Wealden District Council

Sustainable Settlement Study

Wealden Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18)

March 2024

Wealden
District Council

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1. Introduction

Background

1.1 Wealden District Council is in the process of developing a new Local Plan that will set out a framework to help guide development in Wealden to 2040. A key part of the plan making process is reviewing and updating the Council's evidence base to inform the emerging policy approach.

1.2 This study looks to provide the Council's evidence on the role and function of settlements across Wealden. It surveys a wide range of settlements within Wealden to determine the services and facilities present and the accessibility to existing public transport networks, providing a basis for understanding the sustainability of settlements across the district. This will inform the development of a Settlement Hierarchy and the spatial strategy within the emerging Local Plan.

1.3 It should be noted that the study **does not** determine how much growth should go in each settlement. The level of growth that will be distributed across the district will be dependent on many factors, for example, the availability of land, environmental constraints such as landscape and flooding as well as physical and social constraints such as the availability of infrastructure to support new growth. All of these aspects will be considered in other evidence base documents and through the preparation of the Local Plan, in combination with this sustainable settlement study, the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Habitats Regulations Assessment and the subsequent Settlement Hierarchy.

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) includes key principles which are relevant when considering a new settlement hierarchy for Wealden, seeking to focus new development in the most sustainable locations, with a range of services, shops, public transport and employment available, or where there is sustainable access to these.

1.5 A settlement hierarchy is an important tool that categorises settlements and groups them together based on their sustainability and this report sets out the methodology the Council has used to assess settlements in Wealden in relation to the availability of services, facilities and public transport accessibility as well as the outcome of the study.

1.6 It is important that settlements are periodically surveyed to establish how they function in the local area and their level of sustainability to help plan for the future. A thriving rural community in a living, working countryside depends in part, on retaining local services and community facilities such as schools, local shops, cultural venues, public houses and places of worship. Likewise, rural housing in the right place is essential to ensure the viable use of these local facilities.

Purpose of this Study

1.7 The purpose of the study is to understand the current sustainability of the district's settlements and identify those which would be the most appropriate to deliver sustainable growth. A settlement can be defined as a discrete group of houses and for the purpose of this study we have focused on our rural areas including small hamlets.

1.8 Those settlements with the most services and facilities and good level of public transport provision and accessibility are the most sustainable settlements in the district. However, it can also be the case that a settlement with few services and facilities, and therefore considered less sustainable on a purely 'scored' basis, can be categorised higher in the hierarchy if, for example, it is in close proximity to a higher order settlement and has sustainable access to the services and facilities within that settlement. Similalry, a settlement with few services and facilities that is considered less sustainable may become more sustainable as a result of any growth that may come forward and support additional services / infrastructure. However, this Study has been based purely on the existing level of services and facilities offered by a settlement, together with its location in relation to higher order settlements and the provision of sustainable access to those settlements, for example, by public transport. It does not make any judgements on a settlement's future sustainability.

1.9 This study aims to identify a settlement hierarchy that not only defines the sustainability of a settlement based on the number of services and facilities it has, but also on its relationship with the settlements around it.

1.10 This study sets out the following:

- A quantitative audit of the current provision of services, facilities, infrastructure and access to public transport in settlements across Wealden;
- The grouping of settlements into categories reflecting their provision of services, facilities, infrastructure and access to public transport;
- A qualitative consideration of the sustainability of the district's settlements taking into account spatial attributes of places and connectivity;
- A new proposed settlement hierarchy for Wealden.

The approach to previous settlement classification work

Adopted Core Strategy (2013)

1.11 As part of the evidence base work underpinning the Core Strategy (2013), the accessibility of settlements and the self-sufficiency of settlements were assessed independently. These two elements were then combined with a further qualitative assessment to categorise the districts settlements and produce the settlement

hierarchy. Earlier consultation work carried out in 2007 and 2009 explored this approach and invited responses as part of the corresponding Issues and Options consultations. For further information on these early stages please see Background Paper 6 'Rural Settlement Classification' (2009).

1.12 Over time the role and function of the district's settlements has been established where the market towns provide many, if not most, of the services to the local population and the smaller settlements generally limited to providing local services. However, the extent of how each town functions, and the services it provides, is often affected by its proximity to sub-regional centres located outside of the district. Therefore, the Core Strategy considered it necessary and proportionate to consider towns and rural settlements on a different basis. For the five market towns the following factors were considered:

- The towns accessibility;
- The provision of educational and health facilities;
- Employment provision;
- Town centre retail and service provision;
- The size of the town in relation to population;
- Commuting patterns;
- The location of the town to sub-regional towns / cities; and
- The catchment area of each town centre.

1.13 Table 1 sets out the factors used to define the rural settlement classification. For further information on how the settlements were classified, please see Appendix 3 of Background Paper 1 'Development of the Core Strategy' (2011). Table 2 sets out the existing settlement hierarchy, as defined in the Core Strategy (2013).

Table 1: Rural settlement classification factors

Accessibility	**Criteria**
Very Good Accessibly	Frequency of 30 minutes or less and duration of travel of 30 minutes or less by public/ sustainable transport.
Good Accessibility	Frequency of 30 minutes or less and duration of travel of 30 minutes or less by public/ sustainable transport, with exception to access to town centre being frequency between 31 minutes and an hour
Reasonable Accessibility	Frequency of 30 minutes or less and duration of travel of 30 minutes or less by public/ sustainable transport, with exception to access to a secondary school being frequency between 31 minutes and an hour.
Fair Accessibility	Frequency of between 31 minutes and 1 hour and duration of travel of 30 minutes or less by public/ sustainable transport
Poor Accessibility	Frequency of over an hour or frequency of under an hour and duration of more than 30 minutes.
Self-sufficiency	**Criteria**
Self Sufficient Settlement	Primary school provision; secondary school; GP service; dentist; dispensary; convenience store; community hall; public house; and business area or locally significant employment opportunities.
A Self Sufficient Settlement with the Exception of Secondary School Provision	Primary school provision; GP service; dentist; dispensary; convenience store; community hall; public house; and business area or locally significant employment opportunities.
Relatively Self Sufficient Settlement	Primary school provision; GP service; convenience store; community hall; public house; and business area or locally significant employment opportunities.
Relatively Self Sufficient Settlement, with the Exception of Business Area or Locally Significant Employment Opportunities	Primary school provision; GP service; convenience store; community hall or public house.
Settlement with Limited Facilities	Primary school provision; convenience store; community hall or public house; and business area or locally significant employment opportunities.
Settlement with Basic Facilities	Primary school provision; convenience store; community hall or public house.

Table 2: Settlement classifications, Core Strategy (2013)

Settlement type	Description	Settlements
Primary Centre	A large accessible settlement by road and public transport with a centre containing a large range of shops, including the sale of high order goods, a range of leisure opportunities and facilities including a hospital with Accident and Emergency services. Settlement meets all its own needs.	Tunbridge Wells, Eastbourne (both settlements are outside Wealden District)
Secondary Centre	An accessible settlement by road and public transport containing a range of shops, including high street chains and facilities including a hospital. Settlement meets the majority of its own needs.	East Grinstead, Haywards Heath (both settlements are outside Wealden District)
District Centre	An accessible settlement by road and public transport containing a range of shops, employment opportunities and facilities including secondary school. Not reliant upon other centres within the District to meet day to day needs, but requires support from other secondary or primary centres to meet needs of the residents.	Crowborough, Hailsham, Uckfield
Service Centre	Sustainable locations with a range of jobs, services and facilities, serving predominantly nearby communities and the wider rural area but with accessibility to larger centres.	Heathfield, Polegate, Stone Cross, Wadhurst, Forest Row
Local Service Centre	Settlements that have some limited supply of social and economic infrastructure and where local residents depend upon other centres to meet a broad range of needs with accessibility to those centres.	Mayfield, Frant, Buxted, Herstmonceux, Ninfield, Pevensey Bay, Westham, Horam, Groombridge, Hartfield, Alfriston, Rotherfield
Neighbourhood Centre	A settlement with limited or basic facilities with very good to poor accessibility; a settlement with no facilities but with very good to fair	Pevensey, East Hoathly, Maresfield, Danehill, East Dean, Five Ash Down, Berwick Station, Broad Oak, Withyham, Fletching,

Settlement type	Description	Settlements
	accessibility; a settlement with facilities but poor accessibility.	Nutley, Boreham Street, Laughton, High Hurstwood, Little Horsted, Isfield, Upper Dicker, Lower Horsebridge, Hellingly, Ripe, Selmeston, Magham Down, Windmill Hill, Rushlake Green, Bells Yew Green, Mark Cross, Cross-in-Hand, Chelwood Gate.
Other unclassified settlements	This category covers a wide range of settlements with few or no facilities and services (with exception to settlements with very good accessibility), and where further development would be unsustainable.	All other settlements in Wealden

Withdrawn Wealden Local Plan (2019)

1.19 The classification of the district's settlements in terms of their sustainability was revisited as part of the work to develop, the now withdrawn, Wealden Local Plan 2019. It was considered appropriate to review the methodology used to define the settlement hierarchy in the Core Strategy (2013), as well as the settlement hierarchy itself, to address concerns relating to the categorisation of different settlements within the district and to take into account the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[1].

1.20 The work assessed all of the settlements within the district and gathered information through desktop research, as to whether a settlement benefited from, and/or had good access to other settlements with, the following:

- Nursery/pre-school
- Library
- Primary/Secondary School
- Doctor surgery
- Dentist
- Pharmacy
- Hospital
- Convenience Store
- Post Office
- Public House
- Place of Worship
- Community Hall
- Petrol Station
- Business area
- Play area
- Playing Pitches
- Multi-green spaces
- Pavilion/Facilities
- Bus service

1.21 The revised methodology took counted how many services were within each settlement and then applied an 'accessibility ranking' and a 'facilities ranking' based on the following criteria:

[1] At the time this was the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The NPPF has since been updated further in 2021 and that version has been used for this Study.

