

Ford Neighbourhood
Plan Group



Agreeing the future, for the future...

Ford : State of the Parish Report

Prepared by the Ford Neighbourhood Development Plan
Steering Group

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(All available upon our web site at <http://ford.arun.gov.uk>)

Map of the Plan area.



Introduction

This Statement has been prepared by Ford Parish Council (“the Parish Council”) to accompany its submission to the local planning authority, Arun District Council (ADC), of the Ford Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP) under Regulations 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”).

The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by the Parish Council, a qualifying body, for the Neighbourhood Area covering the whole of the Parish of Ford, as designated by the Local Plan Sub- Committee of Arun District Council on 6th December 2013.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the evidence base and the context within which the FNDP is being prepared. It identifies the sustainability issues within the parish and sets out a framework within which the economic, social and environmental issues in the FNDP will be used to determine the plan’s detailed policies and proposals.

1. About Ford

Ford Parish covers an area of 4.08 km² comprising mainly of high quality arable farmland and pasture. Most of the population is centred within The Peregrines, a housing estate built in the 1980's. It is located 2 miles south of Arundel and includes HM Prison Ford and a former airfield.

History of the Parish of Ford

To the east of the parish, which borders the Arun River, lay the original Saxon village of Ffordes (now Ford). At the heart of the village stands the church of St Andrew-by -the-Ford with its Saxon origins and medieval drawings. The church in recent years has been carefully restored and is open to visitors. In the graveyard lies Sir William Garway, who was a Member of Parliament for Chichester and then Arundel between 1661-1689, whose family estate comprised of 2,240 acres of fertile agricultural land. The estate was sold by the Governors of Christ's Hospital in 1914 for £62,000 after 200 years of ownership as their crest on many of the cottages and farmhouses show.

The former aerodrome has been in existence since 1917 and was built mainly by German Prisoners of War and was operational until 1920. During the wars the airfield was occupied by various companies. It was operational during the Second World War as the home of RAF Ford, a Battle of Britain airfield, then was recommissioned by the admiralty in 1945 as HMS Peregrine until 1958. The Ford Motor Company had a plant making aircraft on the airfield. The airfield finally closed in 1980. Many of the local roads are named after the aeroplanes and of those who flew from the airfield during its history. A more detailed history can be found at <http://www.abct.org.uk/airfields/ford-yapton>

Selected Parish Statistics

Population 1,690 in 555 households

Population 3,820 with over 1,500 households.

Population density 4.14 persons per hectare.

17.3% of the population is aged between 0-15 years old.

73.1% of the population is of working age.

9.5% of the population is aged over 65.

12.7% of households claim Housing and Council Tax benefits

26.1% of the population aged over 65 claim pension credit

13.3% have a limiting long term illness

3.4% claim disability living allowance

Source: Rural community profile for Ford (Parish)

Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project, July 2013.

Character and Heritage

The village of Ford is situated in an area used for agriculture and commerce. The village does not have any schools. Children attend primary school mostly in either Climping or Yapton and secondary school in Barnham, Westergate or Littlehampton.

The village does not have an established main centre and would be described as a hamlet if it were not for the addition of a housing estate on the western edge of the parish, built in the 1980's.

The village is set around the airfield. There is a single carriageway road leading north to the A27 at Arundel and has a pinch point at the junction where traffic has to squeeze past parked cars. The speed limit is variable between 40mph rising to 60mph. At its southern point it meets the A259 at Climping roundabout and is difficult for traffic trying to join the flow of vehicles on this busy route. In the middle part of this road the railway crossing causes standing traffic often for up to 20 minutes. To the west is Burndell Road another single carriageway without footways which leads to Yapton. Another means of access to the A27 is via Ford Lane, a single carriageway, subject to flooding, which is used as a rat run. It is used by cars and large HGV's.

Residents enjoy the countryside and the standard of living in Ford with 84% being satisfied with the local area as a place to live. (source Place Survey 2008) A resident responding to the 2012 survey summed it up thus.

