# Harrietsham 2031 Neighbourhood Plan **SUBMISSION PLAN June 2014**







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"We want to put the people who live, work and visit Harrietsham at the heart of this Neighbourhood Plan but we need your ideas and involvement to do this effectively"

**Quote from the Village Visioning Event** 25.04.12



This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with the help of Feria Urbanism, a design and planning studio that specialises in urban design, urban planning, neighbourhood strategies and public participation. Established in 2007, it has been involved in a diverse range of projects across the UK and has developed key skills in organising community engagement events that inform neighbourhood strategies.

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report designed and produced by Feria Urbanism

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# HARRIETSHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2031 SUBMISSION PLAN

This report forms part of the Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan, as prepared for submission to Maidstone Borough Council. It should be read in conjunction with other associated reports and plans that form the submission plan, including:

- Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan
- Conditions Statement
- Consultation Statement
- Sustainability Assessment (to be confirmed)

The plan and all associated documents have been prepared by Harrietsham Parish Council, the qualifying body responsible for creating a Neighbourhood Plan.

Harrietsham Parish Office Harrietsham Village Hall Church Road Harrietsham ME17 1AP

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The formal six week consultation on the submission plan will be run by Maidstone Borough Council. Details of the consultation process, and how to respond, can be found on the following website.

http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/local-plan/neighbourhood-plans

Spatial Policy Team Maidstone Borough Council Maidstone House King Street Maidstone ME15 6JQ

email **ldf@maidstone.gov.uk** telephone **01622 602819** 



"Places are either growing or declining, nothing stays the same but a good Neighbourhood Plan will let you manage growth on your terms"

**Quote from the Three-Day Design Forum** 26, 27 + 28.06.12

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Submission Plan



# **01 INTRODUCTION**



The Pilgrim's Way, a historic long distance path, runs along the higher ground north of the village, within the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

# What is the Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan?

The Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of our village. It contains a vision, aims, planning policies and proposals for improving the area by indicating key sites as being suitable for specific kinds of development. The Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the statutory planning for the area. This statutory status gives Neighbourhood Plans more weight than other documents, such as parish plans, community plans and village design statements.

### The Role of Harrietsham Parish Council

Harrietsham Parish Council is the "qualifying body" for producing the Neighbourhood Plan. That is to say, it has the powers to initiate the process and produce the final document. It will also be the body responsible for consulting on the plan before Maidstone Borough Council submit the plan for independent examination. The Parish Council believe that without planned improvements, any future developments run the risk of being unsustainable and potentially damaging to the village over the long term. This Neighbourhood Plan will not just restate Maidstone Borough Council's planning policies but set out the community's views on the development and use of land in the village. This includes setting policies on where development should go.

# **Local Planning Policy**

This Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan; in this instance is the saved Policies of the Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan 2000. The strategic policies regarding the amount of housing are out-of-date. The Core Strategy 2011 and the Local Plan (Reg. 18) Local Plan 2014 are both emerging plans and are not yet part of the statutory development plan and therefore conformity with those strategic policies is not part of the basic conditions. It is, however, sensible for the Neighbourhood Plan to have regard to these policies.

Maidstone Borough Council has identified Harrietsham as one of the five "Rural Service Centres" in the borough due to its location and existing village facilities. Harrietsham Parish Council has agreed that a relatively small and reasonable amount of development will enhance and extend the present settlement and improve the future sustainability of the village. The Parish Council also believe that a good Neighbourhood Plan will address the concerns surrounding future development within the village.

### **Rural Service Centres**

According to Maidstone Borough Council's Draft Core Strategy (2011), Rural Service Centres are defined as such:

5.8 Rural Service Centres (RSCs) provide an appropriate level of services to serve the surrounding villages and rural hinterland. It is important that these centres are allowed to continue to serve their local area by retaining vital services thereby reducing the need to travel. Provision for some limited development which supports the role of the RSCs to provide for a choice of deliverable housing locations should be made. Appropriately scaled employment opportunities will also be allowed, building on and expanding existing provision in these locations. Furthermore, the Maidstone Borough Council Core Strategy also states the following:

3.22. As a result of the evidence base gathered during the surveying and workshop stages, and the knowledge gained through other strands of Core Strategy research (local housing needs surveys, SHLAA, SHMA, retail, transport and employment studies) officers recommended that five villages were designated as rural service centres, namely; Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst.

This decision was endorsed by Members of the Council's Local Development Document Advisory Group in February 2010.

3.23 The five designated villages each have basic services and facilities the council considers important towards achieving RSC status. These include but are not exclusive to: good public transport linkages, employment opportunities, services and facilities (i.e. a local shop, pharmacy, and public house), and community facilities (i.e. a village hall, doctor's surgery, and sports field). Included in the decision was the capacity for sustainable growth at each of the villages, which may lead to improvements in service and transport infrastructure as well as improved retail and community facilities.

It is the view of the Parish Council that the last line of this description (i.e. improved retail and community facilities) will be a key issue that this Neighbourhood Plan will seek to influence and deliver. It is principally in response to this designated growth status that Harrietsham Parish Council has decided to produce a Neighbourhood Plan that adheres to Maidstone Borough Council's requirements as well as national planning policy.

A Neighbourhood Plan is seen as the most effective way of ensuring that Harrietsham sensitively attains the levels of growth required of it through local planning policy as well as acquiring the necessary uplift in infrastructure that must come with new development. This plan will allow the Harrietsham community to manage growth on its own terms.

- New and improved utility infrastructure will be encouraged and supported in order to meet the identified needs of the community.
- New residential and commercial development will be permitted only if sufficient infrastructure capacity is either available or can be provided in time to serve it.

## **Housing Need**

Implicit throughout this Neighbourhood Plan is an assumption that the demonstration of housing need is not a requirement of this plan as it has taken its lead from an explicit designation (i.e. that of a Rural Service Centre) handed down from Maidstone Borough Council.

The Parish Council has therefore expended its time, energy and resources developing a shared vision for the future of the village and assessing how best these additional houses can be accommodated within or immediately adjacent to the existing built area in the most sustainable and sensitive ways possible. In doing so, this Neighbourhood Plan aims to reconcile housing growth with the delivery of the village's shared vision.

## **Housing Numbers**

As explained above, the Parish Council does not see the role of this Neighbourhood Plan to determine housing numbers but rather, to determine how those numbers (as determined by Maidstone Borough Council) can best be distributed within the village, in accordance with the shared vision.

#### **MBC Core Strategy**

According to the 2012 Core Strategy (Strategic Site Allocations Public Consultation) delivery of these housing numbers will entail the following:

7.1 The following distribution of 1,130 new dwellings on greenfield sites at the Rural Service Centres will be included in policy CS1 of the draft Core Strategy, which is the borough wide strategy setting out the spatial distribution of development. June 2014

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009 and the Strategic Sites Assessment 2009 demonstrated an adequate choice of sites to meet this target.

Of these 1,130 dwellings it is expected that around 315 dwellings will be allocated to Harrietsham. These figures were correct at the time of the publication of the 2012 Draft Core Strategy and at the time of the Regulation 14 Consultation on this Neighbourhood Plan, in November/December of 2013.

#### MBC (Reg 18) Local Plan

The Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan (Regulation 18) Consultation Draft, published in March 2014 confirmed this number, distributed as follows:

MBC Site Ref.	<u>No. of Dwellings</u>
H1 (25) Tongs Meadow	100
H1 (26) South of Ashford Rd	70
H1 (27) Mayfield Nursery	50
H1 (28) Church Rd	95

#### <u>Total 315</u>

However, it is understood that these figures may be revised in the near future by Maidstone Borough Council as it looks once again at its housing targets.

Harrietsham Parish Council is concerned at the delay in establishing a definitive housing figure for the parish and therefore wishes to move quickly, but thoroughly, towards the adoption of this Neighbourhood Plan in order to fill the planning policy vacuum created by the absence of an adopted and up to date local plan at borough level.

This Neighbourhood Plan accepts the scale of housing development provided for in the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan but sets out its own proposals for the location of the new homes in accordance with the vision and principles developed by the community in the preparation of the plan.

#### Neighbourhood Plan Redistribution Of Numbers

The Parish Council is concerned about the impact that 95 dwellings at Church Road will have upon the setting of the Conservation Area in East Street, as recommended through allocation H1 (28) Church Road, in the draft Local Plan. A much smaller proportion of this site was identified as suitable for development through the consultation and engagement process. The three day design forum noted the potential of this site for an element of small, sensitive infill development but retaining large areas of green space to the north of the almshouses to contribute to the formation of the "Green Chain Walk". This specific green space outcome is not identified in the Local Plan allocation.

Meanwhile, land south of Court Lodge Road has not been included in the draft Local Plan allocations. However, this site has been identified by the Neighbourhood Plan as being suitable for development. Development of this land is considered important to contribute to a more compact village and the creation of better links between the village hall in the east and the school in the west. This Neighbourhood Plan suggests a redistribution of the overall 315 number in order to be more responsive to local issues. The overall number must be maintained to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the local plan but a more equitable distribution will assist in meeting the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, the following is proposed:

NHP Policy Ref.	Max. No. of Dwellings
LIV 02 South of Ashford Rd	70
LIV 02 South of Court Lodge	Rd 50
LIV 04 Tongs Meadow	100
LIV 05 Mayfield Nursery	50
LIV 06 Church Rd	45

#### <u>Total 315</u>

Maintaining the setting of the conservation area and establishing large areas of green space adjacent to the almhouses is a community objective; likewise, establishing new east-west routes across the village is also a community objective. The proposed redistribution of housing numbers as set out above will help meet those objectives.

### General Conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

There is no reason why a Neighbourhood Plan cannot be progressed in advance of a Local Plan. One of the basic conditions is that a Neighbourhood Plan should be "... in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority". In this case, the development plan currently comprises the saved policies of the Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan 2000. That plan is now clearly out of date with regard to forecasts of housing need. Saved Policy H1 allocates two sites in Harrietsham for development: one at Station Road for 13 dwellings and one at Hook Lane for 70 dwellings. Policy H11 sets out detailed requirements for the development of the land at Hook Lane. Both of these developments are now substantially complete.

#### No Up-To-Date Development Plan

In the absence of an up-to-date development plan the main source of guidance is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Within this the key considerations are the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 14; paragraphs 47 — 55 relating to the provision of housing and paragraphs 183 — 185 on Neighbourhood Planning.

The latter make clear the importance of local planning authorities setting out the strategic policies for their areas in an up-to-date Local Plan and make it clear that once a Neighbourhood Plan is brought into force the non-strategic policies take precedence over the existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan where they are in conflict. It also indicates that Local Planning Authorities should avoid duplicating planning policies for non-strategic policies where a local plan is in preparation. There is thus a clear distinction between the approach to strategic and non-strategic policies.

In the absence of up-to-date strategic policies there is no suggestion in the NPPF that neighbourhood plans should fill this gap. The projection of housing need for an area is a complex and time consuming task and it is an essential input to the formulation of strategic policies relating to housing development and it makes little sense to carry it out at the level of the individual village. Indeed, it is often necessary for several local authorities to cooperate to carry out this task. It is not therefore necessary or appropriate for this Neighbourhood Plan to rehearse the basis for the housing need forecasts of the local authority.

#### **Regard for the Emerging Local Plan**

Given the requirements for the Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the Local Plan and not to promote less development than the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies, it is clearly prudent to have regard to the provisions of the emerging Local Plan with regard to the amount of housing and the status of Harrietsham in the housing hierarchy. These forecasts are the best that are available and it is sensible to have regard to them.

However, until the Local Plan policies have been the subject of examination and adopted there is a possibility that these forecasts will change or indeed that the status of Harrietsham as a Rural Service Centre could change. It is also important to note that the requirement is for general conformity which would permit some flexibility, in particular in an upward direction.

### Summary

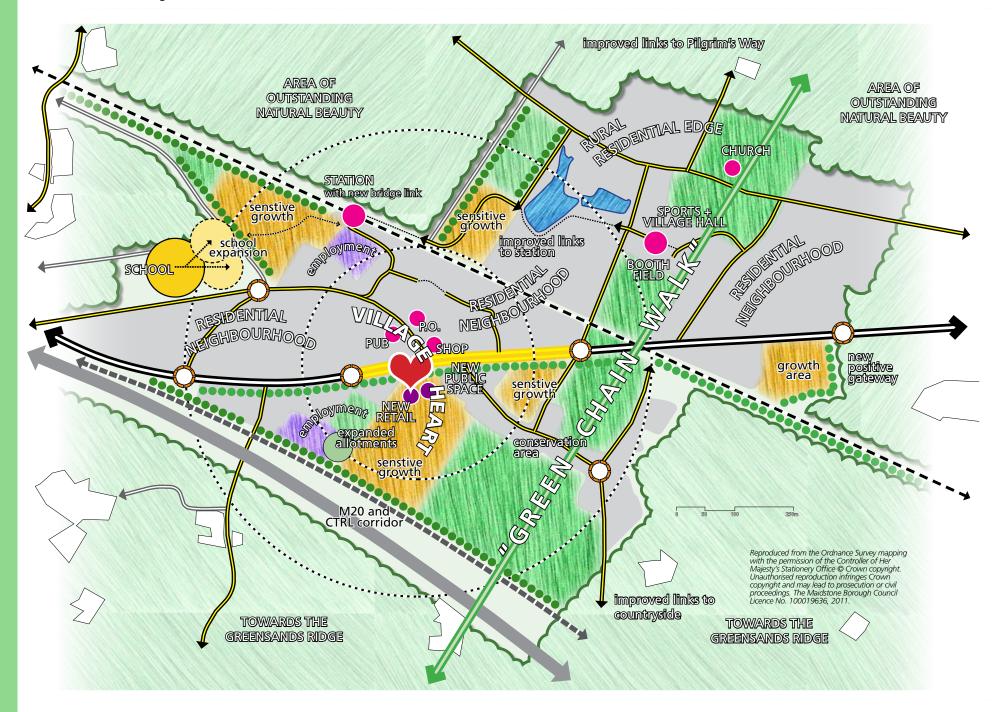
The context within which this plan has been developed is summaries as follows:

- There is no up-to-date housing forecast in adopted Local Plan, which is no significantly out-of-date.
- It is not practical for a Neighbourhood Plan to calculate housing need as it is a highly technical exercise and is only meaningful in the context of strategic policy.
- Therefore, the best available guidance is the forecast in the emerging Local Plan, that is the Maidstone Borough Council (Regulation 18) Draft Local Plan.
- To adopt a lower housing figure in the Neighbourhood Plan than that shown in the emerging MBC Local Plan would be high risk as the Neighbourhood Plan would be out of date very soon if the proposed allocation in the Local Plan is adopted in its current form.
- Therefore, this Neighbourhood Plan is based on a need for a maximum of 315 houses.

