

Worthing Local Plan

# 1 Introduction

## Introduction

- 1.1 This is the Submission Draft Local Plan which, when adopted, will provide a strategy for sustainable development and change in Worthing up to 2036. The Local Plan provides the broad policy framework and a long-term spatial strategy to manage development, respond to climate change, promote regeneration, protect the environment, deliver infrastructure and support vibrant healthy communities.

### Current Stage of Consultation

- 1.2 This period of public consultation forms the 'Publication stage' of the preparation of Worthing's Local Plan. This is the version of the Plan that the Council considers to be legally compliant and 'Sound' for submission to central government for independent Examination by a government appointed Planning Inspector. All details relating to the consultation and how responses can be made can be found at the start of this document. Following the close of the consultation, all responses received will be collated and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

### Purpose of the Plan

- 1.3 Using three broad categories ('Social', 'Economy' and the 'Environment') the new Local Plan will balance the benefits of 'growth' against the potential impact of future development. More specifically, the Local Plan:

- **identifies the key planning challenges and addresses them through a Vision and a set of associated social, economic and environmental objectives;**
- **provides opportunities to create new homes of different types and tenures and jobs for present and future generations;**
- **protects and delivers community facilities and infrastructure to support existing and future communities;**
- **creates opportunities for improving the health and well-being of communities;**
- **seeks to protect and enhance the valued qualities of our environment; and support the move to zero carbon'**
- **gives local communities, developers and investors greater certainty about the types of proposals for development that are likely to be approved; and**
- **sets out a range of policies that will be used to assess development proposals and planning applications.**

- 1.4 The spatial strategy makes it clear what development is intended to happen over the life of the plan until 2036, where and when this will occur and how it will be delivered. This is done by designating key development sites and specific allocations of land for different purposes and establishing policies to guide and help consider development proposals. The Plan is supported by an associated Policies Map which is used to illustrate geographically how the adopted policies will be applied.
- 1.5 Once adopted, the new Plan will replace the Council's local planning policies set out in the Core Strategy (2011) and the saved policies from the Worthing Local Plan (2003). It will inform the preparation of a number of future Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and will be an important consideration in deciding planning applications. It will also inform related strategies and projects proposed by the Council, its partners and other stakeholders.
- 1.6 The Local Plan has been prepared in a way that is flexible and able to adapt to change. However, it will be subject to continual monitoring to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. In addition, and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), a review of the Local Plan will be undertaken within five years of adoption. At any stage when a partial or full update of the Plan is required this will be reported within the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and the timetable for the review will be set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 1.7 It should be noted that this Plan does not cover matters relating to minerals and waste as this is the responsibility of West Sussex County Council. The County Council is also responsible for all roads and transport planning in West Sussex except for the trunk roads (A24 / A27 / A264) which are the responsibility of Highways England.

## What Area Will the Plan Cover?

- 1.8 The new Local Plan will cover most of Worthing borough. However, unlike the existing Core Strategy, it will not cover the land in the north of the borough that lies within the South Downs National Park. The National Park Authority is a planning authority in its own right and produces the Local Plan which sets planning policy for the South Downs National Park area as a whole.





## What has Informed this Plan?

- 1.9 Although the Local Plan reflects local issues and choices, there are also some important limitations as the Local Plan must be aligned to, and conform with, European legislation and national planning policies and their support for sustainable development. Most notably, the preparation of the Local Plan has encompassed the requirements of the Government's NPPF. To support the NPPF, the Government has published Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which has been taken into account. The Local Plan has also been influenced by local strategies, evidence documents and consultation responses. The following section provides a brief explanation of the key documents/stages.

### Consultation Stages

- 1.10 The process of preparing a new Local Plan is made up of a number of statutory consultation stages when residents, businesses and other stakeholders are asked to comment on the Council's proposals. The first stage of consultation, the 'Issues and Options' stage was undertaken in 2016 when the Council sought views on the key challenges for the borough and how Worthing should grow and develop. The responses informed the Draft Local Plan (published for consultation at the end of 2018) that set out the Council's preferred options to address the issues that had been identified.
- 1.11 Consultation responses have been collected in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) using both formal consultation methods and through more informal engagement. Full details of the consultations undertaken have been set out in the Consultation Statement.

### Evidence Base

- 1.12 A key requirement in developing planning policies is that they are underpinned by robust and up-to-date local evidence. As such, a significant number of studies have been undertaken on different subject areas. References to some of these studies appear throughout this document and in associated Topic Papers. The full extent of the evidence base can be viewed on the Council's website.

- 1.13 The Local Plan is accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which sets out the infrastructure requirements to meet the development forecast to come forward in the borough over the plan period. Whilst there are many infrastructure needs identified, none in isolation would restrict the Council's ability to achieve the level of growth the Plan provides for.
- 1.14 The Council must ensure that the aspirational policies identified in the Plan are realistic and deliverable. To make this assessment a Whole Plan Viability Assessment has been undertaken to assess the cumulative impact of the policy and development requirements on a range of development scenarios across the borough.

