The Steering Group were delighted with the number of parishioners who attended the Visioning Workshops and Design Forums and the very useful input they made during the process. That information has shaped the development of our emerging NDP.

The Steering Group does have some reservations about the format of the Feria Interim Report which focussed on looking at sites for significant housing expansion in both East Hoathly and Halland.

Feria seemed to have based this on a housing allocation of 190 homes for East Hoathly and 30 for Halland put forward in Wealden's 2015 Issues Options and Recommendations Consultation Paper. Feria also included reference to a March 2017 Draft WLP and Feria state in their report that no figure was specified for East Hoathly. There were 2 Draft WLP in March 2017. The 3 Mar 2017 Draft had allocations for East Hoathly of 205 homes and for Halland of 30 homes. The 22 Mar 2017 Draft had reduced East Hoathly's allocation to zero. The 2015 Issues Options and Recommendations Consultation Paper did not supersede the existing Local Plan. The 3 March 2017 Draft WLP was withdrawn before the full council considered it and the 22 March Draft WLP was eventually approved by WDC and led to the next Draft WLP of July 2018 which had a Windfall Allowance for East Hoathly of 48 and zero for Halland (Settlement Capacity 30). This remains the basis for the current Submission WLP.

This led Feria to produce Scenarios for the future of the Parish all of which were based on significant growth. This is at odds with Wealden's current plans, our Parish plans and we believe the Feria Report gives the impression that this is what the public want. These concerns were fed back to Feria and some wording was changed but the Scenarios in their final report remained the same.

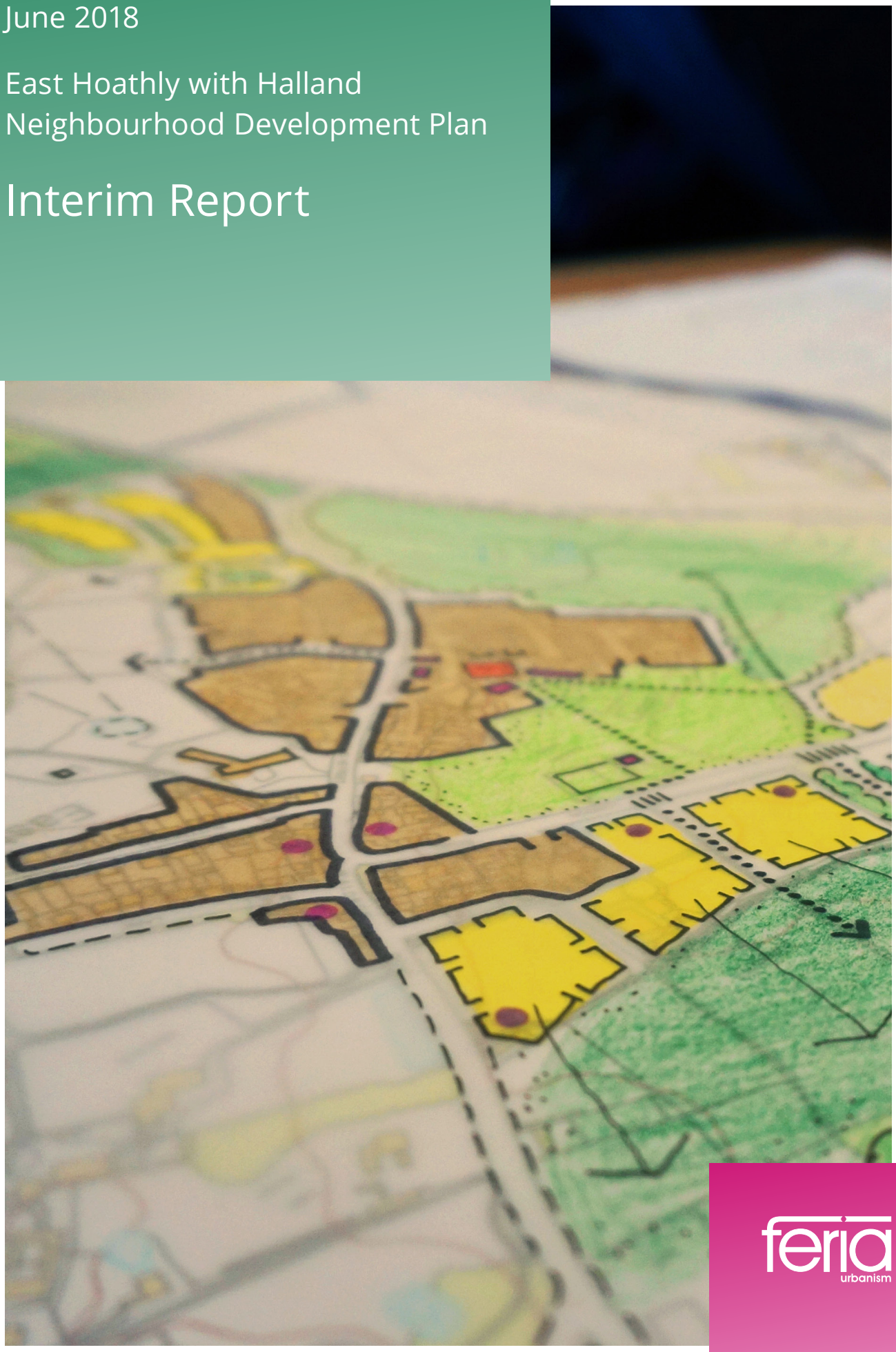
There is no doubt that we remain under threat of significant growth but it is not currently part of any plan. The ideas created in the Feria Scenarios may become useful in the future if we are faced with a change in the level of development being targeted at our Parish by Wealden. It is really important to stress that the input on these Scenarios at the public events was excellent and has very much helped us to shape our emerging NDP.

It should be noted that whilst the emerging WLP is still not adopted we remain vulnerable to speculative planning applications. These contravene the saved policies of the existing WLP and the emerging WLP. However, because Wealden cannot satisfy its 5 Year Land Supply target, we are vulnerable to these applications being granted permission.

