

**Maidstone Borough Local Plan Publication,
prepared in accordance with Regulation 19 of
The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations
2012 (as amended)**

The consultation commences on Friday 5 February 2016

And closes at 5pm on Friday 18 March 2016

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The Maidstone Borough Local Plan, which will set the framework for development in the Borough until 2031, is a very important document. It has been evolving over a number of years in order to respond to both national legislative changes and to local needs and aspirations. These two challenges have not always been easy to reconcile. The council has worked hard to ensure that an appropriate balance has been struck between the national call for homes, the local needs for housing and employment for a growing population and in providing the supporting infrastructure required to make these plans acceptable and maintain residents' quality of life.

Attention has also been paid to provide sufficient green spaces not only for people to enjoy but also to the value we should place upon our natural environment for its own intrinsic worth. This Borough is fortunate in benefitting from a large number of cultural and heritage assets and an extensive rural hinterland with some spectacular countryside which the Local Plan seeks to protect not only for our own benefit but also for future generations.

These assets, together with the Borough's location in the South-East of England close to both London and the channel ports with their access to Europe, makes it an attractive location for people in which to come to work and live. This creates a high pressure on development. The plan must, therefore, also focus strongly on sustainability. We have worked with partners including Kent County Council and other neighbouring authorities, statutory bodies and local communities and agencies, as well as considering many emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans being produced by parishes and neighbourhood forums.

Planning does present difficult choices and requires a balance of national policy and local wishes. The Council believes this plan now sets out the right framework for the future development of the Borough with policies to protect our most valued landscapes and to provide sufficient open spaces whilst also delivering the required level of housing and employment opportunities to meet our growing needs.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed, whether that is an individual resident commenting on an aspect of the plan that directly affects them, Parishes, Residents Associations, Developers, other organisations and statutory consultees, councillors and officers.



Fran Wilson,

Leader of Maidstone Borough Council.



David Burton,

Chair of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee, Maidstone Borough Council.



Introduction

1.1 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the key document that sets the framework to guide the future development of the borough. It plans for homes, jobs, shopping, leisure and the environment, as well as the associated infrastructure to support new development. It explains the 'why, what, where, when and how' development will be delivered through a strategy that plans for growth and regeneration whilst at the same time protects and enhances the borough's natural and built assets.

1.2 The local plan:

- Sets out the scale and distribution of development;
- Identifies, by site, where development will be located;
- Identifies where development will be constrained; and
- Explains how the council and its partners will deliver the plan.

1.3 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan covers the period from 2011 to 2031 but, to ensure an up-to-date planning policy framework is maintained, a review of the plan will commence by 2022. In considering proposals for development, the Borough Council will apply all relevant policies of the plan. It is therefore assumed that the plan will be read as a whole and cross-referencing between plan policies has been minimised.

Publication consultation

1.4 The council has considered the views of the community on the content of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan through a series of consultations, and the next step is to consult the public on its preparation process: whether the local plan has met legal requirements and meets the tests of soundness. This stage of consultation is known as "Publication" under Regulation 19 of plan making regulations⁽¹⁾.

1.5 This consultation will commence on Friday 5 February 2016 and will close at 5pm on Friday 18 March 2016.

1.6 During the consultation period comments can be made in a number of ways but the use of the council's online consultation portal is encouraged. The public can also complete questionnaires, send an email or write to the council. Details of the council's commitment to consultation is set out in its Statement of Community Involvement.

1.7 This local plan is not finalised but it is the version of the plan that the council intends to submit to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. All representations made during this consultation period will also be submitted to the Secretary of State who will appoint an inspector to independently examine the local plan in public.

1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

How the local plan has evolved

1.8 In September 2011 the council consulted the public on its draft Maidstone Borough Core Strategy, which planned for 10,080 dwellings in a dispersed development pattern across the borough for the period 2006 to 2026. As such, a base date of 2006 was used to assess the council's housing and commercial land supply against its targets for the 20 year period. Housing development was to be focused in the north west and south east of the urban area and at five rural service centres. This was a locally derived target having regard to the former South East Plan target of 11,080 dwellings, but also to areas of constraint within the borough such as the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the floodplain. The draft core strategy identified broad strategic locations for housing and employment development rather than allocating specific sites, and detailed development management policies and land allocations were to follow in the form of a Development Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD).

1.9 In March 2012 the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), at the heart of which is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In addition, following consultation on the draft core strategy, the public wanted to see specific strategic site allocations within the document. So in May 2012 the council advertised a 'call for sites' exercise inviting landowners, developers and their agents to submit information about available sites within the strategic housing and employment locations identified on the key diagram of the core strategy. Following a rigorous assessment of all of the sites submitted, the Core Strategy Strategic Site Allocations document was approved for a six week public consultation in August and September 2012, together with the draft Integrated Transport Strategy. Following this consultation, it was clear that the public wished to see all land allocations included in the core strategy, not just those allocated in the strategic locations.

1.10 Meanwhile, during 2012 a number of core strategy examinations were suspended because the presiding inspectors rejected the local authorities' demographic data. The inspectors' concerns focused on housing and employment data based on the evidence behind regional strategies, which was considered to be out of date and did not take account of updated national household projections; an imbalance between dwellings and jobs targets; and a lack of sufficient evidence demonstrating constraints to development. Consequently, in November 2012 the council agreed to delay its core strategy programme so that further work could be undertaken on the evidence base. The council agreed to update demographic and economic need data, to commission a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), and to produce new Strategic Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA and SEDLAA).

1.11 In March 2013 the council decided to amalgamate the Maidstone Borough Core Strategy and the Development Delivery DPD into a single Maidstone Borough Local Plan, an approach supported by the NPPF, and the plan period was rolled forward from 2006-26 to 2011-31. The work undertaken for the core strategy was not lost, and many of its policies were appropriately amended and carried forward to the local plan. The comments received during the public consultations in 2011 and 2012 helped to shape the policies.

1.12 The draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014 provided a comprehensive planning policy framework and allocated land for development with supporting infrastructure to 2031. The plan made provision for 17,100 homes, focusing development to the north west and south east of the urban area, and at five rural service centres and five larger villages, maintaining a dispersed pattern of development at sustainable locations. Land was allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, regeneration was focused on the town centre, and provision was made for employment and retail floorspace and a new medical campus. In addition to the protection afforded to international and national designated landscapes, the plan introduced areas of local landscape importance which are highly sensitive to significant change.

1.13 The draft local plan was subject to widespread public consultation between 21 March and 7 May 2014. The council received approximately 1,700 representations from individuals and organisations, who submitted comments across a wide range of issues. Additionally, six petitions were presented that contained a total of 10,700 signatures, bringing the total number of respondents to the local plan consultation to 12,400. During the consultation, the council undertook a further 'call for sites' exercise because the borough's objectively assessed needs for housing and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation had not been met in full, in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.

1.14 During 2014 and 2015, the draft local plan policies and land allocations have been considered through a series of committee meetings and have been amended in the light of: the comments received through public consultation; an assessment of further sites submitted through the call for sites exercise; the launch of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) in 2014; changes to national policy, such as the General Permitted Development Order⁽²⁾; and updated evidence (some of which was prepared in order to respond to consultation representations).

1.15 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was updated to reflect the release of new national population and household projections and to assess the need for care homes. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was updated following a full assessment of the additional development potential from the further call for sites. The Landscape Capacity Study was commissioned to provide an additional layer of qualitative assessment such as broad landscape character sensitivity and visual sensitivity, and a detailed Landscape Capacity Study was completed for individual draft site allocations where the public had raised concerns about the impact of development on the landscape. The council's Agricultural Land Classification Surveys have been supplemented for specific site allocations where objections were raised on the grounds of loss of best and most versatile agricultural land quality. A Maidstone Qualitative Employment Site Assessment report was commissioned to assess the current employment land within the borough and make recommendations as to its future suitability for accommodating economic growth. Further viability work was completed to enable the council to respond to comments received on the affordable housing policy. Work on the draft Integrated Transport Strategy and the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy has progressed, including the completion of an open spaces audit to define open space standards for the

2 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015

borough. During this time there has been continued engagement with the infrastructure providers, stakeholders and, under the duty to cooperate, with neighbouring local planning authorities.

1.16 In October 2015 the council undertook further public consultation (Regulation 18) where key changes to the draft local plan (2014) were proposed. The amendments predominantly related to new/deleted/amended housing site allocations and sites providing for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation to meet objectively assessed needs; revisions to park and ride provision; the inclusion of a further development site at junction 8 of the M20 motorway to address a qualitative need for employment; new allocations for natural and semi-natural open space to respond to new open space standards; the addition of a new landscape of local value; and a new policy for nursing and residential care homes to address an increasing demand for elderly accommodation over the time frame of the local plan. The representations submitted during consultation have helped to shape the Publication version of the local plan.

Policy framework

1.17 The policies within the Maidstone Borough Local Plan comprise:

- The borough wide spatial strategy which sets development targets and explains the factors that influence the distribution of development;
- Spatial policies that focus on Maidstone urban area, Maidstone town centre, rural services centres, larger villages and the countryside;
- Specific site allocation policies that set criteria for development sites: housing (including future broad locations for growth), Gypsy and Traveller pitches, employment, retail and mixed use;
- Development management policies that apply across the borough, within Maidstone urban area, Maidstone town centre, rural service centres, larger villages and in the countryside which focus on delivering the spatial strategy and set criteria against which planning applications for development will be determined; and
- An infrastructure delivery policy which explains how infrastructure required to support new development will be delivered.

Policies map, key diagram, inset plans and site plans

1.18 The local plan includes a key diagram, which illustrates the spatial strategy. Inset plans for the north west and south east strategic development locations of the urban area, the rural service centres and the larger villages illustrate the development proposals for those areas. The local plan policies map is an ordnance survey based map showing the detailed boundaries of where adopted policies apply and is available on the local plan webpage at www.maidstone.gov.uk/localplan. For ease of reference, Appendix F is a supplementary document that accompanies this plan and it contains individual location plans for allocated sites .

Key Influences

2.1 The council must take account of a number of relevant national and local plans and strategies when preparing the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, and also prepare a robust evidence base to support the policies of the plan.

National policy and guidance

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced in March 2012 and consolidated much of the former national planning policy statements and guidance relating to plan making. Published by the government, the NPPF explains the statutory provisions, and provides guidance to both the community and local government about the operation of the planning system and how the government's planning policies should be applied. National Planning Practice Guidance to support the NPPF was published in 2014. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan does not repeat national policy but it does explain how that policy has been applied.

2.3 The key theme running through the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means that local authorities must proactively engage with applicants in order to find solutions to problems and, where there are no up-to-date policies, to grant planning permission without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Local plans and strategies

2.4 The Development Plan, which comprises adopted local plans and adopted neighbourhood development plans, is central to the planning system and is needed to guide the decision making process for land uses and development proposals. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan will supersede a number of adopted local plan policies, which are listed in Appendix C. The Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plans that are prepared by Kent County Council also form part of the development plan.

2.5 Neighbourhood development plans, which are also called neighbourhood plans, are being prepared by a number of parish councils and neighbourhood forums. A neighbourhood plan attains the same legal status as the local plan once it has been agreed at a referendum and is made (brought into legal force) by the Borough Council. At this point it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Government advises that a neighbourhood plan should support the strategic development needs set out in the local plan and plan positively to support local development. Neighbourhood plans must be prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan. Whilst general conformity to an emerging local plan is not a legal requirement, the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. Where neighbourhood planning has been undertaken before an up-to-date local plan is in place, the council has taken an active role in advising and supporting the local neighbourhood plan team, sharing evidence and information.

2.6 One key local document that has helped to shape the Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the Maidstone Community Strategy 2009-2020 (2013 Refresh). This sets out the council's overall direction and long term vision for the social, environmental and economic well-being of the area.

2.7 Other important local strategies that have been taken into account in the formulation of policies in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan include:

- Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (emerging strategy 2016)
- Economic Development Strategy 2015-2031 (2015)
- Housing Strategy 2016-20 (emerging strategy and draft Action Plan 2015)
- Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-2031 (emerging strategy 2016)
- Maidstone Strategic Plan 2015-2020 (2015)
- Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-16

The evidence base

2.8 A comprehensive evidence base has been developed alongside the Maidstone Borough Local Plan to support the policies within it. The evidence base comprises:

- Agricultural Land Classification Study (2015)
- Ancient Woodland Inventory (2012)
- Economic Sensitivity Testing and Employment Land Forecast (2015)
- Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment and update (2012)
- Landscape Character Assessment (2012, amended 2013)
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2009)
- Maidstone Landscape Capacity Study: Sensitivity Assessment (2015)
- Maidstone Landscape Capacity Study: Site Assessments (2015)
- Maidstone Town Centre Assessment (2013)
- Office Viability Study (2009)
- Open Space Audit (2015)
- Qualitative Employment Site Assessment Maidstone Borough Council (2014)
- Retail Capacity Study (2013)
- Revised Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Study (2015)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)
- Strategic Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessment (2014 and 2015)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014) and Implications of 2012-Based Household Projections (June 2015)
- Sustainable Construction in Maidstone Study (2011)
- Town Centre Study (2010)
- Transport Modelling (various)
- Water Cycle Study (2010)

Sustainability appraisal and habitat regulations assessment

2.9 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan must be accompanied by a sustainability appraisal that considers the impact of the policies on the community, the economy and the environment. The sustainability appraisal has helped to maximise the

positive impacts of local plan policies and minimise the adverse impacts. Both the policies and the local plan as a whole have been subject to sustainability appraisal, which also incorporates a Strategic Environmental Assessment as required by European legislation.

2.10 The council has also undertaken a Habitat Regulations Assessment which assesses the likely impacts of local plan policies on the integrity of internationally important nature sites, namely Maidstone's North Downs Woodlands Special Area of Conservation.

Duty to Cooperate

2.11 The “duty to cooperate” places a legal duty on local planning authorities and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters. A key aspect of cooperation is around the provision of homes and jobs to ensure that objectively assessed needs are met in full. Local planning authorities should talk collaboratively with other bodies to ensure coordination of strategic issues, and can undertake joint working on areas of common interest.

2.12 Maidstone Borough Council has engaged with neighbouring councils of Ashford, Tonbridge & Malling, Swale, Medway and Tunbridge Wells over strategic issues. Regular meetings have been held with Kent County Council to discuss strategic highways, education and health matters in the context of future development proposals. The channels of communication with other infrastructure providers have also been kept open to ensure the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is kept up-to-date.

2.13 A statement of compliance with the duty to cooperate will accompany the local plan at submission stage. The statement will comprise the list of bodies the council has engaged with under the duty during the preparation of the local plan, the strategic issues that have been given consideration, and the outcome of engagement including the resolution or otherwise of issues.

2.14 A statement of consultation will also accompany the local plan at submission, which will explain how the local plan has evolved through its various stages of consultation: who was invited to make representations; how they were invited to do so; a summary of the main issues raised by the representations; and how these have been addressed in the local plan.

Tests of soundness

2.15 When the Maidstone Borough Local Plan is examined by the appointed planning inspector it will be considered against a number of tests of soundness taken from guidance given to the inspectors by the Planning Inspectorate. The NPPF states that local plans must be:

- **Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;

2 . Key influences

- **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
 - **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.
-

Spatial portrait

3.1 The borough of Maidstone covers 40,000 hectares and is situated in the heart of Kent. Maidstone is the county town of Kent and approximately 70% of its 155,143 population⁽³⁾ live in the urban area. The urban area, located in the north west of the borough, has a strong commercial and retail town centre with Maidstone comprising one of the largest retail centres in the south east. A substantial rural hinterland surrounds the urban area, part of which enjoys designation due to its high landscape and environmental quality. The borough encompasses a small section of the metropolitan green belt (1.3%), and 27% of the borough forms part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

3.2 The borough is strategically located between the channel tunnel and London with direct connections to both via the M20 and M2 motorways. Three central railway stations in the town connect to London, the coast and to the Medway Towns. Maidstone borough has a close interaction with the Medway Towns that provide a part of the borough's workforce. The town centre acts as the focus for retail development throughout the borough and has an important role to play in the visitor economy with the tourist information centre located at Maidstone Museum. The rural service centres of Harrietsham and Lenham lie on the Ashford International - Maidstone East - London Victoria line; and Headcorn, Marden and Staplehurst lie on the Ashford International - Tonbridge - London Charing Cross and London Cannon Street lines. The larger village of Yalding lies on the Medway Valley Line, Paddock Wood - Maidstone West - Maidstone Barracks - Strood. The channel tunnel link known as High Speed 1 (HS1) runs through the borough, providing fast links into London (a service links to HS1 from Maidstone West station, via Strood to Ebbsfleet). A number of main transport routes cross the borough including the A20, A229, A249, A274 and A26.

3.3 The borough is relatively prosperous with a considerable employment base and a lower than average unemployment rate compared to Kent. However the borough also has a low wage economy that has led to out-commuting for higher paid work. The local housing market crosses adjacent borough boundaries into Tonbridge and Malling and Ashford, and is influenced by its proximity to London, resulting in relatively high house prices.

3.4 There are parts of the borough that are in need of regeneration, primarily including Maidstone town centre and the pockets of deprivation that exist in the urban area. The rural service centres and larger villages provide services to the rural hinterland and some larger villages also play a vital part in the rural economy. There are a number of significant centres of economic activity in and around the rural settlements, and smaller commercial premises are dotted throughout the borough. Agriculture remains an important industry to the borough including the traditional production of soft fruits and associated haulage and storage facilities.

3.5 The borough is fortunate to benefit from a number of built and natural assets including 41 conservation areas, over 2,000 listed buildings, 28 scheduled ancient monuments and 15 parks and gardens important for their special historic

interest. Seven percent of the borough is covered by areas of ancient woodland, there are 63 local wildlife sites, 34 verges of nature conservation interest, 11 sites of special scientific interest, two local nature reserves and a European designated special area of conservation. The River Medway flows through the borough and the town centre and, together with its tributaries, is one of the borough's prime assets. Protection of the borough's distinct urban and rural heritage remains an important issue for the council.

3.6 The council is making provision for new housing and employment growth, together with associated infrastructure, whilst at the same time emphasising that growth is constrained by Maidstone's high quality environment, the extent of the floodplain, and the limitations of the existing transport systems and infrastructure. There is also likely to be increased pressure to compete with nearby Ebbsfleet Garden City, the Kent Thames Gateway and Ashford to attract inward investment. The challenge for the Maidstone Borough Local Plan is to manage the potential impacts of future growth to ensure that development takes place in a sustainable manner that supports the local economy whilst safeguarding the valuable natural and built assets of the borough.

Key local issues

1. Where, when and how much development will be distributed throughout the borough;
2. Maintenance of the distinct character and identity of villages and the urban area;
3. Protection of the built and natural heritage, including the Kent Downs AONB and its setting and areas of local landscape value;
4. Provision of strategic and local infrastructure to support new development and growth including a sustainable Integrated Transport Strategy, adequate water supply, sustainable waste management, energy infrastructure, and social infrastructure such as health, schools and other educational facilities;
5. Improvements to quality of air within the air quality management area (AQMA);
6. Regeneration of the town centre and areas of social and environmental deprivation;
7. Redressing the low wage economy by expanding the employment skills base to target employment opportunities;
8. Meeting housing needs by delivering affordable housing, local needs housing, accommodation for the elderly, accommodation to meet Gypsy and Traveller needs, and accommodation to meet rural housing needs;
9. Promotion of the multi-functional nature of the borough's open spaces, rivers and other watercourses;

10. Ensuring that all new development is built to a high standard of sustainable design and construction; and
11. Ensuring that applications for development adequately address:
 - i. the impact of climate change,
 - ii. the issues of flooding and water supply, and
 - iii. the need for dependable infrastructure for the removal of sewage and waste water.

Spatial vision and objectives

3.7 The council's vision for the borough is set out in the community strategy and the strategic plan (2015): that our residents live in decent homes, enjoy good health and a pleasant environment, with a successful economy that is supported by reliable transport networks. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the spatial expression of the council's vision.

3.8 By 2031 prosperity will be achieved through sustainable economic growth across the borough supported by the creation of employment opportunities, the regeneration of key sites, continued investment in the town centre and improvements to access. The town centre will be a first class traditional town centre that will enable Maidstone to retain its role in the retail hierarchy of Kent by the creation of a distinctive, accessible, safe high quality environment for the community to live, work and shop in. The town centre will be regenerated by encouraging a wide range of new development including shops, businesses, residential development, cultural and tourism facilities, and enhanced public spaces.

3.9 Through the delivery of the Integrated Transport Strategy, Maidstone will have a transport network that supports a prosperous economy and provides genuine transport choices to help people make more journeys by modes such as public transport, walking and cycling. The transport network will have sufficient people and goods moving capacity to support the growth projected by the local plan to 2031. The borough will have a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and its air quality will be better with more low carbon vehicles travelling on the road network. Both the rural service centres and Maidstone town centre will be better connected to facilities and employment within the borough. Strategic links to locations outside of the borough will be improved, and destinations such as London will be more accessible. Overall, Maidstone will be a better place to live with an enhanced quality of life supported by an improved transport network.

3.10 Maidstone's urban area will be revitalised by the regeneration of key commercial and residential sites and areas of existing deprivation. The delivery of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will develop and enhance a high quality network of green and blue spaces building on the assets that already exist.

3.11 A better mix and balance of housing will be provided, and the density and location of development will be carefully considered. Development throughout the borough will be required to provide a mix of tenures to allow for the creation of sustainable communities and be of high quality using design that responds to the local character of areas and that incorporate sustainability principles. Development will be required to take account of the impact of climate change.