### The Council's Ambitions

- 1.15 To be effective and respond to local priorities, the Local Plan has had regard to a variety of other strategies of the Council and its partners. In particular, this has included Adur and Worthing Councils 'Platforms for our Places - Going Further' which sets out the Council's ambitions for our places to 2022 and beyond. The Local Plan seeks to help deliver and support the relevant elements of the following five 'platforms' and their associated commitments:



- 1.16 In July 2020 the Council published 'And then... bouncing back in post pandemic Adur and Worthing'. The Local Plan will need to help support the place based activities and interventions identified that will enable local communities to thrive, prosper, be healthy and resilient in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 1.17 The Council supports the place brand called 'Time for Worthing' which has recently been developed by local businesses and residents. This aims to capture the borough's commercial and lifestyle opportunities and unite the diverse communities which call Worthing home. The vision is to work collectively to raise the profile of the town and bring fresh energy and investment to our place – be that business, enterprise, skilled workers, tourism and visitors. The Local Plan is just one of a number of documents and strategies published by the Council and its partners that will help to ensure that these aims are realised.



### **The Duty to Co-operate**

- 1.18 The Duty to Co-operate places a legal duty on local planning authorities and other public bodies to engage constructively and actively on planning issues which affect more than one local planning authority. In line with this requirement, Worthing Borough Council has worked on an ongoing basis with key partners to consider a range of cross boundary issues.
- 1.19 Worthing Borough Council is a member of the West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board. The Board has commissioned evidence on a number of strategic studies and has committed to:

- **prepare, maintain and update a Local Strategic Statement to provide a broad strategic direction and establish areas for inter-authority co-operation;**
- **develop and implement a programme for jointly addressing strategic planning and development issues; and**
- **maintain liaison with the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership(s) and other relevant bodies.**

- 1.20 This strategic work has influenced the Local Plan, particularly the spatial strategy. A Duty to Co-operate Topic Paper has been published to accompany this Plan. This incorporates a number of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) agreed between Worthing BC and neighbouring local authorities. The Statements set out details of this process and demonstrate how the requirements of the Duty have been met and how key cross boundary issues have been addressed.

### **Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

- 1.21 Government legislation requires that all Development Plan Documents, including Local Plans, have to be assessed in terms of their impact on society, the economy and the environment. The Sustainability Appraisal (that incorporates the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) is an iterative process that is an integral part of plan making. It is used to consider all realistic options for growth and then identifies the significant social, environmental and economic impacts to ensure that the outcomes are as sustainable as possible.
- 1.22 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been undertaken and published alongside this Plan. The SA considers the impacts of proposed development options on people's health, and covers the criteria of Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The SA will also consider the potential effects of the Plan on people in respect of disability, gender and racial equality impacts, in light of the Equalities Act 2010.

## Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 1.23 Under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, the Council is required to consider the potential impacts of land use plans on sensitive habitats of international importance. The Council has worked with partners to determine whether the Local Plan alone, or in combination with other plans, is likely to result in a significant adverse effect.

## Sustainable Development

- 1.24 As evidenced and supported by the assessments referred to above, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development. This is a fundamental principle of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 which defines 'sustainable' as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In this regard, the NPPF sets three overarching objectives to be delivered through the preparation of plans and the policies in the framework:

- **social - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities;**
- **economic - contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy; and**
- **environmental - enhancing and contributing to our natural, built and historic environment.**

- 1.25 To assist in understanding how these objectives are being met the Local Plan has been structured throughout to reflect these three themes. In addition, the Local Plan has embedded the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). These consist of 17 interconnected goals underpinned by targets designed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. The goals form part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is a call for action by all UN member states. Implementation and success rely on countries' own sustainable development policies, plans and programmes. Local Planning Authorities are



encouraged to localise the UN SDGs It is considered that the UN SDGs will enhance the sustainability credentials of the Plan and thus will provide a more robust monitoring framework. The Monitoring Framework will be used to review the robustness and effectiveness of the policies contained in this Plan.

- 1.26 The UN SDGs are becoming increasingly recognised and adopted by numerous public, private and voluntary sector organisations therefore working towards a common and shared consensus for sustainable development. The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) endorses the use of the UN SDGs within Local Plans as best practice. The Monitoring Topic Paper, that establishes the monitoring framework for the Plan, sets out the compatibility of each goal and associated targets against relevant policies in the Plan. The effectiveness of all policies in the Plan will be monitored and reported to elected Members. The Annual Monitoring Report will be used to provide a detailed review and, where appropriate, steps will be taken to ensure the Council's planning policy framework is effective and up-to-date. This might include the publication of Supplementary Planning Documents to support the policy position established in this Plan. In the longer term, effective and robust monitoring will help to inform any subsequent review of the Plan.