Table 3: Accessibility criteria (2019)

Ranking	Access level	Description
1	Inaccessible by public transport	Poor intermittent service during the week (less than 5 days service) and low frequency
2	Poor accessibility	Limited service to a limited centres and a frequency of up to around 2 hours
3	Accessible	A very good service of one type of transport option, or a good bus service 6 to 7 days per week frequency of one hour and duration up to and around 30 minutes.
4	Very accessible	A range of public transport options preferably 7 days a Week, up to around 30 minutes frequency and duration generally less than 30 minutes.

Table 4: Facilities criteria (2019)

Ranking	Description
1	No facilities or social facilities (pub and or community hall present) but no primary school or convenience store
2	No facilities but with a primary school or convenience store
3	Social facilities (pub and or community hall present) with primary school but no convenience store
4	Social facilities (pub and or community hall) with convenience store but no primary school
5	Social facilities (pub and or community hall) with convenience store and primary school
6	Social facilities (pub, community hall etc. at least one) with convenience store, primary school and doctors
7	Social facilities (pub, community hall etc. at least one) with convenience store, primary and secondary school (not private fee school) and doctors and a number of retail outlets.

1.22 As well as this quantitative assessment of the district's settlements, the function of towns and villages with development boundaries in relation to other settlements was also undertaken in a qualitative assessment. For example, a larger village, in an area where higher order service centres are located a considerable distance away, may act as a local service centre for nearby smaller villages.

1.23 Combined with the quantitative assessment, this work led to a revision to the settlement hierarchy and to the categories, which were consulted on as part of the Issues and Options stage. The categories were:

- Sustainable Settlement – very accessible with good local facilities / accessible with good local facilities;
- Local Settlement – accessible with local to very limited facilities;
- Neighbourhood Settlement – no accessibility but some facilities; and
- Residential Settlement – no accessibility and no / very limited facilities.

1.24 Following the consultation, the settlement hierarchy categories as listed were taken forward, however the 'Sustainable Settlement' category was split into four sub-categories (Town, Urban Settlement, Large Village Type 1 and Large Village Type 2) to better reflect the differences within each settlement originally included as part of the Issues and Options paper.

1.25 The Council published the Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper (2019) as part of the withdrawn local plan in January 2019.

Scope of this Settlement Study

1.25 The study to support this Local Plan covers Wealden District excluding those areas located in the South Downs National Park, which is the responsibility of the South Downs National Park Authority for planning purposes.

1.26 The study assesses both the larger towns and smaller rural settlements within the district. All settlements classified as District Centres, Service Centres, Local Service Centres or Neighbourhood Centres within the existing Wealden Core Strategy 2013 Settlement Hierarchy (except those within the South Downs National Park), as well as all the settlements within the withdrawn 2019 Local Plan, have been assessed.

1.27 The study looks beyond these larger settlements and includes an additional thirty-one settlements not previously classified within the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy, to ensure that the study provides for a comprehensive assessment of the role and function of settlements at all scales.

1.28 In relation to the range of services and facilities considered in the assessment, we worked with our Town and Parish Council's to ensure the list was comprehensive and relevant. Details of this consultation process are set out in section 3 below.

1.29 As with previous studies, it is important to note that this Study is based on a snapshot in time and based upon current services and facilities available in the surveyed settlements at the time, including the availability of public transport routes. These may of course change in the future, therefore the information we hold will be kept under review as we progress the local plan and this study updated accordingly.

Stages of this Study

1.30 The stages involved in producing the sustainable settlement study can be summarised as follows:

- Production of a methodology for understanding, scoring/ranking services and facilities;
- Consultation with Parish and Town Councils on the proposed methodology and identification of key services;
- Consideration of comments on the methodology from Parish and Town Councils, amend methodology and categorisation of services;
- Undertake desk top research to gather data on services and facilities for each settlement;
- Consultation with relevant Parish and Town Councils to verify the list of services and facilities for their Parishes;
- Undertake quantitative assessment of settlements in line with the methodology;
- Consider alternative ways to apply the quantitative assessment / scores and apply these;
- Review findings and group settlements based on quantitative analysis;
- Consider each settlement based on qualitative considerations (spatial understanding and connectivity);
- Group settlements based on quantitative scoring and qualitative considerations; and
- Define a settlement hierarchy and apply this to the plan-making process for the purposes of the Regulation 18 Local Plan spatial strategy and policies;

1.31 The work undertaken to date as presented in this report is draft and we welcome feedback on this work as part of the Draft Wealden Local Plan (Regulation 18) consultation. Feedback will be considered and will be used as relevant to progress the sustainable settlement study and local plan policies as these are refined for the next local plan stage.

2 District context

2.1 Wealden is a large district (835 square kilometres) predominantly rural in character and contains a number of settlements from market towns to hamlets. The district contains five main settlements: Crowborough; Hailsham; Heathfield; Uckfield; and Polegate. Each of these settlements has a rural hinterland with villages and hamlets relying upon the services provided. The character of our settlements vary, and each has a unique identity with different sizes, building types and relationships with the surrounding landscape.

2.2 The high quality and attractive nature of the countryside makes the district a desirable place to live and work, and it is therefore necessary to help retain these characteristics and ensure that the key features continue to make the district attractive to communities, businesses and support the local economy.

2.3 However, with the rural nature of the district there are a number of sustainability issues which may not be as prevalent in larger urban areas. A number of facilities such as hospitals, further education, shopping malls are not contained within the district and residents travel outside of the district to meet needs that go beyond the day-to-day requirements. As a result, the district has high levels of out commuting with around half of the population working outside of the area. In addition to this public transport provision is, in general, poor. Bus services are limited in rural areas and train services vary depending on whether they are located to the north or south of the district. In addition, the size of settlements within the district do not necessarily correlate with its accessibility or the range of facilities on offer.

2.4 Owing to the nature of the settlements within the district there is no one settlement that can meet all the needs of our residents for the purposes of shopping, health care facilities and education provision. It can also not be assumed that everyone has access to a private vehicle and this is an important sustainability consideration when considering access to services and facilities, especially where services and facilities are located in different settlements to that which communities may live.

3 Town and Parish Council consultation

3.1 At the start of this project, we considered potential methods and approaches that we could apply to the study. We produced a Project Scoping Paper (Appendix A) setting out a proposed list of services and facilities that could be used as criteria for assessing sustainability, as well as a proposed scoring method. We consulted and discussed the scoping paper with all of our Town and Parish Council's.

3.2 The scoping paper categorised the services and facilities into 'key services', 'important community services' and 'other community services' and asked Town and Parish Council's to consider and feedback on whether the lists were comprehensive, whether the categorisation of services and facilities were felt to be correct and whether the scoring was appropriate. This consultation was undertaken in May and June 2021 as part of Town and Parish Planning Cluster meetings with Council officers and also as part of the Local Plan Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG).

3.2 The responses to this consultation, and our consideration of these, can be read in Appendix B and the changes to categorisations made as a result of the consultation can be read in Appendix C.

3.3 Parish and Town Councils were also consulted on the data gathered as part of the desk top exercise for each settlement, to ensure that the facilities and services located in each Parish were correct at the time of data gathering. Further detail on this can be read in Chapter 5 of this Paper.

4 Planning policy context

National Policy

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) sets out that the purpose of planning is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three overarching objectives of sustainable development:

- Economic – building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

- Social – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

- Environmental – protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

4.2 The NPPF does not define what constitutes a sustainable settlement, but it identifies core principles and important aspects of sustainability. The most relevant parts of the NPPF in relation to sustainable development and defining a settlement hierarchy are:

- Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development; community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure and infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management (paragraph 20).

- Non-strategic policies should set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development, including allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles and conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment (paragraph 28).

- To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby (paragraph 79).

- Planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses and the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship (paragraph 84).

- Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport) (paragraph 85).

- Places should promote social interaction, be safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles, for example through the provision of sports facilities and local shops and layouts that encourage walking and cycling (paragraph 92).

- Planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities; guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs; and ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services (paragraph 93).

- Planning policies should support an appropriate mix of uses across an area to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities (paragraph 106).

- Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses (paragraph 119).

- Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats and take into account the wider social, cultural,

economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring (paragraph 190).

Local Policy

4.3 The Wealden Core Strategy was adopted in February 2013. This document sets out the strategic vision for the district up to 2027 and identified the amount and broad distribution of future growth across Wealden for the plan period. The Core Strategy concentrates growth in urban areas to help support the ranges of existing services and facilities and to minimise the need to travel. A smaller proportion of growth was assigned to rural settlements and a number were assessed as suitable to accommodate further housing development.

4.4 As already discussed in Chapter 2, the Core Strategy included a Settlement Hierarchy that set out the general role of individual towns and villages in Wealden (see Table 2). The Settlement Hierarchy included higher order (Primary and Secondary Centres) settlements located outside of the district as well as the five categories of settlements within the district.

4.5 Also detailed in Chapter 2 is the work undertaken as part of the withdrawn Wealden Local Plan (2019), which revised and updated the settlement hierarchy. The approach was largely based on the methodology taken forward for the Core Strategy Local Plan settlement hierarchy.

