



# **Crowhurst**



# **Neighbourhood Development Plan**



**Crowhurst Parish Council**  
**Pre-submission January 2018**

**2018-2028**

## FOREWORD

---

The Localism Act 2011 gave parishes and other neighbourhood areas the ability to be able to exercise more control over future development in their community by creating their own Neighbourhood Plan. Crowhurst Parish Council took up this challenge in October 2015 in the hope of achieving the required development whilst ensuring a high level of resident satisfaction. Although the Parish Council is the qualifying body for the Neighbourhood Plan and has oversight over its development, the Neighbourhood Plan Group was formed to ensure the Plan was led by residents.

From the very beginning, it was hoped that it would help bring the community together to ensure Crowhurst would develop in a way that was beneficial to everyone. The terms of reference for the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Group highlighted that the Neighbourhood Plan would:

- a) Identify all the important aspects of life in the parish which are to be considered in planning for the future
- b) Bring forward proposals which will enhance the quality of life in the Parish in the years to come.
- c) Provide a framework for future land usage within the parish

Much of the work in producing the Neighbourhood Plan has been done by the very dedicated members of the Steering Group, who have all put in a lot of time to get us to this point:

Ann Wilson

Chris Davidson

Dave Howley

Diane Stainsby

Gareth Bright

Martin White

Pat Buckle

Sonia Plato

Tracy Hoad

Willy Wilson



However, a lot of assistance has also been given by others too – from inside and outside our wonderful village:

- The task group members who carried out work for the Steering Group
- The residents of Crowhurst for attending workshops, meetings and filling in surveys – this formed the basis of our Plan
- Ashley Wynn of Greenhayes Planning – Chartered Town Planner who was our professional Planning Consultant
- Huskisson Brown Associates (HBA) for conducting our Landscape Assessment
- AECOM for our Heritage and Character Assessment
- Many other residents and non-residents for providing assistance with reports and information

I would like to thank everyone for all their hard work, dedication and involvement in a Plan that should bring benefits to Crowhurst in the years to come.

There will now be further consultation on the draft Plan with further feedback. This feedback will then be reviewed and any necessary modifications made, before a final plan is submitted to Rother District Council. If finally approved at referendum, the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan certainly won't rest on a shelf gathering dust, but will be used as a fundamental reference point and as material consideration in the determination of all future planning decisions for the Parish. Our work on the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan has been to set the principles over the next 10 years or so; it will be for our children and future parishioners to take on the stewardship role for the on-going longer term evolution of our Parish.

Rosalyn Day  
Chair Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group  
December 2017





Fields near Swainham Lane

Photo by Loksan Harley



Your Vision  
Our Future

# CONTENTS

---

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Purpose
- 1.2 Context
- 1.3 Neighbourhood Plans – Overview
- 1.4 Relevance for Crowhurst
- 1.5 Plan Period
- 1.6 Designated Area
- 1.7 Strategic Environmental Assessment
- 1.8 Plan Organisation
- 1.9 Plan Timeline

## 2. Crowhurst – A rural village

- 2.1 Environment
- 2.2 Heritage
- 2.3 Infrastructure and Transport
- 2.4 Facilities
- 2.5 Housing and Population
- 2.6 Local Economy
- 2.7 Education

## 3. A Vision for Crowhurst

- 3.1 The Vision  
Aims
- 3.2 Housing

- 3.3 Infrastructure, Transport and Business
- 3.4 Environment and Heritage
- 3.5 Community Facilities, Services and Activities

## 4. Policies

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 The Natural Environment
  - 4.2.1 Environment Objectives
  - 4.2.2 Policy CS1 – Development Boundaries
  - 4.2.3 Policy CE1 – Landscape Character of Crowhurst
  - 4.2.4 Policy CE2 – Biodiversity
  - 4.2.5 Policy CE3 – Natural Features
  - 4.2.6 Policy CE4 – Blue Infrastructure
- 4.3 The Village Environment
  - 4.3.1 Social Objectives
  - 4.3.2 Policy CF1 – Community Facilities, Open Space and Recreation
  - 4.3.3 Policy CB1 – Design
  - 4.3.4 Policy CB2 – Heritage
  - 4.3.5 Housing
  - 4.3.6 Policy CH1 – Land adjoining Station Road and Forewood Lane
  - 4.3.7 Policy CH2 – Land south of Forewood Rise
  - 4.3.8 Policy CH3 – Land adjacent to the Station Car Park



4.4 Economic

4.4.1 Economic Objectives

4.4.2 Policy CC1 – Businesses

4.4.3 Policy CC2 - Infrastructure

5. [Implementation and Monitoring](#)

6. [Glossary](#)

7. [List of Appendices](#)





1066 Country Walk near The Plough. Photo by Slimmeria Retreat



Crowhurst sign by Church



Your Vision  
Our Future

# 1. INTRODUCTION

---

## 1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This document has been drafted in response to Rother District Council's (RDC) Local Plan with the requirement to provision additional homes throughout the district, including Crowhurst. In essence, if as a village we did not have a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) we could be open to development to meet our village's housing quota, as set by Rother, over which we would have very little say. Having a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Crowhurst built upon our views as residents of the village gives us an opportunity to shape this mandated development.
- 1.1.2 Crowhurst Parish Council took the decision to produce a Neighbourhood Plan at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015 following the Government's publication of the Localism Act in 2011.
- 1.1.3 Crowhurst Parish Council has developed this NDP by working with a Steering Group of interested villagers who volunteered to assist in guiding the development process. The Plan has been developed via an iterative process, initially by the Steering Group followed by a wider community consultative process under part 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The

goal was to allocate development sites and policies to realise the village vision drafted by the Steering Committee, from comments made at public meetings, and finalised with the village in September 2016.

- 1.1.4 If passed at a local referendum, the NDP will be adopted by Rother District Council as the plan which must be used in law to determine planning applications in the Parish; it will become part of the Development Plan alongside the District Council's Local Plan.

## 1.2 Context

- 1.2.1 RDC's Local Plan<sup>1</sup> required by Central Government has the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, which should be aspirational, reflecting the vision and aspirations of local communities, but also realistic. It embraces policies to deliver the homes and jobs needed in the area, over a 15-year time period (2011 - 2028), as well as supporting development and infrastructure.
- 1.2.2 This Core Strategy sets targets for the numbers of additional homes and business floor-space over the 15-year period. The targets balance the need for more homes, improving

---

<sup>1</sup> RDC Local Plan, Adopted Core Strategy 2014 - <http://www.rother.gov.uk/corestrategy>



economic opportunities and social well-being with maintaining the special character and particular environmental qualities of the District that make it an attractive place to live.

- 1.2.3 The housing development target for the District as a whole is for at least 5,700 new homes to be built over the plan period. The majority, some 3,100, are expected to be at Bexhill, with 475-500 extra dwellings at Battle, 355-400 dwellings at Rye, at least 100 dwellings on the fringes of Hastings and 1,670 dwellings across villages, 20<sup>2</sup> of which are designated for our village of Crowhurst.

## 1.3 Neighbourhood Plans

### Overview

- 1.3.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced in the Localism Act November 2011. The overall aim of the act was to devolve more decision-making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils. NDPs were introduced with the aim that:

*“Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live. The Act introduces a new right for communities to draw up a neighbourhood plan.”<sup>3</sup>*

- 1.3.2 NDPs allow local communities, via a Parish Council, or Neighbourhood Forum, to set out a vision for an area, including planning policies and the development of land, being focused on local issues. For example, they could cover where new homes should go and what green spaces should be protected. They could also include local design standards such as the type of materials, scale and character that must be used for any new property. A plan does need to be compatible with national policies and policies in the planning authority’s local plan. It should be focused on guiding development rather than stopping it. If adopted, it will become a statutory plan and be used in making decisions on planning applications.

<sup>2</sup> RDC Local Plan, Development and Site Allocations Part C: Site Allocations Overview <https://www.rother.gov.uk/dasa>



<sup>3</sup> A plain English guide to the Localism Act <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/localism-act-2011-overview>

1.3.3 The Government National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>4</sup>, published in March 2012 and taking immediate effect, 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. Parishes 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)*

## 1.4 Relevance for Crowhurst

- 1.4.1 Having a Neighbourhood Development Plan gives us, as the local community of Crowhurst, a genuine opportunity to input to and shape the future of our village, for example by being able to have a say in where development sites are to be located rather than third parties, e.g. prospective developers doing so purely in their interests.
- 1.4.2 All NDPs are subject to both an independent examination and referendum – needing to receive 50% or more of vote share – as well as being in “general conformity” with the Local Plan (in Crowhurst’s case, Rother District Council’s

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>



Core Strategy). If accepted and ratified by a referendum, our Neighbourhood Development Plan would become part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and have legal weight as a statutory document.

- 1.4.3 If accepted and ratified in the referendum there would also be financial benefits to Crowhurst. By producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, a higher percentage (25%) of the community infrastructure levy (CIL), charged to developers by RDC, comes to our village for projects. Without a NDP, the District Council can decide where a lower percentage (15%) of the money is spent, which could be outside of Crowhurst.

## 1.5 Plan Period

- 1.5.1 The Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared this plan to cover the period 2018 – 2028 in line with Rother District Council's Local Plan timeframe. It sets out specific policies and proposals for the use and development of land in the Area shown below over this plan period.

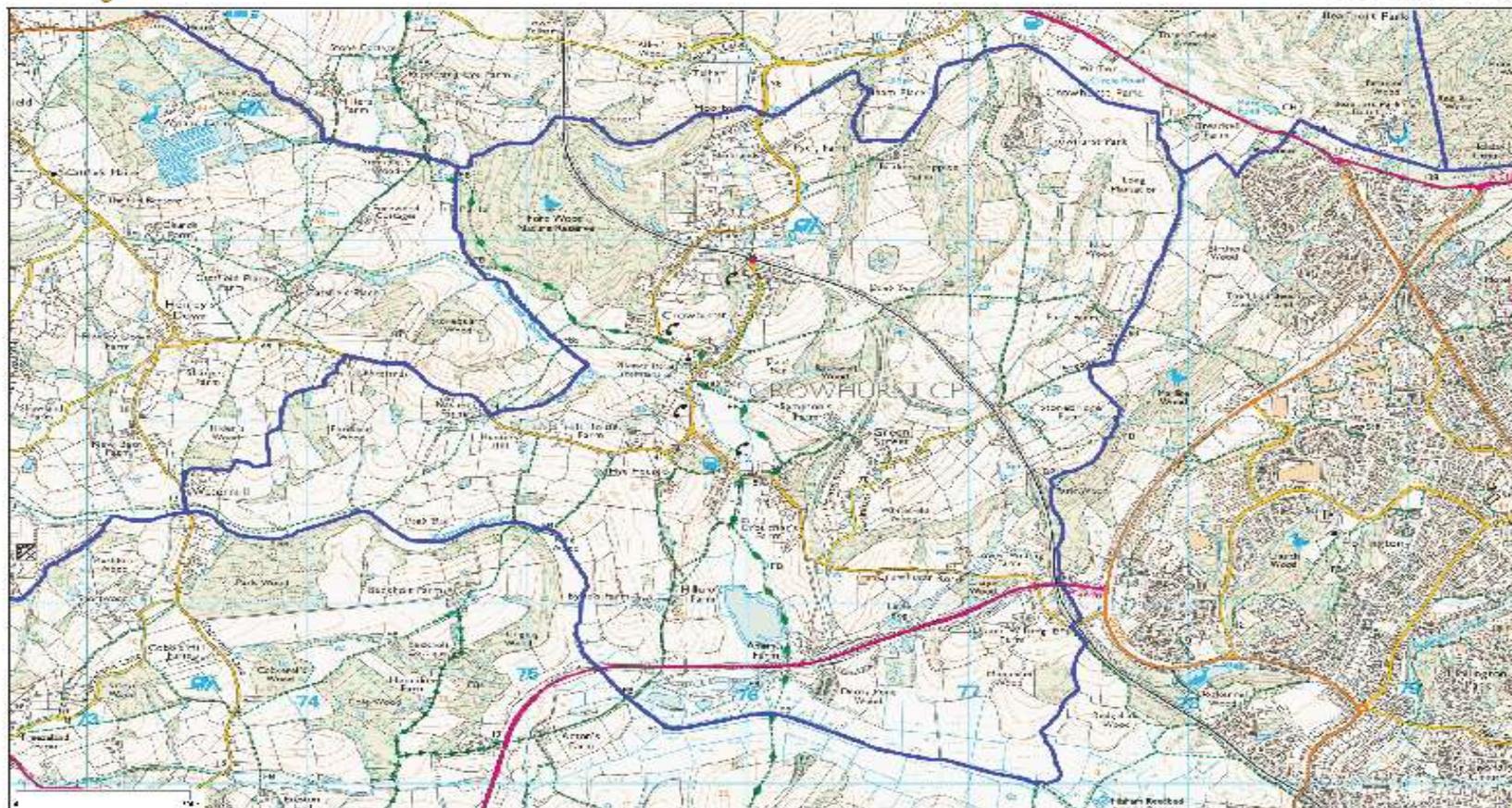
## 1.6 Designated Area

- 1.6.1 Crowhurst Parish Council formally submitted an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Plan Area in October 2015<sup>5</sup>. In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, Crowhurst Parish Council (as the relevant body) submitted to RDC the following map identifying the Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- 1.6.2 In November 2015, it was confirmed by the District Council that, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, the marked area shown on the map (being that of the Parish boundary) was formally designated as the Crowhurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area.

