Town Centres

TC1 District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and Town Centre First Principles

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC1 Policy: District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and 'Town Centre' First Principles
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO1	CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION					• The policy directs proposals for 'main town centre uses' to defined centres, which are situated in the District's most accessible and sustainable areas, and this is likely to minimise or reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to climate change mitigation. • Proposals are supported that take opportunities to improve sustainable travel and connectivity within the centres and adjoining areas where possible, which will improve connectivity, reduce the need to travel by private car and have positive impacts on carbon emissions. • The impact is major positive.
SO2	CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION					• No significant impact.
SO3	FLOOD RISK					• No significant impact.
SO4	WATER RESOURCES & QUALITY					• No significant impact.
SO5	SOIL, LAND & MINERALS					• The policy supports proposals for 'main town centre uses' where they seek to maintain or enhance the overall mix and diverse offer of uses ensuring a range of main town centre uses to support local communities, without the over concentration of any one use within the district, service and local centres, as defined on the Policies Map. • The policy encourages the concentration of a mix of uses on brownfield land and should reduce the loss of greenfield land and the amount of derelict, underused and vacant land, and promote the re-use of buildings, safeguarding undeveloped land and soils. • The impact is major positive.
SO6	WASTE					• No significant impact.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC1 Policy: District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and 'Town Centre' First Principles
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO7	POLLUTION					• The policy directs proposals for 'main town centre uses' to defined centres, which are situated in the District's most accessible and sustainable areas, which will encourage the use of sustainable and active travel choices and reduce the number of journeys made by private car, with positive impacts expected on air quality. • The impact is minor positive.
SO8	GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE					• No significant impact.
SO9	BIODIVERSITY					• No significant impact.
SO10	LANDSCAPE & TOWNSCAPE					• The policy supports the development and protection of defined centres, which is likely to retain and preserve the character of the District's town centres. Local character is likely to improve as the District's defined centres develop. • The policy supports proposals for 'main town centre uses' where they maintain or enhance the role, character and overall mix and diverse offer of uses in individual town and local centres, without the over concentration of any particular use. • Proposals for 'main town centre uses' should be of an appropriate scale to the centre and reflect its function and position within the District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy which is expected to have positive impacts on local character. • The impact is minor positive.
SO11	HISTORIC & CULTURAL HERITAGE					• The policy will support proposals for 'main town centre uses' where they maintain or enhance the character of uses, many of which are historic, therefore, positive impacts are expected for the historic environment. • The impact is minor positive.
SO12	DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE					• No significant impact.
SO13	SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & ACCESSIBILITY					• Proposals are supported that take opportunities to improve sustainable travel connectivity within, through and around the defined centres and adjoining areas where possible, which will encourage sustainable and active modes of travel, including walking and cycling. • Proposals for 'main town centre uses' are directed to defined centres in the District's most accessible and sustainable areas, which is likely to increase/improve access to key services and facilities, using sustainable and active travel modes. • The impact is major positive.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC1 Policy: District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and 'Town Centre' First Principles
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO14	HOUSING					• The policy supports proposals for upper floor uses that contribute to the defined centre's vitality and viability, including residential uses, subject to conformity with other policies in the Local Plan. • The policy will resist the redevelopment of upper floor uses should they result in the loss of ancillary storage space or other beneficial uses to the extent that it would make a ground floor unit unviable. Proposals for residential uses on upper floors of town centre uses are suitable provided they do not conflict with existing uses. • The impact is minor positive.
SO15	HEALTH & WELLBEING					• The policy is expected to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing as it will ensure improved access to key services and facilities using sustainable and active travel modes, such as walking and cycling, which is likely to promote healthy lifestyles and cater for the basic needs of local consumers. • The impact is minor positive.
SO16	QUALITY OF LIFE & PLACE					• The policy supports proposals for 'main town centre uses' within the district, service and local centres, as defined on the Policies Map, where they create a safe, attractive, accessible and high-quality environment, and contribute towards quality of life and place, and community cohesion. • The impact is major positive.
SO17	SOCIAL DEPRIVATION					• The policy seeks to improve connectivity and increase access to services and facilities, ensuring people across a wide range of social groups can access services and facilities by sustainable and active travel modes. • The impact is minor positive.
SO18	ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT					• The policy supports proposals within the District, service and local centre boundaries, as defined on the Policies Map that amalgamate or subdivide existing units that contain 'main town centre uses', provided they only result in a minimal loss of floorspace but lead to an overall improvement to the format of the unit and an increase in jobs to meets the needs of a modern retail/leisure business. • The policy is expected to have positive impacts on the local economy as it will support and encourage the retention and provision of employment floorspace to accommodate business growth, which is also linked to the creation new employment opportunities and local jobs. • The impact is major positive.
SO19	TOWN & VILLAGE CENTRES					• The policy promotes a network and hierarchy of town centres to promote their long-term vitality and viability and requires development proposals for main town centre uses to take a 'town centre first' approach and be located within district, service and local centres, as defined on the Policies Map, before considering other locations outside of those centres.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC1 Policy: District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and 'Town Centre' First Principles
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
						• Proposals are supported for temporary meanwhile uses to occupy vacant units where they support the vitality and viability of designated centres and do not compromise the future redevelopment of the unit/site. • Proposals are also supported where they develop and enhance the evening and night-time economy without resulting in adverse impacts on residential amenity and daytime footfall and can demonstrate that such uses will add to the vitality and viability of the centre. • The policy expects proposals to be of an appropriate scale to the centre and reflect its function and position within the defined town centre hierarchy. • Proposals will be supported where they retain an active ground floor frontage to improve the vitality and viability of centres. • Proposals for delivery lockers will also be supported where it can be demonstrated that their installation would enhance the vitality and viability of the designated centre and would not restrict accessibility for pedestrians or harm the public realm. • The impact is major positive.
SO20	EDUCATION & SKILLS					• The policy supports the development and protection of defined centres, which will provide opportunities for business growth and local jobs, which is expected to improve the skills acquisition and deliver opportunities for apprenticeships and vocational training. • The impact is major positive.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS	Policy No: TC1				Policy: District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and 'Town Centre' First Principles															
SA EFFECTS	SO1 Climate Change Mitigation	SO2 Climate Change Adaptation	SO3 Flood Risk	SO4 Water resources/Quality	SO5 Soil, Land & Minerals	SO6 Waste	SO7 Pollution	SO8 Green & Blue Infrastructure	SO9 Biodiversity	SO10 Landscape & Townscape	SO11 Historic & Cultural Heritage	SO12 Digital Infrastructure	SO13 Travel & Accessibility	SO14 Housing	SO15 Health & Wellbeing	SO16 Quality of Life & Place	SO17 Social Deprivation	SO18 Economy & Employment	SO19 Town & Village Centres	SO20 Education & Skills
Major Positive																				
Minor Positive																				
Not Significant																				
Minor Negative																				
Major Negative																				
Uncertain																				