June 2018

East Hoathly with Halland
Neighbourhood Development Plan

Interim Report



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THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP WISH TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING:

Although various land parcels are described in this report which could share in the development of East Hoathly with Halland Parish further consultation with the community is required before these proposals can be regarded as acceptable. At the moment they are merely suggestions.



This report contains independent advice and recommendations from Feria Urbanism on the continuing development and preparation of the East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood plan. This advice is based on the outcomes of a series of consultation and engagement events held during early 2018.

Feria Urbanism is a planning and design studio that specialises in urban design, urban planning, neighbourhood strategies, public participation and community engagement. Established in 2007, we have been involved in a diverse range of planning and design projects across the UK.

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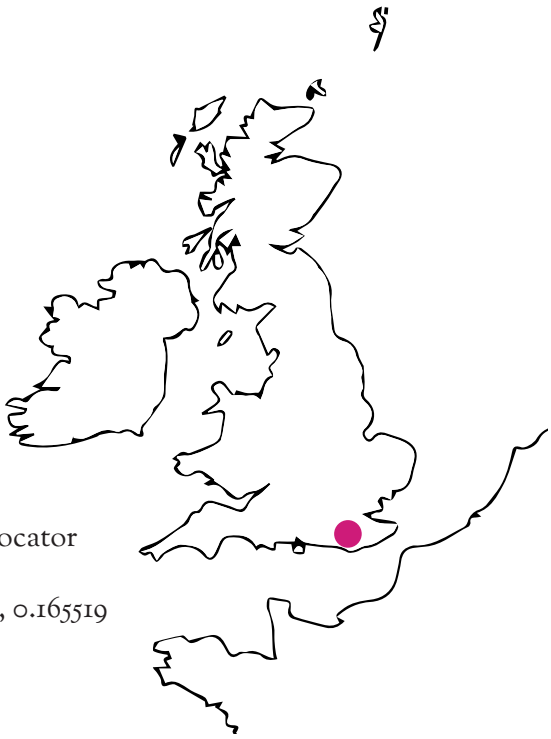

Project Locator

50.925877, 0.165519

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The consultation & engagement work so far



Community visioning events were held in February 2018 and a two day design forum was held in March 2018. The neighbourhood plan steering group successfully promoted these events that were well-attended.

About this report

As part of the process to develop the East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Development Plan, successful community visioning events were held in February 2018 and a two-day design forum was held in March 2018. These were both preceded by a village audit (known as a PLACE assessment) undertaken by members of the steering group and held in late 2017.

The PLACE assessment provided a baseline appreciation of the parish assets, qualities and key features; the visioning events had a community focus as they sought to uncover the main issues of concern to local interest groups and residents; and the design forum provided a platform for more detailed discussions about development and housing land allocations. The design forum directly addressed subject of housing growth and different development scenarios, along with other planning matters.

The PLACE assessment plans and the results of the visioning event can be found in within this report. The various individual outcomes of the design forum have been captured in an annotated slideshow and video, separate to this report, and are available on line [1].

Based on the consultation and engagement process so far, this interim report seeks to draw some conclusions regarding the emerging spatial strategy, showing how various land parcels currently being considered for development could be successfully integrated into the existing villages (pages 25 — 28).



The visioning events helped uncover some key issues that were taken forward into the design forum for further testing.



The design forum was collaborative and interactive, testing ideas and options.



A wide variety of issues were addressed during the design forum but potential housing sites were a main area of debate.

1 https://www. feria-urbanism.eu/east-hoathly-with-halland/

Relationship between the East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Plan and the Wealden District Local Plan

The Government introduced the opportunity for local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Localism Act 2011, and through the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, which set out the requirements for neighbourhood plans.

Neighbourhood plans are policy-based land use plans that need to be in general conformity with both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and with the local plan for the area, in this instance, the Wealden District Council (WDC) Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans are produced by community forum groups or parish or town councils. Neighbourhood plans can influence or allocate new housing; produce design policies for allocated sites and general design policies; protect or identify new community facilities; and identify green spaces to be protected from any future development proposals.

Local Plan Status

The adopted local plan policies are found within the WDC Core Strategy Local Plan. This comprises a long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives for the Wealden District area for the period 2013 to 2027, including the area within Wealden which is in the South Downs National Park. WDC have stated that all subsequent documents produced as part of the local plan will build on the objectives set out in the Core Strategy. Within the adopted Core Strategy, East Hoathly is defined as a "neighbourhood centre" — i.e. a settlement with limited, basic or no facilities but with access to another centre, or a settlement with facilities but poor accessibility or access to a service centre or local centre. Meanwhile, Halland is categorised as an "other unclassified settlement"— i.e. one of a range of settlements with few or no facilities and services, and where further development would be unsustainable. At the time the Core Strategy was published, neither settlement was considered suitable for significant future housing growth.

Settlement Reclassifications

In October 2015, WDC published the Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations report for consultation. In this document, WDC explored issues across the district such as sustainable development, housing, the economy and the environment.

In this document, the two main settlements in the parish had been reclassified by WDC. Now, East Hoathly was considered to be a "sustainable settlement" — i.e. a settlement which is either very accessible with good local facilities or accessible with good local facilities. East Hoathly was now being considered for up to 190 new dwellings, the equivalent of up to 50% growth relative to its current size.

Meanwhile, Halland was now classified as a "local settlement" — i.e. a settlement with accessibility with local to very limited facilities. It was identified for up to 30 new dwellings.

The reclassification of both settlements has been a cause for concern for many local residents. No clear explanation has been given by the team at WDC for the change in status of the two settlements with regard to the local plan process. As a result of this concern, the neighbourhood plan process wishes to engage further with this aspect and contribute to the evidence base that is used to inform such classifications. The results of the visioning events and the design forum can be instructive in this respect.

Future Settlement Sustainability?

Local people who have contributed to the neighbourhood plan process to date do not believe that East Hoathly with Halland provides a wide range of services. The core services in East Hoathly comprise no more than the village shop with post office, a hairdressers, one pub and the coffee shop. Other services are considered to be intermittent or fringe. There has also been a recent reduction in the quality and coverage of the social and community infrastructure which does not justify the change in status of the village hierarchy. For example, a reduction in the frequency and coverage of the bus services, the closure of a pub, a reduction in access to the surgery, a low broadband speeds.

