



## **BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT DRAFT POLICY HEADINGS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The commerce of the historic market town of Cranbrook and village of Sissinghurst was founded on the use of local resources and labour working in close relationship to the land.

Today the demands and opportunities of modern society have resulted in a diverse local economy of retail, services, and production that is less reliant on local resources.

The rise of the digital economy is providing local entrepreneurs with access to national and global markets through activities independent of locality.

A recent survey of local business showed the full spectrum of enterprises from traditional to digital active within the parish. Future aspirations and issues limiting growth and employment were identified.

The challenge for Cranbrook and Sissinghurst is to provide an enabling environment for business of all types to flourish and continue to contribute to the heart and vibrancy of our community.

This document lays out draft policy objectives and headings designed to build a thriving and sustainable business sector. A sector that leverages heritage and tradition, is based on entrepreneurial diversity, capitalises on digital opportunities, and is integrated into the community.



## **THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

Cranbrook and Sissinghurst is an attractive place for business in many respects with the Parish benefitting from a diverse range of sectors. Most business surveyed have been operating locally for over 15 years, many much longer. A majority expect to be active in five years and most have strong ambitions to grow. However, there are recurrent factors cited that are limiting growth, as shown below, that need to be addressed.



### Assets and Opportunities

The NDP Design Forum identified a range of under exploited opportunities for growth. These included making the most of the area's:

- rich heritage and landscape to revitalise the use of local resources as a source of enterprise and boost tourism and related services
- well-established health provision sector that needs to expand to meet growing demand and ensure continuity of provision
- outstanding education resources to meet the skills gap



- need for community shared spaces and entertainment
- public rights of way to provide greater connectivity and sustainable transport options.

### **BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT LIMITING FACTORS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The draft policy objectives are designed to address the identified factors limiting growth:

- lack of affordable housing and business premises
- poor infra structure
- lack of skills and training
- inadequate shared business and community amenities

and exploiting under developed opportunities:

- rich heritage and landscape
- outstanding educational resources
- community shared spaces and entertainment
- connectivity and sustainable transport.

### **BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT DRAFT POLICY INTENT**

1. Create an enabling environment for a diverse, sustainable business sector (existing and new enterprises) to boost employment, staff development and growth.
2. Meet the growing need for health services and ensure sustainability of supply.
3. Leverage heritage and tradition to maximise tourism and related business opportunities in ways sensitive to town and landscape.



4. Integrate business and community by developing shared retail and amenity spaces and services that meet the needs of the whole population.
5. Reinvigorate the relationship between business and countryside through the innovative and use of local resources, production and marketing.

## BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT DRAFT POLICY FRAMEWORK

DRAFT POLICY HEADINGS	NDP OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE
<b>BE01 Business Space</b> Planning applications for the following developments, when designed in ways sensitive to town	1 2 3 4 5 8 9	Meet the demand for business premises

<p>and/or landscape settings, will be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small-scale business development clusters</li> <li>• small-scale developments for business, residential and community mixed-use</li> <li>• conversion of long-term vacant High Street retail spaces into business premises</li> <li>• flexible, multi-use work spaces e.g., ‘hot desking’, digital hubs</li> <li>• redevelopment of brown field sites and restoration of buildings for small-scale industrial use.</li> </ul>		<p>54% of business surveyed are looking to expand over the next five years.</p> <p>There is a chronic shortage of small to medium sized business units limiting growth.</p> <p>A few businesses interviewed stated that “there are insufficient estate agencies dealing with this sector.”</p>
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<p><b>BE02 Transport &amp; Communication</b> Applications that result in improvements to communications, transport, facilities and access will be supported. For example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• install latest mobile phone transmitters and superfast broadband fibre optic cabling delivering 30mb/s</li> <li>• install fast charging points for public electric vehicles, park-and-ride options, and mini-bus services</li> </ul> <p>and which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to their town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p> <p>Planning applications designed to reduce demand for parking and levels of traffic (using non-car access routes) will be encouraged.</p>	<p><b>1 6 7</b></p>	<p>Improve poor infrastructure limiting growth and increase connectivity and sustainable transport solutions</p> <p>Parking - 53% of businesses surveyed cited insufficient parking for customers and staff.</p> <p>Transport</p> <p>25% of businesses surveyed cited lack of public transport as growth limiting</p> <p>93% of employees drive to work</p> <p>5% walk/cycle</p> <p>2% use public transport.</p> <p>Internet speed and reliability 35% cited poor internet speeds and reliability limiting growth.</p> <p>Mobile phone coverage</p> <p>100% complained of patchy coverage in the parish</p> <p>40% cited poor mobile phone limiting their business growth.</p> <p>The NDP Design event identified the need and opportunity to enhance connectivity across the parish and develop sustainable transport solutions fit for the future.</p>
<p><b>BE03 Adult Education</b> Planning applications for new buildings, change of use, extensions or new facilities that seek to address lack of adult education and vocational training opportunities, and which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to their town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p><b>1 4 6 7 9</b></p>	<p>Meet the need for skills through adult education and vocational training</p> <p>Rationale: In the recent Business Survey 37% of enterprises surveyed says the lack of core skills, particularly in customer service, is limiting business growth. 54% of businesses are looking to expand over next 5 years to enable local education resources to connect with business needs and expand their offerings to provide adult and vocational training for existing and emerging sectors.</p>