Spatial vision

By 2031:

1. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan will deliver sustainable growth and regeneration whilst protecting and enhancing the borough's natural and built assets;
2. Development will be guided by the delivery of the Integrated Transport Strategy together with the timely provision of appropriate strategic and local infrastructure;
3. Maidstone town will be an enhanced vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community benefiting from an exceptional urban and rural environment with a vital and viable town centre;
4. The roles of the rural service centres will be reinforced by directing suitable development and supporting infrastructure to Harrietsham, Lenham, Headcorn, Marden and Staplehurst;
5. The roles of the larger villages of Boughton Monchelsea, Coxheath, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding will be maintained through the delivery of limited development, where appropriate, together with supporting infrastructure;
6. The distinctive character of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting and the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, together with the landscape quality of the Areas of Local Landscape Value and the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt, will be rigorously conserved, maintained and enhanced;
7. Employment skills will be expanded to meet an improved and varied range of local jobs;
8. There will be a better balanced housing market to meet the needs of the community across the whole borough; and
9. Development will be of high quality sustainable design and construction to respond to climate change and to protect the environment.

3.12 A number of spatial objectives have been derived from the community strategy and the strategic plan to ensure that the Maidstone Borough Local Plan vision is achieved.

Spatial objectives

1. To provide for a balance of new homes and related retail and employment opportunities, with an emphasis on increasing skilled employment opportunities in the borough alongside developing learning opportunities;
2. To focus new development:
 - i. Principally within the Maidstone urban area and at the strategic development locations at the edge of town, and at junctions 7 and 8 of the M20 motorway;
 - ii. To a lesser extent at the five rural service centres of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst consistent with their range of services and role; and
 - iii. Limited development at the five larger villages of Boughton Monchelsea, Coxheath, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding, where appropriate;
3. To transform the offer, vitality and viability of Maidstone town centre including its office, retail, residential, leisure, cultural and tourism functions together with significant enhancement of its public realm and natural environment including the riverside;
4. To reinforce the roles of the rural service centres through the retention of existing services, the addition of new infrastructure where possible, and the regeneration of employment sites including the expansion of existing employment sites where appropriate;
5. To support new housing in villages that meets local needs and is of a design, scale, character and location appropriate to the settlement and which supports the retention of existing services and facilities;
6. To safeguard and maintain the character of the borough's landscapes including the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other distinctive landscapes of local value whilst facilitating the economic and social well-being of these areas including the diversification of the rural economy;
7. To retain and enhance the character of the existing green and blue infrastructure and to promote linkages between areas of environmental value;

8. To ensure that new development takes account of the need to mitigate the impacts of climate change, implementing sustainable construction standards for both residential and non-residential schemes;
9. To ensure that new development is of high quality design, making a positive contribution to the area including protection of built and natural heritage and biodiversity;
10. To provide for future housing that meets the changing needs of the borough's population including provision for an increasingly ageing population and family housing, an appropriate tenure mix, affordable housing and accommodation to meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community; and
11. To ensure that key infrastructure and service improvements needed to support delivery of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan are brought forward in a co-ordinated and timely manner, and that new development makes an appropriate contribution towards any infrastructure needs arising as a result of such new development.

Policy SS1 Maidstone Borough spatial strategy

Housing and economic development targets

4.1 One of the principal aims of the local plan is to set out clearly the council's proposals for the spatial distribution of development throughout the borough based on the vision and objectives of the plan. This section determines the housing and economic development targets for the plan period (2011 to 2031) and describes the council's approach to the distribution of development. The justification for this approach has been derived from the National Planning Policy Framework, the Sustainability Appraisal and the substantial evidence base produced by the council. Of paramount importance is the evidence that determines the borough's objectively assessed needs for housing, including affordable housing and land for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople pitches/plots; and the need for employment and retail sites. Key to delivering the targets will be the availability of suitable sites and the provision of supporting infrastructure.

4.2 In order to achieve a consistent and transparent approach to the allocation process, pro forma were used to assess the development potential of all known housing and economic development sites. The mitigation of constraints - local landscape, ecology, highways, services, flooding and so on - formed part of the assessments. In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, the availability, locational suitability, deliverability and viability of each potential development site was also examined. The results of the site appraisals are set out in the Strategic Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessment 2014 and 2015.

4.3 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015 confirms the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the plan period 2011 to 2031 as 18,560 dwellings (928 dwellings per annum⁽⁴⁾). This need is based on an analysis of national population projections with key local inputs, including net migration, household formation rates and housing vacancy rates. The council will monitor the impact of new data releases on its objectively assessed housing need and respond as appropriate. The council does not need to allocate land to meet the whole need of 18,560 dwellings because 5,248 homes have already been built since 2011 or have been granted planning permission on sites that are not yet completed. The local plan allocates a further 8,707 dwellings, and identifies broad locations for housing growth that can yield around 3,500 dwellings. Adding a windfall allowance of 114 dwellings per annum from unidentified sites in the latter years of the plan period, the council will be able to meet its objectively assessed housing need of 18,560 dwellings in full, as set out in the table below. The housing trajectory (appendix A) demonstrates in detail how this need will be met.

Housing land supply	Dwellings	Dwellings
Objectively assessed housing need		18,560

4 This compares to an average build rate of approximately 600 dwellings (net) over the past 5 years

Housing land supply	Dwellings	Dwellings
Completed dwellings 2011 to 2015	2,341	
Planning permissions (including subject to S106) to 30.11.15	2,907	
Local plan allocated housing sites	8,707	
Local plan broad locations for housing development	3,500	
Windfall sites (2022 to 2031)	1,026	
Total housing land supply		18,481

Table 4.1 Meeting objectively assessed housing need

4.4 A Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA) for the borough was completed in January 2012. This assessment revealed a need for 157 pitches ⁽⁵⁾ between October 2011 and March 2026 and for 9 Travelling Showpeople plots over the same time frame. The figures were rolled forward a further 5 years to 2031, resulting in a need for 187 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 11 Travelling Showpeople plots.

4.5 These pitches and plots will be delivered through the granting of planning consents and through the allocation of sites. The provision of both privately-owned and affordable pitches on publicly owned sites will contribute towards the targets. Local authorities are required to demonstrate a rolling 5 year supply of deliverable sites, and the council’s position will be set out and updated every year in its annual monitoring reports. These sites must be available for the use proposed and where this is the case, they should be developed in preference to granting consent on unidentified sites.

4.6 A number of sites have been granted planning permission since 2011 (totalling 81 pitches ⁽⁶⁾) and these sites will contribute towards the target of 187 pitches. Sites that can deliver an additional 41 pitches are allocated in the local plan. The balance will be delivered on unidentified sites.

	Pitches	Pitches
Pitch requirement		187
Permanent consents granted	81	
Allocated sites GT1(1) to GT1(16)	41	

5 A pitch is the space needed for a single household. The GTTSAA found that each Gypsy and Traveller household in the borough would occupy 1.7 caravans on average. For the purposes of this local plan a pitch is therefore regarded as the space needed for 1 mobile home (a static) and 1 touring caravan.

6 at December 2015

	Pitches	Pitches
Public pitch turnover ⁽⁷⁾	22	
Total	144	

Table 4.2 Meeting objectively assessed need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

4.7 It is important to achieve a balance of sustainable housing and employment growth throughout the borough whilst protecting the environment, to ensure that there are enough dwellings to accommodate the economically active workforce required to fill new jobs. The scale of sustainable employment growth required will be met through a range of employment sectors. The evidence base includes updated employment land forecasts which examine the local economy to see which sectors will grow or contract (in terms of jobs). The jobs forecast is then converted into a land requirement for those sectors that require new office, industrial or warehousing and distribution space between 2011 and 2031. The assessment has taken account of the new Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery (KIMS) and an expanded medical campus at junction 7 of the M20 motorway. The creation of 14,394 jobs is forecast across all employment sectors, of which 7,933 will be in the office, industrial and warehousing based sectors and at the Maidstone medical campus (including KIMS). These provisions are set out below (total figures vary due to rounding).

2011-2031	Job creation	Floorspace (m ²)	Land (hectares)
Offices	3,053	39,830	2.7
Industry	226	20,290	5.1
Warehousing	453	49,911	10.0
Medical	4,200	98,000	19.0
Total requirement	7,933	208,030	37.0

Table 4.3 Employment land provisions

4.8 Part of the office, industry and warehousing floorspace provisions have been met through planning permissions granted since 2011.

	Offices	Industry	Warehousing
Gross requirement m ²	39,830	20,290	49,911
Supply m ²	24,247	16,595	36,964
Net requirement m ²	15,583	3,695	12,947

Table 4.4 Net floorspace requirement for offices, industry and warehousing

7 1.4 pitched per annum for 16 years

4.9 The local plan allocates sufficient land to provide for offices, industrial and warehousing needs and medical use. A restricted level of office demand and take up within the market has been demonstrated over an extended period by persistently high vacancy rates and unbuilt permissions. This trend is replicated across the South East, including in more local locations such as Kings Hill, Ashford and Ebbsfleet, and is unlikely to change in the short term. However, given the considerable supply of dated and outmoded stock within the town centre there are opportunities to encourage replacement of stock in the latter years of the plan period that is likely to achieve greater space efficiencies.

4.10 The borough's retail needs have been determined through the Retail Capacity Study, which has assessed quantitative needs to 2031 using an empirical model to look at shopping patterns in Maidstone borough as a method of allocating retail expenditure from catchment zones to shopping destinations. The study looked at the needs for both convenience and comparison shopping. Convenience shops sell goods that people need every day, such as food, while comparison shops provide goods that are not bought on a regular basis, such as clothing or electrical products. The need for additional retail floorspace to 2031 is for 6,100m² of convenience floorspace and 23,700m² comparison floorspace. These provisions can be met through land allocations and the town centre broad location in the local plan.

Spatial distribution of development

4.11 Development must be delivered at the most sustainable towns and villages where employment, key services and facilities together with a range of transport choices are available.

4.12 As the County town, Maidstone has a range of higher order services and facilities including one of the largest retail centres in the south east; significant employment opportunities including the centre for public administration for the county of Kent; the district general hospital and a range of cultural and leisure attractions. Maidstone also provides the best range of transport options in the borough.

4.13 The five rural service centres of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst all provide a good range of services which serve both the village and the surrounding hinterland. All provide a nursery and primary school; a range of shops (including a post office); a doctor's surgery; at least one place of worship, public house, restaurant and community hall as well as open space provision. All have a range of local employment opportunities. The centres are connected by at least four bus journeys/weekday and all have a frequent train service.

4.14 Rural service centres have constraints to development. All the rural service centres sit within landscape which is in good condition and has high landscape sensitivity with the exception of the Harrietsham to Lenham Vale. The location of Lenham and Harrietsham within the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty makes this an area sensitive to change. Headcorn is surrounded on three sides by the functional floodplain of the River Beult and its tributaries and has limitations in respect of sewer and sewerage treatment capacity.

4.15 Lenham provides a good range of local facilities and is the only rural service centre with a secondary school. The village has access to employment opportunities locally, and good rail and bus links to Maidstone and Ashford towns. There is easy access to the A20 which leads to Junction 8 of the M20 motorway. There are landscape constraints but, despite this, the village is considered the most suitable to accommodate the most housing development of all the rural service centres.

4.16 The five larger villages of Boughton Monchelsea, Coxheath, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding have fewer services than rural service centres, but can still provide for the day-to-day needs of local communities and the wider hinterland. All villages provide a nursery and primary school; a shop (including a post office); at least one place of worship, public house and community hall as well as open space provision. All have a range of local employment opportunities. The villages are connected by at least four bus journeys/weekday and Hollingbourne and Yalding are served by a train station.

Maidstone Borough Settlement Hierarchy

County town

Maidstone

Rural service centres

Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst

Larger villages

Boughton Monchelsea, Coxheath, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne),

Sutton Valence and Yalding

Maidstone county town

4.17 As the largest and most sustainable location for development, Maidstone town is the focus for a significant proportion of new housing, employment and retail development in the borough. Cultural and tourism facilities are an important contributor to the success of the town centre and opportunities to retain and enhance such facilities in the town centre and the wider urban area are an important consideration. A fundamental objective of the council's strategy is to ensure that the town's growth brings about the regeneration of the town centre and other areas in need of regeneration. Optimum use has been made of the development and redevelopment opportunities that exist within the urban area.

4.18 The town of Maidstone cannot accommodate all of the growth that is required on existing urban sites, and the most sustainable locations for additional planned development are at the edge of the urban area, expanding the boundary of the settlement in these locations. A characteristic of Maidstone is the way tracts of rural and semi-rural land penetrate into the urban area. This feature results from the way the town has developed from its centre along radial routes and river corridors enveloping the land of former country estates. These green and blue corridors have a variety of functions in addition to the contribution they make to the setting of the town, including a local anti-coalescence function by maintaining open land between areas of development spreading out from the town; providing residents with access to open green space and the wider countryside; as well as providing biodiversity corridors. The council will maintain this network of green and blue infrastructure, whilst recognising that a limited amount development may offer opportunities for enhancement provided the function of the corridors is not compromised.

4.19 Strategic greenfield locations for housing development are identified to the north west and south east of the urban area in order to maximise the use of existing infrastructure and to minimise the impact on landscapes and habitats. Broad locations for future housing growth have also been identified within the town centre boundary and at Invicta Park Barracks, Sandling Road, Maidstone. The Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery (KIMS) is now completed at junction 7 of the M20, and the local plan identifies this location for the expansion of medical facilities to create a cluster of associated knowledge-driven industries that need to be in close proximity to one another. The strategic location at junction 7 also includes replacement retail facilities at the adjacent Newnham Court Shopping Village, to deliver a comprehensively planned scheme with supporting infrastructure.

Rural service centres

4.20 It is important that these villages are allowed to continue to serve their local area by retaining vital services thereby reducing the need to travel. Some development at these locations provides for a choice of deliverable housing locations and supports the role of the rural service centres. Appropriately scaled employment opportunities will also be allowed, building on and expanding existing provision in these locations.

Larger villages

4.21 Some of the borough's larger villages can provide for a limited amount of housing development.

Countryside

4.22 It is important that the quality and character of the countryside outside of settlements in the hierarchy is protected and enhanced whilst at the same time allowing for opportunities for sustainable development that supports traditional land based activities and other aspects of the countryside economy, and makes the most of new leisure and recreational opportunities that need a countryside location. The individual identity and character of settlements should not be compromised by development that results in unacceptable coalescence.

4.23 In addition to the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Metropolitan Green Belt and sites of European and national importance, the borough includes vast tracts of quality landscape, including parts of the Greensand Ridge and the Low Weald, together with the Teston, Loose and the Len river valleys. The council will protect its most valued and sensitive landscapes.

Land availability

4.24 The council has undertaken strategic housing and economic development land availability assessments to assess the borough's capacity for delivering its targets. The assessments have considered the availability and suitability of land, the economic viability of delivering sites, and site constraints. The studies show that the local housing target can be met from within the existing built up area and on sites with the least constraints at the edge of Maidstone, the rural service centres and the larger villages. Retail and business development can be accommodated within the town centre and at identified strategic locations.

Policy SS 1

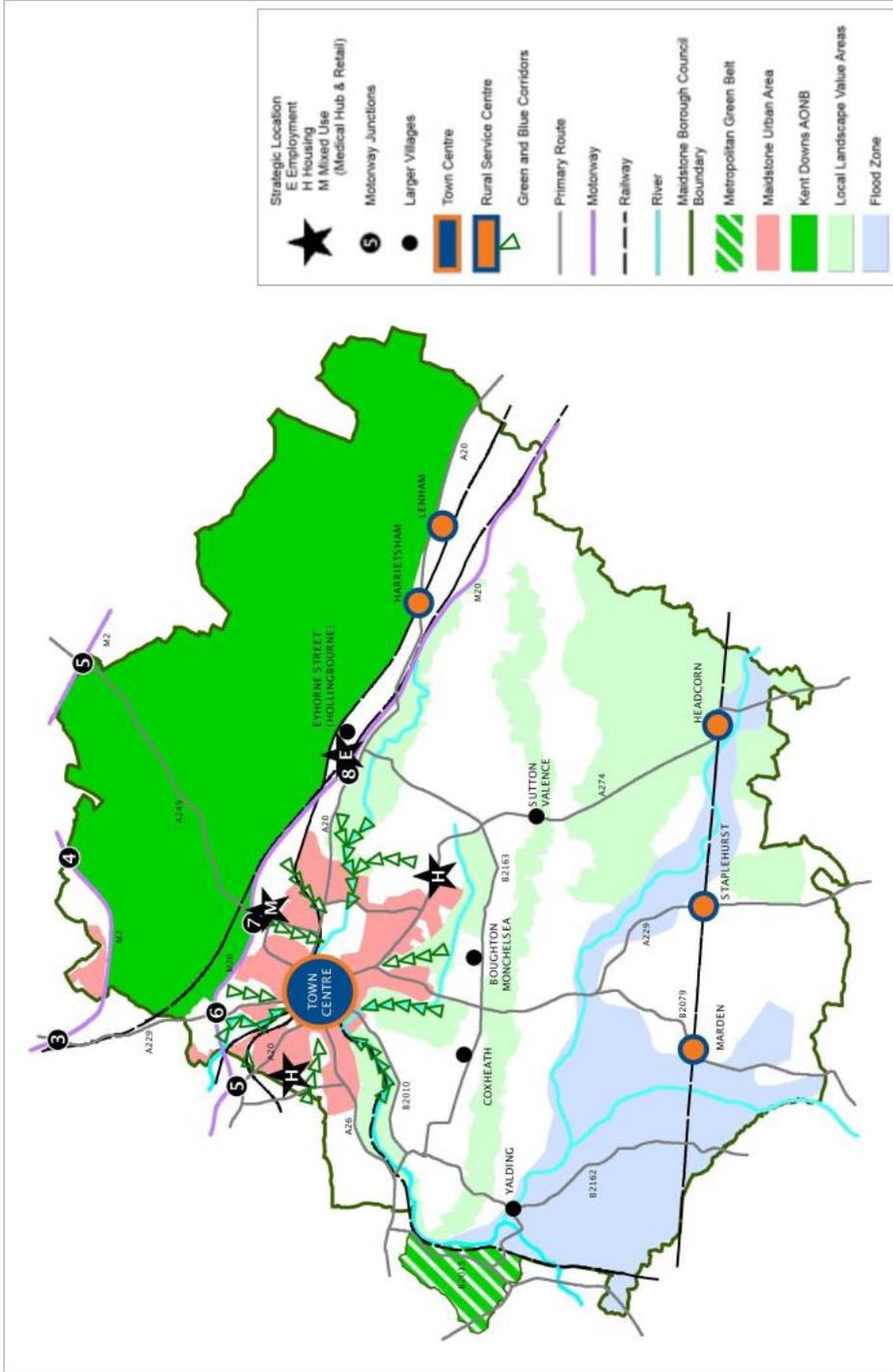
Maidstone Borough spatial strategy

1. Between 2011 and 2031 provision is made through the granting of planning permissions and the allocation of sites for:
 - i. 18,560 new dwellings;
 - ii. 187 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 11 Travelling Showpeople plots;
 - iii. 39,830m² floorspace for office use;
 - iv. 20,290m² floorspace for industrial use;
 - v. 49,911m² floorspace for warehousing use;
 - vi. 98,000m² floorspace for medical use;
 - vii. 6,100m² floorspace for retail use (convenience goods); and
 - viii. 23,700m² floorspace for retail use (comparison goods).
2. New land allocations that contribute towards meeting the above provisions are identified on the policies map.
3. An expanded Maidstone urban area will be the principal focus for development in the borough. Best use will be made of available sites within the urban area. Regeneration is prioritised within the town centre, which will continue to be the primary retail and office location in the borough. Strategic locations to the north west and south east of the

urban area provide for substantial residential development and junction 7 of the M20 motorway is identified as a strategic location for additional business provision in association with a new medical campus.

4. A prestigious business park at Junction 8 of the M20 that is well connected to the motorway network will provide for a range of job needs up to 2031, and will help to diversify the range of sites available to new and expanding businesses in the borough to help accommodate future demand.
5. Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst rural service centres will be the secondary focus for housing development with the emphasis on maintaining and enhancing their role and the provision of services to meet the needs of the local community. Suitably scaled employment opportunities will also be permitted.
6. The larger villages of Boughton Monchelsea, Coxheath, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding will be locations for limited housing development consistent with the scale and role of the villages.
7. Broad locations for significant housing growth likely to come forward in the later phases of the plan period are identified at Invicta Park Barracks, in the town centre and at Lenham.
8. Suitably scaled employment opportunities will be permitted at appropriate locations to support the rural economy (in accordance with policy DM41).
9. In other locations, protection will be given to the rural character of the borough avoiding coalescence between settlements, including Maidstone and surrounding villages, and Maidstone and the Medway Gap/Medway Towns conurbation.
10. The green and blue network of multi-functional open spaces, rivers and water courses will generally be maintained and enhanced where appropriate; and the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and landscapes of local value will be conserved and maintained.
11. Supporting infrastructure will be brought forward in a timely way to provide for the needs arising from development.

Key diagram



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Maidstone Borough Key Diagram

Policy SP1 Maidstone urban area

5.1 Policy SP1 is specifically concerned with the built up area of Maidstone that is outside the identified town centre boundary but within the urban boundary shown on the policies map. This area has a varied mix of housing, shopping and community facilities, a range of business locations, a number of attractive green spaces and good transport links that all act in combination to make Maidstone an attractive place to live and work.