New Local Plan

The consultation responses to the Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations report were considered by council members in April 2016 and WDC continues to use this earlier work to prepare the Wealden Local Plan Proposed Submission Plan (representation stage) which is due shortly.

An early draft of the Wealden Local Plan Proposed Submission Plan, dated March 2017, was published shortly before the "Ashdown Forest" issue (see page 10 of this report) delayed progress on the local plan. In this version, Halland was still identified as having the capacity for 30 additional homes and while no figure was specified for East Hoathly, the draft plan stated that:

— *"Larger sustainable villages outside of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will also contribute to housing growth with allocations and growth to be delivered in Horam, East Hoathly and Ninfield"* — page 31, Spatial Objective 1, Housing, Wealden Local Plan (Draft Proposed Submission), March 2017.

This suggests that the number of 190 suggested in the earlier 2015 Issues, Options and Recommendations report had not been entirely dismissed by this stage.

The Need for General Conformity between Neighbourhood Plans and Local Plans

Whatever the content and scope of the next version of the local plan, it will have a direct influence upon the East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Plan. This is because neighbourhood plans need to be in general conformity with the local plan for the area. Paragraph 31 of the new, revised NPPF (currently in draft recently consulted upon) states that:

— *"Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of*

the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies."

Given that a draft of the replacement WDC Local Plan is expected to be published in the next few months, it is recommended that the neighbourhood plan process takes no decisions until it has reviewed the scope and content of the draft local plan. This review will allow a greater understanding of the strategic policies that it must be in general conformity with and which non-strategic areas it can continue to influence, shape and direct. There needs to be a constructive dialogue between WDC and the neighbourhood plan group to clarify and agree this relationship.

Housing Numbers

At the time of writing (June 2018) there is an embargo on the determination of planning applications and the progress of the replacement WDC Local Plan has been temporarily halted as a resolution to the "Ashdown Forest" issue [2] is sought.

As described in the previous section on the progress of the WDC Local Plan, the housing numbers that must be accommodated by the parish is currently not known and/or made public at the time this report was produced.

Similarly, the specific housing site allocations that may be required to deliver those numbers are also currently not known and/or made public at this time. A further unknown is if site allocations are to be made by the WDC Local Plan or by the East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Plan.

At some stage, an agreement will need to be reached between the local planning authority (i.e. WDC) and the qualifying body (i.e. East Hoathly with Halland Parish Council) about which plan — neighbourhood or local — contains the formal housing site allocations, should the parish be expected to deliver new housing growth as a requirement of the WDC Local Plan.

From preliminary discussions held between the Steering Group and WDC officers in April 218, it would appear that WDC are keen to make any allocations through the local plan rather than working with the neighbourhood plan group to support allocations through the neighbourhood plan. However, this position has not been confirmed and continued dialogue between the local planning authority and the qualifying body is encouraged.

2 For details on the "Ashdown Forest" issue, see the previous Wealden Local Plan updates link on this site: http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Residents/Planning_and_Building_Control/Planning_Policy/Wealden_Local_Plan/PPolicy_Wealden_Local_Plan.aspx

Concern About "Over Development"

Given the current uncertainties associated with the local planning policy context, as described in this report, a primary concern of the residents and organisations that have taken part in the neighbourhood planning process to date is that of "over development" i.e. the imposition of large-scale housing developments upon the parish that the two main settlements are unable to successfully assimilate.

Those involved in the process are keen that this unwanted outcome is avoided by both the parish council and the local planning authority (Wealden DC) through the effective use of all means and mechanisms at their disposal.

Developments of any size, especially major developments of ten or more homes, require careful consideration of the likely impacts (both positive and negative) and the appropriate mitigation measures that must put in place, from the design stage right through to implementation on the ground.

A unfortunate coincidence of events may result in an "over development" scenario because the careful considerations and mitigation measures required may not be effectively applied. The following issues are of concern:

- A successful resolution of the "Ashdown Forest" issue may lift the embargo on planning determinations. This may lead to a rapid clearing of the backlog of planning applications in the parish, all currently held in abeyance. These planning decisions may result in a significant number of new homes for the parish being approved in a short space of time without the necessary level of scrutiny and oversight that would otherwise would be applied.
- If the "Ashdown Forest" issue is successfully resolved and allows the passage of the WDC Local Plan through to its next phase of publication, what does this mean for the range of planning applications currently held in abeyance? Will some planning applications, by virtue of their numbers and/or location, be supported by emerging WDC planning policy as applied to the parish?
- In contrast, will other planning applications be considered to be contrary to emerging WDC planning policy? And if refused permission will the applicants appeal? On what grounds?

In light of the above, how can the emerging neighbourhood plan, and its ideas for how development could be assimilated into the parish, be used to inform emerging planning policy and the application determination process in a more locally-responsive way?

It is noted that the neighbourhood plan is at an early stage in its development but nevertheless contains a range of useful ideas that could help avoid an "over development" scenario for the whole parish.

PLACE assessment plans

These plans (page 13) were the result of an audit day undertaken by the steering group in November 2017. They capture a baseline assessment of Planning, Landscape, Architecture, Conservation and Engineering (PLACE) issues across both East Hoathly and Halland. They should be considered part of the evidence base for the neighbourhood plan.

Received position statements

The design forum event received 19 position statements from various clubs, societies, amenity groups and individuals. A wide range of opinions were expressed through this process of gathering and presenting statements. Much of the focus within the received statements was on the main settlements of East Hoathly with Halland and the land uses and activities around these areas.

These position statements form an important part of the evidence base for the neighbourhood plan. Together with the PLACE plans, the results of the visioning events and the design forum, they are a record of community aspirations and concerns, as well as the intentions of landowners and developers.