Harrietsham Parish Council firmly believe that if this Neighbourhood Plan adopted a housing figure significantly lower than that eventually adopted in the Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan would become out-of-date and the village would quickly be vulnerable to applications for additional development which were not provided for in the Neighbourhood Plan.

However, the Parish Council also wish to make it clear that it will review the Neighbourhood Plan as and when the Local Plan becomes part of the development plan if the latter proposes a level of housing that differs significantly from that in the Neighbourhood Plan. This commitment to review the level of housing in the Neighbourhood Plan is enshrined in Policy LIV 01.





# **02 VISION + AIMS**

## The Harrietsham Spatial Vision

Reconciling the demands placed on the village through housing allocations from Maidstone Borough Council with the wishes of the local community has led to the development of a vision for Harrietsham. This illustrative drawing (left) captures the overall vision as a spatial plan. It sets out what land uses can go where, which areas should be kept undeveloped, how the existing strengths of the village can be protected and how current weaknesses can be addressed.

New development, when strategically placed and when designed to a high standard, can be used to address some of the weaknesses identified through the consultation process, such as a lack of choice over access and movement and the need for greater retail provision.

The spatial plan reflects an overall vision underpinned by the five principles: a connected, compact, welcoming, active and balanced village. These principles are explained in more detail in Section 4 (Planning Principles) and then in further detail still in Section 5 (Site Specific Policies).

# Developing a Vision for Harrietsham

The Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan has been directly informed by the challenges facing the village in the future, the most immediate of which is housing growth directed towards it by Maidstone Borough Council through the borough-wide local plan. It has also been informed by the results of community consultation and engagement.

Reconciling these two often opposing influences has not been easy but the result is a vision, a set of aims and objectives for the plan and five planning principles. The vision has also been interpreted as a spatial vision drawing and will be implemented by the agreed planning policies and projects.

Harrietsham Parish Council believe that future development proposals run the risk of being unsustainable and potentially damaging to the village over the long term without a clear plan to guide their implementation and ensure the best outcomes for the community.

It is acknowledged that if the Neighbourhood Plan is to be adopted, then it needs to be in conformity with European, national and local planning policy. It therefore must be able to accommodate a prescribed level of housing growth as set out in the relevant local plan, produced by Maidstone Borough Council.

# **Aims + Objectives**

Based on the established vision statement, the aims and objectives of the plan are therefore:

- 1. To coordinate all new development proposals in an effective and transparent manner
- 2. As far as is possible, provide certainty regarding the future development within the parish
- 3. Deliver the necessary community infrastructure to support a growing village
- 4. Overcome barriers to north-south movement, such as the A20 road and the railway lines
- 5. Improve choice over access and movement by offering more east-west alternatives to the A20
- 6. Create a vibrant and successful village heart that includes greater retail provision
- 7. Support expansion of local education provision
- 8. Make walking and cycling easier and safer to reduce dependence on private cars for local trips
- 9. Improve access to the surrounding countryside and improve sports and recreational facilities within the village
- 10. Ensure the architecture and design of new developments is of a positive village character and not an inappropriate suburban one.

These aims and objectives will be met through adhering to the five planning principles, the implementation of the planning policies and the specific projects in this Neighbourhood Plan. Our vision is to become a thriving Kent village, a welcoming place for all age

groups that live and work here. With accessible sports and recreational opportunities in and around the village, a good range of vital village services and facilities and excellent education provision, we will be a place where all people can enjoy a higher quality of life.

The village will not sprawl ever outwards but instead be a sustainable and compact village with well-designed internal links and connections that help residents and visitors alike move easily between distinctively designed places.

The people make the place and it is they that will look after Harrietsham well into the future.

A Vision for Harrietsham, 2014.

## **Developing The Vision**

The vision has been informed by the results of community consultation and engagement. A summary of this is captured here; for the full results, see the submitted Consultation Statement.

# What are Harrietsham's key characteristics?

Key words to describe Harrietsham that emerged from the consultation were about the "friendly" nature of the village and the strong sense of "community". Other important descriptions such as "green" were also highlighted.

#### What are the key challenges?

How can the lack of central focus for Harrietsham be addressed and how can the rural feel and nature of the Harrietsham be maintained in the face of relatively significant growth? These were seen as two of the most significant challenges. The community are keen to see these resolved but are also aware the first of these challenges (i.e. lack of a central focus) can be resolved through new development.

The A20 road nuisance was considered to be one of the most negative aspects of village life. Residents want to "reclaim the A20" and return it to a street in the village rather than a road that splits the village in two and new development could help achieve this.

# Which groups are likely to be most affected by change?

The community have been asked about the different challenges faced by different age groups in the village. Common themes included public transport, community spaces and affordable housing.

#### Where are the best bits of the village?

The more established parts of the village, around West Street and East Street were seen as being of the highest value in architectural and visual terms while more recent "disconnected" residential development was seen as less valuable and therefore less successful.

# If Harrietsham has to grow, in which direction should this be and why?

By looking at specific development sites, the consultation allowed a greater insight about the community's attitudes towards growth, where it could be most easily accommodated and how development could support the delivery of the necessary and appropriate facilities. There was agreement that one of the better areas to expand the village was south of the A20. A primary advantage of this location is the opportunity for development to help "tie the village together" between north and south. However, any development south of the A20 would need to be very sensitive and respectful of the character and setting of the adjacent conservation area.

The community were very firmly against any incursion into the AONB to the north of the existing village envelope. The community also identified Tongs Meadow as being an important area for informal recreation in the village and was also noted for wildlife. The majority of people wanted any growth in this area to be sensitively designed.

Development should not negatively impact upon cherished spaces in the village, such as the church and its setting, the AONB and the East Street Conservation Area.

#### What community facilities are needed?

Many residents felt that adequate growing space for the school and the pre-school was particularly important. Also, a safer and less intrusive A20 Ashford Road as it passes through the village centre was needed. Better retail facilities, better footpath connections (including bridge links) between disconnected areas of the village are also needed. Finally investment in medical, sporting and youth facilities are all vital for the future of the village.

#### **Five Planning Principles**

The process of community consultation that helped develop the vision has given rise to five planning principles that help structure this Neighbourhood Plan. These planning principles are explained and illustrated on page 19, right.

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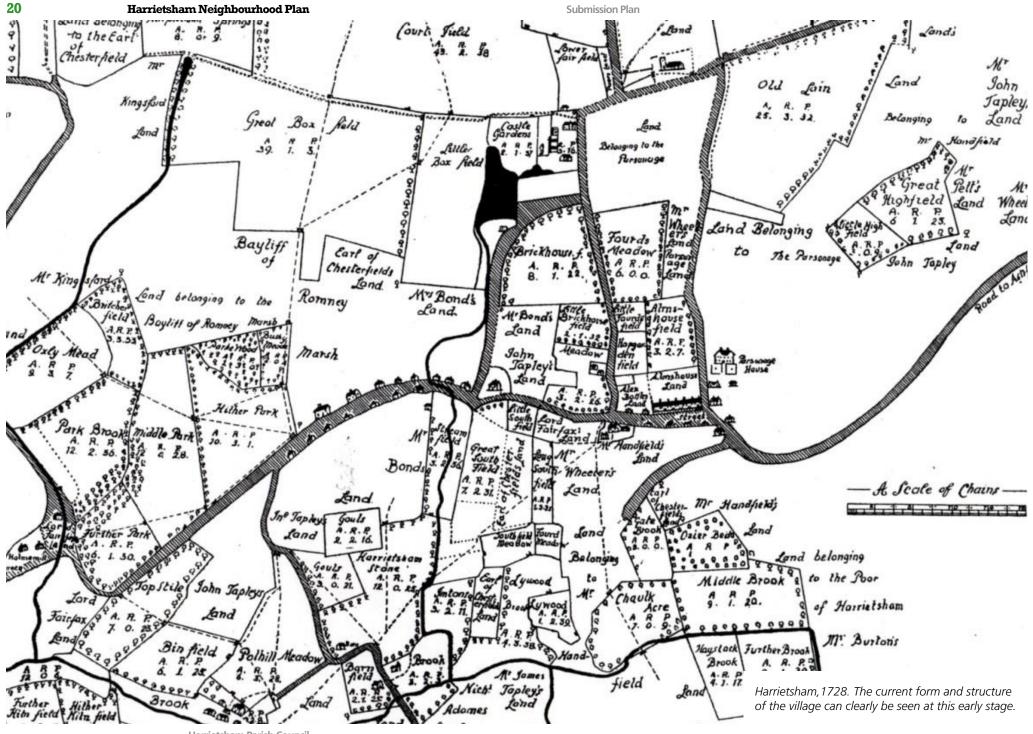


The benefits of new developments will be directed towards helping overcome the geographical fragmentation of the village, a legacy of major infrastructure such as two railway lines, main roads and the motorway. New development and interventions will help prevent further geographical spread of the village while at the same time meeting the need for places for people to live and work and play.

The people make the place but the place can help too. The welcoming village means creating an improved sense of arrival to help create a heightened awareness of Harrietsham as a place that is more than just somewhere to pass through without stopping.

The village is blessed with stunning landscapes and a high quality countryside environment in the immediate vicinity. New development must help invest in better links to the surrounding area together with improvements to dedicated facilities for sport and leisure within the village and in the surrounding landscape.

As the village grows through the addition of new houses, so the level of other essential services, such as shops, classrooms, sports pitches, play areas, allotments, must also rise accordingly. The village of the future must provide excellent opportunities for all residents to lead fulfilled and balanced lives close to the places where they live.



Harrietsham Parish Council

# **03 HISTORY + CHARACTER**



West Street, described as the "High Street" for Harrietsham, as shown in an old postcard, date unknown.

## **Harrietsham Past**

Harrietsham lies mostly at the foot of the great ridge of chalk hills known as the North Downs. It owes its existence to the series of springs which feed the streams and the lakes at Goddington and Woodlands Walk, water being essential for human settlement for drinking and attracting wildlife and game for food.

There were five pre-Norman settlements mentioned in William of Normandy's Domesday Book. These were Fereburne, Polhill, Seleburne, Harbiliton and Hariardesham, the last being the settlement that gave its name to present day Harrietsham.

A variation on the name was written "Heriagierdeshamme" which means "Heriagierde's Water Meadow" clearly signified the importance of water to the settlement. The meadows were probably in the area south of the Alms Houses and the whole area would have also been well-watered by the River Len.

#### **The Bottle Family**

The plan (left) dates from 1728 and the inscription with the plan reads:

"From a plan measured and drawn by Alexander Bottle AD1728 of the Estates of William Horsmonden Turner in Harrietsham, Hollingbourne, Frinsted etc. in Kent" The Bottle family were a long-established Harrietsham family, and included the village coffin makers. The last of the family to live in Harrietsham was Robert Bottle, chairman of Harrietsham Parish Council in the mid-1990s. When he passed away, his wife and the rest of the family moved out of their East Street home.

#### **Local Neighbours**

In 1850 the residents of Harrietsham were notorious. Earlier, smugglers had settled in Harrietsham and it was said that the young men of Harrietsham had been in the habit of attacking Lenham's young men with sticks. The two villages now play cricket against one another instead.

## **Harrietsham Today**

Today, Harrietsham village still has much to offer. There is the parish church of St. John the Baptist, a Catholic Church and a Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall. There is a bus service and rail service, a public house, a village club and an Indian restaurant. There is now a medical centre, community centre and a modern village school. The local industry is varied and there is still a Post Office, a general store, vets and a hairdressers. Perhaps best of all, is the stunning countryside surrounding the village itself.

For a village of its size, Harrietsham has a lot going on with many clubs and societies aimed at all age ranges. Something that is unique to Harrietsham is the "Fish Organisation" which is a voluntary scheme



Church Lane, with the North Downs countryside in the background providing the setting for the village as it still does today (date unknown).

comprising the helping hands umbrella and the production and distribution team for the village's monthly magazine called "Network".

The scheme uses community volunteers to provide transport to doctors' surgeries, local hospitals and other essential journeys. It also arranges activities and events for those who wish to stay involved in village life.

Volunteers deliver the monthly magazine to all properties within the parish and all newcomers are warmly welcomed. They are given a welcome pack, containing all the information on services and amenities, clubs and societies so they can quickly orient and integrate into village life.

## **Future Change**

This graph (below) reveals the fairly constant resident population of Harrietsham between 1801 and 1901 that was followed by a steady increase during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Most noteworthy is the rapid increase that began at the turn of the 21st Century, with over a thousand new residents added to the village between 1991 and 2001.

This Neighbourhood Plan is specifically designed to manage and accommodate what could be a similar scale of growth over a similar time frame. With a dramatic increase in housing, the village has seen its community grow accordingly. However, this dynamic growth has given the village new energy and many of the most active volunteers in the village are relative newcomers. Harrietsham is one of Kent's expanding villages and it retains a strong sense of community. Nevertheless, it is a village that is facing inevitable change; change that this plan is designed to manage.





#### June 2014

## **Divided by Big Infrastructure**

Following the opening of the M20, the existing A20 was declassified as a trunk road which opened Harrietsham up for modest in-fill of new development within a defined village envelope.

The village was further dissected in 2003 by the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL, also known as High Speed One or HS1).



The Ashford Road running through the village, the Roebuck Inn visible in the background, as shown in an old postcard (date unknown).

## **Settlement Patterns**

The present day layout of the paths, lanes and track ways of the village may be traced back to the movements of early Saxon settlers. Over the centuries, the village has been shaped by the influence of the transport routes from east to west.

The Pilgrim's Way was the mediaeval equivalent of a motorway, linking the cities of Winchester and Canterbury with a spur to the port of Dover. In the 1880s the London to Ashford railway line was built and in the early 1930s, the main street of the village was divided by the construction of the A20. This remained a very important trunk road to the channel ports until the completion of the M20 "missing link" between Ashford and Maidstone in the early 1990s.

## Landscape Setting

Landscape is not a subject which stands alone. It is the integrating framework for a village and its setting, within which everything else interacts: the people, the buildings, the wildlife, the water courses and so on. Therefore ensuring the landscape is properly considered in relation to all new developments is important as the implications can be far reaching.

Good development can add to the character of a village and can also fund and deliver many benefits for the community. But carried out without proper care and consideration, it can erode landscape character and local distinctiveness. In order to achieve the aspirations of this plan, landscape character needs to inform the policies. Without this, local character and distinctiveness may not be retained and enhanced as it should be.

