

# LINDFIELD & LINDFIELD RURAL Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031

Submission Plan version



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# Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031

## Submission Plan

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## Foreword

Dear Resident,

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider this important document that contains the policies which, with your help, will soon be included in a new Neighbourhood Plan. The area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan is the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Parishes and incorporates the communities of Lindfield, Scaynes Hill and Walstead. Composing a Neighbourhood Plan is a very new and exciting way for communities such as ours to shape the future of the area we live in and I am very proud that our Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, with a great deal of community support, has progressed your plan to the submission stage.

The process of creating your Neighbourhood Plan is being led by members of your community and is part of the Government's recently revised approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what happens in the area in which we live. Communities like ours have been granted this important new power through the Localism Act of 2011. Ultimately we will all be able to decide whether or not to adopt this Neighbourhood Plan through a local referendum.

The plan contains a number of policies, which include areas where Mid Sussex District Council and the Parish Councils will encourage some small developments and changes, and other areas where development will not be permitted. Moreover, given the recent history of 120 new houses having been granted planning permission in January 2010, 65 new houses in December 2010, and 230 new houses in April 2013, the Parishes have had to take a total of 415 new houses in large developments within the last four years. This is a wholly disproportionate increase for a predominantly rural area when judged against the District-wide total of 530 houses per annum. The plan therefore proposes only small, sustainable clusters of housing to meet local needs and to conserve the Parishes' landscapes and bio-diversity.

I am disappointed that we have been unable to identify any suitable Rural Exception Sites for "Affordable Housing" as a result of our appeal last year to local landowners and their agents for possible land for future development. It is clear from the results of our Housing Needs Survey that was conducted for us also in 2013, that there is a considerable current local need for such accommodation and that the Barratt Homes (formerly Wates) development allocation will not satisfy even this current demand.

The policies within the Neighbourhood Plan have been drafted following considerable interaction and consultation with residents in the parishes over the last 2 years. In addition to holding our Steering Group meetings in public in both Lindfield and Scaynes Hill, we also held a series of Exhibitions and Pop-in Sessions in both locations as well as having information stands at both the Lindfield Arts Festival and Lindfield Village Day. Views and comments received at those events have been most useful and form part of the evidence base that supports the plan.

Our Neighbourhood Plan was created by a large group of committed individuals from both Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Parish Councils, our clerks and other members of our community. My special thanks to all the members of our 4 community Focus Group for their hard work and final reports, which have provided us with great help in producing our policies and thanks also to all other members of our community, whose names are too numerous to

mention, for taking the time to contribute their thoughts and views. In addition I would like to express my appreciation for the co-operation we have received from the councillors and staff of our fellow Mid Sussex Parishes, Haywards Heath Town, Mid Sussex District and West Sussex County Councils.

The work undertaken by the Focus Group volunteers merits special commendation, as they have explored a whole range of current and possible future bio-diversity, community, economic, environmental, housing, infrastructure, landscape, transport and traffic matters, only a few of which it has been possible to incorporate within this plan. This is because many of them are either covered by existing central legislation or are the responsibility of authorities other than our own parish councils and so are outside of our scope.

I should add that following public consultation on our draft Plan at the end of 2013, a number of changes have occurred in both local and national planning policies, procedures and guidelines. For example, the minimum housing development size needed to justify the provision of on-site affordable housing has been increased from 6 to 10 units. Although we have tried to accommodate these changes within our submission Plan wherever possible, there will undoubtedly be areas where we have not been able to manage this, since we cannot of course keep making changes "ad infinitum". Any area that has been missed will of course be considered as part of the ongoing 5 yearly review process.

Finally, both Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Parish Councils along with the Neighbourhood Plan Group would like to thank the community for participating in the process and for making their views and thoughts known, as incorporating the views of the community is a vital part of making the Neighbourhood Plan a success.

Thank you very much for your continued support. Best wishes, **Alan Gomme, Chairman, Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**



*The rural landscape between Lindfield & Scaynes Hill.*

## 1. Introduction

### Purpose

1.1 At the request of Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Parish Councils, the Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) designated the whole of the Parishes of Lindfield and Lindfield Rural (LLR) as a 'Neighbourhood Area' on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2012 for the purpose of enabling the two Parish Councils to prepare the 'Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan' (LLRNP). However, for the purposes of the joint Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan (General Regulations) 2012, it is agreed that Lindfield Parish Council is the qualifying body.

1.2 The plan below shows the boundary of the Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Area (see Figure A). The Parish Councils, through a joint Project Steering Group, have led the preparation of the LLRNP to cover the plan period 2014 – 2031. The LLRNP sets out specific policies and proposals for the use and development of land in the Area over that plan period for a statutory period of public consultation.

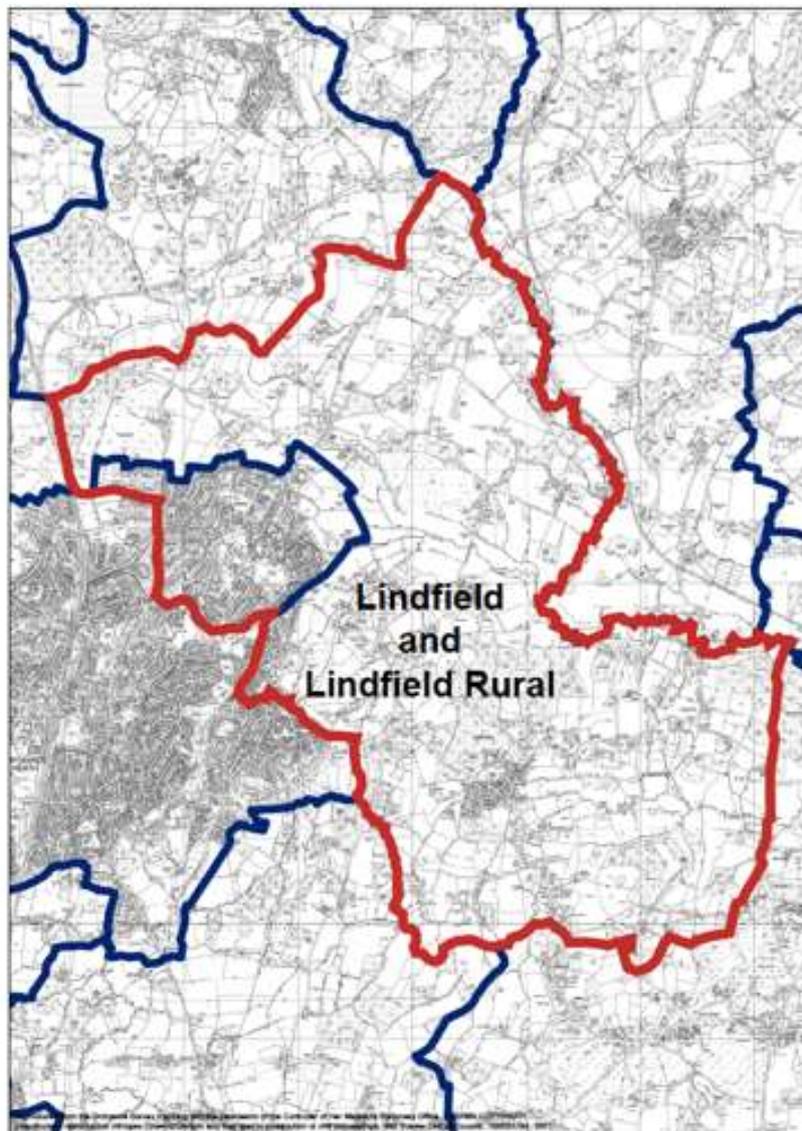


Figure A: The Designated Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Area

1.3 The LLRNP has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

## **Neighbourhood Plans**

1.4 The LLRNP is amongst the first Neighbourhood Plans prepared in England since the 2011 Localism Act. The National Planning Policy Framework states:

*“Neighbourhoods should develop plans that support the strategic development needs (and) ... plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area”. (para. 16)*

*“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Towns ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications”. (para.183)*

*“Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan ... Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies”. (para.184)*

*“Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation”. (para.185)*

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment & Sustainability Appraisal**

1.5 The local planning authority, MSDC issued a screening opinion in July 2013 of all the neighbourhood plans being prepared in its district. The opinion requires that neighbourhood plans are subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the EU Directive 2001/42 if they intend to make land allocations or are in particularly sensitive areas.

1.6 The LLRNP does not propose to allocate land for housing or other purposes and confines its policies to the established settlements of Lindfield and Scaynes Hill. The Screening Opinion therefore confirms that an SEA is not required.

1.7 A Sustainability Appraisal is not a requirement of a neighbourhood plan. However, the Basic Conditions Statement accompanying the LLRNP for examination sets out how the LLRNP contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, as required by the Regulations.

## **The Plan Preparation Process**

1.8 The process of preparing and seeking final adoption of the LLRNP is in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012 and has been agreed by the two Parish Councils.

1.9 The LLRNP has benefited from the involvement of many local people in evidence

gathering, analysis and reporting information. Themed groups were formed around the key topics of the plan to research existing data, policies, plans and programmes at the local and national level that were relevant to the LLRNP. The State of the Parishes Report captured a summary of the considerable work completed, much of which has informed the LLRNP and will continue to inform other non-planning related projects in the area.

1.10 The process up to submission has comprised three main stages:

- State of the Parishes Report – the report published in May 2013 summarising all the evidence on which the LLRNP has been based
- Pre-Submission LLRNP – the report published in November 2013, comprising the vision, objectives, policies and the Proposals Map for public consultation through to January 2014
- Submission LLRNP – this report, which takes into account the representations received on the draft plan and is modified as necessary for submission to MSDC for examination

1.11 Thereafter, the LLRNP documentation is publicised by MSDC for a six week period prior to the examination by an independent examiner. The role of the examiner is to test the LLRNP meets the 'basic conditions' as required by the 2012 Regulations. The examiner then makes a recommendation to MSDC as to whether or not the LLRNP should proceed to referendum, with or without modifications. If MSDC decides the LLRNP should go to referendum then that is arranged for at least one month hence. A simple majority of votes cast will mean that the LLRNP is made and it becomes an up-to-date part of the Mid Sussex development plan for the two parishes.