5.2 As the town has grown over the centuries areas of distinct architectural character have emerged. Adopted Character Area Assessment Supplementary Planning Documents detail the locally distinctive character of an area, and offer guidance on improving the quality of an area. During the local plan period, change within the urban area will tend to be incremental in nature due to infilling and select redevelopment of appropriate urban sites. Development proposals at all locations within the urban area should look to include links to open spaces.

5.3 Land allocations within the urban area specifically at locations close to the town centre will comprise a mix of uses, which will include retail and community facilities, where possible. Major planned development at the edge of the urban area to meet housing and employment needs is to be supported by necessary infrastructure.

5.4 A number of key infrastructure requirements have been identified for provision within the Maidstone urban area as set out in the policy below. There is a significant strategic need for additional secondary school provision within the borough. The Valley Invicta Academy Trust has recently received approval from the Department for Education for an application for free school status and, subject to planning permission, funding has been provisionally secured for a scheme on land adjacent to Invicta Grammar School and Valley Park School. A one form entry school is also required outside the urban area at Cornwallis Academy, Loose.

Regeneration

5.5 There are four neighbourhoods within the urban area that have been identified as being in need of regeneration: Park Wood, High Street, Shepway North and Shepway South. These areas currently fall within the 20% most deprived in the country and a cross-cutting theme of the Maidstone Community Strategy is to tackle health, education and employment inequalities in these areas of relative disadvantage. Development within or adjoining these locations will look to close the gap between these areas and other parts of Maidstone by focusing on improving accessibility to health services, equal access to education and training opportunities, and job creation.

Policy SP 1

Maidstone urban area

1. As the largest and most sustainable location, Maidstone urban area, as defined on the policies map, will be the focus for new development.
2. Within the urban area and outside of the town centre boundary identified in policy SP4, Maidstone will continue to be a good place to live and work. This will be achieved by:
 - i. Allocating sites at the edge of the town for housing and business development;
 - ii. The development and redevelopment or infilling of appropriate urban sites in a way that contributes positively to the locality's distinctive character
 - iii. Retaining well located business areas;
 - iv. Maintaining the network of district and local centres, supporting enhancements to these centres in accordance with the overall hierarchy of centres;
 - v. Retaining the town's green spaces and ensuring that development positively contributes to the setting, accessibility, biodiversity and amenity value of these areas as well as the River Medway and the River Len; and
 - vi. Supporting development that improves the social, environmental and employment well-being of those living in identified areas of deprivation.
3. Spatial policies SP2 and SP3 set out the requirements for the strategic development locations to the north-west and south-east of the urban area. Elsewhere in the urban area land is allocated for housing, retail and employment development together with supporting infrastructure.
 - i. Approximately 1,859 new dwellings will be delivered on 24 sites in accordance with policies H1(11) to H1(32) and policies RMX1(2) to RMX1(3).
 - ii. Approximately 11,400m² of retail floorspace is allocated under policies RMX1(2) to RMX1(3).
 - iii. Approximately 8,000m² employment floorspace is allocated in accordance with policy EMP1(1).
 - iv. Twelve existing sites at Tovil Green Business Park, Hart Street Commercial Centre, The Old Forge, The Old Brewery, South Park Business Village, Turkey Mill Court, Eclipse Park, County Gate, Medway Bridge House, Albion Place, Victoria Court and Lower Stone Street (Gail House, Link House, Kestrel House and Chaucer House) are designated Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities in the urban area (policy DM21).
 - v. Key infrastructure requirements include:

- a. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure, including junction improvements, capacity improvements to part of Bearsted Road, improved pedestrian/cycle access and bus prioritisation measures, in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(11) to H1(32) and policies RMX1(2) to RMX1(3).
- b. Additional secondary school capacity including one form entry expansions of the Maplesden Noakes School and Maidstone Grammar School.
- c. Additional primary school provision through one form entry expansion of South Borough Primary School.
- d. Provision of new publicly accessible open space.

Policy SP2 Maidstone urban area: north west strategic development location

5.6 The north west strategic development location benefits from good access to the M20 motorway, the A20 and the A26. There are capacity challenges that will need to be considered with the local transport network, including key junctions at the M20 junction 5 and at the northern and southern ends of Hermitage Lane. The council will work to address these challenges with Kent County Council, Highways England and the developers of the sites in this location.

5.7 Local services in this part of the town are good and include a mix of health and education facilities within walking distance or frequent access by public transport.

5.8 Retail options are also good at this location. In addition to local convenience stores, the town centre is easily accessible as is the Quarry Wood retail location across the borough boundary in Aylesford, which provides a mix of convenience and comparison goods.

5.9 At this location the council is keen to retain the separation between the edges of Barming and Allington and the edge of the Medway Gap settlements in Tonbridge and Malling Borough i.e. Aylesford, Ditton and Larkfield. To the north, long range landscape views that would be affected by developing these sites has been considered by the Planning Inspectorate (in 2000), which concluded that it was acceptable to develop at East of Hermitage Lane.

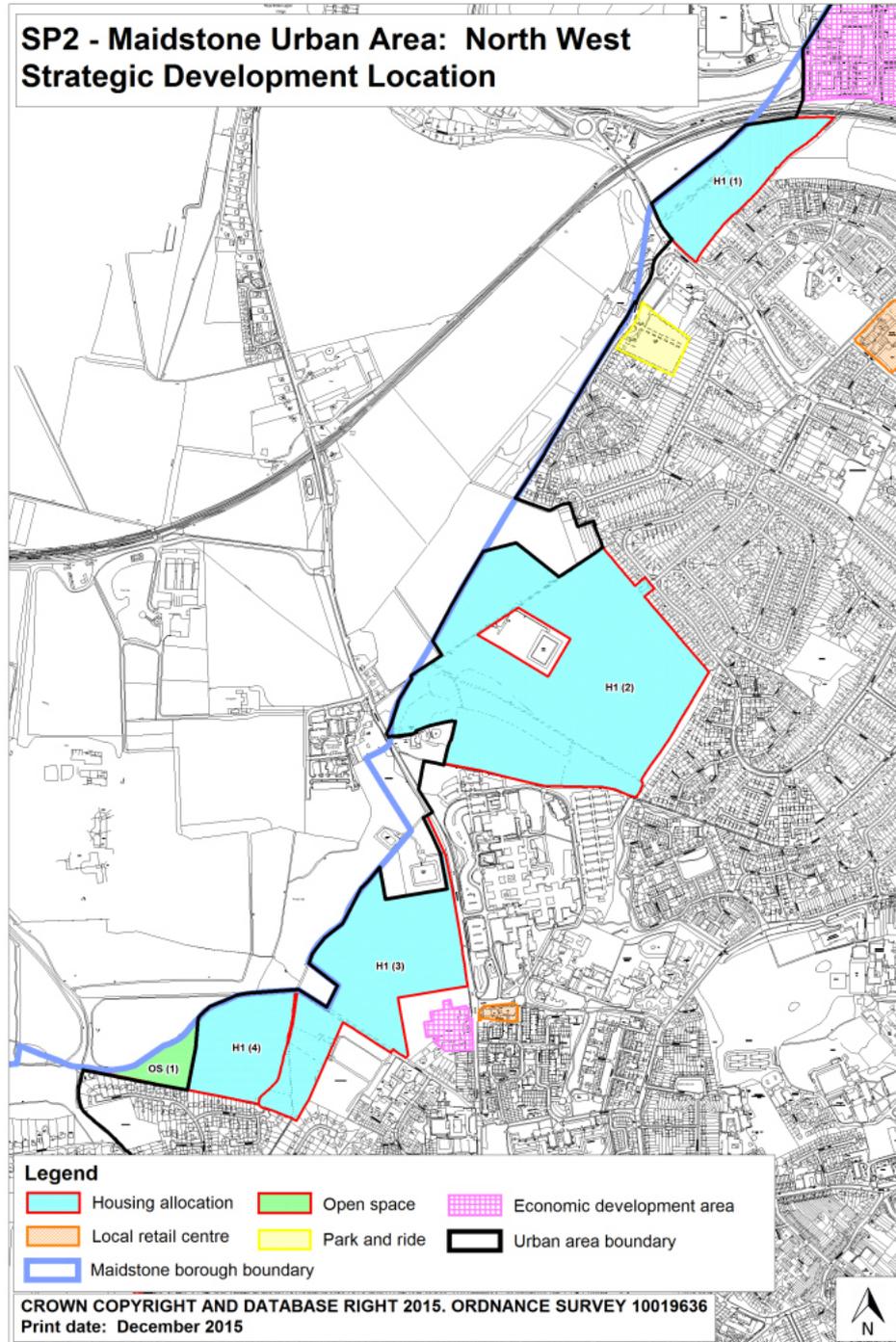
5.10 The north west strategic development location has been comprehensively planned in respect of supporting infrastructure and connectivity between sites.

Policy SP 2

Maidstone urban area: north west strategic development location

As the most sustainable location in the settlement hierarchy, new development over the plan period will be focused at the Maidstone urban area. Land to the north west of the urban area is identified as a strategic development location for housing growth with supporting infrastructure.

1. In addition to development, redevelopment and infilling of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP1, approximately 1,157 new dwellings will be delivered on four allocated sites (policies H1(1) to H1(4)).
2. The existing 20/20 site at Allington and Hermitage Mills are designated as Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities (policy DM21).
3. Key infrastructure requirements for the north-west strategic development location include:
 - i. Highway and transport infrastructure including improvements to: the M20 junction 5 roundabout; junctions of Hermitage Lane/London Road and Fountain Lane/Tonbridge Road; pedestrian and cycle access; and public transport, including provision of a new bus loop in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(1) to H1(4).
 - ii. A new two form entry primary school, community centre and local shopping facilities will be provided on-site H1(2) to serve new development.
 - iii. A minimum of 15.95 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.



Policy SP3 Maidstone urban area: south east strategic development location

5.11 The south east strategic development location benefits from its proximity to Maidstone’s urban area and the town centre, where key community infrastructure, local services and employment opportunities are located. A further

benefit is that there are opportunities to expand and improve on existing services and facilities in this area, and to put new infrastructure in place to accommodate the demands arising from an increase in population.

5.12 Some forms of infrastructure provision have historically not kept pace with development. This has been a contributory factor to some issues such as a congested road network, a shortage of affordable housing, deficiencies in open space provision and poor access to key community facilities in certain areas. New development on the urban periphery in the south east will be underpinned with a co-ordinated infrastructure approach for the area, which will focus on tackling congestion and air quality issues, improving accessibility to the town centre and providing the community services, facilities and accessible open space necessary to mitigate for the increase in population. This is reflected in some of the site allocation policies, where highways improvements such as junction improvements and bus priority measures on the A274 are proposed, along with significant areas of new public open space, two new primary schools and a community hall.

5.13 At this location the council is keen to limit as much as possible the extension of development further into the countryside along both sides of the A274, Sutton Road. This ensures that the more sensitive landscapes in this area will remain protected and development will be consolidated around the urban edge to make best use of new and existing infrastructure.

5.14 The south east strategic development location has been comprehensively planned in respect of supporting infrastructure and connectivity between sites.

Policy SP 3

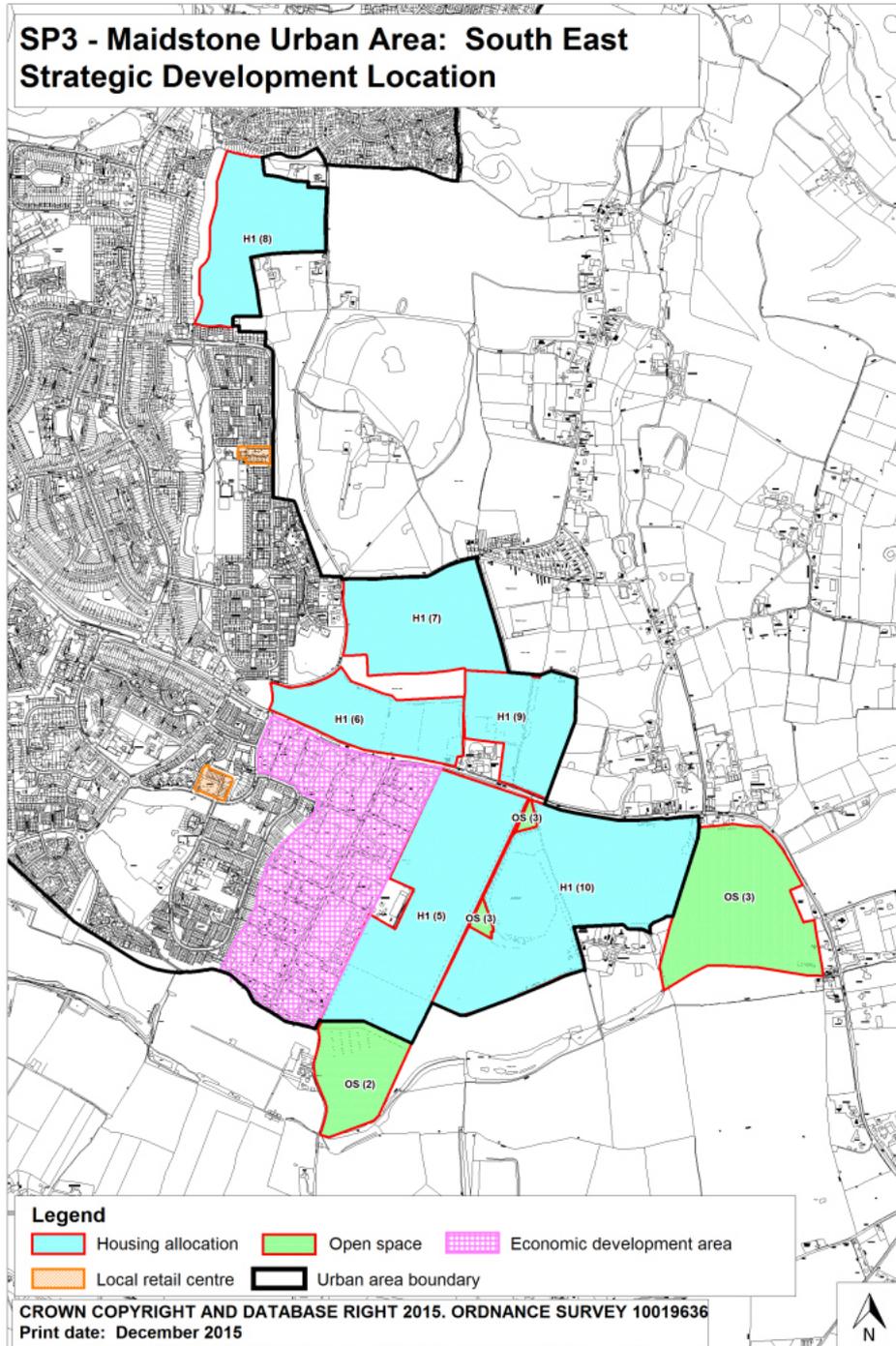
Maidstone urban area: south east strategic development location

As the most sustainable location in the settlement hierarchy, new development over the plan period will be focused at the Maidstone urban area. Land to the south east of the urban area is allocated as a strategic development location for housing growth with supporting infrastructure.

1. In addition to development, redevelopment and infilling of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP1, approximately 2,651 new dwellings will be delivered on six allocated sites (policies H1(5) to H1(10)).
2. The existing Parkwood Industrial Estate is designated as an Economic Development Area in order to maintain employment opportunities (policy DM21).
3. Key infrastructure requirements for the south-east strategic development location include:
 - i. Highway and transport infrastructure improvements including: junction improvements, a new roundabout and capacity improvements on the A274 Sutton Road incorporating bus prioritisation measures, together with improved pedestrian and cycle

access, in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(5) to H1(10).

- ii. New two form entry primary schools on sites H1(5) and H1(10)
- iii. A new community centre and local shopping facilities will be provided on site H1(5) to serve new development.
- iv. A minimum of 31.19 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.



Policy SP4 Maidstone town centre

5.15 Maidstone has a successful town centre. It has been, and continues to be, a centre for public administration, reflecting Maidstone’s county town role. Both the County and Borough Councils are located in the town centre along with other public sector employers such as the Passport Office and the HM Prison Service. Coupled with public administration, business, financial and professional services are particularly important economic sectors and between them they

account for a third of employment in the local economy with the town centre acting as a particular hub for these activities. This is reflected in the volume of office floorspace in the town centre which is estimated to be some 192,000m².

5.16 Maidstone town centre is also a significant shopping destination, offering a predominately outdoor, street-based shopping environment. There is some 141,000m² of retail floorspace within the town centre boundary.

5.17 The town centre has a good balance of major, national retailers alongside a strong, independent offer. The former are particularly concentrated in Fremlin Walk, the southern end of Week Street and The Mall, the town's main indoor shopping centre. The town centre benefits from a high representation of major retailers and has a particular strength in clothing and footwear shops. The presence of a critical mass of national chain stores is an important factor in attracting shoppers into the town which in turn helps to attract and retain the major retailers themselves.

5.18 The local independent shops are principally found within the Royal Star Arcade and along Gabriel's Hill, Pudding Lane and Union Street. These shops add to the town centre's distinctiveness and complement and support the mainstream shopping offer. The larger retail units on the west side of the river also have a predominantly complementary role to the main shopping area. Whilst these units are close to the core of the town centre 'as the crow flies', the routes across the river for walkers and cyclists are indirect and, to a degree, unattractive to use which limits the potential for sustainable linked trips.

5.19 The town centre like others across the country faces challenges from the economic downturn as shoppers spend more cautiously and prioritise value for money. Retailing patterns are also changing as more people turn to the internet for their purchases. Many national retailers are responding to the changing environment by consolidating their national store networks into a portfolio of fewer, larger stores. For Maidstone there is the challenge of competition from other Kent town centres such as Ashford, Tunbridge Wells and Chatham. Planning permission has recently been granted for an extension to Bluewater (30,000m²) which will further enhance its attractiveness as a major shopping destination and result in further competition for the town centre.

5.20 Maidstone town centre also supports a wide range of leisure, cultural and tourist attractions and enjoys an active night time economy. The majority of cultural and tourist facilities are based around the historic core of the town and include the Hazlitt Theatre on Earl Street, the recently extended museum on St Faiths Street and the Archbishops Palace and All Saints Church to the south. Lockmeadow is the town's major leisure and entertainment complex whilst Earl Street has become a particular focus for restaurants and cafés.

5.21 The combination of the centre's historic fabric, riverside environment and accessible green spaces helps give the town its distinct and attractive character. The town centre benefits from the select number of green spaces interspersed through it, such as Brenchley Gardens and Trinity Gardens, whilst further afield the substantial facilities of both Whatman Park and Mote Park are within an extended walking distance of the town centre.

5.22 The quality and attractiveness of the High Street Conservation Area has been substantially upgraded by the High Street Improvement works. As well as expanding pedestrian-friendly areas and reducing the dominance of vehicles, the scheme has created a new public space in Jubilee Square which is used for community and promotional events.

5.23 The River Medway is the key natural landscape feature within the town centre. The river corridor acts as a contrast with the urban townscape, provides pedestrian and cycleway routes and serves as a wildlife corridor by linking urban habitats with the countryside beyond. The River Len, a tributary of the Medway, also runs through the town centre.

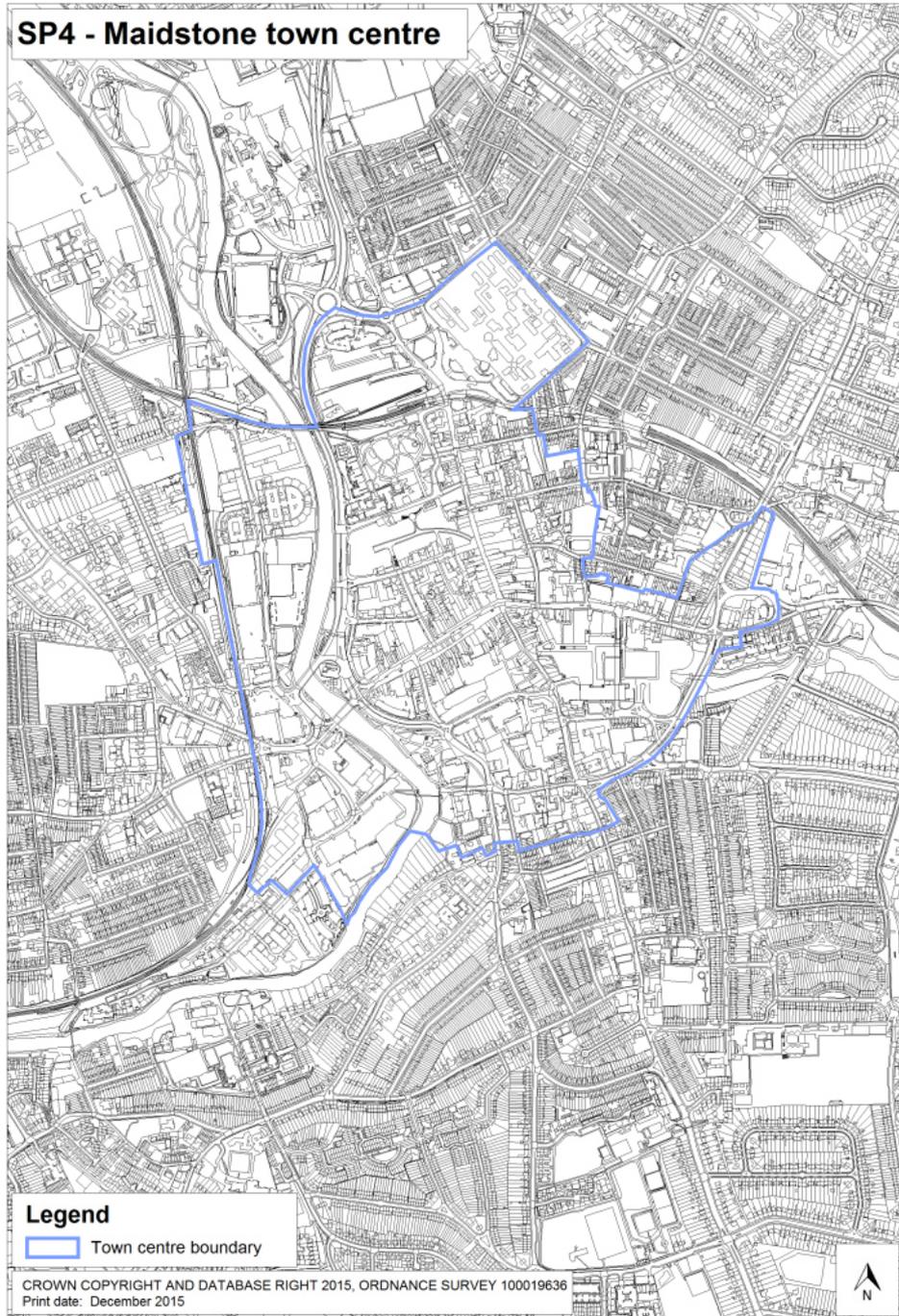
5.24 The Baltic Wharf building in St Peters Street is a prominent and substantial Grade II listed building fronting the west bank of the River Medway. Whilst the more modern warehouses adjoining the building are occupied, the main building is currently underused and the future of this listed building would be best secured by putting it into active use. Planning permission has been granted for a large foodstore and other ancillary uses (offices, restaurant & café and assembly & leisure uses). Should the consented scheme not come forward, the council will consider positively alternative schemes that achieve the retention and restoration of the listed building. Appropriate uses would include housing, offices, leisure uses, cafés and restaurants. In the context of an improved housing market, a residential scheme would positively contribute towards the identification of the town centre as a broad location for housing growth under policy H2.

