

Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Development Plan

Pre-Submission Version for
Regulation 14 Consultation

October 2022



Table of Contents

Foreword	v
1 Introduction	1
2 Peasmarsh : an Historic Rural Parish	5
3 Landscape, the Environment and Heritage	12
4 Infrastructure	22
5 Business and the Local Economy	38
6 Housing	44
7 Site Allocation	53
8 Design and the Built Environment	62
9 Implementation and Monitoring	75
10 Community Aspirations	77

For purposes of this Plan :

An Appendix is included at the end of the Plan because it is too large, wieldy or detailed for the body of the Plan but needs to be easily referenced for clarity.

An Addendum is a standalone document which supports the main document but can be read in its own right.

Appendices

A1 List of Policies	A1.1
A2 Maps	A2.1
A3 Traffic Report	A3.1
A4 Infrastructure Analysis	A4.1
A5 Glossary	A5.1

Addenda

D1 Housing Needs Assessment	AECOM I & E UK Ltd	2022
D2 Site Options and Assessment	AECOM I & E UK Ltd	2022
D3 Peasmarsh Site Assessments	PNDP Volunteer Group	2022
D4 Strategic Environmental Scoping Report	AECOM I & E UK Ltd	2022
D5 Strategic Environmental Assessment	AECOM I & E UK Ltd	2022
D6 Peasmarsh Villagescape and Design Codes	PNDP Group	2022

The links above were correct at October 2022. Addenda can also be accessed directly from the Vault in the Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Development Plan website :

<https://www.peasmarshndp.uk/pages/vault6.html>



Regulation 14 Draft

List of Acronyms

ALC	Agricultural Land Classification framework
ANA	Archaeological Notification Area
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BOA	Biodiversity Opportunity Area
CQC	Care Quality Commission
DaSA	Development and Site Allocations <i>[part of the Local Plan]</i>
EDGH	Eastbourne District General Hospital
ESCC	East Sussex County Council
ESHT	East Sussex Hospital Trust
HNA	Housing Need Assessment
HWLT	High Weald Landscape Trail
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NA	Neighbourhood Area
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework <i>[published July 2021]</i>
OFCOM	Office of Communications
OFGEM	Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PAN	Published Admission Number <i>[for the primary school]</i>
PNDP	Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Development Plan [the Plan]
PRoW	Public Right of Way
PSA	Peasmarsh Site Assessments
RDC	Rother District Council [Rother]
SE Water	South East Water <i>[a water supplier]</i>
SOA	Site Options and Assessment
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SW	Southern Water <i>[a foul water processor]</i>
UKPN	UK Power Networks <i>[an electricity distributor]</i>
WTW	wastewater treatment works



Regulation 14 Draft

List of Figures and Maps

Maps in the body of the text are also in Appendix A2 which contains all maps.

Map 1.1	Designated Neighbourhood Area
Figure 2.1	2011 Population Age Profile
Map 3.1	Broad Habitats and Land Use
Map 3.2	Priority Habitats and Networks <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.3	Rother, Brede and Tillingham Woods BOA <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.4	Characteristic Landscape Components
Map 3.5	Geology, Landform, Water Systems and Climate <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.6	Historic Settlements <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.7	Historic Routeways <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.8	Listed Buildings <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.9	Locally Significant Views <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.10	Agricultural Land Classification <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.11	Local Green Spaces <i>[appendix only]</i>
Map 3.12	Public Access and Connectivity <i>[appendix only]</i>
Figure 4.1	Old Post Office Traffic Flow against Speed
Map 4.2	SW Drainage Network in Central Peasmarsh Village
Map 4.3	Surface Water Flooding [the darker the colour the greater the flooding]
Map 4.4	HV Network in Peasmarsh Area
Figure 5.1	Employment Sectors for Peasmarsh Workers
Figure 5.2	Distance Travelled to Work from Peasmarsh
Figure 6.1	House Numbers in Peasmarsh
Figure 6.2	Dwelling Stock by Council Tax Band
Map 7.1	Map of Allocated and Potential Sites
Map 7.2	Development Boundary and Extensions
Map 8.1	Existing Character Areas Map
Map 8.2	Map of Radiance Emanating from Peasmarsh Parish



Regulation 14 Draft

List of Tables

Table 3.1 : Broad Habitats and Land Use of Peasmarsh

Table 3.2 : Priority Habitats

Table 4.1 : Criteria for Local Service Village Designation

Table 6.1 : Peasmarsh House Prices

Table 6.2 : Affordability of Median Price House

Table 6.3 : Peasmarsh Housing Need

Table 6.4 : Proposed House Sizes

Table 8.1 Table of Light Emanation Zones



Regulation 14 Draft

Foreword

The Localism Act 2012 introduced Neighbourhood Planning in England giving communities the right to shape their future development at a local level and Peasmarsh Parish Council, under this act, is the qualifying body responsible for this draft Plan. However, its creation and preparation has been due to the efforts, dedication and enthusiasm of the Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Development Plan group comprised of parish residents, some of whom are also parish councillors.

The group began work on creating a neighbourhood plan in March 2021. The Plan's vision is for a friendly, safe and attractive community coupled with policies that encourage appropriate planning applications but also aim to safeguard our community facilities and important green gaps and spaces.

This draft plan has been prepared for the public consultation required by Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Act and is a legal requirement. It is there to ensure that residents have been consulted widely and that the Plan meets the community's needs.

This is your chance to “Have Your Say”

Peasmarsh Parish Council



Regulation 14 Draft

1 Introduction

1.1 Context

Neighbourhood Development Plans [NDP's] were introduced in the 2011 Localism Act with the overall aim of devolving more decision-making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils. Specifically :

“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.”

As distinct from early types of neighbourhood plans, modern NDP's become part of the National Development Plan alongside the local authority's Local Plan and must be used in law by the local authority to determine planning applications in the neighbourhood.

The other key piece of the government's approach to localism is the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF]. The current NPPF must be taken into account in preparing all development plans – including NDP's – and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The current edition of the NPPF is dated July 2021.

An NDP is therefore a powerful tool that gives a community statutory power to shape future development, integrating local knowledge and aspiration with planning regulations to ensure that the community gets the development it needs in an appropriate location or locations.

1.2 The Peasmarsh Plan

Peasmarsh is the name of both a parish and the only village within the parish. It is within the area of Rother District Council [RDC], the relevant local authority. For development planning purposes, the neighbourhood has been designated as the full extent of the parish as shown in Figure 1.1 [over].

One of the key aspects of the parish is that it is entirely within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty [AONB]. This has an important influence on the Plan.

The stakeholders in the Plan are primarily those who reside or work in the designated area plus the businesses that operate within it.

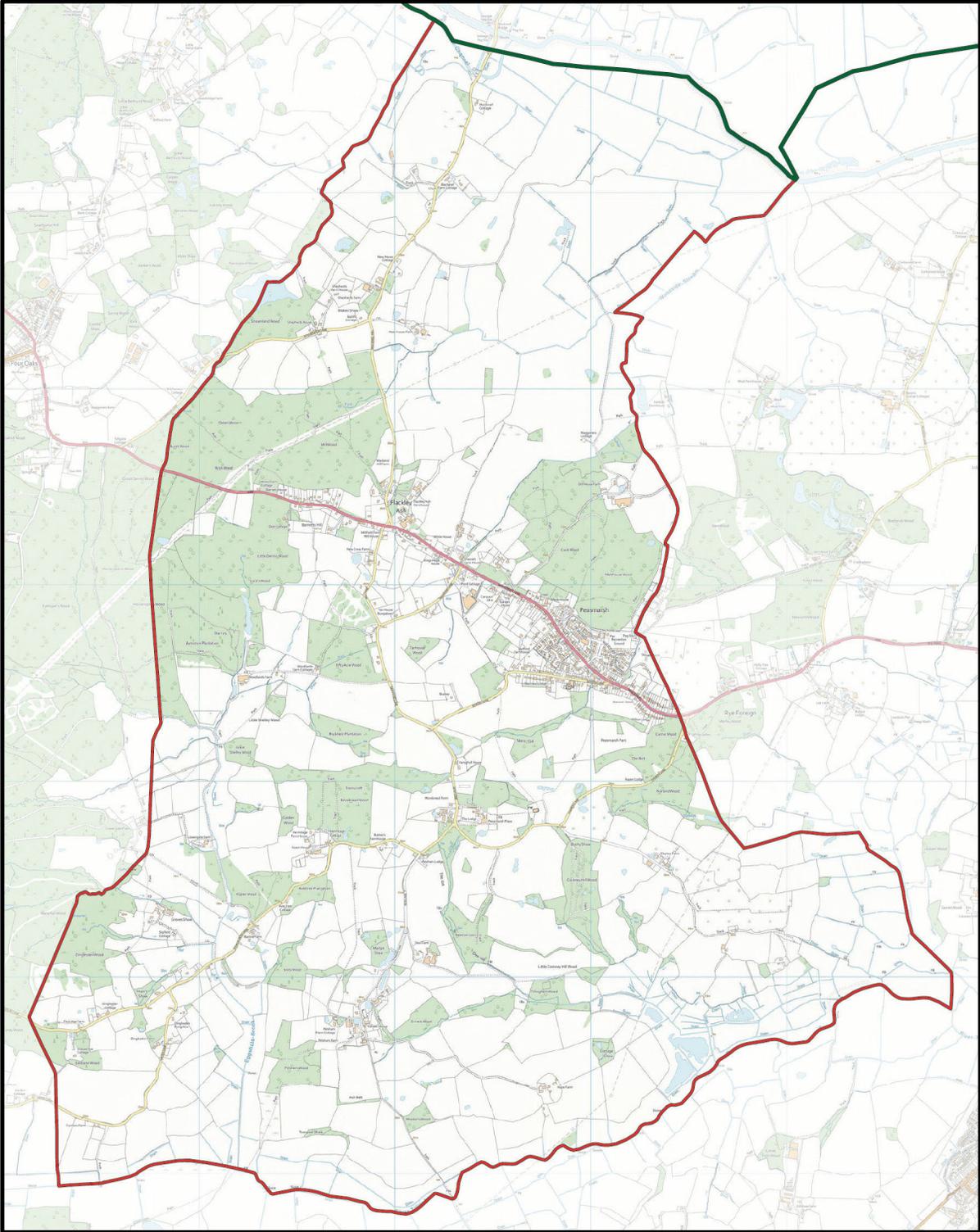
The current RDC Local Plan is for the period spanning from 2011 to 2028 but the authority is already working on an emerging plan which will run from 2019 to 2039.

Work started on the Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Development Plan [PNDP or 'the Plan'] in early 2021 and, as NDP's cannot be backdated, its plan period is from 2021 to 2039 to coincide with the end of the emerging RDC Local Plan.

The Peasmarsh Plan responds to the national challenge of increased demand for housing, jobs and transport and the local challenges set out in the Plan.



Regulation 14 Draft



Map 1.1 : Designated Neighbourhood Area



Regulation 14 Draft

Early consultation with the stakeholders provided a set of desires for the proposed plan :

- Protect the High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty;
- Preserve the landscape, views and biodiversity of the parish;
- Maintain the tranquillity and dark skies of the parish;
- Maintain the rural character of the village;
- Provide truly affordable housing for families with local connections;
- Provide opportunities to downsize and remain in the parish;
- Avoid larger scale developments;
- Support and promote community facilities;
- Improve infrastructure, particularly public transport, sewage treatment and electricity supply;
- Improve road safety with changes to junctions, crossroads and speed limits;
- Work to improve the secondary education provision;

1.3 Vision and Objectives

Following the public consultation, a vision for the Peasmarsh Plan was developed and adopted in November 2021 :

Vision

Peasmarsh parish will continue developing its thriving, safe and friendly rural community through sustainable development.

The Plan will reflect the needs of and enhance / improve the significant environmental assets of the parish whilst developing its economic viability and its rural surrounding. It will also respect our location in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

A set of seven objectives, stemming from the vision, was also developed.

The overall objective of the PNDP is to reflect the wishes of the community in promoting the social, economic and environmental well-being of what is, essentially, a rural parish. The detailed objectives are as follows :

- 1 Sustain a thriving parish offering a range of facilities to the local community, businesses and visitors by encouraging the expansion of the local retail and service provision;
- 2 Seek adequate education provision for parish children of all ages, extending the local educational facilities in line with future housing developments;
- 3 Protect and enhance local open spaces and access to the countryside to enhance the physical and mental wellbeing of residents, encouraging development which exceeds current energy efficiency standards and promoting cycle networks and non-vehicular connectivity with adjacent villages and town for a sustainable village life;



Regulation 14 Draft

- 4 Plan and deliver future developments which reflect both current and future housing needs of the parish in small clusters, promoting principles of good design and quality that encourage the local context;
- 5 Ensure that the parish infrastructure is improved to match existing requirements and then expanded in line with future housing developments; in the short term :
 - i) reduce the impact of road traffic and parking on the local community;
 - ii) eliminate the flooding and stop the supercharging of the sewage system both of which occur regularly;
 - iii) eliminate the frequent and sometimes extended power failures;
 - iv) establish frequent bus services which meet the national Bus Back Better policy with markedly improved frequency all week and timetables integrated with other services including rail;
- 6 Secure the long term future of existing community leisure and cultural facilities for all ages and promote the provision of new facilities to address the future needs of the parish;
- 7 Protect, maintain and enhance the nationally and locally important heritage and environmental assets and historic character by guiding sympathetic development;

1.4 Basic Conditions

As with all neighbourhood plans, this Plan complies with five basic conditions :

- i) it aligns with national policies and the advice and guidance provided in the NPPF;
- ii) it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- iii) it is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the RDC Core Strategy;
- iv) it meets the relevant retained EU obligations; and
- v) it meets the requirements for conservation and environmental impact;

The requirements of the NPPF have already been set out in Section 1.1 and the approach to, and policy for, sustainable development is discussed in Section 8. The PNDP volunteer group has liaised with Rother throughout the creation of the Plan to ensure that it conforms to [or is in agreement with] the 2014 Core Strategy.

Most of the relevant EU regulations still enshrined in English law relate to environmental impact, i.e. condition v), which is discussed in the next paragraph. Three other such directives relate to waste, air quality and water, all of which are conformed with.

The environment is, in any case, a key concern – particularly as the parish is a rural one and entirely within the High Weald AONB. The preparation of this Plan has been guided by a set of criteria created by external professional consultants as part of a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The consultants have subsequently assessed the Plan against those criteria. The report is provided in Addendum D5.



Regulation 14 Draft

2 Peasmarsh : an Historic Rural Parish

2.1 Introduction

The parish of Peasmarsh, East Sussex, lies in the north eastern quarter of Rother district. It stretches south from the Kent border along the banks of the River Rother, over a central ridge and down to the banks of the River Tillingham. The parish is approximately 5,5 km [3.5 miles] from north to south and 2.5 km [1.5 miles] east to west. It is about 6.5 km [4 miles] from the town of Rye.

It is an atypical parish in several ways :

- the core of the one village – also Peasmarsh – is tucked hard up against the eastern boundary of the parish on the north side of the ridge;
- it is cut in two by the A268, the busy road that runs from the A21 through the middle of the village to Rye and Camber;
- the village has some of the characteristics of a ribbon development stretching beyond its core along the A268;
- the parish church is not in the village but up on the ridge in the presumed location of the pre-plague village;
- although the parish has a small population – about 1200 in 2011 – it has a large supermarket [with fuel station, post office, pharmacy and ATM] on the outskirts of the village that attracts customers from all over the district and beyond; as a result the other shops in the village have all closed;

Despite the supermarket, the essential character of the parish – which lies entirely within the High Weald AONB – is that of a rural village.

2.2 Environment

Because of its geography the parish has a variety of ecosystems which range from the flood plain of the Rother to the ridge south of the village.

Almost one third of the parish land area of 1,580 ha [3,900 acres] is designated priority habitat, mainly deciduous woodland [20.7%] and grazing marsh [7.4%]. Several of the woods are designated as Ancient Woodlands or Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites. That includes Malthouse and Cock woods immediately north of Peasmarsh Village, essentially blocking any expansion of the central village in that direction.

Although there are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI's] within the parish, there are several in proximity and one – Leasam Wood Heronry – is less than 1km [0.6 miles] from the parish boundary. Accordingly, most of the parish is within one or other SSSI Impact Risk Zones. Similarly, the parish is not within a Wetland of International Importance [known as a 'Ramsar' site] but it is only 1.6km [1 mile] from the internationally recognised Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Ramsar site.

Geologically, Peasmarsh is at the lower end of the Wealden formation where the sandstone runs out and the underlying clay is exposed. [Up until the late 19th century Peasmarsh had its own brickworks in the village using the local clay.] Because the sandstone is permeable but the clay is not, there are many springs along the line between the two layers.



Regulation 14 Draft

The issue is that the clay results in much of the parish being a critical drainage area. The potential for surface water flooding is further exacerbated by the effects of climate change which seem to be trending to downpour rain events.

2.3 Heritage

The origins of Peasmarsh [variously 'Pesemersse' and Pesemerssheare] are lost in the mists of time. Traces of a Roman bloomery have been reported on the central ridge of the parish and the parish church is recorded as having been built in about 1070 on the site of a, presumably wooden, Anglo-Saxon minster.

The parish does not appear in Domesday but that is said to be because it was already part of King William's holdings when he was Duke of Normandy. By the time of Pope Nicholas' 'Taxatio' survey, undertaken in 1291 and 92 during the reign of Edward I, Peasmarsh was the dominant local parish with the parishes of Beckley, Northiam, Iden and Playden all paying 'pensions' to Peasmarsh.

The parish church is on the central ridge but the modern village lies about 750m [0.5 miles] north at the bottom of the hill. The most popular theory for this move – on the basis that the original village was around the church – is that it occurred during plague times when those who survived wanted to be well away from where the infections had started.

There are 55 listed buildings in Peasmarsh parish, including the Grade I listed 11th century parish church and, two Grade II* buildings. The oldest houses date from the 15th or 16th centuries.

East Sussex County Council [ESCC] has designated much of Peasmarsh village as an Archaeological Notification Area [ANA] in recognition of its special heritage status. The designation runs on either side of the A268 for nearly 2km [1.2 miles] plus at the lower end of School Lane.

2.4 Transport

Peasmarsh is not well served by public transport and there are no cycleways so the population is very reliant on cars for moving around. In any case, being a rural community means that those not living in the village itself need to use cars in order to get to whatever public transport services are available.

The results of the initial public survey undertaken for PNDP showed that, overall, stakeholders rated the public transport services as only 39% adequate.

Bus

The village has one bus service [which runs from Rye to the village of Northiam through Peasmarsh along the A268 and back again]. However, there are only 7 buses per weekday from Rye and 5 per day to Rye [7/d during school holidays], Rye being the more important destination. The first bus to Rye is at nearly 07:30 [but only during school holidays] and there is no service after 16:00, sometimes with 2 hour gaps between buses. [The first bus from Rye only arrives at nearly 09:00 and the last at only 19:14.] There is a reduced service on Saturdays and none at all on Sundays.

However, buses from Peasmarsh are timed to arrive at the station either too close to the [punctual] train departures to allow purchase of tickets or just after the service has left. Even when there should be interconnection, the bus service is frequently late.



Regulation 14 Draft

Rail

Rye railway station is 6 km [3.8 miles] by road from the junction of the A268 and School Lane [reducing to 5.6 km [3.5 miles] if a short-cut is taken via a narrow, potholed lane]. The line runs from Ashford to Hastings and onwards to the west. There is an hourly service in either direction with each route taking about 20 minutes to reach the mainline station. Depending on the time of day and direction of travel, interconnection times are sometimes good but not good at all at other times.

Traffic

The A268 is the route for traffic from London to Rye and Camber. Whilst Rye is a destination throughout the year, Camber is a seasonal destination. The traffic ranges from HGV's heading to distribution depots in Rye to motorcycles. There is also a considerable amount of traffic that delivers to the large supermarket as well as the shoppers visiting from the region.

The parish has a Black Cat traffic flow monitoring device so has recorded a considerable amount of traffic data. For example, in the seven day period April 18th to 24th 2022, the total volume of traffic travelling on the A268 in both directions was 40,241 at the recording point in the middle of the village. 69% of the vehicles exceeded the 30 mph speed limit and the 85th percentile of speed westward was 35.9 mph. The total number of vehicles above 45mph [for both directions combined] during the period was 382.

2.5 Infrastructure

Some aspects of the infrastructure required to support parish life are decidedly below the standards expected. The results of the initial public survey rank those by priority for improvement as perceived by the stakeholders :

- 1st drainage [both foul and surface water]
- 2nd roads and traffic
- 3rd electricity supply
- 4th telecommunications

Gas is not considered as it is expected to be phased out but, in any case, there are no known current issues for those who have a gas supply.

Foul Water Drainage

Peasmarsh does not have a foul water [sewage] treatment works and not even all of the village is connected to the system that does exist.

Approximately two thirds of the 592 homes in the parish are connected to the foul water system which leads to a pumping station on the site of the original treatment works. From there the foul water is pumped 3km [1.8 miles] to the treatment works in a neighbouring parish.

Southern Water, the responsible authority, considers the system a 'foul only' system even though a considerable number of the properties have a mixed [foul and surface water] system discharging to the sewer. This is particularly an issue when a rain downpour event occurs : the pumping station recorded overflow spills to the local stream 38 times for a total of 193 hours during 2021 alone.



Regulation 14 Draft

One of the issues, which the company does acknowledge, is that there is a low point in the sewer as it passes under the A268. Solids accumulate in that section which leads to local sewage spills and, consequently, has to be routinely flushed at intervals.

Surface Water Drainage

This issue has already been touched on when discussing the environment.

There are various points in Peasmarsh parish where heavy flooding occurs at regular intervals. The issue seems to be that existing culverts are either damaged or inadequate for the amount of surface water to be handled.

Electricity

The parish – sometimes just parts of it – experiences frequent supply disruption ranging from less than a second to hours or even days. This is because the supplies are, in general, spurs from high voltage lines and not rings [which would provide secure supplies]. There is little likelihood of the network being upgraded.

Telecommunications

The broadband service in Peasmarsh village was upgraded about 5 years ago to deliver fibre to the cabinet so that only the final line to a property is copper. This means that householders are able to have 70 Mb/s download service if they wish to pay for it. The problem is that the way that the network has been implemented means that some properties do not get good service at peak periods due to bandwidth issues.