"Ford is a delightful and very beautiful setting in the Arun Valley, the views are really special and this little green gap all the way from Arundel to the sea is one that should be preserved. The tiny church and its setting is such a spiritual and very special place. As far as I am aware the industrial units currently work well alongside the farming and residential community and despite the increase in traffic much of the beauty of the area has been retained with these areas being well screened. Despite all the changes we have seen over the last 22 years the hamlet has managed to retain much of its rural pleasure which needs to be retained."

The village has some notable buildings, five of which are Listed. The parish church of Saint Andrew by the Ford, a saxon church built in about 1040 is a Grade one Listed Building and has a surviving early 12th century norman chancel arch with carved decoration. The wooden bell-turret was painted white as a navigational mark for ships.

A memorial Garden now stands on the west of the airfield to commemorate those who flew from the airfield during its 80 year history. A service is held at the Garden every Remembrance Sunday to remember those who gave their lives in the service of their country.

Environment and Habitats

A Soil and Agricultural Land Assessment Study carried out on behalf of ADC in March 2013 (see Appendix A) identified the land as follows:

*Provisional ALC mapping of the Ford site (**Figure 10a**) shows variable land quality, from Grade 1 over a large central portion, to Grade 4 to the east adjacent to the River Arun.*

*Defra's mapping of the Likelihood of best and most versatile land in West Sussex (**Figure 5**) is consistent with the provisional mapping in that it shows a high likelihood of best and most versatile quality land over most of the Ford study area, the exception being to the east where the likelihood is considered moderate (equating to 20 to 60% of land expected to be best and most versatile).*

*Detailed post-1988 ALC data is available for three areas within the Ford Site, totalling around 64ha, and shown in **Figure 10b**. The cumulative area was predominantly found to be of Grade 2 quality, with the remainder comprising 2.5ha of Subgrade 3a quality land, as shown in **Table 9** below. As also seen in Table 9, the proportion of Grade 2 land is significantly higher than both the regional and national average.*

The fields surrounding the village are home to many bird, mammal, amphibian, reptile and insect species as well as being valuable agricultural land (see Evidence Base).

Land to the north and east of the Parish is designated as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area and is largely land at risk of flooding. (see Evidence Base).

Flood Risk and Drainage

The eastern edge of the Parish boundary is the River Arun. This fast flowing tidal river is liable to flooding and indeed a large area of land abutting the river is recognised as a flood plain. Land to the north is also crossed by a number of drains and ditches and is also liable to flooding.

Riparian ownership responsibilities are taken seriously by the local landowners who maintain the ditches and undoubtedly save the parish from a lot of flooding.

Flooding from surface water blights land at Rollaston Park, Johnson Way, Burndell Road, Rodney Crescent and Ford Lane.

Buildings or Structures of Character

The Parish contains 4 buildings listed within Arun District Council's Supplementary Planning Document - Buildings or Structures of Character (September 2005). These buildings, whilst not Listed, are recognised as important contributors to the local distinctiveness and sense of place and form part of the areas rich heritage.

Housing

Ford has a mix of housing types and densities consistent with its rural character and historical development.

To the west a housing development of some 200 homes was added in the 1980's. The rest of the parish is made up of individual properties with gardens and off street parking.

The parish does not have a housing allocation designated within the emerging Arun District Council Local Plan, however there is pressure from other parishes for Ford to use land on the former airfield for housing.

Selected statistics

15.3% of dwellings are detached

31.4% are semi-detached

40.2% are terraced

6.5% are flats

5.8% are park homes, houseboats or other temporary accommodation

75.9% of housing is owner occupied
11.6% of housing is social rented
10.1% of housing is private rented
8.5% of homes are estimated to be in fuel poverty

Source: Rural community profile for Ford (Parish)
Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project, July 2013.

Getting Around

Ford Road is a single carriageway road with many side roads with blind junctions. The road is fairly straight and as a result speeding is an issue.

