

An employment strategy for Ringmer

This document develops a coherent strategy for the maintenance and continued expansion of employment in Ringmer parish. This local strategy, based on the 2003 Ringmer Village Plan, contributes to and provides local detail for implementation of the South East Regional Strategy for the Sussex Coast sub-region, and to the Lewes District Local Development Framework.

1. Principles

The [April 2006 draft] South East Regional Plan notes that employment opportunities in the Sussex Coast sub-region, in which Ringmer is included, are inadequate in both number and quality and seeks to remedy this [policy SCT3]. This lack of local employment leads to excessive out-commuting throughout the sub-region that is particularly apparent in Lewes District and fully reflected in Ringmer. Out-commuting from a rural area with poor public transport links such as Ringmer is predominantly by private car. In consequence the road system linking Ringmer via the B2192/A26 to Lewes and the A27 has been overwhelmed by daily peak hour commuter traffic, with excessive delays and consequent pollution. Many out-commuters from and through Ringmer travel very considerable distances.

We see no prospect of any credible strategy that will improve the local transport network in Ringmer or between Lewes and the A27 within the coming 5-year period, 2006-2011. East Sussex County Council proposals to alleviate the situation have either failed altogether (proposed improvements to Earwig Corner) or appear completely impracticable (proposed bus priority scheme). The one credible scheme that is strongly supported by Ringmer Parish Council (Ringmer-Lewes cycleway) has made no progress in the past three years. We therefore favour an alternative approach that seeks to enhance local employment and thus reduce the need for out-commuting. The South East Plan aims to reduce out-commuting and journey length by providing more high quality local employment [policies T1(iv) & CC2(v)].

2. Recent history

Within living memory Ringmer was a self-sustaining community, with most village residents employed locally in agriculture or village businesses such as the Ringmer Building Works. A period of very rapid residential development (1965-1985) coincident with continued reduction in the primary agricultural workforce and the closure of the Ringmer Building Works created a largely dormitory community.

However, the past two decades (and especially the first few years of the 21st century) have seen a resurgence of local employment, in a diverse range of sectors. These include business and professional enterprises located in medium and small industrial sites (many former agricultural premises); retail enterprises at a range of locations; services, both private and public sector; and enterprises serving leisure and tourism. There has been substantial investment in new and renovated premises. The majority of new jobs have been due to existing organisations re-locating to Ringmer, bringing with them extant staff. A number have moved from Lewes, seeking to avoid recurrent flooding and, more recently, the new parking regime. As yet only a minority of the new jobs have gone to Ringmer residents. While in-commuting, necessarily predominantly by private car, has the same negative environmental impact as out-commuting, it is predominantly against the main peak-hour traffic flows, so has not added seriously to traffic congestion. Changes have not been all one way, and there have been closures as well as successes. However, the net effect of a lower rate of housebuilding coupled with improved and more diverse employment has been an improvement in community sustainability. This trend we seek to continue.

3. Constraints

There are some important constraints affecting employment development initiatives in this rural area.

3.1. The inadequate transport infrastructure. The Sussex Coast sub-region has very poor road and overloaded rail communications, rendering it unattractive to organisations for whom good access to national and international transport routes is a priority. Successful local businesses generally have a local (or at best sub-regional) client base.

New employment options in Ringmer will inevitably increase in-commuting, as only a proportion of new jobs can be expected to be taken by Ringmer residents. The local road network is already overloaded, and pollution a global issue. Enterprises generating many car and van movements, or any significant number of HGV movements, must have good access to Ringmer's primary routes (A26, B2192 & B2124), and must avoid using our single-track country lanes. Those lanes heavily used and highly valued for recreational purposes (Norlington Lane, Green Lane, the northern section of Broyle Lane, Potato Lane and Neaves Lane south of the sewage works) must be carefully protected, while other narrow lanes (Wellingham Lane, Harveys Lane and Moor Lane) and residential roads should not suffer significantly increased traffic or additional HGV movements.

