

Planning Policy in Rother district

Update - July 2009



This 'Update' is intended to help keep interested people and organisations abreast of planning policies in Rother District Council's area.

It highlights recent changes affecting policies against which planning applications in Rother are currently assessed. It also notes progress in developing future policies and proposals that will respond to new environmental and economic, as well as development, imperatives.

Web links are included to assist finding the documents referred to. It is emphasised that the Council's own documents are also available to view at its [Community Help Points](#) in Bexhill, Battle and Rye.

We hope you find this Update, compiled by the Council's Planning Strategy and Environment Section, useful. Our contact details are given at the bottom of the page, and any feedback would be welcomed.

The South East Plan has been finalised

The Secretary of State finally approved, or 'adopted', the South East Plan in May.

This means that it is part of the statutory 'development plan' and sits alongside the Rother District Local Plan (see below) in providing the primary basis for the determination of planning applications. It also sets the context for the preparation of the Council's own Local Development Framework (LDF).

The South East Plan contains a broad range of policies to guide long-term change in the region. It also includes policies specific to the 'Sussex Coast sub-region' which covers the coastal areas of Rother.

There is a South East Plan page on GOSE's [website](#).

All policies previously contained in the earlier 'East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan' have consequently been revoked and no longer apply.

NB The South East Regional Assembly (SEERA) was dissolved on 31st March 2009, and is replaced by the new **South East England Partnership Board**.

The Partnership Board - which is formed from the South East England Councils (SEEC) and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) - is now responsible for implementing South East Plan policies and creating a new, integrated strategy that incorporates SEEDA's Regional Economic Strategy.

All Rother District Local Plan policies 'saved'

Three years after a Local Plan is adopted, Councils must request that its policies continue to be operational (or 'saved') until such time as they are replaced by policies in the new LDF (see overleaf).

The Secretary of State has issued a [Direction](#) that all policies are saved for the time being.

Hence, the Local Plan policies remain pivotal in determining planning applications in Rother District at the present time. The Local Plan itself can be viewed [online](#). It is also still available to purchase.

More information ...

North East Bexhill Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) adopted

Rother's Full Council adopted guidelines for major housing and business developments to the north east of the town on 29th June 2009.

Land to the north of Pebsham and Sidley is allocated for development in the Rother District Local Plan. The SPD supplements this with more detailed requirements to provide employment opportunities, a mix of housing for local people, including public rented and shared ownership homes, and significant new open space areas as well as a new primary school.

The guidance also sets high environmental and design standards. It expects new housing to be much more energy efficient than the current norm and specifically looks to the use of combined heat and power, as well as solar and wind power, for energy generation.

The SPD itself, as well as the 'Adoption Notice' and 'Consultation Statement' can be viewed online at the [SPDs](#) page of the LDF site.

One supplementary planning document that the Council has indicated that it wishes to prepare, for **The Down site, in Bexhill** has been deferred as East Sussex County Council has advised that it has not yet decided that the current High School site is surplus to educational requirements, at least until it has completed the Bexhill Primary Review.

LDF Core Strategy representations published and work continues

The Council consulted on its emerging over-arching, or 'core', strategy for development and change up to 2026 over a 12 weeks period up to the end of January. Some 1,357 representations were received to this '[Consultation on Strategy Directions](#)'. These have been summarised and can be viewed, by chapter, [online](#).

Work continues to refine the strategy in the light of the comments received. This includes further studies to develop viable sustainable energy policies, to determine the best mix of housing to meet local needs of all sections of the community, and to develop appropriate strategies for robust town centres.

The timetable for preparation of the Core Strategy is contained in the '[Local Development Scheme](#)'.

Housing land available for an upturn in the market

The Council has published its [Assessment of Housing Land Supply](#), as at 1st April 2009. This shows that there is a sufficient stock of outstanding permissions and residential land allocations that could come forward to meet the South East Plan's requirements over the next 5 years.

It updates the housing supply information in the earlier Annual Monitoring Report (December 2008), although the [AMR](#) also provides a useful review of local socio-economic and development trends.