

WADHURST

Neighbourhood Plan 2016 to 2036



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Pre-Submission Version Document for consultation at Regulation 14 (2022)

**This Plan has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf
of the Wadhurst Parish Council and those who live and work in the Parish**

15 August 2022

Foreword

A Neighbourhood Plan is a statutory planning document by which local development planning policies are defined, which gives powers to allow local communities to shape new development. In September 2017, Wadhurst Parish Council (WPC), the qualifying body responsible for the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan (WNP), agreed that the Plan should be prepared by a Steering Group of residents and WPC Councillors.

During the many Neighbourhood Plan consultations, interested parties have been widely consulted to ensure that the Plan meets the Parish needs. Our Plan sets out a future vision for the whole Parish, including Wadhurst village, Durgates, Sparrows Green, Cousley Wood, Primmers Green, Pell Green, Woods Green, Turners Green, Tidebrook, Best Beech and Stone Cross/Moseham.

The Parish Vision is:

‘Wadhurst Parish will continue to be a collection of friendly and vibrant distinct communities. The Parish will retain and support its rural ‘village feel’, historic character and heritage. Justifiable, sensitive and sustainable development will be supported whilst robustly protecting the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Parish economy and its popular High Street will be revitalised by improvements to the roads, traffic control, parking and active support of businesses. Sustainable ways of improving travel and leisure activities and facilities, which promote well-being, will be sought wherever possible.’

The Plan has five key objectives for the Parish to deliver the Vision:

Objective 1 – Heritage, Character and Design: To provide sympathetically designed high quality housing for parishioners, that meets local housing needs while enhancing the distinctive natural and built character of the Parish through justified, sensitive, sustainable development and healthy placemaking. Recognising and protecting the individual and distinctive settlements that comprise the Parish.

Objective 2 – Getting Around: To address local transport issues, including traffic and parking issues and promoting sustainable transport options by improving connectivity to facilities within and beyond the Parish by integrating and, where possible, extending the existing network of footpaths and bridleways.

Objective 3 – Local Economy: To support and extend business, employment and associated training opportunities – including provision of infrastructure required – to grow the local economy, and to support the development of the Parish as a sustainable and environmentally friendly destination for those visiting the High Weald.

Objective 4 – Environment: To enhance and maintain the rural character and landscape features of the Parish, that led to the area’s designation as the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This includes promoting opportunities for supporting and improving biodiversity, safeguarding valued green spaces and access to these, and protecting key viewpoints afforded by the Parish’s ridgeline location.

Objective 5 - Wellbeing and Leisure: To retain and, where possible, expand the range of facilities and amenities available for local residents.

Following on from our previous consultations on the draft WNP, this Pre-Submission Plan (2022) has been amended fairly significantly in response to the comments received both from residents, statutory consultees and professional advice.

Whilst the overall direction of travel remains the same, many of the policies have been amended or amalgamated to enable more effective interpretation and application.

Some new policies – one related to the design of development and one seeking to safeguard the natural asset that is Bewl reservoir – have been added. To inform the design policy, we have introduced a set of design codes for the Parish, prepared by the social enterprise consultancy, Create Streets, in consultation with the local community. At a national level, the government amended the National Planning Policy Framework in 2021 to explicitly encourage local communities to have a direct say in the design of development in their areas. Our Wadhurst Design Code sets out how we wish new development to be designed, so that it is high quality, sustainable and contributes to the local character of our Parish and the High Weald.

As a consequence of these changes, we have taken the decision to reconsult on the draft Plan, before finalising it for submission to Wealden District Council. This will ensure that everyone has an opportunity to review the changes and make any additional comments to those considered in the previous Regulation 14 consultation.

The Regulation 14 public consultation will take place over seven weeks from 14 November 2022 and allows parishioners and others a crucial opportunity to shape the future direction of Wadhurst Parish. All feedback will be considered by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, so that the Neighbourhood Plan can be finalised into its Submission form. This in turn, along with supporting evidence and documents, will be submitted to Wealden District Council, who will organise a further consultation, before the Plan is formally examined by an independent examiner and, if successful, put to a local referendum.

Following a successful referendum, the policies in the WNP will be used by Wealden District Council to determine planning applications in the Parish. In addition, with a 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan, the local community will benefit from an uplift in the level of community infrastructure levy (developer contributions) received, from 15% (capped at £100 per existing property) to an uncapped 25% of CIL receipts from the neighbourhood area. These contributions can be used to deliver projects of local importance.

For more information about the WNP, please visit: <http://wadhurst-pc.gov.uk>

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Images show: St Peter and St Paul Church and The Greyhound public house

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan (WNP). It sets out planning and land-use policy for Wadhurst village and the wider parish, over the period 2016 to 2036, forming part of the Development Plan for Wealden District.
- 1.2 Wealden District Council (WDC), as the local planning authority, designated the Wadhurst neighbourhood plan area on 8 November 2017. The neighbourhood plan area shares its boundary with that of the Parish (Figure 1.1). A copy of the decision statement can be found here: https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/WPCNP_PFH_Decision_Nov_2017.pdf
- 1.3 The WNP has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body, set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group comprising community volunteers and Parish councillors to lead on the preparation of the Plan. In consultation with the community and local businesses, the Steering Group has established a vision and framework for the future of the designated area and set out how that vision will be realised through planning land use and development change over the period 2016 to 2036.
- 1.4 The WNP provides guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within Wadhurst Parish. It also sets out how land should be considered, in planning terms locally, and is a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.5 The process of producing the WNP has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance in Wadhurst Parish. Within each section there is a summary of what the policy seeks to achieve and a justification, providing the necessary understanding of why the policy is needed and how it should be applied. The policies themselves are presented in the green boxes and these will be used to determine planning applications. To understand the full context for any individual policy, it should be read alongside the supporting text and evidence documents that have been compiled to underpin the WNP. Beneath each policy is a conformity reference, listing the relevant policies in the WDC adopted Local Plan documents, the objectives of the High Weald Management Plan and the paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that the policy is in conformity with.
- 1.6 The WNP also identifies local community project aspirations that are not met through planning policy, but which are important to the well-being of the community. Finally, the WNP sets out the Community Infrastructure Priorities and a framework for monitoring and implementation.

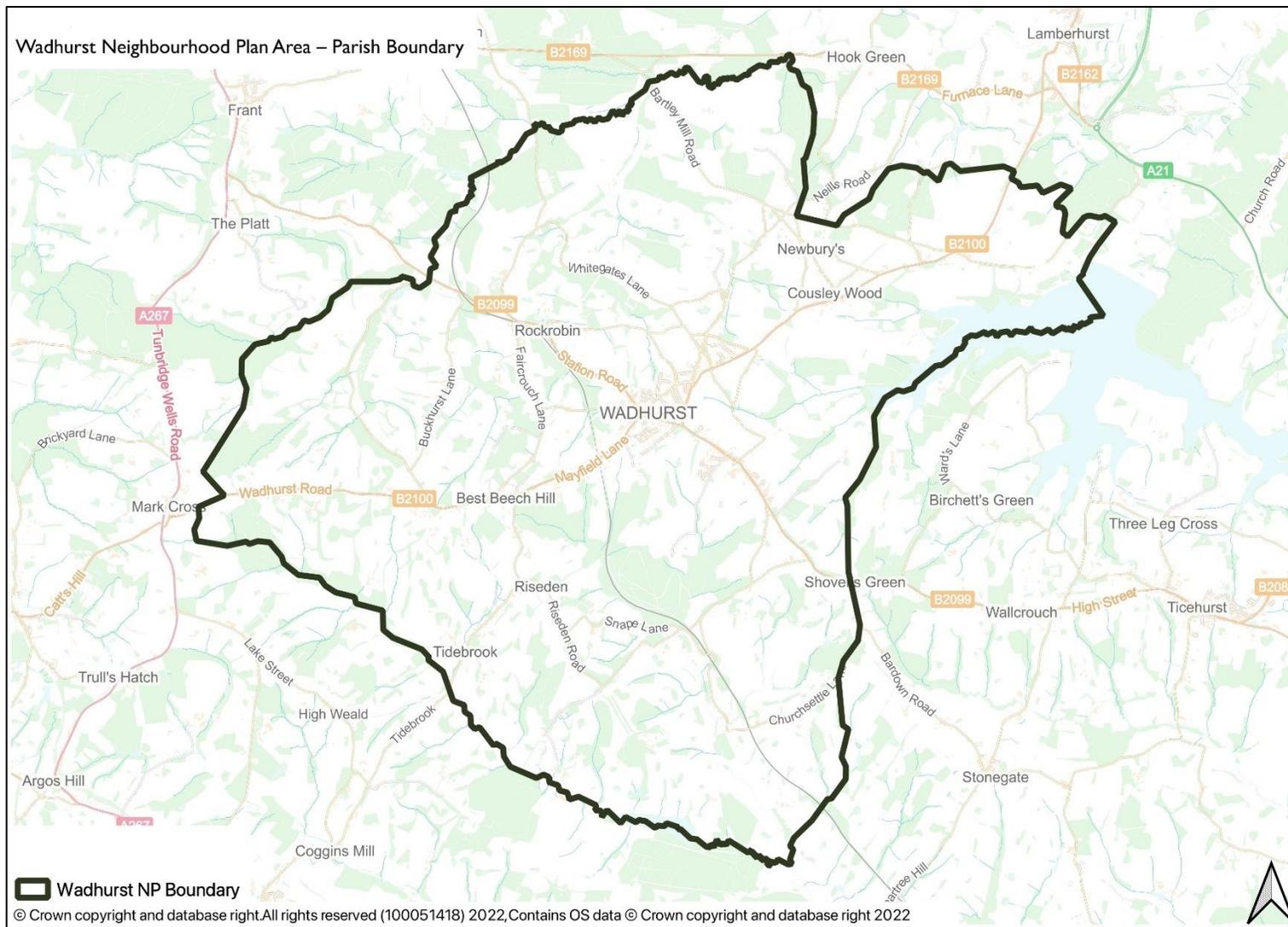


Figure 1.1: Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan designated neighbourhood area

The planning policy context

National Planning Policy

- 1.7 The WNP has been prepared in accordance with the NPPF (most recently revised in July 2021). Paragraphs 29 and 30 state:

*“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** (Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area).*

*Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, **the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.***

Local Planning Policy

- 1.8 The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan for Wealden district, which comprises the following:
- Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan (WDC, May 2016)
 - Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan (WDC, February 2013)
 - Saved policies of the adopted Wealden Local Plan (WDC, 1998)
 - Waste and Minerals Local Plan (East Sussex County Council (ESCC, February 2013)
 - Waste and Minerals Sites Plan (ESCC, February 2017)
 - ‘Made’ Neighbourhood Plans within the district
- 1.9 WDC is preparing a new Local Plan. On 19 February 2020, WDC formally withdrew its draft Wealden Local Plan 2019 following its Stage One examination process. Work has begun on preparing a new document and the first stage of this was a Direction of Travel Consultation, that took place between 23rd November 2020 and 18th January 2021. The current Local Development Scheme (<https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/Final-LDS-1.pdf>) states that the Regulation 18 consultation will take place in Spring 2022, with adoption envisaged for Winter 2023, although this is being updated to reflect the delays to the Local Plan.
- 1.10 The Direction of Travel Consultation policy options have been considered as part of the development of the WNP, although they carry no weight at this time.
- 1.11 The adopted Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan (2013) currently in force seeks to deliver approximately 4,525 net additional dwellings (450 per annum) across the district to provide for 9,440 dwellings over the period 2006-2027. Provision is also made for an additional 40,000 sq.

metres net employment floorspace to provide for 128,695 sq. metres net employment floorspace and 17,000 sq. metres net additional retail floorspace over the period 2006-2027.

- 1.12 The Direction of Travel Consultation sets out that for housing, there is a housing need target of 1,225 homes per annum to be delivered across the district. This is currently the highest out of all East Sussex local authorities. In terms of employment provision, further work is being carried out at the district level to determine what is required.
- 1.13 In the context of the emerging Local Plan, the WNP does not seek to allocate sites for housing or employment. There will be a need to review this position once the Local Plan is adopted and further information about this is set out in Section 11 of this document.

Other considerations

The High Weald AONB Management Plan

- 1.14 Wadhurst Parish falls wholly within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Local authorities with land in an AONB are legally obliged under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to produce an AONB Management Plan. The High Weald Management Plan 2019-2024 is used to guide environmental land management and assess the impact of development or other changes on the AONB. It can be found here:

<http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/high-weald-aonb-management-plan-documents/2291-high-weald-managment-plan-4th-edition-2019-2024.html>

- 1.15 The objectives of the Management Plan have been considered in the development of this Neighbourhood Plan, as has the advice contained in the High Weald Housing Design Guide:

<http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/2348-high-weald-design-guide-final.html>

and the High Weald AONB Colour Study:

<https://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/uk-landscape-research-reports/2058-high-weald-aonb-colour-study/file.html>

Community engagement

- 1.16 Two-way communication with the local community throughout the WNP process has been vital for its success and ultimate support through to the public referendum. It has been important to engage with the whole community including key stakeholders throughout the process.
- 1.17 Communication and consultation, in various forms, (despite the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns during 2020/2021) has played a major role in formulating the WNP and allowing parishioners and other relevant stakeholders the opportunity to take part in defining the WNP. A full description of the community engagement process will be included in the Consultation Statement that will accompany the Submission Version Plan. Figure 1.2 summarises the activity.

Date	Milestone	Key activities
2017	Neighbourhood Area designated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WPC decide to prepare a neighbourhood plan. • Steering Group established. • Area designated to coincide with the parish.
2018	Initial community engagement to publicise the plan and gain input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the WNP at the Commemoration Hall – Saturday pm 23 June 2018. • Parish Fair – Uplands Community College – WNP Drop-in sessions – June 2018. • Primary School Summer Fair – WNP Drop-in sessions – July 2018. • Tidebrook Summer Fair – July 2018 and Tidebrook Drop-in sessions September 2018. • Launch of the five resident Focus Groups at the Greyhound – Autumn 2018. • Cousley Wood Community Event (held in Old Vine) – September 2018.
2019	Evidence gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household Survey – March 2019. • ‘What we all said’ community presentation at the Commemoration Hall – April 2019. • Business Survey – May 2019.
2020 to 2021	Drafting the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Submission plan drafted. • SEA/HRA screening finalised. • 1st Regulation 14 Pre-submission plan consultation and feedback survey – 17th June-15th August 2021. • Feedback considered, prompting professional health check of the WNP. • Development of Wadhurst Design Code.
2022	Consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd Regulation 14 consultation to consult on changes since the first consultation. • Submission Version Plan submitted to WDC. • Regulation 16 Consultation.
2023	Finalising and making of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination. • Parish referendum.

Figure 1.2: Engagement activity timeline

1.18 Discussions with WDC have taken place on each of the topic areas covered by the WNP. In addition, communication with local groups and neighbouring parishes has taken place.



Images show: local consultation events

Evidence base

1.19 A series of reports and evidence documents have either been drawn on or commissioned for the WNP. These are listed in full in Section 16 and form the Evidence Base for the WNP. They include:

- Summary of the Parish Household Survey (HS) results
- 5 Focus Groups' Final Closing Reports
- 1st and 2nd Regulation 14 Feedback Survey (FS) results
- Create Streets Wadhurst Design Code Mapping Tool
- Wadhurst Character Assessment
- High Weald AONB Management Plan
- High Weald Housing Design Guide
- Wealden Design Guide
- Wadhurst Design Code
- Local Green Spaces Report
- Significant Local Views Report
- Green Gaps Report

1.20 In addition, a review of the WDC evidence base used for the withdrawn Local Plan (2019) was analysed. Finally, all existing documents and strategies for the Parish and the published statistical information/data, including the 2011 Census data, were reviewed.

1.21 The initial Regulation 14 Consultation (2021) brought about a great deal of feedback from both the community and statutory consultees, and this has been drawn on. In particular, key parishioner concerns about the impact of development have been carefully considered, for instance, the constraint of the High Street due to traffic congestion, the need for development to be supported by adequate infrastructure services (key among them are GP's, dentists,

school places, sewage, water supplies) and the parishioners' preference for Brownfield development over Greenfield Countryside development.

- 1.22 Some of the concerns raised, for instance strategic transport issues such as road congestion and speeding, medical provision and school places, sit outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is because they are the responsibility of other authorities, for instance the Highways Authority (National Highways and East Sussex County Council (ESCC)), the Education Authority (ESCC) and the Health Authority (NHS England and the Primary Care Trusts). Nevertheless, they have been recorded and Section 12 of this document sets out how the Parish Council will actively liaise with infrastructure providers to influence provision alongside development proposals coming forward in the future.

Sustainability of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.23 The WNP was originally screened by WDC in July 2021 to ascertain whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) would be required. The screening document was subject to consultation with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency and the screening Determination Statement concluded that the WNP would be unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore would not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 1.24 In addition, the screening determined that the 'appropriate assessment' stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process that ascertains the effect on the integrity of any sites of European significance would not need to be undertaken. This conclusion was sent to Natural England for consideration and their response was in agreement.
- 1.25 Following the 1st Regulation 14 consultation (2021) on the Pre-Submission Version WNP, and as a result of the significant number of amendments that have been made to the Plan, notably the inclusion of several new policies, WDC recommended that the updated Pre-Submission Version WNP be rescreened for the purposes of SEA and HRA. This was undertaken in Autumn 2022. The screening has determined that the WNP requires neither an SEA nor an Appropriate Assessment.
- 1.26 Copies of the Screening Determination statements will be available on the Wadhurst Parish Council website to view at the 2nd Regulation 14 ([see Wadhurst Parish Council Website SEA and HRA](#)) and will be included within the Basic Conditions Statement, which will accompany the Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan.

North West Europe and has remained a unique and recognisable area for at least the last 700 years. The unique natural beauty of the High Weald was recognised in 1983 with its designation as an AONB.



Images show: Wadhurst Park; and Wadhurst Village sign

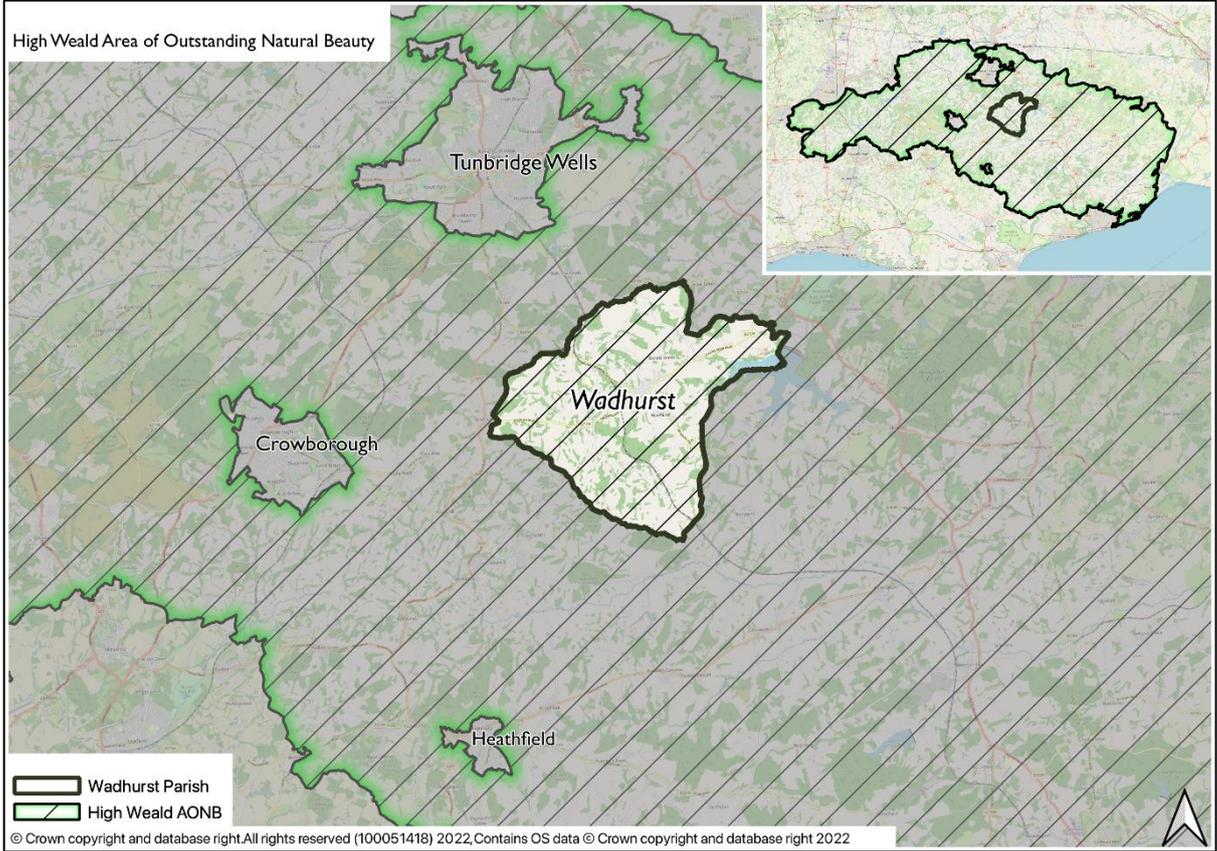
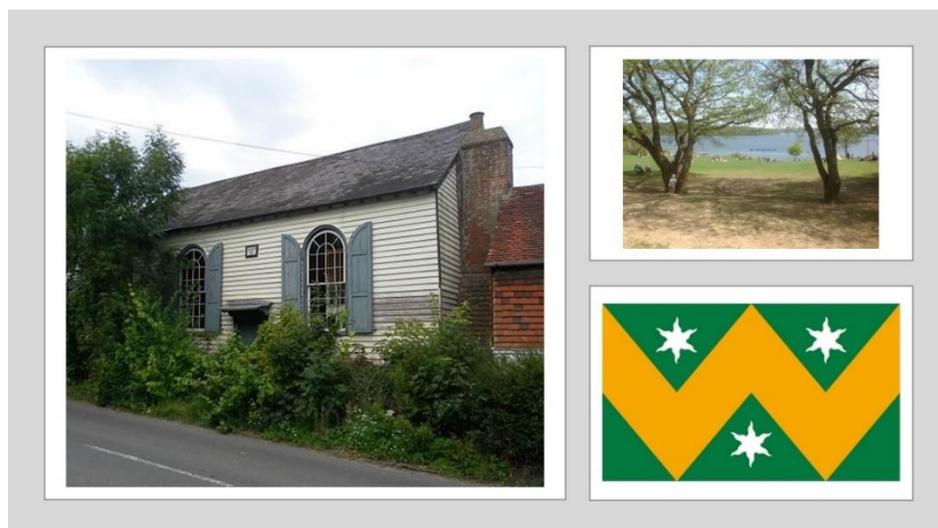


Figure 2.2: Wadhurst Parish within the High Weald AONB

2.4. Initially, the economy of the nascent town built on local trades and pig and sheep farming. Later, from the 1570s to the 1850s, Wadhurst became a centre of the iron industry, wealth from which was used to build many of the large houses in the Parish. With the decline of the iron industry in the area, due to the development of coal blast furnaces in the North of England, livelihoods were largely derived from woodland management, small mixed farming, wool, dairying, soft

- fruit and, notably, hops. Where these have become less viable, the farms have become larger or have diversified, supplying small trades and services associated with the rural economy.
- 2.5. The Parish boundary incorporates parts of Bewl Water, the largest inland body of water in southeast England.
 - 2.6. Wadhurst village has a popular High Street, but the narrow B2099 High Street is now often traffic congested and gridlocked and has a shortage of parking. The volume of general traffic and HGVs through the High Street has increased significantly recently with new housing developments, associated construction traffic and on-line delivery traffic.
 - 2.7. There are many heritage assets within the Parish. This includes over 150 listed buildings and two Conservation Areas. The designated Conservation Area around the High Street was reviewed and extended in 2017. The Conservation Area for Pell Green and Cousley Wood was also designated in 2017.
 - 2.8. Wadhurst is a haven for biodiversity and wildlife, including four Local Wildlife Sites and four Sites of Nature Conservation Interest and Nature Reserves. These include Snape Wood, Birchetts Wood and Bewl Water. There is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest at Bedgebury, which abuts the parish boundary.
 - 2.9. With its numerous countryside footpaths, clubs and leisure opportunities and connections via road and rail to the rest of the UK, Wadhurst is a popular place to live and work.



Images show: Rehoboth Chapel, Pell Green; Bewl Water; and The Wadhurst Flag, which is a community flag proclaiming the unique identity of this Sussex Parish and its people. The flag displays a green field evoking the Parish communities' rural nature. A golden-orange section, forming a 'W' for Wadhurst, recalls the historic iron industry and the mineral colour of local streams. It also symbolises the hills, steep valleys and meandering streams of the surrounding High Weald.

Parish Statistics

2.10. The following profile has been constructed using the data from the 2011 census:

Population by Age and Household Composition

2.11. Of the Parish population, 21% were aged over 65 and 31% were aged 45-64. Around 28% were one-person households. Moreover, 56% of those single households were aged over 65. Thus, an important development theme will be that of “downsizing” as the local population ages into 1–2-bedroom accommodation for the elderly and not to 4/5 bed new build homes. Parish housing that is affordable for the young is particularly important to ensure local families remain together and should not have to move to other locations.

Economic Activity

2.12. The Parish has a level of economic activity (defined as those aged 16-74 who are in employment, self-employment, or actively seeking work) in line with regional and national levels.

2.13. The self-employed make up a larger proportion, at 19.3% in the Parish compared with 15.7% for Wealden and just 9.7% in England & Wales. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, commuting for work into London was common, but now with the benefit of modern technology, more people are currently working from home and the unemployment rate in the Parish is low.

Employment by Industry

2.14. Data shows that the biggest sources of employment are wholesale, retail trade and car repairs (13.7%), finance, insurance and property (12.5%), professional, science and technical (11.8%), followed by human health and social work (11.3%), education (10.5%). Agriculture, while historically important, employs just 2.4% of the labour force. Tourism is not singled out but is thought to be an important contributor to the local economy.

Access to a Car and Distance Travelled to Work

2.15. Car ownership per household is high in the Parish, both compared with the Wealden district and national averages. With continued growth this average could rise further when the data for the 2021 census is released. Hence, there is a concern that further growth in the Parish will come at the cost of more traffic congestion and pressure on the local road network. But it is also significant that 10% of Parish households are without a car. This emphasises the need for the communities around the Parish to be better connected with safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists, although this is not helped by the very hilly topography of the Parish.

Challenges and Opportunities facing the Parish

- 2.16. Since the initiation of the Plan project in September 2017, a considerable amount of work has been undertaken to gauge the views and aspirations of parishioners and businesses within the Parish. Five residents' Focus Groups reviewed core subjects comprising: Design, Development and Character; Getting Around; Local Economy; Environment; Wellbeing and Leisure. A detailed report of the five Focus Group findings is included in the Evidence Base (The Future – What Parishioners Want) accompanying this document (see Section 16).
- 2.17. The key opportunities and challenges that have emerged and which the WNP seeks to address are:
1. Protecting the valued High Weald landscape setting and important views and green spaces within it, including its contribution to biodiversity, recreation and local character. Access to green spaces is important to safeguard as is the provision of new green spaces.
 2. Maintaining the identity and distinctiveness of the individual settlements within the Parish.
 3. Tackling traffic issues, including congestion, narrow lanes, lack of car parking, and road safety.
 4. Ensuring that any new development is in keeping with and contributes positively towards the character of the Parish.
 5. Supporting the ongoing viability and vitality of Wadhurst village centre
 6. Meeting the demands of younger people and families and an ageing population in terms of ensuring housing, services and facilities are accessible and suited to their needs.
 7. Seeking to ensure that necessary and adequate infrastructure is provided.
 8. Improving accessibility within Wadhurst village and to nearby settlements – through the provision and improvement of footpaths, cycle paths, and public transport, if possible – to help reduce over-reliance on car use.
 9. Addressing the provision of housing that is affordable on local average incomes.
 10. Supporting employment that exists in the Parish, including opportunities for those wishing to work from home or more flexibly.
 11. Preserving the dark skies of the Parish.

3. A VISION FOR WADHURST PARISH

Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan

3.1. Through a combination of questionnaire surveys, public consultations, email correspondence and conversations with local businesses, the Steering Group collected the views of parishioners and local businesses to understand what they wished to see for the future of the Parish. There were various consultation events, which have informed the Vision and Objectives. The Vision for Wadhurst seeks to capture parishioners' aspirations for the Parish. It therefore forms the basis on which the Objectives and Policies have been formulated.

3.2. In consultation with the community, the vision for Wadhurst Parish for 2036 is:

Wadhurst Parish will continue to be a collection of friendly and vibrant distinct communities. The Parish will retain and support its rural 'village feel', historic character and heritage. Justifiable, sensitive and sustainable development will be supported, whilst robustly protecting the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Parish economy and its popular High Street will be revitalised by improvements to the roads, traffic control, parking and active support of businesses. Sustainable ways of improving travel and leisure activities and facilities, which promote wellbeing, will be sought wherever possible.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

3.3. The WNP has five objectives, as follows:

Objective 1 – Character, Heritage and Design: To provide sympathetically designed high quality housing for parishioners, that meets local housing needs while enhancing the distinctive natural and built character of the Parish through justified, sensitive, sustainable development and healthy placemaking. Recognising and protecting the individual and distinctive settlements that comprise the Parish.

Objective 2 – Getting Around: To address local transport issues, including traffic and parking issues and promoting sustainable transport options by improving connectivity to facilities within and beyond the Parish by integrating and, where possible, extending the existing network of footpaths and bridleways.

Objective 3 – Local Economy: To support and extend business, employment and associated training opportunities – including provision of infrastructure required – to grow the local economy, and to support the development of the Parish as a sustainable and environmentally friendly destination for those visiting the High Weald.

Objective 4 – Environment: To enhance and maintain the rural character and landscape features of the Parish, that led to the area's designation as the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This includes promoting opportunities for supporting and improving biodiversity, safeguarding valued green spaces and access to these, and protecting key viewpoints afforded by the Parish's ridgeline location.

Objective 5 - Community Wellbeing and Leisure: To retain and, where possible, expand the range of facilities and amenities available for local residents.

4. SPATIAL STRATEGY

Policy WAD1: Location of development

Purpose

4.1. This policy sets out the WNP approach to the location of development within the Parish. It emphasises the importance of protecting the nationally important High Weald AONB, by ensuring that any development is directed to the most sustainable locations, which is within the defined development boundaries, near to local services and amenities. Development beyond this should be strictly controlled. The identification of green gaps will help to avoid sprawl and coalescence between the individual settlements and those beyond the Parish boundary.

Justification

Safeguarding the High Weald AONB

- 4.2. Unlike the neighbouring towns of Crowborough, Heathfield and Tunbridge Wells, Wadhurst Parish – including Wadhurst village – lies wholly within the High Weald AONB (Figure 2.1). The Parish benefits from spectacular long-ranging views from ridges across the valleys to the north and south. Steep valley sides descend sharply from the ridge towards the Rother Valley and Bewl Water. The rolling landscape is richly wooded with ancient woodland and shaws, unimproved grassland, heathland and historic field boundaries, relatively open valley floors with small, winding, streams and extensive areas of exceptional and unique remoteness.
- 4.3. The engagement process for the WNP has revealed that residents strongly value this special landscape and are keen to safeguard its natural and historic features against inappropriate development. This means retaining the rural nature of the Parish's settlements – in terms of size and character.
- 4.4. The importance of protecting AONBs is a national priority, recognised in the NPPF, which states in Paragraph 176 *“that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing AONBs”* and at Paragraph 177 that *“planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest”*.
- 4.5. Whether a proposal is a ‘major development’ for the purpose of Paragraph 177 is a matter for the decision maker (who is WDC for the Parish) taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated.
- 4.6. The Government's Housing Need for Wealden District has already risen from 450 dwellings per annum (dpa) in the current Core Strategy Local Plan (2013) to c. 1,221 dpa (including neighbouring Council needs) for the emerging Local Plan (2023). As the percentage of WDC's annual housing requirement that has been delivered has fallen below 85%, there is a 20% buffer added to this total, thereby effectively increasing the annual requirement to c. 1465 dpa.

- 4.7. WDC's 5-year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) was only 3.66 years as of 1 April 2021. This was probably due to the Government's high Housing Need numbers, where estimates are based on 2014 population projections (where 2018 projections are available that would lead to reduced housing need numbers). It was also due to the Covid pandemic and developer 'Land Banking'. Indeed, if sites that have been approved by WDC but not built out (estimated at circa 7,500 as at December 2021) were included in the 5YHLS, then WDC would have a 5-year Housing Land Supply.
- 4.8. So, since late 2015, official data shows that WDC has not been meeting its Government Housing Need and WDC (and Developers) deem this an 'exceptional circumstance' for major development on AONB Greenfield, thereby tilting the balance in favour of development.
- 4.9. To place this in context, from 2016/22 there have been 230 completions, approvals and live applications (as of 3rd August 2022). Of this total, 75% are dwellings on greenfield sites and just 25% on brownfield sites within the Parish.
- 4.10. As can be seen from WDC's Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) 2021 map, all the subsequent Parish lands put forward for possible development are Greenfield sites within Parish HWAONB countryside. However, WDC's SHELAA only calls for sites over 5 dwellings, developments tend to be large and not small scale, which is not in line with parishioners' wishes.
- 4.11. However, according to the Parish Household Survey / 1st Regulation 14 Feedback Survey, over 94% of parishioner respondents have stated they do not support further major development encroachment on Greenfield Countryside and wish further development to be on Brownfield sites as a clear preference.
- 4.12. Therefore, this Plan respects the parishioners' survey feedback by not allocating for development any of these Greenfield Countryside sites and this forms part of the decision not to allocate sites at all.
- 4.13. The Plan therefore urges WDC to consider Parishioners' preferences for future development to use Brownfield sites in preference to the Greenfield Countryside, before making their strategic development site allocations for the emerging Local Plan (2023) and their subsequent further planning application approvals.
- 4.14. However, recent case law, Monkhill 2021, has had the effect of shifting the 'tilted balance' back in favour of protection. The Court of Appeal recently decided that the failure of a Council to build enough houses is not a relevant issue once the need to protect the AONB or other protected areas has been established, see 2021 EWCA Civ 74 (Monkhill vs Secretary of State) para 37.
- 4.15. At a regional level, the East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2016) describes the characteristics of Wadhurst Parish as follows:

"As with most of the Wealden landscape the historic field patterns of small fields and significant hedgerows remain intact, apart from in the wider more fertile river valleys where farming is more intensive."

Protecting this important landscape against inappropriate development is also supported in the adopted Core Strategy, and in the Wealden Local Plan Direction of Travel Consultation document.

- 4.16. The High Weald AONB Management Plan provides a comprehensive strategy to conserve and enhance the AONB designated landscape and has been adopted by Wealden District Council, therefore development proposals will need to have regard to this Management Plan.

Supporting sustainable development

- 4.17. The adopted Local Plan does not identify a housing figure to be delivered through the WNP itself, as it considers that housing supply to be adequately addressed at the strategic level through the strategic allocations. The WNP therefore does not allocate sites for housing, rather it supports a series of parameters to support WDC's growth strategy. These are:

- Conserving and enhancing the nationally important landscape of the High Weald AONB;
- Directing development to within the defined development boundaries (Figure 4.1);
- Prioritising the use of brownfield sites and only permitting greenfield development beyond or on the edge of the development boundaries in exceptional circumstances, with clear and strict guidance on what is appropriate;
- Providing new dwellings in the period to 2036 on sites in accordance with the adopted Local Plan;
- Ensuring that the overall quantum of development does not put an unacceptable strain on infrastructure capacity, in accordance with Policy CS1 of the adopted Core Strategy;
- Ensuring that new developments include a mix of housing to meet the needs of local people, considering the current and projected demographic of the Parish;
- Neighbourhood Plan Policy WAD16 (Local Green Spaces) takes into account the Local Green Spaces that are demonstrably special to the local community by virtue of their beauty, history, recreation value, tranquillity and richness of their wildlife;
- Protecting cherished areas of beauty/history/recreation/tranquillity and wildlife;
- Ensuring that new development is well-connected to the rights of way network, improving and adding to this where possible, to provide pedestrian and cycle links; and
- Providing well-designed dwellings that are sympathetic to the character of the settlement.