Changes since the 2013 and 2019 Settlement Hierarchy work

4.6 The major change in policy relating to the categorisation of settlements is the updated NPPF, which came into effect in 2021. In addition, the following factors have also emerged since we last considered the sustainability of the district's settlements:

- the Council has declared a climate emergency;
- we have experienced the Covid-19 pandemic;
- the importance of broadband has increased;
- the importance of local recreational space has increased;
- we have seen an increase in home working and therefore a reduction in travel to access work;
- We have seen an increase in internet sales;
- We have seen an increase in the provision and use of online services; and

- With more people working from home there has been an increased demand for local shops/facilities.

4.7 Given the above, we considered it appropriate to take a fresh approach in which to consider the sustainability of our settlements.

5 Methodology

5.2 The following section sets out the methodological approach which has been used to assess the sustainability of settlements within the district. The study has used a desk-based approach along with local knowledge of the settlements, site visits and consultation with Town and Parish Councils to understand which facilities and services are present within each settlement included in the study.

5.3 Given the level of housing growth that we need to consider meeting as per our Local Housing Need Requirement, we took the decision to assess all settlements within the district, including small hamlets. Other studies define a settlement as a group of houses that have at least one community facility, however we did not consider this a suitable definition of a settlement bearing in mind that development coming forward can make a settlement sustainable. Therefore, this Study looks at all settlements in light of the housing requirement for the district.

5.4 For the purposes of the study, we have assessed 78 settlements within the district. Although residents may need to travel to other settlements or outside the district for certain services / facilities, it is taken that the five main towns / settlements of Crowborough, Uckfield, Heathfield, Hailsham and Polegate and Willingdon are sustainable due to the level of facilities, services and accessibility that they provide. Notwithstanding this, we have undertaken work to understand the level of services and facilities present and their sustainability for completeness.

Accessibility

5.5 To detemine a settlements accessibility, we assessed the availability and frequency of bus services together with the proximity of a settlement to a train station.

Bus services

5.6 In looking at the bus services, this included links to larger settlements, the frequency in terms of servces per week, the timetables and the length of journeys to reach a larger settlement, for example bus services between Arlington and Hailsham.

5.7 For the frequency, we categorised the bus sevices as:

- Very frequent - 7 days a week, up to around 30 minutes frequency and journey duration to a regional or district town including an evening service;
- Frequent bus service - 5 days or more a week, with a frequency of one hour and journey duration up to 60 minutes to a regional or district town;
- Limited bus service 3 days or more a week, with both an outward bound and return journey

5.8 Where a settlement had a service less than 3 days a week, or where it was non-existent; no evening service or just once a day, this was picked up in the surveying and presented in the Settlement Profiles (Appendix G) and was not counted in the services/facilities matrix scores.

Train stations

5.9 For access to train stations, the assessment considered the distance and means of travel to the nearest train station i.e. on foot, by car, by bus etc. and this was recorded in the services/facilities matrix. Where there was no access to a train station this attacted a score of 0 in the services/facilities matrix.

Identifying services and facilities

5.10 A population's ability to access services such as shopping, health and education is important for maintaining quality of life. Long distance travel to access these services is undesirable. It promotes car use and is in general unsustainable. On this basis, for the purpose of the quantitative assessment, the study considers services within the built-up area of the settlement only.

5.11 The NPPF was used as a starting point to identify the services and facilities to be considered within the study. It should be noted that the NPPF is not explicit in setting out a definitive list of services and facilities to define a settlement's sustainability, however it provides a good basis in which we can consider sustainability.

5.12 Paragraph 93 of the NPPF (2021) states:

> "To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:
>
> a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments."

5.13 Based upon the NPPF and a review of the services and facilities criteria in previous settlement hierarchy work, an initial list of key services and facilities considered to be essential for a sustainable settlement were firstly identified, followed by those considered to be less vital and important. Table 5 sets out the list of categorised services identified for this Study. Those in bold were included in the Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper (2019) however at that time they were not categorised as 'key services', 'important community services' or 'other important community services'.

Table 5: List of key and other services and facilities

Sustainable Settlement Study to support the Draft Wealden Local Plan (Regulation 18) – Scoping Paper
Key services
• **Primary school** • **Secondary school** • **Doctors surgery** • **Pharmacy** • Supermarket • Convenience store • Train station • Bus service • Bank ATM
Important community services
• **Nursey / pre-school** • Higher or other education facility • **Dentist** • Optician • Sports centre • Place of worship • Pub • Community / village hall • Recreation – play space / playing pitches • Library / mobile library • Broadband connectivity • Local groups / societies • **Nearby hospital** • Designated cycle route • National walking trail • Allotments • Daily bus service
Other community services
• Other health related services i.e. physios • Recreation – teenage area / outdoor gym • Other convenience shops • Other comparison / specialist shops • Café / Restaurants • Takeaways / mobile services • Petrol Station / EV charging facilities • Vets • Public green space larger than 20 hectares • Access to recycling centre

5.14 A further review of the above services and facilities, together with responses from the Parish and Town Council consultation, resulted in some of the services and facilities not being taken forward in the assessment as a measure of sustainability for the reasons set out below (also see Appendix C):

- Optician - The NHS recommends people should have their eyes tested every two years and prescriptions can now be delivered to home, therefore there would be little benefit in further consideration of this indicator as no measurable distinction between settlements would be found.

- Library / mobile library - The use of libraries has decreased with people getting books via digital methods, book stores or buying them online. Therefore, it is considered that there is no measurable difference between settlements in this regard.

- Broadband connectivity – Measuring this for individual locations was not possible for the purpose of this study given the size of the district and the number of postcodes that would be required to be checked. We are also aware that the whole district is covered by 4G by at least one provider and 82% of the district is covered by all four providers compared to just 69% across the UK[1]. In terms of fixed broadband, access to full-fibre broadband is better than on average across the UK for both residential and commercial properties. Therefore it can be taken that the district in general has good coverage and connectivity.

- Other health related services - These services are not used frequently enough to be used as a sustainability indicator i.e. physios.

5.15 Whilst the above services were removed from the list of sustainability indicators, others were moved between categories as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Changes in categorisation of certain services and facilities

Service / facility	Original category (consultation)	New Category	Reason
Supermarket	Key services	Important community services	Grocery delivery services available for those with limited access providing the same service of weekly etc. food provision
Secondary School	Key services	Important community services	Settlements are within multiple secondary school catchment areas and there is the ability for older children to travel to these
Pharmacy	Key services	Important community services	Prescription delivery service available providing the same service of provision
Bank / ATM	Key services	Important community services	People primarily use cashless payment methods. However, banks and ATMs still offer financial services, so considered important to retain overall. Cashback is also available in post offices. Post offices have therefore

[1] Ofcom Connected Nations 2021

Service / facility	Original category (consultation)	New Category	Reason
			been added to the service / facility in relation to providing access to cash.
Nursey / Pre-school	Important community services	Key services	Plays a vital service for those who have children
Access to recycling centre	Other community services	Important community services	Disposing of household waste in recycling centre is a service that people travel to from time-to-time
Designated cycle route	Important community services	Other community services	The rural nature of most of the district alongside the locations of designated routes means these are used mainly for leisure
National walking trail	Important community services	Other community services	The rural nature of most of the district alongside the locations of designated routes means these are used mainly for leisure
Allotments	Important community services	Other community services	They are used for amenity and leisure

5.16 In addition to the above, some more minor amendments to services and facilities were made to better reflect their nature and importance in terms of sustainability and assist in the assessment, where there may be subtle differences in the provision and availability of a service or facility. They remained in their original category:

<u>Key services</u>

- Bus service – this was amended to 'very frequent bus service', preferably 7 days a week, minimum 30 minutes frequency and duration of journey generally less than 30 minutes to the nearest district or regional town;
- Convenience store – open minimum 9-5 and 7 days a week providing basic groceries (Bread, Milk, toilet roll etc.)

<u>Other important community services</u>

- Higher education – other educational facilities removed;
- Sports centre – changed to be *named leisure centre* so that the facility includes places of leisure not just sports;
- Community / Village hall - *now includes community hubs* because these also provide an area for members of the community to gather for activities;
- Recreation – play space / playing pitches *now includes teenage areas and outdoor gyms* as these areas also provide further recreational activities;

- Nearby hospital - Must have a *minor injuries unit* identified by the NHS

- Convenience store – not open 9-5 and 7 days a week but provides basic groceries;

- Daily bus service - Changed to frequent bus service - a good bus service 5 days a week, minimum 60 minutes frequency and duration up to 60 minutes to the nearest district or regional town.

Other community services

- Other convenience shops – changed to 'Other essential retail shops' (including butcher and grocery);

- Café / restaurant – *plus tea rooms and coffee shops*. Added as they provide the same service;

- Takeaways – mobile services removed on the basis that permanency and provision can fluctuate;

5.17 As a result of the above changes, the final list of services and facilities taken forward as indicators of a settlements sustainability are set out in Table 7.

Table 7: List of services and facilities to use as indicators of sustainability

Sustainable Settlement Study to support the Draft Wealden Local Plan (Regulation 18)
Key services
• Primary school • Nursey / pre-school • Doctors surgery • Convenience store open minimum 9-5 and 7 days a week providing basic groceries (Bread, Milk, toilet roll etc.) • Train station • Very frequent Bus service - preferably 7 days a week, minimum 30 minutes frequency and duration of journey generally less than 30 minutes to the nearest district or regional town
Other Important community services
• Supermarket (>400sqm) • Convenience store – not open 9-5 and 7 days a week but provides basic groceries • Secondary School • Pharmacy • Post office / Bank / ATM • Dentist • Leisure centre • Place of worship

- Pub
- Community / village hall / community hub
- Recreation – play space / playing pitches / teenage areas / outdoor gyms
- Nearby hospital – must have a minor injuries unit
- Frequent bus service - a good bus service 5 days a week, minimum 60 minutes frequency and duration up to 60 minutes to the nearest district or regional town
- Access to household waste recycling centre

Other community services

- Other convenience essential retail shops – including butcher and grocer
- Other non-essential retail
- Café / Restaurants / Tea rooms / Coffee shops
- Takeaways
- Petrol Station / EV charging facilities
- Vets
- Public green space larger than 20 hectares
- Designated cycle route
- National walking trail
- Allotments
- Nationally recognised groups - WI/Guides/Scouts/UVA/Rotary and other national groups
- Limited bus service

Approach to the assessment

Scoring mechanism

5.18 In order to use the indicators set out in Table 7 to assess the districts settlements in terms of their sustainability, a scoring mechanism was needed. A critical review of published settlement studies by different local authorites led to the conclusion that there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach.