<p><b>BE04 Tourism</b> Planning applications for schemes designed to enhance the tourism economy and which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p><b>1 8 9</b></p>	<p>Leverage heritage and tradition</p> <p>Local facilities, for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing hotels, B&amp;Bs, restaurants</li> <li>• opening-up of heritage buildings to paying visitors</li> <li>• providing new attractions</li> <li>• improving transport and access and public toilet facilities</li> <li>• Self-Catering &amp; Camping OR Holiday accommodation</li> </ul> <p>are insufficient to encourage, sustain and expand tourism within the parish.</p> <p>Meet the growing need for health services and ensure sustainability of supply</p> <p>Ensure the sustainable provision of health, dental and wellbeing services to a growing population. Satisfy the needs of young families and the elderly.</p> <p>Rationale: Current age of GPs &amp; Number of GPs planning to retire within next 5 years is of concern and resultant remaining GPs is not sufficient to meet the needs of the parish growing population and changing demographics.</p>
<p><b>BE05 Farmsteads</b> Planning applications involving farm, farmsteads and land use change will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide local employment</li> <li>• make use of local resources</li> <li>• enhance productivity</li> <li>• are sensitive to landscape settings</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 3 4 5 8 6</b></p>	<p>In order to survive, farmers need to be allowed to diversify and make best use of local resources whilst respecting the landscape setting and on a small scale suitable to the local setting. Historically Evidence from farmers – poor land quality and need for diversification.</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>protect and enhance the environment.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>BE11</b> Planning applications for the creation of shared open spaces in the centre of Cranbrook with mixed-use, for the benefit of the community, and which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p> <p><b>NOW in Infrastructure Policies IN05</b></p>	<p><b>1 2 3 4 6 7</b></p>	<p>Integrate business and community</p> <p>Current amenity spaces are insufficient for the current and future demographics and do not provide adequate business opportunities. The space would provide opportunity for small traders and would encourage and support innovative ideas for the creation of shared open spaces for retail, farmer’s market, and day time and night time entertainment in the centre of Cranbrook.</p>
<p><b>BE12</b> Planning applications for the provision of amenities for young adults, which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p> <p><b>NOW in Culture &amp; Community CC06</b></p>	<p><b>1 2 3 4 5</b></p>	<p>Reduce amount of vandalism especially in Cranbrook</p>
<p><b>BE01</b> Planning applications for development of affordable, sustainable housing schemes, which can demonstrate that they are in keeping townscape and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p><b>2 3 4</b></p>	<p>Create an enabling environment for a diverse, sustainable business sector (existing and new enterprises) to boost investment, employment, staff development and economic growth.</p> <p>Meet the demand for affordable housing*</p> <p>65% of enterprises surveyed said their staff need affordable housing.</p> <p>A need for a minimum of 300 affordable homes for local businesses was identified.</p> <p>82% of employees travel into the parish to work because they cannot afford to live locally, some from as far away as Gillingham and Bexhill.</p>

<p><b>NOW in Housing &amp; Design HD04 Affordability &amp; Sustainability</b></p>		<p>Recent studies show that the Parish has one of the highest ratios between income and average house prices nationally at 1:19. There is a chronic shortage of rental accommodation at affordable rates.</p> <p>Living and working in the Parish is impossible for most people who wish to do so.</p>
<p><b>BE09</b> Planning applications for the provision of health, dental and well-being services, which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p> <p><b>NOW in Infrastructure IN02 Health &amp; Well being</b></p>	<p><b>5 3</b></p>	<p>Meet the growing need for health services and ensure sustainability of supply</p> <p>Ensure the sustainable provision of health, dental and wellbeing services to a growing population. Satisfy the needs of young families and the elderly.</p> <p>Rationale: Current age of GPs &amp; Number of GPs planning to retire within next 5 years is of concern and resultant remaining GPs is not sufficient to meet the needs of the parish growing population and changing demographics.</p>

## NOTES

This document is self-contained in terms of Policy intent and draft Policies for Business and Employment. The draft Policies have been related to the overall (revised) NDP Objectives as shown in column 2 in table above. The (revised) NDP Objectives are detailed in Appendix 2

Draft policies shown in **red** have been moved elsewhere as shown and the Objectives shown in **red** in column 2 relate to the original Objectives not the revised ones shown in Appendix 2.