Parts of the plan area lie within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and within two character areas in particular, the Hollingbourne Vale and the Mid Kent Downs. Both these areas have key characteristics that need to be recognises and also objectives.

It should be noted that <u>no</u> development site identified in this Neighbourhood Plan lies within the AONB. However, <u>all</u> developments should have regard for these landscape characteristics and objectives due to the village's proximity and relationship to the AONB.

# Landscape Design Principles

The siting, scale and design of much new housing and commercial development around urban edges can have an adverse impact on the AONB landscape. This impact can be through a negative change in character of views in and out of the AONB, cumulative loss of landscape features, and erosion of character through use of standardised suburban layouts and designs.

The following guidance has been adapted from the "Landscape Design Handbook" produced by the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) office. The handbook contains advice on the design of new landscape works and development to ensure that it respects the distinctive landscape setting and does not undermine the purpose, high quality and special distinctiveness of the different landscape characters.

#### Hollingbourne Vale

#### Key Characteristics

- yew dominated scarp woodlands in the west, open cultivated fields on the scarp in the east, with many hedgerow trees
- extensive views from the scarp
- large arable scarp foot fields
- some mixed farmland
- predominantly grassland on scarp
- thick hedges along Pilgrim's Way
- historic "spring line" villages
- scarp crossed by considerable number of roads and footpaths (some, former droveways)

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- to restore a strong hedgerow network on the scarp foot based on remaining field boundaries and to return cultivated areas of the scarp to species rich chalk grassland
- conserve, create and manage a good hedgerow network, including patches along Pilgrim's Way
- to reduce the impact of the existing road and railway network on the landscape

Taken from the "Landscape Design Handbook" produced by the Kent Downs AONB office.

#### **Mid Kent Downs**

#### Key Characteristics

- series of wide ridges and steep-sided dry valleys
- extensive coppice woodlands and some large expanses of conifer woodland
- much surviving original ancient woodland
- large arable fields on the plateaux
- hedgerow trees prominent in parts
- orchards and shelter belts around Chatham, Bicknor and Faversham
- tiny, scattered villages linked by narrow lanes. Hop gardens and parkland

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- to manage and restore hedgerows, trees and woodlands, especially in the valleys
- to seek to conserve the small scale of the roads and villages and the remote quality of the countryside
- to maintain the existing diversity of orchards, hop gardens, parkland and farmland, and control urban fringe pressures

Taken from the "Landscape Design Handbook" produced by the Kent Downs AONB office.

#### Landscape Design Principles — On Rural Settlement Edges

New buildings and infrastructure on the edge of Harrietsham need to be located to avoid loss of important off-site views towards features such as church towers or the wider landscape, as well as avoiding intrusion onto sensitive ridge lines, prominent slopes and damage to distinctive landscape settings.

New development should seek to retain key landscape features on development sites, such as woodland, shaws (narrow belts of woodland), hedgerows, orchards, mature trees, watercourses and ponds as a basis for the new landscape structure and setting of the site.

- Development should avoid straight lines or regimented buildings on the settlement edge for new development.
- Designs should integrate new development with local character, using open space and planting to provide a visual link to the countryside and an attractive backdrop to development.
- Secure and manage native woodland, shaw, hedgerow and tree planting to integrate and/or screen new and existing developments.
- Consider massing, form, height and colour, texture of buildings and structures, taking account of local distinctiveness and characteristics through the use of locally sympathetic materials. In the case of Harrietsham, this will include red brick, tile hanging, weatherboarding, flint and ragstone.
- Coordinate building colour to secure a complementary effect between buildings and the surrounding landscape (e.g. use of matt neutral colours to minimise reflectivity).

- Ensure that site entrances and approaches are designed to fit within the landscape and use discrete signage.
- Consider the need for lighting and where essential seek to minimise its impact in the landscape through choice of light source and control of light spillage.
- Consider the need for fencing. Where security fencing is required use wooden posts and galvanised wire and screen with thorny hedges of native plants.
- Consider the impact of development on the Public Rights of Way network.

## Landscape Design Principles

-Within Rural Settlements

Recent development in rural areas do not always reflect the character and form of the host settlement. Furthermore, without respect for the relationship with the surrounding landscape, such developments can "suburbanise" the character of the villages. Meanwhile, materials choices do not always reflect local distinctiveness, often using standardised bricks and tiles. To avoid such situations in the future, all new developments in Harrietsham must:

- Ensure new development respects and complements rural settlement form, pattern, character and its landscape setting, reinforcing local distinctiveness.
- Conserve sensitive parts of settlement settings.
- Maintain a direct relationship between the old settlement core and the surrounding landscape, allowing views in and out.

- Use native woodland, shaw, hedgerow planting as appropriate to local character and open space to integrate new development. Use advance planting of native local trees and shrubs.
- Avoid the introduction of features such as close board fencing, suburban style walls and fast growing conifers, particularly on the boundaries with rural lanes or with the wider landscape (see Detailed Guidance for alternatives).
- Seek the use of appropriate local materials. In the case of Harrietsham, this will include red brick, tile hanging, weatherboarding, flint and ragstone.
- Seek to minimise the impact of new residential accesses by retaining existing hedgerows or traditional walls where possible.
- Use new native hedge species and sympathetic grass mix verges where new sight lines are necessary. Where possible, use local provenance wildflower and grass-seed mixes.
- Avoid the introduction of urban bollards, concrete block paving and highly coloured signage.
- Use local stone and "conservation" kerbs and surface dressings to complement local materials for carriageways and pavements.
- Consider the need for lighting and minimise the impact, using high pressure sodium lights. Lighting should be mounted on buildings, not columns and posts.



West Street cottages (above) near the station reflects an established village quality using red brick.



New development in Harrietsham should exhibit high standards of architectural design quality and learn from good examples that can be found in the village, such as on Rectory Lane (above).

## Harrietsham Character

There are specific areas within Harrietsham that give the village a distinctive character and form. These tend to be the more established parts of the village, around East Street and West Street. What helps make these parts of Harrietsham special is the way the buildings line the edge of the street to help frame and enclose the space. Special buildings, such as the alms houses, are located on corners to create small but memorable landmarks. New developments in Harrietsham should take inspiration from the East Street and West Street areas.

#### Areas of Special Interest West Street

More recent infill development along West Street, close to the Wheelwrights (see 01) has successfully integrated well with the existing village fabric. Including "rooms in the roof" within new properties is both more efficient with space and helps creates variety and rhythm in the roof line. Some buildings are aligned on the back of footway while others have small front gardens. The inclusion of shallow but well-planted front gardens allows the visual impact of built form to be softened.

Some buildings are set back further back to accommodate driveways such as the garage site (see 03) but these are infrequent, not particularly long and therefore do not dominate the street scene. New developments should also use on-plot driveways in front of properties sparingly to avoid creating suburban, rather than village, layouts.

Other buildings on West Street are slightly taller than their neighbours, such as the post office (see 03) marking them out as local landmarks. This approach of adopting a slightly taller stature should be applied in the new mixed-use area south of the Ashford Road to differentiate the retail offer from



01. West Street and the Wheelwrights area.



02. West Street, Station Road junction.



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surrounding buildings. The West Street, Ashford Road junction is a key gateway to the village heart. The building line on the eastern side of the space curves away to help frame the village green, although much of the public space is dominated by highways infrastructure.

#### Areas of Special Interest East Street

The East Street area (see 05) is subject to Conservation Area status and comprises a coherent mix of residential types. Buildings have a limited range of materials (i.e. half-timber, brick and render only) and they cluster together in short linked rows to effectively define the street scene. The almshouses on the corner of East Street and Rectory Lane are an important element within the Conservation Area. Shown in the right hand side of the sketch (see 06) they are a low-rise development but they address the street positively. The interface with the street is defined with a low boundary wall behind which is a planted garden space.

This attractive combination is a good reference for future development when designing boundary treatments. The almshouses also have a series of chimney stacks that create a roof line with rhythm and variety. Again, this distinctive element helps give identity to this part of the village. Future development within Harrietsham can learn from these much-loved local examples.

# What Does This Means For New Development?

New housing reference the local context through appropriate use of high quality materials and styles. They should avoid creating anonymous, anywhere suburban developments and aim to leave a positive architectural legacy. This does not exclude innovative modern or contemporary architecture and this will be encouraged where appropriate.



04. Ashford Road, West Street junction.





06. East Street Almshouses.



# **04 PLANNING PRINCIPLES**



Uniting both sides of the village either side of the A20 Ashford Road, is a key aspiration of the policy themes.

The results of the engagement and consultation process has led to the development of five main planning principles or "themes" (see Section 02) to structure the plan. These principles are designed to ensure development of new housing and associated infrastructure, all contribute to the overall vision for the village. The principles can be seen as mutually supportive, each helping to direct the benefits accrued through new development towards delivering the agreed vision for Harrietsham.

#### **Directly Addressing Current Weaknesses**

The Parish Council is keen to harness the benefits of new development to address key weaknesses of the existing village in an appropriate and responsible way, as follows:

- Improving the current poor quality physical connections between different parts of the village.
- Addressing an increasing sense of sprawl and a "spreading out" of the village by developing a better sense of a centre and a focal area.
- The need for better retail provision for a growing village together with a missed opportunity to capitalise on the passing trade using the A20 Ashford Road to announce the presence of the village in a more confident and positive way.
- Improving access to recreational countryside routes beyond the village and improving sports and leisure opportunities within the village.

• Bringing about a greater balance between the number of houses within the village and the range of services and facilities that exist. A greater range of community infrastructure is needed if the village is to effectively meet the needs of new and existing residents.

#### **Proportional Response**

The Parish Council is aware that the demands placed on new development to deliver much needed social and community infrastructure through planning gain mechanisms such as s.106 or CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) need to be proportional and appropriate to the scale of the new developments.

A concern expressed by some developers and landowners during the consultation and engagement process, is that development sites accommodated by this Neighbourhood Plan over the next decade will be required to make good, various shortfalls created by poor planning in previous decades.

While the Parish Council acknowledges this concern, it is also aware that the opportunity presented by a Neighbourhood Plan is a highly significant moment in the history of development of the village. It provides a significant opportunity to enhance a vibrant and liveable village.

This plan needs to effectively direct the benefits of development to make a more connected, compact, welcoming, active and balanced village that is fit for the future. 01

#### The Connected Village

"A place with excellent internal and external connections"



New developments are to help overcome the geographical fragmentation of the village, a legacy of major infrastructure such as two railway lines, main roads and the motorway.

The village is to maximise the opportunities presented by direct trains to London and Maidstone and needs to develop better virtual connections through improved communications infrastructure, such as better use of broadband and wireless technology.

This principle of connection is very important to the village and the way it sees itself developing in the future. One of the big challenges identified through the consultation and engagement process has been the fragmentation of the village; a village that is physically divided by large transport infrastructure including the railway line, the A20, M20 and the high speed CTRL (now known as High Speed 1) railway line. This fragmentation has led to key services and facilities being separated from one another with the connecting routes between them often difficult or unpleasant for pedestrians and cyclists to use.

The Village Hall, the Church, the school, the shop, the pub and the Post Office are all located in different parts of the village and so fail to generate a critical mass of services and facilities for Harrietsham. One of the key weaknesses of the current access and movement network are the routes between the village hall and the school north of the A20. At present, the only way to walk between these two important facilities is to use the A20. Not only is this a significant detour but it is also an unpleasant route for walkers and cyclists due to the speed and volume of traffic and the poor quality nature of walking surface, with uneven and inconsistent pavements.

A further weakness is the seasonal nature of some of the routes. For example, certain routes such as those through woodland can be pleasant and attractive in daylight hours in the summer time but are not well-used in the winter months and after dark. These weaknesses of the network need to be addressed.

# What does this mean for policy implementation?

New developments will be required to help stitch back together the different parts of the village. While the site location for new development will contribute to this, the links from new development sites to the existing parts of the village need to be convenient, direct, safe and cater for all modes of travel, giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists. These links, in the form of streets, roads, footpaths and cycleways, need to help enhance the village-wide access and movement network.

Developments will be expected to "plug themselves in" to the existing village as effectively as possible to avoid isolated pockets of development. They will also be expected to contribute appropriately towards improvements of the existing network to improve the experience of those moving around the village.

# 02 .....

## The Compact Village

"A place that is easy to walk around and protects the surrounding countryside"



New development and interventions to help prevent further geographical spread of the village while at the same time meeting the need for places for people to live and work.

New interventions are to direct development around the centre of the village to help create intensity and focus around West Street and the Ashford Road. Developments on the periphery are to present a positive and firm edge condition to the surrounding countryside.

A result of the fragmentation (as described in the first policy theme of connectedness) is a degree of sprawl and expansion, with pockets of development in recent years located on sites between the large infrastructure networks. This has been exacerbated through new housing developments that fail to effectively plug into the existing urban fabric but stand in relative isolation. For example, Cutbush Close and Chippendayle Drive are adjacent to one another yet do not have a proper street connection but a small cut-through pedestrian link only.

This relative sprawl results in a village without an area of intensity or focus that is often so important in creating a sense of place for a village the size of Harrietsham. This lack of a village focus is a key characteristic of the village at present, albeit a negative characteristic and a weakness to be addressed through new development. The inconsistency of the access and movement network together with the spread-out nature of the village needs to be addressed in parallel through mutually supportive measures.

# What does this mean for policy implementation?

New development sites need to be carefully selected so as to contribute to the aims of a compact and walkable village. The first policy theme of connectedness is vital for this but so too is the need for a critical mass of development around a clear and obvious village heart. New development sites must have strong links back towards the centre of the village, currently around West Street, where the pub, shop and post office are located. This area of village services needs to be strengthened and enhanced to meet the needs of a growing village.

The aim is to create a walkable village with the majority of everyday needs within a one kilometre walking zone that represents a 15-20 minute walk. Bringing an intensity to the heart of this zone, focused on the existing mix of uses around West Street, will start to deliver the "civic heart" currently lacking in Harrietsham. This approach will also help prevent coalescence between Harrietsham with nearby Lenham village to the east.

Meanwhile, new development sites on the periphery of the village need to present a positive built edge to the village. Development should mark a clear and in some cases, permanent new edge condition to Harrietsham, distinguishing between the built form of the village and the countryside beyond.

# 03

### The Welcoming Village

"A place that welcomes those that live, work and visit here"



The welcoming village means creating an improved sense of arrival along the Ashford Road, to create a heightened awareness of Harrietsham as a place that is more than just somewhere to pass through without stopping.