5.19 As part of the initial Scoping Paper (as set out at Appendix A) shared with Town and Parish Councils, we set out a number of options for scoring different services and facilities:

- Continue with the approach in the Core Strategy – award 1 point for each service/facility present in a settlement; or
- Use the approach put forward in the Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper (2019) as set out in Table 3 of Chapter 1 previously; or
- Provide set weighted scores depending on the importance of the services/facilities – for example 10 points for key services, 5 points for important community services and 1 point for other community services.

5.20 From the consultation responses (see Appendix B), it was clear that a weighted approach to the scoring was preferred and considered appropriate.

5.21 The next question we sought to answer was how many points each of the three categories should be given. As there is no wrong or right answer we used three different methods as set out in Table 10 below to test the different options and understand the differences in approach in relation on the outputs.

Table 10: Weighted scores

Scoring method	Service/facilities category	Points
1	• Key services • Other important community service • Other community service	10 5 1
2	• Key services • Other important community service • Other community service	3 2 1
3	• Key services • Other important community service • Other community service	1 1 1

5.22 These scores (Table 10) were applied to each settlement where the service/facility existed, regardless of the number of each service/facility present i.e. if a settlement had two convenience stores (open minimum 9-5 and 7 days a week), it would only receive the set points i.e. 10 points rather than 20 points.

5.23 A number of our settlements have more than one type of the same service or facility. For example, a settlement may have two shops or two playgrounds. We therefore considered how additional services and facilities of the same type could be scored. We identified a list of services and facilities from the data that we had collected where there are more than one of the same service or facility within a settlement. This included the following:

- Key services
    - Convenience Store - open minimum 9 - 5, 7 days a week - provide basic groceries - bread milk toilet rolls etc.
- Other important community services
    - Supermarket (>400sqm)
    - Pharmacy
    - Dentist
    - Place of worship
    - Pub

- Community/Village Hall/Community Hub
- Recreation - play space/playing pitches/teenage areas/outdoor gym
- Convenience Store/Farm Shop - not open minimum 9 - 5, 7 days a week - provide basic groceries - bread milk toilet rolls etc.

- Other community services

  - Other convenience shops (including butcher / grocery)
  - Other comparison / specialist shops
  - Café/Restaurants/Tea Rooms/Coffee Shops
  - Takeaways
  - Public Green Space larger than 20 hectares
  - Allotments
  - Nationally recognised groups - WI/Guides/Scouts/UVA/Rotary and other national groups

5.24 We then considered how we could apply a score to those services and facilities where more than one type of the same service or facility was present. Again there was no definitive approach with this, so we applied an additional two approaches to ensure that we have undertaken a rounded consideration of sustainability. The approaches applied to each 'additional service / facility' scoring method were as follows:

- Approach A - Use the weighted scores (scoring method 1, 2 and 3 – table 10) with no additional scoring for any additional service or facility of the same type.

- Approach B – Use the weighted scores (scoring method 1, 2 and 3 – table 10) to score the first example of each service or facility and then score 1 additional point for each subsequent example of that type of service or facility.

- Approach C - Use the weighted scores (scoring method 1, 2 and 3 – table 10) to score the first example of each service or facility and then use a scoring range for each subsequent example of that type of service or facility. The scoring range applied is provided in table 11 below

Table 11: Approach C: Points for each additional service or facility

Service Category	Type of service	No. of additional services	Points
Key services	• Convenience Store - open minimum 9 - 5, 7 days a week - provide basic groceries - bread milk toilet rolls etc.	1-3 4-6 7-9 10-12 13-15 16-17 18-20 20+	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Service Category	Type of service	No. of additional services	Points
Other important community services	• Supermarket	1-3 4-6 7-9 10-12 13-15 16-17 18-20 20+	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
	• Pharmacy • Dentist • Place of worship • Community/Village Hall/Community Hub	N/A	Cap at 3 additional points
	• Pub • Recreation - play space/playing pitches/teenage areas/outdoor gym • Convenience Store/Farm Shop - not open minimum 9 - 5, 7 days a week - provide basic groceries - bread milk toilet rolls etc.	1-3 4-6 7-9 10-12 13-15 16-17 18-20 20+	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Other community services	• Other convenience shops (including butcher / grocery) • Other comparison / specialist shops • Café/Restaurants/Tea Rooms/Coffee Shops • Takeaways	1-3 4-6 7-9 10-12 13-15 16-17 18-20 20+	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
	• Public Green Space larger than 20 hectares • Allotments • Nationally recognised groups - WI/Guides/Scouts/UVA/Rotary and other national groups	N/A	Cap at 3 additional points

Confirming settlement services and facilities

5.19 Data was gathered on the services and facilities present at each of the settlements to be assessed through desktop work and site visits. Once the lists were compiled (Appendix D), these were sent to each of the Town and Parish Council's for confirmation, allowing for changes to be made where appropriate i.e. if we had missed a service or included one that was no longer present or in operation. This work was undertaken in July and August 2021.

Qualitative Assessment

5.25 In addition to the quantitative nature of the above scoring system, we also considered other qualitative factors in determining a settlements sustainability to understand where a settlement should sit within the settlement hierarchy. This included factors such as transport links, accessibility to larger centres, environmental constraints and the location of settlements and whether they support or share services with neighbouring settlements.

5.20 In addition to the above, accessibility is an important factor when looking to determine the sustainability of a settlement. For example, a settlement may possess a limited number of services or facilities, which if strictly following the quantitative assessment scoring, would lessen a settlements sustainability. However, a settlement may have very good sustainable transport links with another settlement that does provide a good range of services and facilities. This therefore provides a justification to consider that settlement to be more sustainable than a settlement that does not have a good range of services and facilities or good accessibility to access these from a higher order settlement. Ultimately, the sustainability of the larger settlement provides a supporting role for settlements that surround it. This approach reflects one of the main objectives of the NPPF, which is to focus growth where residents have the opportunity to use non car modes of travel. This was also an area discussed and considered with Town and Parish Councils during the early stages of consultation on the methdology, which took place between May and June 2021.

1.21 As part of the qualitative assessment and in relation to accessibility, we considered the key reasons why people travel the most and took a more in depth consideration of this as part of the assessment. This included considering a settlements accessibility to education, services and facilities and employment.

1.22 In terms of education, we considered whether a settlement had either a nursery/pre-school, a primary school or secondary school (or a combination of the three) and if not, we considered whether residents can easily access such provision in a nearby settlement by sustainable transport modes.

1.23 For services and facilities, we considered the number, range and type of services and facilities provided within each settlement, with the more services and facilities a settlement had, the more sustainable it would be. Consideration was also given to whether services and facilities within a higher order settlement could be accessed by public transport from a smaller settlement.

1.24 We also considered the range of different services and facilities that were recorded for each settlement. We considered this because two settlements could have a total of five services, but if one has five shops for example and the other has five recreational spaces, there is a notable difference in relation to residents being able to satisfy their daily needs and the overall sustainability of a settlement.

1.25 In relation to employment, we considered whether the settlement was a key employment location, using information from the Wealden Economy Study (2022), and again whether employment can be reasonable accessed using sustainable transport modes.

1.26 When looking at the accessibility of settlements, we considered whether they had a train station, or reasonable access to a train station via sustainable transport modes. We also considered bus frequency and journey times to higher order settlements, both within and outside of the district.

1.27 In considering the NPPF, the quantitative and qualitative approach described above we then defined the settlement categories within Chapter 6 as well as analyse the settlements themselves, in combination with their scores and rankings, to determine their positions within the proposed draft Wealden Settlement Hierarchy, which is set out in Chapter 7.

6.2 Findings and outcomes

6.1 The following section sets out the findings from the quantitative assessment of the settlements within the district.

Analysis of scoring

6.3 The alternative scoring methods were applied to the list of services and facilities for each settlement (Appendix D), the results of which are set out in the tables in Appendix E and Appendix F. Table 12 below provides a summary of the results for each settlement and method, using the average score across all three methods, and are ranked in order.

