

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 8 September 2020

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Remote Meeting - The public proceedings of the meeting will be broadcast live and recorded for playback on the Maidstone Borough Council website.

Membership:

Councillors D Burton (Chairman), Clark, English, Garten, Mrs Grigg (Vice-Chairman), McKay, Munford, Parfitt-Reid and de Wiggondene-Sheppard

The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.

<u>AGENDA</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Notification of Substitute Members	
3. Urgent Items	
4. Notification of Visiting Members	
5. Disclosures by Members and Officers	
6. Disclosures of Lobbying	
7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.	
8. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 7 July 2020	1 - 6
9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)	
10. Question and Answer Session for Members of the Public	
11. Questions from Members to the Chairman (if any)	
12. Committee Work Programme	7
13. Reports of Outside Bodies	
14. Maidstone Local Plan Review Update	8 - 13

Issued on 28 August 2020

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

15. Lenham Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 17A)	14 - 76
16. Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16	77 - 89
17. Kent Downs Draft AONB Management Plan Consultation	90 - 143
18. Conservation Areas Work Programme Update	144 - 149
19. Reference from the Biodiversity and Climate Change Working Group - England Tree Strategy Consultation Response	150 - 170

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

In order to ask a question at this remote meeting, please call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Friday 4 September 2020). You will need to provide the full text in writing.

If your question is accepted, you will be provided with instructions as to how you can access the meeting.

In order to submit a written statement in relation to an item on the agenda, please call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Friday 4 September 2020). You will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to comment on.

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to the **Policy and Resources Committee**, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by **three** Councillors, to the **Head of Policy, Communications and Governance** by: **18 August 2020**

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7 JULY 2020

Present: Councillors D Burton (Chairman), Clark, English, Garten, Mrs Grigg, McKay, Munford, Parfitt-Reid and de Wiggondene-Sheppard

Also Present: Councillor Mortimer

154. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

155. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

156. URGENT ITEMS

The Committee agreed to take an urgent item for information purposes concerning the introduction of the Building Control Out of Hours Service. The update would be provided by Rob Jarman, the Head of Planning and Development.

There were two updates, one to Item 14 – Maidstone Affordable and Local Needs Housing Supplementary Planning Document as a typographical update that the officer would provide during the item’s presentation. The second update was to Item 16 – Neighbourhood Planning Protocol Update, in the form of an amendment to Appendix 1 that had been circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting. The officer would explain the amendment during the item’s introduction.

157. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Mortimer was present as a Visiting Member and indicated the wish to speak on Item 14 – Maidstone Affordable and Local Needs Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

158. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

159. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

160. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

161. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 JUNE 2020

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed at a later date, subject to the following amendments:

To include the original request for an amendment to Item 12 – Committee Work Programme. The request was for the addition of a note that a member item request was made regarding a 20mph speed limit on Hayle Road. The amendment was not made as it was noted that this request was already included in the Minutes of the meeting held 10 March 2020. In addition, the Minute that contained that there were no reports of outside bodies be removed as a verbal update was provided by a Member of the Committee.

162. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

163. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

164. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

165. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Specific reference was made to the Committee's request for a report which examined the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the financial implications of parking and the suspension of regulations, as under the remit of the Committee, made on 9 June 2020. It was requested that the previous instruction of the Committee to alter parking charges be taken into consideration within the report.

The Committee requested that the report be provided in addition to the first quarter budget and performance monitoring report for the 8 September 2020 meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

166. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor English provided a verbal update to inform the Committee that a successful bid had been made by the community rail partnership that runs the Medway Valley and Swale line partnerships to secure £150,000 for a new partnership between Kemsing and Charing. The partnership

would operate through Maidstone and stop at all stations within the borough on the Maidstone East Line.

A written statement from South Eastern Railways and the Community Rail Partnership would likely be provided for the next meeting of the Committee.

It was requested that as the Council's representative to South Eastern Railways, Councillor English request that the merits of the aforementioned funding be made available to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update provided be noted.

167. MAIDSTONE AFFORDABLE AND LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Strategic Planning Manager introduced the report and stated that government guidance allows for the production of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to build upon and provide further detailed advice and/or guidance on policies within an adopted local plan. Policies 19 and 20 of the Council's adopted local plan refer to the production of an SPD. The SPD would not introduce new policies into the local plan. The Council would need to comply with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

The Strategic Planning Manager highlighted that Adams Integra had been commissions to take forward the SPD, with pre-consultation engagement having taken place during the drafting of the document. This involved developers, registered providers and a working group of Members. A statutory six-week public consultation was undertaken, with changes made to the SPD in line with the pre-consultation engagement and the consultation itself. The SPD would have various purposes that included the facilitation of negotiations with, and to provide certainty to, landowners, lenders, housebuilders and registered providers, with regard to the Council's expectations for affordable and local needs housing within specific development schemes.

The report included a summary of the content of the SPD, with the SPD shown in Appendix 1. It was noted that there was a correction to be made to paragraph 2.9 of the report, whereby 2015 would be replaced with 2011.

Particular attention was drawn to the national and local context provided, with paragraph 1.11 of the report having made reference to the 67% of need across the borough is for social or affordable rent tenures, with 33% for intermediate housing. Individual site requirements were also included within the SPD that included the desire to keep affordable units when a resident leaves the property, specific requirements for housing for the elderly, to include extra care and specialist housing. The provision of affordable housing being delivered on site of specific developments was covered, with a high land price outlined as insufficient justification for the under provision of affordable housing.

Councillor Mortimer address the Committee as a visiting member, in his capacity as Chair of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee. An expression of support for the SPD was given, with specific reference made to the importance of the provision of affordable housing.

In response to questions, the Strategic Planning Manager confirmed that the proportion of affordable homes needed would not be addressed through the SPD, but through the SP20 policy of the adopted local plan. To change the proportions required the adopted local plan would need to be reviewed. With regard to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, viability studies and a strategic market assessment would be conducted in order that the evidence produced be considered in the creation of future policy, as part of the non-spatial plan making that would commence in early 2021.

The Committee felt that further consideration regarding accessibility requirements was required. The Housing Delivery Manager confirmed that the demand for wheelchair accessible homes on the housing register was low and that pre-application discussions with developers encourage development to standard M42 – the adaptable accessible standard.

RESOLVED: That

1. Subject to the amendment of paragraphs 2.9 and 11.4 within Appendix 1, the adoption of the Affordable and Local Needs Housing Supplementary Planning Document, for use in decision making be agreed;
2. The Consultation Statement shown at Appendix 2 be noted; and
3. As part of the Council's ongoing emergency housing strategy, work be undertaken to ensure that the issues of accessibility and appropriateness of a home for lifetime live-in be assessed within the general housing issue, be agreed.

168. LOCAL PLAN REVIEW UPDATE

The Strategic Planning Manager introduced the report and noted the Committee's previous resolution that a written update concerning any slippage and/or progress on the delivery of the Local Plan Review within the agreed timescale, be brought to each meeting of the Committee.

As the Local Planning Authority, the council remained on schedule to undertake a public consultation in October 2020 on its preferred approaches to addressing key areas of growth in the borough, that included housing, employment and retail growth amongst other factors.

The Strategic Planning Manager reminded the Committee that a further public consultation would occur in February 2021. Included within the report was a summary of the key specialist evidence studies that would inform the member engagement exercises and October 2020 public

consultation. These areas would include the Economic Development Needs Study, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Sustainability Appraisals and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Strategic Land Availability Assessment, Garden Communities Assessment, Maidstone Transport and Air Quality Modelling Project, Integrated Transport Strategy, Gypsy & Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment, Sports Facilities Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy and Heritage Strategy.

In response to questions, the Strategic Planning Manager confirmed that the strategic flood risk assessment would likely be received this month. The Interim Local Plan Review Director confirmed that two workshops for the Committee, would be held across August and September with an all Member session planned to occur in August. During these activities, Members would be addressed with regard to the evidence base and how it would influence spatial strategy. A Local Plan Review Update report would then be brought to the Committee that summarised the evidence base.

The Committee expressed significant doubt that having the evidence base summarised within a report would allow for proper public scrutiny and transparency throughout the process. As the Committee had previously agreed to the Member Engagement sessions, it was desired that the examination of the evidence should occur in a public forum. It was suggested that a more suitable alternative would be to have a summary report presented to the Committee as planned, with the evidence based attached as appendices in order that the public would be able to view the evidence and the Committee's discussion on the item. It was suggested that adjourned meeting dates be made available if necessary.

It was agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair would engage with the relevant officers to ensure that this be achieved for the September meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted.

169. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PROTOCOL UPDATE

The Planning Policy Officer introduced the report and highlighted that the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol was last approved in July 2018 with the update now requested as a result of changes to the Council's practices in processing neighbourhood plans. It was noted that the protocol must comply with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) as approved by the Committee in June 2020. A reference to the SCI had been included made within the proposed updated protocol.

The Planning Policy Officer made specific reference to the urgent update that was circulated prior to the meeting, to note that the outcome of stage 17A would now read:

'post-examination draft neighbourhood plan (as modified by the Examiner) becomes a material consideration in decisions on planning applications'.

The Committee was reminded that paragraph 1.13 of the report indicated that the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan was at examination, with the examiners report having been received on 30 June 2020 which recommended that the plan move to referendum subject to modification. As such, the plan would now obtain some material consideration with a report for decision to be presented to the September meeting of the Committee.

In response to questions, the Strategic Planning Manager confirmed that whilst the amended SCI would be a temporary measure, the proposed update to the protocol would result in a permanent change.

The Committee felt that the wording of the protocol that related to the weight given to a post-examination neighbourhood plan was unclear. The Planning Team Leader for Mid Kent Legal clarified the legal position to be that a neighbourhood plan would obtain the same legal status as a local plan once it had been approved through a referendum. Alternative wording for the outcome of Regulatory Stage 17A as shown within Appendix 1 was proposed.

RESOLVED: That the revised Neighbourhood Planning Protocol be approved, subject to additional wording to read:

'Note: post-examination draft neighbourhood plan (as modified by the Examiner) becomes a significant material consideration in decisions on planning applications but will receive full weight post-successful referendum'.

170. URGENT ITEM - BUILDING CONTROL OUT OF HOURS SERVICE

The Head of Planning informed the Committee of the newly introduced Out of Hours Service, that would be provided by the Building Control Team. The Council had a statutory duty to ensure that dangerous structures do not pose a public safety risk. The Out of Hours Service will operate 24/7 and will allow surveyors to be contacted if there is a dangerous structure, to assess the building and mitigate any harm or risk that would arise from the structure.

The Head of Planning confirmed that the service had not been introduced in response to an incident, but rather that the resources to do so had become available. The aim of the service would be to improve the way in which the Council discharges its statutory duties.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update provided be noted.

171. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.17 p.m.

2020/21 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Origin	CLT to clear	Lead	Report Author
Q1 Budget and Performance Monitoring 2020/21	SPI	22-Sep-20	Officer Update	No	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Parking Services Update	SPI	22-Sep-20	Committee Request		Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Upper Stone Street Air Quality Update Report	SPI	22-Sep-20	Officer Update	?	William Cornall	
Local Plan Evidence Base	SPI	22-Sep-20	Officer Update		Phil Coyne	Mark Egerton
Local Plan Review Regulation 18 - Preferred Approaches Public Consultation Part 1	SPI	07-Oct-20	Local Plan Review Process	?	Phil Coyne	Mark Egerton
Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22-2025/26	SPI	10-Nov-20	Governance	No	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Q2 Budget and Performance Monitoring 2020/21	SPI	10-Nov-20	Officer Update	No	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Authority Monitoring Report	SPI	08-Dec-20	Local Plan Process	?	Mark Egerton	Anna Ironmonger
Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget Proposals 2021/22	SPI	12-Jan-21	Governance	No	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Local Plan Review Regulation 18 - Preferred Approaches Public Consultation Part 2	SPI	09-Feb-21	Local Plan Review Process	?	Phil Coyne	Mark Egerton
Q3 Budget and Performance Monitoring 2020/21	SPI	09-Feb-21	Officer Update	No	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Ensuring Conditions are Incorporated in Delegated Decisions	SPI	TBC	Cllr Request	?	Rob Jarman	Rob Jarman
Update concerning works on Junction 3 of the M2	SPI	TBC	Cllr Request	?	TBC	TBC
Review of Building Control	SPI	TBC		?	Rob Jarman	
KCC 20mph Speed Limit Pilot Scheme - Hale Road	SPI	TBC	Cllr Request	?	TBC	TBC

Agenda Item 14

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee

8 September 2020

Maidstone Local Plan Review Update

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Phil Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director), Mark Egerton (Strategic Planning Manager), Tom Gilbert (Principal Planning Officer)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report advises Members of potential changes to the planning system arising from the current Government consultation and seeks a steer from the Committee as to whether the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) (Local Plan Timeframe) should be amended in the context of these changes.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee consider whether to continue with the current timeframe (LDS) for the Local Plan Review, including the regulation 18b (Spatial) consultation due to be carried out in October, or whether to request that the timeframe (LDS) be revised and submitted to the Committee at its meeting on 22 September 2020; and
2. That responses to the two Government consultations (on changes to the planning system and the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper) be produced for the Committee to consider at its meeting on 22 September 2020.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Committee	8 September 2020

Maidstone Local Plan Review Update

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p><i>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure</i> • <i>Safe, Clean and Green</i> • <i>Homes and Communities</i> • <i>A Thriving Place</i> <p>The Local Plan Review will impact directly and indirectly on all Council objectives and the report seeks to manage that through ensuring we have an appropriate response to the current consultations and a suitable LDS.</p>	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Cross Cutting Objectives	See above	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section of the report	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Financial	There are no direct financial impacts arising out of this report but there will likely be implications arising out of Government changes to the planning system and any revision to the LDS if requested by Members.	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing but this will have to be reviewed in light of any changes to the LDS requested by Members.	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Legal	All recommendations are made in accordance with current legislation.	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Privacy and Data Protection	The recommendations will not have any implications for the volume of data held by the Council.	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)

Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Crime and Disorder	The recommendation will not have any impact on crime and disorder as it is a response to a national government consultation and will not lead to any specific changes to the current planning system at present.	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)
Procurement	No direct procurement implications arise from this report but any changes to the LDS requested by Members will result in procurement requirements changing and will be dealt with at the appropriate stages.	Philip Coyne (Interim Local Plan Review Director)

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 This report advises Members of potential changes to the planning system arising from the current Government consultation and seeks a steer from the Committee as to whether the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) (Local Plan Timeframe) should be amended in the context of these changes.

Local Plan Review Update

2.2 In 2018 Maidstone Borough Council started the process of reviewing the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017. The reasons for this were as follows:

- Changes in national planning policy
- Changes to planning legislation
- It was a requirement of the Local Plan 2017 – Policy LPR1
- Maidstone Borough Council adopted a new Corporate Strategic Plan and the Local Plan should be aligned to this

2.3 To date the Council has been gathering an evidence base to support the development of the new Local Plan and has undertaken one public consultation (Local Plan Review: Scoping Themes and Issues Consultation July to September 2019). The evidence base has been wide ranging covering the need requirements, legal tests and potential sites. The 2019 public consultation was aimed at hearing views on what the Local Plan Review should include and what are perceived to be the key drivers and influences on it. At present work on the evidence base for a Regulation 18b consultation is being finalised, this was due to be presented to this meeting (8 September)

but in light of the new information arising from the Government consultations Members are being asked to consider the current timetable.

National Government Planning Consultations

2.4 On 6 August, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) published two consultation papers on proposed changes to the planning system in England. These include:

- Changes to the current planning system. Consultation on changes to present planning policy and regulations (consultation period between 6 August to 1 October)
- 'Planning for the Future' White Paper. Consultation on major change to the English planning systems that will require primary and secondary legislation (consultation period 6 August to 29 October 2020).

2.5 Both of the current consultations suggest significant changes to the present and future planning system. Key amongst these are the Government's proposed changes to the Local Plan making process, which include some quite major the changes to the existing system.

2.6 The Government is also proposing an update of the standard method for calculating housing need. This is the nationally set formula which calculates the housing need figure, which is the minimum that Local Planning Authorities must plan for. At present the Council has been using the previous methodology set out by Government that has a need figure for Maidstone Borough of 1,214 housing units per annum. If adopted in the form proposed, the new standard method could increase Maidstone's figure to 1,569 units per annum.

2.7 It is noted that these changes are at present out for consultation and have not yet been adopted by national Government through national planning policy or guidance. However, if they were to be adopted, there are transitional arrangements set out in the consultation for LPAs so that the present housing need figure can be maintained for a holding period. These include:

- If an LPA is at Reg. 19 Local Plan consultation, they have 6 months to submit the plan for examination; or
- If an LPA has not yet reached Reg. 19 Local Plan consultation it has 3 months from the date that the new standard method is adopted to publish a Reg.19 Local Plan consultation and then a further 6 months to submit their Local Plan for examination.

2.8 At present there is no published date for the adoption of the reforms proposed in the consultation to the changes to the present planning system in England. However, it is understood that the changes to the standard method formula will be introduced as part of planning guidance rather than being embodied in legislation, and it is therefore likely that these will come into force during preparation of Maidstone's current Local Plan Review.

2.9 At present the LPR timeline set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) proposes a timeframe that will see the LPR being adopted in 2022 with a Reg.19 Local Plan Consultation in December 2021. Therefore, there is a risk that the higher housing need figure would have been adopted by national Government before the requisite stages are reached for the transitional arrangements described above to be effective.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 Option A: to respond to the consultations and to consider whether to continue with the current timeframe (LDS) for the Local Plan Review, including the regulation 18b (Spatial) consultation due to be carried out in October, or whether to request that the timeframe (LDS) be revised and submitted to the Committee at its meeting on 22 September 2020

3.2 Option B: to just respond to the consultations and not assess whether to amend the LDS – this is not recommended as there could be significant implications for the timings of the Local Plan Review

3.3 Option C: to do nothing and not respond to the consultations and not consider any potential impacts on the LDS. This is not recommended as it will not manage potential risks arising from the changes to the planning policy context.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The preferred option is option A in order to ensure that Members are provided with the opportunity to comment on the Council's response to current national Government consultations and, in this context, to consider whether changes to the Local Development Scheme (the local plan timeframe) are required.

5. RISK

5.1 This report seeks to manage the risks arising out of changes to the planning system that may materially impact the Council's ability to deliver its Local Plan Review in time.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 N/A

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 If the recommendations are agreed then officers will bring reports to the meeting of the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee to be held on 22 September 2020.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- N/A
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- MHCLG – ‘Changes to the current planning system consultation (2020) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system>
- MHCLG – Planning for the Future: White Paper (2020) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

Agenda Item 15

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee

8 September 2020

Lenham Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 17A)

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Anna Ironmonger, Strategic Planning, Planning Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	The report particularly affects the wards of Harrietsham & Lenham, Headcorn, Leeds and North Downs

Executive Summary

The Lenham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017 – 2031 was examined by an independent examiner, who recommended that the Plan (as modified) move to local referendum (Background Document 1). Under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the planning authority is required to make a decision on what action to take in response to the examiner's recommendation. This report seeks approval to move the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan, as modified, to local referendum (Appendix 1). Following a successful referendum, the neighbourhood plan forms part of the Maidstone Development Plan and must be made (adopted) by Council.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. The modifications to the Lenham Neighbourhood Development Plan as set out in the examiner's report be agreed
2. The minor modifications agreed with Lenham Parish Council, as set out in paragraph 1.8 of this report, be agreed.
3. The Lenham Neighbourhood Development Plan proceeds to local referendum

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee	22 September 2020

Lenham Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 17A)

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	It is not expected that the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities, but the plan will form part of the Maidstone Development Plan following a successful referendum, and will assist in the delivery of the Council's four strategic objectives.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Cross Cutting Objectives	Following a successful referendum, the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Maidstone Development Plan, and will assist in the delivery of the Council's four strategic objectives. (See paragraph 1.15 of this report).	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Risk Management	See section 5	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendations are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation is needed. The costs for the referendum and adoption of the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan are borne by the Borough Council. There is a dedicated budget for this purpose, funded by MHCLG neighbourhood planning grants.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Legal	Accepting the recommendations will fulfil the Council's duties under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, the Housing and Planning Act 2016, and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. The recommendations also comply with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).	Cheryl Parks, Mid Kent Legal Services (Planning)
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. The data will be held in line with the Council's, records retention policy, data protection policies and the GDPR.	Anna Collier Policy and Information Manager

Equalities	The Council has a responsibility to support communities in developing a Neighbourhood Plan. This responsibility is set out in the Maidstone Statement of Community Involvement. The neighbourhood planning process provides an opportunity for communities to develop a plan that meets the needs of its population.	Anna Collier Policy & Information Manager
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals.	[Public Health Officer]
Crime and Disorder	There are no implications for crime and disorder.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Procurement	The appointment of an independent examiner from IPE was made under the procurement waiver signed by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement.	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Neighbourhood Plans can be prepared by parish councils and designated neighbourhood forums for their neighbourhood area. A neighbourhood plan will go through two rounds of mandatory public consultation before independent examination, local referendum and being 'made' (adopted) by Maidstone Borough Council. The procedures for designating a neighbourhood area and the preparation of a neighbourhood plan are set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 2.2 The Neighbourhood Planning Area, which comprises the whole of Lenham parish, was designated on 27 November 2012. Extensive consultation on the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan was undertaken during the early stages of plan preparation. A formal six weeks consultation on the pre-submission draft plan and supporting documents (Regulation 14) took place between 24 September and 12 November 2018.
- 2.3 The Regulation 15 Submission Plan and supporting documents were submitted to the Borough Council on 17 December 2019. The Plan was subject to a further six weeks consultation from 17 February 2020 to 17 April 2020 (which was extended to account for the Coronavirus pandemic). In accordance with the agreed neighbourhood planning protocol, the Borough Council submitted representations to both consultations. The Regulation 14 response was submitted under the delegated authority of the Head of Planning and Development. The Regulation 16 response was submitted following the agreement of this committee at its meeting of 10 March 2020.
- 2.4 Throughout the preparation of the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan, communication with the parish council has been maintained. Officers have

offered advice and support to the parish council on a range of issues, including draft iterations of the plan.

2.5 The appointment of Derek Stebbing (from Intelligent Plans and Examinations) as an independent examiner was agreed with Lenham Parish Council. The independent examiner was appointed through the Council's procurement waiver signed by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement. The Lenham Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents, together with the representations received during Regulation 16 consultation, were forwarded to the examiner who dealt with the examination through written representations, concluding that a public hearing was not necessary. The examiner's report was received on 30 June 2020 and has been published on the Borough and Parish Councils' website (see background document 1).

2.6 The examiner concluded that

"...subject to modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that

- The plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Lenham Parish Council (the Parish Council);
- The Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Neighbourhood Plan Area, as identified on the Map at Page 46 of the Plan;
- The Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – from 2017 to 2031; and
- The policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood plan area."

2.7 The examiner recommended that the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

2.8 An minor factual update that does not affect the policies of the plan has been agreed with the Parish Council. An addendum has been inserted to the front of the plan to say:

"An advice note has been published by Natural England in July 2020. The advice note may well have implications for sites allocated in the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan. As such, the advice note should be taken into account when assessing planning applications."

2.9 The insertion of this text is a result of new advice published by Natural England. Lenham falls within the catchment of the Upper Stour. The Stodmarsh water environment is internationally important for its wildlife and has protection under the Water Environment regulations and Conservation of Habitats and Species regulations. The guidance published by Natural England outlines that there are high levels of phosphates and nitrates inputting into the stour catchment. There is uncertainty as to whether new growth will impact on the Stodmarsh water environment. But it is likely that all types of development that would result in a net increase

in population served by a water system. Therefore, the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan should have consideration. The update has been incorporated into the plan (Appendix 1).

- 2.10 In accordance with the neighbourhood planning regulations (Regulation 18), the local planning authority is required to make a decision on what action to take in response to the examiner's recommendations (i.e. to proceed to local referendum).
- 2.11 In order to proceed to referendum, the local authority must be satisfied that the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan has met the basic conditions outlined in paragraph 8(2) of the Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The neighbourhood plan must:
- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issues by the Secretary of State;
 - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority;
 - Be compatible with and not breach EU obligations; and
 - Meet prescribed conditions relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plans.
- 2.12 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further basic condition for a neighbourhood plan, which requires that the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017.
- 2.13 It is for this Committee to decide what action to take in response to the examiner's report. The committee can either
- Accept the examiner's report (with or without modifications)
 - Decline to accept the report
 - Accept the report (with or without modifications) together with further modifications the Council deems necessary
- 2.14 If the Committee is satisfied that the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions; is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights; and complies with the statutory requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), or would do so with modifications then it must decide to move the neighbourhood plan to local referendum.
- 2.15 Lenham is designated as a broad location in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017 to deliver 1000 homes between 2021 and 2031. Specific site allocations could be made through a local plan review or the production of a Lenham Neighbourhood Plan. The parish council decided to prepare a neighbourhood plan and to allocate housing sites in order to deliver 1,000 dwellings in its plan. In addition to making site allocations for residential development, the plan includes policies on design quality; sustainable travel; enhancing and protecting green space; employment, community facilities and tourism; and air quality.

- 2.16 It is considered by officers that the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan has met the statutory requirements, including its policies being in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017. It is recommended by officers that the Committee approves the examiner's modifications set out in his report and makes a decision to move the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan to local referendum.
- 2.17 In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Government has published guidance to help prevent the spread of the virus and as a result the way in which people are able to engage in neighbourhood planning has been impacted. Neighbourhood Plan referendums have been suspended until 6th May 2021. Following a successful referendum a neighbourhood plan becomes part of the development plan. In line with government guidance on coronavirus, the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol was recently updated and a post examination neighbourhood plan is a significant material consideration.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option A: The Committee agrees the recommended modifications outlined in the examiner's report and moves the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan to local referendum
- 3.2 Option B: The Committee agrees to decline the Examiner's report recommendations, and moves the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan to local referendum without any modifications being made
- 3.3 Option C: The Committee does not agree to move the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan to local referendum.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is option A and the Committee agree to move the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan, as modified, to local referendum. If the local authority is satisfied that the statutory requirements have been met, then it is required to move the neighbourhood plan to referendum.
- 4.2 The Lenham Neighbourhood Plan has met the prescribed legislative requirements and there are no reasons to reject the examiner's proposed modifications. The modifications ensure that the policies are compliant with national policy. To not move the plan to local referendum would prevent any further progress and could compromise the good working relationship that officers have with Lenham Parish Council.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this report at

paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 The Lenham Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to two rounds of formal public consultation, and the representations have been submitted to examiner for consideration. The representations, including those submitted by the Borough Council, have helped to shape the neighbourhood plan.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 The decision of this Committee will be published. Officers will work with Electoral Services to arrange a local referendum, in accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012. Subject to the outcome of the referendum, a report on the results will be brought back to this committee and, if successful, a recommendation to Council to make the neighbourhood plan will be sought.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Lenham Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2031
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Background Document 1: Examiner's report on the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2031
<https://localplan.maidstone.gov.uk/home/documents/neighbourhood-plans/lenham/r17-examination/Lenham-Neighbourhood-Plan-Examiner-Report-300620.pdf>

LENHAM

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2017-2031

QUALITY GROWTH QUALITY LIFE



POST EXAMINATION DRAFT

JUNE 2020

An advice note has been published by Natural England in July 2020. The advice note may well have implications for sites allocated in the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan. As such, the advice note should be taken into account when assessing planning applications.



LENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Lenham Today: Physical and Policy Background	5
3. Lenham Tomorrow: Vision Statement	8
4. Design quality	9
5. Promoting active, smarter and sustainable travel	14
6. Enhancing and protecting green space	16
7. Employment	21
8. Community Facilities	24
9. Tourism	27
10. Air quality and renewables	28
11. Strategic Housing Delivery Sites	30
Area 1: North East of Lenham Village Extension	33
Area 2: South West of Lenham Village Extension	34
Area 3: North West of Lenham Village Extension	36
12. Implementing the Plan: Community Infrastructure Levy, Developer Contributions and Planning Conditions	39
Appendix A: Glossary	43
Appendix B: Acknowledgements	44
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Parish Boundary - Map	45-46
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Local Policies - Map	47
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Local Policies - Lenham Village Inset Map	48
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 1 Site 1 Masterplan	49
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 2 Sites 2,3, & 4 Masterplan	50
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 3 Sites 5, 6 & 7 Masterplan	51
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 4 Overall Masterplan	52

1. Introduction

1.1 A Plan for Lenham

- 1.1.1 The Lenham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031 (the Plan) has been prepared by Lenham Parish Council on behalf of those who live and work within the parish of Lenham. The base date of the Plan is 2017. The Plan sets out a vision for the parish until 2031 and contains a set of planning policies and site allocations.
- 1.1.2 In accordance with the neighbourhood planning regulations, the Plan has been prepared through community consultation.
- 1.1.3 Neighbourhood planning is a community-led process introduced by the Government to encourage local people to shape and influence development within the places where they live and work.
- 1.1.4 Neighbourhood plans are policy-based community-led plans. Together with the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (MBLP 2017) and the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the Maidstone Development Plan, which is the policy framework used for planning decisions. MBLP allocates one site at Kilnwood Farm (GT1(8)) to provide accommodation for gypsies and travellers.
- 1.1.5 Neighbourhood plans can influence or allocate new housing and produce design policies for allocated sites or for general development. They can protect or identify new community facilities and identify green spaces with policies which seek to protect them from future development proposals. Lenham Parish contains a number of conservation areas which reflect and enhance the quality of the historic built form and rural character of the area.
- 1.1.6 The Government introduced the opportunity for local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Localism Act 2011 and through new regulations, Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, which set out the requirements for neighbourhood plans.
- 1.1.7 The legislation and the regulations prescribe the basic conditions to which neighbourhood plans have to comply if they are to be confirmed.
- 1.1.8 In Lenham, the preparation of the neighbourhood plan was led by a steering group, the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan Group (LNPG) formed of Parish Councillors and residents that reports to Lenham Parish Council.
- 1.1.9 There has been an ongoing dialogue between Lenham Parish Council and Maidstone Borough Council during the preparation phase to ensure that the neighbourhood plan policies conform with national and local policy as prescribed by the basic conditions.

1.2 Structure of the Plan

- 1.2.1 Following this introduction the Plan comprises further sections. These are:
- Section 2: ‘Lenham Today’, presents an overview of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan, what the adopted Development Plan says about it, key issues and comments raised during consultation.
 - Section 3: ‘Lenham Tomorrow’, presents the vision and objectives for Lenham, as well as overarching principles guiding sustainable development.
 - Sections 4 – 11: These sections present the policies, associated projects and ambitions for Lenham.
 - Section 12: Implementing the Plan explains how Community Infrastructure Levy, and other developer contributions, will work in practice.
- 1.2.2 It is important that the Plan is read as a whole. All policies should be viewed together and not in isolation in the preparation and consideration of planning applications.

