

Introduction

- 11.1 Burgess Hill is the fastest growing settlement in Mid Sussex. In the 50 years between 1951-2001 the population of the town increased more than threefold, from 8,500 to 28,803. This increase in population has been matched by the growth of local employment and the expansion of the Victoria Industrial Estate which has become one of the major employment sites in the county.
- 11.2 The topography surrounding the town has served to contain development, and ridgelines to the south and east in particular provide important definition and a vital setting to the town. Overall, the gentle slopes and low lying relief of the area tend to emphasise the importance of even minor ridges, for example to screen development or to provide views in and out of the town. One of the important environmental assets of the town is the distinct boundaries that exist between the built up areas and the countryside, which often extend right up to the urban edge.
- 11.3 The town is visible in the middle distance of views from the South Downs, and from this direction the east/west ridge running south of the town screens much of the development to the north and west. To the east of the town the land form and tree cover provide the visual setting for Ditchling Common, an important 'Country Park'. The protection of the character of the Common has been a long standing objective of planning policy and the area between the built up area boundary and Ditchling Common is given the same status and protection in this Local Plan as a Local Countryside Gap (see Policy C3 in the Countryside Chapter). Other parts of the town are also prominent in views from the surrounding countryside.
- 11.4 In addition to the topography, Burgess Hill is separated from neighbouring towns and villages by two narrow and vulnerable Strategic Gaps, Burgess Hill-Haywards Heath to the north and Burgess Hill - Hurstpierpoint/Keymer/Hassocks to the south (see Policy C2 in the Countryside Chapter).
- 11.5 The boundaries of the Strategic Gaps have been determined using criteria set down in a Technical Report and are shown on the Burgess Hill Inset Map.
- 11.6 During the 1970s, substantial housing development occurred on the east side of the town following the release of land north of Folders Lane by the then-local planning authority, East Sussex County Council. Very little provision was made for public open space and other local infrastructure to serve this development and deficiencies remain today.
- 11.7 During the 1980s and 1990s, planned development has occurred on the west side of the town in accordance with the non-statutory Burgess Hill District Plan (1983) and the statutory Burgess Hill Local Plan (1992). This development has delivered or secured land for substantial new infrastructure to serve the town, including a new Western Distributor Road (Jane Murray Way), the A2300 link road to the A23 at Hickstead, the Triangle Leisure Centre at West End Farm and a local centre, also at West End Farm. A new building for St Paul's School has been constructed on land reserved for a secondary school opposite the Triangle Leisure Centre. A new sewage treatment works has been constructed at Goddards Green to serve the town and surrounding villages.
- 11.8 Over 2,000 houses have been built on allocated sites since the 1983 Plan was adopted, together with further industrial/commercial development and a Tesco superstore at Hammonds Farm.
- 11.9 In the town centre, the Martlets Shopping Centre was developed in the early 1970s. A second phase, Market Place, was completed in 1991. These developments trebled the shopping floorspace in the town centre.

- 11.10 Notwithstanding the relatively recent development of the town, three Conservation Areas have been designated. These are shown on the Inset Maps.

Future Development of Burgess Hill

- 11.11 The Burgess Hill Local Plan allocated land on greenfield sites for up to 1,500 dwellings at Hammonds Farm, Malthouse Lane and West End Farm. The Plan anticipated that 500 of these dwellings would be built in the period 1991-1996 and 1,000 in the period 1996-2006. In fact, the development of all the allocated sites was virtually complete by the end of 1999. With the exception of 50 units of social housing developed at West End Farm by Hyde Housing Association, all the development has been open market housing.
- 11.12 Although the new development areas have generally been well supported with infrastructure, there are areas where planned facilities have yet to be provided and ensuring these are developed will be an important objective for the Council. The priorities are a new primary school at Hammonds Farm, community buildings, further playing fields and road links on the Victoria Industrial Estate.
- 11.13 In the town centre, environmental improvements are required and there is an opportunity for a limited amount of redevelopment.
- 11.14 While access on the west side of the town has benefited from the new development, east-west movements across the town are hampered by the railway and the limited number of crossing points. A number of roads in the area lying to the east of the railway have restricted capacity and suffer from serious congestion at peak periods. There are no simple solutions to these problems and efforts will be made to encourage the increased use of local bus services.
- 11.15 The further development of Burgess Hill is severely constrained by the two Strategic Gaps which lie to the north and south of the town and Ditchling Common to the east. All these gaps are relatively narrow and their continued protection is essential.
- 11.16 More than half of the circumference of the town is bounded by a 'Green Crescent' of land designated as informal public open space, most of which is in public ownership. This land extends from Batchelors Farm in the south east to Bedelands Farm in the north east. This is also an important constraint to further development.

Policy Aims

- 11.17 The aims of the Local Plan with regard to Burgess Hill are as follows:
- (a) to provide a period for consolidation following the extensive development which has occurred on the west side of the town during the past 15 years;
 - (b) to protect the separate identity of Burgess Hill by maintaining the Strategic Gaps between the town and Hurstpierpoint/Keymer/Hassocks to the south and Haywards Heath to the north, and protecting the area between the built up area and Ditchling Common to the east;
 - (c) to provide for a modest amount of additional housing and commercial development as far as possible on previously developed land;
 - (d) to secure improvements to Burgess Hill and Wivelsfield stations;

- (e) to complete the road links on the Victoria Industrial Estate;
- (f) to secure the redevelopment of the Martlets multi-storey car park and adjoining land;
- (g) to provide a new burial ground to serve the town;
- (h) to provide additional playing fields;
- (i) to consolidate and extend the 'Green Crescent' as a strategic area of informal public open space;
- (j) to safeguard and where possible to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas;
- (k) to stimulate a debate about the future of the Keymer Tileworks;
- (l) to secure the community facilities identified in the Plan; and
- (m) to maintain and where possible enhance the range and provision of community, recreation and leisure facilities within the town, including the protection of existing areas of open space.

The Built Environment

11.18 Although Burgess Hill is a relatively young town, with the majority of development having taken place during the latter half of the 20th century, it has three Conservation Areas. The boundaries of these are shown on the Burgess Hill Inset Maps.

Silverdale Road/Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area

11.19 This area was designated a Conservation Area in 1982 in recognition of its special character. The development of a station in 1889 attracted wealthy new residents to the town who built large new houses with large gardens, in contrast to the existing artisans' cottages to the north and west of the town centre which were occupied mainly by employees of the local brick manufacturing companies.

11.20 Although some infilling has taken place, the character of this area has remained largely intact. The buildings, mostly in Victorian and Edwardian styles, are generally in good repair and are set in large gardens with many mature trees. The character of the area which the Council wishes to conserve depends upon the relationship between the buildings and their settings.