### New developments to create vital public spaces and positive open areas that will compliment the established social networks and connections in the village.

Harrietsham has a very clear and positive sense of community and has successfully developed a series of local social networks and organisations. These social networks have been essential in helping to run and organise the community consultation and engagement elements of the plan-making process. They also help make the village the welcoming and friendly place that is so often used as the key description of the village by residents.

However, the physical form of the village often fails to express this very social and welcoming side to the village that is so evident to people who live or work in Harrietsham. Many people pass through the village, travelling in cars along the A20 Ashford Road but fail to see any reason to stop and explore. Development often "turns its back" to the road, giving the road a feeling of a bypass route and the impression of a village indifferent to visitors and so continue passing through. The features of the village often seen as attractive and of high quality — for example, the church and its setting and the Conservation Areas around East Street — require a detour from the main route to be accessed.

# What does this mean for policy implementation?

This plan encourages the location of high quality new development along the central spine of the A20 Ashford Road to redress this weakness.

Locating new non-residential uses, such as retail or commercial developments, along the Ashford Road gives them a greater chance of success as they can benefit from the passing trade that is already using this route. Well-designed development, with a strong visual presence, can also add a sense of welcome and confidence to the village, helping announce itself to the wider world. No more will it be an inward-looking place.

Locating new retail and commercial uses along the A20, close to the existing cluster of non-residential uses on West Street, also supports the previous policy theme of compactness. It will start to cluster together a range of services and facilities in an access place, developing a critical mass to help form the missing village heart.

This cluster of uses in the village heart needs to have a good quality public space of an appropriate size at its centre. This new village square can act as a focal space for the village, a place that can host organised social gatherings, be a place for chance encounters and support general village life and activity.

# 04 · ·

### **The Active Village**

"A place with good access to sports and recreational opportunities"



The village is blessed with stunning landscapes and a high quality countryside environment in the immediate vicinity.

New development must help invest in better links to the surrounding area together with improvements to dedicated facilities for sport and leisure within the village and in the surrounding landscape.

Harrietsham is determined to maintain its rural links to surrounding countryside and make the most of new opportunities for additional links as presented by new developments. The consultation and engagement process has revealed a strong sense of rurality and that access to green open countryside is a key reason why people enjoy living and working in the village.

To the north of the village lies the North Down Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), an area of landscape importance with a national designation of protection. This is traversed in a west-east direction by the Pilgrim's Way, a long distance footpath following an historic route between London and Canterbury. This is connected to a wider set of footpaths and bridleways.

To the south of the village, lies the Greensands Ridge, an area of landscape importance that until recently, benefitted from local protection designations described in the Maidstone Borough Council local planning documents. Access to the countryside area to the south of Harrietsham is more difficult due to the barriers presented by the A20, M20 and the CTRL.

Within the village is a series of green open fields, sports pitches and paddocks that all contribute to the openness of the village itself. A significant "chain" of these green spaces is located in the eastern side of the village between Church Road and Church Lane.

# What does this mean for policy implementation?

If Harrietsham is to continue to be an attractive place to live, it needs to successfully balance its built and the non-built environments. Access to the countryside is one of the main attractions for those choosing to live in the village and this must be maintained if the quality of life in the village is to remain high.

New development in peripheral locations must provide good access to the countryside beyond and provide access to existing recreational facilities within the village. Better connections and access to the series of opens spaces and paddocks (what has become known as the "Green Chain Walk") is encouraged as this north-south recreational route will help link the wider landscape areas to the north and south of the village.

This active village policy theme also supports the previously expressed ideas for a compact and connected village; a place that encourages and actively promotes a variety of non-car modes of travel across the village.

# **05** •

### The Balanced Village

"A place with the right balance between places for living, working, playing, trade and exchange"



As the village grows through the addition of new houses, so the level of other essential services – such as shops, classrooms, sports pitches, play areas, allotments and workshops – must also rise accordingly.

### The village of the future must provide excellent opportunities for all residents to lead fulfilled and balanced lives close to the places where they live.

Although the Parish Council agreed with the designation of Harrietsham by Maidstone Borough Council as a "Rural Service Centre" it remains a cause for concern both within the Parish Council and within the wider village community. How will the village services and facilities, already considered stretched when supporting existing residents, be able to support a growing population too? This is essentially the principal concern of residents.

When placed alongside a clear desire to maintain the village's existing rural characteristics and a need to deliver a more connected and more compact village, this question of balance is more vital and challenging than ever before.

At present, Harrietsham only has one small village shop, one pub, a small Post Office (with opening hours often considered inconvenient for many users) and a single village hall building (with two halls and one small room but always in demand for bookings from clubs and societies). It also has a satellite GP surgery. There is also a limited amount of sport provision within the Booth Field. Harrietsham Parish Council firmly believes that the growth in housing numbers (as suggested by the Rural Service Centre designation) will require a proportional and appropriate uplift in the provision of social infrastructure, community facilities, sports provision and retail and commercial activity across the village.

# What does this mean for policy implementation?

As designated development sites are built out, they need to contribute not just to housing numbers but to the other elements of village life that make a balanced place to live — the public open spaces, green play areas, civic spaces, shops, services and community infrastructure.

Some sites are more suited to certain aspects of this necessary rebalancing than others. For example, development sites immediately south of West Street and adjacent to the A20 Ashford Road can contribute new retail and new commercial floor space, helping to strengthen the existing (weak) village centre and help overcome the segmentation and divisions created by the road network.

Meanwhile, development sites to the west of the village need to safeguard land for a growing school. It is vital that land for additional classrooms and outdoor play areas is set aside to meet future demand for school and pre-school places. This safeguarded land needs to be adjacent to the existing school building to avoid a fragmented educational provision. LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK

**Green + Blue Infrastructure** 

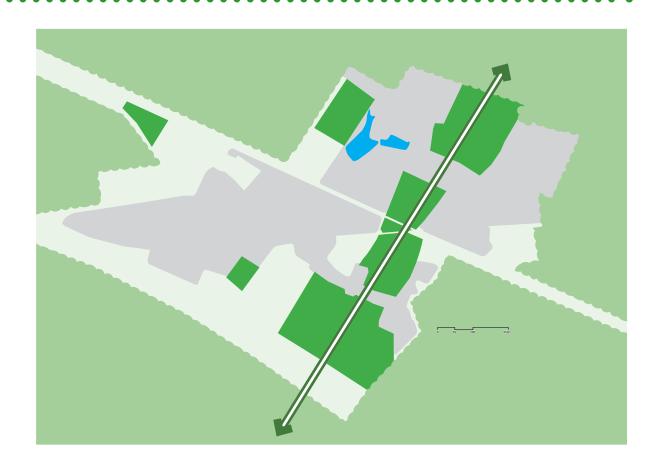
The Harrietsham Spatial Vision (see page 16) has been developed from these five planning principles. The vision drawing comprises three significant layers of information, as follows:

- landscape
- access + movement
- built development

These specific layers all need to be planned and designed in such a way that they support one another, integrate new development and enhance the setting and character of the existing village.

The five planning principles will require an integration of the landscape (both within the village envelope and the surrounding landscape setting) with the built elements of Harrietsham village. This green infrastructure is vital to give the village its rural identity. It also provides recreational opportunities for residents and supports biodiversity. Blue infrastructure, in the form of ponds lakes and watercourses will also need to be integrated.

The diagram (right) shows a high-level landscape strategy for the village. It can be seen how the western side lacks the significant areas of green open space enjoyed by the eastern side. This means that development sites in the west need to provide sufficient green space within each of the development schemes to help redress this balance. Opportunities for pocket parks, street trees and enhanced landscape planting on the edges must be explored and offered as part of all development proposals across the village.



LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK — The proposed landscape framework for the village involves securing a connected series of open green spaces to the east of the village heart. Known as the "Green Chain Walk" this will provide for recreational routes that link the North Down Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the north and the Green Sands Ridge to the south. Improvements to footpaths, access points such as gates and styles, will need to be implemented to maximise the potential of this concept. Other key areas of green space to secure include land immediately south of Court Lodge Road and space to the west of Tongs Meadow. See also Maidstone Borough Council's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Draft, October 2013.



### **ACCESS FRAMEWORK Routes + Connections**

One of the five planning principles is about creating a connected village. New development delivered during the plan period needs to address the weak connections and fragmented areas of activity that currently characterise Harrietsham.

At present, too many journeys, especially those by foot and bicycle, need to use the A20 Ashford Road to move between the western and eastern sides of the village. This diagram (right) shows a strategy to help overcome this, by threading together existing routes north of the Ashford Road, better connecting the area around the village hall with the station and the primary school.

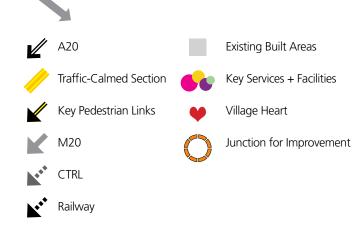
The section of the A20 that passes through the heart of the village also needs to be modified to slow traffic and improve north-south connections for pedestrians and cyclists.

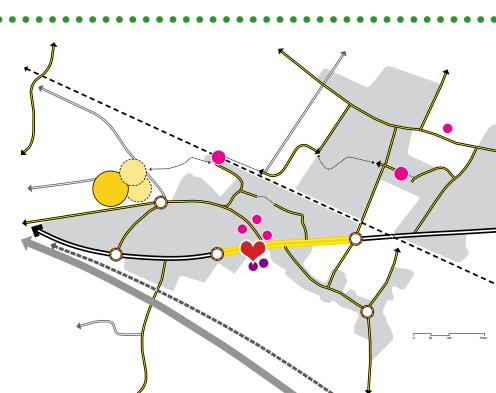


Reducing the severance effect of the A20 is a key objective and the Parish Council is keen to work closely with Kent County Council to deliver the necessary changes to the road.

ACCESS FRAMEWORK — The proposed access framework for the village involves securing better connections between the east and west of the village. Using new development to open up routes between the village hall and the school will be critical to delivering alternatives routes to the A20. Ensuring more routes converge on the village heart to strengthen its role as a primary area of activity within the village is also important.

The downgrading of a key section of the A20, between the Roebuck Business Park in the west and Church Road in the east will reduce the negative impacts of through traffic (e.g. noise, speed, severance) and help reunite the north and south of the village.





**DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK** 

**New Site Opportunities** 

A careful selection of sites has been undertaken through the Neighbourhood Plan process. These sites need to conform with national and local planning policy but also help Harrietsham meet the objectives and ambitions of the five planning principles. The diagram right indicates the main areas of growth. They are all immediately adjacent to the existing built-up area and when viewed collectively, they can help focus village activities around a stronger community heart.

In doing so, it will give Harrietsham a greater intensity of activity within the village envelope and provide long term protection to the countryside beyond. The northern tip of land south of Ashford Road, adjacent to the A20 itself, is ideally placed to contain non-residential uses (such as new retail) to help strengthen the village heart area.





The Tongs Meadow site on the west of the village contains stands of mature trees that are to be retained as part of any new development proposals.

**DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK** — The proposed development framework for the village involves locating as much development as possible within the 1000m catchment area, indicated by the dotted circle. It is within this area that trips by walking and cycling are more likely to be achieved due to the shorter distances to be travelled. The school is on the western edge of this catchment and the village hall lies just outside it on the eastern edge.

With the exception of the ex-nursery site at Mayfields (on the far eastern edge of the village) all proposed development sites lie largely within the "walkable catchment" helping to focus activity and intensity around the village heart. This will help deliver the compact settlement with an distinctive village heart containing greater retail opportunities. These are all objectives identified through the public consultation and community engagement process.





Harrietsham Parish Council

# **05 PLANNING POLICIES**



The consultation and engagement process developed robust design and layout principles for many of the development sites and these are included in this plan.

## **Specific Policies**

The Neighbourhood Planning process has identified six key policy areas for the plan to address. Each of these policy areas has been given a three letter policy code and have then been applied to a specific site or part of the village. In doing so, they form the proposals plan. The key areas of change are summarised in the draft proposals plan. This shows how each of the policy areas will influence the village in a positive way.

- Environment (ENV) The green spaces within the village and the countryside around it.
- Working (EMP) Areas of employment.
- Learning (EDU) The primary school and pre-school and the land around it.
- Movement (MOV) How we move around the village; walking, cycling, buses, trains and cars
- Community (COM) The facilities that create the social heart of our village life e.g. the village hall, the church, the shop and the pub.
- Living (LIV) Areas of existing and proposed new houses.

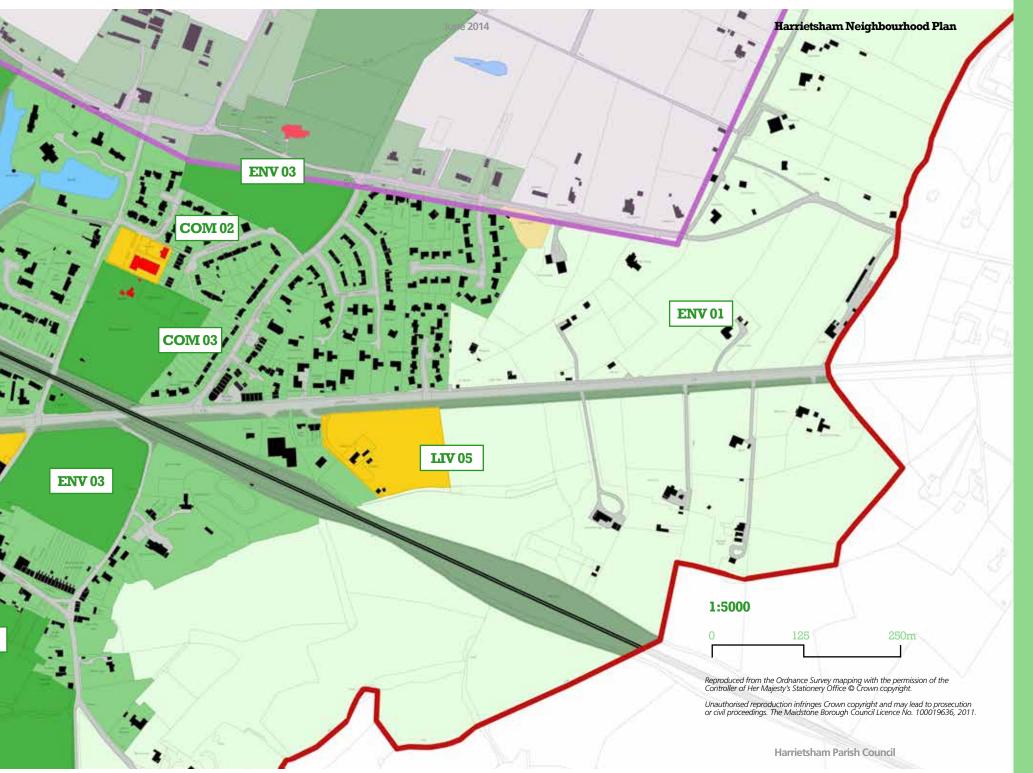
## **Design Principles**

Many of the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan are site specific (i.e. they affect specific pieces of land). The policies are therefore written in such a way as to influence and direct the type and form of development identified for certain sites. For example, the Parish Council is keen that all new development proposals meet the broad objectives of the five policy themes fully and successfully.