5.25 The town centre is also the focus of wider initiatives which will add to the vitality of the town centre and increase its draw. Town Centre Management is a long standing initiative which acts to maximise the appeal of the town centre including through the organisation of promotional events and crime reduction initiatives. The recently established Maidstone Town Team will be delivering projects associated with marketing, events, regeneration and culture.

Town centre boundary

5.26 The town centre boundary identifies the area covered by the policy SP4 and has resulted from a combined assessment of:

- the extent of the area which contains, and is suitable for, the main focus of town centre uses;
- the existing character and form of development;
- the visual, physical and functional relationship between areas; and
- the potential for appropriate development opportunities.



The future role of Maidstone town centre

5.27 The future role of Maidstone as one of the principal town centres in Kent in continuing to act as the county town will be guided by a vision of what the centre will be like by the end of the plan period.

Town centre vision

By 2031 a regenerated and sustainable Maidstone town centre will be a first class traditional town centre at the heart of the 21st Century County Town that has maintained its place as one of the premier town centres in Kent by creating a distinctive, safe and high quality place that has:

- Retained its best environmental features, including the riverside and the enhanced public realm;
- Provided a variety of well-integrated attractions for all ages including new shopping, service sector based businesses, leisure, tourism, and cultural facilities; and
- Improved access for all.

Key components in realising this vision are:

- Enhancing the diversity of the retail offer, supporting a continued balance between independent and multiple retailers;
- Creating a highly sustainable location resilient to future climate change;
- Establishing the town centre as an attractive hub for business building on the town centre's assets and environment;
- Creating a stronger mix and balance of uses within the centre to support long term viability including where appropriate residential development; and
- Tackling congestion and air quality issues through improvements in provision for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, including public transport.

Shopping

5.28 The Town Centre Assessment (2013) reveals that the centre is performing well in retail terms, signified by stabilising vacancy rates and the presence of major retailers, especially in the primary shopping area. Vacancy rates are higher, however, in the more secondary shopping areas which detracts from the overall vitality and viability of the town centre. A flexible approach to allowing service and leisure uses in these locations will help to improve unit occupation and diversify the mix of uses in the town centre. The town centre assessment has identified the importance of restaurants, cafés and coffee shops as well as personal retail (hairdressers etc) and leisure uses in encouraging people to extend the length of their visit to the town centre.

5.29 The Retail Capacity Study (2013) forecasts the need for new shopping floorspace in the town for both comparison and convenience shopping over the time frame of the local plan. The study takes account of predicted changes in shopping patterns such as the increasing role of the internet, population growth

and expenditure growth. There are limits to predicting retail trends over such an extended period and the study advises that the findings for the latter part of the plan period (2026 to 2031) in particular must be regarded as broad indications of retail capacity rather than absolute quantum. A further review of the capacity forecasts will be needed in the middle of the plan period, when the local plan review commences (by 2022).

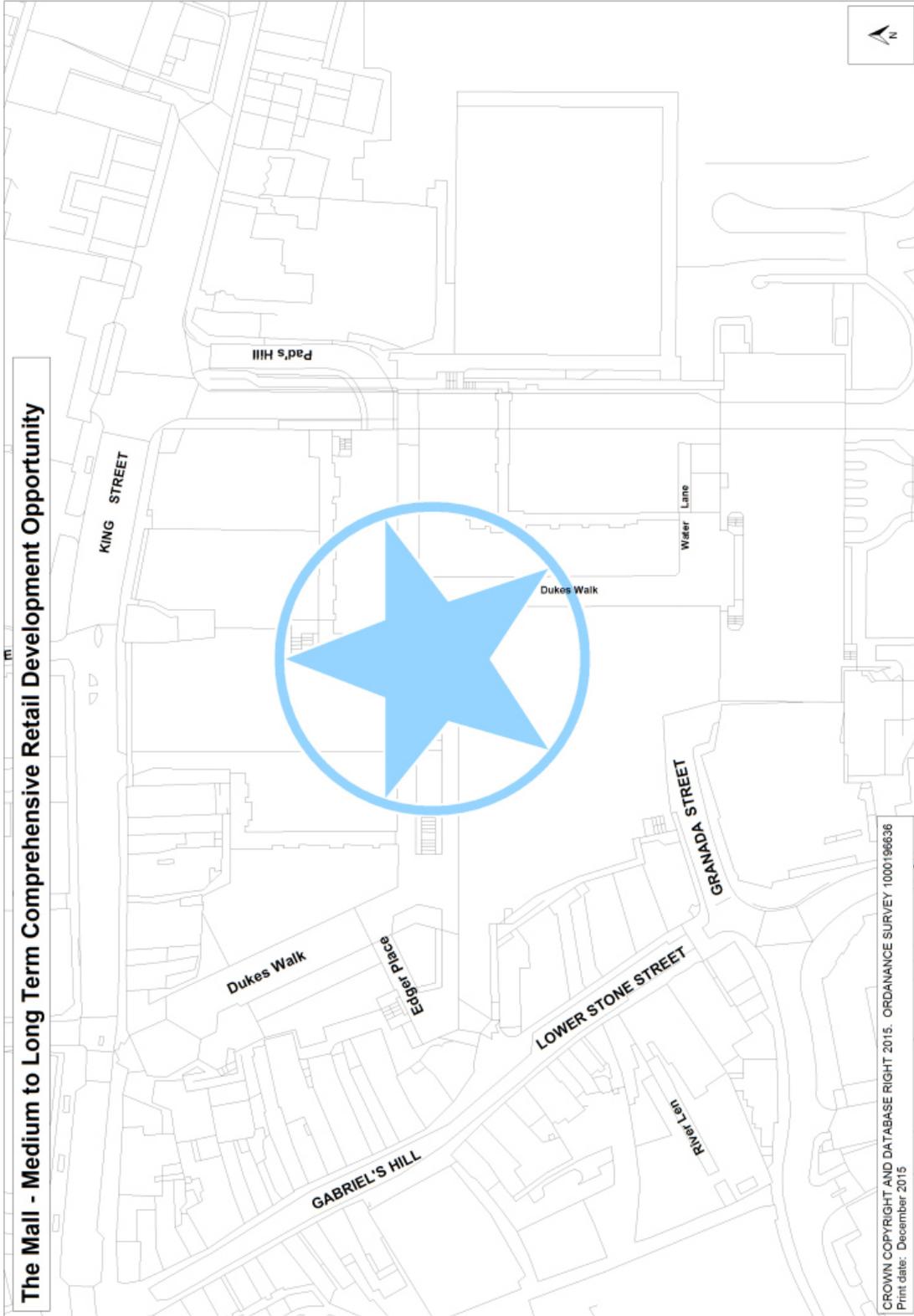
	2016	2021	2026	2031
Comparison (m ²)	5,500	12,400	18,800	23,700
Convenience (m ²)	3,700	4,400	5,250	6,100

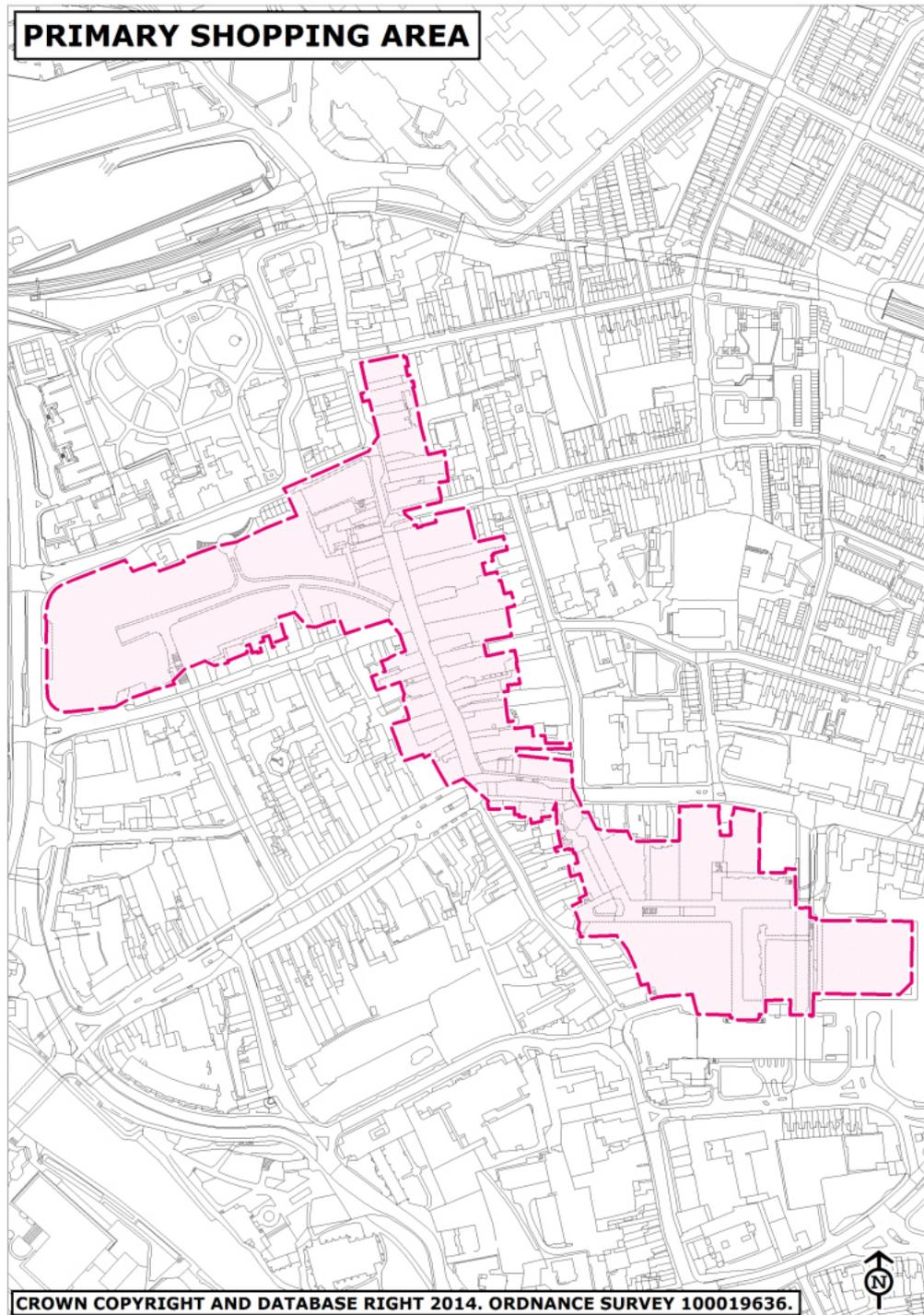
Table 5.1 Retail Capacity (cumulative)

5.30 To accommodate needs in the early part of the plan period, the key opportunity and top priority for new retail development will be the Maidstone East/Royal Mail Sorting Office site (RMX1(2)). The site has capacity to accommodate 10,000m² of convenience and comparison retailing. This is sequentially the first choice site with close, direct walking connections to the heart of the town centre and further scope to enhance the quality and attractiveness of this route through a scheme of enhanced public realm, as well as improved public transport connections in association with the site's development. This site can help to deliver a new modern shopping destination, creating a further 'anchor' shopping location in the town centre alongside Fremlin Walk and The Mall. The site is considered a suitable location for both convenience and comparison type shopping and could help to address the identified lack of larger, more modern units available in the town centre which are important in attracting new operators into the town.

5.31 The Mall is the town centre's main indoor shopping centre and is currently well occupied as one of the key anchor locations in the town centre. The building is, however, becoming dated with its layout and internal environment is less suited to modern retailers' requirements compared with both Fremlin Walk and competing centres further afield such as Tunbridge Wells, Canterbury, Ashford and Bluewater. Without positive and significant intervention there is a considerable risk that the commercial attractiveness of the centre will decline over the plan period to the detriment of the town centre as a whole.

5.32 In response, the council will actively support the longer term redevelopment of the wider area that encompasses The Mall, the multi storey car park fronting Romney Place and Sainsburys as well as the King Street car park site and the former AMF Bowling building (policy RMX1(3)), both on the north side of King Street. As well as re-providing the existing quantum of floorspace, a comprehensive scheme could deliver net additional shopping floorspace and help meet the retail growth predicted for later in the plan period. Redevelopment will help to sustain and enhance the commercial health of the town centre. A scheme in this location is unlikely to come forward until the latter end of the plan period (post 2026). The council will work with its partners to help bring the site forward, and to address issues of site assembly and physical constraints of the site. Identifying this area for longer term growth brings clarity in respect of the future of the town centre.





The local plan needs to define the 'primary shopping area' for the purposes of applying the sequential test (policy DM17). The sequential test requires that new retail development is directed to within the primary shopping area first, then to edge of centre sites (within 300m of the primary shopping area) before out of centre sites. The primary shopping area encompasses the core retail part of the town centre only; there is further significant retailing on more outlying streets (see policy DM32 – secondary retail frontages).

Offices

5.33 Office-based businesses are an important component in the commercial success of the town centre. The town centre is a sustainable location for offices and it offers the dual benefits of having good transport connections and a full range of services and facilities close at hand.

5.34 The town centre office market has been challenged for a number of years. The last significant new office building completed in the town centre was the Countygate development early in the last decade. There is a significant supply of poorer quality office stock which is less suited to modern occupier requirements because this stock is generally older, is not suited to flexible sub-division, is less energy efficient and has limited or no dedicated car parking. This over supply has had the effect of suppressing values. Coupled with a confirmed supply of business park office development at locations such as Kings Hill and Eclipse Park, the net effect is that new 100% office development is unlikely to be viable in the current market and would not proceed without a substantial pre-let. This position is not unique to Maidstone; the market in many regional office locations is reported to be constrained at present.⁽⁸⁾

5.35 A route to tackle this issue is to address the oversupply of poorer quality stock. Recent changes to the General Permitted Development Order enable the conversion of office space to residential use without the need for planning permission for a limited 3 year period (until 30 May 2016) and this could start to secure a step change⁽⁹⁾. A number of factors are likely to need to be in place for the office to residential conversions and redevelopment schemes in the town centre to come forward:

- The value of office stock, in terms of rents, to fall further so that redevelopment for alternative uses becomes viable
- Existing tenant leases to come to an end
- An uplift in the market for town centre apartments.

5.36 It is expected that modern office buildings with car parking which remain fit for purpose will continue to be occupied and remain part of the office stock within the town centre. These sites are designated in the plan for office (B1) use. In addition, the site at Mote Road is an opportunity to redevelop an existing office area to provide better quality stock, recognising that viability is likely to be challenging in the short to medium term.

Housing

5.37 Whilst commercial uses are the priority for the town centre, residential development can have a supporting role, in particular as part of mixed use schemes. Additional residential development in the town centre will help to promote town centre vitality, especially during the evening. The principal

8 Town Centre Assessment (2013)

9 Through the new Housing and Planning Bill 2015, the Government has signalled its intention to make permanent temporary permitted development rights which have enabled offices to be converted to new homes without having to apply for planning permission. The council will maintain a watching brief and respond as appropriate

opportunity will be Maidstone East/Sorting Office site where an element of housing will be delivered alongside significant new retail with other select opportunities for town centre housing also allocated in the plan.

5.38 The Springfield/Whatmans sites off Royal Engineers Road is a gateway location just beyond the town centre boundary where significant new residential development is planned.

Accessibility

5.39 The town centre has a function as a transport hub. Improving accessibility into and around the town centre is also important for sustaining and improving the commercial health of the town centre. Key measures are identified in the draft Integrated Transport Strategy and include increasing the frequency of bus services serving the town centre, a revised approach to car parking management and improvements to the bridge gyratory. The strategy also highlights the value of public realm improvements, including to the River Medway towpath, to improve both the pedestrian and cyclist experience.

Quality in the town centre environment

5.40 Capitalising on the centre's existing environmental assets is a further way to support sustainable growth in the town centre and to further enhance its commercial appeal.

5.41 The town centre has an interesting historic core but, in the past, it has not consistently benefited from high quality design or exceptional public realm. Much of the core of the town centre is prioritised for pedestrians but in places the quality of the surfaces and street furniture have begun to deteriorate and the connections between different locations within the centre are not always clear and legible.

5.42 The High Street enhancement scheme represents a recent positive step change in this respect and the town centre will benefit from further such schemes being brought forward as highlighted in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

5.43 Also better linkages to and enhancement of the existing green spaces and riverside environment within the town centre would help to 'green' the town centre and help to adapt to, and mitigate against, climate change. The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will help to identify the principles that should be followed and the subsequent action plan will include specific initiatives for implementation.

Policy SP 4

Maidstone town centre

1. The regeneration of Maidstone town centre, as defined on the policies map, is a priority. This will be achieved by:

- i. Retaining and enhancing a variety of well integrated attractions for all ages including shopping, service sector-based businesses, leisure and cultural facilities;
 - ii. The retail-led redevelopment of Maidstone East/Royal Mail Sorting Office site;
 - iii. For the medium to longer term, promoting a comprehensive retail redevelopment centred on The Mall;
 - iv. The retention of the best quality office stock whilst allowing for the redevelopment of lower quality offices;
 - v. The protection and consolidation of retail uses in the primary shopping frontages;
 - vi. Outside the primary shopping frontages, allowing for a wider range of supporting uses including those that contribute to the night time economy;
 - vii. Select opportunities for residential redevelopment;
 - viii. The retention of the best environmental features, including the riverside, and delivery of schemes to improve the public realm and pedestrian environment as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
 - ix. Achieving improved accessibility to the town centre through the measures in the Integrated Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
2. Development in the town centre should:
- i. Demonstrate a quality of design that responds positively to the townscape, including ensuring the conservation and enhancement of the town centre's historic fabric. Additionally for sites adjacent to the River Medway, development should:
 - a. Respond positively to the river's setting as seen in both short range views and in longer range views from the river valley sides; and
 - b. Ensure public access to the riverside is secured and maintained either through on-site measures or off-site contributions.
 - ii. Contribute to the priority public realm and accessibility improvement schemes for the town centre identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Policy SP5 Rural service centres

5.44 Outside of the town centre and urban area, rural service centres are considered the most sustainable settlements in Maidstone's settlement hierarchy. The planned development and maintenance of sustainable communities underpins the council's approach to rural areas where the primary aim is to direct development towards rural settlements that can best act as service centres for their local population and surrounding rural communities. Rural service centres

play a key part in the economic and social fabric of the borough and contribute towards its character and built form. They act as a focal point for trade and services by providing a concentration of public transport networks, employment opportunities and community facilities that minimise car journeys.

5.45 An assessment of population and the services and facilities available in each settlement in the borough forms part of the basis for determining the villages that can be designated as a rural service centre. Other factors like the accessibility of the villages, their potential to accommodate additional growth, and the role each village plays as a service centre for its surrounding hinterland are also important. The following villages have been designated as rural service centres based on the above:

- Harrietsham
- Headcorn
- Lenham
- Marden
- Staplehurst.

5.46 The rural service centres will continue to be focal points where improved infrastructure and the strategic location of new development will reduce the need to travel and will help to maintain and improve on the range of essential local services and facilities. It is important that the rural service centres remain sustainable settlements with the services and facilities necessary to support a growing population.

5.47 The Water Cycle Study indicates that a number of the rural service centre catchment areas have at least some known problems with surface water and sewer flooding. It is therefore important that surface water run-off from new development does not make this problem worse. Future developments in the rural service centres should include the implementation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) that reduce surface water run-off. To ensure consistency across each rural service centre with respect to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, a detailed flood risk assessment is required prior to any development with the obvious intention of ensuring new development is located outside areas liable to flooding.

5.48 Whilst Maidstone town will be the focus for most new development, development in the rural service centres with associated infrastructure improvements is considered far more sustainable than the ad hoc growth of smaller settlements. New sites are allocated at all rural service centres for housing development.