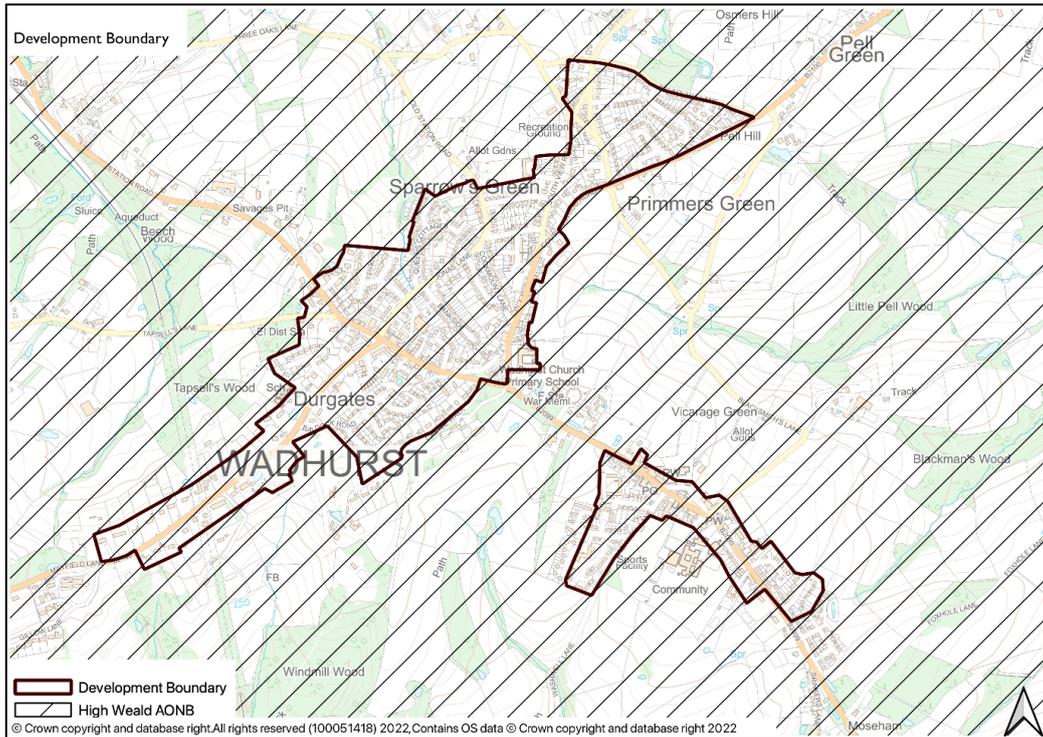


Figure 4.1: Map showing the development boundaries within Wadhurst Parish

Maintaining the distinctive identities of the Parish settlements and reducing ribbon development

- 4.18. Additionally, the WNP engagement has revealed that the local community wishes to avoid coalescence, including ribbon development leading to coalescence, in particular between the individual settlements and hamlets of the Parish themselves, each of which retain their own sense of place and identity.
- 4.19. One way to achieve this is to identify green gaps where development should be avoided, with the aims of:
- maintaining the separate identity and distinctiveness between and within settlement communities; and
 - maintaining the strategic settlement pattern of the Parish; and
 - preventing the coalescence of settlements or ribbon development (leading to future coalescence), especially into the High Weald AONB countryside; and
 - protecting the setting of Conservation Areas.
- 4.20. Appendix A provides the methodology undertaken to identify, assess and select the green gaps.
- 4.21. The work and feedback from the consultation has resulted in nine green gaps being proposed for the Parish (Figure 4.2):
- GG1. Foxhole Field – to restrict ribbon development into the open countryside and eventual coalescence with Moseham/ Shovers Green/ Wallcrouch.
- GG2. Turners Green Field 1 – to restrict coalescence between Turners Green and Woods Green.

- GG3. Balaclava Lane Field 1 – to protect against coalescence of Sparrows Green and Pell Green Conservation Area and into the open countryside.
 - GG4. Turners Green Field 4 – to restrict ribbon development into open countryside and beyond the development boundary (adjoining fields have been subject to planning applications).
 - GG5. Primmers Field – to restrict coalescence between Primmers Green and Wadhurst village.
 - GG6. Balaclava Pub Field – to protect against coalescence between Primmers Green and Pell Green and into the open countryside.
 - GG7. Hill House Field – to protect against coalescence between Wadhurst village and Durgates and into the open countryside.
 - GG8. Wadhurst Castle Grounds – to protect against coalescence between Wadhurst village and Durgates and into the open countryside.
 - GG9. Balaclava Lane Field 2 – to protect against coalescence between Turners Green and Sparrows Green and Woods Green and into the open countryside.
- 4.22. These are considered to be the most sensitive areas for development when considering how to avoid coalescence and ribbon development.

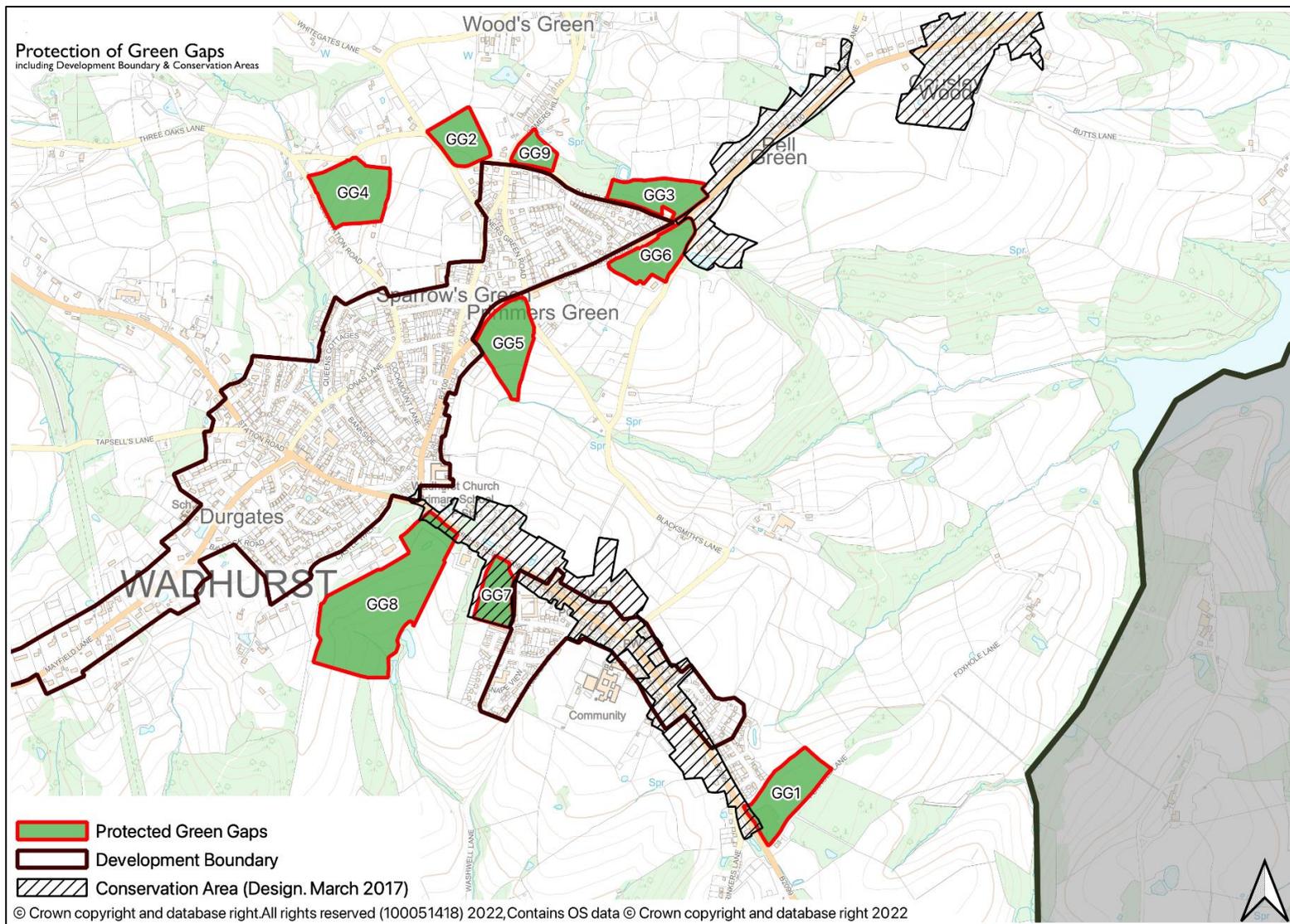


Figure 4.2: Green gaps identified in the neighbourhood plan area, in relation to the development boundary and Conservation Areas

POLICY WAD1: LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

- A. Development in the neighbourhood plan area will be supported within the development boundaries as defined in Figure 4.1. Development proposals on brownfield land will be particularly supported, subject to compliance with other policies in this plan.**
- B. Development in the countryside, beyond the development boundaries, will be strictly controlled in the interests of conserving the nationally important landscape, tranquillity and distinctive character of the High Weald AONB and will be resisted (in accordance with saved Policies EN6 and DC17 of the Local Plan) except in the exceptional circumstances detailed below:**
- i. Significantly and demonstrably conserves and enhances the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting and demonstrate a positive contribution to the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan; and**
 - ii. the proposal is necessary to meet a demonstrable agricultural or forestry need or needs of other activities which require a rural location, in accordance with national planning practice guidance; or**
 - iii. it relates to necessary utilities infrastructure and where no reasonable alternative location is available; or**
 - iv. the proposal is a “rural exceptions scheme” to provide social housing tailored to meet local needs in the Parish, supported by appropriate evidence, in accordance with Policy WAD2 (Meeting Local Housing Needs) of the Neighbourhood Plan, and managed in perpetuity by a social housing provider in accordance with WCS9 of the adopted Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan or in any successor policy; or**
 - v. it is on sites allocated in the Wealden Local Plan or its successor; or**
 - vi. the proposal brings redundant or vacant agricultural/farm buildings or historic buildings of heritage value back into optimal use; or**
 - vii. it relates to sustainable rural tourism, in accordance with Policy WAD11; or**
 - viii. it relates to the provision of a clubhouse at Bewl Water, in accordance with Policy WAD14.**
- C. Such development must not individually or cumulatively result in physical and/or visual coalescence and loss of separate identity of the individual settlements in the Parish. Nine**

green gaps have been identified on Figure 4.2, which demonstrate the areas most sensitive to this. Enhancement of the green gaps through effective landscape management, which strengthens and reinforces their significance as protected landscape areas, will be supported.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1, 4; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN1, EN2, EN6, GD1, GD2, DC2, DC3, DC6, DC17; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): CS1, WCS1, WCS2, WCS6, WCS9, WCS14; AONB Management Plan objectives: S2, S3; NPPF: 20, 29, 80, 119-121, 130, 174, 176, 177

5. HOUSING

Policy WAD2: Meeting local housing needs

Purpose

5.1. Policy WAD2 seeks to ensure that there is a range of general housing that is designed to be capable of meeting the specific housing needs of the Parish.

Justification

5.2. It is important that any new residential development within Wadhurst Parish addresses local housing needs. Policy AFH1 of Wealden's Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan supports this approach. It requires all sites of five or more dwellings to deliver 35% as affordable homes of a mix of tenures.

5.3. The Local Housing Needs Assessment (2021) prepared for the emerging Local Plan suggests the following at a district-wide level:

- Market housing: there is a fairly modest need for market housing of 1-bedroom (5% of market homes) and a far larger need for two- and three-bedroom market homes (at 30% and 40% respectively) with the remaining need at 4+ bedrooms (approximately 25%).
- Affordable housing: the analysis suggests that there will be a need for both social and affordable rented housing – the latter will be suitable particularly for households who are close to being able to afford to rent privately and also for some households who claim full housing benefit. On this basis, at a district level, a rigid policy for the split between social and affordable rented housing, is not recommended, although the analysis is clear that both tenures of homes are likely to be required.

5.4. Surveys carried out at the Parish level to inform the WNP point to the importance of meeting the needs of those seeking to get on to the housing ladder, as well as those of the elderly (70+). The Office of National Statistics (ONS) data related to population growth by age category between 2011 and 2019 reveal that there was a 55% increase in those aged 70-74. There is clear evidence that the 20-30 range and the 70+ bracket are also growing rapidly across the district and this is also true for Wadhurst Parish, as has been endorsed through survey data.

5.5. Providing homes that meet the needs of a range of age groups is therefore important. The “Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI)¹ has, since 2009, developed a series of principles for good design of housing generally. Many of the principles are recognisable from good design generally – good light, ventilation, room to move around and good storage – but they have particular relevance to the spectrum of older persons’ housing which needs to both offer an attractive alternative to the family home and be able to adapt over time to meet changing needs.

5.6. The ten principles are:

- Space and flexibility
- Daylight in the home and in shared spaces
- Balconies and outdoor space
- Adaptability and ‘care ready’ design
- Positive use of circulation space
- Shared facilities and ‘hubs’
- Plants, trees, and the natural environment
- Energy efficiency and sustainable design
- Storage for belongings and bicycles
- External shared surfaces and ‘home zones’

5.7. In terms of size of housing, the existing housing stock in the Parish has a significant tilt towards larger houses (4+ bedrooms), as demonstrated in Figure 5.1, which details stock by tax band, and Figure 5.2, which shows dwellings by bedroom size in the Parish compared to the wider district.

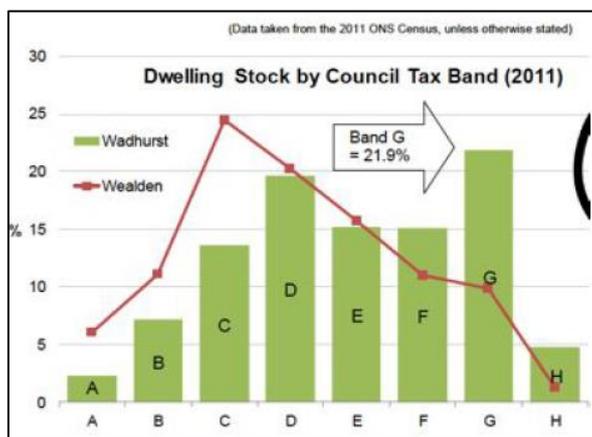


Figure 5.1: Properties by council tax band (source: 2011 Census)

¹ <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/>



Figure 5.2: % of properties with 1 to 5+ bedrooms in Wadhurst compared to Wealden district (Source: 2011 census)

5.8. Since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2013, WDC advises that a total of 144 homes (net) have been completed in Wadhurst, with a further 56 homes approved. The Steering Group have undertaken an analysis of housing provision in the Parish, which is provided in Appendix B. The analysis demonstrates that the trend towards larger homes (in terms of numbers of bedrooms) has continued. Between 2016 and 2022, for instance, 27% of all homes delivered had 4+ bedrooms, in contrast to 7% with 1 bedroom, 35% with 2 bedrooms and 31% with 3 bedrooms.

5.9. Affordability of housing is also a concern locally. Notwithstanding the constraints posed by being located within the AONB, the WNP supports appropriate sustainable development that would deliver homes that are smaller (in terms of number of bedrooms), affordable to those on local median incomes, and suited to both young families and the elderly (for downsizing). This includes support for self-build and custom builds, which provides an additional choice for those wishing to step onto the property ladder. Figure 5.3 is suggested as a guide to provide an appropriate housing mix in Wadhurst Parish:

Bedrooms	Development 2016/22	WNP Required Dwellings Mix		
		Market	Affordable	Total
1	7%	15%	5%	20%
2	35%	20%	15%	35%
3	31%	20%	15%	35%
4	9%	10%	0%	10%
5	18%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	65%	35%	100%

Figure 5.3: Suggested housing mix for Wadhurst Parish

POLICY WAD2: MEETING LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS

- A. Proposals that will deliver smaller two- and three-bedroom dwellings to address the needs of single people, young couples, smaller families and the elderly will be supported, and in accordance with Policy WAD3 (Design and character of development) in this Neighbourhood Plan. Subject to the other policies of this plan, proposals that deliver truly affordable housing in nominal terms (i.e., those that are affordable for local people on local wages) will be supported.**
- B. Housing development must contribute to meeting the existing and future housing needs of the Parish. Developers are required to submit a neighbourhood area specific 'Affordable Housing and Dwellings Mix Strategy' with any planning applications for major development. The Strategy must clearly set out identified housing needs within the neighbourhood area and demonstrate how the proposed development addresses those needs.**
- C. The provision and mix of affordable units for new development must comply with the National Planning Practice Guidance on First Homes, which requires 25% of all affordable housing units to comprise of First Homes. The remaining tenure of affordable units should be in accordance with Policy AFH1: Affordable Housing of the Wealden Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan, or its successor and should meet the specific needs of the neighbourhood area.**
- D. Residential development that could reasonably be expected to meet the needs of older people (by virtue of its size and location) should demonstrate how it has reflected the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) principles.**
- E. Subject to the other policies of this plan, proposals for self- and custom build housing will be supported.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): HG5; WDC Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan (2016): AFH1; AONB Management Plan objectives: S1, LBE2; NPPF: 61-65

6. CHARACTER, HERITAGE, AND DESIGN

Policy WAD3: Design and character of development

Purpose

- 6.1. Good quality housing design can improve social wellbeing and the quality of life by improving the built environment, reducing crime, improving public health, easing transport problems and providing supportive neighbourhoods. This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals within Wadhurst Parish comply with the highest design standards, adhere to the Wealden Design Guide, the High Weald AONB Housing Design Guide and the locally specific Wadhurst Design Code (Appendix C), which forms an integral part of this neighbourhood plan. The policy and its supporting text add greater detail to the Local Plan policies, in particular EN27 of the saved Local Plan policies, which requires development to reflect local distinctiveness.

Justification

- 6.2. Past generations of people and development, in parallel with its location, have created the features that give the settlements of Wadhurst their identities today. This process has been gradual, taking place over many centuries, and the settlements that exist today have a distinctiveness that derives from variety.
- 6.3. The importance of good design has received renewed attention over recent years. In October 2019, a new National Design Guide was launched, forming part of the Government's collection of Planning Practice Guidance. The document sets out ten characteristics necessary for creating a well-designed place, contributing to its physical character, a sense of community and addressing environmental issues affecting climate. The National Model Design Guide expands on the ten characteristics.



The ten principles of design, National Design Guide

- 6.4. Furthermore, the guide Building for a Healthy Life 2020 is the Government-endorsed industry standard for the design of new housing developments. It is a tool for assessing the design quality of homes and neighbourhoods. The criteria also link to other standards for housing design, including the Housing Quality Indicators (HQI) standards and Secured by Design. It should be

used to inform development proposals along with other policies contained within this plan to achieve the industry standard's 'Building for a Healthy Life' commendation.

- 6.5. It is important that development is designed from a landscape-led perspective and the High Weald AONB Housing Design Guide provides a comprehensive set of advice, specific to the characteristics of the landscape, to promote well-designed places and the conservation and enhancement of the AONB. It focusses policies on three core considerations: respecting the setting of the High Weald, incorporating sympathetic placemaking principles next; encouraging detail design built in towards the end.
- 6.6. At the Parish level, Wadhurst is associated with an historic local iron industry (iron ore), oak framed buildings, forestry (weatherboarding) and Wadhurst clay – bricks and tiles and sandstone. These elements are natural influences on the design of housing and public spaces within the Parish and have created its unique rural feel, beauty and character.
- 6.7. Oak – Wadhurst is renowned for the oak from the Whiligh Estate. Timber was famously supplied for the repair of the 14th-century roof of Westminster Hall, some cut from trees over 600 years old, “arguably” from the same forest, which had supplied some of the original material in 1393.



Oak from Wadhurst was used to repair Westminster Hall

- 6.8. Clay – The renowned Wadhurst Clay formation takes its name from the Parish. The uppermost clays of the Wadhurst Clay, closest to the boundary, are often stained red. The Wadhurst clay deposits, from which the iron ore was obtained, supplied suitable material both for bricks used for furnace linings and for tiles, which were increasingly used to replace thatch. These elements are on display in the Parish's public realm and houses.



Examples of clay-based materials incorporated in development in Wadhurst Parish

- 6.9. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states: *“Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers”.*
- 6.10. To further inform design at the local level, the Steering Group commissioned Create Streets to develop a localised set of design codes to guide future development in the Parish.
- 6.11. The main purpose of the Design Code is to provide guidance encouraging the creation of distinctive places that are well-integrated with the existing settlements in Wadhurst Parish and to promote high-quality and popular built forms. The document draws on the design guidance available at the national and regional levels, and that which exists at the very local level, such as the Wadhurst Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Pell Green and Cousley Wood Conservation Area Character Appraisal.
- 6.12. It has also been informed by extensive local engagement, including walkabouts and an interactive website, which attracted over 100 comments in its first phase.
- 6.13. The Wadhurst Design Code forms an integral part of the WNP and should be applied to all development proposals in the Parish.
- 6.14. The Design Code considers the Parish in the context of three Area Types, summarised in Figure 6.1 and mapped in Figure 6.2.

Local Character Area	Example image
<p>Town centre: The term ‘town centre’ is used in a planning sense but in fact, the centre is referred to locally as “Wadhurst village.” It is the Parish’s main shopping centre. This area starts at the intersection with Station Road and Sparrows Green Road in the north west and ends where Lower High Street begins in the south east. The high street incorporates most of the Wadhurst conservation area, which is subject to extra planning controls by Wealden District Council.</p> <p>The main shopping area is about 200 metres long and is characterised by historic buildings on the north and a mix of historic and post-war buildings on the south.</p>	
<p>Neighbourhood Settlements: Outside of the main town centre are the residential neighbourhoods of Lower High Street, Durgates, Sparrows Green, Turners Green, Pell Green and Cousley Wood. These are predominantly residential with few amenities. Homes are mostly detached and semi-detached houses. The Wadhurst high Street conservation area also extends down into the Lower High Street neighbourhood.</p>	
<p>Rural hamlets: There are many smaller, rural hamlets within Wadhurst. These are normally small clusters of dwellings based around historical farmsteads.</p>	

Figure 6.1: Area Types in Wadhurst

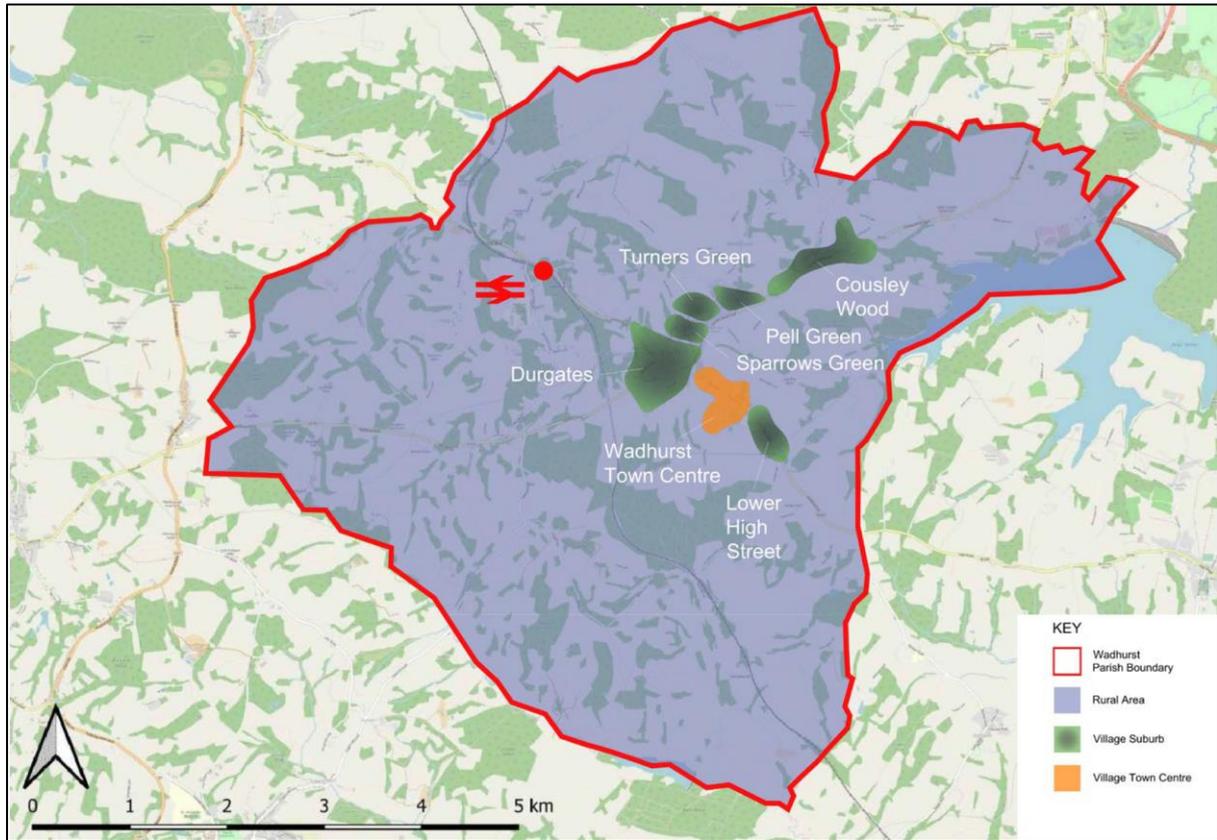


Figure 6.2: Map of Area Types in Wadhurst Parish

6.15. The Code then explores four areas related to design (Figure 6.3), providing detail on the extent to which development proposals should incorporate the guidance provided.

Design Code summary

	<p>Built Form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should be sympathetic to the existing building types and heights. • Allow gentle intensification in the town centre.
	<p>Identity of Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and promote the identity of Wadhurst's Wealden architecture. • Preserve and improve Wadhurst's identity by the quality of façade treatment, roofs, windows, doors and brickwork
	<p>Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design streets that encourage walking and cycling • Connect streets together to avoid cul-de-sac developments.
	<p>Public Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create attractive and green public spaces that have buildings fronting onto them. • Create many smaller public spaces ('little and often') rather than one large space.

Figure 6.3: Summary of the Wadhurst Design Code scope

6.16. Policy WAD3 is closely related to Policy WAD4 (Sustainability and design) and the two should be read collectively.

POLICY WAD3: DESIGN AND CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT

- A. The scale, character, and siting of the proposal should respect and enhance the landscape and its features, valued views into and out of the settlements, the local streetscapes and heritage assets. It should emulate the best of locally distinctive architecture, using materials that are in keeping with those used in existing buildings in the locality and typical of Wadhurst. This will help to avoid generic building design that is inappropriate to the Plan area. Innovation in design will be supported where it is associated with sustainability, demonstrably conserves and enhances the High Weald AONB, being in keeping and utilising materials and detailing typical of Wadhurst. Preference should be given to utilising naturally renewable materials, reusing materials, and locally produced materials with reduced embodied energy from transport and avoiding materials known to have a detrimental environmental effect in manufacture, use or disposal.**
- B. Development proposals must ensure that they achieve a sense of place by protecting and enhancing the quality, distinctiveness and character of settlements and minimising the impact on the natural environment and should demonstrate how they have done so through addressing the following matters, as they are appropriate to their scale, nature and location:**

Design Guidance Conformance:

- i. The guidance and checklists contained within the Wadhurst Design Code, the High Weald Housing Design Guide, the Wealden Design Guide, the Wadhurst Conservation Area Character Appraisal, and the Pell Green and Cousley Wood Conservation Area Character Appraisal.**
- ii. The principles of Building for a Healthy Life unless alternative principles would otherwise result in a higher quality of design.**

Site context:

- iii. the proposal responds positively to and enhances the distinctive character of the area type in which it is located, as mapped and described in the Wadhurst Design Code and, where relevant, the Conservation Area Character Appraisal.**
- iv. the proposal siting, layout, density, spacing, orientation, and landscaping must respect site characteristics; including its topography, natural features, relationship with immediate surroundings, historic setting, and views into and out of the site;**
- v. the scale, form, height, massing, proportions, external appearance, and materials must be compatible with existing character buildings, building lines, landscape, treescape, roofscapes, detailed design features and skylines;**
- vi. development should not detract from the unlit environment of the Parish. Glazing and outside lighting should be designed to minimise light spill, in accordance with Policy WAD17 (Protection of Dark Skies).**
- vii. ensuring development of and in proximity to designated and local heritage assets and their settings conserves, preserves, reflects and enhances the historic asset and the historic environment in accordance with their significance;**
- viii. while being aware of the need to make efficient use of land, as expressed in the NPPF, the density of new housing should be comparable with the densities adjoining the**

proposed development, in order to maintain the character and distinctiveness of the location.

Residential amenity:

- ix. Proposals should not cause significant harm to the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses, and should provide adequate residential amenities for future occupiers of the development by ensuring:
- a. that development does not result in, or is exposed to, excessive noise, vibration, odour, air pollution, activity, vehicular movements, or overlooking; and
 - b. that the built form does not create an unacceptable loss of privacy and overbearing impact, outlook, or daylight and sunlight enjoyed by the occupiers of adjacent/nearby properties, in accordance with the National Design Code²; and
 - c. they provide space for cycle parking and off-road parking for residents, visitors and service vehicles, in accordance with the East Sussex Residential Parking Guidance³ and in accordance with Policy WAD9 (Car parking provision);
 - d. car parking should be appropriate to site context and designed and located so as not to cause material harm to the visual amenity and not dominate the street scene and/or public realm.

Local Character:

- x. Development proposals for new development and extensions/alterations should demonstrate how they have taken account of and addressed the following matters, as they are appropriate to their nature (renovations of the existing built fabric of residential dwellings, as an exception, can use like for like replacement materials):
- a. use of local materials that complement the existing restricted palette of distinctive materials within the Parish, as set out in Section 3 of the Wadhurst Design Code; and for extensions/alterations use of local materials that are in harmony with the existing building;
 - i. handmade clay bricks and tiles in Wadhurst Clay colours (orange/red) typically with blue-grey brick headers in English or Flemish bond
 1. extension/alteration brickwork should match the bind and pointing of the host building.
 2. where tiles are used in extensions/alterations these should match those on the host building;
 - ii. oak framing and joinery
 - iii. sandstone
 - iv. feather-edge weatherboard
 - v. lime render
 - b. incorporation of local architectural details, as set out in Section 3 of the Wadhurst Design Code, such as;
 - i. timber porches (typically steep-pitched open gable or flat roofed)
 - ii. decorative barge boards
 - iii. traditional wood doors
 - iv. substantial chimneys

² [National Model Design Code: Part 1 - The Coding Process \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270000/national-model-design-code-part-1-the-coding-process.pdf)

³

[https://hastings.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/20130909/Agenda/Parking%20Provision%20in%20New%20Developments%20Appendix%20A%20\(09%2009%2013\).pdf](https://hastings.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Cabinet/20130909/Agenda/Parking%20Provision%20in%20New%20Developments%20Appendix%20A%20(09%2009%2013).pdf)

- v. Structural timber buildings are typical of the area and are encouraged. However, 'stuck-on' timber detailing is not in character and will be resisted.
 - vi. tile hanging and weatherboarding are encouraged as they reflect the character of local buildings but must continue around the entire building (not just the l)
- Proposals resulting in the loss of local traditional details such as timber doors, timber canopies, or chimney stacks will be resisted.

Roofs and dormer windows :

- xi. main roofs should be pitched similarly to locally distinctive buildings, usually 47.5 to 50 degrees but, no less than 42.5 degrees; and
- xii. new dwellings and extensions/alterations should not exceed two storeys in height; and Roofs of extensions, new dormers (where allowed) or ancillary buildings should match the pitch of the host buildings; and
- xiii. roofscapes should reflect the locally distinctive character with hipped, half-hipped or cat-slide roof forms; and
- xiv. have open eaves, not boxed soffits; and
- xv. dormers must not exceed one-third of the roof length; and
- xvi. front dormers will be resisted in the Conservation Areas; and
- xvii. solar panels should be sympathetic to the existing building through the use of solid colour and non-reflective materials.

Fenestration:

- xviii. Proposals should incorporate local Sussex style (sashes or small casement) windows, in wood or conservation-compliant style . Alterations that would result in the loss of traditional windows will be resisted, and
- xix. proposals must respect dark skies and avoid glare through sensitive glazing design, typically with a smaller proportion of elevations glazed.

Landscaping, biodiversity and open space:

- xx. provide natural and amenity public green space within all major development sites in line with guidance and standards contained in the Wealden Open Space Study (2022) – Area Profile Wadhurst Parish Council (part 2 of 2), or any subsequent standard set by Wealden District Council, which supersedes this assessment; and
- xxi. the proposal design provides that such space is easily accessible from the proposed new development and well-integrated and providing a clear transition between the public and private realm; and
- xxii. incorporating where appropriate, biodiversity, landscaping and public and private open spaces and supports the creation of wildlife corridors.

Incorporate natural and amenity public green space that:

- xxiii. is in usable parcels of land and not fragmented, and
- xxiv. is safe, easily accessible and not severed by any physical barrier and accessible to the general public, and
- xxv. creates a safe environment considering lighting and layout and complemented by soft landscaping

C. Where development sites abut open countryside, development on the rural boundary edge should mitigate any detrimental visual impacts on the countryside. This should be achieved through the siting of lower density development at the rural boundary of the site in order to

provide a gradual transition from the built form to open countryside, or by other means such as through a layout that clearly minimises the visual impact of any larger buildings on both the open countryside and existing village-scape.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1, 4; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN1, EN6, EN14, EN19, EN27, EN28; AONB Management Plan objectives: S2, S3; NPPF: 126-134

Policy WAD4: Sustainability and design

Purpose

6.17. This policy seeks to ensure that development meets the highest environmental standards in terms of its construction, materials and energy use. This will help to mitigate against climate change and contribute to achieving the national target of zero net carbon by 2050.

Justification

6.18. On 12 June 2019 Parliament voted to amend the Climate Change Act 2008 by introducing a new target for at least a 100% reduction of increased greenhouse gas emissions (compared to 1990 levels) in the UK by 2050. This is otherwise known as a net zero target. This is a demanding target, which will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities to businesses and local and national Government. As part of this, the government has set an interim target to cut the country's greenhouse gas emissions 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels.

6.19. Being '2050 ready' means that new development will be required to have minimal energy use and net carbon emissions. Unlike Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans are more limited in what they can dictate in terms of environmental standards, as they must conform to the minimum requirements as set out by national policy and building regulations. The WNP can, however, strongly encourage the design and layout of new development to maximise its potential to be as energy efficient as possible and to encourage the use of renewable energy.



Examples of discreet solar panels (source: Historic England)

6.20. The Code for Sustainable Homes was withdrawn by the Government in 2015 and this has been replaced by new national technical standards which include new additional optional Building Regulations regarding water and access as well as a new national space standard (this is in addition to the existing mandatory Building Regulations). The Future Homes and Buildings Standard will be introduced in 2025 to complement the Building Regulations and ensure that new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes delivered under current regulations. As an interim step, announcements surrounding changes to Part L

are expected to come into force to ensure new homes built from 2022 will produce 31% less carbon emissions.

6.21. There is an opportunity to improve and promote sustainability in the Parish by:

- Supporting the principles of the Retro First movement⁴, which cites the most climate friendly developments are those that exist already. The movement promotes the reuse of existing buildings and building on brownfield land ahead of development on green fields, which provide important natural carbon sinks. The WNP supports this approach in Policy WAD1 (Location of development);
- minimising the embodied carbon of construction materials, favouring natural materials such as wood over highly energy intensive materials such as concrete and uPVC. The UK construction industry emits 45% of the UK's carbon emissions (source: Technology Strategy Board, now known as Innovate UK), so that 50% of a typical residential building's lifetime carbon emissions have been emitted by the time the building is completed (source: There's no place like old homes: reuse and recycle to reduce carbon, Historic England). This also aligns with the High Weald AONB Management Plan and Housing Design Guide relating to materials use;
- following basic passive environmental design, encouraging the use of insulating materials to minimise energy loss;
- integrating renewable energy systems into new development, including existing and new public buildings;
- reducing water consumption through grey water systems;
- promoting sustainable forms of transport through priority systems for pedestrians and cyclists;

6.22. Alterations to historic buildings: Historic vernacular buildings are themselves highly sustainable, having usually been built of local natural materials with low inherent carbon footprint, all ultimately recyclable. Maintaining the historic character and appearance of these buildings needs to be the prime focus and, in some cases, the possibility of harm to or loss of historic fabric negates such retrofitting. Inappropriate alterations or thoughtless installation of energy efficient equipment could easily compromise historic character and appearance; the effect on the character, fabric and setting of the building will therefore need to be carefully assessed in each case.

6.23. Whilst particular care should be taken across Wadhurst as it is in the High Weald AONB, this is even more so in its conservation areas and careful consideration of the siting and visibility of micro renewables is key.

POLICY WAD4: SUSTAINABILITY AND DESIGN

A. Proposals which incorporate design, materials selection and environmental performance measures and standards to reduce energy consumption and climate effects will be supported, subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan.

⁴ <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/retrofirst>

Proposals which incorporate the following sustainable design features as appropriate to their scale, nature and location will be supported, where measures will not have a detrimental impact on character, landscape and views:

- i. Siting and orientation to optimise passive solar gain.
- ii. The use of low embodied carbon building materials.
- iii. Installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing.
- iv. Incorporating on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels, ground source heating and energy generation etc.
- v. Reducing water consumption using water re-use measures including rainwater harvesting, surface water harvesting and/or grey water recycling systems.
- vi. Providing low carbon sustainable design and avoid or mitigate all regulated emissions using a combination of on-site energy efficiency measures (such as insulation and low energy heating systems), on-site zero carbon technologies (such as solar panels) and, only where necessary, off-site measures to deal with any remaining emissions.
- vii. Providing the infrastructure for adequate electric vehicle charging points for each individual dwelling, including provision for guest parking, where new parking provision is expected to be made.
- viii. Where a development proposal is required to provide Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), this is expected to be provided on-site unless there are clear reasons why this is not possible. Such development is encouraged to demonstrate the use of a wide range of creative SuDS solutions, for example through the provision of SuDS as part of green spaces, green roofs, permeable surfaces and rain gardens. The absence of any on-site SuDS provision will only be permissible in such developments where a specific reason can be evidenced that prevents the use of SuDS.

Maintaining the character and appearance of historic vernacular buildings must be the prime focus and the possibility of harm to or loss of historic fabric can negate the justification for retrofitting with inappropriate alterations or thoughtless installation of energy efficient equipment. The effect on the historic character and appearance, fabric and setting of the building will therefore need to be carefully assessed in each case.

- B. Alterations to existing buildings, including sensitive measures to alter historic buildings, demonstrating designs to achieve energy reduction and compliance with current sustainable design guidance and construction standards, will be supported, subject to other policies in this Plan.
- C. Major infrastructure developments (such as: Solar Farms, Wind Turbines or Wind Turbine Farms, Fracking, Mining, Gas/Nuclear or Power) that would impact the visual beauty, tranquillity or character of the High Weald AONB will be resisted.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN1, EN5, CS2; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): WCS14; AONB Management Plan objectives: G1, G3, S3; NPPF: 126, 127, 130, 153, 154, 155, 161, 190

Policy WAD5: Conserving heritage assets

Purpose

- 6.24. This policy recognises the important contribution that designated and non-designated heritage assets make to the local character and distinctiveness of Wadhurst Parish, both individually and collectively. Where possible, they should be conserved, enhanced and celebrated.