## Consultation



*Lindfield Arts Festival, Scaynes Hill Pop-In Session & Lindfield Village Day 2013.*

1.12 The Parish Councils have consulted their respective local communities extensively, including the 2011 questionnaire and the consultations for the Parish Plans, which all underpin the consultation feedback upon which the LLRNP is based. Groups of local residents have been established to review and agree which issues should be addressed by the plan. There have also been community surveys to obtain the fullest view of local community concerns, needs and wants from the LLRNP.

1.13 The Pre-Submission LLRNP was then published for a statutory public consultation period commencing Friday 1 November 2013 and ending on Friday 13 December 2013. During that period, 62 representations were received making objections or commenting on the content of the document. The details and outcomes of all the formal and informal consultation exercises are contained in the Consultation Statement that accompanies the publication of the LLRNP.

## 2. State of the Parishes

### An Introduction to the Parishes of Lindfield & Lindfield Rural



*Lindfield Pond is at the bottom of Lindfield High Street opposite the King Edward Hall.*

#### **Lindfield**

2.1 Lindfield Parish is located in the central eastern portion of Mid Sussex District in West Sussex, abutting the north-east boundary of the town of Haywards Heath. Haywards Heath straddles the main east-west A272 road, which heads west to Billingshurst, Petworth and Midhurst and east to Newick and Maresfield. Haywards Heath is also located on the main London-Brighton train line for commuters and provides more significant amenities and services (such as the Hospital) than those found in the parish.

2.2 The village of Lindfield is located on high ground to the south of the River Ouse and is characterised by the High Street lined with Lime trees, a feature which gives the village and the surrounding parish its name. Many of the buildings along the High Street are of wooden framed construction and date from the medieval period. The village contains shops, businesses, pubs, schools, a medical centre, churches and community groups catering for a wide range of needs. There is a large pond with a range of wildlife and the village common on which various activities and events take place. The village is well served by a frequent bus service to and from Haywards Heath.

2.3 The countryside around Lindfield forms the Lindfield Rural parish and includes part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with the Ashdown Forest approximately some 5 miles north east of the village. Lindfield has managed to retain rural separation between itself and the neighbouring settlements to the north and north-west, and east towards the hamlet of Walstead and village of Scaynes Hill. These rural approaches to Lindfield are key features of the character and identity of the village, and significantly contribute to its identity as a settlement. Although over the years, the similar gap between Lindfield and Haywards Heath has disappeared, the Lindfield community still considers itself as a separate entity.

## Lindfield Rural

2.4 Lindfield Rural Parish is a parish located in the central eastern portion of Mid Sussex District in West Sussex. The parish is located immediately to the north, east and south east of Lindfield Parish and encapsulates most of the countryside along the eastern edge of Haywards Heath, stretching as far as the East Sussex County boundary. Approximately half of the parish is contained within the Ashdown Forest 7km buffer zone, which forms part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.5 The parish is mainly rural in nature, comprising a number of small hamlets such as Walstead and East Mascalls. There are, however, two larger population centres within the parish: the area adjacent to the Lindfield Village boundary between Scrase Brook and Gravelye Lane and the larger village settlement at Scaynes Hill. It is in the latter that the Village Hall (Millennium Hall) is located, which is the primary community building and where the Parish Council meets. Other facilities/services in Scaynes Hill include a garage/petrol station, two churches and a primary school. Scaynes Hill is served by an hourly bus service which connects to Haywards Heath in the west, via the Gravelye Lane settlement, and Uckfield in the east. Apart from the Gravelye Lane settlement, there are large areas of rural countryside between Lindfield village and the settlements in the Rural parish, giving them their own sense of identity.



*Scaynes Hill Common in Lindfield Rural Parish.*

## Selected Statistics

2.6 The following statistics and evidence are primarily drawn from the 2011 Census. These are used to provide an overview of the current status of the community. Other sources of data or information are acknowledged where applicable.



Figure B: Old Map of Lindfield

## Lindfield

2.7 The usual resident population of the parish is 5,836 people (2,746 male, 3,090 female). Of these:

- 1,111 People aged 15 and under (19.1% of parish population compared to 15.7% across the District and 19% across England)
- 3,165 People aged 16 to 64 (54.2% of parish population compared to 58.1% across the District and 65% across England)
- 1,560 People aged 65 and over (26.7% of parish population compared to 26.4% across the District and 16% across England)

2.8 Of the 5,836 usual residents of the parish, 3,897 were aged between 16 and 74. The economically active population was 2,627 (67.4%):

- 1,455 were Employed full-time (55.4% compared to 42.2% across District)
- 563 were Employed part-time (21.4% compared to 15.1% across District)
- 459 were Self-employed (17.5% compared to 12.4% across District)
- 79 were Unemployed (3.0% compared to 2.4% across District)
- 71 were Full-time students (2.7% compared to 2.6% across District)

2.9 The economically inactive population was 1,270 (32.6%) of whom were:

- 839 were Retired (66.1% compared to 14.2% across District)
- 133 were Students (10.5% compared to 3.6% across District)
- 192 were Looking after home or family (15.1% compared to 4.0% across District)
- 61 were Long-term sick or disabled (4.8% compared to 2.0% across District)
- 45 were classified as Other (3.5% compared to 1.4% across District)

- 2.10 Of the 2,537 residents in the parish in employment and aged between 16 and 74:
- 427 were Managers, Directors and Senior Officials (16.8% compared to 13.3% across the District).
  - 672 were Professional Occupations (26.5% compared to 19.5% across the District).
  - 122 were in Elementary Occupations (4.8% compared to 7.8% across the District).

- 2.11 Of the 4,725 usual residents in the parish aged 16 and over:
- 604 possessed no qualifications (12.8% compared to 14.8% across the District).
  - 2,066 possessed Level 4 and above qualifications (43.7% compared to 33.6% across the District).

#### 2.12 Housing Types

- There are 2,604 dwellings located within the Parish.
- 1,014 dwellings were Detached (38.9% compared to 34.8% across the District)
- 623 dwellings were Semi-detached (23.9% compared to 29.7% across the District)
- 622 dwellings were Terraced (23.9% compared to 16.1% across the District)
- 345 dwellings were Flats/apartments (13.2% compared to 18.9% across the District)

#### 2.13 Housing Tenure

- There are 2,524 households located within the Parish.
- 1,224 were Owner-occupied households, owned outright (48.5% compared to 35.5% across the District)
- 873 were owned with a mortgage or loan (34.6% compared to 38.8% across the District).
- 5 were Shared Ownership (0.2% compared to 1.0% across the District).
- 6 were Social Rented from Council (0.2% compared to 0.5% across the District).
- 164 were Social Rented Other (6.5% compared to 10.1% across the District).
- 214 were privately rented – by landlord or letting agency (8.5% compared to 12.8% across the District).

#### 2.14 Transport

- 353 households had no car or van (15.1% compared to 13.6% across District and 25.8% across England)
- 974 households had 2 or more cars or vans (38.6% compared to 44.2% across the District and 32.1% across England)

2.15 The 5,941 usual residents of the Parish were classified as having the following health status:

- 3,019 were in Very Good health (51.7% compared to 51.8% across the District)
- 1,919 were in Good health (32.9% compared to 34.0% across the District)
- 676 were in Fair health (11.6% compared to 10.7% across the District)
- 190 were in Bad health (3.3% compared to 2.8% across the District)
- 32 were in Very Bad health (0.5% compared to 0.8% across the District)

### **Lindfield Rural**

2.16 The usual resident population of the parish is 2,633 people (1,327 male, 1,306 female). Of these:

- 513 People aged 15 and under (19.5% of parish population compared to 15.7% across the District and 19% across England)
- 1,592 People aged 16 to 64 (60.5% of parish population compared to 58.1% across the District and 65% across England)

- 528 People aged 65 and over (20.1% of parish population compared to 26.4% across the District and 16% across England)

2.17 Of the 2,633 usual residents of the parish, 1,872 were aged between 16 and 74. The economically active population was 1,313 (70.1%) of whom:

- 674 were Employed full-time (51.3% compared to 42.2% across the District)
- 285 were Employed part-time (21.7% compared to 15.1% across the District)
- 267 were Self-employed (20.3% compared to 12.4% across the District)
- 38 were Unemployed (2.9% compared to 2.4% across the District)
- 49 were Full-time students (3.7% compared to 2.6% across the District)

2.18 The economically inactive population was 559 (29.9%) of whom:

- 318 were Retired (56.9% compared to 14.2% across the District)
- 67 were Students (12.0% compared to 3.6% across the District)
- 85 were Looking after home or family (15.2% compared to 4.0% across the District)
- 59 were Long-term sick or disabled (1.9% compared to 2.0% across the District)
- 30 were classified as Other (5.4% compared to 1.4% across the District)

2.19 Of the 1,274 residents in the parish in employment and aged between 16 and 74:

- 200 were Managers, Directors and Senior Officials (15.7% compared to 13.3% across the District).
- 281 were Professional Occupations (22.1% compared to 19.5% across the District).
- 110 were Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations (8.6% compared to 10.7% across the District).
- 61 were Sales and Customer Service Occupations (4.8% compared to 6.8% across the District).

2.20 Of the 2,120 usual residents in the parish aged 16 and over:

- 271 possessed no qualifications (12.8% compared to 14.8% across the District).
- 826 possessed Level 4 and above qualifications (39.0% compared to 33.6% across the District).

