

# Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia Area Action Plan

## Preferred Approaches - Draft Cabinet version

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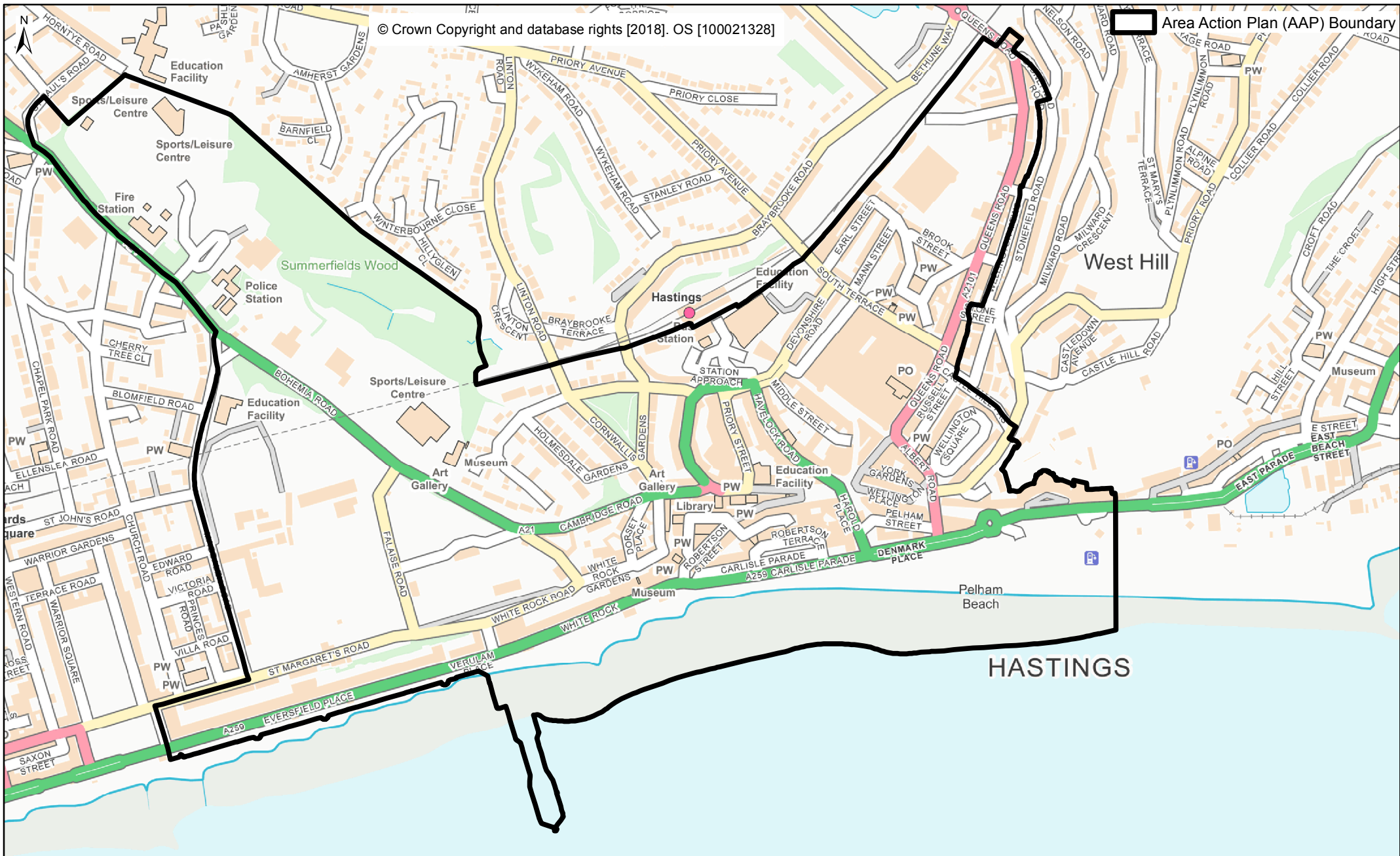
## Section One

### Introduction

- 1.1 Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia has been identified by the Council as critical to the continued social, economic and cultural regeneration of the Borough capable of accommodating the homes, jobs and services which are needed to meet local needs and drive forward future economic growth. The area, whilst providing the town's principal focus for retail, employment, education, leisure, culture and tourism, faces a number of social, economic and environmental challenges. The Area Action Plan (AAP) seeks to address these issues and to unlock the significant untapped potential of the area.
- 1.2 The AAP provides the opportunity to enable a significant step change in Hastings and sets out a coordinated strategy for regeneration and growth. It seeks to make Hastings a more attractive place to live, work and visit, to encourage investment and to maximise local economic benefits. It seeks to promote the early and sustained transformation of the area through a coordinated action plan and effective partnership working. In doing this, it takes a joined up and more flexible policy approach to the town centre, Bohemia and the seafront in order to maximise opportunities and to ensure proposals are sustainable and deliverable.
- 1.3 The boundary of the area covered by the AAP is shown in figure 1.



Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary



**Figure 1**  
**Area Action Plan Boundary**

Scale: 1:8,000

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## The vision

- 1.4 The vision for Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia has evolved through early engagement with key stakeholders and is as follows:

*'By 2033 Hastings, founded upon our unique heritage, natural environment and seaside location and supported by social, economic, cultural and environmental regeneration, will be a safe and thriving place to live, work and visit that offers a high quality of life and has a strong economy and sustainable future. Hastings Town Centre will be a high quality town centre serving local residents, workers, students and visitors – a destination of choice with a unique sense of place.'*

- 1.5 To make this happen Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia will be continually improved through investment in the public realm, the reuse of key seafront sites, regeneration of open spaces, new housing development in Bohemia and improvements to the retail offer of the town centre, complemented by new leisure, cultural and tourism facilities. The approach to the regeneration of key areas of the town centre, Bohemia and the seafront will ensure the right uses, in the right location and a scale of development that can positively contribute to the economic life of the town and range of services and uses which benefit both residents and visitors. A careful balance will be struck between the quantum and quality of development, particularly housing, and how this can help create and cross-fund improvements to the public realm, as well as civic and cultural uses in the area. The positive benefits of regeneration will be made possible through a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the use of public sector land and assets.
- 1.6 The town centre will meet modern retail requirements and have a strong local economy whilst making the most of its distinctive heritage, open spaces and seafront.
- 1.7 Bohemia can be a game-changer, a celebration of the Hastings spirit, which builds on existing qualities and unlocks the potential of this part of town. White Rock Park will be both a destination and a new living room for Hastings, and Bohemia will be opened up as a place to explore. Bohemia can be a testbed for new tools and techniques – cultural, social, ecological and economic, for establishing new ways of living. Over time, Bohemia will become a creative, diverse and forward looking addition to Hastings.
- 1.8 We will work in a way that creates interest and invites collaboration. Whilst planning for the future we will open the doors for new uses and provide the framework for future investment.

## Objectives

1.9 The vision for the town centre and Bohemia is underpinned by a number of key objectives:

### **Objective 1: Achieve and sustain a thriving economy**

1.10 To promote economic growth and local employment opportunities and increase the quality of commercial floorspace and economic opportunities in the town centre for the benefit of the Borough as a whole. Development and change will be phased in line with investment in the area and will include the provision of interesting buildings and spaces which will attract start-up businesses and people looking for an alternative workspace, including affordable artisan “maker” and co-working/shared working spaces. The process of change in Bohemia will commence in the short term through a series of programmed activities and meanwhile uses and by engaging with the community in shaping the future of the area and its economic vitality.

### **Objective 2: Make best use of existing assets to make Hastings distinctive**

1.11 To make best use of existing assets and facilities and consolidate uses to create critical mass and activity, exploring new retail, civic and cultural spaces and extending the range, quality and accessibility of facilities and services to support a vibrant, thriving place that will attract people to live, work and visit the town centre and Bohemia area.

### **Objective 3: Promote Hastings as a destination of choice**

1.12 To create a more competitive destination with an extended offer as a place to shop, work, spend leisure time, learn and live with an exciting range of different leisure and tourist attractions which will continually evolve the Hastings brand and visitor experience, supported by a programme of events and festivals which will extend the range of visitors and tourist season. To promote the Bohemia area as a focus for leisure, recreational and cultural activities which complements the Old Town and St Leonards, increases footfall and activity, activates the seafront and improves the range and quality of visitor attractions and facilities and the overall visitor offer in Hastings.

### **Objective 4: Maximise the opportunities to meet local housing needs and create a safe, healthy and attractive living environment**

1.13 To maximise the opportunities for new residential development and associated infrastructure which creates attractive and healthy living environments with access to a range of facilities and services and a mix of housing and community facilities including affordable housing. This means making best use of available land and promoting high quality development of an appropriate form and density whilst protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment, providing new and improved green spaces and green links and minimising and mitigating the impacts of development on the natural and local environment from ground, air, water and noise pollution.

### **Objective 5: Safeguard and improve the town’s heritage and natural environment**

1.14 To take an environmentally sensitive approach to change which respects the town’s heritage, reinforces the landscape and seafront setting and ensures new development is of the highest design and environmental quality with the creation of a network of high quality green spaces focussed around a revitalised White Rock Gardens - a park fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with improved connections to the seafront.

### **Objective 6: Provide an efficient and effective transport system**

1.15 To create an attractive and distinctive area that is accessible to all, particularly those with specific mobility needs. Create strong east-west connections which enables greater walking and cycling and greater use of public transport through the provision of improved pedestrian and cycle connections between Bohemia, the seafront, Hastings Town Centre

and St Leonards which will address issues of traffic congestion, parking and air quality. Embrace the use of technology and communications to enable 'smart mobility'.

1.16 Realisation of these objectives will generate:

- an improved regional presence;
- new employment and business opportunities;
- new and improved leisure and cultural facilities;
- new high quality homes to meet housing needs;
- higher visitor numbers which will in turn generate spend and further investment;
- a positive perception of Hastings as a place to visit and invest in;
- improvements to the health and wellbeing of the people living in Hastings.

Cabinet draft

## Section Two

### The Plan preparation process

- 2.1 Preparation of the AAP builds on the Hastings Planning Strategy (February 2014) and Development Management Plan (September 2015), both of which cover the whole of the Borough. The AAP will take forward the objectives and aspirations of the adopted Hastings Planning Strategy (2014). The AAP has been informed by a number of other supporting documents including the Hastings Town Centre and White Rock Retail and Leisure Assessment and Urban Design Analysis (Bilfinger GVA, March 2016) and the White Rock Park & Bohemia: A Strategy for the future of the White Rock area (White Arkitekter, July 2017) to be called the White Rock Park and Bohemia Strategy throughout the rest of the AAP document.
- 2.2 The town centre is an important sub-regional retail centre, transport hub, higher/further education and employment centre and serves as a major cultural and economic anchor for the town. Together with the town centre, Bohemia can be a game-changer: a celebration of the Hastings spirit, which builds on the area's existing qualities and unlocks the potential of this part of town. It can provide a testbed for new tools and techniques – cultural, social, ecological and economic and for innovative development including new forms of housing. The AAP sets out the Council's vision for the area and provides the policy framework to guide future development and change. It seeks to enhance the area's character and environment, promote sustainable development and improve the quality and range of facilities and services available to residents, businesses and visitors. In particular it seeks to:
- create a distinctive destination;
  - encourage investment in new high quality development and improvements;
  - create new cultural, leisure and tourism opportunities;
  - improve pedestrian links between Bohemia, the town centre and the seafront;
  - protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
  - enrich the existing character of the seafront and the town's cultural heritage;
  - phase proposals to make best use of available funding and investment;
  - promote a stronger image for the town.
- 2.3 The AAP provides a framework for managing change through the redevelopment of key sites and improvements to the built and natural environment. It focuses on promoting the area as an attractive place to live, as an employment location, retail centre, visitor and tourist destination, a centre for sports, leisure, arts and cultural activities, and a place to invest in. It demonstrates how future development requirements can be accommodated in order to maintain and enhance Hastings' competitive position, whilst at the same time respecting the heritage and character of the area.
- 2.4 The challenge will be to balance future development requirements with the protection and enhancement of the area's unique built and natural environment. Whilst some parts are in need of revitalisation, the area offers significant opportunities for high quality new development. The area also contains buildings and open spaces of heritage importance which have significant cultural and environmental value and should be protected and enhanced for future generations and provide the potential for new uses.

## Scope of the Area Action Plan (AAP)

2.5 The Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia AAP covers a 15 year period up to 2033. The AAP provides:

- Policies for the use of land and buildings;
- development and design guidance for key sites;
- proposals for new and enhanced parks and civic spaces and other environmental improvements;
- an Action Plan for the delivery of key proposals and initiatives.

2.6 Once adopted, the AAP will form part of a suite of Local Plan documents with the Hastings Planning Strategy (February 2014) and the Development Management Plan (September 2015) and their successor documents and will be used for Development Management purposes in the determination of planning applications.

## Policy context

2.7 The Plan is required to be in conformity with National and Local Policy. A summary of relevant planning policy documents is set out in Appendix 1.

## National Policy

2.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 promotes high quality and sustainable development. Sustainable communities require sufficient quality housing to meet their needs, a flourishing local economy supported by adequate infrastructure, a high quality safe and healthy environment and the amenities and facilities required to support a diverse and vibrant local community. The NPPF requires planning policies to positively promote competitive town centre environments and manage the growth of centres over the plan period.

2.9 The draft revised National Planning Policy Framework was published for consultation in March 2018. This document incorporates policy proposals previously consulted on in the Housing White Paper and the 'Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places' consultation. The draft revised NPPF reiterates that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led and that plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings. It places particular importance on the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and ensuring that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

## Local Policy

2.10 The Hastings Planning Strategy (2014) provides the strategic framework for development within the Borough for the period 2011-2028. This includes the provision of at least 3,400 new homes, and 70,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment space over the plan period. The Hastings Planning Strategy (HPS) maintains Hastings Town Centre as the main retail centre in the Borough as a sub-regional centre with a variety of shops and other facilities. The HPS identifies the provision of 20,500m<sup>2</sup> of additional comparison retail within the town centre for the period 2014-2028.

2.11 The HPS promotes Hastings and St Leonards Town Centres as the focus for employment in the office, retail, leisure and cultural and service sectors with Hastings Town Centre

being the primary focus. The need for new retail floorspace is clearly set out, but the requirements for convenience and comparison floorspace and commercial leisure facilities have been updated in the Hastings Town Centre and White Rock Retail and Leisure Assessment and Urban Design Analysis (Bilfinger GVA, March 2016). Developing the diversity and quality of the tourism offer is seen as central to the HPS, having the ability to drive visitor numbers and longer dwell times. In parallel, the HPS aims to promote competitiveness in the range and types of shops, develop the evening economy, improve the public realm, and protect and enhance the architectural and townscape heritage.

2.12 The Hastings Planning Strategy (HPS) provides a long term plan to deliver regeneration and sustainable growth in the Borough up to 2028. It sets out a number of key strategic objectives and priorities of relevance to the future of the Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia areas:

- **Achieve and sustain a thriving economy**- developing the key economic growth sectors including the creative industries;
- **Ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community in which they want to live**- providing more opportunities for people to live in Hastings Town Centre through mixed use development;
- **Safeguard and improve the town's environment**- conserving and managing the historic environment, protecting and enhancing green infrastructure and biodiversity and providing open spaces, recreation facilities and streets that are well designed, safe and accessible;
- **Address the impacts of climate change**- requiring developments to include appropriate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures such as green roofs and walls, sustainable drainage systems, multi-functional green space and biodiversity enhancement and protection;
- **Support sustainable communities**- improving the quality of life, enabling an increased take-up of sports, leisure and cultural activities by residents and visitors through the provision of accessible facilities and promoting access to a healthy natural environment;
- **Provision of an efficient and effective transport system**- providing a network of safe, good quality walking and cycling routes;
- **Making best use of the Seafront and promoting tourism**- ensuring a range of day long and year round activities and facilities that attract residents, workers and visitors; working with local communities to secure a sustainable future for Hastings Pier and other key landmark sites along the Seafront and encouraging artists and related tourists and visitors through increased opportunities for art and craft studios, markets and retail

2.13 The Hastings Planning Strategy (HPS) requires the development of at least 3400 homes in the Borough up to 2028. Through the AAP there is an opportunity to help meet and potentially significantly exceed this target.

### **Development Management Plan (adopted September 2015)**

2.14 The purpose of the Development Management Plan (DMP) is to guide the determination of planning applications. Any scheme to be considered by the Council will be determined using both the HPS and its policies for overall sustainable growth in the Borough, and the policies in the Development Management Plan. The DMP requires development proposals to give specific consideration to design, amenity and access taking account of the area within which it is located. The DMP identifies a number of development sites within Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia.

2.15 The DMP sets out development management policies including for the protection of retail uses within the defined Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area. The DMP identifies two cultural quarters within the town centre boundary. The White Rock and America Ground



Cultural Quarter includes Robertson Street which is located within the Town Centre Shopping Area; and the Academic Cultural Quarter includes the Priory Quarter site (Site Allocation HTC6) adjoining the Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area. Within the Town Centre Boundary, two sites are identified as having the potential to accommodate some retail floorspace as part of a wider mixed use development; the Observer Building (HTC3) and Priory Quarter (HTC6).

### **Local Plan Policies Map (adopted September 2015)**

2.16 Policies in the adopted Hastings Planning Strategy and Development Management Plan will be applied to the Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia area in addition to the policies and proposals set out in this AAP. In accordance with legislation a new Policies Map is required as each plan is adopted to cover all adopted Borough planning policy documents (i.e. the Hastings Planning Strategy, the Development Management Plan and the Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia Area Action Plan). A new Policies Map will therefore be published at the same time as the AAP is adopted.

### **White Rock Park & Bohemia Strategy**

2.17 The AAP has been informed by the White Rock Park & Bohemia Strategy. The overarching aim of the strategy is to use the Bohemia area as a catalyst to drive forward the continued transformation and regeneration of Hastings. The key principle which underpins the Strategy is to celebrate the assets of the Bohemia area and to transform it into a high quality and distinctive place which will create new opportunities for the town, local businesses and residents. The overall objective is to generate a critical mass of activity that is deliverable and distinctive whilst at the same time, creating a high quality cultural and leisure destination with a strong sense of place and good connections with the wider town centre. The goal is to reinvigorate this part of Hastings through a programme of key initiatives and development proposals including:

- performance/cultural space;
- improved leisure provision;
- outdoor recreational space;
- a mix of uses including housing appropriate to the site and as potential source of finance for other projects;
- retail opportunities that might complement the town centre or the visitor economy
- hotel/visitor accommodation;
- access, including transport and parking;
- the possible re-configuration of public service buildings.

2.18 The document has been prepared in consultation with key stakeholders including existing occupiers, land owners and local groups and organisations. The proposals provide a framework for sustainable change and a shared plan of action. It seeks to create a distinctive place and a shared belief in the future of the town and opportunities for all. Several zones of activity have been identified along with a number of key projects which will be delivered through close partnership working between the Council, other public sector bodies, landowners, developers, local businesses and the community. These have been incorporated into the Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia AAP.

2.19 The document includes a robust delivery plan and a programme of measures to change the image of Hastings such as celebrating cultural heritage, local people and food, an extended 'year round' events programme and improved marketing and branding. The Action Plan sets out how the projects and proposals can be effectively phased over time and the key actions and interventions which will be required to realise the vision for the Bohemia area. It recognises the importance of coordinated action on the part of all stakeholders and the need to improve connections with Hastings Town Centre, Old Town



and St Leonards to achieve regeneration objectives and continue the process of transformational change.

## **Sustainability Appraisal**

- 2.20 The AAP is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) undertaken to meet the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations<sup>1</sup>. The purpose of the SA is to inform and influence the AAP's development process and maximise its contribution to sustainable development.
- 2.21 An initial SA Report has been prepared to accompany the current consultation. In addition to setting out an appraisal of the draft plan, it presents an appraisal of a number of alternative options concerning different elements of the AAP. For ease of reference the alternatives together with the preferred approaches are set out within appendix 2.
- 2.22 Following the completion of the current AAP consultation, additional appraisal work will be undertaken and a further SA report prepared to accompany the forthcoming 'Regulation 19' consultation on the AAP.

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<sup>1</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

## Section Three

### Context and issues

- 3.1 In preparing the AAP, reference has been made to available background material and evidence base documents including the Retail and Leisure Assessments and Urban Design Analysis (Bilfinger GVA, March 2016). This information has been analysed and key issues are summarised in this section.

### The area today

- 3.2 Hastings Town Centre is the commercial and retail heart of the Borough. Most of the comparison retail trade takes place here and the town centre has a good representation of national high street retail, catering and other business chains together with many independent shops, cafés and bars. The latter are predominantly in the traditional shopping areas along Robertson Street, Queens Road, and Wellington Place. An important cluster of creative industries has also developed around the Trinity Triangle/Claremont.
- 3.3 The architecture of Hastings Town Centre takes on many forms and patterns and represents a mix of Victorian terraces; mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century retail blocks and recent retail, office and educational developments. There are also a number of distinctive buildings including Pelham Crescent, St Mary in the Castle and the Brassey Institute (library). The area contains many tourist attractions, such as the White Rock Theatre, Hastings Museum, the seafront and pier. Residential uses are predominantly located around St Andrew's Square, Wellington Square and Holmesdale Gardens. Conservation Areas cover much of Hastings Town Centre and it will be important to protect and, where possible, to enhance features of heritage value whilst securing viable new uses and accommodating appropriate forms of development.
- 3.4 Hastings is undergoing significant change with several regeneration initiatives planned and undertaken. The town centre underwent major planned improvement and expansion during the 1990s with construction of the Priory Meadow Shopping Centre and pedestrianisation of the main shopping streets. This enabled the town centre to better fulfil its role as a sub-regional centre. Its catchment area takes in Hastings, parts of Bexhill and the more rural communities to the north and east of Hastings. However, Hastings currently faces competition from neighbouring centres at Eastbourne, Tunbridge Wells and Ashford and there is a need to improve its competitiveness and the range and quality of its offer. Regeneration funding has been focused on the town centre in recognition of its importance, particularly in terms of improving the further and higher education offer and office space. Significant regeneration has taken place, notably the Lacuna Place development and One Priory Square, the railway station, a health centre and new accommodation for further and higher educational establishments. Major improvements have also occurred along the seafront with many of the formerly derelict seafront buildings being refurbished and brought back in use including White Rock Baths and Hastings Pier.
- 3.5 Hastings has a strong and diverse cultural infrastructure but there are a number of significant gaps which need strengthening particularly in terms of creative workspace and mid-scale cultural venues. The town provides a range of performance venues, museums; art galleries and studios and there is an added cultural dimension offered by the further and higher educational establishments and importantly, by the town's artists, performers and other creative businesses and communities. The Council and its partners have recently focused heavily on culture as an instrument of social change and economic growth. The arrival of the Jerwood Gallery and The Stade open space in 2012 marked a significant point on this journey. The Gallery has had a major positive impact itself, and

subsequently the potential of culturally based regeneration to deliver change has become much more widely accepted.

- 3.6 White Rock Gardens represent a significant and underutilised asset, with a stunning location and unrivalled views. The area is strategically located close to the town centre and between two rail stations but, at the same time, is isolated due to weak connections within the area and with the wider town. There are wonderful sea views but these are enjoyed by a limited number of people and the area has become neglected and difficult to define - nearly a park, but more of a common. Some of the facilities are currently poor quality and need reinvigorating. A key challenge is the re-definition of this space and its relationship with the wider town. Change is required if the area is to realise its full potential and provide a more attractive place to shop, work, live and visit, whilst protecting the essential character of the historic parts.
- 3.7 The area covered by the AAP is very varied in its character and function. To help understand the issues and opportunities this presents, a number of broad Character Areas were defined in the Retail and Leisure Assessments and Urban Design Analysis (March 2016). The Character Areas are illustrated in figure 2 and comprise:
- Summerfields/Bohemia
  - White Rock Gardens
  - Seafrost St Leonards
  - Seafrost Hastings
  - Town Centre core
  - Town Centre edge
- 3.8 Key features of the Character Areas may be summarised as follows.

### **Summerfields/Bohemia**

- 3.9 This area comprises the land north of Bohemia Road, including: Summerfields Wood Local Nature Reserve, Hornty Park, Summerfields Leisure Centre, Hastings Museum, the police station, ambulance station and fire station. Summerfields Wood Local Nature Reserve is a unique natural space with a network of formal and informal footpaths and significant heritage and community assets in the form of the Bohemia walled garden, listed Victorian roman bath and ice house. Summerfields Leisure Centre is the Borough's main leisure centre and Hastings Museum serves residents and is an attraction for visitors to the town, but is currently underused by both. The area is poorly connected to Hastings Town Centre and White Rock Gardens and contains extensive areas of underutilised land and poorly defined uses.

### **White Rock Gardens**

- 3.10 This area includes the public open space south of Bohemia Road and north of St Margarets Road divided by Falaise Road, as well as the former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus. White Rock Gardens is a designated heritage asset of local importance with a mix of indoor and outdoor leisure facilities including long established bowling clubs, a well-used skate park and youth facilities. The convent buildings are listed and of national importance. The area provides an important green space between central Hastings and St Leonards and unrivalled sea views. However, the area is underutilised with poor connections to the seafrost and wider town centre, and there are neglected and largely unused areas. The landscape and public realm is in need of enhancement.

### **Seafrost St Leonards**

- 3.11 This area includes the seafrost promenade, the A259 and terraced buildings from Warrior Square in the west to the pier in the east. The seafrost is characterised by distinctive 4-5

storey Victorian seafront terraces with some areas of new build and the two-level wide seafront promenade. The east-west cycle path forms part of a national cycle network route. The promenade affords long views to Hastings Pier and Hastings Castle to the east and Marine Court to the west. The area is impacted by the busy A259 road with limited pedestrian crossings and poor public realm and landscape quality. There is a lack of activities on this section of the promenade to draw people west from the pier.

### **Seafront Hastings**

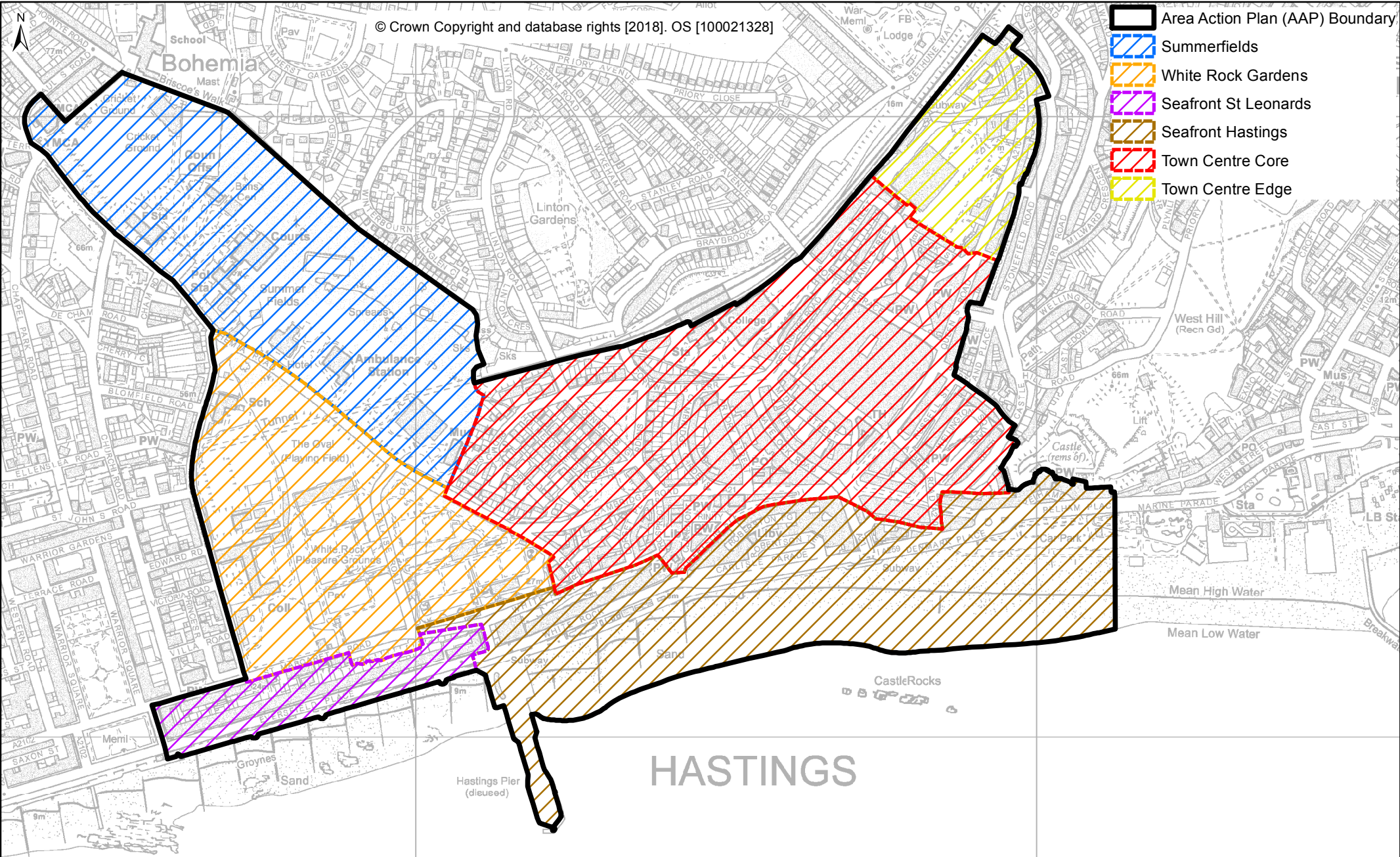
- 3.12 This area includes the seafront promenade, the A259 and terraced buildings from the pier in the west to Pelham Crescent in the east. Along with the seafront in St Leonards, seafront Hastings benefits from the natural beach environment and views. The wide promenade is well used by pedestrians and forms part of a national cycle network route. Hastings Pier and St Mary in the Castle are cultural landmarks and the restoration of the former White Rock Baths has provided a new attraction in the form of The Source Skate Park. The pier, St Mary in the Castle, Carlisle Parade car park and shelters are listed and of national heritage importance. The busy A259 road with limited pedestrian crossings acts as a barrier to movement between the seafront and town centre and the Harold Place underpass is unwelcoming.