## How to use this Document

- 1.27 This Local Plan has been written with the intention that it should be read as a whole. Taken together, the policies, associated supporting text and proposals within the Plan forms a coherent strategy for sustainable development in Worthing. It is therefore important that individual policies are not considered in isolation.
- 1.28 This document focuses on the strategy, policies and proposals of the Local Plan. Greater detail as to the background, policy context and supporting studies can be found in the accompanying evidence base and associated Topic Papers. The policies, when adopted, may be supported by Supplementary Planning Documents which can be prepared at any time to support the Local Plan and its delivery. SPDs will be used to provide additional guidance on specific policies or development sites / areas.

- 1.29 Whilst the NPPF does not formally form part of the Council's Local Plan, it is a material consideration that must be taken into account during the consideration of planning applications. The Local Plan does not duplicate policies that are set out in the NPPF but, where appropriate, it applies them locally to respond to local circumstances. If the Local Plan is silent on a particular issue the default policy position is the NPPF.

- 1.30 Many policies within this Plan refer to, or are informed by, guidance, standards and principles that are prepared by other bodies at the national and local level. Over the Plan period it is anticipated that some of these sources will be revised or replaced. In most circumstances, any revised and updated guidance should be used. Where appropriate, the Council will provide up to date information on its website to inform interested parties of any changes to adopted policy requirements and which guidance should be used.

## Characteristics of the Borough

- 1.31 Worthing originally developed as a popular Victorian and Edwardian seaside resort. It is now one of the largest towns in West Sussex, with around 110,700 residents and a working population of approximately 60,000 people. Its location on the south coast between the English Channel to the south and the South Downs National Park to the north provides a distinctive



and much cherished setting. It is this high quality environment that helps to underpin and support the local economy and which is valued by those who choose to live, study, work and visit here. In turn, this helps to generate an increasing requirement for homes, jobs and leisure uses.

1.32 As illustrated on the Context Map, Worthing occupies an area of 3,369 hectares of the coastal plain, with the only breaks in an almost continuous band of urban development along the coast being at the far eastern and western ends of the borough. Whilst being principally a compact urban area, there are a number of highly valued greenspaces, parks and gardens within and around the town.

1.33 Worthing plays an important role within a wider sub-region with key links to other authority areas such as Brighton & Hove, Adur, Arun, Horsham and Crawley for housing, leisure and employment.

1.34 The seafront is one of Worthing's most important assets acting as a focus for many of the historical buildings, gardens and public spaces. Significant enhancements have been made to parts of the seafront and this is having a positive effect on local businesses with a range of new independent shops and eateries having opened in recent years. The town centre and seafront areas continue to offer the greatest opportunities for major redevelopment.

1.35 Outside of the town centre and seafront area, the borough is more suburban in character. The historic development of the town occurred through the merging of separate villages and centres such as Tarring and Broadwater. The expansion of the town in this way is still evident today with distinct areas centred on the parish church or local shopping areas that each have their own identity and character. A significant amount of growth was witnessed between World War I and World War II resulting in large areas of predominantly two storey residential developments which now extend to the foot of the South Downs.

1.36 In recent years the town has seen a resurgence in popularity as young people and families move into the borough, which is partly influenced by the affordability challenges faced within the residential market in Brighton and Hove.

1.37 In line with the Strategic Objectives that follow, some key characteristics / facts for Worthing are set out within three thematic areas (Social, Economic, Environment) – these follow the context map overleaf.