3.2. Landscape protection. Ringmer lies directly below, and is very visible from, the northern scarp of the South Downs. The proposed boundary of the South Downs National Park runs up to the edge of Ringmer village. There are extensive views from and to Ringmer across the Weald. Care must be taken to avoid negative impact of developments outside the planning boundary on this landscape. There are examples of this being very successfully achieved for medium sized sites by screening, but also other similar extant sites where improved screening is required. The South East Plan promotes the planting of new woodland to screen developments and balance carbon dioxide emissions [policy NRM5(ii)]. Some smaller units are based in converted farm buildings that are themselves attractive landscape features so here additional screening may be unnecessary. However, careful design and imposition of parking conditions are essential to minimise the landscape impact of parked cars.

3.3. Light pollution. This is now formally recognised by the Lewes District Local Plan as an increasing problem in the District, and is very evident in Ringmer, despite the almost complete absence of street lights in the village. Development that creates light pollution is now very evident in some nearby parts of the Weald. New developments must therefore avoid creating additional light pollution. Planning conditions and restricted working hours may be necessary. Illuminated advertising signs are highly undesirable in a village or rural environment.

3.4 Neighbourliness. Both extant and new employment sites must be regulated by conditions that avoid negative impact on nearby residences and businesses.

4. Employment options in Ringmer

4.1. Business and professional. Ringmer has its share of home-office-based employment, including consultants and other professionals, but the majority of such employment is based in a number of larger business sites (appendix 1) and some former agricultural premises. All the larger sites and many of the smaller sites support multiple small businesses.

The adopted Ringmer Village Plan supports the intensification of the use of the larger extant employment sites (subject to the conditions above) and also supports the Lewes District Plan policy that redundant agricultural buildings that contribute positively to the landscape should (again subject to the conditions above) be considered for conversion to other employment generating uses - either as the base for appropriate small businesses or for tourism-related

activities. The South East Plan also supports the efficient use of existing employment sites [policy RE2(ii)]

We believe that there is considerable scope for creating additional employment in this way.

The South East Regional Plan notes that many of the business premises available in the Sussex Coast sub-region are of poor quality, unsuited for modern concerns generating high value employment. There has been considerable recent investment in creating high quality commercial premises in Ringmer, but there is nevertheless room for further improvement.

In addition to the employment sites listed in appendix 1, we can identify at least a dozen other extant or available smaller employment sites within Ringmer parish. Some are individual or small groups of farm buildings recently converted to high quality units, and have little potential for further expansion without causing landscape damage. Others have constrained sites but could be redeveloped to more intensive and/or higher quality units. There are several small sites in course of conversion or with unimplemented planning permission for commercial use. There are additional agricultural buildings that appear redundant and are of appropriate quality and location, but have not yet come forward for conversion. We believe that such sites can make a significant contribution to continuing employment growth in Ringmer parish.

4.2. Retail enterprises. South of Ringmer Green at the Lewes Road/Springett Avenue junction is a commercial area that includes a precinct with about a dozen local shops, a bank, a post office, an estate agent, the Anchor Inn, Ringmer Village Hall, a dentist, a vet and a small number of office premises. A few yards away is the Ringmer Health Centre. There is a public car park, a shoppers' car park owned by the shopping precinct, car parks associated with the Anchor Inn and the Village Hall and provision for on-street parking. The ready availability of parking close to these businesses has been a key factor in their recent success. The shops, post office and bank have been able, especially since parking restrictions in Lewes, to attract many customers from other communities who formerly used facilities in the town. This parking must be preserved, to ensure the continuing prosperity of these businesses: the present trend toward the utilisation of these spaces for residential parking during business hours should be resisted. Apart from maisonettes above the shops in the precinct, this area is given over entirely to commercial or service use, and this should be retained. It may be possible to create or redevelop additional commercial or service units within this area. The core of commercial activity here, especially the bank, post office and catering establishments, play a key role in attracting other businesses to Ringmer.