### **Town Centre core**

- 3.13 This is a large and varied Character Area which covers the town centre shopping areas including Priory Meadow, Robertson Street and Wellington Place, Hastings railway station and adjacent education buildings, and the bulk of higher quality office space focused on Havelock Road. It also includes surrounding residential areas at White Rock, Cambridge Gardens, Wellington Square and St Andrews Square. Priory Meadow Shopping Centre is a strong attractor and the main focus of retail activity in the town centre. The tight historic urban grain creates a compact, accessible retail core and the cluster of heritage buildings creates a distinctive and attractive townscape. There is a good mix of cultural, education and leisure facilities including the cinema and library and a cluster of creative industries in the Trinity Triangle/America Ground Cultural Quarter. Visual and in some cases physical pedestrian and cycle links to the seafront are poor and whilst improvements have been made, the townscape and public realm is of mixed quality.

### **Town Centre edge**

- 3.14 This area includes the land between the railway line and Queens Road mostly occupied by Morrisons supermarket with the Britannia Enterprise Centre to the north and the terraced houses and shops along Queens Road. The distinctive listed railway bridge provides a strong gateway feature to Hastings Town Centre and there is a diversity of small scale businesses at Britannia Enterprise Centre with some striking views from parts of this area to the extensive Victorian terraces on West Hill. However, there is a loss of cohesive urban character due to the openness of the Morrisons site and dominance of car parking with poor quality townscape along Queens Road and poor quality pedestrian access into Hastings Town Centre.



**Figure 2**  
**Character Areas**

Scale: 1:8,000

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## **Key Issues**

### **Built environment and heritage**

- 3.15 Hastings Borough is made up of various places and areas each with their own distinctive attributes that together form the character of the area. The Council will make sure that care is taken not to erode this local identity through insensitive development.
- 3.16 Hastings topography is defined by the seafront, the cliffs and castle that preside over the town and development stretching along valleys and high ridges leading to a spectacular townscape. Wide views can be experienced from the pier looking back towards the town. Development should have an appreciation of Hastings' unique topography, and be sensitive to the scale, height, layout and massing of surrounding buildings as well as views to and from the development site. Particular consideration should be given to buildings of special architectural or historic interest that provide richness and diversity to the local area and help create a sense of place. Many of the historic routes and spaces within Hastings can be easily recognised, and remain key to peoples understanding of where they are.
- 3.17 One of the key strengths of Hastings Town Centre and the Bohemia area derives from its history and wealth of heritage assets. The cluster of historic buildings and the 19th Century street pattern in Hastings Town Centre contribute to a distinctive urban character and the restored pier and new use for the former White Rock Baths have provided a renewed focus for the seafront. It will be important to protect and enhance the heritage value of the area and to seek the restoration and viable reuse of heritage assets. There is also the opportunity to use the area's unique heritage as a key driver of regeneration recognising the historic importance of the area as a major asset in delivering the AAP issues and objectives.
- 3.18 There are, however, a number of issues which the AAP must address in order to realise the regeneration objectives for Hastings. Busy roads and traffic dominate many parts of the public realm which restricts pedestrian movement and cycle access and negatively impacts on the character of the town centre and seafront. The A259 is a particular problem as the road severs the town centre from the seafront creating a physical barrier to easy pedestrian flows.

### **Green infrastructure and landscape**

- 3.19 When it comes to green infrastructure the AAP area is one of contrast divided between the highly urbanised town centre with limited green infrastructure, and Bohemia to the west characterised by significant areas of open space. The beach and seafront are two of the town's primary natural assets and are a key attraction for visitors.
- 3.20 The area contains significant open spaces and natural assets. White Rock Gardens and Summerfields Woods provide multifunctional public green spaces with heritage, biodiversity and recreational value but are currently underutilised.
- 3.21 The AAP provides the opportunity to create a better connected network of spaces which will enhance the character of the town and its attraction as a destination.

### **Movement and connectivity**

- 3.22 Whilst strategically located close to the town centre and seafront, the network of pedestrian and cycle routes within Bohemia is poorly defined with a lack of wayfinding.

Pedestrian and cycle connections between the town centre, Bohemia and the seafront are in need of improvement.

- 3.23 Hastings Station is a key gateway into the town and the main transport interchange between bus and train, but pedestrian routes from the station into the town centre are poorly defined and in need of improvement.
- 3.24 Pedestrian access from the seafront to White Rock Gardens and Bohemia is constrained by topography. There are no direct east-west pedestrian links through White Rock gardens between St Leonards and Hastings. Bohemia Road presents a barrier to pedestrian connections between White Rock Gardens and the leisure facilities, museum and Summerfields Wood that are located to the north of Bohemia Road. A key challenge will be to address the significant level change severing the spatial connection between the seafront and the Bohemia area.
- 3.25 Traffic on the A259 negatively impacts on the quality of the seafront and creates a significant barrier to pedestrian movement, with a limited number of crossing points. Safety railings add to street clutter and inhibit pedestrian movement. A key challenge will be to reduce the impact of traffic on the pedestrian environment and to address the severance caused by the A259.

### **Efficient use of natural resources**

- 3.26 The Climate Change Act 2008 establishes a legally binding target to reduce UK greenhouse emissions by at least 80 per cent by 2050 relative to 1990 levels. The NPPF expects plans to take a proactive approach to limit the impacts of climate change and create more resilient environments for communities, including supporting the transition to a low carbon future. Adopted local planning policies within the Hastings Planning Strategy (HPS) (Policies SC1 – SC6) recognise the importance of the built environment in tackling climate change requiring all development to be designed to include appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures.
- 3.27 Policy SC4 of the HPS establishes a local carbon reduction policy for residential development based on the implementation of the energy hierarchy. This policy was developed to align with the expected introduction of the government 'zero carbon homes' policy implemented through Part L of the Building Regulations. The Housing Standards Review was undertaken to streamline local technical performance standards for homes and resulted in a number of significant changes to the Building Regulations. An outcome from the review (March 2015) was that the government does not expect local planning authorities to set conditions for energy requirements above a Code level 4 equivalent (around 19% better than Building Regulations Part L 2013) instead relying on building regulation standards to achieve the desired energy and carbon dioxide targets<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.28 Further to this, in July 2015 following concerns about significant regulatory burdens on house builders and developers the government announced that it would not continue with the zero carbon Allowable Solutions element of its policy (which allows residual carbon emissions to be delivered either onsite or offsite), or the proposed 2016 increase in on-site energy efficiency standards. Instead it will keep standards under review<sup>3</sup>. This does not modify the NPPF policy allowing for the connection of new housing development to low carbon infrastructure such as district heating networks.

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<sup>2</sup>Written Ministerial Statement – Housing standards: streamlining the system (March 2015)

<sup>3</sup> Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation (July 2015)

- 3.29 National planning policy recognises the responsibility of all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. Many examples of enterprising community-led initiatives are starting to emerge throughout the country, from community-owner electricity generation, such as solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to wind turbines. Community energy projects have the benefit of engaging the local community, providing leadership and control, with the local community collectively benefiting from the outcome. In principle, the Council will support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy.
- 3.30 Combined heat and power (CHP) is a highly efficient process that generates both electricity and heat at the point of use. CHP becomes viable once demand for heat and power is in excess of 5,000 hours per annum. Typically, buildings with these sort of high-energy requirements include hospitals, hotels, leisure centres and universities. This technology can significantly reduce a building's running costs, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and increase fuel supply security.
- 3.31 Linking groups of buildings together through a district heating network can offer further significant savings as a single centralised plant can meet all the development's energy needs<sup>4</sup>. Policy SC5 of the HPS identifies the Conquest Hospital, Summerfields Sports Centre and Hastings Town Centre as locations with potential for CHP network. Recent evidence undertaken on behalf of the Council also highlights Bohemia as an area that lends itself to CHP linked to district heating due to the proximity of public buildings and the existing leisure centre that would provide an appropriate anchor load<sup>5</sup>.
- 3.32 The Council is committed to delivering a greener town and getting the infrastructure in place to support the transition for residents and businesses to low carbon transport. Making provision for electric vehicle charging points will be a primary step to growing this sector.
- 3.33 Southern Water manages potable water supply in the Hastings Borough. The whole of the Southern Water supply area is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change with a delicate supply-demand balance. The Environment Agency has identified the South East (which includes Southern Water's supply area) as 'seriously water stressed'<sup>6</sup>. This is where 'current household demand for water is a high proportion of the current effective rainfall available to meet that demand'. It is therefore imperative that local authorities, water companies and developers work together to deliver the water efficiencies needed to help meet future demand as identified within Southern Water's Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) (2015-2040).
- 3.34 Water companies face a number of water demand challenges including the impacts of climate change causing more extreme weather, working within environmental limits for water abstraction, population growth and changing lifestyles towards smaller households. Reducing water consumption forms a key part of Southern Water's WRMP with a target to reduce average water consumption by 10% (a reduction of 15 litres per person, per day) to 133 litres per person per day by 2020.
- 3.35 Hastings forms part of the Cuckmere and Pevensey Levels catchment. The nearest main river to the AAP area is Combe Haven between the Powdermill Stream confluence and the coast that is located to the west in West St Leonards. Managing urban diffuse pollution is a priority issue for the Environment Agency within this catchment. Pollution

<sup>4</sup> Combined heat and power for buildings Good Practice Guide (2004) Carbon Trust

<sup>5</sup> Hastings Borough Council Sustainable Energy Options Study July 2017 & Energy Options Study Report for HBC by CLS Energy Ltd

<sup>6</sup> Water stressed areas – final classification (July 2013) Environment Agency



from drains, roads and pavements can be washed away by rainfall into the river system. The South East River Basin Management Plan<sup>7</sup> has identified sustainable drainage and water efficiency as positive measures in helping to manage this issue.

- 3.36 Policy SC3 of the HPS requires development to incorporate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures such as water efficiency measures in new development. However, it is considered that there is a clear local need to reasonably justify a new more measured water efficiency standard for new dwellings within the AAP area to help manage water usage by occupiers.

## Housing

- 3.37 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) undertaken in 2013 identified that the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for new homes in Hastings in the period 2011-28 was 404 dwellings per annum (6,863 dwellings in total). However, due to the constraints on the availability of development land, the HPS, which provides for at least 3,400 net new homes by 2028, goes as far as it is able in meeting housing need. Updated analysis of objectively assessed housing shows a small reduction but that the need remains significantly higher than the current Plan target.
- 3.38 Whilst there is significant activity in the residential market in Hastings, there are concerns around the rate of housing delivery. The Council is therefore keen to attract new investment to improve the performance of the housing market.
- 3.39 The HPS identifies the town centre as a sustainable location for residential development where it helps to increase the vitality of the town centre. Maintaining a strong retail presence is a priority, however, and residential uses should not displace retail (A1) uses or office space. Residential use may be beneficial above shops or in buildings where the upper floors are under used. The White Rock Park & Bohemia Strategy document has identified the significant opportunity for new and innovative forms of residential development in Bohemia which has the potential to improve the quality and mix of housing in the area.

## Retail

- 3.40 Hastings Town Centre is currently performing well with a good mix of national chains and local shops. It is important that this area continues to be viable and to evolve if the town is to continue to attract visitors and investors and compete with other centres. Around 50% of the retail floorspace in the borough is located in Hastings Town Centre.
- 3.41 The requirement for additional retail floorspace was reviewed as part of the Hastings Town Centre and White Rock Retail and Leisure Assessments and Urban Design Analysis (March 2016). As a consequence of continued population and expenditure growth, and the strong over trading performance of a number of food stores across the Borough, there is an identified need for additional convenience goods floorspace over the plan period. This is estimated to be around 3,000m<sup>2</sup> net by 2020, 3,400m<sup>2</sup> net by 2025, and 3,500m<sup>2</sup> net by 2030. In respect of comparison goods, Hastings Town Centre is performing reasonably well, achieving borough trade retention of 48%, and wider survey area trade retention of 30.3%. Sales figures indicate that the town centre is trading well for a centre of this size. There is an identified need for additional comparison goods floorspace over the plan period which is estimated to be around 3,100m<sup>2</sup> net by 2020, increasing to 7,300m<sup>2</sup> net by 2025 and 12,400m<sup>2</sup> net by 2030.

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<sup>7</sup> South East River Basin Management Plan (December 2015) Environment Agency.

- 3.42 A large proportion of Robertson Street and the Seafront Hastings lies within Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area and currently comprises a mix of comparison retail, creative businesses and commercial leisure activities. A key issue relates to the quality of the retail offer and low footfall on the seafront particularly on White Rock. There is potential to extend the regeneration benefits achieved in Robertson Street, Claremont and Trinity Street into this part of the seafront and to enhance the retail offer. This would strengthen the existing cluster of creative industries and create a more vibrant cultural quarter.
- 3.43 It is important the vitality and viability of retail areas in Hastings, including Hastings Town Centre, are safeguarded and enhanced. Failure to plan for future retail needs will mean that competing centres will begin to absorb the share of the spending that Hastings currently attracts.

## Offices

- 3.44 The town centre presents a significant opportunity to the borough in terms of office stock. Around 65% of office floorspace is located in Hastings Town Centre.
- 3.45 Office accommodation has grown in Hastings Town Centre, with new floorspace in the Priory Quarter area – in One Priory Square and Lacuna Place. The HPS seeks to develop the town centre as a location for new businesses and those needing to expand. This is of critical importance to the local economy given the need to diversify and strengthen the economic base of the town, encourage new investment and provide new employment opportunities.
- 3.46 The Hastings office market provides considerable supporting evidence for the positive impact that new office space can have on driving an uplift in performance. Prior to the delivery of the Creative Media Centre, Priory Quarter and Havelock Place, the office market within the town struggled. However rents have consistently increased (and have now settled at a much higher average), occupancy rates have increased and a range of new businesses have been attracted to the town (Eastbourne Office Market Report, GVA 2016). Nonetheless, the enhancement of the town centre environment and offer will be critical to attracting new businesses to the town.

## Sport and leisure

- 3.47 Hastings Town Centre and the White Rock area contain a number of existing sport and leisure facilities but the quality of provision is relatively poor compared to other centres.
- 3.48 The White Rock area is an important focus for sport and leisure provision with a wide range of existing facilities. Future provision must be considered within context of the Borough-wide strategy. The Leisure Facilities Strategy (2015) identified the following requirements:
- **Sports halls** - additional space required at peak times with enhanced community access;
  - **Health & Fitness** - deficit in existing provision at Falaise Hall;
  - **Swimming** - new provision required: leisure pool, dedicated learner pool and an extended 25m pool;
  - **Artificial pitches** - 1-2 full sized 3G pitches;
  - **Indoor bowling greens** - no additional provision required but improvements to existing facility;
  - **Outdoor bowling greens** - no additional provision required;
  - **Indoor tennis** - low cost indoor courts;
  - **Outdoor tennis** - adequate supply but enhancement of Alexandra Park a priority;

- **Multi-use Games Areas (MUGA's)** - additional courts;
- **Climbing Walls** - enhancement required to meet needs;
- **Water sports facilities** - further assessment required;
- **Skate Parks** - extension to existing facility.

3.49 Any future sports and leisure provision must be considered in the context of other opportunities such as the proposed Combe Valley Sports Village and Rother District Council proposals for Glyne Gap Swimming Pool and Bexhill Leisure Centre. Key issues to be addressed in assessing the potential for future leisure provision in the Bohemia area include:

- condition of existing facilities and requirement for investment to improve the quality of provision;
- constraints on funding availability- whether for refurbishment of existing facilities or the provision of new facilities;
- the importance of partnership working between the public and private sector and sports bodies;
- the need to ensure the long term maintenance and viability of the facilities;
- the need to ensure good access to facilities for the community, taking account of the high proportion of residents who travel to facilities by foot or public transport;
- fragmentation in existing provision;
- the need to ensure that Hastings and Rother facilities are complementary;
- the importance of a coordinated approach to ensure an effective mix of facilities;
- the potential to look at new models of provision.

3.50 Consultation with existing providers has highlighted the operational and management constraints presented by split site operation of indoor sports facilities and the costs of maintenance and issues of energy efficiency associated with the ageing building stock.

3.51 There is the opportunity to strengthen and enhance the sport and leisure offer to increase its attraction to the sub-regional market. There is also the potential to build on the success of new sectors such as skate/BMX, where Hastings excels, and to consider new models of provision where sport/leisure and culture overlap more strongly. This would strengthen the distinctiveness of the offer and the attraction of Hastings to a wider visitor market.

3.52 In terms of commercial leisure, a need has previously been identified for commercial leisure facilities to diversify the leisure experience and attract users from a larger catchment area (Hastings Town Centre and White Rock Retail and Leisure Assessment and Urban Design Analysis (March 2016)).

## **Culture**

3.53 Hastings has a strong and diverse cultural infrastructure including a number of important components - performance venues, museums; art galleries and studios; the cultural dimension offered by further and higher educational establishments in the town centre; and most importantly, its artists, performers and other creative businesses and communities. The Council and its partners have recently focused heavily on culture as an instrument of social change and economic growth. The arrival of the Jerwood Gallery and The Stade open space in 2012 has had a major positive impact and the potential of culturally based regeneration to deliver change has become more widely recognised. There are however a number of gaps in cultural provision and there is the opportunity to address these in the AAP.

- 3.54 The White Rock Theatre is the town's main cultural performance venue and an important year round attraction but experiences significant constraints in its ability to accommodate larger and more complex performances, and the venue does not meet modern requirements for performers, participants and audiences.
- 3.55 The Odeon cinema is well used, but the existing site is constrained. Refurbishment or relocation to an alternative site with the potential to strengthen and expand the film offer could be considered but a cinema should be retained within the town centre, or on a site with strong pedestrian links to the wider town centre.
- 3.56 There is a growing cultural sector in Hastings and it will be important to create an environment which enables the cultural and creative economy to expand. This requires consideration to be given to venues, programming and promotion and to the provision of appropriate creative workspace including studios and co-working spaces. The town's heritage assets offer significant potential, with Hastings ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the Royal Society of Arts Heritage Index 2015 with greatest potential economic benefit linked to heritage assets. Existing facilities offer significant untapped potential.
- 3.57 The Development Management Plan identifies three Cultural Quarters in Hastings Town Centre and the White Rock Area:
- **White Rock and the America Ground** – The cluster of the theatre, the pier and the White Rock Baths and Bottle Alley define the western end of this area which extends eastwards along the seafront to the America Ground area with the library, the Creative Media Centre and the collection of restaurants and cafes around Robertson Street and the creative industries cluster around the Trinity Triangle and Claremont;
  - **Academic** – The core of this area is the buildings occupied by the further and higher educational establishments around the station and in Havelock Road and Priory Street and the cultural activity generated within them. Complementary activities such as shops and cafés could be encouraged further.
  - **Old Town and The Stade** – A small part of this area falls within the boundary of AAP around Pelham Place.
- 3.58 Culture-Led Regeneration: A Strategy for Hastings 2016-21 sets out the following key priorities:
- Support social engagement and community cohesion through accessible and diverse cultural activity;
  - Ensure high quality cultural opportunities within formal and informal education are available to all;
  - Build the creative economy, supporting creative and cultural businesses and practitioners to develop and become more sustainable, and attract new investment;
  - Develop and promote a refreshed identity for Hastings and 1066 Country, which brings contemporary culture and traditional heritage together in a coherent and marketable brand;
  - Develop and support a high quality year round cultural programme that links to regeneration and tourism strategies;
  - Support and enable the preservation, development and use of the town's cultural assets.
- 3.59 This is reinforced by the East Sussex Cultural Strategy 2013–2023 which seeks to:
- create an environment where great cultural experiences are available to everyone to enhance their quality of life with the outcome of a growing cultural sector striving for excellence which enables East Sussex residents to have great places to live in, visit and enjoy, and have safe, healthy and fulfilling lives;

- create an environment which enables the cultural and creative economy to expand and enhances our ability to attract and retain other businesses with the outcome of a resilient and growing cultural and creative economy which contributes to a vibrant, diverse and sustainable mixed economy for East Sussex;
- develop and promote well packaged cultural tourism offers which celebrate the identity of East Sussex, raise its profile and attract more visitors and businesses to the County with the outcome of a thriving and high value visitor economy, with great places to visit and enjoy, renowned for its natural assets, unique heritage, culture, market and coastal towns.

- 3.60 A study funded by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) – Towards a National Prospectus for the Creative Economy in the South East sets out a portfolio of sector-led initiatives to build a more self-sustaining, creative and cultural infrastructure in the South East. The prospectus highlights the potential of Hastings to benefit from investment in the creative economy and recognises that the town has a growing reputation as a cultural hotspot. The Jerwood Gallery has been a catalyst for culture-led regeneration and has gained a reputation for its ambitious curatorial programming, increasing, not only its own profile, but also that of the town itself.
- 3.61 The expectation is that Bohemia, strategically positioned between Hastings Town Centre and Central St Leonards, will play an important role in the development of the cultural sector and that development within this area will build on the momentum generated by recent initiatives to ensure maximisation of the economic and social benefits of this cultural renaissance. The aim is to breathe new life to this area and re-position Hastings as a national and international visitor attraction.
- 3.62 A Creative Workspace Masterplan has recently been adopted by SELEP which makes the case for investment in creative open workspace to support the growth of the creative economy including the development of creative clusters and creative enterprise zones. Open workspace includes incubators, accelerators, co-working spaces, managed workspace, makerspaces and artists' studios. Open workspaces have grown as a result of global workplace changes, with technology making it possible for employees and the self-employed to work from anywhere with a good internet connection. Most users are microbusinesses and a significant proportion are creative businesses; open workspaces also bring together professionals working in other areas, including biotech, business services and the charity sector.
- 3.63 Culture-led Regeneration: A Strategy for Hastings 2016-21 specifically seeks to develop cultural quarters built around studio and workshop space for the creative industries. Key issues to be considered in future cultural provision may be summarised as follows:
- Opportunities to enhance provision for theatre, dance and music;
  - Potential for a new arts venue which would complement rather than compete with the De La Warr Pavilion (in Bexhill) or Jerwood Gallery and the pier.
  - Benefits of a cultural hub as distinct from dispersed venues;
  - Potential for enhanced museum offer;
  - Development of the music sector and music town brand;
  - The future of the White Rock Theatre as a site for cultural production as well as presentation;
  - Opportunity to develop the cultural tourism sector and for Hastings to shift from a day trip destination to a short break destination;
  - The viability and potential future use of listed buildings for cultural facilities and creative arts;
  - The need to maintain strong links between the cultural and education sectors;

- Potential to attract a nationally significant cultural production organisation due to Arts Council increasing encouragement for shifting production away from London and metropolitan centres;
- Clear need and opportunity around creative industry workspace.

## **Tourism**

- 3.64 Tourism is of significant importance to the local economy and supported around 5000 FTE (full time equivalent) jobs in 2016. There has been a steady increase in tourism value in the town with the volume of staying visitors up 2% between 2014 and 2015 and £100m spent by staying visitors in 2015 (up 6.1% compared to 2014). However, the volume of day trips fell by 3.1% and day trip expenditure by 2.9% over the same period. The town centre and Bohemia offer significant potential to attract increased tourist spend and to increase employment opportunities in the tourism sector through the development of new and improved leisure and cultural attractions, visitor facilities and improved connections to the seafront.
- 3.65 Visitor statistics for the Jerwood Gallery in 2015 showed that over two thirds (66%) of visitors travelled to Hastings just to see the gallery and around two fifths of these (42%) were first time visitors to the area. Seven out of ten (71%) visitors to the gallery thought that this venue raised the town's profile. The Source Park has also had a significant visitor economy impact. This highlights the importance of cultural tourism to the town and its links to the wider development of the cultural offer.
- 3.66 There is a need to enhance the quality of visitor accommodation, facilities and attractions. Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia have a key role to play in improving the tourism offer and creating a balanced attraction to the Old Town and eastern seafront which will encourage a greater number of visitors to the western part of the town.

**Table 1: Summary of key issues & opportunities**

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Location</li> <li>➤ Cultural heritage and history of area</li> <li>➤ A range of well used retail, cultural and leisure facilities</li> <li>➤ Existing green space and landscape features</li> <li>➤ Heritage buildings</li> <li>➤ Summerfields Wood Local Nature Reserve - a unique asset</li> <li>➤ Sea views and vistas</li> <li>➤ Important cultural assets- Hastings Pier and White Rock Theatre</li> <li>➤ Investment in Hastings Pier and White Rock Baths</li> <li>➤ Access to Rail Station and public transport</li> <li>➤ Vibrant independent sector, in both retail and creative industries</li> <li>➤ Development of a cultural cluster in Robertson Street/Trinity Triangle</li> <li>➤ Compact, accessible retail core</li> <li>➤ High level of community involvement in all aspects of Hastings life including the packed annual calendar of events, many run by volunteers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lack of sub-regional profile of facilities in the area</li> <li>➤ Poor quality and range of comparison retail offer</li> <li>➤ Underutilised areas</li> <li>➤ Extensive areas of open space which are poorly connected</li> <li>➤ Poor maintenance and management of open areas</li> <li>➤ Poor quality pedestrian environment</li> <li>➤ A large number of disparate occupiers and poorly defined uses</li> <li>➤ Quality of visitor offer does not meet market expectations</li> <li>➤ Leisure facilities do not meet identified needs</li> <li>➤ Poor connections between White Rock, the seafront and wider town centre</li> <li>➤ Dominance of traffic on seafront</li> <li>➤ Lack of signage and wayfinding</li> <li>➤ Poor quality gateways into the town centre</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Significant areas in public ownership</li> <li>➤ Potential for consolidation of existing uses</li> <li>➤ Release of land for mixed use development</li> <li>➤ Innovation and adaptation which will also act as an attractor to investors and visitors</li> <li>➤ Unlock potential of seafront, landscape and views</li> <li>➤ Potential for partnership working</li> <li>➤ Potential to anchor the town centre at its western edge by driving footfall</li> <li>➤ Build on assets such as Hastings Pier, Source Park, Hastings Museum and White Rock Theatre</li> <li>➤ Growth of the 'staycation' market</li> <li>➤ Improve the quality of the visitor offer</li> <li>➤ Continued exodus of people from London and Brighton, particularly creative professionals.</li> <li>➤ Proximity of retail areas to the seafront</li> <li>➤ Higher and further education facilities in town centre</li> <li>➤ Opportunity to tell the 1066 story in a way that is more relevant to the town and creates a new visitor attraction</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ageing retail and leisure facilities in need of investment</li> <li>➤ Uncertainty regarding future of White Rock Theatre</li> <li>➤ Deterioration of heritage buildings unless funding and a suitable use is secured</li> <li>➤ Availability of funding and Investment in new facilities</li> <li>➤ Piecemeal approach to development</li> <li>➤ Loss of retail, sports and cultural facilities</li> <li>➤ Competition from other destinations with superior facilities</li> <li>➤ Poor quality and quantity of retail space</li> </ul>

## Section Four

### Spatial Strategy

4.1 Change is essential if the vision and objectives for Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia are to be realised. The Spatial Strategy provides the framework for future development and regeneration to realise the full potential of this area.