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.rother.gov.uk/article/11618/Crowhurst-Neighbourhood-Plan>





Date Created: 26-8-2017 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 576088 / 112058 | Scale: 1:25032 | © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2017

Map of Crowhurst Parish, designated as Neighbourhood Plan area



## 1.7 Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.7.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a systematic decision support process, aiming to ensure that environmental and possibly other sustainability aspects are considered effectively in policy, plan and programme making<sup>6</sup>.

1.7.2 Rother District Council, as the local planning authority, issued a screening opinion in January 2017 for the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan. The opinion states that neighbourhood development plans are subject to a SEA under the European Union (EU) Directive 2001/42 if they intend to make land allocations or are in particularly sensitive areas. One of the basic conditions tested was whether the making of the NDP is compatible with EU obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).<sup>7</sup>

1.7.3 Crowhurst's Neighbourhood Development Plan, as part of this screening, was deemed by Rother District Council to require a SEA for the following reasons:

1. *The NDP will allocate sites and form part of the 'development plan' and thereby exert a direct and*

*substantial influence over development proposals coming forward in the period.*

2. *The characteristics of the area covered by the NDP (as set out in Schedule 1(2) of the regulations).*

3. *The NDP needs to consider important environmental factors, notably the area is wholly<sup>8</sup> within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which enjoys the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, as well as the proximity of heritage assets, flood risk areas, a ground water source protection zone, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and other environmental assets.*

1.7.4 The SEA can be found in the Supplementary Documentation.

## 1.8 Plan Organisation

1.8.1 The village's Neighbourhood Development Plan, whilst owned by the Crowhurst Parish Council as a legal entity, has been created by Crowhurst residents actively interested in the Plan. The Crowhurst Neighbourhood Planning Group was

---

<sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic\\_environmental\\_assessment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_environmental_assessment)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.rother.gov.uk/article/12701/Neighbourhood-Plan-Strategic-Environmental-Assessments-SEA>



---

<sup>8</sup> Crowhurst Parish straddles the boundary of the High Weald AONB but any development near the boundary could affect the setting of the AONB

subject to a defined Terms of Reference (ToR)<sup>9</sup> with the following roles and responsibilities:

- Promote the process of preparing the NDP, encouraging interested parties to participate and provide their views and opinions on the specific topics which are covered during preparation of the Plan;
- Arrange meetings and events to gather views and consult on emerging policies for the draft Plan;
- Appoint task groups to undertake identified tasks;
- Assess evidence about the needs and aspirations of the Parish;
- Liaise with relevant organisations and stakeholders;
- Ensure that required surveys, questionnaires, and other consultations are carried out satisfactorily;
- Analyse the results and use them to prepare a robust draft Plan;

1.8.2 The Crowhurst Planning Group is made up of the following sub groups:

**Steering Group** - Meeting monthly since April 2016 and comprising Task Group and Councillor representatives, this group's brief is to move the plan forward; it is accountable to

both the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Planning Group and the Parish Council.

**Communications Task Group** - Responsible for letting residents and interested parties know about the NDP process and progress.

**Land Use (Call for Sites) Group** - Looking at how housing development in Crowhurst can work best for the village. Identifying development sites in keeping with village character and which sit comfortably within the landscape and proposing spaces for environmental protection and community use.

**Street Champions** – Crowhurst volunteers visiting every house in the village to make sure all residents know about this plan and can contribute their ideas, wishes and concerns.

**Research and Heritage Group** – Collating the unique history, culture and heritage of Crowhurst to be recorded, celebrated and protected. Knowing about the past of the village strengthens conservation and provides evidence for where protection of heritage is needed to guide future developments.

**Environment Task Group** - Providing an overview of the plants, wildlife and environments that are special or have particular environmental and scientific value in Crowhurst. Examining areas which might be vulnerable to

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://crowhurstneighbourhoodplan.org/cnp-full-terms-of-reference>

development and identifying what needs to be protected in those areas as part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

**Survey Group** – Creating the surveys that are used to ask all residents for their opinions and ideas.

**Finance Group** - Keeping a budgetary record and liaising with the Parish Council on any financial contributions that are available for the Neighbourhood Planning process to utilise.

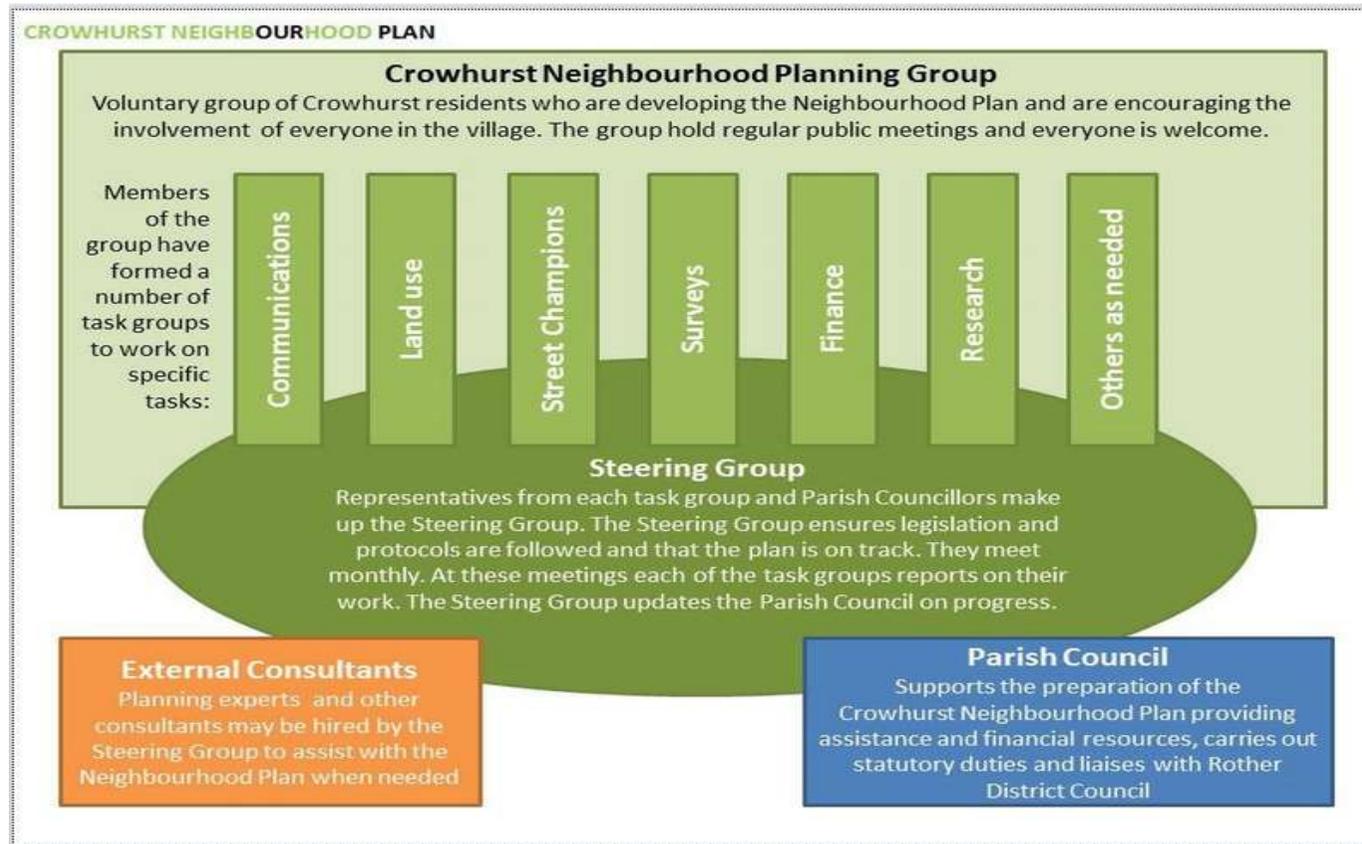


Fig 1.1 – Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Organisation

## 1.9 Plan Timeline

1.9.1 The following diagram represents the timeline of this plan for Crowhurst and is a summary of key events from a comprehensive project plan.

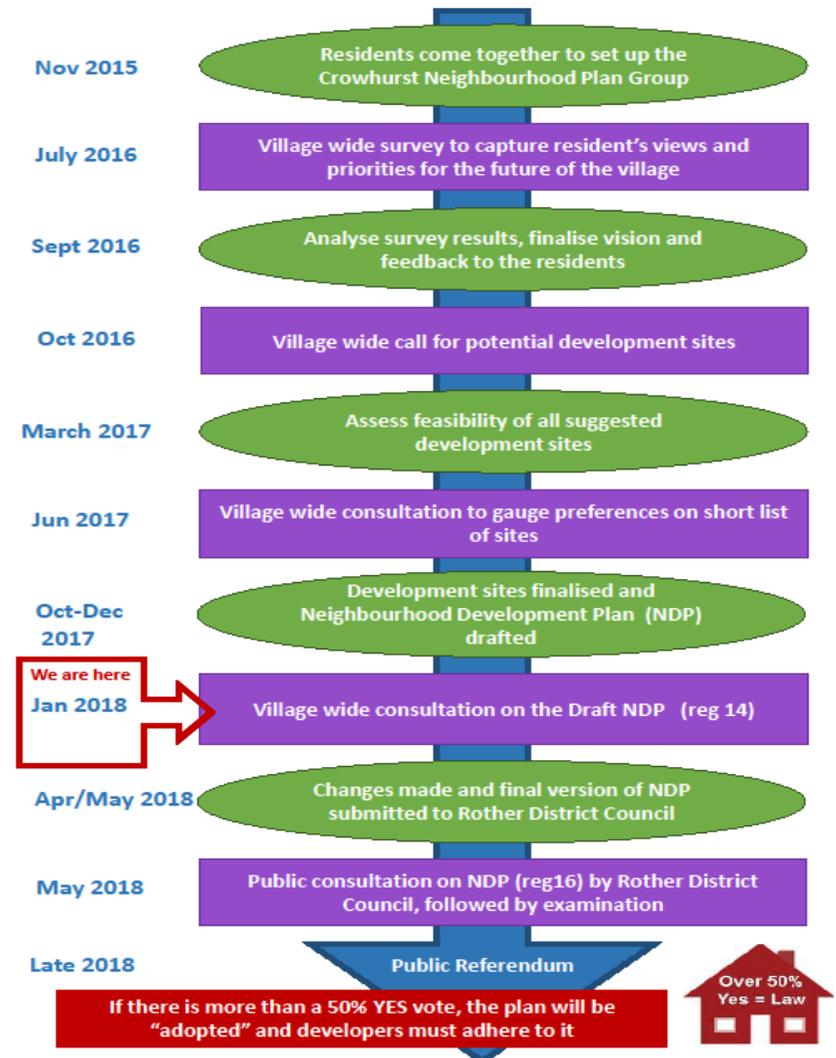


Fig 1.2 – Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Timeline





Looking towards Church from 1066 Country Walk



Your Vision  
Our Future

## 2. CROWHURST – A RURAL VILLAGE

---

2.0.1 The following is a short summary of Crowhurst, its surroundings, heritage and facilities. More in-depth information can be found in the Crowhurst – A Rural Village Nov 2017 document in Supplementary Documentation.

### 2.1 Environment

2.1.1 Crowhurst is located on the southern border of the Rother district, just north-west of St Leonards and Hastings, straddling the edge of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To the South of the village lies the Combe Valley Countryside Park. There is an RSPB nature reserve which includes a Site Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a local nature area of woodland (Quarry Wood), another SSSI on the Eastern edge of the Parish and several areas of Ancient Woodland.

