

“Ringmer to 2030”

Appendix A

Appendix A summarises the evidence collected by the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, upon which the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are based.



Ringmer viewed from the former chalkpits of the Lewes Downs SAC. The B2192 from Lewes to Ringmer passes immediately below the SAC, and then snakes towards Ringmer village, invisible behind the trees in the middle distance. Mill Plain, to the right, and the farmland either side of the B2192 are within the South Downs National Park. Morning peak hour traffic queues along the section of road visible here are due to the over-capacity B2192-A26 junction at Earwig Corner.

***Ringmer Parish Council
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Section 1 Evidence supporting the Introduction

- 1.1 The statistical evidence in this section is taken from the *East Sussex in Figures* (ESIF) website. The website has been progressively updated during the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan to incorporate detailed analysis based on the 2011 census. The latest date at which it was accessed for the evidence included in this Neighbourhood Plan was 15 July 2014. The remaining evidence in this section is based predominantly on the local knowledge acquired from the day-to-day activities of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 Only minor comments, mostly on matters of fact, were made about section 1 during the Regulation 14 consultation carried out in Sep-Oct 2013. East Sussex County Council provided, in their response [no.73], several additional pieces of information that have been included.

Section 2 Evidence supporting the Vision for Ringmer in 2030

- 2.1 The Emerging Core Strategy (ECS) for Lewes District [September 2011] included, in its section 4, the following Vision for Lewes District taken from its Sustainable Community Strategy.
“Our long term vision is of vibrant, distinctive, safe and sustainable communities where everyone who lives, works, visits or studies in the District supports one another and takes care of the environment – a community we can all be proud of.”
The Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan concurs with this District-wide vision.
- 2.2 The proposed submission Core Strategy (PSCS) [January 2013] also includes the following District-wide vision.
“By 2030 the district and its residents will have made every effort to respond to the challenges of climate change, through a reduction in the district’s carbon footprint and by adapting to the consequences of climate change. This will have been done through a variety of means, such as sustainable construction techniques, utilising alternative travel options to the private car (including the reinstated Lewes to Uckfield railway line) and increased production of green energy. As a consequence of these approaches, air quality levels in the towns will be within permitted levels. Measures to reduce risk to the district from the increased frequency and severity of flood events will have been introduced, particularly in the urban areas. Despite the risk of flooding posed by the rivers, the recreational opportunities presented by these key environmental features will have been realised.
The parts of the district within the South Downs National Park will have been conserved and enhanced under the leadership of the National Park Authority, and the area will be better understood and enjoyed by residents, businesses and visitors. Elsewhere, the unique, distinctive and general high quality heritage, built and natural environment of the district will have been preserved, and in some instances enhanced, particularly through urban regeneration along the coastal strip. The enjoyment of the built and natural environment of the district will have been assisted through a strong sustainable tourism industry. Enhancements to the biodiversity of the district, including the further creation of a high quality network of habitats, will have been established and the relative tranquillity enjoyed by many parts of the district will have been retained.
Improved employment opportunities will have reduced the need for out commuting thereby supporting local services such as the retail centres, which will have remained or, where appropriate, regenerated to become vital assets for the communities that they serve. To assist with this, businesses and investment will be attracted into the area, through the provision of modern business accommodation, including for small business start-ups, and high speed broadband, which is all set within an environment that offers good quality of life.
Recent development in the District will have contributed to making existing communities more sustainable and addressing some of the previous imbalances in the standard of living across the

District. The timely delivery of key infrastructure requirements, including sustainable transport options, accessible health care and education facilities, will have been key to achieving this. Appropriate new housing will have been delivered that has contributed to meeting the significant housing need that has resulted from an increase in households in the district and changes to the demographic profile of the population. The provision of appropriate affordable housing, in appropriate locations, will have enabled those who wish to live in the district to do so.

The Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan concurs with this District-wide vision, and in particular with its second, third and final paragraphs, which are directly applicable to this Neighbourhood Plan.

- 2.3 The PSCS also includes the following vision for the rural villages of the low Weald, which include Ringmer.

“By 2030, the Low Weald villages and wider countryside would have retained and, where possible, enhanced their attractive character and identity. Although the majority of recent development would have been directed to the urban areas of the District, development that meets the community’s needs for housing, including affordable housing, and supports the rural economy will have been sensitively accommodated, particularly in those settlements with the best range of community services and facilities and ease of access to employment opportunities. With the London to Lewes railway line passing through this part of the district, further opportunities for sustainable travel, particularly to and from the stations of Plumpton and Cooksbridge, will have been realised. Although travel by the private car will still be, in many instances, the only practical way of accessing and travelling around this part of the district, improvements to road safety, including the lowering of speed limits in the villages, will ensure that this form of transportation is undertaken in the safest possible manner.

As a result of significant growth at the nearby towns of Uckfield, Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath, the demand for informal recreation and leisure facilities will have increased and been met in this area where appropriate, which will have resulted in better facilities for the Low Weald communities and a much needed stimulus to the economy in this area.”

The Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan strongly supports this District-wide vision for the rural villages of the Low Weald.

- 2.4 The PSCS also includes the following vision for the rural area of the South Downs National Park within the District.

“By 2030, the highly valued character of the South Downs National Park will have been protected and enhanced. Development to meet the social and economic needs of the existing communities, including the provision of affordable housing and community facilities, will have been met sensitively, acknowledging and responding to the special qualities of the National Park. The area will perform an important tourism, heritage and recreational role within the region while having due regard to the high quality landscape, conservation of wildlife and the cultural heritage of the South Downs.

The needs of residents and the increased number of visitors to this part of the National Park will have been sustainably managed. This will have included enhanced accessibility to and around this area, including through the use of an enhanced sustainable transport network and improved linkages between the Downland villages.”

The Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan concurs with this District-wide vision for the rural areas within the South Downs National Park.

- 2.5 Our vision for Ringmer in 2030, below, is thus entirely in conformity with the District-wide visions of the Core Strategy.

“By 2030, the Low Weald village of Ringmer, the Broyleside settlement and the wider countryside within the parish will have retained, and where possible enhanced, their attractive character and identity. Although the majority of recent development will have been directed

to the urban areas of the District, development that meets Ringmer's housing and community needs and supports the rural economy will have been sensitively accommodated. Development of new and improved employment opportunities in Ringmer parish will have reduced the need for out-commuting, thereby supporting local services. To enable this, existing employment sites will be maintained and improved, new sites will be identified and established as necessary, and businesses, including working at or from home, will be supported by the provision of modern business accommodation and access to high quality and high speed e-communications.

Ringmer village, as a rural service centre within Lewes District, will continue to meet the demand for local services, including secondary education, healthcare, social care, and informal recreation and leisure facilities, for a wider area than just Ringmer itself. Where possible such services and facilities will be enhanced, and new ones created. This will have resulted in better facilities for the Low Weald communities and a much needed stimulus to the economy in this area.

Travel by the private car will still be the predominant way of travelling around this part of the District. Adequate parking will have been provided for new homes, employment sites, services and recreational facilities. Improvements to road safety will ensure that this form of transportation is undertaken in the safest possible manner. Public transport services by bus will have been maintained and, where possible, enhanced. There will be a cycle network connecting Ringmer to Lewes, connecting the main settlement at Ringmer village to the Broyleside, and allowing cycle access to major employment sites within the parish. The present network of rural lanes and footpaths heavily used for informal recreation will have been preserved and enhanced. Improvements to the A26 junctions north and east of Lewes will ensure that road traffic congestion in Ringmer, despite new development here and elsewhere, is no worse than in 2010.

In 2030 Ringmer will retain the essential 'village feel' of a sustainable rural community. The built and natural heritage of the parish will have been protected and retained. The most highly valued countryside areas in Ringmer parish will have been recognised and conserved. Ringmer will have become a healthier, more inclusive and more sustainable community.

- 2.6 This Vision was strongly supported by residents at the consultation meetings and exhibition held between Nov 2011 and Feb 2012. No comments on the Vision were received in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Comments about section 2 during the Regulation 14 consultation carried out in Sep-Oct 2013 were broadly supportive. A suggestion made by several respondents that the Vision should include a reference to road traffic congestion was accepted, and is included in the Vision above.

Section 3 Evidence supporting the four Key Principles

- 3.1 The four key principles proposed below are derived from the outcomes of the initial community consultation process on the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan, and from the earlier Ringmer Village Plan. The evidence that they reflect community aspirations is briefly summarised for each.

Key Principle 3.1: Ringmer is, and should stay, a village

- 3.1.1 Ringmer is a large parish with two main settlements, Ringmer village and the Broyleside. The surrounding countryside is highly valued and extensively used by residents, and includes a significant rural population. Ringmer village has a good range of services. Despite its population being larger than many small towns, Ringmer maintains a 'village feel', and this is prized by residents as a key asset. The houses and shops gathered round the village green and its sloping cricket pitch in the Ringmer Green Conservation Area are of crucial importance. The community

facilities available in Ringmer are those of a village, not those of a small town. 'Village feel' includes both landscape and social aspects.

- 3.1.2 Household surveys leading up to the development of the 2003 Ringmer Village Plan and the 1988 Ringmer Village Appraisal indicated very clearly the importance to a high proportion of residents of Ringmer remaining a village. Many of the policies proposed to maintain a 'village feel' are those approved, with full consultation, in the 2006 Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy and the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development. This principle was strongly supported at the consultation meetings held in November-December 2011, and at the exhibition held in February 2012, and was further supported in the consultations held January-March 2013. It was also strongly supported in the survey conducted in March 2012 by the North Ringmer Residents' Group. Twenty respondents commented upon the key principles during the Regulation 14 consultation carried out in Sep-Oct 2013. The great majority were supportive, and several emphasised the importance to the community of retaining 'village feel'.

Key principle 3.2: Ringmer should regain sustainability

- 3.2.1 Up to the mid-1960s Ringmer was a large but sustainable village community. The normal reason for living in Ringmer was that you were employed in Ringmer. Since then planned changes have doubled the size of the village by allowing commuter development, while the major local employer closed in the 1980s. Commuting from Ringmer has become far more ambitious and extensive than was ever envisaged. This Neighbourhood Plan will seek to redirect the community towards sustainability by (a) increasing employment opportunities within Ringmer and (b) ensuring that new housing is on a scale and of a type to meet village need.
- 3.2.2 Many of the policies proposed to support greater sustainability are those approved, with full consultation, in the 2006 Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy and the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development in Ringmer. This principle was strongly supported at the consultation meetings held in Nov-Dec 2011 and at the exhibition held in Feb 2012.

Key principle 3.3: Ringmer should be a balanced, healthy and inclusive community

- 3.3.1 There was serious concern, expressed in the 2003 Village Plan, that in the last decades of the 20th century the Ringmer community became unbalanced. The traditionally high proportion of affordable housing was greatly reduced, and young families were priced out of the village housing market. Recruitment to the village primary school plummeted and in 1993 its capacity was reduced. The 2003 Village Plan sought to correct this, with partial success – the primary school is now full again and in 2014 an extension is planned to meet existing needs. This Neighbourhood Plan will seek to ensure that this trend continues so that Ringmer returns to being a fully balanced, healthy and inclusive community.
- 3.3.2 Household surveys leading up to the development of the 2003 Ringmer Village Plan and the 1988 Ringmer Village Appraisal established a wish for Ringmer to be a balanced and viable community. Many of the policies proposed are those approved, with full consultation, in the 2009 Strategy for Residential Development in Ringmer. This principle was strongly supported at the consultation meetings held in Nov-Dec 2011 and at the exhibition held in Feb 2012. There could hardly be better evidence for the desire of residents for Ringmer to be an inclusive community than the support provided by many local people to the elderly, infirm and disabled residents living in the community, and to the residents of Field Cottage, Harrisons Lane, which houses people who require support to live independently. Policy 10.9, which proposes that an additional facility for supported living in Ringmer should be developed if required, received virtually unanimous support in the first two rounds of community engagement, and attracted no negative comment in the Regulation 14 consultation.

Key Principle 3.4: Ringmer and the South Downs National Park

- 3.4.1 After hearing detailed evidence and argument, the Inspector drew the National Park boundary tightly around the south-east and west boundaries of Ringmer village, leaving the parish partly within and partly outside the SDNP, but almost all residents living outside the boundary. This Neighbourhood Plan will include policies to respect this decision, ensuring that only development that supports the National Park purposes and duty takes place within the Ringmer section of the SDNP.
- 3.4.2 Ringmer parish council and other local organisations campaigned in support of the SDNP boundary as finally agreed, with strong support from the village community. This principle was strongly supported at the consultation meetings held in Nov-Dec 2011 and at the exhibition held in Feb 2012.

Section 4 Evidence supporting the General Planning Policies for Ringmer

The eight general planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are:

- 4.1 *The South Downs National Park*
- 4.2 *New development to conform to the Village Design Statement*
- 4.3 *Landscape impact and screening*
- 4.4 *Quiet lanes to be maintained for recreational use*
- 4.5 *Access to the local road system*
- 4.6 *Provision of adequate off-road parking*
- 4.7 *Avoidance of light pollution*
- 4.8 *Avoidance of nuisance to neighbours*

4.1 Evidence collected about the South Downs National Park

- 4.1.1 The order confirming the designation of the new SDNP was made in November 2009, and came into effect in April 2010. The SDNP Authority has two statutory Purposes and a Duty. The Purposes are:
- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area;
 - to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public;
- The Duty, in support of these Purposes, is to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities. Work has now started on the development of the SDNP Management Plan, which is expected to be adopted in 2016. NPPF paragraph 115 notes that great weight should be given to conserving the landscape, scenic beauty and the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks.
- 4.1.2 The SDNP Authority identified the following seven Special Qualities of the SDNP (December 2011), after extensive consultation with stakeholders:
- diverse, inspirational landscapes and breathtaking views;
 - a rich variety of wildlife and habitats including rare and internationally important species;
 - tranquil and unspoilt places;
 - an environment shaped by centuries of farming and embracing new enterprise;
 - great opportunities for recreational activities and learning experiences;
 - well-conserved historical features and a rich cultural heritage;
 - distinctive towns and villages, and communities with real pride in their area.

- 4.1.3 Ringmer's southern horizon is made up of the Caburn block of chalk downland and its Mill Plain spur. The National Park boundary within Ringmer parish was substantially modified from that originally proposed, after consideration by the Inspector of a number of alternative viewpoints, including those of the Countryside Agency, the South Downs Society, the Friends of Lewes, CPRE Sussex, the Glyndebourne Estate, Ringmer parish council and a large number of Ringmer residents. This issue was extensively discussed within the parish at that time, and there was overwhelming support for the principle of establishment of the SDNP, and for its boundary being adjusted as eventually agreed by the Inspector. The Secretary of State endorsed the Inspector's recommendations, which were based on the high landscape and recreational value of the Ringmer land included within the SDNP.
- 4.1.4 Lewes District Council and the SDNP Authority have published a joint Landscape Capacity Study for the District. Many but not all sites considered for residential or employment development in this Neighbourhood Plan have been assessed. The areas within the SDNP to the immediate south-east and west of Ringmer village were assessed as of high landscape sensitivity, substantial or high landscape value, and as having no or negligible capacity to change. Significant new development in such areas is not considered appropriate other than in the most exceptional circumstances. In the course of the development of this Neighbourhood Plan the SDNP Authority have been concerned to ensure that any new development, even of a minor nature, should make a positive contribution to the purposes and duty of the National Park. They have also emphasised to us that when considering proposals for new development on the edge of the National Park or close to its boundary, great weight must be given to the impact of the new development on the purposes and duty of the National Park.
- 4.1.5 A section of the SDNP that includes the part within Ringmer parish gained World Biosphere Site status in Jun 2014 [http://southdownsforum.ning.com/profiles/blogs/the-brighton-lewes-downs-biosphere-it-s-here?xg_source=msg_mes_network].

4.2 Evidence collected to underpin the Village Design Statement

- 4.2.1 The advantages of including a Village Design Statement within the Neighbourhood Plan were drawn to our attention by open comments from residents during the early discussions in Nov-Dec 2011, and Steering Group accepted this proposal. The NPPF makes extensive reference to the importance of always seeking to ensure high quality design, including this as one of the core planning principles [NPPF paragraph 17]. There is more detailed guidance in NPPF paragraphs 28, 35, 55 and 56-66. NPPF paragraph 58 requires neighbourhood plans to "*develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development for the area*". The delivery of good design in this Neighbourhood Plan will be ensured through the Village Design Statement (section 10).

4.3 Evidence about the importance of landscape impact and screening

- 4.3.1 Ringmer parish lies across the junction of two major landscape character areas, the South Downs and the Low Weald. The county council divides the Low Weald into eastern and western character areas, with the boundary running through Ringmer parish. Ringmer village lies directly below, and is very visible from, the northern scarp of the South Downs at Mill Plain or Saxon Down, but the impact from the Lewes Downs SAC at Malling Down is greatly reduced by a screen of mature trees. The SDNP boundary runs up to the south-east and west edges of Ringmer village, emphasising the location of this settlement at the junction between these two major character areas. The Broyleside is more clearly within the Low Weald character area. There are extensive views to many parts of Ringmer and the Broyleside from far across the Weald, and very attractive views across countryside to the east and north-east from Ringmer Green. Care must be taken to avoid the negative impact of new development on both landscapes.

- 4.3.2 Lewes District Council and the SDNP Authority have published a joint Landscape Capacity Study for the District. Many but not all sites considered for residential or employment development have been assessed [Landscape Capacity Study table 5]. The areas within the SDNP to the immediate south-east and west of Ringmer village were assessed as of high landscape sensitivity, substantial or high landscape value, and as having no or negligible capacity to change. Significant new development in such areas is not considered appropriate other than in the most exceptional circumstances. All such development must contribute towards achieving the purposes and duty of the National Park, as noted above.
- 4.3.3 Areas of the Low Weald adjoining Ringmer village and around the Broyleside were mostly considered to have medium landscape sensitivity and medium landscape value. Some, such as the areas north of Potato Lane (on the SDNP boundary) or north-east of the Broyleside, were nevertheless considered to have negligible capacity to change. Most other Low Weald areas assessed were considered to have a medium capacity to change. However, one area, to the east of the Broyleside and south of the Caburn Enterprise Park, was considered to have low landscape sensitivity, only slight landscape value and a high capacity to change.
- 4.3.4 The commentary on Ringmer and the Broyleside in the Landscape Capacity Study (2012) [section 3.2.7] treats them as a single built-up area, rather than as the two distinct settlements they are considered as in the Rural Settlement Survey (2011), ECS (2011), DSCS (2012), PSCS (2013) & PSCSFA (2014). The key conclusions are thus a little confusing. *“Capacity for change is limited to areas outside the National Park and land between the existing built up area [sic]. This latter option would retain development within the context of the village but would need a strong landscape structure so as to retain the sense of a gap in the built-up areas north of Lewes Road. The smaller hedge-lined fields adjacent to the existing residential and industrial uses provide opportunities for screening. Consequently the identified landscape character north of Ringmer, extending eastwards to Broyleside, is considered to have some scope for change. In addition land west of Broyleside of a similar character, is seen as having some opportunity for change [sic]. The area immediately south of Caburn Industrial Park [sic] has little landscape value, although the landscape becomes increasingly open further east, away from the built up area.”* Some of these conclusions are challenging to interpret, and to match to the more detailed site-specific comments in table 5 of this same document. There are indeed smaller, hedge-lined fields adjacent to existing residential and commercial uses to the north-east of Bishops Lane (Bishops Field & Potters Field), but the land to the south-east of Bishops Lane and to the north of the Lewes Road between the two settlements has an extensive, open character with few hedgerows, and indeed a rather similar landscape character to the open land to the east of the Broyleside. It is especially unclear why the land to the east of the Broyle Industrial Area and south of the Caburn Enterprise Park, which is considered to have the lowest landscape character and to have the highest capacity to change, is not prioritised for development in this study.
- 4.3.5 East Sussex county council landscape architect Virginia Pullan visited Ringmer on 20 Mar 2013 and made an accompanied visit to the principal development sites then under consideration, viewed from the available public access viewpoints. Her views were given substantial weight in site selection, which was undertaken at that time.
- 4.3.6 The landscape impact of new development is greatly influenced by whether or not it is screened from the surrounding countryside, though as the East Sussex county council landscape architect has emphasised to us, the nature of the screening is also important. Native woodland screens are particularly effective, converting a negative landscape impact into a positive one, though of course they take time to achieve. Conifer belts grow quickly, but provide an intrusive alien impact to be avoided. There are examples of either location choice or screening resulting in a positive landscape

impact of new development, but unfortunately also extant Ringmer housing developments, including developments on the SDNP boundary, that are still unduly prominent negative landscape features up to 50 years after construction.

- 4.3.7 It should be recognised that there is an inherent conflict between landscape protection and the wishes of developers and residents. Local experience has been that when houses are marketed on the basis of extensive views, and screening required as a condition of the development that would block such views is later planted to protect the landscape, the screening rarely thrives. Enforcement of screening conditions has not always been strong. While the right to a view is not recognised in planning law, evidence from local estate agents confirmed that an attractive rural view has a significant impact on a residential property's market value. This local experience was endorsed as of more general application by the County Landscape Architect. It is thus highly desirable for any necessary screening to be in place before new residential developments are marketed. As noted in the Landscape Capacity Study, new developments that are well contained by strongly established hedgerows or other natural screening will have a much less adverse landscape impact.
- 4.3.8 Ringmer's rural employment sites are, in general, rather more successfully screened or otherwise integrated into the rural landscape. Market factors often dictate that new employment or agricultural buildings are utilitarian in design. Such buildings are far more acceptable at locations where they are effectively screened from the public view. Where they are exposed in the landscape, far greater attention to design will be required for a proposal to have an acceptable landscape impact.

4.4 Evidence collected about the importance of quiet lanes for recreational use

- 4.4.1 There is no accessible natural or semi-natural countryside in Ringmer parish and only one accessible green way on the Ringmer-Glynde parish boundary. However, there are two networks of quiet lanes, carrying very little other than purely local traffic, that are very heavily used by residents for recreational use on foot, on horseback or cycling. These are (a) Norlington Lane, Green Lane and the northern section of Broyle Lane and (b) Potato Lane and the section of Neaves Lane to the south of the Ringmer sewage works (shown on map 4.2 of section 4). Large sections of Potato Lane and Neaves Lane lie along the SDNP boundary. Protection of these lanes for such healthy recreational use was enshrined in policy EMP4 of the Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) and policy HOUS5(viii) of the Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (2009). These lanes are noted as of particular importance to Ringmer in the Lewes District Informal Recreational Space Study (2005). They help to compensate for the deficiency in accessible countryside.
- 4.4.2 There are small numbers of residential properties along these lanes and a very few active or former farms. All the lanes are of attractive appearance with narrow carriageways, often too narrow to allow two vehicles to pass at normal speed. Some sections are single track and there are some very sharp bends. All have highly valued views to the Wealden or Downland countryside. Some have verges of biodiversity interest, and all have many mature hedgerows and trees. Both networks have good links to the public footpath network. Both connect to Ringmer village, and one also connects to the Broyleside. The preservation of the rural appearance and the recreational roles of these quiet lane networks was a high priority of the Ringmer Village Plan, and remains a high priority of this Neighbourhood Plan. East Sussex County Council Highways Department were supportive in principle of this policy but noted that the county council had not at that time (January 2012) engaged in any formal development of a Quiet Lanes policy for the county.
- 4.4.3 It is not the intention of this policy to prevent minor development, such as the conversion of redundant farm buildings to residential or office use, or the provision of any new accommodation

necessary for essential rural workers, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 55. However, larger-scale development that would create higher levels of new traffic, and especially development for employment or leisure purposes that attracted additional large-vehicle traffic incommensurate with the present farm traffic, would discourage recreational use and will be resisted.

4.4.4 There was strong support for this policy at consultation meeting 1, held on 21 Nov 2011. Following a suggestion from the North Ringmer Residents' Group that the northern quiet lane system might be extended to include the northern section of Bishops Lane, and from a parish councillor that the Norlington Lane section might start at Norlington Farm rather than Bishops Lane, these questions were included in consultation meeting 5, held on 30 Jan 2013. 70% of respondents expressing a view favoured the inclusion of the northern section of Bishops Lane. 41% favoured the quiet lane start being at Norlington Farm, with 59% preferring to retain the start at Bishops Lane. A Wellingham resident also responded to the consultation that Wellingham Lane should be included in the quiet lane network. While there is some sympathy with these views, and Wellingham Lane has particularly good connections with the public footpath network, Wellingham Lane is relatively remote from the main settlements and its present recreational use of is not so high, while Bishops Lane carries substantially more vehicular traffic than any of the other quiet lanes. There is also an alternative pedestrian access from Bishops Lane to Norlington Lane along public footpath 22.

4.5 Evidence collected about the importance of suitable access to the local road system

4.5.1 Ideally all new larger-scale developments - residential development of 20 new homes or more, or new development for employment or leisure purposes attracting comparable levels of additional traffic - would have direct access to Ringmer's three principal roads, the A26 and the B2192 and B2124. Alternatively they must demonstrate that the access routes to these main roads via local roads have the necessary additional capacity for new traffic. Where the proposed development is for employment and leisure use and will generate significant additional large vehicle traffic, direct access to the main road system will be a particular advantage, and any local roads used must be demonstrated to be capable of carrying the additional large-vehicle traffic. Residential development on this scale will require extensive large-vehicle access during construction, and subsequently must be accessible to delivery vehicles, emergency vehicles and waste collection vehicles.

4.5.2 For developments within Ringmer village there is a particular concern about the impact of additional traffic on minor roads within the Ringmer Green Conservation Area and on Bishops Lane. Church Hill, Church Crescent and Vicarage Way include a short one-way system by Ringmer church. They are part of a secondary route connecting the B2192 via Ham Lane to the A26 that is used by large-vehicle traffic and occasional buses. This route is also used by peak hour traffic seeking to divert from the B2192 to the A26 to gain preferential access to the A26/B2192 junction at Earwig Corner (see section 9.1). Church Hill is narrow, with a sharp blind bend at Ringmer church that is considered by residents to be dangerous for both vehicles and pedestrians. Church Hill is affected by church events, such as weddings and funerals, and the small church car park is across the road from the church. Church Crescent and Vicarage Way are narrowed by regular on-road parking, as the older houses and cottages here have no off-road parking. North Road runs across Ringmer Green. This is a narrow road shared by pedestrians and vehicles, serving cottages without off-road parking, and is used as their main access route by existing residents at the hundred houses on Christie Avenue, Delves Way and Mildmay Close. New development on Bishops Lane would create additional pressure on North Road, especially if its road access were in the central part of Bishops Lane. Engineering improvements to North Road would require land from Ringmer Green, which is registered both as common land and as a village green, and would have a negative impact on its setting. Church Hill, Church Crescent, Vicarage Way and North Road are all covered by the saved and NPPF-compliant policy H7 of the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan.

4.5.3 The southern section of Bishops Lane has reasonable capacity between the B2192 and Tilekiln, and could potentially be improved. This section carries large-vehicle traffic seeking access to the employment site at Diplocks Business Park (employment site EMP4). The central section runs across the end of Ringmer Green, providing an important part of its setting, and also provides access to Christie Avenue, Delves Way and Mildmay Close. It is intended to seek the inclusion of this section of Bishops Lane within the Ringmer Green Conservation Area (see section 8.2). However, the northern section of Bishops Lane, between Christie Avenue and Norlington Lane is much more sensitive. This retains the appearance of a narrow country lane, with a narrow belt of woodland along its western side that is important both as a green corridor for wildlife and as a landscape screen. There is an ancient hedgerow along its eastern boundary for much of its length. Two width restrictions have been introduced to prevent the use of this section of the lane by large and medium-sized vehicles and discourage its use by peak hour traffic seeking to divert from the B2192 to the A26 to gain preferential access to the A26/B2192 junction at Earwig Corner (see section 9.1). Local residents value this section of Bishops Lane as a recreational asset (see section 4.4 above) and consider the width restrictions to have been successful in achieving their objective. There would be very strong opposition to their removal, while removal of the green corridor to improve this section of Bishops Lane in engineering terms would be contrary to policy 5.9 of this Neighbourhood Plan and NPPF paragraph 117. The access route from Bishops Lane via Norlington Lane to Ham Lane is also considered dangerous by residents because of its present layout and very poor visibility at the Norlington Lane-Ham Lane junction.

4.5.4 Three additional lanes (Wellingham Lane, Harveys Lane and Moor Lane) are narrow country lanes, used by some agricultural vehicles but considered unsuitable for regular use by large vehicles. Wellingham Lane serves only the small rural settlement of Wellingham, which has fewer than 20 houses and a very small number of small businesses housed in converted agricultural buildings. Substantial sections are single track, with roadside hedges, in part lined by deep ditches and with limited visibility for oncoming traffic. There are very few places on this long lane where a car can pass a large-vehicle. Harveys Lane serves a very small number of houses, but is the main access route to the tourist attraction at Bentley. The carriageway is narrow, but the open landscape makes it possible to see oncoming traffic in good time and use the few passing places more effectively. There are wide verges for much of its length, but these are home to an important plant community (see “*Ringmer to 2030*” section 1.6.7). Neither lane carries any significant through traffic. Moor Lane again serves a small number of houses but does carry some limited through traffic between the B2192 and the A27 at Glynde. Additional passing places have been introduced within the past decade. The southern part of Moor Lane lies within the SDNP. None of these three lanes carry, or is designed for, any significant level of large-vehicle traffic other than local farm vehicles. Policy EMP4 of the Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) and policy HOU5(viii) of the Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (2009) sought to protect these lanes from developments creating significant additional traffic, especially large-vehicle traffic. While these lanes are all used for recreational purposes, due to their relatively remote locations from the main settlements they are not so heavily used as those included in section 4.4 above.

4.6 Evidence collected about the importance of provision of adequate off-road parking

4.6.1 Levels of car ownership are substantially higher in rural areas than in towns. Although Ringmer has a good bus service to Lewes and Brighton, car ownership levels are much higher than in the nearby town of Lewes, and closely comparable to those in much more isolated rural villages [see “*Ringmer to 2030*” section 1.6.25 and ESIF, based on the 2011 census]. The proportion of Ringmer households without a car (12%) is less than half the level found in nearby Lewes town (27%), and the great majority of these car-less Ringmer households are pensioner households. The proportion of

households with two or more cars (44%) is twice as high as in Lewes town. Private motor cars are often the only practical way to access employment outside Ringmer itself, and are considered necessary for supermarket shopping. The proportion of Ringmer residents who travel to work by private car (72%) is substantially higher than the District, East Sussex or national averages, and is indeed the highest proportion in Lewes District for any comparable community. Households with affordable housing may have older cars, but there is no evidence that they possess fewer cars. Some rural or self-employed workers need larger vehicles, such as vans or off-road vehicles, for their employment. NPPF paragraph 39 requires that in setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential properties local car ownership levels should be amongst the factors taken into account.

4.6.2 Many of Ringmer's older houses were constructed without off-road parking, on the assumption that residents would walk or cycle to their local employment. Developments during the 1960s and 1970s made provision for much lower levels of household car ownership than are common today. Two 21st century developments were constructed at a time when national policy imposed maximum parking provision levels, in the hope that this would restrict vehicle ownership. In all three situations inadequate off-road parking provision has resulted in on-road parking. This affects many areas of Ringmer village and the Broyleside, and has been a prominent cause of neighbourhood disputes. Access for essential vehicles such as ambulances and refuse collection vehicles is put at risk, and the quality of village life reduced. Inadequate off-road parking provision by a major Ringmer employer has also been a cause of discontent in the Broyleside, though this issue has now been resolved by the employer securing additional off-road parking. The issue, and the problems that it creates, are recognised in the Lewes District Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2012), p.19.

4.6.3 There was overwhelming support at Neighbourhood Plan consultation meeting 2 held 29 Nov 2011 for the view that the design of new housing development in Ringmer must recognise the dependence of village life on the private car and provide adequate local roads and off-road parking spaces for the expected occupiers of new housing. Parking spaces must be of sufficient size to accommodate the types of vehicles residents are likely to own. Similarly new developments for employment, leisure and tourism must provide sufficient off-road parking for the vehicles that they will attract.



On-road parking in Vicarage Way, an occasional bus route in the Ringmer Green Conservation Area. Damage to the kerb & verge can be seen on the right, caused by heavy vehicles leaving the carriageway to pass parked vehicles.



On-road parking in Turnpike Close, a 1960s market housing development in the Broyleside



On-road parking in The Forges, a 2005 market housing development, and on Harrisons Lane, a 1930 development for Glyndebourne Estate employees, on a bus route that also serves Ringmer Primary School.

4.6.4 In October 2012 new guidance was issued by East Sussex County Council on the provision of car parking and secure bicycle parking in new residential development. This takes a flexible approach, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 39, and provides a tool to calculate parking requirements at new developments that reflect local need. 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. The parking provision proposed for new development in “Ringmer to 2030” takes a parish-wide approach, and also makes allowance for the lower level of car

ownership by older residents who are beyond working age, identified in the 2011 census. The outcomes are similar, though not identical, to those calculated using the ESCC tool. Additional parking for visitors is adequately covered in the ESCC guidance.

- 4.6.5 No recommendations are made about cycle parking provision in this Neighbourhood Plan because, although Ringmer has some keen cyclists, the provisions in the ESCC guidance are considered entirely satisfactory.

4.7 Evidence collected about the importance of avoiding light pollution

4.7.1 Light pollution is now recognised as an increasing problem in the countryside, and is identified as an important planning issue in NPPF paragraph 125. Dark night time skies contribute to tranquillity, one of the special qualities (special quality 3) of the SDNP. The possible introduction of street lighting was debated when Ringmer parish council was first formed in 1895 and the debate has been resumed at regular intervals thereafter, but the majority view has always been opposed. Only a small number of street lights have been introduced, on road safety grounds, along some sections of the B2192 in Ringmer village.

4.7.2 Thirty years ago Ringmer was characterised by very dark night time skies, but there is now always a background glow from the streetlights of Lewes, decreasing star visibility in the night skies. There are very long views to and from many parts of Ringmer, including views from the SDNP and from far across the Weald. Light pollution consequent upon development and new traffic systems in some quite distant parts of the Weald is now very evident. Ringmer itself contributes some light pollution from the few street lights in Ringmer village, from domestic and commercial premises and, especially, from the Ringmer F.C. floodlights at Caburn Field when they are in use. One employment site within the SDNP, site EMP16 (electricity substation), contributes significantly to light pollution at a sensitive location.

4.8 Evidence collected about the importance of avoiding nuisance to neighbours

4.8.1 Apart from vehicle parking, the principal causes of avoidable nuisance to neighbours arising from planning decisions are noise and odours. NPPF paragraph 123 provides guidance on the balance that planning policies should aim to provide between supporting sustainable rural activities and development and avoiding the creation of noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health or quality of life. These principles apply in particular to developments that might create other forms of nuisance to neighbours, including excessive noise and noxious odours.

4.8.2 The key issue is one of balance. The tranquillity of the countryside, especially within the SDNP, should be preserved, but residents in a rural area should expect and accept the noise inherent in traditional countryside activities that contribute to rural life or the local economy, such as seasonal sporting activities, church bells ringing on Sundays and for weddings and practices, and the occasional mass baying of foxhounds. Similarly rural residents should expect and accept agricultural smells when a farmer manures his or her fields. The interruption of quiet enjoyment of residential property for such occasional activities as country shows and fairs, fireworks displays, sporting events or music festivals should not be considered to have a significant adverse impact on health or quality of life. However, planning policies and decisions should prevent, or control through conditions, regular or repeated noise and smell or other nuisances giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health or quality of life. In considering applications for animal facilities or businesses and leisure activities creating excessive noise or odours, great weight should be given to the need to protect neighbours, whether residents or employees at other nearby businesses, from such adverse impacts.

Section 5 Evidence supporting the policies for Ringmer's Countryside & Heritage

The key issues relevant to countryside and heritage in the Neighbourhood Plan are

- 5.1 *The countryside in Ringmer*
- 5.2 *The Plashett Wood SSSI, Plashett Park Farm and Clay Hill Farm*
- 5.3 *The River Ouse banks between Lower Stoneham and Barcombe Mills*
- 5.4 *The strategic Green Gap between the Ringmer village and Broyleside settlements*
- 5.5 *Access to the countryside: public footpaths*
- 5.6 *Accessible countryside and natural or semi-natural greenspace*
- 5.7 *Heritage buildings*
- 5.8 *Archaeological sites in Ringmer*
- 5.9 *Green corridors, ponds and streams*
- 5.10 *Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity*

No additional key countryside and heritage areas have been identified to us during consultation.

5.1 Evidence collected about the countryside in Ringmer

- 5.1.1 NPPF paragraph 17 recognises “*the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*” and seeks to preserve and maintain it, and this also underpins the saved policy CT1 of the 2003 Lewes Local Plan. Successive local opinion surveys have shown how strongly Ringmer residents value the countryside surrounding the two village settlements, and the elongated shape of both means that a high proportion of households have direct views to the countryside. All residents have easy access to it, via an extensive network of quiet country lanes and public footpaths. The highest quality landscape lies in the south, far north and west of the parish. However, the more accessible countryside immediately east and north of Ringmer village and surrounding the Broyleside also makes a substantial contribution to the quality of day-to-day life of village residents. This is a key element in the ‘village feel’ that is so highly valued. Such countryside, once developed, cannot be replaced.
- 5.1.2 This policy, developed from policy HOUS5(iii) of the Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (2009), was strongly supported at consultation meeting 1 held on 21 Nov 2011. It was supported by the South Downs Society, CPRE Sussex and the North Ringmer Residents Group in the Regulation 14 consultation.

5.2 Evidence collected about the Plashett Wood SSSI, Plashett Park Farm and Clay Hill Farm

- 5.2.1 Local communities are empowered by the Localism Act (2011) and NPPF paragraph 76 to identify for special protection through Neighbourhood Plans green areas of particular importance to them.
- 5.2.2 The Plashett Wood is ancient woodland designated as an SSSI. To its south lies Plashett Park Farm, a traditionally-farmed mixed farm that was once also part of the Plashett deer park. This farm lies in a gentle valley that retains fingers of ancient woodland stretching from the Plashett Wood, and long established hedgerows with several hundred parkland and hedgerow trees, mostly oaks, at all stages of maturity. The identification of the ancient woodland is confirmed in the Ancient Woodland Inventory (2010) prepared for Lewes D.C. by the Weald & Downland Ancient Woods Survey. To the south-west of Plashett Park Farm lies Clay Hill Farm (formerly also called the Plashett), which includes an exceptional listed 16th century farmhouse and a motte that is a scheduled ancient monument, believed to have been originally a medieval archiepiscopal hunting lodge serving Plashett Park. The Clay Hill motte is the only scheduled ancient monument within Ringmer parish. Both Plashett Park Farm and Clay Hill Farm have been accepted into the higher level Stewardship Scheme and show exceptional biodiversity, including many rare and protected

species. This whole area has high landscape value, recognised by this substantial investment of public funds. There is public access to this area by three long and well used public footpaths and a new licensed footpath that passes by the Clay Hill motte.

- 5.2.3 Policy 5.2 was developed from the evidence about the remarkable biodiversity and landscape quality of this area of the parish presented (and published) by Natural England, the Ian Askew Trust (landowner), CPRE Sussex, Ringmer Parish Council, the Ringmer History Study Group and some dozens of Ringmer residents in the evidence papers and report of the 2009 public examination of the South East Water WRMP09, which included a proposal that much of Plashett Park Farm should be flooded to create a new water storage reservoir. The Inspector's comments in his report strongly endorse this evidence. As a result, South East Water, in their WRMP14, have abandoned any plans to create a new reservoir in this area.
- 5.2.4 Policy 5.2 was strongly endorsed by residents at the consultation meeting held on 21 Nov 2011 and endorsed by over 95% of those expressing a view at the consultation meeting on 30 Jan 2013. It was supported by the landowning trust in their response to the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. It was supported by Natural England, the South Downs Society, CPRE Sussex and the North Ringmer Residents Group in the Regulation 14 consultation. The policy would contribute to meeting Strategic Objective 7 and Core Policy 10 of the PSCS.

5.3 Evidence collected about the River Ouse banks between Lower Stoneham and Barcombe Mills

- 5.3.1 Local communities are empowered by the Localism Act (2011) and NPPF paragraph 76 to identify for special protection through Neighbourhood Plans green areas of particular importance to them. NPPF paragraph 75 states that "*Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.*"
- 5.3.2 There are present footpath routes available from Lewes town via Malling Recreation Ground and a disused railway cutting to Chalkham Farm, Ringmer, running partly along the east bank of the river Ouse. Further up river, at Barcombe Mills, is a public car park in Ringmer parish, from which there are footpath routes further north up the east bank of the Ouse or, across the river, along the former route of the disused Lewes-Uckfield railway. The river bank upstream from Barcombe Mills is heavily used for recreational purposes but, because there is no current public access along the river bank and no weekend public transport serving Barcombe Mills, users almost invariably arrive by car. If a new licensed footpath can be negotiated along the east bank of the Ouse between Chalkham Farm and Barcombe Mills, this would create a new longer footpath route that would benefit public health and create a sustainable tourist attraction. There is a seasonal touring caravan facility in Ringmer within walking distance of Barcombe Mills. Such an attraction would be a significant contribution to meeting Strategic Objectives 4 & 9 and Core Policy 5 of the PSCS.
- 5.3.3 This policy has its origins in an unsuccessful proposal by the South Downs Society and the Friends of Lewes that the Ouse riverside area up to Barcombe Mills should be included within the SDNP boundary on the basis of its recreational potential. The new policy to create a riverside footpath along the presently inaccessible section of riverbank was supported by residents attending the consultation meeting on countryside & heritage on 21 Nov 2011, and has also received support from Lewes town council. It was supported by 94% of those expressing a view at the consultation meeting on 30 Jan 2013. Natural England supported this policy as increasing recreational access to the local natural environment in their response to the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft

Neighbourhood Plan. Four responses to the Regulation 14 consultation, including those from the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group, all supported this policy.

5.4 Evidence collected about the strategic Green Gap between the Ringmer village and Broyleside settlements

- 5.4.1 Local communities are empowered by the Localism Act (2011) and NPPF paragraph 76 to identify for special protection through Neighbourhood Plans green areas of particular importance to them.
- 5.4.2 Ringmer village is a long settlement that already straggles along the B2192 for a distance of almost 2 km (1.2 miles) from Paygate to Broyle Gate. Built development in the strategic Green Gap between the two settlements of Ringmer village and the Broyleside would result in a continuous run of buildings from Paygate to Neaves Lane (B2124), the Caburn Enterprise Park (B2192) and Broyle Close (Broyle Lane). This would represent a continuous built up area of over 3 km (2 miles) along Ringmer's principal access roads, and would inevitably destroy the essential 'village feel' of Ringmer that is so important to the village community. Any continuous built up area of this extent would feel like, and indeed would be, a town, though in Ringmer's case a town with only village facilities. This view that the strategic Green Gap between the settlements should be maintained was very strongly supported by residents at the first consultation meeting held 21 Nov 2011 and by 92% of those expressing a view at the Feb 2012 Exhibition. When asked at consultation meeting 5 whether the strategic Green Gap boundaries had been drawn appropriately in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, 73% thought they had. The remainder divided between those who disagreed with the principle of the strategic Green Gap (who included several people with development interests there) and those who approved of the principle but thought that some limited development, such as exception site development, could be permitted in this area. The principle of support for the Green Gap was also strongly supported in the face-to-face survey of the views of Broyleside residents carried out by Gleeson Strategic Land (77% in favour, 15% opposed, 8% expressing no view) and also in the formal responses to the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.4.3 The Steering Group, in reviewing the strategic Green Gap boundaries in the light of comments made during the consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, concluded that the proposed Green Gap is the minimum necessary to maintain meaningful spatial and visual separation of the two settlements. Minor adjustments were made to the proposed northern boundary. The Green Gap includes productive, essentially flat, agricultural land, with long views from a range of locations in the public realm, including the village green. It should not be assumed that the land immediately adjacent to the boundaries of the proposed strategic Green Gap is considered suitable for development. Much of the surrounding land is excluded only because it is not considered central to the separation of the communities. Some of it is high quality and productive lower greensand agricultural land, some has high potential amenity value (e.g. as playing fields) and most will continue to remain as countryside outside the revised planning boundaries.
- 5.4.4 This is a long-standing issue in Ringmer. Unsuccessful proposals to build houses in the countryside gap between the two settlements in Ringmer parish (on both sides of the B2192) were strongly promoted by developers in the long discussions leading up to the 2003 Local Plan and as strongly opposed by the great majority of local residents and the parish council. These 1990s development proposals repeated similar unsuccessful proposals going right back to the early days of the planning system. The proposal promoted as SHLAA site 01RG (Broyle Gate Farm) is, for example, distinguished from those in Chailey Rural District Council planning applications E/58/0006 & E/60/0699 only in that it is more ambitious about the number of houses to be built. These 1958 & 1960 applications were unsuccessful, and an appeal against the latter decision was dismissed.

5.4.5 This was one of the most frequently mentioned policies in the responses to the Regulation 14 consultation. The policy was supported, often in strong terms, by 24 respondents including the South Downs Society, CPRE Sussex and a developer who had originally proposed development in this area. A District Councillor saw this as *“the single most important feature which controls the understanding of Ringmer as being a village”*. A number of other residents supported the proposed Neighbourhood Plan overall, without specifically mentioning this policy. The policy was opposed in principle by only 7 respondents, including the developer promoting residential development of Broyle Gate Farm. Another 7 respondents, including the North Ringmer Residents Group, supported or recognised the principle of this policy but recommended amending its boundaries.

5.5 Evidence collected about access to the countryside: public footpaths

5.5.1 NPPF paragraph 75 states that *“Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.”*

5.5.2 Ringmer benefits from an extensive network of very well used public footpaths, supplemented by a small number of licensed footpaths open to the public. These make a substantial contribution to the community’s leisure and well being. The footpaths have been well maintained by voluntary efforts through the Ringmer Ramblers, with assistance from the parish council. A guide book to Ringmer’s footpath network has been published by the parish council for the benefit of residents, and the accessibility of key footpaths has been improved by a rolling parish council programme replacing stiles with kissing gates. The efforts of the Ringmer Ramblers and the parish council, and the goodwill of local landowners, have led to a steady extension of the network, through the dedication of new public and licensed footpaths, in recent years.

5.5.3 However, there is still relatively limited public footpath access to the part of the parish within the SDNP, where older maps suggest a loss in the 20th century of many traditional footpath routes, and there is very limited public access to the Plashett Wood SSSI. The landowners of the Plashett Wood SSSI have provided evidence about the management of the wood for benefit of wildlife, and have argued that increased public access would have a negative impact on this. In the Regulation 14 consultation this policy was supported by Natural England, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group.