The broadband service in the rest of the parish relies entirely on copper and is, accordingly, poor to very poor.

The cell phone coverage has been improved in the last five years, at least outdoors : OFCOM reports that all four networks have 'OK Coverage' outdoors throughout the parish other than a few isolated places with 'Some Problems' rating. That does not necessarily tally with residents' experiences.

Indoor coverage is much poorer with only a 'good' or 'OK' service in the village itself and even that depends on which network is being used. Service away from the village varies from 'Some Problems' to 'No Coverage' and again depends on which network is being used.

An important issue is the power supply to the local cell towers which, as with domestic supply, experiences frequent disruption. The cells do not seem to have generators so any lengthy disruption exhausts the batteries in the uninterruptible power supplies and the cells close down.

2.6 Facilities

The nature of the facilities in Peasmarsh has changed substantially over the last 20 years as all of the shops and other outlets along the village's Main Street have closed. Instead the Jempson's campus at the west end of the village has taken over many of the roles previously served by separate companies. It has a regional supermarket, a fuel station, a post office, a pharmacy, a cafeteria and an ATM. It does not open on Sundays.



Regulation 14 Draft

In some ways, having such a campus is good for the village but, because people from quite some distance come to Jempson's and because of the number of deliveries, there is a considerable strain on the road system, particularly the junction of Tanhouse Lane with the A268.

Other facilities, all in Peasmarsh village, include the Memorial Hall, the primary school [see section 2.9 below] and the recreation ground which has its own substantial pavilion.

The parish also boasts two public houses, both in the village, and two hotels, one on the fringes of the village and the other in a totally rural setting.

However, there are many facilities which the parish does not have : library [a mobile library used to visit], secondary school [see section 2.9 below], doctor or dentist [see section 2.10 below], bank [not even in Rye : the nearest bank is in Tenterden, about 13 km [8 miles] away], railway station or adequate bus service [see section 2.4 above], adequate communication systems away from the village [see section 2.5 above] and services for youth.

2.7 The Local Economy

Throughout most of the 19th Century almost 70% of the people living in Peasmarsh worked directly in agriculture with another 22% in occupations [retail, service and manufacturing] that supported this. The remaining 8% were classed as professional or capitalist. Peasmarsh was virtually self-sufficient as a village with a wide range of shops, its own nurse, policeman, postmaster and lawyer, workers in the building trade and, of course a licensed victualler or two. Residents in the village today remember the forge, butchers, baker, Spar shop, Post Office, garage / repair shop etc..

The economy of Peasmarsh today is primarily driven by some agriculture with tourism and retail [because the Jempson's campus serves a wide region, not just the parish] featuring strongly. There are, however, many small – typically self-employed people operating from home – businesses too.

Stakeholders, in general, view the parish as a dormitory location rather than an economic centre and wish it to stay that way.

In the village there is a facility called 'Malthouse Rural Business Park' owned by RDC which is a group of six very small [45 sq. m or 485 sq. ft each] light industrial units with electricity, water and a WC. However they seem to be used as storage bases for small businesses rather than as production units. There are no known people working there.

The economic drivers are not known for paying high wages. This is reflected in the government indices of deprivation, last published in 2019, which show that the parish [combined with part of Rye Foreign as area 'Rother' 002D] was in the 5th decile [40 to 50% so poorer than average] of the Index of Multiple Deprivation and in the same decile for income and employment indices.

2.8 Population and Housing

The latest information available at the time of writing is from the 2011 census. This section will be updated or a codicil added once the data from the 2021 census is published.

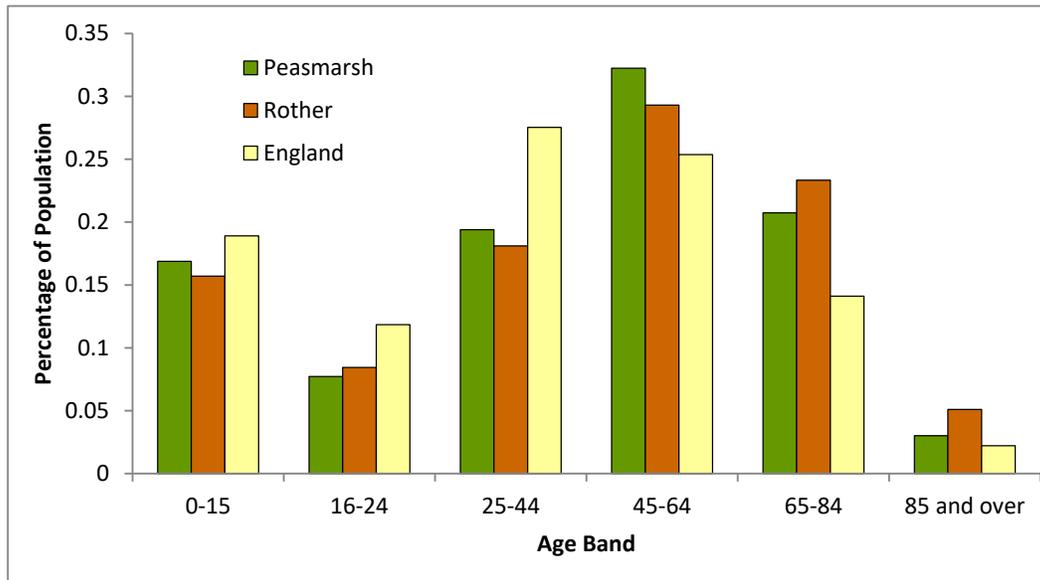
The population of the parish in 2011 was 1,191, formed into 504 households. There were 557 dwellings recorded, the difference presumably being empty dwellings and holiday lets.



Regulation 14 Draft

The Office for National Statistics [ONS] indicated that the population in mid-2019 was 1,294, an increase of 103 since 2011, but that is an estimate, not a verified figure.

The age profile of the parish population in 2011 was typical of many rural villages with fewer younger people and more older people than England as a whole :



Source : 2011 Census data

Figure 2.1 : 2011 Population Age Profile

However Peasmarsh has a reducing percentage of people over the age of 85, reflecting anecdotal evidence that people leave the village as they age whereas Rother as a whole has an increasing population in that age group.

In the same year, ~ 16% of the population worked in skilled trades, ~ 14% were in professional occupations and ~ 12% were in management roles.

The number of dwellings in 2011 was 557, an increase of 73 since 2001. The Post Office states that in 2022 there are 592 properties in the parish. On the other hand, RDC states that 27 new homes were built since the 2011 Census which makes the total dwellings to mid-2022 to be 584.

Again in 2011, slightly over two thirds of these were owned, the rest were rented. Of the rented homes, about two thirds were social rentals and one third were private rental. The social rental percentage was more than that in England as a whole and double that in Rother.

The parish has a very eclectic mixture of house styles. The houses in the village range from traditional clapboard styles through tile hung exteriors to modern brick-built houses. Roofs are similarly varied ranging from traditional thatch through clay tiles and slates to modern cast tiles.

2.9 Education

Peasmarsh has both a pre-school and a Church of England primary school, both on the same site on the southern edge of the village centre.



Regulation 14 Draft

The pre-school operates from purpose-built facilities in the grounds of the primary school and accepts children from the age of two onwards. Although co-located with the primary school, the pre-school operates quite separately from it. Most of the children come from Peasmarsh or Rye.

Peasmarsh Church of England Primary School operates on the site of the original parish school in School Lane. That was founded in 1841 and the original building is still in use as part of a much larger complex. The school is rated as 'Good' by OFSTED.

There are seven year groups at the school, each with a Published Admission Number [PAN] of 15 children so a total of 105 children. The PAN is, in theory, the maximum number of pupils that the education authority will admit to that year group. However, the school has an obligation to accept children who live in the area so in some year groups the number of children already exceeds PAN.

What Peasmarsh does not have is a secondary education facility within the parish. Children from 11 years of age upwards have to travel to secondary schools. The nearest East Sussex schools are Rye College [about 5 km / 3 miles from Peasmarsh] and Robertsbridge Community College [about 19 km / 12 miles along country lanes]. Neither is particularly well perceived and neither has a sixth form. The nearest East Sussex sixth forms are in Hastings and Bexhill.

The majority of Peasmarsh children therefore go to Homewood School and Sixth Form in Tenterden which is across the county border in Kent [about 13 km / 8 miles away, again on country lanes]. That is the case even though the school is currently rated by OFSTED as 'requires improvement'. The problem with that school is that the existing bus service may be withdrawn because Kent is not obliged to provide a service for children living in East Sussex. There is also talk of Homewood no longer accepting children from East Sussex in the near future.

It is worth noting that the government indices of deprivation, last published in 2019, reveal that area Rother 002D – Peasmarsh plus part of Rye Foreign – is in the 3rd decile [20 to 30%] of the Education, Skills and Training index.

2.10 Health Services

Peasmarsh is within the area of the East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust which has two main hospitals, one in Hastings [Conquest, about 19 km / 12 miles away partly on country lanes] and one in Eastbourne [EDGH, about 48 km / 30 miles away mostly on main roads].

There is a small intermediate care hospital in Rye [Rye Memorial Hospital, about 4 km / 2½ miles] from which the NHS offers some services on the basis of professionals visiting from the main hospitals.

The residents of the parish are mainly [perhaps exclusively] registered with three main practices : two in Rye and one in Northiam. They tend to be loyal to their particular practice. The parish does not have a medical centre or surgery although Rye Medical Centre used to offer a single monthly visiting doctor service in the Peasmarsh Memorial Hall. The Northiam practice no longer accepts registrations from Peasmarsh residents.

Travel to all three practices is difficult due to the public transport issues.

There is a pharmacy within Jempson's supermarket and there is an ambulance station at the Rye Memorial Hospital.

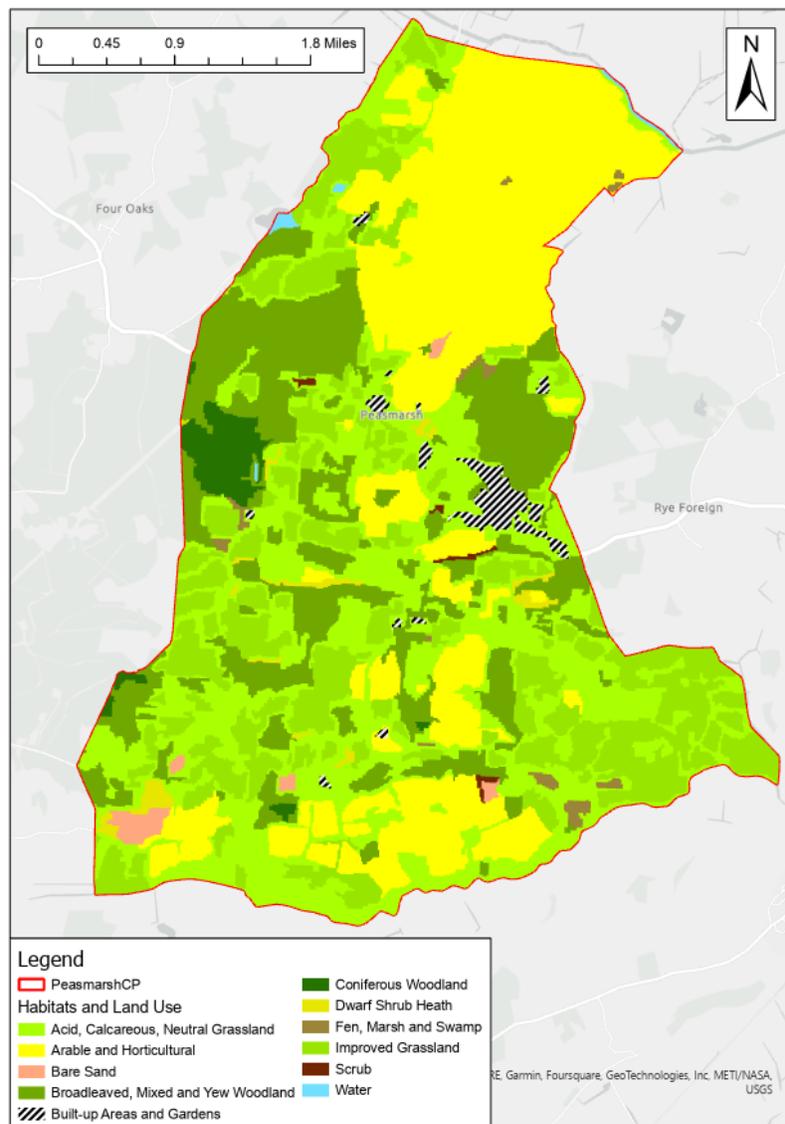


3 Landscape, the Environment and Heritage

This section of the Plan should be read in conjunction with Appendix A2 which contains maps not included in the section and, where included, a larger scale map.

3.1 Introduction

Peasmarsh is entirely within the High Weald AONB. The parish has a variety of habitats from farmland and woods and areas of heathland and scrub. At the northern and southern ends of the parish there are small areas of floodplain grazing adjacent to the rivers Rother and Tillingham respectively :



Source: Natural England. Living Habitat Map (Phase 4) 14 May 2022

Map 3.1 : Broad Habitats and Land Use

See also *Map 3.2 : Priority Habitats and Networks.*



Regulation 14 Draft

The environment can be used to improve water quality, reduce flooding and soil erosion, improve air quality, sequester carbon, restore and enhance biodiversity and nature and increase pollination. It is also a means to improve our health and make us all feel better.

Land based enterprises are key to the economic prosperity of the parish. These include farms, vineyards, woods and forestry, hospitality – camp sites, holiday accommodation, pubs and restaurants – and commercial enterprises in redundant farm buildings.

Accordingly, the detailed objectives of the Plan with respect to Landscape, the Environment and Heritage are :

- Support land-based businesses to develop resilient income streams;
- Restore and enhance habitats, biodiversity and nature;
- Support green infrastructure including renewable energy and traffic free routes in the journey towards net zero;
- Seek positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural, and historic environment;
- Mitigate the visual impacts of developments on the landscape and historic buildings;
- Encourage opportunities for leisure, recreation and community projects;
- Ensure that the tranquillity of the village, including dark skies and the landscape characteristics, is maintained and improved;

3.2 Environmental Designations

Although there are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI's] within the parish, there are several in proximity and one – Leasam Wood Heronry – is less than 1km [0.6 miles] from the boundary. Accordingly, most of the parish is within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

Similarly, the parish is not within a Wetland of International Importance [known as a 'Ramsar' site] but it is only 1.6km [1 mile] from the internationally recognised Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Ramsar site.

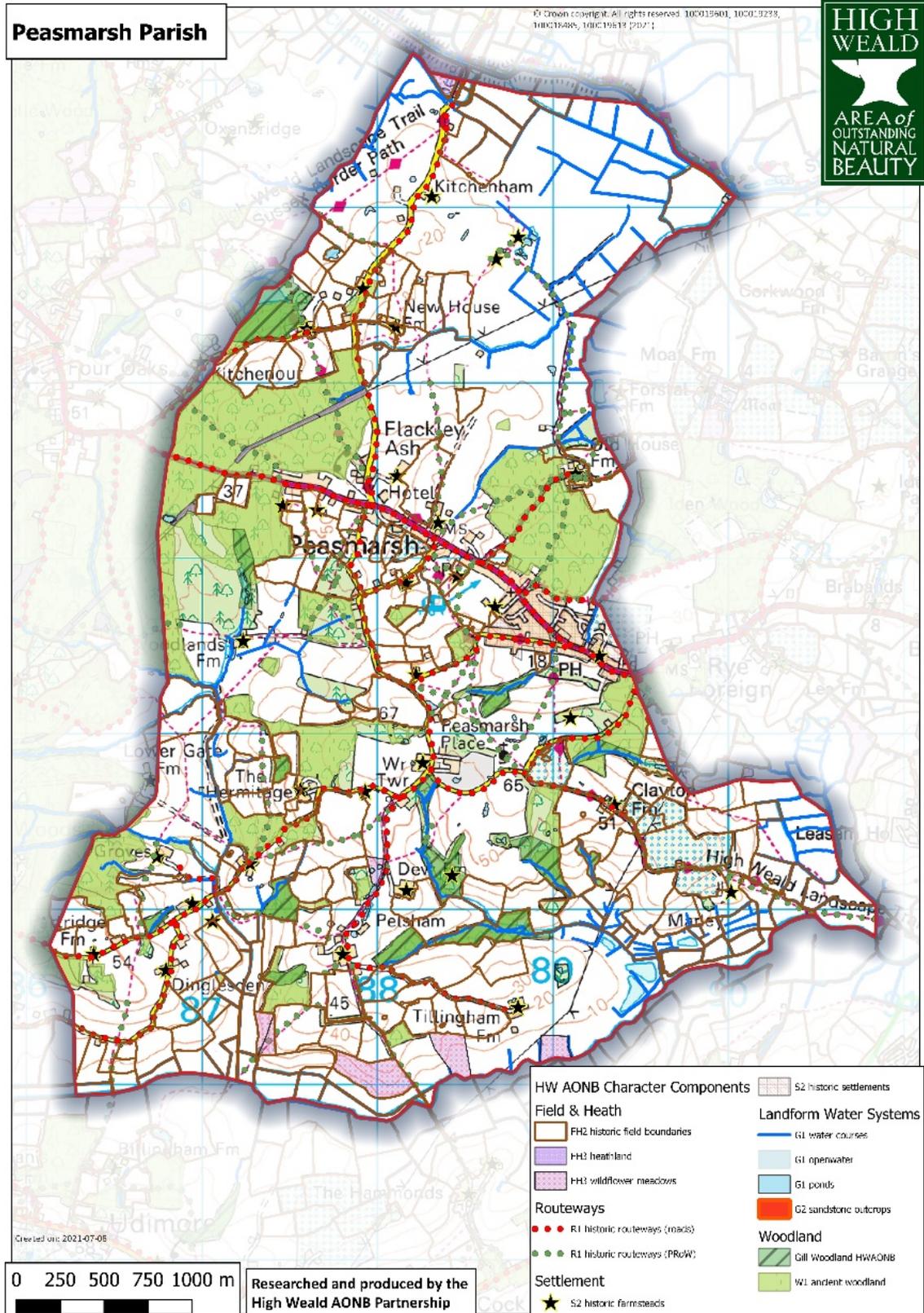
A significant part of Peasmarsh lies within the Rother, Brede and Tillingham Woods Biodiversity Opportunity Area [BOA] and a relatively small part of the parish along the banks of the Rother river is within the Romney Marsh BOA – see Map 3.3. BOA's are aggregations of the government's Biodiversity Action Plan [BAP] habitats, considered to be most important for habitat enhancement, restoration and creation of BAP habitats.

3.3 Landscape Character

The landscape characteristics of the High Weald AONB are evident in the parish of Peasmarsh as shown in Map 3.4 [over]. These can be summarised as :

- Geology, landform, water systems and climate (sandrock outcrops, soil, gill streams); *see Map 3.5*
- Settlement [dispersed settlement pattern, historic farmsteads]; *see Map 3.6*
- Routeways [droveways, sunken lanes]; *see Map 3.7*
- Woodland [ancient woodland, archaeological remains]; *see Maps 3.1 and 3.2*
- Field and heath [medieval fields, grassland, heathland, historic field boundaries]; *see Map 3.4 [over]*

Regulation 14 Draft



Map 3.4 : Characteristic Landscape Components



Regulation 14 Draft

Fields at the village edge are characterised by High Weald AONB historic field boundaries. These form a part of the habitat mosaic of the essentially medieval landscape of the High Weald AONB and often comprise habitat-rich ancient hedgerows. A large area of ancient woodland, Malthouse Wood, flanks the village to the north, whilst Corner Wood and Morfeys Wood mark the south eastern boundary of the village. These are characteristics to be enhanced and possibly re-established where lost.

Peasmarsh has 55 listed buildings [see Map 3.8], including the Grade I listed 11th century parish church and two Grade II* buildings, about 10% of the total addresses. In addition there is a significant number of non-designated heritage assets in the parish.

The importance of listed buildings lies not just in the building itself but its setting within the greater landscape.

Policy L1 : Conserve Landscape and Heritage Asset Settings

Development proposals should protect, enhance, restore and leave as a legacy for future generations the rich heritage and landscape character which is enjoyed by all.

Conformity references : NPPF : 174, 175, 176, 179, 181, 189, 190; RCD : Core : EN1, EN5, RA1, RA2; DaSA : DEN1, DEN2; HWMP : FH2, FH3, R2;

3.4 Locally Significant Views

Protecting key panoramic views and mitigating the visual impacts of developments on the landscape and designated and non-designated heritage assets are key constraints for potential developments.



View from Cornerways to Rye Foreign

Development proposals must be designed in a way that safeguards locally significant view or views.

There are a number of publicly accessible impressive views [See Map 3.9] across the wider landscape in the parish which should be protected from the impact of development. They are listed over the page.



Regulation 14 Draft

- the view from Main Street at Old Winders looking north across the Rother Valley;
- the view from Clayton Farm south/south east towards Rye and the sea;
- the view north from the fields above Sharvels Farm across the Rother Valley towards Wittersham;
- the view from Tillingham south across the valley to Udimore;
- the views from Bushy north west towards Tanhouse and south east towards Dungeness and Little Cheyne Court Wind Farm;
- the view from the fields behind the Church looking north towards Wittersham;
- the view from the Church looking south towards Fairlight and Hastings;
- the views from Cornerways looking north, south and east.

Policy L2 : Protection of Locally Significant Views

As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals within the shaded arcs of the views mapped in Map 3.9 should be designed in a way that safeguards the locally significant view or views concerned.

Development proposals in parts of the parish beyond these view arcs should identify and, where possible, integrate views across the High Weald, in particular where these can be enjoyed by the general public.

Conformity references : NPPF : 128, 129, 130, 134, 176; RCD : Core: EN1, EN2; DaSA: DEN1, DEN2; HWMP : OQ4;

The policy provides the flexibility required for the wide range of development proposals which will come forward within the Plan period. In the majority of cases proposals will be of a minor nature and will have little or no effect on the identified views.

In circumstances where the proposed development would be likely to have an impact on any identified key view, the planning application concerned should be accompanied by a landscape and visual impact assessment that is proportionate to the scale of the development proposed. Any appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated within the design of the development proposed and captured in the assessment.

3.5 Habitats, Land Use and Biodiversity

The variety of parish habitats was discussed in Section 3.1 and shown in Map 3.1. These are analysed in Table 3.1 [over].