There are several other retail premises in Ringmer, either within industrial sites (Harper & Eede, Chandlers, vehicle sales, hire, service and repair businesses) or by the roadside. Roadside businesses include three further public houses (all with restaurants), two petrol stations (one with car sales, repair and hire), a garden centre, several plant nurseries and premises selling local agricultural produce and craft products. Some sections of the A26 and B2192 are at risk of developing an unattractive ex-urban roadside straggle. Roadside retail development and roadside advertising should therefore be carefully controlled.

There is no supermarket in Ringmer and normal family living requires regular trips, inevitably by private car, to supermarkets in nearby towns. There is access to several supermarkets with adequate parking in Lewes (3 miles) and Uckfield (6 miles). Lewes District policy is against the development of new out-of-town superstores or shopping malls, and we do not in any case believe that there are appropriate sites for such developments in Ringmer. However, an effective local mini-supermarket would be an asset.

4.3. Services. Educational facilities include Ringmer Community College (with at least three quarters of the students, aged 11-16, attracted in from other communities), Ringmer Primary School (though some Ringmer parents currently choose to send their children to smaller

schools in nearby villages), several nursery schools and a playgroup. The Ringmer health centre, presently seriously inadequate for the village population and necessitating travel to Lewes, has outline planning permission to expand to the size necessary to serve the whole village population on a new, central site. There is a dental surgery and range of private and alternative health facilities in the village.

There is an ESCC-managed recuperation/rehabilitation centre with about 36 beds at 39 Harvard Road. It is planned to reconstruct this facility on its present site, perhaps on a somewhat larger scale. There are three other private care or nursing homes.

There is a large reservoir and water treatment works at one end of Ringmer, with a proposal for a second nearby, and a sewage works at the other end. A second reservoir is under consideration. Other current facilities include a telephone exchange.

4.4. Leisure and tourism. The Glyndebourne Opera House, rebuilt on a larger scale a decade ago, is located on the southern parish boundary, and is a major source of local employment. Other organisations that bring substantial visitor inflows to Ringmer are the Raystede animal rescue centre, the East Sussex Gliding Club, the Southdown Hunt and local facilities for country sports. The Village Green and an adjacent field owned by a parish charity support cricket, croquet & bowls clubs and a scout hall. The Ringmer Football Club has its own ground in the centre of the village, which the adopted Lewes District Plan envisages relocating to a new, provisionally allocated, greenfield leisure site on the edge of the village, immediately east of Ringmer Community College (with the present site then allocated for new residential development). The football club ground also houses the Ringmer Rifle Club. Facilities at Ringmer Community College include a range of evening and weekend classes, a swimming pool and a gym open to the public outside school hours. The college also has extensive sports fields.

There are children's play areas throughout the village, include two large modern play facilities on Ringmer Green and at Fingerpost Field, a skateboard ramp on Anchor Field and facilities for informal ball games on Anchor Field and at Fingerpost Field. There are four groups of allotments in the parish. Three of these are not presently fully used, and one, on the Lewes edge of the parish, is primarily used by Lewes residents. There are a range of equestrian facilities, though few are open to the public. Ringmer has a very well used network of public footpaths maintained in good repair, and a seasonal grass car park at Barcombe Mills to facilitate leisure use of the River Ouse and its banks. There is a seasonal site for touring caravans at Clay Hill. Two adjoining parishes have golf courses.

There is nevertheless a deficiency, recognised in the Lewes District Plan, in land available in Ringmer for public recreational use. This will become even more apparent if other policies in the Ringmer Village Plan, directed towards attracting more young families into the village to restore the population balance, are successful. An additional area of greenfield land on the edge of the village planning boundary, and immediately adjacent to Ringmer Community College, has been allocated for this purpose. This is intended to include a new Ringmer FC football ground and to accommodate all-weather indoor sporting activities. The Village Plan identified tennis courts open to the public as by far the most strongly desired additional facility, and such courts could also be provided here. A small additional area on Broyle Lane is also allocated for recreational use in the Lewes District Local Plan.