5.6 Evidence collected about accessible countryside and natural or semi-natural greenspace

5.6.1 The Lewes District Informal Open Spaces Study (2005) noted that there was very little accessible open countryside within Ringmer parish, but that provision of accessible countryside was nevertheless considered adequate, because there was good access to open Downland in the neighbouring parishes of Lewes and Glynde via the Ringmer public footpath network. However, this study also noted that there was no natural or semi-natural greenspace in Ringmer parish. The benchmark for neighbouring parishes was 2.3 ha per 1,000 population, so to meet this requirement at least 10 ha of natural or semi-natural greenspace would be needed for the current Ringmer population. Neither the Natural England 300m standard nor the Natural England 20Ha standard was met for much of Ringmer. There has been no improvement since this study was carried out.

5.6.2 Representations from local residents already involved in the Community Orchard project have supported the development of a community woodland in Ringmer. This is an attractive option that could contribute to the deficits in accessible countryside and in natural and semi-natural greenspace identified above. The proposal to seek provision of additional accessible natural or

semi-natural greenspace, including land suitable for development as a community woodland, was supported by 96% of respondents at the Exhibition. NPPF paragraph 92 notes that community forests offer valuable opportunities for upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. In the Regulation 14 consultation this policy was supported by Natural England, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group. East Sussex County Council suggested that this should be included in an overall Green Infrastructure policy.

5.7 Evidence collected about heritage buildings

- 5.7.1 The principles that guide the selection of buildings and other structures for protection by listing are published in *'Principles of selection for listing buildings'* published by the Department of Culture, Media & Sport. The national record of listed buildings is maintained by English Heritage. Ringmer church is a grade 1 listed building, and there are an additional 48 buildings and structures listed at grades 2* and 2. However, the Ringmer History Study Group reported that there has been no formal or systematic review of Ringmer's listed buildings since the list was first created in the 1960s, and that the present list contains a substantial number of uncorrected errors. Studies of Ringmer's history since the list was created have identified a number of buildings listed as grade 2 that have unusual and unrecognised features that justify listing at a higher level, and also identified a substantial number of buildings and structures that meet in full the English Heritage criteria for listing but are currently unprotected. There are also a number of buildings and structures of local significance that are also currently unprotected. The Ringmer History Study Group have in the past presented detailed evidence on this to the attention of the Lewes District Council Design & Conservation Officer and to English Heritage, but due to pressure of work and shortage of resources, there has as yet been no review. This evidence remains available.
- 5.7.2 The NPPF paragraph 17 lists as one of the core planning principles to *"conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations"*. This principle is elaborated on in NPPF paragraphs 126-141. The shortcomings of the existing English Heritage list for Ringmer make it impossible for Ringmer's local planning authorities to meet these requirements. This Neighbourhood Plan therefore includes as appendix B an additional list of heritage assets in Ringmer parish that are believed to meet in full the English Heritage criteria for listing. Until such time as a formal review has updated the English Heritage list, heritage assets included on this list should be treated by the local planning authorities as if they were listed when considering development proposals. They will thus be able to fulfil the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 136, 140 & 141.
- 5.7.3 This policy was supported by 4 respondents to the Regulation 14 consultation, including the Ringmer History Study Group, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group. Lewes District Council expressed some concerns about the compatibility of this policy, as presently drafted, with the NPPF. However, section 12 of the NPPF imposes an unambiguous duty on planning authorities to protect heritage assets. This is intended as an interim policy, based on local expertise, to ensure that Ringmer's important built heritage assets are properly protected, as required by the NPPF, until such time as the proper authorities are able to provide the necessary resources to fulfil their responsibilities.

5.8 Evidence collected about archaeological sites in Ringmer

- 5.8.1 Ringmer's principal recognised contribution to the archaeology of Sussex lies in its extensive medieval potteries. From the 11th century to the 13th or 14th centuries Ringmer produced very large quantities of domestic ware that was marketed over a large area of Sussex. In the 15th-17th

centuries the emphasis changed to the production of tiles and then bricks. A better understanding of the typology and chronological sequence of Ringmer domestic ware would make a substantial contribution to understanding the archaeology of Sussex.

- 5.8.2 The pottery industry was based around Ringmer Green and in Norlington, and historical evidence indicates that in the 13th century its epicentre was the fields along the north-east side of Bishops Lane. This is supported by place name evidence and by the substantial amounts of medieval pottery sherds evident whenever land here is disturbed. However, remains of kilns and pottery waster heaps have been identified across a wider area of the village. Brick and tile manufacture later moved from the area around the Green to the Broyle, where it continued until the 1970s. The scale of the industry was such that it has left substantial evidence in the landscape, creating large depressions, some retained as large ponds, both around the village green and in the Broyle. The large ponds housing the waterbirds at Raystede Animal Welfare Centre were created by this industry.
- 5.8.3 From its propinquity to the intensive Bronze Age and Romano-British settlements on the Caburn chalk downland and Malling Hill, it is inevitable that there will have been pre-Saxon occupation of the surrounding area that is now Ringmer parish. Until very recently rather little evidence for such occupation had been found, except for two pre-Christian Saxon cemeteries near Earwig Corner and on Mill Plain associated with as yet unidentified settlements. However, a small Romano-British site has recently been reported in the Broyle area and a large and exciting Roman settlement has recently been discovered in western Ringmer, near Barcombe Mills.
- 5.8.4 Evidence has been provided by the Ringmer History Study Group, and the policy drafted with the assistance of Casper Johnson, East Sussex County Archaeologist. This policy was supported by 4 respondents to the Regulation 14 consultation, including the Ringmer History Study Group, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group.

5.9 Evidence collected about green corridors, ponds and streams

- 5.9.1 The proposal that new developments should include new green corridors or ponds (or, even better, preserve existing ones) was made by a local resident attending a Neighbourhood Plan consultation meeting in the first round of community engagement. This proposal received 100% support from those attending consultation meeting 4 in Dec 2011. The proposed new policy was supported by 99.5% of respondents at the Exhibition. The PSCS supports the inclusion of green corridors in its Core Policies 8 & 10, and the importance of such corridors for wildlife is noted in NPPF paragraph 117.
- 5.9.2 Ringmer is privileged to have some important green areas, teeming with wildlife, within the developed areas of the village. These include the village green and its pond; the local nature reserve area of Cheyney Field, also including a pond; the old churchyard and woodland adjoining the new churchyard, again including a pond; the grounds of Delves House, with a large pond; and a number of small but important informal woodland plots and fringes, including the informal woodland fringe forming a green corridor separating Christie Avenue from Bishops Lane. In some estate areas within Ringmer village former hedgerows and hedgerow trees have survived, through tree preservation orders and by their use as boundaries. In other areas new green corridors have been created as part of residential or employment developments. The streams that serve the rural areas of the parish are themselves important aquatic wildlife corridors, and an important resource for other wildlife. These features allow wildlife to pass between suitable habitats within the developed areas and the open countryside, give garden and field birds access to most Ringmer gardens, and make an important contribution to 'village feel'.

5.9.3 Natural England and Lewes D.C. made positive comments and helpful suggestions about an earlier version of this policy in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. In the Regulation 14 consultation Natural England were amongst respondents who welcomed this policy. Minor amendments suggested by Lewes D.C. have been accepted.

5.10 Evidence collected about maintaining and enhancing biodiversity

5.10.1 NPPF paragraph 7 identifies maintaining and improving biodiversity as one of the three pillars of sustainable development. NPPF paragraphs 109, 117 and 118 provide more detailed guidance on the importance of conserving, and wherever possible enhancing, biodiversity as a consequence of development. Paragraph 118 notes that where significant harm to diversity cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated or compensated for, planning permission should be refused. Opportunities to incorporate features promoting biodiversity within new developments should be encouraged.

5.10.2 Ringmer contains a variety of scarce and unusual habitats, including some areas of chalk downland in the south of the parish; the Plashett Wood SSSI lying across its the northern boundary; several former deerparks now converted to agricultural use, one retaining parkland trees and fingers of ancient woodland connecting to the Plashett Wood; brookland and wetland along the Ouse valley and Glynde Reach; and some extremely uncommon grassland communities, with characteristic plants including Dyers Greenweed, that descend from the pre-enclosure Broyle deerpark and came to light only during evidence collection for this Neighbourhood Plan. Immediately adjacent to the parish boundary, and separating Ringmer from the town of Lewes, is the Lewes Downs SAC. Conservative agricultural management policies, pursued by some of Ringmer's largest farms, have resulted in excellent biodiversity, and surviving habitats for rare and protected species. Deer, badgers, hedgehogs, bats, grass snakes, slow worms and great crested newt populations thrive locally. Regular bird surveys carried out by expert local residents in different rural and developed parts of the parish also indicate excellent biodiversity. Hedgerow dating work has been completed for many of the hedgerows in the rural areas of Ringmer, with many ancient hedgerows qualifying for protection under the Hedgerows Regulations (1997) identified; much of this work has been published in the magazine *Ringmer History* and full records of this work are retained by the Ringmer History Study Group.

5.10.3 Ancient and long-standing hedgerows, many hedgerow trees (including some veteran trees), wide roadside verges, ponds, streams and wetlands all contribute to the maintenance of biodiversity. Residential gardens, especially medium sized and larger gardens including garden ponds can also play an important part, with hedgehogs, many birds, great crested newts and other amphibians apparently thriving in close proximity with man. Up-to-date information about biodiversity in Sussex is maintained by the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre.

5.10.4 There was 100% support from those present at consultation meeting 4 in Dec 2011 for the principle of including a policy promoting biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan. Natural England responded to the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan by proposing that an overall gain in biodiversity should be a requirement for all development proposals. This policy is based on their suggestions. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds strongly supported the policies in this section. In the Regulation 14 consultation this policy was welcomed by Natural England and supported by others including the South Downs Society, CPRE Sussex and the North Ringmer Residents Group.

Section 6 Evidence supporting the policies for Employment in Ringmer

The key policies relevant to employment in the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan are:

- 6.1 *Employment in Ringmer*
- 6.2 *Agriculture, horticulture and woodland management*
- 6.3 *Retail facilities in Ringmer*
- 6.4 *Services for elderly & disabled people*
- 6.5 *Education providers*
- 6.6 *Tourism and leisure activities*

An additional issue identified to us during the consultation was that home-based employment has a role to play in achieving the Neighbourhood Plan's overall objectives, and some residents, including a District Councillor, have pointed out to us ways in which this might be facilitated. While this argument is considered important, the key supportive actions that the Parish Council can take lie predominantly outside the planning system, and thus the scope of this Neighbourhood Plan.

6.1 Evidence collected about employment in Ringmer

- 6.1.1 Key Principle 2 of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan is to seek to make Ringmer a more sustainable community by providing additional employment opportunities in Ringmer parish, thus reducing the need for residents to commute to employment elsewhere [Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan application]. The Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) proposed to increase employment opportunities within the parish in a number of ways, including protection of existing employment sites from conversion to other uses, the more intensive development of some existing sites and the identification of one or more new sites. A specific site was identified as the preferred option for the new employment site. These policies were expressed in policies EMP1-EMP4 of the Employment Strategy.
- 6.1.2 The NPPF strongly supports this approach. NPPF paragraph 9 includes as sustainable development making it easier for jobs to be created in villages. The core planning principles listed in NPPF paragraph 17 include proactively driving and supporting sustainable economic development to include the delivery of new business and industrial units to meet the business needs of an area and respond positively to wider signals for growth. NPPF paragraph 28 requires that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas, in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development, specifying that this should include expansion of all types of business and enterprise; promotion of the development of agricultural and land-based rural businesses; supporting sustainable tourism and leisure activities; and seeking the retention and development of rural services and community facilities. This Neighbourhood Plan fully endorses this approach and seeks to apply it in Ringmer.
- 6.1.3 The Lewes District Emerging Core Strategy (ECS), published in 2011, proposed that 1.5 ha of new employment land should be provided in Ringmer. It suggested a different location to that considered the best candidate in the Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy – our preferred option was not even amongst those considered. The proposed Submission Core Strategy (PSCS), published in January 2013, recognised the availability of potential employment sites in Ringmer, but withdrew this proposal on the basis that the employment land needed was expected to come forward in Lewes, and that it was uncertain whether Ringmer sites could be demonstrated as deliverable, due to market factors (PSCS para 6.25). Instead PSCS Core Policy 4 proposes a more flexible approach to sustainable employment opportunities throughout the District. This approach is unaffected by the focused amendments in the PSCSFA.
- 6.1.4 A neighbourhood plan may plan for either the same level, or a higher level, of development than is envisaged in the Planning Authority's Core Strategy. It is thus entirely legitimate for this

Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan to choose to plan for a higher level of employment development than that provided for in the PSCS and PSCSFA. The outcome will be entirely positive if this results in additional sustainable development in Lewes District, as we believe it will. It is recognised that this would not be the case if lower rentals simply attracted to Ringmer new development that would otherwise have been accommodated at a more sustainable location, such as Lewes town.

- 6.1.5 At consultation meeting 3 held in Dec 2011 there was almost universal support for increasing local employment opportunities as a key element in this Neighbourhood Plan; for all the major existing Ringmer employment sites being retained; for supporting the upgrading and more intensive use of existing sites, subject to conditions; and for permitting the conversion to employment use of redundant agricultural buildings. There was overall support (80% to 20%) for the proposal that one or more new sites should be allocated for employment use. This was echoed in the responses collected at the Exhibition held 2-4 Feb 2012, where 84% of respondents supported the allocation of 1.5 ha of land for new employment sites. The approach taken in the Village Plan Employment Strategy to prioritising new sites was very strongly supported at these consultation events.
- 6.1.6 However, not all these policies favoured at that time to support local employment could be considered fully consistent with the NPPF (published Mar 2012) and other subsequent national planning policies. These take a more relaxed attitude to the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings, and even viable rural employment premises, to alternative uses, including residential use. Ringmer has already experienced the loss of both potential and actual employment premises to residential use in this way. As a neighbourhood plan must be in accord with national planning policy, the draft Neighbourhood Plan consulted on in Jan-Mar 2013 had amended these policies accordingly. It also identified four possible new employment sites for consideration (in addition to two sites already identified in the first round of community engagement) and two of these, more strongly supported at consultation meeting 5 and performing more positively in sustainability appraisals, have been carried forward into this Neighbourhood Plan. The employment policies in the draft Neighbourhood Plan nevertheless attracted consultation responses from Lewes District Council and others that they were still not fully compliant with national policy. Further amendments were therefore been made in the light of these comments in developing the employment policies now included.

The employment history that has led up to the employment strategy

- 6.1.7 Well within living memory Ringmer was a self-sustaining community, with most village residents employed locally in agriculture or village businesses such as the Ringmer Building Works. However, a period of very rapid residential development based entirely on out-commuting for employment (1965-1995) coincided with continued reduction in the agricultural workforce and the 1980s closure of the Ringmer Building Works. The consequence was the creation of a rural community that, at the end of the 20th century, was distinguished by very high levels of out-commuting for employment.
- 6.1.8 The South East Regional Plan noted that employment opportunities in the entire Sussex Coastal sub-region, in which Ringmer was included, were inadequate in both number and quality and sought to remedy this [South East Plan policy SCT3]. This lack of local employment, especially well-paid employment, has led to excessive out-commuting throughout East Sussex that is particularly apparent in Lewes District and very fully reflected in Ringmer. Much of this out-commuting is necessarily to destinations outside the local sub-region. Long distance out-commuting from a rural area with poor public transport links such as Ringmer is predominantly by private car. Continuing growth at Wealden towns such as Uckfield and Hailsham planned under the Wealden District Core Strategy (adopted 2012) will also create additional commuter pressure

on the roads through Ringmer. In consequence the road system linking Ringmer via the B2192/A26 to Lewes and the A27 trunk road at Southerham has been overwhelmed by peak hour commuter traffic, with excessive delays and consequent pollution. While the South East Regional Plan has been abolished, the evidence on which its policies were based remains fully valid.

6.1.9 While the importance of improving the local transport network between Ringmer, Lewes and the trunk road network has been recognised, successive East Sussex County Council proposals to alleviate the situation have either failed altogether or appear impracticable (see section 9.1 below). An alternative approach was adopted in the Ringmer Village Plan and is proposed for this Neighbourhood Plan [Key Principle 2]. This is to enhance local employment opportunities in Ringmer while ensuring that new housing is designed to meet local needs rather than to attract commuters, and thus reduce the need for out-commuting. This approach is entirely congruent with the intention of the South East Plan to reduce out-commuting and journey length by providing more high quality local employment and supports Strategic Objectives 1, 2, 5, 8, 9 & 10 and Core Policies 4, 6 & 13 of the PSCS. The policy has obvious environmental benefits. Since its adoption in the Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) there has been significant success, but there is still a long way to go to reach the desired outcome of returning to a more sustainable village community.

6.1.10 In the recent past new employment has been created by business enterprises located in major and minor industrial sites (many former agricultural premises); retail enterprises at a range of locations; services, both private and public sector; and enterprises serving leisure and tourism. There has been considerable investment in new and renovated premises, though some low quality premises remain in use. The majority of new jobs in Ringmer have been due to existing organisations re-locating here, bringing with them extant staff. A number have moved from Lewes, seeking to avoid recurrent flooding and the Lewes parking regime. Initially only a minority of the new jobs went to Ringmer residents, but local employment opportunities are now increasing and some employees have moved to live in Ringmer. Changes have not been all one way, and there have been closures as well as successes. However, the net effect of a moderate rate of house building coupled with improved and more diverse employment has been a modest improvement in community sustainability. The guiding principle of this Neighbourhood Plan is to continue this trend towards sustainability throughout the planning period to 2030.

Current employment in Ringmer

6.1.11 The available statistical information for employment of Ringmer residents derives mainly from the 2011 census [ESIF]. In 2012 Ringmer households had a median income (£31,462) that was slightly lower than the South East overall (£32,676) but significantly above the median for Lewes District (£29,098) or East Sussex (£27,281). The proportion of residents economically active followed a similar trend, while unemployment followed a reciprocal trend. A significantly higher than average proportion of Ringmer residents were then employed in health, education and the public services, while a lower than average proportion were employed in manufacturing. As might be expected for a rural area, there was a larger minority employed in agriculture than in the District, the county or the South East overall. The proportion of workers describing themselves as self-employed (14%) was very slightly higher than those for Lewes District or East Sussex, but significantly higher than for the South East (11%) or England & Wales (10%). The proportion of Ringmer workers describing themselves as self-employed has increased from 12% to 14% in the past decade. The distribution of occupations between social categories was very similar to that for the South East, though Ringmer residents included a significantly higher proportion of graduates. The proportion of the population who described themselves as retired (20%) was also a little higher than comparable values for Lewes District and East Sussex (both 18%), and significantly

higher than the values for the South East and for England & Wales (both 14%). This reflects the age profile of Ringmer residents. The proportions of Ringmer workers describing themselves as unemployed (2.8%) or long-term sick or disabled (2.2%) were both lower than any of the comparators above.

- 6.1.12 There is no Ringmer business organisation, such as a chamber of commerce, and no comprehensive public list of Ringmer businesses or employers. Attempts to produce such a list have been frustrated by the small size, diversity, mobility and transient nature of many Ringmer enterprises, and the rather uncertain boundaries between employment and self-employment, and between self-employment and unemployment.
- 6.1.13 At one end of the spectrum are traditional local employers with dozens of employees based in an established workplace. These include public sector organisations, such as the East Sussex County Council Highways Department and Ringmer Primary School; former public sector employers now transferred to the private sector such as the Academy running Ringmer Community College, South East Water's Barcombe Mills water treatment works and the highways contractors spun out by the County Council; and traditional private sector organisations such as R.W. Green tree surgeons, Chandlers builders' suppliers, Health Management Ltd, Brockwells Forestry, and the Lime Tree House care home. The majority of these larger organisations contribute to Ringmer's role as a rural service centre, but there are exceptions. Health Management, whose national head office is in the Broyleside, provides occupational health services to businesses throughout the UK, while almost all the children at Ringmer Primary School come from Ringmer. Many of these larger employers remunerate a substantial proportion of their employees at rates well above the living wage level.
- 6.1.14 Many of the most prominent village businesses, including our farms, shops and health and social service providers, are employers on a smaller scale, but still contribute importantly to Ringmer's rural service centre role. Some, such as Barclays Bank, McColls store (which also runs the village post office), Lloyds Chemists, the agricultural supplier Ernest Doe & Sons and the Freeman Forman estate agency, are local branches of larger chains. The majority are independently owned, and many are family businesses. A high proportion of the businesses located within Ringmer's employment sites belong to this category. Rates of remuneration paid to employees are very variable, including some professional salaries, but a significant proportion of employees paid between the minimum and living wage rates.
- 6.1.15 By far the greatest number of Ringmer businesses are very small, many operating from a home or garden office, garage or spare bedroom. Some are highly successful, operating via the internet on an international scale. Some provide services over a wide geographic area, involving extensive travel from their Ringmer base. Many are run by skilled, self-employed tradesmen, especially in the construction industry, commuting daily from their home base to varying employment locations. This category includes new start-up businesses with potential to grow, but also consultancies run by the semi-retired, craft operations run part-time by those with care responsibilities or on-going health issues, and extends to casual jobbing work by those presently unable to obtain the full time employment they would prefer while ineligible for, or preferring not to claim, benefits. Many of these small businesses fall below the VAT threshold. The increasing number of residents working, or carrying out some of their work, at home or in a home-office makes an important contribution to sustainability. The availability of excellent e-communications is often a key factor in this sustainable local employment. However, such activity does not generally require planning approval.

- 6.1.16 This variety of businesses is challenging to enumerate and to categorise. They make very different contributions to the local economy, and many operate below the horizon of government statistics. However, the Lewes District business rating list shows that there are now 180 premises in Ringmer parish registered as liable to pay business rates. While many local businesses are highly sustainable, reducing Ringmer's contribution to climate change by providing employment close to or at home, others involve daily travel to work elsewhere on a scale equivalent to long-distance out-commuting.
- 6.1.17 Some Ringmer-based businesses attract skilled employees from a wide geographic area. They avoid adding to congestion on the local road network by commuting against the predominant peak hour traffic flows, but emit as much carbon dioxide as any other commuter. In-commuting to rural employment is just as dependent on the private car as out-commuting from village homes. Working **at** home is highly sustainable, but working **from** home can be more equivalent to traditional out-commuting.
- 6.1.18 One other category of local employment that unambiguously contributes to sustainability is employment for an organisation based elsewhere that permits the employee to carry out some or all of their duties from their home. Such home employment is almost invariably dependent on excellent e-communications. Anecdotal evidence suggests such employment has increased quite rapidly in recent years.

Recent trends in local employment

- 6.1.19 The 1980s closure of the Ringmer Building Works, for half a century Ringmer's major employer, resulted in a nadir for the local employment of Ringmer residents. Since then the trend for Ringmer employment opportunities has been steadily upward, with re-occupation of the former Building Works premises followed by the conversion to commercial use of quite a number of redundant farm buildings, on sites both large and small.
- 6.1.20 The Lewes flooding in 2000 provided a significant stimulus, as a good proportion of the businesses evacuated from Lewes chose to remain here. The national economic situation since the publication of the Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy in 2006 has not halted this trend. There have been significant losses, such as the closure of the East Sussex County Council care home at 39 Harvard Road in 2010 and the relocation of the Builders Beams steelwork fabrication business following the destruction of their premises by the explosion at an adjacent fireworks factory in 2006. In Nov 2012 Labtech International, a company manufacturing and distributing specialist supplies and equipment to the biotech industry throughout the UK and internationally, employing 46 people, half of them at its Ringmer HQ, and established here for over 25 years, decided to move to the Bellbrook Estate, Uckfield, because they had outgrown their Ringmer premises. They failed to find alternative suitable premises in Ringmer, though they would have preferred to stay here and would have been prepared to buy the land and build premises themselves had they known suitable sites were available. However, these losses have been more than matched by increased employment in many new businesses, including the continued conversion to employment use of former agricultural buildings and the opening in 2009 of the new Ringmer Health Centre. The year 2012 alone saw the regional company Brockwells Forestry relocate to a Broyleside site in which they are making considerable investment; the opening of Dominos Pizzas, offering several new jobs, in the Ringmer Shopping Precinct; the expansion of Health Management into the premises vacated by Labtech International; and a successful planning application by Galleon Care Homes for a new 60-bed care home on the site of 39 Harvard Road that will offer at least 50 new jobs.

6.1.21 We see no reason to doubt that this trend will continue. The forward business plans of both South East Water and Southern Water include plans for substantial additional investment in their Ringmer water treatment and waste water treatment works, while East Sussex County Council is consulting on a 50% increase in the number of places available at Ringmer Primary School. Occupancy rates at almost all Ringmer employment sites remain very high, with the few exceptions ascribable to site owner policies.

Evidence from commercial property specialists

6.1.22 The two commercial property specialists from whom advice was sought were extremely negative about the prospects for the overall strategy outlined above. Neither the specialist with a prominent position in the Sussex commercial market nor the other specialist consulted considered new speculative greenfield commercial development in this area of Sussex to be economically viable at present, or likely to become so in the foreseeable future. They reported that the situation was difficult throughout Sussex, but especially difficult for areas such as Ringmer with poor access to the trunk road network.

6.1.23 The Sussex specialist stated that with build costs at £65 per square foot for commercial premises of suitable quality but market selling prices of at best £70 per square foot, and rentals of £6 per square foot p.a., the profit margin was insufficient to justify the investment risk. He was more positive about the conversion of existing farm buildings, where there could be some headroom for profit, especially in niche markets such as starter units or live-work units. The same specialist stated that office building was particularly uneconomic in the present, and was likely to remain so for several years at least. He commented that there was currently a substantial oversupply of empty offices even in central Lewes, and that planned cutbacks in the public sector were very likely to exacerbate this. He pointed to a number of prominent, good quality, office buildings well located in the centre of the town that were currently vacant, with no tenants in prospect. The second commercial specialist had a more regional perspective, but concurred entirely in this judgement. An experienced planning agent consulted also concurred in these judgements.

Evidence from Ringmer business site owners

6.1.24 The evidence from six local business site owners who rented out their premises, all of whom operated principally converted agricultural premises, was more positive. Three had established sites, operating for some years, which were largely or completely occupied by long established tenants, with whom they had built good relationships. The common theme was that owner-tenant relationships were the key to success, and that in hard times it might be wise to compromise on rents to keep a reliable tenant, indeed on occasions share risks with them. All had the experience of investing in upgrading buildings to improve the facilities for established and trusted tenants, though they would not have done this in the present climate on a speculative basis. Most tenants were small businesses, but these three sites had between them over 100 employees. The majority of the employees were from the local area, though not necessarily from Ringmer itself. Two medium-sized businesses that owner-occupied their sites (Ernest Doe & Sons and Brockwells Forestry) both made very substantial investment in their Ringmer premises in 2012. A substantial investment from the site-owner was required to enable Health Management to expand by 50% in 2012-3.

6.1.25 Two other site owners were at an earlier stage of their activities. Both had quite large sites, but one had only a relatively small part converted – the remainder largely standing derelict. The other has fairly recently gained planning permission for change of use, but has another broadly similar business in an adjoining parish, where his experience had been very similar to that of the

established Ringmer site owners. Both (in one case subject to planning permission) were prepared to invest capital in upgrading and establishing the existing buildings on their sites.

- 6.1.26 The owner of a smaller and newer farm building conversion had also filled his premises (former agricultural buildings) reasonably fast with two small companies attracted from elsewhere, but had had to compromise on the rental income to do so. One of these companies then decided to relocate, and the owner experienced difficulty in re-letting at an acceptable rent. This owner has, in 2014, obtained planning permission to convert both units to residential use, in the second case using permitted development with prior approval.

Views expressed by Ringmer residents and others

- 6.1.27 Ringmer residents and others present at consultation meeting 3 held on 2 Dec 2011 and at the Exhibition held 2-4 Feb 2012 to consider employment aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan showed a very high level of support for the concept of an employment-led neighbourhood plan. Those present at consultation meeting 5 on 30 Jan 2013 supported three of the four possible new employment sites put forward, two more strongly than the third. The two sites that were most strongly supported by residents also performed relatively well when subject to sustainability appraisal and are included in this Neighbourhood Plan as new allocations. They are extensions to sites EMP7 and EMP19, and are included in appendix C. As site EMP7 will connect to the Ringmer sewage works, whose current limited headroom is required to support phase 1 residential development, this site is not proposed for development until phase 2 of the neighbourhood plan. We believe that Ringmer does have the active entrepreneurs needed to drive delivery.
- 6.1.28 The policies consulted upon in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan were supported by most residents who expressed a view. However, Lewes District Council were quite critical of some aspects of our proposals, expressing the view that they were contrary to the NPPF, while the SDNP Authority expressed uncertainty about the need for new employment sites. A developer, who broadly supported the proposals, pointed out that owners of redundant agricultural buildings were likely to find conversion to residential use more attractive than conversion to employment use. In response these comments the policies have been simplified. The developer's analysis is accepted, indeed supported by subsequent events, but there are nevertheless convertible buildings at locations where residential use would be unattractive or inappropriate. The revised policies in the Regulation 14 consultation received a much more positive response. Three residents and a developer drew attention to an apparent conflict between this policy and proposals in policies 7.10-7.11 re sites RES13 and RES28. The decision re site RES13 is explained in more detail below while site RES28 is too small for this policy to be applicable.

Local employment of local residents

- 6.1.29 When employers and employment site owners were asked to estimate the proportion of employees whose home address was in Ringmer, a clear pattern quickly became evident. At the sites most distant from Ringmer Village (Banff Farm & Broyle Place Farm) only 10-20% of employees were Ringmer residents, though others resided in neighbouring villages (Isfield and Laughton respectively). Ernest Doe & Sons, based in the Broyleside, are long-established in Ringmer but the manager in 2012 could identify only one of 16 employees as a Ringmer resident. In marked contrast Ringmer residents formed the majority of employees in many businesses and services based within Ringmer village. The extreme case was the Ringmer Nursery School, based at the Ringmer Primary School in Ringmer village, whose 11 staff were all Ringmer residents. The absence of any local mechanism to match Ringmer residents seeking employment with job

vacancies in Ringmer attracted several comments. Ringmer Parish Council will address this issue, though not within this Neighbourhood Plan.

The strategy preferred by Ringmer parish council

- 6.1.30 Despite an adverse economic climate, there do seem reasonable prospects of continuing the increase in employment experienced in the parish over the last decade, if perhaps at a somewhat slower rate. As additional and improved premises have been developed in Ringmer, tenants have been found, and there are local entrepreneurs willing to invest in the continuation of this trend. This Neighbourhood Plan will support their initiative. The businesses attracted operate in a wide range of markets, with some serving only the local area but others operating on a national or international scale.
- 6.1.31 Most of the businesses are small – there are only three Ringmer employers with over 100 employees. Many are very small, often a single individual working from home or a garden office, but such one person businesses account between them for a substantial proportion of total Ringmer employment. They also provide the seed from which larger businesses grow.
- 6.1.32 Nevertheless, due weight must be given to the views of the commercial property specialists. We found no evidence that anyone considers speculative new build developments on greenfield sites to be economically viable in the present economic climate, or for the foreseeable future. We do hope to see the progressive upgrading of employment facilities by redevelopment on existing sites, but recognise that this is most likely to be achieved by established businesses seeking improved facilities at their current location, as evidenced by planning applications submitted in the course of this Neighbourhood Plan’s development, and supported by the parish council. We also found no evidence to support the EELA view that there was a shortage of office developments in the Lewes area, or that building new offices would be viable, except for existing businesses such as Health Management seeking to expand without relocating.
- 6.1.33 Our conclusion is thus that in the early phases of this Neighbourhood Plan it is most likely that new development will occur in support of the expansion of existing businesses or at sites with existing convertible buildings that can be made available at attractive rents. Nevertheless, new greenfield development for employment purposes will be needed during the plan period if its ambitions are to be met. Our new employment site allocations reflect this conclusion.

Infrastructure

- 6.1.34 Both small and micro businesses operating in Ringmer and employees working at home are very dependent on modern high speed electronic communication systems. Most of Ringmer parish currently has a reasonably good broadband service, but it is essential that Ringmer remains in the forefront in this respect for this important strand of local employment to thrive [see section 9.14 below].
- 6.1.35 Evidence collected about Ringmer’s infrastructure has also identified a number of constraints on all development at Ringmer, including the capacity of the road system linking Ringmer to Lewes and the trunk road system (A27) via the B2192/A26 (see section 9.1 below) and that the Ringmer sewage works, which serves both Ringmer village and the Broyleside, is now operating at 98% of its permitted capacity, with [Jan 2012] very limited headroom (see section 9.10 below). Improving these key elements of infrastructure will be essential for continued commercial development.

Phasing and conditions for approving new employment development

- 6.1.36 Planning policies alone cannot create enterprise or a diverse range of employment opportunities, but they can facilitate it by identifying attractive locations for employment and encouraging the construction or adaptation of appropriate premises. In an uncertain economic environment, a flexible approach that takes advantage of such opportunities as arise seems the only sensible way forward.
- 6.1.37 This Neighbourhood Plan therefore identifies at the start of the plan, in appendix C, sufficient new employment sites to meet the expected demand throughout the planning period. These sites will be able to accommodate demand well in excess of that anticipated by the PSCS and PSCSFA. It is unlikely that they will all come forward for development early in the Plan.
- 6.1.38 It will be necessary to monitor the ongoing programme for increasing Ringmer's employment opportunities. In the rather unlikely event of new Ringmer employment being generated far more rapidly than currently anticipated, it will be necessary to ensure that overall development does not occur in advance of necessary improvements in infrastructure capacity. The release of employment sites served by the Ringmer sewage works prior to the necessary improvement in its capacity would compromise new housing delivery in the first phase of the Neighbourhood Plan. Expansion of employment sites served by the Ringmer sewage works must therefore be deferred until the planned increase in its capacity has been delivered.

6.2 Evidence collected about agriculture, horticulture and woodland management

- 6.2.1 Agriculture, horticulture and woodland management have for centuries been the backbone of Ringmer's economy, and have created its landscape and environment. Extensive farming was, and is, focused on the downland, the fertile and productive arable that sits below the scarp of the Downs, the greensand belt that runs across the centre of the parish and the alluvial land along the River Ouse and Glynde Reach. Although the economics of small- and medium-scale farming have become challenging, Ringmer has seen the development of viable new agricultural enterprises within the past decade. Throughout the 20th century Ringmer included a mixture of large and small farms, with numerous small dairy farms created in the late 19th century, and a significant County Council estate of horticultural smallholdings and small farms established after World War I that survived until disposed of, predominantly by sale to their tenants, in 1997. Few of these small scale units have survived as viable commercial farms since this disposal. The numerous small farms have, however, left their marks on the rural landscape. The rural part of the parish is thus quite densely populated, but such development is scattered.
- 6.2.2 Direct employment in agriculture is now limited, and mainly confined to members of farming families resident in Ringmer for three or more generations. The number of direct employees in agriculture outside these farming families is now in single figures. There are also an additional number of self-employed agricultural contractors based in the parish. Agriculture in the professionally farmed areas of the parish is highly productive, and makes a very significant contribution to the local and national economy. These include some initiatives generating new agricultural products and local marketing initiatives contributing to the creation of local food networks. It is essential that the planning system should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate new agricultural initiatives.
- 6.2.3 NPPF paragraph 112 requires that the best and most versatile agricultural land should be retained for agricultural production wherever possible. The NPPF Glossary defines the best and most versatile agricultural land as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the agricultural land classification. The most productive land in Ringmer has been identified to us by experienced farmers as the fertile

and productive arable that sits below the scarp of the Downs, which lies entirely within the SDNP; the greensand belt that runs across the centre of the parish, which lies outside the SDNP; and the alluvial land along the River Ouse and Glynde Reach, which lies partly within and partly outside the SDNP. The evidence we received is that the arable below the scarp is very well farmed, but that a small proportion of the greensand, while potentially very productive, is currently much less productive than it could be. Some, near the Broyleside settlement, has been diverted to non-agricultural uses. Built development on the alluvial land is inappropriate, as this land is subject to flooding. There is a belt of gault clay running across the parish to the south of the greensand belt. This is difficult to farm productively, and historically has mostly been maintained as pasture. Most of Ringmer village, including Ringmer village green, lies on this formation. To the north of the parish lies a thick band of Weald clay, which has good fertility but is relatively difficult to work. Most of the Broyleside settlement stands on this formation. Detailed maps indicating agricultural land classifications on a field by field basis do not appear to be available. The available agricultural land classification maps identify part of the arable land below the scarp of the Downs as grade 2, and the remainder is presumed to be grade 3a. For the purposes of this Neighbourhood Plan it is presumed that the greensand belt should also be considered grade 3a, but that the Weald clay will normally be considered grade 3b, while the gault clay land will normally be considered below grade 3.

- 6.2.4 Intensive farming initiatives can increase agricultural production and create new employment. However, some activities, such as very large animal or poultry facilities or large areas of glasshouses, create very large structures with substantial landscape impact. They may involve construction methods that result in the permanent loss of countryside, in much the same way as commercial or residential development. Some such developments may best take place on land allocated for, or meeting the criteria to be allocated for, employment use.
- 6.2.5 Improvements in agricultural production can be achieved without compromising landscape or biodiversity, as demonstrated by some of Ringmer's most productive farms qualifying for higher level status in the Stewardship Scheme. Farmland that has qualified for this status, and whose long-term contribution to the landscape and to biodiversity has been supported by substantial public investment, should not be sacrificed to alternative development unless there is an absolute need in the public interest that cannot be met at other sites of lesser value. Some features and environments important for landscape quality and biodiversity are within the SDNP and thus relatively well protected, while the Plashett Wood, on the Weald clay, is an ancient woodland SSSI. However, Ringmer has some other small pockets of ancient woodland, many ancient hedgerows and mature countryside trees, some important wetland and brookland within the flood plain, and some wildflower meadows that are also very important for biodiversity. Development should be managed to avoid compromising these. In the course of evidence collection it was brought to our attention by local naturalists, and confirmed by the County Ecologist, that Ringmer also retains some extremely uncommon grassland communities, with characteristic plant communities including Dyers Greenweed, that derive from the pre-enclosure Broyle deerpark and are astonishingly rare survivals. It is essential that these unique communities, some of which are on public land, are not compromised either by development or by inappropriate management.
- 6.2.6 Market gardens and smallholdings were significant elements in Ringmer's rural economy in the 20th century, but following the sale of the County Council's estate in the 1990s this sector has shrunk to little more than a single large nursery/garden centre (Goldcliff Garden Centre).
- 6.2.7 Not all Ringmer's countryside is productively farmed. A significant proportion, including parts of the greensand belt, is now used for private equestrian or hobby farming purposes. Some areas,

especially around the two principal settlements, are held by landowners whose primary objective is development gain. Such land can easily become under-managed or lie fallow, and some appears neglected. One significant area appears to be reverting to self-seeded woodland.

- 6.2.8 The Plashett Wood SSSI in the north of the parish is actively-managed ancient woodland, and there are further fingers of ancient woodland, recognised in the Ancient Woodland Inventory, projecting into the nearby Plashett Park Farm. There are many smaller woodlands and shaws, including a number managed for sporting purposes. Hedgerows, many ancient, thrive throughout the parish. A good proportion of hedgerows include numbers of mature trees. There are many trees and tree-screens in the settlement areas and around rural properties. Woodland management, including the maintenance of hedgerows and trees in the countryside, in the public realm and in private gardens, has become an increasingly important element in Ringmer's economy. Employment in this sector is significantly higher than direct employment in agriculture, and varies from companies such as R.W. Green, who employ 34 staff at their Upper Stoneham HQ, and Brockwells Forestry, who are significant new local employers, to individual self-employed contractors. Ringmer-based businesses of this type contribute significantly to Ringmer's rural service centre role.
- 6.2.9 Based in the Broyleside is the regional branch of a large retail business (Ernest Doe & Son) supplying machinery, tools, equipment, materials and specialist clothing to farmers and other countryside workers over a wide area. This business also makes a substantial contribution to Ringmer's rural service centre role.
- 6.2.10 Ideas about the importance of this sector plays in Ringmer's economic life were discussed at the consultation meeting held 2 Dec 2011 and the policies have been developed through the different stages of the Neighbourhood Plan. In the Regulation 14 consultation this policy was supported by Natural England, CPRE Sussex, the North Ringmer Residents Group and Lewes D.C., although the latter expressed the view that policy 6.2(d) might not be enforceable.

6.3 Evidence collected about retail facilities in Ringmer

- 6.3.1 There are a good range of retail services available in Ringmer, including many provided by independent retailers. In Ringmer village there is a bank, a post office, a garage, a pub, and a variety of other retail and service premises including a local store, an estate agent and a pharmacist. Local independent establishments include a butcher-greengrocer, a baker with a small cafe, an off-licence, a pet shop, a furniture manufacturer and retailer, a fish & chip shop, a pizza company and a restaurant. A weekly country market for local produce is held in the Village Hall. Ringmer shopping precinct also houses a hairdresser, a beauty salon, a toning lounge, a veterinary surgery and a dance studio. Most of these retail and other services are provided within the core retail area at Ringmer Green (major employment site EMP1, including the shopping precinct, Ringmer Village Hall and the Anchor Inn). The substantial contribution of independent shops and services is especially valued. However, Ringmer residents must travel to Lewes, Uckfield, Hailsham or further afield to access a supermarket.
- 6.3.2 Ringmer also includes some specialist retailers based outside Ringmer village, including Ernest Doe & Son in the Broyleside, and some specialist outlets in the countryside that are part of local food networks. Elsewhere in the parish are a second garage (with a local convenience store), three other pubs, a large garden centre and a furniture retailer. Chandlers building supplies yard primarily serves the construction industry, but also includes a small retail outlet. There are a range of establishments at which vehicles can be purchased, serviced and repaired. A very wide range of

services are available from businesses run by Ringmer residents. These retailers and services contribute to the local economy, and to Ringmer's role as a rural service centre.

- 6.3.3 As a rural service centre, Ringmer provides retail facilities and services not only for Ringmer residents (including those from the Broyleside, where there are very few facilities) but also for customers from Lewes and a wider rural area. Customers include those employed in Ringmer and students attending Ringmer Community College. These additional customers contribute importantly to the viability of many Ringmer shops and services. Provision of adequate, convenient and affordable parking close to key retail facilities is an essential element in maintaining Ringmer's rural service centre role. In practice it is far easier for those living in outlying parts of Lewes town to access the bank and post office in Ringmer than their equivalents in central Lewes. Some businesses benefit substantially from passing trade.
- 6.3.4 The Lewes District Shopping and Town Centre Survey was published in 2012. Their evidence, based on a household survey, was that the local shopping facilities in Ringmer are comparatively well used by residents and are valued. Ringmer's shops were considered to be performing relatively well by District standards, but not to attract many shoppers from outside Ringmer. However, it should be noted that no shopper surveys were conducted, so that shoppers resident outside the District, including those employed in Ringmer but not resident here and passing trade, would not have been detected. The area served by Ringmer as a rural service centre includes several parishes in Wealden District. The survey noted that most Ringmer residents needed to shop outside the parish for main food (supermarket) shopping and most comparison shopping. The Survey also noted a high level of internet shopping by District residents, though specific data for Ringmer residents are not available. The long (25 year) leases of most premises in the Ringmer shopping precinct terminated during 2013, and new (shorter) leases have now been negotiated between shopkeepers and the freeholder. This process led to some disruption, and an above-normal number of empty shops in 2013. There has been a considerable improvement in 2014 – there are now only two vacant units, and they are both awaiting refurbishment following the termination of long leases.
- 6.3.5 Policy EMP5 of the Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) defined the Ringmer Core Retail Area and required its protection (at ground floor level) for retail, service, office and leisure uses only. Additional development within this area was encouraged, subject to conditions. At consultation meeting 3 held 2 Dec 2011 there was universal support for the view that the Ringmer Core Retail Area should be protected for continued employment uses. The maisonettes above the shops are large units, originally occupied by the retailers. Social changes mean that none are now occupied by the retail business owners, but most are instead let on the commercial market. At the 2013 lease renewals most shops were let or re-let on a lock-up basis. This change is expected to lead to the subdivision of the maisonettes into a larger number of smaller residential units in the course of this Neighbourhood Plan. Comments in the consultations carried out during 2013 mainly related to the disruption consequent on the lease renewals and changes taking place that year.

6.4 Evidence collected about services for elderly & disabled people in Ringmer

- 6.4.1 East Sussex has a high proportion of elderly residents, and this is reflected in Ringmer. The proportion of people of retirement age, and in particular the proportion of the very elderly, is predicted to increase steadily throughout the period to 2030. While many elderly people will continue to live independently, with support where necessary, others will require residential care. East Sussex also has the usual proportion of younger residents with disabilities requiring support or residential care. Support to those living independently and residential care both provide a significant and growing number of employment opportunities.

- 6.4.2 Ringmer has two private sector care homes, and a smaller home to support younger adults with major disabilities, between them employing over 50 people. A large county council-owned care home at 39 Harvard Road closed in 2010, but the site has been reserved for provision of services for the elderly and disabled, and a successful 2012 planning application by Galleon Care for a replacement 60-bed care/nursing home was supported by Ringmer parish council. The application estimated that this development would generate an additional 50 employment opportunities in Ringmer. Additional employment is generated by two complexes of warden-assisted apartments (Delves House and Vicarage Close), by a small group of apartments for supported living (Field Cottage) and by organisations providing support for those who need it to live independently.
- 6.4.3 Demographic factors will increase the requirement for such facilities in Ringmer during the period to 2030, and a further facility of this kind may be required during the plan period. Ringmer has sufficient facilities to be a sustainable location for extra-care apartments for the elderly or disabled, providing that these are located within Ringmer village and close to all services. Ringmer's rural service centre role would also make it an appropriate base location for organisations meeting the health or social care needs of the elderly or disabled wishing to continue independent living in their own homes within a wider rural area.
- 6.4.4 The Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy policy EMP9 provided for the retention and upgrading of the social care, rehabilitation and recuperation facilities at 39 Harvard Road, and that the provision of care and nursing homes in Ringmer should be retained, as a minimum, at its present level. There have been some extensions to two private sector care homes since that date. At consultation meeting 3 held 2 Dec 2011 there was universal support for the view that the present care home sites in Ringmer village (including 39 Harvard Road, then about to close) should be protected for continued use in this role. No contrary views were expressed at the Jan-Mar 2013 or Regulation 14 consultations.

6.5 Evidence collected about education providers

- 6.5.1 For background evidence on Ringmer Community College see section 9.7 below. The College has 700 students and 123 employees. For the Ringmer Primary School, which has about 45 staff but for which a significant expansion is planned, see section 9.6 below. The Ringmer Nursery School has only 11 staff, but all of them are Ringmer residents.
- 6.5.2 The Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) policy EMP10 supported the continued development of Ringmer Community College, subject to conditions. Much of the planned development has since taken place. However, at the consultation meeting 3 held 2 Dec 2011 there was very strong support for these policies being taken forward into the Neighbourhood Plan. This policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation. The wording of the policy has been amended in the light of advice from Lewes District Council about the way the policy was phrased.