11.21 The following features contribute to the character of the Conservation Area:

- the variety in styles of the substantial Victorian and Edwardian houses, set in spacious gardens;
- the predominant use of traditional building materials e.g. brick, clay tile hanging and render;
- the use of ornamental roof ridge tiles;

- the abundance of trees and hedges in the area;
- the grass verges dotted with trees alongside Birchwood Grove Road, which has the appearance of a semi-rural lane;
- the impressive buildings of the Burgess Hill School for Girls set in extensive and attractive grounds; and
- the views from within the Conservation Area, particularly looking to the west from Keymer Road.

St. John's Conservation Area

- 11.22 The area around St. John's Park immediately to the north of the town centre was designated a Conservation Area in 1989. The area includes St. John's Park and the residential areas to the east. It contains two Listed Buildings, St. John's Church and the Providence Strict Baptist Chapel in Park Road. It contains some of the oldest buildings in Burgess Hill. There are also more modest residential properties in Church Road and Crescent Road.
- 11.23 An important feature of the area is the park and remaining trees which survived the 1987 storm. The park is particularly important not only for recreation, but for the views into and within the Conservation Area. It provides an attractive setting for the two Listed Buildings and allows long views to the South Downs. Trees are also abundant within private gardens and they also contribute to the special interest of the area.
- 11.24 Marle Place and its grounds also lie within the Conservation Area. As well as being an important recreational resource, the grounds - which have a considerable number of trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order - contribute to the local amenity and special character of the area by providing an attractive area of open space within a relatively densely built up area.
- 11.25 The features which contribute to the character of this Conservation Area are:
- St. John's Church and Providence Chapel, which are both listed as Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest;
 - the well spaced reasonably large town houses along Park Road and Crescent Road;
 - the views of the South Downs;
 - the variety of substantial residential properties dating from most of the periods of the town's development from the latter half of the 19th century to the present day;
 - the attractive brickwork on several of the buildings;
 - the tree-lined park, which enhances views of St. John's Church and creates a feeling of openness and spaciousness close to the town centre; and
 - the quiet, secluded northern end of Upper St. John's Road with its large buildings set in spacious gardens.

Fairfield Conservation Area

- 11.26 This area was also designated a Conservation Area in 1989. It is located to the west of the London Road. This was one of the earliest parts of the town to develop during the 19th century and is of considerable historic interest. The predominant building material is brick and this is a reminder of the origins of Burgess Hill as an important centre for the manufacture of bricks.
- 11.27 The area north of Royal George Road comprises the largest concentration of small Victorian terraced housing in Mid Sussex and has a distinctive atmosphere and character of its own.
- 11.28 In Portland Road, the houses are larger, but the road is reminiscent of a country lane and has an attractive semi-rural character.
- 11.29 The features which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area are as follows:
- the use of brick in the construction of most of the buildings;
 - the concentration of small Victorian terraced houses, many of which are bay-fronted, with small front gardens enclosed by low boundary walls;
 - the semi-rural character of Portland Road due to its narrowness, unevenness and lack of footways;
 - the extensive views out of the area of distant undulating countryside, particularly looking south down Livingstone Road and Fairfield Road from where there are views of the South Downs and Jack and Jill windmills;
 - the predominantly high density residential character of the area; and
 - the strong sense of enclosure of the area.

Housing

- 11.30 In view of the constraints outlined above and the substantial level of new development which has occurred in Burgess Hill in recent years, only a small amount of new housing is proposed for the town in this Local Plan. Wherever possible, the Council is promoting the use of previously developed land for new housing in locations which are accessible to public transport and close to town centre or local facilities.
- 11.31 These sites are considered in the following paragraphs and are identified on the Proposals Map. In total, they have an estimated capacity of approximately 260 dwellings. The particular circumstances of each site will affect the nature of their development and these are considered in the following paragraphs and policies. In addition to these specific requirements, all proposals for these sites will be expected to have regard to the policies contained in the topic chapters of the Local Plan.

Open Air Market, Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill

- 11.32 This is a 0.4 hectare site which forms part of the Cyprus Road car park. It was, until recently, also in use as the site for the open air market, but the market has now been relocated to a site at the rear of Church Road. It is expected that this site will remain in

- use as a car park while Burgess Hill station site is being redeveloped, in order to help offset the temporary loss of parking facilities in the town. This site should therefore not be developed until the development of the station site has been completed.
- 11.33 The site is bordered by residential development to the north and east. The layout should respect the amenity of existing residents through careful design. There is scope for some three storey development on the site through the use of dormer windows in the roof slope. However, care should be taken to avoid overlooking, particularly of those properties in Crescent Road.
- 11.34 Access will be from Middle Way to the east, where at present there is only pedestrian access. The existing public right of way which runs through the site should be incorporated within the development to enable pedestrian access to continue through to the town centre. The formation of the access should retain the hedge on the eastern boundary as far as possible. The mature oak trees in the north east corner should also be retained.
- 11.35 The proximity of the car park to the west should be taken into account with any layout in order to avoid disturbance to future residents, and the provision of appropriate screening along the western boundary will be required.

BH1 Land at the former open air market, Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill (approximately 0.4 hectares) is allocated for residential development to provide approximately 25 dwellings, 30% to be affordable housing units. Permission will be subject to the general requirements of the Local Plan, particularly policies G3 (Infrastructure), B2 (Design), H2 (Dwelling Mix), H4 (Affordable Housing), T4 (New Development) and R3 and R4 (Outdoor Playing Space).

Additionally permission will be subject to the following requirements:

- (a) access from Middle Way to be formed, removing minimum amount of hedgerow to meet highway standards;
- (b) retention of the existing public right of way within the development;
- (c) the provision of a comprehensive landscaping scheme which shall include the retention and protection of the mature trees on the site and, in particular, the provision of screening along the western boundary; and
- (d) financial contributions towards the provision of additional secondary school places, enlarging Burgess Hill library and civic amenity facilities.

The Oaks Centre, Junction Road, Burgess Hill

- 11.36 This is a 0.4 hectare site close to the centre of Burgess Hill which is currently used for open storage. It lies between two railway lines and satisfactory noise attenuation measures will be required in order to protect new residents.

- 11.37 An electricity substation is situated to the rear of the site and the layout will need to ensure that vehicular access to this facility is retained. The site is considered to be suitable for a development of two storey flats, to complement the existing development to the south. Access to the site will be from Junction Road.

BH2 Land at The Oaks Centre, Junction Road, Burgess Hill (approximately 0.4 hectares) is allocated for residential development to provide approximately 12 flats. Permission will be subject to the general requirements of the Local Plan, particularly policies G3 (Infrastructure), B2 (Design), H2 (Dwelling Mix), T4 (New Development) and R3 and R4 (Outdoor Playing Space).

