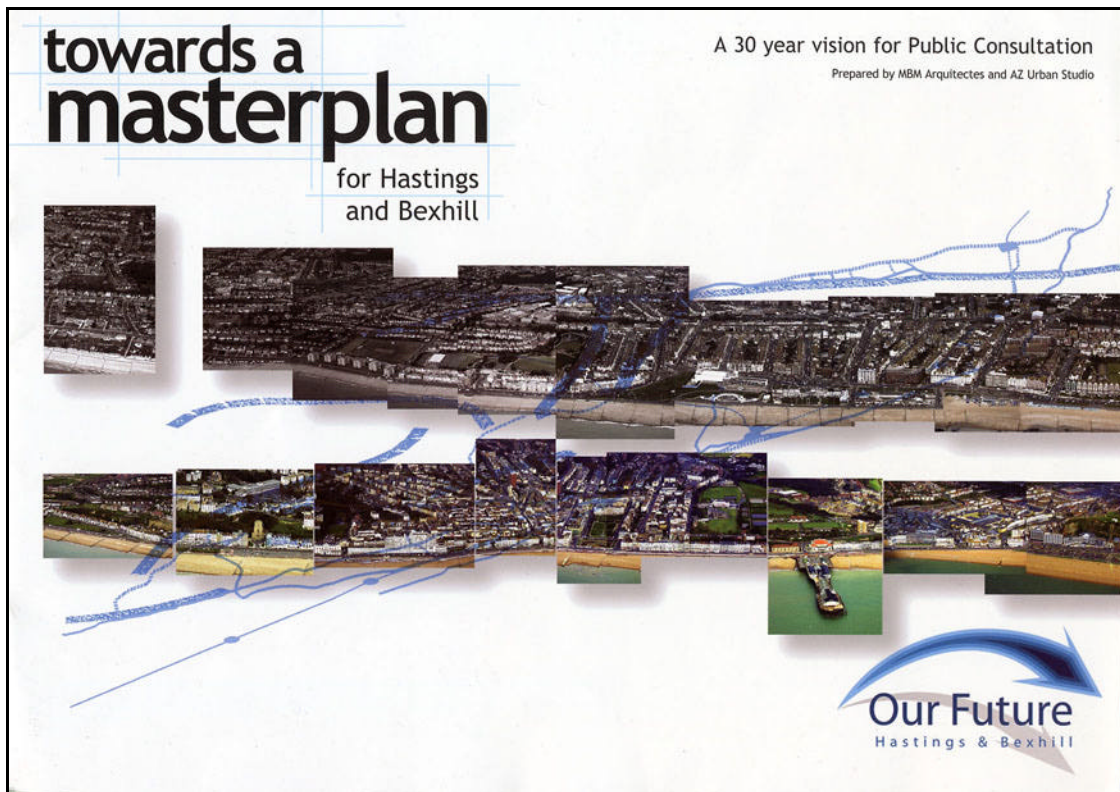


Consultation Results - the future of Hastings & St Leonards and Bexhill

APPENDIX B

The Masterplan



Produced by Clive Jacotine & Associates Limited
with Nick Wates Associates

On behalf of The Hastings & Bexhill Task Force

With support from Hastings Borough Council,
South East England Development Agency
and English Partnerships

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Consultation documents - if not attached, available on www.ourfuture.org.uk
or from The Regeneration Centre, 45a Robertson Street, Hastings 01424 429438
contactus@ourfuture.org.uk

Towards a Masterplan for Hastings & Bexhill – brochure questionnaire.

1 Introduction and conclusions

1.1 ABOUT THIS APPENDIX

- 1.1.1 This Appendix sets out the results of public consultation which took place during November and December 2002 on the proposed Masterplan for Hastings and Bexhill.
- 1.1.2 The exercise was part of a wide ranging consultation programme on the future of the area. This Appendix covers only the feedback arising from the *Towards a Masterplan for Hastings and Bexhill* brochure and related exhibition material. It should be read in conjunction with the main report on the overall consultation programme (*Consultation Results: the Future of Hastings & St Leonards and Bexhill*) as well as the Appendices on other plans and strategies.
- 1.1.3 The results have been clearly set out in a manner likely to be of most benefit to those refining the Masterplan or wanting to extract information on specific areas or themes.

1.2 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 1.2.1 A 14–page colour brochure was produced entitled *Towards a Masterplan for Hastings and Bexhill* which included a tear off reply–paid questionnaire (see Attachment). This was made available free at consultation events throughout Hastings and Bexhill and at numerous information points. People could also download the document and complete the questionnaire on-line on the South East of England Developments Agency’s website – www.ourfuture.org.uk
- 1.2.2 Several sets of two large wall charts on the Masterplan were also printed for display at several permanent and temporary exhibitions and presentations.
- 1.2.3 The aim was to inform people about the ideas proposed in the Masterplan and to secure informed feedback, both on people’s general reactions and on their suggestions for improvement.
- 1.2.4 The results were intended to assist with developing the Masterplan further and with firming up more detailed proposals for specific areas.
- 1.2.5 The brochure and wall chart were designed to have a reasonably long shelf-life for use during the first half at least of 2003.
- 1.2.6 Questionnaire responses have been fed into a database in the Corporate Planning Department which can be built up and developed.

1.3 THE CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 1.3.1 A total of 171 completed questionnaires have been returned to date of which 141, processed before the end of December, have been analysed for this report. See section 2.
- 1.3.2 16 organisations have submitted formal responses in the form of letters or reports. The main points are included in section 3.
- 1.3.3 Written comments were also submitted on feedback sheets at presentations: 15 on 26th November and 11 on 4th December. A transcription of these forms Appendix J5.
- 1.3.4 See main report, *Consultation Results*, for details of event attendance and media coverage.

1.4 CONSULTATION FINDINGS SUMMARY

- 1.4.1 There appears to be substantial support for the Masterplan. The average response from returned questionnaires for the main ideas was 77% for, 12% against and 11% not sure. The sense of general enthusiasm is encapsulated in the positive quotes in paragraph 2.7.
- 1.4.2 In order of popularity the main ideas were rated as follows:

	<i>idea</i>	<i>% for</i>	<i>% against</i>	<i>% not sure</i>
1	Metro rail services	92	2	6
2	University centre	90	4	6
3	Countryside park	85	9	6
4	Millennium community	83	7	10
5	Arts Quarter	76	10	14
6	Sea Avenue	76	13	11
7	Beach community	70	14	16
8	Country Avenue	69	21	10
9	Hilltop Gateway community	48	32	20

- 1.4.3 Differing popularity of various aspects of the main ideas are clearly identifiable. For instance, the sea avenue proposals for lighting, bars, restaurants and landscaping on the seafront are very popular but the idea of separating the east and west carriageways is not so enthusiastically supported. The Arts Quarter idea is strongly endorsed but the Centre for Arts and Design in Warrior Square is questioned by many.
- 1.4.4 There are markedly differing views on a great many aspects. For instance, the desirability of landmark buildings.

- 1.4.5 A number of fundamental differences of perspective are identifiable: for instance roads v no roads; development v no development.
- 1.4.6 A wealth of suggestions have been made. These range from minor changes to the current proposals to major proposals for new elements which might be included.
- 1.4.7 A number of common queries and concerns have emerged. For instance, whether the countryside park or link road will cause houses in Crowhurst to flood.

1.5 CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

1.5.1 Consultation important and welcomed

The consultation has been important for informing people about the Masterplan and giving them the opportunity to make their initial views known. It has been generally well received.

1.5.2 Continue consultation

A debate has been started which needs to continue. Responses to the questionnaire can continue to be encouraged over the coming months, so building up more data. It is recommended that suitable and consistent arrangements are made to collate and analyse responses coming in during 2003.

1.5.3 Support demonstrated

The results so far demonstrate considerable public support for the main ideas in the Masterplan to varying degrees and provide a wealth of suggestions and ideas which will be useful in developing it further.

1.5.4 Publicise and build on the results

The results of this first phase of consultation should be publicised both to provide feedback to those involved and to stimulate further debate and feedback. Ways of doing this could include:

- a) Publishing a summary of the results in *About* magazine or a separate publication and inviting further responses.
- b) A town meeting.
- c) Exhibition in the Regeneration Centre with interactive displays.
- d) Online publication with interactive debate.
- e) Continuing to develop links with local organisations.
- f) Make a film about the Masterplan including the consultation process.
- g) Build up an accessible archive of published and digital material as a resource and promotional tool.

1.5.5 Consultation on local issues

There is a need to focus future consultation on local issues. For instance, Millennium Community sites and particular sections of the Country Avenue. A variety of hands-on, practical methods would be appropriate including seminars, workshops, site tours, local information points and interactive website material.

1.5.6 Encourage more organisations to respond and engage

The organisation responses in particular could be used to stimulate other organisations throughout the area to debate the issues, form their own views and engage in the process.

1.5.7 Promote the Regeneration Centre

The Regeneration Centre is a particularly useful vehicle for the ongoing flow of information between parties and should be promoted and developed accordingly. Local organisations could perhaps be encouraged to use it more for meetings and debates.

1.5.8 Debates on key themes

Collaborative working and discussion is needed on key problem areas of controversy or uncertainty. For instance the Country Avenue, sustainability, green spaces, new housing, hilltop community.

1.5.9 Explore new ideas

Feasibility work is needed on a number of suggestions put forward. For instance seafront transport systems, harbour/marina.