COMMENTARY:	
Duration/Reversibility	The impacts are not likely to change in the short, medium or long term and the policy will become effective on adoption
Mitigation Measures	• Development proposals for main town centre uses will be expected to take a 'town centre first' approach and be located within district, service and local centres, as defined on the Policies Map, unless the proposal complies with the sequential test under Policy TC2 (Sequential and Local Impact Test). • The change of use of existing ground floor premises, that is defined as a 'main town centre use' to residential, will not be supported within a defined centre. • The implementation of specific Local Plan policies in relation to Climate Change, the Natural Environment, Historic Environment, Housing, the Spatial Strategy, Economy, Town Centres and Infrastructure could also mitigate impacts.
Cumulative Impacts	Impacts are likely to be positive as the policy will ensure that proposals for main town centre uses within the district, service and local centres, as defined on the Policies Map are of an appropriate scale to the centre whilst reflecting their function and position within the defined town centre hierarchy.
Summary	Major Positive Effects: **SO1 Climate Change Mitigation; SO5 Soil, Land & Minerals; SO13 Travel & Accessibility; SO16 Quality of Life and Place; SO18 Economy & Employment; SO19 Town & Village Centres** and **SO20 Education & Skills**

	• The policy sets out the hierarchy of Wealden's defined centres (district, service and local centres) and their protection, whilst also improving their viability and vitality. • The policy has been informed by Wealden Town Centre Study (2022) and Employment and Economic study 2022 and is based on the definitions of Town Centres included in the NPPF. • The policy expects development proposals for main town centre uses to take a 'town centre first' approach and be located within district, service and local centres, as defined on the Policies Map, which will ensure proposals for 'main town centre uses' are directed to defined centres situated in the District's most accessible and sustainable areas and is likely to minimise or reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to climate change mitigation. • The policy ensures development proposals support the creation of a safe, attractive, accessible and high-quality environment, taking into account the identity of centres, their heritage as well as their connections with other towns, attractions and accommodation, which will include opportunities to improve sustainable travel connectivity within the centres and adjoining areas where possible. • Proposals for 'main town centre uses' should maintain or enhance the overall mix and diverse offer of uses, and a range of uses to support local communities and the quality of life of local people, without the over concentration of any one use. • The policy seeks to encourage the concentration of a mix of uses on brownfield land, reducing the loss of greenfield land and the amount of derelict, underused and vacant land, to promote the re-use of buildings and safeguard undeveloped land and soils. • The policy enables the development and enhancement of the evening and night-time economy, the provision of jobs, and could help to retain active ground floor frontages, provide delivery lockers and will resist the loss of floorspace and ensure temporary 'meanwhile' uses to occupy vacant units, where they support the long-term vitality and viability of the District's defined centres. Minor Positive Effects: **SO7 Pollution; SO10 Landscape & Townscape; SO11 Historic & Cultural Heritage; SO14 Housing**; **SO15 Health & Wellbeing and SO17 Social Deprivation** • The policy ensures the issues of pollution, character, heritage and other site-specific constraints are considered in the decision-making process. • Proposals for 'main town centre uses' are directed to defined centres, situated in the District's most accessible and sustainable areas, which will encourage the use of sustainable and active travel choices and reduce the number of journeys made by private car, contributing positively to air and noise pollution and connectivity for all. • The policy ensures proposals for 'main town centre uses' maintain or enhance the character of uses, many of which are historic, with positive impacts expected for the historic environment. • Proposals are supported for upper floor uses that contribute to the defined centre's vitality and viability, including residential uses, subject to conformity with other policies in the Local Plan and contribute positively to housing supply. • The redevelopment of upper floor uses is resisted, should it result in the loss of ancillary storage space or other beneficial uses to the extent that it would make a ground floor unit unviable, to ensure proposals are suitable and do not conflict with existing uses. No Significant Effects: for the remaining Sustainability Objectives as the policy is unlikely to have a significant effect. Minor Negative Effects: None Major Negative Effects: None Uncertain: None Overall, the policy is shown to have a Major/Minor Positive effects.

