

Rother Local Plan 2025–2042 Development Strategy and Site Allocations Regulation 18 Consultation January 2026 Response Form

8 week public consultation period: 26th January – 23rd March 2026

Rother District Council is inviting residents, businesses, and stakeholders to take part in a vital consultation on its emerging Local Plan.

The consultation period runs for eight weeks from Monday 26th January to 5:00pm on Monday 23rd March 2026.

The Draft Local Plan and all of its supporting evidence base documents can be found and commented on via the Council's website at www.rother.gov.uk/draftlocalplan2026.

The Council prefers to receive your consultation responses via our website.

You may also respond by email or post by filling this form and then sending it by email to draftlocalplan@rother.gov.uk or by post to Planning Policy, Rother District Council, Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN39 3JX. Please note that submissions made via post will not receive confirmation that they have been received.

If you are using this form, please state which consultation question(s) you would like to respond to. These questions are found in the draft Local Plan. They also have been attached to the end of this form for your reference.

Personal Details – You must provide these details for us to accept your consultation response

	Please enter your details
Title	MISS
First Name	ELIZABETH
Surname	PARKER
Job Title (where relevant)	
Organisation (where relevant)	
Address	
Post Code	
Email address	

Agents Details or Other Details (if making a representation on behalf of the above consultee)

	Please enter your details
Title	
First Name	
Surname	
Job Title (where relevant)	
Organisation (where relevant)	
Address	
Post Code	
Email address	

Privacy Policy Statement

Rother District Council is committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected and will only use and store your personal data in line with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Act 1998. We collect and use your personal data in order to provide services you have requested from us or to carry out our legal obligations to you. We will not disclose your personal data to any third parties, unless we need to do so to provide a service to you or we are legally required to do so. We may share your personal data with other Council departments in order to provide the service you have requested and to ensure that the information we hold about you is accurate and up to date. Our Privacy Policy sets out how we collect, use and securely hold your data and can be viewed on our privacy policy page at <https://www.rother.gov.uk/data-protection-and-foi/privacy-policy/>. If you want more information on how a particular Council service uses your personal data, please view the Privacy Notices at the bottom of the above privacy policy page.

Please be aware that any comments you submit cannot be treated in confidence as the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended, requires copies of all representations to be made publicly available. The Council will publish names and representations on its website, but will not publish personal information, such as telephone numbers, emails or private addresses. By submitting a representation you are accordingly confirming that you agree to this and accept responsibility for your comments.

Please write your comments below. Please indicate in the left-hand column which question you are responding to. This will help ensure that your response is considered correctly. Please continue on a separate page or sheet of paper if necessary.

Question Number	Your Comments
12	<u>Battle and Surrounding Settlements</u> Do you have any comments on the proposed Vision and development strategy for Battle and Surrounding Settlements, including the development figures shown in Figures 20 and 21? (Please note that comments on individual sites should not be made in response to this question, please see questions 36 to 41 instead) PLEASE SEE ATTACHED REPRESENTATION AND APPENDICES
38	Catsfield Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Catsfield, detailed in Policies CT1 to CT3? CATSFIELD CT3 PLEASE SEE ATTACHED REPRESENTATION AND APPENDICES
68	<u>Sustainability Appraisal</u> Do you have any comments on the Interim Sustainability Appraisal in support of the Regulation 18 stage consultation on the Development Strategy and Site Allocations (January 2026)? PLEASE SEE ATTACHED REPRESENTATION AND APPENDICES

Question Number	<i>Your Comments</i>

Question Number	Your Comments

Question Number	Your Comments

Should you require further space to respond to make comments please continue on a separate page or sheet of paper as necessary.

Consultation Questions: Draft Rother Local Plan 2025–2042 – Development Strategy and Site Allocations

Part 1, chapter 2:

1. Do you have any comments on the amended Rother Local Plan Strategic Spatial Objectives shown in Figure 1?

Part 2, chapter 3 - Development Needs

2. Do you have any comments on the Council's proposed housing target for the Local Plan of 8,427 dwellings over the 17-year plan period, or 495 dwellings annually?
3. Do you have any comments on the identified employment needs, or needs for retail and main town centre uses?
4. Do you have any comments on the identified accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople?

Part 2, chapter 4 – Infrastructure Needs

5. Do you have any comments on infrastructure needs or priorities to support the proposed Development Strategy?

Part 3, chapter 5 – Preparing the Development Strategy

6. Do you have any comments on the Council's assessment of the additional Development Strategy Options?
7. Do you have any comments on the preferred approach for housing density shown in Figure 9, or on the updated Density Study (2026)?