Borough Boundary



South Downs National Park



Coastline & Local Green Gaps



Industrial Estate/Business Park



Parks & Green Spaces



Town Centre



Retail Locations by Size



Secondary School



Further Education



Leisure



Hospital



Railway Station



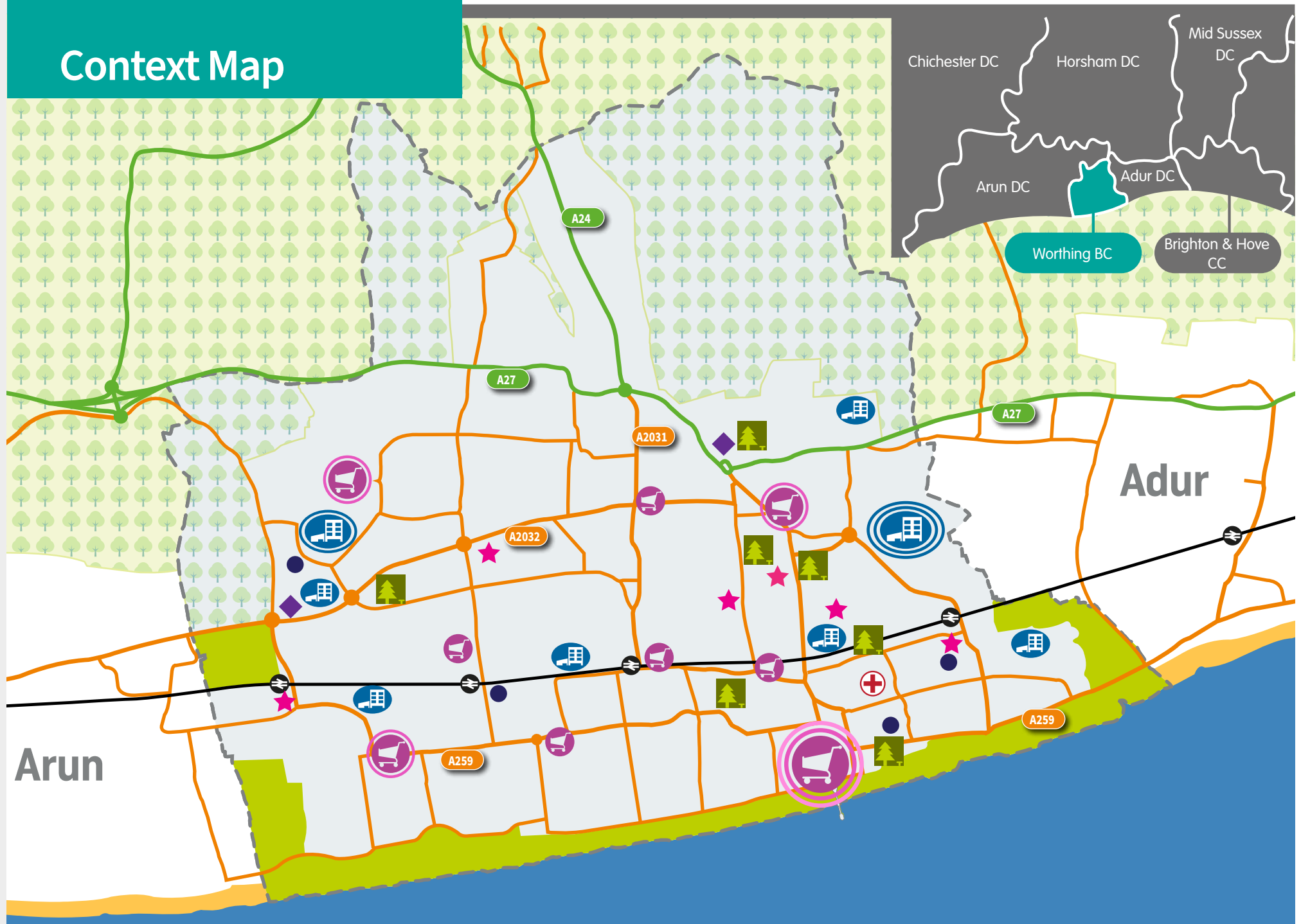
Trunk Roads



Arterial Roads



# Context Map



# 1 Characteristics Of The Borough

## Social



Population has risen over recent decades and is expected to continue to do so during the plan period. It is estimated that there has been a 5.8% population increase between 2011 (104,600) and 2019 (110,700) and that there will be a further 7.8% increase by 2035 (119,300).



The percentage of the population aged over 75 is higher than the South East region average. Although there has been some growth in the mid-age bracket over the last 20 years, it is predicted that the proportion of the population over the age of 65 will continue to increase over the Plan period.



Average life expectancy is 79 years for men and 83.1 years for women. These are slightly lower than the averages for the South East and England.



The percentage of obese adults is higher than the England average with physical activity of adults being slightly lower than average. Priorities for Worthing include promoting healthy lifestyles, raising awareness of risk factors for addictive behaviours, increasing awareness of mental health, encouraging healthy relationships and tackling loneliness.



Residents from minority ethnic groups make up a relatively small, but important, proportion of Worthing's population. However, central areas have a significant number of residents from other EU countries.



Worthing has a total stock of approximately 51,800 homes (2019). The majority (90%) of the stock is in private sector ownership, which is slightly above the Coastal West Sussex average. 10% of the stock is owned by Registered Providers. There is no local authority owned stock.



In 2019 average house prices were 10.89 times median earnings which is well above the national average - this has put home ownership beyond the reach of many households.



Between 2006 and 2019 a total of 3,916 new homes were built in the borough.



In July 2020 there were 1,425 households on the Housing Register. This high level of affordable housing need is further evidenced within the Worthing Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2020) which calculates an affordable housing need of 490 dwellings per annum up until 2039.



The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 ranks Worthing 175th out of 317 local authorities.



There are significant disparities within different areas of the town and 4 wards in Worthing (Heene, Central, Broadwater & Northbrook) are within the 20% most deprived nationally.