TC2 Sequential and Local Impact Test

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC2 Policy: Sequential and Local Impact Test
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO1	CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION					• The sequential test, as set out in the NPPF, will be applied where main town centre uses are proposed on the edge of or outside of centres. National planning policy on this matter confirms that main town centre uses should be in town centres first before edge of centre locations[1] can be considered. • Where the sequential test is met, the policy expects such proposals to provide specific measures that will, where appropriate, establish new or improve the quality and function of, sustainable connections to the centre, in particular walking/cycling routes and public transport links, therefore, minor positive impacts are anticipated on carbon emissions and climate change mitigation. • The nature and extent of the measures should be directly related to the scale of the proposal. • The impact is minor positive.
SO2	CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION					• No significant impact.
SO3	FLOOD RISK					• No significant impact.
SO4	WATER RESOURCES & QUALITY					• No significant impact.
SO5	SOIL, LAND & MINERALS					• The policy requires proposals to demonstrate flexibility on issues such as the format and scale of the development, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are explored first before out-of-town locations are considered. This principle supports the efficient use of land locally as the policy will seek to carefully consider sequentially preferred sites for particular town centre uses. • The impact is minor positive.
SO6	WASTE					• No significant impact.

[1] This term is defined in the NPPF at Annex 2 for retail development, main town centres uses and offices. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, the Council will take account of local circumstances, as well as guidance in the NPPF.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC2 Policy: Sequential and Local Impact Test
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO7	POLLUTION					• The policy requires proposals to provide specific measures that will, where appropriate, establish new or improve the quality and function of, sustainable connections to the centre, in particular walking/cycling routes and public transport links, which will have positive impacts on air quality. • The impact is minor positive.
SO8	GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE					• No significant impact.
SO9	BIODIVERSITY					• No significant impact.
SO10	LANDSCAPE & TOWNSCAPE					• The policy requires proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's existing defined centres, including how the design of the proposed use will blend in with the landscape and surrounding area. • Impact Assessments must be undertaken to demonstrate that proposals for retail development over 350 square metres (gross) and leisure development over 2500 square metres (gross) outside of defined centres will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's defined centres. • The impact is minor positive.
SO11	HISTORIC & CULTURAL HERITAGE					• The policy requires proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's existing defined centres, including how the design of the proposed use will retain and preserve the character of the centres, many of which are historic. • The impact is minor positive.
SO12	DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE					• No significant impact.
SO13	SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & ACCESSIBILITY					• The policy expects proposals at edge of an existing centre or in out-of-centre locations where they meet the sequential test to provide specific measures that will establish new or improved sustainable connections to the centre, in particular walking/cycling routes and public transport links. • The policy creates opportunities for enhancing connectivity and will encourage the use of sustainable and active travel choices to access key services and facilities. • The impact is minor positive.
SO14	HOUSING					• No significant impact.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC2 Policy: Sequential and Local Impact Test
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO15	HEALTH & WELLBEING					• Positive impacts are expected for health and wellbeing as the policy seeks to improve connectivity and will increase access to services and facilities with more local people taking up sustainable and active travel choices, which is expected to promote healthy lifestyles. • Supporting proposals for main town centre uses on the edge of or outside of centres is also likely to provide for resident and visitor's needs, including places of work and places to socialise and this will positively impact health and wellbeing. • The impact is minor positive.
SO16	QUALITY OF LIFE & PLACE					• The sequential test, as set out in the NPPF, will be applied where main town centre uses are proposed on the edge of or outside of centres. • Proposals should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as the format and scale of the development, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are explored first before out-of-town locations are considered. • Impact Assessments must be undertaken to demonstrate that proposals for retail development over 350 square metres (gross) and leisure development over 2500 square metres (gross) outside of defined centres will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's defined centres, either on their own or cumulatively.. • Proposals that apply the sequential test are likely to provide suitable places and spaces and improve access to facilities and services which may contribute to the creation of a sense of place which is well-designed, inclusive and accessible for all. • The impact is minor positive.
SO17	SOCIAL DEPRIVATION					• The policy seeks to improve connectivity and increase access to services and facilities, ensuring people across a wide range of social groups can access services and facilities by sustainable and active travel modes. • The impact is minor positive.
SO18	ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT					• The sequential test, as set out in the NPPF, will be applied where main town centre uses are proposed on the edge of or outside of centres. • Proposals should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as the format and scale of the development, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are explored first before out-of-town locations are considered. • Impact Assessments must be undertaken to demonstrate that proposals for retail development over 350 square metres (gross) and leisure development over 2500 square metres (gross) outside of defined centres, either on their own or cumulatively. • Positive impacts are expected for the local economy as the policy seeks to support the long-term vitality and viability of town and village centres, which will support and encourage