Part 3, chapter 6 – Development Strategy for Rother

8. Do you have any comments on the Council's proposed Overall Development Strategy?
9. Do you have any comments on the proposed growth opportunities in the sub-areas as shown in Figure 10?
10. Do you have any comments on the proposed Vision and development strategy for Bexhill, including the development figures shown in Figures 13 and 14? (Please note that comments on individual sites should not be made in response to this question, please see questions 17 and 18 instead)
11. Do you have any comments on the proposed Vision and development strategy for Southern Rother and the Hastings Fringes, including the development figures shown in Figures 17 and 18? (Please note that comments on individual sites should not be made in response to this question, please see questions 26 to 35 instead)
12. Do you have any comments on the proposed Vision and development strategy for Battle and Surrounding Settlements, including the development figures shown in

Figures 20 and 21? (Please note that comments on individual sites should not be made in response to this question, please see questions 36 to 41 instead)

13. Do you have any comments on the proposed Vision and development strategy for Rye and the Eastern Settlements Cluster, including the development figures shown in Figures 23 and 24? (Please note that comments on individual sites should not be made in response to this question, please see questions 42 to 52 instead)
14. Do you have any comments on the proposed Vision and development strategy for Northern Rother, including the development figures shown in Figures 26 and 27? (Please note that comments on individual sites should not be made in response to this question, please see questions 53 to 63 instead)
15. Do you have any comments on the proposed Vision for the Countryside?
16. Do you have any comments on the proposed strategy for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople? (Please note that comments on individual sites should not be made in response to this question, please see question 64 instead)

Part 3, chapter 7 – Site Allocations

17. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Bexhill?
18. Do you consider that there are any other possible sites in Bexhill which should be allocated for development in the Local Plan?
19. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy BX1: Bexhill Urban Area?
20. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy BX2: Bexhill Cultural Area?
21. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy BX3: London Road – Sackville Road Enhancement Area?
22. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy BX4: Beeching Road Enhancement Area?
23. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy BX18: West Bexhill Growth Area – Infrastructure Policy?
24. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy BX29: North Bexhill Growth Area – Infrastructure Policy?
25. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy BX30: Land south of Haven Brook Avenue – Infrastructure?
26. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Crowhurst Parish, detailed in Policies CR1 to CR3?
27. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocation in Fairlight Cove, detailed in Policy FA1?
28. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in the Hastings Fringes (Guestling Parish), detailed in Policies GU1 and GU2?

29. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy GU3: Rock Lane Urban Fringe Management Area?
30. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Guestling Green, detailed in Policies GU4 and GU5?
31. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocation in Three Oaks, detailed in Policy GU6?
32. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Icklesham, detailed in Policies IK1 and IK2?
33. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in the Hastings Fringes (Westfield Parish), detailed in Policies WS1 and WS2?
34. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Westfield, detailed in Policies WS3 to WS5?
35. Do you consider that there are any other possible sites in the Southern Rother and Hastings Fringes sub-area (which includes the parishes of Crowhurst, Fairlight, Guestling, Pett, Westfield and Icklesham (west)) which should be allocated for development in the Local Plan?
36. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Battle, detailed in Policies BT1 to BT11?
37. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocation in Brightling, detailed in Policy BRI1?
38. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Catsfield, detailed in Policies CT1 to CT3?
39. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Netherfield, detailed in Policies NE1 and NE2?
40. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Sedlescombe, detailed in Policies SD1 to SD11?
41. Do you consider that there are any other possible sites in the Battle and Surrounding Settlements sub-area (which includes the parishes of Ashburnham, Battle, Brightling, Catsfield, Dallington, Mountfield, Sedlescombe and Whatlington) which should be allocated for development in the Local Plan?
42. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Beckley, detailed in Policies BC1 to BC3?
43. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Broad Oak, Brede, detailed in Policies BR1 to BR3?
44. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Camber, detailed in Policies CM1 to CM3?
45. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Iden, detailed in Policies ID1 and ID2?

46. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Northiam, detailed in Policies NR1 and NR2?
47. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Peasmarsch, detailed in Policies PE1 to PE5?
48. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Playden, detailed in Policies PL1 and PL2?
49. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Rye, detailed in Policies RY1 to RY9?
50. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocation in Rye Harbour, detailed in Policy RH1?
51. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy RH2: Employment Land, Harbour Road?
52. Do you consider that there are any other possible sites in the Rye and the Eastern Settlements Cluster sub-area (which includes the parishes of Beckley, Brede, Camber, East Guldeford, Iden, Northiam, Peasmarsch, Playden, Rye Foreign, Rye, Udimore and Icklesham (east)) which should be allocated for development in the Local Plan?
53. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Burwash, detailed in Policies BW1 to BW4?
54. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Burwash Common, detailed in Policies BWC1 and BWC2?
55. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Etchingham, detailed in Policies EC1 to EC3?
56. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Hurst Green, detailed in Policies HG1 to HG4?
57. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Robertsbridge, detailed in Policies RB1 to RB6b?
58. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Staplecross, Ewhurst Parish, detailed in Policies SC1 and SC2?
59. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Flimwell, Ticehurst Parish, detailed in Policies FW1 to FW3?
60. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Ticehurst, detailed in Policies TC1 and TC2?
61. Do you have any comments on proposed Policy TC3: Bewl Water?
62. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations in Stonegate, Ticehurst Parish, detailed in Policies SG1 and SG2?
63. Do you consider that there are any other possible sites in the Northern Rother sub-area (which includes the parishes of Bodiam, Burwash, Etchingham, Ewhurst, Hurst

Green, Salehurst and Robertsbridge and Ticehurst) which should be allocated for development in the Local Plan?

64. Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, detailed in Policies GYP1 to GYP6?

65. Do you consider that there are any other possible sites for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople sites which should be allocated in the Local Plan?

Local Plan Appendices

66. Do you have any comments on the proposed changes to Policy LWL7 (A) (i) (Streets for All)?

67. Do you have any comments on the Appendices?

Sustainability Appraisal

68. Do you have any comments on the Interim Sustainability Appraisal in support of the Regulation 18 stage consultation on the Development Strategy and Site Allocations (January 2026)?

Other comments

69. Are there any other issues, options or other matters you would like to raise?

Catsfield Manor, Church Road, Catsfield, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 9BG

By Email to: draftlocalplan@rother.gov.uk

Date: 23 March 2026

DRAFT ROTHER LOCAL PLAN 2025-2042 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Dear Sirs,

This representation relates to (i) Q12 (ii) Q38 and (ii) Q68 Sustainability Appraisal. Paragraphs also applying to Q12 are 10 - 13.

Objection to Site Allocation CT3 The Brooks, Catsfield for the following reasons:

1. The HELAA has been inappropriately changed between April 2024 and January 2026. Allocations are supposed to follow the HELAA, not vice versa ([Appendix 1](#)):

Site ID	Site Address	Site size (hectares)	Summary of Environmental Constraints	Site Identification	Site Assessment	Availability	Estimated Development Potential	Anticipated Timescale for Development
CAT0029	Land south of Church Road, Catsfield	0.30	There is a risk of surface water flooding along the site's southern boundary and on the adjoining road to the north. The adjoining dwelling to the north-west is a Grade II listed building and there are other listed buildings nearby.	Submitted Site	This is a small road-fronting section of a larger field immediately south of Catsfield village. While there are constraints, including a risk of surface water flooding on the site boundaries and an adjacent Grade II listed building, the site lies just outside the High Weald National Landscape, and in landscape terms, it could potentially accommodate a short row of dwellings to continue the existing ribbon development on either side, although the landscape impact of reducing views across the site would require consideration. The site forms part of a much larger area which was subject to a refused planning application for 28 dwellings (RR/2020/1562/R March 2023). While that was refused on grounds including flood risk and landscape impact, it is possible that a smaller scheme on this limited area could be developed without the same impacts. Furthermore, the principle of a vehicular access at this location was generally accepted through that application. However, given the flood risks across the larger site, further assessment of the flood risks at this site are required in order to determine its suitability for development. The impact on the setting of listed buildings also requires further consideration. Improvements to pedestrian infrastructure would be required.	Potentially available	Residential: 5 dwellings	Unknown

2. The Local Plan Background Evidence document is the Settlement Study (April 2024). The Settlement Study found no development capacity within the Flats Wood CAT2 zone except brownfield or infill ([Appendix 2](#) and [Appendix 3](#)):

“The area has a strong sense of place as a pleasant open stream valley and a setting for the village. It has been defined as good quality and of medium value, and functions as an AONB buffer. It has a moderate-high high character sensitivity and visual sensitivity. It is determined as having a low-moderate capacity for housing development and no capacity to accept business development. The area would be vulnerable to change due to loss of landscape structure. Any proposed development would be limited to brown field land and infill and not encroaching on the open stream valley which should be retained as a setting for the village and AONB buffer.”