#### Key principles

4.2 The Spatial Strategy is based on the following underlying principles:

- Promotion of balanced mixed use development to include retail, leisure, culture, business and residential uses;
- Provision of enhanced sports and recreational uses which will serve a wider sub-regional market;
- High quality design and townscape improvements which respect the heritage and character of Hastings;
- Creating good pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the key opportunity areas;
- Maintaining an appropriate level of parking and access to support retail, cultural and leisure facilities;
- Improving connections between Hastings Town Centre, Bohemia and the seafront;
- Enhancement of the town centre retail, cultural and leisure offer with an improved primary shopping area and the development of specialist retail zones;
- Creation of a strong entrance to the town centre through the development of the station and transport interchange facilities;
- An extended cultural quarter around Robertson Street and the western seafront;
- The creation of three cultural hubs around the White Rock Theatre and Hastings Pier; the former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus and Hastings Museum/Summerfields Wood;
- Protection and enhancement of open space and the natural environment;
- Promotion of visitor economy and enhancement of the seafront;
- Mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

4.3 The town centre and Bohemia provide opportunities to accommodate future growth requirements in the town. The AAP seeks to accommodate these requirements through the identification of a number of opportunity sites.

4.4 The Council wants to make Hastings a 'greener town' and to revolutionise the way energy is supplied and used within the Borough for the benefit of all<sup>8</sup>. Recent research<sup>9</sup> has identified a number of opportunities for the Council to reduce energy consumption within its own estate as well as a number of longer-term opportunities to generate and supply renewable energy. The Council is looking to develop an Energy Strategy to make the most of the opportunities available. Recent innovation means that dwellings have the potential to achieve very high levels of energy efficiency or zero net energy consumption. The Council is keen to support this type of energy efficient development in residential and non-residential development.

4.5 It is critical that Hastings maintains its position as a sub-regional shopping destination if it is to compete with other centres such as Eastbourne and Tunbridge Wells and continue to

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<sup>8</sup> Hastings Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018/19

<sup>9</sup> Energy Options Study Report for Hastings Borough Council by CLS Energy Ltd, June 2017 & Sustainable Energy Options Study for Hastings Borough Council by regen transforming energy, July 2017.



attract investors. The AAP seeks to do this by strengthening the retail and complementary leisure offer and increasing the quantity and improving the quality of retail floorspace.

- 4.6 The HPS goes as far as possible in meeting housing need, particularly for affordable housing, but housing delivery is key. The AAP seeks to maximise the delivery of housing within the town centre and Bohemia and to promote new types of housing development which will improve the local housing market and mix.
- 4.7 Hastings Town Centre will continue to be the business hub of the town. There is the opportunity to strengthen the growing creative industries sector and to provide interesting buildings and spaces which will attract start-up businesses and people looking for an alternative workspace, including affordable artisan “maker” and co-working/shared working spaces.
- 4.8 The town centre and Bohemia contain a range of civic and cultural spaces. The AAP identifies the opportunities to reconfigure and enhance existing provision to serve a wider sub-regional market.
- 4.9 The AAP seeks to strengthen the distinctive character of Hastings by building on its key assets. It places culture and leisure at the heart of the Spatial Strategy and provides the opportunity to promote and enhance an exciting range of cultural, leisure and tourist attractions which will strengthen Hastings’ brand and visitor experience, (for example with the pier and Skatepark); supported by a programme of events and festivals extending the tourist season.
- 4.10 The AAP seeks to ensure that new development respects the area’s unique heritage and is of a high design quality. The combination of topography and the physical qualities of the built environment and landscape create a distinctive sense of identity and place in the town centre and Bohemia. New development should embrace the highest standards in architecture, urban and landscape design to strengthen this identity and enhance the image and profile of the area.
- 4.11 Places should be interesting and attractive providing good quality amenity space that promotes health and wellbeing. Features such as landmark buildings at the corner of a street or at the end of a vista, the incorporation of green space and natural features such as mature trees all help to create reference points and interest within a development. New development will be required to contribute to new or improved public spaces and to enhance the Green Infrastructure Network. The development of sustainable and innovative mixed use development will be promoted which makes efficient use of energy and water, utilises energy from renewable technologies and sustainable methods of construction, promotes low carbon modes of transport and incorporates green infrastructure and biodiversity. Where possible, new development will be required to enhance key points of arrival within the AAP area as identified on the Key Diagram (figure 5).
- 4.12 The AAP provides an opportunity to celebrate and enhance existing green assets to create pleasant and healthy environments. Green infrastructure will be used to soften hard landscaping in areas of deficit and within the town centre to provide an additional layer of interest and value. The unique green and open character at White Rock and Bohemia will be incorporated into new development with a robust network of parks and green spaces. The green network will also form an integrated part of the cycle and pedestrian network promoting healthy living and helping people to make sustainable transport choices.

## Opportunity Areas

4.13 The Spatial Strategy is based on eight Opportunity Areas (OAs). The aim is to enhance the distinctiveness of these areas and to create zones of activity which will add to the diversity of the town centre and Bohemia and create new destinations. These areas will provide a range of development, facilities and activities and proposals will be required to be sensitive to and enhance existing character. The areas are interlinked and contain complementary facilities and land uses. The Opportunity Areas are identified in figure 3 and comprise the following:

- **OA1: Station Gateway and Priory Quarter:** the gateway to the town and the focus for business and education;
- **OA2: Wellington Place and Castle Street:** a high quality retail area with attractive public spaces and good connections to the seafront;
- **OA3: Queens Road:** the northern gateway to the town with a thriving high street and a range of independent shops and small businesses;
- **OA4: Priory Meadow:** the retail heart of the town;
- **OA5: White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter:** a focus for the creative and visitor economy with new workspace and cultural venues;
- **OA6: White Rock Park:** an urban park providing a range of leisure and cultural facilities and a network of open spaces;
- **OA7: Bohemia:** a new mixed use neighbourhood providing innovative new housing and civic services in a parkland setting;
- **OA8: Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road:** restoration and reuse of the listed buildings and creation of a new neighbourhood with links to Bohemia and St Leonards and a network of green spaces.

4.14 The key proposals are summarised below and illustrated in the Key Diagram (figure 5).

### **OA1: Station Gateway and Priory Quarter**

- An extended primary retail area to create an enhanced retail offer/extended retail core to accommodate future requirements for growth in retail capacity
- Improved transport hub and interchange offering a wider range of services and with the potential to accommodate HS1 in the future
- Retention and improvement of parking provision
- Enhancement of pedestrian environment, cycle access and public realm including new public spaces
- Mix of town centre uses to create a vibrant commercial quarter for the town
- Enhancement of station area as a gateway into the town and improved pedestrian links into the town centre and Bohemia

### **OA2: Wellington Place and Castle Street**

- A strengthened retail area
- Improved retail quality and offer
- Enhancement of historic character
- Improved public realm and public spaces including Harold Place to provide a focus to the town centre and an attractive gateway to the seafront
- Enhanced pedestrian environment and links between retail core and seafront
- Improved pedestrian environment

### **OA3: Queens Road**

- Enhancement of the retail area and northern gateway into the town centre
- Intensification of land uses to enhance character and appearance of area including encouragement of new retail uses
- Improved public realm and pedestrian environment
- Promotion of active frontages onto Queens Road
- Development of creative hub and workspace around the Britannia Enterprise Centre

### **OA4: Priory Meadow**

- Enhancement of primary shopping area
- Extended retail offer through the development of new retail floorspace
- Improved public realm and public spaces

### **OA5: White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter**

- Improvements to the seafront and visitor facilities
- Enhanced cultural hub around the theatre and pier to create a stronger arts/ community focus
- Enhanced cultural hub around the Trinity Triangle/Claremont
- Reuse of underutilised areas to provide new and improved leisure and cultural facilities
- Improved public realm and public spaces, pedestrian and cycle connections to the wider town centre and station

### **OA6: White Rock Park**

- Restoration of White Rock Gardens as a focus for sport, leisure and cultural uses
- Improved pedestrian connectivity and cycle access including enhanced links to seafront and new east-west and north-south links within White Rock/Bohemia
- Improved public transport and vehicle links

### **OA7: Bohemia**

- Mixed use residential community
- Protection and enhancement of Summerfields Wood
- Network of green spaces, cycle and pedestrian routes
- Heritage quarter focused on Hastings Museum and Summerfields Wood

### **OA8: Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road**

- Restoration of Convent buildings and development of adjacent land to create a new cultural hub and residential community
- Improved pedestrian connectivity and cycle access including enhanced links to seafront and new east-west and north-south links within White Rock/Bohemia
- Improved public transport and vehicle links

## **Opportunity Sites**

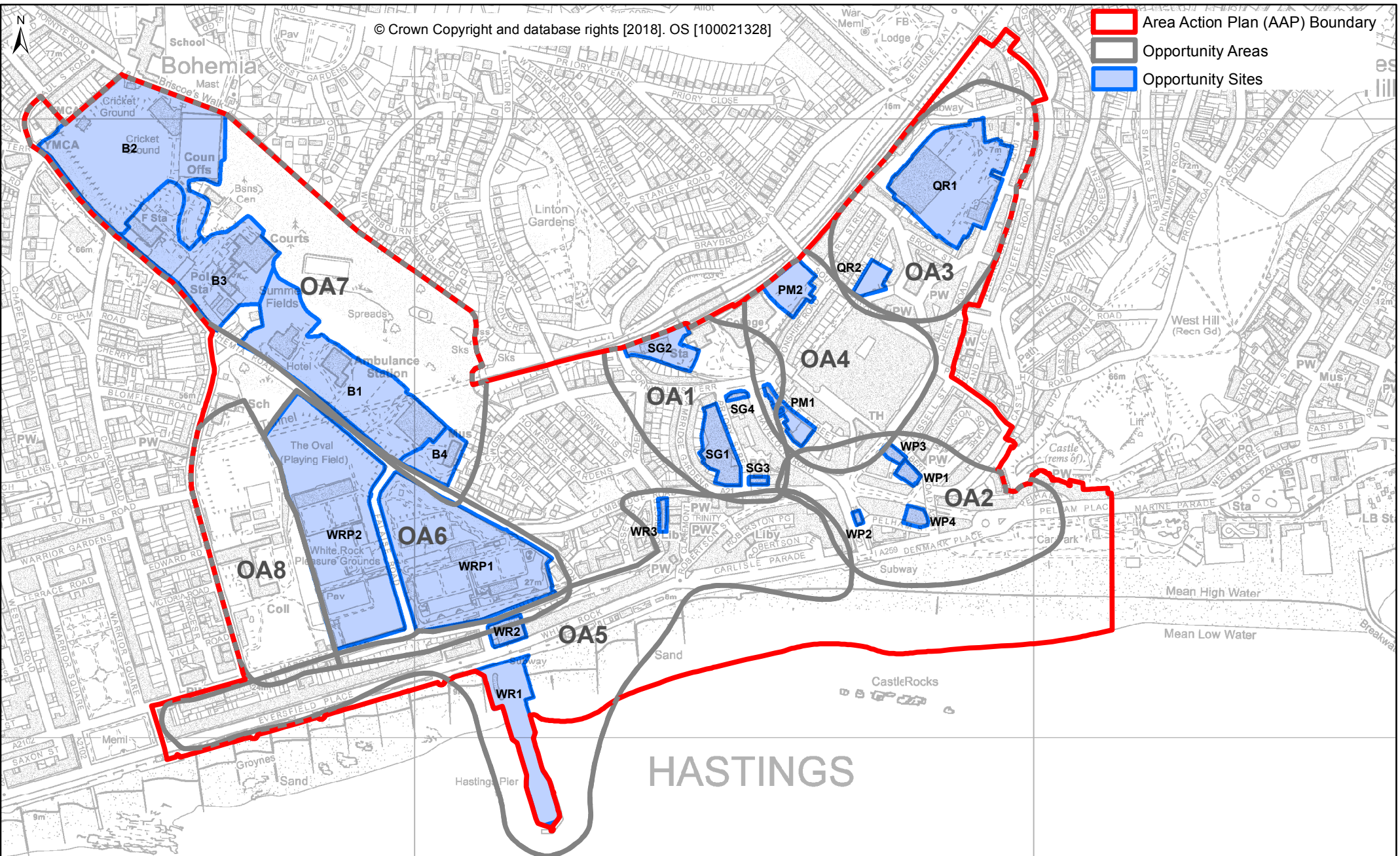
4.15 A number of opportunity sites have been identified within each Opportunity Area. These sites are illustrated on the Key Diagram (figure 5) and will accommodate the following uses:

- in the region of 12,400m<sup>2</sup> net of comparison goods floorspace within or adjoining the primary shopping area;

- in the region of 3,500m<sup>2</sup> net of convenience goods floorspace within or adjoining the primary shopping area;
- in the region of 820 new homes including a range of housing types and tenures as part of mixed use development schemes;
- employment and education space including workspace for creative industries;
- opportunities for cafés and restaurants adjoining the primary shopping area and wider seafront/Bohemia area;
- new and improved leisure and cultural facilities;
- hotels and visitor facilities;
- new and improved public spaces and pedestrian/cycle links.

4.16 The proposed uses for each Opportunity Site and the indicative capacity of each site are summarised in table 2.

Cabinet draft



**Figure 3**  
**Opportunity Areas and Sites**

Scale: 1:8,000

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**Table 2: Opportunity Sites - Proposed Uses and Indicative Capacity (net)**

Reference	Site name	Retail	Residential	Business	Food & drink	Culture	Hotel	Sport & leisure	Cinema/ theatre
SG1	Priory Street car park and ESK	up to 5,000m <sup>2</sup>	up to 100 units	up to 12,000m <sup>2</sup>	✓	✓		✓	✓
SG2	Station Approach car park and Royal Mail Delivery Office	✓		up to 10,000m <sup>2</sup>	✓		✓		
SG3	Former Post Office, Cambridge Road	up to 300m <sup>2</sup>	✓	Up to 500m <sup>2</sup>		✓			
SG4	Queensbury House, Havelock Road	up to 350m <sup>2</sup>		up to 4,000m <sup>2</sup>	✓	✓	✓		
WP1	Corner of Wellington Place and Albert Road	up to 1,000m <sup>2</sup>	✓		✓			✓	✓
WP2	Site of former Harold Place public conveniences	up to 200m <sup>2</sup>			✓				
WP3	Cinema, Queens Road	up to 1,500m <sup>2</sup>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
WP4	1-7 Wellington Place	up to 1,000m <sup>2</sup>	✓		✓			✓	✓
QR1	Morrisons, Queens Road	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
QR2	Cornwallis Street car park	Up to 375m <sup>2</sup>	up to 20 units		✓				

Reference	Site name	Retail	Residential	Business	Food & drink	Culture	Hotel	Sport & leisure	Cinema/ theatre
PM1	Land at Middle Street	up to 2000m <sup>2</sup>			✓				
PM2	Station Yard, Station Approach		c.100 units						
WR1	Hastings Pier				✓	✓		✓	✓
WR2	White Rock Theatre				✓	✓	✓		✓
WR3	The Observer Building	✓	49	✓	✓	✓		✓	
WRP1	White Rock Gardens				✓	✓	✓		
WRP2	White Rock Sports Park		50		✓	✓		✓	
B1	Summerfields		up to 250 units			✓	✓	✓	
B2	Hornbye Park		up to 250 units					✓	
B3	Civic Quarter			✓					
B4	Hastings Museum				✓	✓		✓	

✓ = potential uses as part of mixed use development schemes



## Section Five

### Policies

- 5.1 The policies set out below relate specifically to Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia. In considering new development proposals, these will be applied alongside the policies contained within the Hastings Planning Strategy (2014) and Hastings Development Management Plan (2015).

### Retail

#### Retail Development

- 5.2 The Hastings Planning Strategy (HPS) identifies Hastings Town Centre as the principal commercial centre within the Borough and the main focus for retail and employment growth. In line with national planning policy, the AAP seeks to promote the vitality and viability of the retail area.
- 5.3 The expectations of shoppers are changing and if Hastings is to continue to be attractive to residents, shoppers and visitors, it will need to capitalise on its strengths. Hastings can offer shoppers something different. With a distinct historic environment and seaside location, these defining qualities can be exploited to ensure Hastings successfully competes with other town centres such as Eastbourne and Tunbridge Wells.
- 5.4 Hastings position as a sub-regional shopping destination can be enhanced by strengthening the retail and complementary leisure offer and ensuring enough retail convenience and comparison floorspace is available to accommodate future requirements.
- 5.5 The latest retail assessment<sup>10</sup> shows that Hastings is performing well but if it is to maintain its market share and support population and expenditure growth, additional retail floorspace is required. The retail assessment identifies a requirement for up to 12,400m<sup>2</sup> (net) of new comparison goods floorspace and an additional 3,500m<sup>2</sup> (net) of new convenience goods floorspace between 2015 and 2030. This figure is lower than the level of additional retail floorspace identified in Policy DS3 in the HPS.
- 5.6 The quality and variety of retail outlets is a critical factor in continuing to attract shoppers. Hastings has a good mix of national retailers and independent shops. This position needs to be built on by increasing and improving the range of retail outlets in order to enhance the retail offer as well as increasing the mix of other complementary town centre uses and the quality of the public realm.
- 5.7 The development of new retail comparison floorspace and improvements to the quality of the retail offer will be promoted within the town centre. The Council will work with the Hastings BID (Business Improvement District) and other key partners to deliver this aim.

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<sup>10</sup> Retail and Leisure Assessment & Urban Design Analysis, Bilfinger GVA (March 2016).



## **Policy AAP1 - Retail Development**

The Council will work with the private sector to provide an additional 12,400m<sup>2</sup> (net) of comparison goods floorspace and 3,500m<sup>2</sup> (net) of convenience goods floorspace by 2030 and to improve the existing retail stock through the upgrading or expansion of existing retail units.

Retail development will be supported on the following opportunity sites:

- SG1: Priory Street car park and ESK
- SG2: Station Approach car park and Royal Mail Delivery Office
- SG3: Former Post Office, Cambridge Road
- PM1: Land at Middle Street
- WP1: Corner of Wellington Place and Albert Road
- WP3: Cinema, Queens Road
- WP4: 1-7 Wellington Place
- QR1: Morrisons, Queens Road
- QR2: Cornwallis Street car park

New retail development should complement and be fully integrated and well connected with existing retail facilities. The improvement of and extension to existing shops will be permitted provided they achieve a high standard of design and are well integrated with the rest of the town centre. Smaller units suitable for independent traders will be encouraged in suitable locations. Temporary markets will be encouraged in suitable locations where they will enhance the town centre offer.

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA2: Strategic Policy for Central Area

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

## **Primary and secondary shopping frontages**

- 5.8 Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area is currently defined on the Local Plan Policies Map (by DMP Policy SA1). The AAP provides an opportunity to revise and refine Policy SA1 by introducing both primary and secondary frontages.
- 5.9 Whilst there is a need to diversify land uses to promote a more vibrant and viable town centre, it will also be important to protect core town centre activities such as retail. The definition of primary and secondary frontages will help to protect and strengthen retail provision within the town centre.
- 5.10 It is proposed that within the existing town centre boundary, the primary shopping frontage will include the Priory Meadow Shopping Area (as identified on the Local Plan Policies Map) and the frontages shown in figure 4. The new primary frontage includes the core retail streets within Hastings Town Centre, Queens Road, Wellington Place, Station Road, the eastern end of Robertson Street and north side of Cambridge Road. Within these primary frontages the loss of shops will be resisted and retail (use class A1) will be the predominant use.

- 5.11 Secondary frontages provide greater opportunity for the introduction of other town centres uses. Claremont, Trinity Street and the western part of Robertson Street is establishing itself as a Cultural Quarter and requires provision for a variety of uses such as creative workspace and studios to facilitate a cultural and artistic environment. The extent of the secondary frontage is shown in figure 4.
- 5.12 Residential development can significantly improve the vibrancy of a town centre by creating active places at different times in the day as well as supporting the evening economy. However, residential development will not be permitted at ground floor level within the primary shopping frontage as this would be detrimental to the economic health of the town centre.
- 5.13 Policy AAP2 proposes the introduction of percentage thresholds for both primary and secondary frontages that must not be exceeded for non-A1 retail uses. Policy AAP2 will be applied when assessing applications for a change of use from A1 retail to other uses.

**Policy AAP2 - Primary and Secondary shopping frontages**

The Priory Meadow Shopping Area and the primary and secondary shopping frontages are defined on the Key Diagram.

Development will be permitted within the Priory Meadow Shopping Area provided this would not result in non-A1 retail uses exceeding 5% of the total floorspace.

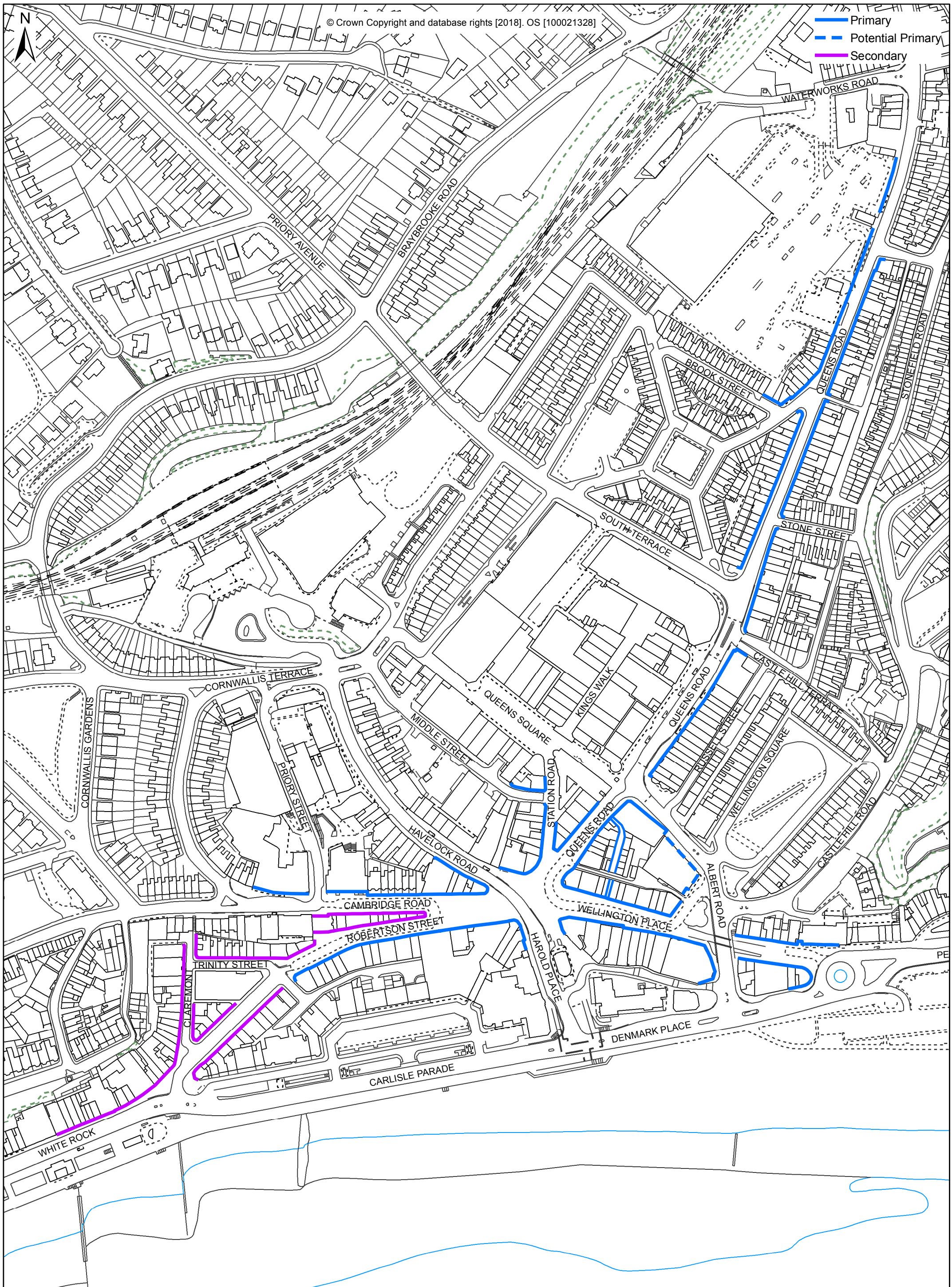
Within the rest of the primary shopping frontage, change of use from A1 retail use to non-A1 retail uses will be permitted provided proposals do not result in more than 45% of the total number of ground floor units along the frontage being non-retail uses.

Within the secondary shopping frontage, planning permission for change of use from retail use to non-A1 retail uses will be permitted provided proposals do not result in more than 60% of the total number of ground floor units along the frontage being non-A1 retail uses.

Proposals must not result in a concentration of non-A1 retail uses that would lead to a significant interruption in the shopping frontage, causing harm to the vitality and viability of the Town Centre Shopping Area as a whole.

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**  
 DS3: Location of Retail Development  
 FA2: Strategic Policy for Central Area

**Relationship to Development Management Plan**  
 SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area



**Figure 4**  
**Primary and Secondary Frontages**

Scale: 1:2,500

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## Housing

- 5.14 Given the constraints to development, and the Hastings Planning Strategy requirement to provide at least 3,400 net new homes by 2028, it is therefore important to optimise the amount of housing that can be delivered in the town centre and Bohemia during this period.
- 5.15 Town centre living will add to the vitality of the area and new housing development in the town centre and Bohemia is a key objective. Residential development will assist in providing a more pleasant and secure environment at all times of the day. The promotion of residential uses as part of mixed use development schemes is in accordance with national and local policy and is a key element in delivering the vision for Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia.
- 5.16 Provision is made for around 820 new homes to meet a range of housing needs. Some of these housing sites have already been identified in the Development Management Plan; including Hastings Station Yard (HTC1), Cornwallis Street Car Park (HTC2) and the Observer Building (HTC3). However the majority of these new homes will be accommodated on opportunity sites in Bohemia. It will be important to ensure provision of a range of housing types and tenures including provision of affordable housing to meet identified local needs
- 5.17 It will be important to optimise the capacity of suitable sites given the need for new housing in Hastings. This will be achieved through optimising the density of new development taking into account site context and the capacity of surrounding infrastructure. High standards of design will be required to enhance the character of the local area.

### Policy AAP3 – Housing Development

The Council will work with the private sector and other providers to deliver in the region of 820 new homes in Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia.

Residential development will be supported as part mixed use development schemes on the following opportunity sites:

- SG1: Priory Street car park and ESK
- SG3: Former Post Office, Cambridge Road
- QR1: Morrisons, Queens Road
- QR2: Cornwallis Street car park
- PM2: Station Yard, Station Approach
- WP1: Corner of Wellington Place and Albert Road
- WP4: 1-7 Wellington Place
- WR3: The Observer Building
- WRP2: White Rock Sports Park
- B1: Summerfields
- B2: Hornty Park

Residential development may be supported in Opportunity Area 8 (Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road) as part of a comprehensive scheme which secures the restoration and viable reuse of the former convent buildings.

Development proposals will be required to make the most efficient use of land and be developed at the optimum density taking into account the site context and capacity of surrounding infrastructure.

Development proposals will be required to include a mix of housing, including family housing and affordable housing and contribute towards the provision of necessary social infrastructure including health, education and community facilities, and wider environmental improvements. A high standard of design and the incorporation of measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change will be required. Proposals for community led and self-build housing will be supported

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS1: New Housing Development  
SC3: Promoting Sustainable and Green Design  
H1: Housing Density  
H2: Housing Mix  
H3: Provision of Affordable Housing

**Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

**Employment**

- 5.18 Hastings Planning Strategy proposes that local economic growth and diversification will be met through the development of up to 70,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace over the lifetime of the Plan. To support the town centre and its role as an employment centre, the Development Management Plan, makes provision for some 21,000m<sup>2</sup> within Priory Quarter (HTC6).
- 5.19 Hastings Town Centre will continue to be the business hub of the town with the focus for the development of new office floorspace in Opportunity Area 1 (Station Gateway and Priory Quarter). There is a need for modern office accommodation which will meet the needs of new and expanding businesses and attract new businesses and investment to Hastings. The AAP seeks to provide a range of employment space suitable to the needs of new and expanding businesses and to promote key growth sectors such as the creative industries. Hastings Town Centre will therefore continue to be the business hub of the town.

**Policy AAP4 - Employment Development**

The Council will work with the private sector and other providers to provide new business employment floorspace including affordable workspace and space for the creative industries.

The development of new business floorspace will be supported on the following opportunity sites:

- SG1: Priory Street car park and ESK
- SG2: Station Approach car park and Royal Mail Delivery Office
- SG3: Former Post Office, Cambridge Road
- SG4: Queensbury House, Havelock Road
- WR3: The Observer Building
- B3: Civic Quarter

Development proposals will be supported which enhance employment opportunities and provide a range of accommodation including smaller units.

In order to promote the development of sustainable neighbourhoods, the provision of

co-working space and workspace for small and start-up businesses will be supported as part of mixed use developments in Opportunity Area 7 (Bohemia) and Opportunity Area 8 (Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road).

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS2: Employment Growth

E1: Existing Employment Land and Premises

E2: Skills and Access to Jobs

E3: Town, District and Local Centres

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

### **Culture and creative industries**

5.20 The creative industries sector is an important and growing part of the local economy. There is potential to provide interesting buildings and spaces which will attract start-up businesses and people looking for an alternative workspace, including affordable artisan “maker” and co-working/shared working spaces.