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC2 Policy: Sequential and Local Impact Test
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
						businesses to grow, expand and diversify, and create new employment opportunities and local jobs. • The impact is major positive.
SO19	TOWN & VILLAGE CENTRES					• The sequential test, as set out in the NPPF, will be applied where main town centre uses are proposed on the edge of or outside of centres. • Proposals should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as the format and scale of the development, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are explored first before out-of-town locations are considered. • Impact Assessments must be undertaken to demonstrate that proposals for retail development over 350 square metres (gross) and leisure development over 2500 square metres (gross) outside of defined centres will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's defined centres, either on their own or cumulatively. • The policy is expected to improve the night-time economy, support the provision of residential development in the town centres, provide for resident and visitor's needs, including places of work, places to socialise and key services and facilities, and support the provision of additional retail and leisure floorspace across the District on sequentially preferred sites. • The impact is major positive.
SO20	EDUCATION & SKILLS					• The policy seeks to support the long-term vitality and viability of town and village centres which will support and encourage businesses to grow, expand and diversify, and create new employment opportunities and local jobs. The creation of employment opportunities and local jobs is expected to improve skills acquisition and deliver opportunities for apprenticeships and vocational training. • The impact is minor positive.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS	Policy No:TC2				Policy: Sequential and Local Impact Test															
SA EFFECTS	SO1 Climate Change Mitigation	SO2 Climate Change Adaptation	SO3 Flood Risk	SO4 Water resources/Quality	SO5 Soil, Land & Minerals	SO6 Waste	SO7 Pollution	SO8 Green & Blue Infrastructure	SO9 Biodiversity	SO10 Landscape & Townscape	SO11 Historic & Cultural Heritage	SO12 Digital Infrastructure	SO13 Travel & Accessibility	SO14 Housing	SO15 Health & Wellbeing	SO16 Quality of Life & Place	SO17 Social Deprivation	SO18 Economy & Employment	SO19 Town & Village Centres	SO20 Education & Skills
Major Positive																				
Minor Positive																				
Not Significant																				
Minor Negative																				
Major Negative																				
Uncertain																				

COMMENTARY:	
Duration/Reversibility	The impacts are not likely to change in the short, medium or long term and the policy will become effective on adoption.
Mitigation Measures	• The NPPF confirms that retail and leisure developments greater than 2,500 sqm (gross) floorspace, proposed either in edge of centre or out-of-centre locations will be subject to the assessment of the impact criteria. It also notes that local planning authorities are able to set local impact thresholds which are lower than 2,500 sqm (gross), after consideration of the criteria in the PPG. • The local impact threshold recommended within the Wealden Town Centre Study (July 2022) is 350 sqm (gross), which will ensure that the impact of proposals for retail development outside of town centres can be fully considered and that existing town centres are not harmed through reduced footfall/expenditure. • The evidence base does not recommend a locally set impact threshold for leisure uses. Proposals for retail development over 350 square metres and leisure development over 2500 square metres must undertake an impact assessment to demonstrate that they will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's defined centres, either on their own or cumulatively in consideration of other commitments in the area. • The introduction of Use Class E will enable retail uses to occupy non-retail premises (in Use Class E) in out of centre locations, thereby circumventing the 'town centre first' principle. Where this could impact on the health of district, service or local centres, the Council may attach a planning condition in out of centre locations to restrict the use applied for.