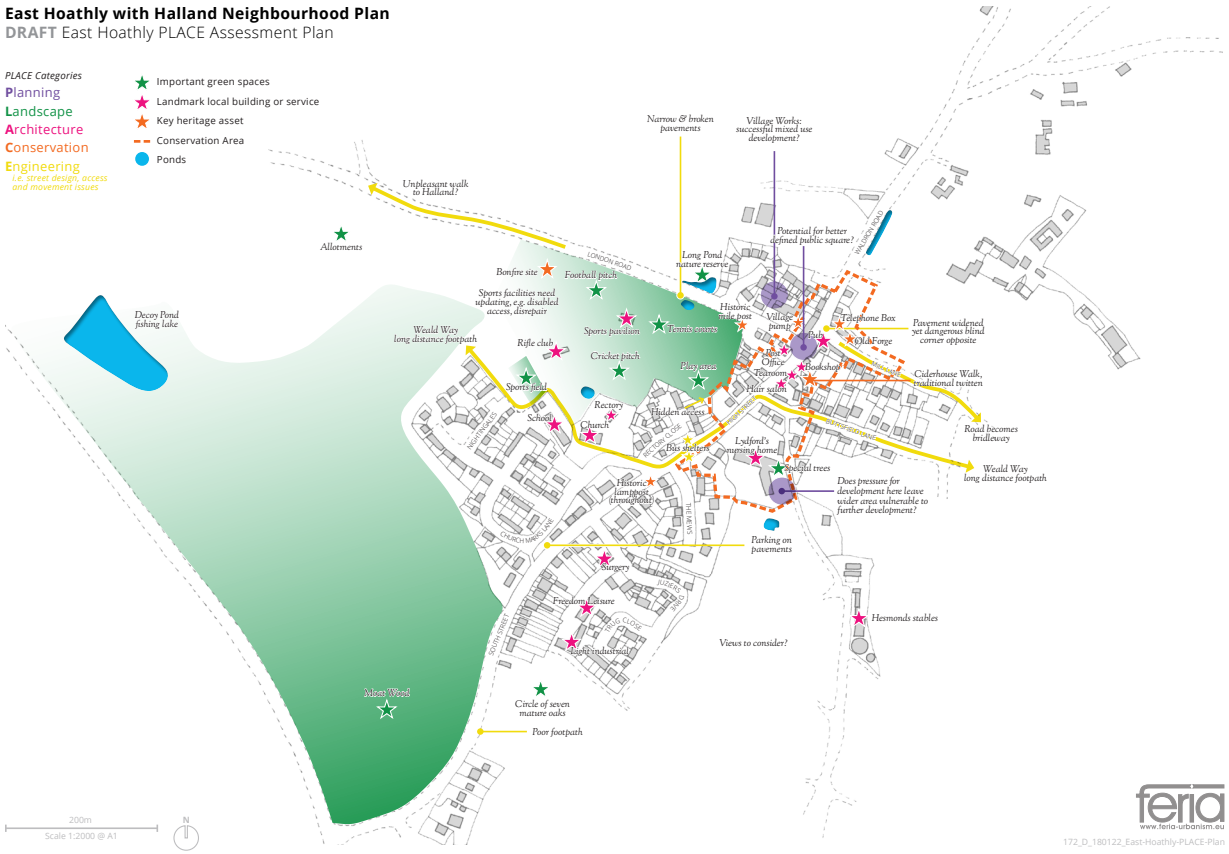
As further work on developing planning policies is undertaken, the neighbourhood plan steering group is encouraged to revisit these statements and seek a linkage between the preferred outcomes expressed within the statements to specific sites and development opportunities across the neighbourhood area. This process can help ensure delivery of various social and community infrastructure elements over the neighbourhood plan period.



The PLACE assessment day resulted in baseline mapping for both settlements. These became a useful starting point for the subsequent stages of the plan process.



The design forum event received 19 position statements from various clubs, societies and amenity groups. Copies of the all the received position statements and the PLACE plans are available from the neighbourhood plan steering group.