The data is from Natural England's Living Habitat Map (Phase 4) which was last updated 14 May 2022. It should be noted that this habitat probability map displays modelled likely broad habitat classifications, trained on field surveys and earth observation data from 2021 as well as historic data layers and may not be 100% accurate.



Regulation 14 Draft

Habitats	Area (ha)	% of Parish
Scrub	3	0.2%
Water	3	0.2%
Fen, Marsh and Swamp	10	0.6%
Bare Sand	11	0.7%
Dwarf Shrub Heath	14	0.9%
Built-up Areas and Gardens	22	1.4%
Coniferous Woodland	29	1.8%
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	282	17.9%
Improved Grassland	313	19.8%
Arable and Horticultural	436	27.6%
Acid, Calcareous, Neutral Grassland	457	28.9%
Total <i>[may not equal column total due to rounding error]</i>	1,581	100.0%

Source : Natural England. Living Habitat Map (Phase 4) 14 May 2022

Table 3.1 : Broad Habitats and Land Use of Peasmarsh

At 76% of the total, the predominant land use of the parish land area of 1,581 ha [3,900 acres] is farming which includes arable, horticulture and grassland [livestock]. A further 20% is woodland and forestry with the remaining 2.6% other habitats. The built-up areas in the parish represent 22 ha or 1.4% of the total land area.

Almost one third of the parish land area is designated priority habitat as shown in Map 3.2 and listed in Table 3.2 :

Priority Habitats	Area (ha)	% of Parish
Lowland heathland	2	0.1%
Traditional orchard	7	0.5%
No main habitat but additional habitats present	19	1.2%
Good quality semi-improved grassland	23	1.4%
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	117	7.4%
Deciduous woodland	327	20.7%
All Priority Habitats	495	31.3%

Source : Natural England

Table 3.2 : Priority Habitats

The dataset used describes the geographic extent and location of habitats of principal importance in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41¹ and doesn't necessarily agree with the dataset used in Table 3.1 and Map 3.1.

Over 20% of the total area of the parish is deciduous woodland and grazing marsh is another 7.4%.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/section/41>



Regulation 14 Draft

Several of the woods are designated as Ancient Woodlands or Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites. That includes Malthouse Wood and Cock Wood immediately north of Peasmarsh Village, essentially blocking any expansion of the central village in that direction.

Policy L3 : Protection of Trees and Woodland

Development proposals must safeguard the future health and retention of ancient woodland, protected trees and veteran trees. Development proposals which would unacceptably impact on the future health and retention of ancient woodland, protected trees and veteran trees will not be supported.

Conformity references : NPPF : 179, 180, 190; RCD : Core: EN1, EN5; DaSA: DE1, DE2, DE4; HWMP : W1, W2;

Objective W2 of the High Weald Management Plan, seeks to enhance the ecological functioning of woodland at a landscape scale.

The rationale of the objective is to increase the viability of the woodland habitat for wildlife, by identifying and extending the area of appropriately managed woodland [including restoring planted ancient woodland] to link and enhance isolated habitats and species populations. Linking provides greater connectivity between woodlands and other important wildlife areas which helps facilitate species response to climate change. Therefore, opportunities could arise to connect green corridors to local woodlands and habitats.

Map 3.2 illustrates the habitat networks which may give potential opportunities to enhance or restore current habitats or create new habitats. These include :

- woodland and hedges,
- wetlands,
- species rich wildflower meadows and pollinator strips
- landscape action priorities of conservation and restoration of coppices, woodlands and traditional orchards,
- improvement of footpath access along the valleys,
- restoration of hedgerows and tree pattern in arable areas.

These may generate new income streams for landowners through environmental land management schemes, biodiversity, carbon and nutrient credits.

The Government's Agriculture² and Environment³ Bills which have become law since Brexit give a different approach to land management and aim to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than before with public support for public gains. The introduction of this approach and related services will influence the way a wide range of people and organisations work, including landowners, estate managers and farmers; local planning authorities, developers, NGOs, consultants, professional bodies, government organisations and the general public.

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/21/contents>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents>



Regulation 14 Draft

Policy L4 : Protection of Biodiversity

All development must contribute to a net gain in biodiversity of more than 10% within the site as required by and measured in accordance with the Environment Act of 2021. If this is not possible within the boundary of the development it must be achieved :

- on neighbouring land; or
- within the parish

Conformity references : NPPF : 179, 180; RCD : Core: EN5; DaSA: DEN4, DEN7; HWMP : G1, W1;

Land use is also influenced by the quality of the land available for agricultural use. The Agricultural Land Classification⁴ [ALC] framework is used to classify agricultural land in England and Wales and referred to in National Planning Policy which protects 'best and most versatile' land – Grades 1, 2, 3 and subgrades 3a and 3b.

Map 3.10 shows that 83% of the parish is grade 3 with a small area (44ha) of grade 2 alongside the River Rother. Grade 3 land has good to moderate quality which means that it has moderate limitations that affect the choice of crops to be grown, timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or yield. Nonetheless it presents, as it has done historically, good opportunities for food production.

Non-agricultural land is land primarily in other uses. In the parish this is mainly woodland as shown in Maps 3.1 and 3.2.

Policy L5 : Protection of Habitats

Development proposals must safeguard the future health and retention of habitats, particularly priority habitats listed in Table 3.2 and shown in Map 3.2. Development proposals which would unacceptably impact on the future health and retention of habitats will not be supported.

Conformity references : NPPF : 179, 180, 190; RCD : Core: EN1, EN5; DaSA: DEN2, DEN4, DEN7; HWMP : G3, R2, W1, W2, FH3;

One of the issues with the environment is the known contamination of Woodside [variously Corkwood] Stream and hence the River Rother with raw sewage. In 2021 alone there were 38 instances recorded with a total of 193 hours of discharge.

This threat to human health and the environment is a direct result of the responsible company not calculating system capacity on the basis of a combined sewer [both foul and surface water] even though it knows and accepts that to be the case because the older houses in Peasmarsh village have combined discharges. This is discussed in more detail in Section 4.3.5 later in the Plan and a policy [I4] is established.

⁴ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5526580165083136> [large pdf file]



Regulation 14 Draft

3.6 Health and Wellbeing

People’s access to natural spaces is known to improve the quality of life, with benefits to health and well-being. Whilst access to natural green space is beneficial to human health and well-being, there will be some areas where this will not be appropriate as access may be detrimental to sensitive habitats and/or species. Peasmarsh enjoys reasonable accessibility to natural and semi-natural greenspace through the network of public rights of way. This adheres to the standards established in Rother’s Core Strategy Policy CO3.

However, the more demanding Natural England standard ANGSt suggests a need for more local accessible natural greenspace [as presented spatially in Map 8 of the RDC Green Infrastructure Study⁵].

Most of the parish also appears to conform to the Woodland Trust’s standards for accessible woodland ⁶[as presented spatially in Map 9 and Appendix A1 of the RDC Green Infrastructure Study].

Paragraphs 98 to 103 of the NPPF relate to open space and recreation. Paragraph 101 notes that neighbourhood plans allow “communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them” and paragraph 103 requires that “Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts”.

Local green space designation allows this Plan to provide protection to areas that are, and historically have been, important to stakeholders. The following areas, as shown in Map 3.11, have been identified for designation :

PMGS01	Recreation Ground and Play Area
PMGS02	Maltings Allotments
PMGS03	Old Bowling Green
PMGS04	Church Grounds
PMGS05	Brickfield Green
PMGS06	Cock Pond
PMGS07	Park View Green

Policy L6 : Protection of Local Green Space

The Plan designates local green spaces as shown on Map 3.11. Development proposals within the designated local green spaces will not be supported.

Conformity references : NPPF : 92, 93, 98, 99, 101, 102, 103; RCD : Core: EN5; DaSA: DEN4; HWMP : OQ3;

Peasmarsh and the surrounding area is well serviced with Public Rights of Way [PRoW’s] as shown in Map 3.12. That includes The High Weald Landscape Trail [[HWLT], a 145 km [90 mile] route that meanders through the High Weald AONB from Rye to Horsham and passes through the village.

⁵ https://www.rother.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Green_Infrastructure_Background_Paper.pdf [large pdf file]

⁶ <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/1788/access-to-woodland-position-statement.pdf> [large pdf file]



Regulation 14 Draft

There are routes which have the potential, subject to being viable and working with landowners, to be developed into traffic free multi-user networks linking Rye, the surrounding villages and diversified farm enterprises resulting in a zero-carbon boost to the local rural economy.

Policy L7 : Retain and Improve Public Access

The Plan encourages green infrastructure for all developments. Green infrastructure outside of new developments will also be supported. That includes traffic-free routes and improvements to the local public access networks with particular consideration of the historic routeways as shown on Map 3.7.

Conformity references : NPPF : 85, 92, 93, 98, 99, 100; RCD : Core: RA1, CO6, TR2, TR3; HWMP : R1, R2;

Health and well-being are often enhanced by perceptual qualities. In the village these may include distinctive features [e.g. Wealden hall houses], scenic beauty [views], a sense of naturalness, dark skies and tranquillity. These are often difficult to quantify but can be enhanced with sympathetic development and the way we conserve and enhance the environment around us.

Some of these are dealt with in other parts of the Plan, in particular Policies D2 : Character of Development, D3 : Overall Site Design and D5 : Dark Skies.

3.7 Conclusions

Protection and enhancement of the landscape, environment and heritage is to the benefit of all, whether resident or visitor. The Plan establishes policies to ensure that that happens beyond the protection afforded by national regulations :

- a set of locally significant views have been designated, giving them appropriate protection;
- protection has been afforded to all trees and woodland, the parish biodiversity and to its many habitats;
- a set of green spaces have been designated, giving them appropriate protection;
- protection has been afforded to green infrastructure, both within and outside of future developments;



Regulation 14 Draft

4 Infrastructure

This section of the Plan should be read in conjunction with Appendix A2 : Maps which contains larger scale maps than those included here.

4.1 Introduction

Several aspects of Peasmarsh parish's infrastructure were identified as key concerns for stakeholders during the public consultations.

Needs were identified for improved roads / traffic, drainage [both foul and surface water], electricity supply and telecommunications in particular.

Accordingly, the detailed objectives of the Plan with respect to infrastructure are :

- calm and safe roads and traffic in the parish for all users whether vehicles, cycles or pedestrians;
- better and more integrated sustainable public transport services;
- a secure supply of clean water;
- an effective and reliable sewer network with adequate capacity for the disposal of sewage;
- surface water drainage compatible with requirements and topography;
- a more reliable electricity supply with redundancy;
- telecommunications commensurate with modern technology throughout the parish;
- easy access to health services;
- improved secondary education provision;

The NPPF, paragraph 20, divides infrastructure into physical infrastructure [including transport, telecommunications, security, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and the provision of energy] and community or social infrastructure [including health, education and cultural]. This distinction is used in this section of the Plan.

4.2 Background

Rother designated Peasmarsh as a Local Service Village in its 2008 Rural Settlements Study⁷. In the study, the definition of a Local Service Village is one having a “*range of local shops, services and social infrastructure*”. The criterion for selecting such villages is that they have a “*minimum of 10 of the 18 identified service level indicator services, and include a primary school*”.

There are actually only 15 identified services listed in the study as shown in Table 4.1 [over]. The table identifies the ten services [and primary school] which are present in Peasmarsh. The issue is that, of the ten services, four of them are supplied by Jempson's on its campus so there is no “*range of local shops, services ...*” and the risk is that, should Jempson's close some or all of its operations, there is likely to be a significant reduction in available services.

⁷ https://www.rother.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Part_1_Rural_Settlement_Strategy.pdf [large pdf file]



Regulation 14 Draft

Convenience shopping ✓	Primary school ✓	Secondary school ✗
Doctors Surgery ✗	Dentist ✗	Chemist ✓
Post Office ✓	Public House ✓	Community Hall ✓
Play Area ✓	Sports Pitch ✓	Place of Worship ✓
Library ✗	Nursery School ✓	Petrol Filling Station ✓

Source : RDC

Table 4.1 : Criteria for Local Service Village Designation

RDC policy RA1 requires that new development be *in locations accessible via a range of transport options* in order to improve *access to basic day-to-day services, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling*. Designating somewhere as a Local Service Village without considering public transport goes against that policy.

RDC also has a green policy in which case the availability of public transport and good walking and cycling routes is essential to minimise the risk of social exclusion, particularly for people without access to a car.

Appendix A4 is a short analysis of the main issues with respect to infrastructure

4.3 Physical Infrastructure

4.3.1 General

Peasmarsh is very much in need of infrastructure improvements, particularly in connection with both foul and surface water drainage, electricity supply and telecommunications.

Local policy should always be to encourage the maintenance and improvement of existing infrastructure. An issue which exists in the parish is the lack of a central record of infrastructure problems.

Policy I1 : Recording of Infrastructure Issues

In order to ensure that PPC is aware of any problems that arise with infrastructure and can feed back to suppliers and planning authorities collective knowledge of such issues :

- establish and publicise a central point for the collection of information to monitor infrastructure issues in Peasmarsh;

Conformity references : NPPF : 33;

Gas supply and waste management have not required any significant investigation in connection with this Plan, since no local issues have been raised in respect of them and, in any case, gas is expected to be phased out over the course of this Plan.

4.3.2 Sustainable Transport

Accessing jobs and services is fundamental to a good quality of life. In the public consultations, a frequently mentioned issue with public transport was that timetables and/or destinations are unsuitable for most stakeholders' working and travel patterns.



Regulation 14 Draft

In addition, lack of integration in public transport services leads to missed connections and long delays, discouraging future use of public transport. This goes against RDC policy TR2 to maximise the use of the existing public transport network. Even when there should be interconnection, the bus service is frequently late.

Rural bus services have a greater impact on achieving the net zero obligation than urban services as distances to be covered are greater than in towns. This is not adequately recognised by planners.

The frequently heard argument is that improvements to rural services cannot be justified because the service is not used sufficiently, an example of self-fulfilling prophecy. In the case of Peasmarsh there should be truly frequent bus service operating from early morning to late evening and that service's timetable should be integrated with the bus and rail services from Rye. That would allow stakeholders to use the bus service for both local needs [going to Tenterden for instance] and longer commutes via Ashford or Hastings.

In addition, the possibility of community transport services, including Demand Responsive Transport, exist and should be explored.

Policy I2 : Bus Service

In order for Peasmarsh to operate as a service village, improvements in the provision and use of the bus service will be supported by :

- i) Advocating for improved public transport connectivity for the village to include :
 - a) reliable, more frequent and integrated services allowing travel to larger service centres;
 - b) extended provision from early morning to later evening including weekends, at affordable fares in order to provide sustainable transport options for commuting, access to services [especially health] and social purposes;
 - c) consideration of patients needing to reach health service destinations;
- ii) Promoting integration of the bus service with other bus services and the rail service at the Rye transport hub;
- iii) Seeking community transport solutions on a range of fronts including connections from Ore/Hastings and Hampden Park/Eastbourne stations to the respective hospitals;

All of the above will be undertaken at district, county and national level.

Conformity references : NPPF : 8c, 85, 104-106, 124c, 152; RCD : Core : RA1, CO4, TR2, TR3;

4.3.3 Roads and Traffic

The issue of traffic is of prime importance to the local community. While the Plan is primarily about land use, the topic remains one that the community sees as a top priority to be addressed.



Regulation 14 Draft

The great majority of traffic in Peasmarsh village goes on the A268, all other streets being minor roads or dead ends. The exception is the considerable traffic flow to Jempson's which is a supermarket campus of regional importance. That uses a small stretch of Tanhouse Lane to reach the campus from the A268.

Traffic speed, noise and intensity on the A268 can make walking and cycling in Peasmarsh an unsafe and unpleasant experience.

The parish is fortunate to have volunteers who, by using a sophisticated Black Cat device, have managed to uncover considerable information on village traffic. A short report on the results of the work is available in Appendix 3 to this Plan.

Figure 4.1 [over] is an extract from the report. It shows traffic flows against speed, both west-bound and east-bound, at a monitoring point 200 metres inside the 30 mph zone for a recent one week monitoring period. Based upon the survey data 69% of vehicles are travelling above 30mph and a significant number are travelling at more than 45mph.

There are significant seasonal differences in traffic volume : ~15,500 vehicles/month were recorded in January 2022 and over 24,000 in July, a 58% increase. This reflects the importance of the tourism sector to the area.

Pavements for pedestrian use in the parish are limited to Main Street [the A268] and part – but not all – of School Lane. The parental perception of local children is that the route to school is too dangerous to walk so they choose to drive. This adds to the volume of traffic on School Lane which has to accommodate teachers parking their cars and the cars used to drop off the many children coming from outside village.

Policy I3 : Improving Road Safety and Traffic Impact

Improvements in safety and reductions in the speed of traffic through the village will be supported by :

- i) Working with police, volunteers and ESCC in order to continue to reduce the speed of traffic through the village;
- ii) Promote the installation of measures to slow traffic through the village, using design features in keeping with the rural nature of the parish;
- iii) Mitigate the negative impacts on non-motorised transport users including improvements to pedestrian footpaths and cycle ways;

Conformity references : NPPF : 92, 104, 105, 106d, 108; RCD : Core : CO6, TR3;

Regulation 14 Draft

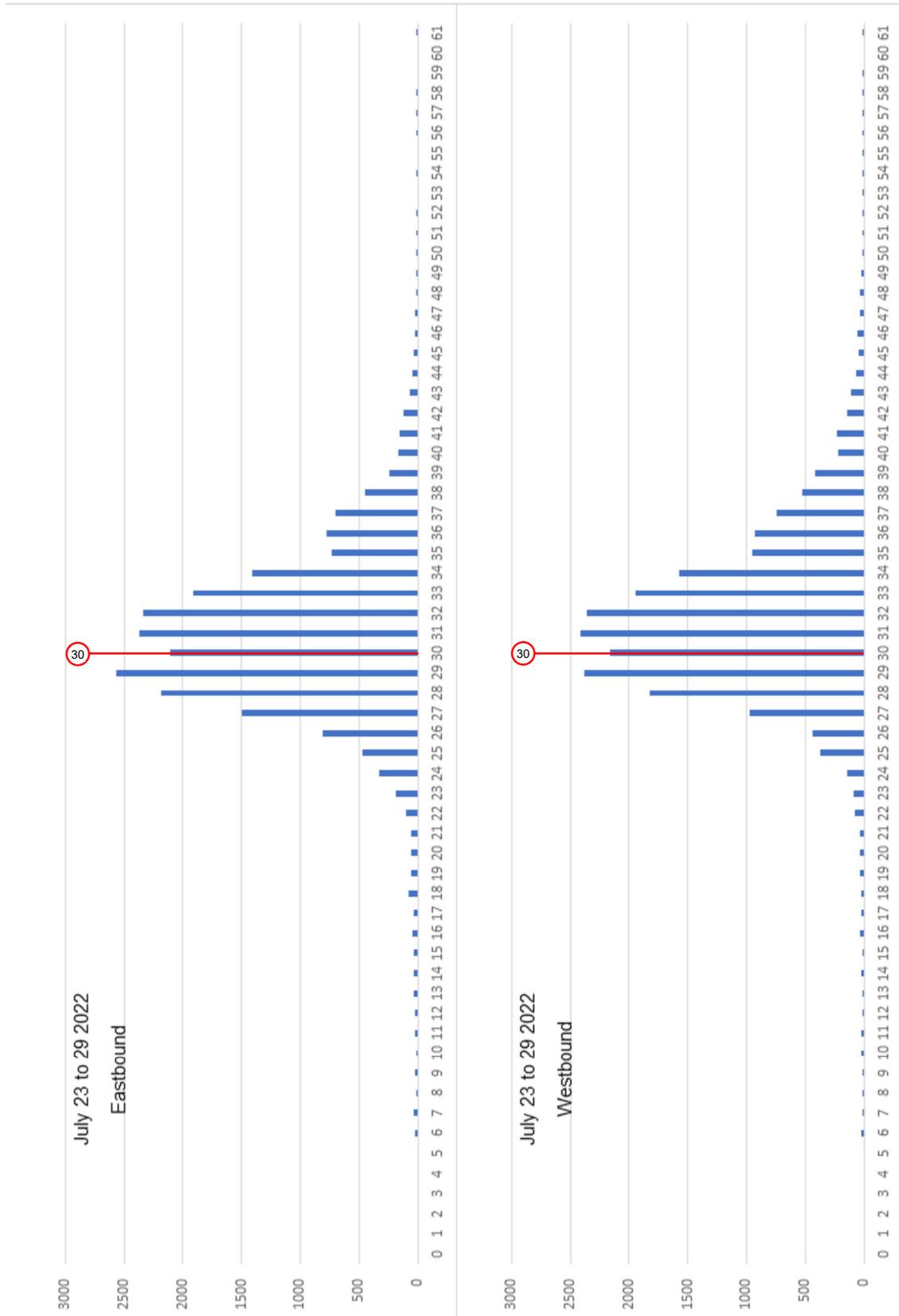


Figure 4.1 : Old Post Office Traffic Flow against Speed



Regulation 14 Draft

4.3.4 Clean Water Supply

Peasmarsh household water is supplied by South East Water [SE Water]. No issues in respect of water supply have been raised in any public consultation.

Significantly, a number of groundwater sources are located within Rother and are important sources of rural water but general water supply within the district is predominantly provided by a number of strategically important reservoirs which also supply water to the Hastings area namely Bewl, Powdermill and Darwell reservoirs.

There have been, in the past, significant failures in the mains water supply following on from electricity outages. SE Water should be required to ensure backup power supplies are readily available in these eventualities – see Policy I6 below.

During such failures SE Water have offered bottled water to residents but only at a depot in Battle – a 21 km [13 mile] drive away. The company should be required to place a bottled water depot in every village affected during a supply failure.

4.3.5 Foul Water Disposal

Southern Water [SW] is the wastewater service provider for those in the parish connected to the sewer system. The village no longer has a wastewater treatment facility, foul water is now pumped to the wastewater treatment works [WTW] in the parish of Iden. SW states that the Iden works treat sewage from Rye [presumably part of], Iden, Peasmarsh, Playden, Camber and Rye Foreign. The village pumping station is on the site of the old Peasmarsh treatment plant.