	• Where necessary, planning conditions and/or legal agreements should be applied to any new planning permission outside of defined centres, including defining the nature and extent of the proposed use to ensure no future adverse impacts on existing defined centres. • The implementation of specific Local Plan policies in relation to Climate Change, the Natural Environment, Historic Environment, the Spatial Strategy, Economy, Town Centres and Infrastructure could also mitigate impacts.
Cumulative Impacts	Impacts are likely to be positive as the policy will ensure that proposals for main town centre uses on the edge of or outside of centres will support the long term vitality and viability of town, service and local centres as defined on the Policies Map, whilst ensuring that the nature and extent of the proposed use will not have any future adverse impacts on existing defined centres. Applications for developments outside of defined centres over 350 square metres (gross) for retail proposals and over 2,500 square metres (gross) for leisure proposals will be expected to be accompanied by an impact assessment.
Summary	Major Positive Effects: **SO18 Economy & Employment; SO19 Town & Village Centres and SO20 Education & Skills** • The sequential test, as set out in the NPPF, will be applied where main town centre uses are proposed on the edge of or outside of centres. • The policy has been informed by Wealden Town Centre Study (2022) and national policy (the NPPF and PPG). • The policy will enable the provision of main town centre uses both on the edge of town and 'out-of-town' in the District. In principle, this will ensure that 'out-of-town' retail is only delivered where there is no viable alternative within existing centres, and where it is shown demonstrably that there is no detrimental impact on existing nearby centres. Where suitable sites are not available within town centres or edge of centre locations (or are expected to become available within a reasonable period), out of centre sites will be considered. • Proposals should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as the format and scale of the development, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are explored first before out-of-town locations are considered. • Impact Assessments must be undertaken to demonstrate that proposals for retail development over 350 square metres (gross) and leisure development over 2500 square metres (gross) outside of defined centres will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's defined centres, either on their own or cumulatively. • The policy ensures applications for proposals for retail development over 350 square metres (gross) and leisure development over 2500 square metres (gross) outside of defined centres are supported by Impact Assessments and will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's defined centres. The provision of main town centre uses both on the edge of town and 'out-of-town is expected to open up opportunities for business growth, jobs, skills acquisition and training, which is expected to improve the vitality and viability of village centres. Minor Positive Effects: **SO1 Climate Change Mitigation; SO5 Soil, Land & Minerals; SO7 Pollution; SO10 Landscape & Townscape; SO11 Historic & Cultural Heritage; SO13 Travel & Accessibility; SO15 Health & Wellbeing; SO16 Quality of Life and Place and SO17 Social Deprivation** • The policy relates to the sequential approach which must apply where main town centre uses are proposed on the edge of or outside of centres. • Where the sequential test is met, the policy expects proposals to provide specific measures that will establish new or improved sustainable connections to the centre, in particular walking/cycling routes and public transport links, which will have positive impacts for accessibility and sustainable travel and reduce carbon emissions, air and noise pollution, and facilitate healthy lifestyles, promoting health and wellbeing. • The policy could help to provide suitable places and spaces and improve access to facilities and services which may contribute to the creation of a sense of place which is well-designed, inclusive and accessible for all.

	• The policy requires proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a significant adverse impact on the District's existing defined centres, including how the design of the proposed use will blend in with the landscape and surrounding area and retain and preserve the character of the centres, many of which are historic. No Significant Effects: for the remaining Sustainability Objectives as the policy is unlikely to have a significant effect. Minor Negative Effects: None Major Negative Effects: None Uncertain: None Overall, the policy is shown to have a Minor Positive effect.

TC3 Primary Shopping Areas

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC3 Policy: Primary Shopping Areas
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO1	CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION					• The policy will protect and enhance retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas which are situated in the District's most accessible and sustainable locations, and this is likely to reduce the need to travel by private cars, which will positively impact on greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to climate change mitigation. • The impact is major positive.
SO2	CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION					• No significant impact.
SO3	FLOOD RISK					• No significant impact.
SO4	WATER RESOURCES & QUALITY					• No significant impact.
SO5	SOIL, LAND & MINERALS					• The policy will protect and enhance retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas and this is likely to reduce/minimise the use of greenfield land for development, ensuring the efficient use of land. • The concentration of retail development in Primary Shopping Areas will support a mix of uses, which will also promote the efficient use of land. • The impact is minor positive.
SO6	WASTE					• No significant impact.
SO7	POLLUTION					• The policy offers opportunities to improve connectivity and sustainable travel choices which is likely to have positive impacts on air and noise pollution. • The impact is minor positive.
SO8	GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE					• No significant impact.
SO9	BIODIVERSITY					• No significant impact.
SO10	LANDSCAPE & TOWNSCAPE					• Protecting and improving areas where retail uses are concentrated within the District offers opportunities for the local character and townscape to be protected and enhanced. Shop front designs and layouts are likely to be enhanced, resulting in a high quality environment and public realm.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC3 Policy: Primary Shopping Areas
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
						• The conversion of traditional shop frontages (particularly in conservation areas) to residential frontages can cause detrimental impacts to the character of the area. The Council's preferred approach is to only support residential uses outside of primary shopping areas (unless residential use is on the upper floors). • The impact is minor positive.
SO11	HISTORIC & CULTURAL HERITAGE					• Protecting and improving areas where retail uses are concentrated within the District, many of which are historic, offer opportunities for the historic environment to be protected and enhanced. • The impact is minor positive.
SO12	DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE					• No significant impact.
SO13	SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & ACCESSIBILITY					• The policy is likely to safeguard and enhance core retail areas which are situated in the District's most accessible and sustainable locations. The policy will encourage the use of sustainable and active travel modes, reducing the need to travel by private car, and improving access to key services and facilities and connectivity in general. • The impact is major positive.
SO14	HOUSING					• The policy will only support residential uses outside of Primary Shopping Areas to protect the characteristics of the District's centres that support their vitality and vibrancy, unless the residential use is on the upper floors. Therefore, through the policy housing could be provided on the upper floors of retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas, where relevant. • The impact is minor positive.
SO15	HEALTH & WELLBEING					• The policy will ensure retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas provide a mix of uses to retain their role and function as shopping destinations meeting the shopping needs of the community and visitors, and this has benefits for health and wellbeing. • Protecting and improving areas where retail uses are concentrated within the District could facilitate the provision of high quality places and spaces where local people can meet and interact, play and enjoy, resulting in healthy lifestyles. • The impact is minor positive.
SO16	QUALITY OF LIFE & PLACE					• The policy will ensure retail uses in Primary Shopping retain their role as shopping destinations meeting the shopping needs of the community as well as generating the required footfall for these centres to continue to be vibrant and viable, which is expected to contribute towards quality of life and place, and community cohesion. • The impact is major positive.
SO17	SOCIAL DEPRIVATION					• The policy will ensure retail uses in Primary Shopping retain their role as shopping destinations meeting the shopping needs of the community as well as generating the