East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Plan
DRAFT East Hoathly PLACE Assessment Plan
PLACE Categories
Planning
Landscape
Architecture
Conservation
Engineering
i.e. street design, access and movement issues
Important green spaces
Landmark local building or service
Key heritage asset
Conservation Area
Ponds
Narrow & broken pavements
Village Works: successful mixed use development?
Unpleasant walk to Halland?
Allotments
Potential for better defined public square?
Long Pond nature reserve
Bonfire site
Football pitch
Sports facilities need updating, e.g. disabled access, disrepair
Decoy Pond fishing lake
Weald Way long distance footpath
Rifle club
Sports pavilion
Tennis courts
Historic mile post
Village pump
Telephone Box
Pavement widened yet dangerous blind corner opposite
Pub
OldForge
Cricket pitch
Play area
Post Office
Bookshop
Tearoom
Hair salon
Ciderhouse Walk, traditional twitten
Sports field
Rectory
Hidden access
School
Church
Road becomes bridleway
Bus shelters
Lydford's nursing home
Special trees
Weald Way long distance footpath
Historic lamppost throughout
Does pressure for development here leave wider area vulnerable to further development?
Parking on pavements
Surgery
Freedom Leisure
Hesmonds stables
Light industrial
Views to consider?
Moat Wood
Circle of seven mature oaks
Poor footpath
200m
Scale 1:2000 @ A1
N
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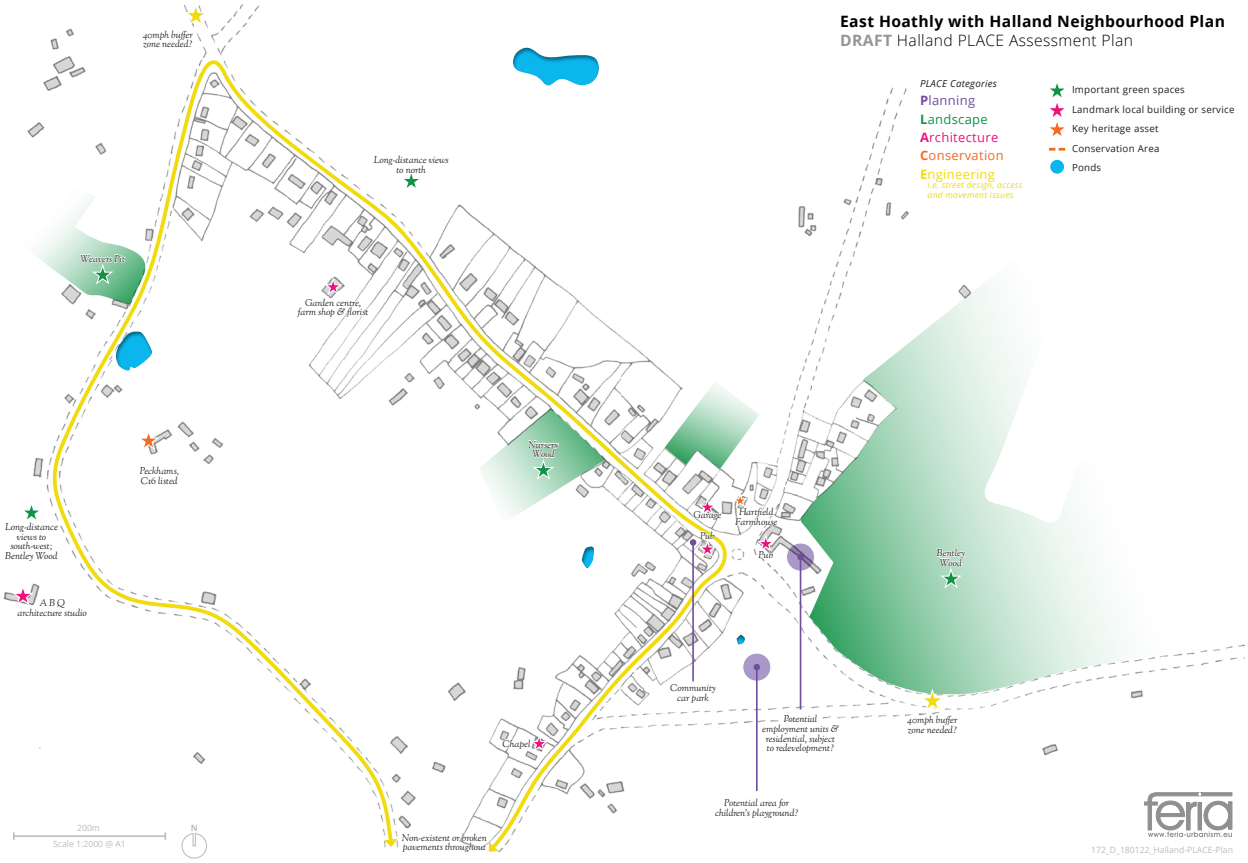
East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Plan
DRAFT Halland PLACE Assessment Plan
PLACE Categories
Planning
Landscape
Architecture
Conservation
Engineering
i.e. street design, access and movement issues
Important green spaces
Landmark local building or service
Key heritage asset
Conservation Area
Ponds
40mph buffer zone needed?
Long-distance views to north
Weavers Pit
Garden centre, farm shop & florist
Peckhams, C16 listed
Nursery Wood
Long-distance views to south-west; Bentley Wood
A B Q architecture studio
Garage
Hartfield Farmhouse
Pub
Pub
Bentley Wood
Community car park
Potential employment units & residential, subject to redevelopment?
40mph buffer zone needed?
Chapel
Potential area for children's playground?
Non-existent or broken pavements throughout
200m
Scale 1:2000 @ A1
N
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Results of the visioning events



In February 2018, two community visioning events were held in East Hoathly and Halland to explore the main challenges and opportunities within the parish. The results of these events are summarised in this section of the report and can provide a key ingredient to the emerging East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Plan.



Task 01 — People & Places

In this task, participants were asked to discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by different demographic groups.

East Hoathly

For teenagers, public transport must become more accessible to allow for more convenient travel throughout the day, with more places to meet that are both safe and convenient. There is a lack of employment for this demographic in the area, resulting in unemployment or the need to commute. Employment opportunities are limited in East Hoathly, which must be enhanced if businesses are to grow.

Existing facilities should be expanded and additional work space included in any future development. Technological infrastructure also needs improvement, particularly mobile and internet connection. Transport and parking must be addressed if businesses are to expand.

The main challenges for pensioners and empty-nesters are accessibility throughout the area and the need to down size to smaller or sheltered dwellings. There is a good sense of community for this demographic and a decent variety of local amenities. There is also a good community of young professionals that could be further enhanced with the provision of a range of housing and transport options to suit the variations of income and work. More affordable housing is needed, as is improved rail connections for commuting.

For families with young children, improved pedestrian access is required. A challenge for young people who have grown up locally is having the option to stay in the area, due to house/rent prices.

East Hoathly is close to many tourist attractions and hosts local B&Bs and a campsite. The landscape is a great attraction for tourists, however there is a lack of public transport available and this currently puts pressure upon roads and vehicular traffic and car parking.

Employment opportunities, access to public transport and broadband connectivity are the main challenges for students in East Hoathly.

Halland

Teenagers have no access to a local youth club and the tennis courts are in East Hoathly. There is a limited variety of sports and leisure facilities for teenagers in general. There are currently small business units (but in East Hoathly) and these are only suitable for one-person or micro-businesses. For employment to grow in the area, transport and technology infrastructure needs to improve. Many people commute elsewhere for work, e.g. London, Brighton, Eastbourne and Croydon.

To improve the quality of life for pensioners and empty-nesters in Halland, sheltered places to meet should be provided. Housing size is also an issue, as this demographic seeks to down size but availability of smaller homes is limited. Improvements are needed to local healthcare services.

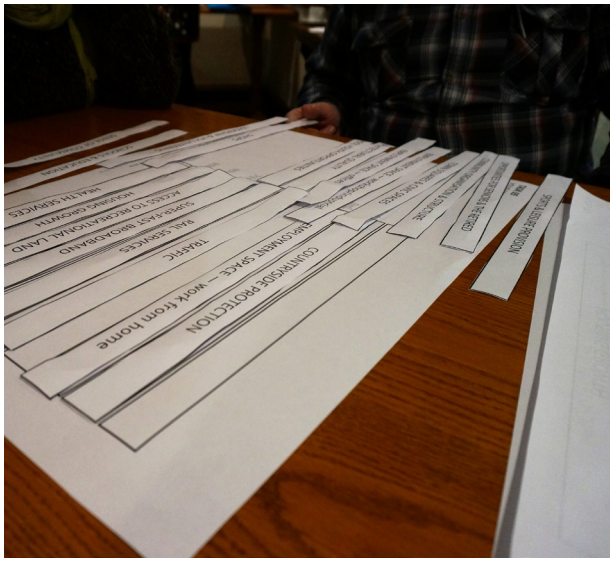
Lack of local facilities and public transport adversely affect young working professionals and increase the need to use cars, which results in increased traffic travelling through Halland.