2.21 Housing Types

- There are 1,056 dwellings located within the Parish.
- 588 dwellings were Detached (55.7% compared to 34.8% across the District)
- 313 dwellings were Semi-detached (29.6% compared to 29.7% across the District)
- 89 dwellings were Terraced (8.4% compared to 16.1% across the District)
- 64 dwellings were Flats/apartments (6.1% compared to 18.9% across the District)
- 2 dwellings were Caravans or other Mobile or Temporary Structures (0.2% compared to 0.5% across the District)

2.22 Housing Tenure

- There are 1,015 households located within the Parish.
- 465 were Owner-occupied households, owned outright (45.8% compared to 35.5% across the District)
- 368 were owned with a mortgage or loan (36.3% compared to 38.8% across the District).
- 4 were Shared Ownership (0.4% compared to 1.0% across the District).
- 3 were Social Rented from Council (0.3% compared to 0.5% across the District).
- 65 were Social Rented Other (6.4% compared to 10.1% across the District).
- 86 were privately rented – by landlord or letting agency (8.5% compared to 12.8% across the District).

### 2.23 Transport

- 69 households had no car or van (6.8% compared to 13.6% across District and 25.8% across England)
- 583 households had 2 or more cars or vans (57.4% compared to 44.2% across the District and 32.1% across England)

2.24 The 2,633 usual residents of the Parish were classified as having the following health status:

- 1,424 were in Very Good health (54.1% compared to 51.8% across the District)
- 842 were in Good health (32.0% compared to 34.0% across the District)
- 264 were in Fair health (10.0% compared to 10.7% across the District)
- 86 were in Bad health (3.3% compared to 2.8% across the District)
- 17 were in Very Bad health (0.6% compared to 0.8% across the District)

2.25 In addition to one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on the eastern edge of the Neighbourhood Area – Scaynes Hill SSSI on Blackbrook Lane - there are some Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), such as Scaynes Hill Common. The Neighbourhood Area also contains other areas identified by Natural England as Priority Habitats and subject to Habitat Action Plans. These are Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland (Birchen Wood). The central western portion of the Neighbourhood Area is adjacent to the Scrase Valley Local Nature Reserve, whilst the southern portion is adjacent to the Chailey Common Local Nature Reserve.

2.26 The Bio-Diversity & Landscape Focus Group additionally considers that all wildlife habitats within the Parishes can benefit from improved stewardship and management. One habitat giving most concern is the remaining rough/unimproved grassland. Three sites have been identified where we should encourage and support the owners in obtaining formal protection. They have also suggested protection for existing wildlife corridors and connected holdings, reserves and other open/green space by further corridors. The restoration of the critical Ouse blue corridor needs to be secured by safeguarded water quality and streamside habitat in tributaries flowing from built-up areas.

2.27 The Neighbourhood Area contains well over 100 listed buildings and structures, the Lindfield Conservation Area and currently three designated Areas of Townscape Character.



*Scaynes Hill Petrol Station & Village Shop.*

## Community Views

2.28 Since the launch of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Project Steering Group has established a number of Focus Groups and arranged drop-in sessions for the community to learn more about the Neighbourhood Plan and to express their opinions on the future of the Parish. It also undertook a comprehensive community survey of all households in the parishes.



*Focus Group Pop-In Sessions in Scaynes Hill & Lindfield held in April 2013.*

2.29 The conclusions of the four Focus Groups and of the survey were detailed in the State of the Parishes Report of May 2013. However, a summary of the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the parishes and of the opportunities and challenges for the LLRNP is provided below:

### Strengths

- attractiveness of the built and natural environment of the settlements and countryside of the parishes
- the physical distinctiveness of Lindfield from its larger neighbour, Haywards Heath
- the community spirit
- the special character of Lindfield Common
- its community facilities, recreation areas and playgrounds in places
- its primary schools

### Weaknesses

- Doctors' patients list oversubscribed and closed, Lindfield Medical Centre unable to be further extended.
- Lindfield & Blackthorns Primary Schools both undergoing expansion to accommodate recent developments in the area, joint site unable to take further expansion.
- Scaynes Hill isolated from Lindfield due to lack of direct bus service and unsafe cycling route.
- Limited public transport between Scaynes Hill and Haywards Heath town centre, especially in the evenings and at week-ends.
- Lack of non-sporting youth facilities in Lindfield.
- Lack of affordable housing and housing types to suit smaller households

### Opportunities for the LLRNP

- to bolster the strengths of the parishes in respect of shaping the future use and development of land
- to shape and control future planning decisions by refining District-wide policies to suit

- the parishes' circumstances
- to secure planning-related funding to invest in supporting infrastructure
- to identify appropriate sites for affordable housing and suitable delivery mechanisms
- to identify viable community assets to protect from inappropriate development proposals

#### Challenges for the LLRNP

- to agree a level of housing growth that is sustainable for the parishes and that makes a reasonable contribution to the Mid Sussex supply requirements
- to distribute that growth in the parishes in ways that bolster the parishes' existing strengths and/or that address their weaknesses
- to maximise the benefits of new housing in the parishes to meet both local affordable needs and the demands in the open market for specific housing types and tenures
- building an effective consensus between the two parish communities

## **Planning Policy Context**

2.30 The parishes are part of the Mid Sussex district, the West Sussex county and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Each has adopted and emerging policies and proposals that influence the strategy and detailed content of the Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan (LLRNP).

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.31 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government in March 2012 is also an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. At Examination, the submitted LLRNP must demonstrate that is consistent with the policies and intent of the NPPF.

2.32 The NPPF contains a number of key principles that will shape the LLRNP. Those with particular relevance are itemised below:

- Presumption in favour of sustainable development (para.14)
- Role of NPs (para.16)
- Recognises intrinsic character and beauty of countryside (para.17)
- Support existing businesses (para.21)
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (para.28)
- Sustainable transport and travel plans (para.35, 36)
- Boosting the supply of housing (para.47)
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (para.50)
- Affordable housing and rural exception sites (para.54)
- The vitality of rural communities (para.55)
- The quality of development (para.58)
- Promoting healthy, inclusive communities (para.69)
- Designation of Local Green Spaces (para.76/77)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (para.109-115)
- Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs (para.115)
- Minimise impacts on biodiversity (para.117)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (para.126)
- Neighbourhood Plans (para.183-185)

2.33 The principles above are those of most relevance to the LLRNP but other principles in the framework will also have some bearing on the preparation of the document. Similarly, the LLRNP has taken account of the National Planning Practice Guidance published in March 2014.

### The Mid Sussex Development Plan

2.34 The development plan for Mid Sussex currently comprises the saved policies of the adopted 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan. The LLRNP must be deemed to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. Once adopted, the LLRNP will be the primary means by which planning applications in the parish will be judged, where it contains specific policies and proposals that complement the Local Plan.

2.35 The policies in the 2004 Local Plan are saved for development management purposes in the district until they are superseded either by a new Mid Sussex District Plan and/or by the LLRNP. The following policies are considered the most relevant to the LLRNP (see Plan B):

- C1 Protection of the Countryside
- C4 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- C5 Nature Conservation
- B1 Design
- B6 Open Space
- B10 Listed Buildings
- B12 Conservation Areas
- B13 Demolition in Conservation Areas
- B14 Pavements in Conservation Areas
- B15 Setting of Conservation Areas
- B20 Advertisements in Conservation Areas
- H2 Housing Density & Mix
- H3 Infill with Built Up Areas
- H4 Affordable Housing
- S6 Local Shopping Areas
- CS6 Retention of Community Facilities
- CS8 Extension of Community Facilities
- CS17 Telecommunications

2.36 There are also following site-specific policies relating to Lindfield Parish, which will remain in place until superseded by the LLRNP (see also Figure C):

- L1 Areas of Townscape Character
- L12 Land North of Meadow Drive (implemented)

2.37 The Basic Conditions Statement prepared to accompany the LLRNP for examination explains how its policies are in general conformity with these policies.

2.38 The LLRNP has been prepared to reflect the reasoning and evidence of the new Mid Sussex District Plan, which will replace the saved policies of the 2004 Local Plan as necessary. The Submission District Plan was published by MSDC in May 2013 but was withdrawn from its examination during the consultation period on the LLRNP Pre Submission Plan in May 2014.

2.39 The Submission District Plan was positive about neighbourhood planning in the District and was the stimulus for the LLRNP. Where relevant, the LLRNP has sought to reflect the policy direction of the new Plan, which itself will need to be in conformity with the NPPF. But, the new Plan will take some time to come forward and, as the LLRNP will precede it, the policies of the Submission District Plan cannot be used to justify the LLRNP.

2.40 However, in respect of housing development in the plan period, the Submission District Plan proposed that 2,000 homes will need to be delivered in the rural areas of the District, having taken into account the number of new homes already 'committed', the number of

new homes planned for Burgess Hill and the number of new homes built in 2011/12. The District Council's preference was that the location and nature of this development should be identified through Neighbourhood Plans.