1.3 Who has prepared the Plan?

- 1.3.1 The Localism Act 2011 gave communities the power to develop neighbourhood plans, to be progressed by parish councils or neighbourhood forums as opposed to the local authority.
- 1.3.2 Work on this Plan has been led by Lenham Parish Council which established a group of Council members and interested residents to consult upon and develop the Plan, namely the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan Group (LNPG). The composition of the Group has changed from time to time over the years.
- 1.3.3 Through the work to date the Group has endeavoured to engage, enthuse and energise Lenham residents and the wider community, including businesses and other stakeholders and organisations, to have their say on the Parish's future and help to shape the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.4 What is in the Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.4.1 Neighbourhood plans can take many different shapes and forms. They can set out detailed policies and allocate sites for development, they can present generic principles for an area and they can focus on a particular theme or issue. There is no prescribed format.
- 1.4.2 Based upon the work undertaken, including the engagement and consultation exercises, we think there are opportunities in Lenham to influence the quality of future development, to improve the look and feel of the village centre, the shops and services within it, to enhance the quality of green spaces, access and movement around the Parish. Locally specific policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan will influence the nature of future change.

1.5 What is not in the Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.5.1 Existing planning policy for the area is set out through a combination of national planning policies (see the National Planning Policy Framework: NPPF) and the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (October 2017).
- 1.5.2 MBLP (2017) provides strategic policy directions, including the number of new homes that need to be provided over the plan period. Where a particular issue or subject is not covered in the Neighbourhood Plan, the NPPF and the MBLP will provide the policy framework for shaping and determining planning applications.
- 1.5.3 The Parish Council has taken the pragmatic view that if change is to happen, then the Neighbourhood Plan is the vehicle for shaping this such that it is done in the 'right way' and brings benefits to Lenham. The Neighbourhood Plan is very much an opportunity, not a threat, and details out how future change should come forward to benefit the parish of Lenham as a whole.
- 1.5.4 Following a successful independent examination a referendum will be held, where all people of voting age residing within the Plan area will be able to cast a vote on whether they think the Neighbourhood Plan should be brought into force ('made'). If more than 50% of the people who vote are in favour, the Plan will be 'made' by Maidstone Borough Council, and it will then be used to shape planning decisions and applications in Lenham.

1.6 What is the process for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.6.1 There are a number of stages involved in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. Broadly, they include:
- 1) Initial consultation to identify issues, concerns and areas of focus for the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - 2) Collection of 'evidence' on the issues and potential options, ideas and strategies to be progressed through the Plan.
 - 3) Production of and consultation on emerging policy ideas.

- 4) Drafting of and consultation on a preferred strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan. This was achieved through the publication of and consultation on the pre-regulation 14 draft of the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan in August/September 2017.
- 5) Review of the Neighbourhood Plan to see whether it is in general conformity with the strategic objectives of the development plan and prepare a Regulation 14 draft version of the Plan for public consultation.
- 6) Prepare a Regulation 16 draft Plan which is submitted to Maidstone Borough Council for further consultation, the results of which go through an independent examination process.
- 7) Subjecting the Neighbourhood Plan to a local referendum.
- 8) Adopting ('making') the Neighbourhood Plan as a policy document – if more than 50% of people vote 'yes' at the referendum.

1.6.2 Production of this Plan has already been through many of the stages outlined above. (We are now at Stage 6 in the above list). This version of the Plan will be submitted to Maidstone Borough Council and will be subject to a further round of public consultation in due course.

1.7 Review of the Neighbourhood Plan

1.7.1 The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period from 2017 to 2031. The emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review is expected to replace the adopted MBLP during 2022, and it is likely to be necessary to review the Neighbourhood Plan to maintain its general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan Review. The Parish Council, working with Maidstone Borough Council, will review and update the Neighbourhood Plan at an appropriate time following the adoption of the Local Plan Review.



2. Lenham Today: Physical and Policy Background

2.1 The Study Area

- 2.1.1 The Lenham Neighbourhood Plan is the culmination of a process of investigation, evidence gathering, assessment and public consultation. The Plan was commenced by Lenham Parish Council in 2012, and the Plan Area was designated by Maidstone Borough Council at that time and is the whole of the Parish area as shown on the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan Parish Boundary Map on page 46. Neighbourhood Plans are a tier of planning which has been introduced by the Government. The intention is to empower local people by enabling them to plan their own area. The intention in this case should be to protect the rural setting, and maintain the relationship between settlements and the setting, while allowing an appropriate degree of growth in suitable locations, and of requisite quality.
- 2.1.2 Much work has been done on the Neighbourhood Plan, facilitated by a Steering Group and specific work groups, and the Parish Council has held meetings with the Members and Officers of Maidstone Borough Council. The early work was taken forward by the Steering Group and by the HIVE work groups which are work streams in the disciplines of Housing, Infrastructure, Village Life and Economy, with each group having its own members and leaders.
- 2.1.3 Lenham Parish is a very special place. Geographically, the Parish is of roughly square shape and extends to approximately 5km east-west and 5km north-south, and largely comprises high quality rural landscape, being roughly equidistant between Faversham, Ashford, Headcorn and Maidstone, being approximately 15km from each of these locations, which means Lenham Parish has been able to maintain its distinct rural character. The Parish also is seen to be located at the centre of Kent when looked at in the context of the county as a whole. This includes the fact that the Parish is the source of two of the county's most important rivers; the Stour and the Len, with the former heading east from the Parish and the latter heading west. The Parish of Lenham can reasonably be considered to be located at the heart of Kent, with the spine of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) being an integral part of the Parish.
- 2.1.4 The major settlement of the Parish, Lenham village, has the only working medieval village square in Kent, which has remained without significant change to the enclosing buildings since the 16th century. As well as the more rural Conservation Areas, the centre of Lenham village has been designated a Conservation Area. The Conservation area contains Two Grade I listed buildings, three Grade II* buildings and 67 Grade II buildings. The village has a defined settlement boundary which is being re-defined under this Neighbourhood Plan. There is a presumption against development outside such boundaries. There are two larger hamlets namely Lenham Heath and Platts Heath which are both located in the southern part of the Parish, and the three smaller hamlets of Warren Street, Sandway and Woodside Green.
- 2.1.5 The Parish historically has included east-west routes including from London to the continent and the Pilgrims Way (North Downs Way). This pattern continues to this day, and the Parish is now crossed east-west by the A20, the M20, the mainline railway and the HS1 Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), all of which run approximately parallel to, and south of, the Kent Downs AONB. The Parish in many ways has a straightforward land use pattern to a large extent defined by the above landscape and infrastructure.
- 2.1.6 The area to the north of the A20 forms part of the Kent Downs AONB, while the area immediately south of the A20, to the east of Lenham village, provides the setting of the AONB and is a very attractive area of open countryside. The area to the south of the mainline railway, to the east of Lenham village, lies in an area of more intricate but still very attractive scenery, including areas of woodland, agricultural fields and the hamlets of Lenham Heath, Sandway and Platts Heath.
- 2.1.7 Notwithstanding the outstanding landscape and heritage assets, the Parish currently is under intense development pressure.
- 2.1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan demonstrates how the Parish can deliver a notable amount of development with supporting infrastructure while at the same time protecting the countryside, by ensuring growth is in appropriate locations.

2.2 The Local Plan

2.2.1 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan was adopted in October 2017 (MBLP).

2.2.2 Lenham is defined as a Rural Service Centre in MBLP Strategic Policy SP8. Policy SP8 (6) states:

‘Lenham is also identified as a broad location for growth for the delivery of approximately 1000 dwellings post April 2021, in accordance with policy H2 (3). Master planning of the area will be essential to achieve a high-quality design and layout, landscape and ecological mitigation, and appropriate provision of supporting physical, social and green infrastructure. Housing site allocations and associated infrastructure requirements will be made through the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan or through the local plan review to be adopted by April 2021. Housing sites should avoid significant adverse impact on the setting of the AONB and coalescence with neighbouring Harrietsham.’

2.2.3 One of the key tasks for the Plan is to identify sites for the 1000 dwellings identified in the broad location for growth. If the Plan does not do this the default position is that the work will be done through the Review of MBLP by April 2021 in which case Lenham Parish Council and the local community will have significantly less direct involvement in how this housing growth is achieved.

2.2.4 Policy H1 (41) in MBLP identifies a site at Tanyard Farm, Old Ashford Road, Lenham for the development of approximately 145 dwellings. This site was granted planning permission (reference 17/500357/HYBRID) for 150 dwellings on 28th September 2018.

2.2.5 Policy H1 (42) in MBLP identifies a site at Glebe Gardens, Lenham, for the development of approximately 10 dwellings. The dwellings are now under construction.



- 2.2.6 Policy H2 (3) in MBLP deals in more detail with Lenham broad location for housing growth. The Policy identifies the following ten principles for the Plan:
- 1) Make efficient use of land and provide a broad range of housing choice by size and tenure (including market and affordable housing) and cater for people with special housing needs;
 - 2) Outline measures to mitigate the traffic impacts from development on the strategic and local road networks;
 - 3) Identify appropriate provision of, or contributions towards infrastructure improvements;
 - 4) Incorporate primary school(s) and secondary school(s) if the scale of development justifies on-site provision, or if not, contributions to provision off-site in order to meet the needs generated by the broad location;
 - 5) Ensure development is fully integrated with the surrounding village through shared community uses and a variety of transport modes including walking, cycling and public transport;
 - 6) Provide, commensurate with the scale of development, a network of open spaces and green infrastructure for amenity, play, sport and recreation, including allotments, local nature reserves woodlands, green spaces and wildlife corridors. Such provision should respond positively to the wider area to create enhanced linkages and networks;
 - 7) Incorporate appropriate landscape treatment which ensures that developments can be satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding area;
 - 8) Protect and where possible, enhance any features of biodiversity value on site or which are off-site but might be affected by the proposed development;
 - 9) Incorporate an appropriate flood risk management strategy and measures for its implementation;
 - 10) Ensure adequate provision is made for enhanced and comprehensive sewerage infrastructure.

2.2.7 These guiding principles form a clear starting point from which to develop policies and proposals in the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan contains a set of Masterplans which illustrate how the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites might be developed to incorporate the above principles.



3. Lenham Tomorrow: Vision Statement

3.1 Vision

3.1.1 The over-arching vision of the Neighbourhood Plan is to:

Protect the heritage features of Lenham village and the hamlets of the Parish, and their setting in relation to the AONB, and the rural parts of the Parish, while allowing appropriate growth.

This leads to the sub-title of the Neighbourhood Plan, namely; Quality Growth Quality Life.

3.1.2 The above is based on the premise that it is possible to have an appropriate amount of high quality growth, in the right location, which is compatible with maintaining and even raising the quality of life.

3.1.3 This vision contrasts with the opposing approach, in which excessive growth of poor or mediocre quality in the wrong location leads to degradation of the setting of the AONB and a lowering of the quality of life.

3.1.4 The unique character and heritage of Lenham village and the hamlets should be protected. It will also be necessary to protect the landscape setting with respect to the Kent Downs AONB and rural countryside. Furthermore, the countryside should be allowed to continue to fulfil a number of roles including active agricultural use, landscape amenity for local people as well as tourists and other visitors, recreational opportunities for cyclists and walkers and habitat for flora and fauna, and that blue-green infrastructure is protected and wherever possible enhanced through developer contributions. Lenham Parish has countryside of high landscape quality which should be safeguarded for the needs of future generations.

3.1.5 Fundamentally, this means that the unique assets of Lenham village, its Conservation Areas and the surrounding countryside that is of the highest landscape value and sensitivity is protected. The built and landscape assets are an important resource for locals and visitors. The setting of Lenham is an important aspect of its character and heritage assets, while agriculture remains an important part of its rural character and economy. The community will endeavour to make walking routes more accessible through signage, providing new car parking and publicising walks on maps in public open spaces and in printed form. Cyclists frequently use the rural roads around the parish and some clubs use the A20 for racing at the weekends, often stopping off in Lenham village to benefit from the historic setting and the village's pubs and award-winning food outlets. The Neighbourhood Plan also seeks to enable a high quality of life for residents of all age groups whilst acknowledging that young, single people may find a wider range of attractions in the towns.

3.1.6 Growth has been identified in the Plan by allocating housing to the less sensitive areas. This will be carefully contained within the settlement boundary being redefined under the Plan. Importantly, the sites so identified will cause no significant harmful impact on the setting of the AONB and would not adversely affect the countryside setting of Lenham village or other heritage assets. Whilst acknowledging that Lenham has to provide new housing for a growing population, the Plan seeks to secure a village which is compact enough to be a harmonious entity but a village in the true sense that all areas are interconnected by roads, paths and that these areas relate to community focal points such as the Community Centre, the schools, the historic Lenham Square, the Social Club, the Tithe Barn and the Church of St. Mary's.

3.1.7 Any development should be of high-quality design. It should respect Lenham's sense of place achieved by identifying the components of that sense of place. The landscape setting and the Square and the Conservation Areas are Lenham's most valuable assets for attracting tourists and other visitors from surrounding towns and from further afield. The Plan also is concerned with the refurbishment of Lenham Square and the enhancement of the Conservation Area.

3.1.8 To be truly considered successful, the Plan must achieve all of the above: protection of the landscape setting and the right amount of development, in the right locations and of the right quality. The vision is reflected in the policies. Further details on the approach taken to site selection is set out in the following paragraphs and is contained in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Report.

4. Design Quality

4.1 High quality design and local distinctiveness

- 4.1.1 The achievement of high-quality design is a core principle of the NPPF. The importance of design of the built environment and its contribution to making better places for people is emphasised. Lenham has grown over time, with the historic core gradually being surrounded by newer residential and commercial development. Initially, the growth of the village responded to its location and cultural heritage, the surrounding landscape and built form, and with the use of traditional materials that reflected the geology of the wider area. These elements help shape the character of the built form.
- 4.1.2 Lenham and its surroundings have developed over many years on a piecemeal basis, with the resulting effect of variety adding to the street scene and its attractiveness. Variety is very important to the feel of Lenham and the surrounding areas.
- 4.1.3 Accepting that Lenham will be growing and housing will have a major role to play in this growth, it is essential that development proposals recognise this variety.
- 4.1.4 The Plan supports developments proposed where elements of the vernacular style are evidenced, and variety is encouraged.
- 4.1.5 The Plan supports development proposals which demonstrate evidence of variety in all schemes. In producing the Neighbourhood Plan reference has been made to Building for Life 12, Maidstone Edition 2018. That document supports the use of distinctive characteristics within the area, including materials that reflect the locality.
- 4.1.6 Schemes proposing major development should show a greater level of variety in material selection; in juxtaposition of unit sizes and orientation; vernacular detailing (use of full hips, half hips and barn hips rather than just gable ends as an example); articulation of roofscapes with chimneys and dormer windows; wider use of vernacular details such as rag stone elements and weather boarding, tile hanging (including with decorative details); local bricks (soft bricks rather than the prevalence of wire-cut bricks); details for Kent peg style ‘nib’ tiles with bonnet hips and laced valley tile details etc; exposed oak elements (not planted timber effects) will all be looked on favourably.
- 4.1.7 All of the above is to raise the emphasis on quality and to promote a traditional approach to housing.
- 4.1.8 The Plan also supports proposals using a blend of modern materials and approaches to housing. The Plan supports more modern projects of clear architectural merit.
- 4.1.9 Lenham Parish Council notes that recent advances in modern materials and building techniques have led to housing developments of oak framed houses (with highly insulated cassette wall construction) which have achieved the highest Passive Haus standards while maintaining the aesthetic of traditional design and detailing. The Plan supports a similar approach to proposals within the Lenham area.
- 4.1.10 Local characteristics should be identified through more detailed Masterplans prepared to support significant planning applications and used to frame a positive place-based response.
- 4.1.11 Equally, aspects of the built form that detract from the quality of place in Lenham have been identified. Such approaches to development should be avoided in the future. They include:
- 1) Vehicle dominated layouts with left over green spaces that have limited use and function.
 - 2) Poorly arranged parking, particularly in residential areas, that is not used in the way it was intended and results in people parking on the pavement.
 - 3) A lack of diversity and appearance of modern house types and limited use of materials.
 - 4) Poorly designed and equipped playing spaces in newer developments.
 - 5) Presence of blank gable ends fronting the street.

- 4.1.12 A design-led response to development, referencing good practice principles, will help create successful places. Where new development is proposed in Lenham it should be of a high-quality, irrespective of scale or use. Policies DM1 and DM2 and the pre-ambles to them in Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017 (MBLP) contain helpful guidance on how to achieve good design and sustainable design respectively. Building for Life 12, Maidstone Edition 2018, also contains very helpful guidance.

Quality Design: Policy D1

- 1. All new development in Lenham should contribute to the creation of high quality places through a design-led approach underpinned by good design principles and reflecting a thorough site appraisal. All buildings, spaces and the public realm should be well-designed and display a high level of architectural quality which responds positively to local context.**
- 2. Proposals for new development should seek to optimise the capacity of the site by responding appropriately to the scale, character, materials, grain and architectural rhythm of the existing built form. Proposals should also demonstrate how they respond to the landscape, local and longer-views, the environment and historic assets. Design that incorporates opportunities to enhance and provide for net gains for biodiversity will be encouraged.**
- 3. Development should integrate well with existing neighbourhoods, positively contributing to the public realm and street environment, creating well connected, accessible and safe places. Development should provide for a rich movement network and choice of routes.**
- 4. Development within mixed-use areas, including Lenham village centre, should seek to contribute to the vitality of the area and the role of the public realm, and where appropriate:**
 - provide active uses and shop window frontages at street level;**
 - where areas of private realm are to be created, such as outdoor seating areas, these should be designed to complement and not detract from any adjacent areas of public realm;**
 - vehicular parking and external storage areas should not be designed adjacent to any existing areas of public realm.**
- 5. Proposals for new development should demonstrate how they respond to and enhance the amenity value of an area through consideration of matters such as overlooking, natural light, micro-climate, outlook and amenity space. Proposals for new residential development are encouraged to meet the nationally prescribed space standards and the necessary dwelling mix, privacy, daylight and sunlight for future occupiers wherever appropriate.**
- 6. New buildings should be designed with flexibility and adaptability in mind, so that they can respond to changing social, environmental, economic and technological needs. Proposals for development on allocated sites in this Plan should be designed such that they do not prejudice the future planning and development of any adjoining sites.**
- 7. The location, design and site layout of new development in the Plan area should have regard to the role Lenham plays within the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Development should not detract from the landscape quality and special characteristics of the AONB. Proposals for major development, or other schemes capable of detracting from the AONB, in the Plan area should be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and, where appropriate, a landscape mitigation strategy.**
- 8. The size and height of proposed new buildings should be designed such that they will be well screened by trees and other landscaping when viewed from the AONB and its setting, taking account of the prominent scarp of the AONB.**
- 9. Non-reflective building materials should be used wherever possible. Care should be taken that solar panels blend into the horizon when viewed from the AONB. Preferably they should face south, away from the AONB.**

10. The Parish Council supports innovative, contemporary design.
11. The design of proposed new developments should take account of local building characteristics, including the traditional materials found in the Plan area.
12. Applicants shall demonstrate how they have addressed the following key aspect in their Design & Access Statements:
 - 1) Interest and subtlety in site layout regards aspects such as street alignments, closes and small squares, rather than the straight roads and sweeping geometries which commonly may be seen in a town setting;
 - 2) Location and design of car parking should ensure that the streetscape is not dominated by car parking;
 - 3) Relationship between buildings and the street;
 - 4) Building massing regards height and form;
 - 5) Construction facing materials;
 - 6) Details such as fenestration, dormers and chimneys, hung wall tiles, feather edged weatherboarding, open eaves, use of half hips in the roof, white windows and timber work. If and when elements such as outside beams and chimneys are used they should be structural and not only ornamental;
 - 7) Native trees appropriate to landscape character that have the capacity to establish large crowns shall be planted alongside roads and within communal areas, unless other species are characteristically appropriate, in order to achieve the optimum integration of new developments into the landscape when viewed from the AONB;
 - 8) New development shall incorporate habitat features such as bird boxes and bat boxes, which shall be built in as an integral part of the construction development;
 - 9) New development proposals shall include details to ensure against light pollution, especially where this would have a harmful impact on the AONB;
 - 10) Planning permission will not be supported for development of a poor design that does not respond to the opportunities for improving local character and quality.

4.2 Small scale development

4.2.1 As well as the 1000 dwellings proposed on the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites there will also be some smaller schemes that come forward in Lenham over the Plan period. These are likely to be less than 'major development' as defined in the NPPF glossary of terms. Existing properties will continue to be extended and modified. This type of development also impacts on the quality of place and local amenity. Applications for such development in Lenham should demonstrate how they respond to the immediate local context and do not unduly impact upon neighbouring amenity.

Small scale residential development and householder extensions: Policy D2

1. Applications for small scale and infill residential development including both the reuse and redevelopment of previously developed land within the built-up area of Lenham are supported.
2. Applications will be supported subject to the following criteria being met:
 - 1) It is demonstrated that the proposed development is in keeping with the character of the existing built form (including the historic environment), expressed through density, scale, height, massing, materials and frontages;
 - 2) The proposed development does not result in an adverse impact on residential amenity of the area, particularly in terms of noise, privacy, overshadowing and access to natural daylight;

- 3) The proposed development does not result in the net loss of local amenity green space, nor adversely impact on biodiversity;
 - 4) The proposed development is directly accessible from the adopted highway and incorporates pedestrian access.
3. Proposals for small scale development, including extensions to existing buildings, must be of a high standard of design, responding to or improving the site and surrounding area.
4. In the context of this policy ‘small scale’ means less than major development as defined in the NPPF.

4.3 Innovation and variety

- 4.3.1 Innovative design, that raises the standard of design in Lenham, but which also promotes and reinforces local distinctiveness, is welcome. Contemporary design approaches may be acceptable where it responds positively to context.



Innovation and Variety: Policy D3

- 1) Development proposals in the Plan area that incorporate innovative design are encouraged.
- 2) Development proposals which reflect the local distinctiveness of building design in Lenham, and which establish a good sense of place, will be supported.

4.4 Self and Custom-build housing

- 4.4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan encourages self and custom-build housing in appropriate locations across the Parish. Where areas of land are identified for self-build, either as part of the 1000 dwellings proposed on the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites or through other smaller scale or windfall development, good design principles will apply.
- 4.4.2 Plot Passports are a summary of the design parameters for any given plot, helping private homebuilders understand what they are allowed to build on the plot. They capture key information from the planning permission for the site, design constraints and procedural requirements. The passports clearly show permissible building lines within which the new dwelling can be built as well as height restrictions and other details such as parking requirements.

Design for self and custom build homes: Policy D4

Where land is proposed for self or custom-built homes, a site masterplan and design codes should be submitted as part of any planning application. Together, these will inform each plot design and ensure that a cohesive and high-quality form of development is secured. The masterplan should address site layout, open space, vehicular and pedestrian access, whilst design codes should address building parameters such as height, density, materials and parking requirements. Where appropriate, planning applications should identify and include proposals for the future management and maintenance of open spaces and landscaping.

4.5 Parking in residential areas

- 4.5.1 The quality and provision of car parking can be a major determinant on the quality of place, particularly in residential areas. If it is not provided in the right place, it is unlikely to be used properly. The location and provision of parking should respond to good urban design and placemaking principles, with on-plot and on-street parking provided in close proximity to the home. Rear courtyards should be avoided.
- 4.5.2 Where parking is provided on-street, consideration should be given to using different materials to define the use of different areas. Where possible, unallocated on-street parking provision, which is more land-efficient than parking courts, should be provided. Applications for proposals in areas of new growth are encouraged to present a street hierarchy and cross sections as part of the pack of submission material, demonstrating how parking will be provided on street. Robust street widths that allow for on-street parking but which also incorporate street trees and landscaping and are designed to reduce speed in residential areas, will be viewed favourably.

Residential Car Parking Design: Policy D5

Parking within new residential development will be designed such that it is conveniently located and overlooked so that it can be used in the way it is intended for, avoiding informal parking that undermines the quality of the street environment. Parking should be unobtrusive, with garages (where proposed) set back from the building line and street trees used to soften the visual impact of parked cars, particularly on street. Where development proposals include separate parking courts, these should be designed to form an integral element of the open space strategy for the site in terms of materials and landscaping and be visually supervised by the dwellings they serve.

5. Promoting active, smarter and sustainable travel

5.1 Walking and cycling

- 5.1.1 There is a desire to improve walking and cycling conditions, and associated facilities, in and around the Neighbourhood Plan area, providing travel choice and opportunity for all, irrespective of age or ability. There are significant social, economic, health and environmental benefits to be gained through a ‘modal shift’ from private vehicles to walking and cycling.
- 5.1.2 Sustainable means of accessibility to schools by walking, cycling, bus and rail travel are particularly important.
- 5.1.3 New housing sites are particularly well located in relation to the two Lenham schools (primary and secondary). There is, however, a choice of other schools, especially in Ashford and Maidstone and sustainable means of access to these is also important. Primary Schools are also located nearby at Harrietsham and Platts Heath.
- 5.1.4 Although Lenham is relatively compact and facilities and services are within a reasonable cycle distance of the home, cycle infrastructure in the Parish is limited.
- 5.1.5 Equally, some pedestrian routes and the quality of the public realm has been an afterthought. Many routes, particularly into the village centre, are discontinuous and unwelcoming. In short, all walking routes should reflect the ‘Five Cs’:
- 1) Connected: good pedestrian routes which link the places where people want to go, and form a network;
 - 2) Convenient: direct routes following desire lines, with easy-to-use crossings;
 - 3) Comfortable: good quality footways, with adequate widths and without obstructions;
 - 4) Convivial: attractive well-lit and safe, and with variety along the route;
 - 5) Conspicuous: legible routes easy to find and follow, with surface treatments and signs to guide pedestrians.
- 5.1.6 The Government’s Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy points to the importance of and need for new infrastructure investment to support active travel. Lenham would benefit from a range of new initiatives to encourage sustainable travel, including the creation of a LCWIP (local cycling and walking infrastructure plan). The improvement of public rights of way in the Plan area will also take account of Kent County Council’s Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).
- 5.1.7 New or improved walking and cycling infrastructure should reflect best practice principles. Alongside provision of safe street conditions and junctions for walking and cycling is a need to increase the provision of cycle parking in Lenham, particularly within the existing built confines of the village and the hamlets.
- 5.1.8 High quality walking and cycling routes should be integrated within new developments. But the quality and attractiveness of the network is only as good as the missing links or gaps in the routes. The Parish Council thus proposes that non-strategic (local) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments received from development should be directed to an improved Parish wide walking and cycle network for the benefit of existing and new residents. Key routes for improvement are those that make short, everyday journeys easy and enjoyable. (See Section 12 below).

Active travel: Policy AT1

1. **Where new walking and cycling routes are provided as part of new areas of development, they must be attractive, safe and convenient to use. The layout of proposed new development should allow for the natural surveillance of routes through overlooking with active development frontages.**
2. **Proposals for new development are encouraged to demonstrate how they link into the existing footpath and cycle network, providing connections between residential, retail, leisure, commercial and community uses.**

3. **Proposals for commercial, leisure and community uses should support and enable active travel through inclusion of safe, secure and convenient cycle parking and changing facilities where appropriate.**
4. **Proposals for development that reduce the capacity or safety of existing active travel infrastructure, including footpath and pavement space, or which results in the removal of locally important facilities, will not be supported.**

5.2 Public transport

- 5.2.1 A good public transport network helps ensure access to jobs, health services, shopping and leisure facilities. For longer distances, beyond which people will normally walk or cycle, good public transport can provide a viable and sustainable alternative to the car. Public transport is also inclusive: it allows everyone, of all ages and abilities, to move around the Parish and the wider environment. The Plan supports the creation of enhanced facilities at Lenham Railway Station.

Public transport: Policy AT2

Support will be given to proposals that:

- 1) **Help deliver improved public transport services through new or extended and more frequent routes;**
- 2) **Incorporate high quality, attractive waiting facilities, including shelters with potential to integrate live travel information;**
- 3) **Are located in close proximity to public transport services and contribute towards improved connectivity to these.**

Design to encourage sustainable transport: Policy AT3

The Strategic Housing Development Sites will be designed to accommodate routes for bus services, integrating with existing routes. Streets should be carefully designed to balance the needs of competing users and avoid conflicts between bus users, pedestrians and cyclists. Where appropriate, new roads through the new residential areas should be ‘future proofed’ to allow for the later extension of bus routes serving the new development areas as and when customer demand justifies it.

5.3 Active Travel Projects funded by Developer Contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy and Government Grants

- 5.3.1 Work on the Neighbourhood Plan has identified a series of possible projects which the Parish Council will continue to support.
- 5.3.2 Public transport, walking and cycling should become attractive propositions for people to use. The quality of infrastructure, as well as routes and services, should be enhanced. This means, for example, wider and better pedestrian crossing facilities, improved street furniture and less street clutter, dedicated cycle lanes, comfortable and informative bus shelters.

