

Character & Key Design Statement

CORE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

To maintain the character and key design features of Rottingdean, a historic chalk downland village.

NATIONAL CONTEXT

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the overarching planning principles for sustainable development and how good design should contribute positively to making places better for people, and ensuring that they are attractive, usable and durable.

Specifically the NPPF (Section 7, Paragraph 58) states that:

Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- *Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
- *Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- *Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.*

The NPPF (Section 7, Paragraph 61) makes the point that *...although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations... and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.*

Importantly the NPPF (Section 7, Paragraph 60) is clear that *... policies should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation,*

originality or initiative ... It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

LOCAL CONTEXT

The character of Rottingdean village is closely linked to its landscape setting, nestled between the open downland of the South Downs National Park, which acts as an immediate reminder of the village's rural location, and the sea. Just 3 miles to the west of the city of Brighton & Hove, the village of Rottingdean is a distinct settlement from the urban conurbation and maintains a strong village identity, with an old-fashioned high street at its core and an eclectic mix of properties expanding outwards towards Ovingdean in the north and Saltdean to the east.

The origins of the Parish of Rottingdean are in farming with many of the dwellings still in existence and a mix of 16th and 17th century cottages, mock Tudor buildings and grand Georgian houses. These original buildings used local materials, mainly flint, and through the centuries this resource has continued to be a key feature in many of the buildings that have been built. Flint walls and facades feature in many of the historic buildings, most notably in the Conservation Area that forms the heart of the village, and is an integral part of Rottingdean's character.

Over time and as the then Borough of Brighton expanded from the 1930s, Rottingdean saw newer developments of mainly bungalows along its northern spine stretching out towards Ovingdean, and the building of larger detached family homes along Dean Court Road. Whilst the Parish boundaries to the east have become blurred with Saltdean, with a variety of larger detached homes, there remain natural gaps to the north and west, with protection on either side from the South Downs National Park. The Village Audit, appended to this document, shows examples of the style of properties that can be found in the village.

INTENTIONS

- To maintain Rottingdean as a thriving, vibrant and distinctive village by protecting and enhancing the unique characteristics, including its green spaces.
- To promote the much loved 'village feel', by supporting small-scale, sustainable development
- To maintain the high quality natural environment.
- To ensure that any further development and change will respect the village's past and present and will contribute positively to the future of Rottingdean and enhance its special nature.

- To maintain the historic access to the seafront, improving access and the public realm.
- To adhere to the site specific planning guidance contained in the St Aubyns Planning Brief.

GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The aim of the Character & Design Principles is to ensure that development reflects the unique character, and characteristics, of the village. Developers must demonstrate in a design and access statement how their proposed development contributes to the character of Rottingdean village. Architectural design should reflect high quality local design references in both the natural and built environment and reflect and reinforce the local distinctiveness of the village.

There is no single predominant style, size or type of property, but instead, a mixture. This extends beyond the materials used and the detailed design of the property into the layout of a scheme, orientations and rooflines within a development and across adjacent properties, and the visual and physical connection of the development into the wider village. This does not limit imagination or encourage pastiche, in fact exactly the opposite, it encourages good, individual and characterful design that compliments the uniqueness of Rottingdean village, provides inspirational spaces in which to live and work, and enhances the overall appearance of the village.

The following Design Principles should be taken into account as part of the development planning process.

Principle GDP1: Building heights and scale

The height and scale of new buildings should recognise and be sympathetic with neighbouring properties and roofscapes. Proposals should demonstrate how heights and density of development will be sympathetic to the existing street scene and surroundings. Proposals for taller buildings on the seafront will be considered where they complement and do not impinge on strategic views within and beyond the village.

Principle GDP2: Protection of views

The visual impact of development proposals on key views and vistas should be considered sensitively. Where possible views both within settlements and out towards the sea and countryside should be retained or enhanced, and proposals should explain how any adverse impact is minimised.

Principle GDP3: Landscaping

Development should incorporate soft landscaping in keeping with the village setting to mitigate the visual impact and, where appropriate, landscaping schemes should seek to include local species. Any existing front boundaries and building lines, including walls and hedges, should be retained or enhanced.

Principle GDP4: Materials

The materials used should reflect the distinctive local character of the village, recognising the use of local materials, particularly the use of flint in walls and facades, and complement those used in adjoining and adjacent buildings.

Principle GDP5: Heritage assets

Development which affects any heritage asset should respect and protect the significance of the asset concerned and should demonstrate how local distinctiveness is reinforced.

Principle GDP6: Sustainability

Development should be designed to incorporate appropriate energy, water and waste saving measures, to minimise the environmental impact and ensure long term sustainability. Appropriate renewable sources should be considered where appropriate to contribute to a lower carbon footprint.

Principle GDP7: Pathways and verges

Development should integrate wherever possible with existing pathways and cycleways and should not restrict transit for cyclists or pedestrians, including those with limited mobility. Grass verges should be retained wherever possible as they contribute to the fabric of the village.

Principle GDP8: Settlement edge development

Development affecting the settlement edges should respect the landscape setting and be softened by landscaping to complement the character of the surrounding countryside and South Downs National Park setting.

Principle GDP9: Conservation Area

Development should recognise the special designation of the Rottingdean Conservation Area (designated 1970, as amended April 2012) and the contents of the Character Statement (see section below).

LOCAL DESIGN REFERENCES

The fabric of the village is characterised by its manmade features as much as those which surround it in the natural environment.