3. The Estimated Development Potential of “Residential: 5 dwellings” on 0.3ha in the HELAA also conflicted with the Settlement Study.
4. The Brooks lies on the boundary of the High Weald National Landscape (“HWNL”) and within the High Weald National Character Area. The Protected Landscapes statutory duty is engaged.
5. The Brooks is a “valued landscape” within the meaning of the NPPF.
6. The statement “*in landscape terms, [The Brooks] could accommodate a medium scale residential development across the south and eastern part of the site only*” is unjustifiable: the eastern part of The Brooks is bound by the HWNL; the south part of The Brooks is bound by the Ancient Woodland “Flats Wood”, a key character component of HWNL natural beauty and significance; the HWNL rises to the east of The Brooks, a public footpath follows the eastern boundary of The Brooks, and there is strong intervisibility between The Brooks and HWNL across its eastern boundary.
7. The Brooks is the setting for the village from all directions. (Images: [Appendix 4](#))
8. In relation to RR/2020/1562/P (refused March 2023) for 28 dwellings on 26 plots across the south and eastern part of The Brooks only:
The High Weald AONB Unit objected stating:
“In summary, the High Weald AONB Unit objects to this proposal on the grounds that it would cause significant harm to the setting of the High Weald AONB... The High Weald AONB wraps around the settlement of Catsfield. Whilst the application site lies outside the AONB, it is within the High Weald National Landscape Character Area and shares many of the AONB’s characteristics. It is also highly visible from the AONB, particularly from Church Road, and the site forms an important component of the setting of the designated area. Development on this site would detract from the open pastoral character of the site and fail to conserve and enhance the adjacent AONB.”
([Appendix 5](#)).
9. The Sequential Test applies at the plan making stage not at the planning application stage. The developer and authority would need to demonstrate no capacity for 35 units, on single or split allocations, within the Rother District Local Plan area.
10. The Exception Test could not be satisfied due to the inherent unsustainability of the proposed allocation for reasons other than flood risk: conflict with the Settlement Study, conflict with the Protected Landscapes duty and cumulative impact to the character of the village of Catsfield on account of the gross number of allocated units consequential to the addition of The Brooks: 85 to a village of 161 over a plan period of 20 years.

11. The Draft Local Plan strategy is not a “*cluster*” of villages contributing to a development total around Battle. The strategy is intensive damaging change to one village.

Objection to the Sustainability Assessment (“SA”) for the following reasons:

12. No SA of the cumulative impact of proposed allocations to settlements.

13. SA assumes the Local Plan strategy is a “*cluster*” of villages contributing to a development total around Battle. This is the theoretical intention not the actual strategy: a “*cluster*” of villages around Battle is not actively contributing towards the development total. The strategy is intensive damaging change to one village.

14. In relation to Landscape Impact SA Category 15C (Appendix 6), the High Weald National Landscape (AONB) Management Plan is also a database document for land outside the HWNL but within the setting of the HWNL.

15. Landscape Impact SA Category 15C for Catsfield CT3 The Brooks should show RED not ORANGE. No evidence base justifies ORANGE “Minor Negative”: the Settlement Study justifies RED “Significant Negative” (Appendix 6).

16. Landscape Impact SA category 15C states landscape impact of proposed allocations will be assessed against the Settlement Study for land outside the HWNL. The Settlement Study for Catsfield CT3 The Brooks is CAT2 - Flats Wood (Appendix 2) and requires RED “Significant Negative”.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

EA Parker

APPENDICES

1	HELAA: April 2024 HELAA: January 2026
2	Settlement Study: April 2024
3	Settlement Study: Built Form / SDB
4	Images of The Brooks From HWNL and Surrounding Public Viewpoints
5	High Weald AONB Unit Objection to RR/2020/1562/P
6	Sustainability Appraisal: SA 15C; CT3 Catsfield

APPENDIX 1

CATSFIELD THE BROOKS

HELAA – 2024 APRIL

HELAA – 2026 JANUARY

ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL

DRAFT HOUSING AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (HELAA)