2.1.2 Surveys and public meetings highlighted the importance that residents place on the environment around Crowhurst. Access to the countryside, wildlife corridors and the views/green spaces within the village were all highlighted as important. Protecting the rural nature of the village is part of the overall Vision for the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

2.1.3 The Environment Description, compiled by the Environment Task Group, can be found in the Supplementary Documentation. It gives much more detail on the environment of Crowhurst Parish and provides recommendations on how best to manage this going forward, based on the aims of the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan and in relation to already saved policies in the Rother Local Plan. The Environmental Planning Checklist will guide developers in conforming with all necessary policies.

2.1.4 Certain parts of Crowhurst are also prone to flooding – both pluvial and fluvial. More detail on flooding issues within Crowhurst can be found in the Watercourses and Flooding document in the Supplementary Documentation.

### 2.2 Heritage

2.2.1 As a village, Crowhurst has definitely been around since 771AD when King Offa of Mercia gave the Bishop of Selsey a piece of land. However there are indications of activity in the area from much, much earlier. The Combe Valley Way (A2690), opened in late 2015 and running through the Southern part of the Parish, provided a bountiful source of archaeological finds (flint scatters etc) that are still being



investigated. These finds point to settlements in the area dating back to the last Ice Age. See Bexhill to Hastings Link Road - Field Collection Survey, Crowhurst Parish Archaeology Update 2017 by Caspar Johnson FSA in Background Evidence for further information.

- 2.2.2 There are 25 listed buildings in the Parish – mostly ranging from 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century. The majority are Grade II listed but Hye House is a Grade II\* and the church tower is Grade I listed. Next to the church are also the remains of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Manor, which is a scheduled monument.
- 2.2.3 Both ironworking and gunpowder making have been major industries in the past. The Heritage Report, compiled by the Heritage Task Group, gives much more information on the heritage of the Parish and can be found in Supplementary Documentation.

## 2.3 Infrastructure and Transport

- 2.3.1 Crowhurst primarily lies along a single road going from the A2690 Queensway bypass of St Leonards to the A2100 at Telham, near Battle. There are a few branching cul-de sacs and one road towards the neighbouring village of Catsfield, through Henley Down. Until recently, there were no other roads in the Parish. Then, in late 2015, the new Combe Valley Way was opened. This was built to relieve pressure on the A259 coast road running from Hastings to Bexhill and

runs between the A2690 Queensway and the A259 in Bexhill. There have been complaints about increased noise levels and litter from the new road.

- 2.3.2 Crowhurst has a train station which is on the main-line from Hastings to London. This station was built when a branch line to Bexhill was opened in 1902. The branch line was closed in the 1960s but the station has remained open, albeit in a smaller capacity. Times to London are around 1 1/2hrs which makes Crowhurst convenient for commuting. However the main access to the station is up a long hill with no pavements and quite a lot of on-street parking which currently is free, while the station car park is metered.
- 2.3.3 Possibly due to the lack of other public transport, Crowhurst has a higher than average number of households with 2 or more cars (57% compared to the Rother average of 37%). Parking provision (or current lack in some places) was cited as an important concern to residents in surveys.
- 2.3.4 Pavements and road safety were also highlighted as important during surveys and public feedback.

## 2.4 Facilities

- 2.4.1 The Village Hall is the main community facility and well used by the Primary School, located next door, and local groups. There has long been talk about building a new Village Hall and this has been looked at during the Neighbourhood Plan



process. St George's Church is located opposite the Village Hall and has a Parish Room with kitchen that can be hired.

2.4.2 In addition to the Village Hall there is the Recreation Ground with a Pavilion and Youth Club Hut. The Recreation Ground also has a children's play area and tennis court.

2.4.3 The Plough Inn pub and Methodist Chapel are located near the Recreation Ground. The Christian Healing Centre is located at the Northern end of the village in the Old Rectory.

2.4.4 There are many clubs and activities in the village. Most of these are listed in the monthly village magazine – the Crowhurst News.

## 2.5 Housing and population

2.5.1 In the 2011 census, there were 891 residents in 327 dwellings. The population was split almost equally between men and women.

2.5.2 Crowhurst has a smaller number of 1 or 2 bed properties compared to Rother ( 28% versus 42%) but has around (based on 2011 census data) 58% of households with only 1 or 2 people.

2.5.3 Surveys in the village showed that more 1 or 2 bed properties were needed, both for emerging households and downsizers.

## 2.6 Local Economy

2.6.1 Crowhurst has a higher number than the Rother average of self-employed people covering a wide range of industries. Other than that, there are a number of businesses providing employment in the Parish – farms, equestrian businesses, two care homes, a weight-loss retreat, the village pub, tourism – campsite and Holiday Village. However, most people need to commute out of Crowhurst for work.

2.6.2 Crowhurst does have a high level of residents working in professional and skilled trade jobs.

## 2.7 Education

2.7.1 Possibly tied in with the higher number of people working in skilled jobs is the fact that Crowhurst has a high percentage of residents educated to degree level or higher (36% compared to 25% in Rother).

2.7.2 Crowhurst has a Church of England primary School which takes children from the village and surrounding areas. It has been rated by Ofsted as Good since 2009.





Community Event at Quarry Wood



Your Vision  
Our Future

## 3. A VISION FOR CROWHURST

---

### 3.1 The Vision

3.1.1 At the start of the Neighbourhood Planning Process, several public consultations took place (Dec 15 –Feb 2016)<sup>10</sup> to find out what Crowhurst residents thought were important. The information gathered was distilled into 2 options for a Vision for Crowhurst. These were put forward at one of the regular public meetings and the favourite was then voted for in the first village wide survey in July 2016. 98% of respondents agreed with the Vision for Crowhurst as:

**‘maintain the village’s rural character by protecting the countryside and environment around its boundaries, promoting community spirit and enhancing infrastructure, facilities and services for residents of all ages’.**

3.1.2 The Vision was agreed by the Parish Council in November 2016.

### AIMS

Using information from the survey and further public meetings, the following Aims were proposed:

#### 3.2 HOUSING

H1) To identify viable sites for new homes that could be integrated into the village with good access to the countryside;

H2) To ensure housing is supported by the necessary infrastructure, sewerage, drainage, energy supply, broadband and parking;

H3) To build affordable homes that meet the current and future needs of the village;

H4) To build homes that are of an appropriate type, size and style for the rural character of the village and are sympathetic to existing homes and the surrounding countryside;

H5) To promote principles of high quality and good design that encourages local context and rural character;

H6) To ensure new homes meet or exceed energy efficiency standards and achieve low carbon status and / or renewable energy generation.

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.crowhurstneighbourhoodplan.org/neighbourhood-plan-meetings>



### 3.3 INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT AND BUSINESS

- ITB1) To improve road safety for all road users;
- ITB2) To reduce the amount and speed of traffic through the village;
- ITB3) To enhance opportunities for walking and cycling around the village;
- ITB4) To maintain and enhance access to public transport especially the train service;
- ITB5) To seek ways to manage parking issues;
- ITB6) To support local businesses;
- ITB7) To improve mobile phone coverage and broadband connectivity;
- ITB8) To improve sewage and drainage.

### 3.4 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

- EH1) To protect and enhance the rural and peaceful character of the village;
- EH2) To identify areas of green space, woodland and heritage sites to be protected from future development;
- EH3) To maintain the distinctive views and connections with the countryside and heritage sites;
- EH4) To protect and enhance the biodiversity, nature and wildlife in the village;
- EH5) To protect the village boundaries to avoid coalescence with neighbouring villages and towns;
- EH6) To alleviate and manage risk of flooding;
- EH7) To promote the use of renewable energy and sustainable materials;
- EH8) To maintain low levels of air, noise and light pollution and reduce amount of litter/ fly tipping.



### 3.5 COMMUNITY SERVICES, FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

CSF1) To promote and encourage community spirit and engagement in local decisions about the village;

CSF2) To promote and encourage neighbourliness to help reduce feelings of isolation;

CSF3) To support the village primary school as well as social and educational opportunities, facilities and activities for children and young people;

CSF4) To support health services, facilities and activities that help to encourage everyone to lead healthy and active life styles;

CSF5) To support and enhance community facilities that will meet current and future demands e.g. village hall, recreation ground, village pub, village shop;

CSF6) To support and enhance community events, leisure and cultural activities for everyone in the village.

3.6 These Aims were then refined into a set of objectives under the three themes of Environmental, Social and Economic to align with the National Planning Policy Framework. The policies within the CNDP are based upon these so that the overall vision for Crowhurst can be realised.

3.7 An Action Plan will also be created for those aims/objectives that are not suitable for a Neighbourhood Development Plan.





Photo by Ellen Harley



Your Vision  
Our Future

## 4. POLICIES

---

### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 New houses are required throughout the country. National targets are distributed down to County, District and then local quotas. Rother District Council (RDC) has a current quota to provide nearly 5,700 new homes over its plan period to 2028. Within Rother's plan, Crowhurst is expected to contribute 20 new homes from planned housing developments (of six homes or more) and a few more through windfall projects (smaller, sporadic developments). Our own local housing needs assessments have broadly confirmed that these numbers match our future, local requirements.
- 4.1.2 One of the key aims of Crowhurst's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is to ensure that development of these new homes provides a positive benefit; providing people with appropriate, high quality homes for the future whilst enhancing the character of the village and adding amenity wherever possible.
- 4.1.3 In order to do this the NDP Team has taken some time to try and understand both peoples' needs and which characteristics of the village are important. The importance of the environment around Crowhurst has been flagged up

from the start of the process. We have also considered other issues such as how amenities could best be improved and what people's housing needs are likely to be over the coming years.

- 4.1.4 The NDP Team has engaged with the community through street champions, workshops, discussions, surveys<sup>11</sup>, exhibitions, and a website - all with continual feedback - to gain as much information as possible. We have liaised with other parishes and local authorities to understand our place in the wider community and to benefit from lessons learned elsewhere. The results of our consultations with residents can be found in the background information.
- 4.1.5 Specialist advisors were employed covering: planning technicalities, landscape considerations and architectural and environmental character assessments, to ensure we can identify practical and compliant, yet sympathetic, development solutions. Advice was also sought from specialist sources covering natural and cultural heritage, and wider environmental issues to ensure we protect all that is important. Reports can be found in the Supplementary Documentation.
- 4.1.6 We took every possible suggestion for housing sites we were able to identify and assess these using a combination

---

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.crowhurstneighbourhoodplan.org/consultation-process>



of technical considerations, criteria relevant to the SEA objectives and other factors identified as important to the community. We have concluded with a final shortlist of viable development sites.

- 4.1.7 Feedback has helped inform the distribution of houses across these viable sites, preferred house sizes, housing density and types and styles of houses the NDP should aim to provide. Surveys have indicated a preference for mixed housing sizes, mostly 1 to 3 bedroom, semi-detached type houses. Census data confirms that Crowhurst has a particular deficit of small (1 or 2 bedroom) properties. Providing these sorts of homes will enable younger families to live in the village or older people to stay in the village but downsize. Development should be dispersed, low quantity, low density formats, with reasonable size gardens where possible, and careful consideration for neighbours, parking and other amenity needs. The NDP aims to encourage high standards of design and sufficient infrastructure wherever new development is permitted.
- 4.1.8 The built environment in Crowhurst has no single or coherent style. There are many architectural styles and some interesting individual buildings which provide good examples on which to base future housing designs. There are also developments which lack distinctive architecture, or in some cases are rather poor. The NDP Team has taken

some time to identify preferable characteristics of the built environment and produce general design statements to guide future development. Guidance will also aim to ensure good building practice is employed encompassing issues such as energy efficiency and flood mitigation measures.

- 4.1.9 The NDP is not simply about enabling housing development. It is as much about providing protection and enhancement of what is important about Crowhurst. Feedback identified considerable concern for landscape and the environment. The Plan includes policies to preclude development which would destroy, unacceptably damage or pollute the landscape or the environment.
- 4.1.10 We have carefully reviewed existing development boundaries and the Strategic Gap (shown on CNDP Map 8, which limits the expansion of Hastings into surrounding countryside areas). These reviews reinforce our work on conserving the character and landscape of Crowhurst and aim to strengthen protection against any possible larger-scale developments. Consequently, the NDP distinguishes clearly between the countryside and the built-up areas and aims to focus most development within or close to existing development. The NDP, in line with the RDC Core Strategy and soon to be adopted Development and Sites Allocation (DaSA) Plan, will protect and enable us to strongly resist development within the countryside, particularly those



areas of special qualities such as the best and most versatile agricultural land, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Nature Reserves and Strategic Gaps.