Policy SP 5

Rural service centres

Within the designated rural service centres of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst, as shown on the policies map, the council will:

1. Focus new housing and employment development within the settlements when it is:
 - i. An allocated site in the local plan;
 - ii. Minor development such as infilling; or
 - iii. The redevelopment of previously developed land that is of a scale appropriate to the size of the village.
2. Retain and improve existing employment sites and encourage new employment opportunities provided the site is in an appropriate location for, and suited to, the use; and
3. Resist the loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces, whilst supporting new retail development, community services and green spaces to meet local need.

Policy SP6 Harrietsham Rural Service Centre

5.49 Harrietsham provides a range of key services. Provision of, and access to, schools and community facilities in the village are adequate but will require improvement with any increase in population. The village has good public transport connections to Maidstone and other retail and employment centres. There is a local aspiration for replacement almshouses to support the local elderly population and for additional retail and play facilities, which are limited.

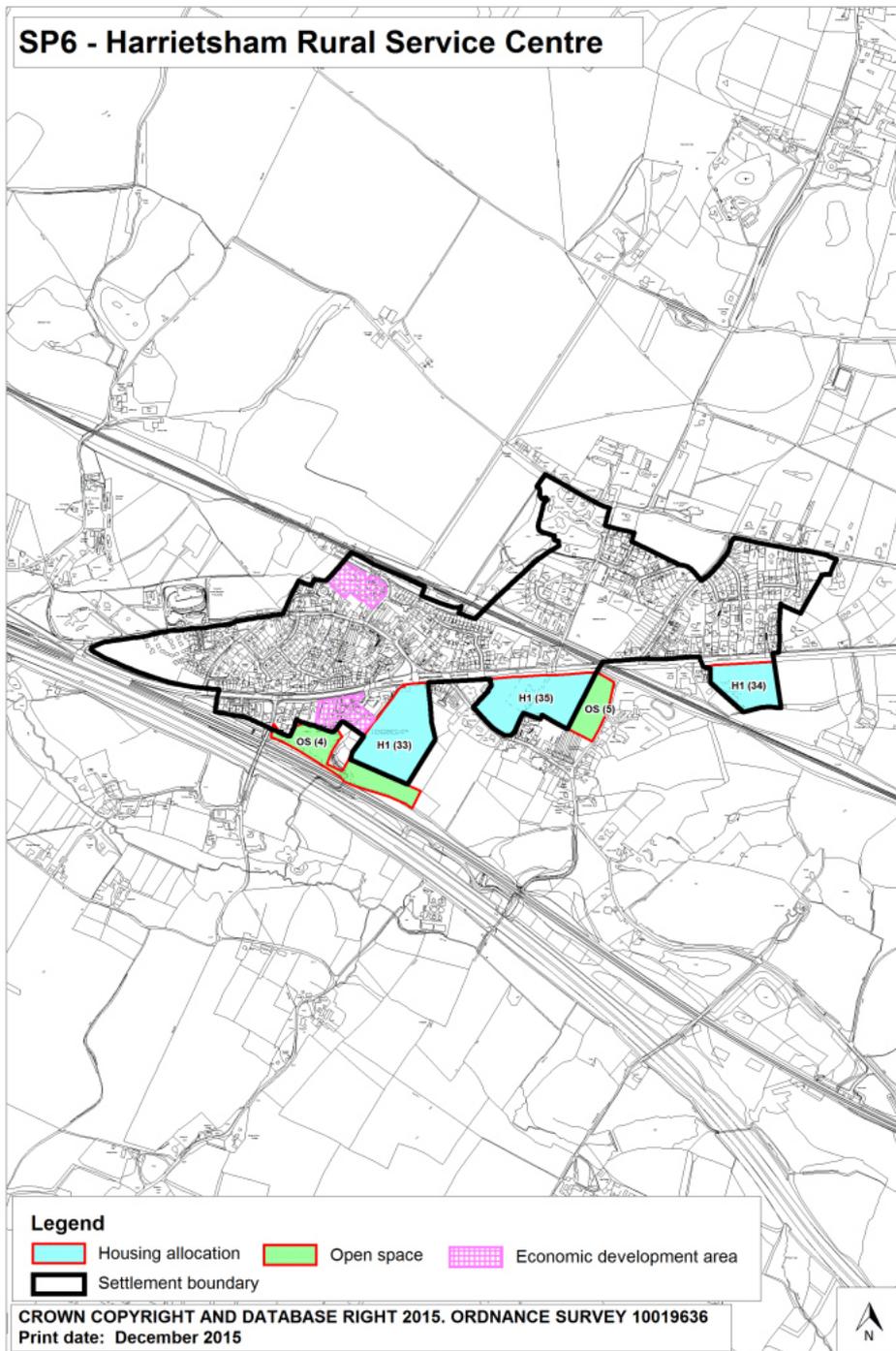
Policy SP 6

Harrietsham Rural Service Centre

Outside the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres are the second most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy to accommodate growth. At the rural service centre of Harrietsham, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP5, approximately 242 new dwellings will be delivered on three allocated sites (policies H1(33) to H1(35)).
2. Two existing sites are designated as Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy DM21).
3. Key infrastructure requirements for Harrietsham include:
 - i. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including improvements to the A20 Ashford Road, improvements to Church Road and the provision of additional pedestrian crossing points in

- accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(33) to H1(35).
- ii. Provision of a one form entry expansion at either Lenham or Harrietsham primary schools.
 - iii. A minimum of 2.78 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.
4. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP5(3).



Policy SP7 Headcorn Rural Service Centre

5.50 Headcorn has a diverse range of services and community facilities which are easily accessible on foot or by cycle due to the compact form of the village. There are local employment opportunities and there is a local wish to ensure that existing employment sites are kept in active employment use. A regular bus service runs between Headcorn and Maidstone and the village has good rail linkages to other retail and employment centres, including London. Flooding is

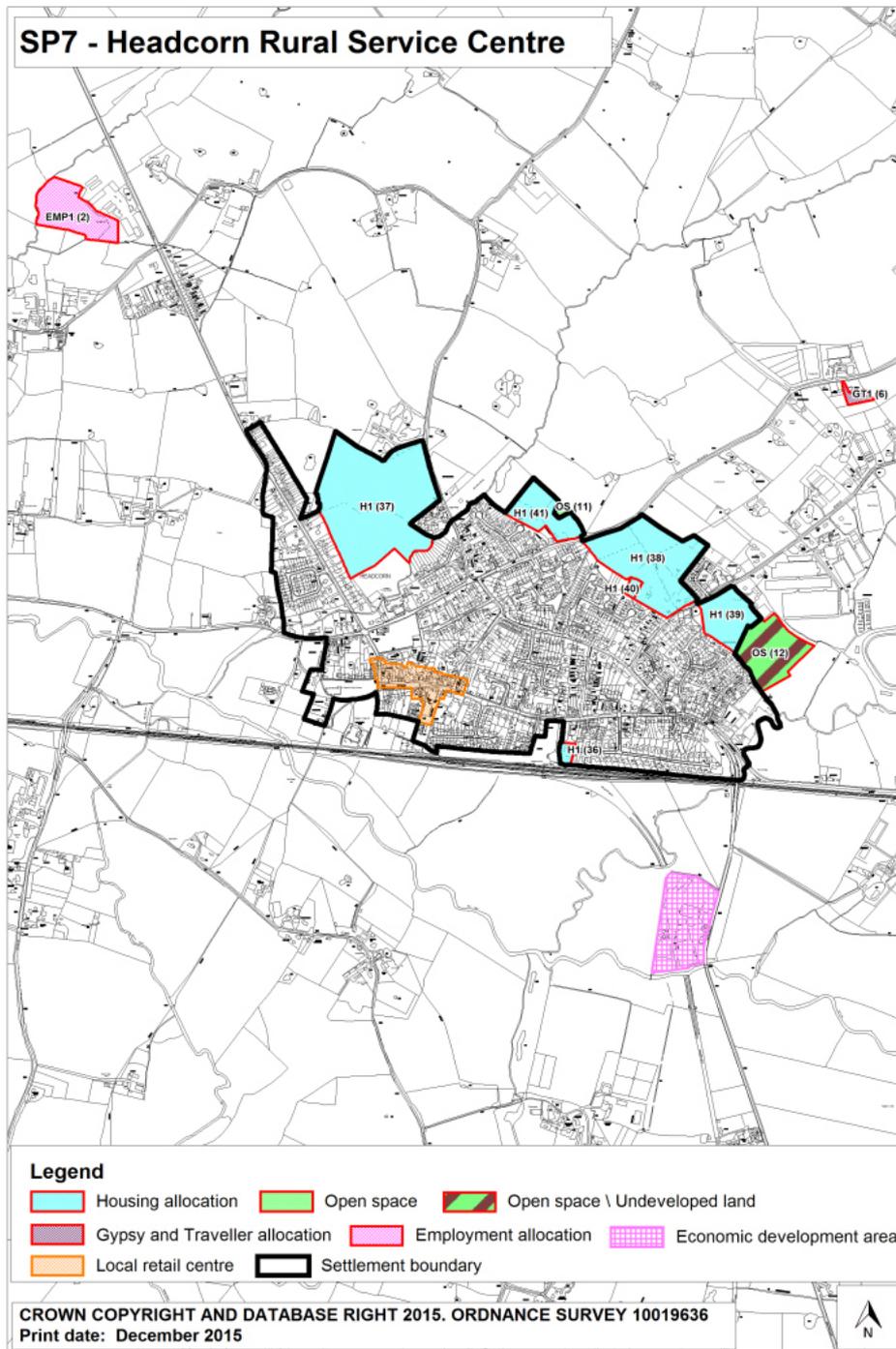
an issue in Headcorn as the village is surrounded on three sides by the functional floodplain of the River Beult and its tributaries. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment advises strict controls on the location of development within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The village lies within a landscape of local importance where proposals should seek to contribute positively to the conservation and enhancement of the protected landscape in accordance with policy SP17.

Policy SP 7

Headcorn Rural Service Centre

Outside the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres are the second most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy to accommodate growth. At the rural service centre of Headcorn, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP5, approximately 423 new dwellings will be delivered on six allocated sites (policies H1(36) to H1(41)).
2. Three pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policy GT1(5) to GT1(6).
3. Two existing sites are designated as Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy DM21), and a further 5,500m² employment floorspace is allocated (policy EMP1(2)).
4. Key infrastructure requirements for Headcorn include:
 - i. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure, including junction improvements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure and improvements to pedestrian and cycle access, in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(36) to H1(41).
 - ii. Provision of a one form entry extension to Headcorn Primary School.
 - iii. A minimum of 2.87 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.
5. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP5(3).



Policy SP8 Lenham Rural Service Centre

5.51 Lenham has the key services and community facilities expected of a rural service centre. The village performs the best in terms of education facilities, with a primary school and nursery school located on the same site, and is the only village to have a secondary school within the village boundary. Transport links to Maidstone and other retail and employment centres by bus and rail are good.

There is a local aspiration for housing development in the village to sustain the thriving village centre and local businesses in general. The need for housing is centred on young people to ensure long term sustainability.

5.52 It is recognised that the location of Lenham within the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty makes this an area sensitive to change. The benefits of selecting this most sustainable of all the rural service centres is considered on balance to outweigh the potential negative impacts on the landscape. The precise scale and location of future development will depend on further studies to assess the impact of development on the environment and to identify the mitigation measures necessary for any proposals to proceed. The precise scale will also depend on the progress being made towards meeting the housing target as the local plan comes forward for review. Recognising the need to avoid coalescence with the village of neighbouring Harrietsham, land at Lenham is available to the east and west of the village that has potential to deliver in the region of 1,500 dwellings.

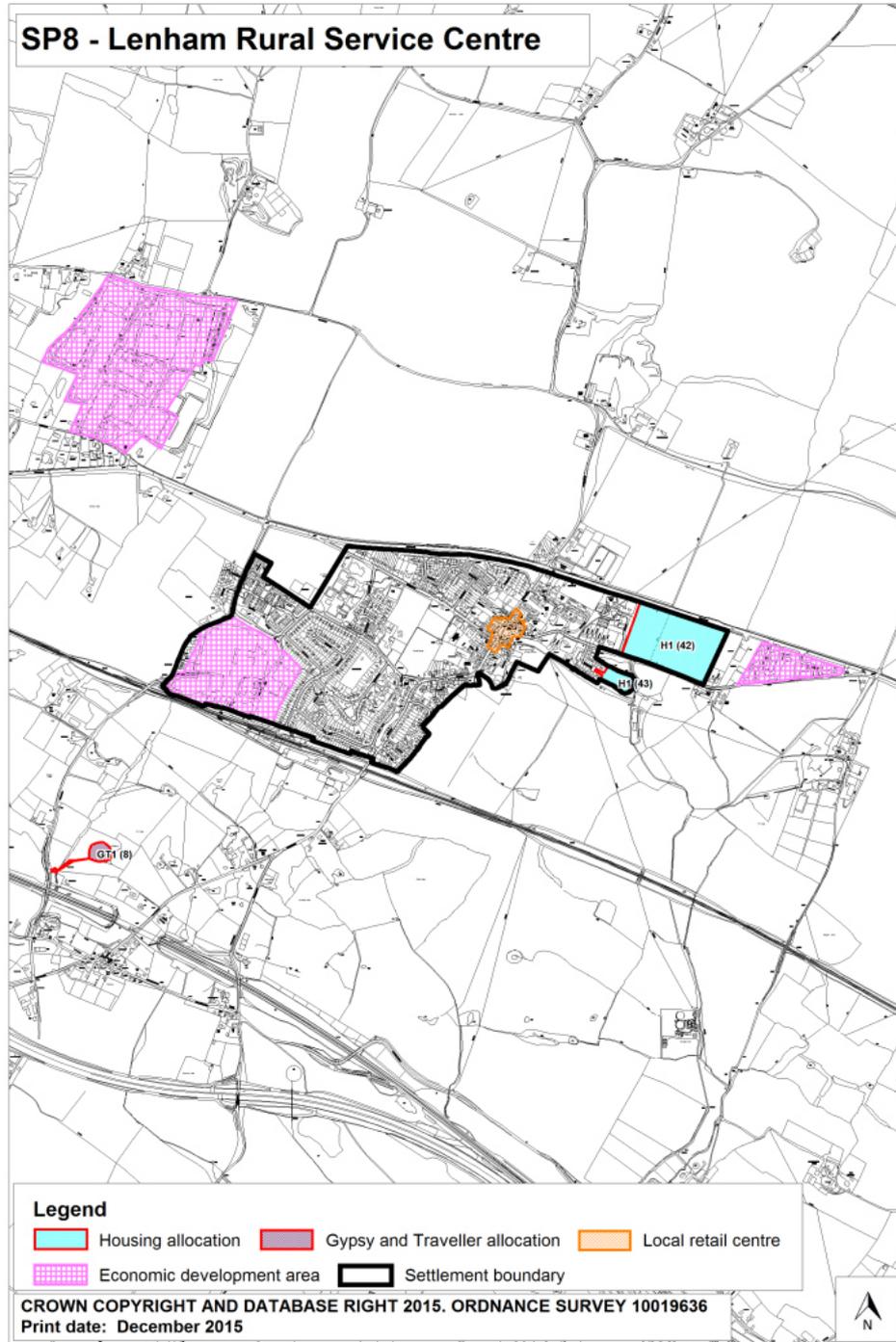
Policy SP 8

Lenham Rural Service Centre

Outside the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres are the second most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy to accommodate growth. At the rural service centre of Lenham, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP5, approximately 165 new dwellings will be delivered on two allocated sites (policies H1(42) to H1(43)).
2. Two pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policy GT1(8).
3. Three existing sites are designated as Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy DM21).
4. Key infrastructure requirements for Lenham include:
 - i. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including junction improvements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(42) to H1(43).
 - ii. Provision of a one form entry expansion at either Lenham or Harrietsham primary schools.
5. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP5(3).

6. Lenham is also identified as a broad location for growth for the delivery of approximately 1,500 dwellings in the latter period of the plan, 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.



Policy SP9 Marden Rural Service Centre

5.53 Marden is a successful service centre, particularly in terms of employment opportunities, and also has strong key community facilities such as a medical centre, library and village hall. Marden has frequent rail connections to London and other retail and employment centres, which has created a demand for new development. This has to be balanced with the desire to ensure local people have access to affordable housing. Public transport connections to Maidstone are less

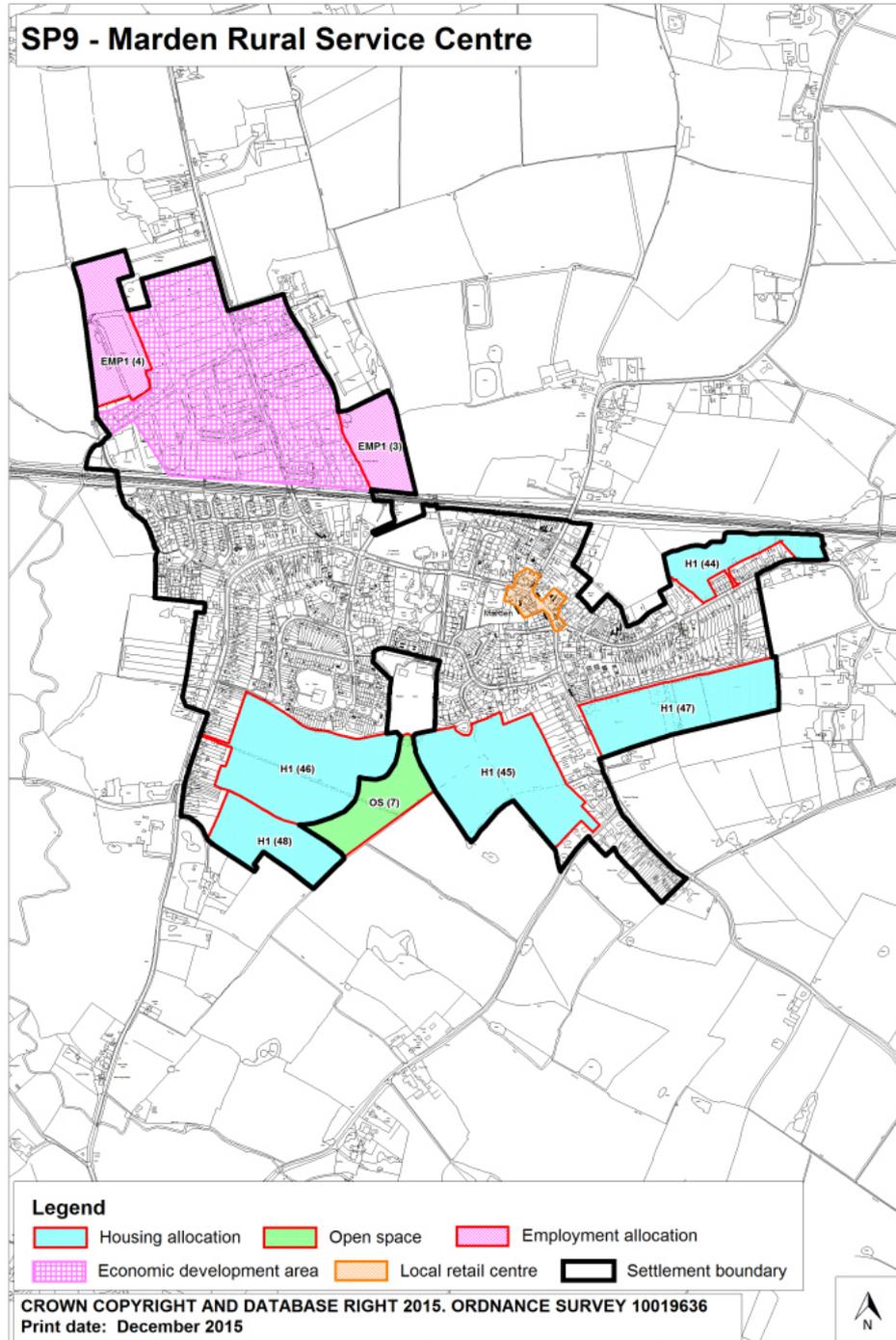
frequent and require improvement. Flooding is an issue in Marden and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment advises strict controls on the location of development within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Policy SP 9

Marden Rural Service Centre

Outside the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres are the second most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy to accommodate growth. At the rural service centre of Marden, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP5, approximately 447 new dwellings will be delivered on five allocated sites (policies H1(44) to H1(48)).
2. Two pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policy GT1(9).
3. One existing site is designated as an Economic Development Area in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy DM21), and a further 21,300m² employment floorspace is allocated on two sites (policies EMP1(3) and EMP1(4)).
4. Key infrastructure requirements for Marden include:
 - i. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including railway station enhancements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(44) to H1(48)
 - ii. Provision of 0.6 form entry expansion at Marden Primary School.
 - iii. A minimum of 5.66 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.
5. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP5(3).