5.21 There is a growing cultural sector in Hastings and it will be important to create an environment which enables the cultural and creative economy to expand and thrive. The AAP places culture at the heart of the Spatial Strategy and provides the opportunity to develop and promote an exciting range of cultural attractions which will strengthen Hastings’ brand and visitor experience. This requires consideration to be given to venues, programming and promotion and to the provision of appropriate creative workspace including studios and co-working spaces.

5.22 The White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter (OA5) will be the focus of initiatives to promote the cultural sector including new and enhanced cultural facilities and creative workspace. In addition, cultural hubs will be encouraged around the listed buildings on the site of the Former Convent of Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road (Opportunity Area 8) and Hastings Museum (Opportunity Site B4)

#### **Policy AAP5 - Supporting Hastings Culture and Creative Industries**

The continued growth of Hastings’ cultural facilities and creative industries is supported. Existing cultural venues and facilities will be protected and enhanced. The development of new cultural venues will be supported.

The provision of workspace for the creative industries will be promoted in the White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter and on the following opportunity sites:

- WR2: White Rock Theatre
- WR3: The Observer Building
- B4: Hastings Museum
- SG3: Former Post Office, Cambridge Road

The development of new cultural facilities will be supported on the following opportunity sites:

- WR1: Hastings Pier
- WR2: White Rock Theatre
- B4: Hastings Museum
- SG3: Former Post Office, Cambridge Road

The potential to integrate sport and leisure facilities, cultural uses and outdoor cultural space will be investigated in taking forward proposals for opportunity site WRP2: White Rock Sports Park.

New cultural facilities will be promoted as part of a comprehensive scheme to secure the restoration and viable reuse of the listed buildings in Opportunity Area 8 (Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road).

The use of vacant properties and land for pop-ups or meanwhile uses for cultural and creative activities will be supported.

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS2: Employment Growth

E1: Existing Employment Land and Premises

E2: Skills and Access to Jobs

E3: Town, District and Local Centres

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

**Relationship to Development Management Plan**

CQ1: Cultural Quarters

**Delivering good design**

5.23 Place-making is central to the vision for Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia. The Council will seek to enhance the character and distinctiveness of the Opportunity Areas through the promotion of high quality and innovative design, a mix of uses and an attractive public realm and network of open spaces.

5.24 New development will be expected to improve:

- accessibility: by defining and enhancing arrival points and developing a clear movement strategy
- connection and linkages: by improved connections, including pedestrian priority streets and enhancing physical and visual connections between the Opportunity Areas
- quality of the public realm: by creating high quality streets and public spaces
- urban green spaces: by integrating green infrastructure
- quality of the townscape: through public art, lighting, and the enhancement of key views and landmarks

## **Policy AAP6 – Delivery Good Design**

The Council will require a high quality of design in all new development. New development should seek to strengthen and enhance the character of the Opportunity Areas by:

- a. improving the main gateways into the town centre and Bohemia through:
  - i. streetscape and landscape treatment
  - ii. distinctive and good quality architecture
  - iii. new/improved pedestrian crossings and connections
  - iv. enhancing heritage assets and cultural landmarks and their settings
- b. retaining strategic and local views and ensuring that new development sustains or enhances these views
- c. the incorporation of accessible and active frontages
- d. the use of attractive, durable, high quality materials

New development will be required to promote the principles of healthy and sustainable design with a high level of resource efficiency and resilience to climate change. Consideration should be given to the incorporation of features such as electric vehicle charging points, living roofs, green walls, rainwater harvesting, passive solar design and zero carbon buildings

Masterplans and design codes should be used to help bring forward development and ensure it delivers high quality design and place making based on the characteristics of the Opportunity Areas.

Design and access statements submitted with development proposals should provide relevant information to demonstrate how the proposal meets the design requirements of the AAP.

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

SC1: Overall Strategy for Managing Development in a Sustainable Way

SC2: Design and Access Statements

SC3: Promoting Sustainable and Green Design

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

## **Enhancing built heritage**

- 5.25 The historic importance of the AAP area is recognised as a major asset in delivering the vision and objectives for the town centre and Bohemia. Sensitive intervention is therefore needed to balance heritage and regeneration objectives.
- 5.26 Ensuring the identification and sensitive management of heritage assets in tandem with promotion of the highest standards of modern architecture will be essential to maintaining the blend of old and new that gives Hastings its unique character.
- 5.27 Regard should be had to relevant Conservation Appraisals before development proposals are submitted to the Council.
- 5.28 All applications for new development in the AAP area will be required to demonstrate an understanding of the local historic environment to explain how this has been taken in to account in evolving the designs and to assess the impacts of the new development on heritage assets. New developments should be high quality and



sensitive to the historic environment. The Council will support proposals for the adaptive reuse of existing heritage assets and the integration of new contemporary design responses within the existing urban and historic fabric.

- 5.29 Development proposals will be required to minimise impacts on heritage assets and their setting and to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas whilst contributing positively to wider regeneration objectives.
- 5.30 The topography of Hastings is defined by the seafront and the strong presence of the cliffs and the Castle presiding over the town with development expanding along the valley and climbing to higher ridges. This affords spectacular panoramic views from higher ground with strategically important views to and from the castle for example and along the seafront. At street level, the pattern of development, differing built forms and the alignment of roads combine to create a rich and mixed townscape perceived as a sequence of views and glimpses.
- 5.31 Conservation Area appraisals identify a number of views that need to be considered in any future development. Such views are a key element in the character of conservation areas that will need to be taken into account in considering development proposals. Accordingly major development will require a view analysis as part of the planning application stage.

#### **Policy AAP7 – Enhancing Built Heritage**

Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should be sympathetic to the asset's significance and setting. Development proposals should seek to avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early in the design process.

The Council will support proposals which:

- i. enhance the setting of Conservation Areas and heritage assets;
- ii. secure the restoration, reuse and long term viability of historic buildings;
- iii. replace buildings of poor quality and poorly designed shopfronts, outdoor advertisements and signage;
- iv. make use of traditional building materials or complementary materials that contribute positively to local character and distinctiveness;
- v. sustain or enhance historic views and vistas;
- vi. provide high quality and innovative design solutions which minimise impacts on heritage assets and their setting.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

EN1: Built and Historic Environment

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

HN3: Demolition involving Historic Assets

HN4: Development affecting Heritage Assets with Archaeological and Historic Interest or Potential Interest

HN5: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

### **Shopfront design and advertisements**

- 5.32 Well designed and interesting shopfronts attract shoppers by creating pleasing shopping environments where people want to dwell. They make a positive addition to

the street scene and contribute to the local economy by attracting visitors as well as investment.

- 5.33 All shopfronts should contribute to the vitality of Hastings Town Centre by maintaining or enhancing the attractiveness of the street scene. For the purpose of Policy AAP8, shopfronts include all ground floor premises with a fascia sign and or display window, including non-retail uses such as building societies, banks, estate agents, cafés and restaurants.
- 5.34 All shopfront design whether an alteration or a new shopfront, and whether modern or more traditional in design should respect the character, scale, materials and detailing of the host building, as well as the setting of the shop on the street frontage. Overly deep fascias are a common flaw that should be avoided as they can make a building look unbalanced and sever the upper and ground floors.
- 5.35 There are fine examples of traditional shopfronts within Hastings Town Centre, many with elaborate Victorian or Edwardian detailing. The proportions and coherent design of these buildings successfully draw the customer to their display window. The Council is keen to have traditional shopfronts restored and retained and their loss will be resisted where they add positively to the streetscene.
- 5.36 The Council expects high quality shopfront design in all locations. This is especially important for proposals within Conservation Areas and where they impact on listed buildings. Where historic shopfronts or architectural detail exists, there will be a presumption in favour of the preservation of these historic assets. Hastings Borough Council will work alongside the Hastings Business Improvement District (Hastings BID) to improve shopfront design within Hastings Town Centre.
- 5.37 The Council wants Hastings to have exciting and vibrant streets, both during the day and evening and as such will expect security measures to be carefully designed with this in mind. Security measures should be integrated into the overall shopfront design. Laminated glass is the Council preferred measure, followed by internal lattice grilles as both these solutions can provide a level of protection against crime and are sensitive to the character of the street scene.
- 5.38 The Advertisement Regulations<sup>11</sup> in place can only control the effect of advertisements and signage on amenity and public safety. External advertising comes in many forms including fascia signs, projected signs on shopfronts, free standing signs, menu boards at cafés and restaurants and post hoardings.
- 5.39 As with shopfront design, a key principle is that advertisements and signage must be designed as an integral part of the shopfront or building on which it is situated. All advertisements and signage must respect the character and setting of the street and be of an appropriate scale, detail, colour and use of materials. This is particularly the case in Conservation Areas, where sensitive design is needed so as to not detract from the important architectural character and quality of the town centre.
- 5.40 The Advertisement Regulations are complex and the Council should be contacted prior to installation of any external advertising or signage to ensure Regulation compliance. There are also special local consent requirements for Estate Agent boards along the seafront.
- 5.41 The Council has adopted guidance within a Shopfronts and Advertisements Supplementary Planning Document that should be referred to in the first instance.

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<sup>11</sup> Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

## **Policy AAP8 - Shopfronts and Advertising**

Planning permission for new shopfronts or alterations to existing shopfronts and signage will be permitted providing the following criterion are met:

- a. All elements of the shopfront (including shop shutters, blinds and signs) form part of an integrated design, with an appropriate relationship to the upper floors;
- b. The proposal respects the architectural style, character and appearance, including details, proportions, material of the building it forms part of;
- c. The proposal relates appropriately to the context of the surrounding area;
- d. The proposal will not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront if it adds positively to the streetscene or details of architectural or historic interest;
- e. Within conservation areas the Council will expect very high standards of shopfront and advertisement design;
- f. Security external shutters and grilles will only be granted where internal or other security measures are not possible and they do not detract from the vitality of the streetscene;
- g. The proposal would allow access to everyone, including older people and those with disabilities;
- h. Consent will only be granted for outdoor advertisements or signs that do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the surrounding area and would not result in danger on the public highway.

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

DM3: General Amenity

HN1: Development Affecting the Significance and Setting of Designated Heritage Assets (including Conservation Areas)

## **Efficient use of natural resources**

- 5.42 Due to the scale and mix of potential development within the White Rock Park and Bohemia Opportunity Areas and the ability to plan development from the outset combined heat and power (CHP) linked to a district heating network is the Council's preferred approach to meeting energy demand in these locations. The heat network and any surrounding built form will need to be designed to allow for the expansion of facilities, as development is built out over a number of years and energy demand rises. The following Opportunity Areas have potential to link new development to district heating:
- OA1: Station Gateway and Priory Quarter
  - OA6: White Rock Park
  - OA7: Bohemia
  - OA8: Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road
- 5.43 The Council will need to test assumptions and the financial and technical feasibility of CHP in these locations before taking any potential scheme forward. The Council will seek funding available from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Heat Network Delivery Unit for this purpose. If found to be viable, the Council will take a lead role in engaging with potential stakeholders, most notably those with responsibility for key anchor loads, such as the existing civic service facilities and hotel, and any significant new development.

- 5.44 Developments within the AAP area should be designed to make efficient use of natural resources, particularly demands for water and energy. The siting and layout of buildings should make efficient use of land, utilising passive solar design to heat the building as well as cooling consideration through design solutions and green infrastructure, such as planting.
- 5.45 The Council is keen to support highly energy efficient dwellings that have a net emissions rate of near zero or below, or are designed to be Passivhaus buildings. The Passivhaus Standard is a well-known example that takes a 'fabric first' approach to ensure exceptional thermal performance and airtightness to deliver high levels of energy efficiency.
- 5.46 The business sector currently accounts for 25% of UK emissions<sup>12</sup>. Although significant demand for energy comes from a small number of larger companies, there is an increasing emphasis on local government to contribute to energy efficiency. Improving the energy efficiency of commercial buildings, lighting and air conditioning for example can lead to significant running cost savings that may also improve the value of the building.
- 5.47 The Council will take the lead by requiring the new leisure centre proposed in Opportunity Area 6 to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' rating. The British Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment (BREEAM) is a measure of best practice in environmental design and management and addresses a large number of environmental issues, such as energy, water, waste, health and wellbeing, transport, materials, waste, pollution, ecology and innovation. Energy and carbon dioxide emissions are weighted heavily within the scoring framework of BREEAM.
- 5.48 The Clean Growth Strategy estimates that transport accounts for 24% of total UK emissions. In line with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) parking guidance, the Council requires that all new residential development with off-street parking include charging facilities for electric vehicles<sup>13</sup>. This action will contribute towards climate change mitigation and air quality improvements within the AAP area. Developers of non-residential schemes will need to consult ESCC at the earliest opportunity to agree requirements for charging points within their proposed development.
- 5.49 Building Regulations – Part G<sup>14</sup>: Water efficiency of new dwellings requires all homes to meet the mandatory national standard of 125 litres per person per day. Following the outcome of the Housing Standards Review<sup>15</sup> a new 'optional' standard was introduced into Building Regulations enabling local planning authorities to require new dwellings to achieve a minimum estimated water use of no more than 110 litres per person per day where clear evidence of need has been established.
- 5.50 Research into the cost of complying with the new standard shows that the additional cost over usual industry practice would be minimal<sup>16</sup>. The AAP therefore proposes to introduce a new policy imposing a condition on new residential dwellings requiring development to meet the higher 'optional' water efficiency standards.

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<sup>12</sup> The Clean Growth Strategy (October 2017) HM Government

<sup>13</sup> Guidance for parking at New Residential Development (October 2017) East Sussex County Council

<sup>14</sup> Part G of Schedule 1 Building Regulations 2010, as amended

<sup>15</sup> Written Ministerial Statement: Housing standards: streamlining the system (25 March 2015)

<sup>16</sup> Housing Standards Review Cost Impacts (September 2014) DCLG

## **Policy AAP9 – Efficient use of natural resources**

Alongside high quality design, the Council is committed to sustainable design within all new development, and supports the efficient use of natural resources, including reducing demand for energy and water.

The Council will encourage exemplar proposals that have a net emission rate of near zero or below and will consider these favourably.

The Council supports the principle of community-led renewable energy projects that help communities generate their own electricity, manage their energy needs locally and support more resilient self-sufficient communities.

To support the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles within the AAP area, all new residential development with off-street parking is required to install charging facilities for electric vehicles in accordance with current standards and codes of practice. Proposals for non-residential development where parking is required must also provide charging facilities to be agreed with East Sussex County Council.

To achieve greater water efficiency standards new residential development must be designed not to exceed 110 liters per person per day, in line with higher 'optional' standards set out within the Building Regulations (Part G).

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

SC1: Overall Strategy for Managing Development in a Sustainable Way

SC2: Design and Access Statements

SC3: Promoting Sustainable and Green Design

SC4: Working Towards Zero Carbon Development

SC5: District Heating and Combined Heat and Power Systems

SC6: Renewable Energy Development

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

## **Green infrastructure**

5.51 Well-designed green spaces and landscaping can enhance the urban environment, influencing business location decisions leading to new inward investment and employment opportunities<sup>17</sup>. It also contributes towards the creation of healthy attractive environments and importantly helps the town be more resilient to the effects of climate change, reducing summer urban temperatures and supporting biodiversity.

5.52 The AAP area presents a significant opportunity to enhance green infrastructure with benefits for biodiversity whilst supporting walking, cycling and recreation. New development should be designed to utilise the benefits of green infrastructure, by providing new or enhanced measures, such as using space for sustainable drainage to help manage intense rainfall events and the use of planting for urban cooling. New development will be required to maximize opportunities to maintain, enhance and restore green infrastructure in keeping with the Hastings Planning Strategy, notably Policy EN2 (Green Infrastructure Network), Policy SC3 (Promoting Sustainable and Green Design) and Policy SC7 (Flood Risk).

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<sup>17</sup> Demystifying green infrastructure, UK Green Building Council, 2016

5.53 It will be important that all scales of development make space for nature to increase the borough’s biodiversity assets.

5.54 The AAP has the following priorities for green infrastructure:

- a. Secure new and enhanced green infrastructure as part of major new development within Bohemia helping to meet the needs of residents and visitors;
- b. Add value to Hastings Town Centre through green infrastructure;
- c. Reinforce and connect existing habitats to the wider green infrastructure network helping biodiversity and habitat protection and enhancement;
- d. Improve people’s health and wellbeing by providing attractive and safe green infrastructure.

5.55 New development can contribute to the green infrastructure network through creative design and use of measures such as:

- new and enhanced green spaces
- green linkages providing pedestrian and cycle routes;
- green roofs and roof gardens;
- green ‘living’ walls;
- sustainable drainage systems/swales;
- street tree planting

**Policy AAP10 – Promoting Green Infrastructure**

New development will be required to respond positively to the creation and/or enhancement of green assets where opportunities exist in line with the priorities for green infrastructure within the AAP area.

The Council will support innovative solutions to improve the green infrastructure network in new and existing developments. The seafront contribution to the green infrastructure network should be protected and maximised. New development that secures net biodiversity gains will be supported.

Where appropriate, new development will be required to:

- i. make provision for new and improved green spaces;
- ii. contribute to the creation of a network of green spaces linking together existing and proposed green infrastructure assets;
- iii. incorporate green roofs on commercial and other buildings;
- iv. consider opportunities for biodiversity and amenity enhancement where sustainable drainage systems (Suds) are incorporated into new development including the public realm;

Green infrastructure should be fully integrated into development from the outset and provision must be made for its future maintenance.

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network  
SC3: Promoting Sustainable and Green Design  
SC7: Flood Risk

**Relationship to Development Management Plan**

HN7: Green Infrastructure in New Developments  
HN8: Biodiversity and Green Space  
HN10: Amenity Green Spaces

## Public realm

- 5.56 The AAP presents opportunities to create a high quality public realm and new and improved public spaces. The seafront is the most important public realm asset for the town and can be significantly enhanced through the provision of improved connections with the town centre and Bohemia and improvements to the pedestrian environment.
- 5.57 One of the challenges is to reclaim the public realm from traffic to create high quality, flexible spaces that restore the greater mix of commercial and civic activity that defined their use in the past. Delivery of public realm improvement works therefore will require coordinated efforts from the Council, ESCC, and other delivery agents. The A259 presents a particular challenge in relation to the quality of the seafront and connections with the rest of the AAP area. It will be necessary to address the problems of the A259 and existing road network in order to promote sustainable development and lasting economic regeneration.
- 5.58 The AAP aims to transform the experience and perception of Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia through improvements to the public realm. This will be achieved through well considered materials, planting, street furniture, signage, art, drainage and other highway infrastructure. Investment in these key elements can turn public spaces into memorable and enjoyable places and make the area attractive to investors. Public space, the way it is enclosed, the activity that takes place round its edges and within it, the choice of surface treatments, the maintenance of the space and its creative input all contribute to its image and quality.
- 5.59 Much of the central area has been pedestrianized but there is a lack of consistency in design which has resulted in a variety of paving materials and unnecessary street furniture such as bollards and guard rails. New paving, canopies, feature lighting, new street furniture, when consistently applied will create a vibrant and attractive space at the heart of the town centre.
- 5.60 Harold Place is one such location where enhancement measures could be made. This central space is characterized by a series of radiating streets fronted by buildings of three and four storeys. The rounded corners of the surrounding buildings facing the space emphasise its focal role indicating the close relationship between the public realm and surrounding development. The potential of the space is undermined by vehicle usage which points towards a need for reclaiming vehicular road space, where possible.
- 5.61 Whilst strategically located close to the town centre and seafront, Bohemia lacks connectivity with the seafront and wider town centre and the public realm is poorly defined. Pedestrian access from the seafront is constrained by topography and pedestrian and cycle routes through the area are ill-defined with lack of signage and unclear wayfindings. There is the opportunity to improve the public realm connecting the former convent site with White Rock Gardens through improved east-west connections. Bohemia Road presents a barrier to pedestrian connections across the north and south of Bohemia Road which should be addressed in any new development.
- 5.62 New development will be required to make provision for improvements to the public realm including upgrading the existing public open spaces and civic spaces as well as creating new public realm within the town and improved connections with those that lie just outside. Well maintained streets and public places encourage their use and add to their vibrancy. Proposals for improvements to the public realm will be considered in a holistic way, taking account of the lifetime of the development in terms of initial investment and levels of on-going maintenance.

## **Policy AAP11 - Public Realm**

New development will be required to make a positive contribution to the quality of the public realm through the enhancement of existing public realm or the provision of new public realm as an integrated part of new development schemes. Where relevant new development will be required to:

- a. emphasise the points of arrival into the town centre (as identified through innovative surface redesign and improved pedestrian crossings);
- b. reinforce a clear street hierarchy and improve legibility by applying a cohesive approach to streetscape design;
- c. improve the pedestrian environment and connections between Opportunity Areas;
- d. utilise durable and high quality materials within the public realm, with special attention to detail and maintenance;
- e. specify management and maintenance regimes; and;
- f. make provision for the inclusion of public art and lighting.

Enhancement of the following roads and principal areas of public realm will be promoted within the plan period. The Council will work with East Sussex County Council and the private sector to implement these improvements:

- A259/seafront
- Station gateway
- Priory Street
- Havelock Place
- Harold Place
- Wellington Place/Castle Street

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

FA2: Strategic Policy for Central Area

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

## **Promoting sustainable transport**

5.63 A comprehensive approach is proposed to improve wayfinding, pedestrian prioritisation, improved pedestrian crossings and new pedestrian and cycle routes.

Key principles include:

- Prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement in the town centre, ensuring access for all;
- Ensure busier roads are easy for pedestrians to cross in key strategic locations;
- Reduce road space where feasible to increase space for pedestrians;
- Manage seasonal parking demand with better information about location of car parks and temporary car parks;
- Make provision for coach parking in appropriate locations to meet requirements associated with existing and proposed uses in the town centre and Bohemia.



### **Policy AAP12 – Sustainable Transport**

The Council will work with East Sussex County Council to deliver a programme of transport infrastructure improvements to enable greater access for pedestrians and cyclists including improved/increased pedestrian crossings and shared space junctions along the A259 seafront road.

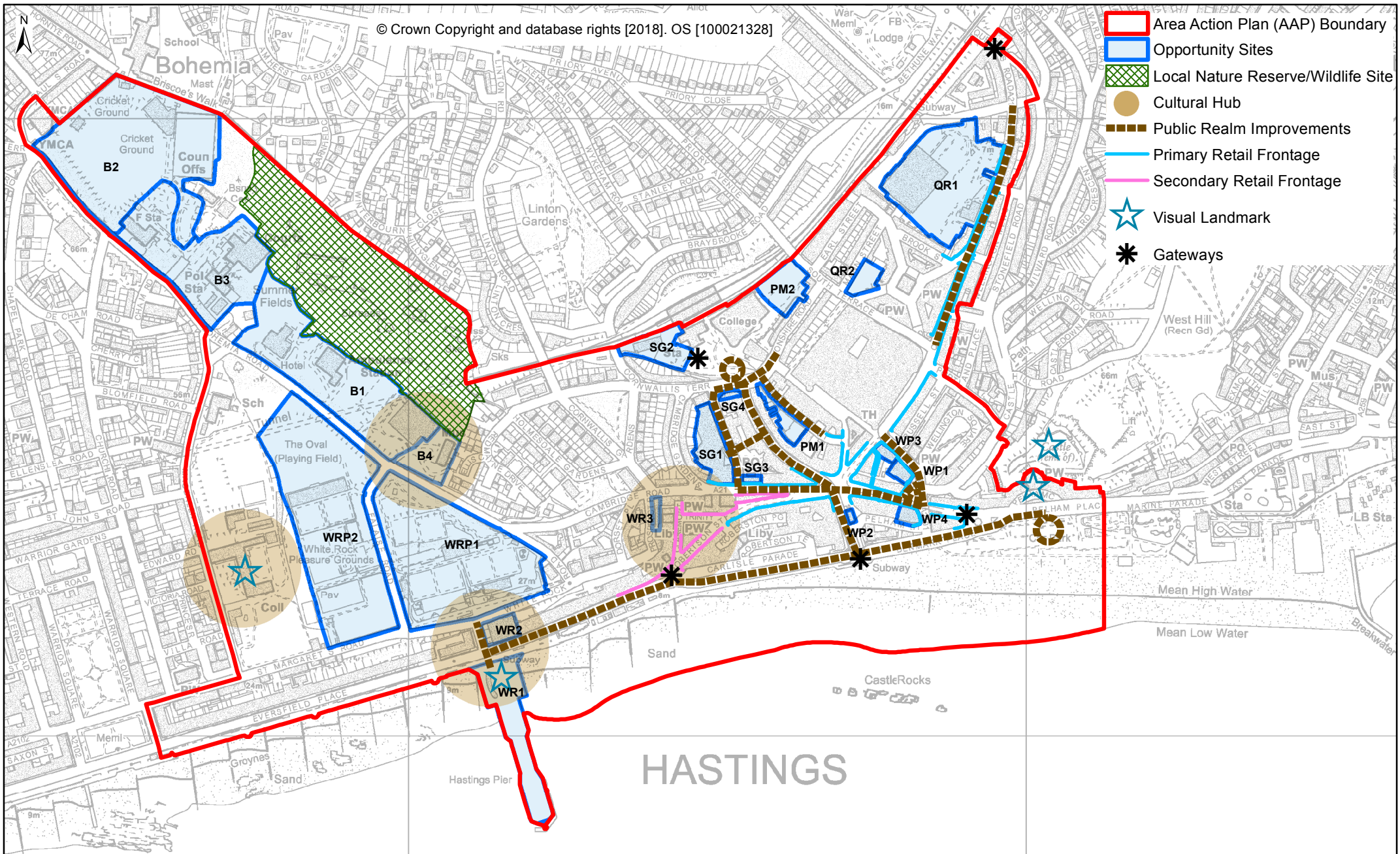
Parking management will be assessed across the town centre to reclaim seafront space for leisure uses and improve the pedestrian environment. Provision will be made in appropriate locations for coach parking to meet existing requirements and needs arising from new development. A cycle strategy will be implemented for Hastings Town Centre in line with Policy T3 of the Hastings Planning Strategy.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

FA2: Strategic Policy for Central Area

T2: Local Road Improvements

T3: Sustainable Transport



**Figure 5**  
**Key Diagram**

Scale: 1:8,000

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## Section Six

### Hastings Town Centre

- 6.1 Hastings Town Centre is the commercial heart of the town and opportunities should be promoted to enhance the vitality and quality of the retail and commercial offer to ensure the town remains competitive. This will include making provision for high quality comparison retail floor space and creating new employment opportunities.
- 6.2 The objective is to build on existing assets and the seafront location to create a high quality town centre serving local residents, workers, students and visitors – a destination of choice with a unique sense of place. The town centre will meet modern retail requirements and have a strong local economy whilst making the most of its distinctive heritage, open spaces and seafront.
- 6.3 The primary retail area will be extended with the creation of two new retail hubs to complement Priory Meadow and enhance the retail offer and attractiveness of the town centre. These retail hubs will focus on Wellington Place/Castle Street and Priory Street.
- 6.4 Four Opportunity Areas (OA) have been identified in Hastings Town Centre:
- OA1: Station Gateway and Priory Quarter
  - OA2: Wellington Place and Castle Street
  - OA3: Queens Road
  - OA4: Priory Meadow

### Opportunity Areas within Hastings Town Centre

#### Opportunity Area 1 (OA1): Station Gateway and Priory Quarter

- 6.5 This area includes Hastings railway station and Priory Quarter which has been the focus for recent education and office development adjacent to the station and extending along Havelock Road. Significant regeneration has taken place in this area, notably the Lacuna Place development and One Priory Square, Sussex Coast College, the railway station, health centre and further education buildings. In particular, the Council wants to see the development of Priory Quarter continue, including the redevelopment of Queensbury House, and Priory Street, to create new employment, retail and leisure uses.
- 6.6 The focus of development within the town centre will continue to be around Priory Quarter. This area is most suitable for further development and change due to its strategic location adjacent to the station and scale of development opportunity.
- 6.7 The proximity of this area to the town's main transport interchange (rail & bus station) means the whole area has the potential to act as an attractive gateway to Hastings. Opportunities exist for public realm improvements and the reconfiguration of public spaces to enhance this area's offer as a pedestrian hub and main access point to the town centre.
- 6.8 The area provides the opportunity for larger scale development and has the capacity to absorb additional retail and employment floorspace and contribute significantly to the regeneration of town centre.
- 6.9 The area provides opportunity for improving connectivity between the Station and the Seafront, Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia.