Additionally permission will be subject to the following requirements:

- (a) access from Junction Road;
- (b) the provision of suitable noise attenuation measures throughout the development;
- (c) the site should be checked for possible contamination and any necessary remediation shall be undertaken by the developer before building commences;
- (d) the provision of a comprehensive landscaping scheme;
- (e) the retention of vehicular access to the electricity substation at the rear of the site; and
- (f) financial contributions towards the provision of additional secondary school places, enlarging Burgess Hill library and civic amenity facilities.

Station Yard And Car Park, Burgess Hill

- 11.38 This is an important 1.4 hectare site in the centre of Burgess Hill, comprising the station yard to the west of the railway line and the adjacent Council-owned and Connex station car parks. A comprehensive redevelopment of the area is proposed, comprising the following elements:

- a new station building and entrance
- up to 60 dwellings
- improved car and cycle parking facilities
- public transport interchange
- highway improvements, including a mini-roundabout and/or traffic signals at the junction of Wolstonbury Way and Station Road.

- 11.39 Care should be taken to minimise disruption, particularly ensuring that there is no significant impact on parking provision during the construction period. Development of this site will therefore need to be co-ordinated with the development for housing of the former open air market site in Cyprus Road which is now in use as a car park. That site

should not be developed until work has been completed at the station and parking is available.

- 11.40 The development should respect the amenities of existing residents, particularly those in Wolstonbury Court through careful design. Some three storey development will be acceptable. Access to the allotments immediately to the south should be maintained.

BH3 Land at Burgess Hill station (approximately 1.75 hectares) is allocated for a mixed use development including provision of approximately 60 dwellings, 30% to be affordable housing units. Permission for residential development will be subject to the general requirements of the Local Plan, particularly policies G3 (Infrastructure), B2 (Design), H2 (Dwelling Mix), H4 (Affordable Housing), T4 (New Development) and R3 and R4 (Outdoor Playing Space).

Additionally permission will be subject to the following requirements:

- (a) a new station building and entrance;
- (b) improved access for pedestrians and cyclists;
- (c) provision of an integrated public transport interchange;
- (d) access to incorporate highway improvements, including the provision of a mini-roundabout and/or traffic signals;
- (e) the rationalisation of the existing car parks into a single long stay car park, providing at least as many spaces as are available at present, to serve both the town centre and the station;
- (f) the provision of adequate noise attenuation measures within the development;
- (g) the provision of a comprehensive landscaping scheme which shall include the retention and protection of existing trees on the site;
- (h) the retention of pedestrian access to the adjoining allotments;
- (i) the site should be checked for possible contamination and any necessary remediation shall be undertaken by the developer before building commences; and
- (j) financial contributions towards the provision of additional secondary school places, enlarging Burgess Hill library and civic amenity facilities.

Cants Lane, Burgess Hill

- ~~11.41 This is a 0.3 hectare site which forms part of the Keymer Tileworks, fronting Cants Lane. It is no longer used for clay extraction. The land slopes steeply to the south and some regrading of the land will be necessary. Developers will be required to demonstrate that the land is stable and can be used safely before development commences.~~
- ~~11.42 Cants Lane is often congested and it will be a requirement that each new dwelling has off street parking. The developer will also be required to investigate measures to relieve existing traffic congestion caused by onstreet parking. These could include lay-bys.~~

~~**BH4** Land at Cants Lane, Burgess Hill (approximately 0.3 hectares) is allocated for residential development to provide approximately 15 dwellings, 30% to be affordable housing units. Permission will be subject to the general requirements of the Local Plan, particularly policies G3 (Infrastructure), B2 (Design), H2 (Dwelling Mix), H4 (Affordable Housing), T4 (New Development) and R3 and R4 (Outdoor Playing Space).~~

~~— Additionally permission will be subject to the following requirements:~~

- ~~(a) provision of measures to relieve existing congestion problems in Cants Lane caused by on-street parking;~~
- ~~(b) the regrading of the site to a safe and stable level prior to commencement of the development;~~
- ~~(c) the site should be checked for possible contamination and any necessary remediation shall be undertaken by the developer before building commences;~~
- ~~(d) the provision of a comprehensive landscaping scheme; and~~
- ~~(e) financial contributions towards the provision of additional secondary school places, enlarging Burgess Hill library and civic amenity facilities; and~~
- ~~(f) preparation of a wildlife survey.~~

Land at 86 Junction Road, Burgess Hill

- 11.43 This is a 0.2 hectare site which is currently occupied by two commercial premises, adjacent to The Junction public house. It backs onto the railway line and appropriate noise attenuation measures will be required throughout the development in order to protect new residents.
- 11.44 Through careful design, the site would be suitable for a development of two storey flats. The amenities of existing residents, particularly at 78 Junction Road, should be protected.

- 11.45 The woodland to the rear of the site forms an important feature which contributes to the local environment and those trees which back onto the site should be protected, particularly during the course of the development.

BH5 Land at 86 Junction Road, Burgess Hill (approximately 0.2 hectares) is allocated for residential development to provide approximately 12 flats. Permission will be subject to the general requirements of the Local Plan, particularly policies G3 (Infrastructure), B2 (Design), H2 (Dwelling Mix), T4 (New Development) and R3 and R4 (Outdoor Playing Space).

Additionally permission will be subject to the following requirements:

- (a) the provision of suitable noise attenuation measures throughout the development;
- (b) the provision of a comprehensive landscaping scheme including the retention and protection of those trees which abut the north east corner of the site;
- (c) the site should be checked for possible contamination and any necessary remediation shall be undertaken by the developer before building commences;
- (d) access from Junction Road; and
- (e) financial contributions towards the provision of additional secondary school places, the enlargement of Burgess Hill library and civic amenity facilities.

Land North of Faulkners Way, Burgess Hill

- 11.46 This is a 1.26 hectare site on the northern edge of Burgess Hill which is currently in use as informal public open space. A public footpath crosses the site and the layout should be designed to ensure that it is incorporated within the development. Provision should also be made for future pedestrian access to land to the north, which is allocated for use as playing fields. Access to the development shall be from Faulkners Way but vehicular access through the housing development to the playing fields will not be acceptable.

- 11.47 Landscaping will be required along the southern boundary to protect the amenities of existing residents. To the east, north and north west the site is bordered by hedgerows and mature trees and these features must be retained as they form an important screen.