1.5.10 Respond to queries

Some specific concerns and queries should be dealt with as soon as possible. In some cases this may require personal communication. It is recommended that responsibility for doing this is determined.

1.5.11 Feedback on changes made

In due course it will be important to let people know how the Masterplan has been changed in the light of the consultation results.

2. Questionnaire results

2.1 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 This section sets out the results of the 141 questionnaires processed before the end of December.
- 2.1.3 The results have been set out in the same order as the questionnaire with the original questions in bold. Two additional sections have been included on positive quotes (2.7) and Queries (2.8).
- 2.1.2 Numbers in brackets indicate the number of people making the same point. Other numbers refer to the questionnaire number to facilitate follow up.

2.2 VIEWS ON IDEAS

Do you like the proposed Masterplan ideas?

		Yes		No		Not sure		Total
		no	%	no	%	no	%	no
1a	Millennium Community	100	83	8	7	12	10	120
1b	Metro rail services	113	92	3	2	7	6	123
2	Country Avenue	85	69	26	21	13	10	124
3	Sea Avenue	93	76	16	13	14	11	123
4	University Centre	112	90	5	4	7	6	124
5	Arts Quarter	94	76	12	10	18	14	124
6	Beach Community	86	70	17	14	20	16	123
7	Countryside Park	104	85	11	9	8	6	123
8	Hilltop Gateway Community	59	48	39	32	25	20	123
	<i>Average percentages</i>		77		12		11	

2.3 Details liked most

It would be useful to know what *details* you like or dislike. For instance, you may like the idea of a country park but not the proposed lake. Or you may be against a beach community at Bulverhythe but in favour of re-aligning the A259 in that area.

Which specific details do you like the most and why?

- Arts quarter/general arts emphasis (17) 3, 4, 5, 9, 18, 20, 27, 28, 33, 3, 55, 68,72, 79, 85, 86, 118.
- Arts centre Warrior Square (1) 57.
- Beach huts/cafes (2) 41, 109.

4. Beach community –
 - a. engaging tradition and modern (1) 74
 - b. in general (6) 9, 12, 55, 59, 72, 106.
5. Brownfield site development focus (6), 6, 29, 49, 93, 114.
6. Bexhill Road bypass (5) 2, 39, 42, 49, 117.
7. Bulverhythe redevelopment (4), 2,16,29,57.
8. Country Avenue –
 - a. improve road links (2) 49, 88.
 - b. in general (5) 9, 32, 34, 60, 88.
9. Country park –
 - a. lake (4) 14, 20, 57, 140.
 - b. in general (8) 9, 36, 59, 70, 75, 89, 90, 124.
 - c. extension (1) 20.
 - d. greening of tip (1) 36.
10. History/tradition/quality references (1) 50.
11. Hilltop community – new station with park and ride (2) 17, 76.
12. Housing – new/good quality (3) 7, 11, 119.
13. Link road (4), 39, 42, 45, 47.
14. Modern designed/architecturally distinctive buildings (4) 27, 28, 72, 77.
15. Public transport improvements (1) 5,
16. Rail links –
 - a. improved/reduce car use (24) 2, 8, 18, 22, 28, 30, 45, 52, 54, 55, 62, 63, 64, 68, 76, 84, 91, 92, 94, 118, 119, 115, 138, 139.
 - b. new station Glyne Gap (1) 58.
17. Sea Avenue –
 - a. bars, restaurants, public art (3) 5, 57, 69.
 - b. in general (11) 9, 23, 27, 32, 37, 40, 49, 85, 96, 97, 124.
 - c. trees (4) 10, 22, 72, 101.
 - d. reducing traffic impact/people friendly (3) 10, 22, 26.
18. Sustainability (1) 15.
19. Transport links
 - a. improved between Bexhill and Hastings (2), 12, 31.
 - b. improved generally/integrated public transport (10) 6, 11, 71, 84, 90, 95, 98, 104, 106, 114.
20. University centre –
 - a. town centre location (5) 10, 19, 44, 72, 78.

- b. reuse buildings (4) 19, 76, 89, 114.
- c. piazza (1) 72.
- d. in general (20) 1, 4, 9, 11, 12, 18, 20, 27, 29, 36, 40, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 67, 73, 85, 118.

2.4 Details liked least

What specific details to you like the least and why?

1. Arts centre:
 - a. will clutter view from seafront (1) oc123.
 - b. does little for community arts (1) oc97.
 - c. waste of money (1) 34.
2. Arts quarter:
 - a. impractical /upmarket /stupid (2) 38, 88,
 - b. wrong area (2) 94,96.
3. Beach community:
 - a. terraced housing (1) 28.
 - b. possible flood problems (1) 83.
 - c. support existing beach huts instead (1) 86.
4. Beach huts – target for vandalism (1) 75.
5. Bexhill Road bypass (1) 76.
6. Country Avenue:
 - a. Ridge section damage to AONB (6) 2, 5, 28, 69, 91, 107.
 - b. allows development of green spaces (5) 25, 59, 95, 102,139.
 - c. allows new development around Bexhill (1) 39.
 - d. may become alternative to rail improvements (1) 66.
 - e. unsustainable (1) 67.
 - f. need bypass instead (1) 88, oc136.
 - g. turning quiet residential cul de sacs into rat runs (1) 140.
7. Countryside park:
 - a. enough parks already (1) 85.
 - b. will suffocate marshes (1) 108.
8. Green land development, any (1) 118.
9. Hilltop community:
 - a. horrible ugly/intrusive buildings (7) 2, 27, 41, 67, 68, 85, 98.

- b. swallowing up Crowhurst/countryside (14) 34, 35, 49, 58, 67, 68, 70, 75, 76, 100, 111, 120, 139, oc134.
 - c. against hi tech industry (1) 97.
 - d. lack of consultation in Crowhurst, (1) 6.
 - e. don't like/not inspired (2) 9, 12.
 - f. create more houses/traffic, (1) 60.
10. History disregarded/too much modernity (1) 17
11. Housebuilding
- a. no more wanted (4) 30, 58, 59, 76
 - b. affordable homes will attract anti-social elements (1) oc123.
12. Lake – don't like/unnecessary/more suited to inland development (5) LM29, 40, 76, 101, 138.
13. Landmark buildings – won't fit in/insensitive designs (3) 6, 55, 58.
14. Landmark buildings, Hastings town centre – obscure views of castle (1) 23.
15. Link road
- a. damage to Coombe Valley (2) 2, 76.
 - b. flood risk possibility (3) 4, 93, 119b.
 - c. adverse affect (noise/pollution) on Crowhurst (3) 6, 93, 134.
 - d. will encourage traffic growth (1) 68.
16. Marketing language of Masterplan (1) 18.
17. Metro – need buses instead (1) 88.
18. Modern design of buildings (2) 6, 23.
19. Roads – all/bypass by different names (3) 20, 39, 114.
20. Sea Avenue
- a. dual carriageway (1) 3.
 - b. impractical/too expensive (1) 38.
 - c. continuing through Old Town (1) 14.
 - d. insufficient space for ideas/engineering problems (2) 16, 117.
21. Timescale too long (1) 47.
22. University – students always poor so won't help town (1) 91.
23. Wilting station – delay trains to London (1) 101, oc123.

2.5 What else could be included

What else could be included in the Masterplan?

1. Architecture
 - a. modern but to complement what exists, 101.
 - b. preserve and restore old houses, 17.
 - c. more focus on historic buildings, 76.
 - d. further compulsory upgrading of dilapidated property (we have magnificent architecture hidden and allowed to deteriorate), 48.
2. Arts Trail – including Burtons’ St Leonards/famous residents/unusual buildings, 92.
3. Bathing pool site – use for recreation not housing (2) 137, oc140.
4. Bexhill Road – look at Eastbourne Friends of the Earth proposals, 111.
5. Bexhill Town Centre – pedestrianised shopping centre with open air eating, continental style squares, 63.
6. Bexhill – new library, 22.
7. Bridle paths and an equestrian centre 69
8. Bulverhythe
 - a. theme parks and a casino to give the area more interest, 37.
 - b. include an open air pool as part of beach community LM69.
9. Castle – enhance this important showpiece 77.
10. Country Avenue
 - a. move into valley of Westfield using Stonestile Lane as access, 89.
 - b. include green areas at Ore station and along Church Street and Victoria Avenue, 138.
 - c. Country park at Coghurst Wood not mixed development, 2.
11. De La Warr Pavilion – better restaurants, 90.
12. Empty shops – use as temporary studios/galleries, 85.
13. Events – annual festival linked with town's identity, e.g. new communication/image technologies, 21
14. Fountains – upgrade, 124.
15. Green spaces
 - a. better management of existing low profile green spaces in community, e.g. Hollington stream, 76.
 - b. better management and promotion of allotments, 76.