Policy SP10 Staplehurst Rural Service Centre

5.54 Staplehurst is the largest of the rural service centres in terms of population and size, and has a number of the key community services and facilities one would expect, including good health care services consisting of a health centre, pharmacy, optician and chiropractic clinic. The village also has more employment providers than most of the other service centres with the exception of Marden. Current transport infrastructure in Staplehurst is good but improvements are

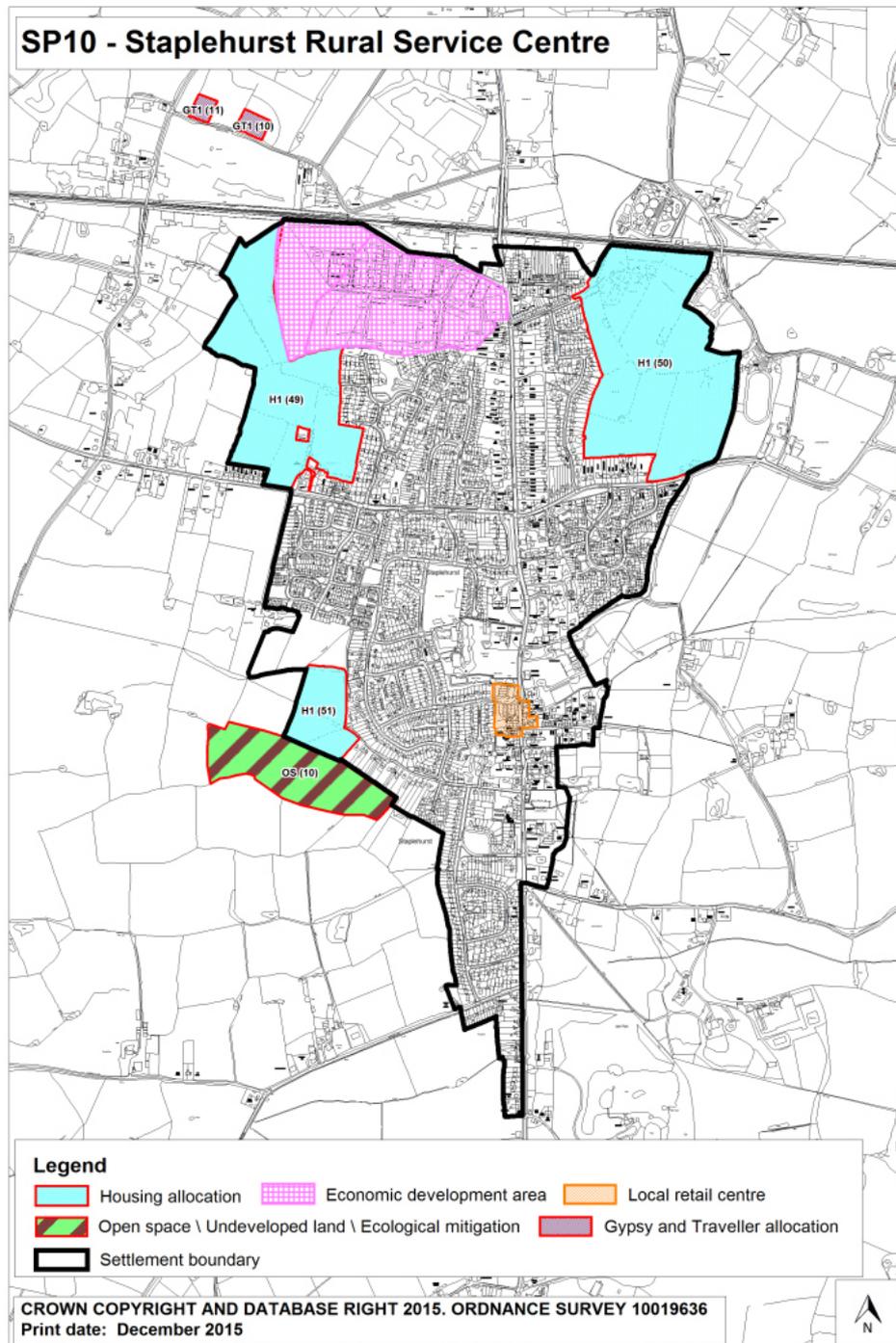
essential to cope with high levels of demand at peak times. Local aspirations for Staplehurst express a need for improvement to highways infrastructure in line with any new large scale housing developments.

Policy SP 10

Staplehurst Rural Service Centre

Outside the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres are the second most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy to accommodate growth. At the rural service centre of Staplehurst, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP5, approximately 710 new dwellings will be delivered on three allocated sites (policies H1(49) to H1(51)).
2. Four pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policies GT1(10) and GT1(11).
3. One existing site is designated as an Economic Development Area in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy DM21).
4. Key infrastructure requirements for Staplehurst include:
 - i. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including junction improvements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian and cycle access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(49) to H1(51).
 - ii. Provision of 0.5 form entry expansion at Staplehurst Primary School.
 - iii. A minimum of 10.35 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.
5. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP5(3).



Policy SP11 Larger villages

5.55 The overall amount of development that will be acceptable in larger villages will be less than in the rural service centres as they are less sustainable locations for meeting the development needs of the borough as a whole.

5.56 The assessment of population, village services and facilities identifies five villages that can be designated as larger villages, namely:

- Boughton Monchelsea
- Coxheath
- Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne)
- Sutton Valence
- Yalding.

5.57 Based on the analysis of population, services and facilities, all five settlements are considered sustainable locations for limited new housing development provided that it is of a scale in keeping with their role, character and size. An appropriate increase in population would help to support village services and facilities. The continued sustainability of these settlements as places to live and work is dependent on the retention of local services that meet community needs coupled with the retention of adequate transport services to enable access to larger centres for those services that are not available locally.

5.58 Similar to the rural service centres, all five villages have different characteristics and there is variation in the limited range of services and facilities they provide.

Policy SP 11

Larger villages

Within the designated larger villages of Boughton Monchelsea, Coxheath, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding defined on the policies map the council will:

1. Focus new development within the settlements when it is:
 - i. An allocated site in the local plan;
 - ii. Minor development such as infilling; or
 - iii. The redevelopment of previously developed land that is of a size appropriate to the role, character and scale of the village.
2. Resist the loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces, whilst supporting new retail development, community services and green spaces to meet local need.

Policy SP12 Boughton Monchelsea Larger Village

5.59 Boughton Monchelsea lies to the southeast of Maidstone's urban edge adjacent to the scarp face of the Greensand Ridge, and is a village that comprises and is characterised by a number of distinct groups/clusters of dwellings. The settlement performs well in the audit in terms of education and childcare, with a primary school, play group, nursery and nearby secondary school. It performs poorly in terms of healthcare, with no GP surgery or other health care service. The village has a local shop, post office, village hall and recreation areas. Although the village is close to the urban area, public transport connections to Maidstone

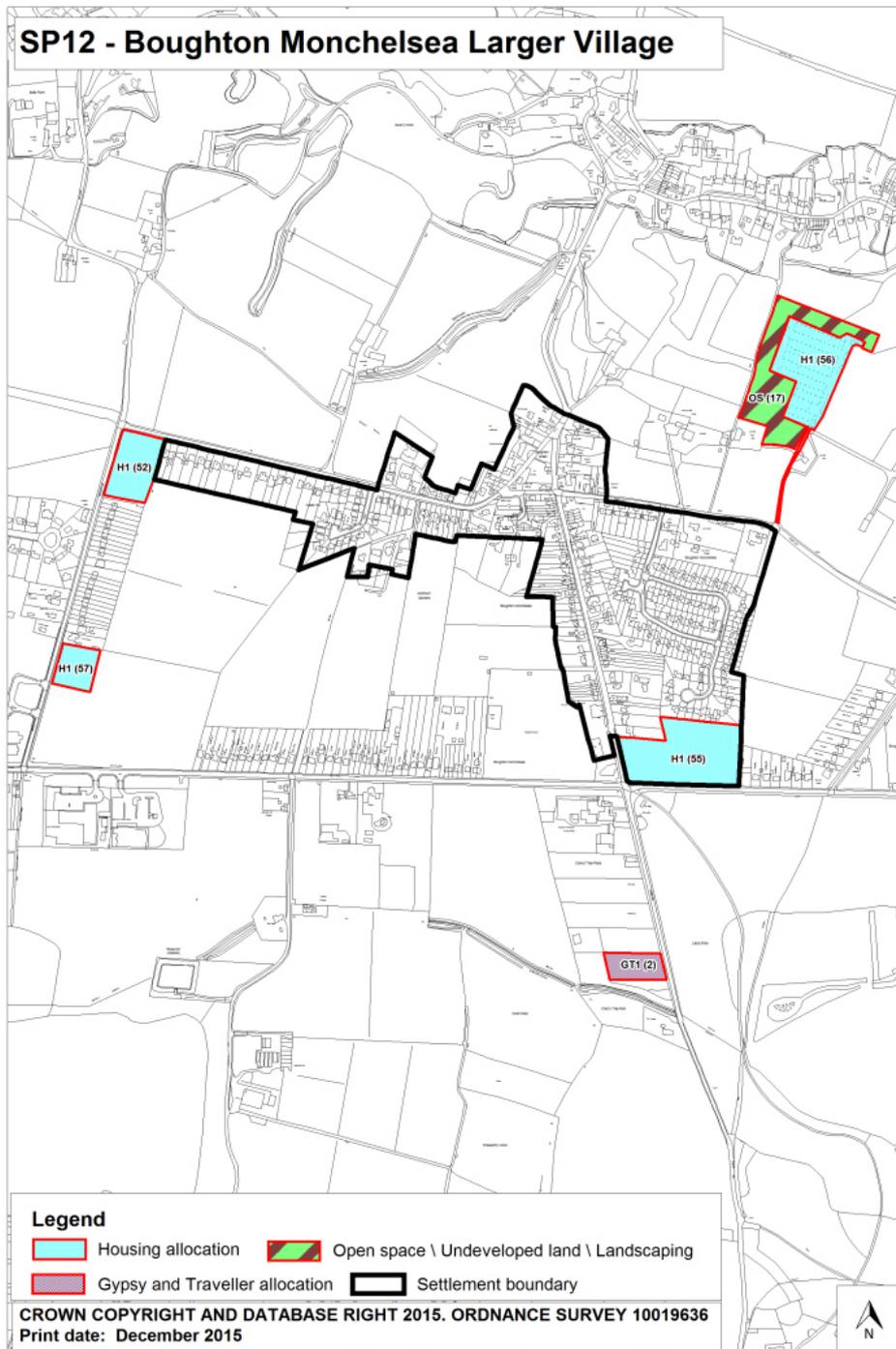
town centre are infrequent, and this is not helped by the fact that residential areas within the settlement are quite dispersed. Local employment opportunities in the settlement are also limited.

Policy SP 12

Boughton Monchelsea Larger Village

Outside the Maidstone urban area and rural service centres, which are the most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy, the third tier larger villages can accommodate limited growth. At the larger village of Boughton Monchelsea, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP11, approximately 193 new dwellings will be delivered on six allocated sites (policies H1(52) to H1(57)).
2. Two pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policies GT1(1) and GT1(2).
3. Key infrastructure requirements for Boughton Monchelsea include:
 - i. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure will be made in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(52) to H1(57). Key schemes include junction improvements and a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure.
 - ii. A minimum of 1.79 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.
4. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP11(2).



Policy SP13 Coxheath Larger Village

5.60 Coxheath has the advantage of a compact urban form and a good offering of key services and facilities to support a growing population. Healthcare services in the village are particularly strong and include two GP surgeries, a dentist, community trust clinic, chiropractic clinic and a pharmacy. However, the GP surgeries are currently at capacity and any further development in Coxheath will be expected to contribute towards ensuring healthcare facilities can meet the

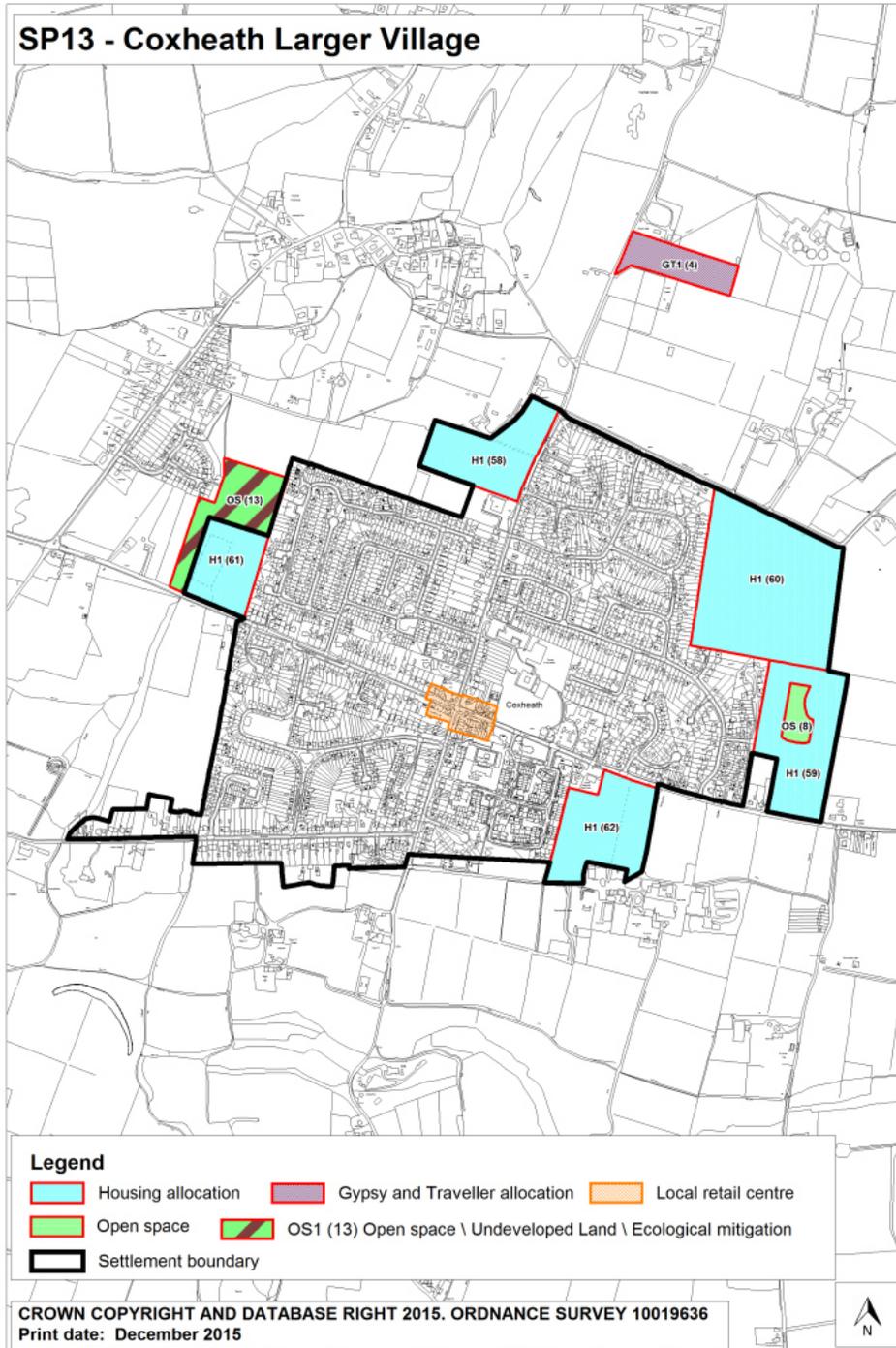
demands of future growth. Coxheath does not have a train station but it has a regular bus service which connects the village to Maidstone town centre. Coxheath also has the advantage of being in close proximity to the town centre, which affords good access to a number of secondary schools and other facilities.

Policy SP 13

Coxheath Larger Village

Outside the Maidstone urban area and rural service centres, which are the most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy, the third tier larger villages can accommodate limited growth. At the larger village of Coxheath, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP11, approximately 506 new dwellings will be delivered on five allocated sites (policies H1(58) to H1(62)).
2. Six pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policy GT1(4).
3. Key infrastructure requirements for Coxheath include:
 - i. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure, including junction improvements at Linton Crossroads, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(58) to H1(62).
 - ii. A minimum of 3.62 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.
4. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP11(2).



Policy SP14 Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne) Larger Village

5.61 Hollingbourne (Eyhorne Street) is a linear settlement which lies to the northeast of Maidstone’s urban area in the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The primary school, pre-school and one of the local playing fields are approximately 0.5km from the village centre. The village does not have a GP surgery or healthcare facilities apart from an osteopath clinic, but does have some good key facilities, including a village hall, local shop, post office,

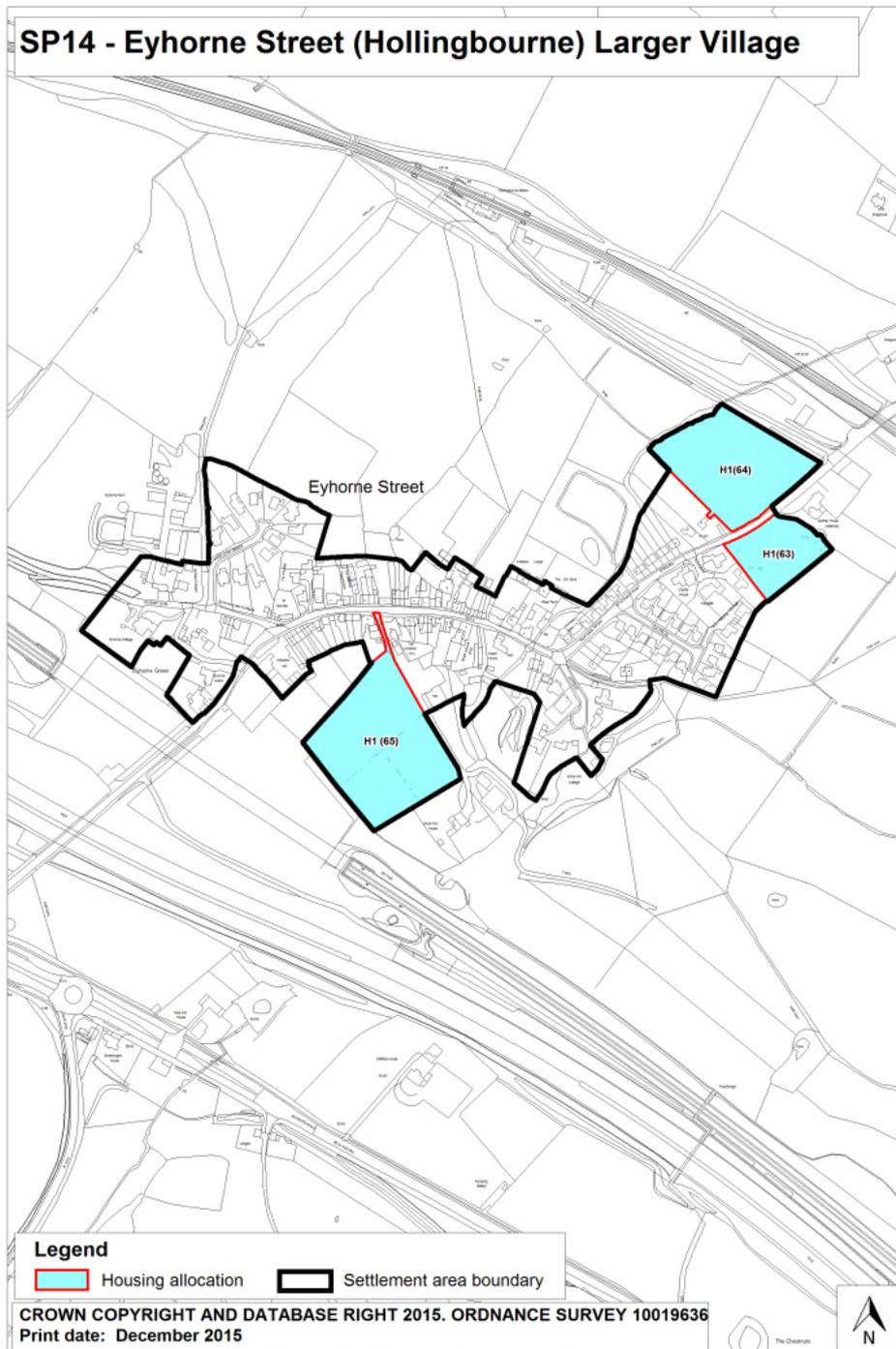
pubs and a restaurant. Rail connections to Maidstone town centre and other retail and employment destinations are good, and the village also has a regular bus service to the town centre.

Policy SP 14

Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne) Larger Village

Outside the Maidstone urban area and rural service centres, which are the most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy, the third tier larger villages can accommodate limited growth. At the larger village of Eyhorne Street, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP11, approximately 39 new dwellings will be delivered on three allocated sites (policies H1(63) to H1(65)).
2. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP11(2).