In order to harness the potential benefits for the village that can be accrued from new development, a series of layout and urban design principles diagrams have been prepared for selected sites. These diagrams set out the key issues that landowners and developers must engage with when developing planning applications for development sites. The urban design principles are not prescriptive of a certain specific architectural response but instead have been developed to provide a clear indication of a preferred approach.

In total, there are 19 formal policies in the Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan. They will be implemented by a series of partners, working in cooperation with one another — the local community; the parish, district and county councils, and their representatives; statutory agencies and stakeholders; landowners and developers.





## Policy ENV 01 Open Countryside

New development will not be permitted in the open countryside beyond the extended village envelope other than in exceptional circumstances such as the provision of essential infrastructure where the benefit clearly outweighs the harm and it can be demonstrated that no suitable alternative sites are available.

The land beyond the new expanded village envelope is to be protected as open countryside. This plan acknowledges that building on green fields will be inevitable to meet the housing numbers sought by the Rural Service Centre designation but through good planning and good design, these developments can create positive new "edge conditions" to the village that create a new and permanent boundary to the village envelope. These edges need to be responsive to the village's local characteristics and the rural conditions. By creating positive and well-defined edges, these new developments will form robust outer boundaries to the village and prevent future outwards growth. Instead, any further development post the plan period will need to concentrate on intensification of existing developed areas.

The countryside beyond the village is protected through national designations (e.g. AONB) and through local development plan polices of Maidstone Borough Council. Policy ENV 01 of the Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan reinforces these policies with a neighbourhood level policy designed to limit further outward growth of the village.

Should the need arise, development for essential infrastructure in open countryside (e.g. water infrastructure) within the parish will be granted in special circumstances, where the benefit outweighs any harm, and it can be demonstrated there are no reasonable alternative sites available.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Balanced, Compact, Active, Welcoming.

## Policy ENV 02 Northern Field

#### Open land to the north of site LIV 02 will be secured for the plan period. Final use to be determined.

The land immediately to the north of the site identified for development needs to be kept green for the whole plan period. This will provide a physical and visual separation between existing residences on Court Lodge Road. The land needs to be kept undeveloped but also have an active function so that it plays a full and active role in the life of the village, in particular for residents that live closest. This land could be meadow, orchard or informal non-equipped recreational play space.

*Key Planning Principles: Compact, Active. See also: LIV 04, COM 02, COM 03.* 



Successful implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan policies will be critical to protecting open countryside beyond the village envelope (ENV 01).



The classic view of a Kentish lane within the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



The northern part of the land south of Court Lodge Road is to be protected as designated green space for public access and use.

## Policy ENV 03 "Green Chain Walk"

Five key pieces of open space will be secured as open space for the plan period, namely: (1) the land north of the church; (2) the Glebe Field; (3) the Booth Field; (4) the paddock bounded by Rectory Lane and Church Road; and (5) land south of East Street towards the ex-CTRL site. Improved public access across all five spaces is required to provide good quality recreational routes. All five spaces to be designated a Local Green Spaces in accordance with the provisions in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

A strategic assessment of the village revealed a concentration of built form running between West Street and East Street, either side of the A20 Ashford Road. This area includes a cluster of important village services, including the pub, post office and village shop. It also considered the most appropriate location for increased mixed-use development though the creation of a new village heart (see COM 01). Conversely, the land further to the east comprises a series of open spaces and undeveloped land, running in a chain formation in a north-south direction, from behind the church in the north through to the open land south of East Street in the south. There are five identified elements to this chain (see plan, right).

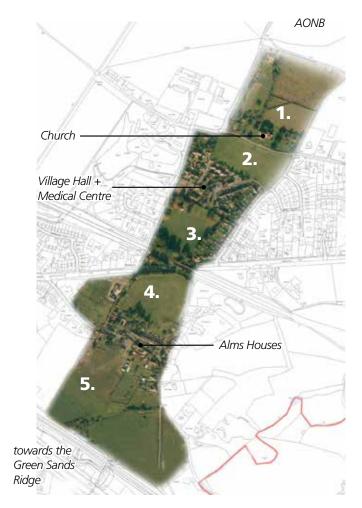
Lying between these opens spaces are some intense but small clusters of high quality development, including the church, the village hall and medical centre and the East Street Conservation Area, including the alms houses. In a sense, these green open spaces provide the setting and the "breathing spaces" for these vital built elements that contribute to village quality and character.

These five open spaces need to be retained and enhanced during the plan period. Footpath connections between them need to be opened up and made clear and passable throughout the year (they often become overgrown). When considered collectively, and with improved access arrangements, the "green chain link" can provide the village with a distinctive, pleasant and attractive recreational route linking land south of the CTRL towards the Green Sands Ridge landscape area with land north of the church, towards the North Downs AONB. Developer contributions will be sought towards delivering the necessary access improvements for this strategic green space network. It is hoped that distinctive artistic signing can be implemented to give this network a clear identity and encourage exploration by residents and visitors alike.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Active, Balanced. See also: LIV 06, COM 02, COM 03.



The most northerly site in the "Green Chain Walk" is a historic meadow in a village setting in the protected landscape of the Kent Downs AONB. It is a site that has been permanent grassland, possibly for hundreds of years. Containing a historic public right of way and lying adjacent to the village church, it will always have been an important part of the countryside setting for Harrietsham.



Policy ENV 03 seeks to protect the chain of five significant open spaces running between the AONB and the land south of the CTRL and M20 corridor towards the Green Sands Ridge, to be known as the Green Chain Walk.

## Policy EMP 01 Maintain Employment Land

#### Safeguard land for employment at the Roebuck Business Park to respond to demand for additional employment space, as and when required.

The Roebuck Business Park has been a successful addition to the village in recent years, providing a range of employment opportunities for local people and accommodation to a range of businesses. In order to retain a balance between a living and working village, there is a need to maintain employment land in the village. Maintaining the Roebuck Business Park and land at Station Road for employment uses is therefore essential to ensure a balanced village for the future.

*Key Planning Principles: Balanced. See also: COM 01, COM 02.* 



Employment opportunities within the village envelope should be retained. The existing business park adjacent to the A20 (EMP 01) is therefore critical to the future of the village.

## Policy EDU 01 School Expansion Site

A site north of West Street will be safeguarded for improved playing field facilities, additional classroom accommodation and off road car parking to the east of the existing school site. The development of this site will retain the rural character of West Street.

By placing the housing site immediately south of the railway line, land can be safeguarded for a school expansion on land immediately to the east of the existing school site. This land will be sufficiently large enough to accommodate additional classroom spaces and outdoor playing field to create a fully functional and integrated school campus. Previous proposals created a rather disjointed layout, with different elements of the school separated by blocks of residential development.



This Neighbourhood Plan has secured a site adjacent to the existing school for education expansion.

#### **Associated Improvements to West Street**

The school expansion and the provision of an integrated campus approach must also seek to address peak time parking issues along West Street. Development of the school site can help deliver interventions that will create off-road car parking associated with the school. Care is needed that such improvements retain the look and feel of a rural village street or lane.

The road is relatively narrow and lacks a continuous footway in the area adjacent to Hook Lane. Design interventions around this area should seek to deliver a parallel service street on the northern side of West Street. This could accommodate short term parking and school-drop off at peak times.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Balanced, Compact, Active. See also: LIV 01, LIV 02



West Street can suffer from on-street congestion linked to the school run. Changes to the street, including off-street areas for drop-off and pick-up can help alleviate this.

#### June 2014

## Policy MOV 01 Create a New High Street

Proposals which create better connections between the pub, post office and shop on West Street and the new mixed use development south of the Ashford Road by reducing the width of the carriageway of the Ashford Road, widening the footways and reducing the speed of traffic as it passes through the village will be welcomed.

The stretch of the Ashford Road that passes in front of this site needs to adopt the characteristics of a "street" rather than a "road" – for example, slower speeds, changed surfaces and a stronger and more positive relationship with the buildings alongside. Better crossing facilities are required to connect the site with the existing village green at the southern end of West Street and consideration should be given to creating a 30 mph zone (or maybe a 20 mph, subject to design detail) in this immediate area, subject to more detailed design and pedestrian audits.

The area of hard standing adjacent to the existing village shop and used for car parking can also be re-imagined through this work, perhaps with new softer materials and tree-planting to become an extension to the village green but still accommodating limited informal car parking.

It is known from responses to the Regulation 14 consultation that Kent County Council are supportive of this traffic-management approach.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Compact, Active, Balanced, Welcoming. See also: LIV 02, COM 01.



Changes to the A20 Ashford Road (MOV 01) to make it less divisive will help unite north and south of the village and create a new focal space for Harrietsham (MOV 01)



The existing village green at the southern end of West Street can be better incorporated to the wider village through modifications to the Ashford Road (MOV 01).

## Other Access + Movement Improvements Required

#### **1. Better Pedestrian Crossings**

As part of wider improvements to the pedestrian experience in the village, there is a need for the installation of pedestrian crossing facilities over the A20 Ashford Road will be sought close to Holm Mill Lane, Church Road and Downlands to benefit pedestrians and cyclists. It is expected that these crossing improvements will be in conjunction with reduced traffic speeds along the Ashford Road between its junction with Church Road in the east and with the Roebuck Business Park in the west.



Speed of traffic on the A20 is off-putting for pedestrians. Slower vehicles speeds (without compromising road capacity) combined with better north-south crossing facilities are needed.

#### 2. Improved Pedestrian Bridge Over The Railway Tracks

The bridge over the railway will become increasingly important to the whole village, not just train passengers. As new development begins to cluster around the station (e.g. housing at Tongs Meadow and on Land South of Court Lodge Road) residents will want to cross the track not to access the train but to simply move between different parts of the village. Such movements will be shorter in distance and more pleasant that using the "long way around" i.e.. down to the A20 Ashford Road.

Therefore, the installation of a new, improved footbridge between platforms; to include a lift suitable for wheelchair users will be needed. Through the consultation process, it was revealed that Harrietsham residents who are wheelchair users or those that have mobility challenges often deliberately alight at Ashford railway station (where there is a passenger lift) to allow them to change trains so they can arrive in Harrietsham on the southern platform. This convoluted situation is unacceptable and a new bridge, complete with passenger lifts, is required. Furthermore, this new bridge needs to be accessible 24 hours a day and seven days a week to all residents, not just railway passengers.

#### 3. Improvements to the Woodland Walk

Safer and more convenient access between new housing sites and the area around the village hall is needed. The existing woodland walk therefore requires better surfaces to ensure the routes are passable in all weathers and all year round. This does not however, require tarmac or similar. Surfaces that drain well but are appropriate to a woodland setting should be pursued. An appropriate woodland management regime to create clear sight lines will also be required.



The current footbridge over the railway line is impossible to use for wheel chair users or and difficult to use for those with restricted mobility. A better replacement is required.



The woodland walk will continue to have an important role in the future of the village, helping to unite different areas of activity (LIV 04).

## Policy COM 01 Additional Allotments Land

## Growth of the existing allotments site into the open landscape to the south.

Associated with the proposed expansion of employment land is a proposed expansion of the current allotment gardens. These are very popular with local residents and currently at capacity. In a similar manner to the need for a proportional growth in employment, there is a need for further allotment capacity for a growing village.

Key Planning Principles: Active, Balanced. See also: MOV 01, LIV 02, EMP 01.



More space for allotments needs to be created and existing ones enhanced (COM 01).

## Policy COM 02 Village Hall

#### This is a safeguarded area for the reconfiguration and extension to the village hall and the medical centre. To be provided as and when required.

The existing population of the village places great demand on the Village Hall. It is regularly oversubscribed and many community groups and events have to seek alternative accommodation. Similarly, the adjacent medical centre is also likely to provide an inadequate level of cover for a growing village in the near future. Viewed together, these two key village facilities will need to be reconfigured within the plan period to provide additional capacity.

While the village hall is constrained on its southern edge by the presence of mature trees adjacent to the Booth Field, its northern and western edges face over surface car parks. Likewise, the medical centre is set back behind surface car park. Rationalisation of the car park areas could provide the expansion space for both facilities. While retention of sufficient car parking spaces will be necessary for the continued success of both uses, a review of the car park capacity at peak times leading to a more efficient use of the land resource available will be key to the delivery of improved village services.

Key Planning Principles: Active, Balanced, Welcoming. See also: ENV 03, COM 03.

## Policy COM 03 Booth Field

This is safeguarded land for sports and recreation purposes. Opportunity for sensitive sports-related development only e.g. sports pavilion, sports court improvements. The field to be designated a Local Green Space in accordance with the provisions in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Booth Field is a vital piece of green infrastructure for Harrietsham and hosts formal sports, such as cricket and tennis, and occasional recreational activities, such as specific events. The site is wellcared for and popular. It comprises a level and well-managed grass surface that is well-drained and is edged with some magnificent mature trees, in particular the western edge adjacent to Church Road. The field is also adjacent to the Village Hall, which can provide the indoor accommodation to support outdoor activities.

However, due to the constant pressure and demands on the village hall, the provision of a small, dedicated sports pavilion to ease the pressure on the Village Hall is sought through this plan. It is expected that the pavilion would be located on the northern edge of the Booth Field, facing "outwards" over the field, with its back to the Village Hall. The pavilion should be of a robust, single storey design and include a small kitchen, toilets, adequate storage spaces and a small decked viewing terrace.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Active, Balanced. See also: ENV 03, COM 02.



The medical centre will need to expand to meet the challenges of a growing village. This expansion may require the reconfiguration of the surrounding surface car parks (COM 02).



Land adjacent to the existing grass court tennis facility could be used to accommodate a new all weather multi-use games area (COM 03).