It could be argued that, with the exception of Glyndebourne and, to a lesser extent, Raystede, Ringmer FC and the Southdown Hunt, surprisingly little employment or economic activity is generated by these leisure facilities. There is no hotel in Ringmer: such accommodation is available in Lewes (3 miles), Halland (2 miles) and Little Horsted (3 miles) and past attempts to establish hotels in Ringmer have not been successful. The most obvious location at which to establish a successful country house hotel would be at Glyndebourne, where there are suitably

unobtrusive locations and an established quality brand. We do not consider that Ringmer offers suitable locations for roadside motel-style development. Such development would be damaging to the landscape, would inevitably cause excessive light pollution, and the low value jobs created would not match the capacity available in the local labour force. There is only one provider of self-catering holiday accommodation in the parish. B&B accommodation is usually available in the parish, though such businesses have tended to be transient, with no long-established providers.

Policies proposed to enhance employment opportunities in Ringmer

EMP 1 Additional employment provision for the period 2006-2011, and probably until at least 2016, can be met by more intensive use of and upgrading of facilities at the extant medium sized business, retail, service and leisure sites listed in appendix 1 and by the conversion to employment-related use of appropriate redundant agricultural buildings. If this policy is successful, and proves sustainable, it may become necessary at later stages during the period to 2026 to identify additional sites of this nature at locations with good access to the local road network, and where with appropriate screening they will not cause landscape damage, light pollution or annoyance to neighbours. No additional large sites should be designated until the capacity of the sites listed in appendix 1 is much more fully exploited.

EMP 2 Employment-related use of all the sites identified in appendix 1 should be retained. Conversion to non-employment use should not be permitted [South East Plan policy RE5(ii)].

EMP 3 Proposals for the more intensive development of, and upgrading of facilities at, the business sites identified in appendix 1 will normally be supported [South East Plan policy RE2(ii)] providing that they meet the following criteria.

- (i) They increase the number or quality of employment opportunities in Ringmer.
- (ii) Traffic generated has acceptable access to the road network.
- (iii) Parking generated can be accommodated within the site.
- (iv) Landscape degradation is avoided by provision and maintenance of effective screening by trees or woodland planting at sites outside the planning boundaries.
- (v) Light pollution is avoided by any necessary external lighting being directional and appropriately shielded.
- (vi) New development at sites within the planning boundary conserves at least the extant quality of the streetscene.
- (v) They do not create nuisance to neighbours.

EMP 4 Proposals for the conversion to employment-related uses of redundant farm buildings will be supported providing that they meet the following criteria.

- (i) The buildings involved are permanent structures, traditional in form, have useful remaining life and are of positive landscape value. Pastiche replacements of worn out, decrepit, rural buildings should not be permitted.
- (ii) The site has acceptable access to the local road network. Proposals should not increase the traffic (beyond that inherent in former agricultural use) on Norlington Lane, Green Lane, the northern section of Broyle Lane, Potato Lane and the section of Neaves Lane south of the sewage works, or lead to significant increases in traffic or create any HGV traffic on Wellingham Lane, Harveys Lane or Moor Lane.
- (iii) The necessary parking can be accommodated within the curtilage of the site and will not intrude into the local landscape.
- (iv) Light pollution is not created.
- (v) New activities do not create nuisance to neighbours.