PART 2: SITE ASSESSMENTS

CHAPTER 3 – BATTLE AND SURROUNDING SETTLEMENTS

APRIL 2024

Site ID	Site Address	Site size (hectares)	Summary of Environmental Constraints	Site Identification	Site Assessment	Availability	Estimated Development Potential	Anticipated Timescale for Development
CAT0029	Land south of Church Road, Catsfield	0.30	There is a risk of surface water flooding along the site's southern boundary and on the adjoining road to the north. The adjoining dwelling to the north-west is a Grade II listed building and there are other listed buildings nearby.	Submitted Site	This is a small road-fronting section of a larger field immediately south of Catsfield village. While there are constraints, including a risk of surface water flooding on the site boundaries and an adjacent Grade II listed building, the site lies just outside the High Weald National Landscape, and in landscape terms, it could potentially accommodate a short row of dwellings to continue the existing ribbon development on either side, although the landscape impact of reducing views across the site would require consideration. The site forms part of a much larger area which was subject to a refused planning application for 28 dwellings (RR/2020/1562/P, March 2023). While that was refused on grounds including flood risk and landscape impact, it is possible that a smaller scheme on this limited area could be developed without the same impacts. Furthermore, the principle of a vehicular access at this location was generally accepted through that application. However, given the flood risks across the larger site, further assessment of the flood risks at this site are required in order to determine its suitability for development. The impact on the setting of listed buildings also requires further consideration. Improvements to pedestrian infrastructure would be required.	Potentially available	Residential: 5 dwellings	Unknown

REJECTED SITES (Sites assessed as Currently Unsuitable/ Unavailable/ Unachievable)

Site ID	Site Address	Site size (hectares)	Summary of Environmental Constraints	Site Identification	Site Assessment	Availability
CAT0002	Willy Woodpeckers, Powdermill Lane, Catsfield	0.28	The site is within the High Weald National Landscape. It is partially within and almost surrounded by ancient woodland and priority habitat, which is protected by a TPO. A public right of way runs adjacent to the east.	Council search	This is a rural employment site comprising a hard surfaced yard and buildings, outside any development boundary. It had planning permission for refurbishment and additional business units (RR/2017/528/P) but this was not implemented for viability reasons, and expired in 2020. While the site remains suitable in principle for the previously permitted development, there is no evidence that the site will be redeveloped in the future and consequently, for the purposes of the HELAA it is not considered to be available.	Not available
CAT0005	Land east of Catsfield Road (Site A), Catsfield	2.67	The site adjoins areas of ancient woodland and Priority Habitat.	Planning application	The site comprises open fields which form part of a larger site which was previously subject to a planning appeal for a solar farm (dismissed). It is in open countryside, wholly unsuited to residential or other employment development and there is no evidence that the site is likely to come forward again for a solar farm, or that the environmental constraints identified in the appeal (including impact on ancient woodland) could be overcome. Any future proposals for a solar farm on the site would be assessed on its merits in accordance with local and national planning policy.	Unknown

ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL

DRAFT HOUSING AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (HELAA)

PART 2: SITE ASSESSMENTS

CHAPTER 3 – BATTLE AND SURROUNDING SETTLEMENTS

JANUARY 2026

CHAPTER 3 – BATTLE AND SURROUNDING SETTLEMENTS

CATSFIELD

IDENTIFIED SITES (Existing allocations and sites with planning permission⁶. Sites are assumed to be suitable, available and achievable for development, unless otherwise stated)

Site ID	Site Address	Site size (hectares)	Summary of Environmental Constraints	Site Identification	Site Assessment	Development Potential	Anticipated Timescale for Development
CAT0001	Land west of B2204, Catsfield	1.66	The site is almost wholly within the High Weald National Landscape. A small section is at risk of surface water flooding. It is partly within the Pevensey Levels Hydrological Catchment Area. There are two listed buildings adjacent to the site. It has historic field boundaries. A public right of way runs adjacent to the south-west of the site.	Allocated Site	The site is allocated for 35 dwellings and open amenity space through Policy CAT1 of the DaSA Local Plan. There is some desire locally to reconsider the allocation for a smaller number of dwellings, and 30 may be more appropriate.	Residential: 30 dwellings	Within 10 years

POTENTIAL SITES (Sites are potentially suitable, potentially available and potentially deliverable, subject to further assessment or investigation)