Table 12: Average scores by Method, ranked in order

Ranking	Settlement	Average Method 1	Average Method 2	Average Method 3	Overall average
1	Crowborough	200	122	98	140
2	Uckfield	196	121	98	139
3	Hailsham	185	114	92	130
4	Heathfield	163	92	70	108
5	Polegate	140	71	50	87
6	Forest Row	125	66	48	79
7	Wadhurst	125	61	41	75
8	Mayfield	115	53	34	67
9	Willingdon	107	52	35	65
10	Horam	98	46	30	58
11	Herstmonceux	99	44	27	56
12	Rotherfield	92	40	24	52
13	Stone Cross	92	36	19	49
14	Pevensey Bay	81	39	26	48
15	Buxted	82	36	22	47

Ranking	Settlement	Average Method 1	Average Method 2	Average Method 3	Overall average
16	Groombridge	84	35	20	47
17	Westham	84	35	20	46
18	Hartfield	78	32	18	43
19	Ninfield	80	31	16	43
20	East Hoathly	75	30	16	40
21	Maresfield	71	29	16	39
22	Pevensey	66	30	19	38
23	Nutley	65	29	18	38
24	Frant	67	28	16	37
25	Cross In Hand	54	25	16	32
26	Mark Cross	55	22	12	30
27	Bells Yew Green	51	22	13	28
28	Blackboys	50	21	12	28
29	Eridge	47	22	14	28
30	Framfield	50	21	12	28
31	Hellingly	53	20	10	28
32	Laughton	49	21	12	28
33	Fletching	47	22	14	27
34	Punnetts Town	50	20	11	27
35	Cade Street	48	19	10	26
36	Lower Horsebridge	49	19	10	26
37	Lower Dicker	42	20	13	25

Ranking	Settlement	Average Method 1	Average Method 2	Average Method 3	Overall average
38	Upper Dicker	44	19	11	25
39	High Hurstwood	44	19	11	24
40	Broad Oak	44	18	10	24
41	Five Ash Down	46	17	8	24
42	Isfield	43	18	10	24
43	Berwick Station	41	19	12	24
44	Chalvington	43	18	10	23
45	Chelwood Gate	42	17	9	23
46	Hadlow Down	39	17	10	22
47	Withyham	41	16	8	22
48	Five Ashes	41	15	7	21
49	Hooe	38	16	9	21
50	Waldron	35	17	11	21
51	Little Horsted	40	13	5	20
52	Danehill	37	15	8	20
23	Fairwarp	31	16	11	19
54	Rushlake Green	34	15	9	19
55	Balls Green	33	14	8	19
56	Selmeston	33	14	8	19
57	Chiddingly	29	14	9	18
58	Arlington	27	15	11	17

Ranking	Settlement	Average Method 1	Average Method 2	Average Method 3	Overall average
59	Old Heathfield	31	12	6	16
60	Coleman's Hatch	28	13	8	16
61	Maynards Green	31	11	5	16
62	Halland	27	12	7	16
63	Windmill Hill	27	11	6	14
64	Bodle Street Green	26	10	5	14
65	Muddles Green	26	10	5	14
66	Boreham Street	22	10	6	13
67	Blackham	21	9	5	12
68	Town Row	20	7	3	10
69	Cousley Wood	17	8	5	10
70	Magham Down	17	8	5	10
71	Wartling	16	7	4	9
72	Upper Hartfield	15	6	3	8
73	Hankham	15	5	2	7
74	Warbleton	11	5	3	6
75	Best Beech Hill	10	4	2	6
76	Vines Cross	10	4	2	6
77	Cowbeech	5	2	1	3
78	Rosers Cross	5	2	1	3

6.4 As expected, the scores for the settlements varied widely across the alternative scoring methods. This was due to the different weightings and graduated approaches. Given that all methods were applied to each settlement in the same way, we considered that averaging each of the scoring methods would allow analysis and comparison. For example, we averaged 1a, 1b and 1c etc. as they shared a common baseline (i.e. 10 points for a 'Key Service', 5 points for an 'Important Community Service' and 1 point for 'Other Community Services'. This was also done for 2a, 2b and 2c as well as 3a, 3b and 3c. This ensures we are using 'like for like' scoring.

6.5 As can be seen from Table 12 the ranking of the settlements by the overall average does not significantly differ from the average of each method, albeit with a few exceptions/outliers. The highest scoring settlements are Crowborough, Uckfield, Hailsham, Heathfield and Polegate, meaning they are the most sustainable in terms of the services and facilities they offer. This was to be expected given they are the district's largest settlements. This is a pattern carried forward from the Core Strategy (2013) settlement hierarchy. The ranking of these settlements overall matches their rankings under each method.

6.6 The settlements scoring between 41-80 points as their overall average, occupy rankings that are similar to their positions under each scoring method. Only a couple of these settlements score the same overall average points, Buxted and Groombridge both score 47 points and Hartfield and Ninfield both score 43. The settlements ranked 6-11 overall are the same under each of the methods, although some do switch places – Mayfield and Willingdon and Herstmonceux and Horam, for example.

6.8 The settlements scoring 31-40 points as an average across the three scoring methods are ranked 20-25 and this reflects a similar ranking under each of the individual scoring methods, albeit some settlements swap places. The exception here is Pevensey, which is ranked 22 overall but under Method 3 it is ranked slightly higher at 18 and sits above the settlements of Maresfield and East Hoathly. The overall average score means Pevensey sits below these two settlements, although it scores the same as Maresfield and is only 2 points lower than East Hoathly.

6.9 Those settlements scoring between 21-30 points as an average overall, are ranked 26-50 with many of the settlements scoring the same amount of points i.e. Eridge, Bells Yew Green, Blackboys, Framfield, Hellingly and Laughton all score an overall average of 28 points. This is reflected almost identically across each of the individual methods with the exceptions being:

- Mark Cross and Waldron – ranked 25 and 52 respectively under Method 1 and ranked 26 and 51 overall; and
- Five Ash Down, Withyham and Five Ashes – ranked 53, 55 and 58 respectively under Method 3 and ranked 41, 47 and 49 respectively overall.

6.10 Those settlements scoring between 11 and 20 points as an overall average, occupy the same ranking positions as they do under each individual scoring method positions 51-67). The exceptions being:

- Little Horsted – ranked 48 under Method 1 and 51 overall;
- Fairwarp – ranked 50 under Method 2 and 53 overall; and
- Arlington, Fairwarp and Chiddingly – ranked 37, 38 and 49 respectively under Method 3 and ranked 58, 54 and 57 respectively overall

6.11 Despite this, the scores for the outliers under Method 3 are all within 6 points of each other and the settlements under Method 1 and 2 occupy similar positions, and where they do change this is only by one or two rankings.

6.12 The lowest scoring settlements by overall average points (10 points or less) match closely in the rank positions as within each of the individual scoring Methods. These settlements have the least amount of services and facilities in terms of their sustainability. Where their positions do change this is only by one rank position.

6.13 Overall, applying the various scoring methods, we have provided a sensitivity check for the scoring and ranking of the district's settlements. The analysis above and Tables in Appendix E show that whilst the scores for each settlement vary considerably between methods, their overall scores and rankings do not fundamentally change, with a few exceptions as detailed above. In many cases, within each method and as an overall average, settlements score the same points. Using the averages from each method provides a robust and justified means of ranking the settlements and is in general a common approach used in studies such as this.

6.14 It should be noted that Table 12 above shows the average scores and **does not indicate** a settlements place in the settlement hierarchy. Whilst the presence of services and facilities are an important consideration, the consideration of sustainability goes further than this.

Identification of settlement categories

6.15 In order to develop a settlement hierarchy, settlement categories are required to be defined to enable an understanding of sustainability and to enable the grouping of settlements in a particular category.

6.16 The criteria and approach used in this assessment was used to identify settlement categories. This includes the type, quantity and quality of the services and facilities present, and other sustainability criteria, including accessibility and sustainable transport opportunities to a town or larger settlement with a good level of services, facilities and employment.

6.17 In defining the settlement hierarchy categories, consideration was given to the types, quantity and range of services and facilities a settlement would need in

order to provide for the day-to-day needs of its residents as well as its proximity and relationship to the wider area and potentially other, lower ranking settlements. Proximity and access to employment and sustainable transport, principally train stations but also the presence and frequency of bus services, was also considered. Finally, account was also taken of the relationship between settlements in so far as a smaller low scoring settlement may be close to a higher order settlement with access via sustainable transport and therefore an influence on its position in the hierarchy. This final point reflects advice in paragraph 79 of the NPPF (2021) that states:

> "Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby".

6.18 The resulting settlement categories proposed for the district retain the towns as the top level and creates a further five settlement categories. The new settlement categories are set out below:

Table 13: Settlement categories

Settlement category	**Description**	**Settlement**
Type 1 settlements (Town)	A district centre providing a retail and employment function as well as providing both key and community services. The settlement will provide very frequent public transport options to higher order settlements outside of the district to access employment and additional retail, services and facilities. The settlement provides both nursery, primary and secondary school provision as well as access to a range of supermarkets.	Crowborough, Uckfield, Hailsham and Heathfield
Type 2 settlements (Settlements that geographically relate to a regional centre within Wealden district)	A settlement located on the edge of a major conurbation that has very frequent public transport services to access a nearby regional centre,	Polegate, Willingdon, Stone Cross, Westham, Pevensey, Pevensey Bay

Settlement category	Description	Settlement
	such as Eastbourne or Tunbridge Wells.	
Type 3 settlements (Primary village)	A settlement providing a smaller retail function than a type 1 settlement as well as providing both key and community services. The settlement will have a frequent public transport service to higher order settlements and key employment locations both within and / or outside of the district. As a minimum the settlement will have a primary school and / or nursery provision, a secondary school or public transport access to a secondary school, a large range and number of services (but less than a type 1 settlement) access to a supermarket or a convenience store (open 9-5, 7 days a week). These settlements provide a number of key services and facilities that meet the settlements own day-to-day needs.	Forest Row, Horam, Mayfield, Wadhurst.
Type 4 settlements (Secondary village)	A settlement with a good range of community services with at a minimum a frequent public transport service to a type 1 settlement to access retail,	Bells Yew Green, Berwick Station, Blackboys, Buxted, Cross in Hand, East Hoathly, Five Ash Down, Framfield, Frant, Groombridge, Hartfield, Herstmonceux, Isfield, Lower Horsebridge,