Population growth is largely driven by domestic migration with the majority of movements being from Adur and Brighton & Hove.



**5.8%**

Population increase  
between 2011 & 2019

**3,916**

New homes built  
between 2006 and 2019

**51,800**

Existing homes

**490**

Affordable dwellings  
required per annum

## Characteristics Of The Borough Economy

Worthing is located within the Coastal West Sussex and Brighton & Hove Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA).

In 2018 there were an estimated 300,000 staying trips and 3.7 million day tourist trips - with total expenditure in the local area by visitors estimated to be £140m per annum.

Strong manufacturing base as well as a significant service sector, led by large public sector employers and financial firms. In employment terms the largest industries (2018) were healthcare (29%), retail (15%), education (7%), manufacturing (7%) and administrative services (7%).

Retail economy performs reasonably well but its primary shopping areas could be performing more strongly. Vacancy rates for retail units are below the national average but slightly above the average for West Sussex.

There is a general pattern of lower wage rates along the coast and wages in Worthing are below the South East average. Resident wages are higher than workplace wages suggesting that the types of employment roles available locally are less well paid than elsewhere in the sub-region.

In 2018, there were 3,695 businesses in Worthing (an increase of 13.5% since 2014). There are fewer micro businesses more small, medium and large businesses than in comparator areas. This is the sign of a stronger, more resilient business base.

Worthing is part of the 'Coast to Capital' Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which is a public and private sector partnership that seeks to improve economic prosperity.

There are areas of heavy road congestion, especially at peak times. This is most prevalent along the A259 coast road and along the A27. The A24 provides the main road link into the town from the north.

There is a good supply of hotels and guesthouses (largely located around the seafront) which offer a variety of accommodation types and standards.

In 2016, productivity (measured by Gross Value Added) was approximately £66k per employee. Statistics shows that Worthing is still performing relatively well in comparison with other Coast to Capital local authorities.

Public transport services in the town are relatively good, particularly the rail and bus links along an east west corridor. There are five railway stations in the borough.

Worthing has a well-defined network / hierarchy of shopping areas (town centre, district centres and local / neighbourhood centres).

Worthing is a net exporter of labour with a net outflow of approximately 1,200 workers.



**3,695**  
Businesses in Worthing

**13.5%**  
Increase in businesses  
between 2014 & 2018

**1,200**  
Net outflow of  
labour force

**£140m**  
Annual visitor spend

# 1 Characteristics Of The Borough Environment



Important fisheries are located off the south coast between Shoreham-by-Sea and Littlehampton.



Due to its permeable geology, Worthing has a larger proportion of land with a high probability of groundwater flooding than many other areas of England.



Worthing is within a 'highly water stressed' region and, as such, water resources must be managed sustainably to meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.



Much of the built environment and heritage is highly valued and the borough includes: 26 Conservation Areas; 9 Environmental Areas of Special Character; 360+ listed buildings; and a large number of buildings regarded as being of important local interest.



Worthing recorded a year on year decrease in CO2 emissions per capita from 2010 to 2018. Carbon emissions reduced from 4.7 tonnes per capita to 3.0 tonnes per capita during this period.



There are two river flood zones in Worthing - the area of the Ferring Rife to the west of the borough and Teville Stream to the east.



Since 2017, Worthing's bathing water has been classed as being of 'sufficient' quality by the Environment Agency.



In 2018, 7.9% of Worthing's population experienced fuel poverty. This was in line with the South East average but was lower than the percentage of people experiencing fuel poverty nationally (10.2%).



The borough is home to a number of statutory and non-statutory nature conservation designations including Local Wildlife Sites and Cissbury Ring (located within the National Park) which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.



In 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and made a commitment to becoming a carbon neutral Council by 2030. The Council also signed the UK 100 Cities Pledge to achieve 100% Clean Energy by 2050.



Air quality is generally good, but an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is in operation on the A27 where most of the air pollution is generated by traffic.



The extensive chalk downlands, much of which falls within the South Downs National Park, helps to provide the town with its water supply, biodiversity, and opportunities for leisure and recreation.



Low-lying areas of coastal land are susceptible to flooding from the sea.



The 7.5km of shoreline is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna.



There are over 360 hectares of parks and open recreation spaces within the borough including Highdown Gardens (Registered as a Historic Park & Garden) and 10 Parks & Gardens registered as having local historic interest.



To the east and west of the borough, areas of valuable open countryside form long established breaks in development between settlements.