There is also a lack of informal meeting places where young professionals can interact and meet neighbours and fellow residents. School transport and after-school clubs are limited for families and young children. There should be adequate school bus accessibility and sheltered space for clubs to run outside of school hours. Recreational space is generally limited and there is currently no outdoor play area for young children.

Halland could encourage visitors to stop overnight at the local hotels and B&Bs and explore the area, using the village as a base for the local proximity. Halland is well-located for local walks and en-route for many visitors accessing the Weald. Students in Halland face similar challenges to teenagers; limited transport access and a lack of facilities for leisurely use. Introducing safe cycle and pedestrian paths would help to alleviate the current restrictive movement and accessibility issues affecting those spending time in the village.



The group discussions on the night were constructive and collaborative.



Choices were made about the key challenges and key qualities of each settlement.

Task 02 — Top Ten Qualities

Combining the rankings given by all groups on the night, the top ten positive characteristics of each settlement are as follows:

East Hoathly

1. Friendly
2. Safe
3. Green
4. Unique
5. Attractive
6. Distinctive
7. Independent
8. Clean
9. Enterprising
10. Open

Halland

1. Friendly
2. Rural
3. Independent
4. Safe
5. Clean
6. Harmonious
7. Green
8. Enterprising
9. Distinctive
10. Open

Task 03 — Limited Growth

This task tested how the parish could accommodate a limited amount of new housing development.

East Hoathly

There was a debate as to whether the land to the east of South Street, between existing development, should be kept as open green space or provide small infill development.

The area to the south of Buttsfield Lane currently houses sheltered accommodation was seen as a potential opportunity for new homes.

Land surrounding the tennis courts and sports pavilion is currently used by a variety of groups, including the local school and therefore should be kept clear of new development. It was considered that development in East Hoathly should be kept to the south-west.

Halland

The area to the south of Halland roundabout was considered to be a good position for new development. However the site was previously used as an animal burial site and therefore will need to be tested for potential harmful chemicals, contamination etc. This area could provide a play-area for children and affordable housing for all generations. Development on, and to the north, of Halland Forge should also be a consideration.

The existing housing development to the north of the A22 could also be expanded and run along the edge up to the Sand Hill Lane crossroads.

Land to the south-west of the roundabout was suggested as an area to keep green, offering walking and cycling connections out into the wider landscape. The green space adjacent to this, on the eastern side of the B2192 should also be kept as open green space.

The green gap between Halland and East Hoathly should be maintained and "ribbon development" should be avoided to maintain separate settlement identities. This area should also encourage cycling between the two settlements.

Possible growth in East Hoathly could take place to the south of the area, as small-scale infill development.

Task 04 — Learning From Other Places

Participants were asked to mark on a plan the places that they liked with a green sticky dot and the places they did not with a red sticky dot.

East Hoathly

There needs to be improvements to access and movement throughout East Hoathly and into the wider areas. Improvements should be aimed at pedestrian access and safety, alongside cycle provision and improved visitor access. The area is surrounded by picturesque countryside and woodland, with an abundance of walking routes available. East Hoathly contains a variety of local amenities and Moat Wood has a good fauna and flora habitat.

There is a good amount of independent businesses surrounding the centre of East Hoathly such as local crafts and workshops, and local health services. The centre is the social core with cafes, a pub, a hairdressers and a book shop being just a few of the attractions. There are certain built areas of the settlement that should be conserved as part of the local heritage and character.

Halland

Halland needs to improve its identity as a separate settlement to East Hoathly. This can be encouraged through improvement to public spaces and access. The open rural land and nearby Bentley Wood are assets to the area and should be improved with a greater emphasis on safe pedestrian movement and more control of the movement of vehicular traffic.

Halland roundabout should have a visual landmark such as flora/sculpture or a fountain. More local amenities are needed, possibly centred around the roundabout, with pedestrian connections to East Hoathly and the wider area.

The Halland roundabout is also suggested as a suitable location for employment and leisure hubs. Ancient woodland to the south-west of the A22 should be celebrated and protected. East Hoathly boasts views across meadows and access to many open spaces.

Task 05 — Top Ten Challenges

Combining the rankings given by all groups on the night, the top ten challenges faced by each settlement are as follows:

East Hoathly

1. Health Services
2. Traffic
3. Housing Growth
4. Super-Fast Broadband
5. Countryside Protection
6. Schools & Education
7. Employment Space — home office
8. Non-School Youth Opportunities
9. Sense of Community
10. Public Transport

Halland

1. Traffic
2. Access to Recreational Land
3. Employment Space — home office
4. Sense of Community
5. Health Services
6. Opportunities for Seniors & the Retired
7. Non-School Youth Opportunities
8. Housing Growth
9. Town Square & Civic Spaces
10. Sports & Leisure Provision

Task 06 — Audit of Local Services

This task asked participants to note down how the two main settlements support one another in terms of services and facilities.

East Hoathly

East Hoathly offers a wide range of services and local amenities. With possible future development and growth on the way, these will need to be supported through new investment.

Areas currently lacking investment tend to be access and movement based; with a need to implement cycling, pedestrian and parking infrastructure appropriate to the growth of the area. This will allow for easier and safer access to existing amenities.

East Hoathly has potential for better access to public transport and countryside walks.

Halland

Halland has no school of its own and relies upon East Hoathly for education provision, alongside reliance upon East Hoathly's post office, village hall, and leisure, business and health facilities.

Halland does have a local motor garage, which also serves East Hoathly. Bus services are limited throughout the parish and East Hoathly currently only provides for small businesses.