BH6 Land to the north of Faulkners Way, Burgess Hill (approximately 1.26 hectares) is allocated for residential development to provide approximately 50 dwellings, 30% to be affordable housing units. Permission will be subject to the general requirements of the Local Plan, particularly policies G3 (Infrastructure), B2 (Design),

H2 (Dwelling Mix), H4 (Affordable Housing), T4 (New Development) and R3 and R4 (Outdoor Playing Space).

Additionally permission will be subject to the following requirements:

- (a) access from Faulkners Way;**
- (b) the provision of a comprehensive landscaping scheme paying particular attention to the southern boundary;**
- (c) the retention of the existing footpath within the development and the provision of a pedestrian link to land to the north;**
- (d) the site should be checked for possible contamination and any necessary remediation shall be undertaken by the developer before building commences;**
- (e) financial contribution towards additional secondary school places, enlarging Burgess Hill library and civic amenity facilities; and**
- (f) preparation of a wildlife survey.**

Land at Folders Farm, Folders Lane, Burgess Hill

11.48 This is a 4.1 hectare site on the eastern side of Burgess Hill which is currently in use as pasture land. It is triangular in shape, narrowing to the north. The layout of the development will therefore need to be carefully designed in order to maximise the use of the developable land.

11.49 Vehicular access is to be from Folders Lane and highway improvements will be necessary in the interests of road safety. These should include a right turn lane and a footway along the site frontage, together with other measures designed to reduce the speed of traffic in Folders Lane. A pedestrian/cycleway link through the site to the Folders estate to the west should also be provided. Traffic calming measures must be introduced to Folders Lane, in conjunction with the development so as to reduce the speed of traffic along Folders Lane.

11.50 The site is important for urban wildlife and contains two ponds. Developers should undertake a landscape and wildlife survey of the site to establish those features of particular significance. The development will be required to incorporate these features within the layout and to protect the line of trees along the western boundary adjacent to the existing footpath. Care should be taken to protect the amenities of the existing residents, particularly those to the south east of the site where additional landscaping will be required.

11.51 The proximity of the railway line will necessitate that adequate noise attenuation measures are included within the development to protect the amenities of new residents. Measures to prevent access onto the line will also be required. The existing level crossing should be closed for reasons of safety. Contributions towards improved community facilities to serve the Folders Lane area and an upgrading of public transport services in the locality will be required.

BH7 Land at Folders Farm, Folders Lane, Burgess Hill (approximately 4.1 hectares) is allocated for residential development to provide approximately 90 dwellings, 30% to be affordable housing units. Permission will be subject to the general requirements of the Local Plan, particularly policies G3 (Infrastructure), B2 (Design), H2 (Dwelling Mix), H4 (Affordable Housing), T4 (New Development) and R3 and R4 (Outdoor Playing Space).

Additionally permission will be subject to the following requirements:

- (a) access from Folders Lane, incorporating a right-turn lane and footway along the site frontage and other traffic calming measures in Folders Lane;
- (b) traffic calming measures to reduce the speed of traffic in Folders Lane;
- (c) the provision of a comprehensive landscaping scheme, paying particular attention to the south eastern boundary and the enhancement of planting along the eastern boundary with the railway line;
- (d) the provision of adequate noise attenuation measures within the development;
- (e) the provision of a pedestrian/cycleway route through to the Folders Lane estate to the west;
- (f) the retention and protection of significant landscape features particularly the trees along the western boundary;
- (g) the careful integration of the ponds and other wildlife features within the layout of the development;
- (h) the closure of the existing level crossing and the provision of other measures to prevent access onto the railway line; and
- (i) financial contribution towards the provision of additional secondary school places, the enlargement of Burgess Hill library, the provision of improved community facilities, the upgrading of public transport services and civic amenity facilities.

Gypsy Site

11.52 There are two residential gypsy sites in Burgess Hill which are located at Bedelands Farm and Fairbridge Way. Both fall within the category of 'sites for settled occupation', as defined by Department of the Environment Circular 1/94 'Gypsy Sites and Planning.' The Bedelands Farm site is adjacent to the railway line and is owned by the District Council. The Fairbridge Way site immediately adjoins the former sewage treatment works. This site is privately owned and is allocated in the Burgess Hill Local Plan for industrial development.

- 11.53 Both sites are managed by West Sussex County Council. The County Council originally leased the Fairbridge Way site from the former Southern Water Authority. The lease expired some years ago.
- 11.54 The current owners of this site wish to implement the Local Plan proposal for business development and it is therefore necessary to identify a replacement site.
- 11.55 In seeking a suitable replacement site, the Council has taken account of the advice contained in Circular 1/94, in particular the need for any site to be within a reasonable distance of local services and facilities. It considers that it is desirable for a replacement site to be in the same general area of the town to minimise disruption and dislocation for the residents. It has also been mindful of the need to identify a site which is available for development. The landholding at Freeks Farm satisfies these criteria. The precise location will be determined following further detailed investigations and negotiations with the landowner. The County Council considers the site is suitable and has advised that provision should be made for 12 pitches.
- 11.56 Access to the site will be from Freeks Lane. This is currently a public footpath but provides vehicular access to Freeks Farm and Lowlands Farm. Improvements to the lane will be required. These will involve surfacing and widening to allow vehicles to pass.

BH8 Land at Freeks Farm is allocated for the development of a residential gypsy site to replace the existing site at Fairbridge Way. Improvements to Freeks Lane will be required.

Employment

- 11.57 The rapid population growth of Burgess Hill has been matched by its development as an employment centre. While employment in the other Mid Sussex towns is predominantly in the service sector, Burgess Hill has established itself as an important manufacturing centre.
- 11.58 Employment is concentrated on the west side of the town on the Victoria/Maltings Park Industrial Estate which now covers an area of 57 hectares and is the second largest industrial estate in West Sussex. The estate is home to over 130 companies which employ over 4,700 people and have a turnover of £1,000m p.a.
- 11.59 The smaller Sheddingdean Industrial Estate was developed during the 1980s by the Council to provide a supply of small units for local companies unable to find suitable accommodation in the town.
- 11.60 One of the issues addressed by the Burgess Hill Local Plan was the very poor access to the industrial estates. The construction of the Burgess Hill Western Distributor Road (Jane Murray Way) and the A2300 link to the A23 at Hickstead has transformed the town's accessibility for local businesses. This has undoubtedly been an important factor in attracting new employers such as Ericssons, Notifier, Edwards High Vacuum and Sussex Enterprise to the town.
- 11.61 Although a substantial amount of office development was provided when the town centre was developed in the early 1970s, there has been little demand for office accommodation in the town in recent years. Indeed, several allocations for town centre office development which are included in the Burgess Hill Local Plan were not taken up and

have been reviewed as part of the Local Plan process.