Justification

- 6.25. There are two Conservation Areas in the Parish, each with a Character Area Appraisal setting out the history of the area and how it should be managed and conserved:

Wadhurst - <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/Wadhurst-Draft-Conservation-Area-Character-Appraisal-v2.pdf>

Pell Green and Cousley–Wood - <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/Pell-Green-and-Cousley-Wood-draft-CA-Appraisal-2020-v2-1.pdf>

- 6.26. Wadhurst is a historic market settlement, granted a royal charter in 1253, located within the High Weald AONB. The landscape retains its medieval character of small irregular-shaped fields and scattered farmsteads, often grazed by sheep or Sussex cattle. Oak and sweet chestnut dominate the wooded rolling hills and streams run red from iron ore in the local rock. Close by, Bewl Water, the largest body of fresh water in the south east, is an active water sports and trout fishing centre. Wadhurst was also the location of the Last Great Prize Fight on 10th December 1863, when Englishman, Tom King, beat the American, John Heenan.
- 6.27. The High Street follows the line of an ancient trackway connecting prehistoric and Roman ironworking sites and communities. This became the old drovers' road and, in 1767, the turnpike around which the village grew. Wadhurst centre still has over 25 buildings dating from between 1500 and 1800, with predominantly small independent retail outlets that attract people from outside the village. Untouched by the advent of steam in 1851 (the railway station is 2.2Km/1.4 miles away), the only significant changes to the centre of the village were after an RAF aeroplane crashed into the centre of the High Street in 1956.
- 6.28. Oak and iron formed the fundamental character of Wadhurst. The village still has a working blacksmith and an old, converted forge, grand ironmasters' homes and the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul where can be seen the finest collection of iron memorial slabs in England, dating from 1617 to 1799. The Church also commemorates the fallen of the two World Wars.
- 6.29. Local oak was used to build great wooden warships at Chatham Dockyard. It is said that oak from the Whiligh estate in Wadhurst forms the hammer-beam roof of Westminster Hall, commissioned in 1393 by King Richard II; it was certainly used to rebuild it after its bombing in the 2nd World War.
- 6.30. There are 154 individual/groups of buildings and assets in Wadhurst parish today that are recognised through a listing for their contribution to national heritage. This includes the Grade I listed Church of St Peter and St Paul in Wadhurst village. The listed buildings and Conservation Areas are mapped in Figure 6.4 (and Figures 6.6 and 6.7 in Policy WAD6).



Images show: Church of St Peter and St Paul, Wadhurst; and Wadhurst Castle

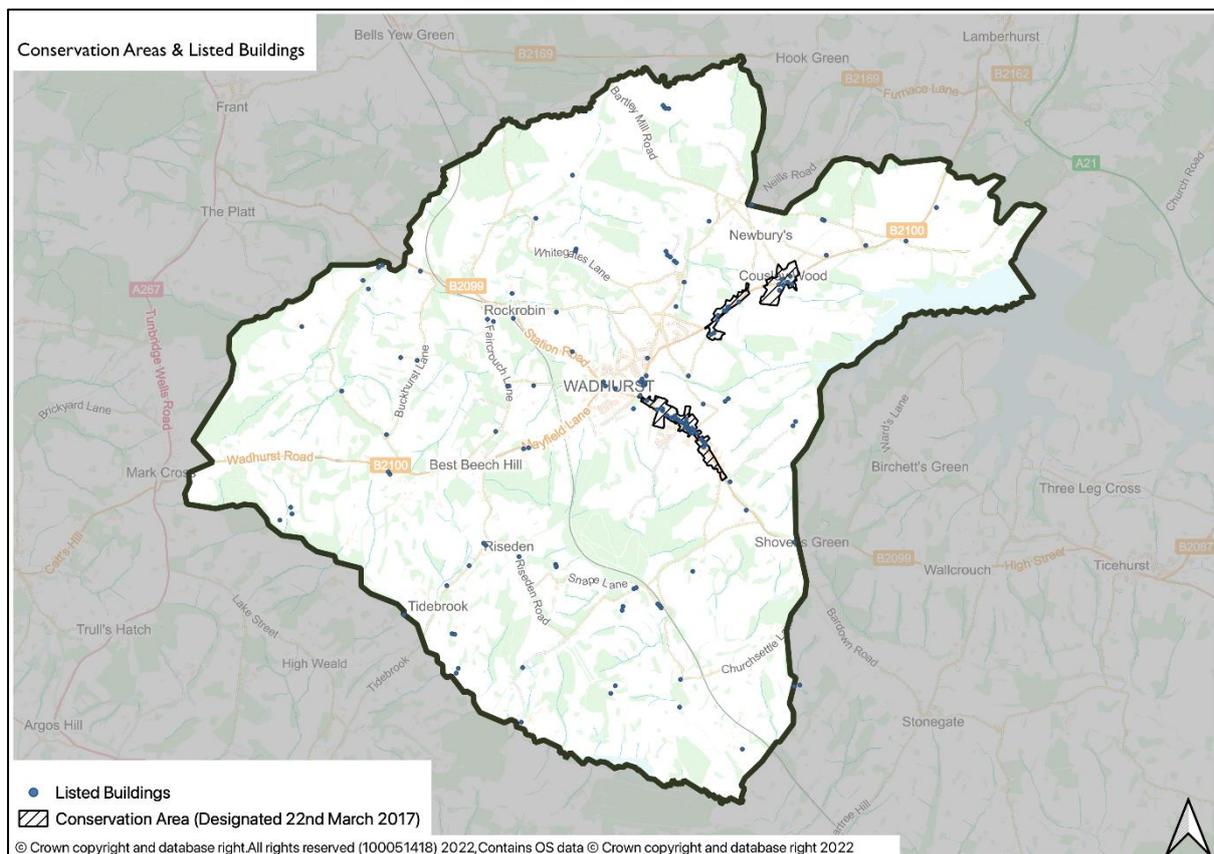


Figure 6.4: Map showing the Conservation Areas, listed heritage assets in Wadhurst Parish

6.31. National Planning Practice Guidance supports the identification of non-designated heritage assets through the neighbourhood planning process (Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723). The Historic Environment Record⁵ contains details of heritage assets, some of which

⁵ <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/>

are not nationally listed. The record should be consulted by prospective developers and the non-listed entries on this record should be considered non-designated heritage assets and therefore be subject to Policy WAD5.

- 6.32. A distinctive feature of the High Weald is the network of routeways (now roads, tracks and paths), the oldest being in the form of ridge-top roads and a dense system of radiating droveways. These are often narrow, deeply sunken and edged with trees, hedges, wildflower-rich verges and boundary banks. Many still exist today in Wadhurst and these should be recognised as non-designated heritage assets in the planning process. They are shown in Figure 6.5.



*'Holloways' were used as a droveways for driving livestock. This one in Wadhurst, was wide enough to admit wheeled vehicles if the ground conditions were favourable.
(Photo © High Weald AONB Partnership)*

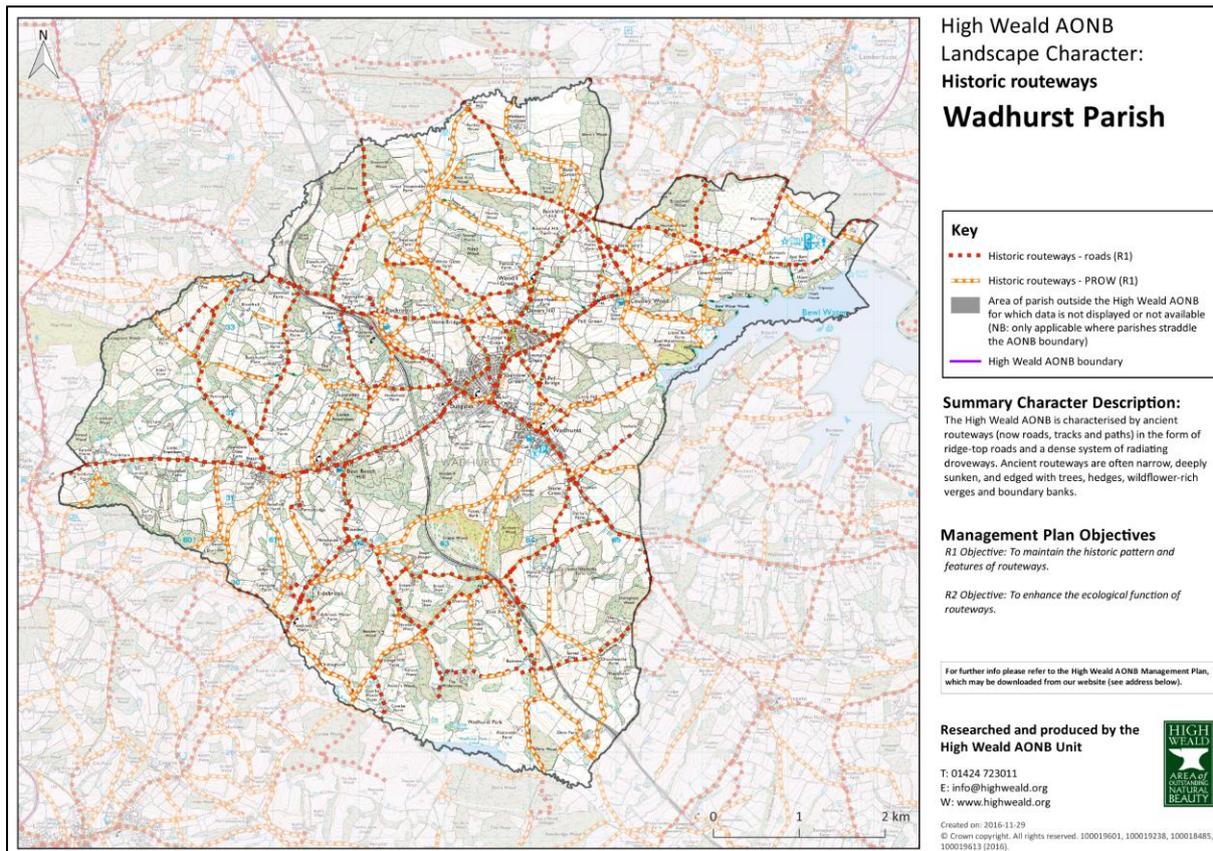


Figure 6.5: Historic routeways within Wadhurst Parish (source: High Weald AONB Unit)

6.33. In parallel with this policy, it is proposed that the community consider if there are any other historic assets that are neither nationally listed, nor appear in the Historic Environment Record, which might be suitable for Local Listing with Wealden District Council.

Local Heritage at Risk

6.34. Historic England produces an annual Register of Heritage at Risk. Outside of London it does not include Grade II listings, apart from churches. Whilst no assets within Wadhurst have been identified at this time, an audit of buildings and assets should be undertaken periodically to monitor the condition of heritage assets.

6.35. Opportunities to restore assets should be taken when they arise, in partnership with the owner.

POLICY WAD5: CONSERVING HERITAGE ASSETS

A. Historic heritage assets within Wadhurst Parish will be preserved and enhanced for their historic significance, including the contribution made by their settings and their importance to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place. These include:

- i. **Assets contained in the Heritage Environment Record (<https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/>) including those which are not already nationally listed; and**
 - ii. **Listed Buildings, battlefields, monuments, Parks and Gardens (Historic England) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/>); and**
 - iii. **The network of historic routeways as shown in Figure 6.5 (including their original course, rural character, banks, hedgerows, verges and other important features); and**
 - iv. **Turners Green 'boxing' Fields 2 and 3, as mapped and described in Appendix E.**
- B. Development proposals affecting heritage assets – including non-designated heritage assets – either directly or indirectly, should sustain and enhance the significance and setting of the asset. This could include, where appropriate, the delivery of development that will make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the heritage asset, or reflect and enhance local character and distinctiveness with particular regard given to the prevailing styles of design and use of materials in a local area.**
- C. Development proposals should demonstrate that they have taken into account the potential impact on above and below ground archaeological deposits to ensure that evidence which could contribute to the understanding of human activity and past environments is not lost. Where a scheme has a potential impact on archaeological remains (below or above ground) a Heritage Statement should be prepared in support of planning applications.**
- D. A proactive stance will be taken to any heritage assets that may be at risk. Great weight will be given to the desirability of conserving designated heritage assets.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN19; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): WSC14; AONB Management Plan objectives: R1, OQ2; NPPF: 189, 190, 194, 203

Policy WAD6: Conservation Areas

Purpose

6.36. This policy seeks to preserve and enhance the character of the three Conservation Areas and their settings within the Parish

Justification

6.37. There are three Conservation Areas within the Parish: Wadhurst, Pell Green and Cousley Wood. These are shown on Figures 6.6 and 6.7. The WNP seeks to ensure that development proposals are sympathetic to the Conservation Areas, as set out in the respective Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

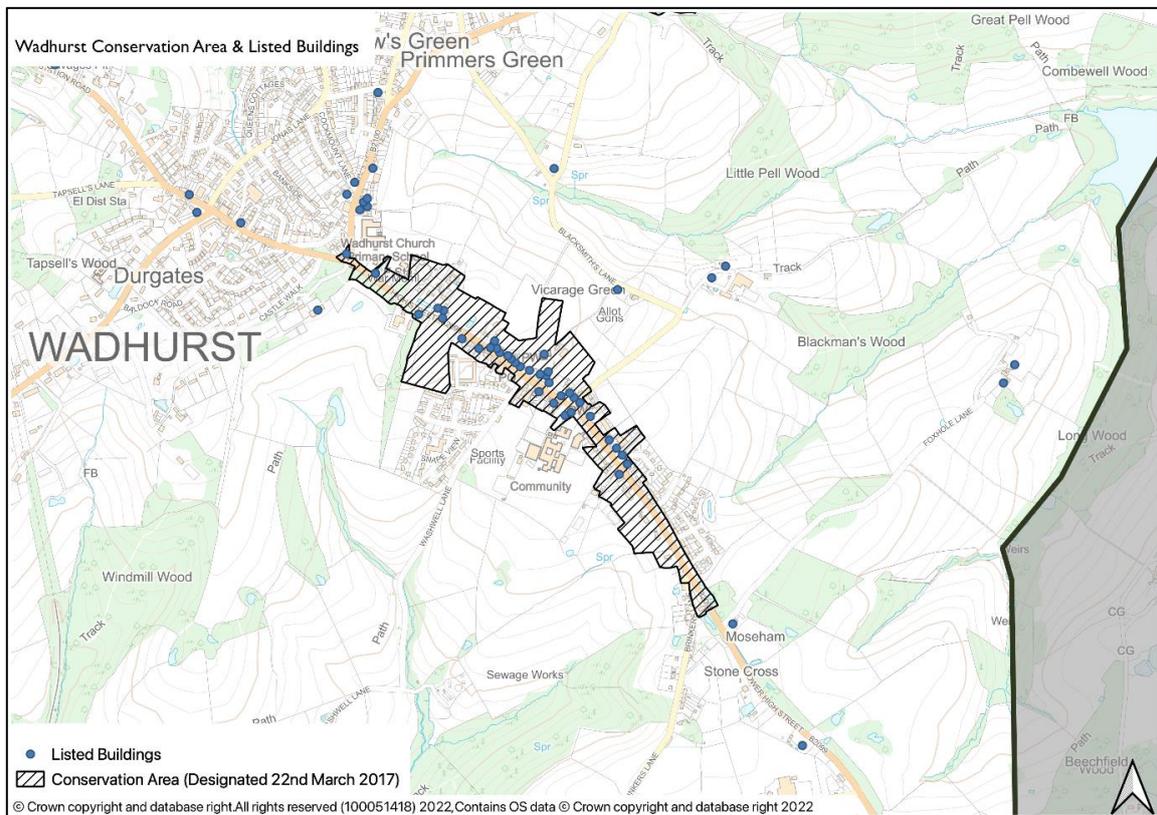


Figure 6.6: Map showing the Wadhurst Conservation Area

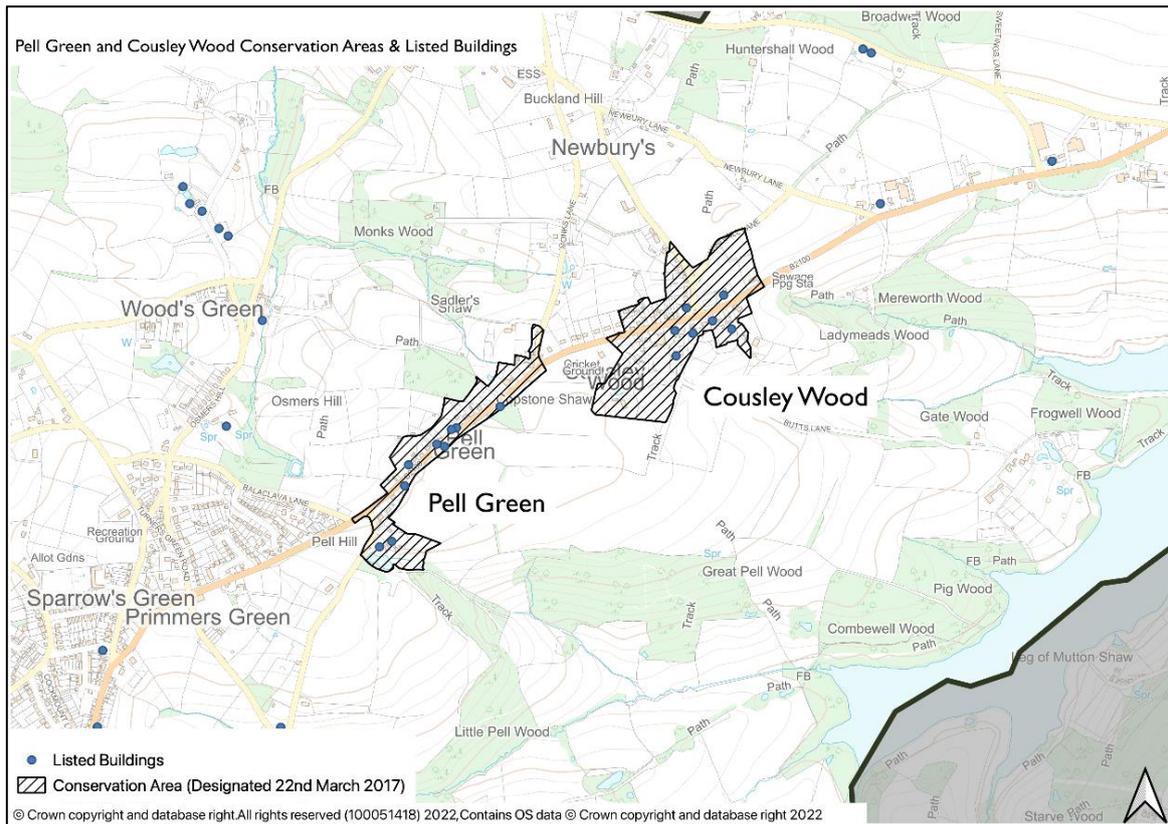


Figure 6.7: Map showing the Pell Green and Cousley Wood Conservation Areas

POLICY WAD6: Conservation Areas

- A. Development proposals will be required to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Wadhurst, and Pell Green and Cousley Wood Conservation Areas and sites adjacent to, or with views from and into these areas, shown in Figures 6.6 and 6.7, and their settings, including the green and woodland spaces in accordance with the information set out in the Conservation Area Character Appraisals⁶.**
- B. Proposals for new development and extensions and alterations to existing buildings and structures within the Conservation Areas will be supported where:**
- i. it is sympathetically designed and preserves and enhances the character of the conservation area and its setting; and**
 - ii. the scale and massing of buildings relate sympathetically to the surrounding area; and**
 - iii. it retains those buildings and other features, including trees and hedges, which make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area.**
 - iv. it uses traditional and vernacular building materials (as described in the Wadhurst Design Code, Conservation Area Designation Reports and Conservation Area Character Appraisals), which respect the context of the development concerned, and**

⁶ <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/heritage/conservation-areas/>

v. it does not exacerbate traffic congestion and air pollution within the Conservation Areas.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN19; AONB Management Plan objectives: S3; NPPF: 189, 190, 194, 206

7. GETTING AROUND

Policy WAD7: Safe and Sustainable Movement

Purpose

- 7.1. The rural nature of the Parish means that car ownership is fairly high with 52% of homes having access to more than one vehicle (2011 Census). Traffic volume and congestion, not only from local traffic, but also traffic travelling through the Parish, has been raised as a particular issue by the local community.
- 7.2. Whilst the WNP cannot prevent people from using their cars, encouraging walking, cycling and, where possible, horse-riding, particularly for shorter journeys within the Parish and between the settlements and facilities, presents an opportunity to help reduce some of the car-related pressures.
- 7.3. This policy seeks to encourage more sustainable modes of transport by supporting proposals that enable and promote active travel.

Justification

- 7.4. Whilst the Parish benefits from a rich and varied network of footpaths and bridleways (Figure 7.1), because of the particular geography and historic growth of the area, the individual settlements – and hence the facilities and amenities within them - are scattered and widely distributed along two main ridge lines. The main hub and services, for instance, are in Wadhurst Village and in Durgates/Sparrows Green (as shown in Figure 7.2), while the main rail transport link is located some 2.2km (1.4 miles) away from Wadhurst Village centre. Figure 7.3 provides details of the walking and cycling distances and times between some of the main facilities as measured by the Steering Group. The times do not take account of the steep hills, the quality of the walking experience or the inclement UK weather, which contribute to car usage.



Images show: footpaths around the Parish

7.5. The Parish is located around the crossroads of the B2100 and the B2099, which provide direct links to the A21 and the larger nearby settlements of Royal Tunbridge Wells, and Crowborough. Drivers from outside the Parish often cut-through Wadhurst, either to access these routes or to avoid them if there are incidents on them. This adds to local congestion on the narrow Parish roads and lanes.

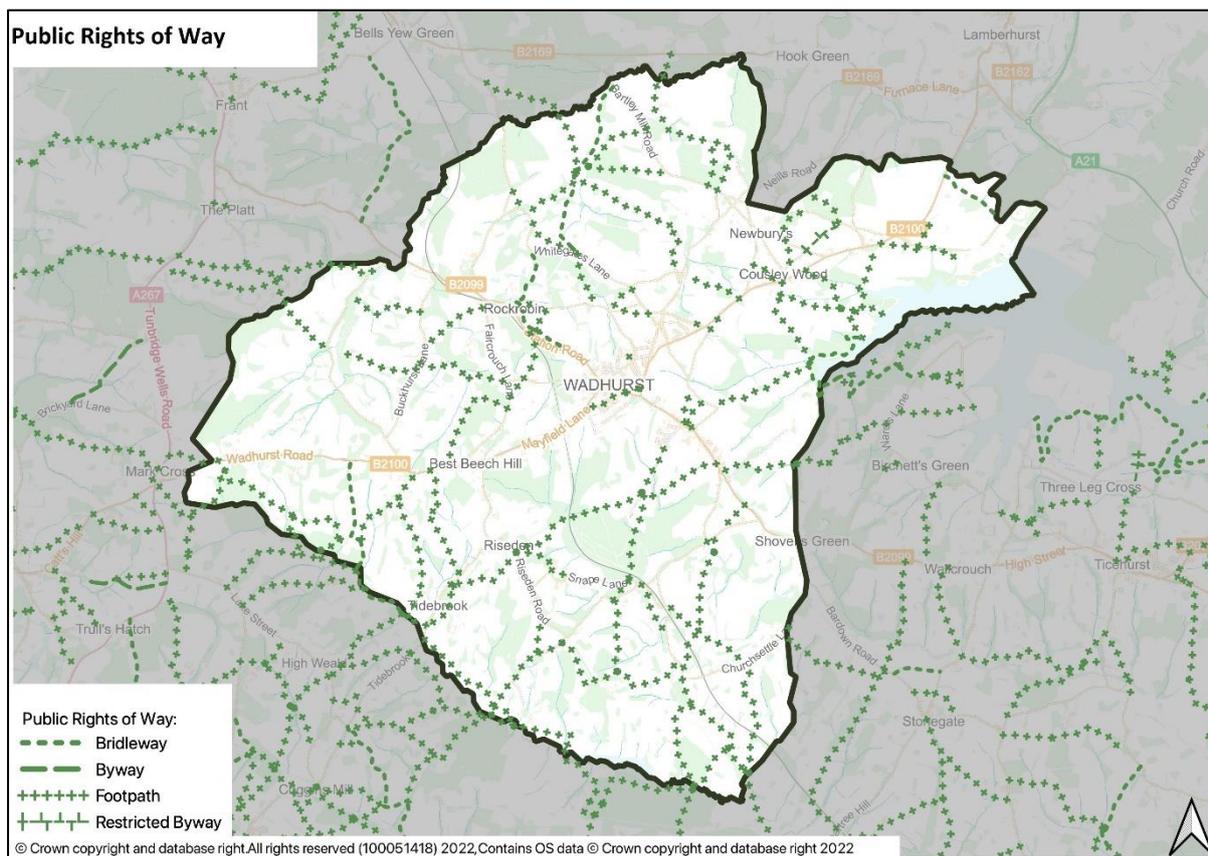


Figure 7.1: Public rights of way in Wadhurst Parish- note that despite a large number of public rights of way in the Parish, there is limited connectivity to the High Street

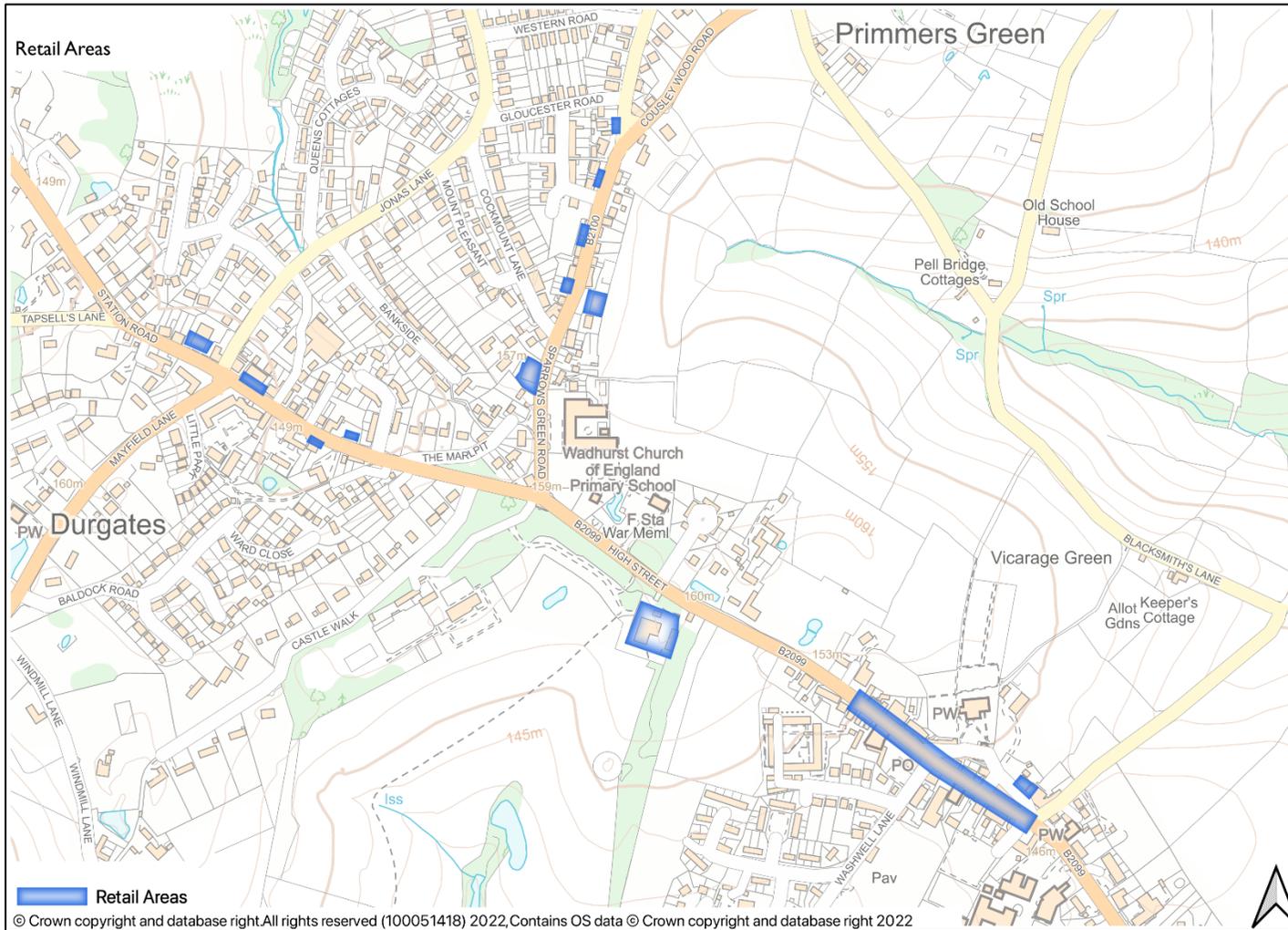


Figure 7.2: Map illustrating the scattered nature of retail/service facilities

From Station to:	Distance, metres	Walking time, mins	Cycling time, mins
Durgates (petrol station)	1270	19	5
Mayfield Lane (Best Beech)	2410	36	10
Wadhurst Village (Jempsons)	2190	33	9
Wadhurst Village (Uplands)	2450	37	10
Waters Reach	2840	43	12
Sparrows Green (Co-op)	1860	28	8
Woods Green	2510	38	10
Cousley Wood Road (Dobbin Inn)	2860	43	12
Cousley Wood (Old Vine)	3890	58	16
From Wadhurst Village (Jempsons) to:	Distance, metres	Walking time, mins	Cycling time, mins
Durgates (petrol station)	900	14	4
Mayfield Lane (Best Beech)	2490	37	10
Station	2190	33	9
Wadhurst Village (Uplands)	260	4	1
Waters Reach	650	10	3
Sparrows Green (Co-op)	610	9	3
Woods Green	1970	30	8
Cousley Wood Road (Dobbin Inn)	1630	24	7
Cousley Wood (Old Vine)	2600	39	11
Sources: Google maps, Ramblers, Road Bike https://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/navigation/calculating-walking-pace.aspx https://roadbikebasics.com/average-speed-on-road-bike/ Note: distance > 2km or 10 minutes walking and cycling time highlighted			

Figure 7.3: Walking and cycling distances and times between main facilities in the Parish

7.6. The evidence gathered as part of the WNP engagement (detailed in the report, The Future – What Parishioners Want which is included in the Evidence Base) demonstrates that the traffic impact on the Parish is, at times, severe. As a result, the walking (and cycling) experience around the Parish is variable, ranging from acceptable to potentially dangerous. There are a range of hazards that pedestrians have to navigate including:

- Vehicles parked on the pavement, forcing pedestrians on to the road (examples in the images below show the Lower High Street).



- Narrow, poorly maintained, poorly lit pavements.
- No pavements in places or pavements with low kerbs (often travelling car encroached e.g., High Street, Sparrows Green).



- Hilly terrain (for instance the walk from the rail station to Durgates, or Woods Green to Wadhurst Village)
- Narrow, uneven, muddy footpaths (the examples below are from Turners Green).



- Dangerous, traffic busy rural lanes/main roads and no pedestrian crossings (the examples below show Sparrows Green, Three Oaks Lane).



7.7. In addition, there are instances of speeding traffic along the main routes through the Parish. Public transport options are limited.

7.8. Improvements to and promotion of the main movement routes within the settlements and wider Parish may further encourage residents to take short, local journeys on foot or by bicycle. Not only will this alleviate congestion and associated air pollution (particularly outside the schools and at the main junctions) but it will also have health benefits for residents.

7.9. In parallel to improving this active travel network, there are a series of actions that may help to improve the environment for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. Many sit outside the scope of the WNP but might be considered as part of ESCC's emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), which can be found here:

<https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/economy-transport-environment/escclcwip-2020/>.

Actions include:

- Using psychological traffic calming that is appropriate to the rural AONB character of the area to slow-down traffic. For example, through the introduction of village gateways, the removal of central white road-lines, road narrowing and the minimisation of urban features, as outlined in the Wadhurst Design Code and detailed more fully in the "Traffic in Villages, Safety and Civility for Rural Roads, Toolkit" by Hamilton-Baillie Associates.
- Introducing slower speed limits in parts of Wadhurst Parish, however, this sits outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Redirecting HGVs away from rural lanes – a dialogue with East Sussex County Council and National Highways would help to consider ways to re-route vehicles, for instance by altering Satnav guidance provided to private companies.
- Problems associated with rat-running, where Wadhurst routes are used by drivers to avoid congestion on the A21.

- Working with East Sussex County Council Highways and private operators to improve public transport provision in the Parish, in terms of routes served, timings and punctuality.

POLICY WAD7: SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT

- A. To ensure that residents can access social, community, public transport, the schools, retail and other important facilities in Wadhurst Parish, as well as the wider countryside, in a sustainable and safe way, all new developments should ensure safe pedestrian, and where possible cycle, access to link up with the existing footpath and cycleway network, and public transport network, as defined in Figure 7.1.**
- B. The provision of new, or the enhancement of existing, cycle and pedestrian routes that are, where feasible, physically separated from vehicular traffic and from one another will be strongly supported. Such routes should be of permeable material and ensure that access by disabled users and users of mobility scooters is secured.**
- C. The design and layout of works related to the widening of footpaths or the provision of traffic-calming measures should enhance the rural, High Weald character, for example retaining and/or providing hedgerows, trees and soft verges where possible. Materials and layout must be sympathetic to local character, in accordance with Policy WAD3 (Character and Design) of this Neighbourhood Plan, and the High Weald Housing Design Guide.**
- D. Proposals for new bridleways will be supported wherever possible; in all new developments existing bridleways must be retained where they exist or, alternatively, new or amended bridleway links provided together with safe road crossing points that enable connectivity between the settlements and the wider countryside.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 2; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): TR1, TR2, TR13; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): WCS7; AONB Management Plan objectives: G3, OQ3; NPPF: 92, 100, 105, 104, 106

Policy WAD8: Mitigating traffic congestion

Purpose

7.10. This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals fully assess both their potential impact and their cumulative impact on the key roads and junctions in Wadhurst Parish that already experience congestion problems, and actively seek ways to mitigate this.

Justification

7.11. Traffic congestion is a major concern for the community and was consistently raised throughout the public engagement on the WNP. Further information on this can be found in the Evidence Base (The Future – What Parishioners Want).

7.12. The rural location of the Parish lends itself to higher car ownership. Many of the older properties were built at a time when cars were not the norm, hence there is lack of off-street parking and over-reliance on on-street parking. This has led to significant numbers of parked cars throughout the day along the narrow streets, often without pavements. Traffic congestion is exacerbated by satellite navigation systems periodically diverting traffic through the Parish when they identify delays on the A21 and also when accidents close the A21.

7.13. The Steering Group has identified several traffic ‘hotspots’ that experience regular congestion, particularly at peak periods. These hotspots are centred on and around the main retail areas (Figure 7.2). This not only delays journeys and discourages travel to the retail outlets in Wadhurst High Street, but also increases emissions and associated air pollution. A particular issue is the large volumes of traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, that travel through Wadhurst village centre. The following areas were identified through the neighbourhood plan process as being problematic and are shown in Figure 7.4.

- The High Street
- Sparrows Green Road
- B2099/B2100 road junctions

7.14. Major development south of the B2099 High Street has resulted in an increase in vehicles commuting/travelling north to, and returning from, the railway station, Tunbridge Wells or the northbound A21 and therefore travelling through the High Street. This has been exacerbated by traffic from new housing developments south of the B2099 in Ticehurst and beyond, due to the B2099 being a principal route to Wadhurst Train Station (with parking), Crowborough and Tunbridge Wells.

7.15. The NPPF (para 113) states, *“All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed”*.

7.16. Since the traffic situation is already severe, it is considered that any further development will add to this significantly. Therefore, a Transport Assessment is required for major development and a Transport Statement for smaller sites, to ensure that potential impacts can be assessed and mitigated.

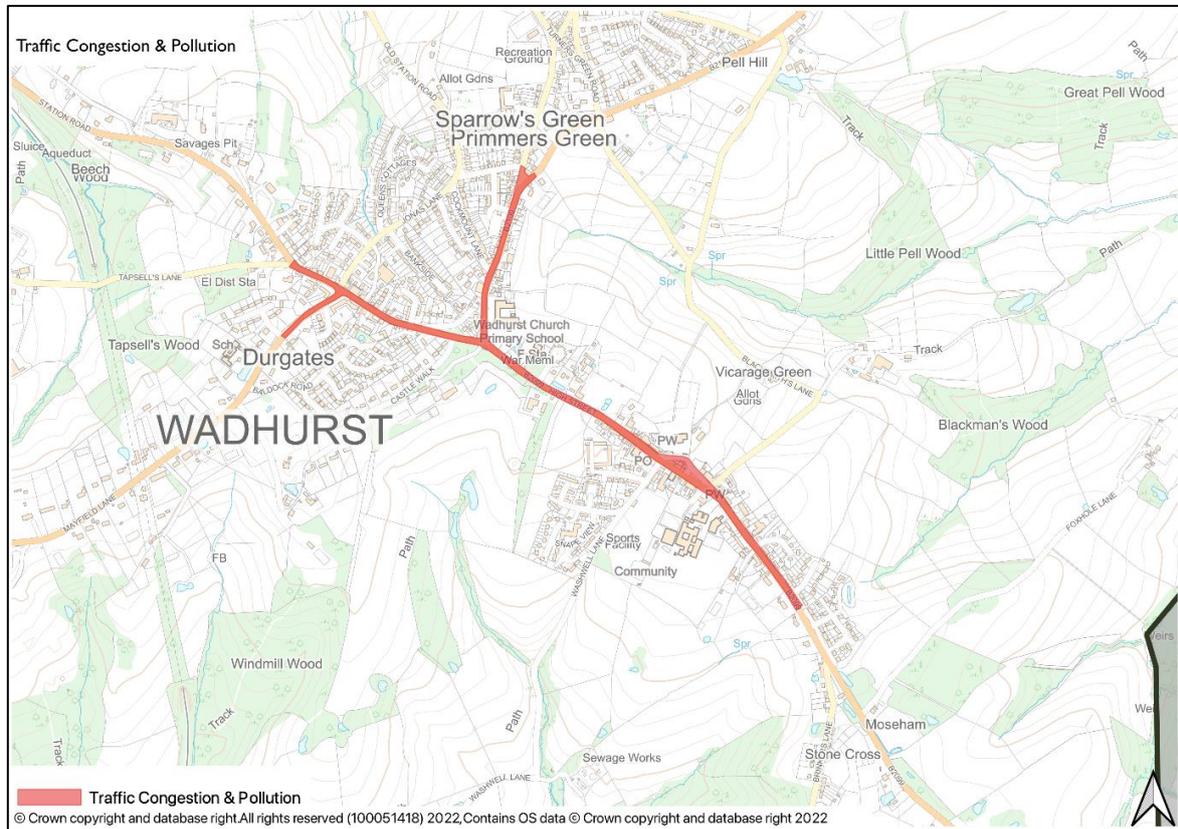


Figure 7.4: Congestion hotspots in Wadhurst

POLICY WAD8: MITIGATING TRAFFIC CONGESTION

A. A Transport Assessment is required for major⁷ development proposals and a Transport Statement for smaller proposals⁸, which must address to the satisfaction of the highways authority the direct and cumulative transport impact on the following roads, as identified on Figure 7.4:

- a. Wadhurst High Street (B2099)**
- b. Sparrows Green Road**
- c. B2099/B2100 road junctions**

B. Such reports must include consideration of the impact on the safety of cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians, including those with mobility issues and people with pushchairs, at the respective location.