Settlement category	Description	Settlement
	services, facilities and employment.	Maresfield, Ninfield, Rotherfield
Type 5 settlements (Neighbourhood settlement)	A settlement with some community services with limited access to public transport. It is likely that residents will rely on the private car to travel to meet their day to day needs for education, employment, services and facilities.	Blackboys, Broad Oak, Cade Street, Chelwood Gate, Coleman's Hatch, Danehill, Eridge, Five Ashes, Framfield, Hadlow Down, Halland, Hellingly, High Hurstwood, Laughton, Lower Dicker, Little Horsted, Mark Cross, Maynards Green, Nutley Punnetts Town, Rushlake Green, Selmeston, Upper Dicker, Upper Hartfield, Windmill Hill, Withyham
Type 6 settlements (Residential settlement)	A small rural settlement with limited or no community services and limited or no access to public transport. It is likely that residents will rely on the private car to travel to meet their day-to-day needs for education, employment, services and facilities.	Arlington, Balls Green, Best Beech Hill, Blackham, Bodle Street Green, Boreham Street, Chalvington & Ripe, Chiddingly, Cowbeech, Cousley Wood, Fairwarp, Fletching, Hankham, Hooe, Magham Down, Muddles Green, Old Heathfield, Rosers Cross, Town Row, Vines Cross, Waldron, Warbleton, Wartling

Analysis of settlements

6.19 Appendix G contains more detailed profiles for each of the settlements assessed as part of this study. These provide more detail on the type and level of services and facilities each settlement has as well as their public transport provision to other centres. The profiles also set out other relevant considerations including

information relating to constraints including landscape, heritage or environmental designations, for example.

6.20 The following section sets out a discussion of the settlements in relation to the categories in Table 13.

Type 1 Settlements (Town)

6.21 This category contains Crowborough, Uckfield, Hailsham and Heathfield. These settlements all have at least 20 of the total 24 services and facilities when excluding education and public transport, which are considered separately below for the purpose of this exercise) listed in Table 7.

6.22 All of the settlements have a very frequent bus service to either Tunbridge Wells, Eastbourne, Haywards Heath or Brighton as well as having bus services between smaller settlements within the district, meaning these smaller settlements can rely on and sustainably access the services and facilities that the towns have to offer. For example, the centrally located bus station in Uckfield, adjacent to the railway station, provides a transport hub with a wide range of services to/from neighbouring towns and villages.

6.23 The settlements all offer nursery, primary and secondary school education as well as various community services including GP Surgeries, leisure centres, recreational spaces, churches, pubs, supermarkets, cafes and restaurants. They also provide significant employment opportunities within their centres but also on industrial estates and in business areas.

Type 2 Settlements (Settlements that geographically relate to a regional centre outside or within Wealden district).

This category contains Polegate, Willingdon, Stone Cross, Westham, Pevensey and Pevensey Bay. All Settlements are within the top 20 rankings, with the exception of Pevensey which is ranked 23 and are located on the edge of Eastbourne, a major conurbation, and all have a very frequent public transport service (bus and/or train) to Eastbourne.

6.24 They all have a convenience store open 7 days a week at least 9am – 5pm and / or a GP surgery as well as good retail provision and other community services including pubs, recreation grounds, village halls, post offices, cafes/restaurants and local groups.

6.25 Polegate supports the only traditional High Street in the area, although shopping provision is dominated by nearby Eastbourne. Nevertheless, it provides a good range and number of services and facilities for its residents. Polegate also has a train station at its centre with services to Eastbourne, Lewes and then onto Brighton and London.

6.26 Pevensey Bay has a good number of services and facilities including at least one small supermarket/ convenience store alongside other local service outlets including pubs, takeaways and local niche operators.

6.27 Willingdon has a number of small shopping parades in the area meeting some of the day to day needs of residents, however residents rely upon Eastbourne to help meet other retail and leisure requirements. Stone Cross has a neighbourhood centre, and a range of community facilities including a convenience store open at least 9am – 5pm 7 days a week, a health centre, dental clinic, church, pub, village hall and recreation ground

6.28 All of the settlements have nursery provision except Pevensey Bay and Westham, but there is access to such provision in nearby Pevensey. All have primary school provision except Pevensey and Pevensey Bay but again there is access to provision in Pevensey & Westham, which can be reached via public transport. The only secondary school is within Willingdon, however the other settlements can access this, as well as provision in Eastbourne and Hailsham, via public transport (bus services).

6.29 Stone Cross, Westham and Pevensey have between 11 and 13 total services and facilities (not including education or public transport). However, they are in relatively close proximity to, and have very good public transport connections with Eastbourne and Hailsham.

6.30 All of the settlements have frequent or very frequent bus services to other centres including Eastbourne, Hailsham and Heathfield. For Polegate and Willingdon, the Stagecoach number 51 between Heathfield and Eastbourne and the number 98 between Hastings and Eastbourne provide access to and from Hastings, Bexhill, Ninfield, Herstmonceux, Willingdon and Eastbourne (the 98) and Heathfield, Hellingly, Hailsham and Eastbourne (51). For Pevensey, the Stagecoach number 99 between Hastings and Eastbourne provides a frequent half hourly bus service 7 days a week.

6.31 Stone Cross is also well located to use the facilities at nearby Langney also and the Stagecoach number 6 between Langney and Eastbourne Town Centre runs hourly Mon – Sat and the number 1X between Hellingly and Eastbourne runs a half hourly service Mon – Sat. Pevensey is also served by a frequent half hourly bus service 7 days a week to Eastbourne (the Stagecoach 99), which also offers an evening service.

6.32 Westham and Pevensey also have linkages via train services from Pevensey & Westham and Pevensey Bay train stations, serving Hastings, Eastbourne and Brighton. Therefore, they have very good sustainable access to higher order settlements.

Type 3 Settlements (Primary village)

6.33 This category contains the settlements of Forest Row, Horam, Mayfield and Wadhurst, all ranked within the top 10 on sustainability scoring, with the exception of Horam which is ranked 11. These settlements all have between 15 and 20 of the total 24 services and facilities (when excluding education and public transport, which are considered separately below) listed in Table 7, although unlike Type 2 settlements, they are not located on the edge of a major conurbation. They do all have very frequent or frequent public transport services to higher order settlements and key employment locations both within and / or outside of the district.

6.34 All of the settlements have nursery provision and Forest Row, Wadhurst and Mayfield also have primary school provision. Residents of Horam can access primary school provision in Maynards Green which is 0.9 miles away. Only Wadhurst has a secondary school however secondary school provision can be accessed in Heathfield (for Horam and Mayfield) and East Grinstead (for Forest Row) and via bus services.

6.35 Forest Row serves as an established residential area as well as a local employment centre and as an important local shopping centre for its residents and surrounding rural areas. In addition to nursery and primary educational provision, it has a GP surgery, convenience store (open 7 days a week at least 9am to 5pm) and other essential / specialist shops, pharmacy, dentist, post office, church, pub, community centre, village hall, recreational spaces, cafes, restaurants and allotments.

6.36 Forest Row has very good accessibility, with the A22 running north/south to the west of the village providing links to East Grinstead and beyond and the B2110 Hartfield Road running east/west connecting the village to Hartfield and Tunbridge Wells. Whilst the village does not have a train station, there are local bus services to and from Forest Row, many of these providing links to East Grinstead, Crawley, Eastbourne and Tunbridge Wells. These run hourly and half hourly 7 days a week and have some evening services.

6.37 Horam is one of the district's larger villages and the settlement is mostly concentrated on the eastern side of the A267 around the commercial core located on the High Street near to the junction of the B2203 Heathfield Road. The village centre provides a range of shops, services and community facilities including a GP surgery, pharmacy, dentists, a Co-Op convenience store (open 7 days a week 7am – 10pm), post office, fish and chip shop, tea rooms and recreation ground. There are also a number of leisure and tourism facilities located both within and on the edge of the village. The leisure and tourism facilities along with the many businesses located within Horam provide opportunities for local employment.

6.38 Whilst there is no longer a train station at Horam, it has a very frequent bus service providing half hourly services Mon – Sun between the village and Heathfield,

with a journey time of approx. 12 mins. This bus route is also a school service and serves Maynards Green primary school (a short journey from Horam).

6.39 Mayfield is predominantly residential in character with a good range of shops and services which are focused around the High Street, including a convenience store open 7 days a week (6am – 9pm/10pm), pharmacy, dentists, post office and bank, pub, church, village hall, recreation grounds, various convenience/essential retail comparison and specialist retail shops, cafes and tea shops and sports clubs.

6.40 Mayfield has good accessibility to the A267 with a very frequent bus service to Heathfield which runs 7 days a week on a half hourly and evening service with a journey time of approx. 14 mins. Although physically close to Crowborough, it is likely to be easier and quicker for residents to access Heathfield via public transport.

6.41 Wadhurst has a good provision of services and facilities including a variety of retail stores, a doctor's surgery, pharmacy, a supermarket, post office, pub, village hall, cafes, restaurants and recreation ground. In addition, the village has a frequent hourly bus service to Tunbridge Wells which runs Mon – Sat, with a journey time of approx. 20 mins. Furthermore, the village does have a train station providing access to London, although it is located approx. 1.5 miles to the north-west of the village centre, however a bus service connects Wadhurst and the adjacent village of Durgates and Sparrows Green to the train station.

Type 4 Settlements (Secondary village)

6.42 This category contains the settlements Bells Yew Green, Berwick Station, Blackboys, Buxted, Cross in Hand, East Hoathly, Five Ash Down, Framfield, Frant, Groombridge, Hartfield, Herstmonceux, Isfield, Lower Horsebridge, Maresfield, Ninfield and Rotherfield. Most of these settlements all have between 10 and 15 of the total 24 services and facilities (when excluding education and transport) listed in Table 7. Those who have less than 10 include Bells Yew Green, Berwick Station, Five Ash Down, Isfield, Lower Horsebridge and Maresfield.