Review of previous employment allocations in the town center which have not been implemented

11.62 Three sites in the town centre which were allocated in the Burgess Hill Local Plan for office development have not been implemented.

Burgess Hill Station Yard (BH 4/2)

The station yard was allocated for small, self-contained office suites or an hotel. No proposals for the implementation of this allocation have come forward. In view of the location of the site in relation to public transport and other town centre facilities, it is considered that the site is suitable for residential development, together with improvements to the station (see Policy BH3).

Land at rear of Church Road (BH 4/3)

Land at the rear of 2-22 Church Road and 2-14 Mill Road was allocated for the development of small, self-contained office suites, dependent upon the provision of a proposed rear service road. There is no likelihood of this service road being provided during the plan period and it is not a proposal of this Plan (see paras 11.91-11.94 below). In the light of recent government guidance and the strategy of the Plan, these sites would be more suited to redevelopment for housing. They are therefore not allocated for office development in the Plan.

Meeds House, Station Road (BH 4/3(a))

Land at the rear of Meeds House was allocated for offices, subject to the retention of the existing house. The site has not come forward for development and it would also be suitable for residential development. It is therefore not allocated for office development in the Plan.

Industrial Development

11.63 The Burgess Hill Local Plan allocated land adjoining Maltings Park Industrial Estate and at the former sewage treatment works, Fairbridge Way, for industrial development. Recent investigations in the Maltings Park area have revealed extensive archaeological features which could extend to the new allocations on the western side of Burgess Hill.

Land South of Maltings Park

11.64 3.5 hectares were allocated for B1 and B8 development, subject to the construction of the Western Distributor Road. Planning permission has been granted for the site. Approximately 50% has been developed and is occupied by Notifier. The planning permission is subject to a S.106 agreement requiring a financial contribution towards the construction of the adjoining section of Jane Murray Way, which was pre-funded by the District Council.

BH9 1.8 hectares to the south of Maltings Park is allocated for B1, B2 and B8 development. Access should be from Charles Avenue.

Land to the North of Maltings Park

11.65 2.6 hectares were allocated for B1 and B8 development in the 1992 Plan. Although outline planning permission has been granted and a Development Brief has been prepared, no development has taken place. The Council reviewed this allocation following publication of PPG3 in 2000, but decided that the continuing requirement for land for industrial development in Burgess Hill outweighed any benefit which might accrue from the re-allocation of the land for residential development. The development of this site is dependent upon the provision of a new link road between Charles Avenue and Victoria Road, as shown on the Inset Map.

BH10 2.6 hectares of land to the north of Maltings Park Industrial Estate is allocated for business development. No development shall be occupied until the Charles Avenue-Victoria Road link has been constructed. Because of the sensitive location of this site, only low rise buildings will be permitted and uses will be restricted to those falling within Classes B1 and B8 of the 1987 Use Classes Order.

Land between York Road and the Pookebourne

11.66 0.5 hectares of land which lies between York Road and the Pookebourne, immediately to the east of Robin Road, was allocated as Informal Open Space in the Burgess Hill Local Plan. The use of this land has been reviewed in the light of objections to the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan and the recommendations of the Local Plan Inspector who considered use of the land for B1 business development would be appropriate. The site has also been the subject of proposals for the development of a nursery and a doctor's surgery. The Council considers that any of these uses would be appropriate for this site, subject to access being taken from York Road, the retention of the existing tree screen alongside the Pookebourne and the provision of a landscaping scheme for the site. The design approach to this site should take account of its position at an important 'gateway' to the Victoria Industrial Estate.

BH11 0.5 hectares of land between the Pookebourne and York Road is allocated for B1 business development. The site is also considered to be suitable for the development of community facilities, for example a surgery and/or childrens' nursery. Development proposals should take account of the proximity of residential development immediately to the north of the site and the existing tree screen along the northern boundary must be retained. Access should be taken from York Road.

Land at the Former Sewage Treatment Works

- 11.67 The Burgess Hill Local Plan allocated the former sewage treatment works for a 'low density industrial/business development'. This allocation has not been taken up.
- 11.68 Although the Council has considered the option of re-allocating this site for housing, it has concluded that there are sound reasons for retaining it as a site for business development. There is a continuing demand for further industrial and warehousing accommodation in Burgess Hill. The site is the largest potential employment site in the District. The characteristics of the site and its location make it suitable for business development.
- 11.69 Development of the site will need to take account of the following matters:
- The residential gypsy site.
 - The exposed boundaries.
 - Accessibility.
 - The possibility that the site is contaminated.

BH12 12 hectares at the former sewage treatment works, Fairbridge Way, is allocated for B1, B2 and B8 business development. The development shall take account of the following requirements:

- (a) no development shall take place until the existing residential gypsy accommodation has been either replaced or refurbished in accordance with the appropriate standards and is available for use.
 - (b) the existing belt of landscaping on the northern and western boundaries should be retained and strengthened with additional planting. This shall incorporate a bridleway specifically designed for use by walkers, cyclists and horseriders unless a suitable alternative route is provided elsewhere within the site.
 - (c) the existing access from the A273 should be improved;
 - (d) the layout and design of the buildings shall take account of the exposed nature of the northern and western boundaries of the site on the edge of the built-up area.
 - (e) access to the existing uses on land adjoining the site shall be maintained or alternative access provided; and
 - (f) provision should be made for improving access to the site by public transport.
- 11.70 The Council will prepare a development brief for the site setting out these requirements in more detail and will expect the developer to enter into a legal agreement.

Shopping

11.71 The shopping facilities in Burgess Hill comprise:

- The town centre, including The Martlets and Market Place shopping centres.
- London Road.
- The Tesco edge-of-town superstore at Hammonds Farm.
- Neighbourhood shopping centres at Worlds End, Sheddingdean, West End Farm and Royal George Road.

11.72 Recent developments include:

- The Market Place development, comprising 10,300 sq. m of floorspace and including a Waitrose supermarket, completed in 1991.
- A food superstore at Hammonds Farm, opened in 1993.
- The Halfords development on London Road.

11.73 These developments have significantly increased the shopping opportunities in the town. The Mid Sussex Household Shopping Survey undertaken in 2002 showed that 92% of Burgess Hill households used stores in Burgess Hill for their food shopping, this has risen from 86% in 1993. 66% of shoppers use the Tesco store, 18% Waitrose and 4% the Coop (which has since been closed).

11.74 As would be expected, far fewer households do their non-food shopping locally. The survey revealed that 31% used Burgess Hill for the majority of their non-food shopping, 31% used Crawley and 26% used Brighton.