- 4.1.11 The loss of wildlife habitats and corridors to development is also resisted, together with harm to heritage assets and their setting. To ensure this, we have undertaken character and landscape assessment work and identified acceptable baseline schemes for each development site. We have developed extensive environmental and heritage protection policies. This work is designed to ensure that houses fit well with the overall character of the village and enhance, rather than damage or spoil landscape, environment or heritage assets.
- 4.1.12 We have also identified other areas in Crowhurst for protection or other amenity use. The Environment Description<sup>12</sup> identifies these areas. See also CNDP Map 3. It also explains in some detail how and why each area should be protected. Where possible, enhancement of the countryside through good management is also encouraged.
- 4.1.13 Against each development site identified in the plan we have included an explanation of the most important policies and considerations. The following policies, including each site specific policy, provide a more in-depth justification and

background explanation. These policies must be considered in conjunction with RDC's Core Strategy and, soon to be adopted, DaSA Plan to get a full picture of the policies applying to new development in Crowhurst.

---

<sup>12</sup> Environment Description, Supplementary Documentation

## 4.2 The Natural Environment

### 4.2.1 Environmental Objectives

1. To preserve, and where possible enhance, the distinct rural landscape character of Crowhurst and the High Weald AONB and its setting including its rural lanes, important open spaces and views and the distinct settlement pattern of the village.
2. To conserve, and where possible enhance, the biodiversity value of the Parish, including the creation or protection of green corridors and wildlife connectivity and notable areas within the Parish including but not limited to the SSSI at the Fore Wood RSPB reserve, Quarry Wood Nature Reserve and Combe Valley Countryside Park. New development will be required to achieve net gain in biodiversity where possible.
3. To protect important landscape features within the Parish such as trees, hedgerows, verges, ponds and watercourses and the wider rural landscape and setting of the village including that of the High Weald AONB and the strategic gap.
4. Ensure that development is safe from flooding and other environmental impacts such as contamination, pollution and equally development does not impact upon the high environmental quality of the parish. Where possible, development should aim to reduce flood risk elsewhere.
5. To promote sustainable development including the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), sustainable construction techniques and renewable energies.
6. To preserve and where possible enhance the heritage assets of the village including listed buildings and their settings, non-designated heritage assets, below ground archaeology, ancient and historic routes and the form of the village settlement pattern.
7. Ensure development is well designed and new development is consistent with the local architectural vernacular and local character in general
8. Ensure development is landscape and ecologically led so the rural character of the village is maintained.



## 4.2.2 Policy CS1- Development Boundaries

### Policy Justification

#### 4.2.2.1 As part of the preparation for the Neighbourhood

Development Plan (NDP) and as a requirement of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process, the use of development boundaries as a manner of delivering the overall strategy of the plan was assessed and considered. Traditionally, development boundaries have been used to direct development to an area where development is considered to be acceptable in principle and identify areas where there would be a priority towards the protection of the countryside and its wider landscape character. Furthermore, beyond the boundary, development would be restricted to those developments which require a countryside location or there is a genuine need which could justify development in such exceptional circumstances. Such exceptions could include agricultural or tourism development or affordable housing schemes where these accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

#### 4.2.2.2 As set out in the evidence base, Crowhurst has a distinct fragmented and dispersed settlement pattern which can be broadly split into north, central and southern parts. This is considered to be unique and special within the AONB landscape and creates a tranquil and rural character which is central to the identity of the village and wider Parish. This

fragmentation presents potential pressures for infill development and encroachment within the intervening land which could have negative impacts on the wider Parish landscape. The northern part of the village is characterised by lower density development with larger plots which also could lead to pressure for redevelopment which in time could erode the verdant character of the village.

#### 4.2.2.3 In 2006, Rother District Council defined a development boundary around the Station Road (central) area and some of the southern part of the village, leaving the remainder of the village in the countryside in planning policy terms, the justification being the protection of this wider sensitive character. The use of development boundaries is a key tool in the current development plan, as stated in Core Strategy Policy OSS2 and continued across the District in the Development and Site Allocations Plan (DaSA) which seeks to apply a general development boundary policy to settlements.

#### 4.2.2.4 The development boundary options have been reviewed as part of the NDP and it has been determined that the 2006 boundary should be amended to include the allocation sites and Forewood Rise, which was previously excluded. This will reflect the principal built up parts of the village but at the same time protects the character and setting of the village, the important protected gaps (Policy CE1) and other



landscape considerations. It will also protect the lower density parts of the village from development pressures which could individually and cumulatively harm the wider built character of the village.

4.2.2.5 Development within the settlement boundary will be supported subject to the development meeting the other policies within the NDP. Beyond the development boundaries, these areas will be protected for their landscape character and development will be limited to those types where there is need for a countryside location or a proven need which will need to accord with the relevant policies of the development plan including those of agricultural and rural development, tourism and affordable housing.

### **Policy CS1- Development Boundary**

1. Within the village development boundary, as shown on CNDP Map 1, development will be permitted subject to compliance with the other policies in the development plan and subject to being compatible with the relevant identified landscape characteristics set out in the Crowhurst Landscape Character, Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (CLCSCA).
2. Outside of the defined development boundary as shown on CNDP Map 1, development will not be permitted unless it preserves the landscape character of the area including that of the High Weald AONB and its setting, and accords with the exception policies of the development plan which normally require either a genuine need to be demonstrated or that the development requires a countryside location.



## 4.2.3 Policy CE1- Landscape Character

### Policy justification

4.2.3.1 The majority of the village lies within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The village has a distinct rural feel which presents a tranquil and remote character and which retains strong characteristics of the High Weald. The village has retained its fragmented pattern, which has arisen from both historical events such as the introduction of the railway and its strong agricultural heritage which remains a dominant part of the village and sits alongside community life. This character is recognised in the Crowhurst Landscape Character, Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (CLCSCA), The Heritage and Character Assessment (HCA) and the East Sussex County Council Landscape Assessment. The reports highlight a landscape that is a strong reflection of AONB Character, but in which the fragmented pattern of the village and its topography makes the village landscape sensitive to change. Being a settlement that is located within a valley formation, and which has a high concentration of public footpaths, there is also a high degree of inter-visibility within the village which also increases the sensitivity of the landscape both within the village itself and on its fringes. Therefore, the openness of the village, its visibility and this agricultural character are integral factors to preserving the tranquillity and rural

character which is so key to the overall character of the village.

4.2.3.2 In a number of surveys held during the preparation of the NDP, the rural character of the village and its intrinsic beauty were of high priority to local people. The plan is supported by a SEA Report which requires the plan to have regard to reasonable alternatives in order to minimise environmental impacts. Furthermore, Paragraph 115 of the NPPF places great weight on the conservation of designated landscapes such as the AONB and the Rother Core Strategy policy EN1 Landscape Stewardship reinforces this protective presumption of landscape character and this is a key focus of the NDP. Thus, the central aims and objectives of the NDP are to allow sustainable growth, to enable the community to grow and prosper but at the same time protecting this special landscape character for future generations.

4.2.3.3 This policy seeks to identify the parts of the village where development should be restricted in order to protect the key characteristics of the village and will be applied in combination with Policy CS1 in respect of development outside the defined village boundaries. The CLCSCA defined 21 character areas within the Parish, each with a unique set of characteristics and which were key to preserve for maintaining its identified landscape character. Beyond the village, the Parish is remote, tranquil and reflective of the



High AONB and open countryside but unusually for a village in the South East of England, the village and its setting retain this tranquillity, remoteness and rural character within its built environs which is subject to greater pressures for change. Having regard to these greater pressures, it is considered appropriate to define the main features of the village environs which contribute to this character and protect these from further development which could undermine the function of these features in the wider landscape character.

4.2.3.4 Any scheme which will achieve an enhancement of the AONB or landscape character will be supported and priority in any planning decision will be given to the protection and conservation of the local landscape character.

### **Policy CE1- Landscape Character of Crowhurst**

The land located outside of the defined development boundary as shown on CNDP Map 1 will be protected and conserved for its landscape character and for its contribution towards the wider character of the Parish. Opportunities for the enhancement of the landscape will be encouraged and supported. Development will only be permitted if it meets the following criteria:

1. It conserves the landscape character of the village and the Parish area including the Character of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or its setting having regard to the Crowhurst Landscape Character, Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment;
2. It does not result in the erosion or loss of the identified protected village gaps and important green spaces as shown on CNDP Map 2 and CNDP Map 3;
3. The development does not impact on important valley and village views as defined on CNDP Map 2;
4. Development will be expected to be designed to include landscaping which will be consistent with the landscape characteristics of its locality as defined by the CLSCA.



## 4.2.4 Policy CE2 – Biodiversity

### Policy Justification

4.2.4.1 Crowhurst has significant and varied natural heritage with a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at the Fore Wood and Combe Haven and a Nature Reserve at Quarry Wood, as well as having unspoilt open countryside, woodland and wetland habitat. These provide a significant natural asset within the context of a relatively small village, which presents a significant asset from which to promote the conservation of the natural environment and also its enhancement. In addition to these more recognised habitats, other assets, including those within the village boundary, include the church yard with its ancient yew tree, Ancient Woodland, established hedgerows, residential gardens, the former railway line and the fringes of the recreation ground which present established wildlife corridors and habitats. The Powdermill and Rackwell Streams and other watercourses also provide habitat and a wetland environment that contributes to the biodiversity of the village and its environs. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF states that planning should aim to conserve and, where possible, enhance biodiversity. Policy EN5: Biodiversity and Greenspace of the Rother Core Strategy reinforces these aims.

4.2.4.2 The policy seeks to ensure applicants understand the ecological interests of a site prior to development so that the design can then protect any existing features and incorporate enhancements into the overall scheme. This is key to seeking enhancements within design and to ensure the scheme accords with relevant guidance such as Natural England's standing advice and enabling a site to maximise the ecological potential of a site, including wildlife connectivity and ensuring the proposed enhancements are acceptable to the site context. The importance of wildlife corridors and wider connectivity is recognised by the Rother Core Strategy, particularly Policy EN5, and *Biodiversity and Planning*, a document produced by Sussex Wildlife Trust and this policy seeks to implement an inclusive approach within any new development in the Parish.

4.2.4.3 The policy will require an integrated approach to all parts of the development, including those traditionally engineered parts of the development, including habitat within buildings such as bird boxes within brick work, wildlife friendly SuDS to maximise biodiversity opportunities in all parts of the building and site. Regard should be had to the SuDS options as set out in the RSPB publication *Sustainable Drainage Systems; Maximising the Potential for People and Wildlife*. The policy will also encourage native planting that is appropriate to the site conditions and also where possible planting that represents good pollinators for local wildlife.



4.2.4.4 This policy seeks to apply to all development within the Parish although it does recognise the need to be proportionate to the scale and type of development and therefore if one can demonstrate the type, location and scale of the development and having regard to the site context, that there would be limited impact then the policy acknowledges the need for ecological surveys would not be required in all instances. However, this would have to be clearly justified and development would be expected to accord with the remaining parts of the policy where these are relevant. It is also expected that applicants have regard to the up to date guidance from Natural England and its standing advice where addressing ecology issues as part of development.

4.2.4.5 The policy is considered to align with that of Policy EN5 in the Core Strategy and proposes greater detail for the local context of Crowhurst. The implementation of this policy will preserve the biodiversity and maximise opportunities to enhance biodiversity in accordance with policies of the NPPF.

### **Policy CE2 - Biodiversity**

Any new development will be required to demonstrate that the biodiversity of the site and its surroundings is conserved and opportunities for the enhancement of the natural environment are maximised.

1. Development will not be permitted where it adversely affects the ecological interests of the Fore Wood Reserve SSSI, Quarry Wood, Combe Haven, Priority Habitats or areas with a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or where development will affect the ecological integrity of the site and such impacts cannot be mitigated or compensated for;
2. Any new development is required to meet the following criteria:
  - (i) New development is expected to be supported by an initial ecological appraisal and if required any further ecology surveys, unless it is can be demonstrated these are not required, having regard to the site context or type of development;
  - (ii) The design of the scheme should be informed by current ecological concerns and opportunities to create enhancements on the site such as, but not limited to, new hedgerow and tree planting, native wildflower planting and habitat creation;
  - (iii) Existing wildlife corridors should be conserved and



retained and new wildlife corridors should be created as part of the new development, where possible.