Active and sustainable travel projects: Policy AT4

- 1) **The Parish Council will look to develop the existing network of public footpaths within the Parish in addition to the LCWIP (see para 5.1.6) in association with the Borough and County Councils, providing safer routes and junctions and improved connectivity to local facilities.**
- 2) **When considering development proposals opportunities should be sought to use developer funding to achieve the above objectives when appropriate.**

6. Enhancing and protecting green space

6.1 Natural and amenity green space

- 6.1.1 The proposals for major growth in Lenham will be required to provide green space as part of the development proposals. Combined with good walking and cycling routes, linking with existing neighbourhoods, the potential for increasing access to green space exists.
- 6.1.2 Within the built-up area of Lenham there is some accessible amenity green space. However, the quality and use of the space varies: in some places play equipment is limited and in others the space represents no more than mown grass. This includes some areas of roadside verges and open spaces that offer the local community little more than a setting for the buildings themselves. Such spaces are often known as ‘space left over after planning’. Such space has a limited role or function. It is considered that spaces within Lenham could be made to work much harder, increasing their use and biodiversity value.
- 6.1.3 The public rights of way network around Lenham provides access to the surrounding countryside and will need to be maintained and improved during the life of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Natural and amenity green space: Policy GS1

Subject to other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, support will be given to proposals for new development that:

- 1) Create new wildlife habitats, connect, enhance and retain existing wildlife habitats.**
 - 2) Provide opportunities for gardening, wildlife and food production within new residential areas.**
 - 3) Provide good quality outdoor space including private, community gardens and allotments as well as contributing to the provision of new tree cover.**
 - 4) Improve links between Lenham and the surrounding countryside, upgrading the quality of the landscape along these routes and strengthening connections with the rural footpath network, including the North Downs Way.**
 - 5) Enhance the quality of public spaces and the streetscape within the built-up area, including new tree planting, landscaping and sustainable drainage.**
 - 6) The Strategic Housing Development Sites shall make provision for protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the site and for the provision of public open space having regard to Maidstone Borough Local Plan, especially MBLP Policy DM19 or a successor policy, which makes provision for publicly accessible open space and recreation. The provisions for public accessible open space outdoor sports contained within this Plan (at Sites 1, 3 and 5) together meet the requirements for playing pitches arising from the housing development proposed in the Plan together with the replacement of the playing field facility at William Pitt Field (Site 6).**
- 6.1.4 Policy DM19 in Maidstone Borough Local Plan sets out the requirement for the provision of publicly accessible open space and recreation.
- 6.1.5 Development proposals in the Plan area should have regard to the open space standards contained in Policy DM19 in the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan, or a successor policy.
- 6.1.6 The Plan proposes the provision of a substantial additional area for publicly accessible outdoor sports in association with Site 1.

6.2 Local Green Space

- 6.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework includes the designation of Local Green Space. As part of the production of the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan (LNP) Lenham Neighbourhood Plan Group (LNPG) has undertaken a review of sites with potential for designation as Local Green Space (LGS) within the Plan.

- 6.2.2 To qualify for LGS designation an area of land has to meet certain criteria as follows:
- 1) the potential LGS site should be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
 - 2) demonstrably special to the local community and holding a particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.
 - 3) the potential LGS site should be local in character and not an extensive tract of land and be capable of enduring with that designation beyond the end of the plan period.
- 6.2.3 As part of the work in preparing Lenham Neighbourhood Plan LNPG has reviewed potential LGS sites within the Parish. Certain sites were ruled out, for example because they were remote from any settlement or because they were regarded as extensive tracts of land not meeting the strict LGS criteria established within the Framework.
- 6.2.4 The sites listed below are identified within the Plan as Local Green Space.

6.3 The Cricket Ground

- 6.3.1 The Ground forms a visual and social link between old Lenham (the conservation area) and the more modern parts of the village which lie to the west. As such the Ground forms an important axis within the built-up frame and is an important ‘green lung’ within Lenham.

Proximity

- 6.3.2 The Cricket Ground falls within the village confines, is surrounded by houses and therefore clearly meets the criteria of proximity.

Local Significance

- 6.3.3 Cricket has been played on the Ground for many decades. The Ground has local significance because of its long history of use as a recreational facility for various age groups and because of the site’s exceptional natural beauty at the heart of the village. During the cricket season this is a place where people of all walks of life and different generations meet to enjoy a game of cricket and all the social interaction which goes with it.

Extent and Durability

- 6.3.4 The Ground is relatively contained and is in private ownership. As stated above, the Ground has been used for village cricket for many decades. Consultation with the owner has not revealed any intention to change that situation. There is no reason why LGS designation on this site should not endure well beyond the Plan period.

6.4 The Allotments

- 6.4.1 The allotments are situated behind the frontages to Ham Lane, Honywood Road and Robins Avenue. The allotments are well used and form an important recreational facility for the Lenham community, which are clearly visible from the many houses which front surrounding roads.

Proximity

- 6.4.2 As the allotments fall within the village confines and are surrounded by houses the site clearly meets the criteria of proximity.

Local Significance

- 6.4.3 The allotments have been used by Lenham residents for many decades. The allotments have local significance because of their recreational value to the community and because this is an important open area within the built confines of the village.

Extent and Durability

- 6.4.4 The allotments site is relatively contained within the surrounding street frontages. The allotments site has recently been purchased by the Parish Council. Consultation with the Parish reveals there is no reason why LGS designation on this site should not endure well beyond the Plan period.

6.5 The Village Pond and Associated Open Land

- 6.5.1 The Glebe Pond lies to the south of Old Ashford Road to the south of the junction with Groom Way. The pond is prominent and in the view from Old Ashford Road as one approaches the Conservation Area and The Square. The pond, and its surrounding open land, form an attractive green feature within the village which is an integral part of the unique village character.

Proximity

- 6.5.2 The pond and associated open land lies adjacent to the village boundary and is surrounded by dwellings at Groom Way, Glebe Gardens and Old Ashford Road itself. The site clearly meets the criteria of proximity.

Local Significance

- 6.5.3 The pond contains the first headwaters of the River Stour before it meanders eastwards towards Ashford. The pond and the natural spring which feeds it is part of a spring line which runs along the foot of the North Downs. The springs issue where the pervious chalk overlies the impermeable gault clay below to produce characteristic chalk streams. The pond also marks the Kentish watershed. Any water sources further to the west flow towards the Len, the Medway and then on into the Thames River basin. Water sources within the Glebe Pond and further to the east flow towards the Stour and then the southeast Kent river basin.
- 6.5.4 The pond has local significance for the following reasons:
- 1) beauty; a very attractive open space within the village;
 - 2) history; a feature enjoyed by village residents for many decades;
 - 3) recreation value; the pond and associated open land forms part of an enjoyable country walk adjacent to the village;
 - 4) ecology; the pond and associated open land supports a wide variety of wildlife both aquatic and terrestrial.

Extent and Durability

- 6.5.5 The pond and associated open land is relatively contained adjacent to the built form of the village. The land has recently been purchased by Lenham Meadows Trust, a local trust with a constitution which promotes long-term management and enhancement of local green space. Consultation with the Trust has revealed there is no reason why LGS designation on this site should not endure well beyond the Plan period.

6.6 The Bowling Green

- 6.6.1 The bowling green lies to the south of Maidstone Road and forms an important part of a group of open spaces in the vicinity.

Proximity

- 6.6.2 The bowling green falls within the village confines being surrounded by houses on both sides of the Maidstone Road. The site clearly meets the criteria of proximity.

Local Significance

6.6.3 The bowling green has been used for recreational purposes within the village for many decades and has been enjoyed by generations of village residents. The green has local significance for the following reasons:

- 1) beauty; and important green space within the built form;
- 2) history; enjoyed for decades by generations of village residents;
- 3) recreational value; the bowling green provides a unique playing surface to support the sporting enjoyment of residents of all ages.

Extent and Durability

6.6.4 The bowling green is relatively contained and is certainly not an extensive front of land. There is no reason why a LGS designation on this site should not endure well beyond the Plan period.

6.7 Court Lodge Meadow

6.7.1 Court Lodge Meadow forms the transition between the open land of the Churchyard, the conservation area to the west and the large tract of unbroken, open farmland to the east which forms part of the landscape setting to the AONB.

6.7.2 The Meadow is crossed by a network of well-used public footpaths which allow ready access from the Square to the open countryside. The footpath network includes the Stour Valley Walk a long-distance footpath which follows the headwaters of the river Stour and actually commences at the corner of the Churchyard in Lenham Square.

6.7.3 The ecological significance of the Meadow has been enhanced by the recent establishment of a wildflower meadow.

Proximity

6.7.4 The Meadow adjacent to the village boundary is closely bounded by houses to the north and east and therefore readily meets the criteria of proximity.

Local Significance

6.7.5 The footpaths crossing the Meadow have been well-used by parishioners (including those seeking access to the parish Church of St Mary) for centuries.

6.7.6 The Meadow has special significance for the following reasons:

- 1) beauty; the Grade 1 Listed barn and parish church are exceptional and form an open setting to the conservation area which comprises a unique quality to Lenham which the Parish Council wishes to safeguard;
- 2) the historic significance of the Meadow arises from it forming a setting to the conservation area and Grade I Listed Buildings which has remained virtually unchanged for centuries;
- 3) the recreational value of the Meadow arises from the well-used public footpaths which cross it, including the long-distance Stour Valley Walk;
- 4) the tranquillity of the Meadow is evident as it forms a green lung so close to the built-up core of the village at the Square and the conservation area;
- 5) the Meadow, including its surrounding hedgerows, comprise an area of considerable ecological value.

Extent and Durability

6.7.7 The site is in private ownership. The owners have been consulted on the proposal to designate the land

as local green space and no comments were received. There is no reason why LGS designation of the Meadow should not extend well beyond the Plan period.

6.8 Green Space Policy

6.8.1 It is important that an LGS policy in the Neighbourhood Plan should list and identify each LGS by reference to the Lenham Local Policies Map. The policy should also stipulate that within the LGS designation the key planning objective will be the preservation of openness over other planning considerations.

6.8.2 Local Green Space: Policy LGS1

The following areas, as shown on the Lenham Local Policies Map, are identified as Local Green Space:

- 1) the Cricket Ground;**
- 2) the allotments;**
- 3) the village pond and associated open land;**
- 4) the Bowling Green;**
- 5) Court Lodge Meadow.**

The sites designated as Local Green Space will be given long-term protection and priority will be given to preserving their character, function and openness. Proposals for development within the Local Green Spaces will not be supported unless, in very special circumstances, it is necessary to meet specific infrastructure utility needs and no feasible alternative site is available. Proposed developments within close proximity of the designated Local Green Spaces should demonstrate that they will not adversely impact upon the accessibility, function or character of the Local Green Spaces.

6.8.3 One of the distinctive characteristics of the countryside beyond Lenham village is the existence of small hamlets and settlements such as Sandway, Platts Heath, Lenham Forstal, Lenham Heath, West Street and Woodside Green, which are set within the wider landscape setting of the Parish which includes the Kent Downs AONB. At various points across the Parish there are important views of the AONB and the open countryside. This locally distinctive context provides a strong sense of identity and character to the countryside in the Plan area.

Countryside Protection: Policy CP1

The Lenham Local Policies Map defines the settlement boundary for Lenham village which is extended to include the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites. All proposals for new development in the countryside beyond the settlement boundary for Lenham will be assessed in terms of:

- 1) the potential visual impact of the development;**
- 2) the effects upon the landscape character and heritage assets of the site and its surroundings;**
- 3) the potential impact upon the biodiversity of the area;**
- 4) the capacity of infrastructure and services available to support the proposed development; and,**
- 5) the relationship of the proposed development to the setting and character of the rural hamlets and settlements within the countryside beyond Lenham village.**

Development proposals should seek to protect the rural environment of the Parish, such that there are no adverse impacts upon the character of the countryside. Proposals which fail to demonstrate that any such impacts can be mitigated will not be supported.

7. Employment

7.1 Existing Situation and Planning Context

7.1.1 There are three major employment sites in Lenham. These are:

- 1) Lenham Storage
- 2) Marley Works (now Aliaxis)
- 3) Ashmills Business Park

7.1.2 Each one of these sites is subject to strategic policy SP22 in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (MBLP). Under policy SP22 the sites are identified as Economic Development Areas (EDA's). Under policy SP22 (3) the redevelopment or change of use from employment of the EDA's will not be permitted unless there is no reasonable prospect of take-up of an employment use or replacement employment is provided elsewhere within the Parish. These exceptions do not apply at the present time.



7.2 Lenham Square

7.2.1 Lenham is a local service centre with a range of jobs in distribution, retail and other services.

7.2.2 Lenham Square is the focus of retail and service activity in the village. The Plan supports the retention and improvement of Lenham Square as the prime focus for economic activity.

7.2.3 Problems associated with parking in and around the Square and accessibility through it at peak times have been raised repeatedly during the public consultation exercises conducted as part of the Plan. These issues are considered in the published Transportation Assessment 2019. There are issues with local flooding of properties within the Square. A scheme of environmental enhancement of the Square could usefully examine these issues in more detail.

- 7.2.4 Policy EMP1 below seeks to support the position of the Square within the Parish and encourage the implementation of a scheme of environmental and traffic improvement. Such a scheme could be funded by developer contributions, through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Parish Council will seek to investigate opportunities for grant funding, possibly to top up any CIL funds at the appropriate time. CIL includes a neighbourhood (or parish) portion and this Plan identifies the need for a scheme of environmental improvement at the Square as a priority for the investment of the neighbourhood portion of the CIL fund.
- 7.2.5 The Plan supports the pre-eminence of Lenham Square as the social and commercial hub of the Parish. Opportunities to provide additional parking at acceptable locations will be supported. Lenham Square is shown on the Policies Map.

Lenham Square: Policy EMP1

- 1) Development proposals which preserve or enhance the character and function of Lenham Square as the retail, commercial, employment and entertainment hub of the Plan area will be supported.**
- 2) Proposals which assist in the implementation of a scheme of environmental enhancement and improved traffic management within Lenham Square will be supported. The first phase of this project should be the production of a Report to identify the opportunities and scope for and cost of improved environmental enhancement and traffic management within the Square.**
- 3) Proposals which provide for additional parking to serve the Square at accessible locations where the parking can be provided without undue harm arising from vehicle noise or visual intrusion or disturbance by user noise will be supported.**
- 4) Lenham Square is shown on the Lenham Local Policies Map.**

7.3 Lenham Station

- 7.3.1 Lenham is a thriving and vibrant economic and social centre. The Plan supports proposals which can reinforce and support the employment potential of the Parish, subject to important environmental safeguards.
- 7.3.2 The Plan adopts a strategy of allocating sites in a spatial pattern which can facilitate a pattern of sustainable transport within the Parish. The selected sites are all within relatively easy walking or cycling distance of key facilities, such as schools, shops and social and community facilities. The pattern of site selection also facilitates the provision of a new circular bus route using the development access roads.
- 7.3.3 By opening up the potential for access to the south of Lenham Station, the Plan achieves several key planning objectives as follows:
- 1) The opportunity to provide a pedestrian crossing over the third railway line at the Station. This could be achieved via a project funded by CIL or another form of government grant. Crossing the third railway line gives the opportunity for the residential development sites to the south of the railway to have pedestrian access to the Station.
 - 2) The scheme could also facilitate disabled access at the station from both the north and the south side.
 - 3) Additional car parking could be provided to serve the station.
 - 4) By introducing pedestrian and vehicular access to the south, the Plan can facilitate a scheme of development around the station which would form a secondary social and commercial hub serving the south of Lenham.
 - 5) It is envisaged that uses which could be supported both to the north and south of the station could include:
 - a) car parking;
 - b) limited retail use on a scale not to undermine the pre-eminence of Lenham Square and its surroundings;

- c) commercial and office uses with potential for serviced office schemes let by the hour or day to facilitate flexible home working;
- d) an element of residential use as part of a mixed-used package including, on the upper floors, for example, above a retail unit.

Proposals for the development of land to the south of the Lenham Station will be considered in the context of the proposals for the development of Strategic Housing Delivery Site 3, as set out in Policy SHDS3 on page 35.

- 7.3.4 The Plan has identified the area to the north of the railway station as having potential for improvement in the public realm associated with the provision of limited commercial and retail floorspace. Policy EMP2 supports sensitive redevelopment proposals at this location.

Land North and South of the Railway Station: Policy EMP2

- 1) **Appropriate commercial development will be supported on land to the north of Lenham Railway Station, as shown on the Local Policies Map. Development proposals should demonstrate that they will not affect the function and accessibility of the station, and that, where possible, they would secure improvements to the public realm in the area.**
- 2) **Proposals for new commercial and social development on land to the south of Lenham Railway Station will be considered in relation to the proposed development of Strategic Housing Delivery Site 3, as set out in Policy SHDS3. Such proposals should comprise a new community hub, incorporating a mix of uses, including new retail floorspace and some residential development. Any development proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of any potential impact upon existing retail provision in the village and should ensure that there is direct and convenient accessibility by pedestrians and cyclists from the proposed residential development to the south. Such proposals should also contain an assessment of the feasibility of providing new or enhanced pedestrian access between the north and south sides of the Station, in order to achieve improved connectivity to the community hub.**

- 7.3.5 The Plan also supports potential employment opportunities within the built-up areas of the Parish. Policy EMP3 promotes this approach within important environment safeguards

Providing for a mix of Employment Opportunities – Policy EMP3

- 1) **Proposals that provide for local employment opportunities within the settlement boundary defined on the Lenham Local Policies Map, including small scale social enterprises, small and medium size businesses, and live work units, will be supported, particularly where they reduce out-commuting.**
- 2) **Opportunities to provide flexible employment space and support for small and medium sized businesses within the defined Lenham village boundary and existing employment areas will be supported.**
- 3) **Applications for new business-related development should improve the quality of the environment and should accord with best practice design principles. New employment proposals will be subject to design, landscape and transport assessments.**



8. Community Facilities

8.1 Community Facilities: Introduction

8.1.1 The provision of infrastructure is critical to ensuring that local residents have access to essential services and facilities to maintain a high standard of living. In particular, provision of social and community facilities, including schools, healthcare, sports halls and community centres, which are well located in relation to footpaths and cycleways and integrated with other local services, will help contribute towards creating and maintaining a sense of place and identity. Locating such uses in areas which are readily accessible and co-located with other activities will help increase access and use by the whole community. These uses and facilities will help meet the needs of the growing community as well as benefiting existing local residents.

8.1.2 Whilst the provision of social and community infrastructure within any area of major new development should principally be focussed on addressing the needs of that development, it should also complement and, where possible, respond positively to the needs of existing communities upon whom development will impact. This will help strengthen community cohesion.

Community Facilities: Policy CF1

- 1) **Applications to enhance and provide additional community facilities will be supported. Community facilities for the purposes of this policy include education, healthcare, childcare facilities and community halls.**
- 2) **Subject to the impact of proposals on residential amenity, all proposals for community facilities should be easily accessible to everyone and provide for good walking and cycling connections and where possible, be located close to public transport. Proposal for new development should provide for the appropriate level of parking provision.**
- 3) **The loss of existing community buildings (Use Class D1) will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or that suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.**

8.2 Lenham Community Centre

8.2.1 Lenham Community Centre is relatively modern and is exceptionally well used by a wide variety of community-based organisations. The Plan supports the retention and enhancement of this important facility.

Lenham Community Centre: Policy CF2

Lenham Community Centre will be maintained and enhanced. Opportunities will be supported which aim to secure the development of new and improved facilities at the site.

8.3 Lenham Health Centre (Len Valley Practice)

8.3.1 Consultation with health providers at Lenham indicates that the construction of the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites will require an up-grade of the facilities within the Len Valley Practice, serving Lenham.

Health Infrastructure: Policy CF3

Development proposals for the expansion of the Len Valley Practice will be supported.

8.4 Education

8.4.1 The construction of 1000 dwellings on the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites (SHDS), together with the construction of the existing housing commitments (264 dwellings), will create a requirement for additional

school facilities to serve the Parish. The planning process allows for developer contributions to be paid to fund expansion of both Secondary and Primary Schools.

- 8.4.2 Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will decide how to allocate such funds as are collected to upgrade education on the basis of the education requirements and any spare capacity within the system which may exist at the time the decision is made. The decision where to construct additional educational facilities is a land use planning matter and such decisions should serve to encourage a sustainable pattern of land uses by placing expanded school facilities as close as possible to the housing.
- 8.4.3 The government has recently reconfirmed its advice on the use of planning obligations in paragraph 56 of the revised NPPF. Planning obligations should be directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related to the proposal in scale and kind. This is the so-called ‘necessity test’.

Secondary Education

- 8.4.4 There is one secondary school, The Lenham School, within the Parish. This school was previously called Swadelands. The Lenham School is well-located to the west of Lenham village centre and has attractive landscaped grounds which are large enough to accommodate the needs of the School. The School is within easy walking (or cycling) distance of many existing dwellings and is close to the bus route. The School therefore contributes strongly to the environmental and social elements of sustainability. There are a number of very sound planning reasons why the site of The Lenham School should remain in education use. The Plan supports the retention of The Lenham School site in education use.
- 8.4.5 The Lenham School is also within easy walking (or cycling) distance of the new houses proposed within the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites.

Primary Education

- 8.4.6 The existing Lenham Primary School is currently one form of entry (1FE) occupying a site of some 2.25 hectares. The school is in a central location within the village and is well located to serve both the existing dwellings and the proposed additional dwellings. The site is therefore ideally located to encourage walking and cycling trips to school which is a central tenet of government policy.
- 8.4.7 The Plan supports the expansion of the existing Lenham Primary School on its current site. This would accommodate at least 210 of the additional primary aged pupils whilst retaining the existing 1FE capacity to become at least a 2FE school.
- 8.4.8 Planning regulations make it clear that developer contributions can only legally be sought at a level which is directly related to the need arising to serve the proposed additional development.

Nursery Education

- 8.4.9 With the proposed expansion of the village there will be a need for good quality, accessible provision for nursery aged children.
- 8.4.10 A site is therefore identified within the Lenham Local Policies Map, at the northern part of the allotments, to provide for nursery education.

Lenham Primary School: Policy ED1

The Lenham Primary School site, as shown on the Lenham Local Policies Map, will be safeguarded for educational use. Proposals to increase the capacity of the school on its current site will be supported. The use of the school facilities for multi-functional community activities will be supported, where there are no adverse impacts upon local residential amenity.

The Lenham School: Policy ED2

The Lenham School site, as shown on the Lenham Local Policies Map, will be safeguarded for educational use. Proposals for additional school facilities on the site will be supported. The use of the school facilities for multi-functional community activities will be supported, where there are no adverse impacts upon local residential amenity.

Nursery Education: Policy ED3

A site to the north of the allotment site at Ham Lane is safeguarded for the development of nursery education facilities, as shown on the Lenham Local Policies Map. Development proposals for nursery school facilities on the site will be supported, subject to detailed consideration of access arrangements and site layout.



9. Tourism

9.1 Tourism

9.1.1 Lenham Parish benefits from highly attractive countryside including the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

9.1.2 Applications for uses and interventions that seek to strengthen the role of Lenham as a centre for the tourism industry are welcome. This includes promoting leisure and cultural uses, strengthening the retail offer and enhancing the quality of the public realm and visitor experience.

Tourism: Policy TOU1

1. Sustainable development that improves the quality and diversity of existing tourist facilities, attractions, accommodation and infrastructure, including green infrastructure, will be viewed favourably. Applicants for new development will be required to demonstrate that:
 - 1) the siting, scale and design has strong regard to the local character, historic and natural assets of the surrounding area; and
 - 2) the design and materials are in keeping with the local style and reinforce local distinctiveness and a strong sense of place.
2. The loss of tourist facilities to other uses will be supported where:
 - 1) it can be demonstrated that the tourist facility is no longer viable, having been actively marketed for a period of twelve months; or
 - 2) the proposed alternative use would provide equal or greater benefits for the local economy and community.
3. Where appropriate, proposals for development will be subject to design, landscape and transport assessments and will comply with the policies contained in Maidstone Borough Local Plan.



10. Air Quality and renewables

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 Improving air quality is a national concern. To help combat worsening air quality the Plan promotes the concept of walkable neighbourhoods, with infrastructure and facilities provided close to the home, and a mix of uses and activities which are located within in the Parish centre. With walking, cycling and public transport promoted as viable and attractive alternatives to the car, the objective is for the impact of vehicle emissions to decrease.

10.2 Electric vehicles

10.2.1 The Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) has prepared a UK-wide strategy which seeks to ensure that nearly every vehicle purchased in the UK will be an ultra-low emission vehicle. Pure electric or 'EVs' and plug-in hybrid vehicles are anticipated to take an increasing share of the new car and van market over the coming years. The use of electric vehicles is an important measure in reducing emissions locally with provision of necessary infrastructure essential. It is therefore important that new development responds to these changes.

10.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports developments that are designed where practical to incorporate facilities for charging and plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

10.2.3 In order to promote a greater role for plug-in vehicles the Parish Council will support development proposals which seek to encourage the use of electric vehicles.

Charging Points for Electric Vehicles: Policy AQ1

- 1) **Proposals for developments in the Plan area which provide for electric vehicle charging points will be supported. In the case of proposed residential developments, proposals should include a charging point for each new dwelling. For flats and apartments which do not have an allocated car parking space, proposals which make provision for a shared communal charging point will be supported.**
- 2) **Proposals for new developments, such as shops and businesses, which include car parking provision for the public and employees, should include at least one electric vehicle charging point, with the necessary infrastructure for future charging points, as part of the development.**
- 3) **In all cases, electric vehicle charging points should be sited to ensure that there are no adverse impacts upon pedestrian movement or the immediate appearance of the street scene.**

10.3 Renewable energy generation

Buildings should be designed to maximise solar gain and incorporate technologies that maximise the use of energy from renewable sources. Proposals for new development are encouraged to incorporate the following:

- 1) Solar Photovoltaic Panels
- 2) Solar Thermal Panels
- 3) Air Source Heat Pumps
- 4) Ground Source Heat Pumps
- 5) Biomass Boilers

Renewable Energy Generation: Policy AQ2

Applications for renewable energy schemes will be required to demonstrate that they do not have a significant adverse impact on landscape character, biodiversity, heritage or cultural assets or amenity value.



11. Strategic Housing Delivery Sites

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan (MBLP) was adopted in October 2017 (MBLP 2017). As the adopted development plan, MBLP is a very important document so far as the future planning of Lenham is concerned.

11.1.2 MBLP identifies, at Policies SP8 (6) and H2 (3), that Lenham should be a broad location for housing growth for the delivery of approximately 1000 dwellings up to 2031. MBLP Policy SP20 makes it clear that 40% of the 1000 homes will deliver affordable housing to meet borough-wide need.

11.1.3 MBLP does not state within the broad location where the 1000 dwellings will actually be constructed. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report sets out the areas considered for growth by the Parish Council, why some were rejected and how the Parish Council arrived at the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites allocated in this Plan. The Lenham Masterplanning Report, produced by AECOM, provides detailed guidance as to how the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites could be developed.

11.1.4 The base date for Lenham Neighbourhood Plan is October 2017. As at October 2017 there were a number of committed development sites within the Parish as follows:

• Old Goods Yard (appeal)	65 dwellings
• Old Ham Lane, Lenham (appeal)	82 dwellings
• Tanyard Farm North (allocation)	145 dwellings
• The Paddock (allocation and permission)	23 dwellings
• Tanyard Farm South (permission)	6 dwellings
• Maidstone Road (under construction)	23 dwellings
• Ridings Farm (permission)	1 dwelling
• Parapet Field (permission)	3 dwellings
• Glebe Gardens (permission)	10 dwellings
• Lenham Heath Forstal (permission)	6 dwellings
• COMMITTED SITES	<u>364 dwellings</u>

11.1.5 Lenham will, therefore, need to accommodate some 1364 additional dwellings by 2031. This level of growth will approximately double the size of the village.

11.1.6 The Strategic Housing Delivery Sites are located within three general development areas as follows:

- 1) North-East of Lenham Village Extension (Site 1)
- 2) South-West of Lenham Village Extension (Sites 2, 3 and 4)
- 3) North-West of Lenham Village Extension (Sites 5, 6 and 7)

11.1.7 The North-East of Lenham Village Extension comprises one site: Land South of Old Ashford Road. This site will deliver approximately 85 dwellings and an area of Open Space to be used primarily for outdoor sport and recreation. Three new sports pitches are to be provided at Site 1. One of these pitches will meet the open space requirements of the residential development proposed at Site 1. The other two pitches are intended as replacement for the loss of the playing facility at William Pitt Field.

11.1.8 The South-West of Lenham Village Extension comprises three sites - Site 2, Site 3 and Site 4. The South-West of Lenham Village Extension also includes an existing commitment at the Old Goods Yard which was allowed on appeal on 2nd October 2015 for approximately 65 dwellings.

- 11.1.9 The South-West of Lenham Village Extension will be served by a new development access road. This road will run from Headcorn Road to Old Ham Lane. The three sites 2, 3 and 4 will provide this new road.
- 11.1.10 A scheme of traffic management to allow for traffic-light controlled flows in alternate directions will be provided at the point that Old Ham Lane crosses the railway. The development of Site 3 will fund the provision of this Smokey Bridge Traffic Management Scheme through planning conditions and a Section 38 Agreement.
- 11.1.11 It will be necessary to provide for a footway crossing over all three of the rail tracks to provide for a southern access to Lenham Railway Station. The footway railway crossing could be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or through a combination of this and any other funding sources, such as government grants, which might become available.
- 11.1.12 Site 3, Land East of Old Ham Lane and South of the Railway, will deliver approximately 230 dwellings and public open space of not less than 2.5 ha including a play area (0.25 ha) and an area of Amenity Green Space (0.25 ha). The area of public open space should incorporate a 15m minimum buffer to protect the integrity of Kiln Wood. Kiln Wood is a 9.6 ha site of ancient woodland owned and managed by Kent Wildlife Trust as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS).
- 11.1.13 The North West of Lenham Village Extension comprises sites 5, 6 and 7. The North West of Lenham Village Extension also includes an existing commitment at a site West of Old Ham Lane and South of the A20 Ashford Road which is controlled by Jones Homes. Housing on this Jones Homes site was allowed in outline on appeal for approximately 82 dwellings on 12th May 2016.
- 11.1.14 The North West of Lenham Village Extension will be served by a new development access road which will run from the A20 Ashford Road to Old Ham Lane to the south. The existing Old Ham Lane and Ham Lane will be improved to provide additional highway capacity. The new development access road will make a junction with the A20, to the north, possibly within the appeal site West of Ham Lane and South of the A20 Ashford Road which is currently controlled by Jones Homes.
- 11.1.15 The North West of Lenham Village Extension Site 5 will deliver approximately 360 dwellings and not less than 6.6ha of Open Space.
- 11.1.16 A study produced by ICOSA demonstrates that the development proposed within the Plan is capable of being provided with a supply of drinking water and a foul sewerage network.
- 11.1.17 The preferred arrangement for the development access roads is shown in the Transportation Assessment. The precise scope of the development access roads and their junctions with the existing highway will be determined at planning application stage. It may be possible at that time to agree an alternate means of access. Planning conditions will be imposed on the grant of planning permission to ensure that an appropriate and sufficient network of development access roads will be in place in a timely manner to serve the development proposals. Certain development access roads running through the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites should be designed to a standard capable of accommodating a two-way bus route, which should be designed to a standard that will be capable of adoption by Kent County Council as highway authority.
- 11.1.18 Consultation with Southern Water Services Limited has confirmed that a proposal for the expansion of Lenham Wastewater Treatment Works will be included within the company's five-year infrastructure investment programme.

11.2 SHDS General Planning Requirements

- 11.2.1 The overall policy requirements for the SHDS are set out below in Policy SHDS1.