(©David Goddard Photography)

The style and type of properties that can be found in the village varies considerably, reflecting the period and what was in vogue at the time they were built. They show how the village has evolved through the ages and, in the main, contribute to the village's uniqueness.





The natural environment acts as a physical boundary; the village is protected on one side by the chalk cliffs and the sea and surrounded by downland; these natural features provide the backdrop to the village setting and also a draw for the many visitors.





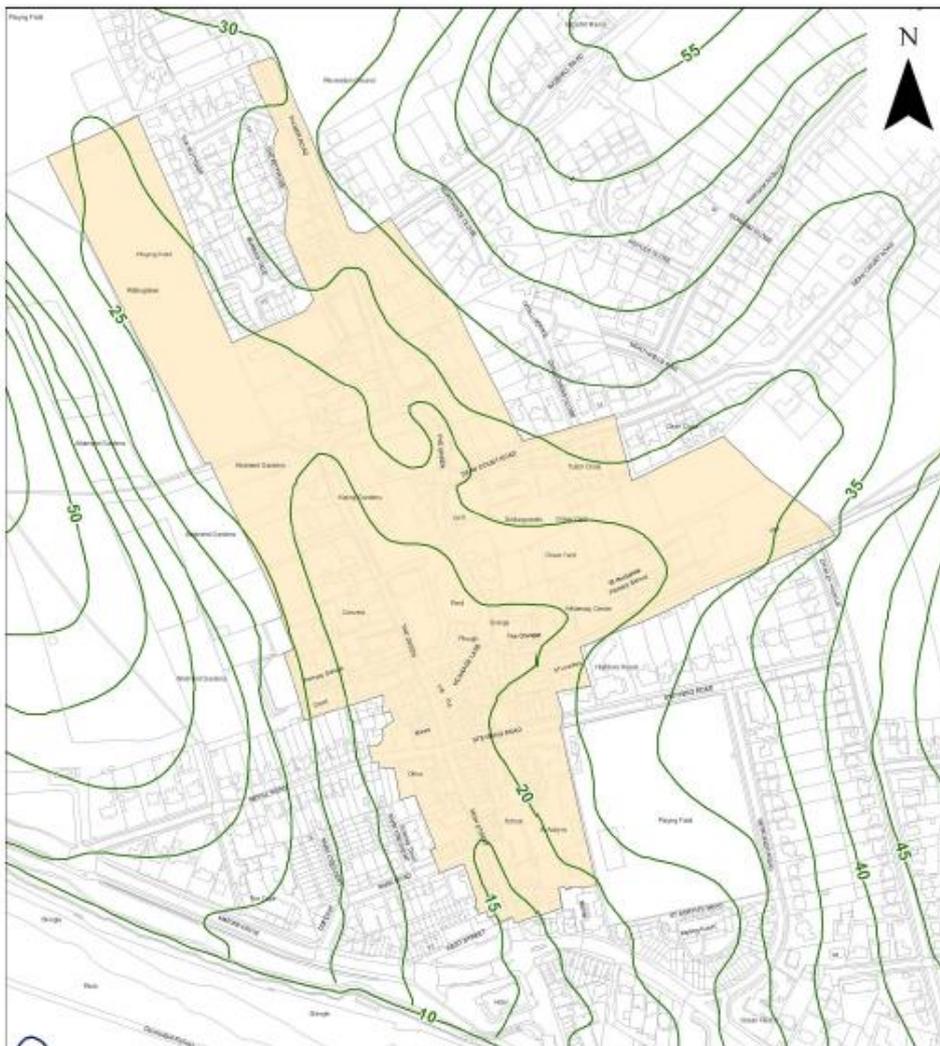
Further examples can be found in the **Village Audit** appended to this document, which also includes examples of design that is considered to be poor or out of keeping with the village setting. The Rottingdean Conservation Area Character Statement should also be referred to for more information.



CONSERVATION AREA

The area at the heart of Rottingdean is a designated Conservation Area, designated in September 1970 with the boundary amended in 2011. It comprises the core of the historic village, including the High Street and The Green, as well as flanking green spaces to the east and west comprises the core of the historic village, including the High Street and The Green, as well as flanking green spaces to the east and west.

Rottingdean Conservation Area



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Key

- Contours
- Conservation Area

Amongst its heritage assets, the area contains 54 listed buildings, eight locally listed buildings and an archaeological notification area. Three further archaeological notification areas, two

scheduled ancient monuments and a listed building (Rottingdean Windmill) are set in its immediate surroundings. Much of the open downland surrounding the village was designated as part of the South Downs National Park in April 2010.

A conservation area is defined as *'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*.

JUSTIFICATION & REFERENCES

National Planning Policy Framework, in particular the following sections:

7. Requiring good design

9. Protecting Green Belt land

11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

South Downs National Park Guidelines (2012)

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/>

Local list of Heritage Assets (BHCC 18 June 2015)

<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/planning/heritage/local-list-heritage-assets>

Brighton & Hove City Plan Part 1

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/planning/planning-policy/city-plan-part-one>

Rottingdean Conservation Area

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/planning/heritage/rottingdean-conservation-area>

Brighton & Hove Urban Characterisation Study (2009) Rottingdean Neighbourhood Study

https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/downloads/conservation/UrbanStdy_Introduction_final.pdf

Brighton & Hove Listed Buildings Directory

<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/planning/heritage/listed-buildings-brighton-hove>

Rottingdean Preservation Society

<http://www.rottingdeanpreservationsociety.org.uk/>