Wealden District Council and South Downs National Park Authority
Core Strategy Examination
Supplementary Statement from East Sussex County Council
16 December 2011

Matter 6: Uckfield Area Strategy

1. Introduction

1.1 East Sussex County Council reaffirms the content of its statement submitted to the Inspector at the Examination in Public meeting in October 2011 (exploratory meeting of 12th October 2011) and which is available on the Wealden District Council's website regarding Uckfield (U27, section 3.4, pages 9-11).

1.2 This further supporting statement should be read in conjunction with the October 2011 statement and sets out the further work which has taken place since then on infrastructure requirements in Uckfield that are the responsibility of the County Council, in particular on education and transport.

2 Transport

2.1 Since our October 2011 statement, a variety of options for addressing the traffic management issues in the town centre have been identified by the Uckfield Town Centre Steering Group, which comprises East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council, Uckfield Town Council and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. These options range from demand management, relocating parking south of the town centre to providing new highway infrastructure. Appraisal of these options will consider a range of criteria including the economic, environmental, and social impacts of each option as well as the effect of each on the potential reinstatement of the Lewes – Uckfield railway line.

2.2 Consultants have been commissioned to undertake the design of the traffic management options for the town centre (Option Development is in the timetable in paragraph 3.4.6 on our October 2011 statement). The consultants will be reporting back to the Steering Group on the design options in late January 2012 and public consultation on these options will be undertaken locally in late February/early March 2012. The Steering Group will then identify its preferred option for implementation in summer 2012.

2.3 Initial discussions have been held with the landowners of the potential allocated site (SDA1 within the Core Strategy) in the south west quadrant of Uckfield. We have agreed with the landowners that the primary access to the site will be off the A22 Uckfield bypass with a secondary access off Lewes Road.

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2.4 In summary, considerable progress has been made to take forward the Uckfield town centre action plan to ensure that the town centre infrastructure will be put in place to accommodate the development in the town and that this will be delivered in a timely manner. In addition, access arrangements have been agreed with the landowners of the SDA identified in Uckfield and this work will be reflected in Wealden's emerging Strategic Sites Development Plan Document (SS DPD).

3 Education

3.1 We reaffirm our position on education provision in Uckfield as set out in our October 2011 statement (section 4.3 of U27). A review of school places will be undertaken over the coming years to ensure we are in a position to react to the predicted requirement for additional places in the town from the early part of the next decade.