C. Proposals to improve the flow of traffic and pedestrian safety, as well as the environment, on these roads in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be strongly supported.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 2; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): TR3, TR10; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): WCS7; AONB Management Plan objectives: OQ4; NPPF: 104, 105, 111, 112, 113

⁷ For housing: 10 or more homes or the site area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential: additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

⁸ Housing: Fewer than 10 homes; non-residential: <1000m² / <1ha or more.

Policy WAD9: Car parking provision

Purpose

7.17. This policy seeks to ensure that adequate parking is provided, serving both the public and as part of development proposals.

Justification

7.18. The issue of car parking was raised by the community during the engagement process. Due to the historic nature of the Parish, many of the roads and lanes are narrow, often lacking pavements, and a large proportion of the homes were constructed at a time when car ownership was not the norm. There is also a shortage of public car parking, particularly in Wadhurst village. As a consequence, on-street and on-pavement parking is a major reason for the current severe traffic congestion in the Parish. This creates obstacles for those wishing to walk and, on occasion, has created problems for emergency vehicles requiring access. The short video below ([see Wadhurst Parish Council Website](#)) shows a fireman diverting traffic down dead-end Washwell Lane in the High Street to allow progress of the fire engine. Concerns have been raised over the Health and Safety implications of this video, as lives could be lost eventually to this traffic congestion and associated restriction of emergency vehicles.

7.19. Whilst the WNP seeks to encourage a shift to active travel, particularly for shorter journeys, it is important that adequate infrastructure to support the use of vehicles is provided.

7.20. The WNP therefore seeks to retain, manage and improve the quality of the existing public car parking areas, in particular where they are off-street, but also on-street spaces along Wadhurst village High Street. In addition, it supports proposals that enable the provision of additional public car parking, particularly where it serves those parts of the Parish most under pressure from on-street parking. Finally, it seeks to ensure that all new development incorporates adequate off-street parking for both cars and bicycles.

7.21. The provision of electric vehicle charging points is required to future-proof parking provision and to catalyse a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport.

Policy WAD9: CAR PARKING PROVISION

Public car parking

- A. Development proposals that would result in an unacceptable loss of existing publicly available off-street car parking spaces and/or on-street parking spaces along Wadhurst village High Street will not be supported.**
- B. Proposals that enable the provision of additional, publicly accessible off-road car parking spaces to alleviate parking congestion along the High Street and Sparrows Green Road will be supported.**
- C. Alongside any new public car parking provision, the following facilities will be strongly supported to be provided as part of that provision:**

- i. dedicated bicycle parking facilities, preferably with e-bike charging points, covered and secure; and**
- ii. future-proofed electric vehicle charging points.**

Car parking as part of development

- D. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should provide an adequate amount of sensitively designed off-street parking, close to the development it serves, which complies with the East Sussex County Council's Parking Guidelines.**
- E. The layout of provision should adhere to the Wadhurst Design Code and have regard to the DG6 'Parking Strategies' guidance of the High Weald AONB Housing Design Guide. Garages and additional car parking should be unobtrusive, and the streetscape not dominated by vehicles.**
- F. Space should be provided for dedicated cycle parking and/or storage.**
- G. Electric vehicle charging facilities that are affordable, reliable and open access must be provided as appropriate to their scale.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 2; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): TR16; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): WSC7; AONB Management Plan objectives: OQ4; NPPF: 107

8. LOCAL ECONOMY

Policy WAD10: Employment retention and local economy viability

Purpose

- 8.1. The provision of local employment is a key aspect of the vitality of any community and this policy seeks to encourage new business development where appropriate and complementary to the sensitive High Weald AONB setting. It also seeks to safeguard existing business premises and associated employment.
- 8.2. Finally, the policy seeks to ensure that Wadhurst village centre remains a thriving destination serving the needs of parishioners and tourists and of the smaller surrounding settlements.

Justification

- 8.3. Wadhurst village centre (Figure 8.1) was designated as a 'Service Centre' by the Core Strategy (2013). The Town Centre and Retail Study (2016) prepared for WDC found that Wadhurst is a relatively attractive, healthy and viable centre that is performing well against a number of key performance indicators. Its offer is dominated by independent retailers, which adds to the overall character and attraction of the centre as a focal point within the Parish. There are opportunities to build on this independent offer, improving the quality of provision and its niche retail offer.

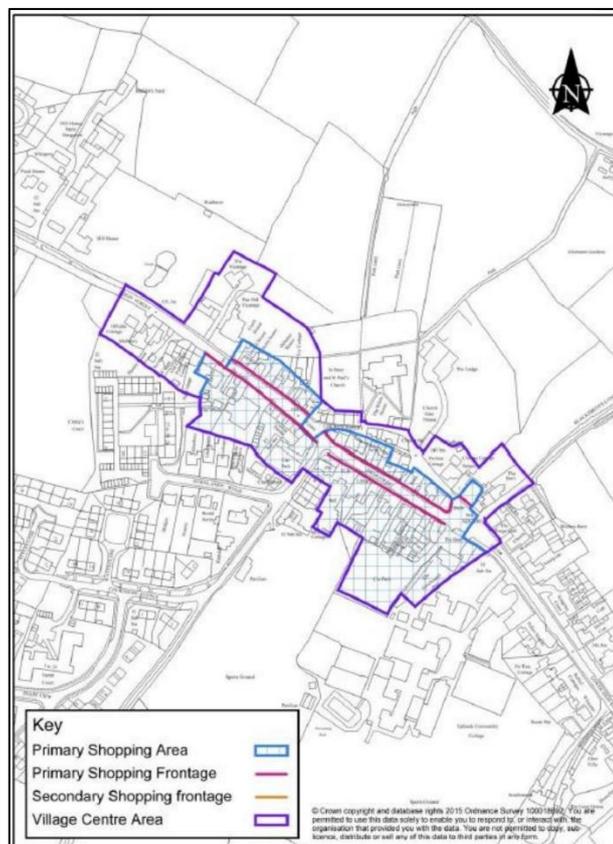


Figure 8.1: Village centre area (source: Town Centre and Retail Study 2016)

- 8.4. Like many village centres, the High Street and other smaller retail areas are suffering from the multiple threats of online shopping and out-of-town shopping, which has been exacerbated by traffic congestion, parking constraints and the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 8.5. There have been a number of planning applications to convert retail spaces to residential, which is eroding the overall retail provision within Wadhurst Village centre. Every opportunity to safeguard existing and provide new retail space and employment opportunities must therefore be taken. It should be noted that, the new permitted planning development right (Class MA), which enables the change of certain buildings in Use Class E (shops, offices, gyms, restaurants, workshops and many other types of commercial building) into residential use under permitted development, is not applicable to buildings or land within an AONB.
- 8.6. Over 35% of Household Survey respondents felt that there is a lack of variety in the range of shops and facilities available, while 14% also noted the disturbing trend of the closure of shops and services.
- 8.7. This policy seeks to provide more flexibility in the way in which premises on the High Street and other retail areas are used so that a greater variety of shops and facilities are available.
- 8.8. Beyond Wadhurst village centre, the key employment areas in the Parish are: educational establishments (Uplands Academy, Primary School at Sparrows Green, Sacred Heart on Mayfield Lane, The Mount on Faircrouch Lane), Wadhurst Manor Care Home (on Station Road), Faircrouch Industrial Park (Faircrouch Lane), Durgates Industrial Park (Durgates), Wadhurst Castle and Castle Keep, Sparrows Green retail area, Lower Cousley Wood Farm units.
- 8.9. The protection of these existing local employment opportunities and the promotion of new ones will not only provide greater prospects for local people to access local jobs but will ensure that these are sustainable in terms of the patterns of commuting that they generate.

POLICY WAD10: EMPLOYMENT RETENTION AND LOCAL ECONOMY VIABILITY

Delivering New Employment:

- A. Within the development boundaries, proposals for new commercial activity (use E) and/or the expansion of existing commercial activity will be supported, subject to the following criteria:**
- i. the proposal, including any associated premises, would not have significant harmful impacts on the local environment and nationally important High Weald AONB; and**
 - ii. the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses, particularly residential, through excessive noise and pollution, smells or traffic; and**
 - iii. the proposal must not have significant adverse impacts upon the local road and footpath network in terms of congestion, parking, safety and amenity to all users including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.**

B. Development proposals which support the increase of footfall in the High Street and other shopping areas (uses B2, B8, E and F) will be particularly supported to secure the vitality and viability of these areas.

Employment Retention:

C. Proposals for a change of use of existing commercial premises to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the commercial premises or land:

- i. has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and**
- ii. has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses as demonstrated by,**
 - a. a robust marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least 12 months and a supplemental report evidencing the marketing undertaken and the market response; and**
 - b. a detailed valuation report assessing the viability of the land and buildings for employment use.**

D. To minimise permanent on-street parking and maintain a comprehensive retail offering, conversion/change of use of retail/business/services to residential development will not be supported in the High Street. Proposals for residential developments above shops will only be supported if off-road parking and off-street bin provision is incorporated.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 3; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): BS6, BS7, BS8; AONB Management Plan objectives: LBE2; NPPF: 84, 85, 92, 93

Policy WAD11: Supporting sustainable rural tourism

Purpose

8.10. Wadhurst's attractive location within the High Weald, coupled with its proximity to regionally and nationally significant visitor attractions, presents an opportunity for the Parish to develop itself as both a destination and base for sustainable rural tourism. This policy supports proposals that would help to achieve this.

Justification

- 8.11. Engagement for the WNP revealed that the local community would support the idea of developing Wadhurst's role as a gateway to the High Weald, promoting activities that are sympathetic with and celebrate the rural nature of the parish, such as walking, cycling, visiting historic sites and buildings, enjoying local food and drink and visiting museums and farm shops.
- 8.12. Attracting visitors to the Parish – particularly those staying at least one night – could provide a valuable source of income for local shops and businesses, accommodation providers and eateries, create new employment opportunities for local people, offer scope for farm diversification and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the local area.

8.13. Proposals that would support the development of such facilities, would need to be undertaken in a way that is in-keeping with the rural character of the High Weald and, as far as possible, contributes to the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the AONB. It should also only be undertaken where it involves the reuse of an existing building, an issue that was strongly voiced through the Household Survey. At the district level, Local Plan Policy TM4 seeks to strongly resist new holiday villages and chalets within the AONB. Policy TM1 of the Local Plan (1998) requires proposals for new or extended tourist attractions and facilities to respect, and where possible, enhance the character, heritage and environmental quality of the area. It also requires particular care to be given to siting, design and appearance within the AONB. The neighbourhood plan supports this approach but limits it to the re-use of existing buildings as opposed to enabling new build for this purpose.

POLICY WAD11: SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM

Development proposals that support diversification of existing tourism attractions and facilities to encourage day and staying visitors will be supported where the following criteria can be met:

- i. The proposal must involve the redevelopment or diversification of an existing building, within its existing Use Class.**
- ii. Proposals meet the concept of sustainable rural tourism⁹ regarding green travel, sustainable employment and the production and consumption of local produce and materials; and**
- iii. The siting, scale and design conserves and enhances the local character of the High Weald following the guidance contained in the Wadhurst Design Code (Policy WAD3) and the High Weald AONB Management Plan (2019 — 2024) and conforming with Policies TM1 and TM4 of the Wealden Local Plan; and**
- iv. There are demonstrable economic and social benefits to the proposals; and**
- v. There is no significant detrimental impact on the existing community or the environment.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 3; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): TM1, TM4; AONB Management Plan objectives: OQ2, LBE2; NPPF: 84

Policy WAD12: Communication Infrastructure Support

Purpose

8.14. This policy aims to ensure that all parishioners and businesses have access to modern high-quality communications infrastructure.

Justification

8.15. The modern economy is changing and it is acknowledged nationally that good communications infrastructure is a basic requirement. The 2011 Census highlights how people are working differently to a generation ago – Wadhurst Parish has a high proportion of people who are self-employed: 19.3% in the 2011 census, compared to 15.7% across Wealden and 4% across the

⁹ Defined here: <https://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/1056-high-weald-tourism-report/file.html>

south east region. Many of these will be working from home, and changes to working practices in the last few years is likely to have caused this figure to increase.

- 8.16. It will be important to ensure that those working from home are able to access the facilities necessary to assist them in sustaining their businesses. Commonly this is in service activities that simply require access to a computer and an internet connection. There is poor mobile signal in parts of the Parish, which is a detriment to business and hence the WNP would support the provision of improved mobile reception subject to it being in accordance with Policy WAD12.
- 8.17. The Household Survey contained a series of questions aimed at small businesses and home-based workers including those that would like to work from home. The Survey received responses from 682 people to these questions, indicating that there are a sizable number of small and home-based businesses. The most significant finding from this group was that 86% of respondents would like improved broadband services.
- 8.18. Although some parts of the Parish have access to acceptable speeds/bandwidth, this is far from consistent in all areas and some users struggle with poor download speeds. It is notable that these findings were gathered well before the Covid-19 impact – improved broadband services will be even more important now with increased home working.

POLICY WAD12: COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

- A. Major development¹⁰ proposals should require the installation of fibre optic connection services to all the properties on site and preferably multiple properties access, where practicable, to reduce the number of installations required.**
- B. Subject to permitted development rights, providers of communication infrastructure apparatus must:**
 - a. have fully explored the opportunities to erect apparatus on existing buildings, existing masts, or other existing structures; and**
 - b. be located to minimise visual impact – consider artificial tree masts; and**
 - c. not require the removal of mature or veteran trees; and**
 - d. not interfere with any other radio or microwave networks in the area; and**
 - e. ensure the numbers of radio and telecommunication infrastructure are kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and**
 - f. be of the minimum physical dimensions necessary to fulfil its function; and**
 - g. ensure the development has been sited and designed to minimise negative impacts to the character of the High Weald AONB and Conservation Areas, including through its integration with existing street furniture and/or the addition of softening landscaping and bespoke design in consultation with the Parish Council; and**
 - h. ensure the proposals are not detrimental to public safety and will minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity.**

¹⁰ For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Preference should be given to technologies that have little or no visual impact on the landscape, such as subterranean fibre optic cabling.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 3, 5; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): BS15; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): WCS7; AONB Management Plan objectives: LBE1; NPPF: 114, 115

9. THE ENVIRONMENT

Policy WAD13: Conservation of the natural environment, ecosystems and biodiversity

Purpose

9.1. This policy seeks to ensure that the multiple benefits of Wadhurst Parish's green and blue spaces – including their importance in combating pressure on wildlife habitats, biodiversity and geodiversity and in off-setting the effects of air pollution - are recognised and enhanced. This applies particularly where individual spaces have a greater collective value as part of wider chains of green infrastructure. This will serve to support the requirement to conserve and, where possible, provide a net gain in biodiversity through planning policy.

Justification

9.2. The NPPF states that plans should seek to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity including by identifying and mapping habitats and networks. The Environment Act 2021 includes provision for a mandatory requirement for new developments to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain. The Act also recognises the need to protect what it describes as “Nature Recovery Networks”, joined-up systems of places important for wildlife on land (and at sea).

9.3. Figure 9.1 identifies on a map the green stepping-stones and, importantly, the unbroken green corridors within the Parish. It has been informed by the High Weald Management Plan, the Wealden Green Infrastructure Study and information sourced from the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre. The strategic Teise Valley green/blue corridor runs through the Parish. This has been identified by WDC as a priority landscape corridor with key opportunities for strategic green infrastructure enhancement, linkage and creation. In addition, the Northern Wealden Green Access Link provides a key opportunity for multi-user, predominantly off-road, strategic access routes/greenway.

9.4. These are important corridors and spaces for the local community for recreational purposes and for visitors to the area, threading through the Parish itself. Access to open spaces is important for wellbeing and mental health. They also provide critical spaces as wildlife refuges and routes for wildlife and species of principal importance, such as bats and hedgehogs etc., to prevent species becoming isolated.

The Defra biodiversity metric (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-metric-calculate-the-biodiversity-net-gain-of-a-project-or-development>) has been designed to determine and quantify existing biodiversity value, in terms of habitats, and the consequent measures required to ensure measurable net gain. Net gain involves a post development increase in biodiversity units of 10%. Natural England considers this to be the most appropriate mechanism for determining current ecological value and delivering biodiversity net gain. Ecological assessment by suitably qualified people must utilise this metric on all habitats to determine net gain. Ecological reports must be consistent with BS 42020 Biodiversity – code of practise for planning and development.

9.5. The green and blue infrastructure assets of the Parish should be maximised and made properly accessible, where feasible and not detrimental to the landscape. Development proposals are

encouraged to facilitate improved connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces that are used by the community.

- 9.6. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (for instance by locating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.
- 9.7. Planning permission should also be refused for any development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as veteran trees, ancient hedgerows and trees of a high conservation value unless the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss. In this instance, substantial compensation as quantified by the Defra biodiversity metric will be considered.



*Both informal and formal green spaces contribute to the green infrastructure network
Birchetts Wood (credit: Liz Randall, Woodland Trust) and Jardin d'Aubers*

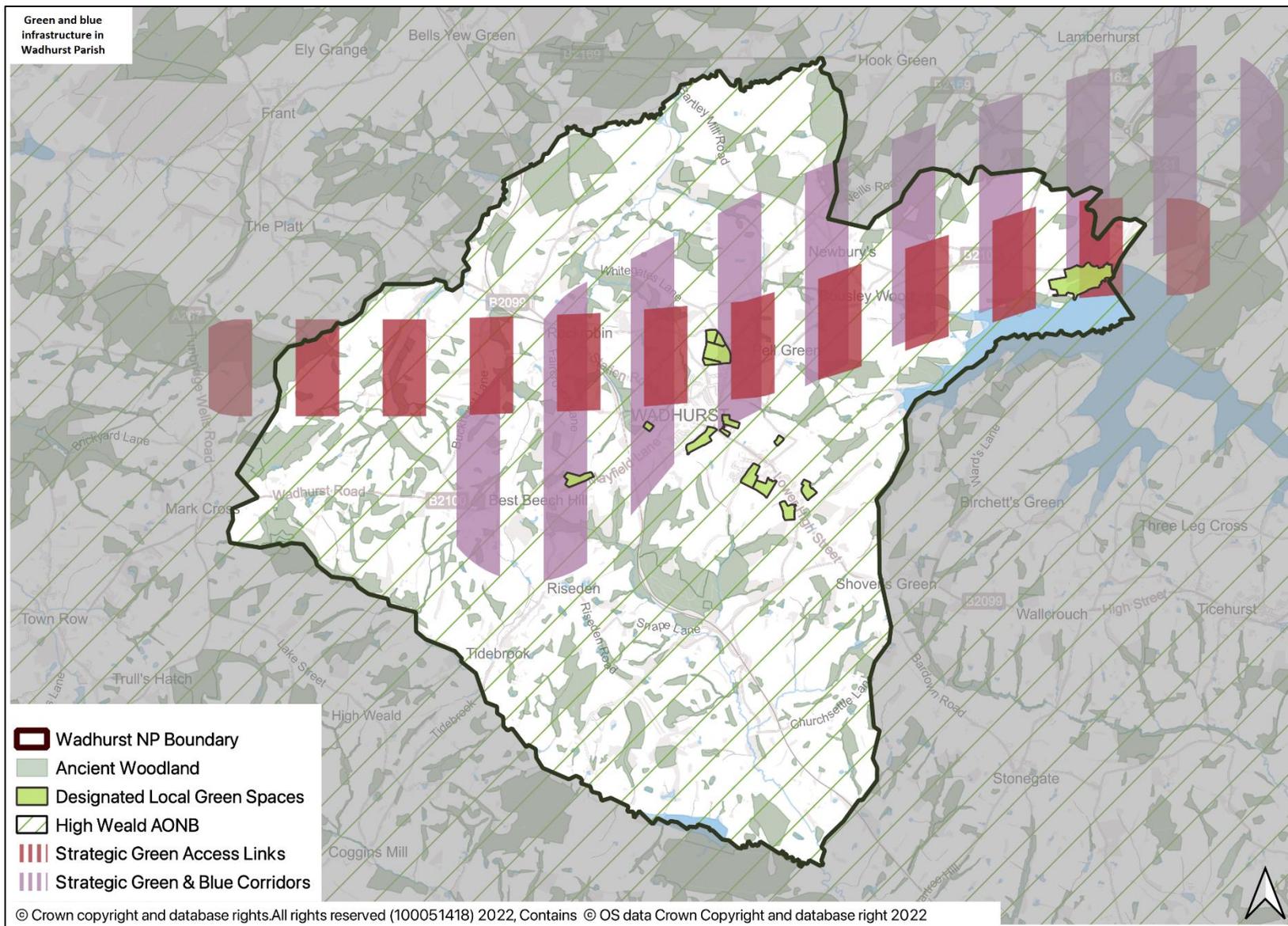


Figure 9.1: Green and blue infrastructure network in Wadhurst

Trees and ancient woodland

9.8. The Parish is home to a significant number of trees and woodland – including veteran trees and ancient woodland (Figure 9.2). As noted in the NPPF at paragraph 131, trees play a vital part in dealing with the effects of climate change and managing pollution. They provide shade, reduce flood risk, enable carbon capture, improve air quality and contribute to the purification of water. They also contribute to local character.



Snape Wood, (credit: Liz Randall, Woodland Trust)

9.9. Ancient woodland and veteran trees are irreplaceable habitats for wildlife and species of principal importance, while also having both heritage and cultural value. Natural England advises that development which would result in the loss of, or damage to, ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees will not be permitted except in wholly exceptional circumstances, as set out in paragraph 180 of the NPPF. It also advises that it is preferable to link up fragmented areas of woodland, which might be divided by development, with green bridges or tunnels. Also, to buffer ancient woodland and notable/veteran trees by leaving an appropriate zone of semi-natural habitat between the development and the woodland, providing wildlife corridors, and balancing new developments and residential areas with green infrastructure and allowing space for trees.

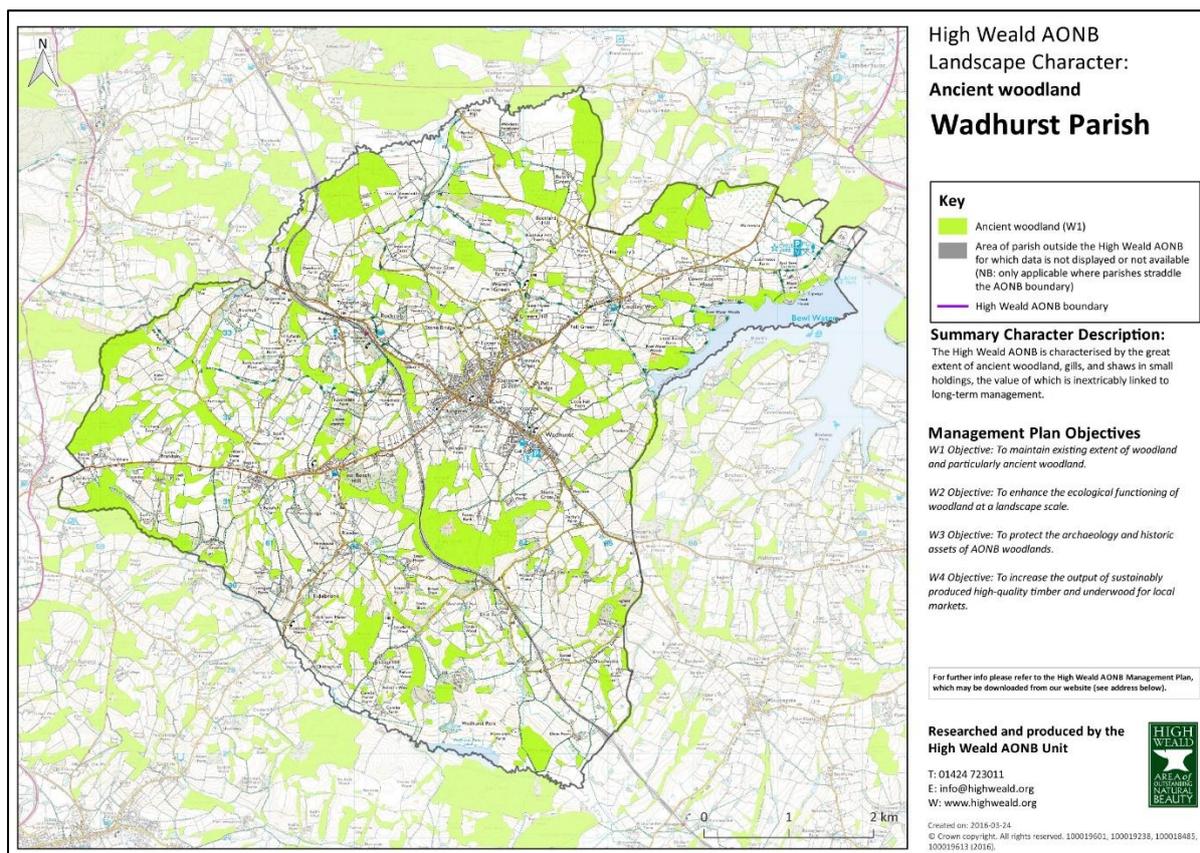


Figure 9.2: Ancient woodland recorded in Wadhurst Parish (source: High Weald AONB Unit)

Biodiversity opportunity areas within Wadhurst

- 9.10. Whilst developers are encouraged to deliver their biodiversity net gain on site, this is not always possible; equally there may be opportunities to enhance other parts of the Parish in need of attention. It is therefore useful to consider where Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA) exist within the Parish. The main opportunities for Wadhurst are as follows:
- 9.11. **Bewl Water:** Identified in the Wealden Green Infrastructure Study as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area. This reservoir is the largest expanse of open water in Sussex and was created by damming the River Bewl and flooding its three main tributary stream valleys. Bewl Water is extremely important for large numbers of waders and wildfowl during the winter and as a stopping point during migration. Specific management requirements are: Wetland habitat management, restoration and creation and access improvements. Policy WAD14 provides additional guidance on proposals that impact Bewl Water.
- 9.12. **AONB landscape restoration:** There is a general aim to improve the biodiversity value of green spaces and green corridors within the High Weald (Figure 9.1 for Wadhurst Parish) for the benefit of wildlife, ensuring in particular the sensitive management of ancient woodland, veteran trees, hedgerows and heathland.

9.13. It should be noted that BOA boundaries can change over time, therefore it is recommended that the High Weald AONB Unit and the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre are consulted when drafting proposals.

POLICY WAD13: CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY

- A. Proposals should be designed to create, conserve, enhance and manage green spaces and connect chains of green infrastructure, as identified on Figure 9.1, with the aim of delivering a measurable net environmental benefit for local people and wildlife. Proposals for all new developments must be supported by a biodiversity appraisal, which must demonstrate how negative impacts would be minimised and biodiversity net gain achieved.**
- B. The appraisal should demonstrate that where significant harm cannot be avoided, proposed development and other changes should adequately mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the harm. The appraisal must demonstrate a measurable biodiversity net gain (of at least 10%) by utilising the Defra biodiversity metric (or as amended).**
- C. Measures to achieve biodiversity net gain, mitigation or compensation involving the creation of habitat and/or relocation of species, should be hypothecated within the Parish and must be agreed by the Local Planning Authority and include sufficient funding to support at least 30 years of post-development habitat management or land use change (in accordance with the Environment Act).**
- D. Proposals that seek to improve the connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces will be encouraged to enhance the green infrastructure of the neighbourhood area. Proposals that support the enhancement and management of the identified Biodiversity Opportunity Areas will be supported. Conversely, proposals which threaten to damage such connectivity will be strongly resisted.**
- E. The planting of additional native species trees and/ or continuous hedgerows to provide wildlife corridors and to offset the effects of air pollution and to provide cooling and shelter for people as well as a habitat for wildlife will be supported.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 4; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN6, EN12, EN13, EN15; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): WCS12, WCS13; AONB Management Plan objectives: S1, S2, R2, G2, OQ3; NPPF: 174, 175, 176, 179,

Policy WAD14: Bewl Water Reservoir Area and Associated Public Activities

Purpose

9.14. This policy seeks to protect and preserve Bewl Water as the only ‘accessible natural green space’ in the Parish. It also seeks to protect the water-based recreational activities possible at Bewl Water. This will help to maintain and improve its naturalness, biodiversity and access to it by parishioners and the wider public for the enjoyment of its open space, natural beauty, dark skies, tranquillity, recreational and leisure activities and beautiful views into and out of the area.

Justification

9.15. Bewl Water, the largest reservoir in south east England, dammed and flooded in the mid-1970s, lies at the eastern edge of the Parish and continues across the boundary into neighbouring Rother. The entire 800-acre site sits wholly within the High Weald AONB. The part within Wadhurst Parish is shown on Figure 9.3.

9.16. The reservoir itself forms part of the network of such resources managed by Southern Water. It can hold more than 31,000 million litres of water – enough to provide an average day’s water usage (about 150 litres) to nearly 200 million people.

9.17. Importantly the site also provides a 13-mile walking and cycling route around the reservoir and some 700 acres of leisure and recreational activities, on and off-water. These are run independently of Southern Water and activities include fishing, sailing, rowing and other water sports. There is a café and aquapark at the northwest part of the site, which also houses a temporary campsite. The entire area provides opportunities for walking, cycling, horse-riding and nature watching.

9.18. The reservoir is located in one of the darkest sky areas of the Parish (as demonstrated in Figure 9.7 of policy WAD17). It provides an important habitat for a range of flora and fauna and a tranquil spot for birdwatchers and nature lovers. Bird sightings include heron, kingfisher, white storks, grebe, various species of gull and osprey. Parts of the reservoir are designated specifically for nature conservation.

9.19. The Water Industry Act, 1991 requires that the reservoir, and particularly its water, is made available for recreational purposes “in the best manner”.

9.20. The Environment Agency’s 1997 ‘Water Related Recreation Strategy for its Southern Region’ noted that “the majority of visitors to the countryside and water areas ... do so for the ‘quiet enjoyment’”. The Strategy states as a principle that “existing opportunities for sailing both inland and coastal waters should be safeguarded. Participation for all should be encouraged through existing clubs and opportunities sought at water sports centres for all sections of the community”.

9.21. Bewl Water is also identified as a Landscape Character Area in the East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2016), which sets out considerations that should be taken into account in relation to any potential development in the area. These include:

- Protecting and enhancing the wetland habitat
- Maximising opportunities for biodiversity

- Maximising opportunities for and manage water based recreational activities where these would not conflict with wildlife
- Identifying areas where public access can be encouraged whilst protecting other areas where wildlife conservation is the priority, particularly in relation to the reservoir.

The strategy set out for managing change in the Bewl Water Local Character Area should be used to inform any development proposals in this area.

- 9.22. Bewl Water is the only natural ‘accessible natural green space’ in the Parish. Safeguarding Bewl Water as an accessible open space is important because there is already a deficit of such space in the Parish. The WDC Open Space Study 2022¹¹ cites Bewl Water as the only such space in the Parish, providing 15.85 ha of space per 1,000 population. Whilst this is in excess of the guideline quantity standard recommended by Fields In Trust (1.80 hectares per 1,000 population), the Open Space Study also states that parts of Wadhurst Parish fall outside the recommended distance to access such spaces, where Natural England’s ‘Accessible Natural Green Space’ Standard (March 2010) states that at least 2 ha. of provision is recommended no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from a person’s home, with at least one accessible 20 ha. site within two kilometres of home. This Standard is based on three underlying principles – improving access to green spaces, the naturalness of green spaces and the connectivity with green spaces
- 9.23. The site is highly valued by residents and attracts numerous visitors from outside of the Parish for its recreational and wildlife opportunities. The Household Survey revealed, for instance, that
- Bewl Water is one of the two most popular public open spaces in the Parish (alongside countryside footpaths).
 - 61% of respondents (571 out of 938) use Bewl Water for informal activities
 - 42% of respondents (392 out of 938) use Bewl Water for dog walking
 - 11% of respondents (107 out of 938) use Bewl Water for organised sport
 - 84% (721 out of 859) of respondents respectively strongly support or support ‘improved recreational facilities at Bewl’
- 9.24. 80% of respondents (750 out of 938) said that they use Bewl Water and only 1% of respondents (10 out of 938) said they don't value Bewl Water.
- 9.25. Since Southern Water sold on a long lease the recreational and leisure area with its associated businesses in 2007, a trend towards commercialisation has negatively affected use of the reservoir for sailing as well as some of the area’s tranquillity and is starting to adversely impact public accessibility for informal recreation and threaten the area’s attractiveness:
- A scheme for 24 Eco-Lodges was refused by WDC’s Planning Committee in 2012;
 - A scheme to build 58 two storey, two-bedroom ‘Earth Lodges’ was rejected by the Planning Inspectorate in 2019;

¹¹ <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/Wealden-Open-Space-Report-26.05.22.pdf>, p.33, Table 6.1

- A seasonal campsite has been established on former open areas under a temporary 3-year planning permission, which it is understood the lessee wishes to become permanent;
- Planning applications to extend and convert the former clubhouse for the water-sports clubs and convert the sailors' race box to overnight tourist accommodation have been made; and
- A planning application to extend and convert the former 'fishing lodge' to overnight tourist accommodation awaits a decision by the Planning Inspectorate.

9.26. It is important that a balance is struck between appropriate recreational provision and development, which could adversely impact on biodiversity or the quiet recreational enjoyment that is currently experienced by users. The community value the facilities on-site that enhance local access and enable the continued provision of water-based activities, while supporting the landscape and biodiversity. Within this context, development proposals must meet the criteria of Use Class F2 (b and c), which would achieve the most sustainable outcomes.

9.27. The WNP supports the ongoing provision of on-water activity and of a clubhouse to serve water-sports clubs' members, where this can be achieved in harmony with the natural setting. The WNP would support such a proposal, where it can be achieved sensitively in the context of the sensitive High Weald setting.



Image shows: Bewl Water

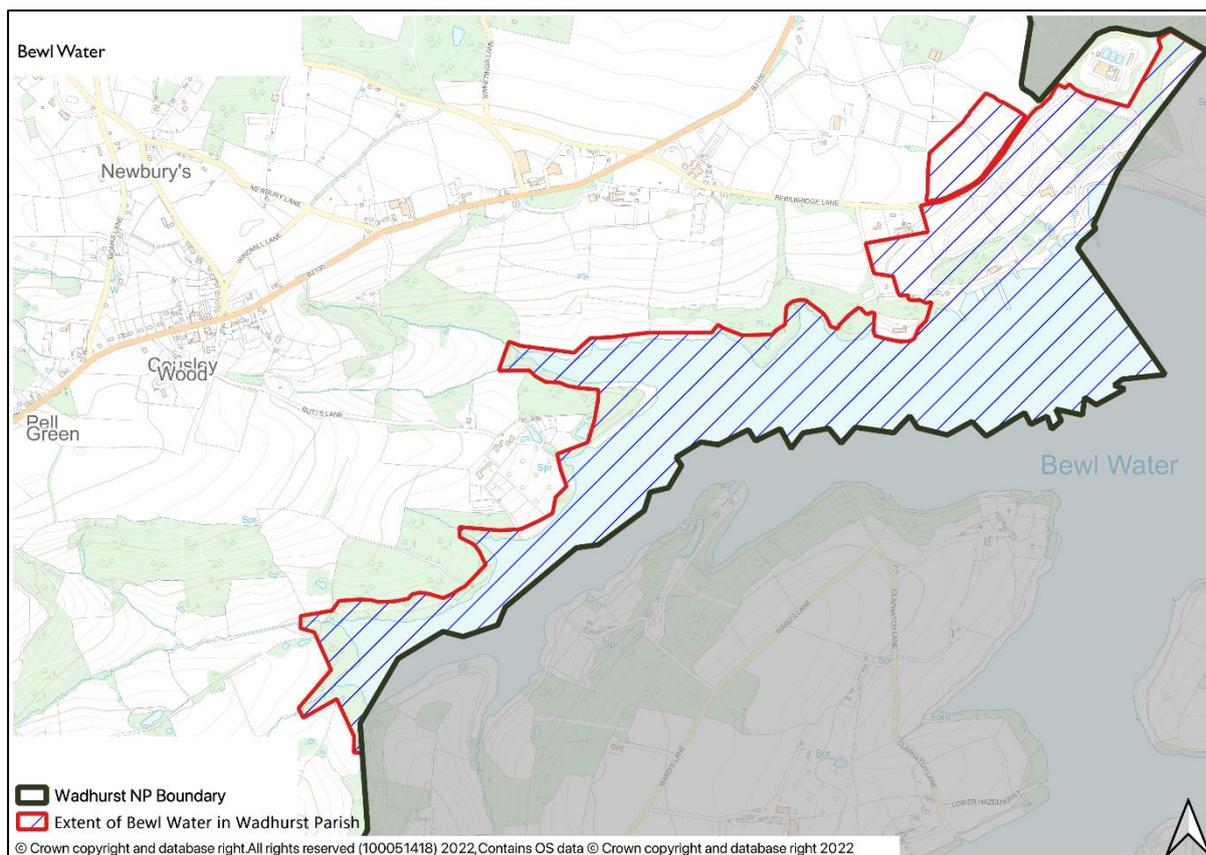


Figure 9.3: Bewl Water open space, showing area of Bewl Water that falls within Wadhurst Parish

POLICY WAD14: BEWL WATER RESERVOIR AREA AND ASSOCIATED PUBLIC ACTIVITIES

A. Development proposals within Use Classes F2 (b and c) in the Bewl Water area, as shown in figure 9.3 - including for a clubhouse with relevant facilities for the use of a non-proprietary, members' club for participants in the on-water activities - will be supported (subject to complying with other relevant Neighbourhood Plan and strategic policies) which:

- i. Is supported by an assessment that demonstrates demand for the recreational facilities; and**
- ii. Is guided by the landscape change and adaptation strategy set out in the East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, Area 7 Bewl Water Character Area¹²; and**
- iii. directly promote and protect nature conservation, biodiversity, dark skies and quiet recreation; and**
- iv. promote sailing, rowing, canoeing or the use of other small non-motorised recreational craft or fishing or similar on-water activity; and**
- v. minimise the impact on the highways infrastructure; and**

¹² <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/xc4liin5/area-7-bewl-water.pdf> Sections C and D.