There are two primary issues in respect of foul water disposal and a third important one :

- the limited sewer network;
- the capacity of the system;
- the power supply to the pumping station;

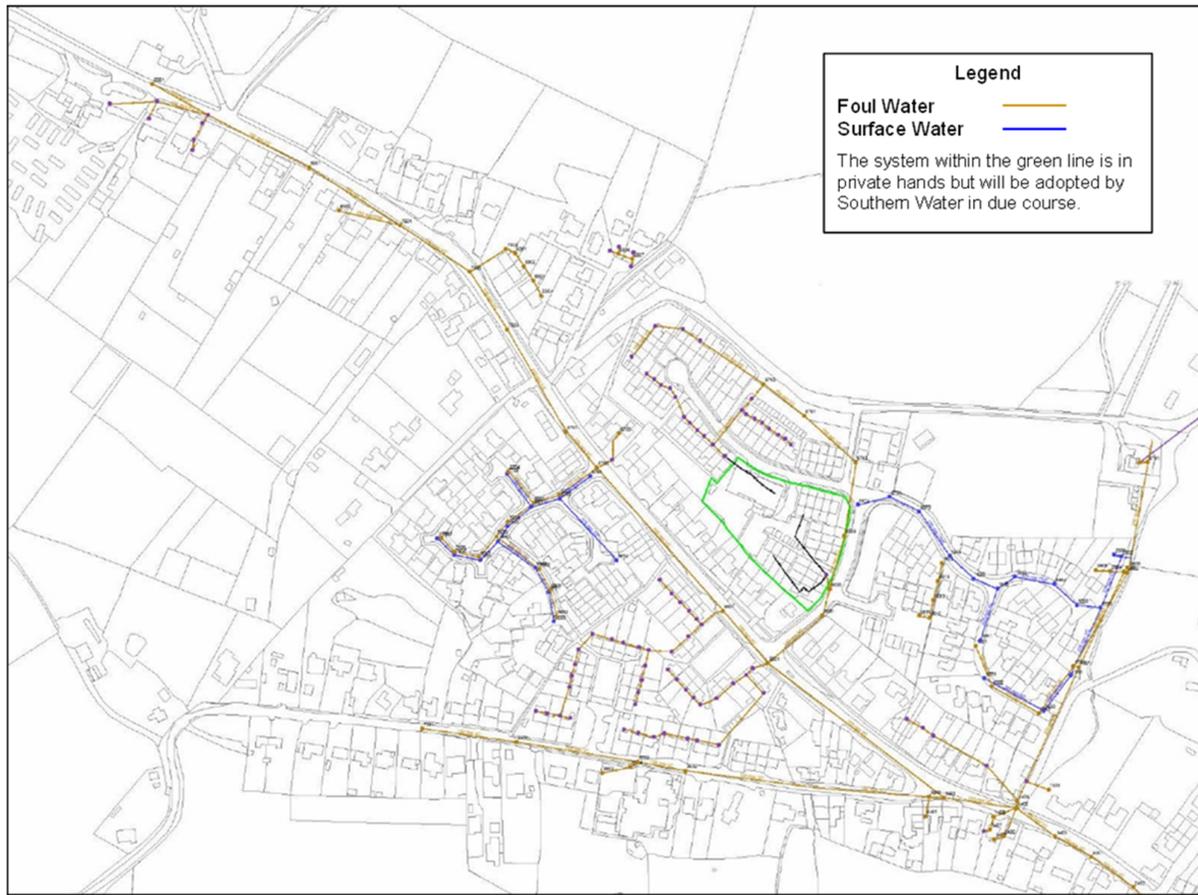
Limited Network

Map 4.2 [over] shows the main extent of the sewer network in Peasmarsh village together with the surface water drains under SW ownership. The company states that it doesn't know all of the details of its network which is why there are some parts of the network not connected to the pumping station. Additionally, the map does not show any private connections to the sewers :

It can be seen that whilst most of the eastern end of the village has the possibility of a sewer connection, the western end is not well served : the sewer does not even reach all of School Lane and stops at the top of Cock Hill on Main Street.

SW acknowledges that it has a statutory obligation to serve new development but it is not reasonable that a development should bear the cost of extending the main to the vicinity of the development when the main is stopped to avoid dealing with difficult terrain or to save costs. The costs of such major infrastructure work will make sites less attractive to develop.

Regulation 14 Draft



Source : Southern Water from DigDat

Map 4.2 : SW Drainage Network in Central Peasmarsh Village

Capacity

The fundamental problem with the sewer system capacity is that the SW calculations assume that the system is for foul water only while accepting that a fairly high percentage [there is no known data on what that might be] of homes connected to the system have combined outflows because they were built before combined systems were not permitted.

One result of that incorrect assumption is that the pumping station recorded overflow spills to the local stream 38 times for a total of 193 hours during 2021 alone.

The capacity problem is not limited to the pumping station and its delivery line to Iden however. Some people experience sewage flooding in their gardens at not-infrequent intervals and instances of internal flooding occur from time to time. The company cannot ascertain whether its drains are of sufficient capacity because it would need to undertake calculations to do that.

Nonetheless, the company says that there is no evidence of under-capacity locally, even though observation in the village suggests that this is not the case. A number of reports of local incidents have been reported to it but it maintains that these are caused by other issues outside of its control. This is a critical matter, fundamental to any new developments and must be resolved before further development is undertaken.



Regulation 14 Draft

The tabulated results of SW’s 2020 Baseline Risk and Vulnerability Assessment show a different story. Iden WTW is reported to have a population of 1,883 connected to its system but it is unclear whether that is the actual population or a population equivalent value which is a technical assessment of capacity.

Most risks were assessed as ‘not significant’ : sewer flooding and collapse, compliance failure, good ecological status, surface water management and groundwater pollution. However, the following risks were all assessed as ‘very significant’ :

Risk :	Pollution	Storm Overflow		Nutrient Neutrality	
Year :	2020	2020	2050	2020	2050
Reason :	operational	hydraulic	hydraulic	unknown	quality

At the end of the table, SW states that it has a low level of concern but accepts that its investment strategy must be to improve the Iden system [of which Peasmarsh is part].

It is understood that as far back as 1990 the planning inspectorate noted that the local system was already close to capacity and since then many new houses have been added.

Pumping Station and WTW Power Supply

As discussed in Section 4.3.7 below, the parish power supply is not secure and, despite being a critical element of the infrastructure, the pumping station does not have its own standby generator.

Policy I4 : Sewage System Improvement

No developments will be supported until such a time as independent capacity checks by a qualified professional have been undertaken and any improvements required are operational. This is essential due to the current identified problems of regular foul water overflow and pollution incidents in the Neighbourhood Area.

Improvements in the system will be achieved by promoting, at district, county and national level, the extension of the local network to include all of the village.

Conformity references : NPPF : 11a, 28, 29, 130a, 177c; RCD : Core : OSS3, SRM2; HWMP : G1; ESCC Flood Risk Strategy;

4.3.6 Surface Water Drainage

Surface water is the runoff from houses, gardens and fields which is not used for other purposes. There is no single organisation with direct responsibility for surface water drainage. Indeed, it is surprising that SW has some responsibility in the village as shown in Map 4.2.

Most of the parish is classified as being in Flood Zone 1 [1:1000 year chance of flooding or better] with very little in Flood Zone 2 [no worse than 1:100 year chance] and relatively small amounts – on the banks of the Rother and the Tillingham – in Flood Zone 3 [greater than 1:100 year chance].



Regulation 14 Draft

The problem in the parish is not river flooding [an Environment Agency issue] however, it is from localised surface water flooding, primarily because of the clay base layer which means that water courses must carry away surface water.

Surface water flooding for all of East Sussex is coordinated by a flood management team in the ESCC environment department which is the designated 'Lead Local Flood Authority'. That team produces and maintains a flood risk strategy and records all incidents reported to it. Problems of flooding and drain maintenance for roads and culverts is dealt with by the ESCC highways maintenance team.

On private land, responsibility for the management and prevention of flooding falls on landowners, farmers, local authorities, drainage boards and developers, depending on the particular circumstances. For watercourses such as streams and rivers, ownership is normally split between landowners on either bank, typically meeting in the middle.

As a result of the multitude of responsibilities above, ESCC observes that much information is not readily available and historical records may be needed to identify old springs and similar.

A guide to some of the organisations involved is on p7 of the ESCC Flood Risk Management Strategy⁸ which also has a guide to water ownership on p32.

The particular problem for Peasmarsh village is that the A268 cuts the natural flow of surface water in its northward path to the River Rother. There are only two known culverts connecting the south side with the north and both seem to be under-capacity or ill-maintained as evidenced by the flooding records shown in Map 4.3 [over] which is an extract from the government's surface water flooding map.

It can be seen that in some places the A268 acts as an ad hoc water course.

In terms of future developments it is important that all such developments – no matter of what size – must install sustainable drainage systems.

Policy I5 : Surface Water Drainage

Development will only be supported where it is demonstrated that surface water drainage will not add to existing site runoff or cause any adverse impact to neighbouring properties and the surrounding environment as required by Design Code 3.3 in Addendum D6 : Peasmarsh Villagescape and Design Codes.

Conformity references : NPPF : 11a, 28, 29, 120b, 124, 127, 128, 130a, 154, 159, 161-165, 167, 177c; RCD : Core : OSS3, SRM2, EN7; DaSA : DRM1; HWMP : G1; ESCC Flood Risk Strategy;

4.3.7 Electricity Supply

Although electricity is sold by retail companies, responsibility for providing power to the parish lies with UK Power Networks [UKPN].

UKPN acknowledges that, in common with many rural areas, Peasmarsh experiences frequent supply disruptions and outages largely due to the lack of a ring network because of the expense of maintaining one.

⁸ <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/flooding/local-flood-risk-management-strategy>



Regulation 14 Draft

Despite UKPN's formal plans for network resilience, most if not all customers in Peasmarsh are on single line 'T' networks rather than on secure ring networks.. A single point of failure on a single line system can prevent supply further on. Clearly, any failure on such a line close to its junction with the main network, will affect many premises.

Map 4.4 [previous page] shows the main high voltage [HV] networks in the area of the village. Note that Peasmarsh is not supplied from either the 132kV or the 33kV networks, it is, at best, supplied from 11 kV lines.

The process of monitoring performance is driven by OFGEM regulations, requiring the recording of any customer interruptions and minutes of supply lost, although these records are not available to the public.

All faults in the area are recorded and investigated by a planning team This feeds into a local plan to improve and repair the local network. This team also monitors load growth in the area which becomes part of a five-year plan for technical infrastructure. In the future, adequate capacity will need to be available not only for additional housing but for the charging of electric vehicles and the installation of greener heating systems. UKPN maintains that this growth is anticipated and catered for within its plans.

A critical issue, outside the control of this Plan, is that UKPN are not in a position to install any new links at present. There is a large backlog of required work and any significant increase in capacity could not be undertaken before 2030. A general shortage of network capacity and engineers is also going to limit any expansion for some time.

This planning mechanism regards developments of up to 10 dwellings as part of their general contingency provision but capacity for larger developments has to be funded by the developers, as does the actual supply to a development site. However, with effect from April 2023, development costs are to be paid by a levy on all customers. Substation upgrades will then not be chargeable to developers.

A key feature of power supply to the Parish, is that there is not only a lack of redundancy in respect of general consumer supply to the area, but there is also no redundancy in respect of supply to key infrastructure installations, such as telecommunications masts and water pumping stations. The knock-on effect of this greatly exacerbates and magnifies the consequences of any power failure.

Policy I6 : Power Supply

The issue of intermittent outages of the power supply inhibits Peasmarsh operating as a service village and creates barriers to future investment. Improvements in the system will be supported by :

- i) Promoting, at district, county and national level, improvements to the local reticulation to substantially improve the reliability of supply;
- ii) Similarly promoting an absolute requirement for key infrastructure installations, including sewage and water pumping stations, cell phone masts and telephone / broadband exchanges, to have secure supplies in the same way as expected of say hospitals with automatic switching in of permanently installed reliable standby generation;

Conformity references : NPPF : 11a, 28, 29, 114, 130a; RCD : Core : SRM1;



Regulation 14 Draft

4.3.8 Telecommunications

Cell phones and the internet have revolutionised the way that many live their lives, enabling new ways of working and communication, fostering online communities, fuelling economic growth and facilitating new business and entertainment.

Peasmarsh is not well supplied with coverage for either : applications for new residential development should demonstrate how the development will provide the ability for occupiers to be able to connect to superfast broadband and mobile communication.

Cell Phones

Although OFCOM reports that all four physical networks have 'OK Coverage' outdoors, stakeholders report poor reception in many locations in the parish. Indoor coverage is much poorer with only a 'good' or 'OK' service in the village itself and even that depends on which network is being used. Service away from the village varies from 'Some Problems' to 'No Coverage' and again depends on which network is being used.

An important issue is the power supply to the local cell towers which, as with domestic supply, experiences frequent disruption. The cells do not seem to have generators so any lengthy disruption exhausts the batteries in the uninterruptible power supplies and the cells close down. That typically means that many stakeholders have no telecommunications at all during extended outages as the telephone system is already digitised.

Broadband

It is claimed that East Sussex has one of the highest levels of access to superfast broadband⁹ in the UK with over 97% of the county already able to access Superfast services and plans in place to reach as near to 100% of the county as possible. There are however significant outlying areas in Peasmarsh Parish unable to access these services and performance for those who can leaves something to be desired, perhaps due to the way that the upgrade was implemented.

⁹ 'superfast broadband' is fibre to the cabinet and copper from there to the premises and typically offers 30 Mbps speeds



Regulation 14 Draft

Policy I7 : Telecommunications

The limited nature of telecommunication facilities inhibits Peasmarsh operating as a service village and creates barriers to future investment. Improvements in the system will be supported by :

- i) Promoting, at district, county and national level, improvements to the local broadband and cell phone services, particularly in the parts of the parish not in the village;

Proposals that deliver improvements to telecommunications will be supported where :

- i) the applicant has fully explored the opportunities to erect apparatus on existing buildings, masts or other structures;
- ii) the number of radio and telecommunication masts are kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network;
- iii) the development has been sited and designed to minimize the impact on the character and appearance of Peasmarsh and the AONB;

Conformity references : NPPF : 11a, 28, 29, 81-83, 114-118; RCD : Core : SRM1;

4.3.9 Developer Obligations

New developments impose additional loads on utilities and sometimes roads, often beyond the simple matter of connecting to the existing network. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that this is completed in an efficient and competent manner.

Policy I8 : Developer Obligations

Where there is a perceived capacity constraint in respect of any utility provision, developers must set out what changes and improvements are required and how they are to be delivered. This should be made public, included as a condition of planning approval and implemented prior to the commencement of the development.

Conformity references : NPPF : 28, 29, 32, 34,130a; RCD : Core : SRM1;

4.4 Social Infrastructure

4.4.1 Health Services

Planning and development should enable and support healthy lifestyles, targeting identified local health and well-being needs – for example, through the provision and maintenance of safe and accessible green infrastructure with increased access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Access to health services such as GP's and hospitals via public transport should be available by suitable bus services and community transport schemes.



Regulation 14 Draft

Hospitals

Hospital services for Peasmarsh are provided by the East Sussex Hospital Trust [ESHT]. Its last CQC overall rating on 27/02/2020 was 'Good'.

The main ESHT hospitals are the Conquest, located in the outskirts of Hastings and about 30 minutes by car from Peasmarsh, and Eastbourne District General Hospital [EDGH] in the outskirts of that town and about an hour away by car. Each has surgical and medical wards and specialist units, a 24 hour Emergency Department and a full range of diagnostic services. The other important hospital in the group is Bexhill.

The issue is that different specialisations are at one or other hospital so one may have to attend EDGH even though the Conquest is much closer.

There is a community hospital in Rye, 4 km [2½ miles] from Peasmarsh village. It is owned and operated by a charitable community trust and therefore outside of the NHS but it works with the NHS which offers intermediate care, palliative care and some day care services from it. Daily medical cover is provided by the local GP practice which is based on the same site as the hospital.

A new 60-bed extension and development of the hospital is currently being undertaken on the site. When complete, this new facility will provide significant extra care home services for the residents of Rye, Winchelsea and the surrounding villages.

General Practitioners

Doctors' surgeries are available at Rye Medical Centre [in the grounds of Rye hospital], Ferry Road Medical centre in Rye and at the Northiam/Broad Oak surgery to the west of the parish. The nearest is 4 km [2.5 miles] from Peasmarsh village and all are within an 8 km [5 mile] drive of it.

This means that the population of Peasmarsh is already very unlikely to have worse access to a GP than the ESHT area, which has on average 10,940 people per practice¹⁰. Any additional surgery is therefore very unlikely to be funded or supported by the NHS.

A third of respondents to the parish consultations reported a desire for more access to local doctors but this is at odds with the experience of Rye Medical centre in running local surgeries in the Parish.

Before the pandemic, occasional surgeries were held in many of the outlying villages, including Peasmarsh, but none of them were very well supported. The one in Peasmarsh was initially once per week but it was never very well supported – no more than 2 or 3 appointments per session at best – and was downgraded to once per month. The arrival of Covid closed all of these arrangements and, in Peasmarsh, it has never reopened.

The doctors found the outlying surgeries very inefficient for many reasons and it is unlikely that they will be re-established.

Dentists

There are 2 dental practices in Rye and another at Northiam, all within an 8 km [5 mile] radius. None are currently understood to be taking NHS patients.

¹⁰ Data from NHS Digital



Regulation 14 Draft

Pharmacies

All of the GP surgeries are dispensing centres and, relevant to Peasmarsh, the Jempson's campus includes a pharmacy.

Care Homes

The parish is well situated in respect of care homes, with a 24 bed care home in the village at Peasmarsh Place which received a CQC report of 'Good' in 2022 at which time, of the full capacity, 16 beds were occupied. Other than the care facility being developed in the grounds of Rye hospital, there is a 35 bed care home at Broad Oak and smaller ones at Rye and Camber. In addition, 38 further care homes are recorded on Google within the Hastings and Bexhill urban area, less than 20 miles from Peasmarsh.

On the Rye hospital site there is a supported housing unit and early work has started on the previously mentioned 60 bed extra care unit which will create additional facilities.

Public Transport Access to Health Services

The problem with access to health services is often linked to the poor provision of public transport in the parish, particularly in respect of accessing Rye Hastings/Bexhill and Eastbourne.

4.4.2 Education

Education is recognised as a basic human right by the United Nations and good educational facilities are a fundamental requirement of civilisation.

Access to schools, where walking or cycling is not feasible, via public transport should be available by suitable bus services and community transport schemes.

The government indices of deprivation reveal that area Rother 002D – Peasmarsh plus part of Rye Foreign – is only in the 3rd decile [20 to 30%] of the Education, Skills and Training index, well below average.

Pre-School

The pre-school in Peasmarsh operates from purpose-built facilities in the grounds of the primary school and accepts children from the age of two onwards. Although co-located with the primary school, the pre-school operates quite separately from it as a charitable trust. Most of the children come from Peasmarsh or Rye.

The school is registered with the necessary authorities to offer the free early education / childcare available to all 3 and 4 year olds plus the additional support available in certain circumstances.

Primary School

Peasmarsh Church of England Primary School operates on the site of the original parish school in School Lane. That was founded in 1841 and the original building is still in use as part of a much larger complex. The school is rated as 'Good' by OFSTED.

The diocese gifted some glebe land to the school in 2015 so it is able to offer a forest school experience to all pupils, something which is also available to children at the pre-school.



Regulation 14 Draft

There are seven year groups at the school, each with a Published Admission Number [PAN] of 15 children so a total of 105 children. The PAN is, in theory, the maximum number of pupils that the education authority will admit to that year group. However, the school has an obligation to accept children who live in the area so in some year groups the number of children already exceeds PAN.

Should the expansion of the school become necessary due to demand, this would be supported by the Plan.

The school is on the southern edge of the village so not necessarily within easy walking distance of all pupils [some of whom come from outside the parish in any case] and for some who are within walking distance the routes are far from safe because School Lane is narrow and doesn't have a pavement throughout its length.

This gives rise to a congestion issue at the start and end of the school day, made worse by the teachers not having anywhere to park except on the road.

Secondary School

ESCC operates two secondary schools in the region of Peasmarsh : Rye College [about 5 km / 3 miles from the village] and Robertsbridge Community College [about 19 km / 12 miles along country lanes]. Neither is particularly well perceived and neither has a sixth form. The nearest East Sussex sixth forms are in Hastings and Bexhill.

There is also a secondary school in Tenterden across in Kent [about 13 km / 8 miles, again on country lanes] and that does have a sixth form plus a grammar stream. The school seems to be the preferred option for most parents when selecting secondary education for their children.

Travel to secondary school is therefore an important issue for the parish.

Policy I9 : Access to High Quality Secondary Education

Improvements in access to secondary education will be supported by :

- i) Lobbying for sustained improvements to the closest ESCC schools, including the provision of sixth form facilities at one or other;

Conformity references : NPPF : 95; RCD : Core : RA1, CO4, EC1;

4.5 Conclusions

Good quality infrastructure throughout the parish is essential for a high quality of life and well-being. Without it Peasmarsh could not and does not correctly function as a local service village. The Plan sets out a series of Policies to support improvements to the existing, in some cases decidedly less than adequate, infrastructure whether physical or social.

The policies encompass a broad range which includes roads, public transport, water supply, drainage of both foul and surface water, electricity, telecommunications and education. There is also a policy to establish a parish wide reporting system for infrastructure issues which will allow PPC to demonstrate the nature of the issues which arise.



Regulation 14 Draft

5 Business and the Local Economy

5.1 Introduction

The economy of Peasmarsh today is primarily driven by some agriculture with tourism and retail featuring strongly. There is a wide range of businesses based in Peasmarsh parish, many very small and home based, often within the service sector.

All of the retail activity is in one business : Jempson's, which operates a campus and serves a wide region, not just the parish. Although currently not an issue, having all of the sector vested in one company is a high risk, particularly over the 18 year life of the Plan.

However, consultations have shown four fifths of stakeholders see Peasmarsh as a dormitory area rather than an economic centre in its own right and the overall view is that the parish should stay as it is.

Businesses were asked to respond to a Business Questionnaire and were also spoken to directly. There was widespread concern that the cost of housing, both in the parish itself and in the wider Rye area, meant that people working in Peasmarsh were unable to afford a home – whether owned or privately rented – so many were commuting from Hastings or other more affordable areas.

Most businesses did not foresee needing additional space in the near future but felt it important to retain existing commercial space. They also highlighted the need for a more imaginative approach to the conversion of farm buildings for wider commercial usage and not just as additional housing/holiday lets, although there is a role for both.