6.6 Evidence collected about tourism and leisure activities

- 6.6.1 This policy is guided by NPPF paragraph 28, which requires that planning should support economic growth in rural areas, including sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments. The principal tourist destinations in and immediately around Ringmer are:
- 6.6.2 ***The Glyndebourne Opera House***, attracting a national and international audience to performances during the Glyndebourne Festival (May-August) and the Glyndebourne Touring Opera season (October) and used for a variety of other activities. While the Opera House itself is in Glynde parish,

the overall site straddles the Ringmer-Glynde parish boundary, with many ancillary buildings and the main car park in Ringmer parish. Glyndebourne visitors mainly arrive by private car, but cause only transient congestion on Ringmer's road system. Some visitors use local services, while those from a distance may stay locally overnight. The opera house is a major employer, though inevitably many of the most highly paid employees, singers and musicians, are brought in on short contracts for specific engagements. Many singers and musicians lodge locally during the season, and many permanent staff are recruited, or come to reside, locally, making Glyndebourne a significant contributor to the local economy and a significant local employer. There are about 150 permanent employees, but this number increases to about 500 during the Festival. Glyndebourne is not accessible by public transport, though minibus transport from Lewes station can be arranged. The great majority of visitors arrive by private car, but arrivals and departures avoid peak travel hours. There is a large car park on the site.

- 6.6.3 ***The Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare*** is a charity that is a substantial attraction, especially for families with children, that receives 150,000 visitors per year. Its facilities include a new cafe. It is accessed directly from the B2192. There is currently no bus route to the site during the time Raystede is open (except on Sunday). A bus service could easily be provided. It maintains a visitors' centre, shop and cafe, as well as accommodation for rescued animals, and is an important Ringmer employer. The site has grown substantially, with careful attention paid to design, to become a significant but largely positive physical presence in the landscape. There are plans for further development when funding is available. Visitors' cars are accommodated in an on-site car park that rarely overflows, and there is potential for expanding the car park should that prove necessary. Much visiting occurs during the daytime, especially during weekends and school holidays, and makes little if any contribution to peak hour congestion on the local road system. The charity Raystede provides employment for 64 staff, and an important service to the wider community.
- 6.6.4 ***The East Sussex Gliding Club*** is a regional attraction of specialist interest, accessed directly from the B2192. Its gliders can be seen navigating the parish skies when conditions are suitable, and are regarded positively by most local residents. However, the propeller-driven tug plane that launches many of the gliders creates a noise nuisance that impacts negatively on most Ringmer residents on busy flying days, and has a strongly negative impact on the more immediate neighbours whose properties are overflown at take off and landing. Self-powered gliders also fly from the field, and have attracted a lower level of negative comment. A 2012 planning application to relax the operating conditions imposed on the site, and in particular to increase the number of powered flights from the field, attracted very strong opposition from neighbours, and has been withdrawn for further consideration. The car and glider parking requirements are accommodated on site, and there are few buildings of a permanent nature. The Gliding Club creates no direct local employment but, like other visitor attractions, makes a contribution to the local economy through the use its members and visitors make of local services.
- 6.6.5 ***Bentley Wildfowl & Motor Museum*** is a local attraction in Little Horsted parish, but just across the Ringmer parish boundary. The centre holds regular events, such as an annual wood fair, generally with a countryside theme. Access to this attraction is via a system of alternative routes along country lanes, one of which, Harveys Lane, is in Ringmer parish. Visitor numbers are not excessive. Bentley has a relatively small impact on the Ringmer economy, but only correspondingly small negative impacts on the local road system. If this attraction were to change its nature to become substantially more commercial, there could be a beneficial effect on the local economy but access issues would require resolution. There is adequate car parking on site, and the potential for its expansion if necessary.

- 6.6.6 There is no hotel in Ringmer parish: such accommodation is available in Lewes (3 miles), Halland (2 miles) and Little Horsted (3 miles). Past attempts to establish hotels in Ringmer have not been successful. Ringmer does not offer suitable locations for roadside motel-style development, as at all possible roadside locations available in Ringmer's countryside such development would be damaging to the landscape, and would cause excessive light pollution. There are providers of self-catering holiday accommodation in the parish, and B&B accommodation is usually available, though such businesses have tended to be transient, with no long-established providers. There is a seasonal site for touring caravans by the A26 at Clay Hill and a second campsite has recently been established on Green Lane.
- 6.6.7 The Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) policy EMP12 supported the development of leisure and tourism at existing sites, subject to conditions. At consultation meeting 3 held 2 Dec 2011 there was overwhelming support for these policies on leisure and tourism being taken forward into the Neighbourhood Plan. No contrary views were expressed by residents at the Jan-Mar 2013 or Regulation 14 consultations, except that one resident (a neighbour affected by noise from tug aircraft taking off and landing) suggested that the Gliding Club should be excluded from this group of attractions as it did not provide any direct employment.

Section 7 Evidence supporting the policies for Residential Development in Ringmer

The key policies relevant to allocation of sites for new residential development in Ringmer are:

- 7.1 Total new housing numbers in Ringmer to 2030
- 7.2 Affordable housing numbers and types
- 7.3 Housing for families with a local connection
- 7.4 Distribution of new housing within Ringmer parish
- 7.5 Priorities in selecting residential development sites
- 7.6 Conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to residential use
- 7.7 Scale of new residential developments
- 7.8 Phasing of new residential development to 2030
- 7.9 Sites selected for development within Phase 1, 2010 to 2015
- 7.10 Sites selected for development within Phase 2, 2016 to 2024
- 7.11 Sites selected for development within Phase 3, 2025 to 2030

No additional issues have been identified to us during the consultation

7.1 Evidence collected about the total new housing numbers in Ringmer to 2030

The Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan, the Lewes District Local Plan (2003) and the Lewes District Core Strategy (Local Plan part 1)

- 7.1.1 The minimum number of new homes to be developed in Ringmer in the period to 2030 must conform to the policies of the relevant Local Plan. However, the saved and NPPF-compliant policies of the current adopted 2003 Lewes District Local Plan, intended to run only to 2011, are silent on this issue. Work to develop a new Lewes District Core Strategy (Local Plan part 1) to cover the period 2010-2030, prepared jointly by Lewes District Council and the SDNP Authority, has been in progress for several years. Development of this Neighbourhood Plan has taken place in parallel with that of the Core Strategy. It was originally envisaged that the Core Strategy would be in place by the time that the Neighbourhood Plan came to be made. This is no longer clear. Three versions of the Core Strategy, the ECS, PSCS and PSCSFA, have

been published and consulted on, but the Core Strategy has not yet been examined in the light of the responses to these consultations. The Core Strategy consultation responses to the ECS and PSCS have been published and are available online, but the comments made in the summer 2014 consultation on the focused amendments included in the PSCSFA have not yet been made public. Ringmer Parish Council, and many local residents and organisations, have responded to all three Core Strategy consultations.

- 7.1.2 It is now clear from ministerial statements, from the NPPG, from precedent and from cases in which the point has been tested at judicial review, that a neighbourhood plan may proceed to examination, to referendum and to being made, in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan for the area concerned.
- 7.1.3 The new housing target adopted in a Neighbourhood Plan may be equal to or higher (but not lower) than the number in the corresponding Local Plan (NPPF paragraph 184). In strict legal terms the current Local Plan with which this Neighbourhood Plan should be in compliance is the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan, which as noted above is silent on the matter. However, the Neighbourhood Plan should also promote sustainable development (as defined in NPPF paragraphs 5-16), take careful note of the core planning principles (explained in NPPF paragraph 17), support a prosperous rural economy (NPPF paragraph 28) and should plan to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes (NPPF paragraphs 47-55).
- 7.1.4 The Lewes District Core Strategy has been developed with these same requirements in mind. NPPF paragraph 216 explains that weight may be given to emerging plans from the date of publication, in accordance with the stage of their preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to policies, and the degree of consistence of their policies with the NPPF. There is further guidance in the NPPG. As the emerging Lewes District Core Strategy has been published and has completed all its consultation stages prior to examination, its strategic policies have been considered very relevant to the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.1.5 The Nov 2011 ECS considered a wide range of possible target numbers for new Ringmer housing. After consideration of the responses, and analysis in a sustainability appraisal, Spatial Policy 2 in both the PSCS and PSCSFA set a target number at 220 new housing units for Ringmer for the period 2012-2030, in addition to prior completions and allocations. The details of the latter group in the PSCS were challenged by Ringmer Parish Council but the numbers were so small as to be immaterial. The PSCSFA introduced an additional Ringmer prior allocation of 40 units to be delivered on Caburn Field. This allocation had been included (with the support of Ringmer Parish Council) in the 2003 Local Plan but was, at the time the PSCS was published, considered undeliverable because there was no evidence that an essential condition (provision of an alternative sports ground for Ringmer F.C.) could be met and Ringmer F.C. expressed at that time no intention of relocating. The PSCSFA concludes that a resolution (not known by or identified to Ringmer Parish Council) is now available. This conclusion has been challenged by Ringmer Parish Council in its consultation response to the PSCSFA. This issue, considered further in section 7.11 below, remains to be resolved at the Core Strategy examination.
- 7.1.6 The Nov 2012 DSCS (the draft submission Core Strategy presented for consideration by officers of the two planning authorities to their respective decision making bodies) proposed that the 220 new houses to be built in Ringmer in the period to 2030 should include 120 new houses on an allocated strategic site north of Bishops Lane (comprising two fields, Bishops Field & Potters Field), plus 100 houses elsewhere in the parish [DSCS spatial policies 2 & 5].

The justification for this was *“Additional housing in Ringmer will assist in enhancing the village’s community services and facilities as well as meeting a housing need for the area. However in accommodating additional housing it is important to ensure that the character of the village and valued areas of countryside are not compromised”* [DSCS para 6.74] and *“To meet a short term housing need, a strategic allocation for housing and associated facilities and services has been identified for delivery at Ringmer”* [DSCS para 6.75]. No evidence was presented to justify the conclusion that the greenfield strategic site proposed, which is outside the current Ringmer village planning boundary, was the best Ringmer site available. Specifically there was no assessment of the extent to which any new Ringmer housing needed could be accommodated on sites within the existing Ringmer planning boundary, and no comparison of the site proposed with alternative greenfield Ringmer sites proposed through the SHLAA mechanism. The 2011 SHLAA rated the strategic site proposed in the DSCS as ‘developable’ (amber), while at least one alternative greenfield site was rated in the same SHLAA as ‘deliverable’ (20RG; green). No reference was made in the 2012 DSCS to the policies of the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development, which would have suggested an alternative approach.

- 7.1.7 No additional evidence justifying the *“short term housing need”* was included in the Nov 2012 DSCS, and it was not clear whether the *“housing need for the area”* referred to Ringmer or to some wider area. The accompanying Sustainability Appraisal/SEA appraised four alternative scenarios for residential development in Ringmer to 2030. These were (a) 130 new houses; (b) 200-230 new houses; (c) 300-330 new houses; (d) 601 new houses. Scenario (b) was given the most positive appraisal. The amount of new housing considered at that time to be required in Ringmer by the Neighbourhood Plan steering group to meet Ringmer’s needs (160) was known to the Planning Authorities from early Neighbourhood Plan development work carried out during the first round of community engagement (Nov 2011-Feb 2012) that had been shared with them, but was not included in the range of numbers assessed in the SA/SEA.
- 7.1.8 Ringmer Parish Council proposed to the Lewes District Council Cabinet meeting on 20 Nov 2012 and to the full Council meeting held on 5 Dec 2012 that the identification of all new Ringmer housing sites should be devolved to the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan. Similar proposals were made to the SDNP Authority Planning Committee, meeting on 8 Nov 2012, by representatives of the North Ringmer Residents group and CPRE Sussex. This proposal was accepted. The PSCS published in Jan 2013 thus proposed in its Spatial Policies SP2 and SP5 that the allocation of sites for the 220 houses required should be determined by the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the conditions that the Plan should be approved by Jun 2014 and should include allocation of sites for 120 houses by 2019. If these conditions were not met allocation of the DSCS strategic site, referred to in the PSCS as a contingent strategic site, was to be activated. Ringmer Parish Council and other parties submitted consultation responses during the Jan-Mar 2013 PSCS consultation on this specific issue that have not yet been responded to. The date of Jun 2014 has passed without the PSCS being submitted for examination. The PSCSFA thus includes revised conditions under which the proposed contingent strategic site would be activated.

Evidence collected about the Ringmer housing market

- 7.1.9 Evidence about the Ringmer housing market was collected from experienced senior staff of the only estate agent based in Ringmer (Freeman Forman, Ringmer branch) and from two Lewes estate agents active in selling Ringmer properties. One of the Lewes estate agencies was a local independent, the other the local branch of a larger chain.

- 7.1.10 All the agents agreed that, with the exception of Ringmer people looking to move within the village, most Ringmer purchasers would really prefer to live elsewhere (particularly Lewes) but were attracted to Ringmer by the better value for money available. While Ringmer property was more expensive than that in some other Sussex towns such as Uckfield, Hailsham and Newhaven, it was less expensive than that in Lewes or some other nearby villages. As one agent put it, *“Ringmer suffers because its estates and shops look suburban: there is a great village community, very important to residents, but not apparent to outsiders”*.
- 7.1.11 The agents also agreed that houses in the Broyleside were 10-20% cheaper than equivalent houses in Ringmer village, due to the lack of services there. Houses in the rural areas of Ringmer parish, especially those with a little land attached, were more desirable and more expensive than those in either settlement.
- 7.1.12 Purchasers were predominantly people to whom value for money was more important than location, and who were almost invariably intending to commute to work by car, often long distances. Ringmer was less popular than Lewes with rail commuters, due to the additional travel and station parking costs. Purchasers were typically second time or third time buyers with families, attracted by larger gardens, off-road parking, good schools, availability of local services and access to the countryside. Ringmer houses were too expensive for most first time buyers, even when they had family help – such buyers were more likely to consider Uckfield, Hailsham and Newhaven. Views over open countryside were highly valued. Access to bus services was not an issue – purchasers intended to travel by car. The most saleable properties were 3-bed semis or small estate detached houses. The Ringmer agent’s view was that properties selling in the range £225K-£300K were in greatest demand, and that more expensive properties were harder to sell. He also noted that proximity to the Caburn Field was a negative factor, due to the impact of the floodlights and noise from the football club, and that houses north of the B2192 were less popular because of the lack of safe crossing points. Bungalows and countryside properties were scarce, and the latter expensive, but when they came available they were snapped up. Expensive houses and houses in the countryside were particularly likely to appeal to buyers moving down from Greater London, and usually intending to commute to employment there.
- 7.1.14 All agents agreed that the most difficult properties to sell in Ringmer are flats, especially those with high service charges. Ringmer is not seen as an attractive location by retirees, who are more likely to prefer coastal towns such as Seaford unless they already have a strong local connection. This view from market professionals was strongly supported by snapshot evidence taken in Jul 2014 from a national website (Zoopla) advertising properties for sale. There were 35 listings for Ringmer properties, of which 21 had been first listed within the previous two months. Only 2 of the 21 properties first listed within the previous 2 months were flats, reflecting their scarcity in the village. In sharp contrast six of the seven Ringmer properties that had been listed on the website for 5 months or more were flats.
- 7.1.15 The Ringmer agent’s view was that new housing should be predominantly 2-bed and 3-bed semis and small detached houses. All three agents took the view that building new properties at a rate of up to 10 houses per year could be accommodated by the local market, but that building large new estates in the village would be disruptive to the market overall.
- 7.1.16 All three agents agreed that Ringmer was not seen as attractive by buy-to-let investors – better returns were available in Lewes. Demand for privately-rented accommodation was

buoyant, though not so buoyant as in Lewes. One agent commented that there was a demand for shared-equity housing in Ringmer.

Steering Group approaches to determining a housing target for Ringmer, 2010-2030

- 7.1.17 The demographics of East Sussex are such that annual deaths exceed births. This will be especially the case for villages like Ringmer, where the population profile shows that older people are over-represented and younger adults under-represented, compared to East Sussex overall [section 1.6.16]. The DCLG Household Interim Projections for England over the decade 2011-2021, England (published Apr 2013) show that the trend towards progressively smaller household sizes established over recent decades, and evident in Ringmer over that period, has recently been greatly slowed, if not halted, by a combination of economic factors and social and welfare policy changes. There is thus no endogenous demographic demand driving new Ringmer housebuilding – even population maintenance is dependent on in-migration. This conclusion is confirmed by the Local Housing Needs Assessment, which demonstrated that the demand for new housing in the District is driven entirely by in-migration from other parts of the UK.
- 7.1.18 With an ageing population, it might be argued that some in-migration might be required to maintain the District's workforce. This is a challenging calculation, as currently (due to changes in national policy) the retirement age is increasing faster than longevity. The continuance of both these trends in the later Plan period, and the balance between them, is not predictable. However, given the very high current levels of out-commuting from Ringmer (and many other places in Lewes District), maintenance of the local workforce could equally be achieved by existing residents who are currently long-distance commuters taking more local employment. The Local Housing Needs Assessment confirms that in this District such a reduction in out-commuting could accommodate the District employment needs generated by any credible level of economic growth without any need for new housing. Such an outcome would, of course, improve the District's sustainability.
- 7.1.19 Similarly the increase in local employment opportunities in Ringmer planned to be created by the policies in section 6 of this Neighbourhood Plan would only create a demand for new housing to the extent that the new positions are taken by workers migrating in to the area. The intention is that the majority of the new positions will be taken by existing residents who currently commute to employment elsewhere. Action to be taken by Ringmer Parish Council outwith this Neighbourhood Plan will seek to encourage and facilitate this.
- 7.1.20 It is thus challenging to make a case that there is any need at all for a net increase in Ringmer housing to meet local need. Indeed there is a clear risk that all new housing will achieve is to attract to Ringmer additional new out-commuters, with an outcome directly contrary to that sought by Key Principle 2.
- 7.1.21 However, it is rather easier to make the case that the present mix of Ringmer housing does not, and will not, meet some important aspects of local need, and that the risk noted above can be mitigated by careful attention to the specific types of new housing that are created during the Plan period. The approach promoted by some developers in their consultation responses is that the mix of new housing should be determined entirely by market factors and should be at the developer's discretion. This approach is not accepted. Local experience has shown that the types of new housing most favoured by such developers in recent years are, unfortunately, those that are most attractive to long-distance out-commuters. It could easily be argued that it is exactly this approach in the recent past that has led to the present

mismatch between the local housing stock and local need, and exacerbated the unsustainable situation that Key Principle 2 seeks to address.

- 7.1.22 We have received evidence that some local young people who would prefer to stay in Ringmer are driven to other, less expensive, Sussex locations by housing availability or market factors. This includes households who would require social rented housing to remain in Ringmer and also households who aspire to owner occupation but cannot afford local market prices. In addition to anecdotal evidence, Steering Group had available the next destinations of the local young families who had completed their tenancies in the Jubilee Cottages houses managed by the Parish Council. This issue is not of recent origin [see the Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development]. The only way to address it is to provide additional social rented housing [see section 7.2] or housing to purchase at below present market value [see section 7.3]. Neither group would be helped by the provision of additional market housing. There are also numbers of people employed in Ringmer who do not live here [see section 6], and anecdotal evidence that a proportion would prefer to live in Ringmer if they could. Many in-commuting employees already live locally in Lewes and nearby villages, but a proportion travel much longer distances. For some this is a matter of personal choice, as they reside in areas such as Lewes, Brighton and even London where accommodation is more expensive than in Ringmer. Ringmer employees who would wish to live here but are unable to afford market housing require the same categories of affordable housing as the local young people considered above.
- 7.1.23 There is at present an over-supply in Ringmer of flats designed primarily for older residents [see section 7.1.14 above]. However, the substantial demographic changes projected for the Plan period do suggest that this aspect of demand will increase. Future trends in pension value may also encourage a higher proportion of retired people to down-size their accommodation, leading to a reduction in the current under-occupation of larger houses by the older age groups. We project that additional provision for this group, including the provision of high quality units designed to accommodate those with care needs, is likely to be required later in the Plan period.
- 7.1.24 The pressure from development interests for additional market housing development in Ringmer is driven primarily by commercial considerations, principally the wish to profit from development windfall gains. A concern, based on the evidence of local estate agents, is that such interests will lead them to propose the types of market housing most likely to prove attractive to additional out-commuters, and thus further reduce, rather than increase, Ringmer's sustainability. This would place unnecessary additional pressure on the commuting infrastructure both locally [see section 9.1 below] and regionally, and would be in direct conflict with the Vision and Key Principle 2 of this Neighbourhood Plan. This conclusion applies with particular force to (a) large and high value market housing and also (b) major developments that would deliver large amounts of new housing at a particular time. Demand to meet local needs is much more likely to be slow but steady.
- 7.1.25 New Ringmer development primarily for new out-commuters would also be in direct conflict with the Lewes District Cores Strategy Vision for the Low Weald, with its strategic objectives 3 and 9, and with its core policies 2 and 13. The key aspects of the Vision and strategic objectives that relate to new development in Ringmer are:
“By 2030, the Low Weald villages and wider countryside would have retained and, where possible, enhanced their attractive and distinctive character and identity. Although the majority of recent development would have been directed to the urban areas of the district, development that meets the community's needs for housing,

including affordable housing, and supports the rural economy will have been sensitively accommodated, particularly in those settlements with the best range of community services and facilities and ease of access to employment opportunities.”

Strategic Objective 3 reads:

3. To deliver the homes and accommodation for the needs of the district and ensure the housing growth requirements are accommodated in the most sustainable way.

Strategic Objective 9 reads:

9. To reduce the need for travel and to promote a sustainable system of transport and land use for people who live in, work in, study in and visit the district.

None of these are affected by the focused amendments in the PSCSFA, so consultation was completed at the PSCS stage. The Vision in particular is central to delivering the aims of the Core Strategy. In the PSCS consultation it received strong support and no dissenting views were registered. In accordance with NPPF paragraph 216, the Core Strategy Vision can be considered highly material, and the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and its policies should be in conformity with it. Thus the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan also includes a Vision, closely aligned with the PSCS and PSCSFA Vision, on which its Key Principles are based and which the Neighbourhood Plan policies are designed to deliver. The Neighbourhood Plan Vision has itself been subjected to both informal and Regulation 14 consultation, and has also received considerable support and no dissent. This Vision can thus also be given substantial importance, and the Neighbourhood Plan’s policies should be aligned with it.

- 7.1.26 New development that created new out-commuting from Ringmer would also conflict with NPPF paragraphs 95 (bullet point 1) and 110. Commuting from Ringmer is much more likely to be by private car than similar out-commuting from new development in the urban areas of the District, particularly new out-commuting from Lewes town, which is the District’s public transport hub and where car ownership is so much lower. There is also much more previously developed (brownfield) land available in the District’s towns, so giving priority to development on Ringmer greenfield land would also be contrary to NPPF paragraph 111.
- 7.1.27 The conclusion is thus unambiguous. To be in accordance with the NPPF and with the Core strategy the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan should plan to meet Ringmer’s own housing needs. It should not plan for the provision of additional housing to accommodate new out-commuters, as that would not represent sustainable development. If this category of housing is required in Lewes District, it should be provided at more sustainable urban locations, in accordance with the Core Strategy Vision.
- 7.1.28 These important concerns about the sustainability of new Ringmer development can be mitigated to at least some extent by careful regard to the types of housing to be developed, and the phasing of its delivery. It is particularly important to deliver the types of housing required to meet local need and to avoid the types of new market housing most likely to prove attractive to long distance out-commuters [see sections 7.2. 7.3 & 10.7-10.10 below]. It is particularly important that those needing affordable housing, for whom the expense of the travel necessary for rural life is a particular challenge, are accommodated at the right location, so important to deliver in Ringmer sufficient new affordable housing to meet the needs of those with a strong Ringmer connection, such as a family connection or local employment.
- 7.1.29 The Steering Group thus considered a range of approaches to determining a housing target for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Option 1: Minimum housing target for Ringmer parish

7.1.30 This option assumes that the minimum housing targets for the different categories of rural settlement are accepted as proposed in the PSCS and PSCSFA. On this basis the minimum new housing target for Ringmer parish should be 100 for Ringmer village (as a rural service centre) + 10 for the Broyleside (as a local village) = 110. However, an overall new housing target of this magnitude would be very unlikely to deliver the new affordable housing required in Ringmer [80 units; see section 7.2 below].

Option 2: What higher target would be appropriate?

7.1.31 There are two ‘rural service centres’ in Lewes District, Ringmer and Newick. We estimate the population of Ringmer village as about 3,000, while the population of Newick village is estimated in the Rural Settlement Study at just over 2,000. Newick Parish Council have argued, in their submission to the PSCS consultation, that Newick is too small to be considered as a rural service centre, and it is certainly at the lower end of the qualifying range. However, if Newick were to be allocated 100 additional houses as a rural service centre it might be considered that Ringmer, a rural service centre 50% larger, should be allocated 150. As the Broyleside is also one of the larger ‘local villages’, it could be argued that, despite its complete lack of facilities, it should be allocated 30 new houses, at the top end of the local village range. On this basis a maximum total target for Ringmer parish would be 150 + 30 = 180.

Option 3: The total for Ringmer parish proposed to meet Ringmer’s needs in the Emerging Core Strategy.

7.1.32 The ECS estimated that the number of new houses ‘to meet Ringmer’s needs’ should be 176. We understand this number to be derived as follows.

Ringmer village, as rural service centre	100
The Broyleside, as local village	30
2003 Local Plan allocation to Caburn Field	40
Existing, unimplemented, planning permissions	6

One could take issue with each of these components. It could be argued, as above, that 100 is too low for Ringmer village, and that 30 is too high for the Broyleside. The Caburn Field was included in the 2011 SHLAA at 36, rather than 40, but this is of less importance than the availability of the site, making its deliverability uncertain. Analysis of the 6 unimplemented planning permissions shows that three were for a site that had since been subdivided, so that a replacement application for 3 houses on the remaining part of the site was refused as overdevelopment, with the refusal sustained at appeal. Two of the other three permissions had in fact been completed, and were also included in the baseline total already delivered, so double-counted. Updating this total with correct information, and deleting the Caburn Field allocation as undeliverable, would give a target for Ringmer parish of 100 + 30 + 1 = 131.

7.1.33 However, it should be noted that all these assessments for options 1-3 are based on generic allocations of numbers to communities based on categorisation in the Rural Settlement Survey; that these assessments appear somewhat arbitrary (not necessarily unreasonable, but arbitrary); and that they do not take into account the specific situations of the individual settlement, in the way that a neighbourhood plan would be expected to do.

Option 4: Should Ringmer be allocated additional development to meet a ‘District need’?

- 7.1.34 The ECS proposed for consideration an option that Ringmer should be allocated a total of 647 new houses, with the majority *“to meet a District need”*. We understand that this total is derived by adding the totals of all the SHLAA sites in Ringmer considered by Lewes District Council to be suitable for development. In the Sustainability Appraisal/SEA accompanying the PSCS this number was reduced to 601, for the reasons explained in section 7.1.32 above.
- 7.1.35 Ringmer Parish Council rejects this option for the following reasons.
- 7.1.36 The SHLAA sites have been submitted by aspirant developers and analysed on an individual basis without any assessment of their cumulative impact, or any consultation or any consideration of the views of the local community. Some sites are recommended as ‘deliverable’ or ‘developable’ despite ECS and PSCS policies pointing in the opposite direction. Ringmer Parish Council has reported an alarming number of factual errors and inconsistencies in the SHLAA assessments. Analysis in this Neighbourhood Plan questions the SHLAA assessment of both the suitability and the capacities of many of the sites [see appendix G]. Cumulative impact is a particular issue.
- 7.1.37 This option is directly contrary to the ECS, PSCS & PSCSFA vision for the rural areas of the Low Weald (which includes Ringmer) which states: *“By 2030, the Low Weald villages and wider countryside would have retained and, where possible, enhanced their attractive character and identity. Although the majority of recent development would have been directed to the urban areas of the District, development that meets local affordable housing and community needs and supports the rural economy will have been sensitively accommodated, particularly in those settlements with the best range of community services and facilities and ease of access to employment opportunities.”*
- 7.1.38 This option would be contrary to all of the PSCS strategic objectives 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10. All the additional development would take place on greenfield land. An opportunity to locate the development where it would contribute to the economy of the relatively more deprived urban areas and coastal communities would be lost. The additional development would, by definition, be for commuters, and thus lead to far greater private car ownership and use than if the development was accommodated more sustainably in the District’s towns. Development on this scale would destroy Ringmer’s ‘village feel’ or ‘sense of place’; indeed Ringmer would become, and would feel like, a town, though one with poor transport links and only village facilities. Option 4 would contribute unnecessarily to climate change, and so would also be contrary to NPPF paragraphs 95 (bullet point 1), 110 & 111, which require new development to be sustainably located so that greenhouse gas emissions are minimised and the use of brownfield land maximised.
- 7.1.39 This option would also place the new commuters at a location that would not be their preferred place to live. Evidence collected from local estate agents is that Ringmer is the first choice of very few of those people who purchase houses here, while evidence from the Lewes District housing list is that Ringmer ranks disproportionately low in the first choices of those registered on the list. It is particularly important for those in need of affordable housing, for whom travel costs are a particular concern, that they are housed at the right location.
- 7.1.40 This option would also create excessive demands on several aspects of Ringmer’s infrastructure. Ringmer Primary School will need to be extended to accommodate even the existing number of Ringmer children. The numbers generated by such development as proposed in this option would require a new primary school on a larger site [see section 9.6

below]. The local transport study has demonstrated that, even without such development, the road system connecting Ringmer via the A26 to Lewes and the A27 trunk road is already over capacity, and it will be adversely affected by the substantial increase in development planned at Uckfield by Wealden District Council [see section 9.1 below]. Development on this scale would require as a prerequisite the development of a new, alternative access road to the A27 trunk road and Lewes town. The Ringmer sewage works is currently operating at 98% capacity, with headroom estimated to us by Southern Water as for a maximum of 40 new houses [see section 9.10 below]. Substantial investment will be required to meet even smaller scale development, but there are no current plans to include in the Southern Water 2014 business plan the new investment that would be required to service new development on such a scale. Ringmer village hall is already unable to meet the existing demand for community facilities and other leisure facilities are inadequate for the existing population [see section 8.1 below]. None of these infrastructure deficiencies can be remedied rapidly, and it is unclear whether viable and affordable plans can be developed to remedy some of them at all.

- 7.1.41 The Sustainability Appraisal that accompanied the ECS appraises this option against an option in which Ringmer is allocated only new housing to meet village needs. The conclusion drawn, that the two options appraise neutrally, was based on a number of demonstrably false premises and assessments; this conclusion was strongly contested by Ringmer parish council in its response to the ECS consultation. However, the Sustainability Appraisal that accompanied the PSCS reached a different conclusion, that this option appraised less well than allocation of a lower number to meet Ringmer’s own needs.
- 7.1.42 This approach is also diametrically opposed to the principles of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan Vanguard application, lodged jointly by Lewes District Council, the SDNP Authority and Ringmer Parish Council. A key overall aim of this Neighbourhood Plan is to reduce the already excessive levels of out-commuting from Ringmer by increased provision of local employment opportunities, and thus increase Ringmer’s sustainability. There are no plans in the Lewes District Infrastructure Delivery Plan to provide the new infrastructure that would be necessary for new Ringmer housing on this scale [see section 9 below]. For these reasons Steering Group regarded option 4 as both unacceptable and unrealistic.

Views expressed by Ringmer residents and others

- 7.1.43 Ringmer residents and others present at the Nov 2011 consultation meeting 2 to discuss housing aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan were asked, after discussion, to express a preference on the numbers of new homes to be developed in Ringmer during the planning period to 2030.

Preferred total	number of choices
<100	13 (21%)
101-150	17 (27%)
151-200	26 (42%)
201-300	3 (5%)
>300	1 (2%)
Leave it to Lewes DC	2 (3%)

The majority of those present at the meeting were Ringmer residents, but there were also a small number with a personal interest in SHLAA sites, and also developers and their planning agents. Responses in the last three categories above were mainly from these latter groups. There were clearly a proportion of residents wishing to see very little future development in

Ringmer, but the majority preferred, after discussion, to see the development of 100-200 new homes.

- 7.1.44 Ringmer residents attending the Feb 2012 exhibition were offered the same choices, but informed by the presentation of options 1-4 above. Almost all respondents (99%) on this occasion were Ringmer residents.

Preferred total	number of choices
<100	51 (27%)
101-150	70 (37%)
151-200	57 (30%)
201-300	6 (3%)
>300	3 (2%)
Leave it to Lewes DC	2 (1%)

The two individuals who preferred the last option both identified themselves as Ringmer residents with an interest in land being considered for development.

- 7.1.45 The views of Ringmer residents in the north Ringmer area (Bishops Lane, Green Close, Delves Estate, lower end of Norlington Lane) were surveyed by the North Ringmer Residents Group in Feb-Mar 2012 through a questionnaire delivered to and collected from each household in the area. This survey recovered responses from over 60% of 300 households in the area.

Preferred total	% of choices
<50	68%
51-100	24%
>100	7%

The option preferred by the Steering Group

- 7.1.46 The Steering Group appreciated, on the basis of consultations carried out in Nov-Dec 2011 and at the exhibition in Feb 2012, that many Ringmer residents support a new housing target below 100 for the planning period. This was the view of over 90% of the residents surveyed by the North Ringmer Residents Group, in a survey that could reasonably claim on the basis of response rate to be most representative of those carried out. However, the Steering Group recognised 110 as the minimum sustainable target for Ringmer parish for the period 2010-2030, especially given the evidence of need for affordable housing (see sections 7.2 & 7.3 below). Considerations based on options 1-3 above suggested that the target for new Ringmer new housing units should be within the range 110-180.

- 7.1.47 Steering Group's initial preferred target to meet Ringmer's housing need was thus for a total of 160 new homes for the period 2010-2030, to include 80 new affordable homes (see section 7.2 below). A 50% target for affordable housing would be extremely challenging, but could be achieved by (a) requiring all new Ringmer developments to include 40% affordable housing, as proposed in the PSCS & PSCSFA and (b) including in the plan a suitable proportion of small exception sites or redevelopments on council-owned land, yielding 100% affordable housing. A target of 160 new homes would be acceptable to the majority of those residents who had attended the Neighbourhood Plan consultation meetings and the exhibition, and considered the evidence presented there.

- 7.1.48 However, at the relevant consultation meetings and at the exhibition the majority of residents also expressed the view that they wished to see a mix of development types, while the Steering Group also concluded that additional housing for older residents was likely to be required later in the Plan period. This would be challenging to achieve within a context of

80 new market sector homes. As specific sites began to be considered, it also became apparent that there were many sites suitable for small developments of fewer than 10 homes that could not be expected to make a full 40% contribution to the affordable housing required. These factors, and the consideration of NPPF paragraph 54, suggested that a larger number of market homes should be planned for, though not so many as to compromise the achievement of Key Principle 2, or the shared Visions of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Core Strategy.

7.1.49 Steering Group also recognised that a target of 160 units would not be compliant with policy SP2 of the PSCS and PSCSFA, and judged that the SP2 target of 220 new housing units for Ringmer was unlikely to be reduced prior to the adoption of the Core Strategy, so that a Neighbourhood Plan with a 160 unit target would be not be compliant with NPPF paragraph 184. It is for these reasons that the target adopted in policy 7.1 is 240 new housing units for the period 2010-2030, despite the clear evidence received that such a target is higher than acceptable to more than a very small minority of Ringmer residents.

7.1.50 The target number adopted under policy 7.1 of this Neighbourhood Plan (240 units) includes in its phase 1 allocations a small number of new homes that were delivered or gained planning permission in the period 2010-2011, and are included in the baseline delivery of the ECS and PSCS. This number is about 10. In addition the total of 240 units also includes a small number of new housing units that have gained planning permission in the period 2012-2014. These are considered to represent early delivery within phase 1 of this Neighbourhood Plan, preparations for which began early in 2011.

7.2 Evidence collected about the numbers and types of affordable housing required

7.2.1 The following definition of affordable housing is taken from appendix 1 (Glossary) of the submission Lewes District submission Core Strategy (SCS).

“Affordable housing – housing provided by a council or housing association which is available below the market cost level. This can include homes rented at rent levels at approximately 50% of the local market level (social rented), homes rented at affordable rent levels at approximately 80% of the market rent (affordable rent), homes that are sold as part buy/part rent (shared ownership) or homes that are sold as a part equity purchase (shared equity).

Reference is often made to ‘low cost housing’ when the term affordable housing is used. It is important to note that such housing does not usually involve any form of public subsidy (unlike the products highlighted in the previous paragraph) and is often housing such as small starter units and homes with low cost specifications. Such housing would not be classed as affordable housing when implementing the policies of this plan.”

7.2.2 The proportion of households renting rather than owner-occupying their accommodation in Lewes District is just over 20%, divided approximately equally between council and housing association tenancies and private tenancies [ESIF]. The proportion in Ringmer parish is extremely close to the District average (21%), though we believe that Ringmer may have a rather higher than average proportion of social rented housing for the elderly, due to the Council’s estates in Mill Close in Ringmer village and Broyle Close in the Broyleside. Until the 1980s there was a much higher proportion of council housing in Ringmer (over 30%), but most has since been sold to tenants and thus passed into the market sector.

7.2.3 ‘Affordable housing’ as defined above includes social rented housing (the most frequent type), shared-equity housing and key worker housing. There is undoubtedly a requirement

for additional social rented housing in every part of Lewes District, including Ringmer. New Ringmer social rented housing is owned and managed by housing associations. As housing association tenants have a restricted right to buy, such social rented affordable housing is likely to remain affordable in the medium term. The 2009 Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development proposed that most new affordable housing in Ringmer should be of this type.

- 7.2.4 However, there are two other options known as intermediate housing. The first is shared equity housing, intended to enable those who cannot raise the resources to purchase market housing to get a foot on the housing ladder. While there is an easily identifiable target group, demand is variable, and very susceptible to changes in interest rates or rents. Purchasers initially buy 25-50% of the property, and pay a social or affordable rent to the housing association for the remainder. The combined cost (particularly as affordable rents are increased towards a high percentage of market rents) is comparable to a mortgage cost (and can be higher when service charges are high) though the deposit required is lower. Additionally, if the owner improves the property, they pay the whole cost but are liable to have to share any consequent increase in property value. Over time, the owner-tenant can 'staircase' their ownership upwards. In villages there is an upper limit of 80% to the ownership they can have but in towns they can 'staircase' to 100% ownership, so the property transfers to the market pool. Unfortunately in the relevant national legislation 'village' is described in population terms as below 3,000, so Ringmer shared equity housing can (and does) escalate to 100% ownership. Additionally, when a shared equity property becomes available for resale housing associations may transfer the property to the market sector. The last type of affordable housing is key worker housing, sold to 'key workers' such as nurses and police at a below-market price, with a condition that when they move they should sell it back to the housing association. Local experience is that this does not work well in Ringmer, due to the high 'affordability gap' of property in this area. Units offered a few years ago were difficult to market. We have not been able to establish whether they were actually marketed as intended. When shared equity or keyworker units have come up for resale they have been offered for sale at market prices, with shared-equity purchase just one alternative. These factors have already led to the loss of some of the shared equity housing included in the 2005-6 Forges development, leading to concerns about the lasting benefit to the community of this scheme. Some of the 2005-6 'affordable' units have already become market sector buy-to-lets. Despite the issues with these specific schemes, it was evident at the Exhibition that there was considerable support from residents for the provision of intermediate housing for these groups.
- 7.2.5 The ECS evidence on affordable housing need was based on the Lewes District housing list as it stood on 31 Mar 2011. At that date there were a total of 2,267 households on the list, of which 69 (3%) expressed a first preference to be accommodated in Ringmer. About 25% of the households on this list already hold a local authority or housing association tenancy, but are seeking a transfer to an alternative location or a different type of property. The proportion of households on the list seeking accommodation in Ringmer is below statistical expectation, and (when normalised by population) at the lower end of the range for the larger communities in the District. By far the most popular location of choice in the District is Lewes town, with 467 of the 2,267 households selecting this as their first choice. In proportion to population, Lewes town was more than twice as popular a location choice as Ringmer. As travel expenses are particularly high for rural residents, and families seeking affordable accommodation are likely to possess relatively low incomes, it is particularly important that affordable housing is made available at the locations where it is required.

The Lewes District Housing list, 31 March 2011

	Housing list	population	ratio
Lewes District	2,267	97,466	2.3%
Lewes town	467	16,348	2.9%
Newhaven	241	12,225	2.0%
Seaford	347	24,044	1.4%
Ringmer	69	4,642	1.5%
Newick	44	2,369	1.9%

- 7.2.6 Households on the Lewes District housing list are categorised into four bands, A-D, with different levels of housing need. The great majority (about 85%) of households on the list are categorised in band D (no current housing need) or band C (limited housing need). Households in these two bands have in practice little likelihood of being offered a council or housing association tenancy. In many cases such households hold, or could obtain, tenancies with private landlords that provide them with adequate accommodation but at substantially higher rents and with much less secure tenure. This is a challenging social policy issue responsible for the continued lengthening of local authority housing lists nationally, as tenants compete for the best terms available. It would be a serious over-simplification of a complex issue to conclude that the problem can be resolved only by building additional social housing, especially in the face of a steady transfer of existing social housing into the private sector.
- 7.2.7 Updated information is included in the Lewes District Affordable Housing Needs Assessment, published in Jan 2014. Comparisons are not straightforward, as those assessed as having no current housing need (category D) are now excluded, but the impact of the 'bedroom tax' has resulted in an increase in the number of transfer applications. There seems little change in the relative demand for accommodation in Ringmer (71 households, including 21 transfers) and Lewes town (438 households, including 149 transfers). 12 of the 21 Ringmer transfers were seeking 1-bed accommodation, suggesting downsizing, perhaps in response to the 'bedroom tax'. The remaining 9 households seeking transfers sought 2-bed to 4-bed accommodation, suggesting that exchanges have the capacity to accommodate at least some of the requirement without the creation of any new units. Some of the transfers will of course be households with current accommodation outside Ringmer wishing to move here, but there will be other households (probably a larger number, given the relative demand for social housing in Lewes and Ringmer) who are currently accommodated in Ringmer but are seeking to transfer elsewhere. In principle each new housing allocation that met the needs of a household seeking transfer would simultaneously create a vacancy to meet the needs of another household.
- 7.2.8 About 6% of households on the 2011 District list were categorised as band A (half of whom were actually homeless) and a further 9% as band B (present accommodation seriously inadequate for their needs). A household in category A could expect to wait 6-12 months before being allocated a suitable property. No equivalent figure was available for households in category B, but the wait would usually be longer [information from Lewes District Council Housing Allocations manager]. Again, no breakdown by category was available for the subset of households with category A-B needs seeking Ringmer accommodation, but statistically one would expect the 69 Ringmer households to include about 4 households in category A and 6 in category B. Annualised, using the expected time spent on the list, this would suggest about 10-12 new tenancies per year would be needed to meet the urgent (category A-B) need for social rented accommodation in Ringmer.

- 7.2.9 There are about 4,900 council and housing association tenancies available in Lewes District, but only about 240 vacancies occur each year in the period up to 2011, reflecting their secure tenure. 11% of Ringmer housing was in these housing categories in 2001, which (including new affordable housing built at The Forges in the 21st century) projects to about 220 current council or housing association units. This would produce an expected average of about 11 vacancies per year in Ringmer.
- 7.2.10 The 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development recognised the shortage of affordable housing and proposed the building of new affordable housing in Ringmer at the rate of 4 houses per year (policy HOU52). If this policy were continued into the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan, adding the new affordable houses to the expected annual vacancies in Ringmer should make it possible to meet the most urgent needs of those households selecting Ringmer as their preferred location and, in addition, provide some new affordable housing for people with a strong Ringmer connection but a lower level of need. An addition of 80 new affordable houses over the plan period would also represent a very useful increase in the total number of affordable houses in Ringmer parish, taking the number from about 220 to nearly 300.
- 7.2.11 The Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (2009) proposed that all new market housing developments or redevelopments of 5 or more units should include 40% affordable housing, including at least 25% housing units for rent at affordable rents. Core Policy 1 of the PSCS proposes broadly similar policies. It proposed a target of 40% affordable housing for all new developments of 10 or more dwelling units, made up of 30% social rented housing and 10% intermediate (shared ownership) housing. For smaller developments it was proposed that developments of 3-4 units should include 1 affordable unit; developments of 5-7 units should include 2 affordable units and that developments of 8-9 units should include 3 affordable units. Core Policy 1 is supported by the Lewes District Affordable Housing and Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Study (2011), as discussed below.
- 7.2.12 PSCS Core Policy 1 recognises that it may not be affordable for every development to make provision for this proportion of affordable housing. This may especially be the case for the redevelopment of brownfield sites. As the new housing sites proposed in this Neighbourhood Plan also include a number of small sites, which are not expected to make a full 40% contribution, achievement of the required 80 new affordable housing units may not be achievable by this mechanism alone. It will therefore be necessary to include within the overall allocation some sites with 100% affordable housing, achieved by new development on existing District Council-owned land or on exception sites. New housing achieved under policy 7.3 would be eligible to contribute to this target.
- 7.2.13 Current Lewes District policies are that affordable houses in market developments should not be distinguishable in physical appearance from the market houses in the same development. They must be built to housing association standards to be accepted, and in some respects these can be higher than those delivered in market housing, though affordable housing usually has parking spaces rather than garages. Current policies also require the affordable houses to be 'pepper-potted' in amongst the market houses. These policies are considered to have been successful in Ringmer.
- 7.2.14 The current Lewes District housing list notes that the greatest demand is for 1-bed accommodation (for single people or couples without children), and the second highest category 2-bed accommodation (would typically accommodate an adult or couple with 1-2

children). Such accommodation is often provided as flats. There is a smaller demand for 3-bed houses and a small but unmet demand for large affordable houses (4-bed or more) to house large families. In the 2014 Affordable Housing Needs Survey there was just a single household seeking 4-bed accommodation in Ringmer (a household seeking a transfer). The Ringmer Village Plan 2009 Housing Strategy required new affordable housing to be principally 2-bed & 3-bed affordable houses suitable for young families, on the basis that we wished to make it possible for more young families to live in Ringmer, to help re-balance the community. We think Ringmer is a great place to raise children. There is clearly also some need for new affordable 1-bed accommodation here, to meet needs for down-sizing created by the 'bedroom tax', but the former Ringmer council housing retained by Lewes D.C. does include (especially at Mill Close, Mill Road and Broyle Close) a disproportionate amount of this type of accommodation for older residents.

7.2.15 Ringmer parish council has its own small-scale experience of affordable housing, as we manage two houses provided by a local charity that are rented to young families with a strong local connection at a very modest rent (well below social housing rents) for a period of up to 3 years. There is a strong demand for these tenancies, which may enable the family concerned to save a deposit for house purchase, or acquire seniority on the housing list. However, these families often find it difficult to obtain suitable accommodation in Ringmer at the end of their tenancy, and several have been forced to move away from the village at that point.