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No: TC3 Policy: Primary Shopping Areas
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
						required footfall for these centres to continue to be vibrant and viable, which could help to encourage engagement and participation in the community. • The impact is minor positive.
SO18	ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT					• By protecting existing primary shopping areas and enhancing the vitality and viability of core retail areas, the policy is likely to have positive impacts on the local economy as it will retain businesses, attract business opportunities and encourage inward investment, and provide jobs for local people. • The impact is major positive.
SO19	TOWN & VILLAGE CENTRES					• The policy will ensure retail uses are encouraged in Primary Shopping Areas, as defined on the Policies Map, to ensure that these central areas retain their role and function as shopping destinations meeting the shopping needs of the community and visitors and generating the required footfall during the day for our centres to continue to be vibrant and viable. • The policy will resist uses that are likely to detract from the overall shopping function and have closed or inactive frontages in the Primary Shopping Area, as this will detract from the overall shopping function. • The impact is major positive.
SO20	EDUCATION & SKILLS					• The policy will support the development and protection of retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas which is likely to retain and provide opportunities for business growth and local jobs and this is expected to improve the skills of local people and deliver opportunities for apprenticeships and vocational training. • The impact is major positive.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS	Policy No:TC3				Policy: Primary Shopping Areas															
SA EFFECTS	SO1 Climate Change Mitigation	SO2 Climate Change Adaptation	SO3 Flood Risk	SO4 Water resources/Quality	SO5 Soil, Land & Minerals	SO6 Waste	SO7 Pollution	SO8 Green & Blue Infrastructure	SO9 Biodiversity	SO10 Landscape & Townscape	SO11 Historic & Cultural Heritage	SO12 Digital Infrastructure	SO13 Travel & Accessibility	SO14 Housing	SO15 Health & Wellbeing	SO16 Quality of Life & Place	SO17 Social Deprivation	SO18 Economy & Employment	SO19 Town & Village Centres	SO20 Education & Skills
Major Positive																				
Minor Positive																				
Not Significant																				
Minor Negative																				
Major Negative																				
Uncertain																				

COMMENTARY:	
Duration/Reversibility	The impacts are not likely to change in the short, medium or long term as the policy will become effective on adoption.
Mitigation Measures	• Uses that are likely to detract from the overall shopping function and have closed or inactive frontages will be resisted in the Primary Shopping Area, as this will detract from the overall shopping function. • The loss of an active ground floor frontage to residential use will not be supported within Primary Shopping Areas where planning permission is required, particularly where such proposals would result in a gap between active frontages, where it would be incompatible with existing and where conversions of traditional shopfronts to residential, harm the existing built form and/or character of the area. • The Council notes that several of the District's centres (Forest Row, Wadhurst, Mayfield etc.) were washed by the High Weald AONB designation and therefore do not benefit from permitted development rights. Therefore, where planning permission is required, Policy TC3 (Primary Shopping Areas) will apply. • The implementation of specific Local Plan policies in relation to Climate Change, the Natural Environment, Historic Environment, Housing, the Spatial Strategy, Economy, Town Centres and Infrastructure could also mitigate impacts.
Cumulative Impacts	Impacts are likely to be positive as the policy will encourage the concentration of retail development in Primary Shopping Areas as defined on the Policies Map, whilst ensuring the core retail areas across the District retain their role and function as shopping destinations, respecting both the natural and built environment.