Site ID	Site Address	Site size (hectares)	Summary of Environmental Constraints	Site Identification	Site Assessment	Availability	Estimated Development Potential	Anticipated Timescale for Development
CAT0014	The Brooks, Church Road	3.11	The site adjoins ancient woodland and Priority Habitat on its southern boundary. There are significant areas at risk of surface water flooding in the northern section. Adjacent to three Grade II listed dwelling buildings on the northern boundary.	Submitted Site	The site comprises a level area of fields immediately south of Catsfield village, just outside the High Weald National Landscape (HWNL). The site has flooding constraints, having high water levels and areas at risk of surface water flooding. The sequential test would need to be undertaken in accordance with national planning policy, and if passed, an exception test would need to demonstrate that development of the site would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, and that development would be safe for its lifetime. In terms of landscape impact, while just outside the HWNL, the site shares characteristics with the National Landscape and there are clear views between the site and the designated area. Additionally the site is important to the rural setting of the village providing a strong sense of place. The site has been subject to an outline planning application for 29 dwellings (RR/2020/1562/P), refused in 2023 due to a lack of information regarding flood risk, landscape and other impacts. However, subject to the resolution of all these matters, a sensitive	Potentially available	35 dwellings	Within 10 years

⁶ Or a resolution to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement.

APPENDIX 2

CATSFIELD

SETTLEMENT STUDY

Rother District Local Plan 2020 – 2040

Settlement Study – Part 2

Draft (Regulation 18) Version - April 2024

www.rother.gov.uk

CAT2 – Flats Wood

This is an area of lower lying pastoral landscape to the south of the village. Some large open fields where hedgerow structure has been lost, but the intensity of agricultural use is lower than in CAT1. The area has a strong sense of place as a pleasant open stream valley and a setting for the village.

It has been defined as good quality and of medium value, and functions as an AONB buffer. It has a moderate-high high character sensitivity and visual sensitivity. It is determined as having a low-moderate capacity for housing development and no capacity to accept business development. The area would be vulnerable to change due to loss of landscape structure. Any proposed development would be limited to brown field land and infill and not encroaching on the open stream valley which should be retained as a setting for the village and AONB buffer. The potential for mitigation is moderate, with some scope to replace lost field boundaries and create new tree belts.

CAT3 - Broomham

The area is in the AONB, apart from the extreme southern end, but is not of high quality. It is an enclosed area of mixed uses –including playing fields, and pony paddocks. There has been some loss of landscape structure due to the loss of field pattern and hedges. There are strong treed hedges and areas of woodland enclosure, some parkland trees, feature pines and poplar belts. The area has some sense of place and local distinctiveness.

The landscape is of good quality, though as a whole it is of high/medium value area that is mostly within the AONB. It has a moderate-high high character sensitivity and visual sensitivity, and it is determined that the area has a moderate capacity for housing development and a low capacity for business development. It is noted that the area has been influenced by intensive uses such as pony paddocks. The character is not stable and could be enhanced with new Green Infrastructure.

