


# Wealden Local Development Framework

***(incorporating South Downs National Park)***

## Wealden Core Strategy

## Examination of Submission Document

## Written Statement

## Matter 15: Infrastructure – whether the infrastructure requirements for the Core Strategy are soundly based and deliverable.

December 2011

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## CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

A) *Have the critical infrastructure requirements in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan been justified by the evidence base? What would be the consequences for the strategy if any critical infrastructure was not delivered? Is there sufficient commitment at this stage from the relevant organ*

B) *isations responsible for the delivery?*

Eastbourne Borough Council [hereafter referred to as EBC] supports Wealden District Council's approach to identifying the critical infrastructure required to deliver its spatial development strategy. Further revisions, as agreed by all East Sussex's local planning authorities, to reformat the Infrastructure Schedule to clearly identify the critical infrastructure will be helpful.

EBC has worked closely with Wealden District Council to resolve several strategic cross-boundary infrastructure matters, including transport and water resources issues. EBC is satisfied that Wealden's transport infrastructure is evidenced and justified by the South Wealden and Eastbourne Transport (SWETS) Study. EBC is committed to a joint approach for the collection of developer contributions towards transport improvements in Eastbourne and the South Wealden Area, through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This, however, needs to be articulated in Policy WCS7 of Wealden's Core Strategy, for the policy to be most effective.

EBC cannot comment generally on the commitment from infrastructure providers to deliver what is identified in the Infrastructure Schedule. However, the uncertainty of the Hailsham South Waste Water Treatment Works and whether or not a plant will be delivered within the course of the plan period to cater for the additional growth proposed causes some concern. The additional growth has the potential to place pressure on Eastbourne's existing Waste Water Treatment Works, which may be required to cater for growth in the southern part of Wealden outside Eastbourne's boundary.

The 'availability of funding' or 'reduced levels of funding' are risks identified by Wealden District Council to delivering certain pieces of infrastructure identified in their schedule. These issues will be dealt with through the joint working on the Community Infrastructure Levy.

## INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE FIRST 5 YEARS

*B) Is it clear what infrastructure is required for the first 5 years of the plan and who is going to fund it and provide it?*

Wealden District Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides a comprehensive account of the infrastructure required to deliver its spatial development strategy. Reformatting of the Infrastructure Schedule to reflect shared priorities across East Sussex will provide clarity over the essential pieces of infrastructure required for the first 5 years.

## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

*C) Does the Core Strategy take sufficient account of the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy?*

Wealden District Council, like all other planning authorities in East Sussex, has shown a very strong commitment to moving forward with CIL, with the joint commissioning of viability assessments and developing a CIL Charging Schedule.

EBC is working closely with Wealden District Council to develop bespoke CIL Charging Schedules that are viable and complementary across both administrative areas. EBC therefore recommends that reference to CIL is included in Policy WCS7.

## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL

*D) Does the Core Strategy provide an adequate basis for the achievement of more sustainable forms of transport and travel? Should there be a policy setting out the transport strategy for the District?*

EBC welcomes Wealden District Council's desire to achieve more sustainable forms of transport and travel set out in its Core Strategy. The inclusion of an additional policy setting out a clear transport strategy would be an effective way to ensure it is delivered. This should be consistent with the objectives of the East Sussex's Third Local Transport Plan.

EBC considers that a sustainable transport policy would be helpful given that so much of the overall development proposed is reliant on transport infrastructure enhancements. Paragraphs 6.17 of Background Paper BP1: Development of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy acknowledges that.

EBC welcomes Wealden District Council's decision to exclude *"the reinstatement of the Willingdon Chord"* from its Infrastructure Delivery Plan on the basis that it *is "unlikely to be delivered within the Core Strategy timeframe (2006 - 2030) and [is] not critical to growth proposed within the Proposed Submission Core Strategy"* (BP11: paragraph 4.12). East Sussex County Council's inclusion of the Willingdon Chord within its Third Local Transport Plan would lead to a potential degradation in the frequency of rail services to Hampden Park and Eastbourne railway stations.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK AND OPEN SPACE

*E) Does the requirement for all new residential development to contribute to the green infrastructure network and make provision for new open space in Policy WCS13 accord with the tests in Circular 05/2005 and the CIL regulations?*

EBC supports Wealden District Council's commitment to enhance its green infrastructure network. There are ways in which significant improvements can be made to the network of green spaces throughout Wealden as a direct result of new development. It is acknowledged that all residential development will result in a requirement for open space provision, some which may be able to be delivered onsite and some may be accessible locally.

The CIL regulations and guidance stipulate that CIL can be levied on all development across the local authority area and it should relate to an impact across the whole local authority.

EBC is satisfied that planning obligations (though site specific Section 106 agreements, Circular 05/2005) do allow for contributions to be sought for green infrastructure so long as they are fairly and reasonably related to the proposed developments.

EBC is currently preparing an Eastbourne Park Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which sets out a detailed vision and series of proposals to conserve and enhance the existing environmental and ecological characteristics of the area. Eastbourne Park has the potential to be extended northwards into Wealden providing excellent local access to an important area of green infrastructure. The area of land immediately south of SD5 and SD7 (south of the proposed Willingdon Chord railway line) and which is shown on Figure 8, to be an area at risk from flooding would be ideal for providing green infrastructure to complement the existing residential areas. EBC will work closely with Wealden to ensure detailed development of growth areas and the provision of open space is complementary across both administrative areas.