Opportunities to connect with wildlife corridors on adjacent land should be explored and, if possible, porous boundaries used;

- (iv) New development should take opportunities to incorporate new habitat within buildings and across the site. This could include those integral within the structure of the building such as bat and bird boxes, wildlife friendly fencing and hedgehog refugia, wildflower patches, new native planting such as tree and hedgerow planting;
- (v) Any lighting should conform to the principles of the Bat Conservation Trust guidance;
- (vi) Any new drainage should be wildlife friendly and opportunities should be grasped to combine SuDS and wildlife opportunities;
- (vii) Any new planting should incorporate native planting and those which are defined as good pollinators for native species.

It will be required that the Environment Planning Application checklist in the Environment Description in the Supplementary Documentation should be completed as part of planning applications. This will guide development in meeting the requirements of the Environmental Policies.

## 4.2.5 Policy CE3- Natural Features

### Policy Justification

4.2.5.1 The NPPF places significant protection on irreplaceable habitat such as Ancient Woodland, aged or veteran trees and also that valued landscapes and biodiversity is preserved and enhanced. This is also supported by Policies EN1 Landscape Stewardship and EN5 Biodiversity and Greenspace of the Core Strategy which provide the strategic basis for this policy. Crowhurst has a wealth of such features, including vast areas of Ancient Woodland, veteran trees and other undesignated features such as broadleaf woodland, field and boundary hedgerows and wetland habitats including streams and ponds. The Environment Description Supplementary Paper sets these out in more detail. The Policy seeks to protect these irreplaceable features defined by the NPPF and also ensure any development will fully comply with the relevant guidance of the Nature Conservation Bodies and that set out in the High Weald Management Plan. This includes the need to comply with the Standing Advice of Natural England and other relevant organisations in relation to the conservation of these ecological and landscape features.

4.2.5.2 Having regard to the latter, the policy seeks to extend this protection to other undesignated habitat and landscape



features in order their wider and cumulative value for landscape character and biodiversity is taken into account as part of development. It is recognised, that sometimes loss is unavoidable on some development, but the policy requires that the design of development seeks to minimise such impacts through design where possible and, where this is not the case, then suitable compensation be provided within the site. It is also vital that the development provides evidence that the important features can be protected during the development and over the lifetime of the development. For example, tree protective fencing and that there is suitable separation space between trees, hedgerows and buildings to avoid later pressures for removal.

### **Policy CE3 – Natural Features**

New development will not be permitted where it adversely affects or results in the loss of natural features which are important from a landscape or ecological perspective. This can include, but not be limited to, Veteran and Aged Trees, Ancient Woodland, Good quality trees and hedgerows and Ponds. New development will be expected to:

1. Retain important features as part of the development scheme and these features to inform the design and layout of the development;
2. Demonstrate that the features can be protected and enhanced over the construction and lifetime stages of the development;

Where the benefits or need for the development are considered to justify the removal of such important features, development would only be permitted if suitable compensation measures were put in place to address their loss.



## 4.2.6 Policy CE4 – Blue Infrastructure

### Policy Justification

4.2.6.1 Crowhurst has two main watercourses that run through the heart of the village – the Powdermill Stream and Rackwell Stream which converge at a point east of Chapel Hill. As a consequence areas along the route of these watercourses are designated as Flood Zone 3, which is the floodplain to these rivers. Other areas within the Village also suffer from risk of Surface Water Flooding including areas west of Station Road, via the route of Brokes Gill, which runs southwards to the Powdermill Stream. There are also a number of secondary springs, ghylls and ponds within the village and the wider Parish. The Village has suffered a number of flood events as set out in the supplementary paper in respect of Watercourses and Flooding and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which noted that flooding occurred in the Combe Haven in 2001.

4.2.6.2 Thus, having regard to the risks and impacts of flooding on the village, the policy will seek to direct any new development away from areas at higher risk of flooding - particularly developments with more vulnerable uses. Thus development will be resisted in these areas unless the development is able to pass the sequential and exemption tests in accordance with the technical guidance of the NPPF,

where it is required, and accords with the requirements of Policy EN7 of the Rother Core Strategy. Furthermore, having regard to the catchment of the Combe Haven, the risks of development causing flooding downstream within the village are real and thus it is essential that development is assessed to ensure the risk is not increased elsewhere. The main solution to this will be the requirement for new development to incorporate SuDS measures within the scheme which would be proportionate to the scale of the development. For instance even a smaller extension to a dwelling could incorporate measures such as downpipes leading to rain gardens, water butts and other measures detailed in the East Sussex County Council publication *'Guide to Sustainable Drainage Systems in East Sussex in 2015'* and the RSPB Publication *Sustainable Drainage Systems; Maximising the Potential for People and Wildlife*. These measures would seek to maintain surface water run-off rates as close to the existing run-off rate as practicable and would be required to be integrated into new development.

4.2.6.3 This approach would accord with the NPPF and the strategic policies of the development plan and will assist in reducing surface run-off within the village and reducing the potential flood events into the future taking into account climate change.



### **Policy CE4 – Blue Infrastructure**

The existing network of streams, ponds, springs and rivers and their flood plans shall be maintained and protected and there will be a presumption against development within areas at risk of flooding in order that development is directed to areas of low risk. Any new development will be required to ensure flooding is not increased elsewhere within the village and that new development incorporates Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which shall be subject to long term management. Development shall meet the following criteria:

1. No development will be permitted within identified flood zone areas, see CNDP Map 4, unless it can meet the relevant requirements of the other relevant policies of the development plan and the NPPF Technical Guidance (or any subsequent guidance thereafter);
2. Any new development will be expected to incorporate the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS as defined by the Guide to Sustainable Drainage Systems in East Sussex 2015) unless it can be demonstrated this is not practicable;
3. The design of the SUDS shall include measures to prevent pollution and shall have an emphasis on landscape in order that it can be integrated within the development and shall grasp opportunities to maximise any biodiversity.

### **Policy CE4 continued...**

Encouragement will be given to development which achieves a betterment in flood risk terms which will reduce pressures on the catchment downstream.



## 4.3 The Village Environment

### 4.3.1 Social Objectives

1. Promote and reinforce the existing strength of community within the Parish and maximise opportunities for social inclusion by all sectors of the community
2. To support and enhance community facilities that will meet current and future demands e.g. village hall, recreation ground, village pub, Youth Club hut, Parish Room and support opportunities for new facilities e.g. shop, where needed.
3. Ensure development is inclusive in terms of accessibility and adaptability having regard to floor-space standards, lifetime homes and other quality standards
4. Deliver the homes that meet the needs of the community including, but not limited to, first time buyers, up and down sizers, the elderly and those who cannot currently access the housing market.
5. Maintain and enhance areas of open space and where possible encourage new open space, sports and play space facilities and ensure access to the countryside is maintained for all.
6. Improve access to local facilities, where possible, including maximising opportunities for utilising public transport and other local services.
7. Support use of existing facilities for community events including potential for dual use of facilities to maximise opportunities for social and community interaction.

8. To support social, health and educational opportunities, facilities and activities for all residents, but particularly children and young people



## 4.3.2 Community Facilities, Open Space and Recreation

### Policy justification

4.3.2.1 Although in its Rural Settlements Paper, Rother DC did not consider Crowhurst to have sufficient services to be designated as a Local Service Village, the village does contain a range of facilities which are of value to the community and should be protected. These include a village hall, youth club hut, church, public house, tennis court and BMX facility and recreational ground with pavilion. These facilities are protected by the NPPF and policies CO1 and CO3 of the Rother Core Strategy but it is considered necessary, on a local level, to protect the important facilities within the village. During the village surveys, the local residents considered the village hall to be the most important facility, together with the pub and recreational ground. Alongside the NDP process, the Pub has already been designated as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) and the Parish Council may also look to extend ACV designation to these other facilities to protect these from market forces should they arise.

4.3.2.2 The village surveys did not suggest a demand for a new single facility and instead there appears to be a local desire to retain and improve the existing facilities around the

village. There is also need for supporting infrastructure to these assets including parking, as there are parking problems at peak use time. Therefore, the Parish will investigate opportunities in the central part of the village to provide additional parking to serve the church, school and village hall in order to support their future viability. Therefore development of existing facilities, and indeed new development, where this meets an identified need will be encouraged along with the multi-use of existing facilities. In short, the Parish will support the future vitality of their community facilities, including utilising CIL receipts from new development, to secure suitable upgrades to these assets.

4.3.2.3 In order to support these facilities over the long term, the policy will seek to encourage development which will secure the viability of an existing asset where this does not interfere with or compete with its principal use. Furthermore, it is understood some of the existing facilities are used for a variety of uses and therefore this extended use is important to the vitality and viability of these assets and this will be encouraged by the policy. The provision of new community facilities will be encouraged and supported, including outside the village boundary where a need can be demonstrated and landscape and other considerations are met.



4.3.2.4 The village has a wealth of rural off- road footpaths which provide access from the detached parts of the village as well as to open countryside. Such routes should be protected and where diversion is required or a new route is required, this should be of high environmental quality. Due to the dispersed nature of the village and lack of roadside pavements, walking access to amenities is difficult. There is a local desire to improve part of the 1066 Country Walk to the southern part of the village to create a safe walking route that is accessible all year round. The aim would be to create a safer alternative to Chapel Hill for pedestrians walking between the recreation ground area and the school or station. The existing footpath across the field could be raised slightly and hardened to enable all weather use (including during flood or near flood conditions), for all users including push chairs. An important consideration would be to ensure that the appearance of the pathway blends in well and is finished with grass. There may also be a need to re-introduce a fence to separate walkers and livestock. Options could be the use of CIL to create an all-weather surface or whether new development could facilitate opportunities to deliver improvements.

4.3.2.5 In terms of open space, there is an under provision of play space for residents in the central/northern part of the village. The District Open Space Paper concedes there is an under provision and the village currently fails the access

standards. Therefore, the policy will seek to protect the existing recreational spaces and encourage new provision particularly in the central/northern parts of the village. This would accord with the NPPF which seeks to protect and enhance public rights of way and recognises the importance of open space and opportunities for sport to creating healthy communities.

### **Policy CF1- Community Facilities, Open Space and Recreation**

The existing community facilities, footpaths and recreational open space as shown on CNDP Map 5 will be protected and supported and new opportunities for community, walking routes and recreational space will be supported. Community buildings include, but are not limited to, the Church and Parish Room, Plough PH, the school and its sports facilities, the Village Hall, Youth Club Hut and the recreational ground and its pavilion. The policy will support the existing and future prosperity of community life through application of the following criteria:

1. To support and enhance, where possible, the existing distributed set of community buildings and spaces to continue to facilitate as wide a range of village activities as possible. Priorities to include:
  - a) Facilitating wider use of the Youth Club Hut;
  - b) Supporting improvements or renewal of the Village Hall and related amenities on its current site if parking issues can be



overcome;

c) Keeping under regular review all renewal and/or replacement options for the Village Hall, Youth Club Hut, pavilion and recreation ground storage facilities.

2. Support new development that supports the long term viability of an existing community facility where this does not undermine its principal use. Dual use of facilities will also be encouraged where appropriate;
3. Support new community facilities within the village boundary and exceptionally outside the village envelope where both an overriding need and local support can be demonstrated and landscape and other policy requirements are met;
4. Protect and maintain existing walking routes within the village including the 1066 Country Walk and create new routes where appropriate, ensuring coherency of the footpath network is maintained. Where possible create enhancements to the footpath network to promote safe walking access between all parts of the village which will retain a good quality environment for walkers. As part of

this, to specifically look at:

- a) Supporting improvements to the footpath between Forewood Lane and Sampsons Lane (Crowhurst 17a and 18), as shown on CNDP Map 6, to an all-weather pedestrian use as a practical alternative to Chapel Hill.
5. Review footpaths in the Parish, but particularly near developments or sensitive ecological or heritage areas, as shown on CNDP Map 6. Where a route diversion or alternative footpath route is required, development should ensure the revised/alternative route is provided to a high environmental standard;
  6. Protect existing green spaces, as shown on CNDP Map 3, and sports and play facilities and encourage inclusion of these within new development where appropriate;

The council will support the continued investment in the community assets of the village which will include the use of CIL receipts to upgrade and maintain these where appropriate to meet the identified needs of the community.



## 4.3.3 Design

### Policy justification

4.3.3.1 Section 7 of the NPPF stated that design is key to the concept of Sustainable Development and should contribute to making places better for people. Whilst the Core Strategy Policy EN3: Design Quality sets out the requirement for high quality design within the District, it is considered necessary to include a general design policy which will apply to both the allocations and general windfall development that comes forward during the plan period. This seeks development to have regard to the general character of the village as set out in the evidence base to the NDP and incorporate the recommendations of that report in managing change within the village. Furthermore, it is equally important to ensure development places great importance on protecting the current levels of amenity for existing properties and treat this as an important factor when designing new development. A good standard of amenity for future occupiers should be secured, having regard to adjoining land uses and the intended use of the development.