- EMP 5** The core retail area at Ringmer Green (including the shopping precinct, Ringmer Village Hall and the Anchor Inn, bounded by Lewes Road and Springett Avenue) should be retained for retail, service, office and leisure uses only. Parking facilities in the immediate area are crucial to the viability of this site: the number of spaces should be maintained and their management should prioritise shoppers and service users. Additional development or redevelopment within this area will be supported providing that it meets the following criteria.
- (i) It increases the number or quality of employment opportunities in Ringmer.
 - (ii) The traditional “village” appearance of the buildings fronting Lewes Road and the Village Green is conserved.
 - (iii) Parking provision is maintained at at least its present level.
- EMP 6** Retail development within the larger business sites identified in appendix 1 should be permitted, with the same conditions as other commercial development at the same sites.
- EMP 7** Retail development at other roadside locations outside development boundaries should not normally be permitted unless directly linked to the marketing of local agricultural or locally-produced craft products.
- EMP 8** To conserve the village and rural landscape, business signs and other advertising should be carefully regulated. This is particularly important outside the planning boundaries. Illuminated signs or advertisements should not be permitted.
- EMP 9** Health care. Ringmer will seek to maintain and improve the services and available within the village, both for Ringmer residents and those of other neighbouring communities. The following are particular priorities, as providers of both local services and local employment.
- (i) Provision of adequate healthcare facilities for all Ringmer residents.
 - (ii) Retention and upgrading of the social care, rehabilitation and recuperation facilities at 39 Harvard Road.
 - (iii) The provision of other health services, care homes and nursing homes within Ringmer should be maintained at at least its present level. Conversion of extant health care premises to residential use should not be permitted unless equivalent alternative facilities are provided elsewhere in the village or their redundancy is established.
- EMP 10** Educational facilities. The exceptional contribution to Ringmer of the highly successful Ringmer Community College is of great importance to the village. Further development of the college within its site, and expansion of associated recreational activities onto the adjoining site allocated for recreational use in the Lewes District Local Plan, will be supported, subject to the conditions below. The proportion of Ringmer parents who choose to send their children to other local primary schools reduces employment opportunities and creates unnecessary road traffic, so is thus of concern. Proposals to develop Ringmer Primary School that will make it more attractive to local parents will be supported, subject to the conditions below.
- (i) Sustainable travel planning, including prompt implementation of plans for a Ringmer-Lewes cycleway, with a designated safe cycle route through the village to enable children commuting to the Community College from Lewes to travel safely by bicycle.
 - (ii) Negative impact on the rural landscape and light pollution are avoided.
 - (iii) Provision is made within the site for any additional parking necessary.
 - (iv) New activities do not create nuisance to neighbours.
 - (v) Improved and safer road traffic and pedestrian access to Ringmer Community College is provided.

EMP 11 Provision of an adequate water supply and an adequate sewage system is of prime importance to the community. The provision of additional water storage facilities within Ringmer parish should be supported providing that the new facilities are constructed west of the A26 and that it is established that there are adequate sources of water available that can be abstracted without causing environmental damage. The Ringmer sewage works is listed as a business site in appendix 1. The present site is believed adequate for its purpose, but should this prove not to be the case extension of this site should be supported, as an exception to policy EMP 1 above.

EMP 12 Tourism & leisure. Development of employment opportunities relating to tourism and leisure at existing sites will be encouraged, and development of new opportunities at new sites will be considered, providing that they are compatible with South East Plan policies TSR4 and TSR2 and also:

- (i) The site has acceptable access to the local road network. Proposals should not increase the traffic (beyond that inherent in normal agricultural use) on Norlington Lane, Green Lane, the northern section of Broyle Lane, Potato Lane and the section of Neaves Lane south of the sewage works, or lead to significant increases in traffic or create any HGV traffic on Wellingham Lane, Harveys Lane or Moor Lane. All plans should consider how visitor attraction can be combined with minimisation of traffic generation.
- (ii) Any necessary parking can be accommodated within the site and will not intrude into the local landscape.
- (iii) Additional light pollution is not created.
- (iv) New activities do not create nuisance to neighbours.

APPENDIX 1

List of substantial business, retail, service and leisure sites in Ringmer to which policy EMP 2 above applies.