Accordingly, the detailed objectives of the Plan with respect to Business and the Local Economy are :

- to support the creation and retention of small scale business;
- to encourage the provision of services and infrastructure that enable business development and sustainability;
- to support the traditional farming community;

5.2 Background

The 2011 census showed that two thirds of working residents were in full time employment at that time with the remainder in part-time employment. The largest employers in the parish are retail, hospitality and care.

At the time of that census, most people living in Peasmarsh worked in the skilled trades, selling [wholesale and retail], professional and education or health sectors. This is shown graphically in Figure 5.1 [over].

Only 3.9% of the working population worked in agriculture at that time.

The parish has a very high rate of self-employed people [17.9%] compared with the average across England [9.7%] and over a quarter of residents work in the public sector.



Regulation 14 Draft

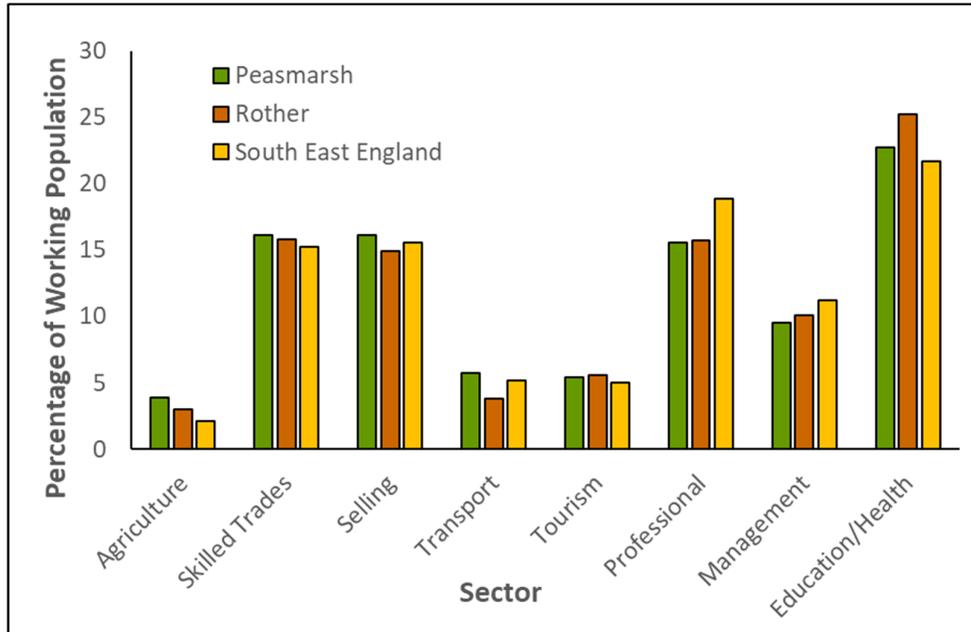


Figure 5.1 : Employment Sectors for Peasmarsh Workers

The census also showed that half of the working population worked at home or within 10km [just over 6m] from home. 14% travelled more than 30km [18.4m] to work :

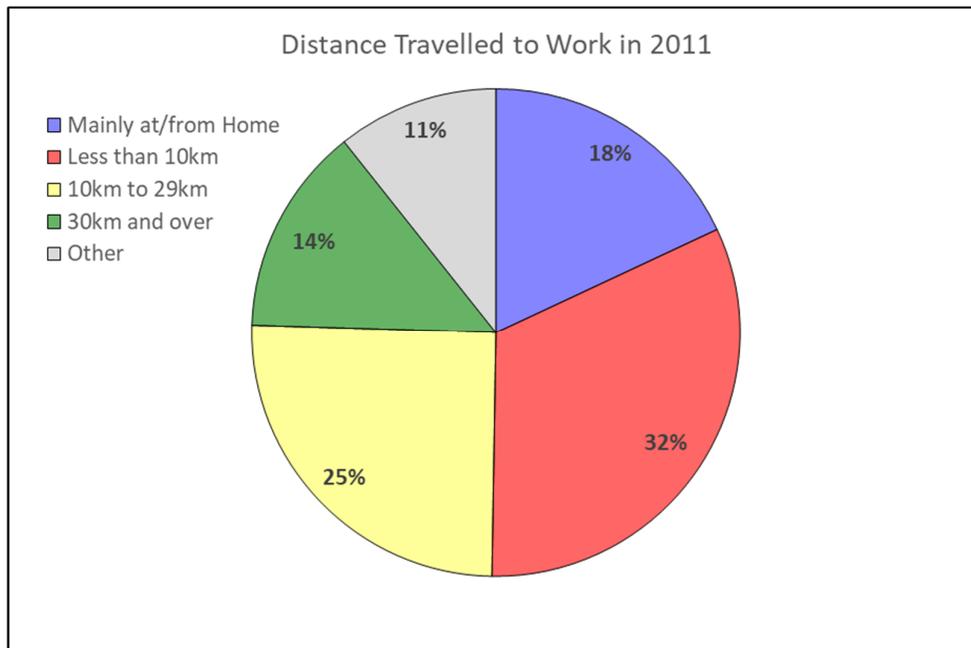


Figure 5.2 : Distance Travelled to Work from Peasmarsh

The vast majority of people [76%] used a private vehicle to travel to work, only 5.7% used public transport while 8.5% walked or cycled to work.



Regulation 14 Draft

Working from home has been stimulated by the pandemic and is likely to continue to grow in coming years. The Parish would benefit from improved mobile phone reception and broadband, a reliable power supply plus a business hub. Equally, new business space for those working from home could be supported through allowing proportionate extensions to an existing building.

Peasmarsh is a rural community that historically grew around farmsteads but changes in farming have been rapid in the last decades. Today's moves towards rewilding and set-aside mean that farmers will continue to face major challenges and will continue to look for areas of diversification to keep farms viable.

The character of the parish is largely the result of how the land has been shaped by farmers, land managers and skilled craftsmen and women over centuries. A vibrant rural economy and confident rural businesses are vital to the future of the area. Rural businesses will be important partners in delivering the aspirations of the Plan.

Land based enterprises are key to the economic prosperity of the village. Historically they have been focused on the mixed farming of family farms and smallholdings, woodland management and rural crafts. Up to the 1980's the village supported a wide range of local businesses including Estate Fencing, Farley's garage, butchers, a post office, tea rooms, and shops. These provided customers from the output of farms and woodlands.

Businesses now open in the rural area of the Parish include the Tillingham Winery [with rooms and restaurant] at what was Dew Farm, The Cherry Barn wedding venue at Clayton Farm, holiday cottages at both Old House Farm and New House Farm. There is also a training centre being developed at Old House Farm.

5.3 Supporting the Local Economy

5.3.1 General

This Plan supports the local economy of the parish, whether in the village or the truly rural areas, provided that any support measures comply with the rest of the policies in the Plan.

Proposals which change the use of a rural building or create proportionate new builds in order to support business or tourism use will be particularly important.

Policy E1 : New Business Space Development

The development of new business space to improve the sustainability of business and provision of employment opportunities in the parish will be supported for use classes A1 to A5, B1 and C3 [for holiday lets] as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as updated in April 2021.

Conformity references : NPPF : 81 - 85; RCD : Core : RA1, EC4; Local Plan : EM10; DaSA: DEC2;



Regulation 14 Draft

The recent trend towards working from home has substantially changed the dynamics of parish life and that trend is considered to be a permanent feature of the scenario during the Plan period. The Plan supports those wishing to work from home by adapting their existing home to a live/work environment.

Policy E2 : Adaptation of Existing Buildings for Live/Work

Development proposals for the conversion of properties for live/work will be supported.

Proposals for Commercial Business and Services (Class E) that involve the use of part of a building, small-scale free-standing buildings within the curtilage of a building, extensions to a building, or the conversion of outbuildings will be supported subject to the following criteria :

- all activities are undertaken predominantly by the occupants of the dwelling;
- additional buildings, extensions or conversions should not detract from the quality and character of the building to which they are subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction;
- the employment element does not adversely impact upon road safety or substantially increase traffic volume; and
- appropriate car parking is provided within the site.

5.3.2 Farming and the Rural Land-Based Economy

Understanding the needs of rural businesses, particularly small-scale enterprises, and enabling change which contributes to the landscape character and environment will be important. There have been significant changes to the economics and structure of farms and woodland which have reduced the number of people working in these sectors.

However, there have been changes to the diversity of land-based enterprises and these opportunities are likely to continue with public and private payments for restoring and creating habitats and continued diversification into new areas which might include adding value to food production and changing the use of farm building to create new enterprises such as :

- holiday accommodation
- wedding venues
- vineyards
- hospitality
- business space including co- working premises

As local businesses expand there may be a need for local staff accommodation. That reinforces the needs for truly affordable housing discussed in Section 6.



Regulation 14 Draft

The Plan supports land-based businesses to develop resilient income streams including food, timber, ecosystem services, alternative uses of redundant farm buildings and tourism.

Policy E3 : Rural Building Conversion for Business Use

Proposals for conversions of suitable redundant farm or other buildings for business uses will be supported, provided that :

- priority is given to agriculture related business use;
- the proposals do not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape of the AONB;
- the buildings are not in an isolated location where there is no nearby built development and are capable of conversion rather than requiring rebuilding;
- the design approach is appropriate and sympathetic to the building and its surroundings;
- traffic, access, landscaping and general amenity considerations are satisfied;

5.3.3 Hospitality and Tourism

Thanks to tourism, hospitality in Peasmarsh is thriving with two hotels, the two village pubs and a growing number of holiday rentals. The latter, of course, is counter to the need for more housing in the parish.

The parish is within 1066 Country and is close to a number of attractions including the mediaeval town of Rye and its major nature reserve of Rye Harbour, Great Dixter house and gardens, Bodiam Castle and the Kent & East Sussex [steam] Railway. Slightly further afield are the internationally recognised Ramsar site named Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay, the equally famous Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch light railway and the historic towns of Winchelsea and Battle [the assumed site of the Battle of Hastings].

The High Weald Landscape Trail runs through Peasmarsh village and the Sussex Border Path passes through the northern part of the parish. The northern parish boundary [also that of the district and county] is the River Rother where there are opportunities to further promote green tourism.

The Plan supports the hospitality and tourism sector and looks to small scale organic growth therein, not large scale developments such as new build hotels or larger developments.



Regulation 14 Draft

Policy E4 : Promotion of Sustainable Tourism

Proposals that involve tourism facilities which respond to identified local needs and are of a scale and location in keeping with the rural character of the parish will be supported, provided that :

- existing attractions or accommodation are enhanced to meet customer expectations;

or

- the supply of quality serviced and self-catering accommodation is increased;

and

- the proposal does not result in a reduction to the parish housing stock;

5.4 Conclusions

Most stakeholders do not see Peasmarsh as an economic centre and the economy is hampered by a lack of affordable housing, inadequate telecommunication services and an unreliable power supply. The existing economy is mainly based on the agriculture, tourism and retail sectors although there are a lot of small businesses and employees that bring in income from outside.

Accordingly, the Plan seeks to support existing businesses, including the farms, and small scale, appropriate new business ventures in certain sectors and use classes.

The self employed and those working from home are identified as particular groups deserving of support. Rural land-based business and tourism are also identified as particular sectors deserving of support.



Regulation 14 Draft

6 Housing

6.1 Introduction

Housing was identified as a key concern for stakeholders.

A need was identified for improved housing provision for those working locally, younger households and a small number of older people wishing to downsize whilst remaining living independently in the village. The latter point is also in line with Rother policy.

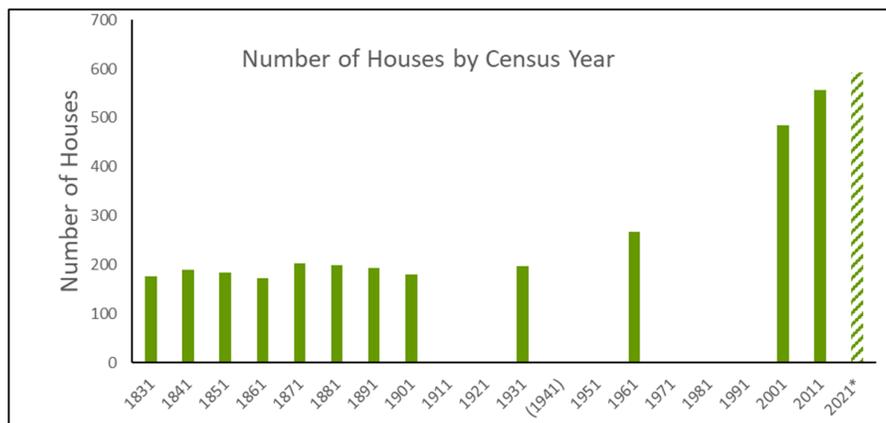
There was concern about the number of houses the parish was expected to accommodate and that developments approved in recent years had not provided affordable homes for local people. There was also concern that any further expansion would both damage the village’s key characteristics and further overload the local infrastructure, which was also identified as a major concern. While some small scale development was acceptable to stakeholders, this had to be done sensitively and appropriately, not least due to the parish being situated within the High Weald AONB.

Accordingly, the detailed objectives of the Plan with respect to housing are :

- to ensure that the homes delivered meet the needs of and strengthen the community;
- to improve the range of housing stock by developing smaller properties to balance the age profile of those living in the parish;
- to enable people with a local connection to Peasmarsch to stay in or return to the village throughout their lifetime and as their needs change;
- to ensure affordable properties are allocated to people with a local connection, both now and in the future;

6.2 Background

The number of houses in Peasmarsch was relatively constant in the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries but it climbed thereafter, tripling since WWII. The Post Office states that in 2022 there are 592 properties in the parish.



Source : PNDP Group from various records

Figure 6.1 : House Numbers in Peasmarsch



Regulation 14 Draft

The 2014 Rother Local Plan Core Strategy¹¹ accepted that, including the 4 new houses then being built on Tanyard Field, Peasmarsh had no outstanding allocation from the 2006 Local Plan.

The 2014 Core Strategy identified Peasmarsh as a rural service village and allocated a further 50 homes to be developed from 2011-2028.

Data from RDC, quoted in the Housing Need Assessment [HNA]¹² undertaken by AECOM, states that 27 new homes were built since the 2011 Census, of which 16 were for market sale (including Tanyard Field) and 11 were for affordable rent. This means that historical development over the last 20 years has averaged 5 homes per year. The 2019 DaSA identified a new site, on the edge of the development boundary to the south of the A268, known locally as Pippins, as suitable for a further 45 homes to meet the 2028 target.

The NPPF defines windfall sites as “*Sites not specifically identified in the development plan*” and paragraphs 69 to 71 of the framework refer to them within a discussion on small and medium sized development sites. The 16 houses referred to above were all windfall sites.

Rother is in the early stages of preparing an emerging Local Plan to 2039. As yet no further figures have been identified although the village is still regarded as suitable for further development as it has been designated a local service village.

However, the parish’s position within an AONB requires that development is limited, sensitively located, and designed to minimise adverse impacts. These factors have therefore to be balanced in the site allocations.

Whilst the local service village designation considers what services are available in the village it fails to consider other issues which impact on the village. Chief amongst these is the poor sewerage infrastructure.

6.3 Housing Issues

There is a range of issues with respect to housing in Peasmarsh.

6.3.1 Diversity

The age profile of the parish suggests that the population is getting older. A modest influx of younger people would be beneficial in terms of securing more diversity and sustainability for the community.

Local businesses have reported the difficulty that their workers have in finding affordable housing in Peasmarsh and/or the wider Rye area which impacts on the economic sustainability of local business.

6.3.2 Housing Type

There is higher than average home ownership (67.5%) in the parish than in England but lower than Rother as a whole. At 20.2% the availability of rented social housing is almost double the rate of Rother as a whole and higher than the rate (17.7%) for England.

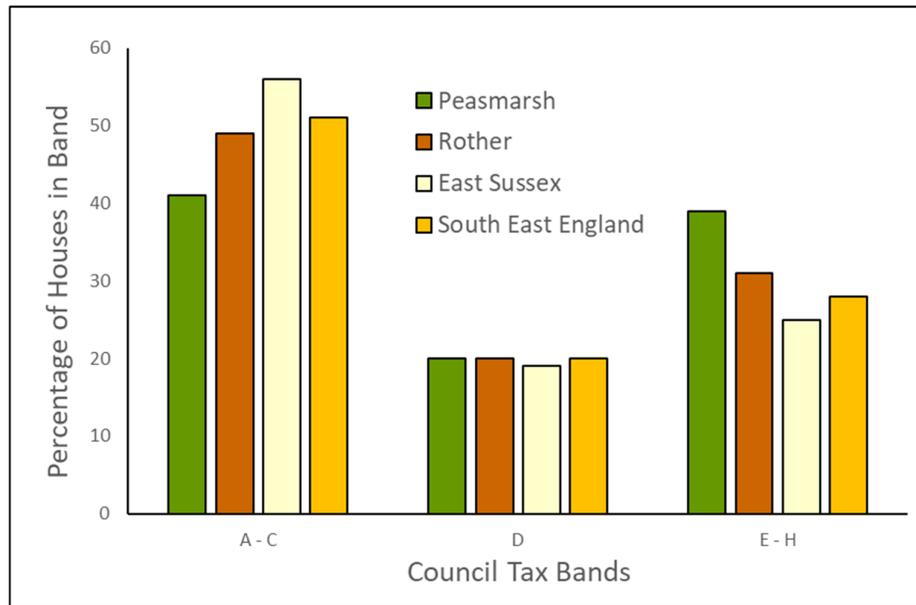
¹¹ <https://www.rother.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/corestrategy/>

¹² <https://www.peasmarshndp.uk/vault/PeasmarshHNA.pdf> paragraph 52



Regulation 14 Draft

The numbers of dwellings with a Council Tax Banding E-H is much higher in Peasmarsh than is the norm :



Source : East Sussex in Figures

Figure 6.2 : Dwelling Stock by Council Tax Band

The dominance of larger detached houses in the village makes it hard for younger families and first-time buyers to move in. The consultation with the stakeholders recognised this and suggested the need for more starter and 2-3 bedroomed homes in the village together with a move away from executive homes. In addition, there was a small requirement for bungalows to be built, which would enable older people to downsize whilst remaining living independently within the village.

This is discussed in Section 6.4.3

6.3.3 House Prices

House prices in Peasmarsh have risen significantly in the last 10 years, except semi-detached house prices [*prices in £k*] :

Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Growth
Detached	£222	£290	£275	£348	£345	£351	£435	£400	£373	£556	150%
Semi-detached	£250	£246	£228	£221	£240	£237	£230	£280	£218	£265	6%
Terraced	£165	£165	£160	£175	£200	£241	£260	£275	£258	£265	60%
All Types	£213	£246	£245	£250	£320	£314	£325	£335	£290	£405	90%

Source :: Land Registry PPD

Table 6.1 : Peasmarsh House Prices

The median house price has risen from £212,500 in 2011 to £405,000 in 2020 – a 90% increase in 10 years.



Regulation 14 Draft

6.4 Assessing Housing Need

The Neighbourhood Plan has an important role in identifying local housing need and working to identify sites that could help meet that need.

A key role of a neighbourhood plan is to work with the local authority to provide a local context for future housing development, in the case of Peasmarsh to 2039. At the time of preparing this Plan the emerging Local Plan for Rother (2019-2039) has been at initial stages of preparation and therefore no figures have been identified.

The Housing Need Assessment [HNA] was undertaken for Peasmarsh by AECOM in late 2021 / early 2021 as part of the Neighbourhood Plan support package. The HNA is available [online](#) and as an Addendum to this Plan.

The key issues highlighted by that report are housing affordability, housing tenure and housing type.

6.4.1 Housing Affordability

Truly affordable housing provides a potential accommodation solution for those that need to live in the village but are unable to access open market price housing [whether for purchase or for rental].

The Rother Local Plan states:

On housing sites or mixed use developments, the Council will expect the following percentages of affordable housing within the district ... In the Rural Areas in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 40% on-site affordable housing on schemes of 6 dwellings or more; [2019 DaSA Policy DHG1 (iv) (a)]

The most referred to definition of affordable housing is that set out in Annex 2 to the NPPF. This is the definition used by local planning authorities when making provision within their areas to meet local demand / need for affordable housing. The NPPF definition incorporates social rent, as well as a range of intermediate rent and for-sale products. However, the Affordable Housing Commission (2020) concluded “many” of these products “are clearly unaffordable to those on mid to lower incomes”¹³.

The AECOM HNA assessed affordability levels across the Neighbourhood Area [the parish]. It concluded that :

Newly forming households are unlikely to be able to afford to buy their own home in Peasmarsh.

The estimated average net annual household income before housing costs in Peasmarsh in 2018 was £37,400. AECOM further estimated the income for those both working and resident in Rother, using ONS data. That showed that the average income for a household in the lower two quartiles was estimated at £24,842.

It is immediately clear from this data that there is a large gap between the spending power of households in Peasmarsh and the price of housing, particularly those earning the lowest 25% of incomes and households which have only one earner.

¹³ [AHC : Making Housing Affordable Again: Rebalancing the Nation's Housing System](#) [large pdf file]



Regulation 14 Draft

To gain a clearer understanding of local affordability, it is useful to understand what levels of income are required to afford different tenures. This is done using 'affordability thresholds': the estimated amount of annual income required to cover the cost of rent or a mortgage, given local housing prices.

AECOM compared various measures of local incomes to the estimated costs of various housing tenures, including private renting and various forms of affordable housing. This is shown in Table 6.2 :

Tenure	Mortgage value (90% of price)	Annual rent	Income required	Affordable on average incomes?	Affordable on LQ earnings (1 earner)?	Affordable on LQ earnings (2 earners)?
				£37,400	£12,446	£24,892
Market Housing						
Median House Price	£364,500	-	£104,143	No	No	No
LA New Build Mean House Price	£279,855		£79,959	No	No	No
LQ/Entry-level House Price	£270,900	-	£77,400	No	No	No
Average Market Rent	-	£14,184	£47,280	No	No	No
Entry-level Market Rent	-	£12,396	£41,320	No	No	No
Affordable Home Ownership						
First Homes (-30%)	£229,635	-	£65,610	No	No	No
First Homes (-40%)	£196,830	-	£56,237	No	No	No
First Homes (-50%)	£164,025	-	£46,864	No / Yes	No	No
Shared Ownership (50%)	£182,250	£5,063	£68,946	No	No	No
Shared Ownership (25%)	£91,125	£7,594	£51,348	No / Yes	No	No
Shared Ownership (10%)	£36,450	£9,113	£40,789	No / Yes	No	No
Affordable Rented Housing						
Affordable Rent	-	£6,108	£20,341	Yes	No	Yes
Social Rent	-	£5,122	£17,056	Yes	No	Yes

Source: AECOM Calculations

Table 6.2 : Affordability of Median Price House

The picture that emerges is that affordability is a major issue in Peasmarsh. Purchasing market housing is only an option for the highest earners or those with existing equity or substantial savings.