The Business and Employment questionnaire, that was used as the basis for much of the evidence supporting the need for policies, included returns from 52 local business out of a register of 180 (29%) and was successful in gaining returns from the largest employers in the parish. As such, it is a valid representation of views and findings.

The supporting Evidence for the need for the draft Policies has been deleted from the body of this document and is detailed in Appendix 1.

## APPENDIX 1

### Supporting evidence for Draft Policies

DRAFT POLICY HEADINGS	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
<p><b>BE01 Business Space</b> Planning applications for the following developments, when designed in ways sensitive to town and/or landscape settings, will be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small-scale business development clusters</li> <li>• small-scale developments for business, residential and community mixed-use</li> <li>• conversion of long-tern vacant High Street retail spaces into business premises</li> <li>• flexible, multi-use work spaces e.g., ‘hot desking’, digital hubs</li> <li>• redevelopment of brown field sites and restoration of buildings for small-scale industrial use.</li> </ul>	<p>54% of business surveyed are looking to expand over the next five years.</p> <p>There is a chronic shortage of small to medium sized business units limiting growth.</p> <p>A few businesses interviewed stated that “there are insufficient estate agencies dealing with this sector.”</p>
<p><b>BE02 Transport &amp; Communication</b> Applications that result in improvements to communications, transport, facilities and access will be</p>	<p>Transport 25% of businesses surveyed cited lack of public transport as growth</p>

<p>supported. For example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• install 4/5G mobile phone transmitters and superfast broadband fibre optic cabling delivering 30mb/s</li> <li>• install fast charging points for public electric vehicles, park-and-ride options, and mini-bus services</li> </ul> <p>and which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to their town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p> <p>Planning applications designed to reduce demand for parking and levels of traffic (using non-car access routes) will be encouraged.</p>	<p>limiting</p> <p>93% of employees drive to work 5% walk/cycle 2% use public transport.</p> <p>Internet speed and reliability 35% cited poor internet speeds and reliability limiting growth.</p> <p>Mobile phone coverage 100% complained of patchy coverage in the parish 40% cited poor mobile phone limiting their business growth.</p> <p>Parking - 53% of businesses surveyed cited insufficient parking for customers and staff.</p>
<p><b>BE03 Adult Education</b> Planning applications for new buildings, change of use, extensions or new facilities that seek to address lack of adult education and vocational training opportunities, and which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to their town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p>In the recent Business Survey 37% of enterprises surveyed says the lack of core skills, particularly in customer service, is limiting business growth. 54% of businesses are looking to expand over next 5 years to enable local education resources to connect with business needs and expand their offerings to provide adult and vocational training for existing and emerging sectors.</p>
<p><b>BE04 Tourism</b> Planning applications for schemes designed to enhance the tourism economy and which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p> <p>the provision of health, dental and well-being services, which can demonstrate that they are designed in ways sensitive to town and/or landscape settings, will be supported.</p>	<p>Local facilities, for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing hotels, B&amp;Bs, restaurants</li> <li>• opening-up of heritage buildings to paying visitors</li> <li>• providing new attractions</li> <li>• improving transport and access and public toilet facilities</li> <li>• self-catering &amp; camping or holiday accommodation</li> </ul> <p>are insufficient to encourage, sustain and expand tourism within the parish.</p>
<p><b>BE05 Farmsteads</b> Planning applications involving farm, farmsteads and land use change will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide local employment</li> </ul>	<p>In order to survive, farmers need to be allowed to diversify and make best use of local resources whilst respecting the landscape setting and on a small scale suitable to the local setting. Historically Evidence from farmers – poor land quality and need for diversification.</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make use of local resources</li> <li>• enhance productivity</li> <li>• are sensitive to landscape settings</li> <li>• protect and enhance the environment.</li> </ul> |  |
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## APPENDIX 2

### NDP Objectives (revised)

1. To ensure that development respects and enhances the distinct historic character of the built environment and rural landscape.
2. To support mixed, tenure-blind development that delivers sustainable, quality, housing and business facilities to meet local needs and promote social cohesion.
3. To encourage development of the highest architectural and energy efficient design and maximises the use of local resources in meeting community and business needs.
4. To encourage development that regenerates urban and rural brownfield sites.
5. To ensure rural development is reflects the historic settlement pattern.
6. To support the delivery of community health and education infrastructure necessary for a growing population.
7. To encourage access and movement networks that promote well-being, increase safety and protect the environment.
8. To support and encourage a diversity of land use that protects and enhances the environment and grows the economy.
9. To support the development of infrastructure and schemes that encourage tourism.