BUS 1 Diplocks Business Site.

Location: North-east of Bishops Lane, within the Ringmer planning boundary.

Access: via Bishops Lane to the B2192.

Present use: Diplock's knackers yard and several other businesses.

Comment: Close to new residential development and access includes a section of the residential Bishops Lane. This site was considered but rejected for residential development in the recent Lewes District Council Urban Capacity Study. We concur in that judgement, both for the reasons there given and because there are some actual and potential uses (e.g. recycling of domestic waste) for which a central location is necessary for efficiency. Some of the units on this site would benefit from upgrading and the site is poorly screened.

BUS 2 Ringmer Business Park.

Location: South of the B2192, with its own planning boundary.

Access: via Chamberlaines Lane to the B2192.

Present use: Coopers scrapyard, Clarks Glass and several other businesses.

Comment: Surrounded by farmland but quite effectively screened. Unimplemented planning permission for additional units.

BUS 3 Broyle Business Sites

Location: In the angle between B2192 & B2124, within the Broyle planning boundary.

Access: several, all direct to B2192 or B2124.

Present use: Harper & Eade agricultural merchants with retail premises, ESCC Highways and many businesses.

Comment: The largest, busiest and best situated business area in Ringmer. Some potential for future eastward expansion later in the planning period should the need become apparent.

BUS 4 Chandlers Yard.

Location: In the Broyle, north-west of the B2192. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: direct access to the B2192.

Present use: Chandlers builders merchants with retail premises.

Comment: Large builders' merchant's yard, presently used mostly for open storage of building materials.

BUS 5 Builders Beams site.

Location: In the Broyle, south-east of the B2192. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: direct access to the B2192.

Present use: Builders Beams steel construction and South Downs Fencing.

Comment: History of annoyance to neighbours from excess noise and unauthorised tipping around the site. Poorly screened from the public footpath along one boundary. Permission for business use of this site was perhaps, with the benefit of hindsight, ill-advised.

BUS 6 Broyle Place Farm.

Location: North of the B2124 immediately east of Broyle Place. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: direct access to the B2124.

Present use: Group of businesses based in former farmyard.

Comment: Ringmer Community Orchard located here.

BUS 7 Upper Stoneham Farm.

Location: East of the A26 just north of Earwig Corner. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: direct access to the A26.

Present use: Group of businesses, including Caffyns vehicle storage, based in former farmyard.

Comment: HGV access passes between residential cottages. Extensive vehicle parking had negative landscape impact but screening now planted. Southern frontage adjoins the boundary of, and is very visible from, the present AONB and the proposed future South Downs National Park.

BUS 8 Disused Chicken Farm, Clay Hill.

Location: East of the A26 at Clayhill. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: direct access to the A26.

Present use: One furniture retail unit and one business in former chicken shed.

Comment: Large site currently housing a long-derelict chicken farm with decaying buildings with one new retail unit across the road frontage. One residential bungalow nearby. Subject to improved access and screening, has unrealised potential.

BUS 9 Banff Farm, Clay Hill.

Location: West of the A26 at Clay Hill. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: direct access to the A26.

Present use: Several businesses based in large modern farm buildings.

Comment: Access to A26 has been improved but hardly ideal. Site is screened from view from the A26 by the owner's house and lie of the land.

RET 10 Ringmer Core Retail Area, Ringmer Green.

Location: South of B2192, west of Springett Avenue, within the Ringmer planning boundary.

Access: via Springett Avenue to the B2192.

Present use: Shopping Precinct with 13 retail units and shoppers' car park. Ringmer Village Hall & car park. Anchor Inn & car park. Georgian house housing bank, estate agent, dentist & offices. Modern single storey building housing retail unit and offices.

Comment: Busy complex at the heart of Ringmer village providing retail, service and leisure facilities, with parking, for the community. Distinctive Georgian & Victorian buildings along the Lewes Road frontage, facing Ringmer Green, rightly within the Ringmer Conservation Area. Shopping precinct is unattractive if functional. Shoppers' car park with garages is run down. Scope for improvement.