Future Requirements

11.75 In view of the new shopping facilities which have been developed in the town in the recent past, the Council does not consider there is a quantitative requirement for a significant amount of additional shopping floorspace in Burgess Hill during the plan period. However, there is justification on qualitative grounds for a limited amount of further shopping to increase the range of choice available to local households for non-food shopping.

11.76 The Council considers that there is an opportunity for redevelopment of the area between The Martlets and Civic Way. This area includes the multi-storey car park, which is almost 30 years old and is substandard in terms of its overall design, layout and appearance by modern town centre standards. It is envisaged that any redevelopment scheme for this area will be predominantly retail, with a potential to include a further mix of uses if appropriate. There should be no reduction in the number of public parking spaces. A Development Brief will be prepared for the site.

BH13 Land adjoining The Martlets Shopping Centre, including the multi-storey car park, is allocated for redevelopment.

Appropriate uses would include:

- retail, including food superstore
- leisure/entertainment
- residential flats
- civic, public and voluntary services

Any scheme should include short stay town centre parking.

- 11.77 Any other sites which are proposed for retail development will be considered against the policies in the Shopping chapter. A Town Centre Shopping Policy Area is shown on the Town Centre Inset Map.
- 11.78 The Shopping Chapter also contains policies for Primary and Secondary shopping areas (Policies S3 and S4). The Primary and Secondary shopping frontages for Burgess Hill town centre are shown on the Town Centre Inset Map.

The Outdoor Market

- 11.79 In 1989, the Burgess Hill outdoor market was moved from the site currently occupied by Market Place to the eastern end of the Cyprus Road car park. It did not prosper in this location which is remote from the main town centre shopping area and a requirement for a more central location was identified. After consideration of a number of sites, the Council selected the car park at the rear of Church Road. A scheme to improve and extend this car park was carried out and the market moved in 2001.

Transport**Roads**

- 11.80 The Burgess Hill Local Plan included a number of important proposals for improving the highway infrastructure of the town. Most of these have been implemented, for example the Western Distributor Road (Jane Murray Way), which was constructed as an integral part of the recent development on the west side of the town, and the A2300 link road, which was built by the County Council with development funding.
- 11.81 The Plan also proposed two new road links between Jane Murray Way and the Victoria Industrial Estate, together with a new internal link between Victoria Road and the northern end of Charles Avenue. The latter was intended to provide a direct link between the oldest and least accessible part of the industrial estate and the new roads and to allow restrictions to be placed on the existing access to the estate from Victoria Avenue.
- 11.82 A southern extension of Charles Avenue was constructed by the District Council in 1996 following the confirmation of a Compulsory Purchase Order by the Secretary of State. This provided the first direct link between the industrial estate and the Jane Murray Way. A second link was created when the connection between York Road and Jane Murray Way was constructed by the District Council in 2002.

Victoria Road Link

- 11.83 Victoria Road is the oldest part of the industrial estate. A number of premises which had been vacant for several years have recently been refurbished and are now occupied. A large site at the western end of Victoria Road (known as the KDG site) was derelict for a number of years and has now been redeveloped.
- 11.84 Much of the traffic to and from the Victoria Road area at present travels along Victoria Avenue, which is a residential street. A new link from Victoria Road connecting to the northern end of Charles Avenue is required. This will provide direct access from this part of the estate via Charles Avenue and York Road to Jane Murray Way. When this access is available, the Council will explore means by which access between Victoria Road and Victoria Avenue can be restricted.

BH14 Land between Charles Avenue and Victoria Road is allocated for a new road link. When this link and the York Road extension are open to traffic, the Highway Authority will impose access restrictions on Victoria Avenue at the point shown on the Proposals Map in order to exclude lorries from the residential area.

Walking and Cycling

- 11.85 The Council is keen to promote walking and cycling as alternatives to the use of the car for local journeys in Burgess Hill. The layout of the new housing areas and the closure of existing roads (Gatehouse Lane and Malthouse Lane) provide opportunities for relatively safe journeys by cycle and on foot through the new developments to destinations such as local schools, the Triangle Leisure Centre and local shops. In 1998, the District Council constructed the Southway cycle track to improve access between the existing and the new residential areas.
- 11.86 In 1998 the County Council approved a Cycling Study of Burgess Hill. This put forward a number of specific proposals for improving opportunities for cycling in the town, to be implemented when resources permit. The proposals will need to be reviewed when the Urban Transport Plan for Burgess Hill is prepared.

Burgess Hill - Hassocks Cycle Track

- 11.87 Both the adopted Burgess Hill and South Mid Sussex Local Plans propose a cycle track/bridleway/footpath between Burgess Hill and Hassocks running along the eastern side of the railway. It has not been possible to reach agreement with the landowner over the routing of this cycle track/bridleway/footpath. In 1996, the County Council and District Council upgraded the existing footway along the eastern side of the A273 between Burgess Hill and Hassocks to a cycle track. Notwithstanding this, the Council considers that there is still a need for a recreational cycle track/bridleway/footpath between Burgess Hill and Hassocks. A suggested route is shown on the Burgess Hill Inset map.

BH15 A recreational cycle track/bridleway/footpath is proposed between Hassocks and Burgess Hill. The proposed route is shown on the Proposals Map.

Bus Services

- 11.88 Bus services in the town have been enhanced as a result of the local Buses-R-Us initiative introduced in 1998. This has involved a partnership between County, District and Town Councils, local businesses and the bus operator. The introduction of the service has resulted in a significant increase in patronage.

Rail Services

- 11.89 Burgess Hill is served by Burgess Hill and Wivelsfield stations. Many local residents rely upon services from these stations for commuting and other essential journeys. Expectations of improvements to rail services following the privatisation of the industry have generally not been fulfilled, although more people are travelling by rail than ever before. For Burgess Hill travellers, there are serious capacity problems during the morning and afternoon peaks which need to be addressed by Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies. Station facilities at Burgess Hill station are in urgent need of improvement. The redevelopment of the station yard and adjoining land will provide the opportunity to achieve these improvements (see paras 11.38-11.40 and policy BH3).

Burgess Hill Urban Transport Plan

- 11.90 During the plan period, the County Council will prepare an Urban Transport Plan for Burgess Hill. This will prove an opportunity for a holistic view to be taken of transport issues in the town. Preparation of the plan will involve extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and interest groups.