Due to the nature of the business development in Ford, as well as a recycling plant, the road is used by very large lorries which regularly clip the grass verges. The recycling plant alone accounts for up to 60 vehicle movements each day.

For most of the route of Ford Road there is only a pavement on one side which keeps changing requiring pedestrians to cross and recross the busy road.

Ford Lane which runs west to east and joins Ford Road is a winding, unlit, single carriageway track with no pavements.

Burndell Road to the west is a single carriageway, unlit road with no pavements for most of its length.

Selected statistics

8.2% of people travel more than 40km to work
18.4% travel less than 2km to work
Average time to nearest hospital by public transport = 49 mins(County average : 35 minutes)
Average time to nearest supermarket by public transport = 9 mins
Road distance from a GP = 1.9km
Road distance from a Secondary School = 4.8km (national average 2.1km)

Source: Rural community profile for Ford (Parish)
Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project, July 2013.

Rail

The main line railway station is well used by commuters as well as residents and has a small car park to the rear which is insufficient for purpose causing parking outside industrial units and on the main road. The closure of the station gates to allow trains to pass causes significant standing traffic either side of the gates.

Bus

There is no bus service to the east of the parish along Ford Road to Arundel. The only bus service is to the west along Burndell Road which is the coastal route from Brighton to Portsmouth. There is no community transport.

Footpaths and Cycleways

There is an existing network of footpaths but no cycleways. It is not possible to get from one side of the parish to the other without using public roads without footpaths. Vehicle speeds throughout Ford make cycling a hazardous task.

Employment and Enterprise

The parish has 128 businesses delivering a range of industries sited throughout the parish most are SME's. The majority of economically active residents are full time employees with a significant proportion of residents either self employed (8.3% v 9.8% national average) or working from home (1.7% v 3.5% national average).

Selected Statistics

63.2% are economically active

8.3% are self employed

1.7% work from home

15.4% are part-time employees

Retail is the largest employment sector (19%)

Source: Rural community profile for Ford (Parish)

Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) Rural evidence project, July 2013.

There are a large number of employment sites including a recycling plant, sewerage works, several general and light industrial employment sites and a proposed waste incinerator site.

Shops

There are no shops in Ford.

Public Houses

There is one public house, The Ship and Anchor located next to the river.

Restaurants

There are no restaurants.

Camping/caravanning

The Ship and Anchor PH as a non-permanent holiday caravan and camping site well used by visitors who contribute to the economic viability of the PH.

Hotels/Guest Houses

There are no B&B or hotel establishments in the Parish.

Community, Leisure and Wellbeing

Ford and Yapton share a community hall which is situated in Yapton.

Selected statistics

17.3% (295 people) of the population are aged under 16 but there is only one play area in the parish sited within The Peregrines development to the west of the parish.

9.5% (160 people) of the population are aged over 65 but Ford has no facilities for the elderly and no medical facilities within the parish.

The community has a Police Community Support Officer who is shared with Walberton, Yapton, Barnham, Eastergate, Climping, Aldingbourne and Middleton.

The demand for allotments has been met by the recent leasing of land which has been used to create 80 plots all of which have been taken. The allotments are a joint project for the residents of Ford, Climping and Middleton-on-Sea.

2. Community Views

Surveys and open events have allowed the parish to gain the views of residents.

Common themes from the open events have been:

- space for a meeting room/village hall
- space for a shop
- open space for play areas
- mix of housing including small, large and retirement including one bed properties
- bus route
- wooded boundary
- low density well designed housing

Selected results - full results in the Evidence Base

Housing

Support for small scale development to meet local needs.

Support for energy efficient development which reinforces the character of the village and which does not cause flooding/drainage issues.

10 (8.33%) would like to downsize to a smaller dwelling.

9 (42%) would like to buy their own home.

7 (12.96%) of young people living at home would like a property to own in Ford.

Community Facilities and Wellbeing

116 (93.55%) feel Parks and Open Spaces are important to preserve.

86 (72.88%) rate Conservation and Heritage features as important.

91 (76.47%) think footpaths and cycle routes are important.