- vi. maintain and further enhance the publicly accessible network of open spaces and public rights of way; and
- vii. encourage native waterside planting appropriate to the area; and
- viii. preserve for the public the natural beauty of the area and have regard to the enjoyment of the area by the public, as required by the Medway Water (Bewl Bridge Reservoir) Act 1968; or
- ix. are for the repair, maintenance, enhancement or rebuilding of bridges, culverts, land drains, pipelines, dam wall, car and boat parks, roadways, slipways, jetties or similar infrastructure.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 3, 4; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN6, EN15, TM1, TM4; WDC Core Strategy Local Plan (2013): WCS13; AONB Management Plan objectives: OQ2, LBE2; NPPF: 84, 98, 99

Policy WAD15: Protection of distinctive and highly valued views

Purpose

9.28. Wadhurst Parish is blessed with being sited within the stunning High Weald AONB countryside. The rolling hills give rise to wonderful long-distance views across the protected landscape and to Bewl Water. This policy seeks to safeguard the most distinctive and highly valued views, judged by parishioners, from inappropriate development and, where possible, enhance them.

Justification

9.29. The parish of Wadhurst comprises the main historic village of Wadhurst itself and a cluster of other, smaller settlements, mainly situated atop ridgelines and affording views across the High Weald from various locations. The topography of the surrounding area means that there are some significant long-distance views which contribute to the character of Wadhurst both for residents and increasingly for visitors. In particular views take in aspects of the High Weald AONB, adding to the sense of place and sense of rurality.

9.30. The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment, 2016 recognises this, describing the *“stunning views across the valley from the enclosing ridges, some of the finest views in the High Weald”*.

9.31. The visual impact of new development on the countryside was a top concern for residents (99.1% expressed a concern in the Household Survey). Because of the ridge line position and topography of Wadhurst, the impact of new development on views is significant as developments can often be seen over very wide areas.

9.32. In the context of the AONB setting, all development proposals should take advantage of and complement existing buildings, landscape and topography and should preserve views across the wider countryside. To support this, development proposals must be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, following the guidelines set out by the Landscape Institute: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/landscape-visual-impact-assessment/>.

9.33. The neighbourhood plan process affords communities an opportunity to identify specific views that they consider to be of particular local importance and worthy of safeguarding. This is supported within the High Weald Management Plan objective OQ4. Ten such views have been

identified, which are considered to fit this description. Figures 9.3 to 9.5 provide overview maps of the views and further details about why they are considered important is contained in Appendix D. The views are:

- View 1 - From the farm gate in Primmers Green Lane towards the steeple of St Peter and St Paul Church
 - Views 2a and 2b - From Cousley Wood Road / Primmers Green Lane junction southeast across Primmers field
 - View 3 - From Ben Grieg's Garage forecourt across well used informal footpaths on field next to (Southwest) Primmers Green field
 - Views 4a and 4b - From Wadhurst CoE Primary School fence northeast to Bewl Water (c. 3 miles)
 - Views 5a and 5b - From well used footpath on field (southeast of Primmers Green field with access from farm gate in Primmers Green Lane) northeast to Bewl Water (c. 3 miles) and north to Primmers Green
 - View 6 - From Church (Donkey Steps) public footpath across Vicarage Green to Bewl Water (c. 3 miles)
 - View 7 - From the Walk, in the High Street south towards the southern ridge (Burwash to Heathfield) c. 5 miles.
 - View 8 - From Wadhurst Lower High Street looking southwest over fields to southern ridge (c. 5 miles)
 - Views 9a, 9b and 9c - from Brinkers Lane farm gates (x2) to the spire of St Peter and St Paul Church (c. 1 mile) and to Mayfield Lane ridge (c. 2 miles); and View 9d looking east towards the Brinkers Lane ridge from footpath 27a from Stone Cross Farm to Snape Wood (this is the reciprocal view of View 9b)
 - View 10 – View of Bewl Water from Windmill Lane, Cousley Wood (by farm gate)
- 9.34. The policy requires that development proposals are designed in a way that safeguards, where possible, the locally significant view or views concerned. It attempts to provide the flexibility required for the range of development proposals which will come forward within the Plan period.
- 9.35. Planning applications for all proposed development should be accompanied by a landscape and visual impact assessment that is proportionate to the scale of the development proposed. Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated within the design of the development proposed and captured in the assessment. This will assist in embedding a landscape approach to development and perpetuate a sense of place, connecting with the High Weald.
- 9.36. Where long distance views extend beyond the Parish boundary, it is the intention of the Parish Council to discuss with neighbouring parishes the impact on views in their area, if development is planned for those areas.

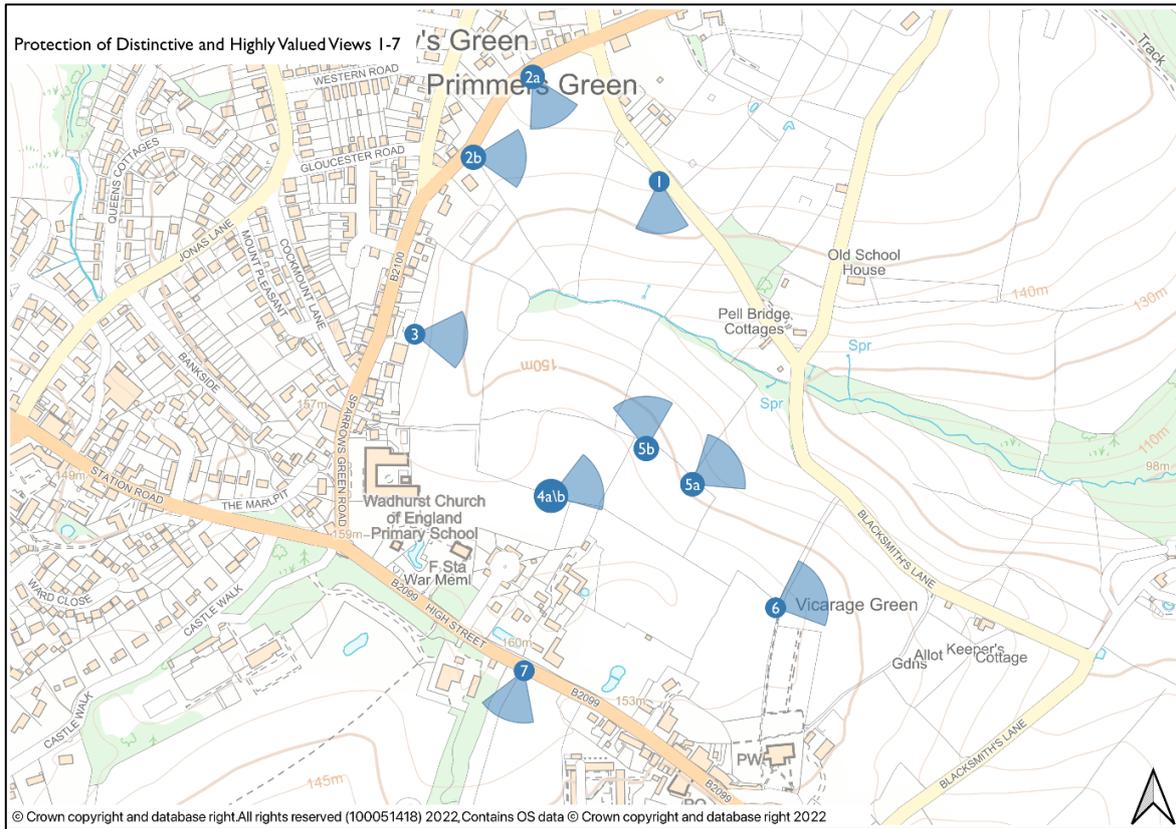


Figure 9.3: Map showing viewpoints 1 to 7

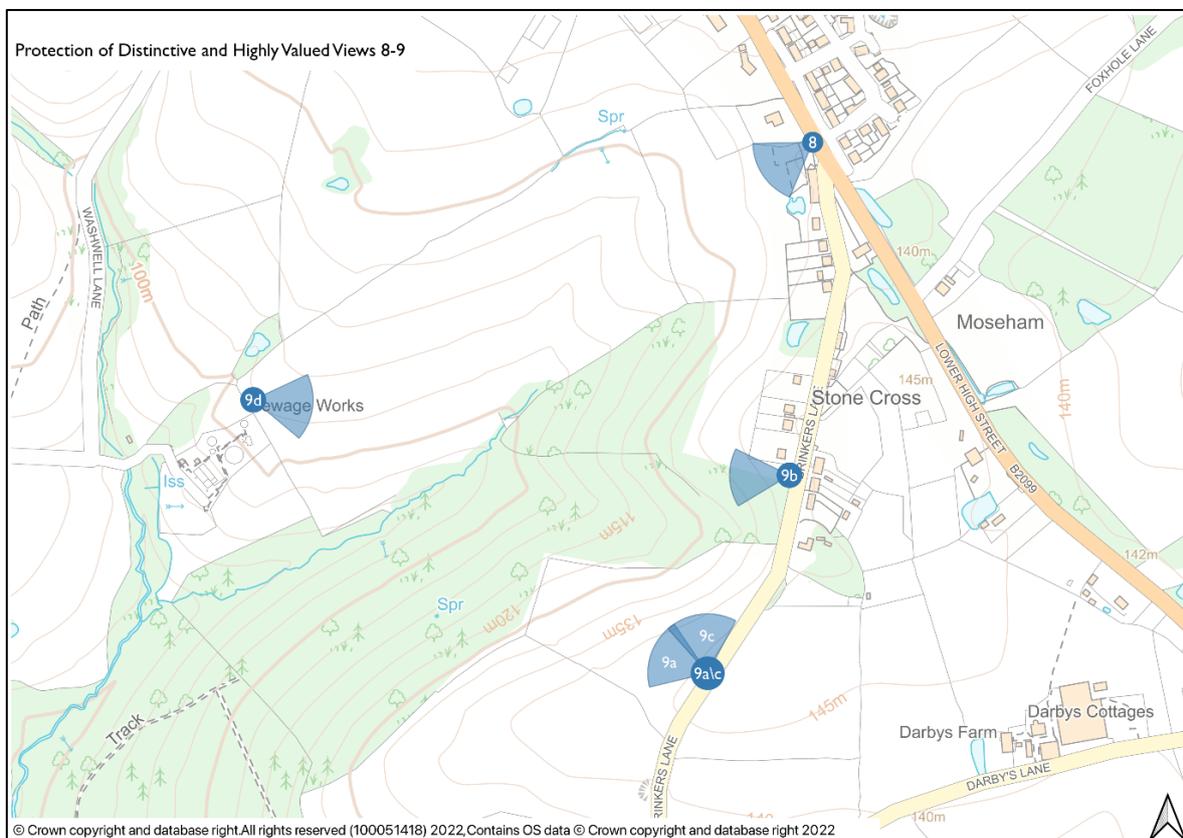


Figure 9.4: Map showing viewpoints 8 to 9

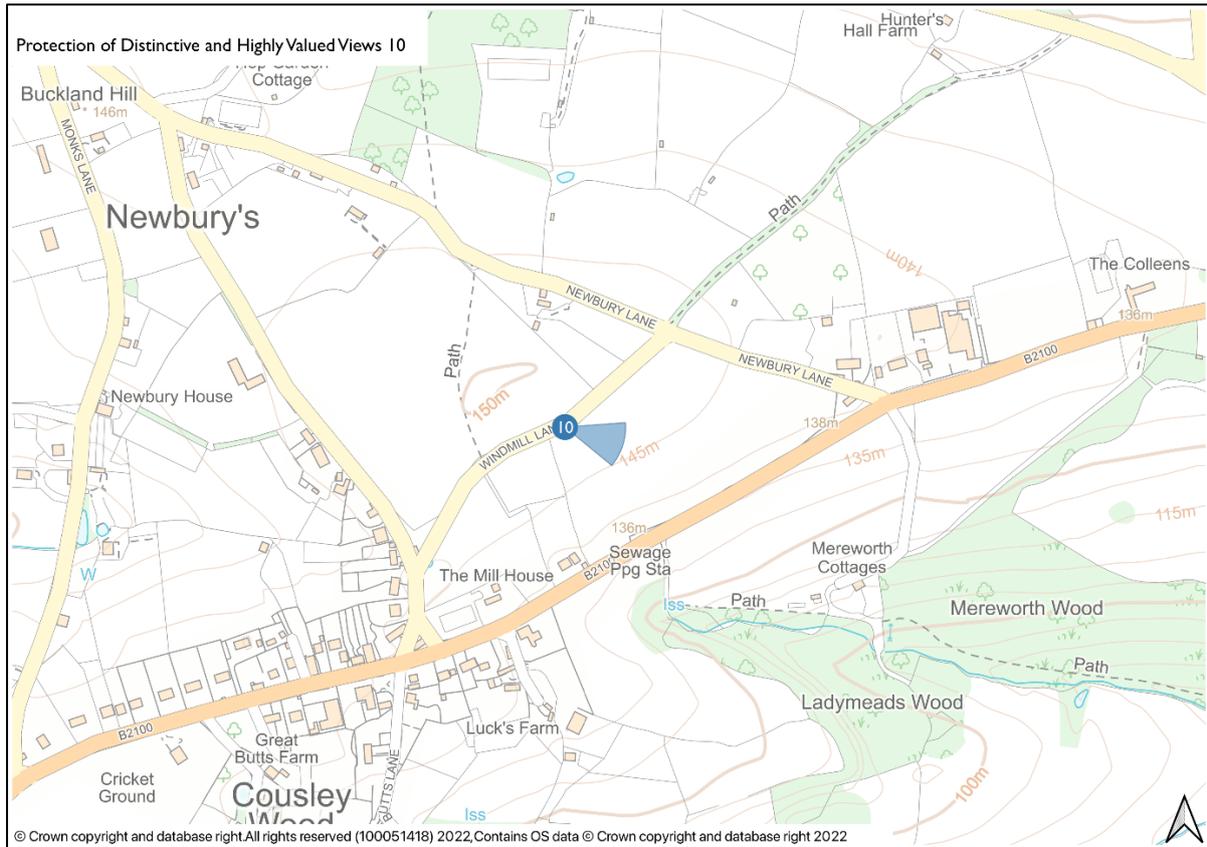


Figure 9.5: Map showing viewpoint 10

POLICY WAD15: PROTECTION OF DISTINCTIVE AND HIGHLY VALUED VIEWS

- A. The setting of Wadhurst Parish, within the High Weald AONB, contributes greatly to its character. Proposals with significant harmful impacts on the setting of the Parish will not be supported.**
- B. Proposals for development should be supported by a landscape and visual impact assessment, in accordance with the latest edition of the Landscape Institute’s Guidelines, which clearly demonstrates the potential impacts that such a proposal would have on significant views where relevant and how these impacts will be mitigated.**
- C. Ten locally significant views are identified in paragraph 9.19 and mapped in Figures 9.3 to 9.5, with descriptions in Appendix D. As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals within the shaded arcs of the various views as shown on the Figures should be designed in a way that does not impact the locally significant view or views concerned.**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 1, 4; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN6; AONB Management Plan objectives: OQ4; NPPF: 126, 127

Policy WAD16: Local Green Spaces

Purpose

9.37. This policy designates Local Green Spaces within Wadhurst Parish, that are demonstrably special to the local community.

Justification

9.38. Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans can designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to the community. This will afford them protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF says that the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

9.39. A survey of green spaces in Wadhurst was undertaken by the Character Assessment Group and the Environment Focus Group. Building on feedback from the local community via the surveys and workshops, the groups reviewed the green spaces across the Parish to ascertain whether they might be suitable for designation as a Local Green Space. The following ten areas are considered by the Steering Group to fulfil all the criteria of the NPPF (note that numbering of the spaces is carried forward from the original long-list of assessments):

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. LG3: Wadhurst Primary School Playing Field | 6. LG10: Vicarage Green Allotments |
| 2. LG4: Uplands Community College Playing Fields | 7. LG11: Turners Green Field 2 |
| 3. LG6: Sacred Heart Playing Fields | 8. LG12: Turners Green Field 3 |
| 4. LG7: Ex Wadhurst College Recreation Field | 9. LG13: Bewl Water Reservoir Recreation Area |
| 5. LG8: Jardin d'Aubers | 10. LG16: Stone Cross Farm Field |

9.40. Figure 9.6 shows the location of each of the Local Green Spaces. Detailed maps of each space are shown in Appendix E along with details as to how they each meet the NPPF criteria.

9.41. Several green spaces that are considered important to the local community have not been proposed for designation as Local Green Space. This is because they are already adequately protected by other mechanisms.

POLICY WAD16: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The following ten green spaces, mapped in Figure 9.6 and detailed in Appendix E, are designated as Local Green Spaces:

1. **LG3: Wadhurst Primary School Playing Field**
2. **LG4: Uplands Community College Playing Fields**
3. **LG6: Sacred Heart Playing Fields**
4. **LG7: Ex Wadhurst College Recreation Field**
5. **LG8: Jardin d'Aubers**
6. **LG10: Vicarage Green Allotments**
7. **LG11: Turners Green Field 2**
8. **LG12: Turners Green Field 3**
9. **LG13: Bewl Water Reservoir Recreation Area**
10. **LG16: Stone Cross Farm Field**

Local policy for managing development on a Local Green Space is consistent with policy for Green Belts (NPPF 101); proposals for development on Local Green Spaces will not be supported unless they conform to national policy guidelines.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 4, 5; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN18; AONB Management Plan objectives: S2; NPPF: 101-103 147-151

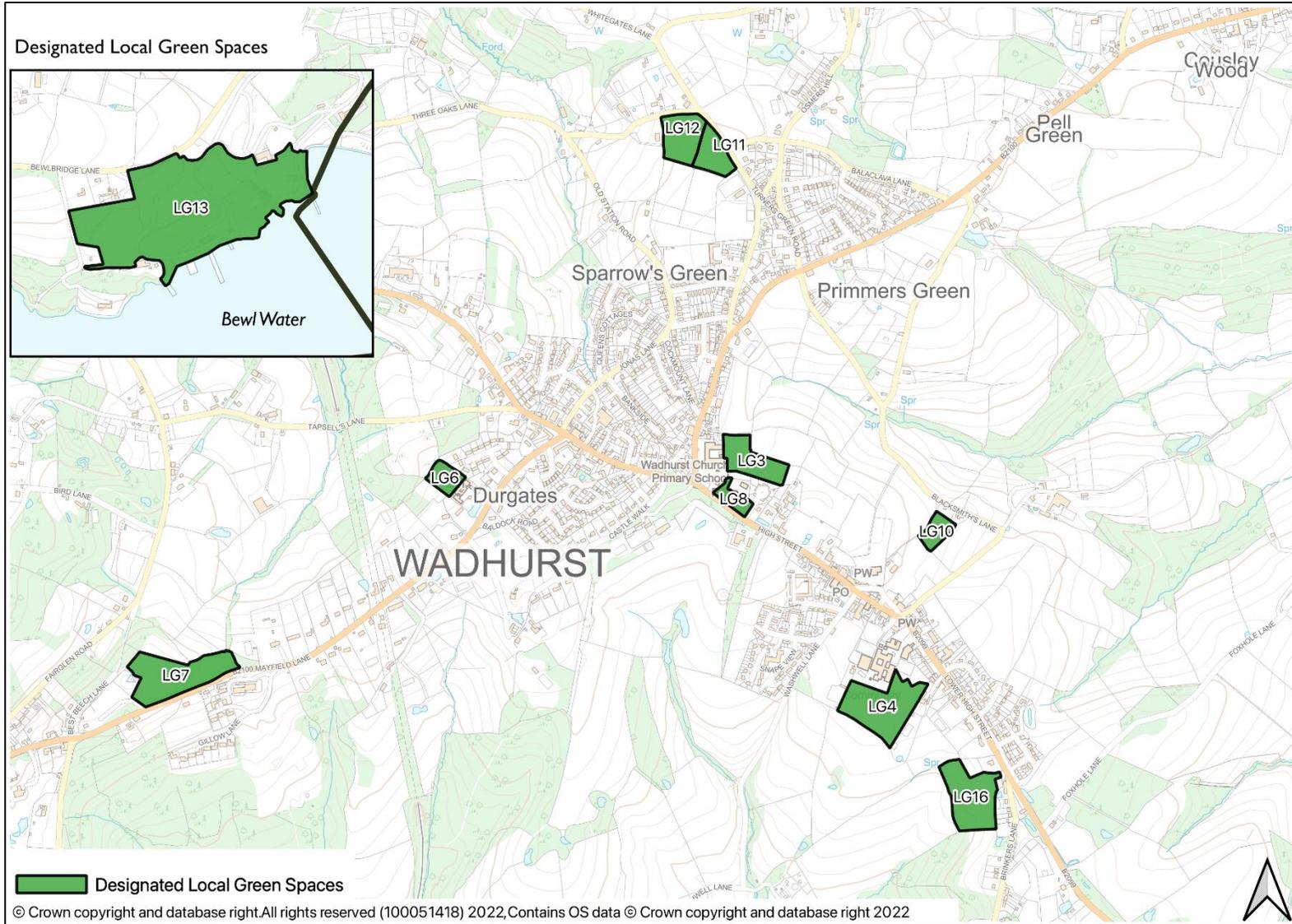


Figure 9.6: Map showing location of the Local Green Spaces

Policy WAD17: Protection of dark skies

Purpose

9.42. Situated in the High Weald AONB, parts of Wadhurst parish, particularly beyond the main settlements, provide ideal locations from which to enjoy dark skies and stargazing. These dark skies also support both nocturnal and diurnal wildlife. This policy seeks to ensure that development does not encroach on this valued aspect of the Parish.

Justification

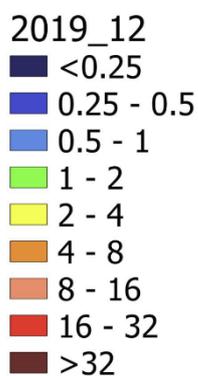
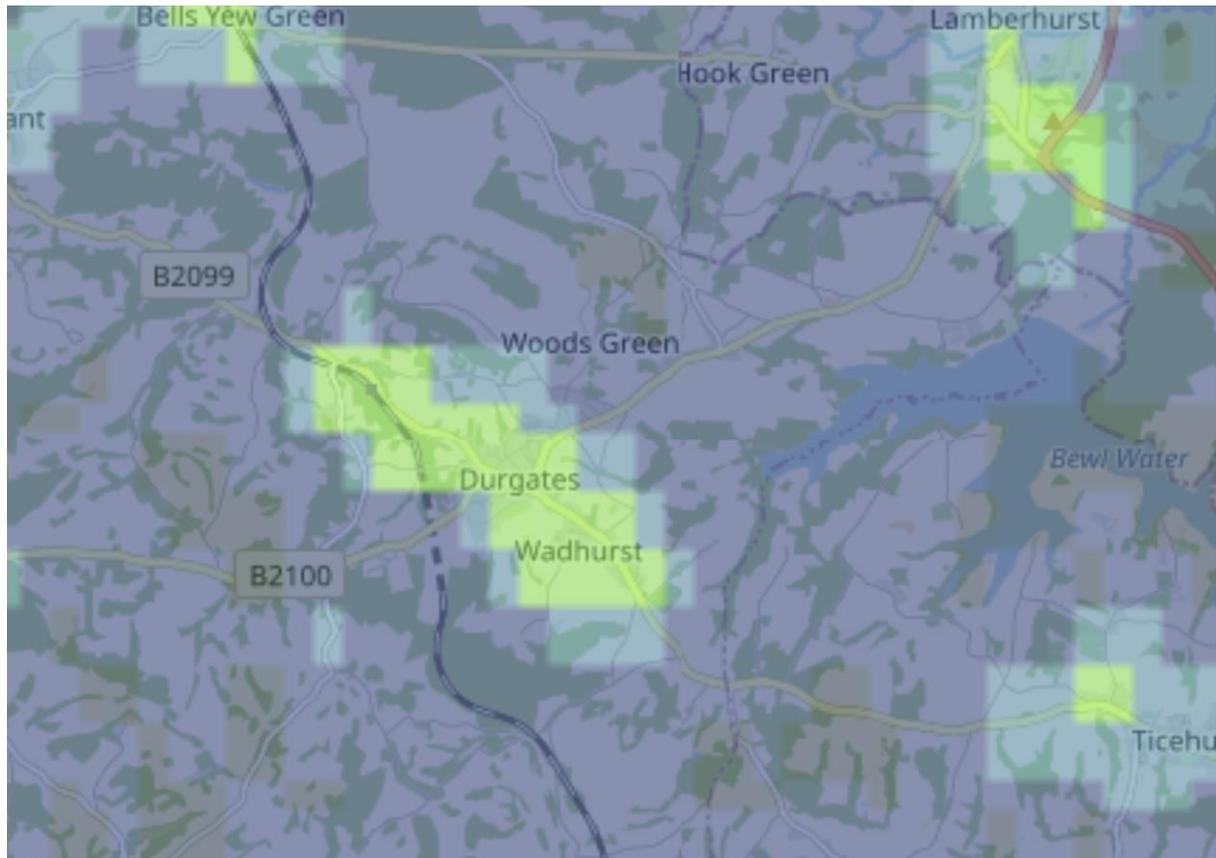


Figure 9.7: Map showing levels of radiance for Wadhurst Parish, 2019 (source: CPRE) Each pixel shows the levels of radiance (night lights) shining up into the night sky

9.43. Swathes of the Parish remain largely unlit (Figure 9.7), for instance the areas away from Wadhurst village and other smaller settlements. The dark night skies in these areas are predominantly unspoilt, and it is important that they are kept that way.

9.44. The benefits derived from the prevention of light pollution include:

- enjoyment and appreciation – improving quality of life and providing creative inspiration
- health – promoting better sleep patterns and reducing stress
- wildlife – supporting a more natural environment for both nocturnal and diurnal animals
- energy efficiency – reducing wastage from unnecessary or excessive lighting, thus reducing the Parish’s carbon footprint

9.45. The impact of light pollution is particularly harmful in the open countryside where rural character is eroded. Light pollution can also compromise the architectural and historical character of conservation areas and listed buildings or their settings. Artificial lighting has an impact on biodiversity especially for nocturnal animals and invertebrates can be seriously affected by artificial light at even very low levels, adversely affecting their ability to feed and reproduce.

9.46. The High Weald AONB Management Plan (Objective OQ4) requires that the special qualities that people value, such as tranquillity, dark skies and clean air, are recognised and taken into account in new developments. It encourages neighbourhood planning groups to include policies that minimise light pollution.

9.47. Policy WAD17 provides detail on two factors that contribute to light pollution:

- External lighting – considering the need for lighting and, where it is required, designing it in such a way as to minimise spillage.
- Glazing – avoiding smooth, reflective building materials, including large expanses of glass, particularly near water bodies. Such materials may change natural light, creating polarised light pollution that can affect wildlife behaviour. The impact of the positioning of glazing should also be considered.

POLICY WAD17: PROTECTION OF DARK SKIES

A. Proposals for development will be supported where it is demonstrated that it protects the night sky from light pollution.

B. If external lighting is required, the following must be demonstrated:

- i. the lighting is necessary for operational, safety or security reasons;**
- ii. any light spillage beyond the application site is eliminated, or reduced by measures such as timing and proximity controls, orientation, screening, shielding or glazing;**
- iii. impact on nearby residential properties, wildlife, local heritage assets or the wider landscape is minimised; and**
- iv. the guidance on lighting provided in the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Note GN01: The Reduction of Obtrusive Light (and any subsequent revisions) is adhered to. Proposals should consider carefully, and provide details of, the light source and intensity being used, the luminaire design, height, and angle, adding baffles and cut-**

off shields where required, and details of control mechanisms to dim or switch off lighting schemes when not required. Where appropriate, lights should be controlled by passive infrared detectors so that they only come on when needed.

C. The material, siting and size of glazing should be carefully considered to ensure that light spillage and reflection is minimised.

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 4; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): EN29; AONB Management Plan objectives: OQ4; NPPF: 185

10. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Policy WAD18: Important Community Facilities

Purpose

10.1. The community facilities within Wadhurst Parish provide an important resource for its residents, both old and young. They enable a range of activities and services to be run, which are important for people's wellbeing and day-to-day needs. Whilst saved Policy LR1 of the Wealden Local Plan (1998) seeks to resist the loss of open space with recreational or amenity value, Policy WAD18 extends this by safeguarding those facilities and assets that have been identified as being particularly important to the local community. Some of these have been, or could be, nominated for designation as Assets of Community Value.

Justification

10.2. A wide range of community, social, recreational and sport facilities is available within the Parish. There is strong community support for the protection of these assets. Local engagement - through the Household Survey, Focus Groups and Parishioner Consultations - has revealed the following assets and facilities as being of particular importance, which are mapped in Figures 10.1 to 10.3.

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. St. Peter and St. Paul Church & Graveyard | m. Greyhound car park, Greyhound Lane |
| b. St. Georges Hall, Sparrows Green | n. Uplands Gym, Lower High Street |
| c. War Memorial, Upper High Street | o. The White Hart Pub, High Street |
| d. Commemoration Hall, High Street | p. The Greyhound Pub, High Street |
| e. Institute Building, High Street | q. The Old Vine Pub, Cousley Wood Road |
| f. Jardin D'Aubers, Upper High Street | r. Cricket Ground and Pavilion, Cousley Wood |
| g. Commemoration Playing Fields, Washwell Lane | s. The Clock House, High Street |
| h. The Walk - path, wall & lime trees, High Street | t. Youth Centre, Lower High Street |
| i. Bewl Water – Footpaths and open green space | u. Wadhurst Rail Station car parks |
| j. Carillon Cottage, High Street | v. Field at Turners Green, site of last bare-knuckle fight and footpath 46 |
| k. Sparrows Green Recreation Ground & Pavilion | w. Scout Hut, Lower High Street |
| l. Washwell Lane car park, Washwell Lane | x. The Welly Walk, Lower High Street - Footpath 27A towards Birchetts Wood |
| | y. The Fire Station, Upper High Street |
| | z. The Sewage Treatment Works, Whitegates & Washwell Lane |

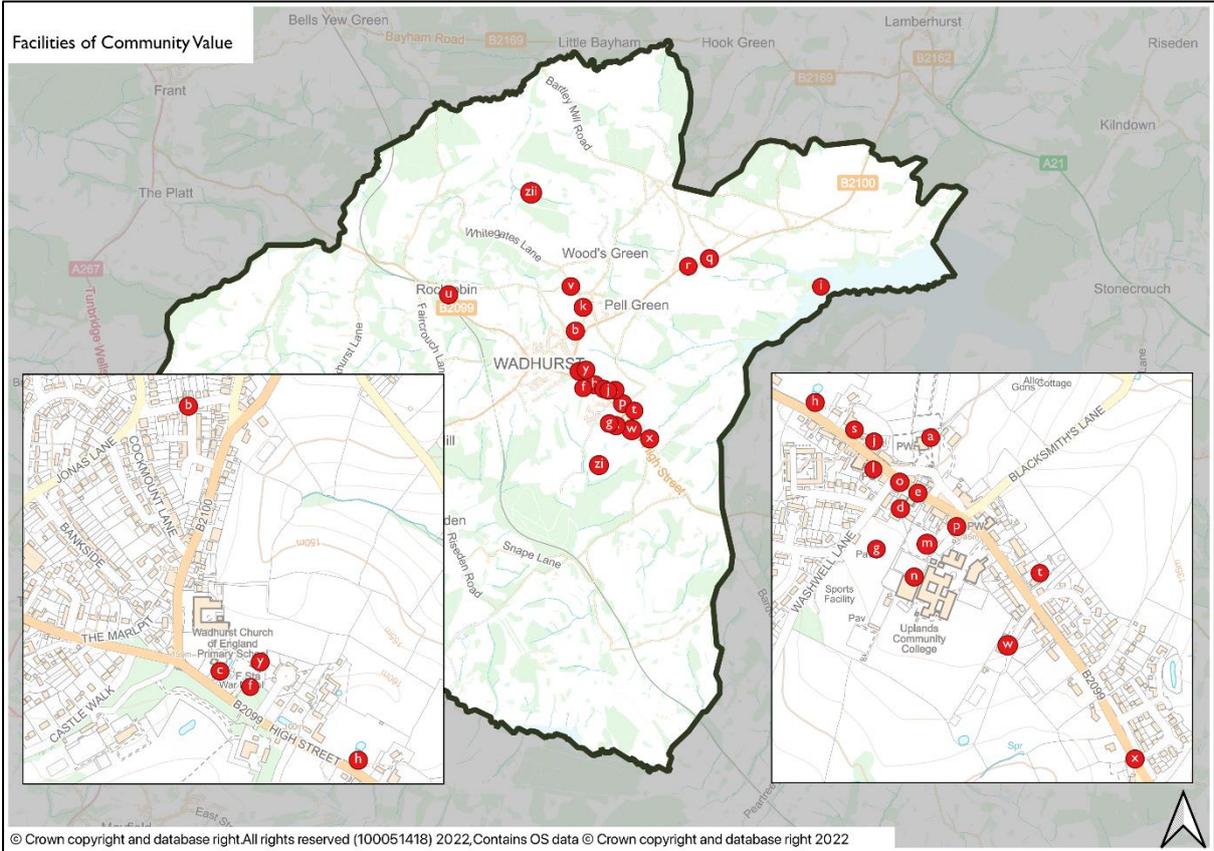


Figure 10.1: Facilities of community value, Parish-wide

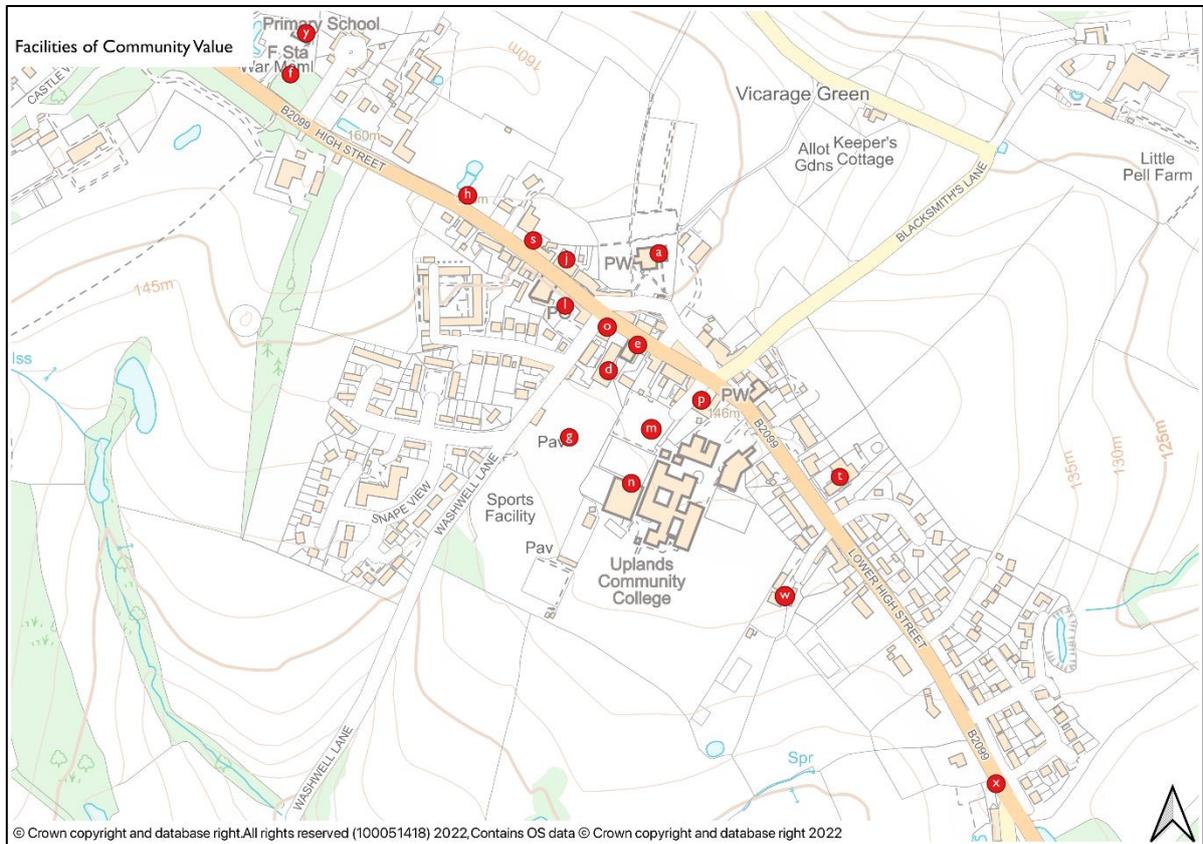


Figure 10.2: Facilities of community value (inset 1)

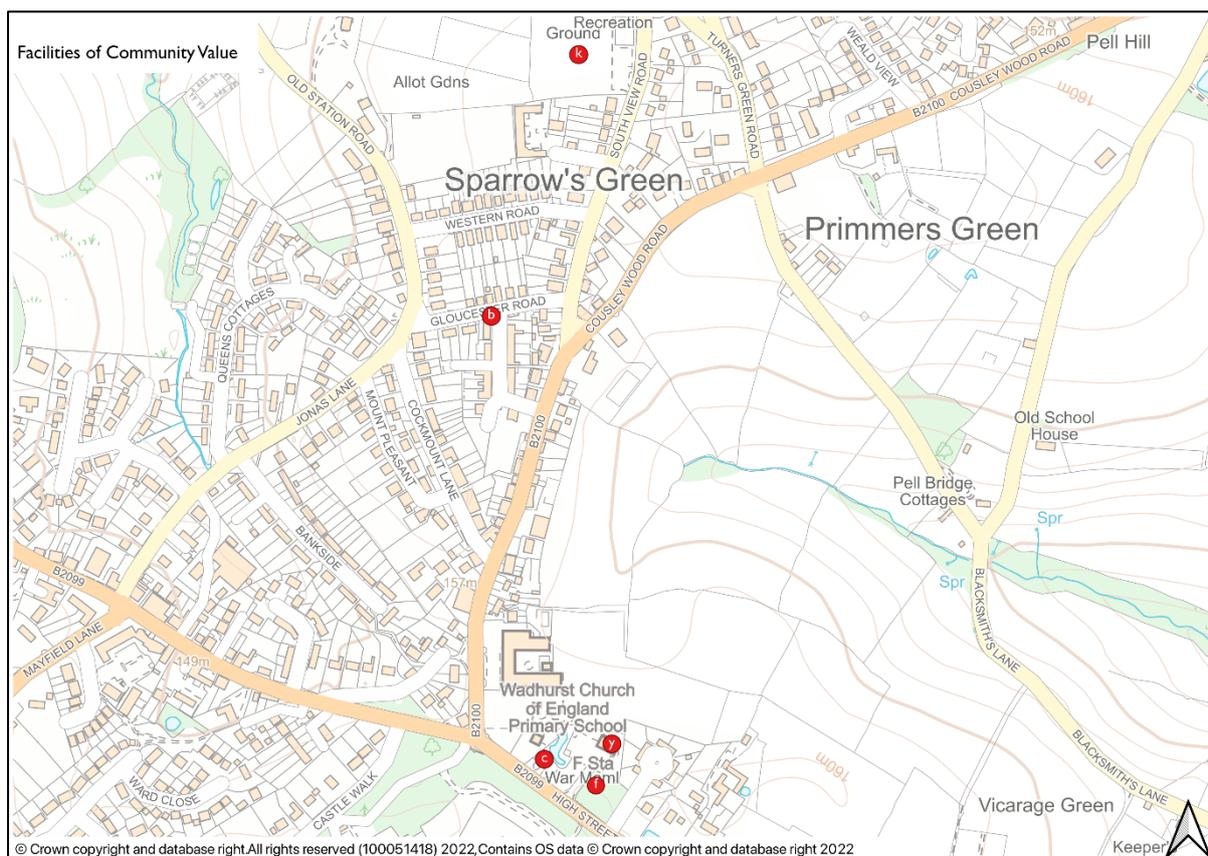


Figure 10.3: Facilities of community value (inset 2)

10.3. Some of the facilities identified are already adequately protected, including through other policies in the WNP, for example:

- The War Memorial, Upper High Street – is designated as a Local Green Space
- Jardin D’Aubers, Upper High Street - is designated as a Local Green Space
- Bewl Water open green space - is designated as a Local Green Space
- Sparrows Green Recreation Ground and Pavilion is owned by WPC
- Cricket Ground and Pavilion, Cousley Wood is registered with Sport England as an active place and is an emergency area for WPC
- Field at Turners Green, site of the last bare-knuckle fight and footpath 46, is designated as a Local Green Space

The Local Green Space protection is considered to provide adequate safeguarding against inappropriate development; however, the assets are retained in the list here to acknowledge their importance as community facilities.