Table 6.2 is based on the median house price in Peasmarsh. Repeating the exercise using the lower entry-level house price results in a similar pattern except that heavily discounted affordable home ownership [First Homes -50% and no more than 25% Shared Ownership] becomes available to those on average incomes. These instances are shown in red/green in Table 6.2. For instance, the mortgage required for First Homes -50% drops to £119,500 so the associated required income drops to £34,071.

Affordable routes to ownership based on the median house prices do not offer enough of a discount to serve those earning the average income or below. When a more realistic benchmark related to the cost of terraced housing is used, they become more accessible. The HNA concludes that at least a 50% discount would be needed to make the new First Homes product affordable locally.

Affordable rented housing appears broadly affordable to average earners and lower earning households where there are two earners. This is positive because of the relative unaffordability of renting and market ownership.



Regulation 14 Draft

However, households in which there is only one lower quartile earner appear unable to even afford social rented homes. They may be able to afford a smaller [1-2 bedroom] social rented property, or a room in a shared house and, because of the ways benefits are calculated and combine, they are likely to be able to afford socially rented housing if available. Therefore, this tenure is a vital segment of the market, catering to those in the greatest need.

6.4.2 Housing Tenure

As discussed in Section 6.3.2 above, although Peasmarsh has a high home ownership rate, it also has a high percentage of rented social housing. There is little private rental accommodation available.

AECOM calculated the housing need for Peasmarsh for the length of the Plan :

Stage and Step in Calculation	Total	Description
STAGE 1: CURRENT NEED		
1.1 Current households in need	21	RDC waiting list data for households claiming a local connection to Peasmarsh and whose address includes the name of the village.
1.2 Per annum	1.2	Step 1.1 divided by the plan period to produce an annualised figure.
STAGE 2: NEWLY ARISING NEED		
2.1 New household formation	100.3	MHCLG 2018-based household projections for the LA between start and end of plan period. % increase applied to NA.
2.2 Proportion of new households unable to rent in the market	26.4%	(Steps 1.1 + 2.2.1 + 2.2.2) divided by number of households in NA.
2.2.1 Current number of social renters in parish	111.6	2011 Census social rented occupancy + LA % increase.
2.2.2 Number of private renters on housing benefits	13.8	Housing benefit caseload May 2018. Pro rata for NA.
2.3 New households unable to rent	26.5	Step 2.1 x Step 2.2.
2.4 Per annum	1.5	Step 2.3 divided by plan period.
STAGE 3: TURNOVER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING		
3.1 Supply of social/affordable re-lets (including transfers) %	1.2	Average number of affordable rented homes that have come vacant in Peasmarsh in the years since 2017, supplied by RDC.
NET SHORTFALL (OR SURPLUS) OF RENTED UNITS PER ANNUM		
Overall shortfall per annum	1.4	Step 1.2 + Step 2.4 - Step 3.2
Overall shortfall over the plan period	25.9	(Step 1.1 + Step 2.3) - Step 3.2 * plan period

Source: AECOM model, using Census 2011, English Housing Survey 2018, MHCLG 2018 based household projections and net additions to affordable housing stock. 2018 is the latest reliable data for some datasets so is used throughout for consistency. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Table 6.3 : Peasmarsh Housing Need

Additional need for those who have local connections with Peasmarsh but are not on the Local District Council housing list would double the affordable rented accommodation needed during the length of the Plan.

If affordable homes to buy [at a minimum discount of 50% of market value] were included this would add an extra 30 dwellings to the need.



Regulation 14 Draft

6.4.3 Proposed Housing Mix

The 2011 census shows 47.6% of households in Peasmarsh have 2 extra bedrooms and a further 34.9% have one extra bedroom, equating to a total over-occupancy of 82.5%. Under 65's with no children are the most likely to over-occupy, possibly people who have not yet had children and plan to in the future. 68.6% of houses in Peasmarsh have 3 or more bedrooms.

AECOM has suggested the following dwelling-size mix should be targeted.

Number of bedrooms	Current mix (2011)	Target mix (2039)	Balance of new housing to reach target mix
1 bedroom	7.1%	10.2%	21.4%
2 bedrooms	24.2%	32.7%	62.8%
3 bedrooms	45.6%	35.7%	0.0%
4 bedrooms	14.9%	15.3%	15.8%
5 or more bedrooms	8.1%	6.1%	0.0%

Source: AECOM Calculations

Table 6.4 : Proposed House Sizes

New development should focus on smaller houses, including semi-detached and terraced which will, by nature, be more affordable. The need for 4 bedroom affordable houses arises because some stakeholders have larger families. It is not the intention to develop 4 bedroom 'executive' homes.

The parish has seen extensive extension and refurbishment of some properties, in general of smaller and single story dwellings. This type of development reduces the number of smaller and more affordable properties available in the Neighbourhood Area [the parish] adding to the overall imbalance in our housing stock. Refurbishment and extension of properties will only be supported where it is not seen to be detrimental to the overall housing mix in the village and does not overextend the residential curtilage to the detriment of the character of the village or neighbouring properties.

Policy H1 : Housing Mix

Housing development that responds to local needs by including a mix of housing in size, type and tenure with priority focussed on medium and smaller homes will be supported.

To avoid further exacerbating the housing imbalance in the parish, proposals to extensively extend or redevelop existing smaller houses, especially single story dwellings, will not be supported.

Conformity references : NPPF : 60 – 67, 78; RCD : Core : OSS3, RA1, CO5, LHN1, LHN2

6.4.4 Rural Development Beyond the Development Boundary

In view of the community aspiration to secure affordable housing for local people, the approach adopted is to support developments that meet this aspiration.



Regulation 14 Draft

This applies whether they are small infill sites within the development area or small scale rural exemption sites [that is sites which may be granted planning permission for affordable housing for people with local connections where market only housing would not be considered].

An element of market housing may be included if this is the only way to make the affordable housing scheme viable. However, the majority of homes delivered on rural exception sites will be retained in perpetuity as truly affordable housing for local people.

Policy H2 : Rural Exception Sites

Exception housing development delivered through rural exception sites will be supported subject to detailed requirements of national guidelines and other policies in this Plan being met.

Conformity references : NPPF : 60 - 67, 78 - 80; RCD : Core : OSS3, RA1, RA3, LHN3, LHN4; DaSA : DHG2; HWMP : LBE2;

In a rural locality dominated by its AONB status, development opportunities that do not impact upon the wider landscape are limited. Conversions of redundant barns and other farm buildings can however provide opportunities for new accommodation and a valuable and appropriate re-use of buildings. They could make a positive contribution to the local character of the area and provide support to the local economy through provision of accommodation for tourism and opportunities to develop small enterprises in the parish.

In this context, the Plan proposes that the conversion of rural buildings, other than those in isolated locations with no nearby built development, be considered for both residential and business purposes, subject to standard planning criteria being met.

Policy H3 : Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use

Planning applications for conversions of suitable redundant farm or other buildings outside the built-up area boundary to residential use will be supported, provided that :

- i) the proposals are consistent with protecting the character and landscape quality of the High Weald AONB;
- ii) the buildings are not in an isolated location where there is no nearby built development and are capable of conversion rather than requiring rebuilding or disproportionate extension;
- iii) the design approach is appropriate and sympathetic to the building, surroundings and wider context;
- iv) traffic, access, landscaping and general amenity considerations are satisfied;

Conformity references : NPPF : 80; RCD : Core : RA1, RA2, RA3, RA4; HWMP : LBE2;



Regulation 14 Draft

6.5 Conclusions

To meet the needs of the community there is a need for small scale, high quality housing – including smaller properties to balance the parish age profile.

Because of the high prices of houses in the parish and the relatively low incomes for many of the households, there is strong requirement for much of that housing to be truly affordable, specifically reserved for those with local connections. In this context, truly affordable does not mean at 80% of open market price as is required by district practice, it means more like 50% of that price.

Based on the RDC waiting list, 26 homes will be needed up to 2039. Including those not on the list would double the need and adding those wanting to buy would add another 30 homes. The need is for two bedroom properties with some single and some four bedroom, truly affordable, ones. It is not possible to satisfy the full needs for a number of reasons.

Policy H1 sets the requirement for housing mix.

Rural exception sites will be an important part of the housing strategy in the parish. Policy H2 accommodates this need. There may also be opportunities for the conversion of suitable redundant farm buildings, whether for residential or commercial use. Policy H3 accommodates this need with respect to residential use.



Regulation 14 Draft

7 Site Allocation

7.1 Introduction

Although housing was identified as a key concern for stakeholders, the scale and location of future developments and the consequent effect on the character of the village were also key concerns. According to the results of the July 2021 survey, less than half are prepared to accept more than 25 new houses and few are prepared to accept more than 50 new houses.

The same survey identified that a large majority of stakeholders preferred development to be by infill or, at most, by developments of no more than 10 houses. There is, in any case, an overarching requirement imposed by the NPPF to limit development in AONB's.

Accordingly, the detailed objectives of the Plan with respect to sites are :

- provide truly affordable housing for people with local connections as identified in Section 6 of the Plan;
- to keep housing development to small scale, reflecting the local character and distinctiveness of the area;
- to keep individual developments to no more than 10 dwellings;

As a parish of nearly 600 homes situated in an AONB, the Plan allocates sites which could accommodate 32 homes with, if necessary, an additional 20 homes from sites which currently do not have vehicular access. This needs to be added to the 45 homes that were allocated in the 2019 DaSA but which will only be built during the term of this Plan.

In addition, based on what happened in the last 10 years¹⁴, 20 homes are assumed to come from windfall developments over the 18 years of the plan period. Given the AONB nature of Neighbourhood Area, small windfall sites should give great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty, as sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts as set out in the NPPF. Developments which do not meet these standards must be refused.

Any proposed development on those sites which were assessed but not allocated are clearly inappropriate for development and must therefore be refused.

7.2 Background

AECOM undertook a Site Options and Assessment [SOA] for this Plan, essentially based on national planning guidance. The results of that work were then taken by the PNDP volunteer group which expanded on them by applying detailed local knowledge, outcomes of previous planning applications, national planning rules, results from the public consultation and, where appropriate, specific factors not considered in the original work.

The resultant Peasmarsh Site Assessments [PSA] document was used to guide this Plan.

Both are available as Addenda to this Plan and online : [SOA](#) and [PSA](#).

¹⁴ In the period from the 2011 census to 2019, 16 windfall houses were built



Regulation 14 Draft

Of the eleven potential development sites assessed, five of them were rated as not suitable for development and four were rated as suitable with another two sites possibly suitable should a solution be found in the future to the lack of vehicular access.

There is also a site, PEA1, known locally as Pippins, which was designated in the Rother 2019 DaSA as suitable for 45 houses. Development has not yet begun but should begin and be completed in the period of this Plan.

The present sewage system and pumping station are working at (or near) capacity with frequent foul water flooding in houses, gardens and running down the street. In addition, the pumping station frequently discharges foul water directly to Woodside Stream and hence the River Rother onwards to the sea. In terms of development there are two distinct problems, the first being the capacity within the existing system and the second being that 4 of the possible sites are beyond the present system. This is especially true of those sites to the west of the village, Rother's preferred area for development as set out in its 2006 Rural Settlements Study¹⁵.

This must be addressed before any future development can occur.

7.3 Sites Issues

7.3.1 Scale of Development

The first public consultation in 2021 showed that only 48.8% of respondents considered that the parish could support more than 25 additional dwellings during the Plan period and only 12.9% considered that it could support more than 50 additional dwellings.

40.6% of respondents expressed a strong preference for infill development and another 48.5% were prepared to accept small scale developments of up to 10 dwellings per location. Only a small minority (10.9%) were prepared to accept larger developments.

These views of stakeholders are broadly in line with national rules with respect to development in AONB's.

The issue of site size is discussed in Section 7.4 below.

7.3.2 Development Boundary

The present development boundary is tightly drawn around the existing area of village housing. To allow development on the scale envisaged by the District Council it would, of necessity, be outside the existing boundary [as happened with the DASA allocation of the Pippins site in 2019, where part of the site was outside the development boundary]. As well as being within the AONB much of the remaining land has special designation, such as ancient woodland or traditional orchard.

The RDC Local Plan suggests that future development could be to the west end of the village, closer to Jempson's campus. However, there are specific landscape and infrastructure constraints in this area which restricts the amount of developable land, as can be seen in the PSA.

This issue is discussed in Section 7.6 below.

¹⁵ https://www.rother.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Part_1_Rural_Settlement_Strategy.pdf [large pdf file]



Regulation 14 Draft

7.3.3 High Weald AONB

Peasmarsh being in the High Weald AONB means that special conditions apply when considering sites for potential development. Two paragraphs of the current National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] dated July 2021 deal with developments in designated areas including AONB's :

- 176 concerns the conservation and enhancement of landscape and scenic beauty;
- 177 concerns major developments;

Similar wording has existed in the NPPF since its inception in 2012.

This issue is discussed in Section 7.4 below.

7.3.4 Rural Development

There are three categories of development away from Peasmarsh village :

- small scale such as extensions / outbuildings and possibly site subdivision to create a second dwelling;
- larger scale developments of up to 10 houses as discussed in Section 7.3.1;
- commercial developments, typically on farm sites;

The first category might also fall into the third category when the intention is to create short-term accommodation for tourists.

In a parish dominated by its AONB status, development opportunities that do not impact upon the wider landscape are limited. However, provided that they are sustainable, conversions of redundant barns and other farm buildings can provide opportunities for new accommodation or business premises as a valuable and appropriate re-use of buildings.

As discussed in Section 5, such conversions could make a positive contribution to the local character of the area and provide support to the local economy through provision of accommodation for tourism and opportunities to develop small enterprises in the parish.

7.4 Development Size

The public consultations defined four sizes of development sites :

village infill	1 to 3 dwellings per location
small scale	4 to 10 dwellings per location
medium scale	11 to 25 dwellings per location
large scale	no limit

The results of the survey in July 2021 showed that only 10.9% of respondents were prepared to accept developments larger than 10 dwellings.

Paragraph 177 of the current NPPF, brought into effect in July 2021, states that, when considering development applications within designated areas “*permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest*”.

A major housing development is defined as one “*where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more*” but for the purposes of paragraph 177, the definition is devolved to the decision maker in order to allow a reduction in the limits should the nature of the designated area justify that.



Regulation 14 Draft

The decision maker for the Plan is the PPC through the work of the PNDP volunteer group.

Paragraph 177 lists three considerations when assessing such applications :

- a) *the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*

PPC recognises the need for development – indeed welcomes it as expressed in various parts of this Plan – and accepts that a reasonable target of new dwellings is required. This Plan shows how such development can be accommodated without recourse to large sites.

- b) *the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way;*

All of Peasmarsh is within the AONB so there is no scope for development outside it.

- c) *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated;*

The impact on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, together with the possibilities for its moderation, were considered in the site assessments. That is why it is considered that no major development of more than 10 homes can be accommodated within the Plan or within the parish during the plan period.

Policy S1 : Development Size

No development shall be larger than 10 dwellings unless it can be shown that :

- i) exceptional circumstances exist; and
- ii) it is in the interests of the parish stakeholders;

No subdivision of a large site into blocks of 10 dwellings will be accepted.

Conformity references : NPPF : 176, 177; HWMP : OQ3;

Policy S1 rules out development of more than 10 homes, given that more than sufficient homes can be built without relying on such major development. It is not possible to undertake a major development within the parish and hence the AONB while minimising adverse impacts in the way required by the NPPF.

7.5 Development Sites Allocation

7.5.1 Introduction

In the SOA undertaken by AECOM, a total of eleven sites were assessed. Four were from RDC's autumn 2020 site call, four from the PNDP group's autumn 2021 site call and three not put forward from site calls but thought to be worthy of assessment. The owner of two of the three latter sites subsequently made it clear that the sites were not available for development so they were not considered further even though assessed.



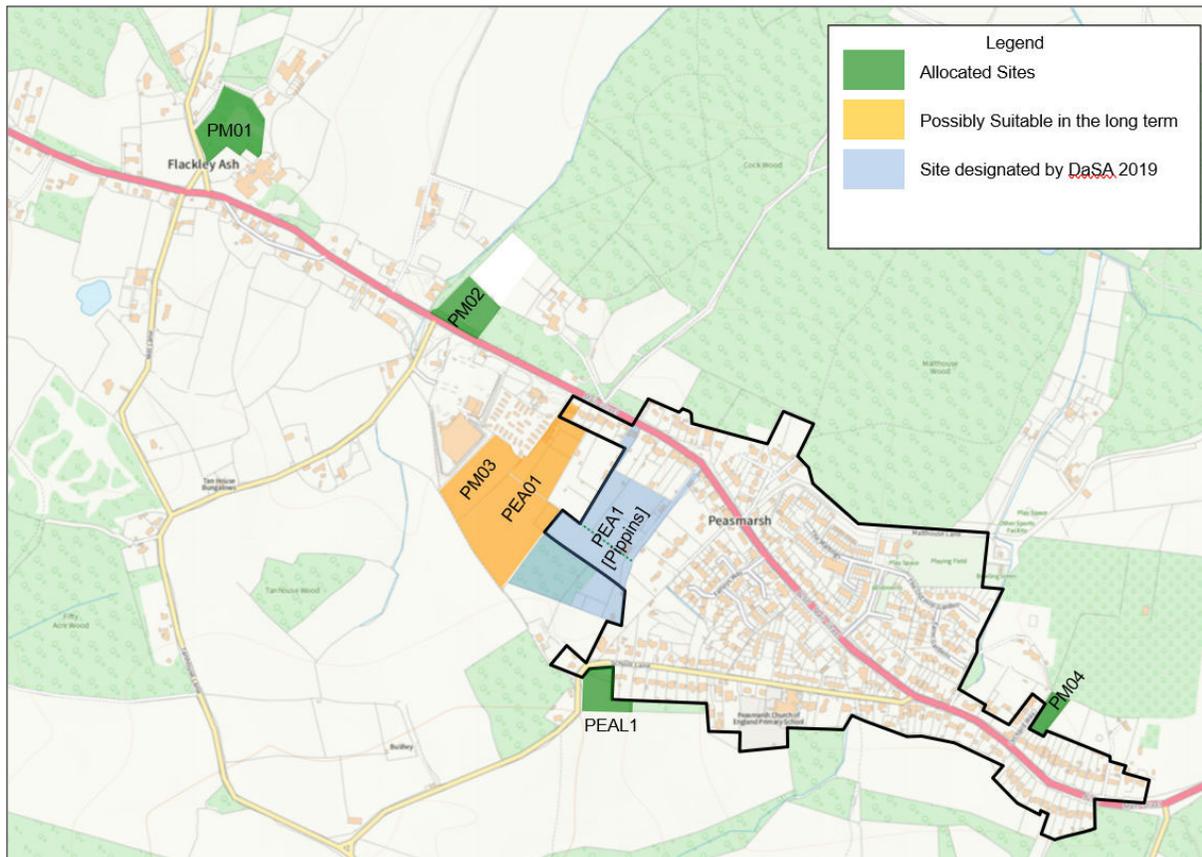
Regulation 14 Draft

The AECOM work was based on national planning guidance. The PNDP group took the findings of the SOA and expanded on them by applying detailed local knowledge, results from the public consultation and, where appropriate, specific factors not considered in the original work. The result is a Peasmarsh Site Assessments [PSA] report.

RDC has not closed its site call and after the SOA was complete a landowner put forward two further sites in the parish. One a completely new site and one a new site combined with the third of the sites thought to be worthy of assessment and therefore already assessed. As part of the PSA the PNDP group undertook the assessment of the new land using the same methodology, terminology and pro-forma as used by AECOM in the SOA.

The four sites allocated as part of this Plan are shown on Map 7.1. The map also shows the two sites which are not allocated but could become available in the longer terms should suitable vehicular access be found.

The allocated sites are listed in the following four sections.



Map 7.1 : Map of Allocated and Potential Sites



Regulation 14 Draft

The key to the map is as follows :

Site	Gross Area	Suitability	Capacity
PM01 Flackley Ash	0.80 ha	yes	10
PM02 Woodside	0.59 ha	yes	10
PM04 Orchard Way	0.21 ha	yes	5
PEAL01 Cornerways	0.38 ha	yes	7
PEA01 Oaklands	2.31 ha	yes if	10
PM03 Old Football Ground	0.82 ha	yes if	10

7.5.2 PM01 Flackley Ash

The eponymous Flackley Ash site is to the north of the hotel and the separately owned Coach House, bounded on its west by Mackerel Hill and on its north by the unadopted lane from Mackerel Hill to Flackley Ash Farmhouse.

The site is remote from the existing development boundary and from the main residential area although there is a cluster of houses [considered by some to be a hamlet] in the immediate area.

Further, it is in that part of the parish which was rated as of medium to high visual and character sensitivity with low capability to accept change for housing. However, the site is totally enclosed and does not feature in the greater landscape.

The site is considered suitable for development as a rural exception site with 10 dwellings provided that suitable mitigation is undertaken. The most difficult aspect for the site is the lack of easy access to the sewer system.

7.5.3 PM02 Woodside

The Woodside site adjoins the north side of the A268 on the lower slopes of Cock Hill. It is opposite Jempson's carpark and stretches to the northern branch of Woodside [variously Corkwood] Stream just past the junction of Tanhouse Lane and the A268.

The site not adjacent to the development boundary or the main residential area. However, it is well related to the village, is close to services and would continue the linear development along Main Street.

The site is considered suitable for development as a rural exception site with 10 dwellings provided that suitable mitigation is undertaken. The most difficult aspect for this site is also the lack of easy access to the sewer system.

7.5.4 PM04 Orchard Way

The Orchard Way site is a plot at the end of that short lane, behind the houses on Main Street directly east of the lane.

The site is next to the existing development boundary which could be adjusted to include the site. However, it is at the east end of the village and therefore not well placed for access to the Jempson's campus.