7.2.16 When asked in consultation meeting 5 whether a target of 80 affordable houses would be considered appropriate, two thirds of respondents thought that it would. A large majority of the respondents who did not support this target number preferred a smaller number. Over 95% of respondents thought it to be essential that at least a proportion of the new affordable housing should be allocated to local people. A similarly high proportion of respondents supported this in the Gleeson Broyleside survey.

7.2.17 The Lewes District Affordable Housing and Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Study (2011) calculated that the profitability of most developments in locations such as Ringmer was such that inclusion of a requirement for 40% affordable housing in new developments of above 10 units would normally be viable. Smaller developments could afford a smaller contribution. The proportion of new affordable housing that can reasonably be sought for inclusion in new Lewes District developments is considered in Core Policy CP1 of the PSCS as 40% in new developments of 10 or more units, with a sliding scale of 1-3 units in new developments of 3-9 units. Given relative building costs and achievable market house prices in Ringmer, compared to the rest of the District, such proportions should be achievable for new Ringmer development, especially new greenfield development, though of course the relevant provisions of the Growth and Infrastructure Act (2013) might modify this in specific cases where there are exceptional costs. Exceptional costs are more likely to be encountered in re-developments. There seems no reason for this Neighbourhood Plan to depart from the provisions of PSCS policy CP1. However, as the need for more affordable housing is urgent, and it is possible that this Neighbourhood Plan may be adopted in advance of the District Core Strategy (Local Plan part 1), an interim policy essentially identical to policy CP1 is included in this Neighbourhood Plan.

7.3 Evidence collected about the requirement for housing for families with a local connection

7.3.1 Ringmer is a particularly difficult housing market for first time buyers, especially for those with young families. Much of Ringmer's current housing was created in the 1960s and 1970s, when

such buyers could typically afford larger properties. A high proportion of this housing has since been extended and improved, taking it further out of their price range. Ringmer has few smaller houses of the type that first time buyers can typically afford today, and when such housing does become available local first time buyers find it hard to compete with buy-to-let landlords, or with more affluent, older purchasers moving in from elsewhere. As a result many young families with a local connection (either a family connection or local employment) are forced to move to surrounding towns with cheaper housing, such as Uckfield, Hailsham and Newhaven

- 7.3.2 The parish council heard interesting proposals from local resident and landowner Andrew Cooper for the provision of 'affordable housing' for local young people that might not meet the formal definition of this term adopted in the PSCS, but was perhaps more in line with the common understanding of this term. Mr Cooper's proposal involved the developer giving up a substantial proportion of the land value so that the consequent new houses could be sold at a lower-than-market price, with the new residents coming from a pre-determined group (e.g. first time buyers with a strong local connection). This was considered an attractive concept, but in the original proposal would have benefitted only the first buyer, as there was no mechanism for the benefit being preserved for subsequent owners in any way. Subsequent sales (possibly, without due safeguards, very soon afterwards) would be at market price.
- 7.3.3 Consideration of possible adaptations of this attractive and generous concept that would preserve the affordability for the benefit of subsequent owners has led to a more developed model (see appendix E). Initial discussions suggest widespread local agreement that such an approach would meet the needs of a hard-working sector of the local community with few other attractive housing options open to them, and who in the absence of such a policy would risk being consigned to 'Generation Rent'.
- 7.3.4 The proposal was submitted for comment to Andy Chequer and Leighton Rowe (Lewes District Council Housing department), Councillors Ron Maskell & Tom Jones (Lewes District Council lead councillors for housing and planning respectively), Councillor Peter Gardiner (District councillor), Tom Warder (Action in Rural Sussex), CPRE National Office and to Matt Richardson (Gleeson Strategic Land) and Chris Wojtulewski (Parker Dann) as developer representatives. Replies were received from Councillor Peter Gardiner, CPRE National Office, Matt Richardson and Chris Wojtulewski, all supportive in principle but suggesting safeguards against pressure to leak to market housing would need to be considered very carefully. In the light of these comments Steering Group decided some minor revisions to the proposal were necessary to remove the risk of perverse incentives. Lewes District Council officers confirmed that housing built under this scheme would qualify as affordable housing, and could be included on exception sites.
- 7.3.5 Consultation on the principles of the modified model, and its suitability for some new Ringmer development, was included in the Jan-Feb 2013 consultation. About 90% of those expressing a view in consultation meeting 5 supported this proposal, on the basis that it was for the benefit of local people. Four landowners have subsequently expressed strong interest in making land available for such development. There was support for this proposal in the responses to the Regulation 14 consultation, though a third developer objected to this policy on the grounds that discrimination in favour of local families had no precedent in planning policy. Steering Group believes this developer's view to be mistaken, as the well established exception site policy, supported by NPPF paragraph 54, does indeed discriminate in favour of those with a local connection.

7.4 Evidence collected about the preferred distribution of new housing within Ringmer parish

- 7.4.1 The ECS, PSCS and PSCSFA all propose that the normal level of new housing for a rural community such as Ringmer village, classified in the Rural Settlement Review as a ‘rural service centre’, should be 100+ new houses. For a ‘local village’ with few services, such as the Broyleside, the normal level of development to be expected is proposed as 10-30 new houses [PSCSFA para.6.8]. Limited development is envisaged in the rural areas by the NPPF paragraphs 54 & 55 and the PSCSFA, principally to make provision for rural workers; through the conversion to residential use of redundant agricultural buildings; and through the provision of new affordable housing on exception sites.
- 7.4.2 To meet the Ringmer parish target proposed in spatial policy 2 of the PSCS and PSCSFA, and that in policy 7.1 of this Neighbourhood Plan, Ringmer development would have to be significantly above the minimum levels indicated above. In addition, if a significant proportion of this development is to be delivered in the first phase of the Neighbourhood Plan, prior to the upgrading of the Ringmer sewage works (which serves both Ringmer village and the Broyleside), it will have to include a significant level of development at rural sites that do not connect to this sewage works. Recent changes to national policy on development in rural areas facilitate the conversion to residential use of redundant agricultural and office buildings and are expected, on the basis of consultations with owners already reflected in some recent planning permissions, to result in the delivery of an appropriate number of new houses in Ringmer’s rural areas during this initial phase.
- 7.4.3 A proposal was made at consultation meeting 5 on 30 Jan 2013 that the new housing within Ringmer parish should be distributed 150-160 to Ringmer village, 30-40 to the Broyleside and about 40 to the rural parts of the parish. This proposal was supported by over 80% of those expressing a view. Contrary views (there or in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan) came predominantly from those with development interests, who invariably thought there should be more development in the section of the parish where their interest lay, or a few residents, who generally thought there should be less development in the section where they lived. There were only six comments on this policy in the Regulation 14 consultation, half of them supportive. Three respondents, including Lewes District Council, questioned the inclusion of new countryside developments. Steering group took the view that the distribution of new housing within a Neighbourhood Area was a legitimate matter for a neighbourhood plan. The majority of new housing in the countryside will be delivered either on exception sites or through the conversion of existing buildings, a sustainable approach that is supported by NPPF para.55 and encouraged by proposals in the DCLG consultation ‘*Greater Flexibilities for Change of Use*’ (2013), and in the subsequent Mar 2014 statutory instrument. 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. Of the countryside units delivered to date a good proportion, including some conversions of redundant agricultural buildings, have been to accommodate rural workers or have provided rented units at the lower end of the market price range.
- 7.5 Evidence collected about the priorities to be used in selecting residential development sites and about the site selection principles for new greenfield residential development in Ringmer**
- 7.5.1 Policy HOUS5(iii) of the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development proposed that in identifying new sites for residential development in Ringmer extension to the Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries to accommodate new greenfield housing sites should be entertained only if the housing required could not be accommodated within the existing planning boundaries.

- 7.5.2 Consideration of the potential new Ringmer residential development sites identified in the SHLAA and during other evidence collection for this Neighbourhood Plan identified the following categories of sites
- Redundant buildings to be converted to residential use from other uses
 - Previously used sites within the existing Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries
 - Greenfield sites within the existing Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries
 - Previously used sites in the countryside
 - Greenfield sites adjoining the existing Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries
 - Greenfield sites in the countryside
- 7.5.3 In prioritising development between these broad categories the principal considerations were the need to protect, in so far as possible, the countryside, the environment and the landscape, and Ringmer's 'village feel', and also the need to conform to the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework. NPPF paragraph 111 confirms that in choosing new development sites priority should be given to the re-use of previously developed 'brownfield' sites (subject to exceptions for those of exceptional wildlife value). This is included amongst the core planning principles in NPPF paragraph 17. However, NPPF paragraph 55 confirms that, subject to conditions, the re-use of redundant agricultural buildings in the countryside for residential use is acceptable. This indicates that sites categorised under bullet points 1-4 above should have priority. There are only a very few, small greenfield sites within Ringmer village and the Broyleside that are not part of the public realm or reserved for recreational or leisure purposes. There are also a few large gardens capable of more intensive development. Such sites would qualify for development in preference to greenfield sites outside the current planning boundaries.
- 7.5.4 However, it is highly improbable that the target housing requirement set by the PSCS and PSCSFA and by policy 7.1 can be met solely on sites within the categories listed as the first four bullet points above, and this certainly cannot be guaranteed at the present time. Some new greenfield sites will therefore be required, so the Ringmer village and/or Broyleside planning boundaries will need to be extended. Sites immediately adjoining the current Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries are very likely (subject to other considerations below) to be more sustainable than new sites isolated in the countryside. Other greenfield sites in the countryside will thus be considered for residential development only when there is a specific need for development at that location and such development is in conformity with the provisions of NPPF paragraph 55.
- 7.5.5 New residential development should only take place within the rural areas of the parish within the SDNP when that development must be located within the National Park and makes a positive contribution to the purposes and duty of the National Park.
- 7.5.6 Policy HOU5(iv) of the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development described the criteria to be used to prioritise new potentially suitable greenfield sites for residential development. These criteria were all strongly endorsed by those present at consultation meeting 3, held on 2 Dec 2011, and have been used in identifying sites for allocation. There were few comments on this policy in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.
- 7.5.7 In accordance with policy 7.5, potential development sites were assessed to determine whether they qualify for inclusion within two groups, priority sites or greenfield sites that fall into the category described by bullet point 5 of Neighbourhood Plan section 7.5.1.

7.5.8 Priority sites include all sites meeting the criteria for inclusion in bullet points 1-4 of Neighbourhood Plan section 7.5.1, and also exception sites for affordable housing, that also meet the criteria below. Steering Group's assessment is that all available, suitable and achievable priority 1 sites that meet these criteria will be required to contribute towards the housing target in policy 7.1.

- The site should be suitable for development and the development should be achievable. Assessments of whether individual sites can be considered suitable and achievable are included in appendix F.
- Sites for inclusion in phases 1 & 2 [see sections 7.9 and 7.10 below] must also be available for development in that phase. Assessments of whether individual sites can be considered available are included in appendix F.
- Development of the site must be in accordance with (a) the NPPF and other national planning policy and (b) other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

It is also desirable that the development of the sites should meet the following additional criteria.

- It should appraise positively when subjected to a sustainability appraisal.
- It should be acceptable to residents on consultation.

7.5.9 Greenfield sites that fall into the category described by bullet point 5 of Neighbourhood Plan section 7.5.1 will be considered for development if insufficient priority sites are available, and the site also meets the criteria below.

- The site should be suitable for development and the development should be achievable. Assessments of whether individual sites can be considered suitable and achievable are included in appendix F.
- Sites for inclusion in phases 1 & 2 [see sections 7.9 and 7.10 below] must also be available for development in that phase. Assessments of whether individual sites can be considered available are included in appendix F.
- Development of the site must be in accordance with (a) the NPPF and other national planning policy and (b) other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

It was anticipated by Steering Group that there would be more greenfield sites available than required to meet the housing target in policy 7.1. In prioritising such greenfield sites for allocation the following factors were taken into account.

- The distance and quality of the pedestrian routes from the site to the most frequently visited services in Ringmer village (the shopping precinct, the village hall, the health centre and the primary school). The primary school was excluded where a development was specifically intended for older residents.
- Impact on the local road network [see policy 9.2].
- Impact on the landscape, on neighbours and on public footpaths or other amenities.
- Impact on the SDNP [see policy 4.1]
- Whether the site was considered to be on high quality agricultural land [see policy 6.2]
- The planned distribution of new development within the parish [see policy 7.4].
- The appraisal of the site when subjected to a sustainability appraisal.
- Acceptability to residents on consultation.

7.6 Evidence collected about the principles guiding the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to residential use

7.6.1 Policy HOUS5(vi) in the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development sought to re-use redundant agricultural buildings for employment purposes, permitting conversion to residential use only when employment use was not practicable or desirable in

amenity terms. This policy has been very successful in leading to the provision of additional employment space in Ringmer, and was strongly supported by those present at consultation meeting 3, on 2 Dec 2011.

- 7.6.2 However, a similar policy in the 2003 Lewes Local Plan was withdrawn by Lewes District Council in Apr 2012, as it was thought not to be in accordance with NPPF paragraph 55. Ringmer has a significant number of redundant agricultural buildings in the countryside that could potentially be converted to residential use within the terms of NPPF paragraph 55, and such conversions will often be more advantageous to the owner. Many such rural properties would not be served the sewers leading to the Ringmer sewage works, whose capacity is currently restricted, and such rural conversions can thus make (indeed, are already making) a valuable contribution to the new housing to be delivered in phase 1 of this Neighbourhood Plan. When such conversions have been given consent, almost all have been promptly delivered.
- 7.6.3 Recent changes to permitted development rights introduced by Statutory Instrument No.564 came into effect in Apr 2014. These further relax, in class MB, the regulations affecting the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to housing, for up to three housing units of a maximum of 450 m² per holding. Under the 'prior approval' procedure required such conversion is subject to conditions, including highways impact, flood risk, design and appearance of the building, and suitable location and siting. These changes do not apply within national parks such as the SDNP.
- 7.6.4 This policy has therefore been amended so that it complies with the provisions of NPPF paragraph 55 and applies only to proposals within the SDNP or those that for other reasons do not meet the conditions required to qualify as permitted development subject to prior approval.

7.7 Evidence collected about the scale of new residential developments

- 7.7.1 In a village such as Ringmer well-designed and appropriately-sited new developments of up to 5 units normally attract little concern. Similarly appropriate developments of 10-30 units will, depending on their location and design, often prove acceptable. It must be recognised that larger developments will generally have a substantial negative impact on Ringmer village, and would be completely inappropriate for a local village such as the Broyleside. Very large development sites of 100 units or more are completely inappropriate in any village setting.
- 7.7.2 The suggestion that new Ringmer developments should be on a scale of 20 units or less, with larger sites subdivided if necessary to achieve this, was included in the Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (policy HOUS5(i)), and very strongly supported by residents at consultation meeting 2 held on 29 Nov 2011. However, some representations were received from developers promoting larger sites during the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan that they regarded this policy as unduly restrictive, and that such a policy would restrict the community benefit arising from development. The Steering Group, on considering these representations, did not accept them in principle as (a) they are contrary to the clearly expressed views of residents that multiple smaller developments spread throughout the planning period would have a far less negative impact on 'village feel' and the ongoing supply of housing for local people; (b) clear evidence that Ringmer developments of all sizes, including very small developments, prove viable for developers; and (c) that under a Community Infrastructure Levy regime expected to apply

for the most of the Plan period multiple smaller developments would yield closely comparable community benefit to a smaller number of larger developments. However, it was recommended that the maximum size of new residential developments should be increased from 20 units to 30 units, and this was agreed by Council at its Planning committee meeting on 25 Apr 2013.

- 7.7.3 Confirmation that Ringmer residents would prefer a succession of smaller developments rather than a small number of larger developments was obtained from the survey carried out by the North Ringmer Residents Group at the 29 Jun 2013 exhibition by Gleeson Strategic Land proposing a development of 115 units on the Bishops Lane site they control (Bishops Field plus Potters Field). 93% of respondents were opposed to the development of any site on this scale in the village. There was no opposition to this proposal from residents in the Regulation 14 consultation, though two developers (both promoting developments of 100 or more units) disagreed with the policy. The Tattenhall (Cheshire) Neighbourhood Plan, approved at examination in summer 2013, includes an identical policy, commended by the examiner. This policy was challenged by developers at judicial review but their argument failed, and the Tattenhall Neighbourhood Plan has now been made [*BDW Trading Ltd (t/a Barratt Homes) & Anor v Cheshire West & Chester Borough Council & Ors* (2014) EWHC 1470]. A similar policy, though with a smaller limit, was included in the Rolleston on Dove (East Staffordshire) Neighbourhood Plan, which was found sound at examination.

7.8 Evidence collected about the phasing of new residential development to 2030

- 7.8.1 New development at a steady rate, sustained throughout the Plan period, is less disruptive to village life, has the potential to sustain relevant aspects of the local economy and has a higher chance of meeting local need. Intermittent large scale development is of little local economic benefit, is much more disruptive to the local community and is more likely to accommodate mainly new out-commuters.
- 7.8.2 The overwhelming preference of Ringmer residents when consulted at consultation meeting 2 held 29 Nov 2011 and at the exhibition was that new housing development at Ringmer should take place at a steady rate throughout the planning period. A clear majority favoured the option that the planning period should be divided into four 5-year phases. This outcome was confirmed at consultation meeting 5 held on 30 Jan 2013, when only one resident (plus four developers) disagreed with the proposal that new development should be phased as evenly as possible through the planning period.
- 7.8.3 Evidence collected about Ringmer's infrastructure has identified a number of short-term constraints on major development at Ringmer, including the capacity of the road system linking Ringmer to Lewes and the trunk road system (A27) via the B2192/A26 [see section 9.1], the capacity of Ringmer Primary School [see section 9.6] and capacity constraints at the Ringmer sewage works [see section 9.10]. School capacity affects only those types of residential development likely to attract families with children of school age. The other constraints affect all types of development, except development that does not require a connection to the sewage works. The constraints imposed by the main road system and the sewage works are recognised in the PSCS, PSCSFA and the SHLAAs. The Ringmer sewage works, which serves both Ringmer village and the Broyleside, was already operating at 98% of its permitted capacity, with headroom estimated in Jan 2012, based on 2011 data, for only 40 additional houses [see section 9.10 below]. Since then some additional housing applications have been approved, as has an application [LW/12/0798] for a new, significantly larger, care home at 39 Harvard Road, which will meet current social needs, provide 50

additional jobs, and is strongly supported by the parish council. These recent developments must be set against the available headroom. Southern Water report that considerable extra investment in upgrading the existing sewage works plant, with a significant lead time, will be required to increase this capacity and gain a new licence from the Environment Agency. Provision of extra capacity depends on successful applications by Southern Water for additional funding, a new discharge licence and the physical completion of the necessary work. While Lewes District Council estimate that this work should be completed by 2016, evidence obtained directly from Southern Water was more equivocal. Similarly East Sussex County Council Children's Services are consulting on a proposal that would see additional primary school capacity available for the 2015/6 academic year, and Lewes District Council consider, on the basis of information supplied by the highway authority, that improved A26 traffic flows should be provided by 2016. Detailed evidence on these three points is presented in section 9 below.

7.8.4 The initial proposal that the Neighbourhood Plan planning period should be divided into four 5-year periods has since been adjusted, on the basis of representations from developers and practical considerations, to three broader periods. This was intended to allow as steady a rate of development as was consistent with economic circumstances, the availability of key infrastructure and practical planning considerations. New development of course requires commercial confidence and the availability of the necessary finance as well as planning permission, but it is essential that the Neighbourhood Plan plans positively to achieve sustainable development. To maximise development in the period 2010-2015, when development within Ringmer village and the Broyleside must fall within the headroom of the present Ringmer sewage works, development will be brought forward where possible in the areas of the parish not dependent upon the sewage works. New employment developments in phase 1 will also be diverted to the areas not served by the Neaves Lane sewage works, to maximise phase 1 delivery of new housing [see section 6]. Subsequent development (and thus the start of phase 2) must be deferred until provision of the key infrastructure developments in the areas above can be guaranteed.

7.8.5 It is recognised that the simpler system of dividing new development into three phases risks the bunching of the delivery of new housing in the later years of the present decade, if all greenfield developers plan for delivery on their allocations as soon as the planning boundaries are extended at the start of phase 2. Steering Group discussions have been with landowners and/or their developers, and all of those promoting the larger sites have indicated a wish to submit at least outline planning applications as soon as possible. However, in most cases the builder who will actually deliver the new housing remains to be identified. It is anticipated that at that stage commercial considerations, including the risks inherent in marketing new housing in direct competition with rival builders, will come into play to spread delivery. However, there are also risks in subdividing phase 2, as originally intended. Phase 2 delivery would become dependent on a small number of sites, and any delays could result in the target being undershot.

7.9 The selection of sites for new residential development in phase 1

7.9.1 Delivery of 240 new housing units over a 20 year Plan period requires an overall average building rate of 12 new units per year. Because of the constraints imposed by existing infrastructure issues [see section 9 below] new housing development in phase 1 (2010-2015) is planned to be delivered at a lower rate than the overall average. It should be noted that outstanding planning permissions for Ringmer include a new 60-bed care home at 39 Harvard Road and substantial new office accommodation for Health Management Ltd, both

of which will be serviced by the existing infrastructure and both of which are expected to be delivered in phase 1. This below average delivery of new housing in phase 1 will be compensated for by a higher rate of new housing delivery during phase 2, when the infrastructure constraints will have been relieved.

- 7.9.2 New housing during phase 1 will be confined to development within existing Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries, rural barn conversions, other rural housing within the scope of NPPF paragraph 55 and exception site developments. All the sites selected are within the first four bullet points of policy 7.5, except for the two exception sites. The exception site developments are included within this phase because of the very clear evidence of a particular and urgent need for affordable housing for local people, which the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to prioritise. The key criteria for inclusion in allocations for phase 1 were (a) that the site qualified for inclusion in one of the categories above and also (b) clear evidence that the site was available within this period and was also suitable and achievable. For more information about the availability, suitability and achievability of each site, see appendix F.
- 7.9.3 The total delivery required in phase 1 is 50 units. We believe that this number can reasonably be accommodated within the present infrastructure constraints. The estimated potential capacity of all the sites allocated in this phase, including sites already delivered, under construction or with planning permission, is 81 units. It is considered advisable to allocate sites in excess of the planned total delivery in case any of the development projects are delayed. The allocations are made up of a number of sites that are individually quite small, which reduces the risk. While the majority of small Ringmer developments approved in recent years have been delivered very promptly after approval, short delays of a year or two are not uncommon and somewhat longer delays are not unknown (see appendix F). Virtually all are delivered within a few years, so it is not considered necessary to make an allowance for allocated sites remaining undeveloped, but it can be anticipated that some sites allocated for phase 1 may not in fact be delivered until phase 2. The total allocation will also permit some continuing development in the event that the infrastructure improvements are not delivered on the schedule currently expected, so that phase 1 has to be extended.
- 7.9.4 One common cause of delay experienced in Ringmer is when a site granted planning approval is then sold on to another developer, or sometimes a series of developers, each of whom then tries to secure a higher value planning permission before the site is eventually sold to a builder. It is hoped that the provision of development briefs (appendix I) will add a new level of clarity that will reduce delays for this reason.
- 7.9.5 Sites allocated in phase 1 include five sites within planning boundaries, three within Ringmer village (RES1-RES3) and two in the Broyleside (RES4-RES5). We are advised by the landowners that all five sites will be available within phase 1. All are considered suitable and achievable in the 2014 SHLAA, a judgement with which we concur. Two of these sites, RES3 and RES5, are owned by Lewes District Council, and it is hoped and expected that these will be used to provide new social rented housing. The Ringmer village sites are all very sustainably located, while the two in the Broyleside are both very close to the bus route terminus, so as sustainably located as other Broyleside housing.
- 7.9.6 Site RES1 (Westbourne, Lewes Road) comprises three adjoining houses with large gardens on the Lewes Road, Westbourne, Shepherds Mead and Penn House. Westbourne is presently unoccupied, the long-term owner having died recently and bequeathed it to charities. NPPF paragraph 53 invites local authorities to consider the case for including

policies to resist the inappropriate development of residential gardens where this would cause harm, but no such policy has been included in the Lewes District PSCS or PSCSFA. Several of the original houses in this part of Ringmer had very extensive gardens, but the gardens of Oakmede, Greenacres and a part of Shepherds Mead were successfully developed in the 1970s and 1980s. The former owner of Westbourne protected his large garden during his lifetime, but always envisaged that it would be developed after his death. When subjected to sustainability appraisal the only negative impacts of development at site RES1 identified were impacts on infrastructure and traffic congestion common to all new developments of this size. We received 25 responses to this aspect of the Neighbourhood Plan in the Regulation 14 consultation. A minority of these opposed this development in principle, but the majority expressed concerns about the manner in which the development might take place, and in particular about possible access from Sadlers Way or Greenacres Drive. The Parish Council, having fully considered the arguments made, takes the view that development here is acceptable in principle. A new development brief has been prepared for this site, confirming that access will be from Lewes Road. We consider that this development brief, together with other Neighbourhood Plan policies and the saved NPPF-compliant policies of the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan, will meet the legitimate concerns expressed by residents.

- 7.9.7 Site RES2 (East of Little Manor, Vicarage Way) is a small, unmanaged, vacant lot in the Ringmer village conservation area, adjoining an important listed house. In its present condition it detracts from the setting of this listed house. A development brief has been prepared to ensure that new development here will make a positive contribution both to the conservation area and the setting of the listed house. Providing this condition is met, development at site RES2 was considered to appraise positively. There was no opposition to this proposed site in the Regulation 14 consultation.
- 7.9.8 Site RES3 (North-west and south-east of Anchor Field), which has two small sub-sites, is owned by Lewes District Council. One part is the site of the former Ringmer Youth Club, demolished some years ago, and now vacant and overgrown. The other is a former residential garage block, used for some years by the council for sorting local recycling but now redundant in this role. Both parts currently make a negative contribution to the streetscene, and are well-located for the provision of new affordable housing. Sustainability appraisal indicated that development of site RES3 appraised positively, especially if the site were to be used for much-needed affordable housing. There was no opposition to this proposed site in the Regulation 14 consultation.
- 7.9.9 Site RES4 (Careys Cowshed, Broyle Lane) is a small site currently housing a former agricultural building now used as a riding stables. While this site currently performs a useful function, the owner has indicated a wish to develop it for residential use for 6 units. The Parish Council considers this number of units would represent over-development of the site, but that a smaller scale development here would be acceptable. Sustainability appraisal indicated that development of site RES4 would result in the loss of its recreational function, though there are alternative locations at which this could be re-provided. As this site is located outside Ringmer village, residents here may make additional use of their cars, but this site is conveniently located for the bus service. One local resident objected to this proposal in the Regulation 14 consultation on the grounds that the site served a useful recreational function, but it is not considered that this objection could be sustained.
- 7.9.10 Site RES5 (Parcels of land at Broyle Close) is also owned by Lewes District Council. This is a low-density former council housing development. The No.28 bus route terminates within

this estate. It is understood that the development proposed includes building over garage courts and, possibly, on underused green land within the estate. Sustainability appraisal indicated that development here would appraise positively overall, especially if the site were used to provide much-needed affordable housing. Like site RES4, this site is located outside Ringmer village, but very close to a bus stop. One local resident objected to this proposal in the Regulation 14 consultation on the grounds that the development would conflict with other Neighbourhood Plan policies. No detailed plans have been put forward, but such plans would need to be compatible with the other policies identified. This development is assessed as suitable and achievable in the 2014 SHLAA, and the potential for provision of additional affordable housing is an important consideration.

- 7.9.11 The Parish Council is aware of no other sites within the Ringmer village or Broyleside planning boundaries that are 'deliverable' – that is they are both suitable and achievable, and also likely to become available within phase 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.9.12 Five sites (RES6-RES10) that will between them provide seven new units in the rural parts of the parish are allocated for delivery in phase 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan. Three of the new units (sites RES6-RES7) will provide accommodation required by existing rural workers. Sustainability appraisal indicates that these sites appraise positively, as they support the rural economy and are sustainably located with respect to their occupiers' employment, as well as providing essential accommodation. Site RES9 proposes the conversion to residential use of a redundant agricultural barn, a Georgian structure that qualifies as a heritage asset (see appendix B), and whose future will thereby be secured. Sustainability appraisal balanced the protection of a heritage asset against a relatively remote rural location. The two remaining sites are previously used rural sites. Both sites are currently derelict and overgrown. Site RES8 is on Norlington Lane, and detracts from the otherwise very attractive Norlington settlement, which contains three important listed buildings. Sustainability appraisal indicated a range of positive impacts on the environment at a location within walking distance of services in Ringmer village. Sustainability appraisal of site RES10 indicated that a new development of the required quality would convert an unattractive derelict and unused rural site that currently has a negative impact on the rural landscape into an attractive feature, though this would be balanced by dependence on the private transport required by the remote location. Most of the new units on sites RES6-RES10 will not require connections to the Ringmer sewage works. There was no opposition to any of these proposed sites in the Regulation 14 consultation.
- 7.9.13 The final two sites proposed for allocation in phase 1 (sites RES11-RES12) are proposed as exception site developments. They are planned as the first two sites for the development of the type of affordable housing proposed in section 7.3 above, with additional detail in appendix E. While they are less sustainably located than would be ideal, they are the two sites that have been offered to us for this purpose, which we believe will meet an important local need for which no provision will otherwise be made. Land value considerations, including 'hope value', make it unlikely that suitable sites will be made available for this purpose at more sustainable locations. Site RES11 (Neaves House paddock) will be a small extension of the existing ribbon development along the south side of the B2124. The East Sussex Landscape Architect made a site visit here and concluded that, subject to suitable layout, design and screening, the landscape impact would be low. She commented that, with some enhancement to the existing screening, Neaves Lane would mark an appropriate settlement boundary. There was no opposition from residents to this proposed site in the Regulation 14 consultation. Site RES12 forms one element of a larger overall development plan for an area of currently-unused land to the east of the Broyleside Business Area (site

EMP7) that will also include an extension to area EMP7, a market housing development (RES18) and a new community woodland. Sustainability appraisal of these two sites balanced the provision of much needed affordable housing for an important social group who would otherwise have poor housing prospects in Ringmer against a loss of agricultural land at these greenfield countryside sites and locations that are, for the reasons noted above, relatively remote from services and public transport. It should however be noted that if accommodation to meet this local need is not provided in Ringmer, the potential residents might well have to take accommodation at locations elsewhere that would commit them to extensive commuting. If the Parish Council's attempts (outside the Neighbourhood Plan) to extend the 28 bus route to Raystede are successful, this could include a new bus stop to serve site RES12 and the Broyleside employment site EMP7.

7.9.14 For further information about sites RES1-RES12 see appendix F.

7.10 The selection of sites for new residential development in phase 2

7.10.1 Policy 7.10 envisages the delivery of a further 120 new homes in the period to 2024, making a total of 170 for phases 1 and 2 combined. This would match the overall planned delivery rate of 12 units/year. New greenfield development will be required to meet this target, so some sites that fit within bullet point 5 of policy 7.5 are included in the phase 2 allocations.

7.10.2 New sites estimated to have a total capacity of 139 units are allocated for residential development in phase 2. Adding in the 31 surplus units from phase 1 [81-50: see section 7.9.3 above] gives a total of 170 units, against the phase 2 target of 120. Again, it is considered advisable sites to deliver a larger number of units than the minimum required, for the reasons explained in section 7.9.3.

7.10.3 The allocations for this phase include three greenfield sites, RES14, RES15 and RES18, that will between them provide an estimated 100 new homes. Discussions with the landowners and/or their developers have established that all three sites are likely to come forward early in phase 2. We understand that the present promoters of site RES15 are likely to seek outline planning permission and then sell the site on to a house builder, which may well lead to some delay, but that RES14 and RES18 already have builders provisionally identified. We thus anticipate that while the rate of development will fall below the planned 12 units/year in phase 1, there will be a rapid return to schedule in the early years of phase 2.

7.10.4 All sites selected for allocation in phase 2 are considered deliverable, in that they are suitable and achievable, and they are either available now, or will become available within phase 2. For more information about the availability, suitability and achievability of each site, see appendix F.

7.10.5 The sites allocated for development in phase 2 include two sites, RES13 (Diplocks Business Park) and RES16 (Chapters garden) that are within the present Ringmer village planning boundary. Site RES13 is the only business site within Ringmer village and under policy 6.1 its retention would be sought. However, it includes one long-established activity (a knackers business) that is accepted as inappropriate for a location so close to residential development and would be better relocated elsewhere, and also a number of poor quality units that do not meet modern needs. Redevelopment is required, but is only likely to be achieved if accompanied by enabling residential development of part of the site to create a mixed use development. The proposal is thus in accordance with PSCS/PSCSFA core policy CP4.2(iii) & (v). A consequent reduction of the use of Bishops Lane by heavy vehicles would also be

welcomed. Site RES13 is included in phase 2, rather than phase 1, because the proposals are at an early stage of development and time will be required to achieve the successful relocation of the existing businesses. In the Regulation 14 consultation three residents and a developer pointed to the conflict between this proposal and policy 6.1, but there was no specific opposition to the proposal otherwise. Sustainability appraisal of the proposal for site RES13 would be positive overall only if the new housing was part of a mixed development that included new employment opportunities, and existing employment was successfully relocated. Like all schemes on this scale there would be a negative impact on traffic congestion, but a negative drainage impact would be avoided if the development is deferred to stage 2, when additional sewage works capacity will be available. RES16, a small garden development at a sustainable location, is included in phase 2 rather than phase 1 because of the landowner's intentions. Sustainability appraisal identified the only significant negative impact as a small additional contribution to traffic on Bishops Lane. There were no objections to development of site RES16 in the Regulation 14 consultation.

- 7.10.6 A total of eleven greenfield sites to the west, north and east of Ringmer village were considered for allocation. Nine of these were sites submitted to the SHLAA, and two were additional sites identified by the Steering Group. Initial considerations eliminated three of these SHLAA sites (10RG, 22RG & 27RG), on the basis that they were within the SDNP, that development would have a strong negative landscape impact contrary to the SDNP's purpose and that when subjected to sustainability appraisal they appraised strongly negatively overall. Negative impacts were identified on the agricultural economy and the countryside, on the landscape aspects of Ringmer's 'village feel', on the SDNP landscape and on traffic congestion. These three sites are also considered unsuitable for development in the 2014 SHLAA.
- 7.10.7 The remaining eight sites were considered at consultation meeting 7 in Feb 2013. The proponents of the Ringmer village sites area 1, area 3 and areas 5 & 6 made presentations at the consultation meeting. Following the views expressed at the meeting, three of the eight sites were eliminated from further consideration. A site on Ham Lane on the edge of the SDNP (area 7 at consultation meeting 7, SHLAA 24RG), already identified as likely to be unsuitable on landscape grounds, also attracted the lowest level of support and the highest level of opposition from residents. Sustainability appraisal of this site was strongly negative overall, due to negative impacts identified on the agricultural economy and the countryside, on the landscape aspects of Ringmer's 'village feel', on the SDNP landscape and on traffic congestion. Two other sites (areas 2 and 4 at consultation meeting 7, the former a large greenfield site opposite Ringmer Community College and the latter SHLAA 21RG, Bishops Lane) also attracted very low levels of support and high levels of opposition from residents. The area 2 site also lies within the strategic Green Gap that policy 5.4 seeks to protect from development while the area 4 site has an artificial eastern boundary and would be very evident in the landscape. Neither site was promoted for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan, so neither met the availability criterion for inclusion in phase 2. Sustainability appraisal of both sites gave strongly negative overall appraisals, with negative impacts identified on the agricultural economy and the countryside, on access to the countryside via public footpaths, and on traffic congestion. Area 2 is an important element of the strategic Green Gap between Ringmer village and the Broyleside, and development here would have a strongly negative impact on Ringmer's 'village feel', while development of area 4, on the edge of the Green Gap, would be very evident in the landscape and would also have a negative impact on the landscape aspects of 'village feel'. There was no support for the allocation of any of these three sites in the comments received in response to the Regulation 14 consultation.

- 7.10.8 Of the remaining five Ringmer village sites, two sites on Bishops Lane, Bishops Field (RES15) and Potters Field (RES35) both had low levels of support and high levels of opposition. However, these two sites together constitute the contingent strategic site proposed in the PSCS and PSCSFA policy SP5. Bishops Lane residents were especially well represented at this consultation meeting. The three final sites, Broyle Gate Farm, Old Forge Pine (RES14) and the orchard adjacent to Vicarage Close (RES32) all attracted more support than opposition from those present. These five sites were carried forward for further consideration.
- 7.10.9 A total of seven greenfield sites to the north, south-west, south-east and east of the Broyleside were considered at consultation meeting 6. The proponents of Broyleside areas 2, 3 and 5 made presentations at the meeting. The land covered by all these sites has been included in at least one of the annual SHLAAs, though in several cases the option considered at the consultation meeting was on a much smaller scale than that proposed in the SHLAA, so as to be in conformity with policies 7.4 and 7.5. All seven landowners, or their representatives, engaged with the Neighbourhood Plan process. Two of these proposals (Broyleside areas 6 & 7, SHLAA sites 30RG and 29RG, both east of the Broyleside and north of the B2192) attracted almost no support and almost universal opposition at the consultation meeting, and were also considered likely to have unacceptable landscape impact by the County Landscape Architect. Area 7 (site 29RG) alone would, if developed on the scale proposed, more than double the size of the Broyleside settlement without providing any new facilities or services. When subjected to sustainability appraisal, both sites appraised strongly negatively overall, with negative or strong negative impacts on farmland and countryside, landscape, 'village feel', traffic congestion and Ringmer's contribution to climate change. Because of its scale area 7 (29RG) would have a negative impact on waste generation and might well exceed the capacity of the sewage works even after its planned upgrade. A third proposal (Broyleside area 1) for a small development immediately north of the Broyleside settlement, received virtually no support but strong opposition from Broyleside residents. When subjected to sustainability appraisal, this site also appraised strongly negatively overall, with negative impacts on farmland and countryside, landscape, 'village feel', traffic congestion and access to the countryside via a public footpath. As this site is located outside Ringmer village, residents here may make additional use of their cars, but the site is conveniently located for the bus service. These three sites were not considered further.
- 7.10.10 The four remaining Broyleside sites, Fingerpost Field and Fingerpost farm (area 2), Rangers Farm and the kennels (area 3), the Neaves House paddock (area 4) and Lower Lodge Farm (area 5) were carried forward for further consideration. The Fingerpost Field/Fingerpost Farm site (area 2) received less support than opposition at consultation meeting 6, but by a fairly narrow margin. The three other sites (areas 3, 4 & 5) each received more support than opposition, in each case by a fairly narrow margin. As the Broyleside settlement is categorised as a local village, these sites were carried forward as alternatives, as each of them is capable of delivering (in combination with the Broyleside sites allocated in phase 1) all or most of the new Broyleside housing required by policy 7.4.
- 7.10.11 These nine greenfield sites outside the existing Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries are each considered below. A tenth site, a garden development adjoining Bishops Field (Sunnymede, RES17), came into consideration late in the process, after the Regulation 14 consultation had been completed.

7.10.12 **Broyle Gate Farm** (Ringmer village area 1) was proposed for allocation partly for housing and partly for new sports facilities. Section 8.4 below provides evidence that there is a clear need for such sports facilities, and this aspect of the plan was heavily promoted by the landowners. The majority of the site was allocated for use for this purpose in the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan [policy RG3]. Policy RG3 remains a saved and NPPF-compliant policy from the Local Plan and it is proposed that this allocation should continue both in the PSCS and in this Neighbourhood Plan. Access to the B2192 is available and the landowners proposed that this should be shared between new housing and the sports facilities. The Landscape Capacity Study identifies development here as having medium impact. At the consultation meeting the developers proposed development of two of the three fields that comprise the site for sports facilities and the third field, adjoining the Ringmer Business Centre, for housing. This proposal was relatively strongly supported at consultation meeting 7, though there was also significant opposition. At subsequent meetings and discussions between members of the Steering Group and the landowners a significantly revised plan was presented, involving residential development for a minimum of 100 houses on one and a half fields of the site (including a part of site RG3 adjoining Ringmer Community College), together with sports facilities delivered at the expense of the development, and at the time of the development, on the remaining one and a half fields (all within site RG3). The landowners were not willing to accept a smaller development as part of the overall plan. The new housing development proposed would adjoin the Ringmer Business Centre (which has its own planning boundary) and land belonging to Ringmer Community College (whose buildings but not sports fields are within the Ringmer village planning boundary), but would nevertheless amount effectively to a quite substantial new residential development isolated in the countryside from other residential development, and not a natural expansion of the settlement. The average pedestrian distance from the site to the shops, main services and Primary School would be greater than from other Ringmer village sites considered. Additionally the whole site lies within the strategic Green Gap, so the residential development would be contrary to policy 5.4., unless the boundaries of the Green Gap were adjusted. The minimum development scale acceptable to the developer was also far in excess of the maximum under policy 7.7. Steering group considered adjusting the Green Gap boundary, but after such consideration this was not supported. Sustainability appraisal of this site gave a strongly negative overall appraisal, despite strongly positive credit being given for the co-provision of recreational facilities. There were negative or strong negative impacts on farmland and countryside, traffic congestion and on Ringmer's contribution to climate change, as it is considered that residents in the new housing proposed would be likely to use private cars to access village services and the primary school. Residential development in the strategic Green Gap would have a strongly negative impact on 'village feel' and as there is a known breeding site for great crested newts adjacent to the site, it is likely that this protected species makes use of the site during its terrestrial phase. The development as proposed would have a negative impact on the setting of the listed Broyle Gate Farmhouse and Broyle Gate Barn, and there are several protected hedgerows on the site. This site was thus not included in the Neighbourhood Plan allocations for the Regulation 14 consultation, but the site was actively promoted by its developer during the consultation period, with a heavy emphasis on the co-provision of sports facilities. This scheme was supported in consultation responses from the developer, the governors of Ringmer Academy and by 20 residents. Half of the supporting residents were from addresses served by Bishops Lane, the majority of whom preferred this option to development on Bishops Lane. Others supported residential development here as a price worth paying to achieve delivery of sports facilities. Some responses quoted, or were written on, copies of the campaign leaflet circulated by the developers. Against this 5 Broyleside residents explicitly opposed development on Broyle Gate Farm, while an additional 18 respondents, including a District Councillor, CPRE Sussex and the South Downs

Society, supported the strategic Green Gap policy, often in strong terms and as the principal element of their response. Residential development at Broyle Gate Farm would be in conflict with this policy.

7.10.13 The site behind **Old Forge Pine** (RES14) is considered sustainably located on the edge of Ringmer village. This site is available. It has good access to Bishops Lane close to its junction with the B2192. Steering Group believe that most new residents here would use the B2192 for most vehicular access purposes, and that the relatively small scale development proposed (20 units) would have little impact on traffic on Bishops Lane and no significant impact on traffic on North Road. The landscape impact of development is assessed as medium in the Landscape Capacity Study, but the site is well contained by hedgerows and mature trees. Providing these are maintained, Steering Group considers that the landscape impact will be limited. The site has housing to its immediate east and west, and there will be some negative impact on this. Foul drainage would be directly to the main Lewes Road sewer and would bypass the Green Close sewer that serves much of northern Ringmer. Development of this site was relatively strongly supported at consultation meeting 7, though there was also significant opposition. A contributing factor to initial opposition was that it was initially presented as including redevelopment of existing Victorian houses and a commercial building (a former forge) on the present highway frontage. However, the landowners made it clear at consultation meeting 7 and at a subsequent meeting with Steering Group members that only new landscaping and a dropping-off point for school children was proposed for the frontage, and that the key buildings would be retained. A safe pedestrian crossing across the B2192 would be provided as part of the development. There is a public footpath across the site that will be retained. Sustainability appraisal of this site identified negative impacts against farmland and countryside (as for all greenfield sites), and recreational access to the countryside via a public footpath that crosses the site. Overall impact of development was appraised as less negative than for most other greenfield sites considered. This site is thus proposed for development in phase 2. The proposal attracted little comment in the Regulation 14 consultation, though two neighbouring residents noted that the site was regularly waterlogged and drew attention to conditions that would be required. A development brief has been prepared for this site to avoid the loss of a building considered of local importance, to ensure the retention of veteran trees and ancient hedgerows on the countryside boundaries of the site and to minimise the impact of development on the public footpath.

7.10.14 **Bishops Field** (RES15) and **Potters Field** (RES35) are both at the northern end of Bishops Lane and adjacent to the Ringmer village planning boundary. The two adjacent fields, which are of similar size, are understood to be in different ownership, but under the control of the same developer, who has promoted them as a single development. Such a development would be considerably in excess of the proposed maximum development size, so contrary to policy 7.7. Even development of the individual fields would exceed the proposed maximum development size, unless the development was staged. The two fields were allocated as a reserve site for possible future development in the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan, but were not in the event required. The policy under which they were allocated has not been saved and is now out of date. They are proposed for allocation together as a 'contingent strategic site' in policies SP2 and SP5 of the PSCS and PSCSFA, to be allocated only if the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan fails to be completed as planned or fails to allocate sufficient new housing early in the plan period. The two fields are separated by ancient hedgerows and by the well-used public footpath no.22. Both fields have neighbouring housing along Norlington Lane and Bishops Lane, upon which development would have some negative impact. The

negative impact of such development in Potters Field, especially in the southern part of Potters Field, would be the more difficult to mitigate through design.

7.10.15 The Landscape Capacity Study assesses development here to have medium landscape impact, but (providing the existing ancient hedgerow is retained) both fields are quite well confined, so that the principal impact would be on neighbours and recreational users of the northern end of Bishops Lane and of public footpath no.22. Development on Bishops Field would not be visible from Ringmer Green, but some development on Potters Field might be visible, dependent on its height and location. Potters Field is more central in Bishops Lane, and thus a little closer to schools and services. Potters Field also contains known archaeological features and has the more severe flooding issues affecting part of the site, while a long-established breeding pond for great crested newts lies adjacent to another part of its boundary. Residents have substantial and well-documented concerns about local access issues [see section 9.2] and the capacity of the local sewers (especially the Green Close sewer) serving development in this area [see section 9.10]. Steering Group shares these concerns. Development of both these sites was strongly opposed, especially by neighbours – indeed consultation meeting 7 and the Gleesons exhibition in Jun 2013 attracted high attendance from residents in the part of Ringmer village served by Bishops Lane. At the Gleeson exhibition held 29 Jun 2013 to promote a proposed development of 115 houses on the two fields, 83% of all respondents opposed the development according to a survey conducted there by the North Ringmer Residents' Group, a figure that rose to over 95% of those living in the parts of Ringmer served by Bishops Lane. Gleesons own survey at this exhibition confirmed a substantial majority of respondents were opposed to their development proposal.