**7.5km**  
Of shoreline

**360 hectares**  
Parks and open recreation spaces

**Over 360**  
Listed buildings

**1**  
Air Quality Management Area



## Issues and Challenges

- 1.38 The Vision and Strategic Objectives that follow this section address a number of key issues and challenges for the Local Plan.
- 1.39 Although Worthing has seen some key successes in recent years there is still much work to do to ensure that the borough continues to prosper, meets the needs of its residents and better fulfils its role within the wider sub-region. There is much potential for an exciting period of change ahead, taking advantage of key sustainable development opportunities that can help the town's economy to grow and improve its regional competitiveness.
- 1.40 Whilst there is an aspiration to accommodate and deliver growth this must be achieved within a very constrained area. Worthing is a very compact town with a tightly drawn boundary. As illustrated on the Land Availability Maps that follow, whilst Worthing measures 33.7 sq km in area 8 sq km (24%) of the borough is taken up by part of the South Downs National Park. The existing built up area (22.5 sq km) takes up the vast majority of the land (88%) within the borough that lies outside the National Park. As explained within Chapter 3, a further constraint is that much of the residual land (the coastline and narrow & sensitive gaps to the east and west) are not appropriate for development.
- 1.41 Limited land availability, infrastructure constraints, areas of flood risk, heritage assets and high quality landscapes around the borough means that there is little room for expansion. This lack of developable land around the town is clearly the crucial factor when considering options for significant growth and the Local Plan's ability to fully meet the borough's identified development needs. Put simply, it is the same features we want to protect which, in part, constrain the borough's ability to grow and develop. The overarching challenge is therefore to strike the balance between taking a positive approach to sustainable development and regeneration against the limited physical capacity of Worthing to accommodate it and the need to maintain a good quality of life for new and existing residents.
- 1.42 An increasing population, alongside the special qualities of the area, creates a high demand for housing. This demand has caused a widening gulf between local incomes and house prices which has resulted in difficulties for many people (particularly younger people) to get onto the housing ladder. The three key priorities set out in the Council's Housing Strategy (2020-23) are to: improve housing related well-being and support; deliver better homes and stronger communities; and improve the level of affordable housing supply.
- 1.43 The Council must therefore plan for housing in the variety of forms needed to meet current and future needs and take into account how the population is changing. In particular, the Council will need to increase the amount and availability of affordable housing to take account of relatively high house prices and below average wages. Housing delivery will also need to respond to the needs of different groups, particularly the needs of an ageing population. In summary, when responding to housing needs the Council must ensure that the right types of housing are built in the right locations.
- 1.44 Whilst the need to deliver housing will be a priority, to ensure that we deliver balanced and sustainable communities, the provision of other uses such as employment, leisure and community facilities will also need to be carefully considered.





- 1.45 Although the Council will work positively to deliver growth, there is no expectation that all needs (particularly housing) can be met within the borough. Therefore, it will be imperative that the Council continues to work with neighbouring authorities and partners through the Duty to Co-operate to explore all options on whether there is any ability for other areas to deliver some of Worthing development needs, and how this might be achieved.
- 1.46 From an economic perspective, Worthing is performing adequately and the town has a strong base to build upon. The Council's Economic Strategy (2018) identifies a number of improvements that would allow the town to significantly enhance its attraction and competitiveness. One of the Council's overarching objectives is to attract inward investment to regenerate and grow the local economy. A particular focus will need to be placed on supporting the town centre. Whilst retail will continue to perform an important role, the town centre will need to adapt to changing economic conditions and expectations, particularly at a time when it will be recovering from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.47 To help meet the town's potential it is essential that the Local Plan helps to unlock key development sites, particularly those in and around the town centre and seafront that provide the greatest potential to deliver social and economic benefits. Some of these sites have been vacant or in poor condition for a number of years and their sustainable redevelopment provides a unique opportunity to improve the town's identity, enhance the public realm, add vibrancy and improve connectivity. The redevelopment of some of these sites also provides an opportunity to capitalise on the seafront setting and maintain and improve community facilities and the borough's retail, tourism and leisure offer in order to better compete with other towns across the wider area. Elsewhere, a challenge will be to provide new premises to meet identified employment needs and support local business.
- 1.48 The way in which infrastructure services are being delivered is changing due to resource efficiency and financial constraints as well as some services becoming increasingly digitised. This has an impact on the ability to plan for future infrastructure needs as well as affecting 'building space' requirements. All of these changes have the potential to impact on Worthing's infrastructure. These changes must be carefully managed to achieve the best outcomes for Worthing.
- 1.49 Given the limited land available to meet development needs, the Council will look favourably at proposals that make 'best use' of each available site and, where appropriate, increase the density of development. At the same time, the Local Plan has a key role to play in ensuring that new development respects the character of the surrounding area. This includes protecting heritage assets and preserving valued open spaces, attractive landscapes, coastline and the setting of the South Downs National Park.
- 1.50 Taking proposed new development and demographic projections into account, it is clear that the town is going to experience an increase in population over the plan period. A challenge is therefore to ensure that all essential infrastructure is delivered to support the levels of growth forecast. For example, road congestion and related pollution (air and noise) is already a significant problem in the borough so it is vital











that a shift to active travel modes are achieved, sustainable transport measures are promoted and the potential impacts of new development are mitigated.