## Policy LIV 01 Village Housing Strategy

#### The Neighbourhood Plan will make provision for a maximum of 315 new dwellings. This provision will be reviewed following the adoption of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

The designation of Harrietsham as a Rural Service Centre (RSC) is one of the primary drivers behind this Neighbourhood Plan. To this end, the housing delivery aspect must address the following points:

- New housing will be located and laid out so as to provide a safe and convenient access by foot and bicycle to village shops, post office, the school, amenities and public transport and also promote the creation of a new village heart.
- All future residential development will be adjacent to the existing developed areas and will be designed in such as way that future occupiers are encouraged to integrate — physically and socially — with the resident local community.
- Future residential development will not adversely affect the ability for existing residents to access village services.
- New residential development will not encroach unnecessarily into the AONB or adopted Conservation Area without the demonstration of exceptional need which is not deliverable elsewhere.
- Phasing strategy attaches priority to the use of brownfield sites before greenfield sites.
- New development will minimise visual harm to the character of Harrietsham, including views form

the North Downs AONB and the Conservation Area.

- New development will minimise the loss of vegetation or adverse effect on wildlife and avoid harm to sites of importance to nature conservation.
- Developments will be required to promote the provision of adoptable environmentally sensitive street lighting within new developments to improve residents safety.
- Developments will be required to ensure all roads, streets and public realm areas meet Kent County Council adoptable standards.

### Affordable + Local Needs Housing

Subject to a binding agreement with Maidstone Borough Council, there is a requirement for a "local lettings policy" for a proportion of the affordable housing delivered by this Neighbourhood Plan. This local policy will:

- Give priority for the local needs homes will be given to those who have a local connection to Harrietsham through residence (continuous period of at least five years) including those who have immediate family (e.g. mother, father, children, brother, sister) members living in the Parish.
- Give priority for to those with employment or about to take up employment in the Parish or who may have been forced to move away from the Parish due to a lack of suitable accommodation, also qualify.
- If there is insufficient demand from these priority groups then Maidstone Borough Council will consider those with a similar connection to neighbouring parishes (Hollingbourne, Lenham, Ulcombe, Wormshill & Frinsted).

## Policy LIV 02 \* Land South of Ashford Road Mixed Used Community Heart

Residential-led development of no more than 70 units on land south of the A20 (4.8 hectares) to incorporate a new public spaces, a new community meeting hall (or similar) and one or more retail units on the northern part of the site, fronting onto the A20.

Possibly the most critical of the development sites identified by the plan (land immediately south of the A20 Ashford Road) can provide a range of services, facilities and housing to support Harrietsham as it looks to the future. Most importantly, it has the ability – by virtue of its size and strategic location relative to transport networks and existing services – to deliver the step change required if the ambitions of a Rural Service Centre are to be fully met. This opportunity cannot be squandered.

Used in the early 1990s as a works depot during the construction of the M20, then the CTRL and then subsequently restored, the land is considered to be "previously developed" land (known as "brownfield") under national planning guidance. As such, it has preferential consideration for development over green field sites. The previous works depot use may have left a legacy of limited land contamination that may require further remediation prior to development for housing and mixed-uses.

\* Link to Maidstone Borough Local Plan Preparation (Regulation 18) 2014 Appendix A Housing Allocations H1(26) — Land South of Ashford Road, Harrietsham. The northern edge of the site fronting onto the A20 Ashford Road needs to provide new public realm in the form of a small civic square or market place, with new retail and community accommodation on its southern edge. The architectural and design approach here needs to be of a very high standard as it will act as a shop window for Harrietsham. The new public realm, in the form of a small civic square or market place, will provide the much needed outdoor focal space for the village, long sought after by Harrietsham residents. Harrietsham can finally find its missing village heart.

The village shop, while providing excellent service, is far too small for the current needs of the village. Many residents feel they need to leave the village to shop. This outward travel pattern is considered to be unsustainable and will only be exacerbated as the village grows in size. Therefore, as part of the more detailed planning and design of this site, further work needs to be undertaken to determine the likely size and scope of retail demand and provision. It should be noted that the retail operations in this location can benefit from the passing trade of those using the A20 Ashford Road rather than relying entirely on the resident catchment, making long term viability and commercial success more likely. At this stage, a small format food store is considered most appropriate, with limited car parking provision, to be shared with a small community hall.

The southern part of the site can accommodate a new residential development, with good pedestrian links to the west onto East Street and westwards towards the Roebuck Business Park via the allotment gardens. Vehicle access for residents will be from the A20 Ashford Road to the north and limited access from the west via the business park. There should be no vehicle access to the east. Constraints to the extent of this residential development are twofold. The first is the negative impact of noise from the CTRL and M20 corridor to the south. This impact effectively sterilises a strip of land to the south that will need to be planted to provide a noise buffer to new residents. The second potential limiting factor is the long distance views of the site that can be obtained from higher ground to the south, towards the Green Sands Ridge.

However, attention to detail and good quality design, particularly with regard to materials and roof lines, should create a development that, while not hidden from view, relates well to its landscape setting and context and provides a positive sense of place for Harrietsham when viewed from the south. There are currently positive long range views of the village from the Pilgrim's Way on the North Downs AONB and these views of this particular development should be considered in the same way.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Compact, Active, Balanced, Welcoming See also: LIV 01, MOV 01, EMP 01, COM 01.



A task group examines the site during the three-day design event (LIV 02).

Gross Site Size 4.8 hectares approx.

Maximum Number of Dwellings (subject to detailed design + layout) 70

#### Other Land Uses to be included

Local retail provision and associated ancillary spaces

#### Current Use

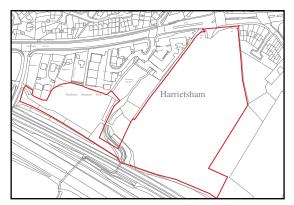
Previously developed land, restored as agricultural grazing land and pasture.

#### Site Conditions

Relatively flat, with little tree planting; visible from land south of the M20 and CTRL corridor.

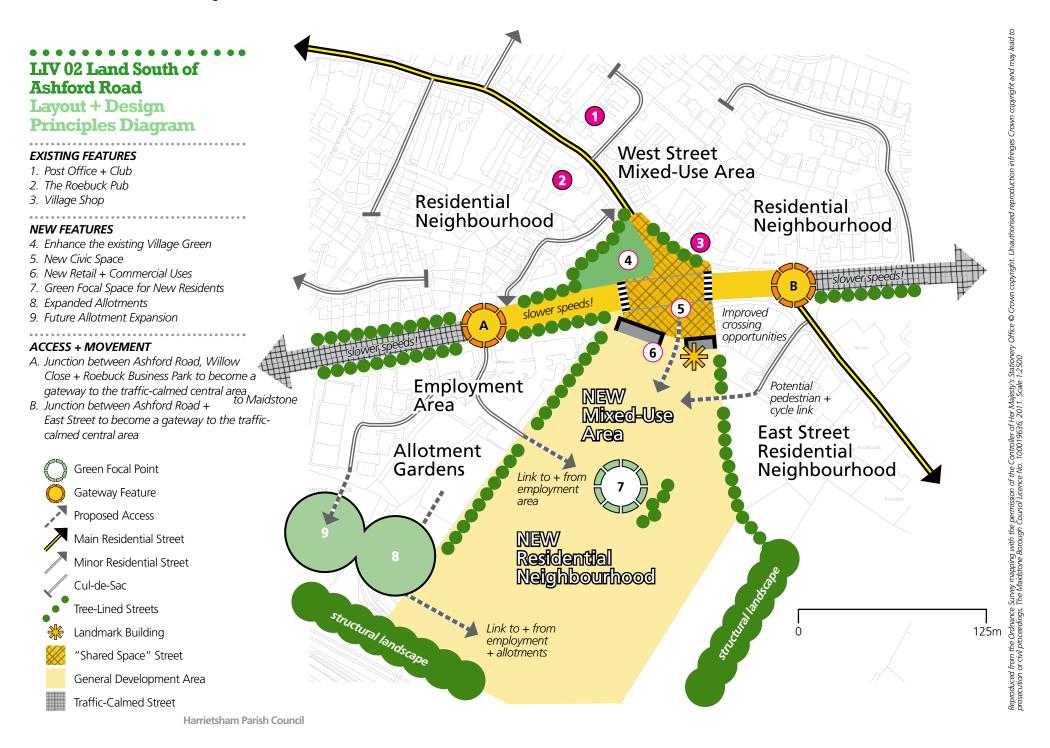
#### Key Reasons For Inclusion

- Central location
- Proximity to Ashford Road
- Relatively large size allows for the creation of a new mixed-use heart directly opposite current centre on West Street.



Site boundary 4.8 ha approx.

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#### June 2014

## Policy LIV 03 Land South of Court Lodge Road New Housing Cluster

A sensitive development on Land South of Court Lodge Road (4.9 hectares) will provide a new neighbourhood of no more than 50 dwellings close to the railway station. This will be a sensitive landscapeled development north of the railway line. Safe links are to be developed through this site to help connect the station with those parts of the village north of the railway line.

This site, immediately to the north of the railway line, is adjacent to the North Downs AONB. The southern part of this site is considered suitable for development; the northern part is to be retained as open space for the whole plan period. The dividing line between the northern part (to remain undeveloped) and southern part (to be developed) is approximately the halfway point, where the woodland path emerges from the east.

While this site sits in a sensitive landscape area, its development is seen as critical to the delivery of a compact, walkable village with more residents living closer to the village's core facilities. Without this site being developed, it is likely that more housing could be located on the far outer edges of the village, exacerbating the sprawl and fragmentation that Harrietsham has had to content with over recent years. It is considered that the benefits that the development of this site can bring in helping to meet these particular objectives of the plan outweigh the landscape and access issues.

That said, its development needs to be handled very sensitively with regard to landscape impacts and access. While the site will provide housing to contribute towards the overall required numbers as



The development south of Court Lodge Road needs to respect the peace and tranquillity currently enjoyed by residents of the lakeside neighbourhood west of Church Road.



A task group examines access issues during the three-day design event in June 2012.

#### Site Size

4.9 hectares approx. (total for both the developable area LIV 03 and the northern field ENV 02).

Maximum Number of Dwellings (subject to detailed design + layout) 50

**Other Land Uses to be included** Green space for the whole plan period (ENV 02)

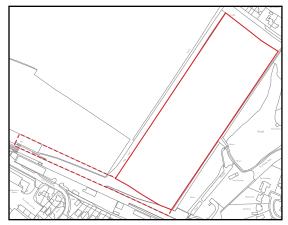
*Current Use* Agricultural Land.

#### Site Conditions

Gently sloping from north to south; Mature tree cover on the edges.

#### Key Reasons For Inclusion

- Located immediately adjacent to the existing village envelope.
- Close to the railway station.
- Opportunity to further connect existing village services and facilities.



Site boundary 4.9 ha approx.

determined by the RSC designation, it also must act as an effective "stepping stone" between the area around the existing village hall, medical centre and church in the east and the railway station and the school in the west. Presently, the only connection between these areas involves the A20 Ashford Road and this is true for all modes of transport.

The development of this site will allow for an alternative route to be opened up. From the east, this route will comprise the "Woodland Walk" which will open up into the new development site, before heading south towards the railway line, then west (parallel to the tracks) to reach the station. The appeal of this route will be enhanced considerably by passing through a sensitively designed pocket of development, providing overlooking and a sense of security that comes with natural surveillance.

The proximity to the AONB requires a carefully integrated approach to landscape design, with edge planting and tree belts vital to help mitigate any potential negative impacts with regard to longer range views. Built development may need to be phased alongside a landscape strategy if the current landscape conditions are not yet mature enough to provide the necessary mitigation.

This site's proximity to the AONB and to nearby woodland areas should inform a higher quality of design, using an appropriate range of styles and materials compatible with this location. Strong references to North Downs building typologies and architecture should be explored by the landowner/ developer as they move towards a planning application. Access to the site will be from the east, for pedestrians wishing to access the site itself and also those traversing the village and heading towards the school and station. Access to the residences will be from the north off Court Lodge Road. A traffic impact assessment and junction review will be required as part of the planning application process to demonstrate that the number of typical vehicle movements here resulting from the new development can be safely accommodated without any adverse impact on the network. The introduction of "engineered solutions" to any required highway improvements is strongly discouraged as this could detract from the rural nature of Court Lodge Road.

Instead, limited and sensitive modifications to the road surfaces and junctions, appropriate in scale and kind to the level of anticipated use, are recommended.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Compact, Active, Balanced. See also: LIV 01, ENV 02, COM 02, COM 03.



The southern part of the land south of Court Lodge Road has been identified as suitable for development due to its location immediately adjacent to the existing village envelope, its proximity to the railway station and the opportunity to connect existing village services and facilities.



The publicly accessible woodland walk will continue to have an important role in the future of the village, helping to unite different areas of activity.



## Policy LIV 04 \* Tongs Meadow New Housing Cluster

A sensitive development on the Tongs Meadow site (3.3 hectares) will provide a new neighbourhood of no more than 100 dwellings close to the railway station. Safe links will be developed through the site to help connect the school with the station and the rest of the village.

This site, immediately south of the railway line, can deliver a significant number of houses to help meet the growth required by the Rural Service Centre designation. It can also deliver significant social infrastructure benefits by virtue of its location, close to both the primary school and the railway station.

Clear and legible pedestrian and cycling routes through the site will integrate the existing village area to the east with the primary school to the west. This link is important to allow children and their parents and carers to walk and cycle to the school without the need to use West Street. Internal layouts therefore need to show a clear, legible and safe route through the site linking Station Road with the school.

The proximity to the AONB requires a carefully integrated approach to landscape design, with edge planting and tree belts vital to help mitigate any potential negative impacts with regard to longer range views. Built development may need to be phased alongside a landscape strategy if the current landscape conditions are not yet mature enough to provide the necessary mitigation.

This site's proximity to the AONB and to nearby woodland areas should inform a higher quality of design, using an appropriate range of styles and materials compatible with this location. Strong references to North Downs building typologies and architecture should be explored by the landowner/ developer as they move towards a planning application.

The site contains a small stand of semi-mature and mature trees that should be retained and incorporated into the new development. The layout and design should also secure an area of quality public open space, of an appropriate size and quality, at the western end of the development site. This open space needs to be overlooked by new development to provide a sense of safety and natural surveillance.

The form and design of the western edge of the development needs particular care and attention as it will be particularly visible from the west. The design needs to create a positive, outward-looking edge for Harrietsham as this will form the new, final edge condition to this side of the village for years to come.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Compact, Active, Balanced. See also: LIV 01, EDU 01.



A task group makes an assessment of the Tongs Meadow site during the three-day design event in June 2012.

#### Site Size

3.3 hectares approx.