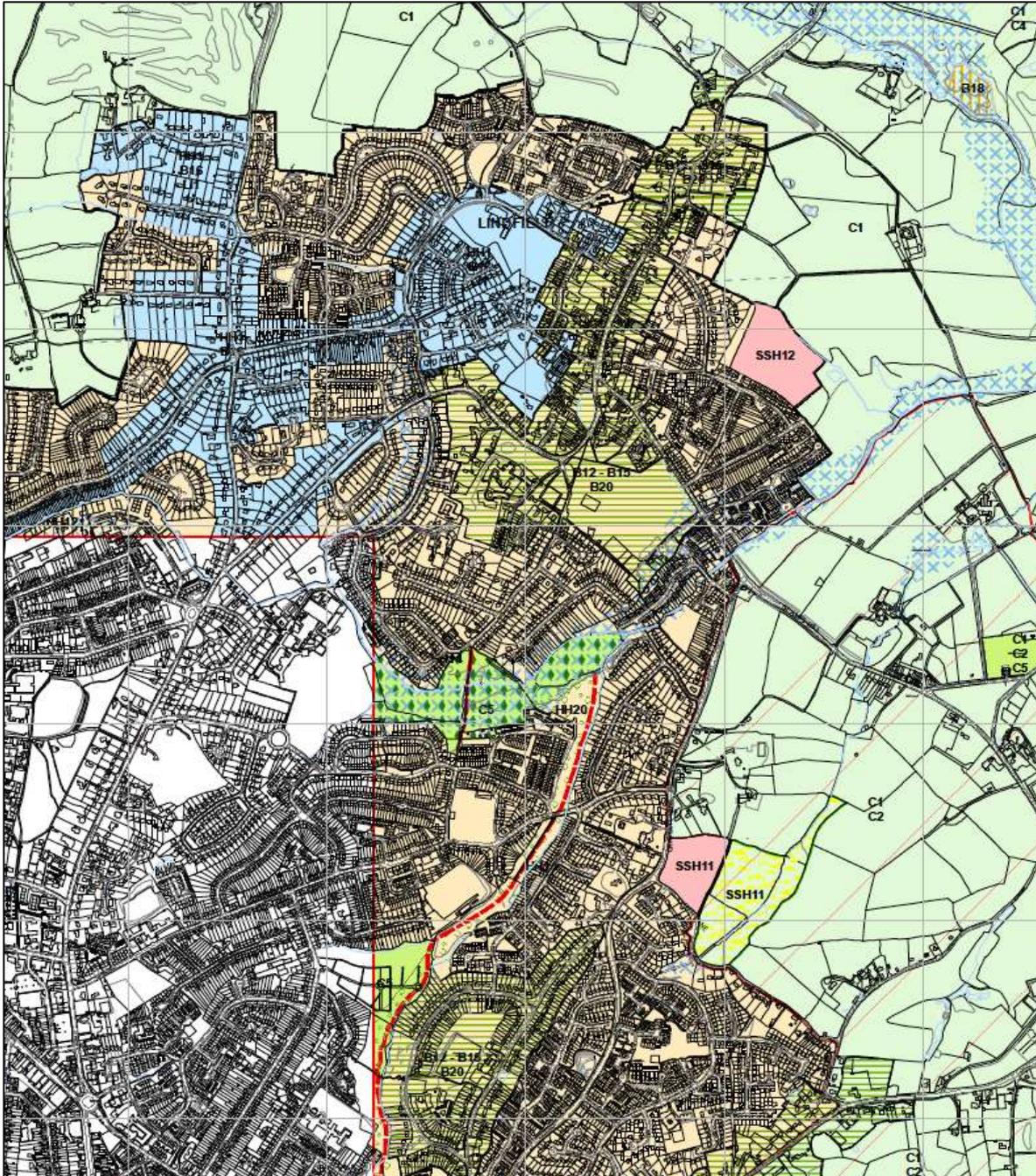


Figure C: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan Proposals Map – Inset 34 Lindfield

2.41 After a decade of stable population numbers, Lindfield will grow by 20% over the next decade as it accommodates 1,000 more residents and 600 additional cars of major development schemes consented since 2010. This will have consequences for a village infrastructure that was already under strain before the latest schemes. In the process, the local community is seeing large stretches of irreplaceable countryside being lost.



Figure D: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan Proposals Map – Inset 19 Scaynes Hill

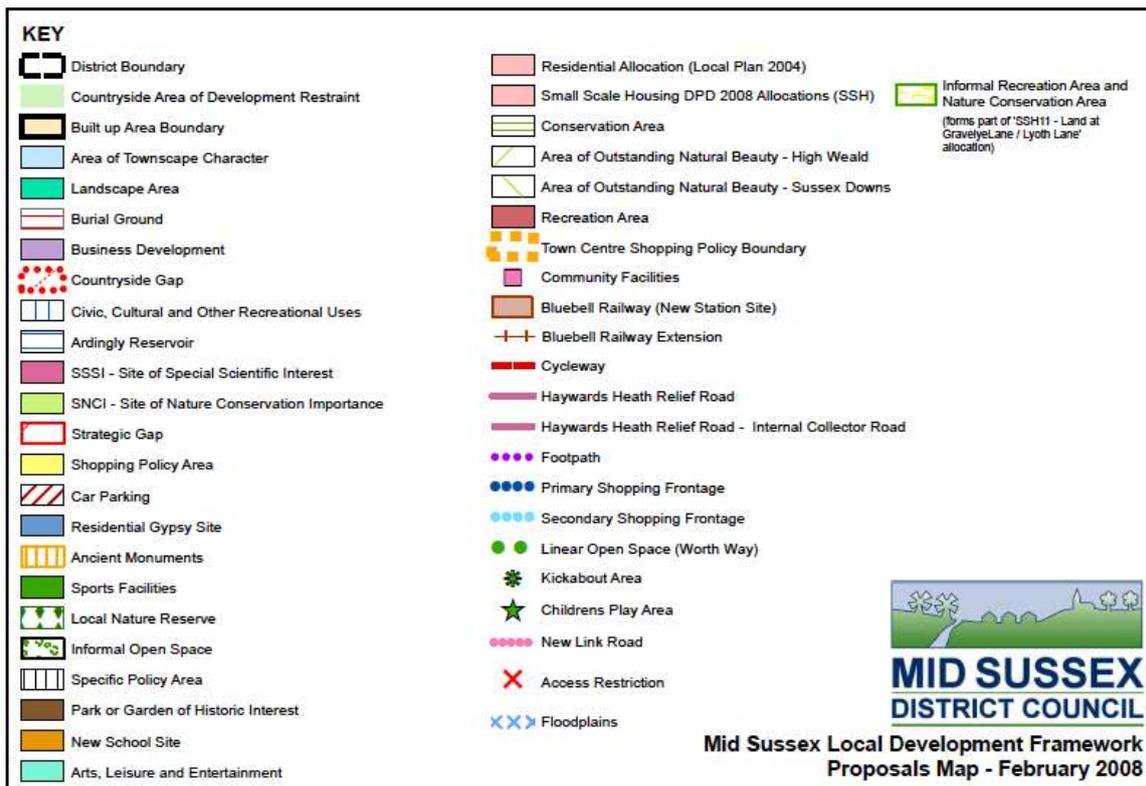


Figure E: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan Proposals Map - Key

2.42 As part of the process of preparing the housing policies of the LLRNP, Action in Rural Sussex was commissioned by MSDC to undertake a Housing Needs Survey for the area. It reported that it had identified 41 households in current housing need (Lindfield 20 no. and Lindfield Rural 21 no.), who have a local connection and who cannot afford to either purchase or rent on the open market. Analysis also breaks down the 41 households into single adult 22, single elderly 3, adult couple 5, elderly couple 1 and families with children 10. This current need is unlikely to be satisfied over the whole plan period by the allocation of affordable homes at the major Gravelly Lane scheme alone. That scheme will deliver almost 70 affordable homes but only a proportion of those will be allocated by MSDC to meet local need and the local need for affordable housing is likely to continue throughout the plan period.

#### High Weald AONB

2.43 Part of the LLRNP neighbourhood area lies within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which extends across Sussex and Kent and was last confirmed in 2014, being a mid-term review of the AONB Management Plan of 2004 so as to more particularly cover the period 2014-2019. In 2001, the then Countryside Commission stated:

*"The primary purpose of designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. In doing so, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.*

*Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs to conserve and enhance natural beauty and sets out responsibilities for their management and for the production of AONB Management Plans".*

2.44 The current High Weald AONB Management Plan was adopted in 2004 for the full period 2004 – 2024 (subject to periodic review). In its vision of the area in 2024, the Plan states:

*"An increasing number of households will have been accommodated without compromising the characteristic historic settlement pattern. Strong planning policies and a sound understanding of the dynamics of sustainable communities have influenced development. Environmental building technologies have improved the construction of buildings and the High Weald now supports 'green' designs using local materials. The links between people, their communities and businesses, and the land has strengthened. The landscape now provides a range of ecosystem goods and services. Many residents grow their own food; are involved in small-scale production; have joined community land management initiatives; are employed in small businesses utilizing products from the local landscape; and buy local products. Most residents and visitors enjoy informal and sensitive open-air use of the AONB and benefit from a rich, protected, well-understood and celebrated cultural heritage. The Plan expects the local planning authority development plans, to provide a considerable level of protection for the character of the AONB. It will inform future development plan policy, and assist in the implementation of existing policies, especially those that seek to conserve and enhance hitherto undefined 'character'. Although neighbourhood plans were not known about then, the Plan states that "...this relationship applies to some other plans (such as community strategies) whereas with others ...it will inform and focus ... parish appraisals, village design statements and parish plans".*

2.45 The Plan has a specific role to play in the planning system. As a statutory document,

local planning authorities must take the plan into account when formulating their development plans. It is a 'material consideration' in terms of deciding a planning application and has been tested through the appeal system. It has identified a series of key issues to for future development plans, including the NP, to address:

- for settlements – the need for greater understanding of the dispersed settlement pattern of the High Weald, and the connections between settlements and the countryside; the loss of rural function, becoming dormitories for commuting or places of retirement; erosion of AONB character through extension of curtilages, inappropriate modifications, or treatments, of boundaries and buildings; inappropriate new development; and inappropriate design and building materials – architecture not respecting AONB character, quality and objectives
- for route ways – car and lorry numbers increasing on the network of narrow lanes, with implications for safety, non-vehicular use, and tranquillity; the threat of rights of way diversion and uncontrolled loss and damage to unidentified features; the introduction of non-native species, inappropriate boundaries and gates, and intrusive highway engineering and the vast majority of ancient route ways in the High Weald have no protection, leaving them exposed to mismanagement
- for woodland - extent of non-native species; the poor connectivity, increasing isolation, fragmented ownership, and small size of many woodlands is degrading their ecological value and potential productivity industries, and the loss of skilled woodland workers; and a poor understanding of ecology and historic environment in the High Weald woodlands, and the nature and extent of the management required to bring them into favourable condition on a landscape scale under a changing climate.
- for field and heath - declining extent of agriculture with land falling out of productive use into amenity and residential use, with consequent neglect; a lack of straightforward farm businesses, exits from agriculture, lack of successors to existing farms, increased reliance on non-land based diversification and incomes; a lack of infrastructure supporting agriculture and land management; declining skills with an ageing and shrinking workforce with the traditional skills necessary to maintain the features of the open land of the AONB; and environmental degradation with neglected fields and heaths scrubbing up, increasing run-off and agrochemical inputs, loss of key habitats and damage to historic features
- for public understanding and enjoyment - limited, fragmented and inconsistent information on, and interpretation of, the AONB; low awareness amongst residents and visitors of the action they can take to care for the area; the quality of Rights of Way and visitor services infrastructure needs to be developed to meet needs and demands for higher standards; and traffic impacts.

#### Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA)

2.46 Ashdown Forest is located adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of Mid Sussex within Wealden District. It is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) due to the important heathland habitats present and classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA) due to the presence of breeding Nightjars and Dartford warbler. It is a site of European Nature Conservation Importance comprising heathland and woodland habitats of around 3,000Ha.

2.47 Following consultation with Natural England, Mid Sussex District Council has undertaken a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to test whether the Mid Sussex District Plan, in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of Ashdown Forest. The HRA report on the District Plan identifies that proposed new housing

close to Ashdown Forest is likely to increase the number of visitors to the Forest. Such visitors could increase disturbance to rare, ground-nesting bird populations (in particular the Dartford Warbler and Nightjar). The 'Ashdown Forest Visitor Survey Data Analysis' published in September 2010 found that most visitors to the Forest live within 7 km of its boundaries (straight line distance). The HRA therefore identified a 7 km 'zone of influence' within which new housing developments must counter its effect by putting in place measures which reduce visitor pressure.

2.48 The LLRNP area includes a small area of land within the 7km Zone, and therefore new residential development in that area must have due regard to the Habitats Regulations. The proposed approach set out in the Mid Sussex District Plan includes providing Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace sites (SANGs) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) measures on Ashdown Forest itself. SANGs are sites that cater for the recreational needs of communities in order to reduce the likelihood of visitor pressure and disturbance on important nature conservation areas. A SANG can either be provided locally or developer contributions provided towards a strategic SANG site located elsewhere in the 7km Zone. The criteria for a site to be suitable as a SANG site is set out on the MSDC website and it is responsible for deciding how developer contributions towards the provision of SANGs and SAMM will be calculated and delivered.



*Walstead, part of Lindfield Rural Parish.*

### 3. Vision & Objectives

#### Vision



*Bluebird Community Bus, Rural Farming & Pretty Corner, Lindfield.*

3.1 The vision for Lindfield & Lindfield Rural in 2031 is:

*In 2031, the parishes of Lindfield and Lindfield Rural will have remained distinct*

communities from the larger adjoining town of Haywards Heath, having seen no significant expansion of their settlements into the surrounding countryside.

The settlements of Lindfield and Scaynes Hill have continued to accommodate new housing to help meet the demand and need for new, and especially affordable, homes by using previously-developed land within their established boundaries. They have also encouraged new small businesses to set up. In doing so, they have succeeded in protecting their many heritage assets and important open spaces.

Lindfield Village Centre has survived and thrived as a viable and vital centre serving the local community and shoppers and visitors from further afield with the right mix of convenience and retail shops, a post office and a range of cafés, restaurants and inns. Both Lindfield and Scaynes Hill have retained and bolstered their community facilities.

Both settlements are better connected to each other and to the wider area by dedicated cycle routes and improved local bus services.



*Lindfield High Street, Farming & Annual Cycle Event.*

## Objectives & Measures

3.2 The Vision is an important statement of how the parishes will change overall but more specific strategic objectives are needed to judge how successful this change will be. For each objective it is helpful to identify one or two measures to monitor and review how the LLRNP is progressing in years to come.

3.3 The following objectives and measures are therefore proposed for the plan:

- i. To meet the future housing demand and need**
  - the number of open market homes being provided
  - the number of affordable homes being provided
- ii. To protect the special historic and landscape character of the parishes and their surroundings**
  - the number of consented applications affecting designated heritage assets
  - the number of consented applications affecting designated environmental assets
- iii. To bolster the resilience and viability of Lindfield's shopping area**
  - the number of A1 shops at any given time
  - the amount of any additional square meter-age of A1 shop floor space
- iv. To encourage greater use of public transport, cycling and walking**
  - the number of new bus services serving the community

- the miles length of new cycle routes coming forward
- the number of new footpaths being created by West Sussex County Council or other land owners

3.4 The objectives cover a range of economic, social and environmental issues that together provide a basis on which the sustainability performance of the LLRNP can be judged. They also accord with the strategic objectives of the District Plan as they relate to the parishes in Mid Sussex (see elsewhere for comments regarding the progress of the District Plan).

3.5 They reflect the nature of the parishes and the direction the local community wants the LLRNP to take, especially in maintaining the special character and identity of the local area. They also accept and welcome change that will enable the local communities to grow in a sustainable way.

### **Monitoring & Review**

3.6 The LLRNP will be monitored by Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Parish Councils and MSDC on a regular basis as part of the Mid Sussex Monitoring Reports. The objectives and measures will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at a Parish level relevant to the Plan will also be included.

3.7 It is expected that the LLRNP will be formally reviewed on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the review of the District Plan if this cycle is different.

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## 4. Policies & Proposals



*View from the top of All Saints church, looking south down Lindfield High Street.*

### **Introduction**

4.1 The LLRNP contains a series of policies and proposals, the successful delivery of which during the plan period will achieve the communities' vision for the Parishes.

4.2 When the LLRNP is made and becomes an up-to-date part of the development plan for the two parishes, these policies will be used by MSDC to consider and determine planning applications. Importantly, the policies will sit alongside the saved (and in due course replacement) policies of the Mid Sussex development plan, including for example policies relating to protecting landscape character and biodiversity. For that reason, the LLRNP policies do not seek to repeat saved policies, merely to refine or to add further interpretation for applying to the LLRNP area. The LLRNP should therefore be read in conjunction with the 2004 Local Plan until a new District Plan replaces that plan.

4.3 Each policy is numbered and is accompanied by a reference to its conformity with the NPPF and development plan. There is also a short explanation of the policy intent and a justification, including a reference to the relevant key evidence (which is listed in Appendix A). The evidence documentation is available either directly or via a link on the Parish Councils' websites.

### **Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parishes**

***Only development proposals within the built up area boundaries of Lindfield and Scaynes Hill, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be supported and the re-use of previously-developed sites will be encouraged, provided that the development is appropriate in scale, massing, and character, and that the proposals for development have had due regard to the policies contained elsewhere in this Plan and the Local Development Plan.***

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan Policy G2, C1, C2 and NPPF para's 17, 55, 109)*

4.4 This policy establishes the key spatial priority for the LLRNP. It supports development proposals in the two established settlements of the neighbourhood area (and especially previously developed land) in line with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF and development plan.

4.5 The effect of the policy is to confine housing and other development proposals to the established built up area boundaries of Lindfield and Scaynes Hill, unless they are appropriate to a countryside location. There have been a number of large housing schemes consented in the Area that will make a major contribution to meeting the housing needs of the District. One largest of the schemes has required an encroachment into the countryside gap between the established settlements of Lindfield - Walstead and Scaynes Hill, the importance of which has now increased in respect of maintaining its distinctive character and identity of these places from further development.

4.6 Given this significant and recent increase in local housing supply, there is little justification for the policy to propose an amendment to the 2004 Local Plan built up area boundaries at either Lindfield or Scaynes Hill to accommodate further housing development that extends those settlements. It may however, be appropriate to do so in any future review of the Neighbourhood Plan once the consented developments have been built out and if further evidence becomes available at that time. It is the case that no additional sites for housing were promoted for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan except for land at Great Walstead School. However, this has not formally been included in the Neighbourhood Plan as the site is situated some distance from the Built-Up-Area Boundaries of Lindfield and Scaynes Hill. Otherwise, as stated, no additional sites adjoining the settlements were promoted or identified as potentially suitable for housing development that were not already consented or for which planning applications had been made to MSDC.

4.7 Rather, its approach to planning positively for development will be to encourage modest proposals inside the existing settlements that can be satisfactorily accommodated without undermining the quality of life for local people. Whilst it does not necessarily rule out proposals outside of the settlements the policy expects the countryside policies of the Mid Sussex development plan and of the NPPF will continue to apply significant policy constraints to development in the open countryside.

### **Policy 2: Housing Windfall Sites**

***Development proposals of 10 or fewer net new homes within the built up area boundaries of Lindfield and Scaynes Hill, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be supported, provided:***

- i. their design accords with the adopted Lindfield Parish Village Design Statement or with the key characteristics of Scaynes Hill, as appropriate;***
- ii. the homes proposed include a number of smaller homes suited to first time buyers or to older households;***
- iii. the scheme delivers, wherever feasible and viable, on-site affordable homes in accordance with development plan policy and implements the adopted Mid Sussex Local Lettings Policy in respect of the allocation of some homes to those households with a local connection; and***
- iv. they respect and, where possible, enhance the natural built and historic environment.***

*(Conformity Reference: Mid Sussex Local Plan G2, C1, H2, H3, H4, H7 and NPPF para's 48, 50, 54, 58, 59)*

4.8 This policy supports small scale housing development proposals within the defined built up area boundaries at Lindfield and Scaynes Hill, especially those designed to suit local demand and need.