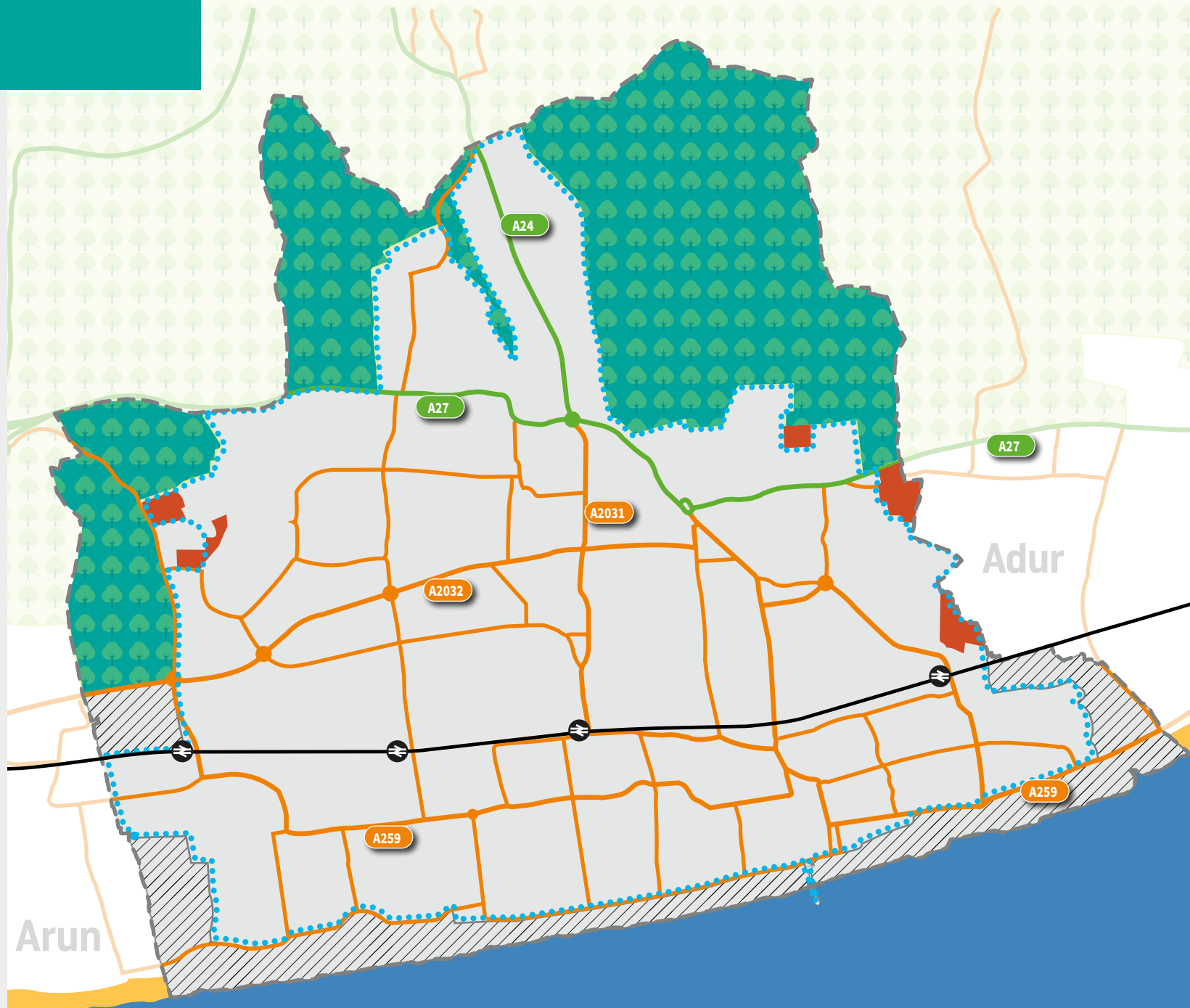
- 1.51 The lack of available land for growth is likely to result in great pressure being placed on many existing land uses. Residential land values are usually significantly higher than other uses so it is no surprise that developers and landowners often promote schemes that would result in the change of an alternative use to housing. Whilst the high levels of housing need must always be taken into consideration, it should not override the need to ensure that the town also provides the right balance of other uses to ensure that people have places to work and enjoy their leisure time. As a consequence, a key challenge will be to ensure that, where appropriate, existing uses are protected. This will include the safeguarding of employment sites and the protection of valued open spaces and community facilities.
- 1.52 Overarching all elements of the Plan is the universal but vital challenge for Worthing to ensure that the area is resilient to the predicted impacts of climate change which can include hotter, drier periods as well as increased rainfall and flood events. In response to the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration the Plan must support the move towards carbon neutrality and clean energy, and ensure development helps the borough to adapt and increase its resilience to the effects of climate change, now and in the future. New development must utilise sustainable construction techniques whilst adaptation and mitigation measures must improve the resilience of communities, reduce inequality and bring a range of social benefits. Worthing is within a 'highly water stressed' (when the demand for water exceeds the amount available) and, as a consequence, the Council will require the sustainable management of water resources to meet the Water Environment Regulations 2017.
- 1.53 The West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2019) sets out that the environment in which people are born, grow, live, work and age has a profound

