

Lewes District Local Plan Part 2 Examination

Additional comments and proposed revised policy on the **Ringmer Planning Boundary submitted at the request of Inspector Fox by Ringmer Parish Council**

John Kay

Ringmer Parish Council address: Ringmer Village Hall, Lewes Road, Ringmer, East Sussex BN8 5QH

Re: Proposals Map for Ringmer

Commentary

- 1.01 Ringmer Parish Council recommends that the new planning boundary proposed for Ringmer and shown on the Ringmer Proposals Map should be amended as shown on the attached plan:
- (i) to include the house called Culverden, Norlington Lane;
 - (ii) to include a small group of houses on the south side of Gote Lane and Rushey Green.
- 1.02 It was implied by the Council at the examination that any planning boundary reconsideration should be carried out as a separate exercise. However, as far as the Parish Council is aware, the only occasions when the Ringmer planning boundary has ever been reconsidered since it was first drawn over 50 years ago have been as part of a new Local Plan.

Culverden

- 1.03 Culverden was built in the early 1960s on a modest plot of land taken from the adjacent Bishops Field. At that time it was well outside the Ringmer planning boundary. Culverden stands on the east side of Norlington Lane. It is a perfectly pleasant house of its era, but has no distinctive features.
- 1.04 With the development of the new Delves estate in the 1960s and 1970s the Ringmer planning boundary was moved to Bishops Lane, including the Delves Estate to its south. In the 1990s the former Ringmer abattoir, which stood on the north side of Bishops Lane, was redeveloped for housing as Norlington Court, with a new access to Norlington Lane. Culverden is immediately adjacent to Norlington Court, its southern neighbour.
- 1.05 The 2016 LLP1 included, as a new strategic site, 110 new dwellings on Bishops Field and Potters Field. This new development is immediately adjacent to Culverden, and its eastern neighbour. Preparatory work for this development is now in progress.
- 1.06 The 2016 Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan allocated for development the site of Sunnymede, a 1930s house in a 1 acre plot, also taken from Bishops Field. The construction of this new development of 10 houses is now well advanced. This new development is immediately adjacent to Culverden, its northern neighbour. Two of the new houses will be immediately north of Culverden along Norlington Lane.
- 1.07 The new proposals map includes Norlington Court, the new Bishops Lane strategic site and the new Sunnymede development within the planning boundary, which now runs down Norlington Lane except that, anomalously, it excludes Culverden. If the proposals map is approved as it stands, as you walk north from Bishops Lane along Norlington Lane you would see a row of houses on its eastern side (6 Norlington Court, 1 Norlington Court, then Culverden, then the access road to the Sunnymede development, then the two new houses part of this development that face onto Norlington Lane), all quite evenly spaced out.

Anomalously, all except Culverden would lie within the proposed planning boundary. Culverden has been engulfed by more recent development, and should also be included within the new planning boundary.

Gote Lane

- 1.08 The houses on the south side of Gote Lane (east of Gote Farm) and Rushey Green are of mixed date. They are a mixture of houses and cottages, varying in age from the 1820s to the 1980s. They stand on plots enclosed from the verge of the lane and from Rushey Green in the late Georgian period. The surviving Georgian houses are all much altered. None are recognised as heritage assets. None of these properties are included in the Gote Lane Area of Established Character.
- 1.09 When the Ringmer village planning boundary was drawn in the 1960s it was drawn along Gote Lane and these houses were excluded. The intention was that the restrictive countryside extension policies should be applied to the houses and cottages on the south side of the lane, to protect views from the lane between the houses up to the Downs.
- 1.10 This intention has never been given weight in the face of actual planning applications. Four completely new houses were permitted on garden plots or long-abandoned house plots in the 1960s, 1970s and 1990s. In theory extensions should have been restricted to below 50% of the original house size, but at least half the houses have been extended by much more than this over the intervening years. One cottage has been extended, in two phases, to more than four times its original size – doubled and then more than doubled again, and with a substantial new garage currently under construction. Several other new domestic garages have been erected. Hedges have grown up between the houses and Gote Lane, and an application for a close-boarded fence that also obscured the view from the lane to the Downs was approved. The views from Gote Lane to the Downs have thus been substantially reduced over time.
- 1.11 When the SDNP boundary was drawn in 2009 it ran along Gote Lane, Rushey Green and Potato Lane, except that it excluded from the new National Park the curtilages of this group of houses.
- 1.12 With the exception of this small group of houses the south-eastern and western planning boundaries of Ringmer village coincide with the SDNP boundary. It is recommended that this anomaly should be rectified by this section of the planning boundary being moved to coincide with the SDNP boundary.