113 (90.40%) say that the surrounding countryside is what makes Ford special to them.

Play areas; youth clubs; off road cycle routes; football pitch; community centre; nursery school on residents wish list.

Strong support for the PH and Church to be made Assets of Community Value along with proposals for the campsite and Flying Fortress

Employment and Enterprise

60 (51.28%) think that employment for local people is important.

73 (66.36%) do not wish to see more land provided for business expansion.

15 (12.82%) would like to start their own business in the area.

95 (80.51%) do not wish to allocate land for tourism activities.

Environment and Sustainability

97 (81.51%) want local character, buildings and features to be preserved.

97 (79.51%) do not want to see further large scale development.

108 (86.40%) want green spaces protected.

69 (54.76%) report flooding in their road or lane.

12 (9.60%) report sewers backing up at their house.

19 (16.10%) report sewer inspection covers being lifted during rain.

A range of green spaces are rated as important including the riverside walks, the airfield, areas around Ford prison, areas around the church

Issues that make Ford special include no traffic, stars at night, peace and quiet, village feel, being in the country, open spaces, wildlife, birds, walks.

Getting Around

79 (62.20%) want to see stronger enforcement of the speed limit through Ford.
94 (74.02%) would like to see the network of footpaths extended and cycle ways added.

3. Planning Framework

The parish is part of the Arun District and the West Sussex County. Each of these administrations has adopted and has emerging policies and proposals that have an influence over the strategy and detailed content of the FNDP.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government in 2012 is also an important guide in preparation of local plans and neighbourhood development plans. At examination, the submitted FNDP must demonstrate that it is consistent with the policies and intent of the NPPF.

The development plan for Arun currently comprises the saved policies of the adopted 2003 Arun Local Plan and those of the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 publication version which has been put out for consultation while this Plan has been being prepared. The FNDP must be deemed by ADC to be in general conformity with the development plan.

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF contains a number of key policy principles that will shape the ALNDP. These are itemised below:

- The presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 14)
- The role of NDPs (16)
- Helping achieve economic growth (18-20)
- Boosting the supply of housing (47)
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (50)
- The quality of development (58)
- Promoting healthy communities (69)
- The use of community right to build orders (71)
- The designation of Local Green Spaces (76/77)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (109-115)
- Neighbourhood plans (183-185)
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The principles above are those of most relevance to the FNDP but many other principles in the framework will have some bearing on the preparation of the document in due course.

Arun Local Plan 2003

There are a number of saved policies of the 2003 Local Plan that remain especially relevant to the FNDP, the majority of which have been updated in the emerging Local Plan:

- Built Up Area Boundary (GEN2)
- Provision of New Residential Development (GEN5)
- The Form of New Development (GEN7)
- Inland Flooding (GEN11)
- Amount of New Commercial Development (GEN6)
- Enhancement of Employment Premises and Sites (DM 1)
- Development and the Production of New Infrastructure (GEN8)
- Provision of Public Open Space within New Development (GEN20)
- Buildings or Structures of Character (GEN22)
- Cycling and Walking (GEN15)
- Listed Buildings (DM 29)
- Areas of Special Character (AREA1)
- Protection of Open Spaces (AREA5)
- Affordable Housing (DEV17)

Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 publication version

The FNDP is being prepared in anticipation of the adoption of this Plan. In doing so, it is expected the FNDP will be submitted for examination – where its conformity to the development plan will be a key consideration – prior to the examination and adoption of the new Local Plan.