Policy SP15 Sutton Valence Larger Village

5.62 Sutton Valence lies to the southeast of Maidstone's urban area on a plateau above the Greensand Ridge. The settlement performs well in the audit in terms of education facilities. There is a pre-school, primary school and the Sutton Valence boarding school, which caters for children from the age of 3 to 18. In terms of services and community facilities there are pubs, a church, a village hall, mobile library service and good playing pitches. The village has a

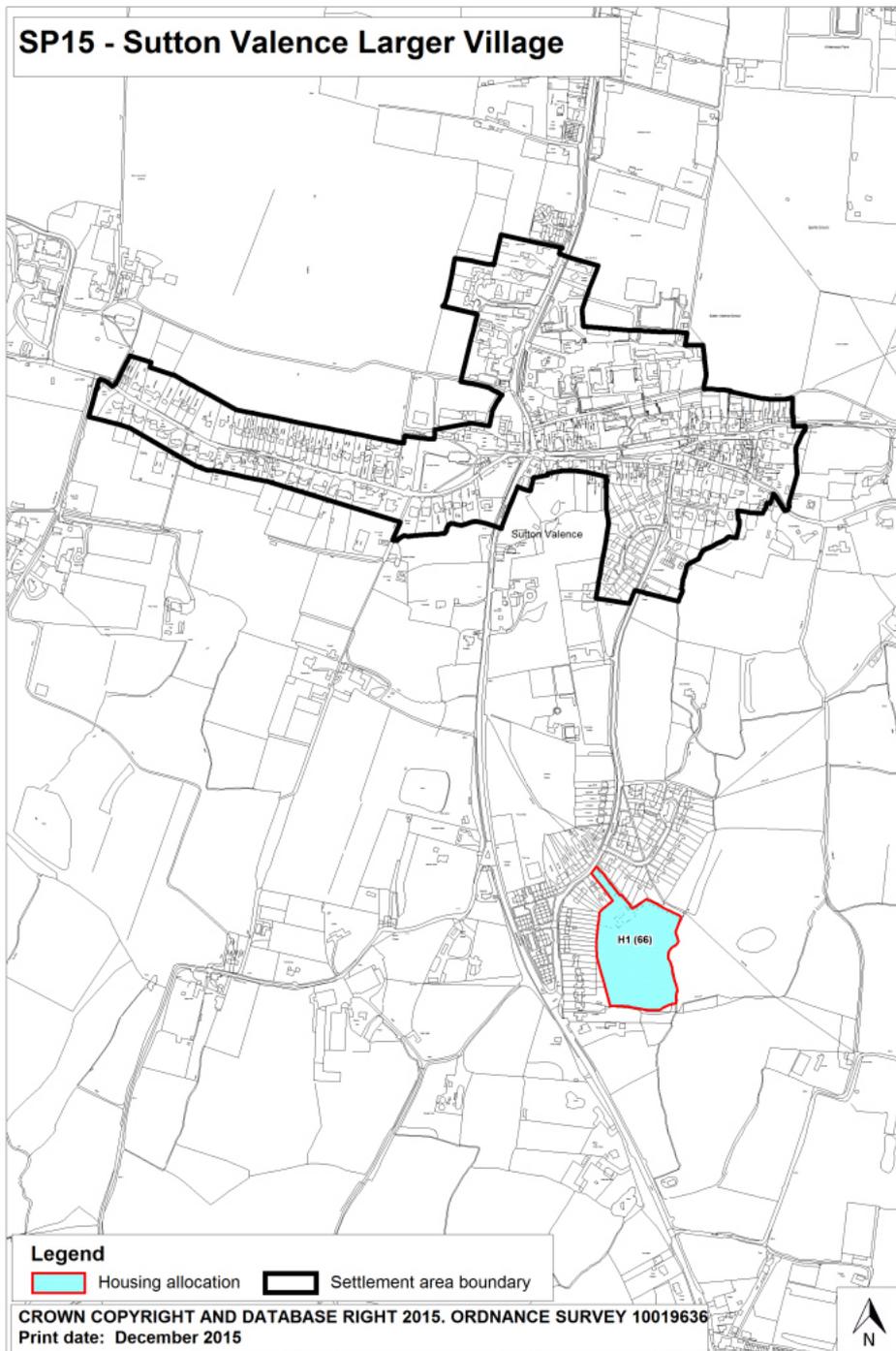
medical practice but no dentist or pharmacy. Public transport connections to Maidstone town centre and Headcorn are good due to a regular bus service. The village does not have a train station.

Policy SP 15

Sutton Valence Larger Village

Outside the Maidstone urban area and rural service centres, which are the most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy, the third tier larger villages can accommodate limited growth. At the larger village of Sutton Valence, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP11, approximately 40 new dwellings will be delivered on one allocated site (policy H1(66)).
2. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP11(2).



Policy SP16 Yalding Larger Village

5.63 Yalding has a number of the key services and facilities expected of a larger village. The village has a local shop, post office and GP surgery. The village is served by a nearby train station and has connections by bus to Maidstone town centre, which is essential in terms of access to secondary education. Yalding also has sustainable connections to nearby Paddock Wood, which also has a range of services and facilities, including a secondary school.

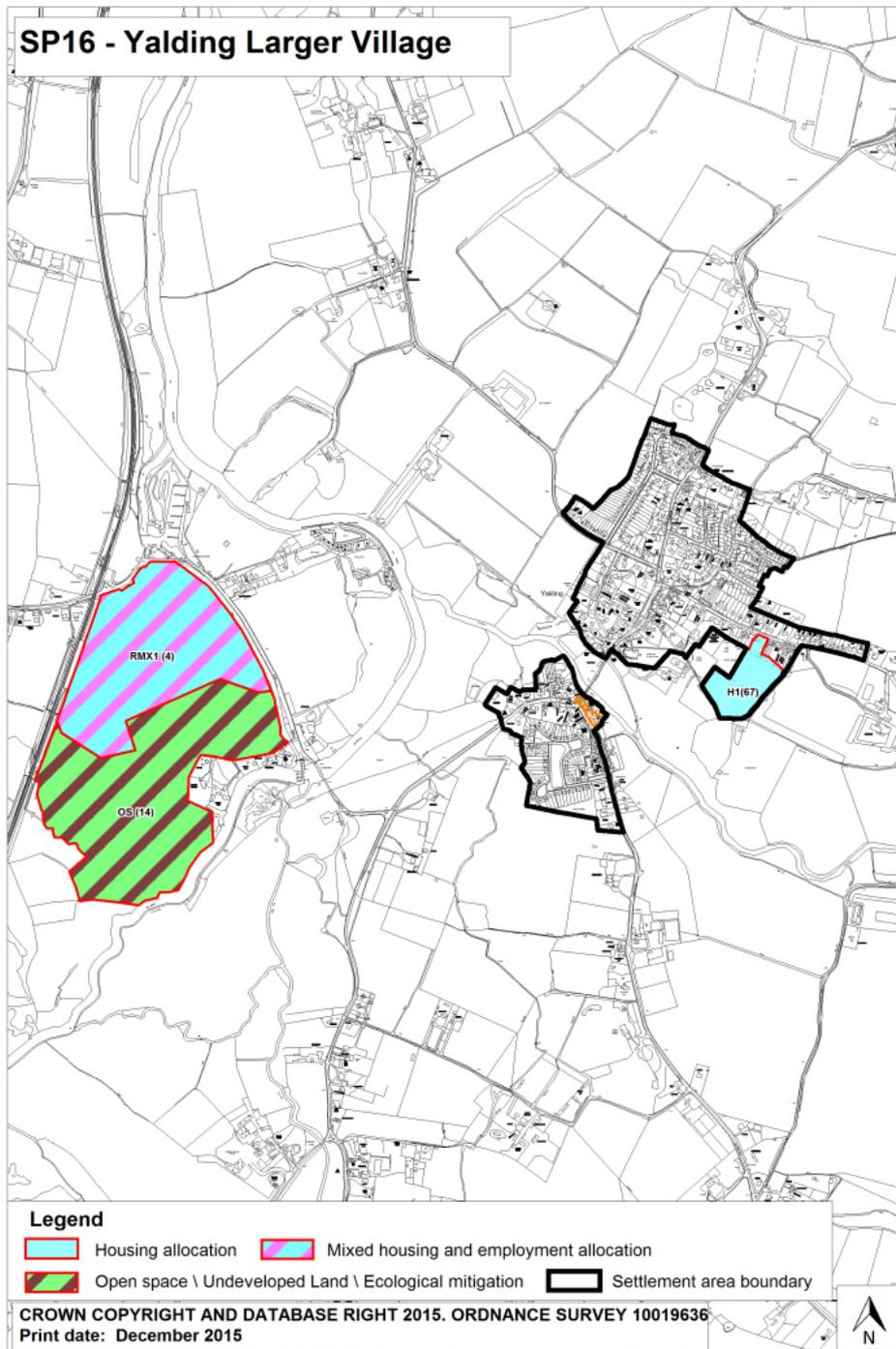
5.64 The Syngenta site to the west of Yalding village is the primary site proposed for development and offers potential for mixed use development for housing and employment affording an opportunity to improve the range of services and facilities in the settlement. It is important to ensure that safe and sustainable linkages between the Syngenta site and the village are provided if this development comes forward. Robust flood mitigation measures will have to form an essential part of any development proposal in the settlement. The size of the Syngenta site offers an opportunity for a sustainable drainage mitigation approach to flood prevention.

Policy SP 16

Yalding Larger Village

Outside the Maidstone urban area and rural service centres, which are the most sustainable settlements in the hierarchy, the third tier larger villages can accommodate limited growth. At the larger village of Yalding, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy SP11, approximately 265 new dwellings will be delivered on two allocated sites (policies H1(67) and RMX1(4)).
2. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure will be made in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(67) and RMX1(4). Key schemes include junction improvements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian access.
3. A minimum of 4.4 hectares of publicly accessible open space will be provided.
4. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy SP11(2).



Policy SP17 Countryside

The countryside

5.65 Maidstone borough is predominantly rural with a large proportion of the population living in villages as well as on the fringes of the urban area. Much of the rural landscapes are of high quality with valuable agricultural and ecological resources within the borough. The countryside areas are highly accessible to

those living and working in the urban areas, complemented by a wide and well-used public rights of way network. They also act as a major asset to attract new investment into the borough. However this proximity to the urban area brings with it pressures arising from an increased level of demand for houses, recreation and jobs in the countryside.

5.66 The countryside is defined as all those parts of the plan area outside the settlement boundaries of the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres and larger villages with defined settlement boundaries and is depicted on the policies map. The countryside has an intrinsic character and beauty that should be conserved and protected for its own sake. However there is also a need to ensure a level of flexibility for certain forms of development in the countryside in order to support farming and other aspects of the countryside economy and to maintain mixed communities. This needs to be mitigated in a way that maintains and enhances the distinctive character of the more rural parts of the borough.

Rural economy

5.67 Maidstone's rural economic character is diverse and complex in nature. The number of rural and agricultural businesses found within villages and rural service centres and the wider countryside account for a significant proportion of all firms in the borough. Small businesses are a particular feature of rural areas, as is homeworking, home-based businesses and live-work units.

5.68 Agriculture remains an important influence, fulfilling a number of important and varied roles in the countryside, contributing to the local economy, and managing and maintaining much of the valued landscapes. It benefits from the fact that much of the soil within the borough comprises the most high grade and versatile agricultural land. However, in line with other businesses agriculture needs to be able to react to new and changing markets and developments in technology. A more recent trend in agriculture is the response to demand for produce to be available on a year round basis. This leads to land being put under intense pressure for almost industrial scale development that can have an adverse impact on the wider landscape and natural assets, such as wildlife, soil and water resources that require protection within the landscape. Another trend is the increasing interest in smaller-scale renewable energy installations. Further advice and guidance on the landscape implications of these activities will be given in the Landscape Character Guidelines supplementary planning document.

5.69 Many rural businesses have begun to diversify away from traditional rural activities primarily through the re-use of farm and other buildings for commercial non-agricultural purposes. This has not only helped to retain economic activity within rural areas but has enabled a number of farms to remain operational. Tourism is of great importance to the local rural economy with the countryside providing ample leisure and open-air recreational opportunities. As well as sustaining many rural businesses these industries can be significant sources of employment and can help support the prosperity of rural settlements and sustain historic country houses, local heritage and culture. To a lesser degree, the winning of minerals such as sand and chalk has also taken place as a diversification activity, but these activities are largely confined to relatively small-scale sites on the North Downs and Greensand Ridge.

5.70 The local plan will continue to recognise the importance of supporting small-scale rural business development. Its priority is to locate these businesses within the defined rural service centres. However, there are employment sites already located outside of these settlements and it is important to offer these businesses a degree of flexibility.

Small villages

5.71 The attractiveness of the countryside is partly due to its scattered settlement pattern and buildings. The overall settlement pattern across the borough is characterised by a large number of small villages scattered across the countryside surrounding a handful of larger, more substantial settlements. It is important these settlements retain their individual identities as there can be a delicate balance between settlement proximity and separation.

5.72 A small area to the west of the borough lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB), incorporating the villages of Nettlestead and Nettlestead Green. The fundamental aims of the MGB are to prevent urban sprawl and to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The local plan will support sustainable development within the MGB provided it is not harmful to the open character of the designation in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

5.73 The rural settlements rely heavily on community-focused services. Community facilities such as clinics, health centres, day centres, playgrounds, playing fields and sports facilities, children's nurseries and schools, village halls and places of worship, together with local village services, particularly with respect to village shops, post offices, healthcare facilities and public houses are essential if small rural settlements are to remain vital and viable.

5.74 For sustainability reasons, the local plan priority is to locate new or improved community facilities in defined rural service centres and larger villages. However, in small villages new facilities may be permitted to serve the local community provided a clear need is demonstrated. The local plan will resist the loss of any community facility that meets an essential community need and which is not available or reasonably accessible elsewhere. In all cases, another beneficial community use should be sought before permission is granted for the removal of these facilities.

5.75 There has been a continued decline in local village services and the local plan will continue to resist any further losses. Any proposal for the re-use or re-development of an existing local village service will be required to be supported by clear evidence of non-viability, such as marketing the building or facility for a period of time to test whether another community interest, operator or owner could be found.

Design

5.76 The countryside is a sensitive location within which to integrate new development and the council will expect proposals to respect the high quality and distinctive landscapes of the borough in accordance with policy DM34. In order to assist in the successful integration of new development into the

countryside the council will ensure Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments are carried out as appropriate to assess suitability and to aid and facilitate the design process.

Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting

5.77 A large part of the northern part of the borough lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is a visually prominent landscape that contributes significantly to the borough's high quality of life. It is an important amenity and recreation resource for both Maidstone residents and visitors and forms an attractive backdrop to settlements along the base of the Kent Downs scarp. It also contains a wide range of natural habitats and biodiversity. Designation as an AONB confers the highest level of landscape protection and one which the council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance⁽¹⁰⁾. Within the AONB, the Management Plan provides a framework for objectives to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. The council has adopted the Management Plan and will support its implementation. Open countryside to the immediate south of the AONB forms a large extent of the setting for this designation. In Maidstone this is a sensitive landscape that is coming under threat from inappropriate development and is viewed as a resource that requires conservation and enhancement where this supports the purposes of the AONB.

5.78 The council will ensure proposals conserve and enhance the natural beauty, distinctive character, biodiversity and setting of the AONB, taking into account the economic and social well-being of the area. Rural diversification and land-based businesses in the Kent Downs AONB will only be acceptable where they help improve the special character of the AONB and are in accordance with the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan, supporting guidance and position statements. Economic development within the AONB should be located in existing traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit in smaller settlements, farmsteads or within groups of buildings in sustainable locations.

5.79 New development in the AONB needs to respect the vernacular architecture, settlement character and the natural beauty of the local landscape. This will require high quality designs as set out in policy DM34. To help developers produce designs of a suitably high quality, the council will continue to encourage the use of the Kent Downs AONB Unit's design guidance and publications.

5.80 The above considerations apply equally to the setting of the Kent Downs AONB. The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 states that the setting of the Kent Downs AONB is 'broadly speaking the land outside the designated area which is visible from the AONB and from which the AONB can be seen, but may be wider when affected by intrusive features beyond that.' It makes it clear that it is not formally defined or indicated on a map.

5.81 The foreground of the AONB and the wider setting is taken to include the land which sits at and beyond the foot of the scarp slope of the North Downs and the wider views thereof. It is countryside sensitive to change, with a range of diverse habitats and landscape features, but through which major transport corridors pass. Conservation and enhancement of this area is also part of the

10 s85 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

council's statutory duty and is covered under the guidance set out in national policy (National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance). However, proposals which would affect the setting of the AONB are not subject to the same level of constraint as those which would affect the AONB itself. The weight to be afforded to potential impact on the setting will depend on the significance of the impact. Matters such as the size of proposals, their distance, incompatibility with their surroundings, movement, reflectivity and colour are likely to affect impact. The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan advises that 'where the qualities of the AONB which were instrumental in reasons for its designation are affected, then the impacts should be given considerable weight in decisions. This particularly applies to views to and from the scarp of the North Downs.' It is considered therefore that it is not necessary to formally define the setting of the Kent Downs AONB and that the impact of development can be appropriately assessed through the criteria of the policy.

High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting

5.82 The High Weald AONB lies beyond the southern boundary of the borough adjacent to the parishes of Marden and Staplehurst, within the administrative area of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Its closest point to the borough is at Winchet Hill in the southern part of Marden parish. The council has exactly the same statutory duty to conserve and enhance the setting of this AONB as it does with the Kent Downs AONB and will apply the same policy considerations for any proposals that may affect its setting.

Landscapes of local value

5.83 The council will seek to conserve or enhance its valued landscapes. The Kent Downs AONB and High Weald AONB and their settings and other sites of European and national importance are considered to be covered by appropriate existing policy protection in the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and other legislation. As well as this national policy guidance and statutory duty, the settings of the Kent Downs and High Weald AONBs are also afforded protection through the criteria of policy SP17 and no additional designation is therefore necessary. In addition to these areas, the borough does include significant tracts of landscape which are highly sensitive to significant change. Landscapes of local value have been identified and judged according to criteria relating to their character and sensitivity:

- i. Part of a contiguous area of high quality landscape;
- ii. Significant in long distance public views and skylines;
- iii. Locally distinctive in their field patterns, geological and other landscape features;
- iv. Ecologically diverse and significant;
- v. Preventing the coalescence of settlements which would undermine their character;
- vi. Identified through community engagement;
- vii. Providing a valued transition from town to countryside.

5.84 Development proposals within landscapes of local value should, through their siting, scale, mass, materials and design, seek to contribute positively to the conservation and enhancement of the protected landscape. Designated areas

include parts of the Greensand Ridge and the Low Weald, and the Medway, Loose and Len river valleys. These landscapes were highlighted as areas of local value by the public through previous consultation.

5.85 The Greensand Ridge lies to the south of Maidstone and is defined by the scarp face of the Ridge with extensive views across the Low Weald to the south. It is characterised by frequent small blocks of coppice and deciduous woodland, extensive orchards and frequent oast houses, with ragstone being a predominant material in walls and buildings.

5.86 The Medway Valley is characterised by the wide River Medway and steep valley sides where the valley incises the Greensand and is crossed by distinctive ragstone bridges. The area lends itself to much recreational land use including the Medway Valley Walk, although some sections are more wooded and remote in character. The Loose Valley lies to the south of Maidstone and is characterised by the Loose stream, mill ponds and springs with steep wooded valley sides, mature native woodland and traditional mill buildings and cottages. The Len Valley lies to the east of Maidstone and is bordered by Bearsted to the west. It is characterised by the River Len, historic mills and a network of pools with remnant orchards.

5.87 The Low Weald covers a significant proportion of the countryside in the rural southern half of the borough. The Low Weald is recognised as having distinctive landscape features: the field patterns, many of medieval character, hedgerows, stands of trees, ponds and streams and buildings of character should be protected, maintained and enhanced where appropriate.

Policy SP 17

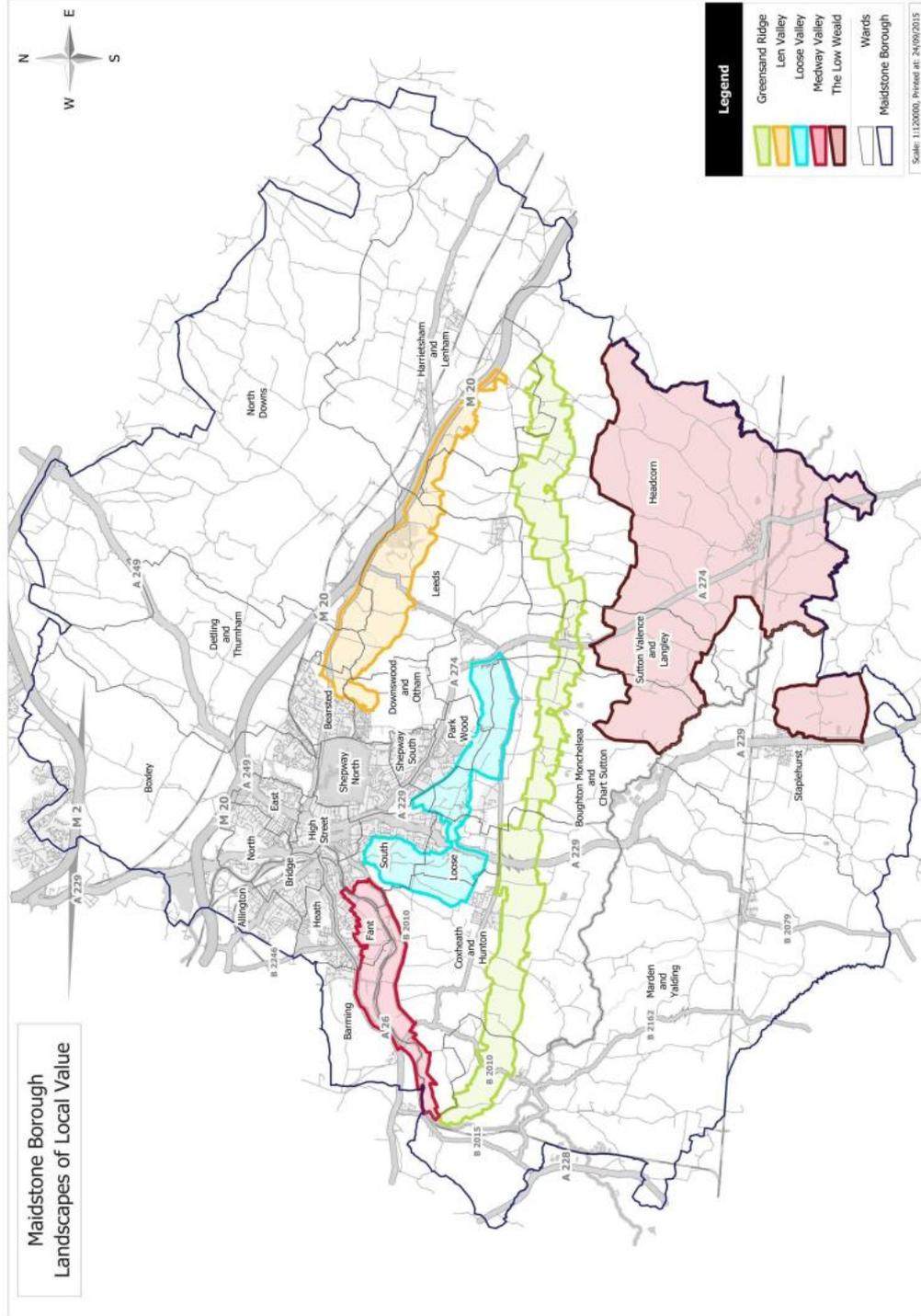
The Countryside

The countryside is defined as all those parts of the plan area outside the settlement boundaries of the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres and larger villages defined on the policies map.