6.43 The settlements all have a number of services and facilities serving local residents including some with nursery and / or primary school provision as well as some with small shops, village halls, churches, pubs, cafes, post offices and recreation grounds. All of the settlements have a convenience store open 7 days a week at least 9am-5pm and/or a GP surgery, except for Lower Horsebridge, Berwick Station and Isfield, which have neither but have sustainable access via public transport to settlements with such services. In addition, Lower Horsebridge and Isfield have access to a farm shop or convenience store, although opening hours for Isfield are limited.

6.44 The settlements also have frequent or very frequent public transport to a Type 1 settlement, and/or a large settlement outside of the district, where a wider range of services and facilities are on offer. This is primarily bus services as only Buxted, Bells Yew Green and Berwick Station have a train station. These train stations offer

services to London and Brighton as well as providing connections to other settlements outside the district such as Hastings and Eastbourne.

6.45 Those settlements scoring less than 10 out of the total 24 services and facilities (except for Maresfield) have been considered within this category primarily because they do offer some level of services and facilities to their communities as well as being extremely well connected via some form of public transport to higher order settlements within the district and to centres outside of the district.

6.46 Bells Yew Green has a convenience store open 6am to 8pm Monday to Friday, open 8am to 7pm on Saturdays and 9am to 6pm on Sundays to serve the local community. The village has a limited bus service to Tunbridge Wells Monday to Friday (5 services per day) however it has a mainline train station with frequent and direct services to London and Tunbridge Wells (4 mins to Tunbridge Wells). The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.47 Berwick Station has fewer services and facilities and lacks a convenience store, although it has a post office. The village also has a limited bus service Monday – Sunday with 1 or 2 daily services only. However, it has a mainline train station with frequent and direct services to Brighton as well as to Eastbourne. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement.

6.48 Blackboys has both nursery and primary school provision and 7 out of 24 services including a village hall, pub and recreation ground. It has a limited bus service Monday to Saturday, with 6-7 services during the day but no evening services. Journey times to Uckfield are short at around 14 mins and 10 mins to Heathfield. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of its residents.

6.49 Buxted has a convenience store open 7am to 7pm Monday to Saturday and 7am to 4pm on Sunday to serve the local community. The village also has a nursery school, GP surgery, and pub and village hall. The village only has a limited bus service to Uckfield (journey time around 21 mins) on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday, with 3 services per day. However, the village has a mainline train station providing direct services to Uckfield (4 min journey). The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of its residents. Passengers can also access London from Buxted via the train, with journey times to London Bridge of around 1 hour 16 minutes.

6.50 Cross in Hand has access to a convenience store at MRH Isenhurst Services on Mayfield Road, which is open 24 hours. The village also has a very frequent bus service to Heathfield (journey times around 4 mins) which runs half hourly and some evening services 7 days a week. The village also has a church, village hall, pub and recreation ground. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.51 East Hoathly has a village store open 6 days a week from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays. It also has a GP surgery, post office, nursery school, primary school, church, pub, village hall and recreation ground. In addition, there is a frequent hourly bus service Monday to Saturday with journey times of around 19 minutes to Uckfield. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.52 Isfield has no key services and only a few community services, including a pub, village hall and recreation ground. Whilst there is no convenience store, there is the Isfield Farm Shop Butchers and Village Store. This is open Tuesday – Thursday from 10am to 2pm, on Fridays from 10am to 4pm and on Saturdays from 9am to 4pm. The store offers fresh produce to the local community including vegetables, milk and meat. However, the village has a very frequent bus service to Uckfield along the A26 (Brighton and Hove Buses number 29) with a journey time of 11 mins and so has very good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement and the amenities it provides as well as providing for the day to day needs of residents. The bus service also provides access to Tunbridge Wells, Brighton and Lewes.

6.53 Five Ash Down has a convenience store open 9am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 12pm on Saturdays and 8am to 11am on Sundays, however it lacks in terms of other services and facilities. Despite this, the village is extremely close to Uckfield and has a very frequent bus service to Uckfield (journey time of approx. 6 mins). Residents can also reach Tunbridge Wells in 25 mins from the village via the Brighton and Hove number 29 between Brighton and Tunbridge Wells. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.54 Framfield has both a nursery and primary school as well as some community services, including a village hall, pub and recreation ground. It also has a limited bus service Monday to Saturday, with only 5-6 services during the day and no evening services. Journey times to Uckfield are short at around 9 mins. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of its residents.

6.55 Frant has a convenience store and post office open 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm on Saturdays and 8am to 1.30pm on Sundays. The village also has a primary school, church, pub, village hall, café, home furnishing store and recreation ground. The village also has a very frequent bus service to Tunbridge Wells (journey times around 7 mins) which runs half hourly and some evening services 7 days a week. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.56 Groombridge has a very good range of services and facilities. Angel House Stores on Station Road is a convenience store open 6am to 8pm Monday to Saturday and 8am to 7pm on Sundays. The village also has a primary school and nursery school, GP surgery (which it shares with Hartfield and is based in Hartfield

0.1 miles away), post office, church, pub, village hall and recreation ground. In addition, the village has a frequent hourly bus service, with some evenings, 7 days a week, with journey times of around 13 mins to Tunbridge Wells. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.57 Hartfield has a very good range of services and facilities. Hartfield Stores Limited on the High Street is a convenience store open 7am to 7pm Monday to Saturday and 8am to 6pm on Sundays. The village also has a primary school and nursery school, GP surgery (which it shares with Groombridge), church, pub, village hall and recreation ground. In addition, the village has a frequent hourly bus service, with some evenings, 7 days a week, with journey times of around 22 mins to Tunbridge Wells. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.58 Herstmonceux has a Mace convenience store open Monday to Saturday from 7am to 7pm as well as a nursery and primary school, health centre/GP, pharmacy, pub, church, village hall, recreation ground and a couple of restaurants/cafes. The village also has a frequent hourly bus service, but no evening services, to Hailsham 6 days a week, with journey times of around 18 mins. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.59 Lower Horsebridge has both a nursery and primary school as well as a pub and recreation ground. It also has a convenience store along Upper Horsebridge Road which is open 7am to 10pm 7 days a week. The village also has a very frequent, half hourly bus service to Hailsham 7 days a week, with a journey time of approx. 10 mins. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of its residents.

6.60 Maresfield has both a nursery and primary school as well as a convenience store open from 6am to 8pm Monday to Saturday and 6am to 6pm on Sundays. The village also has a frequent, hourly bus service to Uckfield, running services Monday to Saturday and with a journey time of approx. 8 mins. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of its residents. .

6.61 Ninfield has a village store and post office in Lower Street, open 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Saturday and 8am to 12.30pm on Sundays. It also has a primary and nursery school, GP surgery, church, pub, village hall and recreation ground. In addition, the village has a frequent hourly bus service 6 days a week (but no evening services) with journey times of around 22 min to Bexhill. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

6.62 Rotherfield has a village store, open 6am to 9pm 7 days a week. It also has a primary and nursery school, GP surgery, pharmacy, post office, church, pub, village

hall and recreation ground. In addition, the village has a frequent hourly bus service 7 days a week with journey times of around 15 mins to Crowborough and 29 mins to Heathfield. The village therefore offers good and sustainable access to a higher order settlement whilst also providing for the day to day needs of residents.

Type 5 Settlements (Neighbourhood settlement)

6.63 This category contains the settlements of Broad Oak, Cade Street, Chelwood Gate, Coleman's Hatch, Danehill, Eridge, Five Ashes, Hadlow Down, Halland, Hellingly, High Hurstwood, Laughton, Lower Dicker, Little Horsted, Mark Cross, Maynards Green, Nutley, Punnetts Town, Rushlake Green, Selmeston, Upper Dicker, Upper Hartfield, Windmill Hill and Withyham. These settlements all have between 5 and 10 of the total 24 services and facilities (when excluding education and transport) listed in Table 7, with the exception of Little Horsted, Maynards Green and Upper Hartfield, which all have less than 5, and Eridge which has 13.

6.64 The settlements all have some level of services and facilities however these are limited. Only Eridge, Nutley, Lower Dicker, Broad Oak, Rushlake Green, Selmeston and Windmill Hill have a convenience store / farm shop that is open 7 days a week from at least 9am to 5pm, and only Punnetts Town has a GP surgery. The remaining settlements have neither. The settlements lack any other form of retail provision.

6.65 In terms of education, Nutley, Mark Cross, Hellingly, Punnetts Town, Cade Street and Little Horsted all have, or have access close by to nursery and primary school provision. Broad Oak and Chelwood gate only have access to nursey provision whilst Five Ashes, Danehill, Laughton, Upper Dicker, High Hurstwood, Hadlow Down, Withyham and Maynards Green have access to primary school provision. Coleman's Hatch, Lower Dicker, Rushlake Green, Selmeston, Halland, Windmill Hill and Upper Hartfield have no educational provision of any level.

6.66 Cade Street is the only one of the settlements with access to secondary education, provided at Heathfield College.

6.67 Public transport provision is also limited, with none of the settlements having a train station and most of them only having limited[2] bus services. The exceptions to this are Eridge, Five Ashes, Mark Cross, Hellingly, Little Horsted and Maynards Green, which all have very frequent bus services[3] to higher order settlements and Coleman's Hatch, Danehill, Lower Dicker, Chelwood Gate, Withyham, Halland, Windmill Hill and Upper Hartfield, which all have frequent[4] bus services to higher order settlements.