4.9 The built-up area boundary is defined for Lindfield village and for Scaynes Hill in the 2004 Local Plan and is restated on the LLRNP Proposals Map. In Lindfield, the boundary runs along the existing northern and eastern extent of the village. The southern and western sides of the village merge into the built up area of Haywards Heath. At Scaynes Hill, the boundary encompasses the core of the village – Lewes Road, Church Road, Vicarage Lane, Orchard Close and Hillcrest Close.

4.10 These boundaries remain a sensible means of distinguishing the urban from the rural in the parishes, although the Lindfield boundary will need to be redrawn in due course to take account of recent planning consents. To conserve the rural setting of both villages and to protect the surrounding countryside from unnecessary encroaching development, the policy supports proposals on previously used land within this boundary. However, proposals for rural 'exception' housing schemes may be acceptable provided they meet the criteria of other development plan policy (notably saved Policy H5 of the Local Plan).

4.11 The consented scheme for 230 new homes on the edge of Lindfield will meet the demand and need for new open market and many of the 41 affordable homes identified by the 2013 Housing Needs Survey in the parishes for the plan period. However, given the recent history of 120 new houses having been granted planning permission in January 2010, 65 new houses in December 2010 and these 230 new houses in April 2013, the Parishes will have absorbed a total of 415 new houses in large developments within the last four years. Although investments will be made to upgrade some local infrastructure, this scale of housing development will place significant demands on that infrastructure and on the historic character of the parishes.

4.12 There will continue to be opportunities arising on previously developed land within the boundaries – 'windfall' sites. Over the last twenty five years over 360 net new homes have been consented within the built up area boundaries of the parishes, equating to an average

of 14 net new homes each year.

4.13 The policy defines 'small scale' as being of 10 or fewer net new homes (i.e. taking into account any existing homes lost to the redevelopment of the site). Of the 113 windfall housing schemes consented in the area since 1989, only 7 (6%) have been for schemes of more than 10 homes so this threshold is not only appropriate in terms of allowing for the incremental growth of the settlements but is also in line with local market trends. The preference for small sites is that they will be distributed across the settlements and over the full plan period, rather than a smaller number of larger sites in fewer locations. This will enable the impacts of development on the local environment and on the local roads to be more manageable.

4.14 The policy also makes clear that proposals for greater than that number of new homes within the boundaries will be resisted. This will extend to include attempts to subdivide larger sites of a unified character, which will not be supported.

4.15 It is important that as many affordable homes are delivered as possible in the parishes, in line with development plan policy on windfall sites and on rural exception sites, so that the level of housing need already identified in the Survey, as well as need that emerges throughout the plan period, is met. The policy threshold of up to 10 dwellings will require schemes delivering between 6 and 10 dwellings to provide affordable homes in line with the MSDC adopted Development & Infrastructure DPD of 2006 (although this document is in the process of being reviewed and updated) and it is possible that following the Government's recent consultation, the threshold may be set at 10). The policy requires all such windfall site proposals to deliver those homes on-site rather than meet the need through financial contributions for provision elsewhere in the area or wider District. It accepts that the requirement must enable feasible and viable development proposals and will expect evidence to be provided if this cannot be achieved before off-site contributions are considered. In any event, the policy supports the use of the adopted Mid Sussex Local Lettings policy to favour households with a local connection in the allocation of affordable homes on the first and subsequent tenancies. Rural exception sites may be another effective means of achieving this objective.

4.16 In all cases, the policy requires proposals to demonstrate they have responded to the design guidance of the adopted Lindfield Village Design Statement. The Statement continues to provide a detailed guide to the key characteristics of Lindfield Ward. Policy 7 of the LLRNP continues the designation of three areas of Lindfield that have distinctive characteristics, which the policy seeks to conserve and enhance.



*Costells Edge & Woodcutters in Scaynes Hill.*

4.17 Scaynes Hill does not have the equivalent guidance. However, the village has grown in three phases: the late 1800's – early 1900's (for example, the Church Road cottages

adjoining the Strict Baptist Chapel); the mid 1900's (for example, properties in Hillcrest Lane and St. Augustine's Close); and the 1980's – early 2000's (for example, Costells Edge and Woodcutters). Each phase displays a distinct building form and appearance, which it is desirable to reflect in new buildings, unless a case can be made for an innovative design solution.

### **Policy 3: Small businesses**



*Lindfield Enterprise Park.*

***Development proposals for small scale business uses on land within the built up area boundaries of Lindfield and Scaynes Hill, will be supported, provided the site is well located to the road network, the operations will not cause harm to the amenities of local residents, and the development proposals will have a low impact on the surrounding areas.***

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan B1, B3, B23, E5, E6, T3, T4 and NPPF para 28)*

4.18 The policy particularly encourages proposals for suitable B1 business development in the Parishes, such as cottage businesses, home-based businesses or/and high-tech office units, to encourage local employment and to provide opportunities for apprenticeships and business development, but other businesses within the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and subsequent amendments, are not excluded.

4.19 It accords with Submission District Plan Policy DP2 that is encouraging "high quality development of land and premises to meet the needs of 21st century businesses and supporting existing businesses, and allowing them room to expand".

4.20 The policy also recognises that proposals must be suited to their location in what is primarily a residential and rural character neighbourhood area. In which case, proposals must be well located to the road network to effectively manage goods, services and employee traffic movements and must not harm the amenities of proximate residential areas.

#### **Policy 4: Lindfield Village Centre**



*Some of Lindfield's Shops; the Butchers, Flowercraft & the Toy Shop.*

**The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Lindfield Village Centre on the Proposals Map. Within the Centre, development proposals that will result in the loss of any village centre units within existing A1 use will be resisted. Proposals to create new village centre units will be supported.**

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan Policy S6, S7 and NPPF para 28, 70)*

4.21 This policy protects the existing A1 shop units from a change of use for another purpose, where planning consent is required, to ensure the vitality and viability of the village as a small service and tourism centre is maintained.

4.22 The Submission Local Plan identifies Lindfield having a village centre that “meets the needs of (its) own communities and neighbouring small villages and countryside areas” in its Policy DP4. Its policy supports development proposals that “help maintain and develop the range of shops and services to enable the village centre to meet local needs and is appropriate in scale and function to its location including the character and amenities of the surrounding area and will not give rise to increased problems of traffic generation and car parking.” However, it does not define the village centre on the Proposals Map nor does it specify in any greater detail how the range and mix of A1 shop and non-A1 uses within the village centre should be managed.

4.23 The defined village centre is defined by the LLRNP on the Proposals Map and extends along High Street (the B2028) from the Brushes Lane junction in the north to the junction with Pondcroft Road in the south and includes part of the Lewes Road (B2111) from its junction with the High Street as far as Flowercraft and a small part of Denmans Lane.

4.24 The LLRNP Village Centre Study report of July 2013 shows that the centre comprised 48 shops and other commercial premises. Over half (56%) of the units were in A1 shop use (almost all local independent operators) with a healthy mix (18%) of A3 and A4 café, restaurant and pub establishments. Only 6% were in financial or professional services use and only two units were empty, which is well below the national average. A further 7 (15%) of units were in another use (B1a, D1, D2 or Sui Generis).

4.25 As such, the village centre demonstrates an increasingly rare commercial vitality and viability, with many local community needs available from one or more of the independent shops and services. The entire centre falls within the Lindfield Conservation Area, which enables stronger control over the design and appearance of commercial frontages.

4.26 These shops and services are greatly valued by both residents of the parishes and further afield, highlighted in responses to the village survey and Village Plan. This policy will protect and bolster the village centre, helping to build a strong community. It will support local employment and reduce the need to commute, especially in light of limited bus services.

4.27 The challenge for the village centre is in maintaining its vitality and viability in the future

as patterns of consumer behaviour continue to change. There is no doubt the village centre has acquired and retained a critical mass of destination retailers, that is a quantum and mix of shops, all of which are independent retail businesses. This drives footfall in the centre from a wider catchment population than would otherwise be the case, which in turn sustains a larger number of cafes, restaurants and pubs than is now typical of most 'high streets'. However, the centre also has a mix of convenience food and other services, e.g. the post office that drives frequent visits from local people.

4.28 Should the number of A1 shop units fall below one half of the total number of units in the centre then that may begin to undermine this critical mass and range of retail outlets. As the current proportion of A1 uses is 56% the policy therefore resists the loss of any A1 use. The policy does not seek to control the number and range of A3 or A4 uses in the centre as these are seen as dependent on the health of the A1 shop provision. There may be scope for their number to increase by re-using units not currently in a 'town centre' use.

### **Policy 5: Broadband**

***Proposals to provide access to a super-fast broadband network to serve the villages of Lindfield and Scaynes Hill, and outlying properties in the countryside, and to improve the speed of existing services, will be supported, provided that wherever possible, the location and design of any above-ground network installations reflect the character of the local area.***

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan Policy CS17 and NPPF para 43)*

4.29 This policy encourages proposals to install a superfast broadband network infrastructure to serve the whole Neighbourhood Area, given the patchy nature of services provided, and accords with the NPPF. Where the network requires above ground installations requiring planning consent, then the Plan requires their location and design to reflect the importance of heritage assets and sensitive landscapes particularly within the Conservation Areas.

4.30 Policy DP21 of the emerging District Plan supported the provision of high-speed broadband and 4G across the District, given the benefits that it will bring to both business and residents in the District and recognising the relatively poorer access to such services in parts of the parish at present. The District Council supports the West Sussex – Better Connected Initiative, which aims to make it possible for 90% of the County to connect to Next Generation Access broadband (at least 24Mbps) and the remaining 10% hardest to reach areas with access to speed of at least 2Mbps by April 2015.