10.4. Where a development proposal would result in the loss of one of these assets, the application should be supported by:

- A viability report, prepared by a relevant professional, including financial accounts and marketing information, illustrating that efforts have been made to promote, improve, and market the facility/property, for sale or rent, at a reasonable value which reflects the

existing use and condition of the asset (a minimum of two independent valuations of the building will normally be required) have not been successful, and the use is no longer viable;

- such information should also include: the history of previous uses and period/s of vacancy of the property; details of agent/s used; copies of brochures, advertisements, and dates (showing that the asset has been marketed at both local and regional level); records of the response and interest shown; and any offers received with reasons for being rejected;
- the marketing of the property and the accompanying information should cover a sustained period of at least 18 months before any planning application is submitted;
- review of the submitted information may be required by an independent consultant and it is expected that the applicant will cover the cost of this.

10.5. In parallel with this policy, the Parish Council will consider formally nominating the important community facilities as Assets of Community Value.

POLICY WAD18: IMPORTANT COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A. Proposals that would result in the loss of all or part of the following important community facilities listed in Clause C and mapped in Figures 10.1 to 10.3, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. facilities of equivalent or better standard to serve the Parish will be provided at a suitable location within the Parish and will be secured through an appropriate planning mechanism and made available prior to the commencement or redevelopment of the proposed scheme; or**
- ii. the facility is no longer viable. This would require:**
 - a. a viability report, prepared by a relevant professional, including financial accounts and marketing information, illustrating that efforts have been made to promote, improve, and market the facility asset, for sale or rent, at a reasonable value which reflects the existing use and condition of the asset (a minimum of two independent valuations of the facility asset will normally be required) have not been successful, and the use is no longer viable;**
 - b. such information should also include: the history of previous uses and period/s of vacancy of the facility asset; details of agent/s used; copies of brochures, advertisements, and dates (showing that the asset has been marketed at both local and regional level); records of the response and interest shown; and any offers received with reasons for being rejected;**
 - c. the marketing of the facility asset and the accompanying information should cover a sustained period of at least 18 months before any planning application is submitted;**
 - d. review of the submitted information may be required by an independent consultant and it is expected that the applicant will cover the cost of this.**

B. Proposals to upgrade or expand these community facilities, in order to enable either their continued operation or for an alternative community use, or to develop new facilities will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- i. the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents and the local environment; and**
- ii. the proposal would not have significant unacceptable impacts upon the local road network; and**
- iii. the proposal would respect the historic importance and integrity of the buildings.**

C. Important community facilities to which this policy applies (numbering corresponds to Figures 10.1 to 10.3):

- a. St. Peter and St. Paul Church & Graveyard**
- b. St. Georges Hall, Sparrows Green**
- d. Commemoration Hall, High Street**
- e. Institute Building, High Street**
- g. Commemoration Playing Fields, Washwell Lane**
- h. The Walk - path, wall & lime trees, High Street**
- j. Carillon Cottage, High Street**
- l. Washwell Lane car park, Washwell Lane**
- m. Greyhound car park, Greyhound Lane**
- n. Uplands Gym, Lower High Street**
- o. The White Hart Pub, High Street**
- p. The Greyhound Pub, High Street**
- q. The Old Vine Pub, Cousley Wood Road**
- s. The Clock House, High Street**
- t. Youth Centre, Lower High Street**
- u. Wadhurst Rail Station car parks**
- w. Scout Hut, Lower High Street**
- x. The Welly Walk, Lower High Street, Footpath 27A towards Birchetts Wood**
- y. The Fire Station, Upper High Street**
- z. The Sewage Treatment Works, Whitegates & Washwell Lane**

Conformity Reference: NP objectives: 5; Saved policies from WDC Local Plan (1998): LR1, LR2, LR7, LR8; AONB Management Plan objectives: LBE2, OQ3; NPPF: 92, 93

11. IMPLEMENTATION AND PLAN REVIEW

- 11.1. Wadhurst Parish Council is the qualifying body responsible for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 11.2. Once the Plan has been 'made', there will be a series of actions that will need to be undertaken to ensure that the policies within the WNP are being interpreted and applied in the way intended. It will also be necessary to maintain a watching brief on changes to the planning policy landscape, both at the national and local planning authority levels, which may have an impact on the Plan's policies, including WDC's emerging Local Plan. Finally, non-planning-related projects and activities that were identified during the extensive community engagement will need to be prioritised for delivery, in partnership with other organisations.
- 11.3. Specific actions to be undertaken are as follows:
- Pursuing the projects and activities that are not policy-based, but nevertheless contribute to the delivery of the Plan - these are set out in Section 13, divided into priorities towards which developer contributions may be directed and broader, community projects, which have been collated throughout the process, but which sit beyond planning policy. A range of organisations may be involved in delivering these projects and there will be a need for a co-ordinated approach. Many will require funding and therefore it would be helpful to consult with the community to understand the potential costs and achievability of each. Funding may be sourced from developer contributions or tailored funds, such as the Big Lottery Fund.
 - Commenting on planning applications or consultations relating to the neighbourhood plan area – the Parish Council has a role in ensuring that the WNP policies are being adequately considered, where relevant, in decisions to determine the outcome of planning applications in the Parish. A meeting between local councillors, planning committee members and the supporting planning officers at WDC would be a useful step in ensuring that the purpose and application of the policies is fully understood by all parties. This will assist in ensuring that policies are interpreted and applied in the way intended.
 - Monitoring the application of the WNP policies to ensure they have been applied consistently and interpreted correctly in response to planning applications – there is scope to identify indicators to measure the effect that each policy is having and the extent to which this is delivering against the associated objective. As a minimum, the Parish Council would wish to maintain a log of planning applications relating to the neighbourhood area, detailing which WNP policies have informed the Parish Council response and the outcome of the decision. This will assist in understanding whether the policies have been used in the manner intended or whether changes may be required, for instance in any future review of the WNP.
 - Maintaining a dialogue with WDC regarding the timing and content of the emerging Local Plan – it will be important to consider the policies in the emerging document and how these may impact the WNP policies. The adoption of the new Local Plan may trigger a light-touch review of the WNP.
 - Maintaining a dialogue with WDC and the promoter/developers of the sites allocated within the Local Plan.

- Maintaining a watching brief on the national policy landscape – changes at the national level may impact on the policies contained in the Local Plan and the WNP. It is therefore important to keep abreast of this, as this could also provide a trigger to undertake a light-touch review of the WNP.
 - Maintaining a dialogue with neighbouring parishes on cross-boundary projects.
 - Maintaining a dialogue with the local community on the WNP implementation. It is also recommended that a regular update – for instance at the Annual Parish Meeting – is provided, to feed back to the community on progress about both the effectiveness of the policies and the pursing of the projects.
 - Considering gaps in the WNP – local issues, concerns or opportunities may arise during the lifespan of the Plan that trigger the need for the inclusion of a new policy. Such issues can be most effectively understood by maintaining open dialogue with the community and other partners.
- 11.4. Whilst it is not a legislative requirement to review a Neighbourhood Plan, it is good practice to do so periodically. This may be because of any of the points noted above. A light-touch review will enable the Parish Council to keep the WNP up to date in general terms, and to ensure that it remains in general conformity with the wider development plan. Any review should be undertaken in partnership with and ensuring the engagement of the wider community.
- 11.5. The Parish Council will consider how best to progress these actions.

12. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND PROVISION

12.1. Throughout the community engagement and consultation, concern has been expressed about the pressures that exist on the existing infrastructure in the Parish. This includes the roads, schools and health services. Policy WSC7 of the adopted Core Strategy states:

“...the release of land for development will be conditional upon there being sufficient capacity in the existing local infrastructure to meet the requirements generated by the proposed development. Where development would create the need to provide additional or improved community facilities, services and infrastructure to mitigate its impact, a programme of delivery must be agreed with the relevant infrastructure providers which will ensure that these improvements are provided at the time they are needed”.

It is imperative that this policy is adhered to and the Parish Council commits to working with WDC, developers and infrastructure providers to represent fully the needs of the Parish.

12.2. The Parish Council is keen to influence the way in which developer contributions are spent in the neighbourhood area to the full extent of their powers under national legislation and planning guidance.

12.3. There are different types of contributions arising from section 106 agreements, section 278 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

- A section 106 agreement (based on that section of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act) or planning obligation is a private agreement made between local authorities and developers and can be attached to a planning permission to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.
- A section 278 agreement refers to a section of the Highways Act 1980 that allows developers to enter into a legal agreement with the local authority to make alterations or improvements to a public highway as part of a planning application.
- CIL is a non-negotiable charge on development based on a fixed rate per square metre of net additional development on a site and levied by the District Council (WDC). Different charge rates would apply for different types of uses and in different areas. The levy is intended to fund the provision, improvement, replacement or maintenance of infrastructure required to support development in an area as set out in its local plan. With a ‘made’ (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan, the local community would benefit from an uplift in the level of CIL received, from 15% (capped at £100 per existing property) to an uncapped 25% of CIL receipts from the neighbourhood plan area.

12.4. The Parish Council intends to regularly review its spending priorities. Any proposed changes to spending principles or priorities will be published for comment by the community and other interested parties. Once finalised, any updated list will be published on the Parish Council website and in relevant literature.

13. COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS – MAJOR PROJECTS

Community Aspirations are non-statutory elements of the WNP. They have been generated from parishioners' input into the Neighbourhood Plan consultations and the Household Survey and will guide the Parish Council and other stakeholders, including parishioners and voluntary groups, on how to prioritise and allocate efforts and funding.

Community Aspirations are closely linked to Parish development, because part of their funding may come from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which in turn is generated by the number of homes built in the Parish in coming years.

A great number of projects and aspirations were raised during the consultation. Many are considered to form part of the normal business of the Parish Council. A full detail of all the projects identified, and relative support for each, is including in the Evidence Base (Detailed information about the community aspirations) accompanying this WNP. Projects needing higher levels of funding, planning and engagement with the community are considered 'major projects' and these are detailed below as priorities.

Ref.	Issue	Possible Actions	Lead agencies / partners
D1.	Improve road safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the introduction of traffic calming measures such as including 20mph limit and / or traffic lights at key congestion times. 	ESCC (Highways)
D2.	Reduce congestion and improve parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add parking space in Wadhurst village or investigate edge-of-village carpark and a park 'n' ride scheme. Encourage parkers to help our High Street by only parking on the road to use the shops (through notices etc.). 	WDC and ESCC (Highways)
D3.	Promote non-car transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate viability of an expanded community shuttle bus to provide a link between key areas of the Parish, including Wadhurst village, Durgates, Station, Tidebrook with potential to extend further and / or link with any possible park 'n' ride scheme. 	Wealden Community Link
D4.	Encourage cycling and walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the provision of footpaths and cycleways between settlements within the Parish and improve cycle connection to local facilities, e.g., Bewl Water. 	WDC and ESCC (Highways)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide cycle stands/rack in the Parish and at key points throughout the area. Provide improved and more secure cycle storage at the station. 	WPC, ESSC (Highways), Network Rail and South Eastern
D5.	Promote tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve visitor information including signposts and information points in the village, at the station, and at key points around the Parish. 	WDC, WPC, ESSC (Highways), Network Rail and South Eastern Rail
D6.	Encourage composting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate community desirability and commercial viability of community composting. 	WDC and ESSC
D7.	Green transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide electric car power points in Parish car parks. 	WDC and UK Power Networks
D8.	Better recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the feasibility of identifying an area to house recycling facilities. 	WPC
D9.	Better health facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a new, fit-for-purpose Health Centre to accommodate health professionals, including doctors, nurses and physiotherapists with adequate dedicated off-street parking. 	Sussex Primary Care Trust and Clinical Commissioning Group
D10.	More community space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a new village green, or pocket park, with seating situated near the centre of Wadhurst village. 	WPC and landowners
D11.	Better leisure facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the viability of a public swimming pool. Options could include: re-opening Uplands open-air pool or commissioning a feasibility study for a new indoor / lido pool. 	WPC, Uplands and WDC
D12.	Outdoor facilities for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the feasibility of an outdoor area for young people (e.g., a skatepark and hangout area) perhaps at the Sparrows Green Recreation ground. 	WPC
D13.	Indoor space for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the feasibility of an indoor social area for young people in the village, to include a low-cost café and activities which meet their needs. 	WPC and WSCC

14. POLICIES MAPS

Figure 14.1 overleaf shows the policies as they apply to the Parish.

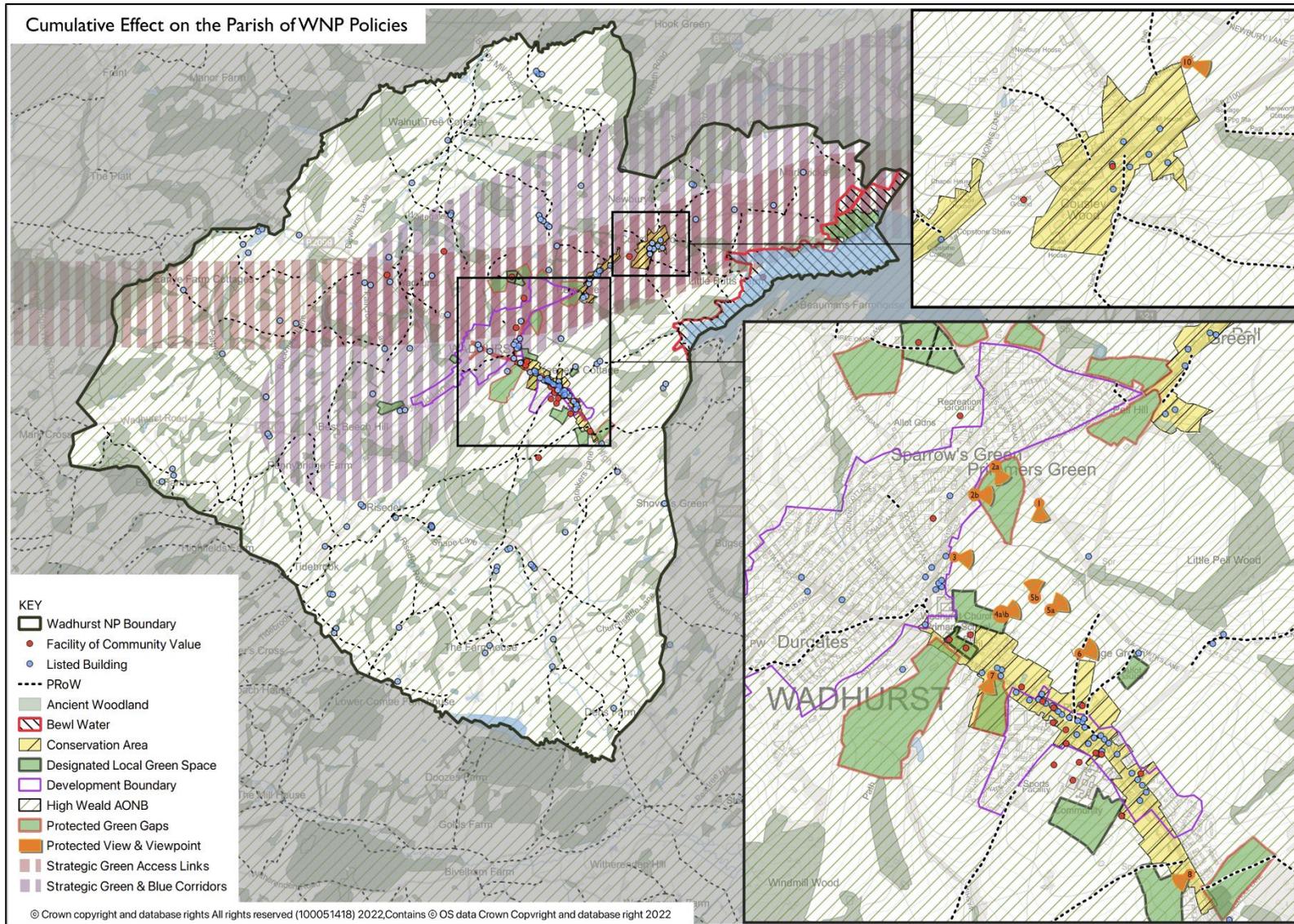


Figure 14.1: Policies Map

15. GLOSSARY

- **Affordable housing:** Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions.

a) **Affordable housing for rent** meets all the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent schemes (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) (Starter homes: In January 2020 the Department announced that the Starter Homes policy was no longer being pursued. In February 2020 it launched a new initiative, First Homes, which also aims to deliver discounted homes for first-time buyers. See below for more information on First Homes).

First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:

- i. must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
- ii. are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;
- iii. on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
- iv. after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).

First Homes are the government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations

c) Discounted **market sales housing** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts

to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

- **Ancient or veteran tree/tree of arboricultural value:** A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.
- **Ancient woodland:** An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes: ancient semi-natural woodland mainly made up of trees and shrubs native to the site, usually arising from natural regeneration; and plantations on ancient woodland sites - replanted with conifer or broadleaved trees that retain ancient woodland features, such as undisturbed soil, ground flora and fungi
- **Archaeological interest:** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- **Assart:** A field that has been created by clearing woodland.
- **Blue infrastructure:** Blue infrastructure refers to water elements, like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities, etc. Green infrastructure refers to trees, lawns, hedgerows, parks, fields, forests, etc. These terms come from urban planning and land-use planning.
- **Change of Use:** A change in the way that land or buildings are used (see Use Classes Order). Planning permission is usually necessary to change a "use class".
- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made by new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and is set by WDC.
- **Conservation area:** an area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.
- **Create Streets:** A social enterprise company founded by Nicholas Boys Smith, who is a commissioner of Historic England and a member of the Government's Design Review Panel. He is also Chair of the advisory board for the Government's Office for Place, that was launched in July 2021 alongside the National Model Design Code and revised NPPF.
- **Designated heritage asset:** A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation
- **Development:** defined in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation's in, on, over or under land; or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land.
- **Disability:** There is no single definition for 'disability'. Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is defined as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.
- **East Sussex County Council (ESCC):** The county-wide authority has responsibility for strategic matters including waste and minerals planning, maintaining the public rights of way network, education, libraries and roads.
- **Green Gap:** Open area around and between parts of settlements, which maintains the distinction between the countryside and built-up areas, prevent the coalescence (merging) of adjacent places and can also provide recreational opportunities.
- **Green infrastructure:** A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
- **Heritage asset:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It

includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

- **Limits to built development:** These identify the areas of primarily built form, rather than countryside. They identify areas within which development of brownfield land may normally be appropriate, including infilling, redevelopment and conversions in accordance with Government Policy and Guidance (NPPF and NPPG). They do not include a presumption for the development of greenfield land such as playing fields and other open space. Identified built-up area boundaries do not necessarily include all existing developed areas.
- **Local Green Space:** A green area of particular importance to the local community it serves. Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against inappropriate development.
- **Local housing need:** The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance.
- **Local Plan** – Local Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design for the area they cover. They are a critical tool in guiding decisions about individual development proposals, as Local Plans (together with any Neighbourhood Development Plans that have been made) are the starting point for considering whether applications can be approved. It is important for all areas to put an up-to-date Local Plan in place to positively guide development decisions.
- **Major Development:** Normally this is defined as: for housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. However, the NPPF disapplies this definition in AONBs and substitutes: “For the purposes of paragraphs 176 and 177, whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined”.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** the national planning policy document which sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG):** This is an extensive online resource of detailed policy guidance provided by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Along with the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework), NPPG sets out how the government envisages the day to day working of the planning system in England to operate.
- **Nature Recovery Network:** An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.
- **Non-strategic policies:** Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.
- **Older people:** People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.
- **Permitted development:** Permitted development rights are an automatic grant of planning permission which allow certain building works and changes of use to be carried out without having to make a planning application. Most houses have permitted development rights, but flats and

maisonettes do not, so planning permission is required. A further example is the conversion of offices, for instance to flats, without the need for planning permission. Note that permitted development rights do not automatically apply in an AONB.

- **Previously developed land/ brownfield land:** Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.
- **Section 106 agreement:** A mechanism under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable.
- **SMEs (Small to medium-sized enterprises):** The UK definition of SME is generally a small or medium-sized enterprise with fewer than 250 employees. While the SME meaning defined by the EU is also business with fewer than 250 employees, and a turnover of less than €50 million, or a balance sheet total of less than €43 million. Within this umbrella there are three different categories: medium-sized, small, and micro-businesses. These categories are defined by turnover and number of employees.
- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):** Supplementary Planning Documents may cover a range of issues, both topic and site specific, which may expand policy or provide further detail to policies contained in a Development Plan Document, where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery.
- **Twitten:** a narrow path or passage between two walls or hedges.
- **Use Classes Order:** The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended in 1995, 2005 and 2013) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.
- **Wadhurst Parish Council (WPC):** The local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in Wadhurst parish and has an overall responsibility for the well-being of its local community. It is the level of government closest to the community, with the district authority above it in the hierarchy. Wadhurst Parish Council is the Qualifying Body responsible for the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Wealden District Council (WDC):** Covering a smaller area than the county council, WDC is responsible for services like: rubbish collection, recycling, Council Tax collections, housing and planning applications.

16. LIST OF EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS

All links correct at June 2022.

Document/ Evidence	Author	Year
Adopted Wealden Local Plan (saved policies)	Wealden District Council	1998
Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan	Wealden District Council	2016
AddressPollution.org	Imperial College London	2021
Ancient tree guide 4: What are ancient, veteran and other trees of special interest?	Woodland Trust	2008
Biodiversity metric	Defra	2021
Census	Office for National Statistics	2011
Climate Change Act 2008	HM Government	2008
Detailed information about the community aspirations (see page 94: Community Aspirations – Major Projects)	Wadhurst Parish Council	2022
East Sussex Design Guide for Residential Development	East Sussex County Council	
East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	East Sussex County Council	2016
Ecological data search for land at Turners Green Road, Wadhurst (see Wadhurst Parish Council website)	Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre	2021
Environment Act 2021	HM Government	2021
Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Turners Green Road (see Wadhurst Parish Council website)	AEWC Ltd.	2019
Green Gaps Report (See Appendix A)	Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	2022
Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development	High Weald AONB Unit	2017
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report for the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan	Wealden District Council	July 2021
Heritage at Risk Register	Historic England	ongoing
High Weald Housing Design Guide	High Weald AONB Unit	2019
The High Weald AONB Management Plan	High Weald AONB Unit	2019 to 2024
Historic Environment Record	Historic England in partnership with ALGAO and IHBC	ongoing
Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI)	Housing LIN	2012
Localism Act 2011	HM Government	2011
National Heritage List for England (NHLE)	Historic England	ongoing
National Planning Policy Framework (amended July 2021)	HM Government	Amended 2021
The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012	HM Government	2012

Document/ Evidence	Author	Year
Pell Green and Cousley Wood - Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal	Wealden District Council	2020
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	HM Government	2004
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion	Wealden District Council	July 2021
The Future – What Parishioners Want (see Wadhurst Parish Council website).	Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	2022
The Reduction of Obtrusive Light. Guidance Note 01/21	Institution of Lighting Professionals	2021
Tourism in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	High Weald AONB Unit / Acorn tourism development consultants	2013
Town and Country Planning Act 1990	HM Government	1990
Town Centre and Retail Study 2016 (stages 1 to 3)	Wealden District Council	2016
Urban Air Quality	Woodland Trust	2012
Use Classes	Planning Portal	2021
Wadhurst Character Assessment Report	Sussex Extensive Urban Survey	2007
Wadhurst Design Code (See Appendix C Wadhurst Parish Council website)	Create Streets	2021
Wadhurst - Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal	Wealden District Council	2020
Waste and Minerals Local Plan	East Sussex County Council	2013
Waste and Minerals Sites Plan	East Sussex County Council	2017
Weald & Downs Ancient Woodland Survey	High Weald AONB Unit	2007
Wealden Design Guide	Wealden District Council	2008
Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan	Wealden District Council	2013
Wealden Economic Impact Study (summary)	Wealden District Council	2019
Wealden Local Housing Needs Assessment	Wealden District Council	2021
Wealden Local Plan Direction of Travel Consultation	Wealden District Council	2020
The Wealden Open Space Study (2016-2028)	Wealden District Council	2016
Wealden District Council Open Space Report (April 2022)	Wealden District Council	2022

Appendix A – Green Gaps justification

See separate document ([see Wadhurst Parish Council website link here](#)).

Appendix B – Detail of development in Wadhurst since April 1, 2013

- B1. This Appendix sets out key information that has been gathered about housing development at the Parish level, which is helpful when considering future housing need, including type, size, tenure and affordability.
- B2. **Housing need for the district:** The adopted Core Strategy Local Plan sets out a need for 4,525 net additional dwellings in Wealden District to provide for 9,440 dwellings over the period 2006-2027, equivalent to 450 dwellings per annum (dpa).
- B3. The latest District Housing Needs Assessment, prepared for the emerging Local Plan, suggests that the housing need for Wealden District has risen from 450 dpa to c. 1,220 dpa at the time of writing.
- B4. **Number of homes delivered in Wadhurst:** Since the adoption of the Core Strategy Local Plan in 2013, WDC report that a total of 144 homes (net) have been completed in Wadhurst, with a further 56 homes approved, totalling net 200 dwellings. Analysis by the Steering Group records 245 completed, approved and current applications in the period 2016 to October 2022 (Table B1).

APPLICATIONS FOR DWELLINGS IN THE PARISH												
Development	Reference	Green field?	Status	Dwellings	FLATS			HOUSES				
					1BR	2BR	3BR	1BR	2BR	3BR	4BR	5BR
Completed developments												
Waters Reach	WD/2017/2531/PO	Y	Completed	35	4				12	8	7	4
Wadhurst Place	WD/2013/1737/MAO	Y	Completed	26								26
Wadhurst Place	WD/2015/2598/MRM	N	Completed	17		10	2	4	1			
Wadhurst Place	WD/2017/2405/MAJ	Y	Completed	15					14			1
Best Beech pub conversion	WD/2017/1467/F	N	Completed	6		3	2	1				
Red Lion pub site	WD/2015/1585/F	N	Completed	4					4			
Queens Cottages (2)	WD/2019/2626/F	N	Completed	1		1						
Methodist Hall conversion	WD/2017/2023/F	N	Completed	3		3						
Current applications or developments												
Old Station Road	WD/2020/2426/MRM	Y	Approved	21				10	7	4		
Weald Hall (3)	WD/2021/0559/MAJ	Y/N	Application	21		6	2	6	7			
George Street	F/201/2052	N	Approved	2						2		
Balaclava Lane	WD/2017/0356/F	N	Approved	1					1			
Balaclava pub conversion	WD/2020/0805/F	N	Approved	6	3	3						
Southview Road	WD/2020/1722/F	N	Approved	2						2		
Nat West bank conversion (4)		N	Approved	4	4							
Townlands Road (5)	WD/2019/0061/F	N	Approved	3		2					1	
Jonas Lane		N	Approved	1							1	
Marling House	WD/2022/0535/MAO	Y	Application	29	8			12	4	5		
Primers Green	WD/2021/1285/MAO	Y	Application	15	3	2			4	4	2	
Styles Lane	WD/2021/1285/MAO	Y	Application	18				2	7	6	3	
Tapsells Lane	WD/2022/0550/F	Y	Application	3								3
Little Windmill Farm (6)	WD/2022/0662/MAO	Y	Application	12					8	4		
Totals				245	22	30	6	2	52	64	33	36
Per cent				100%	9%	12%	2%	1%	21%	26%	13%	15%

Notes

- (1) Estimated by NPSG based on information available up to 07/11/22
- (2) Property converted to 1x 2BR and 1x 3BR flats. 3BR flat is assumed to replace existing site so is not counted as additional housing.
- (3) 8 flats are on brownfield and 13 houses are on AONB
- (4) Assumed to be 4 x one bedroom flats
- (5) Additional 3 dwellings on existing 1 dwelling site, comprising 2 x 2BR flats, 1 x 3BR, 1x4BR houses. 3BR house is assumed to replace existing site so is not counted as additional housing.
- (6) Application for outline planning permission for 12 bungalows, assumed to be 8 x 3BR and 4 x 4BR dwellings

Table B1: Completed, approved and current applications in Wadhurst Parish

- B5. **Notable larger developments** that have been delivered include:

- Rydon Homes Waters Reach: 35 dwellings (including 12 affordable).

- Wadhurst Place: (ex Bellerbys/Wadhurst College grounds): 41 dwellings on Greenfield Countryside and 17 apartments (Brownfield), now mainly developed. No affordable homes allocation.

B6. Notable Brownfield developments that have taken place or have been permitted since 2016:

- Best Beech Pub conversion: 6 (mixed) - Southview Road: 2x4 bed
- NW Bank: 4x1/2 bed apts - Red Lion Pub: 4x3 bed
- Methodist Hall: 3x2 bed apts - Jonas Lane: 1x4 bed
- Balaclava Pub conversion: 6 (3x1,3x2) - Queens Cottages 1 x 3 bed
- Balaclava Lane: 1x3 bed - Townlands Rd: 3 x 3 bed

B7. Type of development: The information in Table B1 demonstrates the number of bedrooms delivered by type of development.

B8. Flats have comprised 23% of completed and current developments, while houses have comprised 77%. Of the homes delivered, the majority have been two and three-bedroom dwellings 33% and 38% respectively (combined % for flats and houses)). Key points are as follows:

- The largest category of homes delivered is three-bedroom houses (26%).
- So-called executive homes (four and five-bedroom houses) comprise a sizeable 28% of the total, which seems inconsistent with respondent needs as expressed in parishioner surveys.
- More affordable dwellings (up to two bedrooms) comprise 43% of the total development – though genuine affordability has to allow for pricing. It is noticeable that these are mainly on brownfield sites.

B9. Tables B2 and B3 show a breakdown of tenure and size required by households with affordable housing needs (based on figures collected by WDC).

Tenure (1)	Total number of 'in-need' households (based on an inability to afford a suitable market property)	Number of 'in-need' households (who also meet WDC eligibility criteria for the Housing register and the local parish connection criteria)
Social Rent	17	12
Affordable Rent	1	1
Shared ownership (Part own / Part rent)	3	0
Starter home	0	0
Totals	21	13

Notes: (1) this is based on each household's current circumstance and a financial assessment

Table B2: Tenure of homes in Wadhurst Parish requested by those with an affordable housing need

Size of Property needed	Total number of 'in-need' households (based on an inability to afford a suitable market property)	Number of 'in-need' households (who also meet WDC eligibility criteria for the Housing register and the local parish connection criteria)
1 bed	15	9
2 bed	1	1
3 bed	4	2
4 bed	0	0
5+ bed	1	1
Totals	21	13

Table B3: Size of homes in Wadhurst Parish requested by those with an affordable housing need

B10. In order to address this need, the Steering Group recommends a mix of housing as shown in Table B4:

Bedrooms	Development 2016/22	WNP Required Dwellings Mix		Total
		Market	Affordable	
1	7%	15%	5%	20%
2	35%	20%	15%	35%
3	31%	20%	15%	35%
4	9%	10%	0%	10%
5	18%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	65%	35%	100%

Table B4: Recommended dwelling mix for Wadhurst Parish

B11. **Prioritising brownfield sites:** WPC is promoting brownfield development by setting up a WPC Brownfield Register, which will then be shared with WDC to populate their District Brownfield Register.

B12. Currently, WDC only has one (Balaclava Lane) Brownfield Site on their District Brownfield Register for the Parish. Therefore, WPC will promote to Brownfield site owners in the Parish the need to register their sites for further development.

Appendix C - Wadhurst Design Code

- C1. The Design Code for Wadhurst Parish forms an integral part of the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan. It can be accessed on the Parish Council website: [\(click here\)](#)

APPENDIX D – Locally distinctive and highly valued views

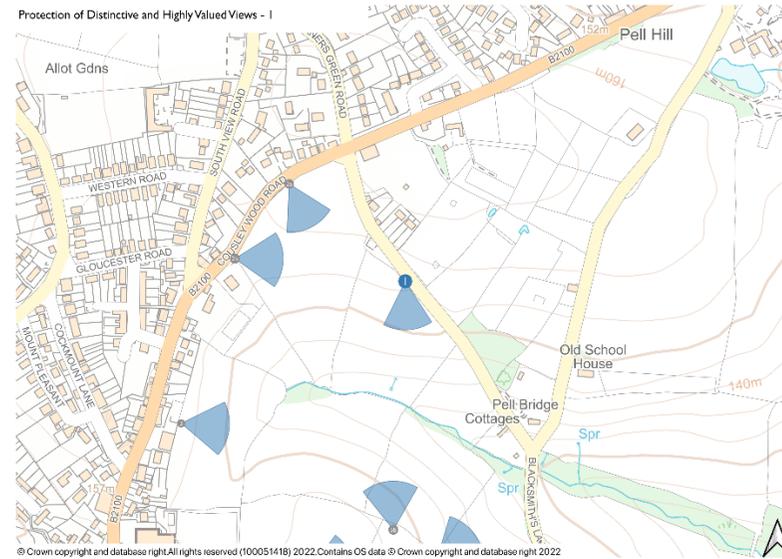
- D1. Wadhurst Parish is located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, towards the eastern end of the east-west Forest Ridge. This part of the ridge has the valleys of the Bewl River to the northeast and the Tide Brook to the southwest. The High Weald, which encompasses the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald, is an area of countryside representing one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe.
- D2. The general appearance of the High Weald is one of a densely wooded landscape, which comprises a patchwork of irregularly shaped fields and woods forming both open and enclosed landscapes along rolling ridges and within valleys. Along the ridge top roads briefly glimpsed extensive views open, stretching away over rolling ridges, with church spires often present within the views between the ridges, and green valleys below. The mosaic of small, hedged fields and sunken lanes, together with the wooded relief and comparative inaccessibility, provides a sense of remoteness which is rare within lowland English landscapes and creates a strong sense of place.
- D3. The landscape of the Weald is characterised by thickly wooded areas, with some historic, often ancient, woodland used for coppicing.
- D4. The historic settlement setting of Wadhurst village, and the Parish overall is created by:
- remnant historic landscapes around the settlements.
 - a ridge that runs northeast to southwest facilitating long and dramatic views of the streams and valleys below.
 - undulating fields interspersed with small stream corridors and extensive patches of woodland.
 - an ancient landscape comprised of irregular piecemeal enclosure, cohesive and aggregate assarts and Ancient Woodland.
 - Grade II listed Wadhurst Castle, and its associated registered park and garden, adding historic interest to the settlement setting.
 - Bewl Water and Kent, which can be seen to the northeast.
 - narrow streams scattered across the countryside.
 - a network of footpaths connecting the settlements with the surrounding countryside.
 - Landscape characteristics include large linear settlement, residential and including local shopping facilities; many historical buildings throughout the settlements; the church, which is central and dominant in Wadhurst village and can be seen from all around on the high ridges; sensitive urban edges all around the settlements, surrounded by mature vegetation; outstanding views to and from Wadhurst village.
- D5. Information about the particularly valued views identified through local engagement is provided below.