4.3.3.2 In order to meet the matter of climate change and the need for housing to be flexible and adaptable for a range of occupiers, it is also required that development meets the minimum national floor-space standards, lifetime home

standards and where it is appropriate wheelchair accessible homes to ensure any new homes can appeal to all sectors of society. Section 8 of the NPPF also seeks to encourage access to outside space and therefore it is an important part of design that outside space provides opportunity for amenity purposes and that development provides opportunity for recreation.

4.3.3.3 The policy will also require design of development to secure good standards of amenity and to protect existing and future occupiers from pollution and amenity impacts. This will accord with the Rother strategic policies and Paragraph 17 of the NPPF. In order to address climate change and flooding it also seek to avoid hard surfacing and promote the use of renewable energy to ensure energy production can be achieved at source in a sustainable manner.



### Policy CB1 Design

Development should be of high quality design and have regard to its site and village context to reinforce and create a sense of place, to enhance the quality of the village environment and to ensure design plays an important role in the sustainable growth of the village. Development will be expected to comply with the following criteria:

1. Any new development should respect its locality in terms of character, scale, topography architectural form, the wider settlement pattern and materiality and should have regard to the recommendations of the Character and Heritage Assessment 2017;
2. Development should not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms overlooking, loss of privacy or overbearing impacts;
3. New housing shall comply with the National Floor-space Standards, Built for Life standards and should accord with the Accessible/Adaptable Dwelling standards (and any relevant subsequent future standards);
4. Any new housing development should have access to an area of private amenity space or where this is not

practicable have access to the local footpath network;

5. Parking provision should meet the relevant standards, be well designed, landscaped and be of porous construction;
6. Where appropriate, development should be supported by a landscape scheme that is proportionate to the scale of the development having regard to the requirements of Policy CE2;
7. The development will be expected to demonstrate that neighbouring properties and the proposed development are protected from all forms of pollution through its design;
8. Where it is practicable, regard should be had to the inclusion of renewable energy as an integral part of the design.



## 4.3.4 Heritage

### Policy justification

4.3.4.1 The Listed Building and Conservation Area Act 1990 sets out a legal duty to protect the special character and setting of statutory Listed Buildings and the NPPF states that the significance of a non-designated heritage asset can be taken into account in decision making. The Scheduled Ancient Monument Act 1979 also provides statutory protection for Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) and their setting. The NPPF also makes clear below ground heritage such as Archaeology can be of equal importance in decision making. The Core Strategy policy EN2: Stewardship of the Historic Built Environment also reinforces the protection, preservation and enhancement of the District's heritage. For a small village, the Parish of Crowhurst contains a wealth of heritage, with a scheduled ancient monument, 25 Statutory Listed Buildings, 29 buildings which are non-designated heritage assets and 3 Archaeological Notification Areas (ANA) within the village area itself and 9 ANAs elsewhere across the Parish.

4.3.4.2 The development of the village itself also presents historic associations with the village retaining its historic dispersed pattern in which agriculture remains the prominent land use. The built form throughout the Parish dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, with many of the earlier buildings being

farmhouses. The Parish Church and the ruins of the Old Manor House, which date from 1250, are thought to contain remains of an earlier building. In the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century, development was focussed around the historic core of the village and dispersed across the landscape with a further concentration of housing in the southern element. Other than the early 20<sup>th</sup> century development along Station Road, which grew up following the construction of the station in 1902, this settlement pattern remains today, with the main centres developed around these two areas with agricultural and rural character remaining dominant within the village and its fringes. As well as having landscape value, this dispersed settlement pattern is also important from a historic perspective as one can still read the original village pattern, a rarity in modern South East England.

4.3.4.3 The NDP seeks to preserve and protect this heritage and where possible enhance this character in order this to benefit the village and the local community. This includes protecting these assets and their setting from inappropriate development but also promoting the understanding of such assets in order their value has wider social benefits in promoting local distinctiveness and a sense of place. Whilst the policy has a protective stance, including the non-designated assets, the policy also seeks to be positive in encouraging suitable new uses for redundant buildings and



using heritage to support other industries that generate local employment or tourism.

### **Policy CB2 Heritage**

The Listed Building and Conservation Area Act 1990 places a legal duty to preserve and enhance the special character of the Historic Environment. The Heritage of the Parish is significant and is of key importance to the identity and character of the village and any new development will be required, at the minimum, to preserve the identified special character of the Parish's heritage assets and where possible, opportunities shall be taken to enhance such character. Development will be expected to have regard to the following criteria:

1. Development shall preserve the special character and setting of any listed building, non-designated heritage asset, scheduled monument or potential archaeological evidence;
2. Development will not be permitted which involves the loss of any heritage asset or non-designated heritage asset as identified within the Character and Heritage Assessment 2017;

3. Any planning application within an Archaeological Notification Area will be expected to be supported by an assessment relating to archaeology and any scheme shall be informed by its findings;
4. Development will be expected to preserve the wider historic settlement pattern of the village.

Encouragement will be given to development which will secure a long term viable future for redundant or under-used heritage assets providing the use is appropriate to the conservation of the special qualities of the building.



## 4.3.5 Housing

### Policy Justification

4.3.5.1 In its Rural Settlements paper, Rother DC defined the village as an 'other village or hamlet' and did not consider the village to possess the facilities to be a Local Service Village. The District originally sought to investigate the potential for up to 15 dwellings but Core Strategy Policy RA1 effectively set an allocation of 20 dwelling within Crowhurst. Rother DC highlighted the need for affordable homes within the village, potential green and amber SHLAA sites and the general facilities, including a railway station, which together justified a small level of growth within the village. As part of the SHLAA exercise, RDC identified an amber and green site – site CH3 and one in a similar location to CH1 but highlighted matters such as flood risk, access and landscape matters that required further investigation.

4.3.5.2 Since 2011 only two dwellings have been built within the village. Within the Rural Settlement Paper, Rother identified 18 households in housing need (2008) with 9 households on the waiting list and as of 2016, there were 4 households on the waiting list. In the village housing needs survey carried out as part of the NDP preparation, it showed that there is a potential requirement for 24 homes within the village. This evidence shows the level of housing provision to be

delivered by this plan is consistent with the identified need and the relevant constraints facing the village.

4.3.5.3 The NDP project team assessed a number of sites put forward by residents and landowners in 2016, a process which can be seen in the Site Assessment Background Paper, having regard to set criteria and other matters such as availability and deliverability. This assessment had regard to the original SHLAA process although further investigations into the original green SHLAA site indicated it was unlikely to be viable for residential development. The NDP site assessment process narrowed the potential sites down to five locations within the village which were to be subject to further assessment relating to access, deliverability and landscape impacts. Of these, two sites did not proceed on the basis of access, availability and suitability issues. Two sites have been taken forward for allocation within the plan. A further site, within the existing development boundary, is also allocated for new development to supplement the new greenfield allocations. These can be seen on CNDP Map 7.

4.3.5.4 In terms of housing mix and tenure, each site will seek to secure a varied mix of market and affordable housing with an emphasis on the delivery of smaller housing units. The village is dominated by larger housing types - only 28% of the housing stock in Crowhurst is 1 and 2 bedroom whereas

58% of households are 1 or 2 person. There is an identified need for smaller units, with the 4 households on the waiting list requiring 1 bedroom units, and 20 potential new households (who will need to move over the next five years) also requiring smaller one or two bedroom units.

4.3.5.5 The RDC Strategic Housing Market Assessment recognised the lack of smaller dwellings in rural areas and the likely future needs to be for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings. The particular lack of smaller dwellings in Crowhurst is evidenced both by the village housing survey and in census data. This lack of current stock and future needs is considered to justify a higher proportion of smaller units within the allocation of housing sites. This will be specified at 40%, which will equate to 5 units (on a 12 dwelling site) and this should be spread across the market and affordable tenures to provide choice for all sectors of society. This approach is not precluded by the Core Strategy policy as Policy LHN1: Achieving Mixed and Balanced Communities states ‘..at least 30% 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings’ so this is considered to be compliant with the Core Strategy.

4.3.5.6 Through this strategy, a potential 16 smaller units (policy CH3 is entirely 1 or 2 bedroom units) can be delivered which should meet the identified needs and, by providing this across all tenures, will still enable flexibility for all type of units across the rest of the development.

## 4.3.6 Policy CH1 - Land at Station Road/Forewood Lane

### Policy Context

4.3.6.1 This site is part of, and adjacent to, the green site in the RDC’s SHLAA exercise which has not come forward due to potential issues relating to flooding. There is also a desire to retain the agricultural buildings to serve Court Lodge Farm which remains operational in the village and which the Plan seeks to support now and in the future and thus this alternative land has been proposed. The site has been chosen due to its central location within the village and its relationship with the established part of the village. The Landscape Assessment has defined the site which can be developed without harm to the wider landscape character, subject to appropriate mitigation and layout being achieved as part of the final development. This site has walking access to the Railway Station, school and village hall and has footpath access to the 1066 Country Walk, which can provide off-road access to the southern part of the village. Due to the proximity of the site to a working farm, the layout should ensure a compatible relationship through a landscaped buffer and the development will be required to remove the existing fire damaged building to maximise the landscape benefits.

4.3.6.2 Due to the size of the site, the development has the potential to deliver a mix of market and affordable housing on site and this is a policy requirement. Due to the flooding issues that occur nearby, the development should include the provision of SuDS to reduce surface water run-off and if possible integrate this with a landscaped focal point to the village as shown on the indicative landscape strategy which is shown in Figure CH1. This strategy should be used to guide development although the policy retains sufficient flexibility for the development at the application stage.

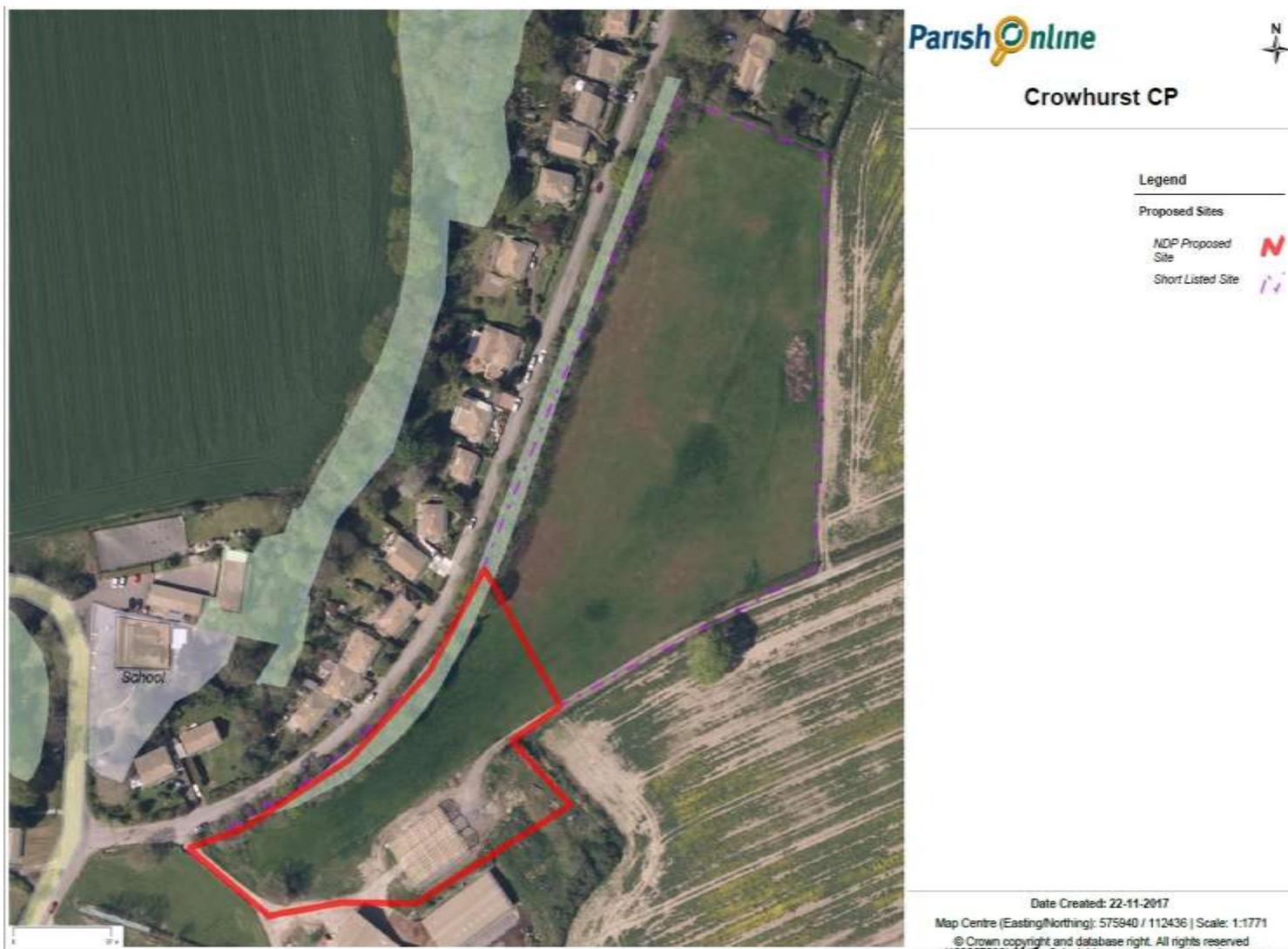
### **Policy CH1- Land at Station Road and Forewood Lane**