Policy SHDS1: Strategic Housing Delivery Sites: General Requirements

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for housing development in the period to 2031. The sites allocated under the policies in this Plan will deliver approximately 1000 homes of varying sizes and types including open space. In addition to the site-specific requirements, all development proposals will be supported if they provide for the number of dwellings indicated and the following criteria are met:

- 1) Development proposals will be subject to the results and recommendations of a phase one ecological survey and an appropriate mitigation and enhancement scheme, prepared to the satisfaction of Maidstone Borough Council as the local planning authority.
- 2) Appropriate surface water and flood mitigation measures will be demonstrated on all development proposals which shall incorporate sustainable drainage systems which should be multi-functional and address the need for surface water attenuation and flow restriction.
- 3) Development proposals will make provision for affordable housing incorporating a suitable mix of dwellings sizes and types in accordance with the policies of this Plan and the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.
- 4) Development proposals will make provision for public open space having regard to the policies of Maidstone Borough Local Plan and the policies of this Plan.
- 5) Development proposals will be supported by a detailed Masterplan for the site to be submitted for approval by Maidstone Borough as local planning authority. The submitted Masterplan should have regard to the proposals shown on the Illustrative Masterplans included within this Neighbourhood Plan. The submitted Masterplan will include details of the landscaping and public open space for the site, access (vehicular, cycle and footway) and drainage (foul and surface water) arrangements for the site and will demonstrate how the development will integrate with the existing built fabric and setting of Lenham. Where the proposals relate to a larger area, the Masterplan should demonstrate how the proposed development will connect with other Strategic Housing Delivery Sites within the Village Extension areas.
- 6) The submitted Masterplan will show arrangements for foul sewerage connections to Lenham Wastewater Treatment Works (LWTW) and will demonstrate, to the satisfaction of Maidstone Borough Council as local planning authority, that adequate capacity will be provided at Lenham WTW to accept foul drainage flows arising from the development.
- 7) All the sites shown will provide access, drainage and services in a coordinated manner. Development proposals which demonstrate how the above intention is to be achieved in practice will be supported. Development proposals shall show the scope of the development access roads and their junctions with the existing highway network. If proposals are made for a phased delivery of any particular Site, each one of those phases should make an appropriate connection with the existing highway network.
- 8) Development proposals shall be accompanied by a Construction Method Statement which will show arrangements for items such as wheel washing, parking of contractors' vehicles, construction access routes and other details of the construction process.
- 9) Development proposals should support high quality communications infrastructure.

11.2.2 In addition to other policies contained in this Plan, the SHDS will be expected to achieve the design principles set out in Policy SHDS2.

Policy SHDS2: Housing Delivery Sites: Design principles:

Application for development should demonstrate how they meet the following design principles:

- 1) Achieve a high quality, attractive, accessible and safe environment;
- 2) Design measures that minimise journeys to school by car must be integrated within the proposed development;
- 3) Optimise the placemaking function of streets, allowing for public transport connectivity but without vehicles dominating the street environment;
- 4) Secure attractive and clearly defined public and private spaces that will enable retention and enhancement of the existing landscape, trees and vegetation.
- 5) Incorporates any local watercourses into the design of site layouts and that they form a part of the drainage strategy for the development of sites.
- 6) All proposals must satisfy the requirements set out in Policy D1 in the Plan to ensure that the setting of the Kent Downs AONB is protected.

- 11.2.3 Affordable housing is provided on major development sites of ten units or more, or sites of 0.5 ha or greater. For rented affordable housing units, the Borough Council nominates households from its Housing Register. For shared ownership/equity units, persons must be registered with 'Help to Buy'. A local connection criterion, which is determined by the Borough Council, applies from the outset, so qualifying households that meet the criterion will be given priority to affordable housing in Lenham. Lenham Parish Council commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment from AECOM to inform the Plan. That Assessment concludes that there may be an unmet need for social rented accommodation arising within the Parish. The Assessment concludes an affordable housing tenure split of 80% social and affordable rent and 20% intermediate tenures may be appropriate on major development sites. This is a departure from the Local Plan strategic policy which meets borough-wide need for affordable housing, and which was subject to viability testing. The Local Housing Needs Assessment for Lenham Parish indicates a strong need for social rented units, which will be a material consideration when applying the Local Plan affordable housing policy in planning decisions. The Strategic Housing Delivery Sites in the Lenham Plan have been subject to viability testing, and the indicative tenure split set out in the Assessment should apply to the allocated sites. The Assessment also concludes that 50% of market and/or affordable houses in new developments should be three-bedroom, 30% two-bedroom and 10% should be one-bedroom, and 10% four-bedroom or more. Support will be given to proposals that provide for this indicative housing mix on the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites allocated in the Plan.

Policy SHDS3 - Strategic Housing Delivery Sites: Housing Tenure and Mix

- 1) Support will be given to proposals that provide for affordable housing on the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites in the Plan. Indicative targets for affordable housing tenure are 80% social and affordable rent and 20% intermediate affordable housing.
- 2) Support will be given to proposals that provide for a range and mix of house types on the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites. An indicative target is 10% one bedroom, 30% two bedrooms, 50% three bedrooms and 10% four bedrooms or more.

- 11.3 The individual policies for the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites are set out below.

11.3.1 Area 1: North East of Lenham Village Extension

Policy - Strategic Housing Delivery Site 1 - Land South of Old Ashford Road

1. Land South of Old Ashford Road, shown as Site 1 on the Lenham Local Policies Map is allocated for development of Open Space and approximately 85 dwellings at a density of 22 dwellings per hectare and with a maximum building height of two storeys. In addition to the requirements set out in other policies of this Plan, planning permission will be supported if the following criteria are met:

Highways, Access and Transportation

2. (i) Access will be secured by a single 'all purpose' junction and an emergency access with Old Ashford Road and will include the provision of a new road to provide access to the area of Strategic Open Space to the south.
- (ii) The development will provide for a footpath/cycleway link along Old Ashford Road/Ashford Road to connect the site with the Ashmill Business Park/Northdown Close employment area.

Open Space

3. Provision of a scheme of Open Space as shown on the Lenham Local Policies Map as a sport and recreation area to include a play area of approximately 0.25 ha, an area for a sports pavilion and car park of approximately 0.45 ha to be laid out with an appropriate form of surfacing and one sports pitch. The car park, one full sized grass soccer pitch and the play area will be laid out in accordance with an approved scheme and will be provided after the construction of approximately half the houses within the development and will be transferred to Lenham Parish Council or other appropriate local organisation, together with a commuted sum sufficient to ensure ongoing future maintenance. The proposed sports and recreation area has potential for an additional three sports pitches which are not directly required as a result of the proposed residential development and

which will be provided as a replacement for the recreation facility currently located at William Pitt Field (Site 6).

Design and Layout

4. The design and layout of the site will be informed by a detail landscape and ecological analysis and Masterplan reflecting that analysis and will incorporate the following features.
 - 1) The landscape strategy for this site must demonstrate that it mitigates as far as possible the visual impact of the development in relation to the AONB, with particular importance being required to structural tree and woodland planting.
 - 2) The provision of a robust tree-planted wildlife landscape corridor to the east of the site including a demonstration of the mechanism whereby such corridor will be permanently retained.
 - 3) Appropriate footpath/cycleway linkages incorporating existing public footpaths within the site (diverted if necessary) to link in with a new footpath/cycleway link along the Old Ashford Road frontage to the site and a new footpath/cycleway link along the eastern boundary of the housing area.
 - 4) The provision of a robust tree-planted wildlife landscape corridor at least 5 m wide along the north side of the A20 Ashford Road. The corridor shall include appropriate breaks to provide for views to Lenham Cross which lies to the north.
5. The design and layout of the site should follow the principles contained in the illustrative Masterplan at page 49.

11.3.2 Area 2: South West of Lenham Village Extension

Policy - Strategic Housing Delivery Site 2 - Land West of Headcorn Road and North of Leadingcross Green.

1. Land West of Headcorn Road North of Leadingcross Green shown as Site 2 on the Lenham Local Policies Map is allocated for approximately 110 dwellings at a density of 31 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements set out in other policies of this Plan, planning permission will be supported if the following criteria are met:

Highways, Access and Transportation

2. Access will be taken from a new junction with Headcorn Road. Access arrangements will include the provision of a new development access road within the site incorporating an appropriate footpath/cycleway link to the boundary with the adjoining allocated development sites to the north and west (Sites 3 and 4). The development access road should also be designed to form part of the proposed new link road between Old Ham Lane and Headcorn Road.
3. The proposed development should enable pedestrian and cycle access to Lenham Railway Station, including an improved footway along Headcorn Road together with internal pedestrian and cycle routes which connect with adjoining sites.

Open Space

4. Provision within the site of public open amenity space and a children's play area in accordance with the standards set out in Policy DM19 of the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan. This area of public open space will be laid out in accordance with an approved scheme and will be transferred either to Maidstone Borough Council or Lenham Parish Council together with a commuted sum sufficient to ensure ongoing future maintenance.

Design and Layout

5. The design and layout of the site will be informed by a detailed landscape and ecological analysis and Masterplan reflecting that analysis and will incorporate the following features:
 - 1) Provision of a robust wildlife landscape corridor along the southern edge of the site incorporating the existing public footway to form a commodious footpath/cycleway link between Headcorn Road and Site 3 to the west;

- 2) Provision for a footpath/cycleway link along the Headcorn Road frontage to the site incorporating as much of the existing frontage hedgerow as possible to form an attractive area of open space.
- 3) A demonstration of how the proposals are consistent in the provision of a satisfactory development access road link between Old Ham Lane and the Headcorn Road.
- 4) The design and layout of the site should follow the principles contained in the illustrative Masterplan at page 50.

Policy - Strategic Housing Delivery Site 3 - Land East of Old Ham Lane and South of the Railway

6. Land East of Old Ham Lane South of the Railway shown as Site 3 on the Lenham Local Policies Map is allocated for approximately 230 dwellings at a density of 32 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements set out in the other policies of this Plan, planning permission will be supported if the following criteria are met:

Highways, Access and Transportation

7. Access will be taken from a new junction with Old Ham Lane. The junction will be designed such that priority will be given to a new development access road running into the site. The access arrangements will include provision for the development access road incorporating appropriate highway, footpath and cycleway links to the boundary of those allocated sites which lie to the east (Sites 2 and 4).
8. Access arrangements will include a scheme of shuttle working on the Old Ham Lane rail bridge (Smokey Bridge) and no dwellings shall be occupied until that scheme is operational and open to traffic.
9. The access arrangements shall incorporate highway, footway and cycleway access to the south of Lenham Station to facilitate the provision of enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities over all three railway lines.
10. The development access roads together, including the scheme of shuttle working at Smokey Bridge, will have capacity to accommodate all traffic movements when all the sites shown on this Plan are completed.
11. That part of the site which lies immediately to the south of Lenham Station is allocated for retail, residential and business use. Development proposals which include provision for the landing of the rail footbridge from the north to south side of the station will be supported.

Open Space

12. Provision of at least 2.0 ha of open space to provide a wildlife and landscape corridor to the south of the site. This will incorporate not less than 1.05 ha of playing pitches for outdoor sport and recreation. The site should additionally provide an area of at least 0.25 ha of play provision for children and young people and an area of at least 0.25 ha of amenity green space.
13. This area of public open space will be laid out in accordance with an approved scheme and will be transferred either to Maidstone Borough Council or Lenham Parish Council together with a commuted sum sufficient to ensure ongoing future maintenance.

Design and Layout

14. The design and layout of the site will be informed by a detailed landscape and ecological analysis and Masterplan reflecting that analysis and will incorporate the following features:
 - 1) The provision of a robust wildlife and landscape corridor of not less than 15m in width designed to protect the ecological integrity of Kiln Wood.
 - 2) Appropriate footpath/cycleway linkages including the provision of a footpath/cycleway along Old Ham Lane frontage of the site, incorporating the retention of as much of the existing frontage hedgerow as possible.
 - 3) A demonstration of how the proposals are consistent with the provision of a satisfactory development access road link between Old Ham Lane and the Headcorn Road

- 4) The design and layout of the site should follow the principles contained in the illustrative Masterplan at page 50.

Policy - Strategic Housing Delivery Site 4 - Land West of Headcorn Road and South of the Old Goods Yard

15. Land West of Headcorn Road and South of the Old Good Yard shown as Site 4 on the Lenham Local Policies Map is allocated for approximately 110 dwellings at a density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements set out in other policies of this Plan, planning permission will be supported if the following criteria are met:

Highways, Access and Transportation

16. Access can be taken through the Old Goods Yard site, or from a new development access road. The access arrangements will include appropriate highway, footpath and cycleway links to the boundary of adjacent allocated sites (SHD Sites 2 and 3).
17. The access arrangements shall incorporate highway, footway and cycleway access to the south side of Lenham Station to facilitate access to proposed enhanced crossing facilities over the railway line.

Open Space

18. The development scheme shall provide for a minimum of 0.5 ha. of open space of a type suited to the character and location of the development. Open space should be designed to integrate with open space provision on adjacent sites, in order to enhance its benefits to the wider community.

Design and Layout

19. The design and layout of the site will be informed by a detailed landscape and ecological analysis and Masterplan reflecting that analysis and will incorporate the following features:
 - 1) The provision of a robust landscape buffer to the east of the site to protect views from open countryside to the east of the Headcorn Road;
 - 2) Appropriate footpath/cycleway linkages, including the provision of a footpath/cycleway along the Headcorn Road frontage to the site, incorporating the retention of as much of the existing frontage hedgerow as possible;
 - 3) The design and layout of the site should follow the principles contained in the illustrative Masterplan at page 50.

11.3.3 Area 3: North West of Lenham Village Extension

Policy - Strategic Housing Delivery Site 5 - Land West of Old Ham Lane and North of the Railway

1. Land West of Old Ham Lane and North of the Railway shown as Site 5 on the Lenham Local Policies Map is allocated for development of approximately 360 dwellings at a density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements set out in other policies of this Plan, planning permission will be supported if the following criteria are met:

Highways Access and Transportation

2. Access will be via a new junction with Old Ham Lane and will include a new development access road running from the A20 to the north to Old Ham Lane to the south close to its crossing over the railway at Smokey Bridge. Appropriate connections to and improvements of Old Ham Lane will be made to the approval of Kent County Council as Highway Authority. Development proposals will need to demonstrate how they will secure the deliverability of a satisfactory access road link between Old Ham Lane and Ashford Road.

Open Space

3. Provision of at least 6.6ha of Open Space to incorporate:
 - 1) at least 0.5ha of allotments;

- 2) at least 0.5ha of amenity green space and play provision for children and young people.
 - 3) not less than 1.05 ha of playing pitches for outdoor sport and recreation.
4. The Open Space will be laid out in accordance with a scheme submitted to Maidstone Borough Council for approval in consultation with Lenham Parish Council and will either be transferred to Lenham Parish Council or to a private management company, together with a commuted sum sufficient to ensure ongoing future maintenance.

Design and Layout

5. The design and layout of the site will be informed by a detailed landscape and ecological analysis and Masterplan reflecting that analysis and will incorporate the following features:
- 1) the provision of a landscape wildlife corridor to the west of the site as part of the Open Space, to maintain the integrity of Dickley Wood and to prevent visual coalescence with Harrietsham.
 - 2) appropriate footpath and cycleway linkages to Sites 6 and 7 to the east.
 - 3) the site layout should include appropriate community facilities, where this is justified.
 - 4) the landscape strategy for this site must demonstrate that it mitigates as far as possible the visual impact of the development in relation to the AONB, with particular importance being required to structural tree and woodland planting.

The occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure in liaison with Southern Water.

The design and layout of the site should follow the principles contained in the illustrative Masterplan at page 51.

Policy - Strategic Housing Delivery Site 6 - William Pitt Field

Land at William Pitt Field

6. Land at William Pitt Field shown as Site 6 on Lenham Local Policies Map is allocated for approximately 50 dwellings at a density of 29dph. In addition to the requirements set out in other policies of this Plan planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:

Highways, Access and Transportation

7. Access will be taken from Old Ham Lane.

Open Space

8. Provision for replacement playing pitches will be made before the release of William Pitt Field for development.

Design and Layout

9. The design and layout of the site will be informed by a detailed landscape and ecological analysis and Masterplan reflecting that analysis and will incorporate the following features:
- 1) provision for footpath and cycleway links to the sites to the north and east (Sites 5 and 7);
 - 2) the landscape strategy for this site must demonstrate that it mitigates as far as possible the visual impact of the development in relation to the AONB, with particular importance being required to structural tree and woodland planting;
 - 3) the design and layout of the site should follow the principles contained in the illustrative Masterplan at page 51.

The occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure in liaison with Southern Water.

Policy – Strategic Housing Delivery Site 7 - Land West of Loder Close

10. Land West of Loder Close, shown as Site 7 on the Lenham Local Policies Map, is allocated for a development of approximately 55 dwellings at a density of 33dph. In addition to the requirements set out in other policies in this Plan, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:

Highways, Access and Transportation

11. Access will be taken from Loder Close.

Open Space

12. A structural landscape corridor at least 15 metres wide will be provided to the north-east of the site of at least 0.15ha to provide enhanced visual screening for the existing dwellings in Westwood Close.

13. The structural landscape corridor will be laid out in accordance with a scheme submitted to Maidstone Borough Council for approval in consultation with Lenham Parish Council and will be transferred to Lenham Parish Council or other appropriate local organisation together with a commuted sum sufficient to ensure ongoing further maintenance.

Design and Layout

14. The design and layout of the site will be informed by a detailed landscape and ecological analysis and Masterplan reflecting that analysis and will incorporate the provision for footpath and cycleway links to the sites to the north and east (SHDS 5 and 6). The landscape strategy for this site must demonstrate that it mitigates as far as possible the visual impact of the development in relation to the AONB, with particular importance to structural tree and woodland planting being required.

15. The design and layout of the site should follow the principles contained in the illustrative Masterplan at page 51.

The occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure in liaison with Southern Water.



12. Implementing the Plan: Community Infrastructure Levy, Developer Contributions and Planning Conditions

12.1 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 12.1.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge levied on development which is payable to the local authority and is intended to be spent on infrastructure projects that help address the demands placed on an area resulting from growth in the Borough. This might include, for example, spending on new transport infrastructure, health and educational facilities, open spaces and sports facilities.
- 12.1.2 A portion of CIL is payable to the Parish Council for spending on local projects in the Neighbourhood Plan area. With a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council receives 25% of all Lenham CIL monies paid to Maidstone Borough Council. 'The neighbourhood portion' of CIL can be used to address a wide range of planning issues including infrastructure as long as the items are concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the Parish.
- 12.1.3 The Maidstone Borough Council CIL Charging Schedule came into effect on 1st October 2018. All subsequent applications for development that meet the eligibility criteria will be subject to this charging schedule, or any updates to it.
- 12.1.4 Through consultation and work on the Neighbourhood Plan a series of projects have been identified towards which the Parish Council intends to direct the 'neighbourhood portion' of CIL.
- 12.1.5 Alongside CIL, the Borough Council will continue to seek Section 106 developer contributions from applicants where applicable and required to provide for works or for funds to make development acceptable in planning terms.



12.2 Strategic Infrastructure Levy Projects and Exclusions

- 12.2.1 This Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of infrastructure projects which will be necessary for the Plan to work in practical terms without adverse impacts on the existing community. These projects will be funded through developer contributions which will include Section 106 Agreements negotiated with each developer and which may include contributions from the Borough-wide CIL strategic infrastructure fund. Where appropriate, opportunities will also be sought to identify and obtain top-up sources funding which may be available from other government grants or other sources at the time the infrastructure project is being implemented.
- 12.2.2 Strategic Infrastructure projects identified in this Plan are shown on Table LNP One - Strategic Infrastructure Projects. Table LNP One has been agreed with both Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council after extensive consultation.

Lenham Square	CIL
Expand Lenham Primary School	Developer contributions will be sought to support the expansion of the School.
Southern Access to Lenham Station	CIL or other government funds.
Southern Development Access Road	Onsite provision through planning condition/S38.
Junction of Southern Development Access Road with Headcorn Road	Onsite provision through planning condition/S278. Site 3 to contribute.
Smokey Bridge Traffic Management Scheme	Planning conditions/S278. Site 3 to provide this element.
Western Development Access Road	Onsite provision through planning condition/S38.
Development Access Road to Ham Lane	Onsite provision through planning conditions/S278. Sites 5, 6 and 7 to contribute appropriately.
Ham Lane/A20 Junction including improvements to Ham Lane/Old Ham Lane	Onsite provision through planning conditions/S278/S38. Sites 5, 6 and 7 to contribute appropriately.
Junction of Western Development Access Road with A20, including A20 speed reduction.	Onsite provision through planning conditions/S278. Sites 5, 6 and 7 to contribute appropriately.
Improvements to Lenham Doctors' Surgery	CIL
Improvements to footpath/cycleway network	Onsite provision through condition/S278 and/or CIL.

TABLE LNP ONE – COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY PROJECTS AND EXCLUSIONS

- 12.2.3 The Infrastructure projects supported by the Plan are described below together with an indication of the method of implementation:

Lenham Square

- 12.2.4 It is intended that a scheme of environmental improvement and traffic management for Lenham Square will be implemented during the lifetime of the Plan to 2031. It is intended that contributions may be made from both the strategic and the neighbourhood CIL elements.

- 12.2.5 Opportunities will be taken to secure additional parking to serve the Square which may assist both the environmental enhancement ‘beautification’ and traffic management. It is envisaged that the scheme could include additional tree planting, high-quality paving, planting boxes and benches and other street furniture.

Southern Access to Lenham Station

- 12.2.6 With the provision of additional housing to the south of the station (Strategic Housing Development Sites 2, 3 and 4) it would be advantageous to provide for pedestrian access from the south. It is not currently possible to access the station facilities from the south because the existing rail footbridge spans only two of the three rail tracks in the vicinity of the station. There will be a project to construct a new footbridge over all three tracks. This project could be funded through CIL or through the provision of other government grants. The SHD Sites immediately to the south (Sites 3 and 4) should provide an appropriate access to the station. There is a separate project within Site 3 immediately adjacent to the station to facilitate a new local centre for the southern sites, this could incorporate retail, residential and some employment uses - *see Policy EMP2 page 23*. Any such development will need to ensure that it facilitates both vehicular access to the station and the landing of the pedestrian footbridge and appropriate connections to the network rail land ownership.
- 12.2.7 Subject to approval by the rail authorities the project should investigate the possibility of delivering disabled access to both sides of the station.

Expansion of Lenham Primary School

- 12.2.8 Consultation with Kent County Council has confirmed the appropriate means to secure primary education needs is by way of one form entry expansion to the existing Lenham Primary School within its own grounds.

Improvement to Local Doctors’ Facilities

- 12.2.9 West Kent CCG is currently undertaking a service review with Len Valley Practice. The growth proposed at both Harrietsham and Lenham will necessitate additional local health facilities which are currently provided by the Len Valley Practice. This is intended to be funded by strategic CIL.

Improvements to the footpath/cycleway network

- 12.2.10 The preparation of schemes for the SHD Sites should take opportunities to create enhanced footpath/cycleway links which will be delivered through onsite provision regulated by planning conditions.
- 12.2.11 There will also be a project (using both strategic and local CIL funds) to provide an enhanced footpath/cycleway network within the Parish.

Development Access Roads

- 12.2.12 A series of development access roads will be provided to serve the southern and western development areas. The development access roads will have a number of elements in common:
- 1) The width, geometry and layout of the development access roads, and the junctions with the existing highway will be regulated through the development management process and secured by means of conditions attached to the grant of planning permissions;
 - 2) Through this process it will be necessary for the development access roads to run from one site to another so that the entire transportation system will have the capacity to accommodate all traffic movements when all the development proposed in this Plan has been completed;
 - 3) The development access roads should facilitate a new two-way bus route from the junction with the A20 to the junction with the Headcorn Road. This element should be built to a standard which is capable of adoption by KCC as Highway Authority.

- 12.2.13 The key elements of the development access roads are shown on Table LNP One, together with the responsibility for the provision of each element.

Affordable Housing

12.2.14 Provision for affordable housing will be made through Section 106 Agreements.

12.3 Neighbourhood (or Lenham Parish) Infrastructure Projects

12.3.1 Lenham Parish Council will receive 25% of all CIL payments made in the Parish for expenditure on local projects that are concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the area.

12.3.2 The Plan sets out below a proposed list of Lenham Parish Infrastructure Projects. This list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive.

12.3.3 The developments proposed in the village which currently do not have planning permission amount to approximately 950 dwellings. CIL contributions vary according to the size of the dwellings proposed. Based on the size of dwellings recently permitted in Lenham it is estimated that the Neighbourhood (or Lenham Parish) portion of CIL could be in the region £0.5 - £1.0m.

12.3.4 Neighbourhood (Lenham Parish) Infrastructure Projects identified in this Plan include:

- 1) funding the implementation of the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan;
- 2) provision of enhanced public open space and recreational facilities within the Parish;
- 3) a scheme of environmental enhancement and traffic management within and around Lenham Square to investigate the provision of additional car parking;
- 4) improved footpath/cycleway links including improved facilities along the A20 Ashford Road.

Developer Contributions – Policy DC1

Developer contributions towards planning proposals in Lenham will be sought in accordance with the policies within this Plan and Maidstone Borough Local Plan. Contributions made to the Parish Council will be used to deliver projects such as the Neighbourhood Infrastructure Projects outlined above.



Appendix A: Glossary

Adoption - The final confirmation of a development plan by a local planning authority. The equivalent terminology for a neighbourhood plan is that the document is ‘made’, rather than ‘adopted’.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - allows Local Authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. Money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport schemes, schools, health centres, leisure centres and parks. Parishes with a made Neighbourhood Plan will receive 25% of any Community Infrastructure Levy arising from developments in their area.

Conservation Area - an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is preserved by local planning policies and guidance.

Design Code - A set of illustrated design rules and requirements which instruct and may advise on the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code are detailed and precise and build upon a design vision such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Development Plan - Includes the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan (and any future adopted Local Plan which may replace it), the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan and Neighbourhood Development Plans which are used to determine planning applications.

Evidence base - The background information that any Development Plan Document is based on and is made up of studies on specific issues, such as housing need for example.

Independent Examination - An assessment of a proposed Neighbourhood Plan carried out by an independent person to consider whether a Neighbourhood Development Plan conforms with the relevant legal requirements.

Infrastructure - Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Infill Development - small scale development filling a gap within an otherwise built up frontage.

Listed Building - building of special architectural or historic interest.

Local Planning Authority - Local government body responsible for formulating planning policies and controlling development; a district council, metropolitan council, county council, a unitary authority or national park authority.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Planning Permission - Formal approval granted by a Council (e.g. Maidstone Borough Council) in allowing a proposed development to proceed.

Planning Practice Guidance - Planning Practice Guidance is available to read online and adds further context to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and it is intended that the two documents should be read together.

Previously Developed Land - Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Public Open Space - Open space to which the public has free access.

Settlement Development Boundary - Also referred to as the extent of the built-up area, settlement or development boundaries seek to set clear limits to towns and villages. They are designed to define the existing settlement and to identify areas of land where development may be acceptable in principle, subject to other policies and material planning considerations.

Sustainable Development - An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment or natural resources. Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Appendix B: Acknowledgements

Lenham Parish Council would like to thank everyone who participated in consultation and engagement events to help shape and inform the Neighbourhood Plan.

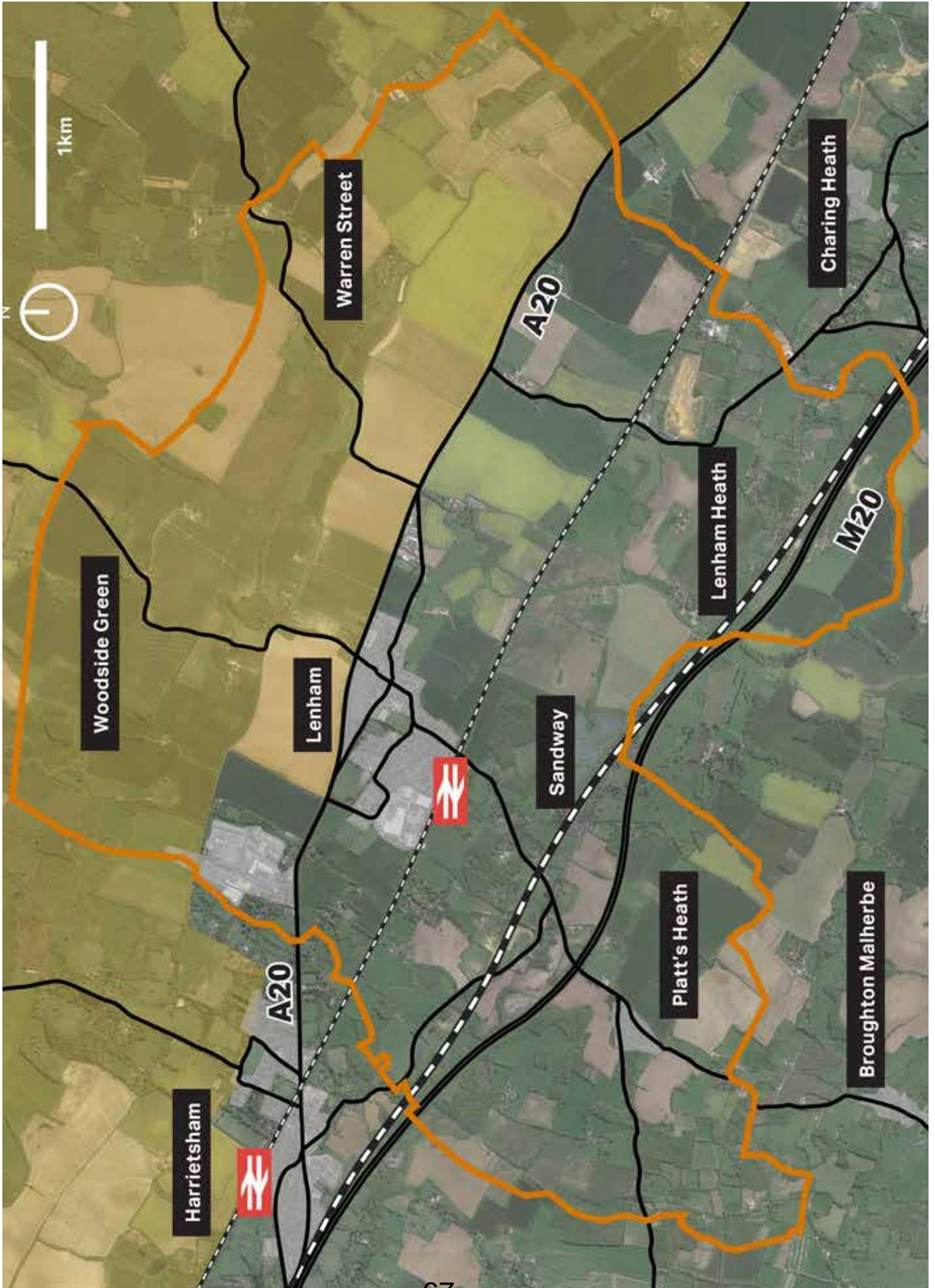
We are also grateful to members of the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group, comprising both Parish Councillors and Residents, who have committed their time, energy and passion to preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and helping to shape a better future for Lenham.