SER 11 ESCC facility, 39 Harvard Road.

Location: Within Springett Avenue estate and the Ringmer planning boundary.

Access: via estate roads.

Present use: ESCC residential home formerly for the elderly, now used as unit providing care for the elderly while recuperating or respite care. Greatly valued facility, especially when day care also provided, but rooms, built in the 1970s, do not meet current standards. ESCC plans to demolish and rebuild a modern facility on the site as part of planned service reprovision, probably c.2008-9.

Comment: Very strong local support for retention of a facility for the elderly at this location.

SER 12 Ringmer Community College & Ringmer Primary School.

Location: South of the B2192, on the eastern edge of Ringmer village and within the Ringmer planning boundary.

Access: Ringmer Community College has direct access to the B2192, plus pedestrian and car access to Greater Paddock. Ringmer Primary School access is to Harrison's Lane.

Present use: Education for all ages, plus a range of community educational and leisure facilities. Ringmer Nursery School also uses the site. There is unimplemented planning permission for a new Ringmer Library to be constructed on the site.

Comment: This large site, mainly playing field, has Ringmer Community College and associated leisure facilities at one end and Ringmer Primary School at the other. The Lewes Local Plan has conditionally allocated an additional area of farmland directly east of Ringmer Community College for community leisure use.

SER 13 South East Water Reservoir and Water Treatment Works, near Barcombe Mills.

Location: On the dammed Iron River near Barcombe Mills. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: via a service road to Barcombe Mills Lane and the A26.

Present use: Reservoir, drawing water from the Iron River and, when necessary, the River Ouse, and purifying it to provide drinking water for the area. Limited fishing use.

Comment: Investigation of the possibility of building a second reservoir to secure additional storage is in progress. The water treatment works is reasonably well screened.

SER 14 Ringmer Sewage Works.

Location: West and east of Neaves Lane. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: via Neaves Lane to the B2124.

Present use: Sewage works. Permission to base several HGV here recently granted.

Comment: Screening requires improvement, especially east of Neaves Lane.

LES 15 Glyndebourne Opera House.

Location: Site straddles Ringmer's southern boundary. Outside planning boundaries but within the present AONB and the proposed South Downs National Park.

Access: to the Ringmer-Glynde C road and thus the A27 or B2192.

Present use: Nationally important Opera House attached to country house, with extensive gardens, accessory facilities and parking.

Comment: In the middle of, and excellent access to, a very attractive section of downland. Use as Opera House is seasonal. The more functional elements of the site are effectively screened.

LES 16 Raystede Animal Welfare Centre.

Location: In the Broyle, north-west of the B2192. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: direct access to the B2192.

Present use: Animal welfare centre with bungalow, holding and treatment facilities for animals and an extensive pond complex (based on a former brickyard).

Comment: Immediately adjoins Chandlers Yard (BUS 4 above).

LES 17 East Sussex Gliding Club Field.

Location: In the Broyle south-east of the B2192. Outside planning boundaries.

Access: direct access to the B2192.

Present use: Airfield for well established gliding club serving the sub-region.

Comment: Very extensive land-raising is being undertaken to level the field. Contains a scatter of buildings, mostly low quality. The tug aircraft used by some gliders has caused annoyance to residents, though most regard the gliders themselves as an attractive element of village life. Open aspect limits alternative uses.

LES 18 Southdown Hunt Kennels

Location: In the Broyle south of the B2124. Within the Broyle planning boundary.

Access: direct access to the B2124.

Present use: Hunt kennels, also includes residences for hunt staff.

Comment: Staff accommodation includes a listed house dating from the period when the site housed a Royal Horse Artillery barracks during the Napoleonic Wars. The hounds are housed in the former barracks armoury building.

Ringmer Parish Council
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