- 6.10 The Station Gateway and Priory Quarter Opportunity Area will be developed in accordance with the following principles:
- Creation of a strong town centre hub by promoting a balanced mix of uses that contribute to the town's growth and supports new investment;
  - Redevelopment of key sites to increase retail capacity within the town centre;
  - Introduction of an element of residential use as part of office/retail led mixed use development to support delivery and sustain vibrancy and the evening economy;
  - Rationalisation of parking and vehicular movements to create more efficient traffic circulation;
  - Raising the quality of streets and public realm including provision of green infrastructure;
  - Improving pedestrian and cycle access from Hastings Station to the town centre, seafront and Bohemia areas.
- 6.11 Development will be required to address the following key objectives:
- Poor connections between key development sites; such as Priory Street car park with the surrounding streets, open space and town centre core area;
  - Deliver a significant portion of employment and retail needs;
  - Support the regeneration of Hastings Town Centre through provision of land uses that complement the main town centre uses;
  - Enabling residential development to create high quality homes in the heart of Hastings.
- 6.12 Priory Street has a poor public realm which discourages pedestrians although it provides an alternative and direct connection between the station, Trinity Triangle and the seafront. At the ground level, redevelopment presents an opportunity to create new active frontages, complementing the existing Priory Square to help establish a new vibrant street with an enhanced pedestrian experience. New development would facilitate these improvement works.
- 6.13 Priory Street will be promoted as a secondary route to the seafront from the station and will:
- create a high quality pedestrian and cycle route; and
  - complement and support the existing public space at Priory Square on the west side of Priory Street.
- 6.14 Havelock Road is the main route connecting pedestrians and cyclists between the station and the seafront. The Council will work with Network Rail and the train operating company (TOC) managing the station to review pedestrian/cycle access from the station to the highway boundary. The steps located to the right of the station could be improved with a cycle channel, to improve cycle access. The pedestrian crossing located at Devonshire Road/Middle Street is currently not located on the desire line, therefore pedestrians are crossing at the far edge of the crossing, but this would need to be reviewed in alignment with the access to the Priory Meadow car park.
- 6.15 The Council will work with East Sussex County Council to identify options for improvements of the public realm, pedestrian experience, cycle access and vehicular movement. Subject to funding being available, the Council and its partners will explore the potential to:
- create new or improve existing crossing facilities with an increased emphasis on priority being given to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic;
  - consider replacement of the current light controlled crossings located in Devonshire Road/Cornwallis Terrace/Havelock Terrace;

- replace the current pedestrian crossing at Devonshire Road/Middle Street junction along the desire line;
- improve the public realm at Station Approach;

### **Policy OA1 – Station Gateway and Priory Quarter**

The Station Gateway and Priory Quarter Opportunity Area is the main gateway into the town centre and the town's key transport interchange. The Council will work with developers and other partners to bring forward mixed use development comprising comparison retail, offices, leisure and residential uses and public realm improvements.

New development will be required to support the vision for the Station Gateway and Priory Quarter and to have regard to the heritage and conservation context. Proposals will be required to enhance connections between the station, town centre and seafront.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS1: New Housing Development  
 DS2: Employment Growth  
 DS3: Location of Retail Development  
 FA2: Strategic Policy for Central Area  
 FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles  
 SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area  
 HTC6: Priory Quarter, Havelock Road

### **Opportunity sites within Station Gateway and Priory Quarter (OA1)**

6.16 The Station Gateway and Priory Quarter Opportunity Area (OA1) contains four opportunity sites as shown in figure 6:

- SG1: Priory Street car park and ESK
- SG2: Station Approach car park and Royal Mail Delivery Office
- SG3: Former Post Office, Cambridge Road
- SG4: Queensbury House, Havelock Road

#### **Opportunity Site SG1: Priory Street car park and ESK**

6.17 Priory Street car park forms part of the Priory Quarter allocation (Policy HTC6) and is allocated under that policy primarily for mixed use employment led development. The site offers strong potential for intensification and optimised land use given the location and proximity to the primary shopping area and education quarter. The redevelopment of the site presents the opportunity to:

- extend the primary retail area and meet the requirement for additional retail floorspace in the town centre;
- create an enhanced shopping experience through the redevelopment of the ESK store, including reconfiguration of the servicing area;
- deliver public realm improvements;
- provide additional uses on upper floors through office, leisure and commercial development;
- provide a range of employment space including start-up business hubs, co-working/shared working spaces and space for small and expanding businesses.

- 6.18 There is potential for other town centre uses such as leisure, culture and residential as part of a mixed use development provided this would not prejudice delivery of employment and retail opportunities. The amount of residential development which is delivered on the site will be required to comply with other planning policies.
- 6.19 Development of site SG1 must be considered in association with site SG2. Redevelopment of the site will require the relocation of the existing multi-storey car park to site SG2.

#### **Policy SG1 – Priory Street car park and ESK**

The Council will work with partners to promote the redevelopment of this site. A mixed use development will be supported, including employment, retail, leisure and commercial uses as appropriate.

Residential uses may be acceptable as part of a mixed use development scheme where this would improve the viability of the site.

The Council will require a comprehensive master plan for the phased redevelopment of the site, which should be considered in association with the Station Approach car park and Royal Mail Delivery Office (site SG2).

A high quality design and public realm improvements will be required which enhances the character and appearance of the area. Active frontages will be required to Priory Street and Cambridge Road.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy:**

DS1: New Housing development

DS2: Employment Growth

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan:**

DM1: Design Principles

HTC6: Priory Quarter, Havelock Road

#### **Opportunity Site SG2: Station Approach car park and Royal Mail Delivery Office**

- 6.20 The Royal Mail Delivery Office forms part of the Priory Quarter development (Policy HTC6) in Development Management Plan. The site's location next to the station area provides the opportunity to create an appealing attractive gateway to Hastings and could include the development of a hotel. The redevelopment of the site is an opportunity to:
- develop a multi-storey car park to replace the existing Priory Street car park and the surface level parking at the station;
  - provide for station car parking in line with the prospect of High Speed 1 (HS1) being implemented within the lifetime of the AAP;
  - reconfigure Station Approach for a better pedestrian experience;
  - provide additional hotel use on the upper floors that is consistent with the gateway function.
- 6.21 A major factor in the timing of the redevelopment of this site is the relocation of the multi storey car park from site SG1 and the existing delivery office. The site is capable



of supporting a mixed use employment led scheme with retail and potentially leisure space. Development of this site must be considered in association with site SG1.

**Policy SG2 - Station Approach car park and Royal Mail Delivery Office**

The Council will work with landowners to promote the redevelopment of Station Approach, car park and the Royal Mail Delivery Office site. A mixed use development will be supported to include a multi-storey car park (up to 350 spaces) and employment space. Other uses may be acceptable including a hotel.

The Council will require a comprehensive master plan for the redevelopment of the site. Development of the site should be considered in association with the Priory Street car park and ESK (site SG1).

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS2: Employment Growth

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

**Relationship to Development Management Plan:**

DM1: Design Principles

HTC6: Priory Quarter, Havelock Road

**Opportunity Site SG3: Former Post Office, Cambridge Road**

6.22 The building provides an opportunity for a mixed use scheme with retail use at ground floor level to create an active frontage.

**Policy SG3 – Former Post Office, Cambridge Road**

The Council will support a mixed use development which would provide:

- a. retail use on the ground floor;
- b. offices or residential uses on the upper floors;
- c. retention of the original post office building

The provision of workspace for creative industries and studio space will be supported.

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

**Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

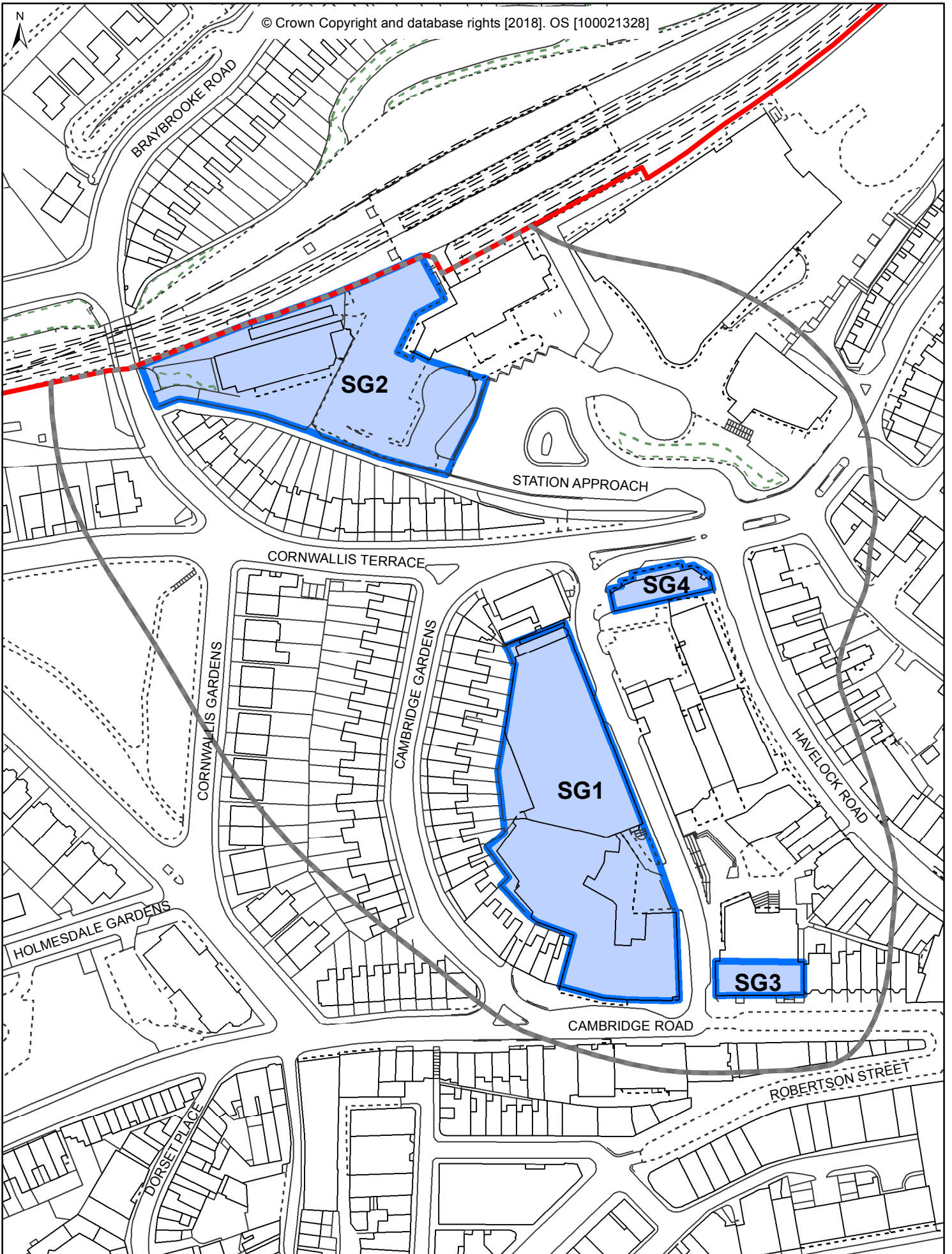
SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

**Opportunity Site SG4: Queensbury House, Havelock Road**




6.23 Queensbury House forms part of the Priory Quarter allocation Policy HTC6. Within this area land and buildings are allocated for mix use employment-led development. Policy SG4 develops Policy HTC6 promoting the re-use as well the potential for the redevelopment of the Queensbury House.

<p><b>Policy SG4 – Queensbury House, Havelock Road</b></p> <p>The Council will work with partners to secure the redevelopment and/or reuse of Queensbury House to provide a range of business floorspace within use class B1. Other appropriate uses such as a hotel, culture and food and drink which will extend the range of employment opportunities and activities in the town centre may be acceptable as part of a mixed use scheme subject to viability in order to achieve the redevelopment and/or reuse of the building.</p> <p>Redevelopment will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. be of a high design quality;</li><li>b. respect the significance and setting of the Conservation Area;</li><li>c. incorporate measures to address parking and access issues;</li><li>d. create active uses on the ground floor.</li></ul> <p><b>Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy</b> DS2: Employment Growth FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre</p> <p><b>Relationship to Development Management Plan:</b> DM1: Design Principles HTC6: Priory Quarter, Havelock Road</p>
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**Figure 6**  
**Opportunity Area OA1**  
**Station Gateway and**  
**Priority Quarter**

-  Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary
-  Opportunity Area
-  Opportunity Sites

## Opportunity Area 2 (OA2): Wellington Place and Castle Street

- 6.24 This is a busy shopping area within Hastings Town Centre. The streets are lively with shoppers and visitors attracted by the mix of multiple retailers and independents located within the attractive historic townscape. This shopping area adjoins and complements Priory Meadow Shopping Centre. Retail is the predominant use, although cafés and restaurants also have a strong presence. Castle Street in particular is a key pedestrian gateway linking the seafront to the Town Centre Shopping Area. Whilst the core activity for this area is retail, it is considered that the retail potential of this prime location is yet to be fully realised.
- 6.25 A key objective will be to attract high quality retail investment, increase pedestrian flows between the seafront and the shopping area and create an attractive and vibrant shopping and leisure destination drawing tourists and visitors from a wide catchment.
- 6.26 This Opportunity Area will meet the retail needs of shoppers and residents, as well as providing an enhanced leisure, cultural and entertainment offer. The look and feel of Wellington Place and Castle Street will be reinvigorated to create a high quality retail destination that is at the heart of town centre activity attracting new investment as well as visitors. Town centre retail capacity is increased through redevelopment of key sites close to the seafront. The public realm will be attractive, vibrant and stimulating. Public spaces will provide a venue for local artist and events. Where possible, trees will be incorporated into the public realm softening the hard landscaping and providing shade. Access to the seafront will be improved with enhanced pedestrian crossing points across the A259.
- 6.27 New development in this Opportunity Area will need to:
- improve the quality and variety of retail outlets;
  - promote a balanced mix of uses within development sites that enables the delivery of high quality design and associated public realm;
  - redevelop key sites to increase retail capacity within the town centre;
  - raise the overall standard of design, including shopfront design, creating attractive and vibrant streets;
  - enhance existing green space.
- 6.28 The majority of funding for public realm improvements will come from private investment as and when development opportunities come forward. In addition, the Council will also work with the Hastings Business Improvement District (Hastings BID), and East Sussex County Council to identify funding opportunities.
- 6.29 Wellington Square is a residential area within the town centre which contains an important area of green space. Its elevated position and grandeur add to the townscape and character of the area. The setting of this significant historic space is currently undermined by Albert Road, which severs it from the main town centre<sup>18</sup> and seafront. The redevelopment of site WP1 offers the potential to enhance the public space located at the junction of Albert Road and Wellington Place (which currently lacks a clear function) and the setting of the Wellington Square and public enjoyment of the green space.
- 6.30 This area presents a significant opportunity to create an exciting and welcoming space.

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<sup>18</sup> Draft Hastings Central Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan – set-piece Regency development with architectural significance.

- 6.31 An important landmark in this area is Pelham Crescent and St Mary in the Castle. These buildings make a real impact along Hastings seafront. The Council will utilise opportunities to enhance the setting of this set piece arrangement.
- 6.32 The town centre is currently dominated by hard landscaping and the urban fabric would be greatly enhanced through the incorporation of green planting and tree cover where architectural quality and views are less critical.
- 6.33 A key objective for this AAP is to improve pedestrian connectivity and cycle access. The A259 seafront road acts as a significant barrier that severs the town centre from the seafront. Work undertaken with East Sussex County Council has identified a package of improvement measures which will help to alleviate this issue.
- 6.34 This includes the potential for shared space in Havelock Road and the potential for a pedestrian crossing over the A259. In addition improvements to the existing junction at Albert Road to provide easier access across the A259 for pedestrians to the seafront are also important considerations.

#### **Policy OA2 – Wellington Place and Castle Street Opportunity Area**

Wellington Place and Castle Street Opportunity Area will be promoted as retail gateway linking the town centre core with the seafront. The focus will be on the delivery of new comparison retail floorspace, public realm improvements and improved connectivity to the seafront for pedestrians. Complementary convenience retail, leisure, cultural, community related uses and residential uses on upper floors may also be appropriate as part of a mixed use development scheme. Proposals will need to demonstrate how they support the role of this Opportunity Area.

All proposals will be required to have regard to the local context and fully articulate the heritage significance of the townscape and key views.

Integration of Queens Arcade will need to be considered in association with the development of site WP3.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

#### **Opportunity sites within Wellington Place and Castle Street (OA2)**

- 6.35 The following opportunity sites are identified in the Wellington Place and Castle Street Opportunity Area which are shown in figure 7.
- WP1: Corner of Wellington Place and Albert Road
  - WP2: Site of former Harold Place public conveniences
  - WP3: Cinema, Queens Road
  - WP4: 1-7 Wellington Place

## **Opportunity Site WP1: Corner of Wellington Place and Albert Road**

- 6.36 This site is located in a prominent position within Hastings Town Centre. The current building is divided between comparison retail floorspace and leisure uses. The building was originally developed as a large convenience store and is of poor design making a negative contribution to the streetscape and conservation area.
- 6.37 To ensure the vitality of the town centre is maintained and strengthened, the Council will support the redevelopment or remodelling of this site to deliver an exciting building of high quality at the eastern end of Wellington Place. This site together with site WP4 must raise design standards and the quality of the shopping experience in this part of the town centre.
- 6.38 Situated in a prime location within the primary shopping area, redevelopment will be expected to be predominantly for comparison retailing. Residential use may be acceptable on upper floors as part of a mixed use development.
- 6.39 The site has significant level differences from east to west which will need to be addressed in any redevelopment proposals. Proposals will need to have particular regard to the bulk, height and patterns of building blocks so as to not compromise the significant heritage assets within the conservation area.
- 6.40 The Council has aspirations for the creation of shared space linking Wellington Square with Wellington Place to improve connectivity to open space and seafront. A design brief will need to be agreed with the Council prior to detailed proposals coming forward.

### **Policy WP1 – Corner of Wellington Place and Albert Road**

The Council will support the redevelopment of this site to incorporate retail and leisure uses.

Development proposals for this site:

- a. should be predominantly for retail comparison goods;
- b. be of high quality design creating an active frontage to Wellington Place and Albert Road;
- c. provide public realm improvements to Wellington Place and Wellington Square;
- d. residential uses may be acceptable as part of a mixed use development scheme where this improves the viability of the site;
- e. the applicant must submit a design brief to be agreed by Council prior to detailed proposals coming forward.

Development proposals for this site must be considered in relation to site WP3.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

## **Opportunity Site WP2: Site of former Harold Place public conveniences**

6.41 This site is located within a prominent location close to Hastings seafront. This location commands a high quality development and offers the potential for an exemplary scheme. Any scheme must complement the existing historic townscape and provide a focal point at street level.

### **Policy WP2 – Site of former Harold Place public conveniences**

The Council will support the redevelopment of this site for retail and other town centre purposes including retail comparison goods and/or restaurant and café purposes.

Development proposals for this site:

- a. should provide a landmark feature at the gateway to the town centre from the seafront;
- b. provide active uses on the ground floor and be designed to have attractive façades and entrances facing south onto Harold Place and north towards the retail centre;
- c. be of high quality design and create a strong focal point between the town centre and the seafront;

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

EN1: Built and Historic Environment

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

## **Opportunity Site WP3: Cinema, Queens Road**

6.42 This site is located in a prominent position within Hastings Town Centre, and lies within the primary shopping area. The building was constructed as the Gaiety Theatre and is a striking building in Italianate red brick and stone. It is currently used as a cinema with a 4 screen multiplex facility.

6.43 The facility is well used and advantageously located in the heart of the town centre. However, without modernisation it may become less attractive to customers in comparison to other newer cinema formats within the locality.

6.44 Leisure uses are an important element of the town centre and the Council will continue to support cinema provision at this site.

### **Policy WP3 – Cinema, Queens Road**

The Council will support the enhancement of cinema facilities on this site or as part of a mixed use development scheme incorporating site WP1. In the event of the reprovision of the cinema on a suitable alternative site within the town centre, the Council will support the redevelopment of the site to incorporate retail and leisure uses.

Development proposals for this site:

- a. should be predominantly for cultural, leisure or retail comparison goods;
- b. should seek to retain the existing building;
- c. must be supported by a Heritage Statement;
- d. must submit a design brief to be agreed by the Council prior to detailed proposals coming forward.

Development proposals for this site must be considered in relation to site WP1, Queens Arcade and the wider context of the Conservation Area.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

EN1: Built and Historic Environment

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

### **Opportunity Site WP4: 1-7 Wellington Place**

- 6.45 The redevelopment of this site will form an important part of the vision to transform this Opportunity Area into a high quality retail destination enhancing this gateway location between the town centre and the seafront.
- 6.46 The current building negatively impacts the town centre streetscape and conservation area. The Council will support the redevelopment or remodeling of this site to deliver an exciting building of high quality that will act as an anchor store at the eastern end of Wellington Place. The redevelopment of this site together with Policy WP1 should raise design standards in this part of the town centre.
- 6.47 Located within the primary shopping area, this site is suitable for mixed use development. Retail comparison floorspace should be the predominant use, but leisure uses such as a cinema, restaurant and café may also be appropriate as part of a comprehensive scheme.
- 6.48 Its main frontage will be onto Wellington Place, but the building must also have an attractive facade especially when viewed from the seafront and Albert Road.
- 6.49 Residential uses may be acceptable on upper floors as part of a mixed use development scheme where this would improve the viability of the site.

#### **Policy WP4 – 1-7 Wellington Place**

The Council will support the redevelopment of this site for a mix of uses including comparison retail, leisure provision, restaurant, café uses and residential uses will be acceptable as part of a comprehensive scheme.

Development proposals should:

- a. be predominantly for retail comparison goods or leisure;
- b. deliver a new high quality landmark building marking the entrance to the town centre from the seafront;
- c. have an active ground floor frontage onto Wellington Place and Albert Road.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

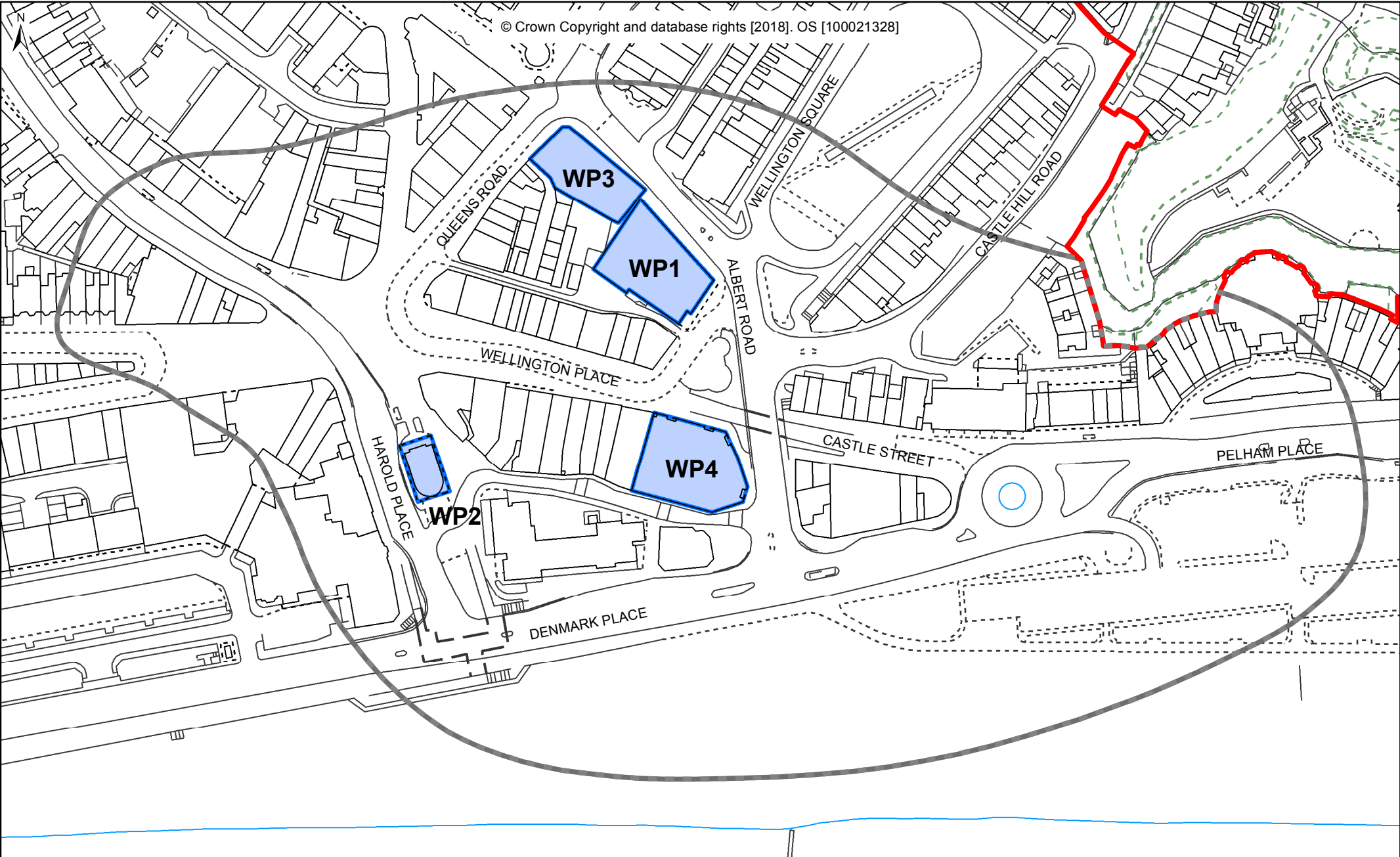
DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre




#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area



**Figure 7**  
**Opportunity Area OA2**  
**Wellington Place / Castle Street**

-  Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary
-  Opportunity Area
-  Opportunity Sites



### Opportunity Area 3 (OA3) - Queens Road

- 6.50 Queens Road is one of main routes into Hastings Town Centre. This Opportunity Area includes Morrisons supermarket, the Britannia Enterprise Centre and the terraced houses and shops along Queens Road. The distinctive listed railway bridge provides a strong gateway feature to the town centre.
- 6.51 Queens Road has a diverse range of smaller independent retailers. Whilst there are positive signs of change along Queens Road there is much that can be done to realise its full potential as a retail destination. Improving the public realm and increasing vitality on the street will be key objectives for this gateway area.
- 6.52 Britannia Enterprise Centre has a unique industrial and artistic heritage, accommodating a mix of starter and established businesses. Its unique culture of business is important to the town, and to the town's distinctiveness.
- 6.53 Morrisons supermarket has an important role as the largest food retail store in the town centre and is clearly complementary to the wider shopper offer in this part of Queens Road. However, the supermarket, car park and the petrol forecourt are dominant and disruptive to the streetscene.
- 6.54 In the event of the Morrisons store being redeveloped this would provide an opportunity to incorporate additional uses and activities which will reinvigorate this area of the town centre. The potential to reinstate the frontage currently occupied by the petrol filling station with new development will help improve the attractiveness of this section of Queens Road, add to the visual interest of the street and create an opportunity for improving the public realm.

#### Policy OA3 – Queens Road Opportunity Area

Queens Road Opportunity Area will be promoted as a high quality gateway supporting the town centre retail core. The focus will be on diversifying retail floorspace and public realm improvements. The area will have a wide range of town centre uses. Residential development will be permitted as part of mixed use development.

#### Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy

DS3: Location of Retail Development  
FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

#### Relationship to Development Management Plan

DM1: Design Principles  
SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

### Opportunity sites within Queens Road (OA3)

- 6.55 There are two opportunity sites in OA3 as shown in figure 8:
- QR1: Morrisons, Queens Road
  - QR2: Cornwallis Street car park

### Opportunity site QR 1: Morrisons site

6.56 Morrisons supermarket plays an important role as the town centre largest convenience retailer. There is potential to intensify uses to make better use of this important site. The store is currently trading well but the original layout and the store design is somewhat dated and a large part of the site is occupied by surface car parking. The supermarket is located to the rear of the site with a surface level car park and a petrol station fronting Queens Road. The site forms an important arrival point at the eastern end of the town centre, but the appearance of the area is not attractive and could be significantly improved.

#### **Policy QR1 – Morrisons, Queens Road**

In the event of this site coming forward for redevelopment, the Council will support a mixed use development incorporating a new food store and other town centre uses including a mix of retail, business (B1a), residential and leisure uses. Development proposals will need to provide:

- a. convenience goods floorspace;
- b. decked car parking to make best use of the site;
- c. integration of the site to the town centre through improved access and permeability;
- d. public realm improvements potentially including street trees and seating;
- e. an 'animated' street frontage on the main routes around and through the site and buildings that address the street;
- f. landscaping proposals incorporating green infrastructure measures.

A Masterplan will be required for the site.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

### Opportunity site QR2: Cornwallis Street car park

6.57 Cornwallis Street car park is located in Hastings Town Centre near to other residential properties and is already identified for residential development and a 'pocket park' in the Development Management Plan (Site Allocation HTC2).

