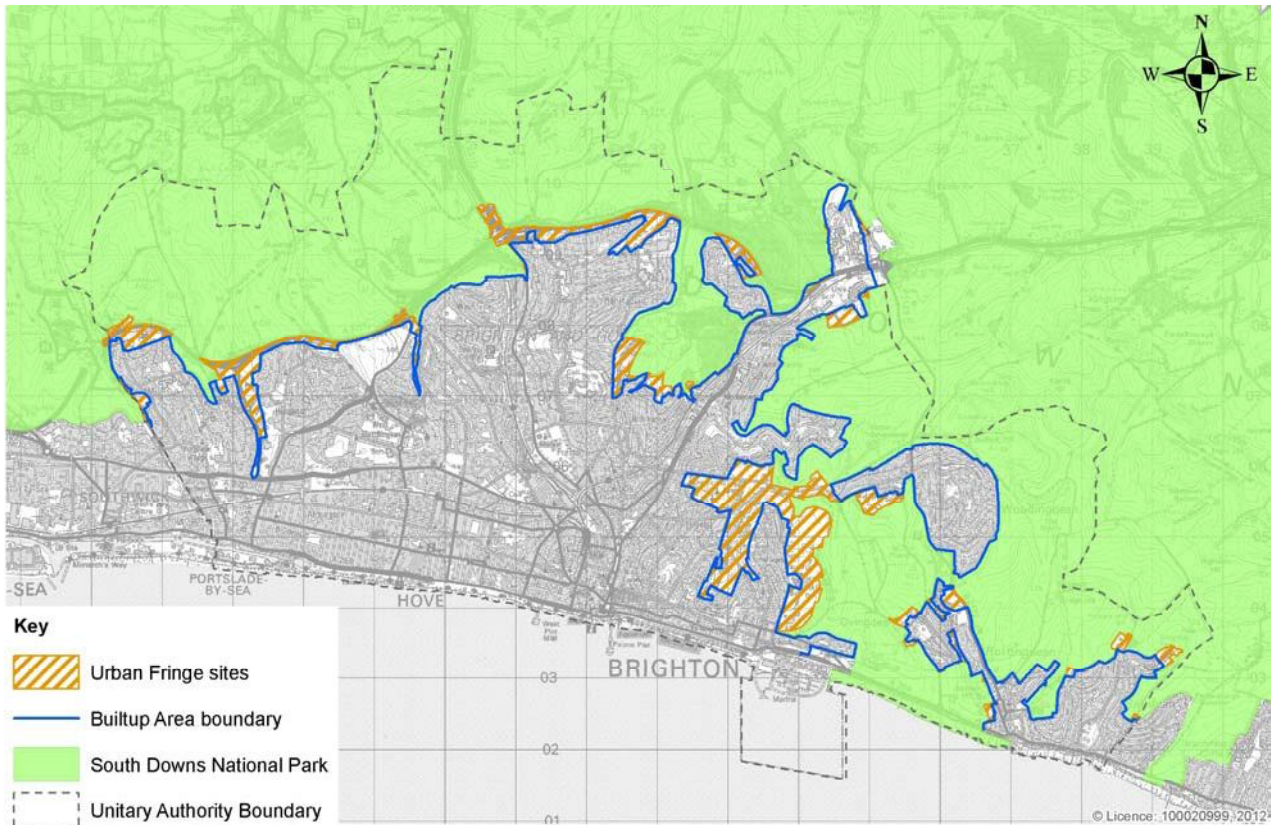


SA4 – Urban Fringe



Context

3.133 Most of the land surrounding the built up area of the city is managed as open space or farmed downland and much falls within the boundaries of the South Downs National Park. For the purposes of the City Plan the term 'urban fringe' applies to those areas of land that lie between the defined built up urban area boundary and the boundary of the South Downs National Park.

3.134 In many instances the South Downs National Park boundary is contiguous with the built up urban edge of the city. The urban fringe is therefore now made up of 'pockets' of residual green space rather than any homogenous green 'belt' around the city. These areas are vulnerable to development pressures, farm fragmentation and anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping, vandalism and inappropriate recreational activity such as illegal motor biking. Elsewhere there has been piecemeal enclosure both for the keeping of horses and garden use.

3.135 Careful use and management of land within the urban fringe is therefore essential in terms of helping to retain the setting of the city in its downland landscape.