*Maximum Number of Dwellings* (subject to detailed design + layout) 100

#### Current Use

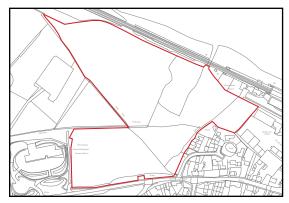
Agricultural Land Not In Current Production.

#### Site Conditions

Relatively flat, with a stand of mature trees and ponds (both to be retained as far as possible).

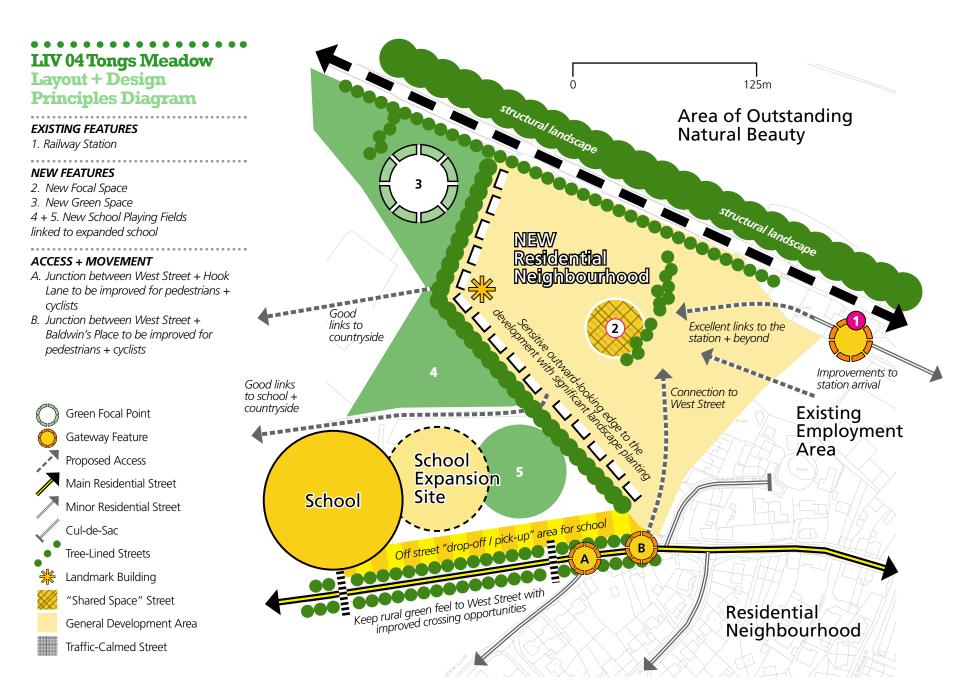
#### Key Reasons For Inclusion

- Located immediately adjacent to the existing village envelope
- Close to the school and station
- Opportunity to further connect existing services and facilities
- Enables a sensible school expansion.



Site boundary 3.3 ha approx.

\* Link to Maidstone Borough Local Plan Preparation (Regulation 18) 2014 Appendix A Housing Allocations H1(25) — Tongs Meadow, Harrietsham.



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## Policy LIV 05 \* Mayfields Nursery

Small cluster of new houses on land at Mayfields Nursery (1.6 hectares) of no more than 50 dwellings on the eastern edge of the village. This development will 'round off' the edge of the village and mark a new eastern edge to Harrietsham. Design and layout needs to recognise this role as the eastern gateway to the village.

The now derelict Mayfields Nursery land on the eastern edge of the village is considered to be "previously developed" land under national planning guidance. As such, it has preferential consideration for development over green field sites. Development of the site can be considered to "round off" the eastern end of the village as land directly opposite the site to the north of the A20 Ashford Road has been developed for housing for some years now and there is a compelling logic to mirror the extent of this development on land to the south.

In doing so, this development will be required to create a new and permanent edge condition for Harrietsham. In essence, this site is as far east as the village should be allowed to grow.

Therefore, the form and design of the development needs to prevent coalescence with Lenham village and layouts and designs that present positive edges, with landmark buildings that can act as a gateway to the village, will be encouraged. Substantial landscape planting will be required along the southern edge of the site to provide visual mitigation to the open countryside beyond.

Key Planning Principles: Compact, Welcoming. See also: LIV 01, MOV 01.



The ex-nursery site at Mayfields lies on the outer eastern edge of the village and the form and scale of development here needs to create a positive gateway approach to Harrietsham from the east. Site Size 1.6 hectares approx.

*Maximum Number of Dwellings* (subject to detailed design + layout) 50

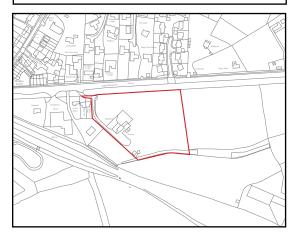
*Current Use* Derelict plant nursery.

#### Site Conditions

Relatively flat with mature tree cover around the edges.

#### Key Reasons For Inclusion

- Previously developed land
- Opportunity to provide a positive and permanent western gateway for the village.
- Location allows for a "rounding off" of the eastern end of the village.



Site boundary 1.6 ha approx.

\* Link to Maidstone Borough Local Plan Preparation (Regulation 18) 2014 Appendix A Housing Allocations H1(27) — Mayfield Nursery Site, Harrietsham.

#### . LIV 05 Mayfields Nursery

. . . . . . . . . . . .

Layout + Design **Principles Diagram** 

#### ACCESS + MOVEMENT

A. New access point to the site from the Ashford Road.

Green Focal Point

**Gateway Feature** 

Proposed Access

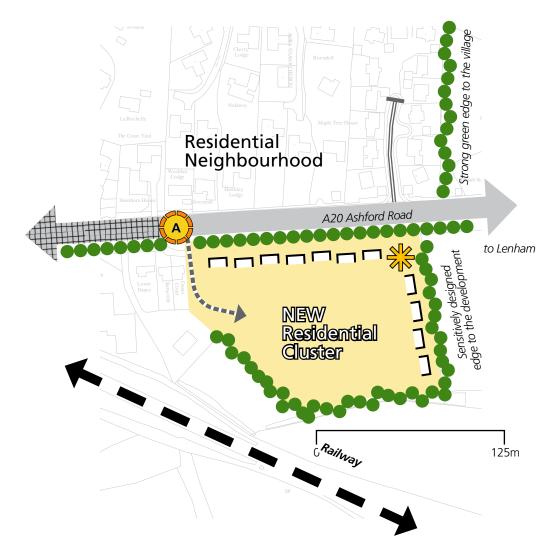
Cul-de-Sac

**Tree-Lined Streets** 

Landmark Building "Shared Space" Street General Development Area

Traffic-Calmed Street

Main Residential Street Minor Residential Street



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5**7** 

## Policy LIV 06 \* Land at Church Road

Small cluster of new houses of no more than 45 dwellings on land at Church Road (3.8 hectares) fronting onto the Ashford Road and East Street. This development needs to ensure the retention of mature trees and the security of open land immediately to the east.

This development site can provide a limited number of houses in the heart of the village. The design should encourage an aspect over the Ashford Road to assist in the creation of a new high street. Development that "turns its back" on the road will be resisted. Development should also create a sensitive and attractive new frontage to East Street with regard to the setting of the East Street Conservation Area.

The mature tree cover along the northern edge of the site should be retained and enhanced, as should selected trees within the site itself. The land to the east of the area considered to be suitable for development must be protected for the whole plan peas green space and given a long term function e.g. community orchard or recreational land.

Key Planning Principles: Connected, Compact, Active, Balanced. See also: LIV 01, MOV 01, ENV 03, COM 03.

\* Link to Maidstone Borough Local Plan Preparation (Regulation 18) 2014 Appendix A Housing Allocations H1(28) — Church Road, Harrietsham.



The design of new homes along East Street needs to respond in an appropriate manner to the Conservation Area status (LIV 04).



There is a variety of housing types in the East Street area. New development should add to this mix through quality designs that draw inspiration from these local styles (LIV 04).

Site Size 3.8 hectares approx.

*Maximum Number of Dwellings* (subject to detailed design + layout) 45

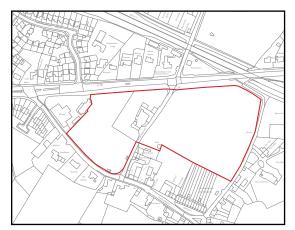
*Current Use* Agricultural Meadow.

#### Site Conditions

Relatively flat; Mature tree cover, especially on the northern edge, to be retained.

#### **Reasons For Inclusion**

- Central location within the village envelope
- Opportunity to improve the quality of the Ashford Road for pedestrians and cyclists
- Strengthen the quality of the Conservation Area
- Deliver long term security to the green space to the north of the almhouses, to become a key part of the green chain walk.



Site boundary 4.9 ha approx.



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# **06 IMPLEMENTATION**



A "mind map" developed by the Parish Council to help inform the delivery of the plan content.

## **Planning Applications**

The ideas for change contained within the Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented in a phased manner over the lifetime of the plan period (expected to be at least concurrent with the life of the Maidstone Borough Council local plan to 2031).

It is expected that sites will be brought forward by landowners and developers through the formal planning application process. This will involve preapplication discussions with officers at Maidstone Borough Council followed by the submission of a formal planning application, supported by the required supporting statements e.g. landscape impact assessments, retail assessments etc.

It is expected that Harrietsham Parish Council (in its role as statutory consultee to planning applications) and Maidstone Borough Council will use the Neighbourhood Plan to assess the appropriateness and suitability of applications. This assessment will help inform the Parish Council's response to the application (e.g. written representations in support of or in objection to the proposals) and will inform the local planning authority's final decision.

In summary, planning applications that are broadly in accordance with both the local development plan, as prepared by Maidstone Borough Council, and with the Neighbourhood Plan should be supported while those that are not, should be refused.

## **Developer Contributions**

Planning gain is a way of describing the increase in the value of land which results from planning permission being granted. This increase in land value mainly benefits the owners of the land, but a levy or tax can be applied to divert some of the financial benefits to local councils, including Parish Councils. It is through mechanisms such as this, that many of the ideas within this Neighbourhood Plan will be funded and delivered.

#### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announced in January 2013 how the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will support house building on greenfield as well as sites through the Neighbourhood Planning process.

The proposals mean that where a Neighbourhood Plan is in place for a parish, the Parish Council will receive 25% of the revenues from CIL arising from "... the development that they choose to accept". Areas without a Neighbourhood Plan, but where CIL is charged, will receive 10% less. At the present time Maidstone Borough Council have yet to introduce CIL to the local planning process. However, if and when they do, this Neighbourhood Plan will allow Harrietsham to benefit from the planning gain that can be accrued through CIL.

#### **Section 106 Agreements**

In the meantime, planning gain can be obtained by the local community through Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Such agreements will be negotiated between the landowner/developer and the Maidstone Borough Council. The financial contributions from Section 106 agreements will be required to fund the necessary lift in infrastructure required to support the expected increase in housing numbers that will result from the Rural Service Centre (RSC) designation.

#### Monitoring

This Neighbourhood Plan will be carefully monitored during its life span by both Harrietsham Parish Council and Maidstone Borough Council to ensure it meets its stated aims and objectives and is delivering the community benefits as expected.

# What Does The Village Need?

Set out below are the key areas of community infrastructure that need to be addressed through development, as subsequently through planning gain mechanisms. Using the responses received through this Regulation 14 consultation, the Parish Council has prioritised the investment (see list, right) and will develop a phasing strategy for the implementation of community infrastructure.

## Retail

As the village grows, the existing retail provision within the village must grow accordingly to ensure more sustainable travel patterns. At present, most utility shopping trips require local residents to leave the village. Over the longer term, this will be unsustainable. Better provision within Harrietsham will be needed.

## PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR HARRIETSHAM TOWARDS WHICH DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TO BE DIRECTED

- 1. Contributions towards the highways improvement project planned for the A20 through the village, including the redesigning of the West Street junction by the village green.
- 2. Contributions towards extending the provision of retail facilities within the village envelope.
- 3. Contributions towards improvements to the Harrietsham Doctor's Surgery in Church Road. This is a specific local provision owned by the community. Therefore provision should be in addition to any other health provision.
- 4. Contributions towards village community facilities proposed for the new village centre as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5. Contributions towards the provision of public recreational and sporting facilities in Harrietsham.
- 6. Contributions towards the provision of youth facilities in Harrietsham.
- 7. Contributions towards improvements to the Harrietsham Village Hall in Church Road.
- 8. Contributions towards the provision of a disabled lift for the footbridge at Harrietsham Station.
- 9. Contributions towards the development of the newly established nature reserve of Teers Meadow and a contribution to the on-going maintenance fund of the Glebe Field and Pilgrims Lake Nature Reserve. These are all significant village amenities.
- 10. Contributions towards improving the former Network Rail footpath that runs from the A20 along the edge of the Booth Field to Church Road. Also, the footpath connection from station to Court Lodge Road. This access route is part of the Neighbourhood Plan and agreement has recently been achieved to make it available.

- The creation of A1 use (retail) and A3 use (food + drink) accommodation at the new village centre (LIV 02) around a new piece of public realm. Work needs to be undertaken to determine the likely size and scope of the retail demand and subsequent provision.
- New local centre to incorporate a Community Building, with an integral cafe facility (LIV 02).

## Community

General support for community life needs to be enhanced in line with the expected growth in residents numbers brought about through an increase in housing numbers. This includes:

- The provision of additional reception, dispensary, treatment rooms and consulting rooms (all to appropriate clinical standards) at the existing doctor's surgery (COM 02).
- Provision of additional meeting rooms and expansion/relocation of existing kitchen facilities at the existing village hall (COM 02).
- School expansion to create a "seven form, two class entry" primary and provision of an immediately adjacent playing field on one fullyfunctional site (EDU 01).
- Provision of additional off-street car parking spaces and a formal "drop off" zone to minimise negative traffic impacts on West Street that may be generated from additional school capacity (EDU 01).
- Pre-school expansion to ensure sufficient preschool places for Harrietsham families (EDU 01).
- An accessible area suitable for recycling facilities within the village.

## Access + Movement

The major changes with regard to access and movement are focused on the downgrading of a limited section of the A20 Ashford Road to help create a new high street and village heart for Harrietsham. The secondary changes, although no less important are the improvement of the network of pedestrian footpaths that connect various areas of village activity with the residential neighbourhoods.