D6. The Wealden Landscape Sensitivity Criteria have been considered to assist in demonstrating the importance of the views:

Ref.	Criteria1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Criteria 6
	Contribution to landscape setting	Distinctiveness	Continuity	Strength of place	Visibility Landform	Visibility Tree cover
View 1 Field East of Primmers Field	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 2a, b Primmers Field	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 3 Field Southwest of Primmers Field	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 4 Field Southeast to View 3	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 5 Field East next to View 4	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 6 Vicarage Green	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 7 Hill House Field	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 8 Stone Cross Farm	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 9a, b Brinkers Lane	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant / Panoramic	Open
View 10 Windmill Lane. Cousley Wood	Major	Unique/rare	Ancient	Strong	Dominant/ Panoramic	Open

D7. Further information on each view is provided below. Each has the name of the view, a photograph showing the view, a map (where the individual view number is noted in blue, where more than one view can be seen) and a description as to what the view is and why it is special.

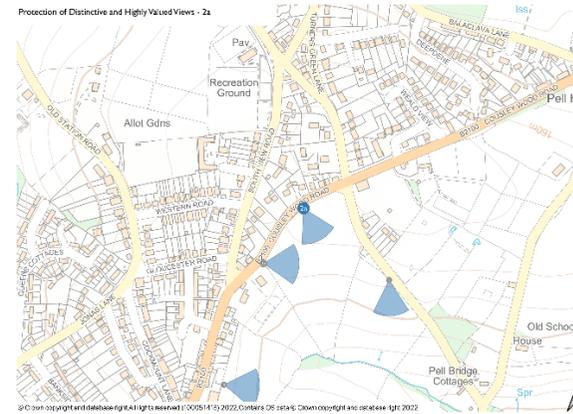
View 1 – From the farm gate in Primmers Green Lane towards the steeple of St Peter and St Paul Church



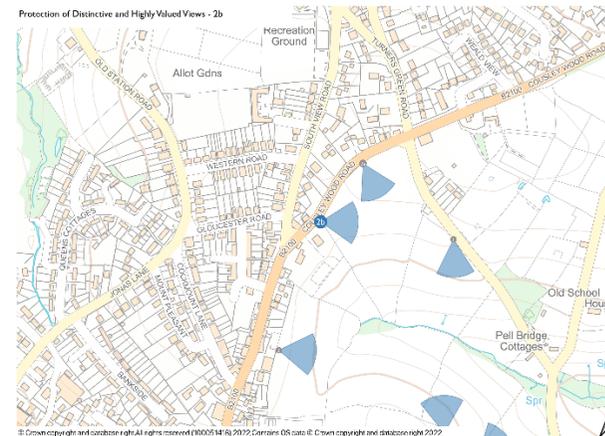
Description: Extensive views across rolling High Weald AONB / sheep grazing lands towards St Peter and St Paul Church steeple (Grade I listed). Primmers Green Lane is a single-track narrow and is a tranquil backwater. Informal footpaths well-used by the public.

Views 2a & 2b – From Cousley Wood Road / Primmers Green Lane junction southeast across Primmers field

View 2a - Looking southeast towards the steeple of St Peter and St Paul Church (Grade I listed) from Cousley Wood Road

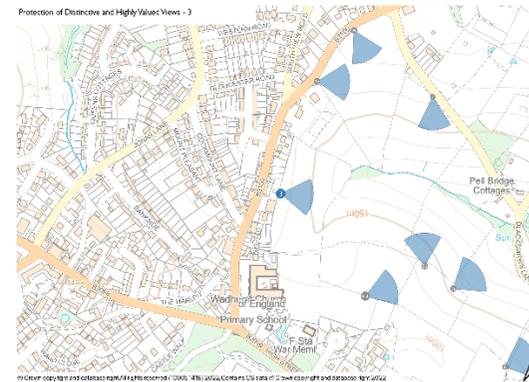


View 2b – Looking southeast towards over HWAONB from start of Sparrows Green Road, where informal footpath starts.



Description: Views are taken from the large southeast sloping field, which offers outstanding views across rolling open High Weald AONB, predominantly sheep grazing countryside. This is an important view southeast between Primmers Green Lane and Wadhurst village, with a view of the Church steeple. This is a view that would have been in existence for many centuries.

View 3 – From Ben Grieg’s Garage forecourt across well used informal footpaths on field next to (Southwest) Primmers Green field

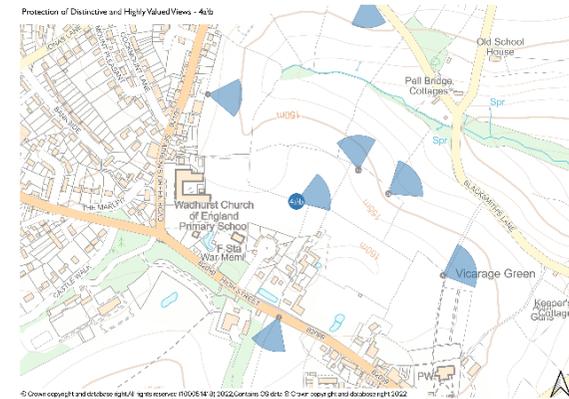


The image on the left shows the view east across rolling AONB / sheep grazing field.

Description: Views are visible to the public from Ben Grieg’s Garage forecourt. The view is seen across the large southeast sloping field. It provides views across open rolling High Weald countryside.

Views 4a and 4b – Across to Bewl Water from Wadhurst Primary School

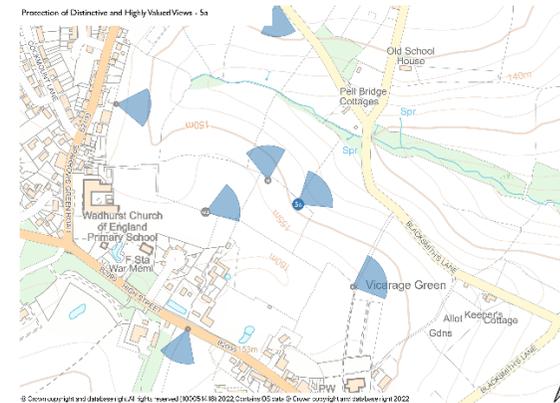
View 4a (image on the left): From Wadhurst CoE Primary School fence and **View 4b (image on the right):** From other side of the fence on well used, informal footpaths on field (which is south of Primmers Field (access from farm gate in Primmers Green Lane) northeast to Bewl Water (c. 3 miles)



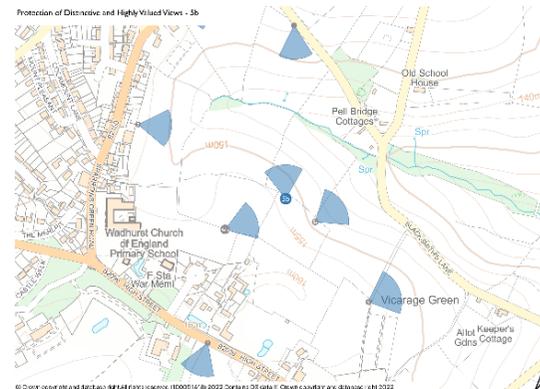
Description: The open views across farmland/sheep grazing areas towards Bewl Water have been identified by the community as providing an attractive backdrop in this tranquil part of Wadhurst behind the High Street. Here the ridge top land is partly bordered by the school playing fields, which themselves are identified as a Local Green Space. Other notable features of the view include the visibility at sunrise. The views are also accessible via informal footpaths which are well-used by the public.

Views 5a and 5b - From well used footpath on field (southeast of Primmers Green field with access from farm gate in Primmers Green Lane) northeast to Bewl Water (c. 3 miles) and north to Primmers Green

View 5a - Bewl Water can be seen in the northeast distance across rolling AONB farmland.

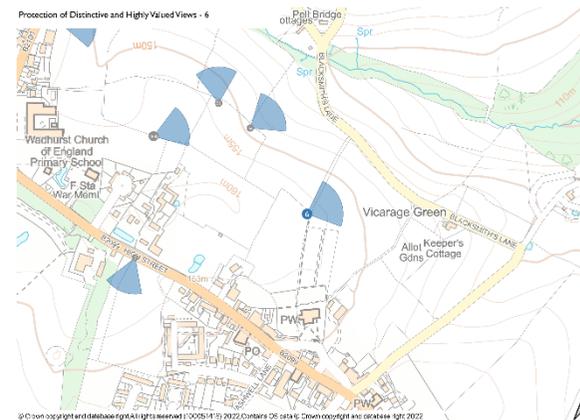


View 5b: Primmers Green can be seen to the north



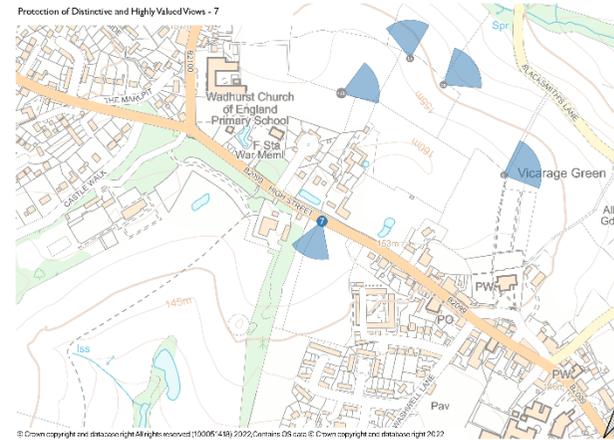
Description: The open views across farmland/sheep grazing areas towards Bewl Water provide an attractive backdrop in this tranquil part of Wadhurst behind the High Street. The view is from the top of the ridge top. At night, the area affords dark skies views and, in the mornings, sunrises have been flagged as particularly beautiful from this location. Although the land here is privately owned, there are informal footpaths well-used by the public, and these views can also be seen from the Primary School Recreation Area.

View 6 - From Church (Donkey Steps) public footpath across Vicarage Green to Bewl Water (c. 3 miles)



Description: Bewl Water can be seen in the distance across rolling High Weald AONB farmland. The open AONB views across this particular piece of farmland/sheep grazing land towards Bewl Water provide an attractive backdrop in this tranquil part of Wadhurst behind the High Street. At night, the area affords dark skies views and, in the mornings, sunrises have been flagged as particularly beautiful from this location.

View 7 – From the Walk, in the High Street south towards the southern ridge (Burwash to Heathfield) c. 5 miles

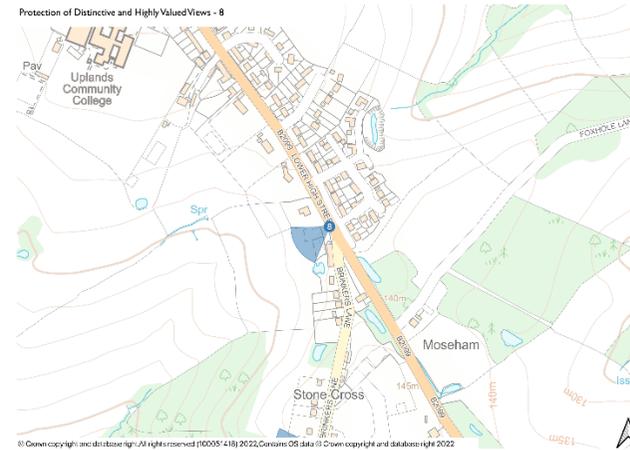


Description: The view is taken from the public bench on The Walk, in the High Street. This is the last easily accessible southern green gap view going northwest of Wadhurst High Street. Rural field fronting onto B2099 (Wadhurst High Street) with long distance views across AONB to the far southern ridge (Burwash – Heathfield).

The Wadhurst Conservation Area Character Appraisal (para. 5.4.4) notes this view *“is particularly significant to the historic setting of Hill House and contributes to the rural setting of this area of the village, affording views to the High Weald”*. In para. 5.5.7 it notes *“There are important panoramic views over the field opposite Hill House across the High Weald towards the next ridge. The panoramic views across the High Weald to the southeast and southwest and this open landscape setting, interspersed with woodland and open fields, has a very strong sense of place and strong links to the historic development of the area.”*

At night, the area affords dark skies views and, in the mornings, sunrises have been flagged as particularly beautiful from this location.

View 8 - From Wadhurst Lower High Street looking southwest over fields to southern ridge (c. 5 miles)



Description: The view taken looking southwest from Lower High Street. The open views across farmland/sheep grazing areas towards the southern ridge (Burwash to Heathfield) provide an attractive backdrop to the busy B2099 Lower High Street Road.

This is an important green corridor view going northwest and looking southwest from Lower High Street. Similar view from public footpath running alongside and into these fields.

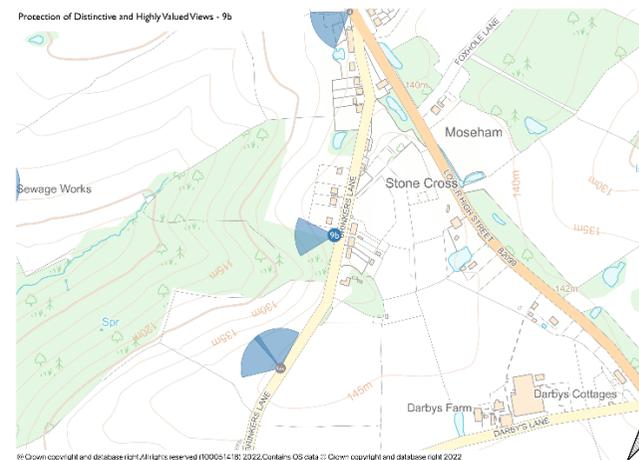
At night, the area affords dark skies views and, in the mornings, sunrises have been flagged as particularly beautiful from this location.

Views 9a, 9b and 9c - from Brinkers Lane farm gates (x2) to Mayfield Lane ridge (c. 2 miles) and to the spire of St Peter and St Paul Church (c. 1 mile); and View 9d looking east towards the Brinkers Lane ridge from footpath 27a from Stone Cross Farm to Snape Wood (this is the reciprocal view of View 9b)

View 9a: from farm gate 2 - West to Mayfield Lane ridge.



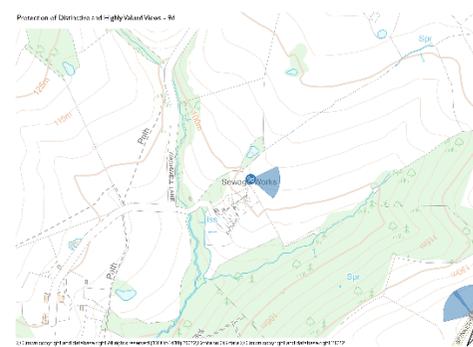
View 9b – from farm gate 1 - West to Mayfield Lane Ridge from ‘Four Winds’ house



View 9c – from farm gate 2 - northwest to St Peter and St Paul Church Spire

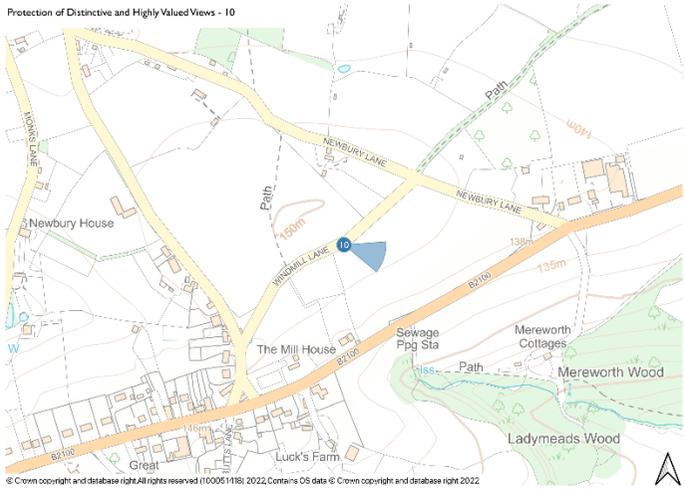


View 9d – looking East towards the Brinkers Lane ridge from footpath 27a from Stone Cross Farm to Snape Wood (this is the *reciprocal* view of View 9b)



Description: Beautiful views in a 180-degree arc are across the High Weald and open farm / sheep grazing land and to Wadhurst village and the spire of St Peter and St Paul Church (Grade I listed). The views are visible from two farm gates on the right as you proceed down Brinkers Lane just past the houses. The Wadhurst Conservation Area Character Appraisal (para. 5.5.6) says "*There are views from Stone Cross, across the fields and through to Wadhurst Castle planned parkland and garden*".

View 10: – Windmill Lane, Cousley Wood (by Farm Gate)



Description: This is a beautiful view towards Bewl Water in a 120-degree arc across the High Weald and open farmland.

Appendix E - Local Green Spaces

E1. The list of Local Green Spaces (LGS) has been developed and tested following the Locality guidance “Making local green space designations in your neighbourhood plan”.

(<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/making-local-green-space-designations-neighbourhood-plan/>)

E2. Members of the Character Assessment Group and the Environment Focus Group drew up a long list (Table E1) of 16 potential green spaces. This included:

- Spaces identified from desk-top research and local walkabouts
- Spaces proposed by the community through the various local engagement activities

E3. A high-level review of the spaces was undertaken. Some of the spaces were considered to be already adequately protected.

Site name	Selected for designation?
LG1 Sparrows Green Recreation Field	No - Wadhurst Parish Council owned, hence considered to be adequately protected from inappropriate development.
LG2 Commemoration Hall Field	No - This field is managed and owned by the Wadhurst Institute Hall & Field Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The CIO constitution requires a Wadhurst Parish resident meeting to be held and subject to approval by them if any sale or part sale of the field is proposed. A recent (Nov 2018) proposed development of a new Hall and 22 houses was rejected by the resulting resident’s referendum. The Field was then removed from the WDC SHELAA.
LG3 Wadhurst Primary School Playing Field	Yes.
LG4 Uplands Community College Playing Field	Yes.
LG5 Cousley Wood Cricket Ground	No - The field is registered with Sports England as an active place and is an emergency area for Wadhurst Parish Council. The LGS designation is not considered to be required.
LG6 Sacred Heart School Playing Fields	Yes.
LG7 ex Wadhurst College Playing Field (Mayfield Lane)	Yes.
LG8 Jardin d’Aubers (World Wars Memorial, Gardens and Pond)	Yes.
LG9. Round Oak Allotments	No - Wadhurst Parish Council owned (which has a duty to provide allotments under the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908). Considered to be adequately protected from inappropriate development.
LG10 Vicarage Green Allotments	Yes.

LG11 Turners Green Field 2	Yes.
LG12 Turners Green Field 3	Yes.
LG13 Bewl Water Reservoir Recreation Area	Yes.
LG14 Waters Reach Ecological Area	No - Owned by Waters Reach Management Company and designated as an Ecological Area in the S106 Planning Document for this new estate of 35 homes.
LG15 Wadhurst Castle Grounds	No – the grounds are a registered garden and are also included within one of the Green Gaps.
LG16 Stone Cross Farm Field	Yes.

Table E1: Long-list of potential Local Green Spaces

E4. The remaining 10 sites were all assessed using the criteria from paragraphs 101-103 of the NPPF as detailed below:

- The Focus Group checked to make sure none of the sites have been allocated for any other purpose or usage in the Local Plan or in any other statutory plan.
- The Focus Group also checked that the land or site in question has not already been granted any planning permissions for development.
- Landowners were notified of the possibility of using the Neighbourhood Plan to designate their sites.

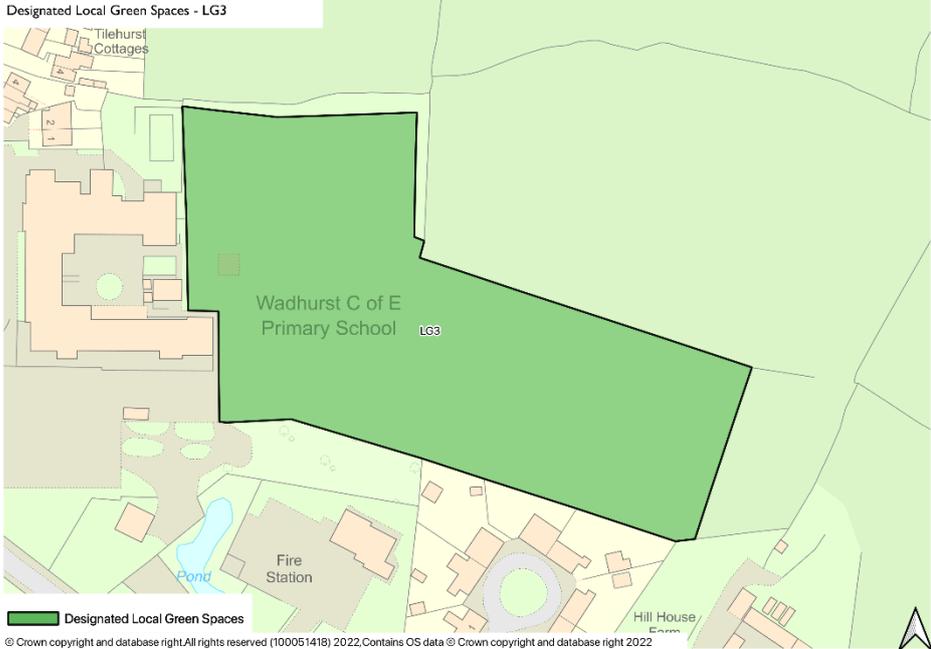
E5. Table E2 provides a high-level review of the proposed sites. This is followed by a series of tables to provide the detailed justification for the sites considered appropriate for Local Green Space designation. The reference provided refers to the original reference assigned (see Table E2).

Ref	Site name	Proximity to community (yes/no)	Beauty (yes/no)	History (yes/no)	Recreation (yes/no)	Tranquillity (yes/no)	Wildlife (yes/no)	Extensive Tract of Land? (Size)	Owner	Allocated for any other use?	Public access (not essential)
LG3	Wadhurst Primary School Playing Field	Yes	Yes / Views	No	Yes	No	Yes	No (1.8ha)	ESCC Education	Yes, Annual School Fair and Open-Air theatre group.	Yes
LG4	Uplands Community College Playing Fields	Yes	Yes / Views.	No	Yes	No	Yes	No (3.0ha)	ESCC Education	Yes. Annual Village Fair	Yes
LG6	Sacred Heart Playing Fields	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No (0.6ha)	Catholic Church	No	Yes
LG7	Ex Wadhurst College Recreation Field	Yes	Yes / Views	No	Only dog walking currently	Yes	Yes	No (2.5ha)	Greymouth Homes	Highest point in Wadhurst Parish (Beech Hill)	Yes
LG8	Jardin d'Aubers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (0.4ha)	ESCC Fire Service	Village Green and wildlife area	Yes
LG10	Vicarage Green Allotments	Yes	No but Views.	No	Yes	No	No	No (0.3ha)	Ticehurst Parish Council	No	Yes
LG11	Turners Green Field 2	Yes	Yes / Views.	Yes	Yes Walking	Yes	Yes	No (1.0ha)	Privately-owned	Horse / Sheep grazing	Footpath 46
LG12	Turners Green Field 3	Yes	Yes / Views.	Yes	Yes Walking	Yes	Yes	No (1.3ha)	Privately-owned	Horse / Sheep grazing	Footpath 46
LG13	Bewl Water Reservoir Recreation Area	Yes	Yes / Views	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (13ha)	Southern Water (Salomons UK Ltd - Lessee)	Camping (3-year permission)	Major Recreation Area
LG16	Stone Cross Farm Field	Yes	Yes / Views.	Yes	Yes Walking/Fireworks	Yes	Yes	No (0.7ha)	Privately-owned	No	Footpath 27a,

Table E2: High-level summary of the Local Green Spaces

LG3 Wadhurst Primary School Playing Field

Address and location	Sparrows Green Road, Wadhurst, TN5 6SR
Ownership details	ESCC (Education)
Description and purpose / current use	This is a large integrated school playing grass field with sports pitches, for instance for football.
Any designations	AONB
Site allocations in Local Plan	No.
Planning permissions?	No.
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Yes, the site is located close to homes.
Demonstrably Special?	<p>Recreation: The space provides an important facility for local school children attending the school. Importantly it is also used for outdoor public events like School fete and community events such as travelling theatre performers (Rude Mechanicals Theatre Company). Its use as a community space – in a parish where such space is at a deficit - is considered important to safeguard.</p> <p>Beauty: There are valued views over the AONB open countryside to northeast.</p>
Local character?	1.8 ha

<p>Photo</p>	
<p>Location map</p>	

LG4: Uplands Community College Playing Fields

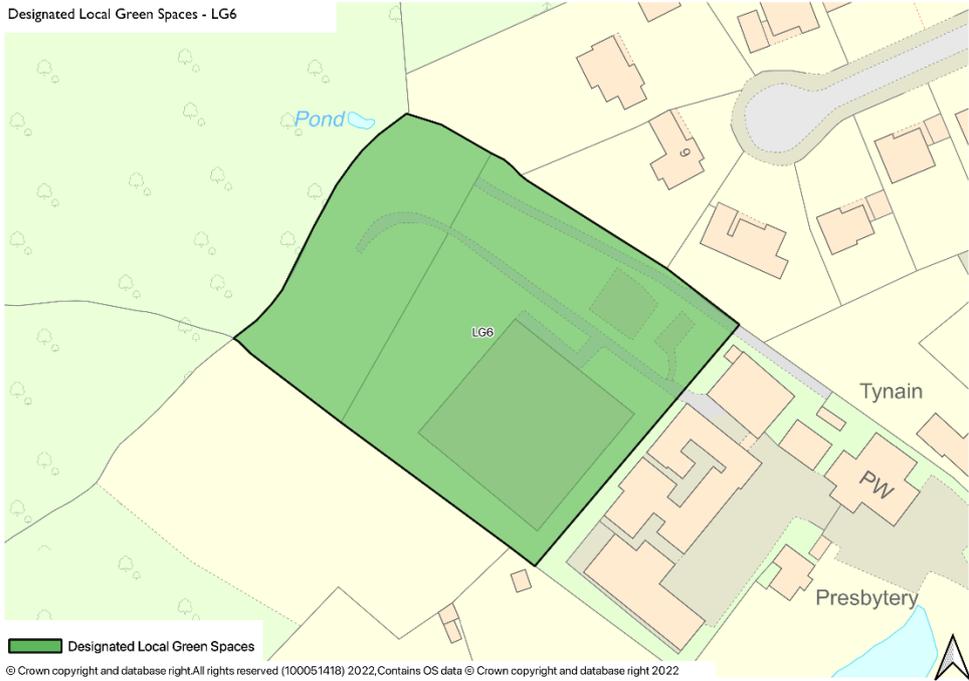
<p>Address and location</p>	<p>Lower High Street, Wadhurst, TN5 6AZ</p>
<p>Ownership details</p>	<p>ESCC (Education)</p>
<p>Description and purpose / current use</p>	<p>These are large integrated school playing fields, laid to grass.</p>

Any designations	AONB.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No.
Planning permissions?	No live applications. In 2020, a new School Accommodation Block was approved and built near to the field.
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Surrounded by homes, within development boundary.
Demonstrably Special?	<p>Recreation: In addition to providing an outdoor recreational facility for the school, the fields are also used by the community, for instance to host the Annual Village Fete.</p> <p>Wildlife: There are a number of mature trees bounding the fields, which provide an important habitat and part of the wider network of green infrastructure.</p> <p>Beauty: There are wonderful distinctive and valued views across the AONB to the southern ridges.</p>
Local character?	3.0 ha
Photo	

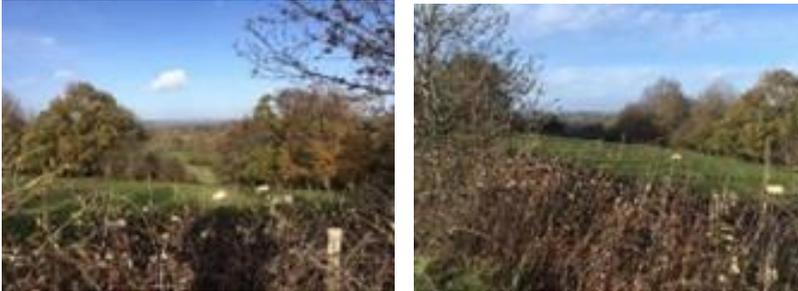


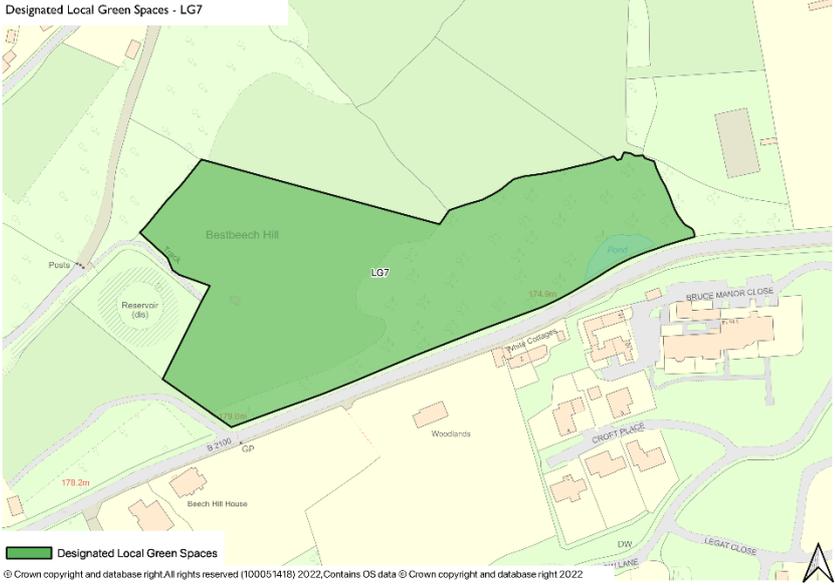
LG6: Sacred Heart School playing field

Address and location	Mayfield Lane, Wadhurst, TN5 6DQ
Ownership details	The Catholic Church (Arundel and Brighton Diocesan Trust)
Description and purpose / current use	This is a large playing field within the school grounds. It is laid to grass with a multi-use games area.
Any designations	AONB.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No.
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	It is located within the development boundary and surrounded by housing. There is public access through to Church cemetery.
Demonstrably Special?	Recreation: The school plays an active part in community life and the field provides a resource for both students attending the school and those visiting for sports events. The field houses formal sports pitches (cricket and football), a

	<p>playground and grassy areas for informal activities. The school hosts parent and toddler mornings, where those attending can use the grounds. The space is used by the public to access the Church cemetery.</p> <p>Wildlife: Parts of the field are left to wildflower, providing an important haven for wildlife and bringing a taste of the AONB landscape into the school and local community.</p> <p>Historic: The school itself was established in 1938 by the Sisters of the Order of Notre Dame to provide an education to the children of local Catholic families. It has a close relationship with the Parish Church. The use of the site – including the field – is considered important to safeguard.</p>
<p>Local character?</p>	<p>0.6 ha.</p>
<p>Photo</p>	
<p>Location map</p>	<p>Designated Local Green Spaces - LG6</p>  <p>© Crown copyright and database right All rights reserved (100051418) 2022, Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2022</p>

LG7: ex Wadhurst College Recreation Field

Address and location	Mayfield Lane, TN5 6DQ
Ownership details	Greymouth Homes
Description and purpose / current use	Formerly the playing field of Wadhurst College (ex Bellerbys College – Grade 1 listed). In the past it has been used by local Brownies, Guides and toddler groups. Lacrosse has traditionally been played here.
Any designations	AONB.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No.
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	This is the only sustainable recreation site for the new 41 executive homes and 17 apartments at the old Bellerbys college, located opposite (now Wadhurst Place). The field is now mainly used for dog / recreational walking.
Demonstrably Special?	<p>Recreation: The site is used for informal recreation, for instance for walking and dog-walking (there is an image of Wadhurst Place dogwalkers meeting up at the site in the photos section below). There are numerous informal footpaths.</p> <p>Wildlife: Currently left to overgrow and a haven for wildlife. There is an established pond on the site.</p> <p>Tranquillity: Because of its siting on the periphery of the main settlement and its elevated and distanced position away from the ‘B’ road – it is extremely tranquil.</p> <p>Beauty: This is the highest point in Wadhurst Parish (Best Beech Hill) and the long-distance country views to the north/north-west are outstanding. Many people visit to view the sunsets. It also affords dark skies.</p>
Local in character?	2.50 ha
Photo	

	
Location map	

LG8: Jardin d’Aubers (Memorial Gardens)

Address and location	Wadhurst High Street, TN5 6SR
Ownership details	ESCC (Fire Service) (leased to WPC)
Description and purpose / current use	A community recreational accessible area with picnic tables, mature trees, two ponds, village flagpole, the village sign (stone), and a War Memorial to both World Wars.
Any designations	AONB. The memorial is a Grade II listed building.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close	Located within the development boundary and surrounding by homes.

to the community it serves	
Demonstrably Special?	<p>Recreation: Being in close proximity to the local schools and nursery, the space provides a meeting point for the families with school children. They use it for informal recreation.</p> <p>Tranquillity: The benches in the area encourage older members of the community to use the space as well. This provides a space to sit and reflect.</p> <p>Historic: The space houses a village memorial to both World Wars and importantly to the 28 men from the Wadhurst area whose lives were lost on 09/05/1915 at Aubers Ridge in WW1 (hence the name). The Memorial is where the local schools will come to commemorate Armistice Day every year. The memorial is a Grade II listed building.</p> <p>Wildlife: There is an established small wildlife garden with mature trees and a wildflower section. Two ponds with the consequent rare wildlife.</p>
Local in character?	0.4 ha
Photo	
Location map	

LG10: Vicarage Green Allotments

Address and location	Vicarage Green, Wadhurst, TN5 6AA
Ownership details	Vicarage Green Allotments Association
Description and purpose / current use	An allotment site with approximately 20 spaces.
Any designations	AONB.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No.
Planning permissions?	No.
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The site is located towards the edge of the village, accessible to the local community.
Demonstrably Special?	Recreation: This is one of two allotment sites serving parishioners. Allotments are valued as places for informal recreation and enable local people to have access to fresh air and to grow their own food. They are well used.
Local in character?	0.3 ha.
Photo	



LG11: Turners Green Field 2

<p>Address and location</p>	<p>Turners Green Road, TN5 6PX</p>
<p>Ownership details</p>	<p>Privately owned.</p>
<p>Description and purpose / current use</p>	<p>This is a sloped field, with historical significance, highly valued by the local community. It is currently used for horse grazing and as a widely-used and popular community footpath. Historically, this was the site of the last ever bare-knuckle fight in the Parish.</p>
<p>Any designations</p>	<p>AONB.</p>
<p>Site allocations in Local Plan</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Planning permissions?</p>	<p>No. In 2019, an application for 5 x Self Build Homes, WD/2019/2252/O, was submitted but it was robustly refused in July 2020 due to the impact on the High Weald AONB and views as well as the site's unsustainability. WDC commented on the application: <i>'In response to the recent planning application, there was robust community representation regarding the site's recreational, historical, and environmental value'</i>. The developer subsequently lodged an Appeal, APP/C1435/W/20/3265921, and a revised application, WD/2021/1056/O, was issued alongside the Appeal. The Appeal was refused in August 2021 and the revised application was refused in November 2021. A copy of the Officer Recommendation can be found on the Wadhurst Parish Council website (click here).</p>

<p>Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves</p>	<p>The field is located in Turners Green, on the outskirts of the village and outside the development boundary. It is close to homes with an ancient footpath (46) crossing it.</p>
<p>Demonstrably Special?</p>	<p>Recreation: The local community treasures their popular recreational value using them for walking, sledging on the slope, bird watching and wildlife spotting. The fields are currently used for horse pasture, which is a diminishing asset in Wadhurst. Ancient footpath 46 crosses the site.</p> <p>Historic: Both this site and LGS12 are of significant historical interest. In December 1863, the last public Bare Knuckle Prize Fight took place between Tom King and John Heenan in December 1863. The fight lasted twenty-four rounds and thirty-five minutes. The fight had a significant impact on modern day boxing and led to the Queensbury rules for boxing. From then on boxing gloves were enforced, and a fighter could no longer seize an opponent round the waist and throw him to the ground; punching alone would decide any contest.</p> <p>There is a commemorative plaque about this in the Sparrows Green Pavilion.</p> <p>Wadhurst History Society have put up a further commemorative brass plaque at the entrance of the site (see photo section), although this was mysteriously removed in June 2022.</p> <p>Beauty: Set within the AONB, and beyond the development boundary, the site affords beautiful long-distance views.</p> <p>Wildlife: The site sits within a darker area of the Parish and supports a range of flora and fauna including rare species such as dormice, common toad, bats, tawny owl, hedgehog, great crested newts, badgers, deer. The WDC assessment of the site for biodiversity purposes found: 'the site is mainly grassland.....the grassland is species rich and has a biodiversity value'. A habitat assessment of the site is included in the Evidence Base for the WNP. Additionally, the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre prepared an Ecological data search for land at Turners Green Road, Wadhurst, which can also be found in the Evidence Base.</p>
<p>Local in character?</p>	<p>1.0 ha.</p>

<p>Photo</p>	
<p>Location map</p>	 <p>Designated Local Green Spaces - LG11</p> <p>Turner's Green</p> <p>Designated Local Green Spaces</p> <p>© Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100051418) 2022, Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2022</p>

LG12: Turners Green Field 3

<p>Address and location</p>	<p>Three Oaks Lane, TN5 6PX</p>
<p>Ownership details</p>	<p>Privately owned.</p>
<p>Description and purpose / current use</p>	<p>A sloped field with historical significance, crossed by ancient footpath 46. Currently used for horse pasture and as a widely-used and popular community footpath.</p>
<p>Any designations</p>	<p>AONB.</p>

Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Located adjacent to LGS11, near to homes, although beyond the development boundary. Access is via FP 46.
Demonstrably Special?	<p>Recreation: The local community treasures their popular recreational value using them for walking, sledging on the slope, bird watching and wildlife spotting. The fields are currently used for horse pasture, which is a diminishing asset in Wadhurst. Ancient footpath 46 crosses the site.</p> <p>Historic: Both this site and LGS11 are of significant historical interest. In December 1863, the last public Bare Knuckle Prize Fight took place between Tom King and John Heenan in December 1863. The fight lasted twenty-four rounds and thirty-five minutes. The fight had a significant impact on modern day boxing and led to the Queensbury rules for boxing. From then on boxing gloves were enforced, and a fighter could no longer seize an opponent round the waist and throw him to the ground; punching alone would decide any contest.</p> <p>There is a commemorative plaque about this in the Sparrows Green Pavilion.</p> <p>Wadhurst History Society have put up a further commemorative brass plaque at the entrance of the site.</p> <p>Beauty: Set within the AONB, and beyond the development boundary, the site affords beautiful long-distance views.</p> <p>Wildlife: The site sits within a darker area of the Parish and supports a range of flora and fauna including rare species such as dormice, common toad, bats, tawny owl, hedgehog, great crested newts, badgers, deer. A habitat assessment of the site is included in the Evidence Base for the WNP. Additionally, the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre prepared an Ecological data search for land at Turners Green Road, Wadhurst, which can also be found in the Evidence Base.</p> <p>Additional evidence noted below LG12.</p>
Local in character?	1.3 ha.

