

Introduction

- 24.1 Crawley Down is a large village located mid way between East Grinstead and Crawley. Although there is a long history of settlement in the area, much of the early development dates from the 19th century. The older part of the village is centred on the green, including Bowers Place and Station Road, and along Sandy Lane and Vicarage Road. The village has expanded considerably over the last 30 years or so and the population more than doubled from 2000 to 4,600 between 1971 and 1981. This period saw the development of large housing estates on the east side of the village, including at Burleigh Wood. The pace of development slowed in the 1980s, being primarily infilling or the redevelopment of smaller sites such as Glebelands south of the church and Long Acre in Sandy Lane. The population of the village is now around 5,000.
- 24.2 Despite this extensive development the original core has retained its village character. The village also has an attractive rural setting, being surrounded by attractive countryside which separates it from the other nearby villages and the larger towns, and which forms a vital part of the strategic gap between East Grinstead and Crawley.
- 24.3 Crawley Down is served by a range of local facilities. These include a number of shops, mainly in Station Road and also in Sandy Lane; a church and parish room; infants and junior schools; a health centre; two village community centres including the Haven Centre with its extensive recreational and social facilities; playing fields, recreation grounds and equipped play areas; a scout headquarters; and an extensive area of allotments.
- 24.4 Worth Way, the long distance bridleway between East Grinstead and Crawley, passes through the centre of the village, partly along the line of the former railway.

Policies and Proposals

Built-up Area Boundary

- 24.5 A built-up area boundary is defined for Crawley Down. This seeks to preserve the rural setting of the village and to protect the surrounding countryside and the strategic gap from unnecessary development. The boundary excludes areas of low density development on the edges of the village including parts of Turners Hill Road, Sandy Lane and Sandhill Lane, all of which are regarded as being part of the countryside and are therefore subject to policies of development restraint.

Strategic Gap

- 24.6 Crawley Down is surrounded by land which falls within the strategic gap between East Grinstead and Crawley. The gap boundary follows the built-up area boundary, with the exception of the area of low density residential development on Sandhill Lane, which is not included in the gap.

Areas of Townscape Character

- 24.7 The Council has identified two Areas of Townscape Character in Crawley Down in accordance with policy B16 of the Built Environment Chapter. The first is at the centre of the village and includes Sunnymead, an area of informal public open space, and parts of Station Road and Bowers Place. This area comprises an interesting and attractive mix of house types of varying ages, styles and plot sizes, together with prominent trees and hedges. The second is part of Sandhill Lane, an unadopted road at the southern edge of

the village, where the varied house types have individual and group interest. They are substantial properties in large plots and incorporate a range of building styles.

- 24.8 The Council will pay particular attention to any proposals for development or redevelopment in these areas, having regard to their special townscape character. It will seek to ensure that this character is protected and where possible enhanced by any new development proposals. These areas are identified on the Proposals Map.

CD1 Areas of Townscape Character have been designated at:

- Sunnymead/Station Road/Bowers Place; and
- Sandhill Lane.

Community/Recreation Use

- 24.9 A need has been identified within Crawley Down to replace or improve the existing village scout headquarters. This currently draws a large membership from Crawley Down and Turners Hill and plays an important role in meeting the recreational needs of children from both villages. The existing scout headquarters is now too small for the group's activities and various options are being explored for meeting this particular need, including the possibility of accommodating a larger building on another site.
- 24.10 The Mid Sussex Playing Pitch Strategy has identified a need for additional playing pitches in the area, and the Council will continue to investigate ways of meeting this local need.