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2022

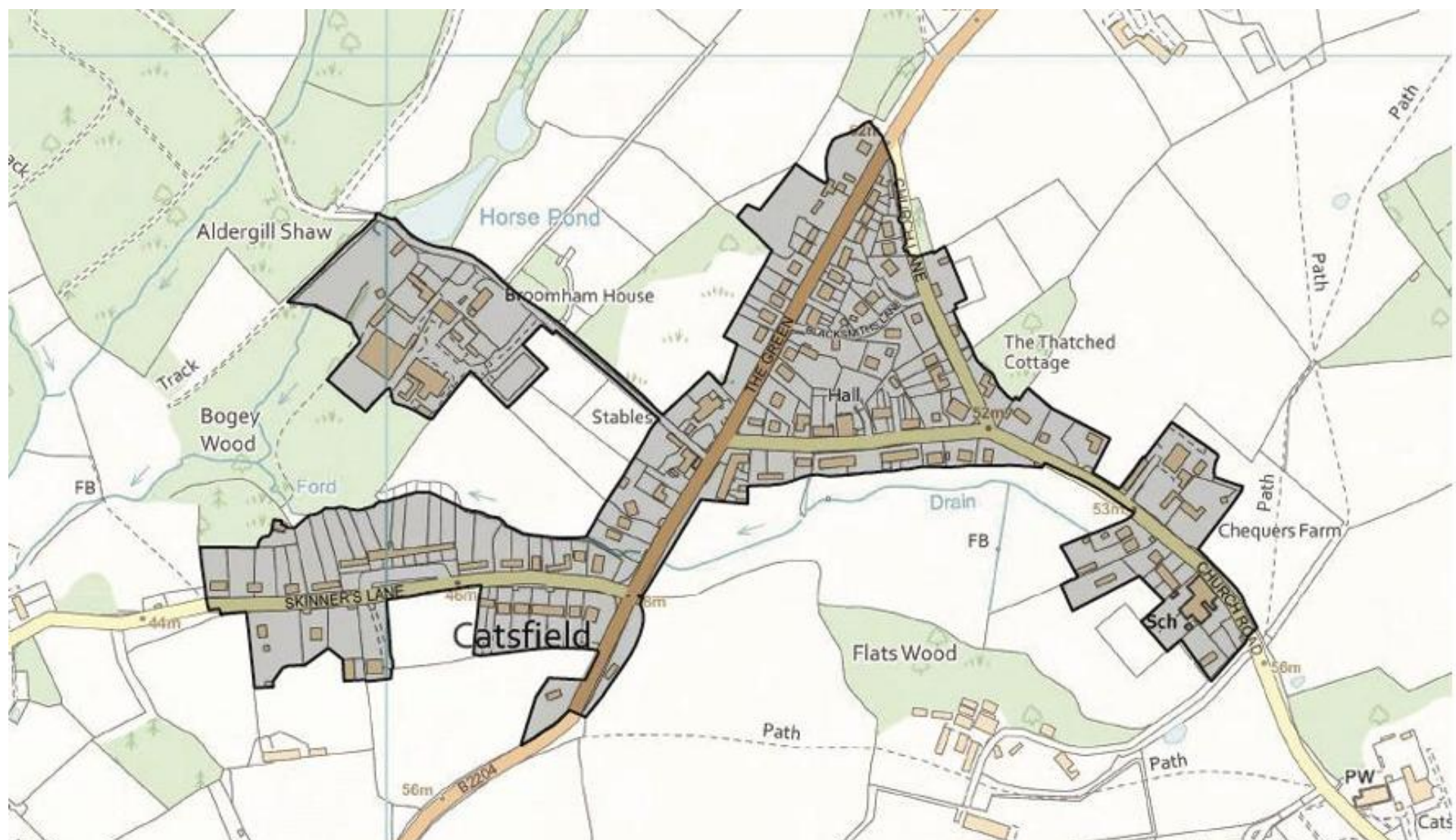
Of the areas assessed, two areas are considered to have potential for small scale development. First is the near section of paddocks to the read of the Post Office west of

APPENDIX 3

CATSFIELD

SETTLEMENT STUDY

BUILT FORM / SDB



APPENDIX 4

IMAGES OF THE BROOKS



ACROSS EASTERN AND SOUTH PART OF THE BROOKS FROM HIGH WEALD NATIONAL LANDSCAPE BOUNDARY

Aspect across the Brooks during active field and boundary management



Sheep pasturing, 2019



Horse pasture and ancient hedgerow, in good management, 2009

ACROSS EASTERN AND SOUTH PART OF THE BROOKS
FROM HIGH WEALD NATIONAL LANDSCAPE BOUNDARY
ANCIENT WOODLAND ALONG SOUTH BOUNDARY



ACROSS EASTERN AND SOUTH PART OF THE BROOKS
FROM HIGH WEALD NATIONAL LANDSCAPE BOUNDARY
ANCIENT WOODLAND ALONG SOUTH BOUNDARY



**ACROSS WESTERN AND NORTH PART OF THE BROOKS
LOOKING TOWARDS THE ANCIENT WOODLAND FLATS WOOD**



ACROSS NORTH PART OF THE BROOKS
LOOKING TOWARDS THE ANCIENT WOODLAND FLATS WOOD



ACROSS WESTERN PART OF THE BROOKS
LOOKING TOWARDS HIGH WEALD NATIONAL LANDSCAPE



ACROSS WESTERN PART OF THE BROOKS
LOOKING TOWARDS HIGH WEALD NATIONAL LANDSCAPE



APPENDIX 5

HIGH WEALD NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

HIGH WEALD AONB UNIT OBJECTION TO
RR/2020/1562/P

High Weald Joint Advisory Committee

Woodland Enterprise Centre
Hastings Road
Flimwell
East Sussex TN5 7PR

Tel: 01424 723011
Email: info@highweald.org



www.highweald.org

Working together to care for one of England's finest landscapes

Rother District Council
17th December 2020
Emailed to Planning@Rother.gov.uk

Dear Mrs S Shepherd,

RR/2020/1562 29 dwellings, The Brook, Church Lane, Catsfield

Thank you for your consultation on the above planning application, which is a development in the setting of the High Weald AONB.

I attach a map showing the AONB boundary and the landscape components in the designated area close to the site. I also attach a map from Defra's MAGIC database showing the priority habitats on the site.