Other Strategies, Plans and Studies

There are a number of strategies, plans and policies that have been used in the preparation of the FNDP:

Arun District Local Plan 2003

Arun District Draft Local Plan (2011-2031)

Arun District Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, SHLAA (2012)

ADC Play Strategy 2011-2016

ADC Leisure Strategy 2012

ADC landscape Study 2006

ADC SPG - Buildings or Structures of Character 2005

Arun District Council Energy Efficiency Strategy 2014-2017

West Sussex County Council Better Connected Broadband Delivery Plan

West Sussex Local Transport Plan 2011-26

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Flood and Water Management Act (2010)

Building for Life 12

Code for Sustainable Homes

Fluvial and Coastal Flood Risk in Ford Parish Map (Environment Agency)

Flood and Water Management Act (2010)

Residents Surveys

Community Engagement Events 2013 and 2014
Ford Housing Sites Appraisal 2014
Biodiversity Report for Ford

4. Ford Neighbourhood Development Plan

The FNDP contains a number of policies for the use of land within the Parish. These policies together with the policies of the Arun development plan - that is the saved polices of the 2003 Arun Local Plan and their eventual replacement by the Arun Local Plan and the NPPF, will be used by the LPA in determining planning applications.

The vision for Ford Parish in twenty years time has sought to capture the community's views and aspirations for the parish. It therefore forms the basis on which the strategic objectives and proposed policies have been formulated.

"In 2023 Ford Parish will continue to be an attractive place to live, maintaining its intrinsic rural character whilst allowing for sustainable development and improving local services.

Agricultural land production will continue to be the major land use over the larger part of the parish.

The different parts of the parish will be connected through a network of cycle ways and footpaths.

Local businesses and those working from home will benefit from an enhanced broadband and internet service with the ability to expand to local small start-up business premises."

The vision statement is underpinned by a clear set of core objectives that seek to make a positive contribution to sustainable growth within Ford Parish, both economically, environmentally and socially.

These core objectives should;

- Provide new residential development which complements the current character and cultural heritage of the village and provide a village 'heart' ;
- Maintain an attractive mixture of green spaces and residential properties;
- Contain appropriate infrastructure, including health, transport and community facilities, to meet the needs of all in the community;
- Ensure new development does not increase flood risk to existing properties or land within the boundary of Ford parish or within that of its immediate neighbours.
- Have new housing which provides a variety of solutions to identified needs;
- Provide for a range of living, working and leisure needs;

- Ensure that the requirements of pedestrians, cyclists, private vehicles and public transport are properly met and accessible to all;
- Maximise usage of the green spaces in the area, ensuring they are well maintained and provide net gains in wildlife habitats.

The FNDP will allocate a site for 750 homes and will furthermore seek to allocate land as Local Green Space and biodiversity improvement areas. Further consultation with land owners and residents will be needed before the proposals are finalised. However, the land favoured by residents is not near any sites of nature conservation importance, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas or other significant sites.

The Plan will also set out policies under the following headings:

Getting Around - dealing with transport and connectivity issues

Employment and Tourism - dealing with the protection, promotion and support for employment and tourism

Housing and Design - dealing with the strategic housing allocation, design and local housing issues

Community and Wellbeing - dealing with leisure, health and recreation

Environment and Sustainability - dealing with drainage, biodiversity and climate change

It is envisaged that the FNDP will go forward for consultation under Regulation 14 early in 2016.

Appendix A - Extract from Soil and Agricultural Land Assessment Study March 2013

6.3. Ford Site

6.3.1. Site Context

The Site at Ford (SHLAA site 71) sits to the north west of Littlehampton and extends to around 400ha in total. The Site is largely contained by suburban land uses, including the villages of Yapton, Climping and Ford.

Within the Site is a former airfield which ceased functioning in the 1980s. It is now predominantly agricultural, but also the location of a sewage works and the Ford Airfield

Industrial Estate which sits just outside the site boundary. The Site is dissected in the north by a rail line and Ford Lane, which both run roughly east to west.

6.3.2. Climate

The climate at the Site is generally warm and moist, leading to relatively large moisture deficits in crops. The number of Field Capacity Days at the Site is slightly above average for lowland England. This is considered to be slightly unfavourable for providing opportunities for working on the land.