The land at Station Road/Forewood Lane, shown as CH1 on CNDP Map 7, is allocated for 12 dwellings. New housing development will be permitted subject to the following criteria being met:

- (1) The development shall be carried out in a comprehensive form to ensure an integrated scheme for the entire site;
- (2) The scheme shall deliver a proportionate mix of 1, 2, 3 or 4 bedroom homes including 40% to be either 1 or 2 bedroom homes suitable as starter homes or for the elderly;
- (3) The development shall provide 40% of the properties as affordable homes on site and these shall be secured by legal agreement which should prioritise occupation by local people;

- (4) A safe means of access to the site will be achieved to the relevant standards to the adopted highway which maintains access to both the farm holding and the residential development;
- (5) The design principles shall be based on a rural vernacular style as set out in the Crowhurst Landscape Character Assessment and shall not exceed more than 2 storeys;
- (6) The development shall retain the existing tree line along Station Road and include new native planting buffers to the north and south western boundaries;
- (7) The development will either provide, or if not viable set aside land, for a village green/amenity space on land adjacent to Forewood Lane;
- (8) The layout of the development will ensure sufficient separation from the adjacent farm uses to maintain amenity of properties and the proper farming operations;
- (9) Development shall comply with the other policies of the plan.





Aerial View of Site CH1

**SITE C - CENTRAL CROWHURST LANDSCAPE STRATEGY**

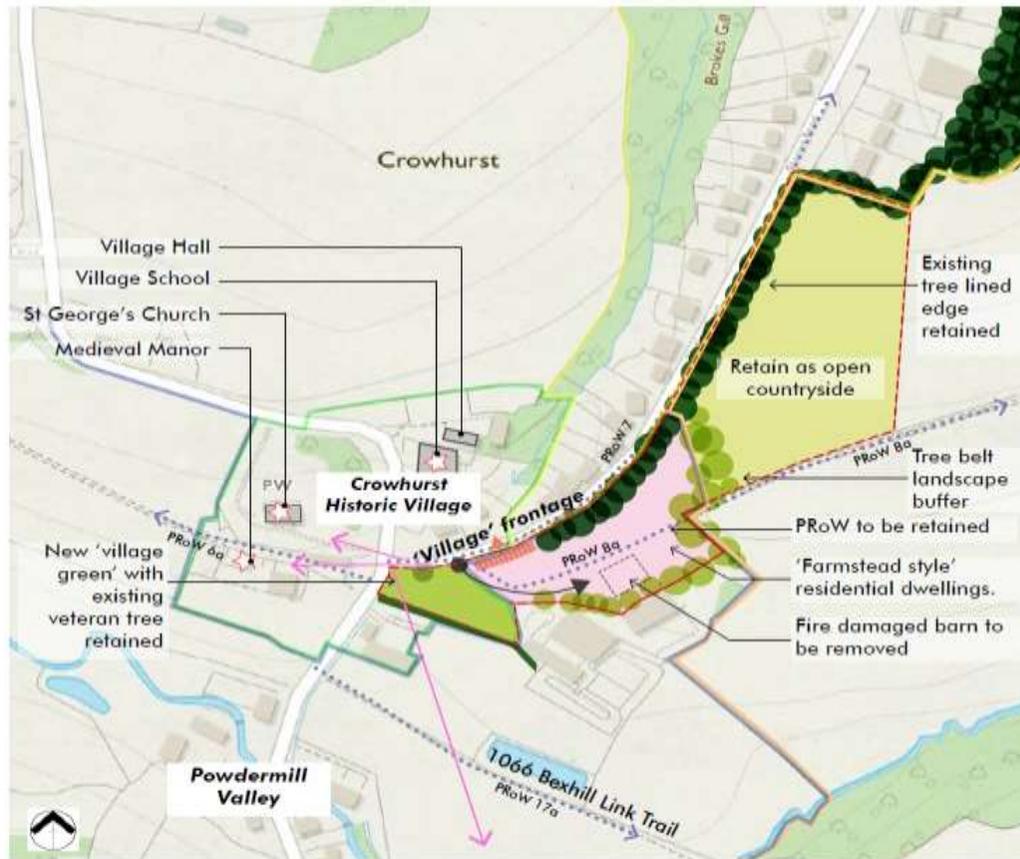
**Capacity Assessment Ranking: Low-Moderate**  
 Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunities to accommodate residential development without detrimental effects.

**Landscape Strategy**

- Potential for new village green to be established at western side.
- Northern part of the site to be retained as countryside to protect distinctive rural characteristic of the village and strong distinctive woodland edge between Station Road settlement and the adjacent fields.
- Enhancement of historic landscape setting of village by retaining greenspaces, important views, and removing derelict buildings which are a detractor in the landscape.
- Active frontages to create positive relationships between new settlement edge, historic village and Powdermill Valley to the south.
- Any new development to reflect rural village and farmstead characteristics through use of vernacular architecture, detailing, layout and scale, avoiding suburbanisation.
- Landscape buffer along countryside boundary to provide soft edge filtering the development into the existing landscape pattern.
- Entrance and access road as per existing farmstead.
- Existing PRoW (no. 8a) to be retained and accommodated in any development through sensitive design.

**Key**

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| --- Site C                     | LCA 2a Powdermill Valley Farmland                       |
| Existing trees (Indicative)    | LCA 2b Crowhurst Historic Village                       |
| Notable buildings              | Potential developable residential area (approx. 0.74ha) |
| Listed buildings               | Access  |
| PRoW                           | Open countryside  |
| Key Views                      | New Village Green with SUDs                             |
| LCA 1c Station Road Settlement | Landscape buffer provision                              |
| LCA 1d Brakes Coppice Farmland |   |



Note: The site is located within the High Weald AONB

## 4.3.7 Policy CH2- Land south of Forewood Rise

### Policy Context

4.3.7.1 The site lies adjacent to the more modern development, Forewood Rise, and sits between the rear boundaries of the existing properties and an existing Copse to the south. While development should be sympathetic to its surroundings, it is envisaged that this development will be distinct from Forewood Rise and not be considered an extension of it.

4.3.7.2 The topography of the land in relation to the wider farmland has resulted in the landscape assessment defining an area of land that could be developed without causing harm to the wider AONB, subject to appropriate mitigation and layout considerations. Due to the size of the site and the lack of equipped playspace in the northern part of the village, and the general under-provision in the District in respect of playspace, an area of playspace shall be provided as part of the development. Due to the size of the development, it is considered the provision of a Local Area for Play (LAP) is proportionate to the size of the proposed allocation. The scheme should provide for a mix of housing types and provide affordable housing on site.

4.3.7.3 The scheme should provide substantial planting buffers to the southern and western boundaries and it is envisaged this would involve the inclusion of semi mature trees as well as smaller specimens to create quicker establishment of these planting belts. The route of the 1066 Country Walk should be an integral part of the design approach to the site and it will be necessary to secure an attractive landscaped route. In accordance with Policy CE4, the development should also incorporate SuDS as part of the development and ensure safe access is achieved to Forewood Lane.

4.3.7.4 It is considered the central location, which is located on the pedestrian footpath route to the central part of the village and access to the railway station establishes this as a good location for the development. The defined site area, subject to the proposed strategic landscaping, can deliver a mix of housing which will conserve the wider landscape considerations and would retain some distance from the SSSI to the north-west.



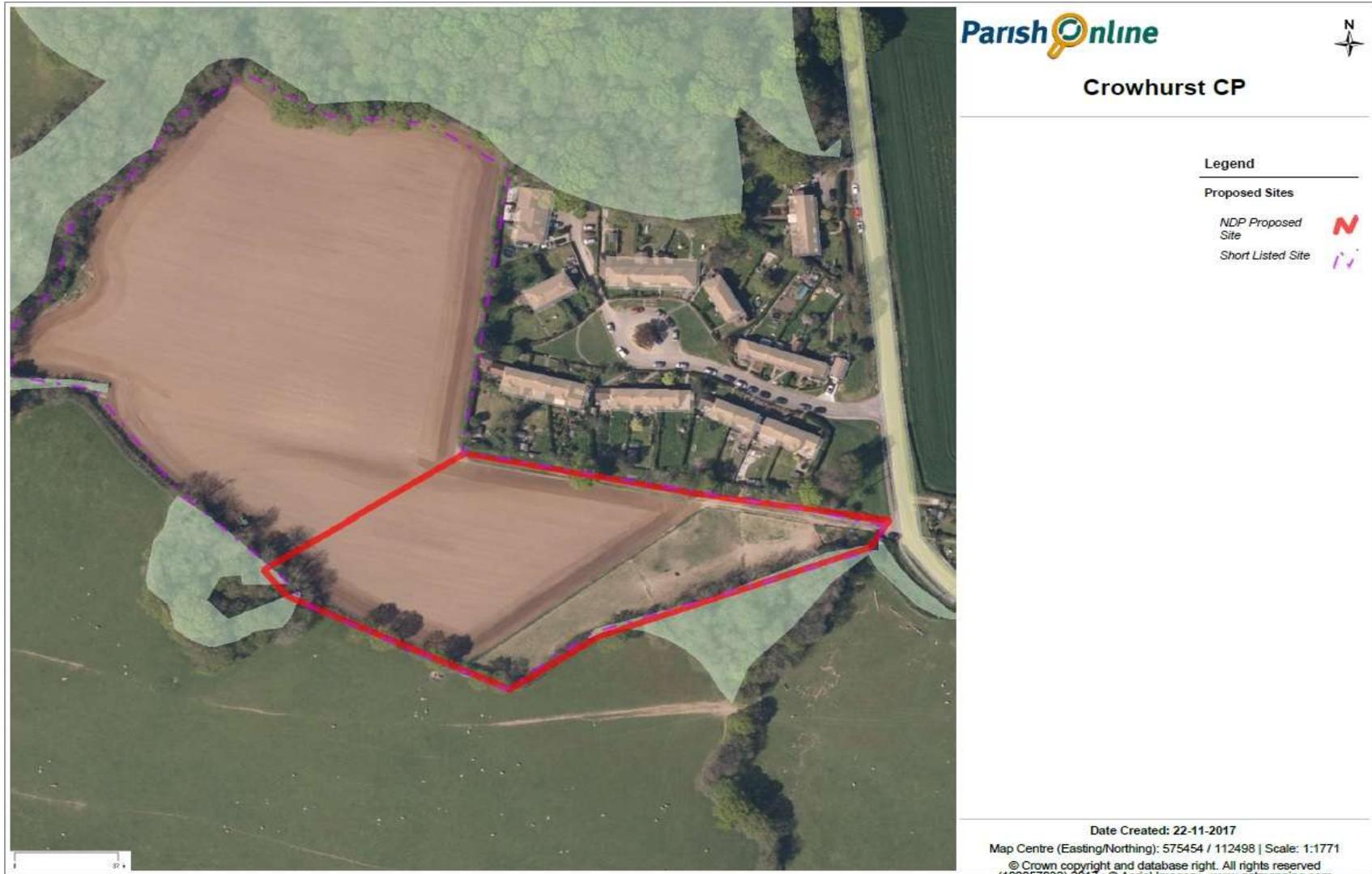
### **Policy CH2- Land south of Forewood Rise**

The land at south of Forewood Rise, shown as CH2 on CNDP Map 7, is allocated for 12 dwellings. New housing development will be permitted on this site subject to the following criteria being met:

- (1) The development shall be carried out in a comprehensive form to ensure an integrated scheme for the entire site;
- (2) The Scheme delivers a mix of 1, 2, 3 or 4 bedroom homes with 40% to be either 1 or 2 bedroom homes suitable as starter homes or for the elderly;
- (3) The development shall provide 40% of the properties as affordable homes and these shall be secured by legal agreement for use by local people in perpetuity;
- (4) A safe means of access to Forewood Lane is provided;
- (5) The route of the 1066 Country Walk is retained as part of the development and an attractive context to this route is achieved;

- (6) The existing trees to the south shall be retained and protected with new strategic landscaping which shall be provided along the entirety of the southern boundary and western boundary of the site. This landscaping and any open spaces should be subject to a management plan to ensure its long term maintenance;
- (7) A children's play area (LAP) shall be incorporated into the scheme as part of the development;
- (8) Development shall accord with other policies of the plan.