Regulation 14 Draft

It is in that part of the parish which was rated as of low visual and character sensitivity with moderate capability to accept change for housing, albeit with moderate to low potential to mitigate the impact of such changes.

The site is considered suitable for housing development with 5 dwellings. The only concern is the surface water course that passes along the southern boundary of the site, but this can be addressed in the design.

7.5.5 PEA L01 Cornerways

The Cornerways site is at the top of the School Lane hill opposite The Mount, where the road turns south. It is on the south side of the lane and is the land where the residents of Hilltop park their cars.

The site is adjacent to the development boundary and the built-up area. Key development constraints include the location's medium to high landscape visual sensitivities. Development would have some landscape impacts because the site is exposed to views from two public footpaths, neither of which crosses the site. The High Weald Landscape Trail also passes the site, albeit on School Lane at that point.

The site is considered suitable for development with 7 dwellings provided that access is acceptable to the highway authority. In the last two years there a vehicle collision at this location when a vehicle exiting from the site was hit by a car coming up School Lane.

7.5.6 Other Potential Sites

There are two sites which are potentially suitable for development in the longer term. Neither currently has an acceptable means of vehicular access but that might be solved over the life of the Plan, particularly as the sites are adjacent to each other.

PEA01 : Oaklands

Oaklands, behind and including the house of that name next to the Cock Inn, is one of two development sites on the remaining paddocks in the core of Peasmarsh village. It adjoins the Pippins site which was designated for development in Rother's 2019 DaSA.

The site is adjacent to the existing development boundary which could be extended to include the site. It is also at the west end of the village which is Rother's preferred area for future development of the village. Further, it is in that part of the parish which was rated as of low visual and character sensitivity with moderate capability to accept change for housing, albeit with moderate to low potential to mitigate the impact of such changes.

The site would be potentially suitable for a housing development of 10 dwellings once a solution has been found for vehicular access to it. This is unlikely in the short term but possible in the period of the NDP to 2039.

The next most difficult aspect for this site is surface water disposal.

PM03 : Old Football Ground

The Old Football Ground is adjacent to and west of PEA01 Oaklands: it is the field directly behind the caravan park at the Cock Inn and hence adjacent to the Jempson's campus in the cutting below. It is the other site on the remaining paddocks in the core of Peasmarsh village. It has the same characteristics as PEA01, Oaklands, above.



Regulation 14 Draft

Policy S2 : Allocated Sites

The Plan allocates the following sites for residential development :

PM01 Flackley Ash : rural exception site, up to 10 dwellings

PM02 Woodside : rural exception site, up to 10 dwellings

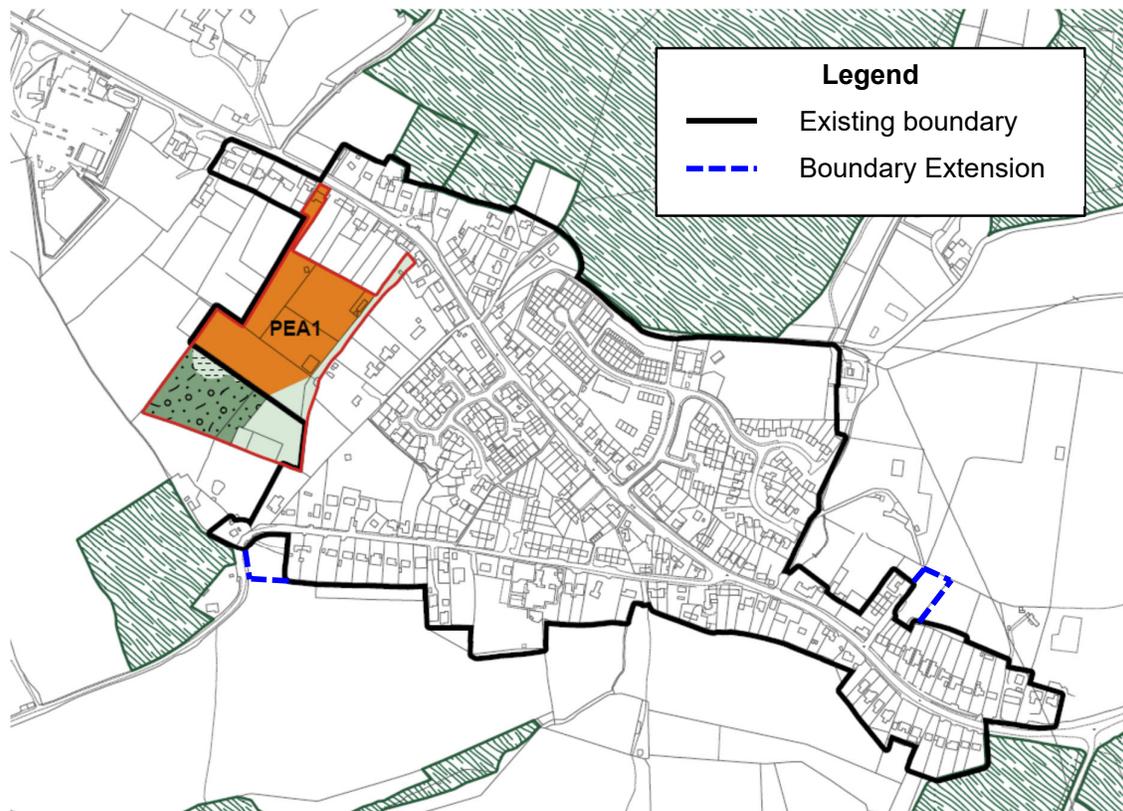
PM04 Orchard Way : development boundary extension, up to 5 dwellings

PEAL01 Cornerways : development boundary extension, up to 7 dwellings

Developments of more than three houses shall only take place on allocated sites.

7.6 Development Boundary

In order to accommodate two of the allocated sites, the existing development boundary must be extended as shown in Figure 7.2 below. There are two extensions, one at the south west corner to accommodate the PEAL01 Cornerways site and one on the north side of the eastern part of the boundary to accommodate the PM04 Orchard Way site.



Source : extract from RDC DaSA 2019, Policies Map Inset Map 12: Peasmarsh

Map 7.2 : Development Boundary and Extensions



Regulation 14 Draft

The development boundary is not fixed in perpetuity and has changed a number of times to incorporate new development. The boundary extents will be reviewed as part of the implementation and monitoring of the Plan.

Development sites outside of the development boundary, with the exception of agricultural conversions, are rural exception sites and therefore dedicated to affordable housing.

Policy S3 : Development Boundary

The Peasmarsh development boundary is hereby extended as shown in Map 7.2. The extent of the boundary shall not be changed without the express approval of Peasmarsh Parish Council.

Any development outside of the boundary, with the exception of agricultural conversions, must comply with the guidelines for rural exception sites. In this context affordable housing shall be let or sold at no more than 50% of the commercial rate for the particular property.

Conformity references : RCD : Core : OSS2;

7.8 Conclusions

Four sites are allocated for development [one with a possible access concern] with a further two sites nominated as potential development sites :

Site	Gross Area	Suitable?	Capacity
PM01 Flackley Ash	0.80 ha	yes	10
PM02 Woodside	0.59 ha	yes	10
PM04 Orchard Way	0.21 ha	yes	5
PEA L01 Cornerways	0.38 ha	yes if	7
PEA01 Oaklands	2.31 ha	possible	10
PM03 Old Football Ground	0.82 ha	possible	10

The allocated sites are capable of delivering 32 dwellings. In addition, it is reasonable to assume that infill sites and similar windfalls will, in the next 18 years, deliver 20 houses. On that basis, this Plan delivers a total of 52 houses. The two 'possible' sites do not currently have vehicular access but that might be resolved during the period of the Plan.

In addition, PEA1 Pippins is expected to come forward in the period of this Plan for planning permission with potentially up to 45 dwellings.

Three of the sites do not have easy access to the sewer. Given that Peasmarsh is designated as a service village the sewer system should serve at least all of the village.

In order to accommodate two of the sites, it is proposed that the development boundary be increased marginally.

The one site, PEA L01 Cornerways, was not assessed by the consultants. Should a developer wish to build there it would be necessary for a consultant such as AECOM to verify its suitability.



Regulation 14 Draft

8 Design and the Built Environment

8.1 Introduction

The High Weald is one of the best-preserved medieval landscapes in North West Europe. The special features that contribute to its unique character include

- its underlying clay and sandstone geology;
- the historic settlements that have evolved over centuries;
- the routeways that connect those settlements;
- the abundance of woodland [much of which is designated Ancient Woodland];
- the patchwork of agricultural field and heath, bounded by hedgerows and woods, that are typically used for livestock grazing, with distinctive areas of lowland heaths and river valleys;

Peasmarsh parish displays many of the features characteristic of the High Weald, including extensive ancient woodlands, scattered historic farmsteads and hamlets, a wealth of listed buildings and the main village itself, located on an historic routeway probably first used by the Romans. The archaeological notification areas in the Parish emphasise the rich heritage that exists locally.

Accordingly, the detailed objectives of the Plan with respect to Design and the Built Environment are :

- to preserve and enhance the rural character of the parish;
- to enhance environment and landscape of the parish;
- to ensure development is well designed and complements the diverse character of the village;
- to maintain the distinctive views and visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside;
- to protect and enhance biodiversity by minimising the impact of development;
- to reduce the environmental impact of new buildings by using appropriate technologies;
- to protect the dark night skies of the parish;

8.2 Background

At a national level, the government has published the National Design Guide¹⁶ which establishes ten design principles for creating a well-designed place and from that has come the National Model Design Code¹⁷. Also at a national level is the Building for a Healthy Life 2020¹⁸ guide prepared by the building industry.

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

¹⁸ <https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life>



Regulation 14 Draft

The High Weald AONB Partnership, including the 15 local planning authorities, has prepared a Design Guide for new housing development in the High Weald. The guide encourages an understanding of how the landscape and its settlements have evolved and why the area is the way it is today before providing design advice on how development needs to respond to local built and natural character.

As part of its guidance, High Weald has published a series of colour palettes ['Main', 'Coast and Lower River Catchment' and 'Western High Weald Woodland and Heath'] for use in new developments.

As part of its Core Strategy, RDC has set out a series of seven Key Design Principles :

Character and Legibility

This is concerned with ensuring that new development respects and contributes to the individual character and local distinctiveness of the parish.

Continuity & Enclosure

This seeks to ensure that streets and spaces lead to a successful development within the wider context.

Quality of Public Realm & Ease of Movement

This is concerned with optimising the overall development, including pedestrian movement and car parking.

Diversity

This seeks to ensure physical and social integration within the development as a whole.

Landscape Setting of Buildings and Settlements

This seeks to ensure that development responds positively to the setting and also retains positive landscape characteristics within and beyond the site.

Design in Context

This requires all design proposals to be based on robust site and context analysis.

Building Appearance & Architectural Quality

This expects high architectural quality, beauty and inspiration, and the clear following-through of an architectural vision in materials and detailing regardless of building style.

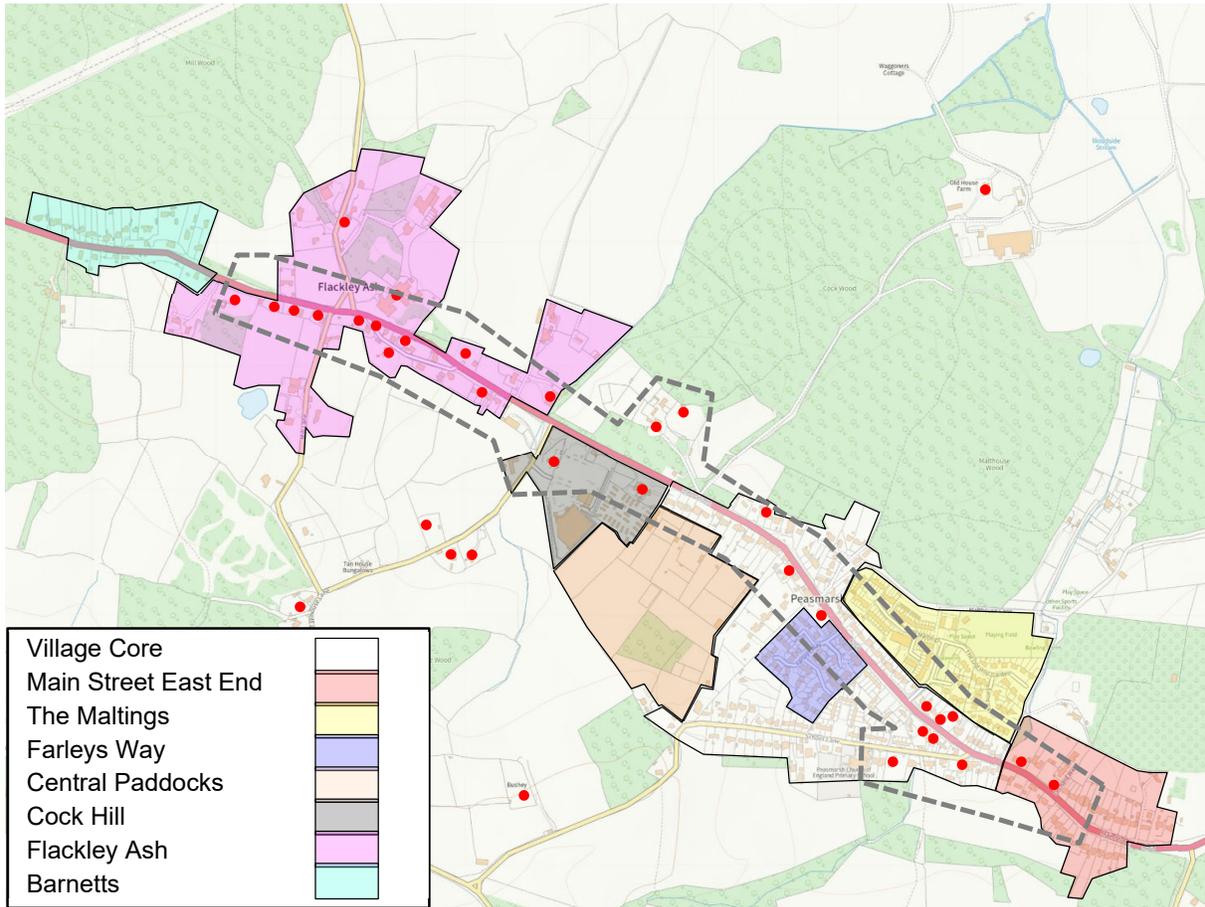
Sustainable Design

This is concerned with minimising the environmental and ecological impact of new developments.

All of the above have application to any development proposals within the parish.

8.3 Existing Character Areas

Eight character areas have been identified in Peasmarsh village, each with its own characteristics. These are shown in Map 8.1 [over]. The map also shows listed buildings, identified by a red dot and the approximate Archaeological Notification Area, identified by a dashed grey outline :



Addendum D6, the Peasmarsh Villagescape and Design Codes document, includes an illustrated report on the village character areas. Short summaries of each are given below.

8.3.1 Village Core

This part of the village is an eclectic mix of old and new with a significant number of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Much of it is also designated as an ANA. Some of the properties are centuries old, many are old while others are modern. There is a similar spread in terms of size and housing density.

House styles cover the full range to be seen in the village : bungalows, small 2 story cottages, semi-detached houses, terraced houses and detached houses with white weatherboard, red tile hung and red brick exteriors and thatch, red/brown clay tile, slate and modern cast tile roofs.

8.3.2 East End

This is also an area of old and new – the last houses were only built in 2015 or so – but the feel is more open than the village core. The newer properties tend to be those further way from the village core.



Regulation 14 Draft

House styles are also somewhat eclectic though less so than the village core. There is a predominance of detached two-story houses although there are many bungalows and bungalows converted to 1.5 story properties, a few semi-detached and one small terrace. Materials are white weatherboard, red tile hung and red brick exteriors and red/brown clay tile and slate or synthetic slate roofs.

8.3.3 The Maltings

This part of the village is actually two distinct sub-areas : the original local authority estate and a smaller estate created by a private developer or developers. The former included a sheltered accommodation complex which was demolished and replaced with modern facilities and additional social housing in the last five years.

Much of the original estate is long terraces of 1.5 and 2 story terraced dwellings in various styles constructed with a yellow brick. Many are white weatherboarded on the upper story. Roofs are tiled with cast tile. The overall feel is of a high density area.

The later estate is a mixture of semi-detached and detached 2 story houses although there are a few bungalows. For the most part the reddish brick used in construction is unadorned although there are a few tile-hung upper stories but none are weatherboarded.

8.3.4 Farleys Way

Farleys Way is a modern, self-contained estate developed on the site of the original village garage and repair shop. The development was built in the 1990's. Part of it fronts on to Main Street.

House styles are mixed although there is a relatively high percentage of detached two-story houses. Materials are mainly red tile hung and red brick exteriors [with some white weatherboard on the Main Street properties] with modern cast tile roofs. The overall feel is open despite there being 30 dph because there are few fences on front gardens.

8.3.5 Central Paddocks

The central paddocks are all that remains of the field systems close to the centre of the village. There is no development here, the land being used for grazing horses, keeping chickens and the like.

Part of this area, PEA1 – locally known as Pippins – was designated for development in Rother's 2019 DaSA but no firm development plans have yet come forward.

8.3.6 Cock Hill

The Cock Hill area of the village is an anomaly, in part because there is little housing and in part because it is strongly commercial with The Cock Inn and Jempson's campus. The inn operates a caravan park at the rear of the property, about one third of them being occupied for most of the year.

8.3.7 Flackley Ash

Thought of as a hamlet by some, Flackley Ash consists mainly of older houses at the west end of the village. There is a high proportion of designated and non-designated heritage assets and the ANA extends as far as here.



Regulation 14 Draft

Dwellings styles are very mixed and date anywhere from the 16th to the 20th centuries. They are mainly 2 storeys although some are 2.5 storeys and there are also a few bungalows. There is a broad mix of materials including tile-hung [scalloped and plain], weatherboard, exposed timber framing and mainly soft terracotta red brick.

There are 13 listed properties in this area including the Grade 2* listed Flackley Ash Hotel. The ANA reaches as far as the west end of this character area. There are two sets of oasts.

8.3.8 Barnetts

This is the far west end of the linear village, beyond Flackley Ash. This too is an area with an eclectic mix of styles with properties of a considerable age as well as more modern buildings. Pedestrian connectivity is poor and the public right of way network is positively dangerous where it has to cross the A268 at the west end of the area just as motor vehicles come up a blind hill crest.

Some dwellings are shielded from the road by vegetation and several properties are set on backland plots. They are mainly 2 storeys although some are 2.5 storeys and some have 1 storey elements. There are also a few bungalows. Materials are similar to those in the Flackley Ash area but a greater proportion are of modern build.

There are 4 listed properties, all Grade 2, in this area including Old Thatch, a 17th century or earlier timber-framed building, part of which may have been a shop at one stage.

8.4 Design Codes for New Developments

Peasmarsch displays many of the High Weald's characteristic features, including ancient woodland, many listed buildings, a maze of historic routeways, scattered historic farmsteads and hamlets and Peasmarsch village itself, located on a very important historic routeway. The various archaeological notification areas emphasise the rich local heritage.

The Plan seeks to ensure that development proposals within the parish reinforce this character – both from landscape and villagescape perspectives – and that housing is appropriate across ages and households whilst having the lowest environmental impact possible.

The parish has established a series of design codes for future developments. This section of the Plan refers on to the greater detail in the relevant document : Addendum D6 : Peasmarsch Villagescape and Design Codes.

8.4.1 Existing Setting

In order to maintain the character of each area, a balance needs to be struck between the scale, bulk, density and height of the built form and that of open green spaces and, where appropriate, the wider landscape.

Additionally, consideration must be given to the impact on local heritage assets, whether designated or not, as well as archaeological remains.

Developments should therefore be designed to be of high quality and reinforce [preferably enhance] the local character, heritage assets and the High Weald setting of the development. The density of development should consider the site's context and landscape setting whilst optimising land use.



Regulation 14 Draft

Housing density should be lower on the outer edges of the settlement where it is adjacent to open countryside in order to maintain views to and from developments.

Policy D1 : Existing Setting

Development must conserve and enhance the character area in which it is located. Developments which do not conform with the following will not be supported :

- i) Designs must demonstrate how the local context has been considered and that they reflect the character and vernacular of the area using architectural variety in form and materials.
- ii) Building design inappropriate to the area must be avoided. Innovation in design will be supported only where this demonstrably enhances the quality of the built form in a character area.
- iii) Development proposals must address the criteria in Design Code 3.2 in Addendum D6 : Peasmarsh Villagescape and Design Codes, as appropriate to their scale, nature and the location of development.

Conformity references : NPPF : 126 - 136; RCD : Core : OSS3, RA1, EN2, EN3; DaSA : DEN1, DEN2;

8.4.2 Placemaking

Good quality design of a development, improving the built environment, is essential to a good quality of life. It should improve public health, reduce crime, ease transport issues and provide a supportive neighbourhood.

Issues raised during the public consultations included :

- retaining the feel of a rural village with small scale developments, something which accords with the High Weald guidance on reducing sprawl;
- integrating green space and native planting to reflect the wider landscape within the development;
- providing adequate car parking for residents and visitors; many of the existing houses were built before cars became ubiquitous;
- ensuring that new developments are within easy access of footpaths to encourage active travel;
- shielding the community from the negative effects of the A268; houses should be set back from the road and protected from road noise and vibration;
- ensuring that each development is suited to an ageing population;

The layout of new housing developments must reflect the rural nature of the village which is characterised by road layouts that do not dominate the development, high levels of pedestrian permeability, off road parking, garden sizes proportionate to the character of the area and natural boundary treatments.



Regulation 14 Draft

Policy D2 : Placemaking

Development must demonstrate a high quality of design, which responds and integrates well with its surroundings, meets the changing needs of residents and minimises the impact on the natural and historic environment.

Development proposals must demonstrate how they have considered and addressed the matters in Design Code 3.3 in Addendum D6 : Peasmarsh Villagescape and Design Codes as appropriate to their scale, nature and location.

Conformity references : NPPF : 126 - 136; RCD : Core : EN2, EN3, EN5, TR3, TR4; DaSA : DHG4, DHG7, DHG8, DHG9, DHG10, DHG12, DEN1, DEN4, DEN5;

8.4.3 New Homes

The design features of new homes can have a significant impact on the character of an area.