#### **Creating A New Village Heart**

- The implementation of appropriate "gateway features" at key locations along the A20 Ashford Road to reduce vehicles speeds and enhance safety (MOV 01). These features will also help inform drivers that they are now entering the residential area of Harrietsham and are no longer passing through open countryside.
- Introduction of a change to the road surface materials, lighting and the reduction in the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph (maybe 20 mph, subject to design detail) between Church Road/ Ashford Road junction in the east and Roebuck Business Park/Ashford Road junction in the west, subject to detailed design, safety audit and approval from Kent County Council (MOV 02).
- Extend the current 40 mph limit on the A20 Ashford Road as far as Holm Mill Lane to the west of the village.

#### **Better North-South Links**

 New pedestrian crossings, with associated islands and refuges at Holm Mill Lane, Church Road and Downlands to improve village access and the safety to all residents. All new crossing facilities to meet inclusive designs standards for all road users, including wheel chair users and cyclists.



Creative solutions are required for improved pedestrian access beneath the railway bridge on Church Road.



This plan seeks improvements to the A20 Ashford Road that will benefit pedestrians and cyclists.



Expansion of the existing allotment gardens is a key objective and policy of the plan (COM 01).

### **Footpath Links**

- Improvements to footpath links along Church Road, especially when it passes under the railway bridge and there is no footway.
- Provide improved footpath links between the railway station and the village hall and doctor's surgery.
- New footpaths and cycle ways between the station and the school (LIV 04).

#### **Public Transport**

- Bus stop improvements along A20 Ashford Road. There is a need for new bus shelters at the bus stops opposite Church Lane.
- Installation of a new pedestrian footbridge over the railway tracks at the station, to include lift facilities for wheel chair users (MOV 06).

## **Green Spaces**

A robust green spaces strategy is necessary to secure the required recreational and amenity spaces for a growing village. It is also necessary to help provide long term security against future development on inappropriate sites.

- The allocation and security of important green spaces, as indicated by the "green chain walk" (ENV 03) and other allocated sites by the plan.
- Long term security for Booth Field as a designated Local Green Space (COM 03).
- The provision of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and a new sports pavilion to cater for the additional use of the village's sports and playing field facilities (COM 03).
- To identify and secure additional informal and formal green space (ENV 01).
- The provision of additional allotment land to the south of the A20 Ashford Road to satisfy anticipated demand from the proposed village expansion (COM 01).
- Introduction of additional equipped play areas for younger children and teenagers to extend provision for all age ranges and members of the community with disabilities.

## **Technology Infrastructure**

• The improvement of local broadband internet connectivity for the whole parish area.

## **Employment**

 Identify potential small scale sites for employment opportunities adjacent to the station or with easy access to the existing major road network (EMP 01) and to actively seek to reduce large lorry movements along West Street.



Retention (and possible expansion) of employment sites in the village is crucial for a sustainable future for Harrietsham.





(Top and above) Members of the Parish Council meet officers and members of Maidstone Borough Council in May 2013 to share their own sustainability appraisal of the various development options.

## **General Conclusions**

The Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan has been a community-led process, enabled by the Parish Council and with professional planning assistance. A key part of the plan-making process was to view Harrietsham in an integrated manner, understand its most fundamental challenges and identify development sites that have the potential to resolve those issues most effectively.

#### Widespread Support

Many residents agree with the aims and ambitions of the plan, understand why the Harrietsham Parish Council have chosen to produce and develop a Neighbourhood Plan and, through the plan-making process have clearly expressed the priorities and needs of the village.

### **Consultation + Engagement**

The regular consultation events have played a significant role in keeping the community aware of the future and current development proposals. By holding frequent meetings and precopulatory events for the residents, this plan has been able to incorporate ongoing feedback.

The engagement events have also been integral to maintaining momentum. The three-day event in June 2012, where many of the key ideas were first developed, triggered many further conversations and discussions. The attendance levels at all consultations events demonstrates a keen interest in the Neighbourhood Plan and shows how this plan reflects the wishes of a community that is confident about embracing development that is properly planned for, sensitively and carefully designed and brings with it real and tangible community benefits.

## **Complementing the Existing**

The policies of the Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan are reflective of the village's aspirations and needs as a community. Future developments as set out in this plan complement the village as it exists now and are responsive to current planning polices, both national and local.

#### Long-Standing Problems +Workable Solutions

Throughout the plan-making process, residents have seen plans and schemes be adapted and modified in response to community-led ideas. This process has benefitted all stakeholders and gives them confidence that future development will reflect Harrietsham's unique community-driven character.

This plan has developed workable solutions to longstanding issues and concerns (e.g. inadequate retail provision, lack of a community civic space, poor links between key facilities) without being detrimental to the rural character of the village.

### The Future

There is a strong sense of community right across the village and Harrietsham Parish Council firmly believe that this Neighbourhood Plan addresses the current and future needs of that community. Local residents want to see the village prosper in the future and continue to be a good place to live, work and visit for many years to come.

#### This plan will help make it happen.



Harrietsham Parish Council

# **APPENDIX**



Posters were placed around the village to effectively advertise the three-day design forum.

## **Contributory Members of Harrietsham Parish Council**

**Tanet Bilke Ámanda Broadhurst Dennis Clifton Stephen Morris David Oversby Tanetta Sams** Tom Sams **Tony Taylor Michael Thompson** 

## **Key Contacts**

#### **Dennis Clifton**

Chair of Harrietsham Parish Council, The Parish Office, The Village Hall, Church Road, Harrietsham, ME17 1AW. harrietshampc@aol.com | + 44 (0) 1622 850089

#### **Amanda Broadhurst**

Clerk to Harrietsham Parish Council, The Parish Office, The Village Hall, Church Road, Harrietsham, ME17 1AW. harrietshampc@aol.com | + 44 (0) 1622 850089

## The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made

## Maidstone Strategic Housing Market

Assessment Final Report January 2014 http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0007/44656/Strategic-Housing-Market-Assessment-2014.pdf

## Maidstone Borough Local Plan

(Regulation 18) Consultation 2014 http://dynamic.maidstone.gov.uk/pdf/Local%20Plan%20Regulation%2018.pdf

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

Neighbourhood Planning Advice http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/local-plan/neighbourhood-plans

Neighbourhood planning has been introduced to enable more community involvement in the planning process, so that people can shape their local areas and have a greater say in planning decisions. A Neighbourhood Development Plan (shortened to Neighbourhood Plan) sets out planning policies for development and the use of land in a local area. Once adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the development plan for the area. This means that the plan has weight when decisions are made on planning applications.

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

Background Evidence Reports http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/local-plan/evidence

The above link contains further links to the following background evidence papers:

- Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report (2007)
- Habitat Regulations Assessment Map (2007)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)
- Office Viability Study (2009)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)
- Strategic Sites Assessment (2009)
- Demographic and Labour Supply Forecasts (2010)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment Summary (2010)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2010)
- Town Centre Study (2010)
- Water Cycle Study Outline Report Summary (2010)
- Water Cycle Study Outline Report (2010)

- Employment Land Review Partial Update (2011)
- Sustainable Construction in Maidstone Study (2011)
- Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (2012)
- Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (2012)
- Maidstone Ancient Woodland Inventory (2012)
- Population Projections Review (2012)
- Demographic and Labour Supply Forecasts (2012)
- Employment Land Forecast 2013 (14,800 Dwellings)
- Retail Capacity Study (2013)
- Local Plan Viability Testing (2013)
- Maidstone Town Centre Assessment (2013)

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

#### **Borough Wide Local Plan (2000)**

http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/local-plan/planning-guidance

The Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 and its appendices is the main planning document for Maidstone. In 2007 the Secretary of State deleted some of the policies in the document, but the policies that were saved are used to make decisions on planning applications. Maidstone has two adopted local plan documents — Affordable Housing DPD (2006) and Open Space DPD (2006) — which are part of the local plan. These documents contain planning policies and should be read with the saved policies of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000.

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

Draft Core Strategy (2011) http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0011/25679/Draft-core-strategy-2011.pdf

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

Interim Approval of Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policies (13 March 2013) http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0019/26830/Interim-Approval-of-Maidstone-Borough-Local-Plan-Policies-March-2013-v2.pdf

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

In March 2013, the borough set a new working housing target of 14,800 properties which are to be delivered between 2011 and 2031. This target is based on a 10-year migration trend. The borough's capacity to deliver this target must be examined through a new Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). When this work is completed, the borough will be able to demonstrate whether it can deliver 14,800 properties. The SHLAA and Strategic Economic Development Land Availability Assessment (SEDLAA) are evidence documents that look at what land is potentially available for development in the borough and assesses that land to see if, in principle, it is available, deliverable and developable. The first stage in the SHLAA/SEDLAA process was a public "call for sites" and the results can be found via the links below.

## **Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment**

**Final Report January 2014** http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0007/44656/Strategic-Housing-Market-Assessment-2014.pdf

## Maidstone Borough Local Plan

(Regulation 18) Consultation 2014 http://dynamic.maidstone.gov.uk/pdf/Local%20Plan%20Regulation%2018.pdf

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

#### **Annual Monitoring Report**

http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/local-plan/monitoring-and-information Maidstone Borough Council produces an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) each year. The document reports on the progress of the local plan and whether the targets in Maidstone's local planning policies are being achieved.

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

## Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment

- http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/landscape,-heritage-and-design/landscape
- http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/landscape,-heritage-and-design/trees

The Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment 2012 replaces the Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Guidelines 2000. The general landscape guidelines provided under Section 9 of the 2000 document will be reviewed by Maidstone Borough Council and updated as part of a Landscape Character Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). However, until the SPD is adopted, Section 9 of the Landscape Guidelines (2000) together with the appendices and character area planting lists are saved policies.

## The Kent Downs Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

### The Kent Downs Draft Management Plan 2013

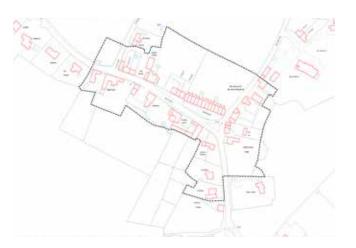
*http://www.kentdowns.org.uk/publications/consultation-on-draft-management-plan-2013* There is a draft review of the Management Plan for the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This sets out the vision of the future of this special landscape, seeks to address key issues and threats and sets out aims, objectives and policies for the positive management of the Kent Downs for the next 20 years.

## **Kent County Council**

Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Pre-submission Consultation) January 2014 http://consult.kent.gov.uk/portal/mwcs/pre-submission

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Draft October 2013 http://consult.maidstone.gov.uk/portal/draft\_gbi\_strategy\_1?tab=files



## **East Street Conservation Area**

http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_ file/0007/19645/Harrietsham-East-Street.pdf

## **Listed Buildings**

http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/ landscape,-heritage-and-design/listed-buildings

Harrietsham has one Conservation Area along a section of East Street — see map above. There is currently no Conservation Area appraisal or management plan in place for this. These identify what is special and needs protecting, and help in the area's management.

They are carried out in consultation with the local community. An appraisal needs to combine historic records and maps with a visual analysis of the present state of the area.

A Conservation Area Management plan can be produced once an appraisal has been carried out and includes policies for enhancing a conservation area's streetscape, highways, landscapes and public spaces. They help ensure that the special character of a Conservation Area is protected.

## **Neighbourhood Plan**

Three-Day Design Forum June 2012

http://www.feria-urbanism.eu

This event was an open invitation to all residents of Harrietsham, to local developers and landowners, to business owners and to the residents of nearby villages and was designed so that each of the three-days built on the outputs of the day before, allowing a clearer and more in-depth understanding of what the Neighbourhood Plan should address. A series of evolutionary plans designs were developed over the three days. The results of the three-day event, together with other background information on the design process, can be found through the above web link.

June 2014

## **Neighbourhood Area**

**Approved Plan Boundary October 2012** http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/local-plan/neighbourhood-plans

Letter and plan from Maidstone Borough Council confirming recognition of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

#### MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL RECORD OF DECISION OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING

Decision Made: 29th October 2012

#### Neighbourhood Plan Area Application

Issue for Decision To consider Harrietsham parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area.

#### Decision Made

The neighbourhood area submitted by Harrietsham Parish Council to Maidstone Borough Council on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2012 is **approved**.

#### Reasons for Decisio

Consultation Consultation commenced on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September and ended at 5pm on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2012. The consultation was advertised as follows

- 1. Note distributed to all households in the parish at start of consultation period
- 2. Neighbourhood Plan Area application (including a map) posted on Maidstone Borough Council's website and on Harrietsham parish council's website
- 3. Poster advertising the consultation on notice boards in the parish
- 4. Ward members and adjoining ward members were made aware of the consultation via

## Representations Received During Consultation One representation was received in support of the application. No objections were received

Considerations

- 1. Does the proposed plan area follow existing, established administrative or planning houndaries
- YES the proposed plan area follows the existing parish boundary
- Does it exclude areas which in planning terms it would be more appropriate to include (for example where planning designation or development location straddles a parish boundary)

NO

3. Does it overlap with another approved neighbourhood area (this is not permitted)

NO Conclusion Harrietsham Parish Council will be preparing the neighbourhood plan and are considered a relevant body<sup>1</sup> under the Localism Act 2011

The identification of Harrietsham in Maidstone Borough Council's Core Strategy as a Rural Service Centre places specific emphasis on the growth of the village as a place to live and work. The village must therefore accommodate additional housing and the necessary associated infrastructure in the near future.

The parish council is progressing with the preparation of a neighbourhood plan and believes a robust and well considered neighbourhood plan offers the best opportunity to accommodate these elements in a successful way. Working to the same boundary for both the parish and the neighbourhood plan will avoid potential confusion for those that live, work and visit the

No objections were received during consultation and the proposed plan area (see map below) meets the criteria set out above. The plan area is considered acceptable in planning terms and the parish council has followed due process in line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations, Part 2, S. 5(1).

R.LL. Jarman

Rob Jarman, Head of Planning

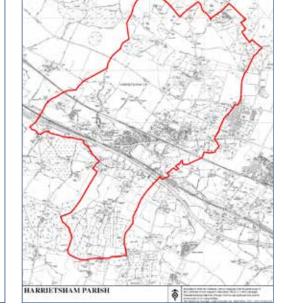
Alternatives considered and why rejected The decision to approve the neighbourhood plan area has been made for the reasons stated above. The alternative is to reject the application but the council is satisfied that due process has been followed and no representations were made during the consultation to suggest the geographic area of the pairs's should not form the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

<sup>1</sup> For the definition of "relevant body" see section 61G (2) of the 1990 Act (inserted by paragraph 2 of Schedule 9 to the L

Background Papers

Signature:

Act 2011 (c.20)



Approved Neighbourhood Plan boundary

Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan 26-28 June 2012



"Plans are of little importance but planning is essential"

Winston Churchill

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leighbourhood Plan