Table 8: Local climatic factors, Ford Airfield

Factor	Ford North	Ford South
Average Annual Rainfall	763mm	743mm
Accumulated Temperature >0°C	1536 day°	1542 day°
Field Capacity Day Regime	157 days	152 days
Average Moisture Deficit, wheat	118mm	121mm
Average Moisture Deficit, potatoes	112mm	118mm

6.3.3. Geology and Soil

The bedrock geology at the Ford Site is chalk. In the north and north east of the Site, superficial marine and beach deposits of sand and gravel are mapped. Across the remainder of the Site are river terrace deposits of sand, silt and clay.

Soils of the Hook and Hamble series are over most of the Site, both of which are deep, silty and stoneless. The difference between Hook and Hamble soils is drainage, with the former susceptible to occasional waterlogging, whilst the latter is well drained throughout the year.

Extending south of the Site, areas of the silty, imperfectly drained Park Gate series are present in association with the Ryebank Rife. Around the northern and eastern edges of the Site are Lyminster series soils. The Lyminster series is developed in marine deposits and as such is sandy and well drained. The final series mapped is associated with the River Arun, which marks part of the eastern boundary to the site, comprising the more clayey Arundel series soils which are seasonally waterlogged by groundwater.

6.3.4. Land Use

Most of the site is in arable agricultural use. Non-agricultural land at the Site includes a farmstead and the Ford Lane Industrial Site along Ford Lane to the north, the sewage works, the Ford Depot and the old airport runways.

6.3.5. Land Quality

Provisional ALC mapping of the Ford site (**Figure 10a**) shows variable land quality, from Grade 1 over a large central portion, to Grade 4 to the east adjacent to the River Arun.

Defra's mapping of the Likelihood of best and most versatile land in West Sussex (**Figure 5**) is consistent with the provisional mapping in that it shows a high likelihood of best and most versatile quality land over most of the Ford study area, the exception being to the east where the likelihood is considered moderate (equating to 20 to 60% of land expected to be best and most versatile).

Detailed post-1988 ALC data is available for three areas within the Ford Site, totalling around 64ha, and shown in **Figure 10b**. The cumulative area was predominantly found to be of Grade 2 quality, with the remainder comprising 2.5ha of Subgrade 3a quality land, as shown in **Table 9** below. As also seen in Table 9, the proportion of Grade 2 land is significantly higher than both the regional and national average.

Table 9: Detailed ALC areas of the Ford Airfield site

Grade	Area	% of Detailed	National Average (%)	Arun District Average (%)
1	-	-	3	13
2	61.5	95	14	18
3a	2.5	5	21	37
3b	-	-	27	
Total	64	100		

Given the climatic conditions at Ford, areas in which soil profiles are typical of the Hook and Hamble series (shown in **Figure 10c**) will be assessed as Grade 1 or 2. The small portion of Subgrade 3a quality land is mapped over the boundary between soils of the well drained Hook series and those of the imperfectly drained Park Gate series in the south of

the Site. Where the Park Gate soil series continues to be mapped, aerial photography shows evidence of crop stress.

There are clear consistencies between the soil series present and the detailed ALC findings, and hence the predicted land quality mapping (**Figure 10d**) is based on the soil series mapping.

6.3.6. Economic Productivity

Using **Figure 10d**, it is estimated that around half of the site area at Ford will be high yielding, and half would produce average yields.

The Ford study area is approximately 400ha in total and therefore 200ha of high yielding land are present. High yields have been calculated to be worth approximately £750 per hectare, equating to an AAGM of £150,000 from the most productive areas at the Ford site.

Average yielding land has been calculated at a value of £490 per hectare. When multiplied across the remaining 200ha at the site, this equates to an AAGM of approximately £98,000.

In total, agricultural productivity at the site is estimated at around **£248,000** per year.

6.3.7. Impact of Development

The area of productive land at Ford is vast and hence the impact of development on agriculture and land quality will understandably be major. Development will also have a massive impact on the economic income of Arun District, with the potential loss of almost a quarter of a million pounds per year from the Ford site alone.

Figure 10: a) Provisional ALC data, b) Detailed ALC survey mapping, c) Soil series mapping and d) Predicted land quality distribution

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