Town Centre Pedestrianisation

- 11.91 The development of The Martlets and the construction of Civic Way in the early 1970s led to the pedestrianisation of Church Walk. At the time, it was envisaged that following the development of a second phase of the town centre, the remaining section of Church Road would be pedestrianised. A proposal to construct rear service roads and to pedestrianise Church Road was included in the Burgess Hill Local Plan.
- 11.92 The Council subsequently prepared a number of detailed options for implementing this proposal and these were the subject of public consultation in 1998. The proposals attracted significant levels of objection and the Council opted for the introduction on an experimental basis of a 'Saturday Closure' scheme which would exclude all traffic, including buses, from Church Road between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on Saturdays. This scheme cannot be introduced until arrangements for the re-routing of buses have been agreed with bus operators and the County Council.
- 11.93 The Council will continue to work with the bus companies and the County Council so that the Saturday Closure scheme can be introduced as soon as possible.
- 11.94 The Council believes that it is unlikely that a permanent pedestrianisation scheme will be achievable during the period covered by this Local Plan. Consequently, it is not included

as a proposal in the Local Plan. The Council anticipates that traffic circulation within the town centre, the future of Church Road and pedestrian priority schemes will be important issues for the forthcoming Urban Transport Plan to consider.

Car Parking

11.95 The Council operates five off-street public car parks in the town centre. These provide 406 short stay spaces and 333 long stay spaces. In addition, the privately-operated Market Place shopping centre car park provides 345 short stay spaces and South Central provide approximately 70 long stay spaces at the station.

Car Park	Short Stay	Long Stay	Total
Cyprus Road	176	60 (Mon – Friday)	236
Martlets	186		186
Queens Crescent		155	155
Station Road		118	118
Market Place	345		345
South Central (Station)		70	70
Church Road	44		44
Total	751	403	1154

Burgess Hill Station

11.96 Land at the station is allocated for residential development (see paras 11.38-11.40 and policy BH3).

11.97 The Council believes that it would be beneficial if, as part of the redevelopment, the two existing car parks - the Council's Queens Crescent car park and the station car park - were to be rationalised into a single long stay car park to serve both the town centre and the station. In addition, land to the east of the station is suitable for commuter parking. There will be no reduction in the overall amount of parking currently available.

Martlets Multi-Storey Car Park

11.98 The Martlets multi-storey car park is almost 30 years old and is substandard by modern town centre standards in terms of its overall design, layout and appearance. It is located in an area which is identified on the Town Centre Inset as an 'Area of Development Opportunity' (see para 11.76 and policy BH13). Any redevelopment scheme will need to incorporate at least as many parking spaces as exist at present.

Wivelsfield Station

11.99 There is a long-standing proposal in the Burgess Hill Local Plan for the development of a small car park to serve Wivelsfield Station on land immediately to the west of the station. In 1990, British Rail obtained planning permission for the car park. This permission has not been implemented. In view of the serious on street parking problem in the World's End area caused by daytime parking, the Council believes that the provision of this car

park is an important objective and it will press for its implementation by National Rail and/or the Train Operating Company which leases the station.

BH16 Land immediately to the west of Wivelsfield Station is allocated for a long stay commuter car park.

Recreation, Sport and Leisure

11.100 The 1992 Burgess Hill Local Plan highlighted the failure of recreation and open space facilities in Burgess Hill to keep pace with the rapid increase in population. As a result, the town had become seriously deficient in terms of the minimum standards of the National Playing Fields Association, especially in respect of playing fields.

11.101 This Local Plan included a number of proposals to redress these deficiencies.

11.102 PPG17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' was published in July 2002. This was too late for the Guidance to be taken into account when the proposals in this Local Plan were prepared. The Guidance requires Local Authorities to undertake robust assessments of existing provision and future requirements for open space and recreation. This work will be undertaken by the Council as part of the review of this Local Plan. Until this work has been carried out, the proposals in this chapter will represent the policy of the Local Planning Authority in respect of open space and recreation in Burgess Hill.

Indoor Recreation: The Triangle Leisure Centre

11.103 The Burgess Hill Local Plan allocated a 5 hectare site at West End Farm for a major, fully integrated leisure complex, incorporating a full range of indoor facilities (wet and dry) as well as a floodlit all-weather pitch and tennis courts. This facility was intended to serve Burgess Hill and the southern parts of Mid Sussex. The Triangle Leisure Centre was opened in April 1999 and replaces the former Swim Centre and Sidney West Centre, both of which have been demolished.

11.104 Approximately 1 hectare of land at The Triangle is available for further development and the Council, as owner and operator of the site, wishes to promote development which will complement the existing facilities. It considers that appropriate uses for this land could include further leisure facilities, for example, ten pin bowling or a hotel/travel lodge.

BH17 Land at The Triangle is allocated for leisure or leisure-related development to complement the existing recreational facilities on the site.

Sidney West Site

11.105 The Council has recently undertaken a public consultation exercise to help it determine the most appropriate use of the land previously occupied by the Centre.

BH18 The playing fields at the Sidney West Centre are retained for recreational use. The land occupied by the former leisure centre building is reserved for leisure/community purposes.

Playing Fields

- 11.106 The 1992 Burgess Hill Local Plan allocated five sites for the development of new playing fields. One of these was at Marle Place, where the future of the community facilities, including playspace, had been put in doubt following the County Council's decision to sell the site for housing. Following the dismissal of a planning appeal, the land has been secured for community use and now provides a junior football pitch and a floodlit multi-use area.
- 11.107 Land at West End Meadows has been laid out for playing fields. None of the three remaining playing field allocations have been implemented due mainly to difficulties over land acquisition. It is proposed to retain all these allocations in this Local Plan.
- 11.108 Apart from West End Meadows, no new playing fields have been provided within the new development areas on the west side of the town. Instead of on-site provision, the Council has negotiated financial contributions with the developers. These contributions have provided a substantial element of the funding of the Triangle leisure centre.
- 11.109 Land at West End Farm is allocated in the Burgess Hill Local Plan for a new secondary school. This allocation is retained (see policy BH23 below). The site is linked to The Triangle by a pedestrian underpass beneath Jane Murray Way. The site is large enough to accommodate a substantial area for formal sport and the Council would expect this to be made available for shared use with the public in conjunction with the Triangle Leisure Centre.

BH19 Land for playing fields and associated facilities is allocated at the following locations:

- (a) land to the east of Kingsway;
- (b) land to the north east of Sheddingdean;
- (c) land to the south of Southway; and
- (d) as an integral part of the development of a new secondary school at West End farm.

- 11.110 The Council recognises that there is still a need for a substantial area of additional playing fields to serve the town and it will continue to seek opportunities.

Equipped Play Area

11.111 The Council intends to provide an equipped children's play area on the 'Railway Land' informal public open space to serve the residential area to the east of Mill Road.

BH20 Land immediately to the north of St. Wilfrid's Road is allocated for a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP).