- c. consideration for existing wildlife havens, 76.
16. Harbour
 - a. create one. 113.
 - b. tidal inlet or access to the sea via a lock. LM14,
 17. Health
 - a. some emphasis on the healing environment? Where people come to take the waters. Make Hastings and St Leonards a must visit place for therapies and integrated health care, 26.
 - b. natural healing centre with physic garden at Glyne Gap, 85.
 18. Heritage – make more use of (Battle of Hastings etc) (2), 17, 24.
 19. Library – town needs purpose built library with parking oc123.
 20. Lighting – more, both traditional and modern, 72.
 21. Living above shops – to be encouraged, 104.
 22. Manor Gardens – tasteful viewpoint to be constructed, 22.
 23. Marina Pavilion – upgrade. 96.
 24. National museum within metro area – perhaps Museum of World War II, 103.
 25. Old Town, Hastings
 - a. proposals to heal the dreadful damage done by driving a suburban style road right through the middle of it, 14.
 - b. pedestrian precinct in the High Street up to and including Courthouse Street. 1,
 - c. improve security of fishing fleet, 76.
 - d. Ice House project, 104.
 26. Opening hours – get town centres and sea fronts "open" for longer each day and for more of the year, 27.
 27. Parks – recognition of importance of existing park structure (Alexandra Park, St Helens Woods, East Hill, West Hill, Fairlight Country Park), 14.
 28. Pedestrians
 - a. pathway for walkers/disabled/non motorised non-cycle path linking parks and seafront, 97.
 - b. green chain proposals (pedestrian routes in green), 14.
 - c. people mover along seafront, 124.
 29. Pelham Crescent and St Mary in the Castle – renovate to create one of the finest architectural feasts in the country, 51.
 30. Policy
 - a. to protect open spaces, 139.

- b. to deal with empty properties, 139.
- 31. Queens Road – regenerate/important gateway into the town (2), 107, LL43.
- 32. River Haven – clean up to avoid sewage leaking into it, 112.
- 33. Robsack – should become a lakeside community replacing the lowest part of Queensway. Crowhurst Rd at the bottom of the slope curves right as now into Churchwood Drive, which at the top of its slope curves past Churchfields Industrial Estate and then right onto Queensway with access to the new communities and Crowhurst connecting to its existing rd under the H to London to railway, 65.
- 34. Schools –Smaller, community based secondary schools. Size gives economy with anonymity! Spend a little more but get individuals proud of their community, 11.
- 35. Seafront
 - a. no cars along the seafront but include a dedicated bicycle lane. LL63.
 - b. new cafe at Warrior Square, 57.
 - c. covered community space by the sea for bad weather use, 87.
 - d. bars and cafes right on beach edge looking out to sea – similar to Brighton, 41.
 - e. volleyball area with imported sand! Palm trees in pots and modern sculptures! 41
 - f. convert to green space, 87.
 - g. slipway and canoe club (2), 88, oc137.
- 36. Sports
 - a. a decent sized swimming pool with decent sized changing rooms, 8.
 - b. far better sports centre than Ravenside, to include pools, solarium, gym, badminton, squash, jacuzzi, cafe, toilets, good showers etc, 22.
 - c. what about a fabulous swimming pool by the sea – few good swimming facilities in Hastings, oc57.
- 37. Sports – upgrade/new stadium for two non league clubs Pilot Field/Firs, 81.
- 38. St Leonards – bring the Eye [London Eye?] to St Leonards, 57.
- 39. Stade
 - a. plans for the enhancement of the amusements centre and fun fair after the lease expires which should conform to the existing historic/traditional character of the Old Town, 50.
 - b. much better redevelopment than that put forward so far, 21.
 - c. relocate amusement arcades and amusement park to the large car park at the east end of the Stade. (2) LL43, LL50.
- 40. Street sculpture – more and better quality, 124.

41. Tourists – better accommodation needed, 16.
42. Town centre, Hastings
 - a. a stylish sculpture or contemporary clock by Debenhams, oc123.
 - b. footway from Hastings station to Safeways, oc123.
43. Transport, buses – a revamped and extended plan for bus routes linking all areas, (4) 28, 77, 111, LL77.
44. Transport, car use – incentives to stop it/cheap buses and metro (2) 66, 91.
45. Transport, cycle routes
 - a. segregated track along Seafront, Queensway and The Ridge, 115.
 - b. bicycle lanes on all roads, LL63.
 - c. dedicated cycle paths/lanes to be incorporated across whole area (5). 6, 9, 28, 63, 72.
46. Transport, general
 - a. reopen tram track at Pebsham, 88
 - b. new tram link servicing local communities in Bexhill and Hastings, 68.
 - c. metro/tram link to Old Town, LM30.
 - d. wheelchair lanes around town, 79.
 - e. instead of link roads why not a tram system, possibly over similar routes. In my experience wherever these things exist (not many) people are very enthusiastic about them, 20, oc123.
 - f. a new vision with a public service partner, not exclusively private enterprise, 67.
 - g. first and foremost links between coastal ports, airports, M25, & London have to be priority as this is the main objection in the relocation of business in the area, 7.
47. Transport, park and ride – to be introduced, 87.
48. Transport, parking –
 - a. more provision, 84.
 - b. more for local shop owners, 88.
49. Transport - Roads and rail – generally improve (3), 11, 101, 104.
50. Transport, rail
 - a. electrify Ashford line, 88.
 - b. metro station at Conquest and by schools, 105.
 - c. more use for freight, 118.
 - d. improvements to London, Ashford, Gatwick, Brighton lines, 44.
 - e. improve railway to London, 17.

- f. extend metro to Eastbourne, LM44.
51. Transport, roads
- a. improvements to A259, 73.
 - b. improvements to A21 access/new link road from Queensway, 98, oc125.
 - c. improve A21, 17.
 - d. re-instate bypass along old existing rail track across the marshlands. [?]
 - e. generally improve, 84, oc127.
 - f. move A259 inland to continue east from the Highlands interchange to skirt the AONB bridging the main rail line and Crowhurst Rd then turning right onto A2100 to Ridge West with access to Queensway and Battle Rd. This frees it from heavy local traffic from Bexhill to Hastings. Its path alongside the Ridge and connected to it would ease heavy local congestion and improve access at anytime to Conquest Hosp. LM65.
 - g. dual Queensway, 88.
52. Transport, stations – improve existing stations eg Ore, Bexhill, Warrior Square, 31.
53. Trees
- a. more tree lined roads within the town, 32.
 - b. more trees along the seafront and feelings of festivity, oc57.
54. West St Leonards
- a. better retail facilities, 61.
 - b. a proper community centre, 61.
 - c. a proper concert hall at this end of town, 61.
 - d. a maritime museum. Amsterdam and wreck of the Anne: salvage, raise, conserve and house them in purpose-built and designed centres. A new tourist attraction to the west of town would be a welcome and radical endeavour, 19.

2.6 Other comments

Any other comments?

1. Approach – tackling the drink and drugs problems, reducing the number of cheap alcohol outlets and improving the housing stock (restoring the features) needs to go hand in hand with these proposals, 27.
2. Architecture

- a. care should be taken to preserve what is positive. New developments should be compatible with local heritage rather than a series of blotches on the landscape, 23.
 - b. use local architects, 58.
3. Arts quarter – in Old Town not St Leonards, LM24.
4. Beach community
- a. need tunnel and/or levee to reach sea at Bulverhythe, (2) LM22, LM119.
 - b. seaside leisure pursuits – such as sail boarding (inexpensive) and sailing school for young people, 29.
5. Bexhill
- a. many people come to Bexhill for peace and quiet. Hope beach areas don't become too noisy at night. LL22.
 - b. new and larger museum needed. 22.
 - c. do not spoil the Victorian charm and character of Bexhill Sea front, 63.
 - d. traffic humps near Galley Hill area might slow down the stupid 'boy racers' who bomb up and down at night, 63.
 - e. concerning Piazza Scheme Devonshire Place Bexhill...bollards look ugly. Better to have second important public buildings. Devonshire Arms purchased to make new site for library...possible public info centre, police post like trees and seats, space for public events, sculpture etc, 103.
6. Bexhill Road – more emphasis must be put on relief road to avoid A259 westbound congestion, 113.
7. Conflict – many ideas seem to be in conflict with what's already good – i.e. the surrounding countryside is our greatest asset. 68
8. Consultation
- a. concern over lack of it in Crowhurst (6) LL6, LL96, 4, 93, 126, 134. 5
 - b. produce a cost–benefit analysis, not just a 'sales' document, 6.
 - c. more publicity in Bexhill [?].
 - d. involve every school in a massive concept/drawing/design competition. Decent prizes for age groups and categories – big public exhibition to show selective entries. 51
 - e. Re Hastings Station yard: You need to treat owners and residents in Devonshire Rd as a priority for consultation, not just questionnaires and plans to comment on. 60.

- f. the consultation process is rushed. Planners and councillors do not seem prepared to listen or answer direct questions. Robertson Street [Regeneration Centre] does not have all the answers to hand. 68
- g. greater public consultation before plans approved and willingness to amend. 107

9. Country Avenue

- a. trees should be naturally grouped/landscaped where Country Avenue borders countryside, LM 72,
- b. how about a separated cycle/bridle path alongside the road? LL115
- c. the Ridge is too built up to ever look as attractive as the Stray in Harrogate. Your choice of picture misrepresents the effect. 78
- d. I can't see how Country Avenue, shown as going to Glyne Gap, is meant to relieve congestion at Glyne Gap. 81
- e. sounds like a Ridge bypass. It would damage the most floristically rich part of Maplehurst Wood SSSI. 111

10. Countryside park

- a. area needs to be used for farming and grazing LL115,
- b. ban motorboats on lake (1) LM55

11. Finance – could these or some of these developments push up already high housing costs coupled with ever increasing council tax rates, making it harder for the working people of the this town whom many are on a low wage. We should not make this town a place for the rich.49.