Halland has a local hotel and B&B in the vicinity, with a couple of pubs situated nearby. There is also a local garden centre which serves the wider area.

Halland is generally treated as secondary to East Hoathly and this has resulted in a lack of diverse amenities within Halland, to the detriment of Halland's residents. Equally, infrastructure throughout Halland is poor; the broadband is a weak signal, no mains gas is available and electrical supplies can be intermittent.

Task 07 — The Future

This task asked participants to think about the best things in East Hoathly with Halland and the things that could be better. They were also asked to describe the parish 15 years' from now.

The parish is friendly and creative with a great sense of community. The area offers a variety of services and opportunities to enjoy the local landscape. The parish benefits from dark skies at night, and is surrounded by green conservation areas and ancient woodlands. There are many families and young children living in the area. Access to recreational facilities for all ages and the variety of small businesses add to the local character and "village feel".

Transport and health services need improvement, alongside infrastructure such as drainage, electric and water supply and quality of technological connections. The variety of grocery shops should be improved and speeding traffic should be actively hindered. The introduction of mains gas or alternative energy supplies should be considered and affordable housing provided.

Safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes should be implemented between East Hoathly and Halland, and street engineering such as lighting, traffic control and uneven surface treatment should be improved. Upgrading the sport pavilion will bring more social opportunities to an expanding village.

In 15 years' time, East Hoathly with Halland will be...

"...a thriving, caring community."

"...a community-spirited village that we will be proud of."

"...a small, special Wealden village with a sense of community spirit."

"...recognisable as it is today through organic growth."

"...an inclusive, caring community with a larger proportion of young people. Each village will still have its individual identity."

NOTE : Due to space constraints in the Halland venue, this task was only run in East Hoathly.

Task 08 — Feelings of Safety

This task asked participants to note down the places where they feel safe or unsafe at different times of the day.

Daytime

The community is of the right size for members of the public to feel safe on the streets, with people looking out for each other. Villagers and the elderly feel well cared for by fellow residents. Access around the post office corner feels unsafe for pedestrians crossing, due to the speed and proximity to flowing traffic.

Road crossings near the allotments and church also feel unsafe. Parked vehicles on tight corners can prove a hazard to pedestrians and the A22 is regarded as unsafe between the two villages.

Cycling along the lanes is also considered hazardous, as are slippery footpaths and pavements and the large vehicles that drive through the village.

Evening

At evening rush-hour, it is considered that the village becomes a rat-run and unsafe for pedestrian movement.

Night Time

The pavilion and its car park are considered unsafe places to be after dark. The implementation of lighting could alleviate this and "deter loitering youths". More lighting along lanes and around The Mews and church area would also be desirable. The church and twittens throughout the village feel unsafe at night time, mainly due to uneven surfaces underfoot. Dark nights are, however, part of the village charm.

General Comment

In general, many pedestrian paths need improvement to allow for easier and safer access throughout the day and into the night. This is especially true given that huge articulated lorries often pass through the village, accessing industrial and agricultural units. Horse boxes, common in this part of the county, do not present such a problem.

NOTE : Due to space constraints in the Halland venue, this task was only run in East Hoathly.

Emerging spatial strategy

The debate and discussion during the design forum led to the development of a draft spatial strategy that could be used to guide future development the parish. The drawings were created to allow different options and outcomes to be tested against a range of criteria. The land parcels that were used to develop these scenarios were put forward during the design forum event.

Based on the drawings that emerged at the end of the second day, there follows a series of spatial strategy scenarios that need to be subject to further consideration for possible appropriateness and suitability. These different scenarios (and the supporting commentary) can become the basis for future dialogue between East Hoathly with Halland Parish Council and/or the Steering Group and Wealden District Council as well as for constructive conversations within the local community.

There is a feeling within the community that the parish, and East Hoathly in particular, is still readjusting to accommodate the increase in housing numbers resulting from recent developments at Juziers and Nightingales. Any future developments should be small and gradual to allow successful assimilation with the village.

PLEASE NOTE — It must be stressed that these draft spatial strategy drawings must be subject to further consideration, testing, consultation and engagement with a wide variety of groups, actors and agencies and are certainly not final or fixed.





Current situation

The built areas of the parish (shown in brown) comprise the two main settlements of East Hoathly and Halland. East Hoathly is the larger of the two and offers social and community facilities, such as a village shop and post office, cafe, pub, church and a primary school. The village is also home to employment units and a care home. Towards the centre of the village lies the recreation ground, with children's play equipment and tennis courts. Woodland adjoins the built area to the west and long distance views of the surrounding countryside can be seen throughout the settlement.

Halland features two pubs at its centre, which is currently dominated by a large roundabout and vehicular traffic. The bulk of the residential area can be found along two roads, spreading westwards from the centre in the form of ribbon development. Halland is home to a chapel and a horticultural nursery (Stavertons) which is of fairly significant size within the village and includes a farm shop. Woodland adjoins the built area to the east and provides a "green gap" between East Hoathly and Halland. It is difficult to navigate between the two villages on foot or via bicycle, due to the dominance of the vehicular route.

It is from this baseline assessment that possible future scenarios have been developed. The approach taken was as follows:

- How can future housing growth protect and enhance existing community facilities and also bring new investment into future facilities?
- How and where can the existing settlement patterns accommodate new growth in the most sensitive and sustainable way?



Scenario 01 — Countryside enhancement only

This diagram above shows targeted enhancement to the countryside only. The existing green areas around the villages are shown, including the recreation ground, structural landscape and adjacent woodland. A segregated footway and cycleway linking the two villages is shown, a key project that emerged from the design forum event. However, this may require developer contributions to fund its construction. At its western end, this link can be marked by the redeveloped Forge Hotel. Also in Halland, further woodland planting has been added between the Hop Garden and Bramble Bank sites, to enrich the biodiversity of the area and provide an attractive pedestrian route between the potential future developments.

In East Hoathly, two "country park" areas have been added to the north and south of the village. These more wild areas would act as a end-stop to encroaching development. Considering the popularity of the parish as a walking destination, the country park concepts could provide an attractive welcome to visitors and could be funded by new developments.