Summary	Major Positive Effects: **SO1 Climate Change Mitigation; SO13 Travel & Accessibility; SO16 Quality of Life and Place; SO18 Economy & Employment; SO19 Town & Village Centres** and **SO20 Education & Skills** • The policy will ensure the concentration of retail development in Primary Shopping Areas as defined on the Policies Map. • The policy has been informed by Wealden Town Centre Study (2022) and national policy (the NPPF). • The policy ensures retail uses are protected and developed in most of the District's most accessible and sustainable locations, which will encourage the use of sustainable and active travel modes and improve connectivity, increase access to key services and facilities with positive impacts expected on carbon emissions and climate change mitigation. • By protecting the role and function of Primary Shopping Areas, the concentration of retail uses will provide a mix of uses to meet the shopping needs of the community and visitors and generate the required footfall during the day for the centres to continue to be vibrant and viable, contributing positively to quality of life. • By protecting existing primary shopping areas and enhancing the vitality and viability of core retail areas, the policy is likely to have positive impacts on the local economy as it will retain businesses, attract business opportunities and encourage inward investment, and provide jobs for local people which is closely linked to skills acquisition and training. Minor Positive Effects: **SO5 Soil, Land & Minerals; SO7 Pollution; SO10 Landscape & Townscape; SO11 Historic & Cultural Heritage; SO14 Housing**; **SO15 Health & Wellbeing and SO17 Social Deprivation** • The policy will protect and enhance retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas and this is likely to reduce/minimise the use of greenfield land for development, ensuring the efficient use of land. • The concentration of retail development in Primary Shopping Areas will support a mix of uses, which could help to promote the efficient use of land. • The policy offers opportunities to improve/increase connectivity and sustainable travel choices which is likely to have positive impacts for air and noise pollution. • Protecting and improving areas where retail uses are concentrated within the District offers opportunities for the local character, townscape and the District's natural heritage to be protected and enhanced. The conversion of traditional shop frontages (particularly in conservation areas) to residential frontages can cause detrimental impacts to the character of the area, including heritage assets and their setting. • The Council's preferred approach is to only support residential uses outside of primary shopping areas (unless residential use is on the upper floors). The policy will ensure retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas provide a mix of uses to retain their role and function as shopping destinations meeting the shopping needs of the community and visitors, and this has benefits for health and wellbeing, and engagement and participation in the community, addressing issues of social deprivation. No Significant Effects: for the remaining Sustainability Objectives as the policy is unlikely to have a significant effect. Minor Negative Effects: None Major Negative Effects: None Uncertain: None Overall, the policy is shown to have a Major / Minor Positive effect.

TC4 Garden Centres

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No:TC4 Policy: Garden Centres
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO1	CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION					• The policy will support proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries, as defined on the Policies Map where the additional traffic generated does not have an adverse impact on local roads by reason of their inadequate capacity or rural nature; and the site has good accessibility to an existing sustainable settlement and is not situated in an isolated location. • The policy is expected to encourage sustainable and active travel modes which will have positive impacts on greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to climate change mitigation. • The policy will subject all proposals for the expansion/extension of garden centres in all locations to the sequential test, and local impact assessment if outside of a designated town centre boundary (Policy TC2 – Sequential and Local Impact Test) • The impact is minor positive.
SO2	CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION					• No significant impact.
SO3	FLOOD RISK					• No significant impact.
SO4	WATER RESOURCES & QUALITY					• No significant impact.
SO5	SOIL, LAND & MINERALS					• . No significant impact.
SO6	WASTE					• No significant impact.
SO7	POLLUTION					• The policy will support proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries, where the additional traffic generated does not have an adverse impact on local roads by reason of their inadequate capacity or rural nature; and the site has good accessibility to an existing sustainable settlement and is not situated in an isolated location. • The impact is likely to be positive as it is expected to encourage sustainable and active travel modes which is likely to improve air quality. • The impact is minor positive.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No:TC4 Policy: Garden Centres
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO8	GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE					• No significant impact.
SO9	BIODIVERSITY					• No significant impact.
SO10	LANDSCAPE & TOWNSCAPE					• No significant impact.
SO11	HISTORIC & CULTURAL HERITAGE					• No significant impact.
SO12	DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE					• No significant impact.
SO13	SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & ACCESSIBILITY					• The policy supports proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries, where the additional traffic generated does not have an adverse impact on local roads by reason of their inadequate capacity or rural nature; and the site has good accessibility to an existing sustainable settlement and is not situated in an isolated location. • The policy also supports proposals where the car parking requirements can be accommodated satisfactorily within the immediate surrounds of the building, or where this is not suitable due to highway safety concerns, an alternative solution is agreed, which could encourage car use, however, proposals are required to be situated on sites with good accessibility and should not be in an isolated location. • The policy is likely to promote the use of sustainable and active travel choices. • The impact is minor positive.
SO14	HOUSING					• No significant impact.
SO15	HEALTH & WELLBEING					• The policy supports proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries, where the additional traffic generated does not have an adverse impact on local roads by reason of their inadequate capacity or rural nature; and the site has good accessibility to an existing settlement and is not situated in an isolated location. • The policy promotes the use of sustainable and active travel choices, which could enable healthy lifestyles. • The impact is minor positive.