7.10.16 Access from Bishops Field to Bishops Lane could be achieved at the site of a field gate near to the Norlington Lane end of Bishops Lane. It is likely that the majority of vehicles would not use the remainder of Bishops Lane to travel to work or access shops or services, but they would use Bishops Lane to access the Primary School. Such access would be compatible with retaining the present character and traffic restrictions (considered successful in limiting use by through commuter traffic) of Bishops Lane, and would minimise additional traffic generation for North Road, a narrow lane with very limited capacity that runs across Ringmer Green [see section 9.2]. However, Steering Group does not share the developer's view that the new Bishops Field access would have the necessary capacity to serve both Bishops Field and Potters Field if developed on the scale proposed at the Gleeson Jun 2013 exhibition. We also wish to preserve the rural aspect of the well used public footpath no.22, and believe this could be achieved if it were to be separated from a Bishops Field development by a new green corridor along the line of the ancient hedgerows and drainage ditches. This would not be compatible with a large development of both fields via a single access point. We believe that development of Potters Field would require an alternative access somewhere in the central section of Bishops Lane, and that this would inevitably lead to significantly greater traffic flows on North Road and the more sensitive sections of Bishops Lane. Development of Bishops Field is thus considered to have fewer negative impacts overall than development of Potters Field. This conclusion was strongly supported by a sustainability appraisal. Development of either field would have negative impacts on farmland and countryside, and would cause additional traffic congestion, affecting Bishops Lane and other narrow lanes within and adjoining the Ringmer Green conservation area. However, residents at Potters Field would be more likely to use the vulnerable North Road across Ringmer Green to access their homes. Development of Potters Field would also affect recreational access to the countryside via a well-used public footpath. Potters Field has particularly acute drainage problems, is known to contain archaeological remains of Ringmer's medieval pottery industry

and it is very likely that the great crested newts breeding in a pond very close to its boundary use the field during their terrestrial stage.

7.10.17 The Neighbourhood Plan proposes that Bishops Field (RES15) should be allocated for residential development in two stages, both within phase 2, for a total of 50 homes. A development brief proposes that the development should be contained by a green corridor based on the ancient hedgerow. Potters Field (RES35) is not allocated for development, except as a reserve site for phase 3, for allocation only in the event that other anticipated development at more sustainable locations is not delivered. In the Regulation 14 consultation there was some support for the allocation of Bishops Field in conjunction with Potters Field from the developer and from two Broyleside residents, while several other residents (most but not all of whom lived in the areas served by Bishops Lane) preferred development on Broyle Gate Farm as an alternative to that proposed here. Two residents (one a District councillor) opposed the scale of development proposed for Bishops Field, on local access grounds, while the North Ringmer Residents Group and a local resident suggested that the second phase of Bishops Field development should be deferred to phase 3.

7.10.18 The **Sunnymede Garden** site (RES17) was considered as a candidate for residential development in the early stages of the Neighbourhood Plan, but was excluded from consideration at consultation meeting 7 because it was understood not to be available. However, more recent developments have led the owners to notify the Steering Group that they have reconsidered their position. Sunnymede has a 1 acre site with a large garden and was formerly part of Bishops Field. While the site has independent access to Norlington Lane so that it could be developed independently, it could also, with greater advantage, be developed in conjunction with phase 2 of Bishops Field. The only negative impact of development of this small site identified at sustainability appraisal was the local access impact on Norlington Lane, Bishops Lane and other pinch points in the local road system.

7.10.19 The **orchard adjacent to Vicarage Close** (RES32) is a small enclave excluded by the Inspector from an SDNP boundary that otherwise follows the boundary of existing Ringmer village development very tightly. There was much support and relatively little opposition to this development at consultation meeting 7. Development here would not be visible from the public realm except possibly, depending on screening, from Ringmer new churchyard. The only practical access is via Vicarage Close, and the only practicable residential use for this site is considered by Steering Group to be as an extension to the existing sheltered housing in Vicarage Close. The housing association managing Vicarage Close have confirmed to Steering Group that they would be keen to acquire and develop the site. The location is highly sustainable for this purpose. The landowners confirm that the site, currently used in conjunction with their nearby private house, will be available within the planning period, but were not willing to confirm availability within phases 1 or 2. Development of this site was considered to appraise positively overall. In addition to the provision of new housing of a type that is likely to be required later in the Plan period to meet the needs of the growing number of older people, such a development would contribute to local employment and service provision. The only negative impact identified was an increase in traffic at a pinch point in the local road system. This site is thus allocated for development in phase 3. There were no negative comments from residents on the allocation of this site in the Regulation 14 consultation.

7. 10.20A range of proposals for the development of **Fingerpost Farm** and **Fingerpost Field** have been promoted through the SHLAAs, some of them proposing development on a very large scale. However, the option considered for Broyleside area 2 at consultation meeting 6, with

the support of the landowners involved two different housing developments, one south and one west of existing housing in Elphick Road. Both new developments would have a very significant impact on Elphick Road residents that would be challenging to mitigate, given that both existing and proposed new housing would be relatively high density and with small gardens. The owner of Fingerpost Farm retains an interest in Fingerpost Field, which is owned by Lewes District Council. Fingerpost Field is a playing field just outside the existing Broyleside planning boundary, but if developed the playing field would have to be re-provided elsewhere to meet the requirements of NPPF paragraph 74. This site is, for a Broyleside site, relatively sustainably located. This development would in itself have limited impact on the wider landscape. Residents' views at consultation meeting 6 were guarded - perhaps because at the time of the consultation meeting the detailed proposals were undeveloped - but they were not so negative as they were for Broyleside areas 1, 6 & 7. Access would be to Broyle Lane, probably at two locations. More problematic is that one section of land close to the Norlington Stream has a history of flooding.

7.10.21 At subsequent meetings with Steering Group members more detailed proposals were presented by the landowners. These included the provision of quite a large area of land within the strategic Green Gap as a replacement sports field (a use acceptable in principle at this location as compatible with policy 5.4). The land offered was considerably greater in area than Fingerpost Field, which would be lost, and could potentially accommodate many of the new sports facilities required [see section 8.4]. Part of the land offered for recreational use is immediately behind existing housing on Broyle Lane but the area runs to near the Green Man, Lewes Road, offering alternative options for use. However, there were no identified arrangements for access to the B2192, which Steering Group considered essential, as the access from Broyle Lane, which would also serve part of the new housing proposed, was not considered either adequate or appropriately located for a new facility serving the wider community. In addition the contractual relationships between Lewes District Council and the owner of Fingerpost Farm were not transparent, leading to uncertainty whether negotiations between the two might impact on deliverability of new housing in Fingerpost Field. There were also uncertainties whether necessary associated requirements, such as changing rooms and parking, could be accommodated in an acceptable way. The site thus did not meet the availability criterion for allocation in phases 1 and 2. A sustainability appraisal identified the proposed co-provision of recreational facilities as having a strongly positive impact, but also negative impacts on farmland, countryside and traffic congestion. In addition part of the site proposed for development has a history of flooding, and care would be required to avoid a negative impact on the setting of the listed Fingerpost Farmhouse. It is unclear whether the entire development proposed can be accommodated on the part of the land outside the strategic Green Gap – if not there would be a negative impact on Ringmer's 'village feel'. As a site outside Ringmer village there would be likely to be a negative impact on Ringmer's contribution to climate change, although there is a bus stop nearby. A separate sustainability appraisal was also carried out on a proposal for a larger scale development on the same land submitted to the SHLAA (SHLAA site 26RG). This proposal did not include the co-provision of recreational facilities, and much of the development would lie within the strategic Green Gap, so would have a strongly negative impact on 'village feel'. The impact of the larger scale development on farmland, countryside, traffic congestion and countryside would be much more severe. There would be a negative impact on access to the countryside via a public footpath, and the impact of the larger scale development on the setting of the listed Fingerpost Farmhouse would be much more difficult to avoid. The overall appraisal of the larger scale development was strongly negative. The smaller scale site was not included as a proposal in the Regulation 14 consultation, but comments received included those from the

landowner, supporting its inclusion, and also comments from four Broyleside residents who, in supporting the Neighbourhood Plan, specifically opposed development in this area.

7.10.22 **Ranger's Farm** (Broyleside area 3, SHLAA 04RG) is also, for a Broyleside site, sustainably located. This site had relatively strong support from residents at consultation meeting 6, though there was also significant opposition. This site is available. Although the Landscape Capacity Study assesses landscape impact here, and landscape capacity to change, as medium, Steering Group takes the view that the landscape impact would be comparatively low, despite possible distant views from the SDNP. Good access to the B2124 or B2192 would be available, and there would be little if any negative impact on residential neighbours. The landowner proposed a high proportion of low cost housing, which would be welcomed. The site touches the present Broyleside planning boundary only tangentially, across the Kennel Corner junction, but will adjoin the extension of this planning boundary planned for phase 2. Its immediate neighbours would however be employment sites (including one employment site with foxhounds, who can be quite noisy) rather than other housing. This site lies entirely within the strategic Green Gap, so development here would be contrary to policy 5.4 unless the boundaries of the Green Gap were adjusted. Steering group considered making such an adjustment, but after consideration this was not supported. A sustainability appraisal concluded that development here would have a strongly negative overall impact. In addition to the negative impacts on farmland and countryside, traffic congestion and Ringmer's contribution to climate change, there is also an existing employment facility on the field that would be lost, and the site forms part of the strategic Green Gap, so development here would have a strongly negative impact on 'village feel'. This site was not included as a proposal in the Regulation 14 consultation, but comments received included comments from the North Ringmer Residents Group and one resident, supporting development here and noting the commitment to include a high proportion of low cost market housing.

7.10.23 **Neaves House paddock** is a small site extending existing development along the B2124 as far as Neaves Lane (Broyleside area 4). This site was relatively acceptable to residents attending consultation meeting 6. The County Landscape Architect thought some development here acceptable, but the development of the whole paddock would introduce a different type of development to the area. This site also scored lower than the other sites on sustainability grounds and the site has lower capacity than other Broyleside development considered. A sustainability appraisal identified negative impacts on farmland and countryside and traffic congestion and also on Ringmer's contribution to climate change. This site is relatively distant from the nearest bus stop. Part of this site has instead been allocated for development on a smaller scale as a phase 1 exception site, as noted above.

7.10.24 The final Broyleside option is **Lower Lodge Farm** (Broyleside area 5). The option that is proposed for allocation is on a much smaller scale than is proposed for the same site in the SHLAAs, and is part of an overall development plan for the site that includes an extension to the adjoining employment area (EMP7), an exception site development included in phase 1 (RES12), a residential development of part of the site (RES18) and the donation of over 4 ha of land to be developed as a community woodland, which would also establish a boundary screen for the overall site. A development brief has been prepared for the overall site. This site also had relatively strong support from residents at consultation meeting 6, though there was also some opposition. The site is less sustainably located than Broyleside areas 2 or 3, though it would benefit from the proposed extension of the public transport network to Raystede, an improvement that will be sought by the parish council and is in accordance with PSCS/PSCSFA core policy CP13.7(i). However, the linked provisions of land for employment purposes and affordable housing, and the donation of land for a community woodland that

would meet nearly half the current deficit in accessible countryside in Ringmer [see section 5.6] are material considerations. This area is identified in the Landscape Capacity Study as having the lowest landscape quality and the highest capacity to change of any Ringmer site. The community woodland would include most of the southern boundary and the entire eastern boundary of the site, and create a new facility for outdoor community recreation. Steering Group concluded this would result in an overall positive landscape impact as a result of development. Because of this screening, development here would have very limited impact on residential neighbours. While residential development alone at this location would have a strongly negative overall impact at sustainability appraisal, consideration of the overall mixed-use scheme proposed gives a much more positive impact. The negative impacts on farmland, traffic congestion and Ringmer's contribution to climate change were considered more than offset by positive contributions to local employment (through the co-provision of a new employment site), and to much improved access to the countryside, enhanced biodiversity and enhanced countryside (through the provision of a new community woodland). In the Regulation 14 consultation two Broyleside residents, one additionally responding on behalf of the governors of Ringmer Academy, considered this site unsuitable on sustainability grounds. East Sussex County Council noted that this site had been discounted in the SHLAA, and that the site was sensitive because of its open landscape nature, but that there was scope to conserve and enhance the landscape here (a role that would be played by the planned community woodland). This view appears at variance with the view of the Landscape Capacity Study noted above, while the County Landscape Architect, after a visit to the site, considered the overall proposal for the site satisfactory.

7.10.25 Seven countryside sites (RES19-RES25) are allocated for residential development in phase 2, providing a total of 14 units. Site RES19 will provide accommodation for a rural worker, and a sustainability appraisal gives an overall positive impact. Sites RES20-RES22 and RES24-RES25 are sites for barn conversions that are planned for phase 2 and RES23 is a former residential site now containing only a decaying agricultural building that is proposed for restoration to a use in a way that will have a more positive landscape impact. Site RES22 is the only residential development site proposed in this Neighbourhood Plan that lies within the SDNP. The site is a redundant farmyard at Old House Farm that has the capacity to be converted to provide 5 residential units, to be used to accommodate workers at the nearby Glyndebourne Opera House. Old House Farm and the Opera House are in the same ownership, and within easy walking distance provided that a linking footpath is provided. The buildings proposed for conversion are traditional in form. If visible they would form an attractive landscape feature that would be enhanced by appropriate conversion, but their location and existing screening means that they are barely visible from locations accessible to the public. Their restoration to a use connected with local employment would be in accordance with both the purposes and the duty of the SDNP. The only negative impacts identified on sustainability appraisal are contributions to climate change from the developments outside Ringmer village, and the loss of a small area of unfarmed countryside at RES23. Developments RES22-RES24 would have a positive landscape impact and RES21, RES22 and RES24 would secure the futures of heritage buildings that are currently unused or derelict and must be considered at risk. Site RES22, a redundant traditional farmyard within the SDNP, gives a particularly positive overall appraisal.

7.10.26 For further information about sites RES13-RES25 see appendix F.

7.11 The selection of sites for new residential development in phase 3

- 7.11.1 Delivery of a further 70 homes will be required within phase 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan, in addition to the 50 planned for phase 1 and the 120 planned for phase 2. The delivery rate during this phase will be close to the planned average overall rate of 12 units/year.
- 7.11.2 The majority of the additional 70 units to be delivered in this phase to complete the requirement for a total of at least 240 units are expected to come from the delivery of sites allocated in phases 1 and 2 in excess of the numbers required for those phases. However, an additional pool of deliverable or developable sites sufficient for their inclusion in phase 3 to guarantee delivery of enough new housing to meet the overall target of 240 has been identified in policy 7.11. It is recognised that if all the allocated sites do come forward as expected the total delivery of new housing would be significantly in excess of 240 [see appendix F]. There is also the potential for the delivery of unplanned ‘windfall’ housing in Ringmer. While the 240 target is a minimum, not a maximum, the delivery of an excessive number of new homes, beyond those required to meet local need, would increase pressures on the village infrastructure and could compromise the achievement of the improved sustainability of the community sought under key principle 2. It could also potentially put in jeopardy both key principle 1 and the Vision. It will therefore be essential for the monitoring of delivery of new housing in Ringmer during the Neighbourhood Plan to be more sophisticated than simply ensuring that the provision of an adequate number of new housing. It must ensure that the supply of new housing is matched by appropriate increases in local employment, and also ensure that the delivery of key infrastructure is coordinated with new housing delivery.
- 7.11.3 Six of the phase 3 sites allocated are considered ‘developable’ rather than ‘deliverable’ at the present time. These ‘developable’ sites are all at sustainable locations within the existing Ringmer village planning boundary, and their development is in all cases considered suitable and achievable. This is in almost all cases confirmed by the 2014 SHLAA. These ‘developable’ sites are given priority over additional greenfield sites outside the planning boundary in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan policy 7.5 and the relevant core planning principle of NPPF paragraph 17. It is the Parish Council’s view that all six sites are likely to become available within the period covered by the Neighbourhood Plan, but this cannot at present be guaranteed. The remaining Ringmer village site, the **orchard adjacent to Vicarage Close** (RES32), is a greenfield site at a sustainable location adjoining the planning boundary, discussed in detail above in section 7.10.19, but expected on the basis of the owner’s intentions to come forward in phase 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan rather than phase 2. This site is considered deliverable.
- 7.11.4 The largest of the six ‘developable’ sites is the **Caburn Field** (RES26), presently the playing field for Ringmer F.C. It is considered developable rather than deliverable because the intentions of the owners are not currently understood to be fixed, nor is it certain that an essential condition for its availability, the provision of an alternative football field and associated facilities for Ringmer F.C., can be met [see section 8.4 below]. Additionally, as discussed in sections 7.1.5 and 7.1.32 above, it is not at present clear whether the estimated 40 units that could be delivered on this site will be eligible to count within the Neighbourhood Plan total of 240, or whether they would be considered additional to it. This will depend on the eventual wording of the adopted Lewes District Core Strategy (Local Plan part 1). A sustainability appraisal identified that the relocation of Ringmer F.C. from its present village-centre location would result in the loss of, or at least a much less convenient location for, the Caburn Pavilion, an important community meeting place. This could be mitigated if the new location made available additional recreational facilities such as sports fields for the benefit of other organisations, such as Ringmer Rovers or A.F.C. Ringmer. The

negative impact could also be mitigated by the provision of new facilities for older residents as part of the new residential development. As a relatively large development, this would also contribute correspondingly to traffic congestion.

- 7.11.5 Of the remaining five 'developable' sites one, **East of Chapters, Bishops Lane (RES31)**, is a small greenfield site within the planning boundary that forms a part of, and might be one route of access to, Potters Field (RES35). This has been assessed as available, suitable and achievable in all versions of the SHLAA, an assessment with which the Parish Council concurs. A sustainability appraisal identified the only negative impacts as the loss of a small piece of farmland and a corresponding increase in traffic using North Road, Bishops Lane and other pinch points in the local road system. However, the landowner, in responding to the Regulation 14 consultation, did not wish to develop this site in advance of the development of Potters Field (site RES35). Potters Field is, as noted in sections 7.10.14-7.10.17 above and 7.11.8 below, allocated only as a phase 3 reserve site.
- 7.11.6 The **redevelopment of the shopping precinct maisonettes (RES27), Busy Bee redevelopment (RES28), Farthings Garden, North Road (RES29) and Pippins garden development, Bishops Lane (RES30)** are all sustainably-located development or redevelopment sites in Ringmer village that the Parish Council expects to come forward within the Neighbourhood Plan period. The Busy Bee garage is very likely to be redeveloped from its present use later in the Plan period, and Steering Group considers conversion to residential use by far the most likely option, and in accordance with PSCS/PSCSFA policy 4.2(iv). The owners' intentions for the other sites are uncertain or unknown. The Farthings Garden was formerly a distinct residential site, and historically housed several cottages. This site lies within the Ringmer Green conservation area, and Pippins lies within a small section of Bishops Lane that the Parish Council would like to see included within the conservation area. Appropriate high quality design would be required for such developments. Sustainability appraisals identified few negative impacts of these developments. Redevelopment of the shopping precinct maisonettes (RES27) could be on a sufficient scale to contribute significantly to traffic congestion, and might impact negatively on vehicle parking available in the vicinity of the shops. The Busy Bee redevelopment (RES28) would impact negatively both on employment and on the availability of a significant service, but these losses could not be prevented. Both the Farthings and Pippins garden developments would introduce a small amount of additional traffic into North Road and Bishops Lane, pinch points in the local road system. There was no opposition from residents to any of these proposals in their responses to the Regulation 14 consultation, except from one resident who opposed garden developments on the grounds that such gardens provide important wildlife opportunities. This point is common ground, but policy 5.10 above requires all development to at least maintain and preferably enhance biodiversity.
- 7.11.7 Phase 3 also includes two proposed countryside developments (RES33 & RES34). These are both barn conversions in accordance with NPPF paragraph 55, and will deliver a total of at least 5 units. These developments are included in phase 3 on the basis of the owners' intentions, but both are considered deliverable. A sustainability appraisal of the barn conversions at Barnfield Farm (RES33) identified that this would lead to the loss of current tourist accommodation, while a sustainability appraisal of those at Plashett Park Farm (RES34) would safeguard the future of heritage buildings that would otherwise be at risk. In both cases the new residents would live in rural areas remote from public transport, though it is probable that the new units at Plashett Park farm would be let to rural workers.

7.11.8 Although the Parish Council consider it unlikely that none of the sustainable ‘developable’ sites within the Ringmer village planning boundary will come forward before 2030, none can at present be guaranteed. There is thus a requirement for a ‘deliverable’ reserve site to enable the Parish Council to be confident that the target of at least 240 new housing units can be achieved. The reserve site selected is **Potters Field** (RES35), a greenfield site outside the current Ringmer village planning boundary [see section 7.10.14-17 above].

7.11.9 For further information about sites RES26-RES35 see appendix F.

Section 8 Evidence supporting the policies for Social & Leisure Facilities in Ringmer

The key issues identified as relevant to the social and leisure facilities in the Neighbourhood Plan are

- 8.1 Community meeting facilities
- 8.2 Ringmer Green & other managed open spaces
- 8.3 Ringmer community swimming pool
- 8.4 Sports pitches and tennis courts
- 8.5 Outdoor play facilities for children
- 8.6 Outdoor facilities for young people & adults
- 8.7 Allotments and the community orchard
- 8.8 Tourist attractions in and around Ringmer
- 8.9 Community assets

No additional key social and leisure areas have been identified to us during consultation

8.1 Evidence collected about community meeting facilities

8.1.1 Ringmer Village Hall, run by an independent voluntary management committee, is the principal venue for village events. It contributes to Ringmer’s role as a rural service centre, as it is used by a wide range of local organisations. The hall was first built in 1891, and has developed through regular updating and extension, including a substantial extension in 1974. It has an excellent central location, within walking distance of all households in Ringmer village. It now has four flexible meeting rooms of different sizes, with capacities between 20 and 150. The two larger halls, which are at different levels due to the fall of the land, can be combined to form a theatre with a stage. The two larger halls both have associated kitchens. The Village Hall also houses the Ringmer branch library run by East Sussex County Council and the Ringmer Parish Council Office. It serves as the polling station for Ringmer parish. Built into the structure are internal toilets, which cannot accommodate the disabled, and external public conveniences, accessible from the outside when the hall is closed, that do include facilities for the disabled. There is a car park for Village Hall users accessible from the B2192.

8.1.2 Village Hall rents are maintained at an affordable level to encourage community activities, but there is not sufficient capacity to accommodate all Ringmer’s numerous social events, societies and gatherings. Booking rates for the Village Hall meeting rooms are very high, and many village organisations and individuals have found themselves unable to book facilities when needed. This issue restricts the opportunities for the formation of new interest groups providing such activities. Alan West, chairman of the Village Hall trustees, at the Ringmer Social & Leisure Facilities consultation evening (held on 13 Dec 2011), confirmed occupancy rates of 90% for the main hall, 75% for the smaller hall and 50% for the St. Mary’s room. Bookings are dominated by the longer-established village organisations, with few opportunities for regular meetings of new groups or

occasional events. The estimated annual footfall was 38,000 and while there was some scope for expanding capacity this was not large. Current plans for improvements centred on access issues, additional storage, some new meeting space and better use of some existing space. The hall is also used by groups from outside the village, particularly from Lewes, but a brand new hall built recently in the adjoining parish of Barcombe had not impacted on demand in Ringmer.

- 8.1.3 Despite the best efforts of the management committee, and significant upgrading at regular intervals, its age and heavy use for a variety of purposes makes it challenging to maintain a standard of provision to match the many excellent 21st century village halls elsewhere in rural Sussex. The Village Hall trustees have recognised this deficiency and developed plans to extend and update the Village Hall, but attempts to obtain grant funding have not to date been successful. Very active local fund-raising over a period of years has raised over £100,000, but this is barely 20% of what is needed. Had they been successful, they would have upgraded the facilities available and extended the size of one meeting room, but still not fully met community need. The need to upgrade this facility was recognised in the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (policy HOUS9). Further attempts to obtain external financial assistance have continued up to and including in 2014, but these have also been unsuccessful. Local fundraising from the village community is ongoing.
- 8.1.4 Other community facilities in Ringmer village include the Caburn Pavilion (a large room accommodating about 100 in the building occupied as a social club by Ringmer F.C.); the Church Room (added on to Ringmer church, accommodating up to 50); the Scout Hut (accommodating up to 50); and facilities at Ringmer Community College (the large school hall and classrooms, a variety of sizes). The Church Room is a high quality modern venue with catering facilities, but generally available only to groups associated with the parish church. The other facilities are available to a wider range of groups, outside the hours when they are required by their primary users and subject to various restrictions. Facilities at Ringmer Community College are relatively little used by village organisations unconnected with the College, but members of the Ringmer Academy Board point out that they are quite well used by a range of organisations from the wider area. The facilities currently offered by the Caburn Pavilion may be relocated, or even lost, if plans to move Ringmer F.C. to an alternative location and re-develop the present football field for residential use (see section 7.11 and appendix F, site RES26) go ahead during the planning period.
- 8.1.5 There was for many years a Youth Club building at Anchor Field, but this service was moved to Ringmer Community College and then discontinued when County Council funding ceased. The Youth Club building has now been removed and its former site is unused.
- 8.1.6 There are no community facilities available in the Broyleside. The Broyle Community Association met in Ringmer Village Hall. The 2003 Lewes District Local Plan allocated a small site [site RG4] west of Broyle Lane at the north end of the settlement containing then-redundant farm buildings and adjoining an existing children's play area for additional recreational/community use in this settlement. It was thought it might be possible to convert the buildings on the site to form a community meeting place. However, these buildings have not come forward for this purpose, and have instead been put to equestrian use by a new owner. In Neighbourhood Plan consultations neither the Broyleside Community Association (now defunct), local residents nor the Parish Council were convinced that an independent community meeting place for Broyleside residents at this location would prove viable. When Broyleside residents were asked in the Jun 2013 Gleeson Broyleside survey what their priorities would be for the use of any available s.106 funds to provide additional local amenities, only 10% of those responding made improvements to Ringmer Village Hall their top priority. However, this may reflect previous advice in local fundraising campaigns that

improvements to the Village Hall, owned by a private charity, could not be funded in this way. There was no significant support for a separate community facility in the Broyleside.

- 8.1.7 A severe shortage of community civic space in Ringmer parish was confirmed by the 2005 Lewes District Informal Recreational Space Study.
- 8.1.8 This policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation. Most residents are very well aware of the situation, because of the very active ongoing fundraising and regular publicity and reports to the community from the Village Hall Management Committee. East Sussex County Council welcomed the proposal to provide additional indoor space for cultural and leisure activities and the policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group.

8.2 Evidence collected about Ringmer Green and other open spaces

- 8.2.1 Policy RE1 of the 2003 Lewes Local Plan has standards for recreational space based on the National Playing Fields Association's 'six acre standard' (2001). This national guidance has since been replaced by '*Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play*' published in 2008 by Fields in Trust, the NPFA's successor body.
- 8.2.2 Managed green spaces in Ringmer village include those listed below. They are open to public use except where otherwise indicated. Most are included in the Community Asset Register [appendix H]. Strong protection for Ringmer Green and other managed green spaces was supported by 99% of respondents at the Exhibition.

Ringmer Green is a registered village green owned by the lord of the manor of Ringmer and managed by Ringmer parish council. It is also registered common land. The Green has a cricket pitch, with pavilion and club house, a large children's play area, a large pond and a considerable amount of informal public seating. This is the centrepiece of Ringmer village, and the most important element of the Ringmer Green Conservation Area.

Ringmer Old Churchyard is a closed burial ground surrounding Ringmer church, owned by the church and managed by Ringmer parish council. The medieval church is grade 1 listed by English Heritage and lies within the Ringmer Green Conservation Area. The Old Churchyard adjoins Ringmer Green.

Cheyney Field is a large field within the Ringmer Green Conservation Area that is owned and managed by the Cheyney (Almshouse) Trust. The field is formally open only to members of the organisations listed below as tenants. There are two almshouses. The field has been developed to include a number of sports and leisure facilities, including the Bowls Club, the Scout Hut with some adjoining land, a cricket field and nets and a pitch used by the Croquet Club. Part of the field is managed as a wildlife reserve.

Anchor Field play area is owned by Lewes District Council and managed by Ringmer parish council. Anchor Field includes a skateboard park, a football goalpost, a basketball hoop and swings. Part of this area was taken in 2009 to accommodate the new Ringmer Health Centre. This area is well used by children and young adults. There is an estate road (Anchor Field) along one boundary, and a Lewes District Council car park, including Ringmer's main public recycling facility, along another.

Green Close green is owned and managed by Lewes District Council, primarily for the benefit of local residents of this former council development.

Rushey Green is owned by the Glyndebourne Estate and managed by Ringmer parish council. This is an area of registered common land maintained as grass for casual recreational use.

Mill Close green is owned and managed by Lewes District Council, for the benefit of the residents of this council and housing association development for the elderly.

Gote Green, ownership uncertain, is managed by Ringmer parish council. This is a small area of roadside grass managed for some years by the Women’s Institute as a wildlife area.

Sadlers Way green area is owned and managed by Ringmer parish council. Some improvements to this area of green space were made in 2012 to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

Middleham Close green areas are owned and managed by Ringmer parish council. These two small green spaces are grassed with some trees.

The Forge Green is owned and managed by Lewes District Council for the benefit of local residents.

The Forge Communal Open Space is owned and managed by Lewes District Council, primarily for the benefit of local residents. This includes a play area for small children.

8.2.3 Managed green spaces in the Broyleside include the following. They are open to public use except where otherwise indicated. Most are included in the Community Asset Register [appendix H].

Fingerpost Field is owned by Lewes District Council and managed by Ringmer parish council. This includes a children’s play area and a large grassed area equipped with goalposts. It is planned that from autumn 2014 Fingerpost Field will accommodate some of the games and training of Ringmer Rovers Junior Football Club.

Broyle Lane play area is owned and managed by Ringmer parish council. This small fenced green area is equipped with small goalposts.

Broyle Close green areas comprise two grass areas owned and managed by Lewes District Council, primarily for the benefit of local residents of this former council development.

8.2.4 Ringmer parish council’s Greens Committee took the view that the available managed green space in both Ringmer village and the Broyleside is adequate for the current population, though additional development might, depending on its scale and location, create a need for additional managed green space. No disagreement with this view was evident at consultation meeting 4 in Dec 2011, in evidence of public opinion collected at the Feb 2012 Exhibition (when 99% wished to see continued protection for Ringmer Green and other large public open spaces) or in public responses arising from parish council newsletters, the parish council “*Ringmer to 2030*” website or other Neighbourhood Plan information. This view is supported by the Lewes District Informal Recreational Space Study (2005). This policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

8.3 Evidence collected about the Ringmer community swimming pool

8.3.1 Physically associated with Ringmer Community College but managed separately by Wave Leisure is an indoor heated 25m swimming pool, built as a result of fundraising by the Ringmer community. This is used by the College during school hours but available for community use at other times. It is open for community use for a total of more than 40 hr/week. The Ringmer pool is managed by Wave Leisure in conjunction with the Lewes Leisure Centre. This policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

8.4 Evidence collected about sports pitches and tennis courts

8.4.1 The 2003 Lewes District Local Plan notes that Ringmer had a long-recognised shortfall of outdoor sports pitches, and that this was corroborated by local experience that existing facilities were inadequate in terms of both availability and quality. This was further emphasised in the 2005 Lewes District Informal Recreational Space Study. Similar conclusions were reached in the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (policy HOUS11). Most village sports pitches, including the football pitches owned by Ringmer F.C. and Ringmer Community College, are on heavy gault clay, which is extremely difficult to drain. Such pitches are very easily damaged by

excessive use, or by any use in wet weather, which prevents what might otherwise seem sensible sharing, such as between weekday school use and weekend use by amateur club footballers. The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review (2004) reported [Tables 4.12 & 5.9] a surplus of adult football (0.7), junior football (1.5) and junior rugby (1.0) pitches. However, we cannot identify where this surplus adult football capacity might be, as there is (and was) no public provision at all. The surplus junior pitches could perhaps have meant those under local authority control at Ringmer Community College, but that now has academy status, and additional buildings, including the new sixth form centre, have been constructed on former playing fields. Necessary expansion of the Ringmer Primary School may further encroach on the Community College playing fields.

- 8.4.2 Ringmer village green has a cricket square and cricket pavilion, managed by the Ringmer Cricket Club. The section of the Green used for cricket is rather small for the purpose, slopes quite steeply, and is bounded by a public residential road (North Road), while cricket balls are regularly hit onto the busy B2192. However, both the Cricket Club and the Stoolball Club have used this ground for well over a century. The Cricket Club has a second pitch and nets nearby in Cheyney Field, leased from the village almshouse charity. The same charity's Cheyney Field also accommodates the Ringmer Bowls Club, which has a pavilion, and the Ringmer Croquet Club. These facilities are open only to members of the relevant clubs, and operate at or close to capacity, so that while they are satisfactory in meeting club needs they are not available for informal games.
- 8.4.3 Ringmer F.C. has its own ground and pavilion, Caburn Field, in the centre of Ringmer village. They play in the Sussex County League, in a high division for a community the size of Ringmer. The Caburn Field is a private ground, not available to other organisations, and is owned by trustees for the benefit of Ringmer F.C. The club charges spectators for entry and has a stand, floodlights and changing rooms. The Caburn Pavilion, adjacent to the ground, is a wooden structure brought from Crawley and assembled on site by Ringmer F.C. members many years ago (when many were employed by the Ringmer Building Works), but is now somewhat elderly. It includes a social club, open in the evenings for players and members, that is an important source of income for the community football club that now runs Ringmer F.C. The Caburn Pavilion's central location is important for this income stream. The Caburn Pavilion is also used by other community groups and for some village events. However, most of the land on which the Pavilion is built is owned not by the trustees but by Lewes District Council, and Ringmer F.C. now have to pay a substantial annual rent to the council for the use of their premises.
- 8.4.4 Under a previous management regime, when run by Ringmer F.C. Ltd, the club developed high ambitions and aimed at a semi-professional level of play. The owners planned to move the club to a larger site located next to Ringmer Community College and build a much more developed ground and facilities, to be paid for by residential development of the Caburn Field. Land was allocated for recreational purposes with this as the planned centrepiece in the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan [site RG3] and the Caburn Field was allocated for residential development. Unfortunately, despite impressive success on the field, the club's financial model did not prove sustainable, and Ringmer F.C. Ltd collapsed into administration, with substantial debts to the bank and to the directors. The community-based successor, Ringmer F.C., have acquired the key footballing assets of the club from the administrator. While they have engaged in a partnership with a developer to consider whether there might be the potential for re-orientation of the ground that would enable them to release some land at Caburn Field for development, and thus finance the construction of a new clubhouse, no viable plan has as yet been developed. However, the club retain the ambition to have a ground and clubhouse of their own, on their own land, potentially through relocation and redevelopment of the Caburn Field site.

- 8.4.5 There is a second football club, A.F.C. Ringmer, started about 8 years ago by a group of young men who all attended Ringmer Community College and lived in Ringmer or nearby villages. Half their current players live in Ringmer, and the others grew up here or in the surrounding villages and live nearby. A.F.C. Ringmer is composed of amateur footballers, who play on Saturday afternoons, with no charge for their few spectators – indeed the players pay to play. However, they do well in the Mid-Sussex League (Championship division), one step down from the Sussex County League. They do not need floodlights but they do need a pitch, and they have not been able to find one in Ringmer. They initially played at Laughton, then moved to Falmer until displaced by Brighton & Hove Albion, then to Plumpton and now at South Malling. A.F.C. Ringmer continues to seek, but has not yet found, suitable facilities in Ringmer.
- 8.4.6 Ringmer Community College has two junior football pitches, two mini-soccer pitches and a rugby pitch. Its recent development to include a sixth form has put considerable pressure on these. College facilities have been made available for use at weekends by Ringmer Rovers Junior Football Club, but such pressure on their use means that in wet weather use by Ringmer Rovers very often has to be cancelled. Ringmer Rovers have 10 junior teams, one for each age group from under-8 to under-16, with two teams at under-12. There are about 20 children in each team, so 200 altogether. The majority of these are Ringmer residents although there is more mixing over a wider area in the older age groups. Each team should play each week throughout the season, so there should be 5 teams playing home matches each weekend. In the past Ringmer Rovers had tried playing at the Convent Field (Lewes). Training is usually at the Southdown Club, Lewes, on a weekday evening, which requires all the boys to be taken there and back by car. Some training happens at the Community College on a Saturday morning, but around the pitches rather than on them. Ringmer Rovers have asked for the use of Fingerpost Field from 2014, and have sometimes used this for daytime training. Fingerpost Field has only on-road parking, but it is hoped to arrange to use parking facilities on the nearby business estate, which is little used at weekends. The Fingerpost Field moles do create some health & safety risks, and its surface is that of a reasonably flat field, rather than a proper sports field. Moles do not seem to be an issue at the Community College, where there is ongoing pitch maintenance by the Community College. There are thriving and successful girls' football teams at Ringmer Primary School.
- 8.4.7 Ringmer Community College also has some tennis courts but these are not available to the community. Ringmer village and the Broyleside thus have no sports facilities open to the public, and are unable to accommodate existing amateur sports clubs. A tennis club was identified as a high priority in the 2003 Ringmer Village Plan but no opportunity has been found. Ringmer has many tennis players, but they travel to Lewes and other nearby villages to play. Ringmer has no rugby or hockey team, no netball team, no public athletic facilities, and few facilities for informal sport of any type. This lack of facilities limits activity. There are currently no facilities in Ringmer for women's sports other than stoolball.
- 8.4.8 The 2003 Lewes District Local Plan proposed the allocation of a site immediately east of Ringmer Community College (RG3) to meet these and other needs, including a then-proposed relocation of Ringmer F.C. Ltd. The Plan for RG3 was carefully designed to maintain a strategic Green Gap between Ringmer village and the Broyleside, as green sports fields would maintain the Green Gap, and it was believed that any necessary built structures and car parking could be accommodated without compromising the principle. These plans were not, in the event, realised prior to Ringmer F.C. Ltd entering administration. The successor community-based Ringmer F.C., financially dependent on the proceeds of its Anchor Field social club, does not currently wish to relocate here from its village centre location, nor do the landowner's plans extend to accommodating Ringmer F.C. However, the land has the capacity to meet many of the other needs noted above, and is well located to do so. Policy RG3 of the 2003 Local Plan is a saved and NPPF-compliant policy.

- 8.4.9 The shortage of sports pitches in Ringmer thus has two components. First there is an easily identified element, an unmet requirement for adult and junior football pitches in Ringmer for existing Ringmer teams to play on. The second, more difficult to quantitate, is the unmet need for facilities for other sports, such as women's football, rugby, hockey, lacrosse, netball and tennis, that Ringmer enthusiasts currently have to travel elsewhere to play, with the result that there are no current Ringmer teams. Were there such teams in Ringmer, it is likely that they would recruit members from those who are currently uninvolved, thus making a valuable contribution to the involvement of residents in healthy outdoor exercise. The 2003 Ringmer Village Plan identified the absence of tennis courts in the village as a particular priority. There had previously been some facilities available at Ringmer Community College, but these ceased to be available to the public. The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review (2004) noted that there were tennis courts available in the villages of Barcombe (3), Ditchling, Firle, Kingston (2), Newick (3), Piddinghoe and Plumpton (3). Ringmer, a considerably larger village than any of these, is the only large village that has no provision for tennis, and the scale of provision elsewhere would suggest a minimum of 4-5 courts would be required. However, in the continuing absence of any opportunities to play in Ringmer, the viability of such facilities remains untested.
- 8.4.10 Exploration of the options for the creation of new sports pitches for community use in Ringmer as part of this Neighbourhood Plan has confirmed RG3 as a potentially viable site. Maintenance is a key issue. Wave Leisure have experience of managing such assets at other locations, and could potentially do so from their existing base at Ringmer Community College. While preliminary estimates prepared by The Landscape Group suggest that pitches close to Ringmer Community College could be laid out and maintained at a viable cost under such management, benefitting from shared use of existing car parking and changing rooms at Ringmer Community College, such a development at another location would require the co-provision of new car parking, access, changing rooms, and management and other associated facilities that would be likely to render the project less economic to create and to maintain. The landowners and those with development interests in site RG3 have proposed making a part of this area available for sports purposes, but only on the condition that another part of RG3 and also another adjoining field in their ownership were given permission for residential development for at least 100 houses. Residential development at this location would not be compatible with policy 5.4, a central policy to this Neighbourhood Plan. The proposal presented at consultation meeting 7 in Feb2013 would have created a new housing estate isolated in the countryside from other residential development, contrary to the provisions of NPPF paragraph 55.
- 8.4.11 The landowners of Fingerpost Farm, another site offered to the SHLAA for development, have also indicated that they would be prepared to make part of their site available for sports pitches, subject to the approval of residential development of other land in which they have an interest. The land offered is also in the strategic Green Gap, but on the opposite side of the B2192. This location is not so close to Ringmer Community College as site RG3, making effective management by Wave Leisure or a similar organisation more challenging. This offer was made at a relatively late stage in the evolution of this Neighbourhood Plan, and the Steering Group's view is that it cannot, at its present stage of development, be considered deliverable. The only access presently proposed is from Broyle Lane, in the Broyleside, which is not acceptable. Alternative access that would place the proposed sports fields within a more reasonable walking distance of Ringmer village might be achievable, but would require consent from third parties. It is also currently unclear how, or whether, any associated built facilities or car parking needed to serve new sports facilities here could be achieved without compromising the strategic Green Gap.

- 8.4.12 The installation of an all-weather pitch at or near Ringmer Community College might provide an alternative viable solution, if the substantial initial investment could be covered. Whereas cost estimates for new grass pitches we have received have been of the order of £20-£40K per pitch, the cost of an all-weather pitch of sufficient size to accommodate an adult football pitch or, at other times, 2-3 smaller pitches for junior football has been estimated to us as £250-£500K, depending on the grade of pitch installed. To permit economic use an all-weather pitch would require floodlights that would need to be in operation most nights of the week during the football season, which creates an important restriction on the number of locations at which such a pitch would be acceptable. While ongoing maintenance costs of either type of pitch could be covered by charges to users, the importance of hands-on professional management, especially for an all-weather pitch, has been repeatedly emphasised to us. We have been advised that an all-weather pitch suitable for football, the most immediate un-met need, would for technical reasons be unlikely to be suitable for most other sports, in particular rugby. An all-weather pitch would require associated facilities such as a sports pavilion or clubhouse with changing rooms and also car parking.
- 8.4.13 Strong support and very little objection to the provision of additional sports facilities has been revealed in the public engagement carried out as preparation for this Neighbourhood Plan. This might be expected to be a particularly high priority for those wishing to use such facilities themselves, or for their children. In the Jun 2013 Gleeson survey where 100 Broyleside residents were asked to identify their priority for additional amenity provided from developer s.106 funding, about a third of those expressing a view made the provision of additional sporting facilities their top priority. The only comparably important priority was the provision of an additional pedestrian crossing across the B2192 [see section 9.4]. We received representations about the importance of the provision of additional sports facilities, at site RG3 or a suitable alternative location, especially from respondents with children connected with Ringmer Rovers Junior Football Club, in both the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and in the Regulation 14 consultation. This viewpoint was supported in the latter consultation by East Sussex County Council, the governors of Ringmer Academy and 13 residents.

8.5 Evidence collected about outdoor play facilities for children

- 8.5.1 There are well established and equipped children's play areas maintained by the parish council on Ringmer Green in Ringmer village, and at Fingerpost Field in the Broyleside, and additional equipped play areas for younger children within the Forges development (maintained by Lewes District Council) and at the Broyle Close play area in the Broyleside (maintained by Ringmer parish council). There are informal play areas for children on Ringmer Green, Anchor Field and Rushey Green in Ringmer village and at Fingerpost Field and the Broyle Lane play area in the Broyleside. Some younger children do also use facilities designed with young people primarily in mind, such as the skatepark at Anchor Field and the areas for informal football at Anchor Field and Fingerpost Field.
- 8.5.2 Ringmer parish council's Greens Committee took the view that the children's outdoor play facilities available in both Ringmer village and the Broyleside are adequate for the current population, though additional development might, depending on its scale and location, create a need for additional outdoor play facilities for children. No disagreement with this view was evident at consultation meeting 4, or in public responses arising from parish council newsletters, the parish council "*Ringmer to 2030*" website or other Neighbourhood Plan information. This draft policy was supported by 95% of respondents at the Exhibition. This view is also supported by the Lewes District Informal recreational Space Study (2005). This policy received few comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

8.6 Evidence collected about outdoor facilities for young people & adults

- 8.6.1 Outdoor facilities for young people and adults in Ringmer, beyond simple access to the countryside via public footpaths and quiet lanes (see section 4), are limited.
- 8.6.2 Young people are the principal users of the skatepark on Anchor Field (extended in size in 2012) and facilities for informal football at Anchor Field and Fingerpost Field. Ringmer Community College hosts an Adizone for outdoor exercise by young people or adults, which is available to the community for public use at rather restricted times. There is a scout hut with some surrounding outdoor space. There are only very limited private opportunities for cycling or horse riding, other than on public roads, and the parish's quiet lanes (see section 4.4) are extensively used for such purposes.
- 8.6.3 This policy received few comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

8.7 Evidence about allotments and the community orchard

- 8.7.1 **Allotments:** There are five groups of allotments in Ringmer parish. One, at Earwig Corner on the edge of Lewes town and within the South Downs National Park, is managed by an allotment association for the benefit of Lewes residents. The largest group, located out of the village by the electricity substation and also within the National Park, are maintained by the parish council. Following a period early in the 21st century when the waiting list grew, plans were in hand to extend these allotments by extension onto nearby agricultural land, but as the arrangements for this neared completion, the allotment waiting list evaporated, leading to the project being suspended. There are two small groups of allotments managed by Lewes District Council within the former council estates of Green Close (in Ringmer village) and Broyle Close (in the Broyleside), and a very well managed group of private allotments at the end of Ham Lane (in Ringmer village). Overall the availability of allotments within the parish meets the current need and additional capacity could be provided should it be required.
- 8.7.2 **Community orchard:** The Ringmer Community Orchard is located at Broyle Place Farm and managed by the Common Cause Co-operative [www.commoncause.org.uk]. The Ringmer community orchard was planted in December 2005 as part of the Ringmer Village Plan. About 50 fruit trees were planted on an acre of land at Broyle Place Farm provided by a local farmer. The orchard, which features as one of 10 exemplars in the DCLG guide to community orchards, [<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/19732401.pdf>] was created and is maintained by a local community group, with support from a range of voluntary, charitable and public sector bodies, including Lewes District Council, Ringmer parish council and Ringmer Community College. It is used very successfully as an educational resource by local schools and the annual fruit crop is made available to the local community.
- 8.7.3 The proposed allotments policy was supported by 100% of those attending consultation meeting 4 in December 2011. The proposed policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation, apart from the support of the North Ringmer Residents Group.

