

Frant Parish Council,
c/o The Clerk,



Marina Briginshaw
Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development
Wealden District Council
Vicarage Lane
Hailsham
East Sussex
BN27 2AX

16/11/16

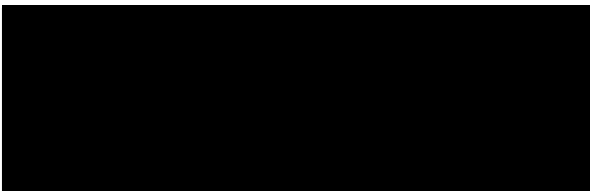
Dear Marina Briginshaw,

Application for a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Frant Parish

Frant Parish Council announced its intention to undertake a Neighbourhood Development Plan at its Annual Village Meeting on 25th May 2016, and subsequently passed a resolution at its meeting on Wednesday 21st September 2016 to begin the formal process. The Plan is intended to cover the whole of the parish of Frant, as shown on the attached map (Annex A). A supporting statement outlining the rationale for the area is also attached (Annex B).

Frant Parish Council is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Please accept this letter as a formal application to designate Frant Parish as a Designated Neighbourhood Area, under the Localism Act 2011 as governed by Part 2, Section 5 of the 2012 Regulations.

Yours faithfully,

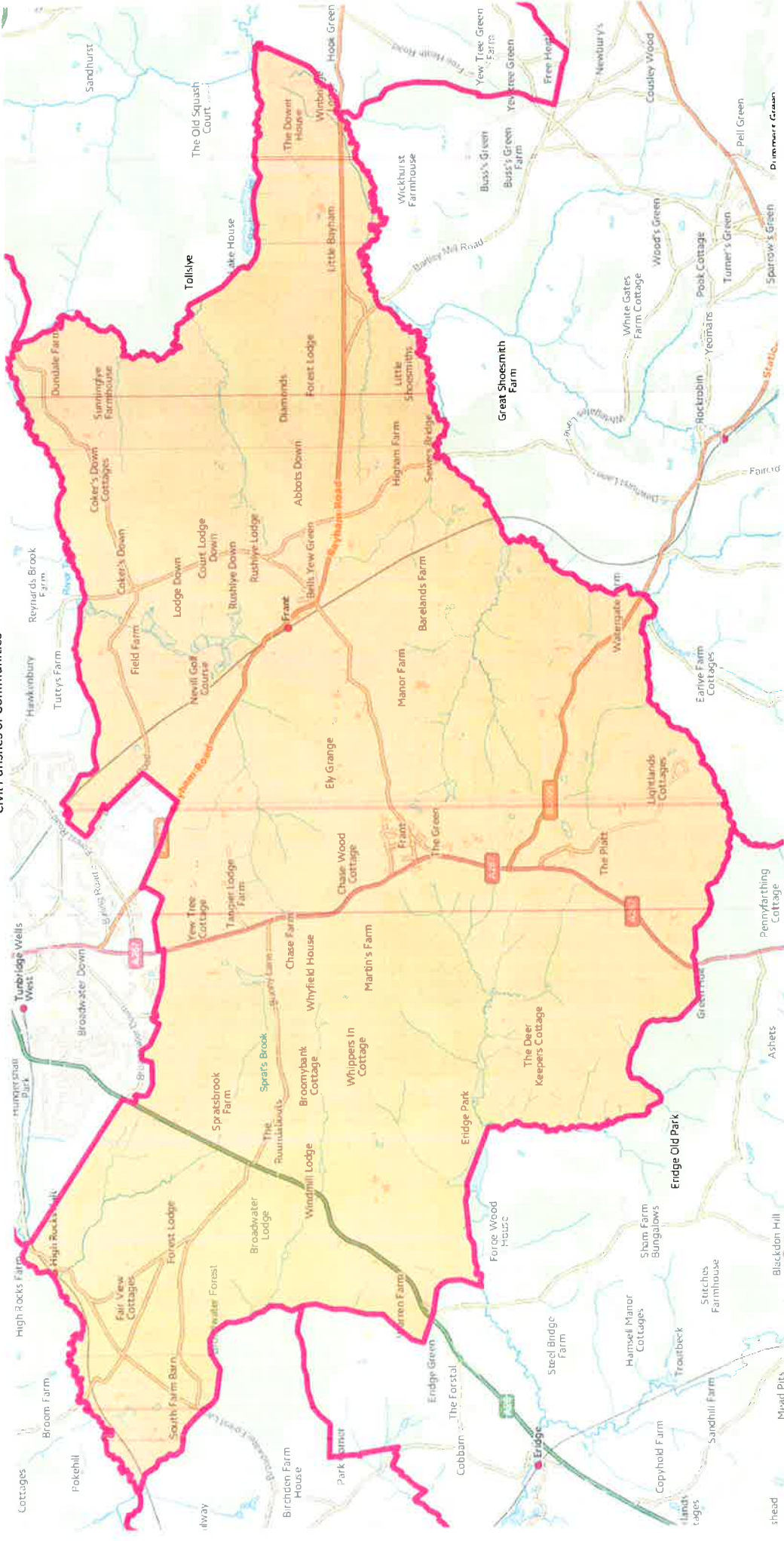


Cllr William Rutherford

Chairman, Frant Parish Council



ELECTION MAPS
FRANT CIVIL PARISH, EAST SUSSEX COUNTY
Civil Parishes or Communities