We would also like to thank the consultants for their help in facilitating events, for the development of ideas and concepts that communicate the views of the community and translate these into a planning policy document.

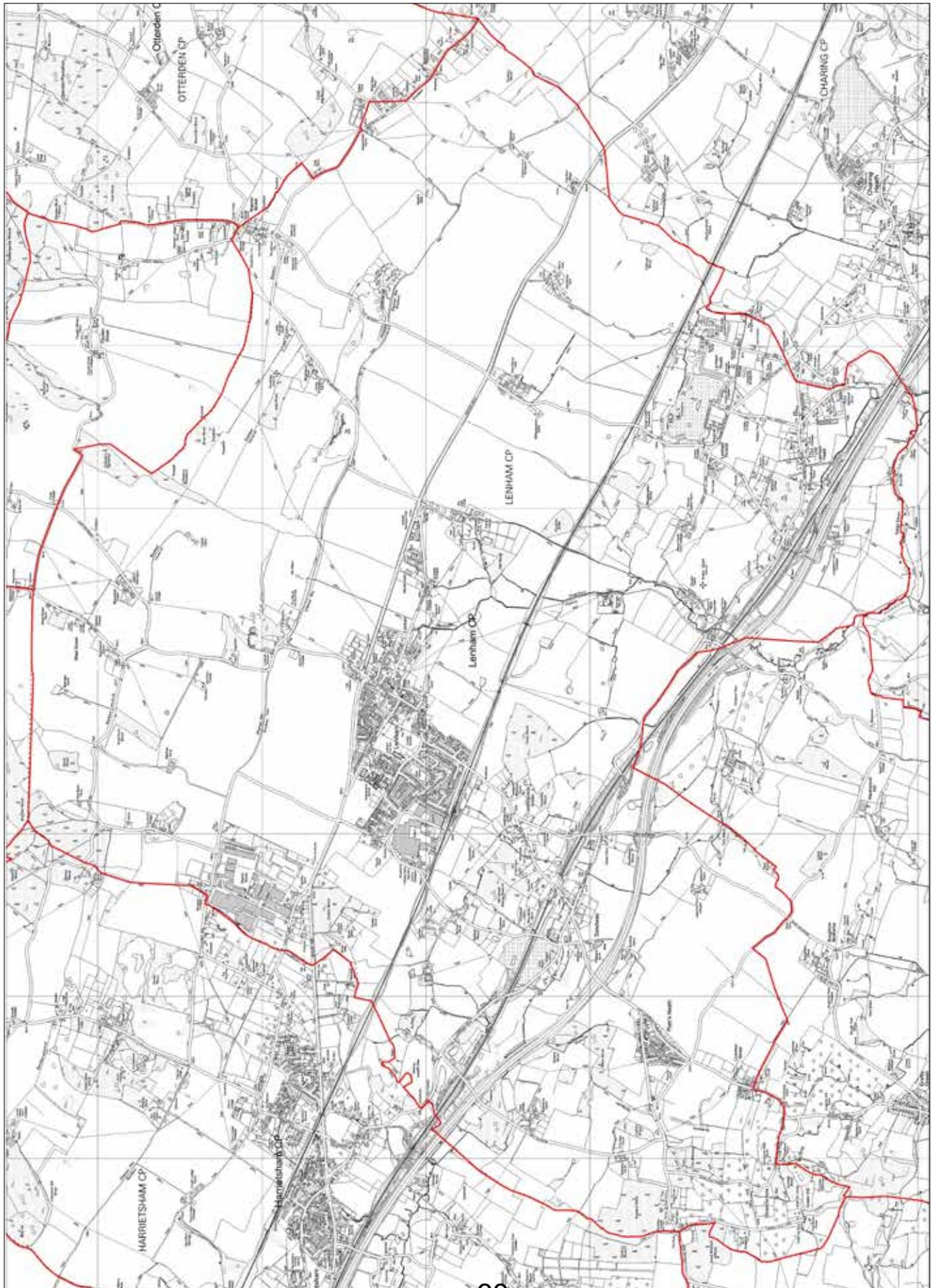
We would also like to thank Hailsham Town Council for providing the framework for this Plan.



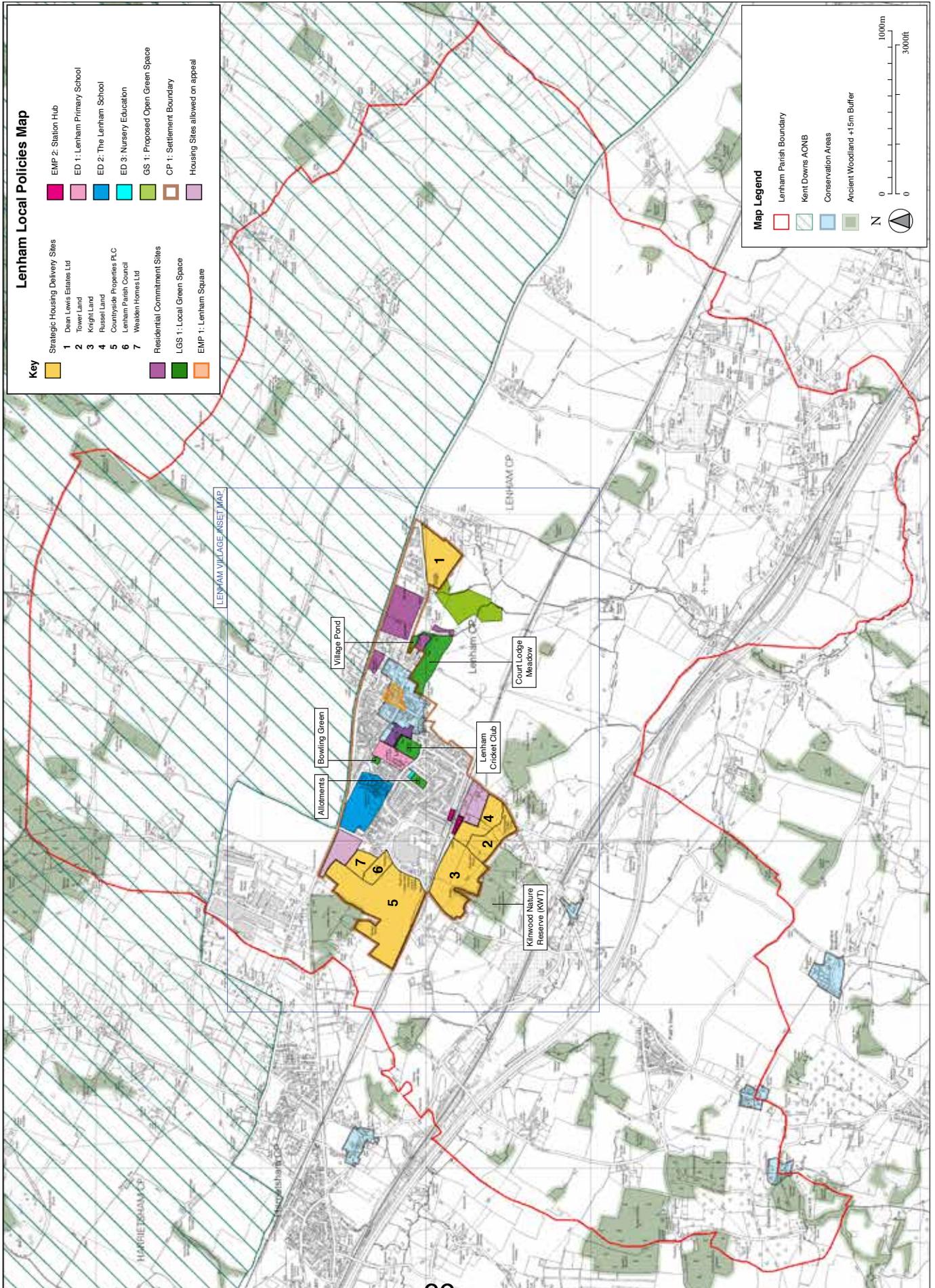
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Parish Boundary - Map



Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Parish Boundary - Map



Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Local Policies - Map



Lenham Local Policies Map

Key

 Strategic Housing Delivery Sites	 EMP 2: Station Hub
 1 Dean Lewis Estates Ltd	 ED 1: Lenham Primary School
 2 Tower Land	 ED 2: The Lenham School
 3 Knight Land	 ED 3: Nursery Education
 4 Russel Land	 GS 1: Proposed Open Green Space
 5 Countryside Properties PLC	 CP 1: Settlement Boundary
 6 Lenham Parish Council	 Housing Sites allowed on appeal
 7 Wealden Homes Ltd	
 Residential Commitment Sites	
 LGS 1: Local Green Space	
 EMP 1: Lenham Square	

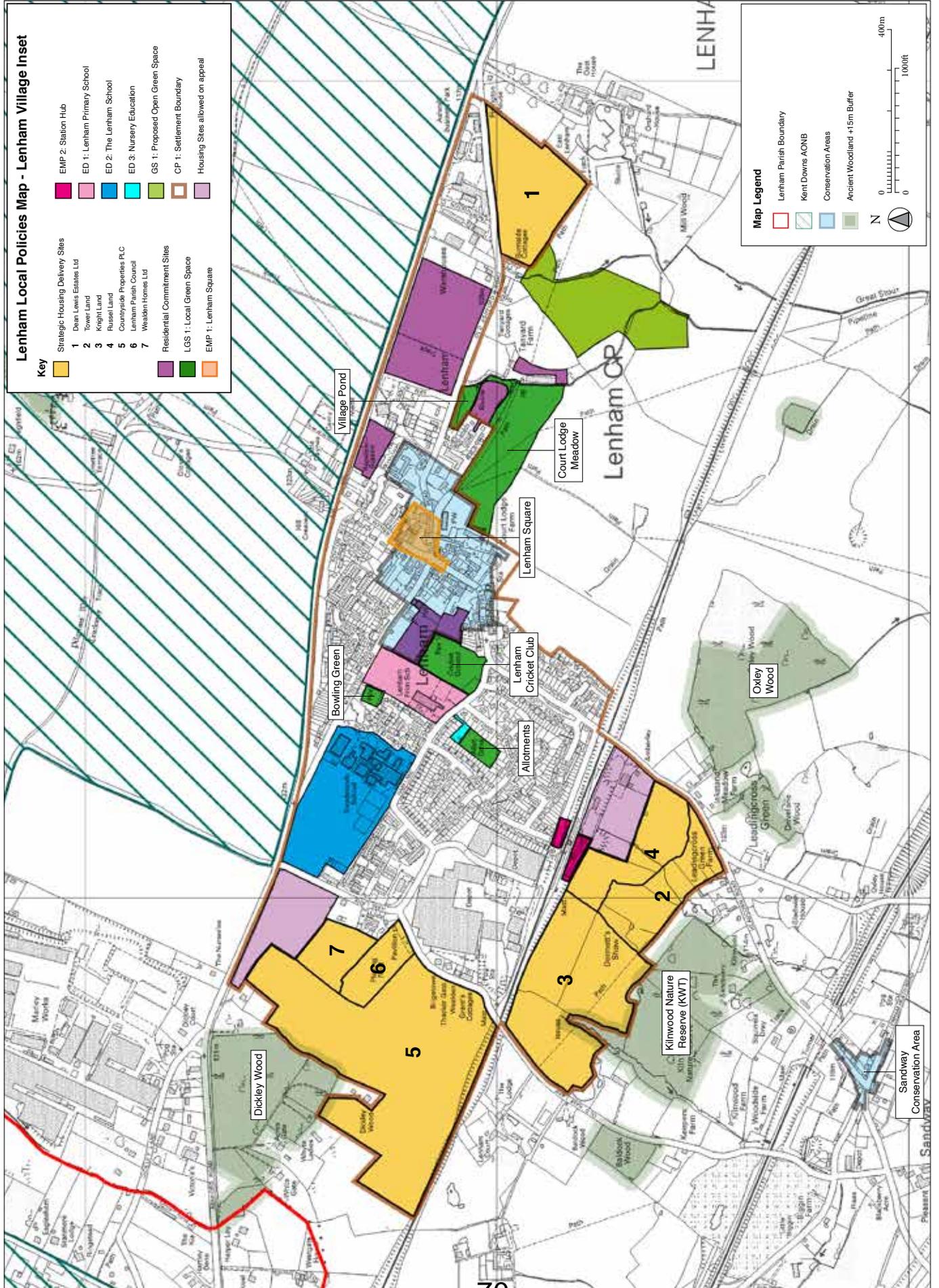
Map Legend

 Lenham Parish Boundary
 Kent Downs AONB
 Conservation Areas
 Ancient Woodland +15m Buffer

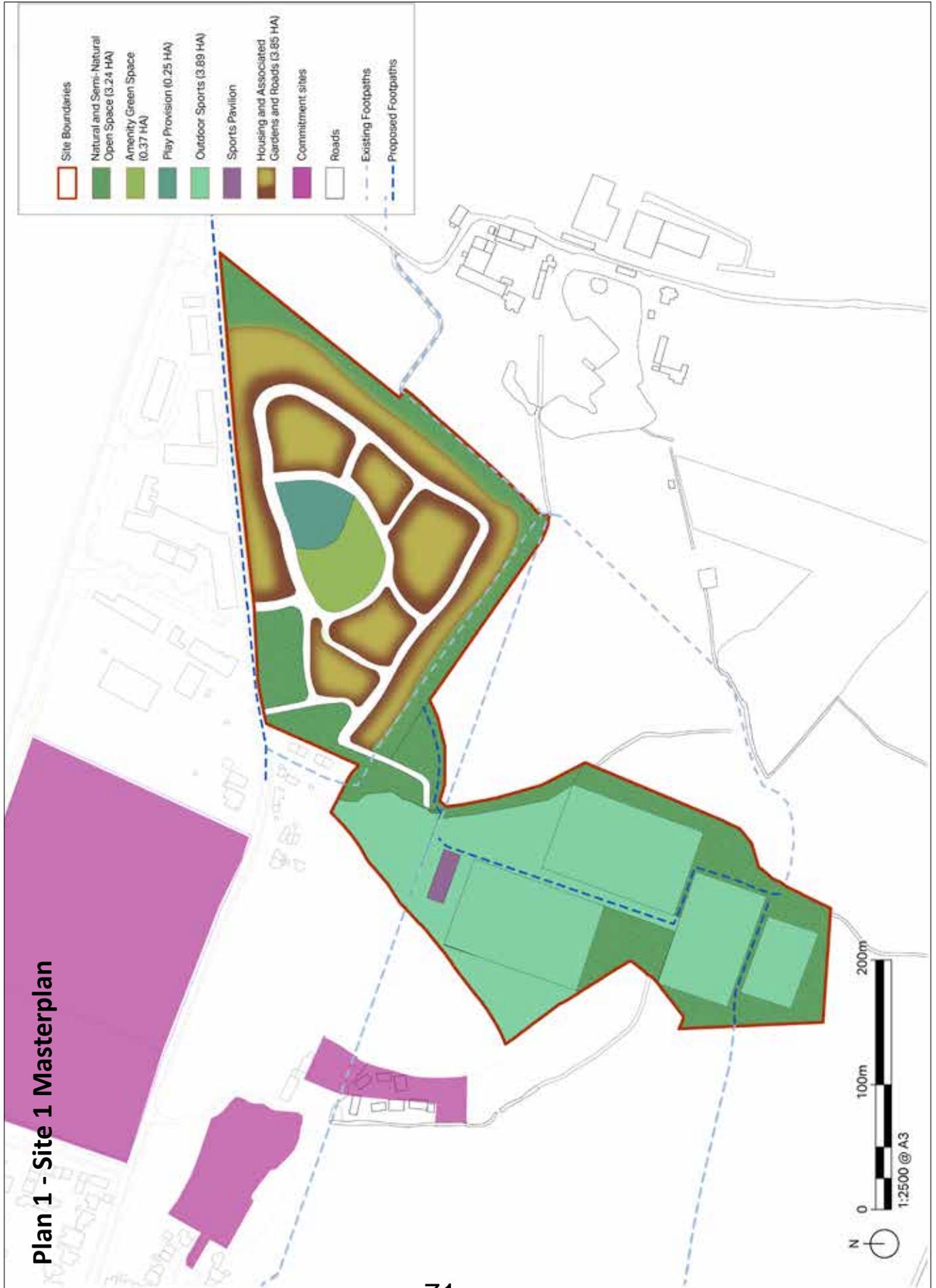
0 1000m
0 3000ft

N

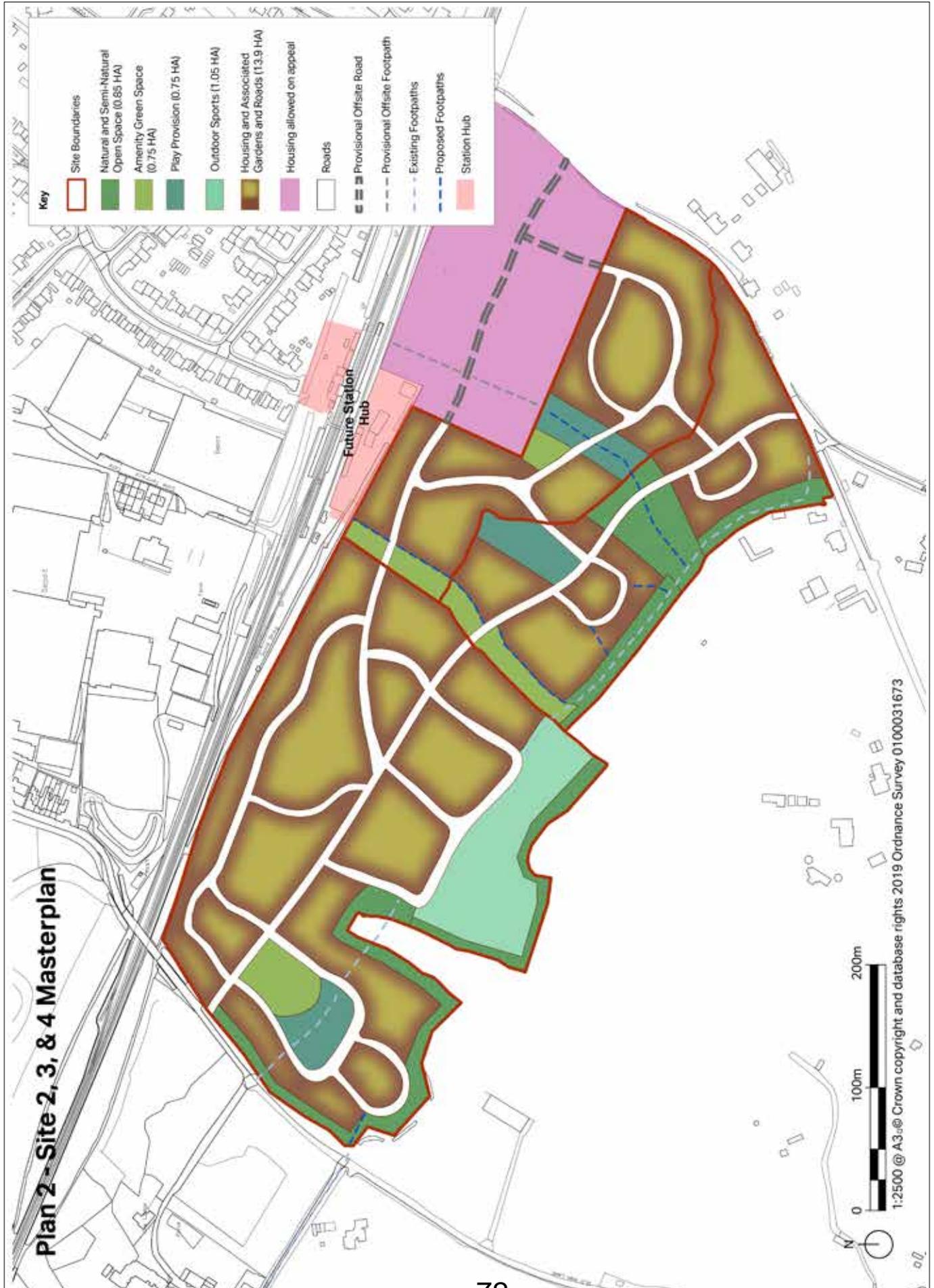
Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Local Policies - Map - Lenham Village Inset



Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 1 Site 1 Masterplan



Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 2 Sites 2, 3 & 4 Masterplan

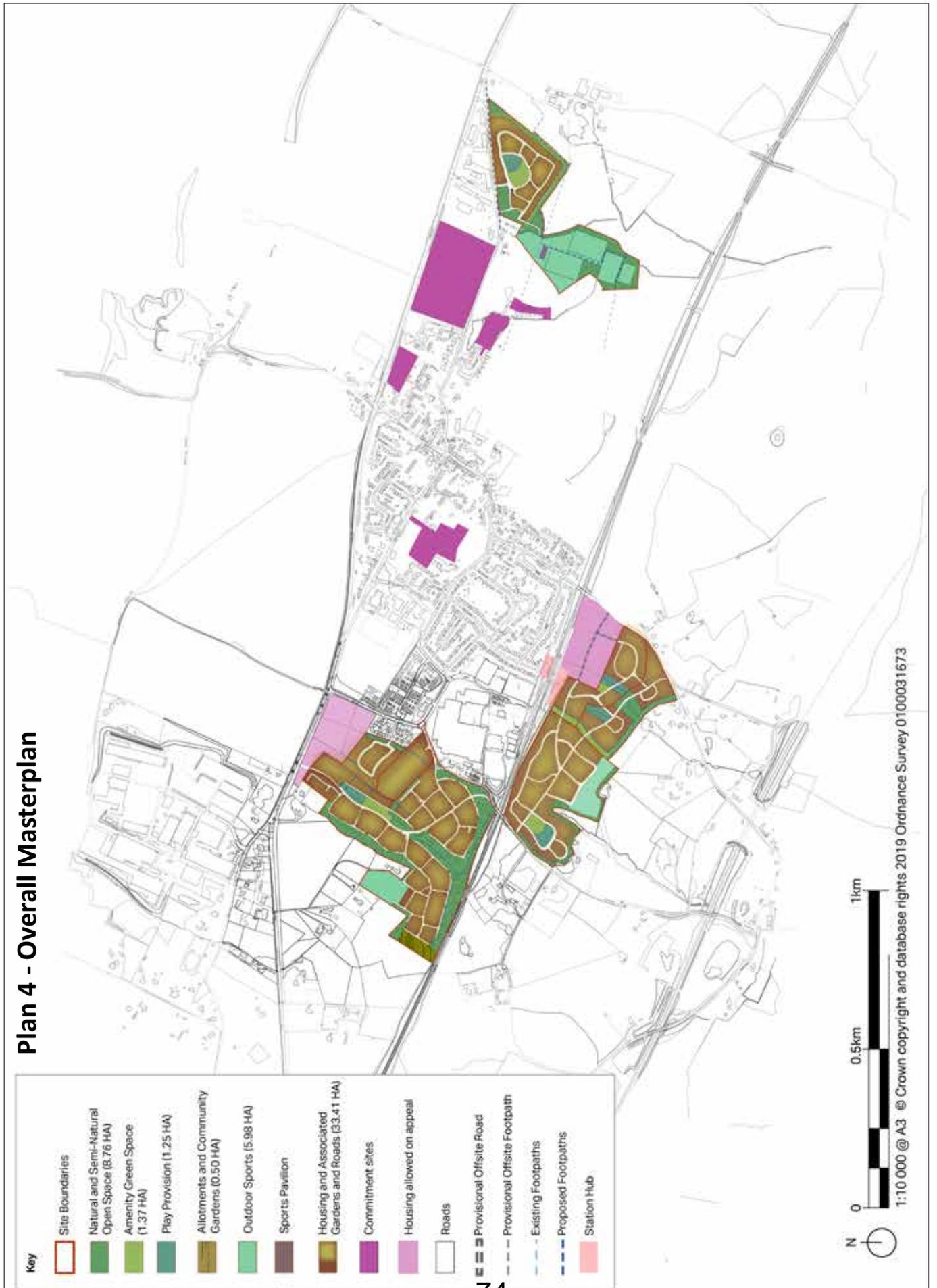


Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 3 Sites 5, 6 & 7 Masterplan



Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 4 Overall Masterplan

Plan 4 - Overall Masterplan







STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

8 September 2020

Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Mark Egerton, Strategic Planning Manager Sue Whiteside, Principal Planning Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	Boughton Monchelsea & Chart Sutton, Sutton Valence & Langley, Staplehurst, Marden & Yalding, Coxheath & Hunton, Loose, South, and Park Wood.

Executive Summary

The Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan (Background Paper 1) has been submitted and published for a second round of public consultation, which runs from 14 August to 28 September 2020. It is the role of the Borough Council to ensure that certain conditions have been satisfied at this stage, and to facilitate the consultation. It is confirmed that the regulatory requirements under Regulations 14 and 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) have been met during the preparation of the plan.

The Borough Council is also a statutory consultee for the purpose of making representations on the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan. The Committee is requested to consider the Council's formal response to the consultation, attached as Appendix 1, in accordance with Regulation 16. Following the close of consultation, the submission documents and all representations received will be passed to the independent Examiner for examination into the plan.

Purpose of Report

Decision.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan be supported, subject to the resolution of matters raised in the Council's representation (Appendix 1).
2. That the Council's representation in response to the Regulation 16 consultation on the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan, attached at Appendix 1, be approved.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee	22 September 2020

Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	It is not expected that the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities but, following a successful examination and referendum, the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Maidstone Development Plan, which will assist in the delivery of the Council's four strategic objectives.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Cross Cutting Objectives	The report recommendations support the achievement of the four cross-cutting objectives through the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan, which will eventually become part of the Maidstone Development Plan.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Risk Management	Risks are set out in Section 5 of the report. This consultation (Regulation 16) is being run to ensure that the plan meets the requirements of national legislation.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendations are within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation. The costs for consultation (Regulation 16), examination, referendum and adoption of the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan are borne by the Borough Council. There is a dedicated budget for this purpose, funded by MHCLG neighbourhood planning grants.	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
Staffing	The recommendations can be delivered within current staffing levels.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Legal	Accepting the recommendations will fulfil the Council's duties under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, the Housing and Planning Act 2016, and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. The recommendations also comply with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).	Cheryl Parks, Mid Kent Legal Services (Planning)
Privacy and Data	Facilitating the consultation will increase the volume of data held by the Council. The data	Anna Collier Policy and

Protection	will be held in line with the Council's data protection policies and the GDPR.	Information Manager
Equalities	The Council has a responsibility to support communities in developing a Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Planning process provides an opportunity for communities to shape a plan that meets the housing needs of its population.	Anna Collier Policy and Information Manager
Public Health	It is recognised that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals through the policies of the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan.	[Public Health Officer]
Crime and Disorder	There are no implications for Crime and Disorder.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning
Procurement	The appointment of an independent Examiner from IPE has been made under the procurement waiver signed by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement.	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Parish councils and designated neighbourhood forums can prepare neighbourhood development plans, also known as neighbourhood plans, for their designated neighbourhood areas. Neighbourhood plans are required to have regard to national policy and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area. Neighbourhood plans go through two rounds of mandatory public consultation before independent examination, local referendum and being 'made' (adopted) by Maidstone Borough Council. The procedures for designating neighbourhood areas and preparing neighbourhood development plans are set out in The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 2.2 Boughton Monchelsea parish was designated a neighbourhood area on 29 October 2012. The parish council undertook a 6-week public consultation on the pre-submission version of the neighbourhood plan (Regulation 14) between 26 April and 11 June 2019. The Council submitted a representation on the plan under the delegated authority of the Head of Planning and Development. Following consultation, the parish council has amended the plan in response to relevant issues raised in representations.
- 2.3 When a parish council or designated neighbourhood forum submits a neighbourhood plan to the Borough Council, the Council has a responsibility to ensure that regulatory requirements have been met, i.e. that public consultation on the pre-submission draft plan was carried out in accordance with Regulation 14, and that the submission plan and supporting documentation meet Regulation 15 obligations. These requirements have been met.

- 2.4 The next stage is a second 6-week public consultation on the submission plan (Regulation 16), prior to the plan's submission for independent examination. The Borough Council is responsible for facilitating this consultation and has agreed the consultation dates with the parish council: 14 August to 28 September 2020 (taking account of the August bank holiday). Considering recent government guidance on the Covid-19 pandemic, changes have been made to the way consultations are carried out. These changes were addressed by this committee at meetings held in June (statement of community involvement) and July (neighbourhood planning protocol). As such, this consultation is being undertaken in accordance with neighbourhood planning regulations, the Council's Statement of Community Involvement 2018 (as amended), and the neighbourhood planning protocol.
- 2.5 The full set of submission documents for the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan, which are listed below, can be viewed on the neighbourhood plans webpage (Background Papers 1 and 2).
- Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council covering letter with a Summary of Key Issues raised in Consultation
 - Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan, submission draft, March 2020
 - Consultation Statement and Appendices October 2019
 - Consultation Statement Appendix G – Regulation 14 list of consultees
 - Basic Conditions Statement March 2020
 - Environmental Statement 2019, which concludes that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment nor a Habitat Regulations Assessment is required
 - Colvin and Moggridge, Boughton Monchelsea Landscape Management and Masterplan 2018
 - Colvin and Moggridge, Boughton Monchelsea Priority Local Landscape 2019
 - Boughton Monchelsea Housing Needs Survey 2018, Action for Rural Communities Kent
 - A folder of additional parish-specific Evidence on Flood Risk, MBC Housing Register and Housing Density.
- 2.6 The Borough Council is responsible for appointing an independent Examiner (in agreement with the parish council) and for arranging the examination following the close of consultation. The Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying submission documents must be forwarded to the Examiner, together with all representations received, for the Examiner's consideration. Mr Derek Stebbing (Intelligent Plans and Examinations) has been appointed to examine the plan. A neighbourhood plan examination is usually dealt with by written representations, although an Examiner can move to a hearing for more complex plans or issues.
- 2.7 The Examiner's role is limited to testing the submitted plan against the 'Basic Conditions' tests for neighbourhood plans set out in legislation, rather than considering its 'soundness' or examining other material considerations. It is the role of the local planning authority to be satisfied that a basic condition statement has been submitted, but it is only after the independent examination has taken place and after the examiner's report has been

received that the local planning authority comes to its formal view on whether the draft neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions. The basic conditions are met if:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area)
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations¹
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan²
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017³.