12. General

- a. don't spoil Hastings and St Leonards with too much development, Masterplan is excellent in principle but is there room to fit it all in without spoiling what we already have? We have already expanded too much! 76
- b. This plan is unfriendly towards people, the various strands are isolationist – the metro the device to unite them! What is that all about? 116
- c. Come Clean! This is all being triggered by immigration...118
- d. we need a new economy; managers of a professional calibre; a new high calibre development body to work alongside the council. 122

13. Heritage – If Hastings wants to stand out as a model town it must not ignore the existing most valuable aspect, the Old Town. What's special about Hastings is natural features, West and East Hill and the Old Town in between. 17

14. Hilltop Community – would be better solely as a residential area, not commercial.

Oc125

15. Housing – No houses like Western Rd St Leonards, horrid. 88
16. Identity – Lack of clear identity for the town – how do we make the most of its unique character? LL21,
17. Landmarks – build some traditional windmills – West Hill, East Hill and elsewhere – rather than "statements" by designers. 14
18. Language – Plain language would make the ideas more realistic. Why talk about 'sea avenue' when you mean seafront? 18
19. Link Road
 - a. Could it be moved further north avoiding Marline Woods area. LL49
 - b. Better on the old railway line across the marshes. 136
20. Metro
 - a. no second-hand metro trains from S London! LM68,
 - b. services must be frequent (15 mins) if it is to work (1) LM108,
 - c. will not help getting the workforce to the industrial sites. LL39,
 - d. people wont leave cars unless fares are cheaper. Put a car park at Three Oaks station. 115
21. Old Town – Bourne through Old Town should be closed to through traffic (1) LL14,
22. Pelham Crescent – Historic town houses forming Pelham Crescent look very shabby and grey – need restoration, either sand blasting or painting. Also shops on either side of St Mary in the Castle entrance need renovation. 41
23. Parking
 - a. park and ride needs more emphasis – could extend this idea for coach park and ride– with very regular pick up/drop off times. This would solve the Stade problem! 32
 - b. parking in town as a tradesman is terrible. More permit holders only spaces could be changed to allow 'or up to 2 hrs'. This would ease the situation.48
24. Pedestrians – more ways for walker as/disabled to enjoy freedom from traffic/pollution/cyclists. 97
25. Rail – if aim is to cut traffic why not build rail link from Baldslow? LM115,
26. Sea Avenue
 - a. sounds like a Bexhill bypass. Keep shore free of noise and pollution.[?]
 - b. concern about proposals to reroute A259. I live in Bexleigh Ave. This area has been blighted for too long. At the minute we have a lovely view. Oc133
27. Seafront
 - a. All the existing parking at seafront should be moved to underground parking. It really is an eyesore. LL17,

- b. No restaurants on beach. 88
- 28. Services – Ideas won't work unless basic services are improved first – safe and clean streets and good bus services. Poor services are holding back economy. LL15,
- 29. St Leonards – Remember that St Leonard is the patron saint of mad people so please include something for those who are suffering mental problems/depression.26.
- 30. Style – more taste and less amusement arcades. LM 96
- 31. Traffic
 - a. beach community, country park and hilltop community could all cause traffic problems instead of solving them. LL40,
 - b. proposals do very little to relieve congestion from freight traffic in Bexhill. We want a bypass. 132
- 32. Telham Lane – As resident of Telham lane, would like reassurance that Lane would not become short cut to station. 125
- 33. University
 - a. suggest engineering courses LM67
 - b. should be for locals to retake exams and not just for outsiders. LM79,
 - c. expand existing area around HCAT, LM 119,
 - d. too bitty. Needs a well defined centre with a campus. LL113
- 34. Wilting
 - a. The word 'Wilting' denotes something which is fading out and in danger of dying out. Its image could be much improved by transposing the letter T and L to become Witling which would denote that it was the child of wit of our town planners [sic] and it would also be in balance with Guestling at the other end of town. 65
 - b. Wilting is an awful name. 91

2.7 Positive quotes

1. Beach community is a magical idea, we would certainly want to be part of it. 12
2. It's all excellent. Get on with it! The sooner the better. 13
3. I like everything it is wonderful that Hastings will really once again be the place I like to visit. LM33,
4. It would be really great to see it all come true. What an achievement now. LM64,
5. All sounds imaginative and innovative. LM90
6. Lots of wonderful ideas. LM 127,

7. I like it all, let's go for it now! LL8,
8. Congratulations to all concerned for a bold vision of the future. WE71
9. It's all very exciting and will be wonderful if it comes to fruition. OC8
10. Let's get started – can't wait. Well done. OC9
11. Ignore the whingers – let's do it! OC12
12. Hope I live long enough to see it! OC13
13. Well done! Keep it up and make it happen. OC26
14. I am greatly encouraged by the skill and effort that has already gone into the masterplan. The ideas are bold, imaginative and yet in keeping with the architectural beauty and distinctive nature of the area. OC28
15. Only to wish these projects every success. I remember Hastings in happier times (1960s) and would love to see the area regenerated. OC31
16. Bringing all the regeneration targets together under one roof is progress. Allowing the public to participate at an early stage of a project is important. The council must come and listen to what the public has to say. OC43
17. Ignore the NIMBYs – get building! OC44
18. Look forward to it all taking shape. Good luck! OC45
19. This is an imaginative and positive vision for a regenerated Hastings. OC50
20. I'm pleasantly surprised and, dare I say it, excited at the prospect of the regeneration of the area. Impressed by the forward thinking and contemporary design details. OC55
21. I think the overall plan is fantastic. Like most people I think the sooner it starts the better. OC56
22. At last – a coordinated overall plan – great news. OC73
23. An ambitious and stunning development plan. I hope that sufficient money is available! OC74
24. Start soon! OC75
25. Inspirational. Please make it work. OC77
26. This is a wonderful chance to make this town of ours somewhere to be proud of. Thank you. OC81
27. These are wonderful plans – if only a small percentage are realised it will be superb for the area, let's hope for us much as possible, thank you. OC82
28. Go for it ASAP. OC90
29. Hastings is a great place for some, lets make it an even greater place for all. OC 104

2.8 Queries

1. Rail links – does track have sufficient capacity? 8
2. Beach community – what about flood risks/global warming? (3) LM63 LM106 LM112.
3. Country Park – what about gas building up from centuries of landfill? (1) LM63
4. Hilltop community, don't understand its impact on local countryside, need more details? LM72
5. Will broadband really encourage businesses to relocate? LL7,
6. Country Ave. Any studies re: flora and fauna re-sitting of animals and habitat? What about tunnels under road? LL69,
7. Country Avenue: where would proposed new link rd go? LL74,
8. What will happen to railway engineering sheds in Bridge Way? I am a shareholder in Hastings Diesels. OC91
9. What is 'mixed use development' in area north of Barnhorn Rd? Residents have already rejected plans for Barnhorn Business Park. Oc127
10. What is planned for the old A259? Oc133

2.9 Age profile of respondents

<i>Age group</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
Under 18	1	1
19 to 29	5	4
30 to 39	15	11
40 to 49	34	24
50 to 59	37	26
60 to 69	27	19
70 and over	5	4
No response	15	11

3. Organisation responses

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section of the report sets out the results of responses from organisations and groups.
- 3.1.2 16 responses were received in the form of completed emails, letters, memorandum, reports and telephone calls.
- 3.1.3 The main points made are set out in the same order as in the *Towards a Masterplan for Hastings and Bexhill* brochure, starting with a substantial 'general' section. Points have been loosely grouped thematically within sections. The original source material is available both on paper and electronically.
- 3.1.4 Contributions have been only minimally edited for clarity with original wording maintained wherever possible. Points are numbered to assist with referencing and discussion. Sources are shown in brackets.

3.2 Organisations responding

- 3.2.1 Responses were received from the following:
 - 1. 1066 Housing Association – including feedback from its Tenants Consultative Group (letter 20.12.02)
 - 2. Association of Bexhill Citizens (letter 10.12.02)
 - 3. Crowhurst Parish Council (letter 4.12.02)
 - 4. De La Warr Pavilion (letter 19.12.02)
 - 5. East Sussex Coastal Biodiversity Project (letter 20.12.02)
 - 6. East Sussex Transport 2000 (Report 6.12.02)
 - 7. Green Party (report following meeting of 21.11.02)
 - 8. Hastings Borough Council – Borough Ecologist (Memorandum 9.12.02)
 - 9. Hastings & St Leonards Allotments Federation (letter 10.12.02)
 - 10. Hastings Urban Design Group (report 30.11.02)
 - 11. Hastings Old Town Residents Association (letter Dec 02)

12. Hastings Regeneration Partnership Board (Report 2.12.02)*
13. Hastings Voluntary Action (letter Dec 02)*
14. Stade Partnership (letter 10.12.02)
15. Sussex Wildlife Trust (report 18.12.02)
16. University of Brighton (report Dec 2002)

3.3 GENERAL POINTS

3.3.1 Real opportunity to influence development of town

Generally, we support the proposals put forward in relation to the Masterplan, Millennium Community, Community Strategy, housing renewal area, and Cultural Strategy. We share the view that we all now have a real opportunity to influence the development of the town.

(1066 Housing Association)

3.3.2 Support from tenants

Our Tenants Consultative Group considered the proposals at their meeting on 17th December. 1066 HA tenants from across Hastings & St Leonards were present. The Group were generally supportive of the proposals and positive about the changes they would bring to the town.

(1066 Housing Association)

3.3.3 Bold and imaginative plan

The University welcomes the main aspects of the proposals in the Masterplan. It is a bold, imaginative plan that should have a substantial impact on all aspects of life in the Hastings and Bexhill area and at the same time act as a magnet for investment in East Sussex.