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Annex B: Supporting Statement

Geography

Frant is a rural parish covering an area of 3,193 hectares in the north of Wealden District Council. To the north it is bordered by the significant urban development of Tunbridge Wells in Kent. There are three principal settlements within the parish, Frant, Bells Yew Green and Eridge and these settlements show a high level of interdependence. Frant Parish Council was established in 1894.

Community

Although Frant Parish contains three distinct settlements, there is considerable community cohesion across the parish. Frant Church of England Primary School moved into a brand new premise in January 2011 and has Eco school status. The primary school is a key focus of community activity, with pupils from across the parish and an active parent teacher association. There is also a nursery school within Frant that also has a parish-wide intake.

The Church of St Albans in Frant is a another key focus of local community activity, as is Holy Trinity in Eridge. Both these congregations fall within the same parochial council and are served by the same vicar. The parish has a small doctor's surgery which currently operates on a part-time basis.

A number of local businesses are located within the parish. The Frant Village Store and Post Office is a well supported and highly valued community asset, as is Lamb's Larder in Bells Yew Green. More recently Fullers Butcher opened in Eridge, providing another important local facility. In addition there a number of small business that trade from premises within the parish which are important local employers. The parish includes four public houses, the George Inn, the Abergavenny Arms, the Nevill Crest and Gun and the Brecknock Arms, which are also both community assets and sources of local employment.

Housing

The 2011 Census recorded 1,645 residents in 654 households. Broken down by age group, the parish has a higher percentage of the population aged 0-14 and 30-44 than the average across Wealden, or indeed across East Sussex, reflecting the number of young families within the parish. 70.5% of households are recorded as family households. Conversely the parish has a below average number of residents over 65. This distinct demographic profile has implications for housing requirements within the parish, and also the supporting infrastructure.

Built Environment

The settlement of Frant village has a dedicated Conservation Area containing a significant number of listed buildings. Bells Yew Green, on the other hand, is a more recent village development. Eridge sits within 15km of the Ashdown Forest, which inevitably has implications for development within

this community. The rural characteristics of all three settlements need to be carefully reconciled with changing demands and developments.

Natural Environment

The majority of the parish lies within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are significant areas of preserved environment within the parish with public access:

- Broadwater Warren is a 77 hectare open heathland owned by the RSPB, which is an important habitat for a variety of wildlife including the Woodlark and Nightjar
- Hargate Forest is a 62 hectare Ancient Woodland owned by the Woodland Trust
- Chase Wood is a 44 hectare mixed woodland, privately owned but with permissive paths
- Rushlye Wood is a four hectare Ancient Woodland owned by the Woodland Trust

In addition there are several large Sites of Special Scientific (SSSI) that lie wholly or partly within the parish:

- Eridge Park and associated woodland is 250 hectare of mixed woodland in private ownership
- Eridge Rocks is 44 hectares of ancient woodland around sandstone outcrops, owned by the Sussex Wildlife Trust. Home to mosses, liverworts and ferns, including the rare Tunbridge Filmy Fern (*Hymenophyllum tunbrigense*)
- Nap Wood is 41 hectare of mixed woodland owned by the National Trust
- High Rocks is a 3 hectare key geomorphological site

The preservation, promotion and enhancement of these unique sites are important considerations in local development.

Transport

Transport is also a key issue for the parish. Both the A26 and A267 run through the parish resulting in significant concerns for road safety. However these roads are vital for the residents in this rural area – The 2011 Census shows that Frant has higher per capita car ownership than Wealden, with over 50% of households having two cars or more. Frant also has a mainline station in Bells Yew Green served by Southeastern Trains on the London to Hastings line, making it a key commuting hub for local residents. Balancing the needs of transport users with concerns around volume and speed of traffic will be a critical focus for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Sustainable Development

The National Planning Policy Framework put significant emphasis on sustainable development, ensuring growth caters for the needs of the current generation while ensuring that future generations are not negatively impacted. This is a key consideration for Frant Parish, bringing together all the policy areas identified above into a coherent Local Neighbourhood Plan.