6.58 The site is also suitable for a mixed development incorporating retail/business uses at ground floor level.

### **Policy QR2– Cornwallis Street car park**

The Council will support the redevelopment of Cornwallis Street car park for a mix of uses including residential development (possible net capacity 20 dwellings) with retail use at ground floor level to create an active frontage onto the street.

In promoting site development consideration will be given to measures to secure public access parking either on site or elsewhere.

Development proposals will be required to include a children's play area, "pocket park" or similar open recreational space.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

H1: Housing Density

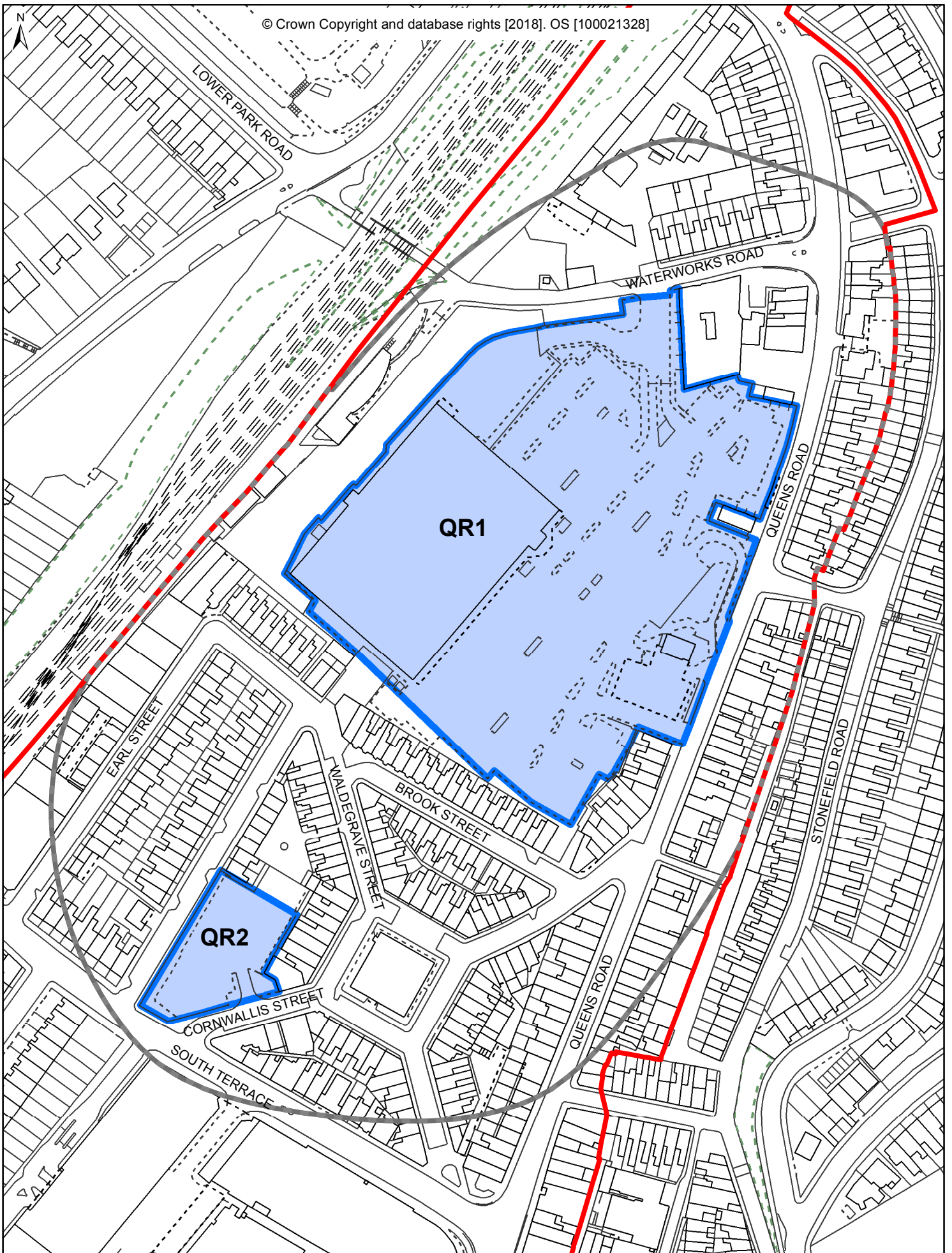
H2: Housing Mix

H3: Provision of Affordable Housing




#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

HTC2: Cornwallis Street Car Park



**Figure 8**  
**Opportunity Area OA3**  
**Queens Road**

-  Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary
-  Opportunity Area
-  Opportunity Sites

## Opportunity Area 4 (OA4): Priory Meadow

- 6.59 The development of Priory Meadow Shopping Centre has done much to establish Hastings position within the retail hierarchy. Building on this the town centre needs to be revitalised with additional investment in retail and ancillary development particularly in key gateway locations closer to the seafront. This will encourage more shopping footfall to the benefit of a greater number of businesses.
- 6.60 Improving the quality and variety of the retail offer will be important, as will encouraging substantial new leisure uses to attract people to the centre at different times of the day and evening.

### Policy OA4 – Priory Meadow

Improvements to the quality and range of retail offer will be promoted in Priory Meadow and the adjoining streets to create a strong retail focus to the town centre.

Within this area:

- a. there will be a presumption against the loss of A1 retail floorspace;
- b. proposals will be viewed in terms of their contribution to the retail and ancillary development mix and their potential to enhance their attraction to residents and visitors;
- c. the Council will take into account the effect of any development proposals on existing retail activities and expect them to be protected or for there to be no net loss;
- d. a positive approach will be taken to assist the occupation of under used floors above shops and other premises to improve vitality.

Enhancement to the public realm and improvements to the pedestrian environment will be promoted.

#### Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy

DS3: Location of Retail Development  
FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre  
E3: Town, District and Local Centres

#### Relationship to Development Management Plan

DM1: Design Principles  
SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

## Opportunity sites within Priory Meadow (OA4)

- 6.61 Two opportunity sites are identified in OA4 as shown in figure 9:
- PM1: Land at Middle Street
  - PM2: Station Yard, Station Approach

### Opportunity site PM1: Land at Middle Street

- 6.62 The land at Middle Street provides the potential for the expansion of the Priory Meadow shopping centre and the Council will explore with the centre owners and developers the opportunities to increase the quantity, quality and range of retail offer.

### **Policy PM1 – Land at Middle Street**

The land at Middle Street is proposed for A1 retail development as an extension to Priory Meadow shopping centre.

Development proposals for this site will:

- a. include a pedestrian link to Priory Meadow;
- b. minimise impacts on adjacent properties;
- c. include provision for servicing;
- d. include improvements to the public realm.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area




### **Opportunity Site PM2: Station Yard, Station Approach**

6.63 The majority of Hastings Station Yard has already been redeveloped for educational (Sussex Coast College) and health care purposes, and includes a small retail element. The remaining part of the site continues to be suitable for residential uses and it is not considered necessary to add to or modify this allocation through this Area Action Plan. The site is allocated for development in the Development Management Plan and development proposals will be required to comply with DMP Policy HTC1. Development will be required to make the most efficient use of land and to be developed at the optimum density taking into account the site context and capacity of surrounding infrastructure in accordance with AAP Policy AAP3.





**Figure 9**  
**Opportunity Area OA4**  
**Priors Meadow**

-  Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary
-  Opportunity Area
-  Opportunity Sites

## Section Seven

### Bohemia

- 7.1 The Bohemia Quarter (including White Rock Gardens) offers significant potential for appropriate development which will enhance the leisure and cultural offer of the town and provide a mix of new housing whilst protecting and enhancing existing assets. The goal is to reinvigorate this part of Hastings through a programme of key initiatives which seek to:
- regenerate White Rock Gardens and create a focus for sports, leisure and culture;
  - create new cultural, leisure and tourism opportunities and new cultural hubs;
  - create new residential neighbourhoods with a mix of housing types and tenures, co-working space and community facilities;
  - improve pedestrian and cycle links between White Rock, the town centre and the seafront;
  - protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
  - enrich the existing character of the seafront and the town's cultural heritage;
  - concentrate sports and leisure activities.
- 7.2 The Bohemia Quarter will provide a mix of residential, leisure, workspace and cultural uses to create a critical mass of activity – active, integrated and a resource for neighbouring communities to visit and enjoy: a cultural centre and a place for creative and new ways of living in an inspiring parkland setting; a new well connected neighbourhood – not seen in isolation but as an extension of the neighbouring areas of Hastings and St Leonards.
- 7.3 The proposals for Bohemia and White Rock Gardens are underpinned by four cultural destinations which are located at strategic entrance points to the Bohemia Quarter:
- The seafront - based on the White Rock Theatre and the pier with a focus on performance, production and entertainment
  - The Convent – with a focus on heritage, the arts and education
  - The Museum - with a focus on cultural heritage and local history
  - Trinity Triangle/America Ground - with a focus on cultural and creative industries
- 7.4 Each cultural hub will act as a gateway into Bohemia and the wider town centre. Multiple uses will be encouraged to add resilience to each hub, and increase the numbers of visitors. Each of the existing cultural buildings will have a defined public space which can also be activated and become a focus for activity. These hubs will be the shop windows for Bohemia and Hastings Town Centre, promoting the new cultural programme and engaging a wide audience from Hastings and beyond. In addition, the area will provide a focus for enhanced leisure facilities and a high quality living environment.
- 7.5 The character of Bohemia derives directly from its greenness and open character- but the area is currently ill defined and underutilised. The proposals seek to preserve this open parkland quality but to introduce a range of new uses and to create a network of green spaces of contrasting character. The network of public spaces is connected by pedestrian and cycle routes. New development can be used to define edges to open public space, and provide public and commercial ground floors which will help to activate the parks.



## Opportunity Areas within Bohemia

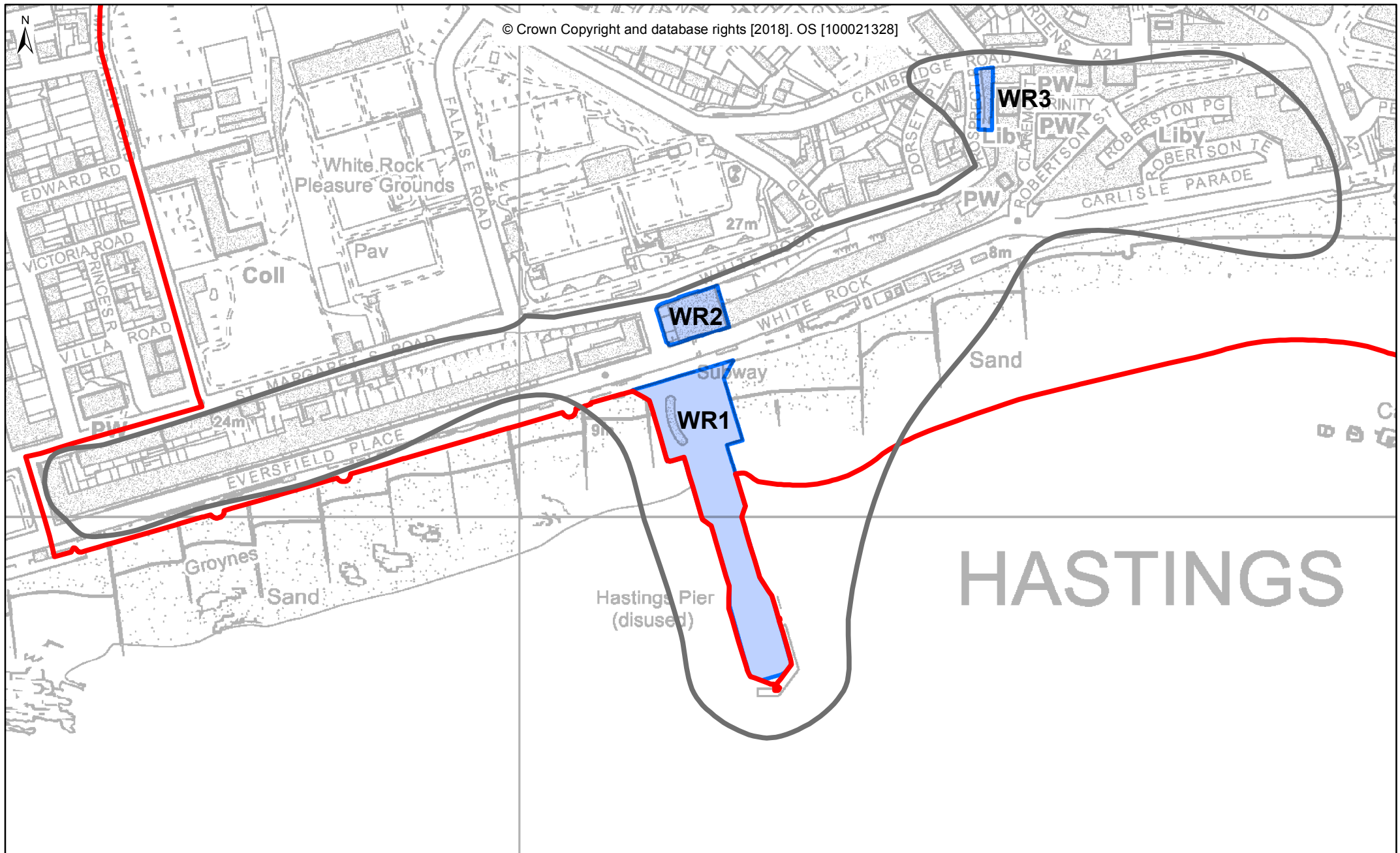
- 7.6 The Bohemia area covers a spatially diverse mix of places. The area has therefore been divided into four Opportunity Areas to allow their separate and distinctive identities to be strengthened:
- OA5: White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter
  - OA6: White Rock Park
  - OA7: Bohemia
  - OA8: Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road

### Opportunity Area 5 (OA5): White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter




- 7.7 The Council recognises the importance of cultural activities and the creative industries to the local economy and the wellbeing and enjoyment of visitors and the community at large.
- 7.8 The White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter is designated by Policy CQ1 of the Hastings Development Management Plan. The area is defined at its western end by the cluster of the theatre, the hotel, the pier, The Source and Bottle Alley and extends eastwards along the seafront to the America Ground, Trinity Triangle and Claremont with the library, the Creative Media Centre and the collection of restaurants and cafes in the area.
- 7.9 The White Rock Promenade is being transformed into an extended hub of activity at the heart of the seafront through a programme of public realm improvements and the opening of the pier and The Source. Further improvements to the public realm will create a nicer pedestrian environment and increase footfall and dwell time. This will attract visitors to the area and encourage the development of more attractions, creating a strong alternative destination to the Old Town. Connections to White Rock Gardens will be improved.
- 7.10 Hastings rich cultural offer includes visual and performing arts, music and festivals. It is supported and influenced by the work of the creative industries such as design, fashion, publishing, video games, radio and film. Cultural facilities and venues include creative industries workspace, museum, theatres, library, and music and other entertainment venues. The seafront and Source Park provides an important setting for a wide range of arts and cultural activities. There is potential to develop the cultural offer through extended provision of workspace for creative industries and space for cultural production and consumption such as performing and visual arts studios.
- 7.11 It will be important to protect cultural venues and the Council will ensure that planning decisions reflect the Agent of Change principle and take account of existing noise generating uses in a sensitive manner when new development, particularly residential, is proposed nearby.
- 7.12 It is proposed that the cultural hub around the White Rock Theatre and the Pier should focus on performance, production and entertainment. The emerging cultural hub around the Trinity Triangle/America Ground including the Printworks and Rock House should be further strengthened with a focus on education and the creative industries.
- 7.13 Robertson Street has many historic buildings which add value to the street scene and create a strong sense of place. There are also a number of historic shopfronts that enhance the street scene, but these are a minority and there are far more that have inappropriate materials and fascias or bear no relationship to the historic building

above. Hastings Creative Media Centre on Robertson Street is a good example of a modern building sitting comfortably within a historic context. This high quality design needs to be replicated within the rest of the area.

- 7.14 The junction at Robertson Street/ Carlisle Parade and the junctions at Harold Place/Denmark Place and Albert Road/Denmark Place have been identified for investment within the public realm improvements programme. Together these junction improvements will enhance connectivity and access to Hastings Town Centre from the pier and seafront.
- 7.15 The Robertson Street retail gateway will complement the cultural quarter by building on the presence of existing businesses and national brands to attract new and exciting occupiers, such as specialist shops, restaurants and boutique brands.
- 7.16 The area around the Trinity Triangle and Claremont has the potential to become a stronger focus for the creative industries.
- 7.17 Localised improvements to the promenade will be implemented and an enhanced pedestrian environment. This will include measures to provide greater priority for pedestrian and cyclist with new crossings, the widening of the northern footway and removal of railings to create a more attractive pedestrian environment. Ground floor uses can start to spill out where the pavement on the north side is widened and parking is restricted. The surface treatment of Robertson Street will be extended to create a seamless pedestrian link to the town centre. The key objective will be the creation of an active frontage to the seafront through the reuse of existing commercial space and public realm improvements. A new pedestrian route is proposed (potentially including stairs and a feature lift) up to a belvedere pedestrian route along the front of the White Rock gardens, which has an elevated view of the seafront linking back into St Margarets Road as it rises to the east and west. This would create direct connections, both physical and visual between the Pier and White Rock Gardens.
- 7.18 Enhancement of Bottle Alley will be promoted and encouraged including the provision of new café facilities and seasonal activities.



**Figure 10**  
**Opportunity Area OA5**  
**White Rock and**  
**America Ground Cultural Quarter**

-  Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary
-  Opportunity Area
-  Opportunity Sites

## **Policy OA5 – White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter**

The Council will work with developers, businesses and other stakeholders to promote the White Rock and America Ground Cultural Area as a cultural destination.

Improvements to the range and quality of cultural facilities; the provision of workspace for the creative industries; and the protection, enhancement and interpretation of heritage assets will be encouraged.

Within this Opportunity Area:

- a. development will be encouraged which will assist the further expansion of its role as a centre for cultural and related leisure and business activities;
- b. proposals will be viewed in terms of their contribution to the mix and diversity of uses and to their potential to enhance their attraction to residents and visitors;
- c. the Council will take into account the effect of any development proposals on existing cultural activities and expect them to be protected or for there to be no net loss;
- d. planning decisions will reflect the Agent of Change principle;
- e. to improve economic vitality, a positive approach will be taken to assist the occupation of under used floors above shops and other premises.

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

DS3: Location of Retail Development

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

E2: Skills and Access to Jobs

E4: Tourism and Visitors

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area

CQ1: Cultural Quarters

## **Opportunity sites within White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter (OA5)**

7.19 Three opportunity sites have been identified in OA5 which are shown in figure 10:

- WR1: Hastings Pier
- WR2: White Rock Theatre
- WR3: The Observer Building

### **Opportunity site WR1: Hastings Pier**

7.20 The Grade II Listed Pier is recognised as a key heritage and economic/tourism asset to the town and a key objective will be to support its sustainable future as a key destination along the seafront. The importance of the Pier is underlined by the award of the Stirling prize for Architecture in 2017. The next phase of development is critical for the establishment of the Pier as a viable attraction for residents, visitors and workers in the town. Any further development will be required to improve the offer of attractions and variety of programmed events to provide a year-round destination for visitors.

- 7.21 Potential new attractions could include:
  - indoor attractions, such as an art house cinema
  - an extended outdoor performance area to accommodate larger concerts, outdoor screenings and performances
  - specialist markets
  - new food outlets
  - a zip wire from the end of the pier to Bottle Alley
  
- 7.22 In actively promoting the provision of new attractions on the Pier, the Council recognises the importance of both permanent and temporary uses to secure its sustainable future. The Council will work with the owners of the Pier to actively explore options to enable the appropriate mechanisms to streamline the planning process to enable the development of appropriate attractions that balance the importance of the heritage value of the pier in relation to economically viable uses.
  
- 7.23 Development of the pier will be complemented by other initiatives along the seafront.

**Policy WR1 – Hastings Pier**

The Council will work with the owners of Hastings Pier and other stakeholders to promote sustainable development to provide a range of leisure and cultural facilities which enhance the attractions on the pier, support its long term viability, and create a year round destination.

The Council will actively support a range of temporary uses for the pier that support the viability of the pier as a year round attraction.

Development proposals will need to be of a high design quality in keeping with the historic character and appearance of Hastings Pier and the Conservation Area and other features of heritage importance.

Development proposals for this site will be required to be in accordance with an agreed Masterplan and management plan.

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**  
 FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre  
 EN1: Built and Historic Environment  
 E4: Tourism and Visitors

**Relationship to Development Management Plan**  
 DM1: Design Principles  
 CQ1: Cultural Quarters

**Opportunity site WR2: White Rock Theatre**

- 7.24 A key objective will be to secure the future of the theatre as a sustainable multi-functional arts centre through refurbishment, extension or replacement of the existing building unless a replacement cultural venue is provided elsewhere in the AAP area. The theatre should be a place of cultural production and performance with flexible spaces, hospitality and conference facilities. The existing building can be retained and extended to offer the mix of uses that will ensure its future. Through repurposing and extensions spaces can be created which will enable wider usage and thus generation of greater revenue for the operator. It can be both event space and used on a daily basis by visiting companies and local residents. Alternatively a company

could be recruited to be resident offering a layered programme of production and performance and education. The large roof can accommodate a public terrace and lifts and escalators which will connect the two levels of street and White Rock Gardens with viewing areas and roof top café.

- 7.25 In the event that facilities are re-provided in a new cultural venue elsewhere in the AAP area, suitable alternative uses of the site will be considered which will enhance the seafront and the Cultural Quarter such as a new hotel/conference centre and facilitate the development of a new purpose built venue elsewhere in the AAP area.
- 7.26 There is the potential to enable the closure of Schwerte Way and White Rock Road to allow for the creation of a new civic space between White Rock and the seafront and for the extension of the theatre to provide new facilities and public access. Public realm works to include improved pedestrian crossing, lighting and tree planting with a new direct entrance into the park.

#### **Policy WR2 – White Rock Theatre**

The Council will resist the loss of cultural facilities and will work with partners to improve the facilities currently provided by the White Rock Theatre through a programme of refurbishment or redevelopment.

Development of the White Rock Theatre will be supported subject to the provision of improved performance and production space within the building. Proposals for this site will be required to be of a high quality design which will enhance the appearance of the White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter and the Conservation Area and be in accordance with an agreed masterplan.

Development of the White Rock Theatre for cultural use will be required to incorporate:

- a. a range of performance and production spaces;
- b. a new civic space;
- c. high quality public realm;
- d. improved pedestrian crossings and links to the seafront and White Rock Gardens.

Subject to the relocation of the facilities provided in the theatre to a new cultural centre on an alternative site in the town centre or Bohemia, a suitable mixed use redevelopment such as a hotel/conference centre will be permitted. A high quality design will be required in accordance with the objectives for the White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter and to enhance the range of cultural and tourism facilities on the seafront.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre  
EN1: Built and Historic Environment  
E4: Tourism and Visitors

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles  
SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area  
CQ1: Cultural Quarters

## Opportunity site WR3: The Observer Building

- 7.27 The Observer Building is allocated under DMP Policy HTC3 for mixed use development. The Council would encourage the mix of uses to retail, workspace for the creative industries, educational or leisure facilities as well as residential units. The site will be expected to support a varied housing mix and to include affordable housing. Reuse of the Observer Building and the refurbished library will strengthen this location as a cultural hub. Policy WR3 develops Policy HTC3 to promote a mixed use development which will facilitate the restoration of the building frontage and reuse of the building and enhance the Cultural Quarter.

### Policy WR3: The Observer Building

The Council will work with partners to secure the restoration of the building frontage and appropriate reuse of the Observer Building and to secure a mixed use development which will enhance the mix of uses and cultural offer of the White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter. The site is allocated for mixed use development including residential, commercial business including workspace for creative industries, cultural and/or educational uses.

Development proposals for this site will be required to:

- a. sustain and enhance the significance and setting of the Town Centre Conservation Area and adjacent listed buildings;
- b. create active uses on the ground floor;
- c. restoration of the building frontage.

#### Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre  
EN1: Built and Historic Environment

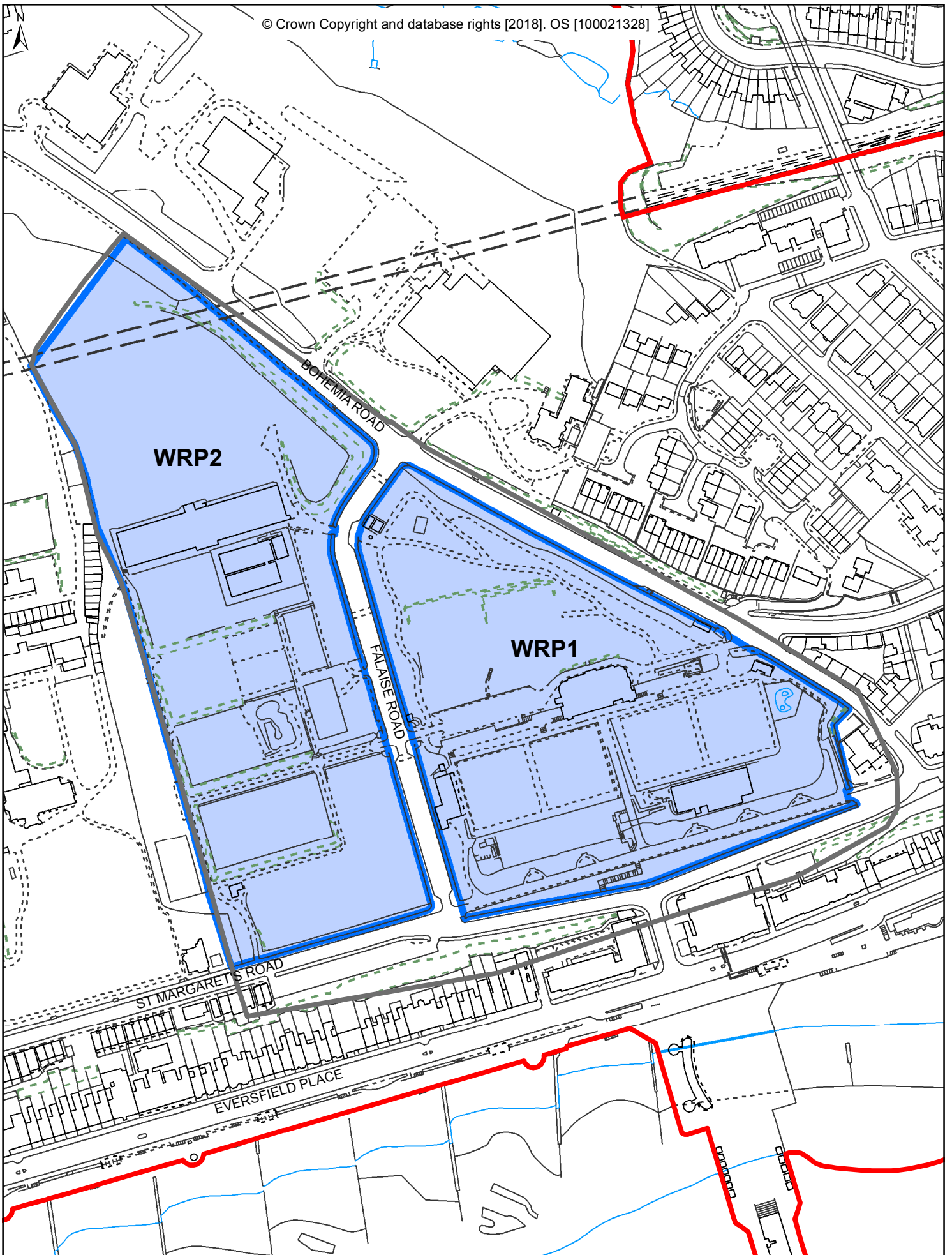
#### Relationship to Development Management Plan

DM1: Design Principles  
SA1: Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area  
CQ1: Cultural Quarters  
HTC3: The Observer Building  
HN1: Development Affecting the Significance & Setting of Designated Heritage Assets (including conservation Areas)  
HN3: Demolition involving Heritage Assets  
HN5: Non-designated Heritage Assets




## Opportunity Area 6 (OA6) - White Rock Park

- 7.28 White Rock Gardens will be restored to provide a place where visitors and locals will enjoy the sea views and the parkland setting. The gardens will form part of an integrated network of green spaces.
- 7.29 The consolidation of indoor and outdoor leisure uses is proposed to the west of Falaise Road to form a new Sports Park – a centre of sporting excellence in a parkland setting. The Sports Park will be active on all days. The site provides the potential for a new indoor sports centre to replace the existing Summerfields Leisure Centre.





**Figure 11**  
**Opportunity Area OA6**  
**White Rock Sports Park**  
**and Cultural Campus**

-  Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary
-  Opportunity Area
-  Opportunity Sites



## **Policy OA6 – White Rock Park**

The Council recognises the importance of open space, sports, leisure and cultural activities within Hastings to the local economy and the wellbeing and enjoyment of visitors and the community at large.

