

Opinion

# Planning Update

with Margaret Howell  
Battle Town Councillor

**Battle Neighbourhood Plan**  
*Your monthly update*

## Battle Neighbourhood Plan

**A**ugust and September have been quiet months so far, as the Steering group has not had a meeting since July. But rest assured, regular meetings will be resumed at the end of the month. By then, we should have had a visit from a professional planner under the auspices of AECOM/ Locality/MHCLG. This help is in addition to that provided by our consultant, but is concerned with the site assessments, rather than the overall view.

We initially formulated our own criteria of site assessments, but have revised these, so we are in line with the Planner, who has worked on other Neighbourhood Plans. We have used a "traffic light" methodology: Green for an acceptable site, Amber for a marginal site and Red for an unacceptable site. In conjunction with this, we have another five point set of criteria as follows: 1 - does not meet criteria, 2 - nearly meets criteria, 3 - Just meets criteria, 4 - Meets criteria acceptably, 5 - fully meets criteria.

In addition, one popular factor is that of encouraging cycling and walking. With



that in mind, sites will be categorised as follows: 1 - over 1.5 km from key services, 2 - within 1.25 km, 3 - within 1 km, 4 - within 500 metres, 5 - within 250 km of key services.

The Planner advises that she will assess all potential sites against the national and

local planning policy criteria to establish which sites are "developable" in planning terms. These ties in with our "traffic light" scheme. There will then be correlation between our assessments of potential sites and the planner's assessment. The sites will then be refined to shortlist

those that are best in terms of meeting the Neighbourhood Plan principles and objectives (as well as meeting the housing numbers required).

The timescale for this is as follows:  
Finalise and agree criteria: Completed  
Initial desktop site assessments: August - mid September  
Site visits: Scheduled for 18th September  
Finalise site assessments and produce report: By mid October  
Peer review: By the end of October  
Battle Town Council Review Start of November

Finalise report Mid November  
In addition, one of the Steering Group's main concerns is the retention of the Strategic Gap between Battle and Crowhurst along Forewood Lane and that between Telham Lane and Hastings at Breadsell Farm in order to maintain their separate identities and prevent ribbon development. Rother District Council in its Strategic Gaps Landscapes Assessment of March 2016 reiterated this importance.

Please do continue to look at our website: [battleneighbourhoodplan.co.uk](http://battleneighbourhoodplan.co.uk)