(University of Brighton)

3.3.4 Important springboard for change

The Trust considers the ambitions of the document to have a significant impact upon the regeneration of Hastings and Bexhill. More specifically, the proposals present an important springboard for the change process to begin, with important emphasis upon the transport infrastructure, further and higher education and importantly, the cultural identity of the area, both for the local community as well as a tourist destination.

We would welcome a genuine dialogue over the next stage of planning, not merely in support of the De La Warr Pavilion itself but for our true commitment to helping steer and deliver many of the concepts contained within the document.

(De La Warr Pavilion)

3.3.5 Welcome subject to consultation and testing through the planning system

Hastings Urban Design Group has welcomed the principle of a plan for the future of Hastings being undertaken by an internationally established design partnership which, by being able to distance itself from local parochial prejudice, is able to analyse problems and the perceived needs of Hastings and Bexhill objectively to arrive at possible solutions which have the potential to benefit the residents, present and future, of both towns and the wider community. We note that the plan does not replace existing plans but is to be seen as “a vision within which both current and previously unimagined projects can unfold over the next thirty years”. We welcome too the assurance that, in general, development of proposals within the plan will be subject to the widest possible consultation within the local community and be tested through the existing planning process.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.3.6 Creative involvement needed at local level

We believe that – as the Masterplan proposals unfold – there will be a need to interpret the plans and proposals into terms that are readily understood and that demonstrate benefits for current as well as future residents of the neighbourhoods targeted for change. In each area, residents need to be kept informed and drawn into the process in a creative way.

(1066 Housing Association)

3.3.7 Some people unaware of major proposals

Some residents complained that they had not been aware of the consultation, despite the high level of publicity. It was also noticeable that even those people who were aware of the consultation had not realised the implication of some of the physical proposals. For example, some residents in the Ore Valley had not understood the proposal for the new road through the valley, although it was marked on the map in the consultation booklet.

(1066 Housing Association – Tenants Consultative Group)

3.3.8 Housing and community facilities simultaneously

New housing needs to be developed in tandem with community and play facilities – an example was given of the Western Road development where new tenants were pleased with their homes but felt there were inadequate facilities around them.

(1066 Housing Association – Tenants Consultative Group)

3.3.9 Housing and transport simultaneously

[Concern that housing will be built before suitable transport infrastructure in place.]

(Association of Bexhill Citizens)

3.3.10 **Construction training needed**

There is a need to develop a workforce skilled in trades necessary for maintaining and renovating the housing stock. Courses leading to trade qualifications at the College needed to be provided in the evenings on a "night school" basis.
(1066 Housing Association – Tenants Consultative Group)

3.3.11 **Tax burden?**

There was a concern about the future Council Tax burden of the proposals.
(1066 Housing Association – Tenants Consultative Group)

3.3.12 **Contradictions on sustainable transport**

Sustainable transport is not yet at the core of strategic thinking. It is still seen as a 'bolted on extra' to win brownie points in order to gain funding alongside less sustainable options. Sustainable transport options often appear in policy documents and are uttered frequently, but appear on the ground much less often if at all. That has to change. The Masterplan has many contradictions on this score and from a point of view of sustainable planning for the future, fails on transport even if it succeeds in other areas. Get it right on transport and you probably get it right in most other areas. Planning for the future must use land sparingly and on a human scale.
(East Sussex Transport 2000)

Transport – improving roads should be of lower priority than sustainable transport initiatives.
(Sussex Wildlife Trust)

3.3.13 **Failure to address sustainable development concept**

The Masterplan fails to address the concept of sustainable development, focusing on economic and social regeneration without addressing the needs of the natural environment. It offers no opportunities for biodiversity gain and advocates the use of greenfield sites and building of more roads.
(Sussex Wildlife Trust)

3.3.14 **Plan must benefit wildlife**

Development should not be permitted unless it provides design features that would benefit wildlife....A percentage of capital costs should be used to ensure provision for nature enhancement or works towards delivery of relevant biodiversity targets.
(Sussex Wildlife Trust)

3.3.15 Use sustainable building methods

Sustainable methods of building and operation should be used, e.g. sustainable drainage systems, renewable energy sources.
(*Sussex Wildlife Trust*)

3.3.16 Biodiversity

Biodiversity should be integrated in to every part of this plan. Ecological advice is necessary at the planning stage and beyond. Proposals should make provision for wildlife at the design stage and should not cause demonstrable harm to areas of nature conservation importance.
(*Sussex Wildlife Trust*)

Whilst the development of such a plan can be welcomed, particularly in respect of making the most of the local environment and providing quality public spaces, there are concerns regarding elements of two of the concepts; Sea Avenue and the creation of a lake within the countryside park. I am concerned that the existing biodiversity of the whole area does not appear to have been recognised and taken into account.
(*East Sussex Coastal Biodiversity Project*)

See also comment of HBC Borough Ecologist on The Community Strategy (Appendix A 4.3.21)

3.3.17 Environment sector representation on Task Force

There is no obvious representation from the environment sector. If you are forming a team to consider redeveloping an area, there should be strong representation from both government and non-governmental organisations from this sector. Good economic growth requires a long-term strategy and this is not possible without sound knowledge from all sectors.
(*Sussex Wildlife Trust*)

3.3.18 Not much for Bexhill

Perusal of the 8 key ideas reveals how little there is in it for Bexhill.
(*Association of Bexhill Citizens*)

3.3.19 Timescale too long

Regeneration is needed NOW, not within 30 years. To our disadvantaged people, not forgetting our high proportion of retirement age people, a 30-year vision is an irrelevance. They should have some more immediate improvement of quality of living to look forward to.
(*Association of Bexhill Citizens*)

3.3.20 Pedestrian and cycle access from Crowhurst

Has consideration been given as to how pedestrians and cyclists would access Hastings and Bexhill safely?
(*Crowhurst Parish Council*)

3.3.21 Include allotments

Members of the Hastings & St Leonards Allotments Federation wish to express their deep concern that allotments have been completely overlooked in the regeneration plans for Hastings and St Leonards. We have ploughed our way through all of the strategy brochures and the masterplan, full of words such as sustainability, recycling, health and quality of life, yet there is not a single mention of allotments, which create an important potential for all of these things.

The allotments should be included in the regeneration programme, with substantial funding being allocated to ensure that they are securely fenced, well maintained and well advertised. The appointment of a dedicated allotment manager should be considered to ensure that sufficient time is allocated to the project and that the funding is spent appropriately.

(*Hastings & St Leonards Allotments Federation*)

3.3.22 Extend eastwards to include the Stade

The Stade Partnership has discussed the scheme and our members are very much in favour, dependent, of course, on future public consultations on detailed projects. We would be grateful if you could consider including the following projects within the general scheme

1. Extend the scheme eastwards along Hastings seafront to include Rock a Nore Road, to include:

- a) improved traffic flow, particularly during the summer
- b) improved lighting, although this has been tackled by HBC recently and is far better than it was
- c) improved security at night
- d) public access
- e) disabled access to the sea
- f) viewing areas etc
- g) removal of old dog pound and rejuvenation of that site
- h) future of Ice House building
- i) car parking and access issues.

Rock a Nore Road is a valuable feature of the Old Town which has relied on its 'rustic' features to date. It is in need of an injection of enthusiasm, not so that it loses its charm but to modernise it.

2. Improve the junction of Rock a Nore Road and the A259. This is a dangerous spot for pedestrians, who tend to cross the road at the narrowest point.

3. Determine the long-term future of the amusement park (currently slot-machines and amusement rides) after expiration of the lease.

(*Stade Partnership*)

3.3.23 Continued involvement

It is important that 1066 HA, as a key partner and a principal land owner in the Ore Valley, continues to be seen as a key partner, and involved in the selection of key partners such as lead developer and consultants. The proposals will impact in significant ways on the quality of life for our residents, and on the resultant land values for sites in 1066 ownership which will be central to our Building Communities programmes.

(1066 Housing Association)

3.4 Millennium Community

3.4.1 General support

We welcome the granting of Millennium Community status as an opportunity for developing existing brown-field sites as balanced local communities taking maximum advantage of one of the area's major assets, the existing rail corridor.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.4.2 Support for sustainable building

We welcome references to “low environmental impact, high design quality and low construction impact” as a feature in the design of “vibrant sustainable neighbourhoods on under-used land around existing and new stations”. We strongly support the principle of sustainable building and hope that the opportunity is taken to promote sustainability in any restoration of existing buildings which might result from increasing confidence in the area's future.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.4.3 Caution on factory produced buildings

There is reference elsewhere to “volumetric” building methods. We accept that this may offer some advantages in meeting the objectives of “faster and environmentally friendly building” but factory production is likely to advance the prosperity of Hastings only if it can use local labour within a reasonable distance of the construction site. A building programme which involves transporting large pre-constructed building elements by road would exacerbate transport problems and there is some doubt about the practicability of moving the larger elements by rail in view of the latter's present inadequacies.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.4.4 Urgent need for hi tech construction training

The prospect of an overall increase in building activity locally points to an urgent need to boost training in relevant skills and see the application of new technology to such skills as an opportunity, perhaps to be developed by Hastings College.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.4.5 No to Ivy House station, Wilting only if no development

We do not approve of the Ivy House station and approve of the Wilting Station only as a station but not as a general development into the fields.
(*Green Party*)