Aerial View of Site CH2

**SITE A - POWDERMILL VALLEY NORTHERN SLOPES LANDSCAPE STRATEGY**

**Capacity Assessment Ranking: Low-Moderate**  
 Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunities to accommodate residential development without detrimental effects.

**Landscape Strategy**

- Maintain open area of countryside across western slopes to protect rural edge to ancient woodland and maintain tranquil characteristic of the valley and village setting.
- Some capacity for small scale development to be located on the lower south facing slopes south of the existing development.
- Route of 1066 Country Walk-Bexhill Link to be protected and any development would need to be sensitively designed to respect this rural path.
- Any development to provide connections to existing PRoW to increase permeability and create a countryside route to the village.
- Landscape buffer along countryside boundary to provide strong soft edge to help filter development into the existing landscape pattern and create habitat linkages.
- New development to reflect rural village and farmstead characteristics through use of vernacular architecture, detailing, layout and scale, avoiding suburbanisation.

**Key**

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| --- Site A                          | █ Potential developable residential area (approx. 0.67ha) |
| ● Existing trees (Indicative)       | → Access  |
| █ Notable buildings                 | █ Open countryside  |
| ☆ Listed buildings                  | ○ Landscape buffer  |
| █ Ancient woodland/SSSI/SNCI        | █ Amenity Landscape                                       |
| ..... PRoW                          |   |
| █ LCA 1a Fore Wood Nature Reserve   |   |
| █ LCA 1b Fore Wood Lane Settlement  |   |
| █ LCA 2a Powdermill Valley Farmland |   |
| █ LCA 2b Crowhurst Historic Village |   |



### 4.3.8 Policy CH3 - Land adjacent to Station Car Park

#### Policy context

4.3.8.1 This site was previously considered an amber site on account of its accessible location but uncertainty over the access to the site. Despite the tree cover on the site, the District Council were of the view that there were no trees of sufficient value to restrict development and subject to the access and parking issues, the site could be suitable for development. Meetings have been held with Network Rail, the owners of the site, who remain committed to the development. Due to the location adjacent to the Railway Station and the limited size of the site, it is considered the site should be restricted to a low profile flatted development which would deliver 1 or 2 bed units which could attract downsizers or younger people who would commute to London or other larger settlements. On this basis, it is considered the scheme could provide less parking than the ESCC maximum standards but the scheme will be required to provide a parking provision and create an acceptable access to the site which does not adversely affect the function of the railway car park. As the owner/applicant is Network Rail it is considered this is a feasible option.

4.3.8.2 Due to the constrained size of the site and its residential surroundings, it is considered appropriate to limit the development to two storeys and to 6 units to ensure there is sufficient site area to deliver parking in a landscaped context. Whilst the tree cover has been found to be of lesser quality, any scheme should be supported by a tree survey to identify if there any trees that can be retained as part of the scheme. Likewise due to the loss of this tree cover, any scheme will be expected to deliver a comprehensive landscape scheme that will protect the amenity of adjoining occupiers and provide an attractive setting to the development.



### **Policy CH3- Land adjacent to the Station Car Park**

The land adjacent to the Station car park, shown as CH3 on CNDP Map 7 is allocated for a minimum of 6 homes. Housing development will be permitted subject to the following criteria being met:

- (1) The development shall be laid out as a flatted development which shall consist of 1 or 2 bedroom units;
- (2) The building shall not exceed 2 storeys;
- (3) The design should incorporate the traditional architectural vernacular;
- (4) Safe access to be created that will not adversely affect Craig Close residents;
- (5) Sufficient space must be retained to provide sufficient parking provision for both the development and the station car park as per the relevant standards;

- (6) The development shall be supported by a tree survey and good quality trees specimens to be retained as part of a wider appropriate landscaping scheme to create an appropriate setting to the development





Aerial View of Site CH3

## 4.4 Economic

### 4.4.1 Economic Objectives

1. Support and improve links with new and existing rural businesses through sympathetic small scale development, particularly that which can reduce out-commuting.
2. Support and improve links with new and existing the tourism facilities which in turn will support the use of other facilities within the village
3. Ensure new development is viable in order to ensure prompt delivery in line with the needs of the community.
4. Ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided alongside new development to ensure access, services and quality of life is maintained for both new and existing residents
5. Ensure new development promotes safe access for pedestrians and vehicles and is able to support opportunities for utilising public transport

### 4.4.2 Businesses

#### Policy justification

4.4.2.1 The Parish contains a range of businesses which contribute to the local fabric of the village and the wider rural economy. This includes a number of tourism related businesses such as the larger Crowhurst Holiday Park to the north east of the Parish, Brakes Coppice Camping site and holiday cottages through to other businesses such as those in agriculture and land based industries. Due to the rural location of the Parish, it is important the plan recognises the value of this to the local economy including employment and indirect benefits such as spending in the village such as the Pub especially as most residents are reliant on out-commuting for work. It is also understood that a number of people work from home and so the policy should also support such live work principles to reduce out-commuting and congestion which would accord with Policy EC4 of the Rother Core Strategy.

4.4.2.2 The NPPF supports new development for economic purposes in rural areas through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings and the policy would enable such growth subject to consideration of relevant factors such as landscape, amenity and access. The success of tourism facilities within the Parish also provide an opportunity to encourage more visitors to Crowhurst and



support its community assets and achieve an understanding of the special qualities and history of the village. This support for sustainable growth could also, in time, provide new employment for residents and reduce reliance on out-commuting for work purposes.

### **Policy CC1 Businesses**

The plan will support existing businesses within the Parish as well as encouraging new economic activities which are compatible with the rural environment of Crowhurst and maintain the special qualities of the Parish. The following types of development will be supported subject to compliance with other policies of the plan:

1. Development which will support the viability of an existing business or represent sustainable growth;
2. New Agricultural or Forestry buildings where there is a need for the new building and facilities;
3. New opportunities for business creation through conversion of existing buildings within the Parish or small scale new build development within the village boundary or brownfield land outside development boundaries;

4. New small scale tourism opportunities including temporary uses where these protect the character of the landscape or any effects can be mitigated;
5. Development which supports home working or reduces out commuting such as live work units or ancillary development that supports home working, i.e home offices.

Development would also be required to comply with the following:

6. Where possible development should seek to align with relevant village strategies or initiatives;
7. Development should preserve the landscape character of its environs as defined in the Crowhurst Landscape Character, Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment and comply with other policies having regard to ecology, amenity and access/traffic considerations.



## 4.4.3 Infrastructure

### Policy justification

4.4.3.1 In order to promote the further prosperity of the village and Parish, it is vital that modern infrastructure is provided and it is recognised that new development may require supporting infrastructure to avoid placing additional pressures on existing infrastructure. Therefore it is essential new development either mitigates its impact through the development itself or through necessary contributions, most likely to be secured through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charges or through planning obligations (if in excess of the NPPG thresholds), which can then be invested in the local infrastructure. Thus, the development will be required to address necessary infrastructure requirements in order to avoid any adverse impacts of development for the benefit of existing and future occupiers.

4.4.3.2 Village surveys showed a lot of concern over parking within the village – primarily around the recreational ground and the Village Hall/school/church area and in the Forewood Rise development. Therefore, any new development should be entirely self-sufficient with off-street parking such that residents do not need to park on the surrounding roads. Because public transport is poor and reliance on cars is high in this area, care should be taken not to underestimate the

number of parking spaces required per dwelling. There is general support for improving parking where possible and a proposal has been put forward for a small parking area for about ten cars in the field beside the top entrance to the churchyard. The parking area would need to be designed and landscaped carefully and appropriately for the setting. Amenity benches could be introduced to enable enjoyment of the view across the valley for visitors and walkers. These facilities are to be coordinated so as to enhance and support the use of adjacent amenities including the Village Hall, Parish Room, school and local footpaths.

4.4.3.2 On the adoption of the NDP, a quarter of all CIL receipts within the Parish will revert to the Parish Council for addressing Local Infrastructure. At the present time, the Parish Council have identified the village hall (or other community facilities) and improvements to the footpath between parts of the village to be priorities to which any monies would be spent but this will be reviewed throughout the plan period to ensure investment is directed where it is most needed.



### Policy CC2 - Infrastructure

Any development would be expected to be supported by the necessary infrastructure and also provide access for existing and future residents to key facilities and village assets in order to promote safety and an inclusive community. The following criteria should be met:

1. Safe pedestrian and vehicular access and, where it is practicable, off-road pedestrian routes provided to the key parts of the village and public transport links;
2. Development should be served by adequate drainage including surface and foul drainage;
3. New development should include on-site infrastructure to allow connection to high speed internet connections where available;
4. Ensure development delivers a proportional contribution towards any educational, social and community facility to meet the identified needs generated by the development;
5. All development proposals must meet the maximum

vehicle and cycle parking in accordance with relevant County Council standards. Provision must also be made for visitors and trades-people and that provision laid out to make a positive contribution to the development and its environment;

6. Support an appropriately landscaped parking area in Church Paddock, as shown on CNDP Map 6, beside the top entrance to the churchyard and coordinate/link with adjacent amenities and footpaths. Measures must be taken to mitigate effects on the heritage and landscape in the area;
7. Development should not cause adverse effects on highway safety or congestion.

Support will be given to measures to improve parking and road safety where there is an identified need.





Parking near Crowhurst Primary School, Village Hall and Church



Your Vision  
Our Future

## 5. Implementation and Monitoring

---

### 5.1 Implementation

- 5.1.1 The implementation of the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan will require the ongoing engagement and involvement of the residents of the village to ensure that the aspirations of the CNDP are realised. This will be coordinated by a committee or working party, such as the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, supported by the Parish Council.
  
- 5.1.2 Those aspirations brought up during the Neighbourhood Plan process, but which do not form a part of the CNDP because they do not relate to land use, will form the basis of a new Village Action Plan. The Parish Council will encourage resident groups formed during the process of the NDP to continue to explore areas of interest or importance such as environment, heritage and living history and community facilities.

### 5.2 Monitoring

- 5.2.1 The vision and aims of the CNDP will underpin the implementation of the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan. Crowhurst Parish Council will monitor this implementation, supported by the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Subject to available resource the Parish Council will prepare annual monitoring reports. These reports will be published on the Council's website and issued to Rother District Council.
  
- 5.2.2 It is expected the CNDP will be formally reviewed on a five-year cycle, subject to available resource.



## 6. Glossary

---

ACV	Asset of Community Value	NP/NDP	Neighbourhood Plan / Neighbourhood Development Plan
ANA	Archaeological Notification Area	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	NPPG	National Planning Policy Guidance
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan	PH	Public House
CLCSCA	Crowhurst Landscape Character, Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment	RDC	Rother District Council
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
CNDP	Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan	SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
DaSA	Development and Sites Allocation (plan)	SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
ESCC	East Sussex County Council	SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
EU	European Union	SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
FSA	Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
HBA	Huskisson Brown Associates	SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
HCA	Heritage and Character Assessment	ToR	Terms of Reference
LAP	Local Area for Play		
LDF	Local Development Framework		



## 7. List of Appendices

---

CNDP Map 1 Development Boundary (Policy CS1, CE1)

CNDP Map 2 Important Areas and Views (Policy CE1)

CNDP Map 3 Local Green Spaces (Policy CE1, CF1)

CNDP Map 4 Flooding (Policy CE4)

CNDP Map 5 Community Facilities and Areas (Policy CF1)

CNDP Map 6 Proposed Infrastructure Improvements (Policy CF1,  
CC2)

CNDP Map 7 Proposed Sites (Policy CH1, CH2, CH3)

CNDP Map 8 Strategic Gap





Lake near 1066 Country Walk and Link Road. Photo by Slimmeria Retreat