8.8 Evidence collected tourist attractions in and around Ringmer

8.8.1 The principal tourist destinations in and immediately around Ringmer are listed below. For further information about them see section 6.6 above.

The Glyndebourne Opera House

Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare

The East Sussex Gliding Club

Bentley Wildfowl & Motor Museum

There is no policy 8.8.

8.9 Evidence collected about Ringmer's community assets

8.9.1 A draft list of Ringmer community assets was prepared by Ringmer parish council. The concept received strong public support at the Exhibition. This draft list was publicised via a parish council newsletter and on the parish council's "Ringmer to 2030" website from 16 Mar 2012, resulting in a number of suggested modifications. The revised community asset register now proposed is published as appendix H. There were no comments from residents about policy 8.9 or appendix H in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation. One developer objected in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation to the inclusion in the draft list of community assets of land in which they had an interest. This element has, after due consideration, been removed.

Section 9 Evidence supporting the policies for Infrastructure Requirements

The key infrastructure issues identified as relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan are

9.1 *The main road network serving Ringmer parish*

9.2 *The local road network within Ringmer parish*

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

9.4 *Road safety*

9.5 *Public transport*

9.6 *Primary & nursery education*

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

9.8 *Health service provision*

9.9 *Water supply*

9.10 *Drainage & sewerage*

9.11 *Electricity & gas supply*

9.12 *Waste disposal & recycling*

9.13 *Cemeteries*

9.14 *e-communications*

No additional issues have been identified to us during the consultation

9.1 Evidence collected about the main road network serving Ringmer parish

9.1.1. As there is no railway in Ringmer and no trunk roads managed by the Highways Agency within Ringmer parish, travel to, from and within the parish is dependent on the local highway network managed by East Sussex County Council. An A road, the A26, runs through the rural parts of the parish. The two other main roads (in the context of Ringmer) are the B2192 and B2124. All three are two-way single-carriageway roads, and thus belong to the category of rural roads identified by national studies as having the highest road casualty rate.

- The A26 runs north to south between Lewes and Uckfield through the western rural area of Ringmer parish, but does not serve either Ringmer village or the Broyleside. Although classified as an A road, the section through Ringmer parish is not part of the trunk road network.
- The B2192 runs north-east to south-west through the parish and serves both Ringmer village and the Broyleside. It joins the A26 at Earwig Corner, just at the parish boundary with Lewes town. In the other direction it crosses the A22 London-Eastbourne trunk road at Halland, and then runs to Heathfield, serving on the way a number of Wealden rural communities. The B2192 runs through the Ringmer village, and across Ringmer Village Green.
- The B2124 runs east-west across the eastern half of Ringmer parish, joining the B2192 at Kennel Corner in the Broyleside settlement. It runs from there to the A22 London-Eastbourne trunk road at Golden Cross. The A22/B2124/B2192/A26 route offers an alternative route to the recommended A22/A27 for traffic from the rapidly growing Hailsham-Hellingly area to access Lewes, Brighton and the main A23/M23 trunk route from Brighton to London.

9.1.2 All three principal roads carry heavy through traffic, including heavy goods vehicles. This traffic will inevitably increase following the 2012 approval of the Wealden District Core Strategy that includes very substantial additional residential and employment development in the Hailsham-Polegate area and 1,000 new houses and additional employment development to the south and west of Uckfield. The Lewes District PSCS and PSCSFA also propose substantial development in Lewes town, much of which will be likely to use the A26 to leave Lewes.

9.1.3 The principal destinations for residential and commuter traffic originating from Ringmer village or the Broyleside are the town of Lewes and the main trunk road network at the A26/A27 roundabout at Southerham. This traffic uses the B2192/A26 route.

9.1.4 This route experiences long morning peak-hour traffic queues north of the A26/B2192 junction at Earwig Corner. Traffic heading southwards on the A26 has priority at Earwig Corner. Long peak hour queues can accumulate on both roads, but particularly on the B2192, with stationary traffic adjoining the Lewes Downs SAC. In the evening rush hour similar queues develop to the south of Earwig Corner, on Malling Hill, and back up through the A26/Church Lane and A26/Phoenix Causeway junctions in Lewes. These queues of standing traffic are also very close to the Lewes Downs SAC. There are also long queues every rush hour for the A26/A27 junction at Southerham, which back up to the A26/Phoenix Causeway junction. This in turn results in commuter traffic attempting to leave Lewes town backing up through the town, and is responsible for the very poor air quality experienced in central streets within the town.

9.1.5 The 2011 Lewes Town Transport Study studied the impact of a number of possible scenarios on traffic on this congested route. None of the scenarios studied are exactly what is now planned in the PSCS and PSCSFA, but the closest is scenario 3, which rates very poorly in the study. Under all growth scenarios the Earwig Corner junction was predicted to become progressively less able to meet the demands imposed upon it, with the prediction that even if Earwig Corner was improved, this would merely transfer the problem to the A26/Church lane and A26/Phoenix Causeway junctions. Little attention was paid in this study to the critical A26/A27 junction at Southerham, perhaps because this is the responsibility of the Highways Agency rather than East Sussex County Council. This study did not include in its assessment the impact of new traffic from the developments at Uckfield and Hailsham/Polegate approved in the subsequent Wealden core strategy. The conclusions are endorsed in the Lewes District Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2012), pp.10-11 and its recommendations (p.59) require improvements at the relevant A26 junctions.

- 9.1.6 This study led directly to the conclusion in the 2011 Lewes District SHLAA that any significant development in Ringmer should be dependent on prior improvement of the Earwig Corner B2192/A26 junction. It is not evident why improvement of the other junctions identified as lacking capacity in the Lewes Town Transport Study was not also required – this aspect of the study appears to be ignored. In the 1990s there were determined attempts by East Sussex County Council highway engineers to design effective improvements for Earwig Corner, but no successful and affordable solution was reached. The favoured solution, re-routing the B2192 through high quality agricultural land to a new large roundabout to the north of the present junction, proved too expensive to be justified. This entire new route, and Earwig Corner itself, now lie within the SDNP, and such a proposal would be unlikely to be approved on landscape impact grounds alone. The new lighting necessary for a new roundabout would, because of the lie of the land on the north slope of the Downs, become a prominent new source of light pollution visible from as far away as Crowborough, on the far north of the Sussex Weald. Less drastic solutions considered in the 1990s, such as new traffic lights, were assessed as not able to deliver the necessary improvements in traffic flow.
- 9.1.7 The significance of this issue is recognised in the Lewes District PSCS and PSCSFA and the associated SHLAAs. The PSCS and PSCSFA require development at the proposed contingent strategic site in Ringmer (on Bishops Lane) to be contingent on contributions to off-site infrastructure improvements at Earwig Corner, and similar requirements for all larger Ringmer sites considered are noted in the SHLAAs. While recognition of the importance of the issue is welcomed, there do appear to be some practical concerns. While it is accepted that new development in Ringmer will exacerbate the current problem, development elsewhere, including new development in Lewes town and in Wealden District, will also have substantial impacts, but there do not appear to be any realistic proposals to ensure that development outside Lewes District should contribute. There are potential complexities from Uckfield and Hailsham-Polegate being in Wealden District (with an adopted Core Strategy and an advanced Infrastructure Delivery Plan), Ringmer being in Lewes District (which has a Core strategy yet to be examined and only a draft Infrastructure Development Plan that excludes the SDNP, and thus Earwig Corner) while the SDNP infrastructure delivery plan is still at a very early stage of development. No effective and acceptable approach to the improvement of Earwig Corner has as yet been identified or costed. Finally, and most importantly, the proposed PSCS and PSCSFA policies ignore the key conclusion of the 2011 Transport Study, confirmed in the 2014 draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan, that successfully addressing traffic flows at Earwig Corner alone would simply transfer the problems to other junctions on the A26 as it passes through Lewes.
- 9.1.8 It should be noted that the parish boundary separating Ringmer (and thus the Neighbourhood Plan area) from Lewes town passes through the Earwig Corner B2192/A26 junction. The other A26 junctions referred to and the A26/A27 junction at Southerham are not within the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan area. The A26/A27 junction forms part of the main trunk road network managed by the Highways Agency.
- 9.1.9 Throughout the community engagement process residents have shown great concern at the potential impact of additional Ringmer development on the local infrastructure. Over 90% of residents present at consultation meeting no.4 in Dec 2011 considered the capacity of the main road network a key infrastructure issue for Ringmer. The impact of additional residential development on the main road network, in particular Earwig Corner and the other A26 junctions, was one of the most frequently expressed concerns in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and also in the Regulation 14 consultation. In the Regulation 14 consultation policy 9.1 was supported, or considered too weak, by the

South Downs Society, the North Ringmer Residents Group and 7 residents. East Sussex County Council felt that the references to past (failed) solutions to find a solution to this problem were 'quite harsh' (though they were derived in the main from studies carried out by the council's own experts) and proposed that the policy should include a requirement that new development in Ringmer should be expected to contribute financially 'to any agreed scheme for improvement'. Lewes D.C. responded that they recognised the traffic issues, including the specific issues at Earwig Corner, which indeed feature in all their own Core Strategy iterations. They also noted that the junctions other than Earwig Corner lay outside the Ringmer Neighbourhood Area. A developer made the comment that transport issues were a matter for the highway authority, not the parish council.

9.2 Evidence collected about the local road network within Ringmer parish

- 9.2.1 There are a variety of local roads within Ringmer parish, ranging from traditional country lanes and the secondary routes to Glynde and Barcombe, to modern estate roads serving 20th and 21st century development. In some cases former country lanes, such as Gote Lane, Harrisons Lane, Church Hill/Ham Lane and Bishops Lane, are now used as secondary routes or for access to modern housing developments, or entrance to and exit from the village, without ever having been upgraded to the standard appropriate for their new role. The unimproved nature of these quite heavily used lanes makes an important contribution to Ringmer's 'village feel', at the cost of some potential risk to road safety.
- 9.2.2 The local road network within Ringmer village and the Broyleside also has a number of problematic areas. In many cases the roads themselves would be perfectly adequate for their purpose if they were not used for on-road parking by residents. This may be because the houses were built prior to 1965 for people with local employment and no expectation of car ownership (e.g. Harrisons Lane running up to the Ringmer Primary and Nursery Schools); because houses built 1965-1975 for commuters failed to anticipate the multiple car ownership common today (e.g. Ballard Drive, Christie Avenue, Mill Road and many others); or because houses were built in the 21st century with nationally-imposed maximum parking provision below actual car ownership levels in an area like Ringmer (e.g. Tilekiln, The Forges). Generally little can now be done to remedy this problem, which can be sufficiently severe to force emergency vehicles, buses and delivery vehicles to mount and damage grass verges or, in some cases, prevent their access altogether. Successful employment developments recruiting staff who commute to Ringmer have on occasion caused similar problems. To avoid exacerbating this problem it is essential that all future residential, commercial and leisure development must make provision for adequate off-road parking [see section 4.6].
- 9.2.3 There is a specific problem that affects two local road systems within Ringmer village: Bishops Lane/Norlington Lane/Back Green/Ham Lane and Vicarage Way/Church Crescent/Church Hill/Ham Lane. Traffic heading from or through Ringmer village to Lewes, or to access the trunk road network at Southerham, would naturally use the B2192/A26 to do so. However, the experience of meeting long queues to join the A26 at Earwig Corner has led to many vehicles diverting via these narrow lanes to the A26, and thus gaining priority access to the Earwig Corner junction. The greater the problems experienced at Earwig Corner, the greater the incentive to divert in this way.
- 9.2.4 The northern section of Bishops Lane, between Christie Avenue and Norlington Lane, retains the appearance of a country lane, bounded by a rather overgrown ancient hedgerow on one side and a wooded green corridor along the other. This section of Bishops Lane also has heavy recreational use. There is no pavement, so pedestrians share the carriageway with vehicles. The central section of Bishops Lane bounds the Village Green, and its conservation area. However, Bishops Lane also carries quite heavy local traffic. It is the only access to the local road network for over 100 Delves

Estate households from Christie Avenue, Delves Way and Mildmay Close, in addition to the households resident in North Road, Green Close, Trinity Field, Bishops Close, Tilekiln and Bishops Lane itself – together about 10% of the households in Ringmer parish. The Delves Estate households are particularly likely to drive along the northern section when leaving home as North Road, the principal route used for returning, is one way. North Road, a narrow lane running across Ringmer Green that is affected by on-road parking, cannot readily be improved without damage to the conservation area, but is a busy access route for the Delves estate and housing in the central section of Bishops Lane with very limited capacity for additional traffic. It is unsuitable for large vehicles. Additionally Bishops Lane is the access route to the only significant business site in Ringmer village (Diplocks Business Park, EMP4), where several businesses need heavy goods vehicle access. In addition to Bishops Lane itself, additional traffic hazards are identified at the difficult Norlington Lane/Back Green/Ham Lane junctions at its northern end.

- 9.2.5 Through traffic diverting along Bishops Lane, and in particular such use of the lane by large vehicles, has been controlled by the introduction of artificial width restrictions. Large vehicles accessing Diplocks Business Park can only do so via the wider southern section of Bishops Lane. The parish council and the North Ringmer Residents Group consider this approach to have been successful and wish it to be retained. There is, however, an inherent tension between improving Bishops Lane to accommodate new development and discouraging its use by through commuter traffic. In discussions with East Sussex Highways we enquired what solutions were envisaged to enhance capacity without affecting residents' amenity, but were informed that this was an issue for the developer to resolve when an application was made. It is essential that any road improvements are not at the expense of the ancient hedgerow or the green corridor, which also serves as an important landscape screen for the Delves Estate.
- 9.2.6 Restrictions on Bishops Lane inevitably increase such diversions via the alternative Vicarage Way/Church Hill/Church Crescent route. This traffic, which includes buses and other large vehicles, passes through a narrow one-way system near Ringmer church, in the heart of the conservation area and at a location where several older houses and cottages have only on-road parking. Of the two routes connecting the B2192 and A26, this route has the safer and less inconvenient access to Ham Lane and thus the A26. New development on Bishops Lane will also increase traffic on the Norlington Lane/Church Hill/Church Crescent/Vicarage Way and on North Road. The minor roads within the Ringmer Green conservation area are subject to the saved and NPPF-compliant policy H7 of the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan which seeks to minimise traffic levels in conservation areas. Again, it is essential that new development should not be at the expense of road safety and the amenity of existing residents.
- 9.2.7 Throughout the community engagement process residents have shown great concern at the potential impact of additional Ringmer development on the local highway infrastructure. Over 90% of residents present at consultation meeting no.4 in Dec 2011 considered the capacity of the local road network a key infrastructure issue for Ringmer. In the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and in the Regulation 14 consultation there were many comments about the inadequacy of this aspect of infrastructure, with particular concerns about Bishops Lane, North Road, the lanes around the Back Green and Church Hill, Church Crescent and Vicarage Way.

9.3 Evidence collected about the provision of cycleways and safe routes for cycles and mobility scooters

- 9.3.1 The topography of Ringmer makes it suitable for cycling, and Lewes is within easy reach by bicycle. However, on the main roads such as the B2192, B2124 and A26 and in the narrow country lanes cyclists are at risk of having to travel dangerously close to motor traffic. While there are intrepid

cyclists who make regular use of this mode of transport, many others, less confident, are discouraged from using such sustainable transport by the lack of safe cycling routes. In particular, parents very rarely permit children living in one community but studying in the other to travel between Ringmer and Lewes by bicycle. The Lewes District Informal Recreational Space Study (2005) concluded that there was a need to address the issues of green travel within the parish, and between Ringmer and Lewes.

- 9.3.2 The provision of a safe cycleway, separate from the road, between Ringmer and Lewes has long been sought, and a start has now been made, with the construction of a new cycleway alongside the B2192 from Ringmer village towards Lewes. Only the first stage has been built, and it currently terminates at the Ringmer-Lewes parish boundary, close to the Lewes Downs SAC. Completion of this cycleway is a high priority, and funding for completion of the route to Lewes was awarded via the SDNP Authority in 2013 and the route is expected to be opened in 2015.
- 9.3.3 The Broyleside and Ringmer are within a very easy distance by bicycle and a safe off-road route, with safe crossing places, would be expected to increase dramatically the use of bicycles by both adults and children for travel between the two communities.
- 9.3.4 Mobility scooters are also widely used, especially within Ringmer village where care has been taken to ensure appropriate crossing points on the estate roads. Demographic projections suggest they will become even more common in the future. Many current scooters have the range to travel both between Ringmer village and the Broyleside and between Ringmer village and Lewes. Creation of off road-cycleways that can be shared with mobility scooters will open new transport opportunities to scooter users.
- 9.3.5 Many Ringmer employment sites are located in former farmyards in the rural areas of the parish. These sites are also within easy commuter-cycling distance from the two Ringmer settlements and from Lewes. Safe cycling routes would encourage such commuting, though marking dedicated cycle lanes along the wider sections of the main roads would probably be more realisable than creating off-road cycleways.
- 9.3.6 This policy received 100% support from those attending consultation meeting 4 in Dec 2011. It received few comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation. In the Regulation 14 consultation the policy was supported by Lewes District Council, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group. A District Councillor supported the completion of the Ringmer-Lewes cycleway, but considered a new cycleway linking Ringmer and the Broyleside a lower priority, as this section of the B2192 was subject to a 30 m.p.h. speed limit.

9.4 Evidence collected about road safety

- 9.4.1 The principal identified road safety hazards in Ringmer are:
- (i) the excessive speed of the heavy traffic through Ringmer village and the Broyleside on the B2192 and B2124;
 - (ii) the excessive speed of some drivers entering Ringmer village via Ham Lane and Church Hill and then encountering the pinch point at Church Crescent; and
 - (iii) pedestrians and mobility scooters crossing the B2192.
- 9.4.2 The local road safety organisation RADAR has been successful in drawing attention to the dangers created by the speed at which traffic travels along the B2192. Excessive speed of drivers entering Ringmer village from Lewes has been reduced by traffic calming measures, but there are no

equivalent traffic calming measures to reduce the speed of vehicles entering the Broyleside from the east along the B2192 or B2124, or those entering via Ham Lane. RADAR has led a campaign to moderate the speed of through traffic that has had significant success. Speeds remain too high, but repeated requests for reduced speed limits in different parts of Ringmer have failed to gain support from the highway authority. Access for local traffic onto the B2192 is unsafe at locations in the eastern section of Ringmer village and at the Broyleside where traffic speeds are currently excessive.

- 9.4.3 It remains an issue that many residents, including elderly residents and families with children, live north of the B2192 while all shops, both schools and most services lie to its south. A number of potential new development sites lie north of the B2192 or B2124. There is one light-controlled crossing at the west end of the village green, opposite Ringmer Village Hall, and another Pelican crossing at the Forges, but no safe crossing at the locations where children and young people from the Broyleside or the northern section of Ringmer village must cross the B2192 to access the schools. A lollipop lady who used to supervise children crossing the road was not replaced when she retired some years ago. Traffic studies have shown that it would be safe to provide a pedestrian crossing at the location formerly supervised by the lollipop lady. Further east along the B2192 traffic speeds are higher (above the existing speed limits) and traffic calming measures may be necessary to allow safe crossing.
- 9.4.4. There are two other particular road safety blackspots. One is at Upper Stoneham, on the A26 about 400m north of Earwig Corner. Here the relatively wide and straight A26 narrows and bends between cottages, at the site of a former turnpike Paygate. There have been several serious accidents here (the two most recent in Aug 2013), and the former Paygate Cottage, now a private residence that projects towards the roadway, and its immediate neighbours have been hit and severely damaged by vehicles on multiple occasions. There are many near misses. A 50 mph speed limit has not resolved the problem. The second is where the B2192 enters Ringmer from Lewes, at the site of another former turnpike gate, and the B2912 bends quite sharply to the left, while the minor road to Glyndebourne branches off to the right via a complicated junction. The speed limit of 40 mph, starting 100m before the junction/corner, has not prevented a number of vehicles approaching Ringmer from Lewes failing to take the corner, and colliding with oncoming vehicles leaving Ringmer, or garden walls on the offside of the roadway.
- 9.4.5 The proposed road safety policies received support from 95% of those attending consultation meeting 4 in Dec 2011. Additional evidence of the importance of road safety to Ringmer residents was provided by the Gleeson-sponsored face-to-face survey of 100 Broyleside residents, almost all of whom live north of the B2192, in Jun 2013. When asked about the perceived value of financial contributions provided by developers under s.106 agreements, the commonest response was not one of those prompted, but write-in support for a safe pedestrian crossing over the B2192 near Ringmer Community College. In the Regulation 14 consultation this policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group but some reservations were expressed by both Lewes District Council and East Sussex County Council.

9.5 Evidence collected about public transport

- 9.5.1 There has never been any railway service within Ringmer parish. Historically Ringmer was served by a railway station 1.8 miles from Ringmer village and just across the western parish boundary at Barcombe Mills, but this was on the Lewes-Uckfield railway, closed in 1969. Local pressure groups supported by the District and County Councils have conducted intensive campaigns to re-open this railway, and the track bed has been largely conserved. However, a 2008 study concluded that re-opening would be uneconomic. It is thus highly unlikely that this service will be re-opened by 2030

and, even if it were, no guarantee that the railway station at Barcombe Mills, now in private hands, would be reinstated. The nearest active railway station to Ringmer is at Glynde, but there is no public road transport service between Ringmer and Glynde and the rail service from Glynde is limited. The local transport hub is Lewes, and the great majority of Ringmer residents wishing to access the railway network must first travel by road to Lewes. Buses from Ringmer to Lewes and Brighton are not routed via Lewes station. Station car parking at Lewes is available but expensive.

9.5.2 Ringmer is served by bus services.

9.5.3 The Brighton & Hove no.28 bus runs from the Broyleside via Ringmer village and Lewes to central Brighton. This journey is scheduled to take just under 1 hour, though peak hour queues for Earwig Corner and in Lewes town render the timing uncertain. Attempts in the past decade to plan a priority bus lane on the B2192 were discontinued as impracticable. The first service leaves the Broyleside at 6.20 a.m. and the last leaves central Brighton at 11 p.m. During the working day there are two buses per hour, but early morning, evening and Sunday services are irregular and less frequent. This is, by village standards, a good bus service, though some evening services are currently under threat.

9.5.3 The Brighton & Hove no.29 bus runs from Tunbridge Wells and Uckfield to Brighton. Again, during the working day there are two buses per hour, travelling down the A26 through the western part of Ringmer parish. They do not serve Ringmer village or the Broyleside.

9.5.4 Both services include some variations. A few early morning and all late evening 28 buses extend to Uckfield. One morning and one evening weekday 29 bus diverts via Ham Lane through Ringmer village. Overall the bus service to Uckfield is not adequate enough to encourage those wishing to visit this nearby town to use public transport. There is an additional supported service linking Ringmer to Hailsham and Eastbourne and diverting through Ringmer village, but just a handful of buses per day and a complex pattern of routes. This is a subsidised service, and there is a current consultation on a proposal to change the frequency of this service from weekdays to two days each week. There are also some school buses providing services to and from Ringmer Community College. Residents do not presently consider it practical to travel by bus to employment, shops or services at locations other than Lewes, Falmer or Brighton. It is not possible to access the Raystede Animal Welfare Centre, visited by 150,000 visitors per year, by bus. There is a bus stop directly outside, but no buses stop there during the hours that Raystede is open.

9.6 Evidence collected about primary and nursery education

9.6.1 NPPF paragraph 72 requires that great importance should be attached to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available. Ringmer Primary School, Harrisons Lane, in Ringmer village [www.ringmer-pri.e-sussex.sch.uk], provides primary education for all Ringmer children who seek it. It is the successor of the Ringmer Board School (opened 1879), Ringmer Council School and Ringmer Elementary School, all of which operated from a Victorian school building on Lewes Road. A separate Infants School was opened on Harrisons Lane in 1970, to accommodate a burgeoning school population following rapid house building, primarily for new young families, and to accommodate an annual school entry that rose to 75 per year in the 1970s. By the 1990s an ageing population was producing only 25-30 entrants per year, and the Victorian school was closed and demolished, with the entire school concentrated at a modernised but smaller school building on Harrisons Lane, developed from the Infants School. This re-modelled school can accommodate an entry of 30 children (1 class) per year. Re-balancing the village population demographic, in accord with the objectives of the 2003 Ringmer Village Plan, has resulted in a rebound in primary school recruitment, reaching 45 children in Sep 2011 and an average of close to 40 entrants per year in the

3 years leading up to summer 2013. There are 53 new entrants for 2014. If this trend is maintained, as the current pre-school population suggests it will be, additional primary school capacity will be necessary to accommodate even the current population. New family housing is likely to attract a disproportionate number of new families with primary school age children, and the head teacher and governors have expressed concern about the impact on the primary school. Planning permission was given in 2012 for an additional temporary mobile classroom, and this was installed in 2013. The school currently employs a total of about 45 staff.

- 9.6.2 The East Sussex County Council report '*School Organisation in East Sussex*' (Oct 2012) projects the availability of places in each East Sussex school forward to the 2016/7 school year, based primarily on the known birth rates in each catchment area. Data for Ringmer Primary School are shown in table 8.2 and discussed in paragraph 8.2.14. The data show an expected shortage of half a reception class for each year from 2013/4 to 2015/6. This is based on the existing number of Ringmer residents. The projection for 2016/7 is for a shortage of a full reception class, making allowance for the development of some new housing in Ringmer by that date. The shortage of primary school places in Ringmer is recognised in the Lewes District Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2012), p.21 & p.60, but only the increase to 1.5 class entry, rather than 2 class entry, is being planned for.
- 9.6.3 East Sussex County Council formally consulted in Jun-24 Jul 2013 on a proposal to expand the Primary School building, to increase its capacity sufficiently to increase the present annual entry of 30 to 45 (from a 1 class entry to 1.5 class entry; in total 7 classes to 11). Ringmer parish council supports this proposal, as do the head teacher and governing body [see article by head teacher Dave Evans in the Aug 2013 *Ringmer Parish Magazine*]. A decision to proceed with the proposed expansion to allow a 1.5 class entry has been made, and an exhibition of the design of the proposed new school was held in Jul 2014, but the most rapid programme of delivery would not see the new school completed until the 2015/6 school year. It should be noted that the level of additional provision proposed is that required to meet existing demand. The proposed housing total for delivery in phase 1 of this Neighbourhood Plan would add only 2.5% to Ringmer's housing stock and should be accommodated within the development proposed to be delivered by 2015/6.
- 9.6.4 However, the delivery of new housing equivalent to a further 6% of Ringmer's current housing stock in phase 2 will prove challenging to accommodate within the provision presently proposed, and '*School Organisation in East Sussex*' projects additional provision, to 2-class entry, will be required at this time. As noted above, new family housing is likely to attract a disproportionate number of incoming families with primary school age children. The expanded primary school provision presently under consideration would certainly **not** be adequate to accommodate new development on any larger scale than that envisaged in this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 9.6.5 We thus conclude that to meet the level of development proposed in this Neighbourhood Plan it will be necessary to complete a second phase of expansion of the Primary School, to allow for a 2-class entry (a capacity that was available in Ringmer prior to the 1993 reorganisation). We were assured that the building exhibited in Jul 2014 is designed to be extendable to a 2-class entry, and has the central facilities for a school of that size. The head teacher and East Sussex County Council consider that this can be accommodated within the present primary school site. This would be challenging to achieve, but we accept their judgement. There is no time schedule for the delivery of a 2-class entry school.
- 9.6.6 Such an expansion will exacerbate an additional problem, the impact of the delivery and collection of children from the school by private car at the beginning and end of the school day. As parents are not permitted to take their cars into school premises, this already causes considerable daily

congestion on Harrisons Lane and in other nearby roads, and increased impact in line with the projected expansion would not be acceptable. A solution must be included within the expansion plans. Many parents deliver their children to school by car because this is the first step in their commute to their employment elsewhere, so while increasing the proportion of children walking to school would be desirable, it may not be realistic.

- 9.6.7 It should be noted that any increase in the proposed new housing development in Ringmer beyond that envisaged in this Neighbourhood Plan would have one of two consequences. Either a new, larger primary school would be required on a new, larger site, or a proportion of Ringmer children would have to be educated outside Ringmer. The latter solution is neither acceptable nor practicable. The fact that all village children can attend the same village school is a central element in social cohesion and the maintenance of 'village feel'. Nearby village schools and schools in Lewes lack spare capacity. In addition to a strongly negative impact on 'village feel', the daily transport of children to Lewes schools would add unacceptably and unsustainably to the transport problems noted in section 9.1 above. It would be very poor value for public money to invest in additional accommodation on Harrisons Lane in the short term, only to discover that a new school would be necessary a few years later.
- 9.6.8 The Ringmer Nursery School [www.ringmernursery.org.uk] is an independent not-for-profit charitable organisation that operates from the same premises as Ringmer Primary School (for which it pays rent and has a seven-year lease), taking children from the age of 2½. The co-location of these two organisations is greatly appreciated by parents, and offers very useful experience for children, helping their preparation for starting school at the age of 5. The Primary School head teacher and governing body are committed to maintaining this relationship. The number of children in the Nursery School rises during the school year, in 2011 reaching a maximum of 70. Intakes are rising steadily, with the relatively new (2005) Forges development contributing a disproportionate share of children. The Nursery School receives a significant proportion of its funding from East Sussex County Council under the Early Years entitlement for Nursery Education. The Nursery School employs a total of 9 staff and has two regular volunteers. The entire staff, including the head, are Ringmer residents. The school finds it relatively easy to recruit suitable new staff when this is necessary. The Nursery School also takes NVQ students from Sussex Downs College, Lewes, for work experience when asked, and these students are also almost always Ringmer residents. The Nursery School is concerned that its current lease may not be renewed by East Sussex County Council if Primary School enrolment continues to increase. There seemed to be a difference of view between East Sussex County Council staff and local residents as to whether there was any present or projected shortage in nursery school provision. Village experience is that a significant proportion of the children entitled to 15 hr/week early years education in Ringmer were not able to access it because of lack of capacity. The county council took the view that any shortage could be accommodated by moving away from the model of delivering nursery provision in parallel with the school day and school year to a new model in which the nursery was open for more hours per day and a larger number of weeks per year, thus accommodating additional children. This model was not favoured by parents, especially those with both school and nursery age children.
- 9.6.9 There is also an active 'Tiddlers & Toddlers' group for parents or carers with younger children that meets two mornings per week in Ringmer Village Hall [www.tiddlersandtoddlers.org.uk]. This is a voluntary group. Hollyhocks Montessori Playschool, opened in 1994, is an independent sector organisation that operates (seven sessions per week) from a rural farmhouse and garden in Wellingham Lane. There are 32 children attending, aged 2-5, though no more than 16 at any one time.

- 9.6.10 There is a Children's Centre in Ringmer, located in a new purpose-built building within the Ringmer Community College campus. This serves a wide rural area to the north, east and south of Ringmer, an area that includes 600-700 children of the relevant ages, but in practice most users come from Ringmer or the villages served by the B2192 and B2124. The Children's Centre, run by East Sussex County Council, has adequate capacity.
- 9.6.11 The shortage of places at Ringmer Primary School, and the difficulties that the school had experienced in accommodating the large recent intakes, was drawn to our attention at consultation meeting 4 by a primary school governor. She noted that the Primary School 2010 intake included 50 rising fives, compared to a planned capacity of 30. In their responses to the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan several residents commented on the shortage of places at Ringmer Primary School and in support of the proposed policy. While rising fives resident in Ringmer are guaranteed a place at the school, some incoming children of primary school age have been refused places because of lack of capacity, and this has caused considerable difficulty for their families. Similar comments, emphasising the impact of new development on primary school capacity, have been made by many Ringmer residents in their comments on the successive iterations of the Core Strategy. In their responses to the Regulation 14 consultation the head teacher and East Sussex County Council acknowledged that the capacity of the school was an important issue but commented that it would be possible to extend the school within its existing site, as noted above. The county council also commented that provision should be made for new development to contribute financially to the provision of extra primary school accommodation. The chair of the Primary School governors and a District Councillor both pointed out that the expansion currently planned for 2015/6 was to meet existing need, and that a further expansion to 2-class entry would be required to accommodate the children of the new development planned for phases 2 and 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan. There were no comments from residents on the policy proposed.

9.7 Evidence collected about secondary and further education and services for young people

- 9.7.1 Secondary and further education in Ringmer is provided by Ringmer Community College and Sixth Form, a very successful establishment serving a wide rural area. The College, which has recently attained Academy status, is one of Ringmer's largest employers and a principal contributor to Ringmer's role as a rural service centre. Traditionally a provider of comprehensive 11-16 education, in 2010 it added a new sixth form block. In 2012 it has 630 students aged 11-16 and 70 students aged 16-19. *'School Organisation in East Sussex'* (Oct 2012) notes that there are currently surplus places at Ringmer Community College and does not project any capacity issues up to 2016/7. Only about 20% of entrants to the Community College have home addresses in Ringmer, and it seems likely that under present policies, and at any imaginable level of future Ringmer development, places will be available to all students resident in Ringmer who desire them. The Academy employs 123 staff, including 16 Ringmer residents. The Community College has good academic facilities but a shortage of sports pitches and facilities. However, given the low proportion of students who live in Ringmer, any contributions from new development to remedy this deficiency would have to be raised over a much wider area than Ringmer parish.
- 9.7.2 Ringmer has, from time to time, experienced significant levels of nuisance and petty vandalism attributed principally to young people. A youth club managed on a voluntary basis for many years from premises in Anchor Field was succeeded by a professional service youth managed by East Sussex County Council from the Community College. The Anchor Field youth club building has now been demolished. Unfortunately reductions in County Council funding led to the withdrawal of their Ringmer youth service in 2011. This professional service has not been replaced by voluntary sector provision. Such provision would be welcomed.

9.7.3 The proposed policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation, apart from the support of the North Ringmer Residents Group.

9.8 Evidence collected about health service provision

9.8.1 **Acute care provision.** The nearest acute hospital services (including A&E and maternity units) are in Brighton, Haywards Heath and Eastbourne, each about 30 min away by private car except at peak travel hours. None are easy for ill or disabled people to access by public transport. There are community hospital services available more locally, at Lewes and Uckfield. While acute services are under stress, there is no evidence to suggest that further development at Ringmer on the scale currently proposed would exacerbate the current situation.

9.8.2 **Primary care provision.** Primary care provision in Ringmer parish is provided principally by the Anchor Field branch surgery of the River Lodge primary care practice, whose main surgery is in Lewes. A new, enlarged, purpose-built health centre for the practice was opened in Anchor Field in 2009. Provision of services in Ringmer reduces the need for Ringmer residents, and residents of other nearby villages, to travel to Lewes for consultation and treatment.

9.8.3 River Lodge practice serves 10,507 people [April 2012] of whom 3,789 [36%] have Ringmer addresses. This suggests that over 80% of Ringmer residents are registered with this practice. The 8 practice doctors currently provide in total 47 clinical sessions per week, of which 20 sessions [43%] are provided in Ringmer. The practice area is a defined rural area around Lewes, including several smaller villages (Laughton, Barcombe, Glynde) that would naturally look to Ringmer as their rural service centre. Ringmer patients are normally offered appointments in Ringmer, though they may need to travel to Lewes for emergency appointments (there is a single duty doctor for emergencies, who may be at Lewes), or if they wish to see a specific doctor whose clinics are held there. Reciprocally, some Lewes patients choose to access services at Ringmer. The practice provides primary care services to the care homes in Ringmer. The practice list is always open to new residents within the practice area.

9.8.4 An 12% increase in Ringmer household number is anticipated over the period to 2030. An increased proportion of elderly and very elderly residents is projected, and both housing provision and care provision in Ringmer will reflect this. The PSCSFA is also likely to project an increase in the number of households in Lewes, but little if any increase in the smaller villages around Ringmer. While the practice would need to recruit additional clinical staff to meet a significant increase in demand, there is sufficient physical capacity at Ringmer to meet any likely increase in demand to 2030. The Ringmer health centre has 4 consulting rooms available, of which only 2, at most 3, are currently used for medical consultations at any one time.

9.8.5 NHS modernisation plans include the intention to provide additional services close to the patient. Some such services are already being provided by the practice and space and facilities are available in Ringmer to support the continuation of this trend. The Ringmer health centre has also been able to offer some facilities to other providers, such as 'Health in Mind' counsellors. There is less spare physical capacity at the practice's Lewes surgery, but there is potential for expansion there should demand increase.

9.8.6 **Dental care provision.** There is one dental practice in Ringmer Village, the Ringmer Dental Surgery. The practice has two dentists and a dental hygienist, employing a total of 8 staff (3 resident in Ringmer). There are about 5,000 patients on the practice list, about half of them resident in

Ringmer. The remainder come from a wide local area, including Lewes and, for historical reasons, Seaford. Many Ringmer patients must thus obtain their dental treatment elsewhere. The practice takes NHS patients, but there is quite a long waiting list. There is no capacity for expansion at the premises, on which Dr Mallon holds a long lease. There is thus capacity for additional dental provision (particularly NHS dental provision) in Ringmer, which would add to Ringmer's role as a rural service centre.

- 9.8.7 **Other health care provision.** There is a pharmacy in Ringmer, but there is no optician, though there are several in Lewes. A range of alternative health services are available, including those offered by the Ringmer branch of the Carlton Clinic [www.carlton-clinic.net]. There is a veterinary practice in the Ringmer Shopping Precinct, a branch of the Cliffe Veterinary Practice, Lewes.
- 9.8.8 Comments received in the initial round of community engagement included some dissatisfaction with the provision of primary care services in Ringmer, but these related to inadequacy of service provision (a matter for the practice concerned, not a planning matter), rather than to the premises available from which provision is made. The proposed policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation, apart from the support of the North Ringmer Residents Group.

9.9 Evidence collected about water supply

- 9.9.1 Drinking water is supplied to Ringmer by South East Water. This company has a large water treatment works within Ringmer parish at Barcombe Mills that supplies water to large areas of East & West Sussex. Adjoining this is a small holding reservoir that straddles the Ringmer-Barcombe parish boundary. The company abstracts water to serve the water treatment works from a nearby source on the river Ouse, and the works is also connected both to Arlington reservoir (on the river Cuckmere) and to chalk groundwater sources in the Downs.
- 9.9.2 The South East in general, and the water resource zone that includes Ringmer (South East Water WR22) in particular, are highly water-stressed areas. In preparing its 2014 Water Resources Management Plan South East Water considered a range of alternative options for enhancing water provision to the Barcombe Mills water treatment works and enhancing the capacity of the works itself. The WRMP14, which has now been approved, proposes improvements to the operating efficiency of the Barcombe Mills water treatment works at an early stage in the plan; increased provision of water to the water treatment works by recycling purified water from the Southern Water waste water treatment works at Peacehaven in the 2020s; and a further increase in provision from a second storage reservoir at Arlington in the 2030s. If either of these proposals were to fail, there might be a contingent reserve requirement for an alternative storage reservoir to serve the Ouse, and this might be located in Ringmer. However, the controversial suggestion in the WRMP09 that this might be at Clay Hill, immediately adjacent to the Plashett Wood ancient woodland SSSI, has now been discarded. No new Ringmer reservoir is expected to be needed within the period of this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 9.9.3 Proposals at consultation meeting 4 in Dec 2011 envisaged that South East Water might wish to extend their holding reservoir near their Barcombe Mills water treatment works. This was supported by about 80% of those attending, but it has since become clear that this is not part of the company's plans. As Ringmer Parish Council has been represented on the company's environmental focus group, we have been aware of their plans for future development, and the present policy is in conformity with the proposals in the approved WRMP14. This policy received few comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation. A District Councillor suggested that there should be a requirement for improved

water efficiency in new development, but this was considered to be more appropriate for inclusion in higher level policy.

9.10 Evidence collected about drainage & sewerage

9.10.1 Drainage and sewerage in Ringmer is the responsibility of Southern Water. Mains drainage is available in Ringmer village and the Broyleside, served by the main Ringmer sewage works and also in a small area around the Holdings and the Cock Inn that has a separate sewage system, but not in most rural areas of the parish.

The Neaves Lane, Ringmer, Waste Water Treatment Works

9.10.2 The Ringmer sewage works, on Neaves Lane, was first developed in 1904, and drains into Glynde Reach. After various intermediate developments it was refurbished and substantially extended in 1970 to serve a population of up to 4,600. The 2011 census population for Ringmer was 4,648. The sewage works serves some properties in Glynde parish as well as in Ringmer. Evidence from the Southern Water Development Manager for Asset Management in Jan 2012 was that the sewage works then had headroom in its licence for only 40 additional households, i.e. that it was operating at 98% of capacity. Since then there have been a small number of new planning permissions for residential development granted, plus also an increase in the size of the 39 Harvard Road care home site to 60 beds, and a quite substantial new office development in the Broyle Business Area. The issue, and the problems that it creates, are recognised in the Lewes District Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2012), p.60-61.

9.10.3 There are assumptions and approximations in the calculations that underpin this assessment, but there seems no room for doubt that this sewage works is operating at close to maximum load and represents, until upgraded, a serious constraint to further development in Ringmer. The 2009 East Sussex Wastewater Management Study, commissioned from Scott Wilson Ltd by the county council, identified Glynde Reach as the most polluted river in the county, with the pollution responsible for the poor quality of its aquatic life. Evidence in the Lewes D.C. sustainability appraisal published in 2014 in association with the PSCSFA noted that the District's rivers were far below average by all three of the Environment Agency's criteria, with water quality in Table 8 having fallen by over 50% between 2009 and 2013. The reported combination in Glynde Reach of floating weeds, low levels of dissolved oxygen, poor fish populations and excess phosphates are all indicative of too much 'biological nutriment' entering this river. Fishermen no longer fish there and a farmer whose land borders the river told us that he took care to ensure that his livestock had no access to its water. The Environment Agency's '*What's in your backyard?*' website rates the current water quality of Glynde Reach as 'Poor' and its forecast future water quality for 2015 also as 'Poor'. It is common ground that the Neaves Lane sewage works is a major contributor to this situation.

9.10.4 It is considered likely that a licence for a larger volume of effluent from the Ringmer sewage works would be granted by the Environment Agency only if its effluent water quality was improved. This will require investment in new equipment. This is identified as a current constraint on further development in Ringmer in the Lewes District PSCS and PSCSFA, and the SHLAAs. A bid to the regulator for the necessary investment funds was expected to be included in the Southern Water 2014 business plan, and the PSCS & PSCSFA assume that if the bid is approved by the regulator work could then be completed by 2015 or 2016. Evidence given to us by Southern Water is broadly similar but not identical to that provided by planning officers; it was confirmed that an investment scheme for the company's Ringmer waste water treatment works was included in the company's business plan for 2014, and noted that if this scheme were confirmed it would deliver investment in

the period between 2015 and 2020. The intention was that this would be delivered in time to ensure systems could cope with additional wastewater flows from new customers.

- 9.10.5 It was also noted that there might also be a need to improve the local river environment to comply with the Water Framework Directive, and that this might, quite independently, require investment to upgrade the Neaves Lane, Ringmer, sewage works. There would need to be a partnership with other stakeholders, such as riparian farmers. Southern Water would be investigating this in the years ahead, in partnership with the Environment Agency, to confirm a long-term plan but an environmental need to upgrade the Neaves lane sewage works has already been identified. This is to reduce the amount of phosphates contained in the treated wastewater discharged into the Glynde Reach to help improve the hydro-ecology of this watercourse. The approach will be finalised with the EA in early 2016. This has been included in the new Southern Water business plan for 2015 -2020 as the current information the company has indicates it will be required. This would seem entirely necessary in view of the poor, and rapidly declining, quality of the river water in Glynde Reach noted above.

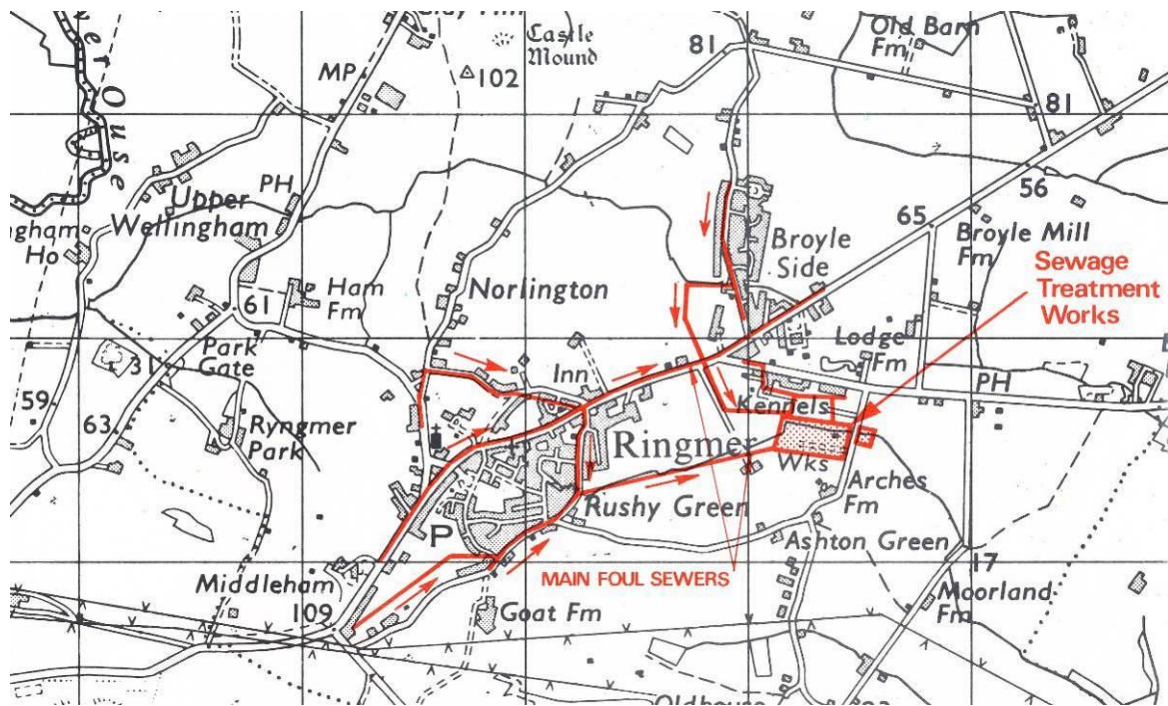
The Holdings, Ringmer, Waste Water Treatment Works

- 9.10.6 There is a second very small sewerage system (apparently unknown to the District Council planning department) serving a small number of residential properties at the Holdings, Old Uckfield Road, and the Cock Inn. This drains into the Norlington Stream, also identified in the 2009 Wastewater Management Study as suffering from pollution issues. An extension proposed to the employment area EMP19 would be in the area served by this sewerage system. Southern Water were unable to identify for us either the design capacity of this system or its current load, but noted an application to connect new commercial development would only be permitted if investigation were to show that the necessary capacity was available. We were informed in Sep 2013 that there were no plans for further investment in this system.