Highlighted (in pink) are civic, commercial and social buildings such as the two pubs and Stavertons in Halland; and the church, primary school and village hall in East Hoathly. These are key facilities which people travel to on a regular basis and their location should inform the design of walking and cycling routes, to be connected to a wider network. There is an important view corridor to the east of the village to be kept free of development, to allow unobstructed views of the attractive landscape to the south.



Scenario 02 — Potential development opportunities in Halland

This future scenario provides connections so pedestrians do not have to use the main roads. The dotted circle represents an average walking time of 5 minutes, from its centre to outer edge. Clusters of intense activity encourage pedestrian movement and help the village move away from reliance on the car.

The layouts of both the new developments at the Hop Garden and Bramble Bank have been redrawn to move them away from a cul-de-sac form and instead connect with one another via good pedestrian links, including one to the rear of Stavertons nursery. The pond (blue) could be integrated with the new public areas and Knowle Lane could be designated as a "quiet lane" that will prioritise walking, cycling and horse riding. New woodland has been planted around the ancient woodland to provide an effective ecological mitigation buffer zone.

Option sites 1, 2 and 3 show areas of possible future development that had been discussed during the design forum site visits. Each of these — should they happen — will pull the centre of gravity of Halland in different directions. People supporting Option site 1 felt that development here would work well opposite The Forge, subject to the redesign of the roundabout to allow better connectivity across. Option sites 1 and 2 both benefit from being located at the centre of the village.

Alternatively, people mentioned the growing hub of activity around Stavertons Nursery and felt that Option 3 would effectively continue the direction of growth to the west. There is the potential for new community facilities through new development.



Scenario 03 — Potential development opportunities in East Hoathly

This scenario offers balanced development, shared between north and south. It should be noted that the land shown as potential development has been directly informed by the design forum presentations and site visits. However, the land take shown is reduced in size when compared to that being promoted by the landowners and developers.

The impact of the new development areas are offset by large, useful open spaces in the form of country parks, giving long term protection of the village edges. Innovative and striking "eco-architecture" could become a flagship development on land developed by the CLT, to provide a distinctive welcome to the village from the west.

The red dots denote where local landmarks could be located within new development parcels, such as a change in architectural design or scale. The view corridor south to the South Downs is kept free of development while the circle of oak trees on the Rydon Homes site is retained as far as is possible, becoming a focal point at the centre of new development.

Pedestrian links and connectivity to the existing parts of the village are essential for all developments, if they are to be successfully integrated as a whole. There is a critical need for linked-up areas rather than cul-de-sac layouts, with convenient and attractive walking routes for all.

The area between the church, school and village hall is shown as a new civic square. This space, overlooked by the surrounding civic buildings, is currently a car park. This could be reimagined as car-free space for activities such

as a farmers' market, fetes and events, while still accommodating car parking at other times of the day or week. New surface materials, such as bound gravel or brick paviours, could be used instead of tarmac to help define the square. New trees could also be added, while retaining the existing trees.

Summary of the scenario options

- The future development scenarios in this report are not exclusive of other options and none of them should be treated as proposals. They have been developed through the design forum process to allow the testing of ideas, options and outcomes.
- Other viable scenarios may well exist and the local community are to be encouraged to share their ideas. However, it is recommended that the steering group and/or the parish council seeks to established a preferred spatial strategy at some point in the plan process, thereby helping provide confidence to residents and landowners/developers alike.
- However, a preferred spatial strategy can only become more established through close cooperation with the WDC planning team. The neighbourhood plan team needs to understand the strategic policy approach in the emerging WDC Local Plan to then assess how this can be made to fit with the neighbourhood plan ambitions.
- As mentioned previously, the housing numbers that must be accommodated by the parish is currently not known and/or made public at the time of this report. Similarly, the specific housing site allocations that may be required to deliver those numbers are also currently not known and/or made public at this time. Only the resolution of the "Ashdown Forest" issue and the publication of the next version of the WDC Local Plan will move this issue forwards.
- Greater technical knowledge about the various sites is required (e.g. topography, soil conditions, flood and drainage characteristics etc) to allow greater confidence about the suitability of land for development and what form development might take.
- A balanced approach towards new homes in the two main settlements is encouraged, and within each settlement, so as not to cause divisions and discord within the community by placing all new development in one area only — "share the pain, share the gain" is a useful refrain here.
- A key project outcome of the design forum was a segregated walking and cycling route between the two villages. This is shown in the development scenarios, on land on the northern edge of the London Road and A22. The route runs immediately adjacent to various development parcels, allowing financial contributions from developers to be drawn down to help pay for such a route.
- Encouraging compact settlement patterns creates a positive intensity to living and working. This will add to the viability of retail facilities and other community projects within the centre of the villages. In contrast, dispersed development located away from the main settlements will fail to create the critical mass needed to better support social and community facilities.

Next steps

- The work completed so far gives the East Hoathly with Halland neighbourhood plan steering group a strong framework for the creation of a first draft of a neighbourhood plan. Through continued conversations and engagement with the public, further details can now be added to this framework.
- It is acknowledged that only a small percentage of the resident population were directly engaged with the visioning events and the design forum and further, wider engagement is now necessary.
- Refining the emerging spatial strategy requires an engagement with WDC to move it forwards from here. This is not straightforward as more technical knowledge about the sites is required and there are still no definitive housing requirements from WDC (expressed in numbers) for the parish or the individual settlements. That said, there is now a concept drawing that can be influenced and shaped by this information as and when it comes forwards.
- The diagram sequence on pages 25 — 28 in this report "unpacks" the drawings that were developed at the design forum to show how the different scenarios could be arranged or linked. However, this report is keen to stress that these are not the only ways to develop this aspect of the plan and that opposition exists from various quarters to the ideas shown.
- The report is also keen to stress that the diagrams do not reflect an endorsement by the community or the neighbourhood plan group — they remain working drawings prepared simply to test ideas.
- It is recommended that a site allocation workshop between the steering group and/or parish council and WDC planning team is held to help coordinate a joint response to housing allocations. If such a workshop is held, then it is expected that the spatial strategy diagrams in this report will be a useful input to the debate and discussion.

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