effect on the quality of their health and well-being. Many of the strongest predictors of health and well-being, such as social, economic and environmental factors, fall outside the healthcare setting. These wider determinants of health have a significant impact on people's health and well-being. The poorest and most deprived are more likely to be in poor health, have lower life expectancy and likely to have a long-term health condition or disability. The Local Plan is an important mechanism to promote well-being and address the wider determinants of health. In particular, the Local Plan will seek to address the high variation in levels of deprivation with policies that will help to deliver high quality housing and support the quality of community life, social cohesion, access to the natural environment and generally create balanced communities.

- 1.54 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on all sections of society. Whilst it is too early to say how pronounced and long term these impacts might be it is widely accepted that there will be many implications for the local economy, for transport and for social structures. Like all local authorities the Council will have to respond positively to support post-Covid recovery. Planning will play an important role in this process and, if anything, the pandemic has emphasised the importance of the Local Plan's role in planning for sustainable, resilient and inclusive outcomes ('Build Back Better'). Although the Local Plan is designed to provide a clear framework for development it must be accepted that, in these uncertain times, there may need to be an even greater requirement for adaptability and flexibility. Furthermore, all policies will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that they remain effective and deliverable.

# 1 Introduction

-  South Downs National Park
-  Borough excluding South Downs National Park
-  Edge of Town Development Opportunities
-  Railway Station
-  Trunk Roads
-  Arterial Roads
-  Worthing Borough Boundary
-  Area within South Downs National Park
-  Area within existing built up area (BUA) boundary
-  Area not including SNDP, existing BUA and edge of town development opportunities





# Indicative Land Areas

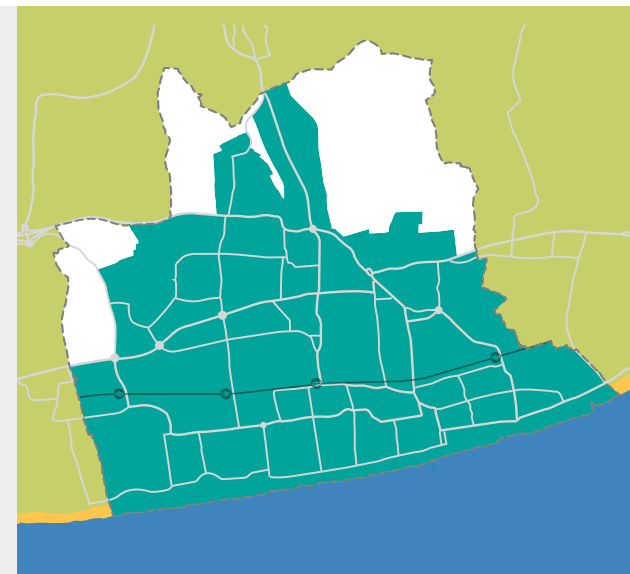
## Worthing Borough Boundary

33.7 sq km



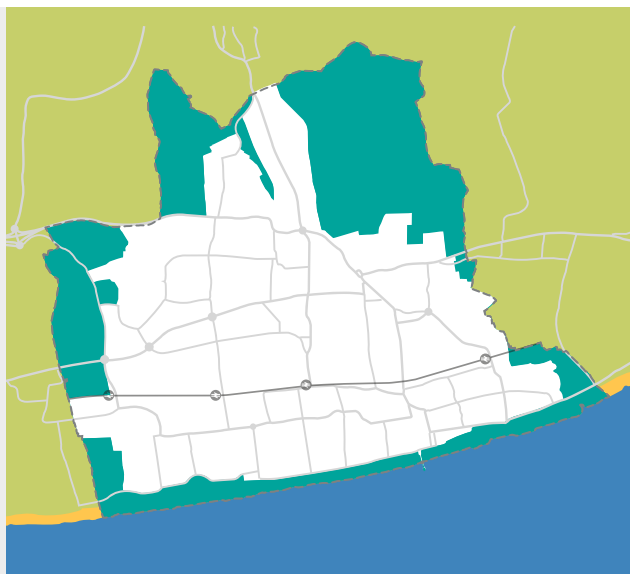
## Area within South Downs National Park

8 sq km



## Area within existing built up area (BUA) boundary

22.5 sq km



## Area not including SDNP, coastline, existing BUA and edge of town development opportunities

Approx 0.03 sq km