2.8 At this stage (Regulation 16) of the development of the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan, the Borough Council is also a statutory consultee and can submit comments on the plan during consultation for consideration by the Examiner.

2.9 During the preparation of the plan, the Council has offered advice and support to the parish council on matters such as the neighbourhood planning process, the evidence base, the plan's regard to national policy, and general conformity with the strategic policies of the Maidstone Development Plan. The parish council has responded positively to the advice offered.

2.10 The neighbourhood plan contains a range of policies, including policies relating to:

- Sustainability
- Design
- New non-designated heritage assets
- Maintaining village character and the separation of settlements
- Protection of the landscape and woodlands
- Designation of a new 'Priority Local Landscape'
- Biodiversity
- Infrastructure and community facilities
- Connectivity
- Endorsement of adopted local plan housing site allocations
- Affordable Housing

¹ For example, the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Habitats Regulation Assessment

² This applies to the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment for certain development proposals, and is not applicable to the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan

³ This Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018

- The rural economy.

2.11 The neighbourhood plan is clear and well written and, with one exception, its policies conform to the strategic policies of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017. Neighbourhood plan policies PWP4(B)(ii): Provision for new housing development; RH2: Affordable housing – local priority; and RH3(c): Redevelopment and/or remodelling of existing affordable housing provision, refer to the occupation of affordable housing being prioritised for applicants with a local connection. Strategic policy SP20 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan seeks the provision of affordable housing as a percentage of market housing schemes to meet a borough-wide need. The criteria for the occupation of affordable housing provided under this policy is set by the Borough Council, and does not prioritise occupation for people with a proven local connection. Non-strategic policy DM13 of the Local Plan brings forward affordable local needs housing on rural exception sites, and people with a local connection are prioritised for the occupation of these homes. Policies RH2 and RH3(c) of the neighbourhood plan are not rural exception site policies. Definitions for 'affordable housing' and 'rural exception sites' are clearly set out in the glossary of the NPPF.

2.12 This point was in fact raised by the Council in its representation on the neighbourhood plan at Regulation 14 consultation. In its Consultation Statement, which includes the parish council's responses to the issues raised by respondents, the parish council stated:

"Noted. It is understood that MBC does not currently prioritise people with local connections. However this was an important issue in community engagement, and it was felt that people with local connections should have the opportunity to occupy affordable housing in the parish, and contribute to the sustainability of the local community by being able to live where they have a positive connection, while not debarring others from moving into the parish. The policies apply "outside the Maidstone Urban Area" which means that they do not apply to the largest housing sites in the parish, but do apply in the more rural part of the parish where facilities are more limited. The Neighbourhood Plan has to "generally conform" to MBC strategic policies, and this is felt to be an appropriately balanced approach. No change."

2.13 Despite being an important issue for the community, the approach is not in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted local plan, and the Council has exclusive rights to nominate suitable households in housing need in accordance with its Allocations Scheme. Affordable housing for occupants with a local connection can be provided on rural exception sites (either through sites allocated in local plans or neighbourhood plans, or through the planning application process). The reality of the situation is that those who are on the Council's Housing Register who might have a local connection to Boughton Monchelsea, would have the opportunity to bid on any affordable properties that are advertised in their particular band and bed-need.

2.14 Without modification, the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan fails to meet the basic conditions for neighbourhood plans, as required by Government, with regard to conformity to the adopted local plan's strategic

policy SP20. Further, the Government seeks conformity and consistency between local plans and neighbourhood plans. Parish councils preparing other neighbourhood plans in the borough have removed affordable housing policies seeking a local connection from their plans (prior to submission) in order to meet the basic conditions at examination.

- 2.15 Consequently, the representation attached at Appendix 1 seeks a modification to the neighbourhood plan, to delete references to prioritising affordable housing for people with a local connection to Boughton Monchelsea parish. The Examiner will conclude on the matter and make recommendations accordingly. Further minor proposed modifications are intended to correct errors and achieve clarity.
- 2.16 The Committee is recommended to support the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the resolution of matters raised in the representation, and to approve the Council's representation attached at Appendix 1.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option A: To not make representation on the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan. The consultation is being run in accordance with the requirements of national legislation, but there is no requirement for the Council to submit a representation on the neighbourhood plan. However, to follow this option means that the Council's overall view as the local planning authority is not asserted. This approach would compromise the Council's opportunity to inform the Examiner of its position on the plan.
- 3.2 Option B: To approve the Borough Council's representation on the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan, attached at Appendix 1.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option B is recommended. Once a neighbourhood plan is the subject of a successful referendum, it becomes part of the Maidstone Development Plan and is used for development management decisions. This option affords an opportunity to inform the Examiner of the Council's position in respect of the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this report at sections 3 and 4.
- 5.2 The risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Council's policy.
-

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 The Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan is subject to two rounds of public consultation. The first (Regulation 14) was undertaken by the parish council in 2019, and the Council's representation on the plan was submitted under delegated authority by the Head of Planning and Development. The comments received during consultation, together with the parish council's responses to the issues raised, are summarised in the Consultation Statement, and the plan has been amended as a result.
- 6.2 The current consultation (Regulation 16) is facilitated by the Borough Council, and all representations will be collated by the Borough Council and forwarded to the independent Examiner of the plan, together with the submission documents, for his consideration.
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Examination of the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan will be dealt with by written representations and/or a hearing, and Maidstone Borough Council is required to pay for the costs of the examination. Following the examination, the Examiner will issue his report and recommendations⁴. A report will be presented to this Committee outlining the Examiner's recommendations and seeking a decision on whether to move the plan to referendum⁵. If more than half of those voting in the referendum have voted in favour of the plan being used to inform planning applications in the area, the plan becomes part of the Maidstone Development Plan and will move forward to being made (adopted) by full Council.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Response to the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Consultation
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Background Paper 1: Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan https://localplan.maidstone.gov.uk/home/documents/neighbourhood-plans/boughton-monchelsea/r15-submission2/200309-Parish-Doc_2020_LR.pdf

⁴ Following a successful examination, a neighbourhood plan becomes a significant material consideration in decisions on planning applications within the neighbourhood area (Neighbourhood Planning Protocol).

⁵ Once a decision is made to move to referendum, a neighbourhood plan has significant weight in decision making for the neighbourhood area.

- Background Papers 2: Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan Submission Documents <https://localplan.maidstone.gov.uk/home/neighbourhood-planning> ('Consultations' tab)

Neighbourhood Planning Team
Maidstone Borough Council

Date: 23 September 2020

Maidstone Borough Council

Maidstone House,
King Street,
Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ

 maidstone.gov.uk

 [maidstonebc](#)

 [maidstoneboroughcouncil](#)

By email only

Dear Sir/Madam

BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE PERIOD TO 2031

Consultation pursuant to Regulation 16 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

Consultation period 14 August 2020 to 28 September 2020

Boughton Monchelsea parish was designated a neighbourhood area on 29 October 2012. During the preparation of the plan, the Borough Council has offered advice and support to the parish council on matters such as the neighbourhood planning process, the evidence base, the plan's regard to national policy, and general conformity with the strategic policies of the Maidstone Development Plan. Contact with the parish council has been maintained throughout the plan's preparation. The parish council has afforded the Council opportunities to informally comment on draft iterations of the plan, and the parish council has responded positively to the advice given.

The parish council undertook public consultation on the pre-submission version of the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14) between 26 April 2019 and 11 June 2019. The Borough Council submitted representations on the plan and, in response to all representations received, the parish council has amended the neighbourhood plan as appropriate.

The Borough Council is satisfied that public consultation on the pre-submission draft neighbourhood plan was carried out in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), and the submission plan and supporting documents meet the requirements of Regulation 15. Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency have confirmed that a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Habitats Regulation Assessment is not required for the plan.

Public consultation (Regulation 16) on the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan, facilitated by Maidstone Borough Council, commenced on 14 August and closes on 28 September 2020.

The Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan was considered by the Council's Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee on 22 September 2020 when support for the plan, subject to the resolution of matters raised in the Council's representation, was confirmed.

The neighbourhood plan is clear and well written and, with one exception, its policies conform to the strategic policies of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017. Neighbourhood plan policies PWP4(B)(ii): Provision for new housing development; RH2: Affordable housing – local priority; and RH3(c): Redevelopment and/or remodelling of existing affordable housing provision, refer to the occupation of affordable housing being prioritised for applicants with a local connection. Strategic policy SP20 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan seeks the provision of affordable housing as a percentage of market housing schemes to meet a borough-wide need. The criteria for the occupation of affordable housing provided under this policy is set by the Borough Council, and does not prioritise occupation for people with a proven local connection. Non-strategic policy DM13 of the Local Plan brings forward affordable local needs housing on rural exception sites, and people with a local connection are prioritised for the occupation of these homes. Policies RH2 and RH3(c) of the neighbourhood plan are not rural exception site policies. Definitions for 'affordable housing' and 'rural exception sites' are clearly set out in the glossary of the NPPF.

This point was raised by the Council in its representation on the neighbourhood plan at Regulation 14 stage consultation. In its Consultation Statement, the parish council has responded:

"Noted. It is understood that MBC does not currently prioritise people with local connections. However this was an important issue in community engagement, and it was felt that people with local connections should have the opportunity to occupy affordable housing in the parish, and contribute to the sustainability of the local community by being able to live where they have a positive connection, while not debarring others from moving into the parish. The policies apply "outside the Maidstone Urban Area" which means that they do not apply to the largest housing sites in the parish, but do apply in the more rural part of the parish where facilities are more limited. The Neighbourhood Plan has to "generally conform" to MBC strategic policies, and this is felt to be an appropriately balanced approach. No change."

Despite being an important issue for the community, the approach is not considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted local plan, and the Council has exclusive rights to nominate suitable households in housing need in accordance with its Allocations Scheme. Affordable housing for occupants with a local connection can be provided on rural exception sites (either through sites allocated in local plans or neighbourhood plans, or through the planning application process). The reality of the situation is that those who are on the Council's Housing Register who might have a local connection to Boughton Monchelsea, would have the opportunity to bid on any affordable properties that are advertised in their particular band and bed-need.

Without modification, the Council believes that the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan fails to meet the basic conditions for neighbourhood plans with regard to conformity to

adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan strategic policy SP20. There is also a matter of consistency with other neighbourhood plans in the borough, whereby parish councils have removed affordable housing policies seeking a local connection from their plans (prior to submission) in order to meet the basic conditions at examination.

Consequently, this representation seeks a modification to the neighbourhood plan, to delete references to prioritising affordable housing for people with a local connection to Boughton Monchelsea parish. Other representations listed below seek greater clarity or correction.

Page no.	Paragraph/Policy no.	Representations
30	Map 9 Local Landscape Designations	<p>Amendment: Under Section 4.5, paragraph 2 (page 29), reference is made to the Local Plan designations for the Greensand Ridge and Loose Valley Landscapes of Local Value being shown on Map 9. These have not been included on Map 9.</p> <p>It is also considered that Map 9 would be clearer if the 'existing LCA classifications' were removed. These classifications can be accessed in Maidstone's Landscape Character Assessment and, without the supporting description, there is limited value in showing them on Map 9.</p> <p>Reason: Correction and for clarity.</p>
33	Map 10 Key Views	<p>Amendment: In its Regulation 14 consultation response, the Council recommended that the direction of key views taken at the viewpoints be included, and to cross-reference to photographs. The Consultation Statement confirms that the map will be amended, but this has not been updated. An alternative would be to include photographs of all of the key views, rather than a selection.</p> <p>Reason: For clarity.</p>
38	PWP2: Priority Local Landscape	<p>Amendment: "Development proposals in this area will not be permitted supported unless ..."</p> <p>Reason: The Borough Council is the responsible authority for determining planning applications.</p>
39, 50 & 51	<p>PWP4(B)(ii): Provision for new housing development</p> <p>RH2: Affordable housing – local priority</p> <p>RH3(c): Redevelopment and/or remodelling of existing affordable housing provision</p>	<p>See main body of representation for background information.</p> <p>Amendment: Delete references in the neighbourhood plan to prioritising the occupation of affordable housing for people with a local connection.</p> <p>Reason: To conform to the NPPF and strategic policy SP20 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017.</p>

Page no.	Paragraph/Policy no.	Representations
59	LRE2(c)(i)	<p>Amendment 2: Delete text for LR21(c)(i). "Development is located ... near existing established built or landscape features.</p> <p>Reason: For clarity. It is unclear why development would be located near landscape features because, for example, there are issues about potential adverse effects of development too close to existing trees or hedges.</p>

Yours faithfully,

Rob Jarman

Head of Planning and Development

Maidstone Borough Council, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ

t 01622 602214 [w www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk)

Agenda Item 17

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

8 September 2020

Kent Downs Draft AONB Management Plan Consultation

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Deanne Cunningham, Team Leader (Heritage, Landscape and Design)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

There is a statutory requirement under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act)) for the 12 Local Authorities responsible for parts of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to act jointly to prepare, review and adopt a Management Plan for the AONB.

The adopted Kent Downs AONB Management Plan (2014-2019) is currently being reviewed by the Kent Downs AONB Unit and has been subject to the appropriate statutory assessments. The revised plan responds to the findings of the Government's Review of National Parks and AONB, the input of experts, climate change impacts and natural decline, assists with meeting net zero targets and seeks to take a positive approach for the future of landscapes of the Kent Downs.

The Borough Council is a statutory consultee on the draft Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2020-2025 and the Committee is therefore requested to consider the Council's formal response to the consultation, attached as Appendix 1, with a view to supporting the adoption of the final Plan as required by the CRoW Act 2000.

Purpose of Report

Decision.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2020-2025 is generally supported subject to resolution of the matters raised in the Council's consultation response attached at Appendix 1; and
2. The Council's consultation response on the draft Kent Downs AONB Management Plan attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Committee	8 September 2020

Kent Downs Draft AONB Management Plan Consultation

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p><i>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure</i> • <i>Safe, Clean and Green</i> • <i>Homes and Communities</i> • <i>A Thriving Place</i> <p><i>We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council's overall achievement of its aims as set out above.</i></p>	Rob Jarman Head of Planning and Development
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p><i>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Heritage is Respected</i> • <i>Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced</i> • <i>Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved</i> • <i>Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected</i> <p><i>The report recommendation supports the achievement of the above cross cutting objectives through the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan.</i></p>	Rob Jarman Head of Planning and Development
Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No direct risk management implications arise from this report.</i> 	Rob Jarman Head of Planning and Development
Financial	No direct financial implications arise from this report.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No direct staffing implications arise from this report.</i> 	Rob Jarman Head of Planning and Development
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No direct legal implications arise from this report.</i> 	Jo Smith Senior Planning Lawyer Mid Kent Legal Services
Privacy and Data Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No privacy and data protection implications have been identified.</i> 	Anna Collier Policy and Information Manager
Equalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment</i> 	Anna Collier Policy & Information Manager
Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.</i> 	[Public Health Officer]
Crime and Disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No crime and disorder implications arise from this report.</i> 	Rob Jarman Head of Planning and Development
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No procurement implications arise from this report.</i> 	Rob Jarman Head of Planning and Development & Section 151 Officer]

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There is a statutory responsibility under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW Act) 2000 (sections 89 and 90) for Local Authorities to act jointly to prepare, adopt and subsequently review AONB Management Plans at intervals of not more than five years.
- 2.2 The review of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 is now outside of the statutory time frame. Initial delays occurred because during the review process questions were raised about fundamental issues relating to the context in which the plan was being written and whether the plan was in line with current guidance. The specific concern was whether the plan strayed too far into seeking to be determinative of planning and

development management issues, and whether it should contain 'policies'. Advice was therefore sought from both Natural England and Defra. Following this, the impact of Covid-19 has delayed things further.

- 2.3 In the meantime the current AONB Management Plan (2014-2019) remains in place until the new version has been reviewed, revised and adopted.
- 2.4 The AONB Management Plan belongs to the relevant Local Authorities and the AONB Unit assists in taking forward its preparation and review. The support of constituent Local Authorities is needed, particularly with regard to feedback on the consultation draft.
- 2.5 It is important that during the consultation each Local Authority is aware of its responsibilities, the plan, its statutory status and the process and timetable for the review.
- 2.6 The deadline for the consultation responses is 7 September 2020 but, because of the cycle for SPI Committee, it has been agreed that the consultation period can be extended for a short time to enable the Council to make its response.
- 2.7 The draft Plan is subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment.
- 2.8 All Local Authorities have to adopt the same plan, so if any one of them requires a late stage amendment, the whole adoption process will need to start again.
- 2.9 Once the current consultation responses have been compiled, the Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) will consider the consultation responses at its next meeting. The timetable is for the second draft of the Management Plan to be considered by the JAC in October. The final Plan should be available in November ready for the final adoption process, which is expected to take 3-4 months, with the anticipated adoption date being the end of March 2021. There is still some uncertainty about the publication of the Government's response to the Review of National Parks and AONBs and whether it will affect the timetable. If it is published before adoption there may be a need for minor changes to the Plan to ensure consistency but it is not anticipated that it will be a particular problem.
- 2.10 The revisions include making the Plan fit for the rapidly changing context and drawing on new evidence from the Government's Review of AONBs and National Parks. The Plan responds to:
 - The national guidance and legislation for the preparation and review of AONB Management Plans.
 - The findings of a wide ranging public and stakeholder consultation and engagement programme.
 - The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan
 - Expected EU exit and seeks to be fit for post exit Environmental Land Management Systems and the expected Agriculture and Environment Acts

- Biodiversity and environmental net gain
- The stronger emphasis in policy on the natural capital and ecosystems services approach
- Responding to the Climate and Environment declarations of many of the Local Authority partners
- Being fit to accommodate the findings of the Government’s Landscape Review
- Responding to the findings of the Kent Growth and Infrastructure Framework, Environment Strategy and Draft Biodiversity Strategy.
- Being fit to accommodate the findings of the National Tree Strategy
- Aligning with the plans and policies of Local Authority and Defra family partners
- Providing relevant, up to date evidence and principles to assist Local Authorities in their functions.

2.11 The draft Management Plan is considered to be acceptable in principle subject to minor amendments and clarifications as noted in the Council’s consultation response attached at Appendix 1. If the issues remain essentially unchanged from the 2016-2019 Management Plan and no further comments have been made and there is no obligation to complete all sections of the consultation questionnaire.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option A: To not make representation on the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan. The consultation is being run in accordance with the requirements of national legislation, but there is no requirement for the Council to submit a response. However, to follow this option means that the Council’s overall view is not asserted. This approach could compromise the Council’s ability to agree to adopt the Plan within necessary timescales and cause it to frustrate the process.
- 3.2 Option B: To approve the Borough Council’s representation on the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan, attached at Appendix 1.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option B is recommended. This option affords an opportunity to inform the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and will help to ensure that its adoption is timely and expedient.

5. RISK

- 5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council’s Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this report at sections 3 and 4.

5.2 The risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Council's policy.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 The Mid Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee fed back preliminary comments on the draft Management Plan earlier this year prior to the current public consultation, which closes in September 2020. The final revised draft of the Plan is due to be considered by JAC members in October. The Council will then be asked to adopt the Plan once the final version has been agreed by the JAC.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 Once the Management Plan text has been finalised, the JAC will take the Plan through a formal adoption stage. At this stage it will be published as a hard copy and in a digital version and deposited with the Secretary of State as required by the CRoW Act 2000.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- *Appendix 1: Kent Downs AONB Management Plan consultation response*
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Paper 1: Kent Downs AONB Management Plan (<https://localplan.maidstone.gov.uk/home/planning-consultations>)

Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Draft Management Plan

Consultation Questionnaire

The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit are seeking your views on the Kent Downs AONB Draft Management Plan 2020 – 2025. Kent County Council (KCC) is hosting this consultation on their behalf.

What information do you need before completing the questionnaire?

We recommend that you read the **Draft Management Plan** (or sections relevant to your interests) and accompanying **Draft Landscape Character Assessment** (or sections relevant to your interests) before filling in this questionnaire. The Environment Report and Sustainability Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment are also available. All consultation material is available on KCC's website kent.gov.uk/kentdownsaonb or in hard copy on request.

We recognise that the AONB Management Plan and accompanying Landscape Character Assessment are broad in the subjects and geography they cover so please do not feel obliged to answer all of the questions. We welcome your response to any or all of the matters they cover.

The Draft Plan was prepared before the Covid-19 pandemic and it will be vital we consider how the Management Plan responds to the crisis. This questionnaire provides an opportunity for you to tell us any key considerations you feel we should take into account.

This questionnaire can be completed on our website. Alternatively, you can fill in this Word version and return it via email to mail@kentdowns.org.uk or by post to Kent Downs AONB Unit, West Barn, Penstock Hall Farm, Canterbury Road, East Brabourne, Ashford, Kent TN25 5LL.

Please ensure your response reaches us by midnight 7th September 2020.

Alternative Formats: If you need this questionnaire or any of the consultation documents in an alternative format, please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine which is monitored during office hours.

Privacy: Kent County Council collects and processes personal information in order to provide a range of public services. Kent County Council respects the privacy of individuals and endeavours to ensure personal information is collected fairly, lawfully, and in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Section 1 – About You

Q1. Are you responding on behalf of ...?

Please select the option from the list below that most closely represents how you will be responding to this consultation.

Select **one** option only.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yourself as an individual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yourself in your professional capacity
<input type="checkbox"/>	A representative of a local community group or residents' association
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of a Parish / Town / Borough / District Council in an official capacity
<input type="checkbox"/>	A Parish / District / County Councillor
<input type="checkbox"/>	An educational establishment, such as a school or college
<input type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of a business
<input type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of a charity, voluntary or community sector organisation (VCS)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

If 'Other', please specify:

Q1a. If you are responding in your professional capacity, please tell us what it is:

Q1b. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation (community group, resident association, council, educational establishment, business or any other organisation), please tell us the name of the organisation here:

Maidstone Borough Council

Q2. Please tell us the first five characters of your postcode:

Please do not reveal your whole postcode. We use this to help us to analyse our data. It will not be used to identify who you are.

ME156

Section 2 – Kent Downs AONB Draft Management Plan

The Draft Management Plan is formed of 12 sections. You can provide feedback on all or as many of the sections as you like. If you would rather not provide feedback on any section, just move on to the next set of questions.

1. The Kent Downs AONB [Page 4](#)
2. The Management of the Kent Downs AONB [Page 7](#)
3. Sustainable Development [Page 9](#)
4. Landform and Landscape Character [Page 13](#)
5. Biodiversity [Page 16](#)
6. Farmed Landscape [Page 19](#)
7. Woodlands and Trees [Page 22](#)
8. Historic and Cultural Heritage [Page 25](#)
9. Heritage Coast [Page 28](#)
10. Geology and Natural Resources [Page 31](#)
11. Quality of Life and Vibrant Communities [Page 34](#)
12. Access, Enjoyment and Understanding [Page 37](#)

1. The Kent Downs AONB

A vision is a description of what an organisation would like to achieve or accomplish and is intended to serve as a guide for what action will be taken in the future.

The overarching ten-year vision for the Kent Downs AONB included in the Draft Management Plan 2020-25 is as follows:

“In 2030... the qualities and distinctive features of the Kent Downs AONB, the dramatic south-facing scarp, secluded dry valleys, network of tiny lanes, isolated farmsteads, churches and oasts, orchards, dramatic cliffs, the ancient woodlands and delicate chalk grassland along with the ancient, remote and tranquil qualities, are valued, secured and strengthened.

“The Kent Downs has become a landscape where rapid change supports the AONB’s distinctive features. Responses to development pressures and climate change have enhanced landscape character and what is valued by people about the landscape. The Kent Downs landscape is recognised and valued, enjoyed and cherished and its future conservation and enhancement is a certainty.

“Strong, assertive leadership from the AONB partnership along with positive partnerships with key organisations, local people and land managers act together with wider publics to conserve, enhance, enjoy and promote a nationally and internationally recognised and valued landscape.”

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the vision for the Kent Downs AONB in 2030

See page 3. *Select **one** option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q3a. Please provide any comments on the vision here:

Welcome the acknowledgement that change will inevitably occur in the AONB and that the AONB partnership shall seek to ensure that such change supports the AONB’s distinctive features.

The Draft Management Plan identifies special components, characteristics and qualities of the Kent Downs AONB.

- Dramatic landform and views; a distinctive landscape character
- Biodiversity-rich habitats
- Farmed landscape
- Woodland and trees
- A rich legacy of historic and cultural heritage
- The Heritage Coasts
- Geology and natural resources
- Tranquillity and remoteness

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified what makes the area distinctive and special to you?

Select one option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
			X		

Q4a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

We note that ‘vibrant communities’, ‘development pressures’ and ‘access, enjoyment and understanding’ which had previously been included in the special components, characteristics and qualities of the AONB have, in the main, been reclassified as ‘important social and economic components of the Kent Downs which are a key to its future conservation and enhancement’.

As the communities that lie within the Kent Downs AONB form an important component of the AONB, and it is their histories that have shaped the cultural landscape we do not agree with the proposed new special components, characteristics and qualities identified in the Draft Management Plan (MP) as this will result in the relegation of the importance of the communities that live and work in the AONB.

The Draft Management Plan also identifies the social and economic components which are key to the future conservation and enhancement of the Kent Down AONB. See page 6.

- Vibrant communities
- Access, enjoyment and understanding

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the key social and economic components?

Select one option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
			X		

Q5a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Whilst we welcome the reference made to communities within the AONB, it is important that they are not relegated in their significance to the AONB so that the future economic and social needs of communities can be met.

2. The Management of the Kent Downs AONB

Our vision for the management of the Kent Downs AONB is as follows:

“In 2030... the Kent Downs AONB is widely recognised and greatly valued. It is a landscape cherished and held in the highest esteem by those who visit, live and work there and nearby and by those who influence its future. Residents and visitors know where the AONB is and they understand its character and qualities and support the purposes of its designation. The Kent Downs AONB partnership is acknowledged, supported, funded and equipped to be the main and an influential and effective advocate and champion for the AONB. A diverse range of individuals and organisations are delivering positive action on the ground and are collaboratively engaged in the partnership and management planning. The AONB partnership is engaging and open about the conservation and management of the AONB.”

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for the management of the Kent Downs AONB?

See pages 9 – 18. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q6a. Please provide any comments on our vision for the management of the Kent Downs AONB here:

Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for the management of the Kent Downs AONB?

See page 20. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
		X			

Q7a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

We question the removal of the point about responsiveness to people, adaptivity and flexibility to change, which were included in previous iterations of the MP. There is a need to balance conserving and enhancing the AONB with the economic and social wellbeing of the communities that are located within and on the edge of the AONB.

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for management of the Kent Downs AONB?

See page 20. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q8a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

We acknowledge the role that LPA’s have in supporting the implementation of the management plan and support principle MPP2.

Inclusion of technical and financial support from LPA’s is new and was not included in the previous MP. Clarification is needed in respect to what form this technical and financial support will take.

3. Sustainable Development

Our vision for sustainable development is as follows:

“In 2030 ... the principles of sustainable development are at the heart of the management of the Kent Downs. Change reinforces and enhances the characteristics, qualities and distinctiveness of the Kent Downs and benefits its communities and economy. While the surrounding urban areas have expanded considerably, innovative management techniques and policy approaches successfully address the pressure and opportunities presented by growth to the landscapes of the AONB.

“The impacts of climate change are being felt but the mitigation and adaptive responses taken are landscape led, effective and carefully chosen to enhance the characteristics, qualities and distinctiveness of the landscape rather than detracting from them. The natural capital and ecosystems service provision of the Kent Downs has been enhanced. Important areas of tranquillity have been identified, protected and expanded and provide ‘oases of calm’.”

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for sustainable development?

See pages 23 – 26. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q9a. Please provide any comments on our vision for sustainable development here:

Clarification is needed in respect to what ‘growth to the landscapes of the AONB’ means as it is not clear in this context whether it refers to the expansion of the landscape and designation, or expansion into the landscape.

Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right guiding themes for sustainable development?

See pages 26 – 28. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q10a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right recurrent themes for sustainable development?

See pages 29 - 31. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q11a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for sustainable development?

See page 31. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q12a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

We would ask for clarification in respect to the meaning of ‘environmental net gain’.

Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for sustainable development?

See page 32. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
			X		

Q13a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Aim 6 refers to the setting and views in and out of the AONB to be conserved and enhanced. Whilst important, the setting of the AONB is not part of the AONB and should not be subject to the same stringent requirements as the AONB itself.

Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for sustainable development?

See pages 33. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q14a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

4. Landform and Landscape Character

*The section is informed by the accompanying **Draft Landscape Character Assessment** which details the identifying characteristics of the landscape of the Kent Downs AONB and makes landscape management recommendations on actions, investments and priorities to conserve and enhance the landscape. **See Section 3 of this questionnaire on page 40** to answer the questions on the Landscape Character Assessment.*

Our vision for landform and landscape character is as follows:

“In 2030... the rich diversity of landscape character and qualities distinctive to the Kent Downs are protected, enhanced and managed to the highest standards in a co-ordinated and continual programme. The special characteristics and qualities of the Kent Downs AONB are widely recognised, valued and strengthened and landscape character informs land and resource management, nature recovery plans, intended net gain and natural capital investments, responses to climate change and development decisions.”

Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for landform and landscape character

See page 36. *Select **one** option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q15a. Please provide any comments on our vision for landform and landscape character here:

Whilst this section is accompanied by the Draft Landscape Character Assessment we would like to see the methodology so that we can ensure that the assessments fit with our own suite of landscape character assessment evidence.

Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right landscape character types and areas within the Kent Downs AONB?

See pages 36 - 39. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q16a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

b. should include other incompatible land uses and associated ancillary structures, for example small scale agricultural activities such as alpaca, chicken and pig husbandry.

Q17. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for landform and landscape character?

See page 40. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q17a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

g. should consider landscape and visual appraisals and not just LVIA as the level of assessment required depends on the type and scale of the land use changes in question.

Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for landform and landscape character?

See page 41. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q18a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Again, ‘landscape net gain’ needs clarifying as a term.

Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for landform and landscape character?

See pages 41. *Select **one** option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q19a If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

LLC4- should read as ‘enforcement action against’ as ‘prosecution’ is just one means of enforcement.

LLC5- is this a principle?