Design Concepts

The 2021 NPPF states that “*Planning policies for housing should make use of the Government’s optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing, where this would address an identified need for such properties.*” The standards encourage provision of enough space in homes to ensure that they can be used flexibly by a range of residents. Other standards aim to ensure that sufficient storage can be integrated into dwelling units, emphasising that they are minimum space standards.

The development of “Lifetime Homes” helps to ensure that dwellings are appropriate for the needs of older persons whilst still meaning that they are suitable for other types of occupiers such as first-time buyers. The Lifetime Homes standard “*seeks to enable ‘general needs’ housing to provide, either from the outset or through simple and cost-effective adaptation, design solutions that meet the existing and changing needs of diverse households*”.

Proposals for new housing in Peasmarsh are especially encouraged to meet the Lifetime Homes standard.

Just as some of the HAPPI guidelines are appropriate to overall site design for an aging population, others are relevant to house design.

Affordable Housing

Proposals that include affordable housing will be required to ensure that :

- i) it is designed so that it is ‘tenure blind’ [indistinguishable from open market housing either on site or, where schemes do not include on site open market housing, the wider area];
- ii) where appropriate, small clusters of affordable housing are distributed around a larger site



Regulation 14 Draft

External Facade

Despite the eclectic mix of house styles across the parish, there are still dominant materials in evidence influenced by local availability : red brick, red tile and white weatherboard.

Typically the façade of two story houses will be a mixture of two of the materials : brick lower floor with traditional tile or weatherboard upper or weatherboard lower floor with traditional tile upper. Whilst some older properties have slate roofs, the predominant roofing material is red tile.

98% of stakeholders support the continued use of these traditional materials.

The High Weald AONB guidance also provides details of materials and suppliers to ensure new developments integrate and are 'good neighbours' with existing buildings and landscapes.

Sustainability

Sustainability is such an important topic that the discussion is devolved to Section 8.4.4.

Policy D3 : New Homes

Development must demonstrate a high quality of dwelling designs, which respond and integrate well with their surroundings and meet the changing needs of residents.

Development proposals must demonstrate how they have considered and addressed the matters in Design Code 3.4 in Addendum D6 : Peasmarsh Villagescape and Design Codes as appropriate to their scale, nature and location.

Conformity references : NPPF : 126 - 136; RCD : Core : CO5, EN2, EN3, EN5, TR3, TR4; DaSA : DHG3, DHG4, DHG6, DHG7, DHG11, DHG12;

8.4.4 Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

As part of achieving the government's 'net zero' target, all new development must have minimal energy use and net carbon emissions. That has implications for site design, house design and materials specifications.

Houses should be highly insulated, have low water demand and be fitted with, or directly connected to, renewable energy systems. Opportunities to retrofit existing developments will also be supported, where this can be achieved sympathetically and without detriment to neighbouring properties or the landscape.

Planners and developers are strongly encouraged to make use of energy efficient materials and to consider high-efficiency alternative systems and facilities for development sites. In this context, the orientation of buildings can be important in order to make best use of available sunlight.

The government's 'Future Homes Standard' is a set of rules that will come into effect from 2025 to ensure new homes produce less carbon emissions. To help lay the groundwork for its introduction, the government substantially changed the Building Regulations in June 2022. New homes in England now need to produce around 30% less carbon emissions compared to the old regulations.



Regulation 14 Draft

There is an opportunity to improve and promote sustainability in the parish by:

- following basic passive environmental design, encouraging the use of insulating materials to minimise energy loss;
- integrating renewable energy systems and high efficiency energy solutions into new development;
- reducing water consumption through grey water systems;
- promoting sustainable forms of transport through priority systems for pedestrians and cyclists;
- promoting sustainable waste management and recycling; and
- supporting landscape-sensitive, small-scale renewable energy schemes, tailored to the conservation of the AONB;

D4, the policy for Energy Efficiency and Sustainability is on the next page :



Regulation 14 Draft

Policy D4 : Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

The design and standard of any development is required to achieve the highest level of sustainable design, in order to reduce energy consumption and climate effects.

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

- i) incorporate on-site energy generation from renewable sources;
- ii) optimise site and house orientation in order to assist with passive solar design and any relevant renewable energy solutions;
- iii) use high quality, thermally efficient building materials;
- iv) install energy efficiency measures such as loft, draft and wall insulation and triple glazing;
- v) reduce water consumption through the use of grey water systems;
- vi) provide low carbon sustainable design and avoid or mitigate all regulated emissions using a combination of on-site energy efficiency measures [such as insulation and low energy heating systems], on-site zero carbon technologies [such as solar tiles] and, only where necessary, off-site measures to deal with any remaining emissions;
- vii) install lower wattage light sources;
- viii) provide adequate, future-proofed electric vehicle charging points for each dwelling;

Alterations to existing buildings should be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with current sustainable design and construction standards.

Alterations to existing historic buildings, whether designated or not, in order to improve energy efficiency should be informed by Historic England best practice and designed to reflect Historic England's 'whole building' approach.

Development proposals for landscape-sensitive, small-scale community-scale renewable energy schemes that contribute towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and carbon neutral targets will be supported where it is demonstrated through suitable site specific analysis that the proposal :

- i) has regard to High Weald AONB guidance;
- ii) makes provision for the removal of the facilities and reinstatement of the site, should it cease to be operational;
- iii) ensures existing public access is not impeded;
- iv) does not result in the loss in use of Grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land;

Conformity references : NPPF : 11,155,156; RCD : Core : SRM1, EN7, TR3; DaSA : DRM1, DRM2, DEN5, DEN7;



Regulation 14 Draft

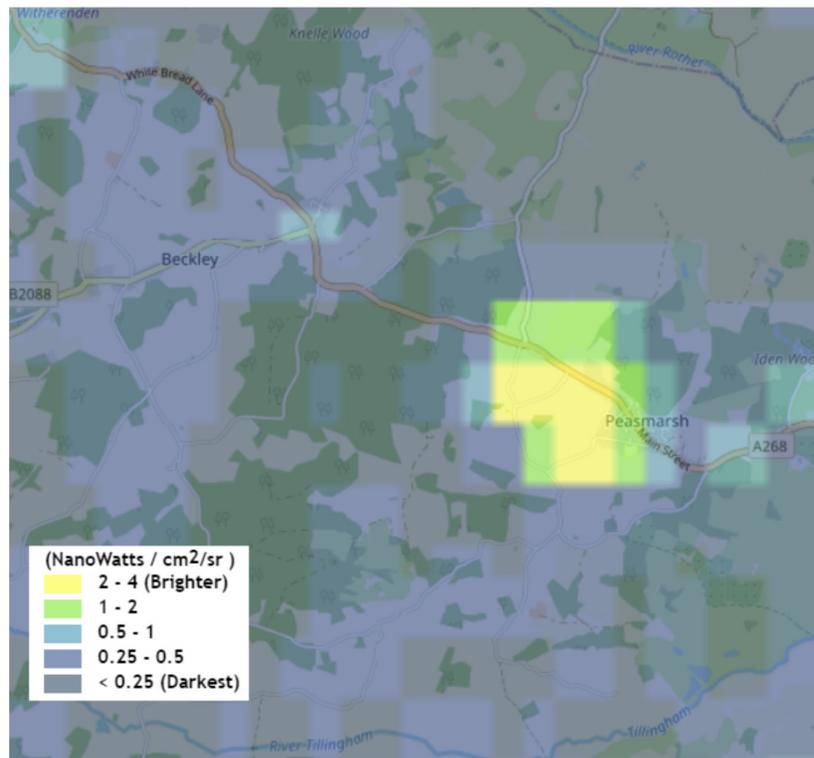
8.4.5 Dark Skies

Dark skies are defined by the OED as “*places where the darkness of the night sky is relatively free of interference from artificial light*”.

The High Weald is an intrinsically dark landscape, benefitting from some of the darkest skies in the south east. These unusually dark skies have been identified as worthy of conservation by the International Dark Sky Association with many benefits.

The NPPF states that planning policies and conditions should “*limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation*”. It is supported by the National Planning Policy Guidance on Light Pollution which was last updated in 2019.

Although much of the parish enjoys low light levels, the area of Jempson’s campus lets a lot of light emanate :



Map 8.2 : Map of Radiance Emanating from Peasmarsh Parish

The light shown emanates from the Jempson’s campus. Section 10 includes a project to see whether this can be reduced without compromising the safety and security of the campus.



Regulation 14 Draft

The Institute of Lighting Professionals publishes a table of light emanation in its guidance on obtrusive light :

Zone	Surrounding	Lighting environment	Examples
E0	Protected	Dark (SQM 20.5+)	Astronomical Observable dark skies, UNESCO starlight reserves, IDA dark sky places
E1	Natural	Dark (SQM 20 to 20.5)	Relatively uninhabited rural areas, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, IDA buffer zones etc.
E2	Rural	Low district brightness (SQM ~15 to 20)	Sparsely inhabited rural areas, village or relatively dark outer suburban locations
E3	Suburban	Medium district brightness	Well inhabited rural and urban settlements, small town centres of suburban locations
E4	Urban	High district brightness	Town / City centres with high levels of night-time activity

Table 8.1 Table of Light Emanation Zones

RDC has adopted this guidance, specifically applying Zone E1 to the AONB with the exception of settlements in the AONB where Zone E2 applies. Unfortunately, there is no direct conversion between sky quality meter units [SQM] used in the table and the luminance units used in Map 8.2.

White light, with more blue content, is generally more disruptive to wildlife, and human sleep, than yellow/orange light and should be avoided.

Policy D5 : Dark Skies

All proposals for external lighting must demonstrate an essential purpose to the occupier or beneficial impact to the community and have regard to the current policies and guidelines of the High Weald AONB and RDC.

All lighting should be designed to minimise light spill.

Where it can be demonstrated as meeting an essential purpose, external lighting [including temporary lighting and lighting of sports facilities] should be of a sensitive and proportionate nature. The impact of all external lighting should be minimised in terms of direction, power, colour and duration. A lighting plan submitted with the proposal should set out how this is to be achieved.

Conformity references : NPPF : 185; RCD : Core : CO6; DaSA : DEN7; HWMP : OQ4;



Regulation 14 Draft

8.5 Conclusions

Protection and enhancement of the villagescape and the surrounding landscape is an important concept when contemplating new developments. The Plan establishes policies to ensure that that happens beyond the protection afforded by national regulations.

Design codes have been developed and imposed on new development :

- to protect the setting in which they are built;
- to ensure that the development site is designed to work well and sit comfortably with the existing village;
- to ensure that the homes that are built meet the needs of the parish and reflect the vernacular of the village;

A policy has been established to ensure that all new development is both energy efficient and sustainable and another policy has been established to protect the dark skies of the parish.



Regulation 14 Draft

9 Implementation and Monitoring

Following final consultation with Rother and with local residents, formal examination and a referendum held within the parish, the PNDP is expected to come into force in spring 2023.

Once the Plan is effective there will be a series of actions that need to be undertaken to ensure that the policies within the Plan are being interpreted and used in the way intended by those making planning decisions. PPC will be particularly concerned to judge whether its policies are being effectively applied in the planning decision process. It will also be necessary to maintain a watching brief on changes to planning regulation at all levels which may have an impact on the policies.

Additionally, the projects and activities that are outside the remit of the Plan, but described in Section 10, will need to be prioritised for delivery.

9.1 Specific Actions

Specific actions to be undertaken include :

- 9.1.1 Commenting on planning applications or consultations relating to the parish [the Neighbourhood Area]; the Parish Council has a role in ensuring that the Plan policies are being adequately considered, where relevant, in decisions to determine the outcome of planning applications.

A meeting between local councillors, planning committee members and the supporting planning officers at RDC would be a useful step in ensuring that the purpose and application of the policies is fully understood by all parties. This will assist in ensuring that policies are interpreted and applied in the way intended.

- 9.1.2 Monitoring the application of the Neighbourhood Plan policies to ensure they have been applied consistently and interpreted correctly in response to planning applications; there is scope to identify indicators to measure the effect that each policy is having and the extent to which this is delivering against the associated objective.

As a minimum, the Parish Council would wish to maintain a log of planning applications relating to the neighbourhood area, detailing which Neighbourhood Plan policies have informed the Parish Council response and the outcome of the decision. This will assist in understanding whether the policies have been used in the manner intended or whether changes may be required, for instance in any future review of the Plan.

- 9.1.3 Maintaining a dialogue with RDC regarding the timing and content of the emerging Local Plan – it will be important to consider the policies in the emerging document and how these may impact the Neighbourhood Plan policies. The adoption of the new Local Plan may trigger an update of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 9.1.4 Maintaining a watching brief on the national policy landscape – changes at the national level may impact on the policies contained in the Local Plan and this Plan. This might also provide a trigger to undertake a light-touch review of the Plan.



Regulation 14 Draft

- 9.1.5 Maintaining a dialogue with neighbouring parishes on cross-boundary projects and issues.
- 9.1.6 Maintaining a dialogue with the local community on the Plan implementation – ensuring that all records of how the Plan has been used should be made public. A regular update should be included in the Chairman's report to the Annual Parish Assembly to feed back to the community on progress about both the effectiveness of the policies and the pursuing of projects.
- 9.1.7 Considering gaps in the Plan – local issues, concerns or opportunities may arise during the lifespan of the plan that trigger the need for the inclusion of a new policy or a modification to an existing policy. Such issues can be most effectively understood by maintaining open dialogue with the community and other partners.
- 9.1.8 It is good practice to review a plan periodically. This may be because of any of the points noted above. A light-touch review will enable PPC to keep the Plan up to date in general terms and to ensure that it remains in general conformity with the wider development plan. Any review should be undertaken in partnership with and ensuring the engagement of the wider community.

Peasmarsh Parish Council will take responsibility for considering how best to progress these actions.



Regulation 14 Draft

10 Community Aspirations

During the preparation of the Plan the stakeholders raised a number of issues and suggested actions that fall outside the remit of the Plan. They are, however, considered no less important and in some cases help to address issues created by past development. They should also help mitigate the impacts of future developments undertaken in accordance with the Plan.

10.1 Delivery of Affordable Housing

The Plan sets out the need of the parish for truly affordable homes for people with local connections. Indeed, the lack of a requirement for a local connection for the existing social housing reinforces the opposition to further affordable housing development in the parish.

The Plan also allocates two sites which must be rural exception sites. The NPPF definition of rural exception sites is :

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Such sites therefore satisfy the need expressed by the stakeholders.

One way of delivering a rural exception development is to form a parish Community Land Trust [CLT] as has been done in Icklesham parish. A CLT is a non-profit entity that develops and manages affordable housing on behalf of the community, often in partnership with a housing association. A partnership with a housing association helps attract the finance required for a development.

In order to progress a Peasmarsh CLT, PPC will have to approach potential partners but to do that it needs a more definitive statement of affordable housing needs. It will therefore need to commission an affordable housing assessment which will involve confidential information so must be kept at arm's length. Action in rural Sussex [AirS] is one possible organisation to carry out the assessment.

Thereafter PPC will be able to approach potential partners with objective of establishing its own trust to develop one or other of the two rural exception sites.

Project 1 : Delivery of Affordable Housing

Investigate the establishment of a Peasmarsh Community Land Trust, initially by commissioning a specific affordable housing assessment and thereafter by approaching potential partners.



Regulation 14 Draft

10.2 Road Safety, Traffic and Parking

Improving road safety, particularly on Main Street and School Lane would improve the quality of life for all stakeholders. The parish already has an active Community Speedwatch group and operates a BlackCat traffic monitor which gathers data 24 hours a day – see Appendix A3.

10.2.1 Road Safety

It is now demonstrable that the majority of vehicles passing through the 30mph zone on the A268 are exceeding the speed limit with 85th percentile speeds [i.e. 15% of the traffic is travelling faster than that speed] of up to 35mph and small numbers are travelling in excess of 60 mph.

Pedestrian safety is an issue beyond the A268 and certainly beyond the 30 mph zone along it.

It is proposed that a working group be established to describe the traffic issues faced across the Parish, research solutions, engage with the Highways Authority to trial proposals and campaign to implement measures to reduce traffic speed – and hence noise – and improve pedestrian safety. The latter should include establishing adequate pavements for pedestrians on all roads in the contiguous village and the establishment of a cycle path [off-road where possible] through the village. This would help ease the School Lane parking problem if parents felt it became safer for children to walk to school.

Project 2 : Road Safety

Establish a parish working group tasked with finding and implementing acceptable solutions to the traffic issues faced across the parish.

10.2.2 Parking

Parking is an issue in Peasmarsh village because many of the dwellings date from an era when car ownership was not the norm so no provision was made for parking one. The major problem is along the lower reaches of School Lane where the problem is exacerbated by the presence of the school which does not have any parking provision for staff and many pupils arrive and leave by car.

There is also a problem at the junction of the Maltings with the A268 where parking reduces the carriageway to one lane right on the junction itself due to the loss of the layby that resulted from the latest Maltings development.

10.2.3 Public EV Charging

As part of its Net Zero initiative, the Government has announced plans to end the sales of new fossil fuel vehicles by 2030 and hybrids by 2035. Electric vehicles [EV's] are expected to be the norm for cars, particularly as charging times shorten, ranges increase and more charging points become available.



Regulation 14 Draft

Whilst all new builds will have EV charging capability as standard, existing dwellings will not and for those without parking will not be able to safely do so in any way. Public EV charging is likely to be the only solution for those residents.

In addition, the parish has to consider its tourism sector : tourists will expect to be able to charge their EV's conveniently.

Project 3 : Parking and EV Charging

Work with the highways authority and local government organisations to explore whether more parking and public EV charging can be established in Peasmarsh Parish, perhaps in combination with traffic calming measures.

Keep abreast of emerging EV solutions and strategies and work with the relevant authorities and stakeholders to promote the installation of adequate public EV charging facilities for those unable to have access to private facilities.

10.3 Promotion of Tourism

Peasmarsh does not have any substantial tourist attractions but is within 1066 Country and is situated close to a considerable number of attractions, including Rye, Battle and Winchelsea, several world class environmental sites, Bodiam Castle and Great Dixter house and gardens.

It is therefore seen by tourists as a place to stay more than as a destination *per se*. To that end, the parish has a hotel, a vineyard with hotel accommodation attached, two pubs – one with rooms to let and the other with a caravan park and camping facilities – and many places offering bed and breakfast or self-catering accommodation.

However, the High Weald Landscape Trail runs through Peasmarsh village and the Sussex Border Path passes through the northern part of the parish. The northern parish boundary [also that of the district and county] is the River Rother where there are further opportunities to promote green tourism. The vineyard plus the proposed creation of traffic-free greenways could all form part of a move towards green tourism in the parish.

What seem to be missing are a coordinated approach to marketing the parish and an associated 'visit Peasmarsh' website.

Project 4 : Promotion of Tourism

Set up and maintain a coordinated ongoing approach with local businesses to market and promote Peasmarsh as a tourist destination.



Regulation 14 Draft

10.4 Enhancing Our Parish

The Parish Council have identified two groups of actions in order to enhance life in the parish :

- i) supporting the parish facilities;
- ii) engendering and enhancing the community spirit of the parish;

There is a definite interaction between the two.

10.4.1 Facilities

The parish has several facilities :

Memorial Hall

The parish has the benefit of the restored and expanded Memorial Hall which hosts a number of activities including yoga, pilates, flower arranging, a film club and art exhibitions among others. The hall, originally built as a memorial to those from Peasmarsh who gave their lives for the country in WWI, is probably as close as Peasmarsh comes to having a village centre.

The Memorial Hall is a registered charity and has its own independent committee and trustees.

Recreation Ground and Pavilion

The parish also has the benefit of the recreation ground and its pavilion together with children's playpark, skatepark and basketball goal. The recreation ground and pavilion are used to host sports training sessions in school holidays and football matches during the winter months.

At present the recreation ground facilities have a small volunteer committee who supervise the day-to-day running and maintenance of these facilities.

Allotments

Peasmarsh has eleven allotments – all currently being worked – and is looking to increase this number by creating additional plots in the now unused bowling green.

The allotments are administered by the Parish Council for the benefit of all Peasmarsh residents.

All these facilities receive funding from PPC. The parish needs to ensure that they flourish for the benefit of all.

Project 5 : Parish Facilities

Ensure ongoing support for these facilities and encourage greater use by all residents.



Regulation 14 Draft

10.4.2 Community Spirit

Although Peasmarsh is a friendly village the community spirit could be usefully enhanced by re-introducing activities that were stopped because of the pandemic. The potential was clearly seen during the run-up to, on the day and subsequent to the celebrations of her late Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

In addition there is always a need for community support which would benefit from being more coherent. One example of such support is Hands of Hope which runs a lunch club in the Memorial Hall once a month.

One of the most important needs is not the elderly but the younger generation which does not have a youth club, a scout/guide group or other such facility.

One specific initiative might be to establish a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the parish in order to make it a safer and therefore better place to live.

Project 6 : Community Spirit

Work with all interested parties to help support communal activities which will benefit the community, either by binding the community more closely together or by giving help to those that need it.

10.4.3 Neighbourhood Communications

There are a variety of communication channels in the parish, some of which overlap because the ecumenical parish – quite rightly – has its own resources independent of the secular parish. There are a variety of websites, social media pages, notice boards and magazines but today's emphasis is clearly electronic communication which does not sit well with all. In addition Jempson's has its own communication channels.

Project 7 : Neighbourhood Communications

Work with all interested parties to improve the communications in the neighbourhood by adopting a common approach commensurate with the limitations imposed by GDPR.

10.4.4 Developer Contributions

Contributions for the parish from developers are collected through the Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL]. The CIL allows local authorities to set a fixed-rate charge per square metre of new development used to address the cumulative impact of development in an area.

CIL was introduced across Rother in 2016 and applies to new residential and some retail development. Fifteen percent of CIL receipts are passed directly to parish and town councils where the developments took place. This rises to twenty-five percent if a Neighbourhood Plan is in place.



Regulation 14 Draft

A series of activities has been identified by PPC for possible funding by the CIL :

- installing a pedestrian crossing over Main Street;
- improved road junctions on the A268;
- creating traffic-free greenways both through Peasmarsh village and between there and Rye;

10.4.5 Dark Skies

Map 8.2 shows the extent to which Jempson's security lighting impacts on the night sky in Peasmarsh.

Project 8 : Dark Skies

Work with Jempson's to investigate the feasibility of reducing the light emissions of the security lighting without compromising the safety and security of the campus.