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Policy No:TC4 Policy: Garden Centres
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary
SO16	QUALITY OF LIFE & PLACE					• No significant impact.
SO17	SOCIAL DEPRIVATION					• No significant impact.
SO18	ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT					• The policy will contribute positively the local economy and employment as its aim is to protect defined centres by ensuring existing garden centres do not detrimentally impact the vitality and viability of nearby retail centres. • The impact is major positive.
SO19	TOWN & VILLAGE CENTRES					• The policy supports proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries where the sale of plants, horticultural products, garden buildings, garden furniture and ornaments within the garden centre remains the principal use. This is expected to improve vitality, vibrancy and viability of these centres. • Where a significant extension to an existing garden centre is permitted, the Council will consider whether a planning condition is necessary to ensure the retail floorspace principally relates to the sale of garden/horticultural products. • The impact is major positive.
SO20	EDUCATION & SKILLS					• Minor positive impacts are expected on this SA objective as there are opportunities for employment and local jobs, which is closely linked to skills acquisition and training as the policy aims to is to protect defined centres by ensuring existing garden centres do not detrimentally impact the vitality and viability of nearby retail centres. • The impact is minor positive.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS	Policy No:TC4																		
SA EFFECTS	SO1 Climate Change Mitigation	SO2 Climate Change Adaptation	SO3 Flood Risk	SO4 Water resources/Quality	SO5 Soil, Land & Minerals	SO6 Waste	SO7 Pollution	SO8 Green & Blue Infrastructure	SO9 Biodiversity	SO10 Landscape & Townscape	SO11 Historic & Cultural Heritage	SO12 Digital Infrastructure	SO13 Travel & Accessibility	SO14 Housing	SO15 Health & Wellbeing	SO16 Quality of Life & Place	SO17 Social Deprivation	SO18 Economy & Employment	SO19 Town & Village Centres	SO20 Education & Skills
Major Positive																				
Minor Positive																				
Not Significant																				
Minor Negative																				
Major Negative																				
Uncertain																				

COMMENTARY:	
Duration/Reversibility	The impacts are not likely to change in the short, medium or long term as the policy will become effective on adoption of the Plan.
Mitigation Measures	• Proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries, as defined on the Policies Map, will be permitted when the criteria set out in the policy is met. • Where a significant extension to an existing garden centre is permitted, the Council will consider whether a planning condition is necessary to ensure the retail floorspace principally relates to the sale of garden/horticultural products is required. • All extensions to existing garden centres that are proposed to have retail floorspace above 350 square metres gross will be subject to the Local Impact Test under Policy TC2: Sequential and Local Impact Test. All other ancillary uses that defined as 'main town centre uses' within national planning policy (i.e. cafes/restaurants) may also be considered under the sequential test. • The implementation of specific Local Plan policies in relation to Climate Change, the Spatial Strategy, Economy, Town Centres and Infrastructure could also mitigate impacts.
Cumulative Impacts	Impacts are likely to be positive as the policy will ensure proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries, as defined on the Policies Map, principally relate to the sale of garden/horticultural products whilst ensuring that all extensions to existing garden centres that are proposed to have retail floorspace above 350 square metres gross will be subject to the Local Impact Test under Policy TC2: Sequential and Local Impact Test.

Summary	Major Positive Effects: **SO18 Economy & Employment and SO19 Town & Village Centres** • The policy sets out criteria to determine the extension or expansion of gardens centres outside development boundaries in order to protect the District's defined centres. • The policy has been informed by national policy (the NPPF). • The policy will contribute positively the local economy and employment as its aim is to protect defined centres by ensuring existing garden centres do not detrimentally impact the vitality and viability of nearby retail centres. • The policy supports proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries where the sale of plants, horticultural products, garden buildings, garden furniture and ornaments within the garden centre remains the principal use, and this is expected to improve vitality, vibrancy and viability of these centres. • Where a significant extension to an existing garden centre is permitted, the Council will consider whether a planning condition is necessary to ensure the retail floorspace principally relates to the sale of garden/horticultural products. all extensions to existing garden centres that are proposed to have retail floorspace above 350 square metres gross will be subject to the Local Impact Test under Policy TC2: Sequential and Local Impact Test of this Local Plan. Minor Positive Effects: **SO1 Climate Change Mitigation; SO7 Pollution; SO13 Travel & Accessibility; SO15 Health and Wellbeing and SO20 Education & Skills** • The policy supports proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries, where the additional traffic generated does not have an adverse impact on local roads by reason of their inadequate capacity or rural nature; and the site has good accessibility to an existing sustainable settlement and is not situated in an isolated location. The policy will encourage sustainable and active travel modes which will have positive impacts on greenhouse gas emissions, contributing positively to air pollution and climate change mitigation. • The policy supports proposals where the additional traffic generated does not have an adverse impact on local roads by reason of their inadequate capacity or rural nature; and the site has good accessibility to an existing sustainable settlement and is not situated in an isolated location. The policy is likely to encourage the use of sustainable and active travel choices which will in turn enable healthy lifestyles, promoting health and wellbeing. • The policy protects defined centres by ensuring existing garden centres do not detrimentally impact the vitality and viability of nearby retail centres and is likely to have a minor positive impact for education and skills as there are opportunities for employment and local jobs, which are closely linked to skills acquisition and training. No Significant Effects: for the remaining Sustainability Objectives as the policy is unlikely to have a significant effect. Minor Negative Effects: None Major Negative Effects: None Uncertain: None Overall, the policy is shown to have a Minor Positive effect