3.5 Metro services

3.5.1 Potential for reduction in car dependency welcomed

We support proposals for upgrading existing stations (Bexhill and Ore) and developing new ones at intermediate points as the key to a viable local metro system linking the extreme Eastern and Western ends of both towns with their centres and with the retail park and proposed recreation area at Glyne Gap and offering the potential for a reduction in car dependency.
(*Hastings Urban Design Group*)

3.5.2 Design quality of Hastings Station crucial

We see the prospect of a new station at Hastings as a key element in any proposals for Hastings station yard as a whole but it is essential that the quality of design in these proposals is recognised as being at the heart of any revitalisation of central Hastings.
(*Hastings Urban Design Group*)

3.5.3 Support for Wilting and Ivy House stations

We recognise the potential value of a new station at Wilting which, even before further development there or in North Bexhill, would benefit existing communities in St Leonards (possibly reducing commuter car journeys to and from Warrior Square and Battle), and we recognise that a station may eventually be needed at Ivy House to complement new housing and employment opportunities in that area.
(*Hastings Urban Design Group*)

3.5.4 More integrated transport

We support plans for making greater use of rail for convenient local movement, but any proposals for more effective public transport and for its wider acceptance as an alternative to the car need to include a fresh look at ticketing arrangements and their inter-changeability, the use of buses more appropriate to the local terrain and a more closely integrated system exploiting all forms of public transport.
(*Hastings Urban Design Group*)

3.5.5 Reopening Willingdon Chord essential

Access, by both road and rail, is seen as a major factor in Hastings position as a deprived corner of the southeast and we support any measures which might reduce journey times to and from London, Ashford and Gatwick. Work to the A21 and A259 is desirable in terms of safety and convenience but improvements to the rail network will be more effective in the long term. We welcome the possibility of upgrading of the Ore/Ashford line as one step in any plan for eventual through services between Ashford International and Brighton and Southampton (the South Coast Strategic Route), but we see the re-opening of the Willingdon chord as essential to this and to any improvement in journey times between Hastings / Bexhill and Gatwick /Victoria. *(Hastings Urban Design Group)*

3.5.6 No need for landmark stations – keep railway embankments as wildlife havens

The metro transport railway is a positive move towards a sustainable transport system, but there is no need for landmark stations. The railway embankments throughout Hastings are excellent examples of the mixed marginal vegetation associated with these corridors, e.g. West St Leonards Railway Embankment SNCI. Railway embankments provide relatively undisturbed and varied habitats, which act as havens for wildlife. *(Sussex Wildlife Trust)*

3.5.7 Open new stations sooner

This is a long term solution to a pressing problem [ie action on the metro, particularly Glyne Gap station, needed sooner]. *(Association of Bexhill Citizens)*

3.5.8 Improve Bexhill station

The proposed Metro service is particularly welcomed, enabling more people, living and working as well as visiting the area, to experience a better quality form of travel than that which currently exists. The urgent need for specific improvements to Bexhill's station is recognised and it is hoped that the quality and frequency of main line services from London, Ashford and Brighton take heed to local improvements. *(De La Warr Pavilion)*

3.5.9 Metro OK but improve buses first

The metro idea is welcome once the practicalities of slow and express trains using this line have been worked out. We believe that there should be a date set before any of the other plans are put into place for the implementation of a user friendly, efficient, cheap bus service connecting with the train service and with combined time-ticketing. *(Green Party)*

3.5.10 Better for Cooden Beach than Hastings Old Town

These proposals will be of little direct benefit to the Old Town as no station will be less than a 20 minute walk. No mention is made of existing or possible future feeder bus services. These will be vital for much of the town. We find no evidence that this proposal will reduce car use. There is potentially more on offer to Cooden Beach than the Old Town, yet levels of need are significantly different.
(Hastings Old Town Residents Association)

3.6 Country Avenue

3.6.1 Opposition likely

The idea and intention of the Country Avenues was welcomed, but it was felt that there would be massive opposition from people directly affected and who would not wish to see new development on the countryside. Some of the older members reflected that housing developments on greenfield sites during the 60's and 70's had met with opposition at the time, but were now an established part of the town.
(1066HA – Tenants Consultative Group)

3.6.2 Fails to deal with lorries

This fails to address the increasing numbers of large lorries – mostly to and from the continent – which currently use The Bourne (A259).
(Hastings Old Town Residents Association)

3.6.3 New road north of the Ridge inevitable

With increased use of Queensway and the Ridge as a means of relieving traffic pressure on the A259 through both towns, the need to cater for additional capacity on the Ridge is inevitable and a new road, the tree-lined “country avenue” to the North of it, would help to achieve that (subject of course to the adequacy of junctions and, in particular, access to and from the A21).
(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.6.4 Not a once-and-for-all “outer urban edge”

We support the principle that it should, as far as possible, incorporate existing roads, perhaps coming closer to the Ridge than the present plans suggest to limit encroachment into sensitive rural landscape but, while that may encourage inward growth and discourage such outward expansion, we do not see it as the once-and-for-all “outer urban edge”.
(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.6.5 Using roads to define town boundaries will not work

The definition of the future urban shapes of Bexhill and Hastings cannot properly be made with a line or route of a future road scheme. It would encourage an inefficient use of land. There may be a need for future extensions to the urban area, but we know from past studies that new roads such as those proposed are not fundamental to their development and may in fact define their nature in the direction of unsustainable modes of access. The Country Avenue would undoubtedly also promote out of town 'greenfield' site developments.
(*East Sussex Transport 2000*)

3.6.6 Development north of Bexhill disregards widely recognised planning principles

A matter which needs to be addressed urgently is the plan for major development North of Bexhill. Whereas plans for Hastings and St Leonards include the objective of new sustainable communities along the rail corridor, those for Bexhill include an extensive area for expansion on the town's outer edge. This will lead to an increase in traffic on existing roads as well as on the new "country avenue" link with a future connection at Wilting. It is included in the current Rother Local Plan and appears to disregard the now widely recognised planning principle that new housing and employment should, where possible, be absorbed in existing communities and not concentrated on their outer boundaries.

If this issue is not resolved the development in North Bexhill (which, in contrast to proposals for Hastings, is very unlikely to evolve into "sustainable local communities") will affect adversely not only Bexhill but communities in Hastings and St Leonards and in Rother's wider rural hinterland. This has the potential to reduce significantly the very positive effects of other aspects of the Masterplan.
(*Hastings Urban Design Group*)

3.6.7 Based on discredited arguments

The Country Avenue rests on many of the discredited arguments heard over recent years to justify eastern and western bypasses. There is little through traffic, demand management of traffic is extremely limited, the County Council continues to see the private car as the prime mode for all trips and journey purposes, and the area is characterised by high levels of single occupancy vehicles and 30% school run traffic in the peak hours. No serious demand management measures, or any of high quality, have been tested in the area.
(*East Sussex Transport 2000*)

3.6.8 Will compromise countryside stewardship

The Country Avenue, with its Hastings – Bexhill Link Road section – would certainly compromise any attempts to enhance natural environments through 'Countryside Stewardship' management schemes intended to achieve Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) status, and would devalue existing SSSIs and landscapes including those with Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) status.
(*East Sussex Transport 2000*)

3.6.9 **Need commitment to demand management**

We are surprised that MBM should associate itself with seriously flawed concepts such as that represented by the Country Avenue. It represents a 'carry on as before' approach to transport planning, with the private car at the centre. Many of the positive elements that include sustainable transport would be frustrated by this huge increase in road space. These contradictions hugely weaken the attractiveness of the Masterplan. There should be an explicit commitment to demand management evident throughout the document.

(East Sussex Transport 2000)

3.6.10 **Another name for a bypass**

The Country Avenue has the potential to be a euphemism for a bypass, but the route is unclear on the maps provided in the consultation documents. Much of the development appears to be on greenfield sites (e.g. north of Bexhill) and so are not considered sustainable, and offer no potential for environmental gain.

(Sussex Wildlife Trust)

3.6.11 **Oppose bypass under a pretty name**

We strongly disapprove of the link road and additional road North of the Ridge, which are just the by-pass under a pretty name. We also disapprove of the denial that this is a bypass as it is doing the same thing as the one previously called a bypass. They are designed to open up Greenfield sites, encroach on areas of outstanding natural beauty and will encourage more traffic instead of dealing with the traffic problem.

(Green Party)

3.6.12 **Support but would prefer a bypass**

This would soon be treated by through traffic as a Bexhill and Hastings By-Pass and can be welcomed as opening up North Bexhill to Business and Housing development; but will hardly be up to By-Pass standard.

(Association of Bexhill Citizens)

3.6.13 **Avoid roads which affect wildlife**

Any proposed road improvements or new road developments affecting areas of wildlife importance must be avoided; compensatory or mitigation measures should be sought only as a last resort. Improving and building roads as part of the plan may lead to increasing use of road transport and haulage, rather than increasing growth of sustainable transport use. Even if roads do not run through sites of wildlife importance, they will impact through air and noise pollution and water run off. The new roads will serve to expand the town boundaries and offer potential for further loss of countryside through urban sprawl in the future.

(Sussex Wildlife Trust)

3.6.14 Concern about rat–run through Crowhurst

The introduction of the Bexhill to Hastings link road could make the rat–run traffic worse.

(Crowhurst Parish Council)

3.6.15 Link Road and Queensway/A21 link at same time

If the link road was scheduled for 2007 and the Queensway to A21 improvements for 2011, what would be the effect of the additional traffic during that 4–year gap

(Crowhurst Parish Council)

3.7 Sea Avenue

3.7.1 More planting

We support any proposals aimed at enhancing the natural asset enjoyed by Hastings and Bexhill, ie. the sea, and applaud any efforts to improve the sea front environment and reduce the impact of traffic. In particular, we would strongly support the introduction of more planting on the sea front and feel that there is a need for more study into the selection of suitable species to counter the popular myth that trees will not survive there (as they appear to do in other coastal towns)..