Drains and sewers within Ringmer

- 9.10.7 While the capacity of the main sewage works serving Ringmer village and the Broyleside is one important infrastructure constraint for development in the area served, in addition we received very extensive, but perhaps more controversial, evidence from residents that there are also serious inadequacies in the main and local sewers that drain from at least some parts of Ringmer village to the Ringmer sewage works. There were numerous reports from residents that the old main sewer system along the B2192 has struggled to cope in recent years, especially since the development of the Forges estate in 2004-5. Local evidence is that sewage from side branches can struggle to access this main sewer at times of heavy load – an affected parish councillor was informed by Southern Water operational staff that this was a well-known problem. There has been recurrent flooding from the main foul sewer serving the Delves Estate and Bishops Lane where it passes through Green Close, prior to its joining the main sewer passing down the Lewes Road. This has been ascribed by affected residents who carried out long and detailed investigations to excessive pressure in the main Lewes Road sewer preventing sewage from the Bishops Lane side branch entering. A large storage tank scheme was installed under Green Close to resolve this problem in 2006/7. Residents do not regard this as having resolved the problem, and have reported on-going foul sewage flooding on several occasions since. Southern Water respond that there have been only four sewerage failures in Green Close reported since this scheme was completed, and they ascribe these to ‘operational issues’, such as sewer blockage due to fat, rather than hydraulic overload.
- 9.10.8 A second major sewer serving the main 1960s developments in the southern parts of Ringmer village passes along Gote Lane, past the primary school, and then across farmland past

Chamberlaines Farmhouse to the sewage works. While there have been no complaints about the operation of this sewer within Ringmer village, the owner of Chamberlaines Farmhouse has reported that there have been failures resulting in discharges onto the farmland in the neighbourhood of his house on a number of occasions, including in 2014. These failures are confirmed by Southern Water records. The company report that mitigation plans have been implemented, and that potential longer-term solutions are being investigated. We were told in Sep 2013 that no specific investment in Ringmer sewers was included in Southern Water's 2015-2020 business plan, but that there were funded plans for significant investment in the general upgrade and repair of sewers across the company's network, but that this was not as yet allocated to specific locations. Future investment in the period between 2015 and 2020 would depend on prioritisation, which in turn would be based on the regulator's response to the business plan.



Ringmer sewerage system from 'Ringmer Sewage Treatment Works', (1972). The modern map shows additional detail and routes within housing estates, but still serves the same areas of the parish.

Surface Water Flooding

9.10.9 During the 2000 floods, when Lewes town experienced extensive flooding, about 40 Ringmer properties suffered significant flood damage due to run-off flooding. The largest single group affected were in the Broyleside, close to where the Norlington Stream crosses Broyle Lane. There has been a long history of recurrent flooding at this location, affecting an area of surrounding countryside as well as the residential area. The problem is believed to be exacerbated by the faster run off created by development of the Broyle Industrial Estates, which are upstream on the Norlington Stream. The Norlington Stream, while nominally the responsibility of riparian owners, has in practice been maintained by the Environment Agency. Other flooding in 2000 affected a number of individual properties, particularly older roadside properties. Successive resurfacing has led to the road being higher than the surrounding ground level, and the drainage proved inadequate to cope with the excessive rain running off the road. In a few cases blocked drains or culverts flooded individual properties. A few properties in western Ringmer lie within the Ouse flood plain, though most of those flooded in 2000 are now protected by bunds.

9.10.10 Much of the developed area of Ringmer village is low lying, with a water table that rises to or above ground level in wet periods. Especially on the gault clay on which most of Ringmer village is built, natural drainage is extremely poor.

Overview

9.10.11 The Steering Group concluded that the capacity of the main sewage works serving Ringmer village and the Broyleside is currently an important infrastructure constraint for development in the area served. Given the very poor, and rapidly declining, water quality in Glynde Reach, it is essential that the sewage works is upgraded prior to the start of the development planned for phase 2 of this Neighbourhood Plan. There are, additionally, concerns about the capacity of the foul drains connecting existing development in Ringmer village to this sewage works.

9.10.12 The draft policy on drainage and sewerage, and to avoid flooding, was supported by 100% of respondents attending the Exhibition. Resident responses to both the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and the Regulation 14 consultation repeatedly emphasised the importance of effective drainage and a sewage works with adequate capacity. Southern Water responded to both consultations and the wording of policy 9.10 is in accordance with their recommendations.

9.10.13 Dr Sarah Harrison, commenting on the PSCS on behalf of Southern Water, noted, in response to the only specific Ringmer development suggested there [on Bishops Lane], that there was currently insufficient underground sewerage capacity to accommodate development proposed for this site. She proposed an amendment that would have had the effect of deferring development until adequate capacity was available [PSCS consultation response 1.14, available on www.lewes.gov.uk]. The Environment Agency also commented that a specific flood risk assessment would be required for this same site [PSCS consultation response 1.9, submitted by Emma Whittaker on behalf of the Environment Agency]. These comments are in conformity with NPPF paras.99-104.

9.11 Evidence collected about electricity and gas supply

9.11.1 Electricity is available throughout Ringmer parish. There is a 132 kV electricity substation in Ringmer parish, with associated office facilities. This substation lies within the SDNP. Within the parts of Ringmer village and the Broyleside developed since the 1960s electricity supplies are generally distributed through underground cables, but in some peripheral areas of the settlements, and throughout the rural area, they are distributed via overhead lines. The overhead lines are characterised by a higher incidence of interruptions of supply. We have received little other evidence to suggest that the current services are other than adequate for the areas that they serve, or that they would have any difficulty in providing services for any new developments envisaged in the areas currently served or nearby. One commercial company complained of delays in providing specific services needed by their business.

9.11.2 There are gas mains serving Ringmer village and the Broyleside, but not the rural areas. It appears to be accepted that the provision of mains gas to most rural areas of the parish is likely to remain uneconomic.

9.11.3 This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group but received no other comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

9.12 Evidence collected about waste disposal and recycling

- 9.12.1 Waste collection in Ringmer from domestic premises is the responsibility of Lewes District Council [see www.lewes.gov.uk], while its disposal is the responsibility of East Sussex County Council. There is a weekly kerbside collection of general household waste and food waste, and a fortnightly kerbside collection of partially sorted recyclable household waste, including waste paper, cardboard, glass bottles, metal cans, aluminium foil, plastic bottles, batteries and textiles using a black box/white bag system. The range of items collected is continually reviewed and doorstep collection of cardboard and food waste has been added from 2013. Home composters are available at a price subsidised by the District Council. Garden waste can be collected by a private sector contractor at a fee. Used furniture in good condition is collected by Furniture Now [www.furniturenow.co.uk], and large items will be collected, for a fee, by Lewes District Council.
- 9.12.2 There is a small recycling centre at Anchor Field in Ringmer village, located inconveniently close to the Ringmer Health Centre and the skateboard park. In addition to the materials noted above, this also collects clothing in good condition and small electrical appliances. Other items, including larger electrical appliances and building materials, can be taken for disposal or recycling to the Household Recycling Centre, Ham Lane, Lewes. Green waste can also be taken to this Recycling Centre. This destination is not accessible by public transport, nor would the materials concerned be acceptable on a bus, so this requires an 8 mile round trip by private car, passing through the most congested and polluted roads in central Lewes, where unacceptably poor air quality is recognised as a significant issue. An experimental collection of green waste from Anchor Field on 7 Jul 2012 for disposal at the large scale commercial composting facility operated by KPS Composting [www.kpscomposting.co.uk] in the adjoining parish of Isfield was sponsored by Ringmer parish council, and demonstrated a strong local demand for a service that would avoid causing unnecessary pollution in Lewes.
- 9.12.3 Overall the proportion of waste recycled has increased substantially in the past decade, but there are still opportunities for further improvement. Until 2014 the kerbside recycling collection is taken by short-range electric vehicles to a small recycling centre in a former domestic garage block in Anchor Field, where the sorting process caused some nuisance to local residents. A proposal that there should be a new recycling centre in Ringmer, to replace all the present facilities in Anchor Field, was supported by 86% of respondents at the Exhibition, but a significant minority of residents were opposed to this. A manned centre might not prove sustainable, and the present location of the collection facilities was thought convenient. This policy was then refined, to retain the present Anchor Field collection point but to relocate the sorting facility for material from the doorstep collections. While there are a number of potential locations on Ringmer employment sites that would have represented far more suitable locations for the local sorting process following doorstep collection, relocation has not been achieved, apparently because the District Council has not been able to reach financial agreement with the site owners. This activity has now been relocated to a centre outside Ringmer parish.
- 9.12.4 The thrust of this policy has thus been changed, to facilitate any future changes to improve the efficiency of local recycling. This policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

9.13 Evidence collected about cemeteries

- 9.13.1 The old churchyard around Ringmer church has been closed for further burials and interment of ashes, and is now maintained by Ringmer parish council. The new churchyard, well-located directly across Church Hill from the church, is managed by the church and presently offers burials or interment of ashes to all Ringmer residents. This churchyard, opened in 1938, has limited remaining

capacity, estimated by the vicar as sufficient on present policies and demand level for about a further 10-15 years. The new churchyard is directly against the SDNP boundary, and it is crossed by a public footpath from Ringmer church providing direct access into the SDNP. Public access and landscape impact considerations may further restrict its capacity. The Lewes District Informal Open Spaces Study (2005) noted that there was a deficiency of cemetery space in Ringmer parish.

- 9.13.2 If burials and interment of ashes are to continue to be available to Ringmer residents as at present, additional facilities are expected to be required before 2030. The church does not own any additional land in the immediate neighbourhood of the new churchyard, and is unlikely to be in a position to be able to provide such new facilities for all parish residents at its own expense. A site to the south-west of the new churchyard was reserved in an earlier local plan for a churchyard extension, but this designation was not continued in the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan. This land is in private hands, and used (as amenity rather than agricultural land) in conjunction with a neighbouring Vicarage Way residential property. This land is just within the SDNP boundary, but use as a cemetery would not in principle be contrary to the SDNP purposes and duty – cemeteries can be attractive landscape features and havens for wildlife.
- 9.13.3 A proposal to encourage the development of a green burial facility in Ringmer, to serve the surrounding area, was raised and discussed during the early stages of community engagement. While there was majority support, there was also opposition, and it was decided not to pursue this proposal. This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group but received no other comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

9.14 Evidence collected about e-communications

- 9.14.1 There are a number of mobile telephone masts in and around Ringmer parish, although we have received some evidence that not all the major telephone networks have comprehensive coverage in all parts of the parish. Reception appears good in Ringmer village, but coverage is reported to be more patchy in the Broyleside and in some rural areas.
- 9.14.2 High broadband speeds are valued by residents, and essential for commercial developments or for working from home. Broadband is available via the Ringmer telephone exchange, with the current theoretical maximum speed 20 Mbps, though many residents and business experience considerably lower speeds. The proprietor of Goldcliff Garden Centre, in the countryside on the A26, reported that low broadband speeds caused serious inconvenience for his business's card sales. The Ringmer exchange is not currently accessible to companies other than BT Wholesale, which thus has an effective monopoly on the supply of broadband from this exchange. Local loop unbundling, allowing other providers to compete on price, would create competition that would lower the cost and improve the service available to businesses and residents.
- 9.14.3 Some rural properties in the south-west of the parish are served by the Lewes telephone exchange, which now offers superfast fibre broadband. A few rural properties in the north of Ringmer are however served by the Isfield telephone exchange, one of the few that does not currently offer broadband. According to August 2014 information from East Sussex County Council, the installation of superfast broadband in Ringmer is currently scheduled for 2014-2015. The importance of excellent broadband and e-communications for working at home in Ringmer has been repeatedly emphasised to us.
- 9.14.4 It is not possible to predict how e-communications will develop over a period of time as long as the current planning period. However, to ensure commercial competitiveness and maintain

sustainable working at home as a viable option, it is essential that the facilities available to Ringmer residents are maintained at the highest level available. This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group but otherwise received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation. The wording was amended in accordance with a comment from Lewes District Council.

Section 10 Evidence supporting the Village Design Statement

Key aspects of the Village Design Statement

Key aspect 1	Context
Key aspect 2	Historical setting
Key aspect 3	Landscape setting
Key aspect 4	The evolving settlement pattern
Key aspect 5	Character areas

Village Design Statement policies

Policy 10.1	Design, massing and height of buildings
Policy 10.2	Making good use of available land
Policy 10.3	Materials
Policy 10.4	Housing space standards
Policy 10.5	Pedestrian movement - twittens
Policy 10.6	Hard & soft landscaping
Policy 10.7	Types of residential development
Policy 10.8	Housing for the elderly & disabled
Policy 10.9	Housing for supported living
Policy 10.10	Development briefs
Policy 10.11	Roadside advertising in the countryside

Key aspects of the Village Design Statement

Key aspect 1 Evidence collected about the Village Design Statement context

10.Ka1.1 The Steering Group agreed in principle to develop a Village Design Statement within the Neighbourhood Plan after taking advice from Richard Dollamore of the SDNP Authority Planning Department. Village Design Statements are new to Lewes District though common elsewhere. They are encouraged by the NPPF and the SDNP Authority. Seen as an analysis of the local built environment, and hence a guide for sympathetic future change without being unreasonably prescriptive, they are also the first step in establishing development briefs for significant sites. This whole process, importantly, should help create certainty and so streamline the planning approval process.

10.Ka1.2 Of particular help has been the SDNP Village Design Statement Toolkit. Also useful as models have been the Adur District Council: East Preston Village Design Statement and Mid Sussex District Council Development Brief – Supplementary Planning Document East Grinstead : Land East of the Old Convent.

10.Ka1.3 The NPPF places a strong emphasis on the importance of good design. Requiring good design is one of the core planning principles listed in NPPF para 17, amplified in paras 56-61. To quote paragraph 56 “*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good*

planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.” The Steering Group strongly endorses this approach.

Key aspect 2 Evidence collected about the Ringmer’s historical setting

- 10.Ka2.1 Ringmer evolved from five original agricultural settlements dating from between the 5th and 10th centuries. These have now shrunk to the rural hamlets or even single farms that still encircle, but remain detached from, the current parish settlements of Ringmer village and the Broyleside. These two settlements are thought to date back to the 13th century with Ringmer village expanding around the parish church as a trading settlement sited on poor land central to the earlier farming settlements of Wellingham, Middleham-Gote, Ashton and Norlington. Most of Ringmer’s oldest vernacular houses are to be found in these older settlements. Trading premises such as blacksmiths and carpenters, and Ringmer’s medieval pottery industry founded on the heavy gault clay, created the heart of the present Ringmer. As the farming settlements contracted over the centuries, Ringmer village grew, around its central village green.
- 10.Ka2.2 The ancient parish highway system, extended by some straight 18th century enclosure roads within the former Broyle deer park, experienced some minor improvements in the late 19th and 20th centuries but otherwise remained little changed until significant housing development began in the 1960s. The 19th century railways had all bypassed Ringmer so the village, with its agricultural emphasis, had no spur to growth until middle class motoring took hold in the inter-war period and the first modern houses began to be built. This was also the time of the first social housing, in the Broyleside, which was completed by the then Chailey Rural District Council. The Glyndebourne Estate also built houses for its workers, some of architectural merit, using its own construction company, the Ringmer Building Works. This became a significant regional building contractor in 1930s and was the major employer in the village until the 1960s, but closed in the 1980s. The Glyndebourne Opera House is now a major employer since its expansion in the 1990s, along with Ringmer Community College, East Sussex County Council Highways department and its contractors, several commercial estates, Raystede Animal welfare centre, the Primary School and the village care homes. A smaller employer of great historical interest is the Southdown and Eridge Hunt whose kennels are based in a former Napoleonic horse artillery barracks in the Broyleside.
- 10.Ka2.3 The history of the physical village is interdependent with social change over the centuries. Ringmer was always a farming community with a long tradition of brick, tile and pottery manufacture. The key social changes (since the Romans left the area) have been the enclosure in the 18th century of the common land of the Broyle which was originally the Archbishop of Canterbury’s deer park, the Captain Swing riots (serious in Ringmer) of the under and unemployed rural poor in the 1830s and the “The Quiet Revolution” of 1871-1971 as described by Peter Ambrose in his 1973 so named book about social change in a Sussex village using Ringmer as its basis.

Key aspect 3 Evidence collected about Ringmer’s landscape setting

- 10.Ka3.1 Ringmer Village is deeply inserted into the northern perimeter of the SDNP in the form of a narrow wedge. So, not only does the village feel itself inside the National Park – this is best experienced from the Village Green – but the National Park feels part of the Village. In addition, as one fifth of the Parish lies within it, the SDNP ‘Integrated Landscape Character Assessment’ (ILCA) and in particular sections ‘Open Downland A4’ and ‘Character Area 11’ are of great importance and significance to the village. It discusses the development squeeze pressures immediately outside the SDNP from development needs within, along with the development

pressures triggered by the proximity of the National Park itself. Interestingly the SDNP Partnership Management Plan consultation document alludes to the issue of wealthy residents commuting out of the SDNP and poorer residents commuting in. This exacerbates the funnelling of the north-south traffic mentioned in the ILCA above, which for Ringmer means at Earwig Corner. The ILCA also identifies the recreational imperative and the changing nature of farming in many areas of the low Weald from improved grassland and arable to hobby farming, whilst the retention of hedgerows and verges allows the natural scale of the fields to remain, softens the vista to the more open north and encourages common and unusual species to survive. All these are significant in the parish.

Key aspect 4 Evidence collected about the evolving settlement pattern

10.Ka4.1 The way the settlement has evolved physically over the last 200 years is well demonstrated by comparison of the village map of 1704 and the Ordnance Survey maps of 1813, 1873, 1898, 1940 and the present day. Evidence about Ringmer's History has been collected from the Ringmer History Study Group.

Key aspect 5 Evidence collected about Ringmer's character areas

10.Ka5.1 The Ringmer History Study Group provided evidence that Ringmer's five original agricultural settlements, dating from the 5th to the 10th century, have now shrunken to rural hamlets containing small groups of houses or even single farms. Each settlement was once surrounded by its own Open Field system, some boundaries of which are still evident as major landscape features. All are much older than the late-medieval settlement at Ringmer Green, and they contain many of Ringmer's most important buildings. All remain physically separated from the two main settlements today. Three of these original settlements, Gote, Middleham and Ashton, now lie within the SDNP. Gote and Middleham are each reduced to a single large house. The Wellingham settlement lay along Wellingham Lane between Wellingham House and Upper Wellingham Farm. The Norlington settlement lay along Norlington Lane between Norlington Farm and Swingate. The Broyleside is a medieval daughter-settlement of Norlington. The materials used on existing village buildings have been recorded following observation helped by the English Heritage listed building register for the most significant. Further information about buildings, their grounds, and the availability of materials have been interpolated from parish registers, the annals of the Ringmer History Study Group, the Sussex Archaeological Society and local knowledge. Many photographs have been taken over the last century and a half.

10.Ka5.2 **Character Area 1** is the Ringmer Green Conservation Area, centred around the village green. Housing is extremely diverse in the size, scale and construction of its buildings, as demonstrated by the following more significant examples. A few survivors from its early centuries are supplemented by many more from 18th and 19th century expansion. Many of these older buildings have survived, and they are the ones from which Ringmer's distinctiveness can be judged. Their siting and spacing is fairly random, and they are especially visible around the Village Green and along the main roads. They demonstrate a great range of vernacular designs dating from Tudor to Edwardian times, made possible by the village's location at the edge of the chalk Downs. Most are built from locally sourced materials – timber from the Broyle and the Weald; flints, lime mortar and Portland cement from the chalkpits between Ringmer and Lewes; and bricks and tiles that were often of very local manufacture. Brick and tile manufacture continued in Ringmer into the second half of the 20th century. Horsham stone slates and local stone, supplemented by occasional pieces from Lewes Priory following its dissolution by Henry VIII, occur in a few of the more distinguished buildings. Cast iron and oak, again all locally sourced, feature too. Lewes's sawmills have supplied imported softwood brought up the River

Ouse along with roofing slates. Reeds and straw for thatching would have been local but most thatched roofs have now been replaced by tiles.

- 10.Ka5.3 The grade 1 listed St Marys Church is constructed of dressed stone and flint, with a Horsham stone and red tiled roof. The Old Vicarage, the Village Hall, and the Old Almshouse on the Green are also of flint and tile construction. Flint boundary walls predominate in the heart of the village. Also on the Green is Delves House, the Georgian-style home of the late Sir Thomas Beecham, which is cloaked in red brick with a red tile roof. Nearby, and adjacent to the Village Sign on the B2192 is Little Manor, an older house with a red brick Georgian facade and a Horsham stone roof. Almost opposite lies Old Cottage, a black and white, red tiled roof, oak framed house with a 15th century core, along with its slightly younger neighbour The Yews with its white rendered walls and red tiled roof.
- 10.Ka5.4 The other houses in Area 1 tend to be 18th, 19th and early 20th cottages or villas of brick and tile or slate construction and of a variety of styles, but near the church on the western end of the Green are a row clad in white wooden siding. Nearly all the houses in this area have two storeys, with usually only the very largest having dormer windows to give a second floor. Most houses are either detached or terraced, although a few are semi-detached with the division being at right angles to the road facing gable, and the roof space divided fore and aft giving an attic room to each. Ringmer's distinctiveness is best demonstrated by this area (although the Napoleonic Barracks and Middleham House are outwith it) which shows a wide diversity of local vernacular architecture, often of some quality, using the full palette of local and imported materials appropriate to the quality of the building and its date of construction.
- 10.Ka5.5 Almost all the houses in Character Area 1 face the road that serves them with the exception of the small number that open directly onto the village green, the visual focus of Ringmer. The village green is the communication hub for the village as the roads, footpaths and twittens will lead you to it and the parish pump - foot traffic has always been an essential part of the village's function and social cohesion. There are two other areas of open ground nearby, The Back Green, which is now allotments, and Cheyney Field, which links through spatially to the Village Green but mainly has houses backing onto it. One 19th century terrace faces onto Cheyney Field, and instead backs onto North Road and the village green. Only the few houses that open directly onto North Road by the village green have no front gardens, but all have back gardens. Gardens vary considerably in size and are generally enclosed at the front with low walls of brick or flint or hedges and sometimes fences, the hedges tending not to be manicured. Mature trees and shrubs are plentiful. There is, by village choice, very little street lighting in this area. Inadequate off-road car parking for some older houses creates a visual 'litter', social tensions, traffic obstruction and damaged verges.
- 10.Ka5.6 **Character Area 2** is the first area seen on entering the village from Lewes once past the Glyndebourne turning at Paygate Corner. Colloquially known as the 'West End', these houses began to be built in the 1930s as individually designed substantial residences with large rear gardens facing the Downs and trees, shrubbery and wide verges to the front. There are some larger bungalows from the same period along Gote Lane, and these two areas are identified as *Areas of Established Character*. All these plots had been developed by the 1970s by which time the earlier solid Sussex style (red brick, tile and tile hanging) had become diluted. These houses now tend to be altered and extended on sale. There is limited foot traffic generated here and no street lighting.
- 10.Ka5.7 **Character Area 3** comprises parts of the Laughton Road, Neaves Lane and the B2192 near Shortgate that have been in transition for some years. Like Area 2 the houses in Area 3 are

predominantly detached and stand in substantial grounds set back from the road but were not originally so grand. Built between the wars, many have now been extended or redeveloped out of all recognition. Mainly bungalows but with a few interspersed two storey houses and offering no uniformity of character, they are located remote from the village heart. Shrubs rather than trees predominate in this area. There is little foot traffic and no street lighting here.

- 10.Ka5.8 **Character Area 4** is small but presents a row of low two-storey Glyndebourne Estate cottages from the 1930s in the Voysey style of architecture. Some are rendered and some white clapboard. They are an excellent demonstration of affordable housing made attractive by skilful use of proportions. Unfortunately, the lack of off road parking provision detracts from the streetscape. Considerable foot traffic is generated around here by schools and village amenities which uses the pavements and nearby twittens. There is no street lighting here.
- 10.Ka5.9 **Character Area 5** makes up most of the rest of Ringmer and Broyleside, and has been built from the mid 20th Century onwards, although there are some small pockets of older properties in Area 5 as well. Predominantly post-war housing estates have infilled the space between the medieval Bishops Lane, Norlington Lane, Church Hill, Gote Lane and Harrisons Lane that form the perimeter of Ringmer village. These developments have been knitted into the village not only by new roads but also by means of twittens which have replicated old footpaths leading to and from its central facilities and more out-lying neighbourhoods. Such twittens have a strong Sussex tradition, and are a special feature of the nearby town of Lewes. More recent housing has also extended eastwards from the largely-medieval Broyle Lane. The whole of Ringmer village today is contained by its old lanes, twittens and roads, a feeling reinforced by its edges being defined by the open country visible across them to the other side.
- 10.Ka5.10 The modern social and market housing estates have been built to various brick and tile designs and to various densities. The majority of houses were built as three bedroom semi-detached but with areas of three and four bedroom detached properties. There are some bungalows as well, the majority small, but a few quite substantial. Extensions to all types of houses are now common. Because most estates are not large, and built at different times, field by field, they have been assimilated organically into the village, both visually and socially. Many old field boundaries survive as the boundaries of later development. Careful retention of existing twittens and footpaths has helped physical integration too. There are some trees, particularly at development site edges and around the Conservation Area but medium sized house plot sizes have generated a more suburban feel to this area. Car parking is a visual and social problem in the oldest estates where car parking was not even considered, in 1960s estates when only a single car was anticipated, and additionally in the most recent 21st century developments, where so little parking was provided that there is insufficient for residents and visitors in the evenings and at weekends. There is no street lighting here, except for low-level lighting in the most recent development.
- 10.Ka5.11 Foot traffic remains important, not least to the schools, surgery and shops. The modern shopping precinct lies at the entrance to Springett Avenue which forms the backbone to the largest 1960s/1970s housing development. With ground floor shops and two storey maisonettes above, the shopping precinct is out of scale and character with the village. Its rear, seen from the Village Green and main road is particularly depressing. The whole is a lesson in the need for good design, recognised as such soon after its creation in Peter Ambrose's study of Ringmer development '*The Quiet Revolution*' (1973). The 1950s secondary school building further along the main road has settled well into its environment but the very recent 6th form building at its rear - a substantial, tall, shiny white addition - is extremely dominant on the village edge. It is visible for miles from the Downs and should not be repeated.

10.Ka5.12 To the north of Bishops Lane is a small industrial estate that also contains a knacker's yard and animal incinerator. This is one of the few employment sites in Ringmer village that is within easy walking distance and is therefore sustainable as well as convenient.

10.Ka5.13 **Character Area 6** comprises the Norlington and Wellingham linear medieval settlements, laid out along Norlington Lane and Wellingham Lane respectively, each surrounded by the remnants of their medieval Open Field systems. Many of the original house-plots along both lanes have been lost. They contain houses of all periods, but include many of Ringmer's oldest surviving houses and listed buildings.

Village Design Statement policies

Policy 10.1 Evidence collected about design, massing and height of buildings

- 10.1.1 There are a large, perhaps excessive, number of guidance documents available for house builders. These date back to the iconic *'Space in the Home'*, setting standards over half a century ago that many contemporary houses fail to meet, and include such guidance as *'Building for Life'*, the *'Code for Sustainable Homes'* and *'Lifetime Homes'* standards with differing emphases and aimed at different target groups. Following the DCLG Housing Standards Review 2013 the government is proposing to simplify the standards for housebuilding at a national level through the building regulations, with some local discretion. In the meantime we remain conscious of the Secretary of State for Education's view (17 May 2013 *Daily Telegraph*) that the many "cramped" houses built in the last two decades had made it "more difficult to raise and support a family". We endorse this view, and are aware of such examples built both in the 1980s and more recently in Lewes District.
- 10.1.2 The case for design quality is clearly made in many places of the NPPF which is a key document for the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base. Here is a small sample. Para 8: *"the planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions"*. Para 17: planning should *"be entirely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area"* and *"be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve places in which people live their lives"*. Para 56 requires good design. We are also conscious that design cannot be prescriptive because of the eclectic nature of Ringmer's architecture, in step with NPPF para 60.
- 10.1.3 Design quality means a high standard of design; though taste and fashion will always exist, in such a subjective issue there is usually strong agreement over what is attractive and what is ugly. Here proportions are a key element. But in civic and architectural design, function as well as appearance has to be of high quality – both have to be got right, and then it has to be built well too. Both Vitruvius (c 1390) who wrote *"Well building hath three conditions: firmness, commodity, and delight"* (i.e. structural stability, appropriate spatial accommodation, and attractive appearance – translation by Encyclopaedia Britannica), and the 1930's Bauhaus credo *'form follows function'* are saying essentially the same thing although over 500 years apart.
- 10.1.4 This policy has been revised, in the light of comments on its predecessors and proposed changes in national standards, to focus on those aspects of design that are consistent with the saved and NPPF-compliant 2003 Local Plan policy ST3, are specific the Ringmer's rural

location and 'village feel', and protect existing heritage assets and the Ringmer Green Conservation Area. There were very few comments from residents on this revised policy in the Regulation 14 consultation.

Policy 10.2 Evidence collected about making good use of available land

- 10.2.1 Until 2010 national planning policy required high development density, to minimise the amount of greenfield land sacrificed to new development, and to encourage developers to build smaller houses to meet identified needs. While a laudable objective, this policy had some negative consequences, especially in rural areas where car ownership is high. These included very small gardens, provision of inadequate off-road car parking and houses inappropriately crowded together. Some developers also responded by seeking to build taller houses that may be acceptable in towns but are generally inappropriate in a village context. Development of new bungalows almost ceased. These negative consequences have been experienced in Ringmer developments built during this period. Evidence from senior staff at the Ringmer Children's Centre, based principally on their experience of developments elsewhere in the District, strongly recommended the provision of adequate private gardens for small children's play in housing intended for families. The national policies requiring such high development densities are now no longer in force.
- 10.2.2 The PSCS and PSCSFA, while still seeking to make good use of greenfield land, now propose different development densities for urban and rural areas. Development densities of between 20-30 units per hectare are recommended in the PSCS and PSCSFA for rural areas such as Ringmer. We support this approach. This should allow sufficient provision to be made for adequate off-road parking for the numbers of vehicles rural residents actually own and also gardens of sufficient size to serve as play spaces and promote biodiversity. Much Ringmer development in character area 5 has been planned at densities of 25 units per hectare or less. Such development provides good amenity for residents. Development at densities below 20 units per hectare will require special justification, to ensure that good use was being made of available land. Development at densities above 30 units per hectare may be appropriate for specific types of residents, especially elderly residents who have down-sized, and can sometimes be appropriate in village locations, but such densities will also require detailed justification to ensure compliance with other Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- 10.2.3 This policy received few comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

Policy 10.3 Evidence collected about materials

- 10.3.1 The materials used on existing village buildings have been identified by observation, using the English Heritage listed building register to identify those considered the most significant. Many photographs have been taken and shared.
- 10.3.2 The wording of the policy was revised following comments from Lewes District Council and a developer to the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, and the wording with respect to roof pitches has been changed in response to the thoughtful comments of a resident in the Regulation 14 consultation. Otherwise this policy received few comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

Policy 10.4 Evidence collected about housing space standards

- 10.4.1 The ‘fitness for purpose’ of houses and their gardens includes their size and their functional arrangement as well as their appearance. The minimum size of our rooms must reflect the size of people using them. While height increase has now largely levelled off, apparently peaking with those born around 1960 so now in their fifties, weight continues to increase, so that airlines may now choose 50mm wider aisle seats on the Airbus A320 to suit the ‘trend in demographics’ of overweight passengers. Unfortunately the size of new British houses recognises neither taller nor bigger people. Indeed, in Mar 2013 the DCLG Secretary of State blamed the previous government’s housing density targets for condemning families to be “trapped in rabbit hutch homes”. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors has calculated that the average British home has decreased in size by 40 percent in 80 years (1 Aug 2013 *Daily Telegraph*). In addition, the Royal Institute of British Architects recently published a survey (16 Apr 2013 *Guardian*) showing 80% of the population support minimum space standards for homes. The same article also quotes author Alain de Botton as commenting “For too long, house builders have been conning the public into buying hugely overpriced rubbish, the architectural equivalent of the turkey twizzler”.
- 10.4.2 The senior managers at the Ringmer Children’s centre managers put forward two specific pleas about all the design of new housing in Ringmer. Most importantly, they were strongly opposed to the provision of ‘back-to-back’ housing for families with children. Some such housing had recently been built as part of the affordable housing provision in another part of the District and had proved highly unsuitable for families with children housed there. Their view was that safe enclosed gardens were essential for families with children. A second essential feature for all new housing for families with children was that it should include the provision of space for families to sit and eat together. They regarded this as very important for families with children of all ages.
- 10.4.3 Whilst recognising we must use building land efficiently, we need also ensure privacy and quality of life for people to be content. To help achieve this we aim to introduce minimum space standards in the village originally introduced as an affordable housing standard. This is the Ministry of Housing and Local Government Design Bulletin 6 ‘*Space in the Home*’ of 1963. Although 50 years old (so developed when people were shorter and thinner), this remains the most authoritative guidance. However we are aware that in its response to the DCLG Housing Standards Review 2013 consultation phase the government proposes to move towards national standards via changes to building regulations. In the meantime we remain conscious that the Secretary of State for Education noted (17 May 2013 *Daily Telegraph*) that the many “cramped” houses built in the last two decades had made it “more difficult to raise and support a family”.
- 10.4.4 Detailed design of new developments can also play a very significant role in reducing levels of crime experienced by residents (www.securedbydesign.com and evidence from Neighbourhood Policing officers). While Ringmer is a low-crime area, with few domestic burglaries, the local police records supplied regularly to the parish council show that there are significant incidences of theft from domestic outbuildings, garages and commercial premises and of criminal damage. Attention should be paid to the principles of ‘*Secured by Design*’ in all new development, including commercial development.
- 10.4.5 This policy has been revised in the light of comments from Lewes District Council and a developer during the two consultations. We are aware that aspects of this policy may be superseded by future changes to national building control regulations .

Policy 10.5 Evidence collected about pedestrian movement – twittens

- 10.5.1 There are more than 20 twittens in the developed areas of Ringmer village and the Broyleside. Twittens are narrow footways that shorten pedestrian distances by connecting roads with each other and with public open spaces. Some mark former public footpaths through countryside that has now been developed, but others were designed into 20th & 21st century developments. They are an attractive feature of the village, separate road and pedestrian traffic and encourage residents to make journeys on foot. They are very popular with residents. The suggestion that a policy to include new twittens in new developments, and that these should be designed so as to be suitable for mobility scooters, was made by a local resident attending an NDP consultation meeting. When this new policy was tested at the Exhibition, it was supported by 98% of respondents.
- 10.5.2 The concept of separating footpaths and traffic as a planning ideal originated in the USA in the 1930s and is best exemplified by Milton Keynes in this country. Whilst attractive in theory it is not a practical solution for a village as it is land hungry and can be seen to glorify the car. Villages are inclusive socially and traditionally mixed people and traffic to a limited degree. Small housing developments can cope with a small amount of slow moving traffic but the separation of people from traffic by means of a twitten where a road is not needed is a positive outcome.
- 10.5.3 Twittens are intended for pedestrians but we need to recognise that mobility scooters are common and will become more common as longevity increases. Twittens will therefore need to be designed for mobility scooters. The design of new twittens must recognise that such scooters will travel in both directions and will therefore need to pass each other.
- 10.5.4 Minor changes in the phrasing of this policy have been made in the light of comments by Lewes District Council in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and by a resident in the Regulation 14 consultation. This policy received few other comments from residents in either consultation.

Policy 10.6 Evidence collected about hard & soft landscaping

- 10.6.1 The background to this policy is explained elsewhere in this appendix, and the Character Area descriptions above are also relevant. In the Regulation 14 consultation his policy was welcomed by the South Downs Society, but minor changes have been made in response to supportive suggestions from East Sussex County Council, Lewes District Council and two residents.

Policy 10.7 Evidence collected about the types of residential development required

- 10.7.1 The 2003 Ringmer Village Plan adopted as its action point 4.1:
“Ensure new housing development [in Ringmer] includes a mixture of housing types, especially affordable housing that remains affordable, with a predominance of 2 and 3 bedroom family houses and accommodation dedicated to workers in essential local public services.
 Even at this early date the prospect of additional executive housing for new Ringmer out-commuters was noted as particularly unpopular.
- 10.7.2 This section notes the evidence collected about the types of new residential development thought by residents and other stakeholders in 2011-2012 to be required in *“Ringmer to 2030”*. To improve sustainability this ought to be housing required by those who already live in Ringmer and wish to continue to do so; those with a family connection to Ringmer; and those employed in Ringmer, or with strong family connections here, who would like to live here but are currently unable to do so. In contrast new housing of other types, or new housing built on a scale incommensurate with local need, will inevitably attract new commuters and its effects will prove

contrary to Key Principle 2. Comments made by some developers that the type of housing built should be left to market forces are not accepted, for this reason.

- 10.7.3 Those attending the Nov 2011 consultation meetings and those attending the Feb 2012 exhibition were asked to select the types of housing they considered most needed in Ringmer, and also invited to suggest types of housing they would not wish to see in any quantity. The preferences of those attending the exhibition were as follows.

Preferred types of new housing	1= first choice, 2=second choice, etc,	X=little or none of this			
	1 st choice	High choice	Low choice	None of this	% 1 st or high
Flats	6	18	20	38	29%
Small 1-2 bed starter houses	33	64	13	9	82%
2-3 bed houses for young families	50	66	9	3	91%
Mixed developments	61	52	16	12	80%
3-4 bed detached houses	5	21	19	31	34%
Executive houses	1	7	13	69	9%
Bungalows for the elderly & disabled	23	52	28	6	69%
Sheltered housing	15	41	27	9	61%
Self-build housing schemes	10	34	21	22	51%

- 10.7.4 While there is no unanimity about the preferred type of new housing, it is clear that some categories would be substantially more welcome (or in some cases less unwelcome) than others. The outcomes of the consultation evening were very similar, but the numbers of residents smaller. The four most popular categories and the four least popular categories were exactly the same in each case.
- 10.7.5 Evidence collected from local estate agents about the demand for housing in Ringmer (confined of course to demand for market housing) was broadly in line with the residents' views. All agents consulted agreed that the majority of Ringmer buyers (other than people already living in Ringmer) chose Ringmer as a compromise between their desired location (usually Lewes town) and the relative affordability of Ringmer housing. Two agents agreed that small family houses (£225K-£300K) sold comparatively well. Smaller bungalows were scarce, but sold well when available. All but one agent found houses above £300K more difficult to sell, unless in the countryside. First time buyers were few and far between - almost the only first time buyers who bought in Ringmer were those with substantial assistance from their families. The agents were unanimous that flats were the most difficult properties to sell in Ringmer. The Ringmer agent commented that houses in the southern part of Ringmer village were easier to sell than those north of the B2192 because of the perceived difficulty and danger of crossing the B2192 to reach schools, shops and services.
- 10.7.6 Factors that attracted buyers, apart from prices, included the village environment, open spaces and views, good schools and village services and the availability of car parking. Reasonably sized gardens were a particular asset. Ringmer village was significantly more attractive to buyers than the Broyleside, and there was a significant difference in house prices between the two communities.
- 10.7.7 Ringmer parish council, bearing in mind the views expressed by residents, would wish to see a mix of housing types, with a predominance of 2-bed and 3-bed houses suitable for young families and some significant new provision, at a suitable location or locations, of housing designed to meet the needs of the elderly and disabled. In the Regulation 14 consultation the

only comment from a resident was that Lifetime Homes standards should be more widely required (as they are in the neighbouring Wealden District).

Policy 10.8 Evidence collected about housing for the elderly & disabled

- 10.8.1 The proportion of Ringmer residents aged over 65 is 26%, comparable to the proportion in Lewes District overall (23%) but substantially above the national average (16%). The proportion of Ringmer residents aged over 85 is 5%, higher than Lewes District overall (4%) and over twice the national average (2%) [ESIF]. Demographic projections for the period to 2030 are available only at county level but predict a steadily increasing proportion of the East Sussex population will be over retirement age [East Sussex Director of Public Health's annual report, Mar 2012]. There is expected to be a particular increase in the number of people aged over 80, a proportion of whom are likely to be able to live independently only with a level of support. Ringmer has market sector developments for older residents at Delves House and Vicarage Close and similar affordable developments at Mill Close and Broyle Close. The Broyle Close development is on the periphery of the Broyleside and rather remote from village shops and services (though on a bus route). The other three developments are well located close to the village centre.
- 10.8.2 Demographic factors and social policies that encourage people to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible may well increase the demand for similar facilities within the Neighbourhood Plan period. Development of additional accommodation for the elderly in both sectors would enable local people to remain in the village for longer and also release under-occupied larger houses for family use. Some older people and many families including family members with disabilities prefer to live within mixed developments, and could do so if these included suitable homes built to Lifetime Homes standards.
- 10.8.3 The Caburn Field site, allocated for residential development in the 2003 Lewes Local Plan, adjacent to the site of the Ringmer health centre and a very short level walk from village shops, was identified as ideally situated for this purpose. This policy was included in the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (policy HOUS3). However, this site is now not expected to come forward for development early in the Neighbourhood Plan period. There was strong support at consultation meeting 2 held 29 Nov 2011 for the view that a suitably-located site in Ringmer village should be allocated for this purpose, and this view was also supported by 94% of respondents at the Feb 2012 Exhibition. This policy received few comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

Policy 10.9 Evidence collected about housing for supported living

- 10.9.1 In addition to care homes for those unable to live independently, Ringmer has in Field Cottage, Harrison's Lane, a group of rooms and flats for supported living. Field Cottage has been a well run and valued facility in the village for more than 30 years, but may not have the capacity to meet local demand for this type of accommodation over the Plan period.
- 10.9.2 This policy was included in the 2009 Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development (policy HOUS4). There was strong support from local residents for the provision of additional accommodation of this type at an appropriate village location if there is a need for it in the consultations leading up to that strategy. This policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

Policy 10.10 Evidence collected about development briefs for new developments

- 10.10.1 A development brief will normally be prepared before allocation of significant sites for employment, housing, leisure or other purposes [NPPF paragraph 58]. Exceptionally development briefs may also be prepared for smaller sites where the location is particularly sensitive. This process will provide developers with guidance and certainty of what is required, and contribute to ensuring that development in Ringmer parish helps support Key Principles 1 and 4 so that the Neighbourhood Plan and achieve its overall objectives. Development briefs can help ensure that sites are developed in a way that is acceptable to local residents, and thus reduce barriers to development. The principle of development briefs being prepared for new development on Ringmer, suggested by a local resident at a consultation meeting, was supported by 97% of respondents at the Feb 2012 exhibition.
- 10.10.2 Detailed development briefs for new residential development sites have not been widely employed in Lewes District, although they are commonly employed in some other Sussex District Councils. Mid Sussex District Council produced a successful Development Brief for the Land East of the Old Convent in East Grinstead. The Accordia development in Cambridge developed from a City Council development brief which made play of the stream flowing through the grounds of an old wartime hospital. In order to create variety on a large central site near the Botanical Gardens four separate architects were engaged by the developer each to work on a separate area of the site. Both affordable and market houses were built and the whole completed in 2007. The scheme has won the Stirling Prize from The Royal Institute of British Architects and has now been designated a Conservation Area.
- 10.10.3 Development briefs are seen as a means of streamlining the planning process and helping the developer achieve high standards, developments acceptable to local people and value for money. Development briefs need only be as complex as development and location demands but developers will be expected to engage with the local community before submitting detail plans for approval. Development briefs are provided in appendix I for all new major employment sites and for housing developments of more than 20 units. The key items identified may include the density and nature of the buildings, points of vehicular and pedestrian access, known infrastructure constraints, hard and soft landscaping and street lighting and orientation and massing of buildings, all relating to the special requirements of the site.
- 10.10.4 In their response to the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan Lewes District Council recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan should include the development briefs. This recommendation has been adopted (see appendix I). One developer considered this policy onerous. There were no comments from residents on this policy in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

Policy 10.11 Evidence collected about roadside advertising in the countryside

- 10.11.1 NPPF paragraph 67 notes that poorly placed advertisements can have a negative effect on the built and natural environment. Advertisements in the countryside can have a negative impact on the rural landscape, and thus on the amenity of countryside residents and the enjoyment of those passing through. This has, on occasion, been an issue in Ringmer. Functional notices are of course necessary to enable visitors to locate rural employment sites and tourist attractions. These should be of sufficient size and clarity to be clearly legible to drivers approaching the site. Policy EMP8 in the Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) required that business signs and other advertising should be carefully regulated, especially outside planning boundaries, to protect the village and rural landscape, and that illuminated signs or

advertisements should not be permitted. Some limited illuminated signs for shops and services in and near the Ringmer Core Retail Area have now been permitted. However, garish and brightly lit advertising within Ringmer village would have an urbanising effect, and a negative impact on 'village feel'. The NPPF identifies amenity and public safety as the key issues, and notes that account should be taken of cumulative impacts.

- 10.11.2 Lewes District Council supported this policy in the Regulation 14 consultation, but noted that some types of roadside advertising were permitted development. This policy received no comments from residents in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan or in the Regulation 14 consultation.

Evidence base

Much of the evidence and local knowledge on which this Neighbourhood Plan is based is derived from the day-to-day work and experience of Ringmer Parish Council. Additional evidence was collected from the documents, meetings and discussions summarised below.

Ambrose, Peter, 'The Quiet Revolution': A social history of Ringmer between 1871 and 1971, published in 1973.

Ancient Woodland Inventory: A revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory for Lewes, carried out by the Weald & Downs Ancient Woodlands Survey, published in November 2010 and available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

Broyle Community Association Survey: discussions with David Sands-Smith and Broyle Community Association members on 22 May 2012. The Broyle Community Association ceased to function in autumn 2012.

Building for Life: The sign of a good place to live. The Building for Life Partnership (2012). Available at www.designcouncil.org.uk

Code for Sustainable Homes: based on the BRE Global EcoHome scheme. Available at www.breeam.org

Co-housing options: Discussions with Julian Howells and colleagues, Co-Housing Group, on 11 Feb 2012 & 23 Feb 2012.

Consultation meetings: Consultation meetings 1-4 were held in Nov-Dec 2011 at the Caburn Pavilion and Consultation meetings 5-7 were held in Jan-Feb 2013 in Ringmer Village Hall. Copies of the presentations at the meetings (where available), the notes recording the meeting and a synopsis of the responses to the closed questions asked on questionnaires completed at the meetings are available on the "Ringmer to 2030" webpages, available on www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk.

DCLG Household Interim Projections, 2011-2021, England: Based on 2011 census data, published in Apr 2013, and available on the www.gov.uk website.