SA4 Urban Fringe

The council will promote and support the careful use and management of land within the urban fringe to achieve the following objectives:

1. The protection and enhancement of the wider landscape role of land within the urban fringe, the setting of the South Downs National Park and the protection of strategic views into and out of the city.
2. Securing better management of the urban fringe, environmental improvements and safe public access to the countryside through sustainable means.
3. The promotion of the urban fringe as **part of the city's green network and** encouraging opportunities for multi-functional uses such as, appropriate recreation and cultural experience, new allotments and local food production and biodiversity conservation and enhancements (see CP5 Biodiversity).
4. The protection of sensitive groundwater source protection zones from pollution and encouraging land management practices that reduce rapid surface water runoff and soil erosion.
- 5. The creation of 'gateway' facilities and** interpretative facilities in connection with the South Downs National Park to support sustainable tourism.

Development within the urban fringe will only be permitted where:

- a) a site has been allocated for development in a development plan document; or
- b) a countryside location can be justified;
- c) the proposal has regard to the downland landscape setting of the city;
- d) all adverse impacts of development are minimised and appropriately compensated for; and
- e) where appropriate, the proposal helps to achieve one or more of the objectives set out above.

Supporting Text

3.136 The spatial strategy for the City seeks to accommodate future development primarily within the existing built up area of the city. Significant amounts of new development are directed to areas which either already benefit from close proximity to good sustainable transport links or are areas where accessibility can be improved; are areas which offer significant capacity for new development and are areas where new development can secure substantial benefits for the city. This approach ensures that transport impacts will be minimised and that areas of countryside and the South Downs National Park will continue to be protected.

3.137 There are however some uses for which sites are unlikely to be found within the built up area but are necessary to service the needs of the city. Such uses might include new forms of waste or water management, renewable energy generation, local food production and the facilitation of a gateway to the South Downs National Park by sustainable transport means. Sites for such uses may need to be identified in Part 2 of the City Plan. Some sites falling within the urban fringe were allocated for development in the 2005 Brighton & Hove Local Plan.

3.138 Where appropriate, proposals for development should help to achieve the five principal objectives for the urban fringe as identified in the policy. These objectives reflect

the key aims and objectives of other council strategies and plans and also reflect Biosphere Reserve principles and objectives which aim to bring people and nature together. For example, the council's 'Downland Initiative Strategy' and the city's 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan' seek to ensure that management of the downland estate achieves social, environmental and economic benefits and 'reconnects the people of Brighton & Hove to a more biodiverse downland with better education and improved access and a better sense of connection to the land'⁸⁹.

3.139 There are also other types of developments that are likely to justify an urban fringe/countryside location. These might include, for example, householder extensions appropriate in scale and design to the parent building or farm diversification schemes which are necessary for the efficient operation of the farm and do not prejudice the agricultural use⁹⁰. Proposals for farm diversification within the urban fringe should accord with the council's adopted Planning Advice Note 01 Farm Diversification (October 2005) or subsequent revisions. The NPPF (March 2012) advises that local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances⁹¹.

3.140 The protection of water supply and water quality are also key responsibilities in the urban fringe because the chalk under the downland around the city is the aquifer or groundwater storage that supplies the city. The EU Water Framework Directive introduces a new concept of 'good status' that is far more rigorous than current water environment quality measures and it includes the protection of groundwater. This valuable resource needs to be protected from pollution and from land uses with a high risk of pollution. Towards this end, the city council has adopted a sustainable farming strategy for the management of its farmland to prevent soil erosion, flooding and pollution of the city's water supply. The River Basin Management Plan⁹² (South East River Basin Districts – including Adur and Ouse Catchment and prepared by the Environment Agency) looks to influence land management to reduce, or ensure no increase in, run-off rates and to encourage activities that may have the potential to reduce run-off rates from the South Downs and contribute to wider benefits (such as biodiversity, soil conservation and water quality improvements).

3.141 The council works with other landowners and DEFRA to seek sustainable management of the Downland not in its ownership and control.

⁸⁹ Downland Initiative Policy was first developed in 2005.

⁹⁰ Minor development proposals will not necessarily be expected to contribute towards the achievement of the five primary objectives set out in SA4.

⁹¹ Paragraph 55, NPPF, March 2012.

⁹² River Basin Management Plan – South East River Basin Districts, Environment Agency, December 2009.