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.7.2 More sensitive, less grandiose

While supporting the principle of a more attractive seafront we feel that the sea avenue concept is grandiose and, if implemented, could put at risk the best of what already exists. We see it as appropriate for some parts of the seafront but it needs to recognise that that part of both towns is made up of a series of linked areas with distinct characters and detail interest. We would therefore encourage a sensitive intervention which builds on existing strengths such as the 1930s concrete shelters and Marina Pavilion, and solves some of the problems, such as the isolation of Bottle Alley.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.7.3 Sea Avenue through West Marina seems bizarre

The suggestion that the sea avenue should pass through the West Marina bathing pool site appears bizarre as this is the only significant space outside the Old Town and Rock a Nore where access to the beach and potential recreation space is not severed from the town by a road.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.7.4 **Bexhill Road bypass OK in principle**

Subject to further detail, we accept the possibility of relief from traffic congestion along Bexhill Road by the section of sea avenue from Glyne Gap through Pebsham. (*Hastings Urban Design Group*)

3.7.5 **Proposed solution will not achieve the objective**

The Sea avenue is presented as a proposal to reduce the impact of cars along Hastings / St Leonards seafront but, in order to function, each carriageway would need to be wide enough for vehicles to pass others which are stationary. This suggests at least four traffic lanes overall and could be counter-productive. There seems to be no insurmountable reason why the present seafront could not be transformed into the lively, sociable and inviting place suggested by the masterplan, by reducing the carriageway width and widening the promenade in places, something which should be possible if traffic volumes are reduced by the proposal to divert some traffic to alternative routes North of the town.

A proposed central reservation might accommodate car parking and bus stops, as well as planting, but we question the idea that other uses such as cafes and kiosks would colonise this area. The signs are that anyone using the promenade wants to be as near to the sea as possible and we feel that it would be hard to make an area sandwiched between carriageways sufficiently attractive to counter that impulse. (*Hastings Urban Design Group*)

3.7.6 **Think buses**

The Sea Avenue could be a success, though the major increases in roadspace as a whole would induce access by car and require large car parks: not a sustainable option. The scheme should right from the start feature 'turn up and go' bus services running seven days a week connecting with the railway stations. The separated carriageways are described as offering 'parking in between wherever possible in Hastings' – a recipe for disaster and traffic promotion – but non-car alternatives are not mentioned at all. The Masterplan is weak on buses and ignores the role that these could play if buses were prioritised. (*East Sussex Transport 2000*)

3.7.7 **Cosmetic**

These can be welcomed as cosmetic exercises, but are not designed to facilitate freight movement. (*Association of Bexhill Citizens*)

3.7.8 **Yes but...**

A complete cycle path would be welcome, but is not promised. Significant change needs to take place in the HBC's current approach to poor quality commercial activities like the Stade Amusement park. Instead picnic and barbeque areas, all-weather sports courts for basketball, volleyball, boule etc. should be available free. BMX and skateboard tracks should be built. Open space should be preserved

and added to. The changing nature of day trippers needs to be better understood. Through traffic on the A259 should be underground.
(*Hastings Old Town Residents Association*)

3.7.9 Will help establish integrated approach

The De La Warr Pavilion is an architectural icon and its restoration and redevelopment will much improve the seafront landscape. However, this cannot stand alone and this must be seen also in the context of existing proposals for Bexhill's seafront. The proposed Sea Avenue should seek to establish an integrated approach to the broader coastline, highlighting its existing quality architecture and seafront landmarks.
(*De La Warr Pavilion*)

3.7.10 Look after natural habitat

The vegetated shingle beach and maritime cliffs at Bulverhythe have been designated a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) by Hastings Borough Council, as they represent a significant coastal habitat in the extreme west of the Borough. Both maritime cliff and vegetated shingle are listed as priority habitats under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, and vegetated shingle in particular is globally rare. Any development of the beach should therefore take full account of the habitats present ensuring no damage or loss and exploit all opportunities to enhance these habitats for public appreciation and enjoyment.
(*East Sussex Coastal biodiversity Project*)

3.7.11 Global warming considered?

Insufficient information given. Are any plans in place to deal with sea levels rising because of global warming?
(**Green Party**)

3.8 University Centre

3.8.1 Maintaining momentum is critical

We are particularly supportive of the proposal to build a University Centre as a new imaginative building that responds to the need of students and which will be a landmark within the development of Hastings. We recognise that such a building will take a number of years to design and build – this is not a particular issue as education takes time to develop and evolve. In 2003 we will open the BT building and would be able to understand, in far more detail, the existing and changing demand pattern for higher education, the needs of local employers, and the desires of local, potential students.

As the demand and course offering base grows together with the development of Hastings, so, we believe, that the University Centre will become of interest to students moving in to the area for a variety of reasons. This will not happen

immediately but we would expect to see it occurring within three to four years of the start of the University Centre. This, together with the growing young population in Hastings, will provide the growth for the University Centre taking it to its target numbers of between one and two thousand students in the fifth to tenth year of operation.

The main concern of the University of Brighton is of any delay that occurs within the staged development of the University Centre. If the BT building or an equivalent were not followed up with a major facility then indeed much of the initial enthusiasm and success would be lost. So it is crucially important to the development of the University Centre that the phase two development be worked on almost concurrently with the move to refurbish and provide an initial centre in the BT building.
(University of Brighton)

3.8.2 Consider sustainable buildings

Education – the concept of a university in the centre of the town in close proximity to the train station is excellent and will help to regenerate the area. Again the natural environment and sustainable buildings should be considered for all development in the long-term.

(Sussex Wildlife Trust)

3.8.3 Early start welcome

We support plans for the revitalisation of Hastings town centre by bringing back into use vacant or under-used land and buildings and accept the principle that “the integration of learning, economic and social activity will be a powerful force for regeneration”. Whether a “university centre” is enough by itself to achieve that goal is open to question but we welcome the prospect of an early start on these plans as a possible catalyst for innovation and change.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.8.4 Delay start date

We welcome this proposal for all of the benefits it will bring but doubt if any students arriving in September 2003 will find a good set of facilities. It would be sad if a poorly prepared college gained a negative reputation. We strongly urge September 2004 as the start.

(Hastings Old Town Residents Association)

3.8.5 Integrated design approach needed for station area

We are concerned about the apparent absence of an integrated design approach to the redevelopment of Hastings station and the station yard in view of the central location of this key site and the image it can create as a principal point of entry to the town.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.8.6 **Piazza must be kept traffic free**

We welcome the proposals for a pedestrian piazza linking the station with the Town Hall and the existing pedestrian areas, with provision for parking underneath it. It is essential that this concept is adhered to as the plan is developed and that everything is done to avoid the possibility of a lively sociable public space being dominated by vehicles.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.8.7 **Design must not be restricted by existing buildings with no future**

What possibility is there for buildings other than those already identified being incorporated into this part of the plan to ensure that design for the station yard is not restricted by existing buildings which may themselves have a limited future? What is the future of the Royal Mail sorting office?

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.8.8 **Improve scale and appearance of BT building**

Acquisition and conversion of the BT building for Education use is welcome and we would support any plans which enhance the scale and appearance of that building with relation to its neighbours in Havelock Road and its physical and visual integration with other parts of the town centre.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.8.9 **Raised pedestrian piazza essential**

The proposal to place parking in an undercroft and form a raised piazza utilising the slope in the site is essential in this location. A large site not constrained by roads is a great asset and the impact of traffic will be minimised. The area becomes a natural extension of the pedestrianised town centre. To this end we hope to see the widest possible mix of uses on the site including public facilities, the proposed new library retail outlets and restaurants and bars adjacent to the station would be welcome.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.8.10 **High density needed**

We would encourage high density development of this key site and consideration of extending the site boundaries as far as possible including investigating air rights development over the railway track. Tall buildings are appropriate in this location but they must be of the highest quality design and located with the utmost consideration to enhance and protect views across the town centre, particularly the views from the West Hill and neighbouring Braybrooke Road.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.8.11 **University will not help Bexhill.**

University Centre is stated to be well under way at Hastings. Regeneration of Bexhill will not apparently be aided by this, except perhaps by the generation of jobs of a menial nature.

(Association of Bexhill Citizens)

3.8.12 **Consultation needed on faculties**

University centre idea fine. More consultation needed with employers and college tutors as to the best faculties to have here.

(Green Party)

3.9 Arts Quarter

3.9.1 **Develop St Mary in the Castle instead**

We challenge this concept but welcome the Housing Renewal Area. Finances are inevitably limited. We urge you to develop St Mary in the Castle as a Visual and Performing Arts centre. The areas currently unrestored could become artists studios. We would welcome many more public works of art along the seafront and more street performing arts events. Arts and commercial artistic events/activities should be arranged including brass bands, twirlers, dancers, gymnastic and sports displays and taster days, exhibitions by voluntary groups, charity events etc. Farmers and other specialist markets should all be seen on The Stade, at Warrior Square and the Marina.

(Hastings Old Town Residents Association)

3.9.2 **Put the arts centre on the Stade**

Why is the Arts Centre programmed for Warrior Square and not the Stade? It should have 80% of it's exhibiting space designated for local artists. Who would be running it?