5. Biodiversity

Our vision for biodiversity is as follows:

“By 2030... the distinctive wildlife habitats of the Kent Downs are understood better, enjoyed and celebrated and are in favourable, resilient condition with individual characteristic species flourishing. There is a far-sighted nature recovery plan being implemented for the Kent Downs, which recognises and responds to the substantial changes that will be experienced and is linked to a wider nature recovery network. An approach to intended biodiversity net gain is understood and agreed and is achieving advances in biodiversity and habitats across the Kent Downs. There has been an increase in the extent and quality of key characteristic habitats and abundance of species of the Downs. People, policy and funding regimes recognise, value and support the importance of nature in the Kent Downs.”

Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for biodiversity?

See pages 44 – 47. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q20a. Please provide any comments on our vision for biodiversity here:

Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right special characteristics and qualities for biodiversity?

See pages 47 - 51. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q21a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q22. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for biodiversity?

See page 52. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q22a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q23. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for biodiversity?

See page 54. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q23a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q24. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for biodiversity?

See page 54. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q24a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

6. Farmed Landscape

Our vision for farmed landscape is as follows:

“In 2030... the Kent Downs AONB is a place where agriculture takes and is appreciated for a pivotal role in the conservation of natural beauty and landscape qualities and character as well as wider. Sustainable farming is the predominant land-use of the AONB and the heritage of mixed farming is retained in a contemporary context, supports and enhances landscape character, nature and is an increasingly important part of the Kent Downs contribution to achieving net zero carbon emissions. There is a greater public understanding of the roles of farming and more opportunities to gain carefully managed access to farmed landscape and to understand farming systems. Despite the volatile context, a broad range of crops are sustainably produced and are suited to the increasing extremes of climate, local conditions and market forces as well as the landscape. Naturally diverse permanent grasslands are well managed by grazing and orchards, plats and hop gardens retain an important place in the landscape. The flourishing number of vineyards are managed in a way that conserves the characteristics and qualities of the AONB. The high-quality products of the Kent Downs are commercially successful and high environmental quality is a market advantage.”

Q25. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for farmed landscape?

See pages 57 – 61. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q25a. Please provide any comments regarding our vision for farmed landscape here:

Q26. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right special characteristics and qualities for farmed landscape?

See page 66. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q26a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q27. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for farmed landscape?

See page 67. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q27a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q28. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for farmed landscape?

See page 68. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q28a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q29. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for farmed landscape?

See page 69. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q29a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

7. Woodlands and Trees

Our vision for woodlands and trees is as follows:

“In 2030... the characteristic Kent Downs network of woodland and trees is greater in extent and is conserved and enhanced for its landscape, wildlife and historic value. Sustainably managed woodlands and trees are resilient to stressors such as pests, disease, visitor pressure and climate change, they provide inherent mitigation and adaption to that change. Buoyant markets for woodland products support the productive, sustainable management of trees and woodlands; high quality multi-functional management provides well-used places for leisure and recreation, health and wellbeing and are rich in characteristic wildlife.”

Q30. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for woodland and trees?

See pages 72 – 77. *Select **one** option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q30a. Please provide any comments on the vision for woodland and trees here:

Whilst we strongly agree with the vision we would like to see consideration of hedgerows alongside trees and woodlands.

It would also be helpful to take a more detailed view on ‘wilding’.

Q31. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right special characteristics and qualities for woodlands and trees?

See page 77. Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q31a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Definition of ‘notable’ trees is needed.

We would also like this to encompass groups of trees which have important amenity value (where the individual trees may or may not be in good condition or significant).

Q32. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for woodlands and trees?

See page 78. Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q32a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Other non- intensive activities can pose a threat to woodland trees (see answer to Q16a.).

Again the issue of ‘wilding’ needs clarification.

Definition of ‘specimen’ trees, particularly the distinction between ‘notable’ trees, and the need for consideration of groups of trees needed (see answer to Q31a. above).

Q33. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims that support the sustainable management of woodlands and trees?

See page 79. Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q33a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

7.3.1 The word ‘fine’ should be omitted and hedgerows added.

Q34. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles that support the sustainable management of woodlands and trees?

See page 80. Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q34a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Include mention of hedgerows.

8. Historic and Cultural Heritage

Our vision for historic and cultural heritage is as follows:

“In 2034... the rich heritage of historic landscape, buildings, settlements and sites that characterise the Kent Downs’ historic and cultural fabric are maintained in favourable condition and are enhanced to reflect their local character and significance. The environmental performance of historic buildings is enhanced in a way that is sensitive to their character. They are understood and cherished by local people and visitors alike for their intrinsic value and for their important contribution to quality of life and rural economy. Vibrant and exciting artistic and cultural interpretation and celebration of the Kent Downs is supported and strong partnerships for the arts and cultural development in the Downs is in place and delivering extraordinary, contemporary work enjoyed by and inspiring wide and diverse publics.”

Q35. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for historic and cultural heritage?

See page 83. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
X					

Q35a. Please provide any comments on the vision for historic and cultural heritage here:

The vision for the historic environment is supported. As well as being understood and cherished, the Plan should encourage local people and visitors to actively participate in protecting and enhancing the heritage and cultural aspects of the landscape. The vision for artistic and cultural interpretation and celebration should include the history of the landscape and its heritage. This would fit with Principle HCH5.

Q36. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right special characteristics and qualities for historic and cultural heritage?

See pages 83 - 89. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q36a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

More emphasis should be given to the importance of historic farmsteads, which are present across the landscape. This would align with Principle HCH6 and the Kent Downs Farmsteads Guidance. As well as being significant historic buildings, farm houses form the nucleus of groups of ancillary buildings and the managed land around them, and farmsteads and their settings are an essential aspect of the historic landscape.

The Plan could refer to the presence of valuable but non-designated 20th century defensive heritage which exists away from the coast, for example the numerous structures and features at Detling airfield.

Q37. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for historic and cultural heritage?

See page 89. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q37a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

The text refers to scheduled and unscheduled historic environment. It would be more accurate to refer to designated and non-designated heritage assets, as this would encompass both buildings and archaeology.

Q38. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for historic and cultural heritage?

See page 90. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q38a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Aim 1 should also refer to buildings and structures, for example farmsteads or churches that may not be within a defined village settlement.
 Aim 5 should refer to conservation rather than restoration in order to be consistent with aim 4 and wider historic environment policy.
 Aim 5 could include a desire to promote traditional skills training and education, which would then support Aim 5 which requires skilled workers to be employed.

Q39. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for historical and cultural heritage?

See page 90. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure

	X				
--	---	--	--	--	--

Q39a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Principle HCH6 should also refer to other relevant conservation management plans, which might include those for conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, or archaeological sites.

The application of design policies in relevant neighbourhood plans is pursued through the functions of the LPA and therefore it is not necessary for this to be duplicated in HCH6.

9. Heritage Coast

Our vision for the Heritage Coast is as follows:

“In 2030... the special place that the White Cliffs of Dover have in the hearts and minds of millions of people is justified by the reality experienced on the ground. Collaborative effort continues to transform the management of the coasts which meets the needs of the landscape, natural and historic environment and communities, while supporting the sustainable regeneration of the coastal economy including the coastal towns.”

Q40. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for the heritage coast?

See pages 93 – 97. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure

Q40a. Please provide any comments on the vision for the heritage coast here:

Q41. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right special characteristics and qualities for the heritage coast?

See page 97. Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure

Q41a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q42. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for the heritage coast?

See page 98. Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure

Q42a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q43. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for the heritage coast?

See page 99. Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure

Q43a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q44. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for the heritage coast?

See page 99. Select **one** option only.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure

Q44a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

10. Geology and Natural Resources

Our vision for geology and natural resources is as follows:

“In 2030... great care is taken to conserve and manage the natural resources of the Kent Downs particularly soil, air, ground and river water. New and innovative ways to both reduce resource use and enhance the existing natural capital have been adopted which support landscape character and qualities, the economy and communities. The need to conserve and enhance natural beauty means mineral resource mining occurs away from the AONB, except in exceptional circumstances, and worked out quarry sites have been restored to enhance local landscape character.”

Q45. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for geology and natural resources?

See pages 102 – 105. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q45a. Please provide any comments on the vision for geology and natural resources here:

Q46. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right special characteristics and qualities for geology and natural resources?

See page 105 - 106. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q46a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q47. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for geology and natural resources?

See pages 107 - 108. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q47a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

There is an opportunity to reference the symbiotic relationship that can exist between flood reduction measures and landscape enhancement.

Q48. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for geology and natural resources?

See page 108. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q48a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q49. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for geology and natural resources?

See page 108. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q49a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

11. Quality of Life and Vibrant Communities

Our vision for quality of life and vibrant communities is as follows:

“In 2030... a diversity of people and communities are central to the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the Kent Downs; they value this special place and feel welcome to enjoy, experience and benefit from the AONB. People and communities have a strong, positive influence over change through being engaged and active participants. Communities’ work and voluntary activity marries social and economic well-being with landscape conservation and enhancement. Individuals and organisations choose to buy goods and services that in themselves benefit the Kent Downs landscape and economy.

“The health and well-being benefits of contact with nature and beauty have become central to the purposes and management of the landscape and the Kent Downs partnership.”

Q50. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for quality of life and vibrant communities?

See pages 111 – 116. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q50a. Please provide any comments on the vision for quality of life and vibrant communities here:

Q51. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for quality of life and vibrant communities?

See page 116 - 118. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q51a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q52. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for quality of life and vibrant communities?

See page 118. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q52a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q53. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for quality of life and vibrant communities?

See page 118. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q53a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

12. Access, Enjoyment and Understanding

Our vision for access, enjoyment and understanding is as follows:

“In 2030... the Kent Downs AONB is a place of natural beauty with opportunity and access for all people; they feel welcome to participate in quiet recreation for health, relaxation, enjoyment and for cultural and artistic expression.

“Improved management ensures that the Public Rights of Way and much of the highway network is safe, quiet and convenient for walkers, cyclists and horse riders and public transport is an attractive option to reach and enjoy the landscape. Maintenance of the Public Rights of Way and highway network is sympathetic to biodiversity and landscape character.

“The Kent Downs AONB is recognised, valued and celebrated by residents, visitors and by those who simply delight in the fact that it is there.”

Q54. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our vision for access, enjoyment and understanding?

See pages 121 – 128. *Select one option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q54a. Please provide any comments on the vision for access, enjoyment and understanding here:

Q55. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right main issues, opportunities and threats for access, enjoyment and understanding?

See page 128. *Select **one** option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q55a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q56. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right aims for access, enjoyment and understanding?

See page 130. *Select **one** option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q56a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Q57. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have identified the right principles for access, enjoyment and understanding?

See page 130. *Select **one** option only.*

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
	X				

Q57a. If you have answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’, please tell us why here:

Section 3 – Draft Landscape Character Assessment

The Draft Landscape Character Assessment (which is made up of 13 individual documents) outlines the identifying characteristics of the landscape of the Kent Downs AONB and makes landscape management recommendations on actions, investments and priorities to conserve and enhance the landscape. These recommendations inform the Draft Management Plan.

Q58. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the landscape management recommendations in the draft Landscape Character Assessment?

Select one option in each row.

Chalk Downs	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
LCA 1A West Kent Downs						
LCA 1B Mid Kent Downs			X			
LCA 1C East Kent Downs						

Chalk Scarps and Vales	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
LCA 2A Kemsing Scarp and Vale						
LCA 2B Hollingbourne Scarp and Vale				X		
LCA 2C Postling Scarp and Vale						

Chalk Cliffs and Coast	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
LCA 3A White Cliffs Coast						

Select **one** option in each row.

River Valleys	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
LCA 4A Darent Valley						
LCA 4B Medway Valley		X				
LCA 4C Stour Valley						

Greensand	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
LCA 5A Sevenoaks Greensand Ridge						
LCA 5B Lympne Greensand Escarpment						

Low Weald	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
LCA 6C Low Weald Eden Valley						

Q58a. Please provide any comments on the landscape management recommendations here: Please be as specific as is possible in your answers and provide evidence if appropriate.

LCA 2B Suggests that large scale development outside the AONB will have an adverse effect on the AONB. We disagree with this and consider that it should be rephrased to make it clear that, so long as suitable design and appropriate edge treatments can be secured to mitigate potential harm to the landscape character of the AONB, then appropriate large-scale development in the setting of the AONB could be acceptable in landscape impact terms..

Section 4 – Supporting Assessments

Q59. We have completed an Environment Report and Sustainability Assessment on the Draft Management Plan.

If you have any comments on this assessment, please provide them here:

The Environment Report and Sustainability Assessment is available at kent.gov.uk/kentdownsaonb or in hard copy on request.

To help ensure that we are meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 we have undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIAs) for the draft Management Plan.

An EqIA is a tool to assess the impact any proposals would have on the protected characteristics: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, religion, and carer's responsibilities. The EqIA is available at kent.gov.uk/kentdownsaonb or in hard copy on request.

Q60. We welcome your views on our equality analysis and if you think there is anything else we should consider relating to equality and diversity. Please provide any comments here:

Section 5 – Additional Information

Q61. The Draft Management Plan was prepared before the Covid-19 pandemic. It will be important to consider how the Management Plan should respond to the crisis. Please provide any key considerations you think we should take into account here:

If your comments directly relate to a specific section of the Draft Management Plan, please include the name of the section with your comment.

Q62. If you have any examples of landscape enhancement, biodiversity, or access improvement projects in your local area, please provide details here:

If you wish to discuss, please contact mail@kentdowns.org.uk

Q63. How did you find out about this consultation?

Select all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Received an email from Kent County Council
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Received an email from Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Received an email from another organisation or contact
<input type="checkbox"/>	From a friend or relative
<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper
<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Media (Facebook or Twitter)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kent.gov.uk website
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

If other, please specify:

Q64. Finally, do you any other comments to make about our Draft Management Plan?

Kent Downs AONB Citizen's Panel and Newsletter

The Kent Downs AONB is considering establishing a Citizen's Panel. Members would be asked for their feedback on a range of issues to help the AONB better understand residents' views and provide the right information to help people enjoy the landscape.

If you are interested in learning more, please visit <https://bit.ly/3cpYPnq>

Visit our website KentDowns.org.uk and join our email list via <https://bit.ly/2Lg7Bsb> to stay up to date with news and events in the Kent Downs Areas Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Section 6 - More About You

We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally, and that no one gets left out. That's why we are asking you these questions. We won't share the information you give us with anyone else. We'll use it only to help us make decisions and improve our services.

If you would rather not answer any of these questions, you don't have to.

It is not necessary to answer these questions if you are responding on behalf of an organisation.

Q65. Are you.....? Select one option only.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q66. Is your Gender the same as your birth? Select one option only

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q67. Which of these age groups applies to you? Select one option only.

<input type="checkbox"/>	0-15	<input type="checkbox"/>	25-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	50-59	<input type="checkbox"/>	65-74	<input type="checkbox"/>	85 + over
<input type="checkbox"/>	16-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	35-49	<input type="checkbox"/>	60-64	<input type="checkbox"/>	75-84	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q68. To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong?

Select **one** option only.

White English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Welsh	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Northern Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Gypsy/Roma	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British African	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arab	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Asian or Asian British Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>		

(Source: 2011 Census)

***Other Ethnic Group - If your ethnic group is not specified on the list, please describe it here**

A Carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. Both children and adults can be carers.

Q69. Are you a Carer? Select one option only.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal

day-to-day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, for example), are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Q70. Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010?

Select **one** option only.

Yes

No

I prefer not to say

Question 70a. If you answered ‘Yes’ above, please tell us the type of impairment that applies:

*You may have more than one type of impairment, so please tick **all** that apply. If none of these applies to you, please select ‘Other’, and give brief details of the impairment you have.*

<input type="checkbox"/>

Physical impairment

Sensory impairment (hearing, sight or both)

Longstanding illness or health condition, or epilepsy

Mental health condition

Learning disability

I prefer not to say

Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Q71. Do you regard yourself as belonging to a particular religion or belief?

Select **one** option only.

Yes

No

I prefer not to say

Q71a. If you answered 'Yes' above, which of the following applies to you?

Select **one** option only.

Christian

Buddhist

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Sikh

Other

I prefer not to say

If you selected Other, please specify:

Q72. Are you...? Select **one option only.**

Heterosexual/Straight

Bi/Bisexual

Gay woman/Lesbian

Gay man

Other

I prefer not to say

If you selected Other, please specify:

Consultation Privacy Notice

Last Updated: 10 June 2020

Who are we?

Kent County Council collects, uses and is responsible for certain personal information about you. When we do so we are regulated under the General Data Protection Regulation which applies across the European Union (including in the United Kingdom) and we are responsible as 'controller' of that personal information for the purposes of those laws. Our Data Protection Officer is Benjamin Watts.

The personal information we collect and use

Information collected by us

In the course of responding to Consultations published by Kent County Council we collect the following personal information when you provide it to us:

- Postcode
- Email address if you want updates on a consultation
- Feedback on the consultation
- Equalities Data - Ethnicity, Religion, Sexuality, Gender Reassignment, Disability or if you are a Carer
- Cookies – we use three types of cookies when you use our website. For more information about the cookies and how they are used please visit <https://kahootz.deskpro.com/kb/articles/kahootz-cookie-information-ci>

We use cookies to remember who you are and a few of your preferences whilst you use the website.

We do not use cookies to collect personally identifiable information about you, track your behaviour or share information with 3rd parties.

Our cookies do not contain any of your personal information and only take up about one-thousandth of the space of a single image from a typical digital camera.

All of the cookies we set are strictly necessary in order for us to provide the online service to you.

You do not need to submit any equalities information if you do not want to. KCC is committed to the principle that all our customers have the right to equality and fairness in the way they are treated and in the services that they receive. Any information you do give will be used to see if there are any differences in views for different groups of people, and to check if services are being delivered in a fair and

reasonable way. No personal information which can identify you, such as your name or address, will be used in producing equality reports. We will follow our Data Protection policies to keep your information secure and confidential. Your equality data will be anonymised before sent to other teams.

How we use your personal information

We use your personal information to inform you of the outcome of the consultation, if you have requested updates.

We may use your postcode to carry out a type of profiling to estimate which one of a number of lifestyle groups you are most likely to fall into. We do this using geodemographic segmentation tools. We do not make any decisions about individual service users based solely on automated processing, including profiling.

How long your personal data will be kept

We will hold your personal information for up to 6 years following the closure of a consultation.

Reasons we can collect and use your personal information

We rely on *'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest'*

And *'processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject.'*

The provision of contact details, including name, address or email address is required from you to enable us to respond to your feedback on consultations.

We rely on *processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest* as the lawful basis on which we collect and use your special category data for the purpose of equalities monitoring.

Further, the processing is necessary for the purposes of identifying or keeping under review the existence or absence of equality of opportunity or treatment between groups of people with the view to enabling such equality to be promoted or maintained.

You can read KCC's Equality Policy on our website <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/equality-and-diversity>

Who we share your personal information with

Kent County Council are hosting this consultation on behalf of the Kent Downs AONB Unit services. We may share your personal data and feedback with the Kent Down AONB Unit who may need to respond to your feedback. In some cases that may include your name and contact details if provided.

We will share personal information with law enforcement or other authorities if required by applicable law.

We use a system to log your feedback, which is provided by a third-party supplier.

Your Rights

Under the GDPR you have a number of rights which you can access free of charge which allow you to:

- Know what we are doing with your information and why we are doing it
- Ask to see what information we hold about you
- Ask us to correct any mistakes in the information we hold about you
- Object to direct marketing
- Make a complaint to the Information Commissioners Office

Depending on our reason for using your information you may also be entitled to:

- Ask us to delete information we hold about you
- Have your information transferred electronically to yourself or to another organisation
- Object to decisions being made that significantly affect you
- Object to how we are using your information
- Stop us using your information in certain ways

We will always seek to comply with your request however we may be required to hold or use your information to comply with legal duties. Please note: your request may delay or prevent us delivering a service to you.

For further information about your rights, including the circumstances in which they apply, see the guidance from the UK Information Commissioners Office (ICO) on individuals' rights under the General Data Protection Regulation.

If you would like to exercise a right, please contact the Information Resilience and Transparency Team at data.protection@kent.gov.uk.

Keeping your personal information secure

We have appropriate security measures in place to prevent personal information from being accidentally lost or used or accessed in an unauthorised way. We limit access to your personal information to those who have a genuine business need to know it. Those processing your information will do so only in an authorised manner and are subject to a duty of confidentiality.

We also have procedures in place to deal with any suspected data security breach. We will notify you and any applicable regulator of a suspected data security breach where we are legally required to do so.

Who to Contact

Please contact the Information Resilience and Transparency Team at data.protection@kent.gov.uk to exercise any of your rights, or if you have a

complaint about why your information has been collected, how it has been used or how long we have kept it for.

You can contact our Data Protection Officer, Benjamin Watts, at dpo@kent.gov.uk. Or write to Data Protection Officer, Kent County Council, Sessions House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ.

The General Data Protection Regulation also gives you right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority. The supervisory authority in the UK is the Information Commissioner who may be contacted at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns> or telephone 03031 231113.

For further information visit <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/about-the-website/privacy-statement>

Agenda Item 18

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

8 September 2020

Conservation Areas Work Programme Update

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Deanne Cunningham, Team Leader (Heritage, Landscape and Design) Paul Robertshaw & Christopher Rainsford, Principal Conservation Officers
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report identifies the work undertaken to date in respect of the conservation areas work programme and advises Members of the timescales for the public consultation and adoption of four conservation area appraisals and management plans.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the committee on progress of the two-year work programme for Maidstone's conservation areas as agreed at the meeting of this Committee on 10 September 2019.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee	8 September 2020

Conservation Areas Work Programme Update

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council's overall achievement of its aims as set out in section 3.	Head of Planning and Development
Cross Cutting Objectives	The report recommendations support the achievements of the Heritage is Respected cross cutting objective by preparing appraisals and management plans for the borough's conservation areas.	Head of Planning and Development
Risk Management	Refer to section 5 of the report	Head of Planning and Development
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	There will be Staffing implications and these are set out in section 3	Head of Planning and Development
Legal	Accepting the recommendations will fulfil the Council's duties under the Planning (Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.	Cheryl Parks Mid Kent Legal Services (Planning)
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	The preservation of the historic environment is of a positive benefit for all members of the community, helping achieve a strong sense of belonging. Community engagement and an equalities assessment would be carried out as part of the development of individual management plans to consider issues such as accessibility.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer

Crime and Disorder	No direct implications have been identified.	Head of Planning and Development
Procurement	No procurement will be required	Head of Service & Section 151 Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are 41 designated conservation areas in Maidstone Borough. Of these 13 have an appraisal, management plan or both.
- 2.2 In September 2019 Members agreed a two year work programme covering 2019-2021 for the production of documents for additional areas, to be resourced through the Business Rates Retention Scheme.
- 2.3 The work programme also included revision of the Boughton Monchelsea conservation area boundaries, which was finalised under delegated powers on 25.03.20.
- 2.4 In accordance with the agreed work programme, draft documents have been prepared for Sutton Valence and three Maidstone conservation areas – Town Centre, Chillington House and Ashford Road. These will be made available in draft on the Council’s website for public consultation (<http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/planning-and-building/primary-areas/heritage-and-landscape/tier-3-primary-areas/conservation-areas>).
- 2.5 The table in Appendix 1 sets out the status of each conservation area to include the new draft documents.

Policy considerations

- 2.6 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to review their conservation areas from time to time, to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement and consult the public in the area in question, taking account of views expressed (Sections 69(2) and 71(1 and 2)).
- 2.7 National planning policy guidance advises that a conservation area appraisal can be used to help authorities to develop a management plan and appropriate policies for the Local Plan, and that a good appraisal will consider features that made a positive or negative contribution to the area, thereby identifying opportunities for beneficial change or planning protection (PPG, Para 025).
- 2.8 Historic England advises that an up to date conservation area appraisal and management plan is the most appropriate way for a local authority to fulfil the above duties (Designation, Appraisal and Management of Conservation Areas, January 2019).

Work completed, 2019/2020

- 2.9 The boundaries of Boughton Monchelsea The Green and The Quarries Conservation Areas have been extended following a public consultation. The revised boundaries were formally adopted under delegated powers on 25.03.20.
- 2.10 A draft appraisal and management plan has been prepared for Sutton Valence Conservation Area. This is due for adoption in December 2020.
- 2.11 The 2009 Maidstone Centre appraisal has been revised and a management plan drafted. This is due for adoption in December 2020.
- 2.12 The 2010 Maidstone Ashford Road appraisal has been revised and a management plan added. This was originally intended for 2020/21, but was brought forward during the Covid-19 pandemic. This is due for adoption in December 2020.
- 2.13 A draft appraisal and management plan has been prepared for Maidstone Chillington House Conservation Area. This was also brought forward from the 2020/21 period. This is due for adoption in December 2020.

Upcoming work, 2020/2021

- 2.14 The above draft documents are available on the Council's website for public consultation. Following this meeting, they will be publicised by contacting Ward Members, Sutton Valence Parish Council, Maidstone BID, Maidstone Museum, and other groups and stakeholders relevant to each conservation area.
- 2.15 Following a period of not less than six weeks the documents will be amended in light of comments received and reported to the Head of Planning and Development for delegated approval. The final adopted documents will be added to the website accordingly.
- 2.16 Elmstone Hole Conservation Area will have an appraisal and management plan drafted in accordance with the agreed work programme, due to be completed in February 2021.
- 2.17 An appraisal and management plan will be drafted for Yalding Conservation Area, which was initially proposed for the work programme but substituted for Sutton Valence following Member discussion. This is due to be completed in February 2021.
- 2.18 If additional resources are made available in 2021, work will proceed on conservation areas in the rural service centres. These areas were identified as the next highest priority in the 2019 report.
- 2.19 Upcoming work completed in 2020/2021 is expected to be reported to Members in September 2021.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The work will be mainly be carried out by the part-time conservation officer, who is employed on a temporary contract due to end in early 2021. In addition to the conservation area work, officers will be carrying out project work in relation to the Local Plan review.
- 3.2 The project has been resourced in 2019/2020 by money allocated from the Business Rates Retention Scheme, which has been used to increase the hours of the part-time officer. This funding will not be available after March 2021, and consequently the resourcing of further conservation area work will be subject to review.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 In order to fulfil the Council's duties in relation to its designated conservation areas it is necessary to publish further appraisals and management plans.

5. RISK

- 5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 If the Committee agrees the recommendations of this report, the stakeholders will be notified in relation the proposed consultation exercise for the CAAMPs produced for Sutton Valence and Maidstone Centre, Chillington House and Ashford Road Conservation Areas, and officers will proceed with work on Yalding and Lenham Hole Conservation Areas.

7. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Maidstone Conservation Areas status September 2020

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDIX 1 - MAIDSTONE CONSERVATION AREAS STATUS

Conservation Area	Appraisal (CAA)	Management Plan (CAMP)
Bearsted	Combined CAAMP 22.03.10	
Bearsted Holy Cross Church		
Boughton Malherbe		
Boughton Monchelsea the Green	26.03.08	11.04.17
Boughton Monchelsea the Quarries	27.02.09	
Boughton Monchelsea Cock Street	27.02.09	
Boxley Village		
Boxley Abbey		
Broomfield		
Detling	26.03.08	
East Farleigh Dean Street		
East Farleigh Lower Road		
Grove Green		
Harrietsham		
Headcorn		
Hollingbourne Broad Street		
Hollingbourne Eyhorne Street		
Hollingborne Upper Street		
Leeds Lower Street		
Leeds Upper Street		
Lenham Village		
Lenham Sandway		
Lenham Elmstone Hole	Due 2021	
Lenham Liverton Street		
Linton	26.03.08	22.03.10
Loose Valley		
Maidstone All Saints	2003	2003
Maidstone Ashford road	Drafted 2020	
Maidstone Centre	Drafted 2020	
Maidstone Chillington House	Drafted 2020	
Maidstone Holy Trinity	02.10.07	22.03.10
Maidstone Rocky Hill		
Marden		
Otham	27.02.09	
Staplehurst		
Sutton Valence	Drafted 2020	
Teston		
Wateringbury		
West Farleigh		
Wormshill		
Yalding	Due 2021	

Agenda Item 19

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

8 SEPTEMBER 2020

REFERENCE FROM THE BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP

1. ENGLAND TREE STRATEGY CONSULTATION RESPONSE

- 1.1 On 29 July 2020 the Biodiversity and Climate Change Working Group adopted the consultation response to the Government's [England Tree Strategy](#) attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The Working Group requested that the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee, and the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee, also consider submitting a response to the consultation.
- 1.3 This could be based on the draft response adopted by the Biodiversity and Climate Change Working Group and be adapted to reflect the needs and priorities of the committee's remit.
- 1.4 The consultation closes on 11 September 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Committee consider submitting a response to the England Tree Strategy Consultation based on that set out at Appendix 1; and
2. That the Committee amend the consultation response to reflect the needs and priorities of their remit.

Briefing Note

Defra England Tree Strategy Public Consultation

June - September 2020

1. Background

This consultation will inform the new England Tree Strategy which will be published later this year, setting out England's forestry policy through to 2050, and replacing the Government 2013 Forestry Policy Statement.

The England Tree Strategy will set out priority policies to deliver England's portion of the UK's tree planting programme and will focus on expanding, protecting and improving woodlands, exploring how trees and woodlands can connect people to nature, support the economy, combat climate change and recover biodiversity. The strategy will ensure that trees are established and managed for the many benefits and ecosystem services they provide for people, the economy, the climate and nature.

The Government has several ambitions on expanding tree cover which are addressed within the England Tree Strategy:

- The government's manifesto committed to increase tree planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025.
- The government's 25-Year Environment Plan commitment to increase woodland cover in England from 10% to 12% by 2060.
- The government's aim to create a national Nature Recovery Network (NRN), creating or restoring 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat to support a coherent, national ecological network, linking and restoring designated sites which are currently protected.

Commercial forestry is a devolved matter, the government is working with the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to determine how best to achieve its manifesto commitments, which will require collective effort across government, stakeholder groups and land managers, as well as building the capacity of the nursery sector and increasing the size of the forestry workforce.

In the March 2020 budget, Government announced a £640million 'Nature for Climate Fund', which will provide funding for tree planting - paying public money for public goods. The England Tree Strategy will set out how elements of this Fund will be used.