The area to the east of Falaise Road will be retained as formal open parkland and gardens. The area to the west of Falaise Road will be promoted as a sports park and cultural campus well connected by a network of pedestrian and cycle routes with the wider Bohemia area and the town centre.

Within this area:

- a. the consolidation of sports and leisure facilities will be promoted;
- b. the design and location of new development will minimise impacts on heritage assets and green space;
- c. development will be set within a landscaped setting with a network of green spaces;
- d. proposals will be viewed in terms of their contribution to the mix and diversity of uses and to their potential to enhance their attraction to residents and visitors;
- e. an appropriate level of parking will be provided to support the sports and leisure facilities.

Residential development will be permitted where this will not impact on the setting of the designated heritage assets and where this will facilitate the delivery of sports, leisure and cultural facilities and the restoration and enhancement of heritage assets and the parkland setting.

The Council will seek to work with developers to implement a district heating network, supported by Combined Heat and Power within the White Rock Park Opportunity Area.

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

SC5: District Heating and Combined Heat and Power Systems

EN1: Built and Historic Environment

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network

EN7: Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape

EN8: Open Spaces – Enhancement, Provision and Protection

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

HN1: Development Affecting the Significance and Setting of Designated Heritage Assets (including Conservation Areas)

HN9: Areas of Landscape Value

## **Opportunity sites within White Rock Park (OA6)**

7.30 Two opportunity sites are identified in OA6 which are shown in figure 11:

- WRP1: White Rock Gardens
- WRP2: White Rock Sports Park

## Development site WRP1: White Rock Gardens

- 7.31 This historic asset is proposed as part of a network of parks with the best views in Hastings offering a contemporary take on the pleasure gardens. The objective will be to create an attractive park with a range of new attractions within the historic context of the Gardens, building on the history of White Rock as a series of public/semi-public landscapes: (pleasure) gardens, parkland and activity areas.
- 7.32 A Landscape Masterplan will be required building on what is already successful and at the same time exploring a range of new initiatives designed to realise the tremendous potential of the park. The park will form the focus of a network of green spaces. Proposals can include:
- terracing to make the most of the sea views.
  - winter gardens/greenhouses.
  - an arboretum
  - performance spaces
  - special garden areas e.g. sensory gardens
  - a programme of events
  - picnic lawns
- 7.33 The existing indoor play facilities are in need of enhancement and integration with the park. Educational links can be investigated to provide a pedagogical and challenging range of facilities for Hastings.
- 7.34 The potential should be explored to identify a site for a new hotel within the south east corner of the park, fronting White Rock Road.

### Policy WRP1 – White Rock Gardens

White Rock Gardens is a locally designated Historic Garden. The Council will seek to improve pedestrian access to the Garden and seating areas, promote public art and enhance existing landscaping.

The use of Falaise Hall as a restaurant, café, gallery and an events/performance space will be supported subject to the relocation of existing indoor leisure facilities. Appropriate meanwhile uses will also be supported.

The potential for a hotel on the eastern side of the gardens will be explored provided that development is in accordance with other policies and does not result in the loss of any green space or impact on views or the character of the Conservation Area.

Development proposals for this site will be required to be in accordance with an agreed Landscape Masterplan.

#### Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy

SC5: District Heating and Combined Heat and Power Systems

EN1: Built and Historic Environment

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network

EN7: Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape

EN8: Open Spaces – Enhancement, Provision and Protection

CI2: Sports and Leisure Facilities

#### Relationship to Development Management Plan

DM1: Design Principles

HN1: Development Affecting the Significance and Setting of Designated Heritage Assets

### Development site WRP2: White Rock Sports Park

- 7.35 The sports park could comprise a series of interconnected spaces with provision for different sports - bowls, multi-use games area, upgraded skateboard/BMX facilities, and miniature golf. The vision is for an inter-generational sports area which will be attractive to residents and visitors and create a vibrant focus for a wide range of existing and new urban sports. The established skateboard facility will be developed to complement The Source. Key event spaces within the park will have covered areas and services built in to provide water and power for specific events during the year. Spaces should have a mix of uses, promoting social interaction as well as sporting excellence. Cultural uses and new residential development alongside the sports uses may be acceptable as part of a comprehensive mixed use development scheme.
- 7.36 The new sports centre should be designed as a landmark development of high design quality which will be incorporated in the park providing multi-functional spaces for a variety of sports and community uses including extended swimming facilities, sports courts, indoor bowls, bookable rooms, outdoor terraces and café/restaurant served by decked parking. The location of the centre means it is accessible by foot and cycle through a network of routes within the park and is well connected to the wider area. The parkland can wrap up onto the roof of the pool, integrating the building into the landscape and making use of topography.
- 7.37 The mix of uses in the new sports centre will be subject to the preparation of a development brief but could include:
- 25m pool
  - Learner pool
  - Leisure Pool
  - Soft play
  - Multi-use Sports Hall
  - Health and fitness facilities
  - Squash Courts
  - Café
- 7.38 The provision of leisure pool facilities would create an attractive sub-regional destination for visitors and enhance the tourism offer of the town.
- 7.39 The woodland on the site of the old Bohemia Farm will be retained as part of the network of green spaces.
- 7.40 An area of high quality apartments is proposed on the site of The Oval to be developed in conjunction with the sports centre building on the concept of healthy living and providing residents with access to a wealth of leisure facilities and green spaces. Access to public transport and the centres of Hastings and St Leonards will help to reduce car dependence and ties in with the Healthy Hastings initiative. The site could have the potential for up to 50 homes at a density of 80 dwellings per hectare (dph).

## **Policy WRP2 – White Rock Sports Park**

The Council will support the consolidation of indoor and outdoor sports facilities on the site including a new leisure centre to replace the existing leisure centre (site B1(a))<sup>19</sup> New buildings will be located on the higher part of the site and The Oval to minimise impacts on heritage assets and the character and landscape of White Rock Gardens.

A pedestrian and cycle route will be provided through the site to link Opportunity Area (OA8) Former Convent site, Magdalen Road to Falaise Road and Hastings Town Centre. Cultural uses including outdoor cultural space and residential development (indicative capacity 50 units) may be permitted as part of a comprehensive development to add vitality to the area and to promote healthy lifestyles.

The feasibility of district heating and/or Combined Heat and Power systems will be fully investigated as part of the development of this site.

Development proposals for this site will be required to be in accordance with an agreed Masterplan.

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre

SC5: District Heating and Combined Heat and Power Systems

EN1: Built and Historic Environment

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network

EN7: Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape

EN8: Open Spaces – Enhancement, Provision and Protection

CI2: Sports and Leisure Facilities

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

HN1: Development Affecting the Significance and Setting of Designated Heritage Assets (including Conservation Areas)

HN9: Areas of Landscape Value

## **Opportunity Area 7 (OA7) – Bohemia**

- 7.41 Bohemia presents the opportunity for the creation of a dense but green, mixed use area – an aspirational place to live, work and visit with good connections to the wider town and direct access to parks and woodland. Relocation of existing uses is critical to unlocking the development potential of this area and creating a vibrant urban neighbourhood.
- 7.42 A Heritage Quarter is proposed celebrating and animating the history of Hastings, White Rock and Bohemia incorporating Hastings Museum and Summerfields Wood. The Heritage Quarter provides the opportunity for new initiatives such as workshops and studios and new visitor facilities to broaden the appeal of the existing Museum.
- 7.43 The defining design principle for Bohemia is the need to ensure that development comes forward as part of a coordinated plan ensuring integration of development areas, creation of connections and a consistent approach to design of strategic infrastructure. The objective should be to create frontages to Bohemia Road which will transform it from a road to a street. New crossing points should be incorporated and

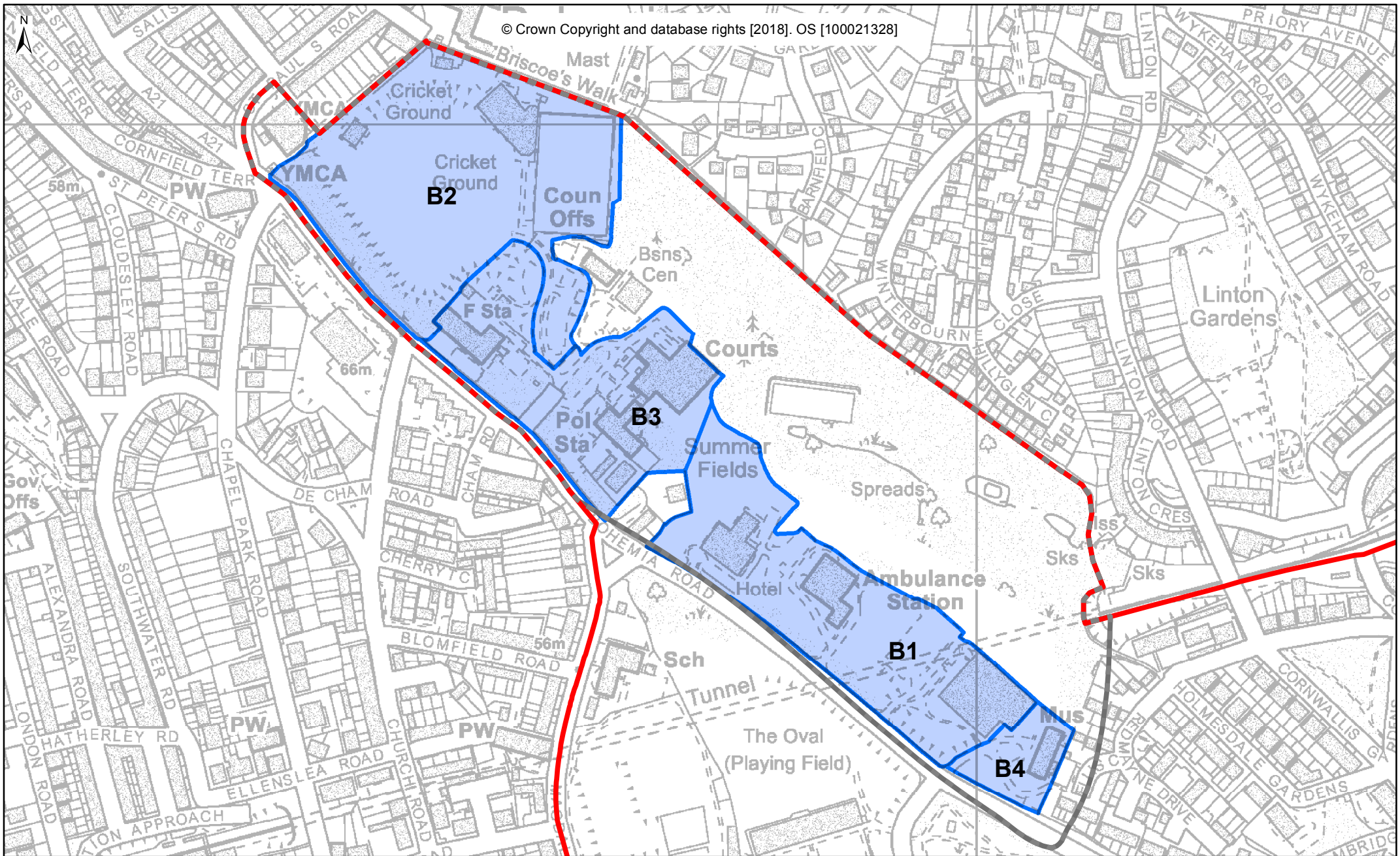
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<sup>19</sup> See paragraph 7.46




generous pavements provided. Inward looking development should be avoided and particular emphasis placed on connectivity and edge treatments – the basic principles for building an urban neighbourhood.

- 7.44 In accordance with Policy AAP3 it will be important to optimise the capacity of suitable sites given the need for new housing in Hastings. This will be achieved through optimising the density of new development taking into account site context, character of the area and the capacity of surrounding infrastructure. The density figures provided in Policies B1 and B2 are therefore indicative only. High standards of design will be required to enhance the character of the local area.

Cabinet draft



**Figure 12**  
**Opportunity Area OA7**  
**Bohemia**

-  Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary
-  Opportunity Area
-  Opportunity Sites

## **Policy OA7 – Bohemia**

The Council recognises the unique heritage of Bohemia and the opportunity to promote better use of the area to the north of Bohemia Road. The area to the north of Bohemia Road will be promoted as a new sustainable residential neighbourhood - a place to live, work and play, well connected by a network of pedestrian and cycle routes with the wider White Rock area and the town centre.

Within this area:

- a. the relocation of existing leisure and consolidation of civic facilities will be promoted;
- b. the design and location of new development will minimise impacts on heritage assets;
- c. an appropriate buffer zone will be retained free of development around the edge of Summerfields Wood to protect the woodland setting and ecology forming part of the green infrastructure network;
- d. development will be set within a landscaped setting with a network of green spaces;
- e. proposals will be viewed in terms of their contribution to the mix and diversity of uses and to their potential to enhance their attraction to residents and visitors;
- f. development of existing museum site, including potential new facilities.

The following development will be permitted:

- a. residential including a mix of unit sizes and tenures and affordable housing in accordance with Council policies;
- b. small scale workspace including co-working space and community space within the new residential neighbourhoods;
- c. new civic uses within the Civic Quarter;
- d. enhancement of existing leisure facilities.

Residential development will be permitted where this will not impact on Summerfields Wood and the setting of the listed heritage assets and will facilitate the restoration and enhancement of the parkland setting.

The implementation of a district heating network, supported by Combined Heat and Power will be promoted unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that such a network is not feasible.

A comprehensive Masterplan will be required to provide a framework for development.

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network

EN3: Nature Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity

EN5: Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

EN7: Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape

EN8: Open Spaces – Enhancement, Provision and Protection

E4: Tourism and Visitors

H1: Housing Density

H2: Housing Mix

H3: Provision of Affordable Housing

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

HN7: Green Infrastructure in New Developments

### **Opportunity sites within Bohemia (OA7)**

7.45 Four opportunity sites are identified in OA7 which are shown in figure 12.

- B1: Summerfields
- B2: Horntye Park
- B3: Civic Quarter
- B4: Hastings Museum

#### **Opportunity site B1: Summerfields**

7.46 The Summerfields area comprises three sites:

- B1(a) - Summerfields Leisure Centre
- B1(b) - existing SECAMB operational site
- B1(c) - Travelodge and adjacent land

7.47 The availability of site B1(a) is subject to the relocation of the existing leisure centre and development will not be permitted until the appropriate re-provision of leisure facilities has been secured. Development will be required to provide an active frontage and pedestrian linkages to Bohemia Road, public realm improvements and improved linkages. Development will be required to protect Summerfields Wood.

7.48 A phased development is proposed subject to the relocation of existing uses and land release. The vision is for the creation of an attractive new neighbourhood based around a network of streets and public spaces with a mix of housing types and a range of community facilities which is well integrated with the wider area through the provision of new pedestrian and cycle routes.



## **Policy B1 - Summerfields**

The area is proposed for the development of a mixed residential neighbourhood with a range of housing types and tenure, network of green spaces and play areas together with the retention of mature trees on the site, local workspace and community facilities (indicative capacity of up to 250 homes at a density of around 60 dph. Development will be required to create a frontage onto Bohemia Road and to provide a suitable buffer to Summerfields Wood to protect the woodland edge and ecology.

The allocation comprises three elements and development will be phased according to site availability and the relocation of existing uses. It will be necessary to demonstrate that development of will not prejudice the development of the remaining phases.

The allocation comprises:

- B1(a) - Summerfields Leisure Centre
- B1(b) - existing SECAMB operational site
- B1(c) - Travelodge and adjacent land

The development of site B1(a) will be subject to the relocation of the existing leisure centre to a suitable alternative site. The development of site B1(b) will be dependent on the relocation of the existing civic functions to a suitable alternative site.

A district heating and/or Combined Heat and Power system will be encouraged to support development subject to a feasibility study;

A self-build and custom build development will be supported.

Development will be required to be in accordance with an agreed Masterplan and development of any part of the site will be required to demonstrate that it would not prejudice the development of the wider site area. A high quality of design will be required in accordance with Policy AAP6.

### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network

EN3: Nature Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity

EN5: Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

EN7: Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape

EN8: Open Spaces – Enhancement, Provision and Protection

E4: Tourism and Visitors

H1: Housing Density

H2: Housing Mix

H3: Provision of Affordable Housing

### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

HN7: Green Infrastructure in New Developments

HN10: Amenity Green Spaces

## Development site B2: Hornty Park

- 7.49 Subject to the relocation of the existing sports facilities from Hornty, the site could be released for residential development. In the event of redevelopment, the site should retain a central green space and provide community facilities to serve the wider community (with the possible relocation of facilities from YMCA to existing pavilion and redevelopment of the existing YMCA site to provide improved access to development area).
- 7.50 High quality housing and community facilities should define the local park and create new links through the area with a robust network of streets and green spaces. A community park should be retained on the northern edge of Summerfields Wood with close links to St Pauls School and the local neighbourhood.
- 7.51 The site has the potential for up to 230 homes at an indicative density of 50 dph if the existing sports and leisure uses were to be relocated to a suitable alternative site. The number of units will be dependent on the area of land released for development through the relocation of existing sports and leisure uses.

### Policy B2 – Hornty Park

Residential development will be supported on part of the site where this would not impact on existing open space and sports provision. In the event of the relocation of existing sports facilities to an alternative location, comprehensive development of the site will be acceptable subject to an approved Masterplan (indicative capacity of up to 250 homes at a density of 50 dph).

Development proposals for this site will be required to:

- a. provide a mix of housing types and tenures including affordable housing in accordance with the Council's policies;
- b. sustain and enhance the significance and setting of the Grade II listed ice house including its insulating earth mound, and include the provision for appropriate public access;
- c. minimise impacts on Summerfields Wood and include an Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP), and incorporate appropriate conservation and mitigation measures as recommended by the ECOP;
- d. include a network of green spaces which link with the wider urban green space network;
- e. provide a financial contribution to the management of the Local Nature Reserve and opportunities for natural play within it;
- f. include a Flood Risk Assessment and flood resilient design as appropriate to the outcome of that report;
- g. investigate the impact to, and potential loss of, sporting facilities at Hornty and include appropriate mitigation and compensation as outlined by these investigations;
- h. be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. Proposals must indicate how the conclusions and recommendations of the Assessment have been incorporated within the development;
- i. incorporate pedestrian and cycle routes which link with routes in the wider area;
- j. investigate the feasibility for district heating and/or Combined Heat and Power systems on site;

Development proposals for this site will be required to be in accordance with an agreed Masterplan.

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network  
EN3: Nature Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity  
EN5: Local Nature Reserves (LNR)  
EN7: Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape  
EN8: Open Spaces – Enhancement, Provision and Protection  
H1: Housing Density  
H2: Housing Mix  
H3: Provision of Affordable Housing

**Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles  
HN7: Green Infrastructure in New Developments  
HN10: Amenity Green Spaces  
SAP1: Horntye Park

**Development site B3: Civic Quarter**

- 7.52 The Civic quarter provides potential for the consolidation of the ESFRS and SECAMB facilities on an extended ESFRS site in the longer term to free up the SECAMB Make Ready site for a later phase of development (Site B1(b)).
- 7.53 The setting of mature trees must be retained in any redevelopment of the site with improved public links to the woods.

**Policy B3 – Civic Quarter**

Civic uses will be consolidated within the civic centre including the possible relocation of existing uses from site B1(b) subject to operational requirements.

A high standard of design and landscaping and suitable access and parking arrangements will be required.

The feasibility for district heating and/or Combined Heat and Power systems on site will be investigated in any proposals for the consolidation of civic uses.

**Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

SC5: District Heating and Combined Heat and Power Systems  
EN2: Green Infrastructure Network  
E1: Existing Employment Land and Premises

**Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles  
HN7: Green Infrastructure in New Developments

## Development site B4: Hastings Museum

- 7.54 The museum is a distinctive building but needs to be more prominent and better linked to the town centre and attractions in the wider area in order to increase its visibility to visitors and enhance its cultural role. The potential to link the museum with Summerfields Wood provides a unique opportunity to celebrate local cultural heritage and to bring the historic and contemporary together.
- 7.55 Opportunities to enhance the museum will be explored. This could include, for example, extension to the existing building, outdoor display areas, café and workshops to celebrate the local culture of Hastings and a heritage trail linking the museum to Summerfields Wood and the Bohemia Walled Garden with improved signage and interpretation facilities. Other associated uses could also be considered such as arts storage and presentation facilities linked to national cultural institutions which would offer local employment opportunities and conservation training.
- 7.56 Existing initiatives such as the restoration and use of the Bohemia Walled Garden provide the basis for future enhancements to Summerfields Wood including improved access, signage and management. This will enhance this unique asset as a destination for residents and visitors to the town.

### Policy B4 – Hastings Museum

The expansion of Hastings Museum to create additional exhibition and visitor facilities will be supported. Other associated cultural uses will also be considered.

Improved pedestrian links will be provided to Summerfields Wood. Measures will be supported to improve signage and landscaping to improve the setting and prominence of the museum and to enhance the public enjoyment of the wood including new interpretation facilities and the restoration and management of the walled garden and other assets of heritage value.

Development proposals for this site will be required to be in accordance with an agreed Masterplan.

#### Relationship to Planning Strategy

EN1: Built and Historic Environment

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network

EN3: Nature Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity

EN5: Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

EN7: Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape

EN8: Open Spaces – Enhancement, Provision and Protection

E4: Tourism and Visitors

#### Relationship to Development Management Plan

DM1: Design Principles

HN1: Development Affecting the Significance and Setting of Designated Heritage Assets (including Conservation Areas)

HN7: Green Infrastructure in New Developments

**Opportunity Area 8 (OA8) – Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road**

- 7.57 The extent of Opportunity Area 8 is shown in figure 13.
- 7.58 Development Management Plan Policy HN6 recognises the importance of the listed convent buildings and the potential for an appropriate form of enabling development to facilitate their restoration and reuse. The AAP seeks to build on this policy to ensure that in the event of enabling development taking place it does so in accordance with the vision and objectives for the White Rock area.
- 7.59 Restoration and reuse of the listed Convent buildings will be supported provided this can be achieved in accordance with the Council’s built heritage planning policies. New uses include arts and educational uses including music studios, performance space, workspace and live-work space. The expansive grounds could become part of the network of White Rock Parks and could host events throughout the year.
- 7.60 The former playing fields to the north of the listed buildings offer the potential for a new residential neighbourhood. This can serve to facilitate restoration of the Convent buildings as a form of enabling development. In the event of a new residential neighbourhood being developed to the north of the convent buildings as part of an enabling scheme, there would be an expectation that this neighbourhood will be connected by a new pedestrian and cycle route with the wider White Rock area and town centre.
- 7.61 This could include direct pedestrian and cycle routes though the site from St Leonards to Hastings Town Centre which continue through the park.

<p><b>Policy OA8 – Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road</b></p> <p>A comprehensive approach is required to the reuse and development of the former Convent buildings and proposals will be required to be in accordance with an agreed Masterplan.</p> <p>With regard to the conversion and re-use of the exiting listed buildings a number of uses may be acceptable including the provision of a centre for arts, education, culture, music and creative industries. So too, in principle is a mixed residential development on the former playing fields subject to meeting the requirements of Policy HN6. The development must be of a high design quality required to incorporate a network of green spaces and pedestrian and cycle links to the adjoining White Rock Park and Gardens and the town centre.</p> <p>Planning permission will be granted for development which would secure the long term viable use and future of the existing listed buildings. Development will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. secure the management in perpetuity of the whole site and as a place of special historic and architectural significance;</li><li>b. secure the ongoing management of the whole of the site, including the respectful protection of the Nuns’ cemetery and</li><li>c. minimise the harm to heritage assets;</li><li>d. provide an appropriate amount of affordable housing when balanced against any potential harm to the listed buildings;</li><li>e. investigate the feasibility of district heating and/or Combined Heat and Power systems on site;</li></ul> <p>The Local Planning Authority will liaise closely with Historic England on any scheme</p>
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submitted including the sharing with them of any viability assessments or financial assessments submitted to support any development proposals.

In addition, planning permission will not be granted for enabling development unless:

- a. the impact of the development is precisely defined at the outset, through the granting of full, rather than outline, planning permission;
- b. the achievement of the heritage objective is secured through the use of a Section 106 agreement or by other enforceable means;
- c. the heritage assets concerned are repaired to an agreed standard, or the funds to do so made available, as early as possible in the course of the enabling development, and in any event, before completion or occupation of any new build.

#### **Relationship to Hastings Planning Strategy**

EN1: Built & Historic Environment

EN2: Green Infrastructure Network

EN3: Nature Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity

EN5: Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

EN7: Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape

EN8: Open Spaces – Enhancement, Provision and Protection

E4: Tourism and Visitors

H1: Housing Density

H2: Housing Mix

H3: Provision of Affordable Housing

#### **Relationship to Development Management Plan**

DM1: Design Principles

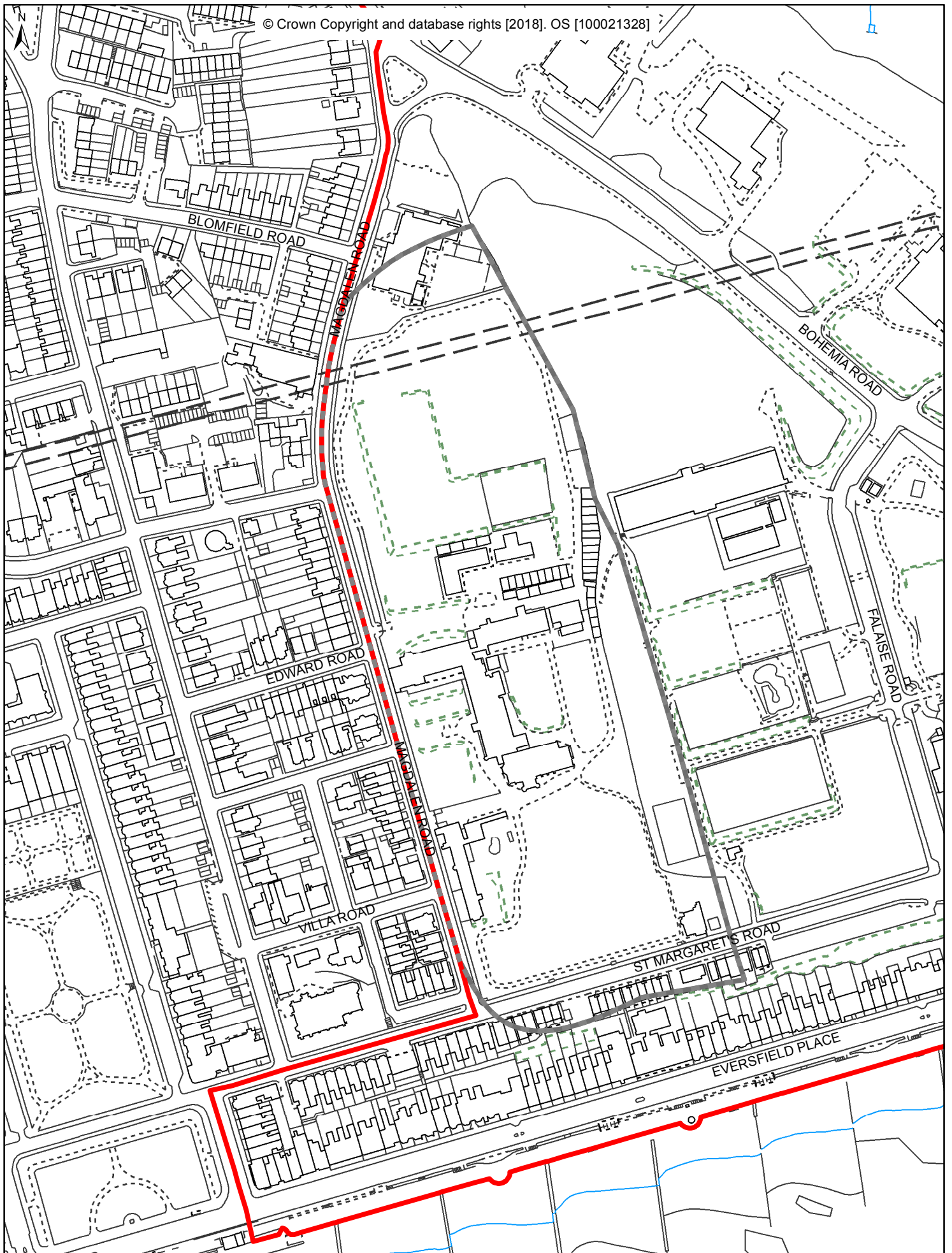
HN1: Development Affecting the Significance and Setting of Designated Heritage Assets (including Conservation Areas)

HN3: Demolition involving Heritage Assets



HN6: Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road

HN7: Green Infrastructure in New Developments

HN10: Amenity Green Spaces



**Figure 13**  
**Opportunity Area OA8**  
**Former Convent of Holy Child**  
**Jesus, Magdalen Road**

-  Area Action Plan (AAP) Boundary
-  Opportunity Area

## Section Eight

### Implementation

- 8.1 The AAP provides the framework for the coordination of future investment in the town centre and Bohemia. It provides a strong development framework capable of responding to changing conditions whilst maintaining a clear vision for the area.
- 8.2 Achieving the overall vision will be dependent on an integrated approach to the sites identified for change and development, enhancement of the Opportunity Areas and transport and environmental improvements. The AAP will be subject to annual review and monitoring against the objectives and timescales set out in this document. Above all it will be about changing perceptions and creating an environment of confidence for stakeholders and investors.
- 8.3 New development will be required to contribute to the vision and objectives set out in the AAP by increasing the quality and diversity of the experience and attractions for residents and visitors to enjoy. The objective will be to create value through the promotion of high quality development, open spaces and public realm.
- 8.4 A process of active management over the long term is needed in order to manage the change process. This will ensure that future development and investment is well managed and that they combine in such a way that the investments share success and combine to further extend the profile of Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia. The process of change and investment will take a concerted effort and partnership working over the long term. The vision will inform a series of proposals which can take place independently, but within an overall coordinated framework.