(Green Party)

3.9.3 **Support for landmark building in Warrior Square but Arts Centre should be in town centre**

We support the idea of a landmark building located in Warrior Square. This would help to focus attention away from some of the insensitive recent buildings constructed in this location. We are sure that this could be an elegant enhancement to the Square.

We do not believe that this is necessarily the best location for an Art and Design Centre. Such a building in this location would undoubtedly serve to raise the value of surrounding property and regenerate the neighbourhood but the increased value is likely to force out the artists currently resident in the area. This will lead to a successful Arts Quarter only if ways can be found to support artists with economical

studio space and accommodation and to help them purchase their studios where possible.

Hastings and St Leonards arts community would benefit enormously from a dedicated arts facility but it would be better located in the town centre and adjacent to the new Art school facilities of the University Triangle. It would also be preferable if the project grew from Arts community initiative and there are independent proposals for a large town centre gallery that this proposal may jeopardise.

We are surprised that this project is included in those scheduled for the short term. Is there an Arts provider already involved or funding secured? Surely this is a long term project.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.9.4 De La Warr is the primary cultural landmark

Arts Quarter is another predominantly Hastings project. The major contribution the De La Warr Pavilion makes to Arts is down–played. No emphasis is given to the major restoration and refurbishment programme under way there to meet the need and aspirations of the 21st Century, to serve Southern and South East Arts.

(Association of Bexhill Citizens)

As a unique arts building, the De La Warr Pavilion recognises that the cluster approach to cultural provision is essential to the sustainability of a tourism strategy. The notion of a cultural quarter in St Leonards is a welcome addition although the development of a new cultural landmark does not in itself sustain the concept and should be re–examined. It is acknowledged that a large number of artists live and work in the St Leonards area and we feel that this is a strength upon which to build. Low cost, quality studios and live/work provision is in much demand and along with resources in media, print, retail and leisure.

With specific regard for the De La Warr Pavilion, we would strongly argue that its presence within the cultural identity of the area, including St Leonards and Hastings is primary rather than adjacent to any existing or new initiatives.

(De la Warr Pavilion)

3.10 Beach community

3.10.1 Conflict with Millennium Community?

We unanimously endorse this concept and believe that it could lead to exciting Architectural possibilities. However there appears to be some conflict with the Millennium Community status of this site. The idea of self–build and relaxed planning controls is to be applauded but how does this loose structure and individualism fit with the demands of the Millennium Community and the control of a single Developer. Or is only part of the site to be used for the Millennium Community?

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.10.2 Bridging of railway crucial

Earlier proposals for this site included a deck bridging over the railway. It is regrettable that this is not indicated on the current drawings. It is crucial to the success of this community that there is easy access to the beach which implies numerous or continuous bridging of the railway.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.10.3 Sea Avenue must be low impact at this point

Great care is required to reduce the impact of the Sea Avenue at this point since the narrow site requires any development to embrace the road. The Avenue clearly must be a very low grade feeder road with very limited traffic at this point if this community is to be viable.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.10.4 Bexhill Road bypass in tunnel

If you insist on an extra road here, make it a tunnel, making the current stretch of road for buses and bicycles. Do not build across the designated park.

(Green Party)

3.11 Countryside Park

3.11.1 Welcome but can it be afforded

This has some merit but leaves some fundamental questions unanswered. For instance, how will the operating costs be borne? The lake is a particularly attractive idea. It should be linked to a watersports centre and perhaps include an international standard rowing course. All existing hedgerows, trees not currently inside a S.S.S.I. should be retained if possible.

(Hastings Old Town Residents Association)

3.11.2 Welcome but integrated access needed

This is an excellent recreational buffer space between the towns and welcome remediation of the eyesore Pebsham landfill site. We unanimously endorse the proposal to extend the boundary of the countryside park.

Our only concerns are about integrating access to the park. It should be linked to the promenades of both towns and to a comprehensive cycle and pedestrian network that weaves through the towns. There could be extension of the current Greenway Project initiatives.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.11.3 **Tranquil landscape with good access needed, not an urban extension**

The Countryside Park concept seems intent on changing the rural nature of Combe Haven into an urban extension, rather than celebrating its tranquillity and high quality landscapes hard up against a population of 140,000 people – this presents unique opportunities. Combe Haven is an asset worth conserving and enhancing from an educational, leisure, and tourism perspective, with enormous potential through improved pedestrian and cycle access.

(East Sussex Transport 2000)

The concept of a countryside park at Glyne Gap and Pebsham could make a positive contribution to biodiversity in the region. However, the area identified for the creation of a lake is designated as an SNCI by both Hastings Borough Council and Rother District Council for its marshy grassland and reed bed. Again, these are both listed as priority habitats under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

I refer you to policy E2 of GOSE's Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) which states, "the Region's biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced with positive action to achieve the targets set in national and local biodiversity action plans through planning decisions and other measures". Further information on local and national biodiversity action plans for the relevant habitats can be found at <http://www.biodiversitysussex.org/> and <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/>. I also consider that the proposals are in conflict with the published East Sussex Structure Plan, particularly policies S1(j) and EN17.

(East Sussex Coastal Biodiversity Project)

3.11.4 **Devastating to important habitats**

Proposals for developing Glyne Gap will be potentially devastating to locally and nationally important habitats and species that inhabit the marshes, fens and reedbeds. The commitment to the countryside park at Glyne Gap, should be developed and managed in sympathy with the SSSI at Combe Haven, which could be incorporated as a wildlife feature. This offers the potential to buffer this sensitive wildlife site and an opportunity to increase public awareness and appreciation of biodiversity.

The use of the proposed lake is unclear. It should not exist to the detriment of surrounding wetland sites and associated species, especially Filsham Reedbeds LNR and Combe Haven SSSI. Where will the water to fill it be sourced? It is important that the surrounding wetland site is not compromised. Reedbed is a Priority UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitat and Filsham Reedbed is of immense ecological importance. Several protected species inhabit this area, e.g. bearded tits nest here.

(Sussex Wildlife Trust)

3.11.5 **Disbelief**

Countryside Park almost mimics the proposals adopted by the local Councils in March 1993. This 'declaration of intent' has not prevented further development of the site for waste disposal and sewage treatment purposes. It is hard to believe that this development will be undone to be make way for the Park, certainly not the sewage

treatment works which will be needed more than ever with the increased housing development in the Two Towns.
(*Association of Bexhill Citizens*)

3.11.6 Concern over drainage

Would the new lake feature at Glyne Gap have an affect on the drainage/water table?
(*Crowhurst Parish Council*)

3.11.7 Lake for non-motorised boats only

We think the lake is a good idea. It should be for non-motorised boats and nature conservationists consulted.
(*Green Party*)

3.12 Hill Gateway Community

3.12.1 Station but no development

We approve of the station only. We do not approve of extra development into the countryside, or the design of the buildings as illustrated. We strongly disapprove of the link road beside it and realise that the whole plan is to later create development along the entire length of the link road and turn the two towns into one.
(*Green Party*)

3.12.2 Welcome

We welcome the proposal to extend the Robsack community around a new road/rail interchange.
(1066HA)

3.12.3 Wrong site for park and ride

This cannot be a serious proposal. It fails to provide park and ride in any conventional sense. It is too far from the A21. Most day visitors head for the Old Town which means a 15 minute walk from Hastings Station. These proposals will not give Robsack the help it needs. Candidly it would be an example of Urban sprawl if the development is to be large enough to fund the rail and road Infrastructure.
(*Hastings Old Town Residents Association*)

3.12.4 Could be a model of sustainable development

This is clearly a long term project and there is no requirement to develop this land in the near future. However a business community centred around an integrated transport node is a suitable development and could provide much needed employment and local focus for the neighbouring Robsack residential community.

The proposed park and ride station may help reduce parking requirements at the town centre stations.

It is to be hoped that this community could be a model of sustainable development and also fit sensitively into the fine landscape at Upper Wilting farm. The elevated position means that this community will be visible from a wide area so the highest standards of design and landscaping are essential.

(Hastings Urban Design Group)

3.12.5 Environmental impact needs examining

The Hill Community scheme should be examined in terms of its environmental impact. From a sustainable transport point of view, it looks poorly thought through. It would generate car trips directly, and the 'Park and Ride' car park would undermine rail and bus markets over a wide area; it would encourage railheading car trips from Bexhill and Hastings, and quite possibly, Rye.

(East Sussex Transport 2000)

3.12.6 Detrimental to the landscape character

The Hill Community is on a greenfield site with woodland, another UK BAP priority habitat. It would be detrimental to the character of the landscape and a considerable eyesore from a wide area. It would also be extremely damaging to this area and the wider countryside as it would threaten wildlife corridors. The proposal appears to offer no opportunity for biodiversity gain or sustainable development at this significant greenfield site. The proposed link road to this development would also isolate the SSSI at Filsham and would invite further development in this area.

(Sussex Wildlife Trust)

3.13 Specific sites

3.13.1 Ore Valley:

We generally welcome the masterplan proposals as they have been designed to support the Millennium Community but need to understand the proposal for the new road through the valley as it could impact on our redevelopment site at the top end of the Broomgrove estate. We believe that re-routing power cables underground will greatly assist redevelopment of the Valley as a whole and the Broomgrove site in particular.

(1066 Housing Association)

3.13.2 Red Lake area:

We welcome the proposal to extend housing and industrial developments in this area and to create a new Country Avenue and rail station to serve it.

(1066 Housing Association)