The consultation is split into four sections as outlined below –

1. Expanding and connecting trees and woodland:

- Establishing more trees and woodlands and ensuring they are resilient to our future climate, pests and diseases
- Addressing barriers to woodland creation
- Creating space for nature

2. Protecting and improving our trees and woodland:

- Protecting our trees and woodlands
- Managing woods to recover biodiversity and increase resilience
- Developing our domestic nursery capacity

3. Engaging people with trees and woodland:

- Increasing access to trees in and around towns and cities
- Education and engagement with woodlands
- Enabling investment in and protection of green infrastructure

4. Supporting the economy:

- Diversifying rural economies
- Enabling agro and energy forestry
- Supporting our timber industry
- Increasing forestry skills

Link to consultation: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/forestry/england-tree-strategy/>

2. Questions

Section	Question	Response
1. Expanding and connecting our trees and woodlands	<p>6. Which actions would address the financial barriers that prevent the creation of new woodland? (select all that apply):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consolidating the current range of woodland creation grants into one b) Increasing the payment rates for incentives for woodland creation c) Widening the eligibility criteria for applicants to our woodland creation grants so more applicants can apply d) Widening the eligibility criteria for the type of woodlands and tree planting that can be funded e) Providing a clear explanation and guarantees of how trees planted between now and 2024 will be considered under Environmental land management Scheme f) A quicker approval process for grant agreements g) Support if trees fail to establish due to no fault of the owner (for example, due to tree health or severe weather) h) Introducing mechanisms that provide an annual cash flow in the woodlands' early years i) Introducing mechanisms to realise a secure long-term cash flow for ecosystem services j) Introducing measures to stimulate more private investment (e.g. green finance) in woodland creation k) Developing new approaches to partnerships between landowners and woodland investors or managers which enable the landowner to derive an ongoing annual income from the land l) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>l) Other –</p> <p>Grants policy support should be extended to natural or semi-natural regeneration.</p> <p>Grant criteria should be less prescriptive and move away from high-density plantation style woodlands requiring intensive management.</p> <p>Grant schemes should incentivise woodland creation in areas that maximise benefits for communities, agriculture and biodiversity such as flood plains and aquifer protection zones.</p> <p>Grant schemes should be more supportive of urban and urban-edge woodland creation, which are often smaller than rural sites.</p>
	<p>7. Which of the above actions would be most effective in addressing the financial barriers that prevent the creation of new woodland? (select up to three options).</p>	<p>c) Widening the eligibility criteria for the type of woodlands and tree planting that can be funded.</p>
	<p>8. Woodlands provide a range of ecosystem services that provide benefits to businesses and society. How could government better encourage private</p>	<p>Linkage to the planning system to enable woodland creation schemes which complement and balance new developments, for example - Berry Gardens at Redwall Lane, Linton, where</p>

APPENDIX 1

	<p>investment in establishing trees and woodland creation? (Maximum 150-word response).</p>	<p>an application for a new commercial premise was encompassed delivery of 25 acres of new wet woodland on farmland on the floodplain of the River Beult.</p> <p>A further example is an urban stretch of the River Len in Maidstone transferred to the local authority as a component of mitigation for adjacent retail and other commercial schemes. The land was restored to wet woodland and scrub - this was achieved by volunteers at no cost to the local authority and has benefited flood attenuation, amenity, air quality, water quality and biodiversity. http://healthsustainabilityplanning.co.uk/flood-risk-reduction-river-len-kent/ .</p> <p>A final example is Knoxbridge Farm, Cranbrook Road, Staplehurst where a significant area of new native woodland was delivered as part of a planning application for a new access required to facilitate changes in the agricultural business.</p>
	<p>9. Which actions would address the non-financial barriers to the creation of new woodland? (select all that apply):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consolidating the current range of woodland creation grants into one b) Providing access to better information on the income streams well managed woodland can provide c) Providing land managers with better access to expert advice on woodland creation and forestry knowledge and skills d) Providing the investment community with access to expert advice on woodland creation and forestry knowledge and skills e) Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to land managers f) Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to the investment community g) Outreach to present the benefits of trees and forestry to local communities h) Changing policy so it does not treat afforestation as a permanent land use change i) Increasing availability and access to contractors to plant and maintain the trees 	<p>o) Other</p> <p>Support for natural or semi-natural regeneration.</p> <p>Planting criteria should be less prescriptive and move away from high-density plantation style woodlands requiring intensive management.</p> <p>Policy should guide and incentivise woodland creation in areas that maximise benefits for communities, agriculture and biodiversity such as flood plains and aquifer protection zones. Such 'focus' would potentially ensure engagement from key sectors and landowners.</p> <p>Policy should be more supportive of urban and urban-edge woodland creation, which are often smaller than rural sites but easier to progress.</p>

	<p>j) Increasing availability of desired bio secure planting material</p> <p>k) Educate and enthuse a new generation to expand the forestry industry</p> <p>l) Developing new approaches to partnerships between landowners and woodland investors or managers which enable the landowner to retain ownership of the land</p> <p>m) Developing a supply of diverse and locally appropriate seed and planting material by supporting community tree nurseries and other small nurseries that provide UK sourced and grown trees.</p> <p>n) Providing best practice guidance on how best to achieve tree cover through natural establishment (e.g. most suitable locations, ground preparation, fencing requirements and decisions on management over time).</p> <p>o) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words.</p>	
	<p>10. Which of the above actions would be most effective in addressing the non-financial barriers to the creation of new woodland? (select up to three options).</p>	<p>Support for natural or semi-natural regeneration.</p> <p>Planting criteria should be less prescriptive and move away from high-density plantation style woodlands requiring intensive management.</p> <p>Policy should guide and incentivise woodland creation in areas that maximise benefits for communities, agriculture and biodiversity such as flood plains and aquifer protection zones. Such 'focus' would potentially ensure engagement from key sectors and landowners.</p> <p>Policy should be more supportive of urban and urban-edge woodland creation, which are often smaller than rural sites but easier to progress.</p>
	<p>11. Which actions would address the regulatory barriers that prevent the creation of new woodland? (select all that apply):</p> <p>a) Providing access to better guidance on how to meet the UK Forestry Standard</p>	<p>g) Other</p> <p>Policy support and encouragement of natural or semi-natural regeneration.</p>

APPENDIX 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Local partners agreeing and setting priorities for woodland creation and other habitat restoration across landscapes c) Enabling regulatory decisions by the Forestry Commission which reflect the national obligation to meet net zero emissions by 2050 and achieve the investment in natural capital set out in our 25 Year Environment Plan d) Implementing a joint approach to land management across central government and its agencies including those responsible for protected landscapes e) Providing a clear explanation and guarantees of how trees planted between now and 2024 will be considered under Environmental Land Management Scheme f) Reduce the time and costs associated with Environmental Impact Assessment for afforestation. g) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>Policy criteria should be less prescriptive and move away from high-density plantation style woodlands requiring intensive management.</p> <p>Policy should support and incentivise woodland creation in areas that maximise benefits for communities, agriculture and biodiversity such as flood plains and aquifer protection zones.</p> <p>Policy should encourage and support urban and urban-edge woodland creation, which are often smaller than rural sites but bring significant local benefits.</p>
	<p>12. Which of the above actions would be most effective in addressing the regulatory barriers that prevent the creation of new woodland? (select up to three options).</p>	<p>g) Other</p> <p>Policy support and encouragement of natural or semi-natural regeneration.</p> <p>Policy criteria should be less prescriptive and move away from high-density plantation style woodlands requiring intensive management.</p> <p>Policy should support and incentivise woodland creation in areas that maximise benefits for communities, agriculture and biodiversity such as flood plains and aquifer protection zones.</p> <p>Policy should encourage and support urban and urban-edge woodland creation, which are often smaller than rural sites but bring significant local benefits.</p>
	<p>13. How can we most effectively support the natural establishment of trees and woodland in the landscape? (Maximum 100 words).</p>	<p>The natural climax vegetation across all but the wettest lowland and exposed upland areas of the British Isles is woodland. If grazing pressure is reduced trees will return. Grazing by sheep is the most destructive of natural tree regeneration but continues to be subsidised. In</p>

APPENDIX 1

		<p>some areas where high deer densities occur, fencing may be required, however a more optimal approach is reintroduction of natural predators, such as Eurasian lynx, which regulate populations of these herbivores and modify their behaviour.</p> <p>Policy and grant criteria should support natural establishment of new woodland, scrub, wood pasture and other structurally complex sylvan habitats.</p>
	<p>14. Are there any other actions - beyond the options you have already selected or submitted - that would help landowners and managers to transform the level of woodland creation and increase the number of non-woodland trees in England? (Maximum 100 words).</p>	<p>National / local policy should enforce better regulation and routing (trunking) of new and existing (retro-fitting) of underground services, thus enabling increased and replacement street tree planting.</p> <p>Hedgerow tree and shelterbelt retention and introduction should be supported by a range of measures including identification and protection of future hedgerow trees from hedge-cutting / flailing interventions.</p> <p>Street tree planting and care should be made a statutory highway authority function and funded appropriately – encompassing a duty to replace street trees lost to whatever cause.</p> <p>Policy, grants to landowners and planning system should drive better protection of existing trees and woodland, their expansion and linkage (including wood pasture, hedgerow trees and scrub).</p> <p>Grants should specifically incentivise introduction of trees and woodland into floodplains, aquifer protection zones and urban / peri-urban areas to maximise benefits.</p>
	<p>15. Which of the following actions would be most effective in helping expand woodland creation in locations which deliver water, flood risk benefits and nature recovery? (select up to three options):</p> <p>a) Widening the eligibility criteria for woodland creation grants so more applicants can apply, and more forms of woodland are eligible</p>	<p>h)</p> <p>Using both the planning system and agricultural payments to disincentivise development and intensive cropping on flood plains and upland catchments and incentivising woodland and other sylvan habitats.</p>

APPENDIX 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Widening the eligibility criteria for woodland creation grants so more sizes of woodland are eligible c) Increasing grant payments for tree planting along water courses, steep sided slopes and difficult sites d) Quicker approval process for grant agreements e) Providing a clear explanation and guarantees of how trees planted between now and 2024 will be considered under Environmental Land Management f) Implementing a joint approach to land management across government, including authorities responsible for protected landscapes g) Providing better access to advice and guidance on woodland creation, forestry expertise and training -- Please Select h) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>Use the NPPF, Local Plans and other relevant policy documents to 'zone' floodplains, catchments and other sensitive landscapes for woodland and other sylvan habitat creation.</p> <p>Place a duty on public landowners to protect and expand woodland and other sylvan habitats on land under their control located within flood plains, catchments, urban / peri-urban and other sensitive landscapes.</p>
	<p>16. What role could the nation's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) play in increasing woodland cover? (Maximum 100-word response).</p>	<p>If grazing pressure is reduced trees will return. Grazing by sheep is the most destructive of natural tree regeneration, however, deer can be an issue in some parts of the country and fencing or predator re-introduction will be required.</p> <p>Protected landscapes should promote and facilitate more complex habitat types – such as mosaics of woodland, wood pasture, carr and scrub within protected landscapes. There is currently a significant focus on treeless landscapes such as heather, acid, grazing marsh and chalk grassland and all these habitats benefit from proximity to areas of structurally complex tree cover.</p>
<p>2. Protecting and improving our trees and woodland</p>	<p>17. Which actions would be most effective to increase protection for trees and woodland from unsustainable management? (select a maximum of three options):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Introducing measures to support compliance with the UK Forestry Standard b) More effective information sharing between government departments and their delivery 	<p><i>h) Other</i></p> <p>Incentivise expansion and re-connection of existing woodlands and wood pasture, creation of better structured woodland edge, and open space within woodlands through planning system and ELMs.</p>

	<p>bodies to inform decisions impacting on woodland, including to prevent woodland loss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) Introducing clearer processes for licencing tree felling, with felling licences that can be suspended, withdrawn or superseded d) Greater penalties for non-compliance with the requirements of the Forestry Act e) Powers to set wider felling licence conditions, for example to enable enforcement of compliance with the UK Forestry Standard f) A clearer policy presumption that all trees felled without a licence will be replaced (except in exceptional circumstances) g) Refining the process of making Tree Preservation Orders, and clarifying the criteria to improve consistency in application of the policy across local authorities h) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	
	<p>18. Which actions would best help the planning system support better protection and enhancement of the ancient and wider woodland environment and trees? (select a maximum of two options).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Providing support to fully complete revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory (to include ancient woodlands under two hectares in area) b) Commissioning research into effective size and use of buffer zones around woodland for different impacts c) Providing better monitoring and recording of decisions on planning applications affecting ancient woodland d) Sharing best practice guidance and training to support implementation of National Planning Policy Framework policy on ancient woodland with local authority planners e) Encouraging more woodland to be brought into management where impacted by development f) More effective information sharing between agencies and local planning authorities to inform decision making impacting on woodland including to prevent woodland loss g) Refining the process of making Tree Preservation Orders, and clarifying the criteria to improve consistency in application of the policy across local authorities h) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Other <p>Greater planning policy protection for secondary woodland (in addition to that guidance contained within the NPPF relating to semi-natural ancient woodland).</p> <p>Use planning guidance to incentivise the protection, buffering and connection of existing woodland on (and adjacent to) development sites through master planning, LEMPs, and conditions.</p>

APPENDIX 1

	<p>19. What actions would be most effective in reducing the use of plastics in forestry? (select one option):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Providing support to land managers for deer control and fencing b) Supporting further testing and trial of non-plastic alternatives such as tree guards c) Introducing stronger control on the recovery and disposal of plastics in grant agreements and public sector contracts d) Promoting the use of non-plastic tree guards e) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>e) Other – Increase incentives for natural regeneration where thorn and scrub will protect saplings and developing woodland.</p>
	<p>20. Which actions would overcome financial barriers to woodland management? (select all that apply):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Providing better information on timber prices, grant schemes and market opportunities for wood and non-wood products b) Providing grant support for a wider range of management activities c) Providing grant support for the restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodlands Sites (PAWS) d) Providing support for woodland infrastructure such as roading e) Providing grants or loans for equipment, for example, harvesters f) Support to increase the productivity/supply chains for woodland products g) Support for landowner collaboration in woodland management h) Government requiring more domestic timber through procurement policies i) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>l)</p> <p>Ensure that environmental services (such as aquifer recharge, flood attenuation, watercourse quality, soil protection, air quality, landscape and biodiversity) and amenity value are factored into financial and management equation. Cropping for timber and other material and associated significant forestry interventions do not necessarily benefit delivery of environmental services and amenity. Woods are much more than just forestry.</p>
	<p>21. Which of the above actions would be most effective at overcoming the financial barriers to woodland management? (select a maximum of three options).</p>	<p>l)</p> <p>Ensure that environmental services (such as aquifer recharge, flood attenuation, watercourse quality, soil protection, air quality, landscape and biodiversity) and amenity value are factored into financial and management equation. Cropping for timber and other material and associated significant forestry interventions do not necessarily benefit delivery of environmental services and</p>

		amenity. Woods are much more than just forestry.
	<p>22. Which actions would address the non-financial barriers to woodland management? (select all that apply):</p> <p>a) Providing user friendly woodland management services aimed at ‘non forester’ woodland owners</p> <p>b) Ensuring public recognition of woodlands that are managed sustainably (for example like Green Flag awards)</p> <p>c) Providing better communication of the benefits and need for woodland management with land managers and investors</p> <p>d) Providing better information on timber prices, grant schemes and market opportunities for wood and non-wood products</p> <p>e) Training to increase the forestry skills capacity in agricultural workers</p> <p>f) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words.</p>	<p>f)</p> <p>A far greater emphasis within forestry guidance and planning system upon optimal woodland management interventions to enhance delivery of environmental services, biodiversity and landscape.</p>
	<p>23. Which of the above actions would be most effective at overcoming the non-financial barriers to woodland management? (select a maximum of three options).</p>	<p>f)</p> <p>A far greater emphasis within forestry guidance and planning system upon optimal woodland management interventions to enhance delivery of environmental services, biodiversity and landscape.</p>
	<p>24. Which actions would overcome the regulatory barriers to woodland management? (select all that apply):</p> <p>a) Streamlining delivery of current regulations (for example, self-service felling licences for tree felling proposals that would not reduce woodland cover)</p> <p>b) Placing responsibility for complying with woodland regulation on the woodland manager rather than the woodland owner</p> <p>c) Placing a legal obligation on all landowners to manage their woodland</p> <p>d) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words.</p>	<p>e) Other</p> <p><i>Coppicing and other smaller-scale interventions to maintain rides, glades and well-structured woodland edges should be exempt from felling licences.</i></p>

	<p>25. Which of the above actions would be most effective at overcoming the regulatory barriers to woodland management? (select one option).</p>	<p>f) Other</p> <p><i>Coppicing and other smaller-scale interventions to maintain rides, glades and well-structured woodland edges should be exempt from felling licences.</i></p>
	<p>26. If you own and/or manage woodland(s) that is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) what actions would help you most to bring that woodland(s) into management? (Maximum 100-word response).</p>	<p><i>Coppicing and other smaller-scale interventions to maintain rides, glades and well-structured woodland edges should be exempt from felling licences.</i></p>
	<p>27. Which of the following actions would be most effective in improving plant biosecurity across England’s trees and woodlands? (pick a maximum of two):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increasing the number of nurseries that meet the ‘Plant healthy’ management standard b) Providing better best practice guidance and information about biosecurity c) Introducing conditions to public sector contracts and government tree planting or restocking grants that require suppliers to meet the ‘Plant healthy’ management standard d) Amending planning policy to encourage local planning authorities to source trees from suppliers who meet the ‘Plant healthy’ management standard e) Sharing the Forestry England’s experience and case studies f) Managing the impact of invasive non-native plants which provide a pathway for disease through targeted action, ongoing management and monitoring, and wider education g) Developing a supply of diverse and locally appropriate seed and planting material by supporting community tree nurseries and other small nurseries that provide UK sourced and grown trees. h) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>h)</p> <p><i>Incentivise and provide policy support for natural regeneration, wood pasture and low stocking density ‘framework planting’..</i></p>
	<p>28. Which of the following actions are or would be most appropriate for England’s trees and woodlands to contribute to climate change mitigation and</p>	

	<p>helping to achieve net zero? (pick a maximum of three options):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Bringing woods into management to enhance their future resilience to climate change and secure greenhouse gas emissions reduction in other sectors through wood replacing 'carbon intensive' materials (acknowledging that this will lead to a short to medium reduction on carbon stored in the woodland) b) Planting UKFS-compliant productive forests to provide a strong carbon sink over the coming decades and then a source of sustainable timber to meet the needs of future generations c) Planting predominantly native woodland to act as a long-term store of carbon d) Establishing 'energy forest' plantations (short rotation coppice and short rotation forestry) to satisfy future biomass demand for bioenergy with carbon capture and storage e) Encouraging agroforestry to increase the amount of carbon stored on productive farmland f) Strengthening the protection of all woodland to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation. 	
	<p>29. Which of these actions would be most effective in reducing damage to trees and woodlands caused by deer? (select a maximum of two options):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Develop a national policy on sustainable deer management and control measures b) Facilitate landscape scale control by land managers c) Deer control as a requirement of grant or felling agreements d) Incentives for the management of deer e) Supporting a range of approaches to tree protection, including fencing and other alternatives to plastic tree guards f) Better advice and guidance on the value of and options to control damage by deer g) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>h)</p> <p>Restoration of predators, such as Eurasian lynx, to landscape to ensure more sustainable deer populations and behaviours.</p>
	<p>30. Which of these actions would be most effective in reducing the damage to trees and woodlands caused by grey squirrels? (select a maximum of two options):</p>	<p>f)</p> <p>Aside from those geographical areas where red squirrel populations or their recovery are</p>

APPENDIX 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Making grey squirrel control a requirement of grant or felling agreements b) Providing incentives for the management of grey squirrel c) Researching contraception to prevent breeding d) Reintroducing animals to help control squirrels, such as pine martens and goshawks e) Providing better advice and guidance on grey squirrel control f) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>compromised by the presence of greys there is little if any landscape, ecological or economic negative impact arising from this species. Indeed, natural regeneration of woodland, suppression of invasive sycamore, native predators and invertebrate habitat niches creation can all benefit from their presence.</p>
<p>3. Engaging people with trees and woodland</p>	<p>31. Are any of the following significant barriers to securing and maintaining street trees? (select up to three options):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Appropriate standards and guidance for securing the right trees in the right places b) Practical challenges in terms of street design, planting requirements and compatibility with other infrastructure provision c) The adoption of street trees by local highway authorities, or alternative arrangements where streets are not adopted d) The skills and resources needed to deliver new street trees, including funding for planting e) The funding and skills for ongoing maintenance of street trees over their lifetime f) Other – please specify in no more than 100 words. 	<p>f)</p> <p>Lack of budget to enable appropriate replacement and care of street trees.</p> <p>Years of poorly planned and managed routing of under and over-ground services sterilise the majority of urban highways and verges. Trunking of new services and retro-trunking of existing services will be required if a renaissance of street trees is to be achieved.</p>
	<p>32. How could government overcome the barriers to securing and maintaining street trees you have identified in question 31? (Maximum 100-word response).</p>	<p><i>Ring-fence funding for and make statutory protection and replacement of street trees, alongside better regulation of underground services to ensure trunking and free-up space for tree planting.</i></p>
	<p>33. Which of these actions would be most effective in increasing the number/coverage of trees in and around urban areas? (rank the following options in order of preference):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promotion through national policy (including England Tree Strategy and national planning policy) including recognition that trees and woodlands are key components of green 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statutory requirement to replace street trees and protect all urban woodland 2. Promotion through national guidance (such as green infrastructure, planning and design, and code/street guidance, e.g., Manual for Streets) - stronger inclusion of appropriate engineering solutions 3. Development and implementation of Local Tree and Woodland Strategies

APPENDIX 1

	<p>infrastructure, with equal status to other green and built infrastructure</p> <p>b) Promotion through national guidance (such as green infrastructure, planning and design, and code/street guidance, e.g., Manual for Streets) - stronger inclusion of appropriate engineering solutions</p> <p>c) Development and implementation of Local Tree and Woodland Strategies and local planning policies - setting local targets for tree canopy cover and recognition that trees and woodlands are key components of green infrastructure, with equal status to other green and built infrastructure</p> <p>d) Training for practitioners, including highways engineers and others</p> <p>e) Providing better support for community forests in areas of greatest need</p> <p>f) Creating new community forests in areas of greatest need</p> <p>g) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words.</p>	<p>and local planning policies - setting local targets for tree canopy cover and recognition that trees and woodlands are key components of green infrastructure, with equal status to other green and built infrastructure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Creating new community forests in areas of greatest need 5. Training for practitioners, including highways engineers and others 6. Promotion through national policy (including England Tree Strategy and national planning policy) including recognition that trees and woodlands are key components of green infrastructure, with equal status to other green and built infrastructure 7. Training for practitioners, including highways engineers and others 8. Providing better support for community forests in areas of greatest need 9.
	<p>34. Which actions would most help the preparation and implementation of local Tree and Woodland Strategies? (rank the following options in order of preference):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Preparing national guidance on developing Local Tree and Woodland Strategies b) Setting local targets for tree canopy cover c) Using canopy cover as a measure to monitor the scale and development of the urban forest d) Agreeing national data standards for urban trees e) Standardising the approach to measuring the value of the urban forest resource f) Adopting Local Tree and Woodland Strategies as supplementary planning documents g) Strengthening technical expertise in tree and woodland management in local authorities h) Recognising trees and woodlands as key components of green infrastructure, with equal status to green and built infrastructure. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopting Local Tree and Woodland Strategies as supplementary planning documents 2. Setting local targets for tree canopy cover 3. Using canopy cover as a measure to monitor the scale and development of the urban forest 4. Strengthening technical expertise in tree and woodland management in local authorities 5. Agreeing national data standards for urban trees 6. Preparing national guidance on developing Local Tree and Woodland Strategies 7. Standardising the approach to measuring the value of the urban forest resource 8. Recognising trees and woodlands as key components of green infrastructure, with equal status to green and built infrastructure.
	<p>35. Which actions would most effectively engage people in the management and creation of their</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating new community forests in areas of greatest need

APPENDIX 1

	<p>local woodlands? (rank the following options in order of preference):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Providing more training opportunities to support woodland management and creation b) Providing legal support to community groups for the acquisition or lease of woodland c) Enabling community groups to influence decision making about the management of their local woodland d) Enabling community groups to participate in the management of their local woodland e) Facilitating networks to exchange ideas and share good practice f) Providing better support for community forests in areas of greatest need g) Creating new community forests in areas of greatest need h) Supporting the growth of woodland social enterprise in and around towns and cities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Providing better support for community forests in areas of greatest need 3. Supporting the growth of woodland social enterprise in and around towns and cities 4. Providing legal support to community groups for the acquisition or lease of woodland 5. Providing more training opportunities to support woodland management and creation 6. Supporting the growth of woodland social enterprise in and around towns and cities. 7. Enabling community groups to influence decision making about the management of their local woodland 8. Enabling community groups to participate in the management of their local woodland
	<p>36. Which actions by government would be most effective in addressing barriers to peoples' access to trees and woodlands? (rank the following options in order of preference):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Supporting woodland access through existing incentives and rights of way b) Offering more generous woodland management incentives for those woodlands with public access c) Creating new accessible woodlands in and around towns and cities d) Supporting woodland access with bespoke incentives, simply to allow access e) Improving the quality of access by investing in infrastructure (car parks, trails, path surfacing, signage, seating) f) Regulating to maintain access rights when creating new woodland g) Supporting people to become trained/accredited to better facilitate contact (learning and health) with nature. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating new accessible woodlands in and around towns and cities 2. Supporting woodland access through existing incentives and rights of way 3. Supporting people to become trained/accredited to better facilitate contact (learning and health) with nature. 4. Regulating to maintain access rights when creating new woodland 5. Supporting woodland access with bespoke incentives, simply to allow access 6. Improving the quality of access by investing in infrastructure (car parks, trails, path surfacing, signage, seating) 7. Offering more generous woodland management incentives for those woodlands with public access
	<p>37. Which of the following do you most value about trees and woodland? (select up to two options):</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Places for nature 2. A resource that provides water management 3. A resource that cleans the air 4. A resource that stores carbon

APPENDIX 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Places to exercise and relax and engage with nature b) Places for nature c) A source of sustainable products and employment d) A resource that provides water management e) A resource that cleans the air f) A resource that stores carbon g) As a feature within towns and cities h) As part of urban green space i) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Places to exercise and relax and engage with nature 6. As part of urban green space 7. As a feature within towns and cities 8. A source of sustainable products and employment
	<p>38. Which of these actions would best address the funding challenge for the planting and on-going maintenance of trees in urban areas? (pick up to two options):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Making central funding available to supplement private finance for establishing trees in existing developments. b) Using planning levers to require developers to plant trees relating to new development on streets and other public spaces c) Using planning levers to raise funds for on-going maintenance d) Ensuring the value of tree's longer-term benefits are captured to access financing e) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Using planning levers to require developers to plant trees relating to new development on streets and other public spaces e) Introducing statutory duty upon public local authorities to replace and maintain street and other trees removed for safety or other reasons.
<p>4. Supporting the economy</p>	<p>39. What could the England Tree Strategy do to encourage the use of timber in construction? (select up to two options):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Improving, encouraging or incentivising the growth of necessary skills such as those in green construction, design or forestry b) Promoting and incentivising Grown in Britain Certification c) Encouraging planning requirements to incorporate sustainable materials d) Amending public procurement standards to support Grown in Britain certified forest products, incorporate sustainable materials and signal long-term demand 	

	<p>e) Increasing the availability of knowledge and stimulate an understanding of sustainable building practices</p> <p>f) Supporting new innovations in developing timber building materials such as cross laminated timber</p> <p>g) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words.</p>	
	<p>40. How could policy about the permanency of woodlands better support tree establishment for agro forestry or energy crops? (select one option):</p> <p>a) Changing policy so it does not treat afforestation as a permanent land use change</p> <p>b) Adjusting policy so energy forestry crops (short rotation coppice and short rotation forestry) are not permanent land use change</p> <p>c) Retaining the current position whereby afforestation is generally a permanent land use change</p> <p>d) Not sure.</p>	
	<p>41. Which actions would best increase the uptake of energy forestry? (select up to two options):</p> <p>a) Providing financial support for the capital costs of energy forestry</p> <p>b) Clarifying the taxation of energy forestry (as either agriculture or forestry)</p> <p>c) Clarifying the regulatory position for energy forestry (for example, can I change land use in the future)</p> <p>d) Providing support to develop a secure supply chain (such as forward contracts for feedstock)</p> <p>e) Providing better advice and guidance on energy forestry</p> <p>f) Increasing skills capacity in energy forestry</p> <p>g) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words.</p>	
	<p>42. Which actions would best increase the planting of more trees on farms? (select up to two options):</p> <p>a) Clarifying the regulation of agroforestry as either agriculture or forestry</p> <p>b) Clarifying the implications for the land holding's tax status of planting more trees</p> <p>c) Providing better advice and guidance on woodland creation and management</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Providing incentives for a wider range of tree planting on farms e) Funding for the advice and the design of schemes for trees on farms and agroforestry f) Providing better advice and guidance on how woodland creation and management can contribute to farm business models g) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	
	<p>43. Which actions would best increase agroforestry, woodland creation and management on tenanted farmland? (select up to two options):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Providing industry led guidance, best practice and case studies of how tenants and landlords can work together to deliver benefits for both parties from diversification into tree planting and agroforestry on tenanted land b) Providing eligibility criteria for tree establishment grant agreements to discourage the proactive resumption of tenanted farmland c) Reviewing how tenancy agreements approach the responsibility for and rights to trees d) Confirming the property rights to long-term carbon benefits e) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	
	<p>44. What are the most urgent shortages in the workforce capacity needed to increase woodland creation, maintenance and management? (select up to two options):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Professional forester b) Supervisor for forest works c) Machine operator, for example, tractor/harvester/forwarder drivers d) Hand cutter / chainsaw operator e) Tree planter f) Tree nursery workers g) Forestry educators h) Land agents, surveyors and architects with specialist forest knowledge i) All of the above j) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	<p>j. Local authority tree officers.</p>
	<p>45. Which actions would best strengthen productivity in forestry supply chains? (select up to three options):</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Providing grant support for a wider range of management options b) Providing support for woodland infrastructure such as roading c) Providing grant or loans for equipment (for example, harvesters) d) Providing support for productivity/supply chains for woodland products e) Providing better information on market prices and opportunities f) Training to increase the skills capacity in agricultural workers g) Facilitating collaborative working between woodland owners h) Developing options for private investment for ecosystem services that drive woodland management i) Other - please specify in no more than 25 words. 	
--	---	--

3. Contact

Tree.Strategy.Consultation@defra.gov.uk

4. Author

Tony Harwood (chair Maidstone Borough Council Biodiversity and Climate Change Working Group)
July 2020