### Delivery strategy

- 8.5 The timescale for delivery of the proposals set out in the AAP will be influenced by a number of factors including the ownership and availability of sites, financial viability and funding. The AAP will be subject to regular monitoring and review. At all times, however, priority must be placed on creating value and it will be necessary to ensure that this is not compromised in the interests of early delivery. This also serves to highlight the importance which must be placed on quality, not just quantity, in bringing forward development opportunities. A number of interventions will be required to deliver the objectives set out in the AAP:
- **Leadership** - the role of the Council will be critical as landowner, decision maker, planning authority and facilitator of change.
  - **Effective partnership working** - the importance of partnership working to deliver economic growth and regeneration benefits has never been greater. The proposals for Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia promote a close working relationship between the public and private sectors.
  - **Encouragement of local enterprises and investment** - the engagement of local enterprises particularly in the cultural and creative industries sector and support for the Business Improvement District (Hastings BID)
  - **Attraction of local, inward and foreign investment** - the need to attract investment to drive forward growth of the local economy, business development and new employment opportunities.
  - **Engagement of the community** - this process has started and will be maintained through engagement in the development of proposals.
  - **Maximising funding opportunities** - it will be necessary for partners to work together to access potential sources of funding.



- **Development of a marketing and branding strategy** - the creation of a strong brand will be essential in changing the image of the town and increasing its appeal.
- **Preparation and monitoring of a phased implementation plan** - proposals must be phased with a focus on early wins to start the process of transformation of the AAP area. Implementation of the AAP will be subject to monitoring and review to take account of changing conditions and new opportunities.
- **Management and maintenance** - a coordinated management and maintenance regime will be required to maintain the quality of the area and create a safe and attractive environment for residents and visitors.

#### 8.6 Key mechanisms include:

- use of the AAP as the basis for development control and strategy development to ensure that change is brought forward in a coordinated and cohesive manner;
- working with other public sector bodies to ensure the coordination of funding support to deliver key projects;
- bringing forward proposals for land and buildings within Council ownership;
- working with landowners and developers to bring forward proposals for the Opportunity Areas and identified opportunity sites to ensure that new development and public realm proposals are of the highest design quality;
- securing developer contributions towards improvements to the town centre and necessary infrastructure improvements, in particular transport and public realm improvements through the use of Section 106 legal agreements;
- where necessary and justified on planning grounds to use Compulsory Purchase powers to bring forward land in order to deliver the proposals set out in the AAP.

### **Role of Hastings Borough Council**

8.7 Hastings Borough Council has a pivotal role to play in the transformation of the town centre and Bohemia as facilitator, planning authority and land owner. The Council can bring valuable expertise and resources to work with partners to help deliver projects.

8.8 Land owned by the Council can be released for development to part fund leisure and cultural facilities and environmental improvements. In addition, the Borough Council can work with other landowners and organisations to bring forward proposals and to seek funding for the implementation of key opportunities.

8.9 There are a wide range of benefits which we consider can be captured from intervention in the town centre and Bohemia. Through a comprehensive approach the area can:

- help to generate greater numbers of visitors;
- generate more viable facilities and businesses which will be of higher quality;
- generate employment opportunities together with financial benefits including higher levels of business rates, New Homes Bonus and rental income from the letting of the space;
- create higher levels of visits which will generate greater patronage across the town and will in particular help to support the retail and leisure facilities along key pedestrian routes;
- have wider and softer benefits including greater levels of satisfaction in the area and improved health and wellbeing from having much improved facilities.

## **Pro-active planning**

- 8.10 The Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia AAP will provide the policy framework for bringing forward development opportunities and projects identified in the Masterplan. A pro-active approach will be adopted to facilitate the delivery of key projects and necessary infrastructure in accordance with the NPPF and Hastings Planning Strategy.

## **Partnership working**

- 8.11 To date initiatives have been promoted by local people making things happen. This needs to be harnessed and built on by encouraging other external 'facilitators' to participate in the projects – be these funders, investors or competition winning architects.
- 8.12 Successful implementation of the AAP and key projects will only be achieved through creative partnership working. This will be of particular importance in the current economic climate when it will be necessary to consider new and more creative ways of working. The proposals encompass a wide range of projects and implementation will be dependent on a strong partnership approach involving Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, The Foreshore Trust, wider regeneration and funding partners as well as landowners, the local community, businesses and investors.
- 8.13 The public sector will need to take an interventionist approach to enhance the profile and environment of Hastings as a place in which to invest. As both the planning authority and a key landowner, the Council will have a pivotal role in taking forward the proposals.

## **Maximising funding opportunities**

- 8.14 The AAP provides a statement of intent for lobbying for public sector funding and private investment. It will give confidence to investors that there is a commitment to change.
- 8.15 Implementation of the AAP will require significant public and private sector funding. The cost of new facilities such as the White Rock Sports Centre and Park and the development of a cultural performance venue fit for the future will be significant. Development of the new sports centre and improved cultural performance venue will require a mix of funding including prudential borrowing and the sale of existing sites. This must, however, be balanced against the costs of refurbishment and extension of the existing leisure centre which has a limited life and the operational and maintenance cost savings which would be possible with a new centre designed to a high specification. A new centre would also attract higher levels of usage (including visitors) and would provide stronger and sustainable revenue streams. The integration and concentration of complementary uses centred around public facilities will serve to reduce the 'whole life cost in use' revenue costs. Transport improvements will be critical to ensuring sustainable economic regeneration of the town centre and Bohemia and this will require close cooperation between the Council, central government, East Sussex County Council and transport operators to secure funding for improvements to roads and bus and rail connections to the town.
- 8.16 The Council will work with developers and other public agencies to facilitate development in accordance with the AAP and to secure funding for transport and environmental improvements and appropriate social infrastructure provision. A key element of delivery is the developer contributions, which individual development will be required to make to fund town centre improvements. The Council will apply planning obligations/planning conditions to ensure the objectives of the AAP are realised.

- 8.17 Private sector funding will also be required to effect improvements to existing business and retail premises in the town centre such as improvements to vacant floor space and shop units or shop front improvements.
- 8.18 The Council will make funding available over the plan period from its capital programme to deliver improvements to the town centre in collaboration with its partners. Public sector funding will be sought through competitive bidding and submission of business cases for both transport and environmental improvements. Subject to the success of these, this will enable a phased programme of work during the plan period.
- 8.19 Initially public sector investment is needed in order to commence the process of change and improvement. The town centre and Bohemia can play a significant role providing facilities which will attract local, sub-regional and tourist visits. Provision of quality facilities will thus generate activity which will provide local employment and training opportunities as well as bring new spend into the local economy. The economic impact could be significant and increase the sustainability of facilities. Key funding opportunities which can be considered include the following:
- Prudential borrowing – the Council could consider this borrowing facility to invest in income generating facilities such as the Leisure Centre. Future revenue would then repay the loan.
  - Lottery funding – there are a range of lottery funding opportunities and these do evolve from time to time. Opportunities such as Power to Change, Parks for People, Heritage Enterprise and Reaching Communities. It must be noted that such funds are normally directed towards community organisations which will be recipients of the funding. Working with local communities to develop such proposals could form a key early project to generate investment in the Park and link with the pier.
  - Coastal Communities Fund – the Coastal Communities Fund is aimed directly at towns like Hastings and it is likely that future rounds will be available.
  - One Public Estate - public sector organisations are seeking to work in collaboration to meet their property needs and create efficiencies. Given the number of public sector buildings across the area, there may be opportunities for consolidation and rationalisation which could both reduce costs but at the same time generate revenue from development of surplus sites.
  - Local Growth Fund – administered by the Local Enterprise Partnership, funding is generally focussed towards employment, training initiatives and transport infrastructure, however certain elements of future development and investment may form part of a funding bid and therefore would be an appropriate source to target.
  - The Council will also work in partnership with East Sussex County Council to explore other opportunities through new funding sources being promoted by the Department of Transport and the Department for Communities and Local Government throughout the plan period.
- 8.20 Funding applications will need to be tailored to specific projects. Given the emphasis of many funds on community groups and social enterprise there is a need to work with active groups that can take projects forward in partnership and therefore help to facilitate future development.
- 8.21 The potential for private sector funding for development/investment will be assisted by having a coordinated and comprehensive strategy in place which will help to de-risk potential investment and heighten the prospects for future returns. Whilst public sector

funding may be constrained, Council owned assets such as land and buildings can be used as catalysts for change.

## **Promoting culture and local enterprise**

8.22 Culture will deliver value but needs to be protected for the long term. Key to the promotion of culture as a driver of regeneration will be:

- shifting perception and creating value
- partnership working
- developing the creative economy
- developing new business models

8.23 A mechanism is required which allows partners to be brought in at an early stage to influence design and type of amenity provision. In the short term, the priority should be to create a stronger focus and cluster of activities around the pier and White Rock Theatre. Culture can also drive the programme of temporary activities which will raise the programme of the wider site e.g. in the parkland. Cultural amenities around the edge of the area (museum, Convent and town centre) will have a cascade effect and the establishment of good connections will be important.

## **Community involvement**

8.24 Active engagement of the local community has started and will be critical in taking forward the proposals in the AAP. The delivery strategy recognises the role of the community in the transformation of the town, including the development of proposals for White Rock Gardens. The involvement and support of the community will be particularly important in taking forward proposals and the potential to secure funding.

8.25 The role of young people will also be critical in bringing life and animation to the area. It is proposed that the existing Youth Council and local schools and colleges should be fully involved in the development of proposals.

## **The role of architectural competitions**

8.26 The use of architectural competitions will ensure that the best architects are attracted to Hastings. It will also encourage innovative design and new approaches to development which will make Hastings stand apart from other places.

8.27 White Rock Gardens offers enormous potential but needs to be re thought. An architectural competition for the park would generate new ideas and interest in the potential for existing and new uses for the park. An urban park of this scale and position should be a destination with a national and international reputation.

8.28 A separate architectural competition should be held to design the Sports Park and Sports Centre and any cultural/live performance venues. An innovative approach to this facility could push new approaches to sports provision.

## **Phasing**

8.29 The proposals need to be coordinated such that risk is managed and that through the creation of place, confidence and value builds.

8.30 The key objective will be to achieve early and sustained transformation of the area. There will be an overlap between projects and the timescale for implementation may be brought forward in accordance with the Masterplan dependent on land availability and funding.

- 8.31 Change will not happen overnight and the area will develop over a long period. This is actually beneficial as it will become richer and more diverse over time and values and investment opportunities will increase. It will also allow more people to be actively involved.
- 8.32 New initiatives should be encouraged within the existing open spaces of Bohemia and these can be prototypes for the future development of the place.
- 8.33 Early work and intervention is needed to create the conditions where private sector interest and investment can be secured. This initial work would help to ensure that 'value is created' which will make projects more attractive and viable.
- 8.34 The long term vision should be pursued through specific projects, with a focus on key priorities and addressing barriers to regeneration such as environment and infrastructure. It will be important to demonstrate progress through a short, medium and long term strategy with an emphasis on promotion and programming in the short term.
- 8.35 Proposals will be phased over the plan period. An indicative phasing programme is set out in the Indicative Implementation Schedule (table 3), together with the key actions required to implement the proposals set out in the AAP. The Council expects development to be phased generally in accordance with the indicative phasing programme unless this would have benefits for delivery of the overall vision and provided that the AAP objectives would not be prejudiced. Projects are set out within three indicative phases:
- short (1-5 years)
  - medium (5-10 years)
  - long (10-15 years)
- 8.36 The Council will work with land owners and developers in bringing forward proposals. Phasing is based on a number of key considerations including site availability, funding, deliverability, land assembly and infrastructure requirements. Each phase will be characterised by specific programmes of activity and by detailed proposals being brought forward for key sites.
- 8.37 The phasing also reflects the importance of key sites which would mark a step change in the offer and perceptions of the centre and improve the climate for investment. The phasing plan will be kept under regular review as implementation progresses and will be updated on an annual basis.

## **Monitoring**

- 8.38 The completion of proposals and operation of the policies within the AAP will be subject to monitoring as part of the Councils statutory monitoring of all planning policy documents.

## **Planning application requirements**

- 8.39 The AAP provides the planning policy framework for development and change within Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia and will be applied in the determination of all planning applications. The Council will work with developers in preparing Masterplans and development proposals will require a high quality design which will assist in delivering the overall vision for the town centre. The following documents will be required in support of planning applications for development proposals on opportunity sites in the town centre and Bohemia:

- Masterplan showing how the site relates to the wider town centre;
- Design and access statement showing how a high quality of design will be achieved;
- Landscape and open space strategy;
- Phasing and delivery strategy;
- Transport assessment.

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**Table 3: Indicative Implementation Schedule**

Reference	Site name	Indicative timescales	Partners	Delivery Strategy	Infrastructure requirements	Funding opportunities
SG1	Priory Street car park and ESK	Medium - Long	Hastings Borough Council (HBC) Developers	Development of Masterplan Secure developer partner	Relocation/ replacement of multi-storey car park in site SG2	Release of development value Private sector S106 funding Coastal Communities Fund
SG2	Station Approach car park and Royal Mail Delivery Office	Medium	HBC Network Rail Landowners Developers	Development of Masterplan	Re-provision of multi-storey carpark  Investment in station/new services	Release of development value Private sector Transport funding S106 funding Cross-subsidisation from site SG1
SG3	Former Post Office, Cambridge Road	Short - Medium	HBC Landowners Developers	Early release of site		Private sector
SG4	Queensbury House, Havelock Road	Short	SeaChange HBC Developer	Market site	Public realm	Private sector Coastal Communities Fund

Reference	Site name	Indicative timescales	Partners	Delivery Strategy	Infrastructure requirements	Funding opportunities
WP1	Corner of Wellington Place and Albert Road	Medium	HBC Landowners Developers	Masterplan Links with sites WP3 and WP4 Optimise development potential through mixed use development	Public space Public realm	Release of development value Private sector S106 funding
WP2	Site of former Harold Place public conveniences	Short	HBC Developers	Market site Catalyst for regeneration of town centre	Public realm Landmark building	Private sector S106 funding
WP3	Cinema, Queens Road	Medium	HBC Landowners Developers	Enhanced cinema provision or relocation of cinema to alternative site	Public realm Enhancement of heritage asset	Private sector S106 funding
WP4	1-7 Wellington Place	Medium	HBC Landowners Developers	Masterplan Links with sites WP1 and WP3 Optimise development potential through mixed use development	Public realm Links to seafront	Private sector S106 funding
QR1	Morrisons, Queens Road	Long	HBC Landowners Developers	Masterplan Optimise development potential through mixed use development	Public realm Parking	Private sector S106 funding
QR2	Cornwallis Street car park	Short - Medium	HBC Developers	Market site	Public realm Parking Pocket park	Private sector S106 funding



Reference	Site name	Indicative timescales	Partners	Delivery Strategy	Infrastructure requirements	Funding opportunities
PM1	Land at Middle Street	Medium	HBC Developers Owners of Priory Meadow	Masterplan Extension to Priory Meadow	Public realm Parking	Private sector S106 funding
PM2	Station Yard, Station Approach	Short - Medium	HBC Developers	Market site	Public realm Cycle way	Private sector S106 funding
WR1	Hastings Pier	Short	Owners of Hastings Pier Venue operators	Continue the development of facilities and extended programme of activities	Public spaces	Private sector Coastal Communities Fund
WR2	White Rock Theatre	Short - Medium	HBC Arts Council England Cultural companies and venue operators	Extension of White Rock Theatre to include extended performance and hospitality areas incorporating new pedestrian lift access to White Rock Gardens	Public spaces	Hastings BC Private sector Arts Council England SELEP Coastal Communities Fund Fund raising
WR3	The Observer Building	Short - Medium	HBC Owners Hastings Creatives Ltd Cultural groups and organisations	Develop proposals viable mixed use scheme for refurbishment and reuse of building	Restoration of building	Release of development value Fund raising

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Site name</b>	<b>Indicative timescales</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Delivery Strategy</b>	<b>Infrastructure requirements</b>	<b>Funding opportunities</b>
WRP1	White Rock Gardens	Short - Medium	HBC Friends of White Rock Gardens Bowls Clubs	Early engagement of Friends of White Rock Gardens Programme of events and festivals Community events	Green space Cycle/pedestrian links	Release of development value Heritage Lottery- Parks for People
WRP2	White Rock Sports Park	Medium - Long	HBC Developer partner Sports clubs and providers Sport England	Feasibility Study Engagement with existing sports clubs and providers Review options for leisure provision Design Competition Seek developer partner for new Sports Park Rationalisation of outdoor sports uses Relocate existing GP surgery Preparation and implementation of proposals for Sports Park	Cycle/pedestrian links Parking Sports facilities	Prudential Borrowing Enabling development/sale of existing leisure centre site S106 Private sector Revenue from facilities

Reference	Site name	Indicative timescales	Partners	Delivery Strategy	Infrastructure requirements	Funding opportunities
OA8	Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Magdalen Road	Medium - Long	HBC Land owners Hastings Creatives Ltd Cultural groups and organisations Education providers	Hastings Borough Council to work with landowners and stakeholders to secure sustainable future for listed buildings Explore options for future use and enabling development. This may include Feasibility study and Business Plan for International School for arts and possible education use.	Restoration of listed buildings Green space Cycle/pedestrian links Contribution to social infrastructure	Heritage Lottery Enabling development S106 Fund raising Education providers
B1	Summerfields	Short - Long	HBC Leaseholders Developer partners	Redevelopment of site following relocation of leisure uses to new Sports Centre and Sports Park	Green space Cycle/pedestrian links Contribution to social infrastructure	Private sector S106
B2	Horntye Park	Medium	HBC Horntye Trust Developer partners YMCA	Confirm future of sports facilities and relocation proposals Preparation of proposals for redevelopment of existing site	Green space Cycle/pedestrian links Contribution to social infrastructure	Private sector S106
B3	Civic Quarter	Medium - Long	HBC Public sector bodies	Review opportunities for consolidation of civic uses		One Public Estate

Reference	Site name	Indicative timescales	Partners	Delivery Strategy	Infrastructure requirements	Funding opportunities
B4	Hastings Museum	Short - Medium	HBC Jerwood Gallery Cultural organisations Bohemia Walled Garden Society Friends of Summerfields Wood Local community	Feasibility Study and business plan and review of funding opportunities Approach key national cultural institutions to test Art Storage market Improved access to Summerfields Wood - New footpaths Interpretation facilities. Biodiversity enhancement.		Arts Council Cultural Organisations Heritage Lottery Fund raising Education providers

# Appendix 1

## Summary of Planning Policy

### Hastings Planning Strategy

The Hastings Planning Strategy (HPS) provides a long term plan to deliver regeneration and sustainable growth in the town up to 2028. The HPS outlines a number of Strategic Objectives that will help meet the overall vision for the Borough. Relevant aims within Objective 1 include 'providing for 20,500m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace in the town centre by 2028' and 'developing Hastings and St Leonards Town Centres as the focus for employment in the office, retail, leisure and cultural and service sectors, with Hastings Town Centre being the primary focus'. Objective 7 seeks to make best use of the Seafront and promote tourism within Hastings. A relevant aim within Objective 7 is to 'increase opportunities for vibrant art and craft studios, markets, chalets and retail' within the seafront area.

The relevant HPS policies are outlined below as follows:

- Policy DS3: Location of Retail Development states a need for 20,500m<sup>2</sup> new comparison goods floorspace up to 2028, with this need being primarily met within Hastings Town Centre. Furthermore, it is stated that 2,800m<sup>2</sup> of retail warehousing needs will be met on edge-of-centre and out-of-centre sites.
- Policy E3: Town, District and Local Centres sets out the hierarchy of town, district and local centres in Hastings. Development proposals for town centre uses are directed to town and district centres. The hierarchy of centres is as follows: Town Centre: Hastings (the principal centre in the town)
  - District Centre: The Old Town, St Leonards centre, Ore Village, Silverhill
  - Local Centre: Bohemia
- Policy E3 seeks to safeguard the retail character and function of the centre, enhance its appearance and quality, encourage a diverse range of uses within the centre including retail, leisure, social, education, arts, culture, office, residential and commercial.
- Policy E4: Tourism and Visitors seeks to promote and secure sustainable tourism development in Hastings Town Centre by encouraging a more diverse and high quality tourism offer in both attractions and accommodation.
- Policy FA3: Strategy for Hastings Town Centre states the following objectives:
  - provide for c.21,700m<sup>2</sup> (net) employment floorspace at Priory Quarter by 2028
  - provide for 20,500m<sup>2</sup> (gross/net) retail comparison goods floorspace up to 2028
  - achieve a more even mix of housing tenure
  - promote competitiveness in terms of the range and type of shops operating in the area
  - ensure the area is attractive to visitors and support the retention of visitor accommodation
  - promote accessibility by local public transport, walking and cycling, and for people with disabilities
  - develop the evening economy
  - promote and encourage improvements to the public realm as part of new development schemes and in day to day repairs and maintenance
  - promote leisure and cultural facilities including a new library, registration service and wedding venue, and support the development of cultural quarters between White Rock & the America Ground and Station Plaza through the Development Management Plan
  - protect and enhance architectural heritage, particularly in the conservation area
  - maintain the distinctiveness of the area in terms of architecture, townscape and function

- improve the existing housing stock and quality of life for residents
- encourage mixed use developments and explore the potential for 'living above the shop'
- seek to reduce the number of long term empty homes
- control the distribution and mix of Houses in Multiple Occupation within the area.

## Development Management Plan

The Development Management Plan (DMP) document follows on from the Hastings Planning Strategy. The DMP shows in more detail where the housing, offices, shops and other development will go; and provides specific policies to be used in the determination of planning applications.

The Development Management Plan identifies the following retail policies:

- Town Centre Boundary: Policy FA3;
- Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area: Meadows: Policy SA1;
- Drinking Establishments and Hot Food Take Aways: Policy SA4

**Policy SA1** states that within the Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area at ground floor level, as defined on the Policies Map, proposals for planning use classes A1-A4 and other uses appropriate to the character of the shopping area will be permitted provided both of the following criteria are satisfied:

- The proposal would not result in non-A1 uses exceeding 5% of the total floorspace of Priory Meadow and not more than 45% of the total number of ground floor units in the remaining shopping area, as defined on the Policies Map;
- The proposal would not result in such a concentration of non-class A1 uses as to lead to a significant interruption in the shopping frontage, thus harming the vitality and viability of the Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area as a whole.

**Policy SA4** states that planning permission for new drinking establishments (use class A4) and hot food take-aways (use class A5) will be granted provided that the proposal would not adversely affect neighbours, result in public disorder and that it would not cause a danger to the public highway.

**Policy CQ1** identifies four Cultural Quarters where cultural activities are concentrated and where their continuance and expansion will be encouraged and supported. The areas of relevance include the White Rock and America Ground Cultural Quarter (including Robertson Street and Harold Place) and the Academic Cultural Quarter (including Priory Quarter). The Development Management Plan recognises that cultural activities can make a vital contribution to the local economy, strengthening visitation rates and raising aspirations in the town. The document notes that it is natural for many of these to cluster within an area for mutual advantage, benefiting from flexibility, change and temporary uses, in addition to an availability of indoor and outdoor exhibition and performance space.

Section three of the DMP identifies Site Allocations across the Borough, two of which are of particular relevance to this study and fall within the Town Centre Boundary and immediately adjoin the Hastings Town Centre Shopping Area:

- Site Allocation HTC3 (The Observer Building) is identified within the DMP as being suitable for mixed use (including tourist accommodation, retail, educational and leisure facilities).
- Site Allocation HTC6 (Priory Quarter, Havelock Road) is also identified as being suitable for mixed use development including education, retail, leisure and hotel uses. The Development Management Plan confirms that the site has outline planning permission for a large scale mixed use development comprising offices,

education, retail and leisure. It encompasses a significant part of the Academic Cultural Quarter, and is allocated primarily for business development, but also allows for other complementary uses – retail, education, car parking, hotel and/or leisure proposals, should they come forward. A design brief has been prepared to help guide development in this location.

Elsewhere within the Hastings Town Centre Boundary, and in close proximity to the Town Centre Shopping Area, Site Allocations HTC 1, 2 and 4 are allocated for residential development.

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## Appendix 2

### List of reasonable alternatives and preferred approaches

#### Reasonable alternatives in Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

A key element of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process is the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' for the Area Action Plan (AAP). The SEA Regulations<sup>20</sup> are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the SA Report should present an appraisal of the '*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan*'.

#### Options appraisal

In response to this, a number of alternative approaches have been considered for the AAP through the SA process to date. These were developed through two workshops undertaken with key officers involved in the AAP process in August and November 2017 as well as during the preparation of the draft AAP.

Listed below are the reasonable alternatives (options) appraised as part of the SA process, also referenced is the preferred approach taken forward in the AAP (shown in brackets). The SA appraised reasonable alternatives focused on the broad distribution and approach to development as well as broad policy approaches, as listed below:

#### Appraisal of options for retail provision

**Option TC1:** continue to concentrate key retail and office uses in the town centre core and town centre edge (preferred approach)

**Option TC2:** facilitate new town centre use in the parts of the AAP area outside of the town centre core and town centre edge

#### Appraisal of options for housing numbers

**Option H1:** deliver numbers proposed through the existing HPS Policy DS1 (i.e. at least 3,400 net new homes for the period 2011-2028)

**Option H2:** facilitate enabling development, delivering an additional 670 homes (preferred approach)

**Option H3:** facilitate higher densities, delivering between 670 and 2,778 additional homes

**Option H4:** meet residual unmet need, totalling an additional 2,778 homes

#### Appraisal of options for the broad location of housing

**Option HL1:** focus housing delivery on Hastings Town Centre

**Option HL2:** focus housing delivery at Bohemia (preferred approach)

#### Appraisal of options for green infrastructure provision

**Option GI1:** continue the approach for green infrastructure provision in the AAP area facilitated through Policy HN7 of the DMP

**Option GI2:** initiate the AAP specific approach to green infrastructure provision to support policy HN7 (preferred approach)

#### Appraisal of options for leisure provision

**Option L1:** business as usual - Summerfields, Falaise Fitness Centre, outdoor provision at White Rock Gardens

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<sup>20</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004



**Option L2:** move Falaise Fitness Centre into Summerfields

**Option L3:** relocate Summerfields and Falaise into a purpose built facility (preferred approach)

#### **Appraisal of options for the A259**

**Option P1:** improve pedestrian crossings across the A259 (preferred approach)

**Option P2:** facilitate comprehensive reconfiguration of the A259

#### **Appraisal of options for housing delivery at Bohemia**

**Option WR1:** deliver new housing in the northern part of the Bohemia area (preferred approach)

**Option WR2:** deliver new areas of housing in the southern part of the Bohemia area

#### **Appraisal of options for Horntyne**

**Option HT1:** Horntyne remains as an existing sports facility

**Option HT2:** Horntyne is redeveloped for housing (preferred approach)

**Option HT3:** Horntyne is redeveloped for another use (e.g. employment)

#### **Appraisal of options for the White Rock Theatre**

**Option WRT1:** allocate land for a new theatre which meets appropriate standards

**Option WRT2:** retain a degree of flexibility for the future of the White Rock Theatre (preferred approach)

**Option WRT3:** initiate a change of use for the site for specific (non-theatre) use

Following on from the assessment of reasonable alternatives the SA report that accompanies the Hastings Town Centre and Bohemia Area Action Plan Preferred Approaches document for public consultation sets out an appraisal of the AAP (at Regulation 18 stage) under the eight SA themes - biodiversity, climate change, historic environment and townscape, land, soil and water resources, community vitality, health and wellbeing, transportation and air quality, economy and employment and provides an overall conclusion and recommendations on these themes for the next stage of plan making.