### **Policy 6: Local Green Spaces**



*Hickmans Lane Recreation ground, Anchor Pond & Scaynes Hill Recreation Ground.*

**The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces in the following locations, as shown on the Proposals Map:**

- i. Hickman's Lane Recreation Field, Lindfield**
- ii. The Wilderness Field, Lindfield**

- iii. **Limes Estate, Lindfield**
- iv. **Scaynes Hill Common, Lindfield Rural**
- v. **Anchor Pond & Common, Lindfield Rural**
- vi. **Scaynes Hill Recreation Ground, Lindfield Rural**
- vii. **Scaynes Hill Cricket Ground, Lindfield Rural**
- viii. **Recreation area of Lyoth Lane, Lindfield Rural**

**Development proposals on land that is not ancillary to the use of the land for public recreational purposes, and is not provided for in the development plan in respect of protecting open spaces, will be resisted.**

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan Policy B6, R2 & NPPF para's 76, 77)*

4.31 This policy proposes a number of important green spaces in the parishes to be protected from development by the designation as Local Green Spaces in accordance with the NPPF.

4.32 In each case, the green spaces are an integral part of the parishes and are therefore regarded as special to the local community. The LLRNP Local Green Spaces studies for Lindfield and for Lindfield Rural parishes set out the case for each site to be designated. Once designated, the policy will resist all proposals for development unless it can be clearly demonstrated they are minor, they are ancillary to a public recreation use or they are required utilities development.

#### **Policy 7: Areas of Townscape Character**

**The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following areas as Areas of Townscape Character, as shown on the Proposals Map:**

- i. **Summerhill Lane/West Common**
- ii. **Sunte Avenue/Hickmans Lane/Denmans Lane**
- iii. **The Welkin**
- iv. **The Wilderness**
- v. **Portsmouth Wood and Portsmouth Wood Close**

lose



*The entrance to Welkin*

**Development proposals in an Area of Townscape Character will be supported, provided applicants can demonstrate they have had regard to their impact on the character and appearance of the area and have sought to retain features important to the character of the area, as defined in the Lindfield Village Design Statement.**



*Inside The Wilderness.*

***In particular, proposals should:***

- i. retain trees, frontage hedgerows and walls which contribute to the character and appearance of the area;***
- ii. retain areas of open space, (including private gardens) which are open to public view and contribute to the character and appearance of the area; and***
- iii. avoid the demolition of existing buildings which contribute to the character and appearance of the area.***

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan Policy B1, B2, B7, B16, R2, L11 and NPPF para's 58, 59)*

4.33 Three areas of Lindfield Parish were designated in the 2004 Local Plan Policy L11 as Areas of Townscape Character in accordance with saved Policy B16 of the Built Environment Chapter. The Submission District Plan does not intend to save these policies so the purpose of this policy is to update and replace them.

4.34 The character of Lindfield is derived from its mix of building layouts, styles and periods, which together combine to form a particular townscape. This varies from area to area. Local residents value this character, which gives their area an individual identity with which they can associate. The Lindfield Village Design Statement was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by MSDC in 2011. It defines the character of the townscape for the purpose of this policy.

4.35 The policy requires those making development proposals to demonstrate (in their Design & Access Statements) the way in which the proposals have had regard to the defined townscape character of Lindfield. Its intention is to ensure that this character is conserved and, where possible, enhanced by any new development proposals. Although not the same status as Conservation Areas, and accordingly not protected to the same extent by current legislation, MSDC will pay particular attention to any proposals for development or redevelopment, having regard to the special character of the townscape in such areas.

4.36 Although the Submission District Plan no longer identifies Areas of Townscape Character, its Policy DP24 requires that "all development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, and surrounding spaces will be well designed, reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages and create environments that are accessible to all members of the community".

4.37 The LLRNP will therefore expect proposals for development lying within an Area of

Townscape Character to demonstrate they have paid special regard to the distinct character of the area, as described in the adopted Lindfield Village Design Statement.

### **Policy 8: Allotments**



*Existing Allotments in Lindfield & Lindfield Rural parishes.*

**Proposals to establish new allotments, either within or adjoining the built up area boundary of Lindfield and/or Scaynes Hill, will be supported, provided the land can be easily accessed and there can be adequate provision for off-street parking. Proposals which would lead to the loss of existing allotments will be resisted, unless alternative, reasonable provision can be provided within the locality either under statute or otherwise.**

*(Conformity Reference: NPPF para's 69, 70)*

4.38 This policy encourages proposals to provide new allotments for the parishes. There has been a large increase in the demand for allotments in the past decade, with all sites in Mid Sussex oversubscribed.

4.39 Both parish councils are keen to provide allotments as there is sufficient demand and there is currently a waiting list wanting allotments. It is noted that Policy DP22 of the Submission District Plan supported proposals for new allotments. At present, no long term solution has been identified but this policy encourages new provision in an appropriate location.

### **Policy 9: Community Facilities**



*The King Edward Hall, Lindfield & The Millennium Centre, Scaynes Hill.*

**Proposals at the Millennium Hall at Scaynes Hill and at the King Edward Hall in Lindfield for**

**their improvement and extension to retain the established community use of the buildings and land and to provide suitable non-residential uses will be supported, provided:**

- I. The extension of the building meets the design requirements of the development plan;**
- II. Any new use of the extended building is compatible with the established use as a community facility;**
- III. The uses of the building extension do not, either on their own or cumulatively with the established use of the existing building, cause harm to the amenities of local residents; and**
- IV. In respect of the Millennium Hall, additional car parking spaces are laid out in accordance with the guidance of the local highway authority.**

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Plan Policy B1, R1, CS8 and NPPF para's 69, 70)*

4.40 This policy encourages proposals to extend the popular Millennium Hall in Scaynes Hill and the King Edward Hall in Lindfield for the improvement of their existing uses and to enable the provision of other appropriate uses for community benefit.

4.41 Both facilities already play an important role as 'hubs' for local community activity at Scaynes Hill and Lindfield respectively. In addition to hosting such events as wedding receptions, dance and pilates classes, the Millennium Hall provides a meeting place for community groups such as the WI and Scouts. It also contains changing room facilities that are used by the football clubs playing on the adjacent recreation field. The King Edward Hall is used for dance classes, cinema and theatre events as well as regular food and craft markets. Community surveys have indicated a desire for the facilities to provide additional uses, for example medical services, post office or farm shop at Scaynes Hill. The sites are well placed to serve the local communities and there is some land available to extend the present buildings. As such, the policy accords with the Submission District Plan Policy DP23, which supports the "provision or improvement of community facilities and local services that contribute to creating sustainable communities ... Community facilities and local services to meet local needs will be identified through Neighbourhood Plans ....".

4.42 However, the policy also recognises that the present sites and uses are not without their limitations. It therefore requires proposals to demonstrate that they are suited to the sites, the current uses and to the adjoining residential areas.



*Lindfield Common and much of Lindfield sits well in the Rural Parish agricultural and wooded landscape.*

## 5. Implementation

### Introduction

5.1 The Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan (LLRNP) will be implemented through a combination of the local planning authority's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the parishes and through steering local community, public sector and private sector investment and actions into a series of non-statutory proposals contained in the plan.

5.2 These proposals have emerged during the preparation of the LLRNP and, although they cannot form part of the statutory land use policy provisions of the LLRNP, they are included in this section as non-statutory proposals to provide a comprehensive view of local community aspirations for the parishes.

### Development Management

5.3 The policies contained in the LLRNP will be delivered by landowners and developers through the submission of planning applications and the carrying out of development works if consented. In preparing the LLRNP, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that its policies are achievable.

5.4 Whilst the local planning authority will be responsible for development management, the Parish Councils will also use the LLRNP to frame their representations on submitted planning applications. They will also work with the authority to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development, for example in participating in any pre-application meetings with applicants that may take place and in reviewing the MSDC plan monitoring data.

### Proposal 1: Assets of Community Value



*Inn on the Green PH, Lindfield Post Office & Strict Baptist Church.*

**The Parish Councils propose the following properties are put forward for designation as Assets of Community Value as a result of their acknowledged importance to the life and enjoyment of the parish communities of Lindfield and/or Lindfield Rural and the relevant nominations under Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011, will be made accordingly:**

- I. Inn on the Green Public House, Scaynes Hill**
- II. Scaynes Hill Strict Baptist Church**
- III. The Lindfield Evangelical Free Church, Chaloner Road**
- IV. The Lindfield Post Office, High Street**
- V. The White Horse Public House, High Street**

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan B11, CS7, CS8 and NPPF para's 28 and 70)*

5.5 This proposal highlights those assets that should be the subject of nomination to MSDC for

an asset of community value, under the provisions of Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011. The Act says that such properties are considered to have been recently or currently used by the community to further their social wellbeing or social interests such as cultural, recreational and sporting interests and could do so in the future.

5.6 The inclusion of these sites on the register of Assets of Community Value will provide the Parish Councils or other community organisations within the parishes with an opportunity to bid to acquire on behalf of the local community the asset once placed for sale on the open market.

5.7 All the assets selected are considered to be buildings or other land of some considerable longstanding in the local community and with which local people have a strong affinity. A short justification for each asset is included below:

- Inn on the Green PH, Scaynes Hill (has already been formally registered by MSDC on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014 pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 and the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012). This landmark building on the A272 in a very prominent position is considered by the Scaynes Hill residents to have future value as a community led shop/coffee shop/public house/Post Office/meeting place.
- Scaynes Hill Strict Baptist Church. In the event that declining membership makes this church unsupportable for its congregation, Scaynes Hill residents consider that this building could provide a valuable community resource centre.
- Lindfield Evangelical Free Church. In the event that declining membership makes this church unsupportable for its congregation, Lindfield residents consider that as this is the last site close to Lindfield High Street with good car parking provision, it would make an ideal site for a relocated and enlarged Medical Centre.
- Lindfield Post Office. Post Offices are one of the vital ingredients for a vibrant community and residents do not want to lose this crucial asset - so should the business and site become available for any reason, the residents of Lindfield would welcome the opportunity to run the Post Office and shop as a community venture.
- The White Horse PH. This is a landmark building opposite the village pond and alongside the village hall, The King Edward Hall. It also is has off-street parking provision, a feature unusual in the village. In the now unlikely event that the building and site becomes available, Lindfield residents would like the opportunity of reusing the building as an extension to the KEH next door.