Photo



Location map

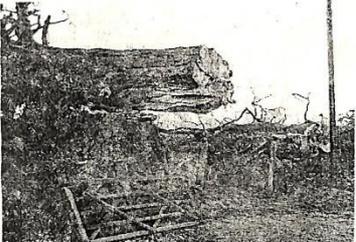


Additional evidence supporting sites LG11 and LG12:

Additional evidence to support the designation of sites LG11 and LG12:

- Evidence 1: Landmarks Fall – newspaper article describing the significance of the two sites

SITE OF LAST BARE-FISTED FIGHT - MAY 8th 1863



THE ancient beech trees at Turners Green, Wadhurst as they were **AND the beech trees after demolition...**

TWO ancient beech trees at Turners Green, Wadhurst, were felled last week.

Landmarks fall

Local people were up in arms about the action but the owner of the land on which the trees stood, Mr David Cogger, explained it was necessary because the trees were "rotten through the middle."

The condition of the trees was confirmed by Mr George Edwardes-Jones of Wasp (Wadhurst Area

Society for Protection and Preservation) who said the owner had every justification for felling the trees.

He had inspected them himself and had seen they were rotten at the core.

"It was very sad," he said "but it had to be."

Mr Edwardes-Jones added that the owner

had permission from the Forestry Commission to fell the trees which were a potential danger to passers-by.

The beech trees were about 250 years old and bordered a field which is a part of local history as it was where prize fights were once held which used to attract crowds of enthusiasts from as

far as London.

Wadhurst Parish Council discussed the trees at a meeting last Tuesday, but members thought the trees were simply being pruned.

A spokesman for Wealden District Council at Crowborough explained the trees were not the subject of a preservation order and were not in a conservation area, so they were not involved in the decision.

- Evidence 2: Letter from Wadhurst History Society detailing the historical importance of the two sites



- Evidence 3: Extended Phase 1 habitat survey – Turners Green Road – shown in Evidence Base and available on the [Wadhurst Parish Council website](#).

- Evidence 4: Historical letter to the Courier detailing the sites.

Telephone
Holborn 2686 (6 lines)
Telegrams
Field Newspaper London

*Must see
call probably
at least 2/5*

The Field

Windsor House
Bream's Buildings
London E.C.4

Aug 15th 1923

Dear Sir,

Your letter to hand, I presume you refer to the King v Heenan fight which took place at Walthamstow on Dec. 10, 1863, according to the records, & not in 1862. The Field of that time did not publish an account of the fight, but there was a leader written on it & extracts from the Lancet on the condition of Heenan after the fight were published. You would probably be able to find an authentic account of the fight in the files of Bell's Life, which gave full accounts of all the big fights. You could probably see that at the office of The Sporting Life, 27, St. Bussell Street, E.C.4. You would, of course, be quite welcome to consult the files of the Field at this office if you wished.

Yours faithfully,
J. Watson

COMMON LANDS.

CMB 11/2/129

REFERENCES TO THE KING-HEENAN PRIZE FIGHT OF 1863 - SEE CORRESPONDENCE FILED UNDER T.W. COURIER 1977 & 1979/80.

OFFICE V.B. REFERENCES RETAINED ARE:-

1865 MCH. (V.B. 159) - WALLIS TO WACE

1848 OCT (V.B. 100) - EXORS W^m WALKER TO WACE: TENANT THOMAS APPS

1882 MCH (V.B. 138) - VALⁿ. OF LANDS - WACE TO WACE.

(THIS BOOK IS NOW WITH RECORD OFFICE AT NEWES - WITH OTHERS TO 1869)

? REC. TO PURCHASE FROM HYADAMS (C. FOXES 2A)

(FOLLOWING PAPER "ENQUIRIES" AS TO LOCATION OF FIGHT IN 1844, RENEWED IN 1979, SEE ABOVE CORRESPONDENCE FILED!)

AMPLIFICATION OF ABOVE - (V.B.'S (2) CHECKED 31.1.1980 BY CMB)

1848. OCT. 15, P. 46 : VALⁿ. OF TENANT RIGHTS, ^(MANURES^m) ON COMMON LANDS - FROM EXORS. LATE W^m WALKER TO - WACE. INCOMING TENANT THOMAS APPS.

1882 - MCH 3rd P. 28^a : INV^m & VALⁿ. OF FREEHOLD PROPERTY. CALLED "COMMON LANDS" IN THE PARISH OF WOODHORST FROM THE REV. R.H. WACE TO HIS SON THE REV. HENRY WACE. THOMAS APPS (TENANT) RENT 1/40 P.A. FREEHOLD. GROWING TIMBER INCLUDED IN VALUATION. TYPE

28/2/1980
DS
MAP
REFS
(1909)
PLANTMENTS

SCHEDULE QUOTED:-

ACRES	DESCRIPTION	MEASURE
462 - 5.786	BEECH FIELD (PASTURE)	5A. 3R. 7P.
843 - 2.636	NORTH FIELD (MEADOW)	2A 2R 11P.
844 - 2.430	EAST FIELD (")	2A 1R 36P.
846 - 2.158	MIDDLE FIELD (PASTURE)	1A 3R 37P.
845 - 2.056	SOUTH FIELD (PASTURE)	2A. 0R 23P.
849 - 4.574	UPPER MEADOW (MEADOW)	4A 2R 5P.
* 19.640 A.		19A 1A 39P *

* 2 CATTLE LODGES & YARDS

(S/I TO REV^m 4/1882)

* SMALL DIFFERENCE OF DEGREE PROBABLY INCLUDES THAT AT THE CATTLE LODGES AND YARDS WHICH MAY NOT HAVE BEEN SHOWN IN ABOVE SCHEDULE.

Wadhurst. 225 2/11

Sept 9th 1977

The Editor
Kent & Sussex Courier
Grove Hill Road
Lunenburg Wells

Dear Editor,

The Lincolnshire Flight 1863

With reference to the notes by 'Warwick' in today's issue of 'The Courier' (South Eastern Edition), ^{EAST SUSSEX} I say that a very detailed account of this occurrence appears in 'The Story of Wadhurst' (a record of local history from Mrs Rhys David's lecture notes of 1894, collated and edited by Mr Alfred Vase). This booklet was published by the 'Courier' in early 1924.

A full account and historical record - under a title of 'The Wadhurst Flight' occupies several pages (105-109) and it is only possible here to refer to and quote a few salient points. There are several acknowledgements by the author for notes from 'The Field', 'The Target', and 'Luglistica'.

The flight was not however near Wadhurst Station, but was in the Sparrows Green area. 'The story' quotes ... 'A special train of 30 carriages, closely packed, left London Bridge at 6.15 a.m. for Wadhurst It drew up at a secluded spot (writes the Luglistica reporter) short of Wadhurst Station at 9.15 a.m. It totted up a steep clayey hill ... for about 1 1/2 miles (i.e. past Greens Farm, Three Oaks and Stonebridge) to the Two Beches on the Common Land stakes were pitched and the flight began at 10 a.m.'. It is quoted as being fought out in a corner of the Common Land on Hill House Farm on December 8th 1863.

One point however is not clear even now. The date quoted above was Dec 8th; according to an 'Iron Age Standard' report on July 3rd, 1904, under a '100 years ago' feature, which gave various recorded history of Noonan's life story and giving the date of this flight as December 10th 1863.

← **
THIS
POINT
NOT
QUOTED
IN PRESS
REPORT!

Yours faithfully,

P.S. It is possible your own files may have a copy of 'The story' as it was your publication - if so, and you wish to amend or add to the above, please do so!

126

Cousley Wood
Wadhurst. TN15 6HA

Sept 29th 1977

The Editor
Kent & Sussex Courier
Grove Hill Road
Tunbridge Wells

Dear Editor,

The 1863 Prize Fight

My apologies for returning to
but since my notes appeared in your issue
I have had several enquiries as to the location
of this fight, and as a result of some further research into
the incident, it apparently took place on
Common Lands at Turners Green (not Sparrows Green). The lands
referred to comprise a small holding of about 19 1/2 acres, in six
enclosures, approached by the two large beech trees (which still exist)
at the road junction at Fairhaven Corner.
The Wace family who lived at Hill House and farm for many years
seemed to have owned these common lands, as I have now seen a
record of a transfer of the freehold from Father to Son in 1882 - the
tenant of the fields then being a Thomas Apps. My own grandfather
is also recorded as having seen this fight as a boy - he was born in 1849.
The Wace Family who lived at Hill House and Farm for many years
seemed to have owned these common lands, as I have now seen a
record of a transfer of the freehold from Father to Son in 1882 - the
tenant of the fields being a Thomas Apps. My own Grandfather is also
recorded as having seen this fight as a boy - he was born in 1849.

1863 prize fight
MY APOLOGIES for returning to the above subject but since my notes appeared in your issue of Sept 16, I have had several enquiries as to the location of this fight, and as a result of some further research into the incident, it apparently took place on Common Lands at Turners Green (not Sparrows Green). The lands referred to comprise a small holding of about 19 1/2 acres, in six enclosures, approached by the two large beech trees (which still exist) at the road junction at Fairhaven Corner.
The Wace family who lived at Hill House and farm for many years seemed to have owned these common lands, as I have now seen a record of a transfer of the freehold from Father to Son in 1882 - the tenant of the fields then being a Thomas Apps. My own grandfather is also recorded as having seen this fight as a boy - he was born in 1849.
CHAS. N. BOCKING
Springfield
Cousley Wood
Wadhurst
(T.M.C.
7.10.77)

C. W. ASHBY

Yours faithfully,

16/2/81
NOTE: G.P. BORN IN 1843 (NOT 1849)
FIGHT
Probable Sad at Young Man age!
He came to work in 1852
from his school. Appears to have
been above the error.
G.P. Bockina
1852 Here
1863 Here
11 years!!

THE KING-HEENAN FIGHT.

127

FROM THE T.W. COURIER OF 14.12.1979.

FINAL FIGHT OF A GREAT CHAMPION

DOES anyone know the site in WADHURST where John Heenan, the great American bare-knuckle fighter and one-time champion of the world, had his last fight, against Tom King, in 1863. After 40 desperate minutes Heenan was well beaten, and so ended the career of one of the most popular ring champions.

The Wadhurst fight was probably held in a field close to the railway, for it was the practice then for the "Fancy" to hire a train to follow their heroes and set up the encounter in a place where they were unlikely to be disturbed

by the police.

Heenan was never the same man after his terrible 41-round inconclusive fight to a standstill with Tom Sayers in a field beside the railway at Farnborough, Hants, in 1860. Heenan was temporarily blinded, and Sayers' right arm on which he had taken hundreds of blows, was black and swollen to nearly double its normal size.

Tom Sayers took to drink and

debauchery and died in 1865, aged 38 and a physical wreck.

Heenan stayed in England and continued fighting, until he was soundly thrashed by Tom King.

The Wadhurst battle is regarded as one of the minor epics of the bare-knuckle ring, but little is known of the venue and circumstances today.

Heenan became a bookie, but it brought him little luck. He was severely injured in the crash of an Ascot race train in 1864, and after seven years of poor health died suddenly in the United States in 1873.

NOTEBOOK

P. 12.

COURIER

ADVISED BY ME

ON

21.12.79

BY

PHONE TW

(26262)

(1 REPLY RECEIVED)

? FAIR VIEW

PREVIOUS ENQUIRY BY T.W.C. - ISSUE OF SEPT 9. 1977

MY FIRST REPLY " " " 16 "

MY FOLLOW-UP LETTER " OCT 4 "

(AFTER CHECKING LOCATION OF COMMON LANDS)

LOCATION OF BIG PRIZE FIGHT FOUND

THE MYSTERY surrounding the location of the King v Heenan prize fight in Wadhurst in 1863 has been solved with the aid of a Courier publication, The Story of Wadhurst, printed in 1893 and three local residents.

The booklet, which has now become a collector's item valued at £12, states that the fight, which caused a sensation in its day, was fought out in a corner of the Common Lands, on Hill House Farm.

It mentions two enormous beech trees which still stand today in a field owned by Mr and Mrs S. Rowles, of Fairhaven, Turners Green, opposite the Sparrows Green recreation ground.

Mr and Mrs Rowles have a copy of the book, as does Mr G. Hook, stationmaster at Wadhurst Station. It gives a detailed account of the fight which was hard and savage. After only 40 minutes, a relatively short time as these fights could last hours, Heenan was defeated.

PATRIOTIC FERVOUR

An interesting footnote to the fight is the patriotic fervour levelled against Heenan. As an American from the northern states public opinion was biased against him. Britain was protecting her cotton interests by supporting the rebel Confederate States in the American civil war.

On the day of the fight Wadhurst was swamped by the prize fighting fraternity. A special train stopped half a mile outside the station to let the supporters off — thus avoiding the police who

often swooped on illegal prize fights.

Traders and publicans had a field day supplying fight fans with refreshments both liquid and solid.

The fight itself was a bit of a let-down as Heenan, once a world champion, had never recovered from an earlier bout with Tom Sayers which lasted a mammoth 41 rounds and left him temporarily blinded. He was past his prime and his performance, much to the delight of the patriotic crowd, was not up to his old standard.

Heenan faded from the public eye after the fight and became a bookie. He was injured in a train crash at Ascot in 1864 and died a broken man in the United States in 1873.

EX T.W. COURIER
21.12.1979

Jan 6th 1980

Springfield,
Cousley Wood
Wadhurst.

Mr. R.J. Baldoek
Wadhurst Parish Council
The Briars
Western Road, Wadhurst

Dear Mr Baldoek,

Local History.
Famous Prize Fight - King/Heenan

No doubt many of your Members will have read of the recent revival of interest in the above matter - and as Wadhurst does not appear to have had any great items of Historic Interest recorded (with the exception of course of the Charter of 1253), may I suggest that now would be an appropriate time, now the location of the Common Lands has been established and the two famous beach trees identified at the entrance thereto, to apply for a Preservation Order on these, so that they may become 'ancient Monuments' or something similar! The trees I believe are still in fairly good order - and after all, other places have their 'Famous Trees'!

Yours sincerely,

Randy RJB. 630p 25/1/80 - enquiries proceeding!

THE KING-HEENAN PRIZE-FIGHT 26

EX T.W.C
11.1.1980

TONBRIDGE
EDN
↓

T.W.C 18.1.1980

Fight venue

IN YOUR issue of December 14 (Page 12) you ask where, in Wadhurst the King and Heenan took place.

It was in a field at Turners Green on December 8, 1863. This is confirmed (1) in The Story of Wadhurst (Published in 1924) which gives the location as "the second field south of the road" from the two Beech Trees standing opposite "Fairhaven". It also refers to "the few cottages round the site". And (2) by Mr C. H. Bocking's letter which appeared in your issue dated October 7, 1977.

F. C. BOORMAN
"Greenhurst"
Old Station Road
Wadhurst

venue

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F. C. BOORMAN

Prize fight

I HAVE read with soe interest the report on the above matter appearing in your issue of December 21 last. While I do not find fault with the quoted extractions from the booklet, I do query other comments made!

A similar inquiry was made some two years ago, and my replies of September 16 and October 1977 do not need further comment.

I agree that "The Story" was printed by your good selves, but certainly not in 1893! The lecture, upon which the book was based was not given until 1894 (as the frontispiece quotes) and the late Mr Alfred Wace added various later items of local interest up to about 1922/3. The book contains the rolls of honour of service

The Editor
Kent & Sussex Courier
Longfield Road
Tonbridge Wells

Cousley Wood
Wadhurst . TN5 6HA
Jan 4th 1980

Dear Sir,

Prize Fight at Wadhurst

I have read with some interest the report on the above matter appearing in your issue of Dec 21st last. Whilst I do not find fault with the quoted extractions from the Booklet, I do query other comments made!

A similar enquiry was made some two years ago, and my replies of Sept 16th and Oct 7th 1977 do not need further comment.

I agree that 'The Story' was printed by your good selves, but certainly not in 1893! The Lecture, upon which the book was based was not given until 1894 (as the frontispiece quotes) and the late Mr Alfred Wace added various later items of local interest up to about 1922/3. The Book contains the Rolls of Honour of Service Members including those who died, from 1914-1920. The Editor's Preface, and a Postscript at the end of the book by Mrs Rlys Davids were both dated December 1922.

I purchased a paper-back Edition of the booklet at about the time of publication - and the date I recorded on it was Feb 23rd 1924! Future historians, please note!

Yours faithfully,

PRIZE - FIGHT (WADHURST) 124

JOHN C. HEENAN AND TOM KING

DECEMBER 1863

100 YEARS AGO *

From the Evening Standard, Friday, July 1, 1864.

Dangerous Condition of Heenan. —Among the most serious sufferers from the recent railway accident at Egham, is John C. Heenan, the Benicia Boy. It appears that Heenan looked from his carriage window when the first alarm was given, and finding a collision was inevitable, jumped on to the platform as the train was moving, and falling heavily, injured his spine so severely, that he has suffered from a continuous succession of fits ever since.

NOTE: Born on May 2, 1835, John Carmel Heenan's first fight in England was against Sayers, on April 17, 1860. After 37 rounds the referees declared the fight a draw. The American Press denounced the decision as due to British partisanship. On December 10, 1863, he fought "Sailor" Tom King at Wadhurst, losing in the 25th round. The American Press claimed Heenan was drugged. Heenan stayed in England as a bookmaker until the end of the Civil War when he returned to face charges of corruption. He established a gambling parlour and fought as sparring partner to Jem Mace, and died suddenly on October 25, 1873.

FROM THE
"EVENING STANDARD"
JULY 3RD 1864

* NOTE STILL UNDER QUERY :-

THE REPORT ABOVE
QUOTES DEC 10TH 1863
THE STORY OF WADHURST
(WACE)
QUOTES DEC. 8TH 1863.

Big fight

DOES ANYONE know the site in WADHURST where John Heenan the great American bare knuckle fighter and one-time champion of the world had his last battle, against Tom King in 1863?

After 40 desperate minutes Heenan was well beaten, and so ended the career of one of the most popular ring champions.

The Wadhurst fight was probably held in a field close to the railway, for it was the practice then for the "Fancy" to follow their heroes and set up the encounter in a place where they were unlikely to be disturbed by the police.

Heenan was never the same man after his terrible 41-round inconclusive fight to a standstill with Tom Sayers in a

field beside the railway at Farnborough, Hants., in 1860.

Heenan was temporarily blinded, and Sayers' right arm on which he had taken hundreds of blows, was black and swollen to nearly double its normal size.

Tom Sayers took to drink and debauchery and died in 1865, aged 38 and a physical wreck.

Heenan stayed in England and continued fighting until he was soundly thrashed by Tom King.

This Wadhurst battle is regarded as one of the minor epics of the bare-knuckle ring, but little is known of the venue and circumstances today.

Heenan became a bookie, but it brought him little luck. He was severely injured in the crash of an Ascot race train in 1864, and after seven years of poor health died suddenly in the United States in 1873.

FROM THE T.W.
"COURIER"
SEPT 9TH 1977

(SEE C.H.B.'S REPLY!)

1863 fight

THE BARE-knuckle battle between John Heenan, one-time champion of the world, and Tom King at WADHURST in 1863 — referred to in a recent Week by Week story — took place in the Sparrows Green area, according to Mr Charles Bocking, of Springfield, Cousley Wood.

A detailed account appears in The Story of Wadhurst, a record of local history from Mrs Rhys David's lecture notes of 1894, collated and edited by Mr Alfred Wace. Mr Bocking quotes:

"A special train of 30 carriages, closely packed, left London Bridge at 6.15 am for Wadhurst. It drew up at a secluded spot short of Wadhurst Station at 9.15 am . . .

. . . We toiled up a steep clayey hill . . . for about 1 1/2 miles (past Greens Farm, Three Oaks and Stonebridge) to the Two Beeches on Common Land. Stakes were pitched, and the fight began at 10 am".

Mr Bocking says the contest is quoted as being fought on a corner of the common land at Hill House Farm.

T.W.C. 16.9.1977
(SEE LETTER) →

SEE MY COPY →
LETTER
OVER-PAGE

PRIZE FIGHT KING & HEENAN

Big fight

DOES ANYONE know the site in WADHURST where John Heenan the great American bare knuckle fighter and one-time champion of the world had his last battle, against Tom King in 1863?

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TWC. 9.9.77

(DUP)

1863 fight

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Mr Bocking says the contest is quoted as being fought on a corner of the common land at Hill House Farm.

See Wadhurst
(Red album)

KING - HEEMAN FIGHT

CHECK ON 22.9.1944 (see Grace)
RECORDED ON

VAL BK 133 (P 149) HILL FARM (~~1860~~)
OCT 31. (1860) WADSWORTH
WADSWORTH TO WACE

VAL B 138 (P 28) COMMON LANDS
(1882) REV. R. H. WACE
WADSWORTH JOHN P. C.

SEE PRESS CUTTINGS IN LOCAL HISTORY VOLUMES

VAL B 138 (P 28) MENTIONS HILL FARM
(1882) EAST GREENFIELD
(NO MENTION OF WACE)
WALL & WACE - HILL FARM

OS MAP 18.4 E St Seen 22/9/44
Copied at Burn Alone (10p)
NEAR OPPOSITE FAIRHAVEN

MORTONS LAND - OS NO 450 - 4.150 ACRES
OPPOSITE FAIRHAVEN - OS 462 - 5.456 AC
2 BEECH TREES
COMMON LAND / WACE
FIELD POSSESS PRESENT PLAYING FIELD
(OS NO 849, ALSO 843 & 844)

SEE CW FISHER'S ORBIT. WADSWORTH FARM - SAID
FIGHT AT TURNERS GREEN AS A BOY - BORN 1849
AGE 14 IN 1863

849 TAMPSITT 12/1911
NO DATE OF DEATH SHOWN

COMMON LANDS (TURNERS GREEN).

V.B. 138. p. 28. TOTAL FREEHOLD PROPERTY
 CALLED "COMMON LANDS", PAR. OF WADHORST
 FROM REV. R.H. WACE TO HIS SON REV. HENRY WACE

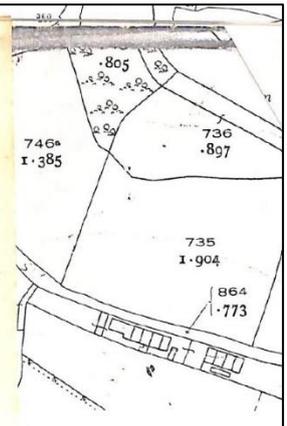
(SOLICITORS MENTIONED) LAND TAX - 1.50
 MARCH 31ST 1882. QUIT RENT VERY SMALL
 TENANT THOMAS APPS. RENT 4/6 P.A.
VALU^N INC. GROWING TIMBER.

MAP:-		A R. P	
5.786	BEECH FIELD (PASTURE)	5-3-7	762
2.634	NORTH " (MEADOW)	2-2-11	843
2.430	EAST " "	2-1-26	844
1.984	MIDDLE " (ARABLE)	1-3-37	846*
2.056	SOUTH " (PASTURE)	2-0-23	845
4.574	UPPER " (MEADOW)	4-2-5	849
19.470		ACRES. 19-1-39	

2 CATTLE LODGES
 & YARDS.

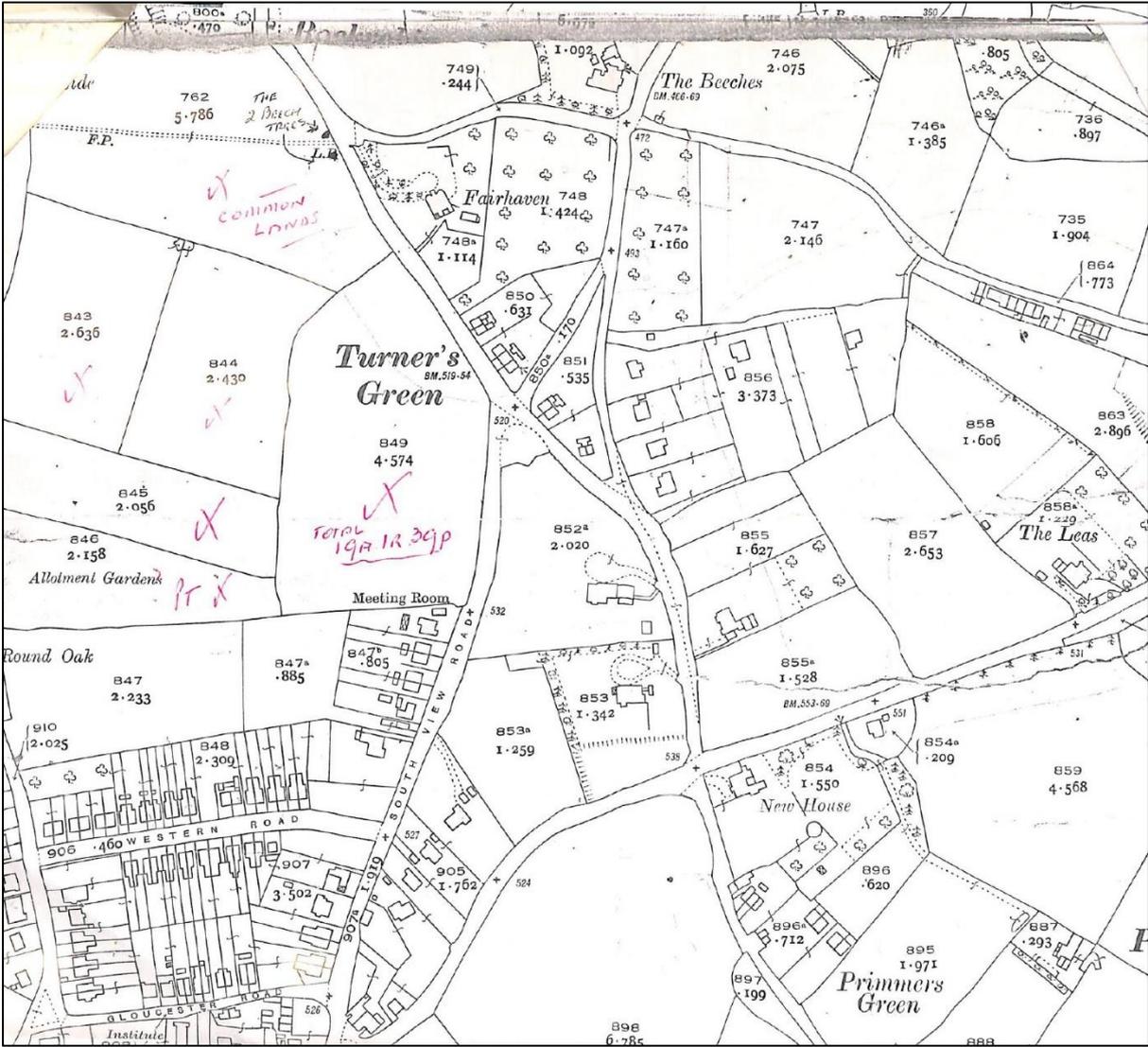
(PRICE NOT NOTED HERE)
 (SEE BOOK IF NEEDED)
 FOR INFORMATION ONLY

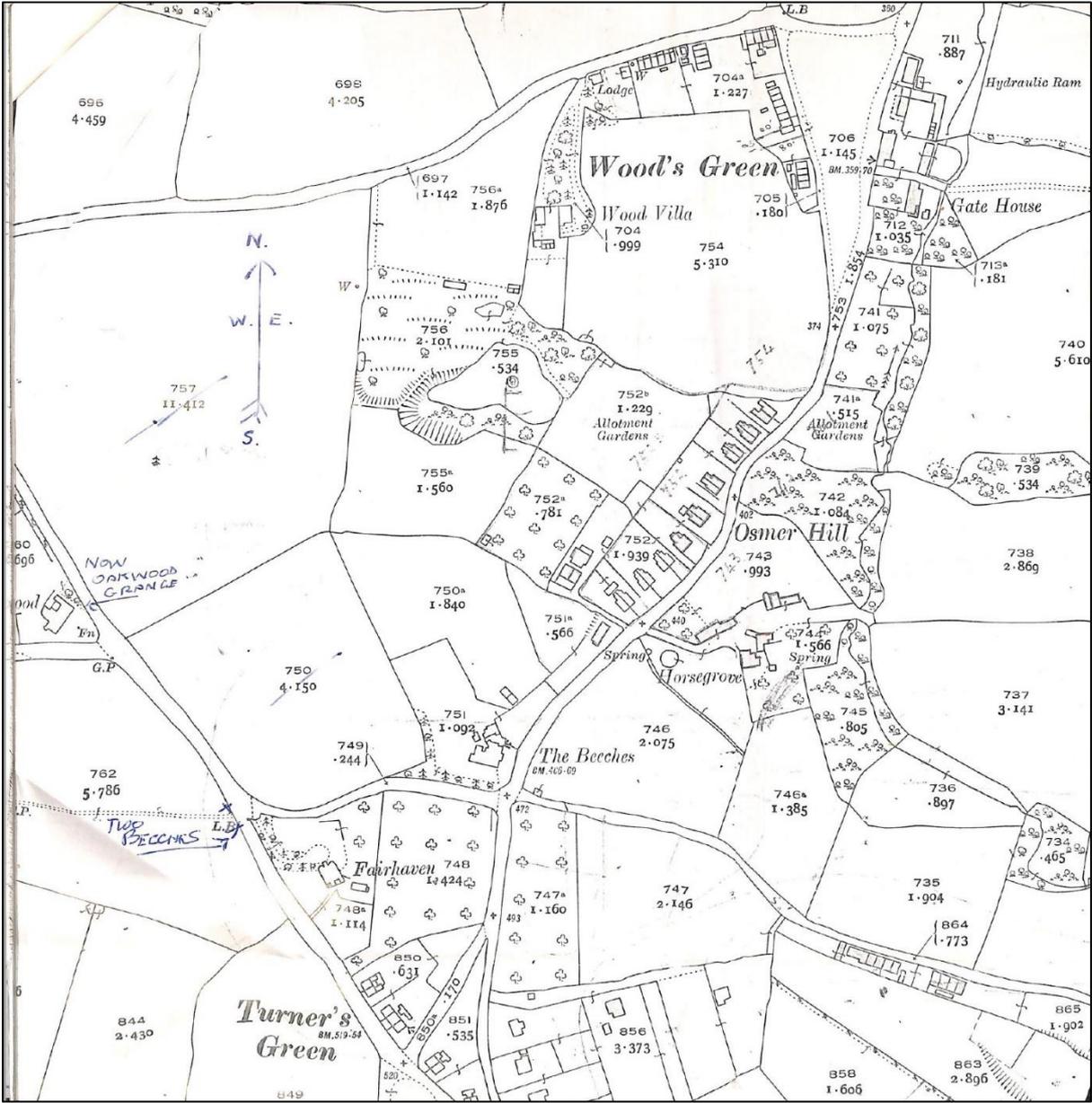
N.B. 1885 DIRECTORY - SHOWS REV. R.H. WACE (HILL HOUSE).
 " " " THOMAS APPS (STONEBRIDGE)
 1884 VOTERS - " REV. R.H. WACE (LEGASSE).
 N.B. JOHN LEGAS BUILT HILL HOUSE



OS 846 = INFORMATION
 THIS RECORD OF 1-3-37 TABLE
 REPRESENTS PART OF THIS MODERN
 PAGE
 DETAILS (REF. ONLY) - FROM V.B. 138. H. J. BURNETT & SON.
 (EXTR. ON 29-9-1977)

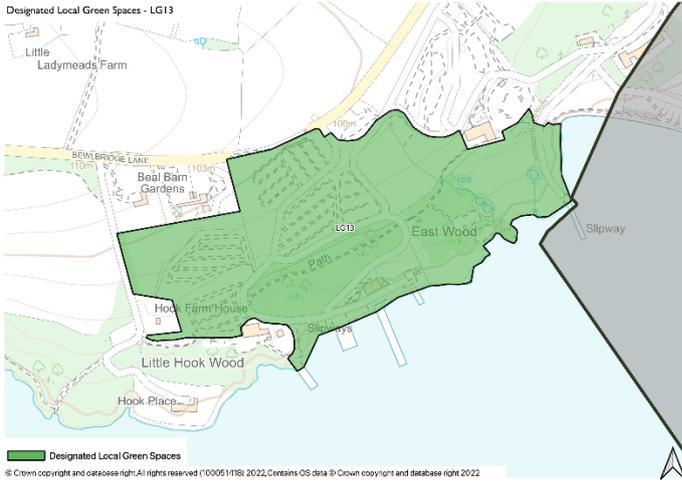
N.B.
 V.B. 138
 WALKER
 TO
 WACE
 (HILL HO.)





LG13: Bewl Water Reservoir Recreation & Leisure Area

Address and location	Bewl Reservoir, Bewlbridge Lane, Wadhurst, TN3 8JH
Ownership details	Southern Water (Salomons UK Ltd - Lessee)
Description and purpose / current use	<p>A much-valued multi-use leisure and recreation area for community use. Landscaped to a design by award winning landscape architect Dame Sylvia Crowe PPILA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● mainly large open grassed areas, ancient woodland, and foreshore for walking and informal recreation ● reservoir foreshore with slipways and bases for rowing, sailing and canoe clubs and outdoor boat storage areas ● a base for fishermen, with boat hire and tackle shop ● camping ● children’s adventure play-area and soft play area <p>Nearby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● landscaped car parking area ● cafe
Any designations	AONB, within a Local Wildlife Site and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No.
Planning permissions?	Various applications have been made in the past, most recently: 80 earth lodges – application rejected. Campsite for 80 pitches granted for 3 years from 2021. Currently applications outstanding for change of use to overnight accommodation for the former clubhouse and the race box.
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The main visitor and vehicle entrance is from the A21 but Wadhurst residents typically access Bewl via the B2100 to Bewlbridge Lane and Hook Hill Lanes, parking there and walking in via Bewl’s ‘back door’ or its vehicle exit. Some also walk from Wadhurst village and Cousley Wood via the footpath network. Within 1km of Lower Cousley Wood and 2.4km of Cousley Wood.
Demonstrably Special?	<p>Recreation: In answer to a question in the Household Survey regarding public open spaces used or valued as an asset to the community, Bewl Reservoir was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● used for informal activities by 61% (571) of respondents, ● used for dog walking by 42% (392) of respondents, ● used for organised sport by 11% (107) of respondents, &

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● not used but valued by 19% (178) of respondents. <p>There is no alternative site of at least 20 Ha. in the Parish to meet Natural England's ANGSt standard.</p> <p>Beauty: Wonderful views throughout this area across Reservoir and across the High Weald.</p> <p>Additional evidence noted below this table.</p>
<p>Local in character?</p>	<p>Circa 13 ha.</p>
<p>Photo</p>	
<p>Location map</p>	 <p>Designated Local Green Spaces - LG13</p> <p>© Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (10005118) 2022. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2022.</p>

LG16: Stone Cross Farm Field

Address and location	Lower High Street, TN5 6LR
Ownership details	Privately owned.
Description and purpose / current use	This a community-valued sheep grazing field, featuring a popular public footpath (Wadhurst 27a).
Any designations	AONB and borders to the Wadhurst Conservation Area.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No, but submitted as a potential site in the WDC 2020 Call for Sites.
Planning permissions?	No.
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves (in meters)	Located close to homes crossed by Footpath 27a.
Demonstrably Special?	<p>Recreation: Since 2011 this field has been used (bar Covid and severe weather) to host the annual Parish Bonfire and Firework display by the Wadhurst Warriors Charity. The slopes are used for tobogganing on snow days. The site offers the first and only distinctive and highly valued views to the southern ridges as you enter Wadhurst from the B2099 (southeast). It is beautiful, tranquil and has a historic, well-used public footpath 27a (Snape 4) running through it, leading to Birchetts Wood and Forestry Commission Snape Wood. This footpath represents the one public access to these ancient woods without having to walk on pavement- less roads or take the car and is the only footpath able to be directly accessed from Wadhurst village High Street. This unique footpath is highly valued by the community and used for walking and bird watching.</p> <p>Beauty: The site affords beautiful views to the southern ridges and sunset views to the west.</p> <p>Wildlife: The site supports badgers, deer, and rare species such as great crested newts in the nearby pond.</p>
Local in character?	0.7 ha.

Photo



Location map

