

## SA4 – Urban Fringe



## Supporting Documents:

PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - 2005  
 Draft South East Plan - 2006  
 SDNP - Inspector's Report on the National Park  
 Boundary - 2007  
 The South Downs Management Plan -2007  
 Sustainable Community Strategy - 2006  
 Housing Needs Study - 2006  
 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy - 2008  
 The Downland Initiative - 2005  
 Local Transport Plan - 2006

## Context

2.138 Most of the land surrounding the built up area of the city is managed open space or farmed downland and much of this is currently designated as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty land. Most of the surrounding farmed downland that stretches from the city's western boundary with Adur District to the coast between Ovingdean and Roedean is proposed for inclusion within the proposed South Downs National Park (based on the Inspector's 2007 proposed boundary modifications). In the adopted Local Plan the urban fringe around the city was defined as a zone of countryside within approximately two kilometres of the built up area boundary but this will change when the National Park Designation Order is confirmed and it will be much narrower as in many instances the National Park boundary will be contiguous with the urban edge. It is likely that there will be areas of land that are no longer afforded statutory landscape protection and it will be important for the council to have a policy in place to address this. However until the National Park is confirmed the exact extent of the urban fringe will not be known, in the interim Local Plan policies on the Countryside, AONB and the urban fringe will be saved.

## Preferred Option – SA4 Urban Fringe

Land between the built up area boundary and the proposed South Downs National Park boundary will be protected and enhanced through the following:

1. Development outside the built-up area boundary will not be permitted unless:
  - a) it has been allocated for development in a development plan document; or
  - b) a countryside location can be justified; and
  - c) there is no significant adverse impact; and
  - d) enhancement to the countryside/ downland will result

2. Promoting the urban fringe as part of the green network and encouraging opportunities for multi-functional uses such as wildlife, recreation and cultural experience, new allotments and local food production and biodiversity enhancements (see CP5 Biodiversity)
3. Creating 'gateway' facilities and interpretative facilities in connection with the proposed South Downs National Park to support sustainable tourism,
4. Securing better management of the urban fringe, environmental improvements and safe public access to the countryside;
5. Protecting sensitive groundwater source protection zones from pollution and encouraging land management practises that reduce rapid surface water run-off and soil erosion.
6. Protecting the wider landscape role of land within the urban fringe, the setting of the National Park and protection of strategic views into and out of the city.

Proposals for farm diversification within the urban fringe should accord with the council's adopted Planning Advice Note 01 Farm Diversification (October 2005).

### Supporting Text

**2.139** This preferred option applies to land between the defined built up area boundary and the proposed boundary of the South Downs National Park. These areas of protected or residual green space and countryside are not continuous or homogenous entities, in some instances they can be characterised as fingers/ green wedges that come into the built up area others are small pockets of land between the proposed national park boundary and the urban edge. The careful management of the urban fringe is essential to retaining the setting of the city in the downland and maintaining the clearly delineated boundary that exists between urban development and the open countryside. The lack of urban sprawl is a most attractive and characteristic feature of the city and its setting in the landscape and should not be eroded on a piecemeal basis by unsightly or harmful developments or infrastructure.

**2.140** The urban fringe is vulnerable to urban pressures such as fly-tipping, vandalism, farm fragmentation leading to abandonment and inappropriate recreational activity such as illegal motorbiking. Elsewhere there has been piecemeal enclosure both for horsiculture and garden use. This all contributes to a continuing diminution of the countryside, in terms of both its extent and its character and quality.

**2.141** There are developments or uses for which sites are unlikely to be found within the built up area and sites in the urban fringe may need to be identified. Proposals for facilities that can not be located in the built up area but are necessary to service the needs of the city such as new forms of waste or water management, renewable energy generation (including woody biomass), local food production will be considered provided a sequential test is undertaken to exhaust urban possibilities. Uses appropriate in the urban fringe could include the management of access to the city and the facilitation of a gateway to the National Park by sustainable transport modes.

**2.142** The city has adopted a sustainable farming strategy for the management of its farmland to prevent soil erosion, flooding and pollution of the city's water supply. The Draft River Adur Catchment Flood Management Plan prepared by the Environment Agency looks to influence land management to reduce, or ensure no increase in, run-off rates and to encourage activities that may have potential to reduce run-off rates from the

South Downs and contribute to wider benefits (biodiversity, soil conservation and water quality improvements).

**2.143** The protection of water supply and water quality are key responsibilities in the urban fringe because the chalk under the downland around the city is the aquifer or groundwater storage that supplies the city. The EU Water Framework Directive introduces a new concept of 'good status' that is far more rigorous than current water environment quality measures and it includes the protection of groundwater. This valuable resource needs to be protected from pollution and from land uses with a high risk of pollution.

**2.144** The council has adopted a sustainable agriculture policy and signed a management agreement for the South Downs AONB. The council works with other landowners and DEFRA to seek sustainable management of the Downland not in its ownership and control.

### **Implementation**

**2.144** The preferred option would be implemented through the Core Strategy, the Proposals Map, generic Development Policies in the Development Policies and Site Allocations DPD, the development control process and the Local Transport Plan.