## Infrastructure Projects

### Proposal 2: Transport & Traffic



*Lindfield's High Street / Lewes Road Junction & a Rural Cyclist.*

**The Parish Councils will support proposals that satisfactorily address pedestrian, cyclist and traffic safety issues at the junction of Lewes Road & High Street, Lindfield. They will also**

**support proposals to establish a dedicated safe cycle route from Scaynes Hill through to the Lewes Road in Lindfield.**

*(Conformity Reference: 2004 Mid Sussex Plan Policy T4 and NPPF para 35)*

5.8 This proposal supports a range of sustainable transport measures that address highway safety and promote cycling in the parishes.

5.9 The local community is concerned about the impact of the scale of development consented or proposed in the parishes and more generally around the Haywards Heath area in the coming years. An increase in traffic on local roads will likely exacerbate existing safety concerns at the busy and awkward junction of Lewes Road & High Street, Lindfield and further discourage cycling between the two villages.

5.10 In which case this proposal actively encourages firstly the investigation by the local highways authority into possible solutions to this junction at the heart of the Village Centre and secondly any proposals for the use or development of land that will satisfactorily address those issues. However, any proposed solutions will need to be supported by the local community before they can be considered for implementation

5.11 More generally, the local community will expect an independent traffic survey of the LLRNP area once the proposed southern bypass around Haywards Heath has been completed. Ultimately, this process will be led by Lindfield Parish Council in consultation with Lindfield Rural Parish Council. The recommendations from such a survey will then form the basis of discussions with the local highways authority with a view to implementation.

5.12 Finally it encourages proposals from the local highway authority to provide a new dedicated safe cycle route from the busy A272 near Scaynes Hill to Lindfield to encourage cycling and walking between the two settlements. At present, Bedales Hill from its junction with the A272 is unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians as it comprises a narrow carriageway with blind bends and with no footway until the junction with East Mascalls Lane. There have been previous proposals to address this issue and this one encourages the use of planning obligation and/or community infrastructure levy funding obtained by the local highway authority from consented development schemes in this parish to fund this provision.

**Proposal 3: Infrastructure Investment**

***The Parish Councils propose the financing and delivery of the following infrastructure projects using the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural allocation of the Mid Sussex Community Infrastructure Levy (once applicable) and other previous and future sources of funds as appropriate:***

- I. Provision of public toilets at Lindfield Common and Scaynes Hill Millennium Centre***
- II. New land for allotments within the Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Area***
- III. Funds towards the future management of Wilderness Field***
- IV. Traffic calming works (to be agreed with the local highways authority)***
- V. Cycle path between Lindfield and Scaynes Hill, in pursuit of Proposal 2***
- VI. Extension of Scaynes Hill Millennium Centre.***

*(Conformity Reference: Submission 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan G3 and NPPF para's 162 and 183)*

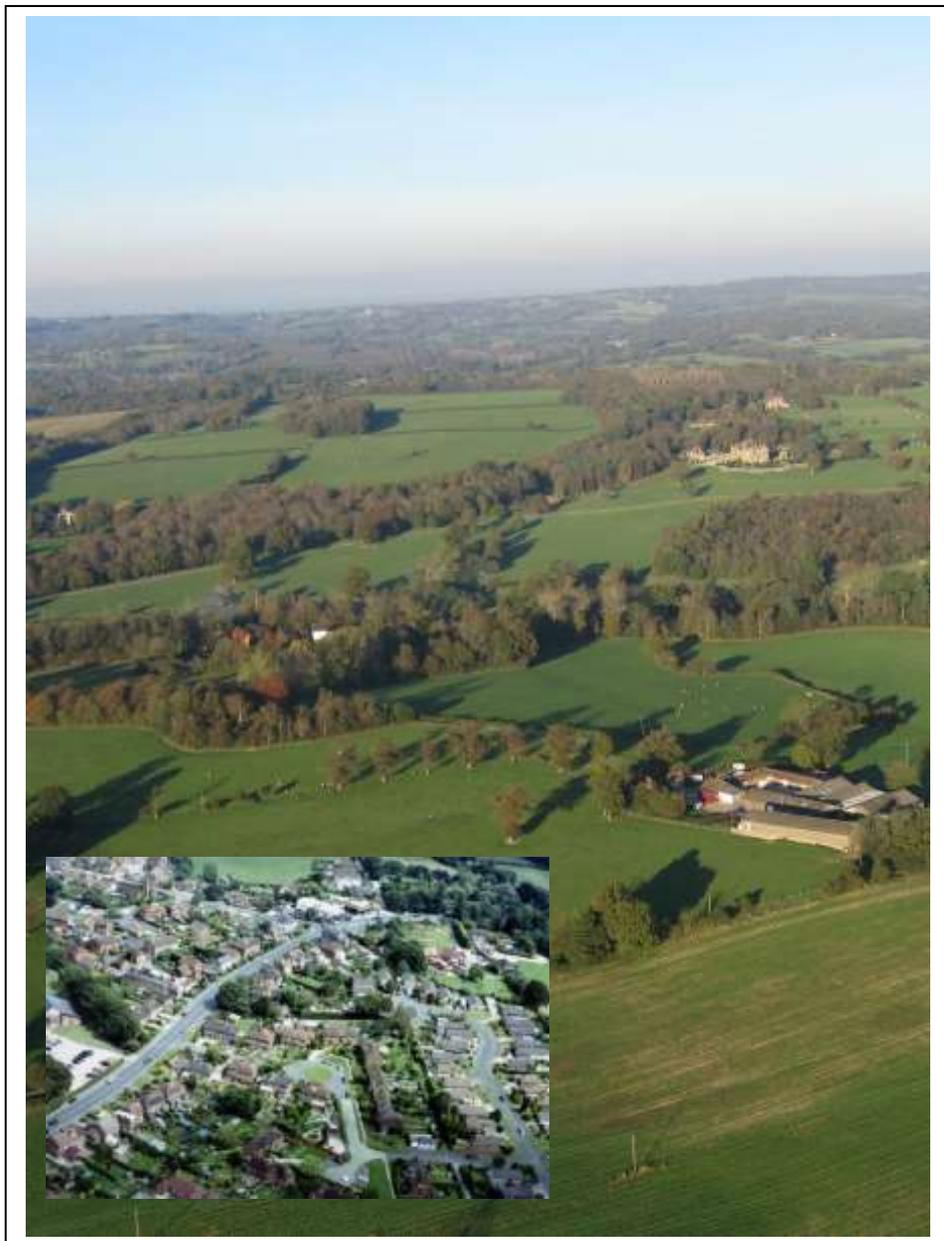
5.13 This proposal identifies without priority, a series of the most important infrastructure projects to support the development proposals of the LLRNP.

5.14 Policy DP18 of the Submission District Plan proposes that the Community Infrastructure

Levy (CIL) will normally be spent on infrastructure needs in the locality of the scheme that generated it.

5.15 The intention is for the LLRNP allocation of the forthcoming Mid Sussex CIL - at least 25% of the Levy charged in the LLRNP area - to provide an important source of funding for the listed projects. MSDC published its Draft Charging Schedule in 2013 for the CIL that currently proposes a charge on qualifying residential development of between £210/sqm and £235/sqm of gross internal floor space. A new Charging Schedule will be prepared alongside the new District Plan.

5.16 Prior to the adoption of the CIL, Section 106 Agreements will remain an important source of investment funding, albeit in a more limited way than in recent years. Once the CIL is adopted, it is expected that Agreements will only be used to manage the delivery of very specific development scheme requirements, e.g. affordable housing.



*Part of Lindfield Rural Parish with Scaynes Hill inset.*

## **Photographers**

The Steering Group would like to record their thanks to all the photographers who have provided us with their images during the course of the preparation of this plan, many of which have been incorporated into this document.

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## **Proposals Maps & Insets**

**SEE SEPARATE DOCUMENTS x 3**

## Annex A – Evidence Base

The list below contains all those documents collected and reviewed in the process of preparing this report. All are available to view via Lindfield Parish Councils' website neighbourhood plan pages.

- Lindfield Town Plan (2006)
- Rural Community Profile for Lindfield Parish (2012)
- Lindfield Landscape Character Assessment (2011)
- Lindfield Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)
- Lindfield Village Design Statement (2011)
- Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey (2013)
- Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Survey (2013)
- Lindfield & Lindfield Rural State of the Parishes Report (2013)
- West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study (2009)
- Revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory for West Sussex (2010)
- Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004)
- Mid Sussex Submission District Plan (2013)
- Mid Sussex Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2013)
- Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy (2010)
- Mid Sussex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)
- Mid Sussex Open Space Study (2006)
- Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study (2007)
- West Sussex Local Transport Plan (2011)
- High Weald AONB Management Plan (2009)
- Housing Focus Group – Housing Needs Survey, Affordable Rural Housing: A practical guide for Parish Councils. Affordable Housing Keeping Villages Alive, Focus Group final report.
- Landscape Focus Group – Landscape Character assessment for Mid Sussex, University of Sussex River Ouse project, Desktop Biodiversity Report: Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (2014), NPPF SWT Summary Table, Focus Group final report.
- Traffic Focus Group – Mid Sussex Transport Study Stage 1, Focus group final report.
- Community Focus Group – Rural Places Profile Lindfield, Living Communities guidance, Focus Group final report.
- Lindfield – Areas of Townscape Character (2014)
- Lindfield & Lindfield Rural – Green Spaces (2014)
- Lindfield Shopping Area and map(2014)