DCLG Housing Standards Review: Published for consultation in Aug 2013 and available on the www.gov.uk website. The ministerial response to this consultation was reported to Parliament in Mar 2014: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm140313/wmstext/140313m0001.htm#14031363000005

DSCS: Draft Lewes District Submission Core Strategy, published November 2012, for consideration by the SDNP Planning Committee and Lewes District Council Cabinet, and (then) available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

East Sussex County Council e-Sussex Broadband Rollout: Accessed on 13 Aug 2014. See: <http://www.goesussex.co.uk/sites/default/files/Where-and-when-by-exchange-as-at-30-7-14-final.pdf>

East Sussex County Council press release issued 23 July 2008 issued on behalf of the Central Rail Corridor Board concluding that the reopening of the Lewes to Uckfield railway line was not economically viable, on the basis of a study by Network Rail that put the costs of re-opening the line at £140M.

East Sussex County Council report: 'School Organisation in East Sussex, 2012/3 to 2016/7': This report, published in Oct 2012, and assessing the availability of future places at East Sussex schools, is available on www.eastsussex.gov.uk.

East Sussex Guidance for Parking at New Residential Development, published in October 2012 by East Sussex County Council and available on their website www.eastsussex.gov.uk.

East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, published in 2010 by East Sussex County Council and available on their website www.eastsussex.gov.uk.

East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan, published in February 2013 and available on the website www.eastsussex.gov.uk.

East Sussex Wastewater Management Study commissioned from Scott Wilson Ltd, published October 2009, and available on the East Sussex County Council website at <http://consult.eastsussex.gov.uk/file/1003352>.

ECS: Lewes District Emerging Core Strategy published for consultation in September 2011 and available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

EELA: Lewes District Employment and Economic Land Assessment published in 2010, updated in 2012, and available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

Environment Agency: 'What's in your backyard?': This website provides a current and projected future assessment of water quality in the rivers managed by the EA. It is available at <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/37811.aspx> and was consulted in Jun 2014.

ESIF: East Sussex in Figures, produced by East Sussex County Council and published on their website, www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk, accessed at dates between Jan 2012 & Jul 2014.

Evidence underpinning sections 4.1 & 4.3 (the SDNP, Ringmer's landscape): collected from meetings or discussions with Andrew Triggs (Neighbourhood Planning officer, SDNP) on many occasions; and with East Sussex County Council landscape architect Virginia Pullan on 20 Mar 2013 and comments made in response to the Regulation 14 consultation. Councillors have attended many meetings arranged by the SDNP Authority on its future plans, the development of its Management Plan and the development of its Local Plan.

Evidence underpinning sections 4.5 & 4.6 (access to the local road system, parking provision): collected at meetings and discussions with Claire Warwick & Jon Wheeler, ESCC Highways, on 11 Jan 2012; with Claire Warwick, ESCC Highways on 27 Jan 2012; with Teresa Ford, ESCC Highways on 15 Jul 2014; with Ringmer road safety organisation RADAR on 9 Dec 2011 & 11 Jan 2012; comments from (then) parish councillor Ron Livingstone received 12 Jan 2012; survey results re Bishops Lane from Sy Morse-Brown, North Ringmer Residents Group, received 7 Mar 2012; and with David Sands-Smith, chair, Broyle Community Association, on 30 Oct 2012.

Evidence underpinning sections 5.1-5.6 & 5.9-5.10 (Ringmer's countryside and biodiversity): collected from meetings or discussions with Andrew Triggs (Neighbourhood Planning officer, SDNP) on many occasions; Lewes town council and Barcombe parish council on 17 Nov 2011; Angela Marlow and Louise Bardsley (Natural England) on 21 Nov 2011, 11 Jan 2012, 19 Jan 2012 & 22 Nov 2012; Ringmer Ramblers on 21 Nov 2011; Andrew Shaw (High Weald AONB) on 19 Jan 2012; Sue Noone (proponent of Ringmer Community Woodland) on 9 Feb 2012; Dave Bangs & Peter Hodge (historic grassland communities surviving from the former Broyle deerpark) on 20 Aug 2012 & 13 Sep 2012; Rachel Whitfield, RSPB Community Engagement Officer on 2 Aug 2013 & 7 Aug 2013; Brian Wignall, resident and ornithologist, on 8 Oct 2013. Additional evidence about the exceptional biodiversity on Plashett Park Farm and its

landscape was assembled and presented by Natural England, CPRE Sussex, Ringmer Parish Council, the Ringmer History Study Group and several individual respondents at the public examination into South East Water's WRMP09.

Evidence underpinning sections 5.7 & 5.8 (Ringmer's heritage): collected from meetings and discussions with the Ringmer History Study Group on 21 Nov 2011, 24 Nov 2011 & 29 Nov 2011; Amy Redding (New Forest DC Design & Conservation Officer) on 21 Mar 2012; with David Millum (Culver Archaeological Project) on 28 Mar 2012; with Casper Johnson (East Sussex County Archaeologist) on 28 & 29 Nov 2012.

Evidence underpinning section 6 from commercial property specialists: discussions with Chris Oakley, executive chairman, Oakley Property, on 19 Oct 2011; with Philip Sturdy, Haywards Heath-based commercial surveyor & estate agent with a national company, on 2 Dec 2011; and with Chris Wojtulewski, planning agent with Parker Dann, Lewes, on 13 July 2012. Lucy Knott, Lewes District Council, provided a list of 180 Ringmer premises currently assessed to pay business rates on 25 Feb 2013.

Evidence underpinning section 6 from owners of Ringmer business sites: discussions with Anthony Tasker, Broyle Place Farm Business Site, on 13 Nov 2011; with Mike Bartter, Banff Farm Business Site, on 17 Nov 2011; with Richard Monnington, farmer and owner of Upper Stoneham Farm Business Site, on 2 Dec 2011 & 11 Jun 2013; with David Collins, agent for Messrs Kerwin, owners of Avery's Chicken farm, on 15 Nov 2011, 9 Feb 2012 & 9 Feb 2013; with Nathaniel Trotman, Upper Wellingham Farm, on 17 Nov 2011; with Harold Stroude, farmer and owner of Bridge Farm, Barcombe Mills, Norlington Farmyard, Lower Barn Farmyard, Lower Clayhill Farm, Ringmer and Cowlease Farm, Hamsey, on 28 Nov 2011 & 9 Aug 2013; with Andrew Cope, chief executive of Chandlers Ltd, The Broyle, on 28 Mar 2012; with Paul Slot, chair of Waterloo Bonfire Society, owner of the former Goldcliff Nursery site, on 11 Apr 2012 & 16 Jul 2013; with Andrew Cooper, owner of the Ringmer Business centre on 22 Jun 2012, 22 Nov 2012 & 10 May 2013; with Peter Crowley, Wave Leisure, on 14 May 2012; with Malcolm Parnell, commercial estates manager, CHP Management Ltd, owner of the Ringmer Shopping Precinct on 20 Jul 2012; with Peter Sayers, manager of the Ringmer branch of Ernest Doe & Sons, on 21 Nov 2012; with Chris Wojtulewski (Parker Dann) and client Tessa Talbot, owner of site south and east of Caburn Enterprise Park on 26 Nov 2011, 13 Jul 2012 & 14 May 2013; with Paul Hartfield, owner of the Caburn Enterprise Park, on 6 Feb 2013 & 19 Feb 2013; with Robin Beech, Peter Beech & Mike Barber (MJB Associates), owners of Diplocks, on 23 May 2013; and with Julian Hingston, owner of the Busy Bee Garage, on 31 Jul 2013.

Evidence underpinning section 6 from actual or potential Ringmer employers: discussions with Lew Howard, shopkeepers' association chair, on many occasions between Nov 2011 and Jul 2014; with Dr Mallon, owner, Ringmer Dental Practice on 25 Nov 2011; with the assistant manager, Barclays Bank, Ringmer on 25 Nov 2011; with Harold Stroude, farmer, on 28 Nov 2011; with Jackie Warren, Ringmer Primary School head, on 30 Nov 2011; with Anthony Tasker, owner of Broyle Place on 2 Dec 2011; with Paul Seeley, South East Water, on 23 Dec 2011 & 2 Apr 2012; with Kathy Stonier, principal of Ringmer Community College on 17 Jan 2012; with Jacqui Lane, responsible for the Ringmer Children's Centre, on 18 Jan & 24 Feb 2012; with the district manager responsible for McColl's Store, Ringmer Shopping Precinct, and the manager of the store on 2 Feb 2012; with Andrew Cope, managing director, Chandlers on 28 Mar 2012; with Tracey Burgoyne, River Lodge practice manager, on 30 Mar 2012, 24 Apr 2012 & 3 Jul 2012; with Jonathan Gooding, chief executive of Retirement Villages Ltd, on 3 Aug 2012 & 4 Nov 2012; with Steve Winter, operations director, Galleon Care, and others on 11 Oct 2012; with Peter Sayers, manager of the Ringmer branch of Ernest Doe & Sons, on 21 Nov 2012; with Richard Green, owner of RW Green, tree surgeons, on 27 Nov 2012; with Joanne Yates, director of Parsons Joinery on 25 Jan 2013; with Simon Clark, Clark's Glass, on 1 Feb 2013; with Chris Stanyard, ESCC, re employment by ESCC and their main contractors based in Ringmer, on 6 Mar 2013; with Julian Hingston, Busy Bee Garage, on 31 Jul 2013.

Evidence underpinning section 6: planning applications and investment in employment premises:

Planning applications: LW/11/1320 & LW/12/0030 from Brockwells Forestry Ltd for new offices and a new showroom at their Broyle Business Site premises (implemented); LW/12/0176 extension to Holm Lodge Care Home (implemented); LW/12/0287 construction of new microbrewery at Highfield Farm (implemented); LW/12/0354 & LW/12/0446 new investment at Barcombe Mills water treatment works (implemented or being implemented); LW/12/0535 large extension to joinery, Sycamore House, Broyle Business Area (refused); LW/12/0667 Dominos Pizza, Ringmer Shopping Precinct (implemented); LW/12/0771 extension to Marlie Farm industrial estate (refused); LW/12/0798 new 60 bed care home at 39 Harvard Road; LW/12/0048, LW/12/0843, LW/12/0868 & LW/13/0399, four different applications from different applicants for conversions

of redundant agricultural buildings to create in total five new holiday-let cottages; LW/12/0894 (retrospective), new business units at Lower Stoneham Farm (implemented); LW/13/0007 & LW/14/0300 for the refurbishment of Acorn House to accommodate 50 new office-based jobs for Health Management Ltd (implemented); LW/13/0233, conversion of farm building to business facility, Bridge Farm (implemented); LW/13/0522, extension to the Meadow Business Centre (implemented); LW/13/0623, new gymnasium, Shopping Precinct (implemented); LW/13/0666, large steel frame building, Clayhill Woods (implemented); LW/13/0681, new cafe-restaurant, Shopping Precinct; LW/13/0753, conversion of workshop to food preparation business, Vicarage Way; LW/13/0846 for the erection of a farm shop and cafe at the Orchards, Uckfield Road; LW/14/0348 for a new beauty salon (implemented); LW/14/0429 for a large agricultural building, Upper Broyle Farm. **Other investment:** Ernest Doe & Sons reported investing £300K in improvements in their Broyleside business site in 2012.

Evidence underpinning section 6.2 (local agriculture and woodland management): from meetings or discussions with Harold Stroude, farmer, on 28 Nov 2011 & 9 Aug 2013; with Mark Watts, tree surgeon, on 28 Nov 2011; with Richard Monnington, farmer, on 2 Dec 2011; with Colin Turner, Middle Broyle & Highfield Farms, farmer with local food network interests, 20 Nov 2012; with Andrew Winsbury, tree surgeon, on 25 Nov 2012; with Aidan Horace, self-employed rural labourer, on 25 Nov 2012; with Richard Green, RW Green tree surgeons, on 27 Nov 2012; with Matthew Hicks, Goldcliff Garden Centre on 28 Nov 2012; with Andrew Brinkhurst, farmer, on 9 Feb 2013 & 6 Jun 2013; with Chris Rowland & Ollie Pendred, Ovesco Ltd, on 12 Jul 2013; and with Sarah Farnes, farmer, on 29 Jul 2013. Ringmer parish councillor Bob Peters has farmed in Ringmer for over 70 years and a former parish councillor who contributed to the development of the Village Plan Employment Strategy, the late John Craig, farmed here for over 60 years. Forecasts about the likely future trends in food prices (up 40% in the next decade) were quoted in the Guardian by Philip Clarke, Tesco, based on the OECD-UN FAO forecasts: <http://www.oecd.org/site/oecd-faoagriculturaloutlook/prices.htm>

Evidence underpinning section 6.3 (retail provision in Ringmer): collected from meetings or discussions with Lew Howard, shopkeepers' association chair, on many occasions between Nov 2011 and Jul 2014; with the district manager responsible for McColl's Store, Ringmer Shopping Precinct, and the manager of the store on 2 Feb 2012; with retail consultants G.L.Hearn on 28 Mar 2012; with Malcolm Parnell, commercial estates manager, CHP Management Ltd, acting for the owner of the Ringmer Shopping Precinct on 20 Jul 2012 & 24 May 2013; with Peter Sayers, manager of the Ringmer branch of Ernest Doe & Sons, on 21 Nov 2012; with Sarah Philips, supervisor, Lloyds Pharmacy, on 30 Nov 2012; with Joy Thornicroft, proprietor, Middletons, on 1 Dec 2012.

Evidence underpinning section 6.4 (provision of services for the elderly and disabled): collected from meetings or discussions with Jonathan Gooding, chief executive of Retirement Villages Ltd, on 3 Aug 2012 & 4 Nov 2012; with Steve Winter, operations director, Galleon Care, and others on 11 Oct 2012; with Dr Laith Butti, general practitioner and senior partner, Anchor Field Surgery; with Mrs Julietta Inguito, manager, Lime Tree House Care Home, on 21 Nov 2012; with Suzie Magness, Business Development Manager, Retirement Leasing Housing Association, on 11 Jan 2013.

Evidence underpinning section 6.5 (education providers): see sections 9.6 & 9.7 below.

Evidence underpinning section 6.6 (leisure & tourism in Ringmer): collected from meetings or discussions with Gus Christie and representatives of the Glyndebourne Estate on 22 May 2012; with Nigel Mason, chief executive, Raystede, on 19 Nov 2012; with Simon Kahn, East Sussex Gliding Club on 20 Oct 2012 & 16 Nov 2012; with Hilton Thatcher, Bill Etteridge & Nigel Fright, East Sussex Gliding Club on 14 Feb 2013; with Andrew Pierce, B&B proprietor, on 5 Jun 2013. Information about the four key facilities is also available from their websites Glyndebourne.com, www.raystede.org, www.sussexgliding.co.uk & www.bentley.org.uk.

Evidence underpinning section 7 (residential development): Evidence was collected from local estate agents specialising in residential property by discussions with Stuart Smith, branch manager, Freeman Forman, Ringmer on 18 Oct 2011; with Rob Nettleton, Lewes Estates, Lewes, on 19 Oct 2011; and with Paul Radloff, Fox & Sons, Lewes, on 21 Oct 2011.

Evidence underpinning section 7.1 (overall housing target): Precedents where a neighbourhood plan has been made in advance of an up-to-date Local Plan include Arundel (West Sussex), Tattenhall (Cheshire) and Winslow (Buckinghamshire).

Evidence underpinning sections 7.2 & 7.3 (affordable housing): Housing list data was collected from officers of the Housing Dept, relating to information collected on the list as at 31 Mar 2011, as used in the ECS, and evidence provided in a meeting held 13 Dec 2011 with Leighton Rowe, Lewes DC Housing Supply manager and Jo Jacks, Lewes DC Housing Allocations manager. Updated information is included in the Lewes District Affordable Housing Needs Assessment, 2013-2018, published in Jan 2014. Discussions were held with Jane Gallifent & Bev Alexander, Hastoe Housing Association, on 1 May 2012; discussion with Leighton Rowe & Nilam Papat, Lewes D.C., on 1 May 2012 & 10 Sep 2013; discussions with Lewes D.C. Scrutiny Panel on 20 Nov 2012; with Ron Maskell & Tom Jones, Lewes D.C. Cabinet lead housing & planning councillors, on 26 Nov 2012; and with Matt Richardson, Gleeson Strategic Land, on 26 Nov 2012. Relevant consultation comments on the draft Neighbourhood Plan were received from Alex Munro, CPRE England.

Evidence underpinning sections 7.9-7.11 (selection of development sites): Evidence collected from owners or developers of potential development sites: several developers or representatives attended all or most of the seven consultation meetings held Nov-Dec 2011 and Jan-Feb 2012. These including Martin Harrop (Croudace Developments), Alex Bateman & Craig Noel (Strutt & Parker), Bill & Annie Almond, Philip Sturdy & Andrew Cooper, while several others attended those specifically focused on new housing provision; additional discussions were held with: Bill & Annie Almond, owners of Vicarage Close orchard on 13 Dec 2011, 24 Nov 2012, 15 Feb 2013, 19 Feb 2013 & 23 May 2013; with Matt Richardson, Gleeson Strategic Land, and/or planning consultant Michael Pickup, TCPS, on 19 Jan 2012, 1 Feb 2012, 25 Oct 2012, 23 Nov 2012, 6 Feb 2013, 14 Feb 2013, 18 Feb 2013, 27 Feb-8Mar 2013, 25 Mar 2013, 24 Apr 2013, 10 May 2013, 21 Jun 2013, 18 Jul 2013, 16 Aug 2013, 20 Aug 2013, 4 Sep 2013, 15 Oct 2013, 7 Nov 2013, 11 Nov 2013, 27 Feb 2014 & 9 May 2014; with Liz Clifford, Chapters, on 19 Jan 2012, 9 Oct 2012, 12 Feb 2013 & 21 Jun 2013; with Bob Cairns (also on behalf of Peter Bellamy) & Nick Powell, owners of Westbourne site, on 27 Jan 2012, 17 Oct 2012, 14 Dec 2012 & 11 Jun 2013; with Ed Deedman, Natterjack Construction, re the Westbourne site on 22 Aug 2013 & 30 Oct 2013; with Westbourne site neighbours on many occasions in 2013-2014; with Paul Allison, 1 Trinity Field, on 30 Jan 2012 & 13 Feb 2013; with Alex Bateman (Strutt & Parker) on 7 Feb 2012; with David Collins, agent for site south of Nought, and his clients Martin Elliott & Kean Elliott, on 9 Feb 2012 & 5 May 2012; with Ted Chitty, Bob Munnery & Gavin May, representatives of Ringmer FC and Ben Ellis (Bedford Park Developments) re Caburn Field, on 25 Feb 2012, 28 Feb 2012, 1 May 2012, 23 Nov 2012, 13 Feb 2013, 13 Jun 2013, 10 Oct 2013, 13 Jan 2014, 20-27 Feb 2014, 14 Apr 2014; with Andy Joss, Ed Gribble, Jim Gribble or Jim Richardson, their agent, re Fingerpost Farm on 27 Apr 2012, 15 May 2012, 22 Jan 2013, 6 Feb 2013, 11 Feb 2013, 15 May 2013, 23 May 2013, 2 Jun 2013, 19 Jun 2013, 16 Aug 2013, 19 Aug 2013, 22 Sep 2013, 11 Oct 2013, 24 Oct 2013, 9 Dec 2013; with David Evison (Evison & Co) re Ham Lane glebe land on 5 May 2012; with Max & Cleone Pengelley (trustees) and Nick Watson, Jamie Evans, Alex Bateman, Isobel Swift & Jess Allen (Strutt & Parker) re Askew Estate land on 8 May 2012, 11 Feb 2013, 15 Mar 2013, 19 May 2014, 17 Jun 2014 & 21 Jul 2014; with Gus Christie, James Youatt & Craig Noel (Strutt & Parker), Glyndebourne Estate land, on 30 Nov 2012, 11 Feb 2013, 15 Feb 2013, 22 May 2013, 5 Jun 2013, 11 Jun 2013, 29 Jul 2013, 6 May 2014; with Barry Giles, Fingerpost Farmhouse, on 22 May 2012; with Chris Wojtulewski (Parker Dann) and clients Emily Talbot, Mr G. Talbot & Mr R. Badcock on 12 Jun 2012, 13 Jul 2012, 11 Feb 2013, 12 Jun 2014; with Dominic Buckwell, Upper Lodge, on 8 Oct 2012 & 1 May 2013; with Darran Foss, Shortgate Farmhouse, on 15 Oct 2012; with Simon Kahn & Anne Hodgson, Sunnymede, and their agent Trevor Denny on 1 Nov 2012, 11 Jun 2013 & 9-10 Jul 2014; with Alex Bateman (Strutt & Parker), re Old Chapel barns on 5 Nov 2012; with Mavis Druce, Middleham Close, on 19 Nov 2012; with Colin Turner, Highfield Farm, on 20 Nov 2012; with Nigel Mason, Raystede, on 23 Nov 2012; with Suzie Magness, New Business Development Director, Retirement Lease Housing Association, on 26 Nov 2012, 27 Nov 2012, 11 Jan 2013 & 5 Sep 2013; with Chris Wojtulewski (Parker Dann), client Tessa Talbot and Steven Neilly (Clearwater Developments) on 26 Nov 2012, 12 Dec 2012, 8 Jan 2013, 6 Feb 2013, 5 Apr 2013, 14 May 2013, 8 Aug 2013, 15 Sep 2013, 12 Jun 2014, 24 Jul 2014, 1 Aug 2014 & 12 Aug 2014; with parish councillor Bob Peters, on 30 Nov 2012; with Martin Harrop or Alison Walker (Croudace Strategic), Tony Charles (Portchester Planning) & Philip Sturdy, landowner, Broyle Gate Farm, 30 Jan 2013, 15 Feb 2013, 18 Feb 2013, 22 Feb 2013, 23 Apr 2013, 24 May 2013, 22 Aug 2013, several parish councillors also attended the exhibition of their proposals for Broyle Gate Farm on 31 Jul 2014; with Nilam Papat (Lewes DC) re Lewes DC-owned sites, on 6 Feb 2013, 25 Feb 2013, 13 Mar 2013, 3 Jun 2013; with Trudie Krige & Bev Brown, Turnpike Farm, on 6 Feb 2013, 11 Feb 2013 & 13 Jun 2013; Andrew Brinkhurst, Nick Ide (Batcheller Monkhouse) and agent Tezel Bahchali, Upper Broyle Farm, 7, 8 & 9 Feb 2013, 6 Jun 2013 & 11 Aug 2014; Pat Willard, Neaves House & Steven Neilly (Clearwater Developments) on 8 Feb 2013, 17 May 2013, 19 Jul 2013 & 20 May 2014; Andrew Cooper, Rangers Farm on 11 Feb 2013 & 10 May 2013; Andrew Rudebeck, Clay Hill House, on 21 May 2013;

Robin Beech, Peter Beech & Mike Barber (MJB Associates) and Lap Chan (architect), Diplocks Site, on 23 May 2013 & 22 Jan 2014; Malcolm Parnell, CHP Management, on 24 May 2013; Eric Nye, Broyle Mill Farm, on 24 May 2013; Andrew Pierce, Barnfield Farm, on 5 Jun 2013; Richard Monnington re Ringmer Park on 11 Jun 2013; with Sarah Farnes, Downsview Farm, on 29 Jul 2013; with Julian Hingston, Busy Bee, on 31 Jul 2013; with Harold Stroude, Holfords Cottages, Norlington Farm barns & 2 Norlington Villas on 9 Aug 2013; with Sandeep & Amanda Sudan, Pippins, on 15 Aug 2013; with Gordon Fowlie, Frthings, on 15 Aug 2013; with Ed Deedman, Natterjack Construction, on 22 Aug 2013 & 30 Oct 2013; with Wendy Tompsett, 8 The Holdings, on 2 Sep 2013; with Lap Chan re Diplocks site, 22 Jan 2014; with Max & Cleone Pengelley, Askew Trust, and Nick Watson & Jamie Evans, Strutt & Parker, re Askew Trust properties on 19 May 2014, 17 Jun 2014 & 21 Jul 2014; with Stephen Neilly, Clearwater Developments, re Lower Lodge Farm on 20 May 2014 & 24 Jul 2014;

Croudace Strategic distributed a flyer about their proposals for Broyle Gate Farm to all Ringmer households in Feb 2013, and made a more selective distribution of similar promotional literature during the Regulation 14 consultation. They held a public exhibition of their proposals (rather different from those presented earlier) at Ringmer Community College on 31 Jul 2014. Gleeson Strategic held a well-attended exhibition about their proposals for Bishops Lane in Ringmer Village Hall on 29 Jun 2013. Andrew Cooper (Rangers Farm), Jim Richardson (Fingerpost Farm), Chris Wojtulewski (Lower Lodge Farm), Matt Richardson (Bishops Lane), Craig Noel (Glyndebourne) & Martin Harrop (Broyle Gate Farm) presented their development proposals at consultation meetings 6 & 7. Proponents of other major candidate sites were offered but declined this opportunity.

Evidence underpinning section 8 (social and leisure facilities): collected from meetings or discussions with David Sands-Smith (chair, Broyle Community Association) on 28 Jan 2012, 5 Feb 2012 & 22 May 2012; with Alan West (chair, Ringmer Village Hall trustees) on 8 Feb 2012; with Ted Chitty (treasurer, Ringmer FC), Bob Munnery (chair, Ringmer FC), Gavin May (Ringmer FC) and Ben Ellis (Bedford Park Developments) on 25 Feb 2012, 28 Feb 2012, 1 May 2012, 23 Nov 2012, 13 Feb 2013 (including the cost of all-weather pitches), 13 Jun 2013, 10 Oct 2013, 13 Jan 2014, 20-27 Feb 2014; with Edmund Hall (AFC Ringmer) on 17 Dec 2011; with Dave Manning (AFC Ringmer) and Paul Norton (The Landscape Group) on 23 Oct 2012 & 6 Feb 2013; with Christopher Peck (Ringmer Rovers) on 24 Nov 2012; with Gavin May (Ringmer Rovers coach) about facilities for Ringmer Rovers and other sporting activities on 13 Dec 2012, 17 Dec 2012, 18 Dec 2012, 21 Jan 2013 & 20 Feb 2013; with Peter Crowley (Wave Leisure Trust) and Paul Douglas-Smith (manager, Lewes Leisure Centre & Ringmer Pool) on 14 May 2012 & 6 Feb 2013; with Simon Clark (Ringmer Rovers) on 1 Feb 2013; with Nigel Morris (Ringmer Rovers) on 4 Feb 2013; with Marina Robb about sports & social facilities for young people on 23 Jan 2013 & 25 Jan 2013; with Mark Wignall (Downlands College, Hassocks, about the cost of all-weather pitches) on 7 Feb 2013; with Philip Sturdy & Martin Harrop (Croudace Strategic, about possible provision of land for sports pitches and the costs thereof) on 18 Feb 2013; with Graham Branton (chair, Ringmer Rovers) on 19 Feb 2013 & 26 Feb 2013; with Martin Costin about sites for sports facilities on 20 Feb 2013; with Cllr Jeremy Hallett (Uckfield TC) re the costs and management of their new all-weather sports pitch on 23 Feb 2013 & 15 Mar 2013; with Chris Wojtulewski & Tessa Talbot (Lower Lodge Farm, possible provision of land for sports pitches) on 14 May 2013; with Andy Joss and other members of the Gribble family (Fingerpost Farm, possible provision of land for sports pitches) on 15 May 2013, 23 May 2013, 11 Oct 2013 & 9 Dec 2013; with Cllr James Page, Lewes D.C. leader, re sports pitches on 22 Sep 2013, 24 Oct 2013 & 9 Dec 2013; with Sue Noone (proponent of Ringmer Community Woodland) on 9 Feb 2012; with Richard Monnington re a possible extension to the parish council allotments on many occasions; with the trustees of the Cheyney Trust re a possible allotment site, on 10 Dec 2012; with Chris Wojtulewski (Parker Dann) and clients (owners of the Lower Lodge Farm re possible provision of land for community woodland) on 13 Jul 2012, 26 Nov 2012 & 14 May 2013; with Gus Christie and representatives of the Glyndebourne Estate on 22 May 2012; with Simon Kahn, East Sussex Gliding Club on 20 Oct 2012 & 16 Nov 2012; with Hilton Thatcher, Bill Etteridge & Nigel Fright, East Sussex Gliding Club on 14 Feb 2013; with Nigel Mason (chief executive, Raystede) on 23 Nov 2012; A flyer from Croudace Strategic promoting the provision of sports facilities as part of their development was circulated to all Ringmer households in Feb 2013.

Evidence underpinning sections 9.1-9.3 (road & cycle network): collected from meetings or discussions Claire Warwick, ESCC Highways Transport & Development Control team & Jon Wheeler, ESCC Highways Infrastructure & Development Team, 11 Jan 2012; with Claire Warwick on 30 Jan 2012; discussions with Roger New, ESCC highways engineer responsible for the Lewes Town Transport Study, on 24 Jan 2012; with Mr P. Harwood, Highways Agency, on 1 Feb 2012; with RADAR, 9 Dec 2011 & 11 Jan 2012; comments from (then) parish councillor Ron Livingstone received 12 Jan 2012; survey results re Bishops Lane from Sy Morse-Brown, NRRG, received 7 Mar 2012; with David Sands-Smith, former chair BCA, on 30 Oct 2012; with Chris Stanyard & Roger New (ESCC) on 6 Mar 2013; with Alan Cook

(ESCC), Chris Bowers (Lewes District councillor), Rosalyn St Pierre (ESCC councillor), Gid Cox (cyclist) and others re the Lewes-Ringmer cycleway completion on many occasions; and with Teresa Ford, ESCC Highways on 15 Jul 2014 & 11 Aug 2014. See also Lewes Town Transport Study below.

Evidence underpinning section 9.4 (road safety): discussions with the Ringmer road safety organisation RADAR and with officers of the East Sussex County Council Highways department on many occasions.

Evidence underpinning section 9.5 (public transport): taken from bus company and train company websites and from communication on 27 Feb 2014 with Mike Best, Operations Director, Brighton & Hove Bus Company. The East Sussex County Council consultation on proposals to reduce the subsidised bus services running from Ringmer to Eastbourne and Hailsham from every weekday to two days per week runs from 7 Jul 2014 to 28 Sep 2014, and is available at <https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/economy-transport-environment/organisationsbuschanges>.

Evidence underpinning section 9.6 (primary and nursery education): discussions about the capacity of Ringmer Primary School with Jackie Warren, head teacher, and Canon Will Pratt, Margaret Constable, Michael Hobden, Margaret Sweatman, Clare Wiczorek, governors, of Ringmer Primary School, Nov 2011-Jan 2012; with Melanie Griffin, ESCC head of the Capital Strategy Team, Education, 1 Feb 2012; with Dave Evans, head teacher, on 16 Jul 2013; with Malcolm Welsh, chair of governors of Ringmer Primary School on 10 Oct 2013, 8 Dec 2013, 10 Dec 2013, 17 Dec 2013; with Jacqui Lane, ESCC community development worker, ESCC Children's Centre programme, and other Children's Centre staff on 18 Jan, 5 Feb & 24 Feb 2012; with Corina Gamble, head, Ringmer Nursery School on 22 Nov 2011. The governors of Ringmer Primary School considered the impact of a potential expansion of Ringmer by either 200 or 650 new houses, agreeing that in either case it would be impossible to accommodate the additional children within the existing school buildings, at their meeting on 30 Nov 2011, minute 26.2. For the consultation about the expansion of Ringmer Primary School see https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrens-services/ringmer/consult_view and the article by head teacher Dave Evans in the Aug 2013 *Ringmer Parish Magazine*. Several parish councillors attended an exhibition of the plans for the extension of the Primary School held on 25 Jul 2014, attended by head teacher Dave Evans and a range of senior staff from the East Sussex County Council Education Department.

Evidence underpinning section 9.7 (secondary and further education and services for young people): discussions with Kathy Stonier, principal, and the Board of Ringmer Academy, 17 Jan 2012, and with Academy company secretary Alex Hunt on 15 Nov 2012;

Evidence underpinning section 9.8 (health service provision): discussions with Tracey Burgoyne, River Lodge practice manager and Dr Laith Butti, senior partner, River Lodge & general practitioner, Anchor Field surgery, on 30 Mar 2012, 24 Apr 2012 & 27 Sep 2012; discussions with Dr James Mallon, proprietor, Ringmer Dental Surgery, on 25 Nov 2011. Information about Ringmer's public health was from Graham Evans, head of public health intelligence, East Sussex County Council, on 3 Dec 2012.

Evidence underpinning section 9.9 (water supply): discussions with Lee Dance, South East Water asset manager and Paul Seeley, South East Water asset director, on 23 Dec 2011 & 2 Apr 2012; with Roger King, Lewes DC, on 13 Mar 2013; and regular meetings through the South East Water Environmental Focus Group, comprising a number of parties including Lewes DC and CPRE Sussex; Ringmer parish council engaged actively in discussions with South East Water and the planning inquiry into the soundness of the company's 2009 Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP09), and was a member of South East Water's Environmental Focus Group offering confidential comments to the company on an ongoing basis as it prepared its revised Water Resources Management Plan for 2014 (WRMP14).

Evidence underpinning section 9.10 (drainage and sewerage): information about the capacity of Ringmer Sewage Works was provided by Susan Solbra, Development Manager, Asset Management, Southern Water, 9 Jan 2012, 11 Jan 2012, 26 Nov 2012, 26 Nov 2012, 10 Jan 2013, 18 Jan 2013, 30 Jan 2013, 6 Feb 2013, 28 Mar 2013, 21 May 2013 & 24 Apr 2014; with Joel Hufford, Southern Water communications team, on 2 Sep 2013, 16 Sep 2013 & 12 Dec 2013; and with Russell Walkden, Lewes DC, on 10 Jan 2013. Discussions about drainage issues in Green Close with Gary Hockley, Green Close resident, on many occasions during 2012-2014; with Richard Booth, Lewes Road resident, on 17 Dec 2012; with Alan Griffith, Broyle Lane resident, on 21 Jan 2013; with Andrew Cooper, Bishops Lane resident, on 24 Jan 2013; with Martin Costin, Chamberlaines Farm resident, on 11 Feb 2013 & 14 Feb 2014; with Mark Reynolds, Southern Water, on 27 Feb 2014; with John Jackson, Lewes Road resident, on 25 Feb 2013; with Sy Morse-Brown, North Ringmer Residents' Group, on 13 Mar 2013; with Ian Wilson, Rushey Green resident, on 20 Jun 2013. Complaint to

Ringmer parish council planning committee on 22 Nov 2012 by Andrew Cooper, Bishops Lane resident, about the poor state of the Bishops Lane drainage system. Three parish councillors inspected the map of the sewers served by the Ringmer sewage works at Lewes District Council offices, 7 Dec 2012, and a parish councillor attended the Southern Water consultation day on their 2015-2020 business plan at Arundel on 4 Sep 2013.

Evidence underpinning section 9.12 (waste disposal and recycling): discussions with Cllr Jim Sheppard, lead Lewes DC councillor for waste collection and Trevor Watson, Lewes DC head of recycling, on 1 May 2012 & 30 Nov 2012; with Trevor Watson, Julia Black & Cllr Chris Bowers, Lewes DC, on 20-23 Nov 2012, 13 Dec 2012, 18 Feb 2013, 20 Feb 2013; with business site owner Andrew Cooper on 22 Nov 2012; with Don Faulkner, Mill Mead resident, on 9-12 Mar 2013; with Daniel Clark, Southern Water, 6 Jun 2013.

Evidence underpinning section 9.13 (cemeteries): discussions with Canon Will Pratt (and through him the Diocese of Chichester), 13 Dec 2011, 23 May 2012 & 3 Jul 2012; and with Mr Bill & Mrs Annie Almond, 13 Dec 2011 & 24 Nov 2012.

Evidence underpinning section 9.14 (importance of excellent e-communications for working at home or in a rural area): discussions with Rosie Boxer, 3 Dec 2011; with Francis Lang, 9 Dec 2011; with Geoff Bridger, 9 Nov 2012; with Richard Purdom, 20 Nov 2012; with Ian Loughborough, 20 Nov 2012; with Matthew Hicks, Goldcliff Garden Centre, on 28 Nov 2012; with Paul Manser, 6 Feb 2013 & 1 Jul 2013.

Evidence underpinning section 10 (Village Design Statement): Evidence collected from Richard Dollamore, SDNP Authority planning officer on 15 Jun & 4 Jul 2012; Jacqui Lane, Community Development Worker responsible for the Ringmer Children's Centre and her senior colleagues held on 24 Feb 2012; from Graham Evans, head of public health intelligence, East Sussex County Council, on 3 Dec 2012; from the Ringmer History Study Group on many occasions.

Evidence unrelated to policies included in the Neighbourhood Plan: meeting with Ollie Pendered, Ovesco Ltd, re possible solar farms in Ringmer on 25 Jul 2013; with Sheila Holden, a qualified Neighbourhood Plan examiner, on 31 Aug 2013.

Exhibition: the exhibition held 2 Feb 2012-4 Feb 2012 at an empty shop in the Ringmer Shopping Precinct to consult residents and others about the Neighbourhood Plan. Synopsis of principal evidence collected is available on the Ringmer parish council website, www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk.

Gleeson Broyleside survey: Survey of the views of 100 Broyleside residents by face-to-face interview carried out in Jun 2013, sponsored by Gleeson Strategic Land.

Gleeson Exhibition: Gleeson Strategic Land held an exhibition on 29 Jun 2013 in Ringmer Village Hall presenting a proposal for 115 housing units to be developed on Bishops Field & Potters Field, Bishops Lane. The exhibition was well publicised, including the delivery of a flyer to each Ringmer household. Gleesons prepared and a survey sheet seeking attendees' views, and the North Ringmer Residents Group, who also publicised the exhibition to their members, also distributed a survey sheet to those attending. The NRRG counted the total number of attendees at 345. Gleesons collected 189 questionnaires from those attending the exhibition, while the NRRG collected 179 completed questionnaires. The NRRG survey included a request for postcodes, which showed that 62% of their respondents lived in the area served by Bishops Lane, 20% elsewhere in Ringmer village, 11% in the Broyleside and 7% elsewhere in Ringmer. Copies of the results of both surveys have been made available to the Steering Group.

Growth and Infrastructure Act (Apr 2013): Available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/27/contents/enacted>

Hedgerows Regulations (1997): Copies of these regulations are available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/1160/contents/made>

Historic Environment Record for East Sussex, maintained by the East Sussex County Archaeologist, available at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/archaeology/her.htm.

Landscape Capacity Study: The Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park Authority Landscape Capacity Study was published in Sep 2012. This document is available on www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lewes District Affordable Housing Needs Assessment, 2013-2018: published in Jan 2014 and available on www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lewes District Affordable Housing and Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Study: published in Dec 2011 and available on www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lewes District Informal Recreational Space Study: study by the East Sussex County Council Landscape Group on the availability of informal recreational space in Lewes District, published in Oct 2005 and available on www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lewes District Infrastructure Delivery Plan: published in Nov 2012 and updated in May 2014 as one of the background papers for the Lewes District submission Core Strategy and available on www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lewes District Local Housing Needs Assessment: undertaken by consultants for Lewes D.C. and published in Apr 2011 as one of the background papers for the Lewes District submission Core Strategy and available on www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lewes District Local Plan: this document, adopted in March 2003, contained District-wide and local policies regulating development in Lewes District including plans and policies for development in Lewes District up to 2011. A number of key retained policies are intended to remain in force up to, and in some cases beyond, the adoption of the new Core Strategy. This document is available on www.lewes.gov.uk. An assessment of the compliance of the saved Local Plan policies with the NPPF (as of July 2014) is available at [www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/plan_Cabinet_Appendix\(1\).pdf](http://www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/plan_Cabinet_Appendix(1).pdf).

Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review: this document, published in 2004, is available on www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lewes District Shopping and Town Centre Survey, published in May 2012 and available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lewes Town Transport Study: Study commissioned by Lewes DC from East Sussex County Council to assess present and future local road transport issues in the area north of Lewes, published on 23 Sep 2011. This study was commissioned prior to the completion of the Wealden Core Strategy, identifying large strategic sites in (inter alia) Uckfield and Hailsham. None of the scenarios for housing growth in Lewes and Ringmer considered correspond exactly to subsequent proposals, but scenario 3 is the closest to what is proposed in the DSCS. This document is available on www.lewes.gov.uk.

Lifetime Homes standards: Lifetime Homes standards were developed to provide criteria for homes that are accessible and inclusive for older people or people with disabilities. Available at www.lifetimehomes.org.uk.

Local Housing Delivery Group (Standards Working Group): 'A review of local standards for the delivery of new homes', (Harman Group) (June 2012). Available at: www.nhbc.co.uk/NewsandComment/Documents/filedownload,47340,en.pdf

Localism Act (Nov 2011): available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents>

Mid-Sussex District Council Dwelling Space standards: The supplementary planning document 'Dwelling Place standards' was published by Mid-Sussex District Council in Jul 2009, and is available on www.midsussex.gov.uk.

Ministry of Housing and Local Government Design Bulletin 6 "Space in the Home" (1963)

Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Meetings held on 21 Nov 2011, 29 Nov 2011, 2 Dec 2011 & 13 Dec 2011 and 30 Jan 2013, 13 Feb 2013 & 20 Feb 2013. Presentations, notes and outcomes are available on www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk.

Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, published in Mar 2012 by the DCLG, are available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/made>

North Ringmer Residents Group Survey Report: Survey of residents in the area of Ringmer village north of the B2192 carried out by a residents' association. The results were reported to Ringmer parish council Mar 2012.

NPPF: the National Planning Policy Framework (Apr 2012). Available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2116950.pdf>

NPPG: the DCLG Planning Policy Guidance to the interpretation of the NPPF published in Mar 2014 and available at: <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>.

Permitted development rights: A new statutory instrument, the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment and Consequential Provisions) (England) Order, 2014 No.564, was made in Mar 2014 and came into effect in Apr 2014. The section of most relevance to this Neighbourhood Plan is Class MB.

Planning & Design for Outdoor Sport and Play (2008), published by Fields in Trust, see www.fieldsintrust.org.

'Principles of selection for listing buildings': The criteria, published by the Department of Culture, Media & Sport, for listing heritage buildings under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), published in March 2010. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/137695/Principles_Selection_Listing_1.pdf

PSCS: The Proposed Submission Core Strategy for Lewes District, published for consultation in January 2013 by Lewes D.C. and the SDNP Authority, and available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

PSCS consultation responses: A synopsis of the comments made on the PSCS in the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation, published in Apr 2-14, together with the full text of all the comments made, available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

PSCSFA: The Proposed Submission Core Strategy revised to include a set of focused amendments, published for consultation by Lewes D.C. and the SDNP Authority in May 2014 and available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

'Ringmer Footpaths': the booklet originally written by Anne & John Stamper as 'Ringmer Paths' in 1974, has been regularly updated and through several editions, more recently edited by the Ringmer Ramblers. It is published by Ringmer parish council and has been in print continuously since 1974.

Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan application: the successful application submitted by Lewes DC and the SDNP planning departments, in association with Ringmer parish council, for funding and support to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Ringmer parish. A copy of the application is available on www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk.

'Ringmer Sewage Treatment Works'. A technical account of the development of the Ringmer Sewage Works from its foundation in 1904 to its major upgrade in 1970 to serve a population of up to 4,600, published by Chailey Rural District Council in 1972.

Ringmer Sewage Works capacity: information provided by Susan Solbra, Development Manager, Asset Management, Southern Water, 9 Jan 2012.

Ringmer Village Appraisal (1988) based on extensive opinion surveys and consultation.

Ringmer Village Plan (2003), adopted after extensive opinion surveys and consultation, available on www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk.

Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy, approved in 2006 after extensive local consultation and published on the Ringmer parish council website, www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk.

Ringmer Village Plan Strategy for Residential Development, approved in 2009 after extensive local consultation and published on the Ringmer parish council website, www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk.

Rural Settlement Survey: Published by Lewes District Council in 2011 and available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

SDNP Authority: information about the SDNP boundary, its purposes and duty and its special qualities is available on the website, www.southdowns.gov.uk.

SDNP Boundary Designation: the evidence considered by Inspector Robert Neil Parry prior to his adjusting the proposed SDNP boundary within Ringmer parish is summarised in paragraphs 7.388-7.405 of volume 1, part 2 of the boundary report included within his 31 Mar 2006 Final Report to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/documents/national-parks/np-volume1.pdf>.

SDNP Local Plan, currently at the Issues & Options stage. Up to date information on its progress is available on the SDNP Authority website, www.southdowns.gov.uk.

SDNP Partnership Management Plan, Shaping the future of your South Downs National Park 2014-2019, published in 2014 and available on the SDNP Authority website, www.southdowns.gov.uk.

SDNP Special Qualities, published in 2011 and available on the SDNP Authority website, www.southdowns.gov.uk.

SDNP Village Design Statement Toolkit: Published in 2012 and available on www.southdowns.gov.uk.

Secured by Design: This is the official UK police initiative, owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers, supporting designing out crime from new development, and is available on the website www.securedbydesign.com.

SHLAA: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, first published by Lewes District Council in 2010 and extensively revised in 2011, further revised in 2012, 2013 & 2014 and available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

South East Plan: the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East, published in May 2009. The South East Plan has now been revoked. This is available on the National Archives website, <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100528142817/http://www.gos.gov.uk/gose/planning/regionalPlanning/815640/>

South East Water WRMP09 & WRMP14: The company's 2009 Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP09) was found by the Inspector at examination to be sound only in so far as its policies to 2020 were concerned. The Inspector, after hearing evidence from Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Ian Askew Trust, CPRE Sussex and Ringmer parish council, was particularly critical of the proposal to create, after 2020, a new water storage reservoir that would have flooded this valley. This particular reservoir proposal has since been removed from consideration and there are now a number of alternative sources proposed for the provision of new water resources to the Barcombe Mills WTW in the water company's approved WRMP14.

Summary of Consultation Responses on the draft Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan: Summary of the 70 responses from individuals and organisations received during the Jan-Mar 2013 consultation on the draft Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan, available on www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk.

Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre: This regularly-updated online record is maintained by the Sussex Wildlife Trust, working in partnership with public bodies including East Sussex County Council, Lewes D.C. and the SDNP Authority and a range of wildlife and environmental agencies including Natural England, the Environment Agency and the National Trust. It is available at <http://sxbrc.org.uk/> and was last consulted in Jul 2014.

Sustainability Appraisals: A Sustainability Appraisal/SEA was published by Lewes District Council at the same time as the ECS and a revised Sustainability Appraisal/SEA was published to accompany the DSCS, the PSCS and the PSCSFA. These are available on the Lewes District Council website, www.lewes.gov.uk.

Wealden District Core Strategy: this Core Strategy was adopted in Nov 2012. It is published on the Wealden DC website, www.wealden.gov.uk.

Websites for leisure & tourism centres in and around Ringmer: Information about these key facilities is available from their websites Glyndebourne.com, www.raystede.org, www.sussextgliding.co.uk & www.bentley.org.uk.

Zoopla website, advertising property for sale in Ringmer, <http://www.zoopla.co.uk/for-sale/property/ringmer/>