In summary, the High Weald AONB Unit objects to this proposal on the grounds that it would cause significant harm to the setting of the High Weald AONB. It is also considered that the Ecological Report submitted with the application is inadequate and further surveys are needed to assess the impacts on the ecology of the site and how this connects into the AONB.

Legal and Policy Background

It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to decide whether the application meets legislative and policy requirements in respect of AONBs. Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires local authorities to have regard to 'the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs' in making decisions that affect the designated area. The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 172 requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas.

Anglesey
Arnside and Silverdale
Blackdown Hills
Cannock Chase
Chichester Harbour
Chilterns
Clwydian Range
Cornwall
Cotswolds
Gower
Cranbourne Chase and Dee Valley
West Wiltshire Downs
Dedham Vale
Dorset
East Devon
Forest of Bowland
Howardian Hills
High Weald
Isle of Wight
Isles of Scilly
Kent Downs
Lincolnshire Wolds
Llyn
Malvern Hills
Mendip Hills
Nidderdale
Norfolk Coast
North Devon
North Pennines
North Wessex Downs
Northumberland Coast
Quantock Hills
Shropshire Hills
Solway Coast
South Devon
Suffolk Coast and Heaths
Surrey Hills
Tamar Valley
Wye Valley

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One of the
AONB Family

The Planning Practice Guidance on development in the setting of AONBs says “Land within the setting of these areas often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and where poorly located or designed development can do significant harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary. Development within the settings of these areas will therefore need sensitive handling that takes these potential impacts into account”.

The [High Weald AONB Management Plan](#) has been adopted by all the relevant local authorities with land in the AONB as their policy for the management of the area and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it, and is a material consideration for planning applications. The Management Plan objectives should be used as a ‘checklist’ against which to assess the impact of proposals on AONB purposes. A template is provided in the [Legislation and Planning Advice Note](#).

The Proposal

The application proposes 29 dwellings and a community building on land to the south of Church Road. Minimal information is provided with the application, so this response focuses on the principle of the loss of this field to development.

The High Weald AONB wraps around the settlement of Catsfield. Whilst the application site lies outside the AONB, it is within the High Weald National Landscape Character Area and shares many of the AONB’s characteristics. It is also highly visible from the AONB, particularly from Church Road, and the site forms an important component of the setting of the designated area. Development on this site would detract from the open pastoral character of the site and fail to conserve and enhance the adjacent AONB.

Appended to this letter are some comments on the ecological information submitted with the application. In summary the Ecological Report is incomplete and further surveying work is required particularly around protected species. Without such work it is difficult to assess the impact of the development on the ecology of the site or how this connects into the habitats of the AONB. The report also does not contain any recommendations for mitigation, or biodiversity net gain

The above comments are advisory and are the professional views of the AONB Unit’s Planning Advisor on the potential impacts on the High Weald landscape. They are not necessarily the views of the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Claire Tester MRTPI

Planning Advisor, High Weald AONB Unit

Advising on the management of a nationally important landscape, part of our Natural Health Service

APPENDIX 6

SA CATEGORY 15C

CATSFIELD CT3 THE BROOKS

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL – CT3 THE BROOKS

Significant positive	Minor positive	Neutral or uncertain	Minor negative	Significant negative
++	+	0	-	--

SA Objective		Indicative housing units																																																			
		SA1: Air pollution				SA2: Biodiversity				SA3: Climate change				SA4: Flood risk				SA5: Coastal erosion				SA7: Health & wellbeing				SA8: Access to services				SA11: Heritage				SA12: Land & soil				SA14: Water quality				SA15: Parks and countryside				SA17: Employment				SA20: Roads & travel choice			
SA indicator reference		1a	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	5a	5b	5c	6a	7a	7b	7c	9a	11a	11b	12a	14a	15a	15b	15c	15d	17a	17b	20a	20b																									

CT3 – Land south of Church Road	35	-	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	+	0	0	+	+	-	-	0	-	0	-	N/A	-	-	0	N/A	0	N/A
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Criteria	Significant positive	Minor positive	Neutral or uncertain	Minor negative	Significant negative	Data sources	Notes
Scoring key	++	+	0	-	--		
						Fringes Landscape Assessment (2008) and any other relevant assessments.	
15.c Landscape sensitivity (applies only to sites outside the National Landscape)	N/A	No impact	Low impact	Medium impact	High impact	HELAA Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (if available), or officer assessment, informed by Market Towns and Villages Landscape Assessment (2009), Bexhill and Hastings Fringes Landscape Assessment (2008) and any other relevant assessments.	Landscape sensitivity derived through officer assessment.