[2] Limited means 3 days or more a week, with both an outward bound and return journey.
[3] Very frequent means 7 days a week, up to around 30 minutes frequency and journey duration to a regional or district town including an evening service.
[4] Frequent means 5 days or more a week, with a frequency of one hour and journey duration up to 60 minutes to a regional or district town.

6.68 Hellingly has access to Hailsham and Eastbourne, as well as Heathfield via the Stagecoach number 51 bus between Heathfield and Eastbourne, with journey times to Hailsham of approx. 14 mins, to Eastbourne of just over an hour and approx. 20 mins to Heathfield. This bus service also stops at Polegate, giving residents of Hellingly access to a train station. Eridge has hourly /half hourly services, 7 days a week, to Tunbridge Wells with a journey time of around 12 mins. This is the Brighton and Hove number 29 bus between Tunbridge Wells and Uckfield. Little Horsted has a service to Uckfield via this service as well, with a journey time of approx. 5 mins and some evening services. Maynards Green has a service to Heathfield with journey times of approx. 10 mins via the Stagecoach number 51 / 51X between Eastbourne and Heathfield, whilst Mark Cross has a service to Tunbridge Wells, with a journey time of approx. 15 mins via the Stagecoach number 251 and 252 between Cade Street and Tunbridge Wells. There is also a school service leaving Mark Cross at 7.50am and arriving at St Johns Grammar school in Tunbridge Wells at 8.35am. A slightly later bus (7.52am) arrives at Bennett Memorial School in Tunbridge Wells at 8.25am.

6.69 Lower Dicker has a service to Hailsham, with a journey time of approx. 20 mins. Chelwood Gate has a service to Haywards Heath, with a journey time of around 29 mins. Withyham has a service to Tunbridge Wells (with some evening buses) and a journey time of approx. 19 mins. Halland has a service to Uckfield with a journey time of around 12 mins, but no evening services. Windmill Hill has a service to Hailsham with a journey time of approx. 18 mins, but no evening services. Upper Hartfield has a service to Tunbridge Wells with a journey time of approx. 22 mins and some evening services.

6.70 Whilst the settlements with very frequent or frequent bus services could be included within the Type 4 Settlements category, due to the fact some have educational provision and / or a convenience store also, the settlements generally lack in a range of community facilities or retail and leisure provision and residents are likely to still need to travel to meet their day-to-day needs.

Type 6 Settlements (Residential settlement)

6.71 This category contains the settlements of Arlington, Balls Green, Best Beech Hill, Blackham, Bodle Street Green, Boreham Street, Chalvington & Ripe, Chiddingly, Cowbeech, Cousley Wood, Fairwarp, Fletching, Hankham, Hooe, Magham Down, Muddles Green, Old Heathfield, Rosers Cross, Town Row, Vines Cross, Waldron, Warbleton and Wartling. These settlements all have between 0 and 5 of the total 24 services and facilities (when excluding education and transport) listed in Table 7, with the exception of Fletching, Chalvington, Hooe, Waldron, Fairwarp, Balls Green, Chiddingly and Arlington, which all have more than 5.

6.72 Of those settlements with more than 5, most have some level of services providing for the community but these are limited to either churches, pubs, village

halls or recreation grounds. None have either of the key services (a GP and / or a convenience store open 7 days a week at least 9am to 5pm), although some like Fletching, Chalvington & Ripe, Arlington and Waldron have village stores but with limited opening hours and they are therefore unlikely to cater for all the day to day needs of residents. Only Chalvington & Ripe has access to nursery provision in nearby Ripe whilst Fletching and Balls Green have primary schools.

6.73 Furthermore, only Hooe has a very frequent bus service and Boreham Street has a frequent bus service (with the rest having no bus service at all) However, the bus serving Hooe does not serve the settlement directly as residents would need to walk approx. 1 mile to The Lamb Inn on the A259 to catch the Stagecoach 99 bus to Bexhill, Hastings and Eastbourne. This walk is along a narrow country road with no footpaths. The bus serving Boreham Street runs Monday to Saturday and has an hourly service, although no evening services, with journey times to Hailsham of around 18 minutes. However, the village itself only has a pub and village hall, with no shopping facilities.

6.74 Hence although these settlements do score more on the community services available, they are not considered to be accessible by public transport and do offer limited services and facilities, with it likely that residents will rely on the private car to travel to meet their day to day needs for education, employment, services and facilities.

6.75 Of the remaining settlements, all of which score less than 5, only Town Row has the key service of a convenience store open 7 days a week at least 9am to 5pm. However, it lacks any other services or facilities, and so even though Town Row has a frequent bus service to Tunbridge Wells, it is likely that residents will rely on the private car to travel to meet their day to day needs for education, employment, services and facilities. This is also true for the other settlements scoring less than 5 as they have no public transport and very limited services and facilities. Magham Down does have a frequent bus service to Hailsham, however the lack of services and facilities within the village justifies its inclusion within this category.

6.76 It is noted that some of the settlements scoring less than 5 do have some level of educational provision but this is limited to nursery provision in Bodle Street Green and primary schools in Old Heathfield, Muddles Green and Hankham. This is also generally the extent of the services and facilities they provide, alongside a church, pub and / or village hall, hence their inclusion within this category.

7 The proposed draft Wealden settlement hierarchy

7.1 Table 14 below sets out the proposed draft Wealden Settlement Hierarchy based on the scores and evidence gathered in this Study and discussed in Chapter 6.

7.2 The settlement hierarchy is an important tool to help decide on the most sustainable locations for future growth. The level of growth will be determined through the local plan and will be established in relation to the opportunities and constraints of each settlement and the various other technical studies being produced, such as the sustainability appraisal and habitat regulations assessment, landscape and ecology assessments, transport capacity, flooding and other key constraints, as well as an assessment of infrastructure required to support any future growth

Table 14: Proposed draft Wealden Settlement Hierarchy

Settlement category	**Settlement**
Type 1 settlements (Town)	Crowborough, Uckfield, Hailsham and Heathfield.
Type 2 settlements (Urban settlement)	Polegate, Willingdon, Stone Cross, Westham, Pevensey, Pevensey Bay.
Type 3 settlements (Primary village)	Forest Row, Horam, Mayfield, Wadhurst.
Type 4 settlements (Secondary village)	Bells Yew Green, Berwick Station, Blackboys, Buxted, Cross in Hand, East Hoathly, Five Ash Down, Framfield, Frant, Groombridge, Hartfield, Herstmonceux, Isfield, Lower Horsebridge, Maresfield, Ninfield, Rotherfield.
Type 5 settlements (Neighbourhood settlement)	Broad Oak, Cade Street, Chelwood Gate, Coleman's Hatch, Danehill, Eridge, Five Ashes, Hadlow Down, Halland, Hellingly, High Hurstwood, Laughton, Lower Dicker, Little Horsted, Mark Cross, Maynards Green, Nutley Punnetts Town, Rushlake Green, Selmeston, Upper Dicker, Upper Hartfield, Windmill Hill, Withyham.
Type 6 settlements (Residential settlement)	Arlington, Balls Green, Best Beech Hill, Blackham, Bodle Street Green, Boreham Street, Chalvington & Ripe, Chiddingly, Cowbeech, Cousley Wood, Fairwarp, Fletching,

Settlement category	Settlement
	Hankham, Hooe, Magham Down, Muddles Green, Old Heathfield, Rosers Cross, Town Row, Vines Cross, Waldron, Warbleton, Wartling.

Development Boundaries

7.3 National policy remains largely silent on any specific requirement for development boundaries. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) do identify the need for certain specific policy boundaries, with town centres for retail-planning purposes for example. It therefore falls to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to consider what is appropriate in terms of development within various settlements and the resultant need for specific boundaries around settlements.

7.4 The draft Settlement Hierarchy set out in Table 14 above has been used to assist in the identification of those settlements to which a development boundary will be attributed[5]. Development Boundaries feature in the extant Local Plans for Wealden (1998) and the 2013 Core Strategy Local Plan. They were also included within the withdrawn Wealden Local Plan, along with Core Areas for some smaller settlements.

7.5 Appendix H sets out the chronology of those settlements given a development boundary over the various iterations of Local Plans within Wealden, including the draft Wealden Local Plan 2023 (Regulation 18).

[5] Please see the seperate Local Plan Development Boundary Background Paper.

6 Conclusions

8.1 The findings of this Study show that the larger settlements tend to score more highly across the range of sustainability indicators identified in terms of the type and level of provision of services and facilities, as well as accessibility to higher order settlements. However, it also highlights that some settlements considered to be lacking in service provision should be considered in a higher category than their quantitative ranking or score indicates, due to a more in depth and qualitative consideration including accessibility via public transport to a higher order settlements.

8.2 The draft Wealden Settlement Hierarchy set out in Table 14 gives an indication of the level of sustainability however it should be noted that, the results of the Sustainable Settlement Strategy Report are only one of a number of factors to be taken into consideration in the selection of appropriate locations for new development. Transport, employment/economic, environmental, landscape, heritage and flooding considerations also need to be assessed in order to determine the most appropriate and sustainable locations for growth within the district. These others matters are covered within the wider suite of evidence base produced to support and inform the Wealden Local Plan. This study has therefore considered the current sustainability of the district's settlements only.

7 Monitoring and review

9.1 This Study will need to be reviewed and updated at the Regulation 19 stage in the light of changing service and facility provision and changes in the evidence base over time. As time goes by, some settlements may become more or less sustainable as more facilities and services become available to settlements or conversely are lost or reduced. The settlement hierarchy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

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