Informal Public Open Space

11.112 The recent housing development on the west side of Burgess Hill has enabled the Council, by means of planning agreements with developers and landowners, to bring substantial areas of land into public ownership as informal public open space. This land, together with land previously acquired by the Council and land owned by Burgess Hill Town Council, forms the basis of what has become known as the 'Green Crescent' of open space which now extends around approximately two thirds of the circumference of the town. Much of the 'Green Crescent' is situated in the parishes of Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common and Cuckfield Rural. Routes for walkers, cyclists and horseriders will be provided.

11.113 The extensive area of public open space immediately to the west of the railway also provides a valuable local amenity.

BH21 The following areas are allocated as Informal Public Open Space:

- (a) **Batchelors Farm;**
- (b) **Land south of Nightingale Lane;**
- (c) **Land adjoining Jane Murray Way, York Road and Sussex Way;**
- (d) **Land to the north of Sheddingdean and Leylands Park, including Bedelands Farm; and**
- (e) **The 'Railway Land' to the north and south of Wivelsfield Station.**

11.114 The District Council will seek opportunities to extend the 'Green Crescent' and to bring into public ownership land allocated as Informal Public Open Space.

Community Facilities

Education

11.115 As a result of the recent residential development which has taken place in Burgess Hill,

the County Council has identified a requirement for two new schools. The locations are shown on the Burgess Hill Inset Map.

BH22 Land at Hammonds Ridge is allocated for the development of a primary school.

BH23 Land at West End Farm is allocated for the development of a secondary school. The development should include recreational facilities designed for shared use with the local community.

Community Buildings

11.116 There is a requirement for three community buildings to serve existing residential areas. The locations are shown on the Burgess Hill Inset Map.

BH24 Land is allocated for the development of community buildings:

- (a) on land at Hammonds Ridge;
- (b) on land to the west of Robin Road; and
- (c) on land to the east of Kingsway.

11.117 The sites at Hammonds Ridge and Robin Road are owned by the District Council. The land at Kingsway is in private ownership and the Council will seek to acquire it.

Keymer Tileworks and Claypit

11.118 One of the greatest environmental and planning challenges facing Burgess Hill over the next 20-30 years is the long term future of the Keymer Tile Company's works and claypits. Although this timescale is well beyond the period covered by this Local Plan, the Council considers the issues need to be aired and fully debated so that a 'vision' for the future of the site can be developed.

Location and History of the Site

11.119 The site is located between Cants Lane and the Burgess Hill-Lewes railway line. It covers an area of 20.5 hectares (51 acres). Production of building materials on the site pre-dates the development of Burgess Hill and the town has expanded to the point where the site is now surrounded on all sides by houses.

- 11.120 Brick making ceased many years ago and handmade clay tiles only are now manufactured on the site. These are first class building materials which are held in very high regard by the building industry. The site represents a strategically important mineral resource. Recent surveys undertaken by the company suggest that there are sufficient reserves of suitable clay to enable production to continue for a further 20-30 years. Some parts of the site are no longer required by the company for operational purposes.
- 11.121 The only access to the site is via Nye Road, which is a narrow residential street.
- 11.122 The site is effectively a large sump which collects rainfall. The company maintains water levels by pumping. When pumping ceases, the pit will fill with water.
- 11.123 The current planning permission for the site requires the owners to implement a restoration scheme when production comes to an end. This restoration scheme will involve the creation of a large lake covering virtually the entire site.
- 11.124 In 1985, planning permission was refused for filling the site with domestic refuse and developing recreation facilities.
- 11.125 The 1992 Burgess Hill Local Plan allocated as Informal Public Open Space a small area in the north east part of the site where clay extraction has ceased. This proposal has not been implemented and there is no public access to any part of the site for reasons of security and public safety.

Keymer Tileworks Working Party

- 11.126 In 1998, the company appointed new management and initiated a dialogue with the local authorities. The company's objectives were to review the existing restoration proposals, which they do not believe are appropriate, to try to agree a long term strategy for the site and to obtain planning permission for residential development of parts of the site which are surplus to operational requirements.
- 11.127 A Keymer Tileworks Working Party was established, comprising officers and councillors from Burgess Hill Town Council and West Sussex County Council, officers from Mid Sussex District Council and representatives of the company. In 1999, the company held an Open Day for local residents and organised a public meeting to discuss the future of the site.
- 11.128 The Working Group has identified a large number of issues which are fundamental to any consideration of the future of the site. These are set out below.
- Is a large lake the most appropriate after use for the site? The proposal raises serious concerns over safety in view of the likely depth of the water and the steepness of the slopes. Who will be responsible for the site when production ceases?
 - Any alternative to a lake will involve importing inert fill material (by definition, material which cannot decompose i.e. not domestic refuse). The most likely source of suitable inert material is spoil from new development sites. To fill the south eastern part of the site (some 4 hectares) would require about 330,000 cubic m of material. If brought in by road, this would represent about 25,000-30,000 lorry movements. If properly handled and compacted, the filled areas could be built on.
 - Investigations have revealed that although the site adjoins the railway, it would

be extremely difficult to bring fill material in by rail due to the cost of installing a siding and the fact that the network locally is already operating at capacity providing passenger services. This option would only become a possibility if a large source of suitable fill material could be identified which is readily accessible to an existing railhead and which could be transported in large quantities on a regular basis.

- ❑ If transport by rail is not an option, which would be the best route for lorries? Access from Junction Road or Cants Lane would raise major concerns in view of the restricted width and capacity of the roads. In highway capacity terms, Kingsway is a modern distributor road and might be considered suitable for a temporary period, in spite of the fact that it serves a large residential area. Use of the proposed Haywards Heath Relief Road, the B2112 and the eastern section of Folders Lane would avoid the need for movements through the town centre.
- ❑ What would be the most appropriate land uses for the site in the long term? Government and local planning policy is to maximise the use of previously developed 'brownfield' land for new housing, and this site could eventually accommodate several hundred houses. Alternatively, should the site be used to help rectify the existing severe shortages of open space and recreation land in this part of the town?
- ❑ Could development of the site ease the current traffic congestion in Cants Lane by providing new road links?
- ❑ Could small parts of the site which are surplus to the company's requirements be released for development while production of tiles continues? (50 houses have been built following the grant of planning permission on appeal in June 2001).
- ❑ At present, the site is of considerable nature conservation interest. How can this interest be safeguarded and enhanced? Conservationists believe that the current restoration scheme - the lake option - would very largely destroy this interest.

Need for a Masterplan

11.129 These are complex and sometimes conflicting issues. However, a 'vision' for the future of the site is urgently needed which all those with interests in the site, especially the company, can work towards achieving.

11.130 The Council therefore intends to prepare a Masterplan for the site which will provide this 'vision'. A large number of stakeholders will need to be involved in this process, including the company and local residents.