1. Provided proposals do not harm the character and appearance of an area, the following types of development will be permitted in the countryside:
 - i. Small-scale economic development, including development related to tourism and open-air recreation, through:
 - a. The re-use or extension of existing buildings;
 - b. The expansion of existing businesses; or
 - c. Farm diversification schemes;
 - ii. Small-scale residential development necessary to:
 - a. Meet a proven essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work;

- b. Meet a proven need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation; or
 - c. Meet local housing needs; and
 - iii. Development demonstrated to be necessary for agriculture or forestry.
2. Where proposals meet criterion 1, development in the countryside will be permitted if:
 - i. The type, siting, materials and design, mass and scale of development and the level of activity maintains, or where possible, enhances local distinctiveness including landscape features; and
 - ii. Impacts on the appearance and character of the landscape can be appropriately mitigated. Suitability and required mitigation will be assessed through the submission of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments to support development proposals in appropriate circumstances.
 3. The loss of local shops and community facilities which serve villages will be resisted. In all cases, another beneficial community use should be sought before permission is granted for the removal of these facilities;
 4. Proposals will be supported which facilitate the efficient use of the borough's significant agricultural land and soil resource provided any adverse impacts on the appearance and character of the landscape can be appropriately mitigated;
 5. The distinctive character of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the extent and openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt will be rigorously conserved, maintained and enhanced where appropriate;
 6. The Greensand Ridge, Medway Valley, Len Valley, Loose Valley, and Low Weald as defined on the policies map, will be conserved, maintained and enhanced where appropriate as landscapes of local value;
 7. Development in the countryside will retain the setting of and separation of individual settlements; and
 8. Natural and historic assets, including characteristic landscape features, wildlife and water resources, will be protected from damage with any unavoidable impacts mitigated.

Account should be taken of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and the Maidstone Borough Landscape Character Guidelines supplementary planning document.



Policy H1 Housing site allocations

6.1 The council has identified the north west and south east of the Maidstone urban area as strategic locations for development. In addition, five rural service centres are identified at Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst. Housing sites are allocated at each of these centres. Larger villages are identified at Boughton Monchelsea, Coxheath, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding where limited housing development is allocated.

6.2 Two calls for sites were undertaken during the preparation of the plan, whereby landowners, developers and the public were asked to submit sites to the council for an assessment of their development potential. As part of the assessment, all of the sites submitted were subject to site visits, and an appraisal of each site's suitability for development was undertaken.

6.3 The appraisal examined site topography, conditions and surrounding land uses. To protect the best of Maidstone's urban and rural heritage, the appraisal considered the impact that development would have on the landscape, ecology, ancient woodland, heritage, archaeology, and the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land. Safety is a prime concern, so the access to each site was evaluated, together with the impact of development on the wider highway network. The need for infrastructure to support new development is a key consideration, so the assessment looked at access to schools, community and health facilities, shops, open space, public transport, and utilities. The impact of development on existing residential amenity was also an important factor. Site conditions can constrain development or require mitigation, so the appraisal looked at the impact of air quality, noise, land contamination and flooding. A number of infrastructure providers and other organisations input to the process, including the Environment Agency, water companies and Kent County Council; and the council's evidence base was supplemented in order to inform decisions.

6.4 Individual site assessments were recorded on pro forma to ensure consistency in the process, and made public. Each site has been subject to independent sustainability appraisal, which has assisted in decisions. The results of site appraisals have been recorded in the council's Strategic Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessment, which lists all sites that have potential for development and the sites that have been rejected. Sites that are located within the plan's settlement hierarchy have been allocated for housing in the local plan.

6.5 The site appraisals have informed the policy criteria that each development site must meet. Of the sites listed, some can be developed with minimal infrastructure provision, whereas others will need more intervention. Some sites contain features which should be retained, such as trees or ponds that are worthy of retention for landscape, screening or ecological reasons. Other sites may have access restrictions or will need to contribute toward highway improvements to relieve congestion. The requirements for each housing site, including development guidance, mitigation and infrastructure contributions, are set out in detailed site allocation policies in the plan.

6.6 Policy RMX1 identifies the retail and mixed use allocations and, where housing forms part of the development split, the residential element of these sites is included in the table below. The dwelling yield in the final column is an estimate and the actual number of dwellings on each site could be higher or lower following the detailed consideration of a planning application.

Policy reference	Site address	Approximate Dwelling yield
<i>North west strategic development location</i>		
H1(1)	Bridge Nursery, London Road, Maidstone	140
H1(2)	East of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone	500
H1(3)	West of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone	330
H1(4)	Oakapple Lane, Barming	187
<i>South east strategic development location</i>		
H1(5)	Langley Park, Sutton Road, Boughton Monchelsea	600
H1(6)	North of Sutton Road, Otham	286
H1(7)	North of Bicknor Wood, Gore Court Road, Otham	190
H1(8)	West of Church Road, Otham	440
H1(9)	Bicknor Farm, Sutton Road, Otham	335
H1(10)	South of Sutton Road, Langley	800
<i>Other urban area locations</i>		
H1(11)	Springfield, Royal Engineers Road and Mill Lane, Maidstone	500
H1(12)	180-188 Union Street, Maidstone	30
H1(13)	Medway Street, Maidstone	40
H1(14)	American Golf, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone	60
H1(15)	6 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone	15
H1(16)	Slencrest House, 3 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone	10
H1(17)	Laguna, Hart Street, Maidstone	76

6 . Housing site allocations

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Policy reference	Site address	Approximate Dwelling yield
H1(18)	Dunning Hall (off Fremlin Walk), Week Street, Maidstone	14
H1(19)	18-21 Foster Street, Maidstone	5
H1(20)	Wren's Cross, Upper Stone Street, Maidstone	60
H1(21)	Barty Farm, Roundwell, Thurnham	122
H1(22)	Whitmore Street, Maidstone	5
H1(23)	North Street, Barming	35
H1(24)	Postley Road, Tovil	62
H1(25)	Bridge Industrial Centre, Wharf Road, Tovil	15
H1(26)	Tovil Working Men's Club, Tovil Hill, Tovil	20
H1(27)	Kent Police HQ, Sutton Road, Maidstone	112
H1(28)	Kent Police training school, Sutton Road, Maidstone	90
H1(29)	New Line Learning, Boughton Lane, Loose	220
H1(30)	West of Eclipse, Maidstone	35
H1(31)	Bearsted Station Goods Yard, Bearsted	20
H1(32)	Cross Keys, Bearsted	50
RMX1(2)	Maidstone East and Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone	210
RMX1(3)	King Street car park and former AMF Bowling site, Maidstone	53
<i>Harrietsham Rural Service Centre</i>		
H1(33)	South of Ashford Road, Harrietsham	113
H1(34)	Mayfield Nursery, Ashford Road, Harrietsham	49
H1(35)	Church Road, Harrietsham	80
<i>Headcorn Rural Service Centre</i>		
H1(36)	Old School Nursery, Station Road, Headcorn	9

6 . Housing site allocations

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Policy reference	Site address	Approximate Dwelling yield
H1(37)	Ulcombe Road and Mill Bank, Headcorn	220
H1(38)	Grigg Lane and Lenham Road, Headcorn	86
H1(39)	South of Grigg Lane, Headcorn	55
H1(40)	Knaves Acre, Headcorn	5
H1(41)	North of Lenham Road, Headcorn	48
<i>Lenham Rural Service Centre</i>		
H1(42)	Tanyard Farm, Old Ashford Road, Lenham	155
H1(43)	Glebe Gardens, Lenham	10
<i>Marden Rural Service Centre</i>		
H1(44)	Howland Road, Marden	44
H1(45)	Stanley Farm, Plain Road, Marden	85
H1(46)	The Parsonage, Goudhurst Road, Marden	144
H1(47)	Marden Cricket and Hockey Club, Stanley Road, Marden	124
H1(48)	South of The Parsonage, Goudhurst Road, Marden	50
<i>Staplehurst Rural Service Centre</i>		
H1(49)	Hen and Duckhurst Farm, Marden Road, Staplehurst	250
H1(50)	Fishers Farm, Fishers Road, Staplehurst	400
H1(51)	North of Henhurst Farm, Staplehurst	60
<i>Boughton Monchelsea Larger Village</i>		
H1(52)	Hubbards Lane and Haste Hill Road, Loose	20
H1(53)	Boughton Lane, Boughton Monchelsea and Loose	75
H1(54)	Boughton Mount, Boughton Lane, Boughton Monchelsea	25
H1(55)	Junction of Church Street and Heath Road, Boughton Monchelsea	40

Policy reference	Site address	Approximate Dwelling yield
H1(56)	Lyewood Farm, Green Lane, Boughton Monchelsea	25
H1(57)	Hubbards Lane, Loose	8
<i>Coxheath Larger Village</i>		
H1(58)	Linden Farm, Stockett Lane, Coxheath	74
H1(59)	Heathfield, Heath Road, Coxheath	110
H1(60)	Forstal Lane, Coxheath	195
H1(61)	North of Heath Road, (Older's Field), Coxheath	55
H1(62)	Clockhouse Farm, Heath Road, Coxheath	72
<i>Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne) Larger Village</i>		
H1(63)	East of Eyhorne Street, Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne	10
H1(64)	West of Eyhorne Street, Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne	14
H1(65)	Adjacent to The Windmill PH, Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne	15
<i>Sutton Valence Larger Village</i>		
H1(66)	Brandy's Bay, South Lane, Sutton Valence	40
<i>Yalding Larger Village</i>		
H1(67)	Vicarage Road, Yalding	65
RMX1(4)	Former Syngenta works, Hampstead Lane, Yalding	200
<i>Other rural area</i>		
H1(68)	Bentletts Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford	10

Table 6.1 Housing site allocations

Policy H 1

Housing site allocations

1. The sites allocated under policies H1(1) to H1(68) and policies RMX1(2) to RMX1(4) will deliver a total of approximately 8,707 homes to contribute towards meeting the borough's housing need. These sites will deliver a range of developments of varying sizes, types and net densities according to the site conditions set out in the detailed site allocation policies. In addition to site specific requirements, all sites should meet the following criteria.
 - i. Development proposals will be subject to the results and recommendations of a phase one ecological survey as determined by the council.
 - ii. Appropriate surface water and robust flood mitigation measures will be implemented where the site coincides with identified flood zones 2 and 3 and shall be subject to a flood risk assessment, including sites in Flood Zone 1 greater than 1ha in area, and shall incorporate sustainable drainage systems.
 - iii. Provision of publicly accessible open space should be made in accordance with policy DM22.
 - iv. Provision of affordable housing and a suitable mix of dwelling sizes should be made in accordance with policies DM11 and DM13.
 - v. An individual transport assessment for development proposals that reach the required threshold will be required to demonstrate how proposed mitigation measures address the cumulative impacts of all sites taken together. The transport assessment will be submitted to and be approved by the Borough Council in consultation with Kent County Council as the highway authority and Highways England.
2. Contributions towards provision of community and strategic infrastructure requirements, as set out in spatial policies SP1 to SP16 will be collected through the Community Infrastructure Levy unless specifically stated within individual site allocation policies. Site specific infrastructure requirements are identified within individual site policies and will be delivered using planning obligations under section 106. Further detail on individual infrastructure schemes is set out within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Policy H1(1) Bridge Nursery, London Road, Maidstone

Policy H1 (1)

Bridge Nursery, London Road, Maidstone

Bridge Nursery, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 140 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Access

1. Access will be taken from the A20 London Road only.

Ecology

2. Submission of necessary ecological and landscape surveys, with a detailed mitigation scheme that:
 - i. Provides for the retention of land as an ecological corridor to mitigate the impact of development on a protected habitat;
 - ii. Subject to further evaluation of their value, retains trees subject to a (woodland) tree preservation order as per advice from the Borough Council;
 - iii. Retains and strengthens trees and shrubs that form the site boundary; and
 - iv. Retains the hedge bordering the A20 London Road, except at the point of access to the site.

Air quality

3. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

4. Provision of a minimum of 1.5ha of natural/semi-natural open space together with contributions towards existing areas of open space, equipped play, outdoor sports facilities and allotments at Adisham Drive, Allington Open Space and Giddyhorn Lane.

Highways and transportation

5. Complementary enhancement of the informal pedestrian link through the north eastern end of the site into the sports ground off Castle Road.
6. Contributions towards pedestrian and cycle links to existing residential areas, shops, schools and health facilities.

Strategic highways and transportation

7. Interim improvement to M20 J5 roundabout including white lining scheme.
8. Traffic signalisation of M20 J5 roundabout and localised widening of slip roads and circulatory carriageway.
9. Provision of an additional lane at the Coldharbour roundabout.
10. Capacity improvements at the junction of Fountain Lane and A26.

Policy H1(2) East of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone

Policy H1 (2)

East of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone

East of Hermitage Lane, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 500 dwellings at an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A 15 metres wide landscape buffer will be implemented between the identified area of ancient woodland and the proposed housing development, to be planted as per recommendations detailed in a landscape survey. Development will not be permitted within this area.
2. The root protection area of trees identified as in and adjacent to the area of ancient woodland will be maintained and kept free from development.
3. A buffer will be provided along the north eastern boundary of the site (rear of Howard Drive dwellings), incorporating existing protected trees, the details of which will be agreed with the council.
4. The wooded character of the footpath (KB19) running along the south eastern boundary of the site will be maintained.
5. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of an archaeological survey.

Access

6. Access to the site will be taken from B2246 Hermitage Lane. Subject to the agreement of junction details, this access will be made in the vicinity of the land opposite the entrance to Hermitage Quarry.

7. An automated bus gate will be provided that allows buses and emergency vehicles to access the site from Howard Drive. Pedestrian and cycle access from Howard Drive will enable permeability to the site.
8. Where ownership of component land parcels differs, access for development purposes will not be impeded to or from these component parcels.

Air quality

9. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

10. The ancient woodland on the south western boundary of the housing development will be retained as public open space.
11. The linear woodland, extending south and south east from the ancient woodland to the site boundary, will be retained as public open space.
12. The land currently used as a commercial orchard, north west of the restricted byway and extending as far as the borough boundary, will be retained for a combination of community infrastructure and public open space uses.
13. Provision of 12.95 ha of open space within the site comprising 6.62ha woodland/landscape buffers, 5.41ha amenity green space, 0.77ha of allotments (community orchard), 0.15ha of provision for children and young people and contributions towards outdoor sports facilities at Giddyhorn Lane. Development should maximise the use of the southern part of the site including Bluebell Wood and the "hospital field" for the provision of open space, making best use of existing features within the site.
14. Maintenance of the open character between Allington in Maidstone Borough and the Medway Gap settlements in Tonbridge and Malling Borough.

Community infrastructure

15. Land will be transferred for primary education use, the details of which will be agreed with the local education authority.
16. A multi-functional community centre will be provided. The use of the north western part of the site (land to the north of the restricted byway and south of the borough boundary) for the siting of community infrastructure is strongly encouraged.

Highways and transportation

17. A direct pedestrian/cycle path, complementary to the current character of the orchard and open fields, will be provided alongside the western access to site.
18. Contributions will be made towards pedestrian and cycle links to existing residential areas, shops, schools and health facilities, including links through to Howard Drive and Queen's Road via Freshland Road.
19. Provision of pedestrian crossing facilities on Hermitage Lane to the north of the site.

Strategic highways and transportation

20. Interim improvement to M20 J5 roundabout including white lining scheme.
21. Traffic signalisation of M20 J5 roundabout and localised widening of slip roads and circulatory carriageway.
22. Provision of an additional lane at the Coldharbour roundabout.
23. Capacity improvements at the junction of Fountain Lane and A26.
24. Provision of a circular bus route to serve the north west Maidstone strategic development area.
25. Provision of a new cycle lane along B2246 Hermitage Lane.

Policy H1(3) West of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone

Policy H1 (3)

West of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone

West of Hermitage Lane, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 330 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Inclusion of a 15 metres wide landscape buffer along the north west boundary adjacent to the designated area of ancient woodland, to be planted as per recommendations detailed in a landscape survey.
2. Provision of landscaping on the B2246 Hermitage Lane frontage to maintain an element of its current open character.

Access

3. Provision of a new pedestrian footpath along the B2246 Hermitage Lane frontage of the site, linking south along the western side of Hermitage Lane to the existing footpath.
4. Securing private vehicular access only from B2246 Hermitage Lane.
5. Provision of a pedestrian crossing point close to the site access on Hermitage Lane.
6. Complementary enhancement of the unmade section of Oakapple Lane, retaining the features that are integral to its character, to provide a secondary access, used by emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Open space

7. Provision of a minimum 25 plot allotment within the site together with contributions towards Oakwood Cemetery, sports facilities and equipped play areas at Barming Heath and Gatland Lane, and contributions towards open space within 1km of the site or to be offset against enhancements of Oakapple Lane. Additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

8. Contributions towards pedestrian and cycle links to existing residential areas, shops, schools and health facilities, incorporating a link along the unmade section of Oakapple Lane.
9. Contribution towards providing a new cycle lane on B2246 Hermitage Lane.
10. Provision of a footway on the western side of Hermitage Lane and pedestrian crossing facilities, together with a footway to link to the existing pedestrian island on Hermitage Lane.

Strategic highways and transportation

11. Interim improvement to M20 J5 roundabout including white lining scheme.
12. Traffic signalisation of M20 J5 roundabout and localised widening of slip roads and circulatory carriageway.
13. Provision of an additional lane at the Coldharbour roundabout.
14. Capacity improvements at the junction of Fountain Lane and A26.

Policy H1(4) Oakapple Lane, Barming

Policy H1 (4)

Oakapple Lane, Barming

Oakapple Lane, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 187 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The hedgerow on the eastern boundary of the site will be retained to form a natural break between housing allocations.
2. The hedgerow along the southern boundary of the site will be enhanced in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and existing housing on Rede Wood Road and Broomshaw Road.
3. A 15 metre landscape buffer will be implemented adjacent to the ancient woodland at Fullingpits Wood in the north east of the site.

Access

4. Primary access will be taken from site H1(3) West of Hermitage Lane.
5. Secondary access will be taken from Rede Wood Road/Broomshaw Road.

Ecology

6. Creation of a habitat corridor will be required along the northern boundary of the field (of which this allocation occupies the south eastern portion), between Fullingpits Wood and Oaken Wood.

Noise

7. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the operations at Hermitage Quarry.

Air quality

8. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development

Open space

9. Provision of 1.5ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(1) together with any additional on-site provision and/or

contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Strategic highways and transportation

10. Interim improvement to M20 J5 roundabout including white lining scheme.
11. Traffic signalisation of M20 J5 roundabout and localised widening of slip roads and circulatory carriageway.
12. Provision of an additional lane at the Coldharbour roundabout.
13. Capacity improvements at the junction of Fountain Lane and A26.
14. Capacity improvements at A20 London Road junction with St, Laurence Avenue (20/20 roundabout)
15. Proportional contributions towards a circular bus route that benefits public transport users in and around the north west strategic location; this route will run via the town centre, B2246 Hermitage Lane, Maidstone Hospital, Howard Drive and the A20 London Road.

Policy H1(5) Langley Park, Sutton Road, Boughton Monchelsea

Policy H1 (5)

Langley Park, Sutton Road, Boughton Monchelsea

Langley Park, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 600 dwellings at an average density of 25 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Provision of a minimum 10 metres wide structural landscape buffer to the south of the developable area, to soften development from the site's southernmost area of open space.
2. Provision of a minimum 10 metres wide structural landscape buffer along the eastern boundary of the site.
3. Any development should be sited in order to preserve the setting of the listed building, Bicknor Farmhouse, in close proximity to the site's northern boundary.

Access

4. Access will be taken from the A274 Sutton Road.
5. Emergency/bus prioritisation access to the site will be taken from Bircholt Road near its junction with Cuxton Road.
6. A separate cycle and pedestrian access will be provided to site H1(10) South of Sutton Road subject to agreement with the Highways Authority and the Borough Council.

Ecology

7. A phase 1 ecological survey of the site is required, and further specific surveys where deemed necessary, with appropriate mitigation measures
8. Development should, where possible, aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity as informed by ecological surveys, and any significant harm must be adequately mitigated.

Noise

9. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the A274 Sutton Road.

Air quality

10. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

11. Provision of 7.65ha of informal open space (nature conservation area) in accordance with policy OS1(2), 1.93ha of amenity green space, 0.3ha of allotments, 0.21ha of provision for children and young people, and contributions towards outdoor sports facilities within 2 miles of the site.

Community infrastructure

12. Transfer of land for a 2FE primary school.
13. Provision of appropriate shopping facilities for the needs of the development, which shall be delivered within a community hub/local centre.
14. Provision of appropriate community facilities for the needs of the development.

Highways and transportation

15. Provision of a new roundabout to provide access to the site.

Strategic highways and transportation

16. Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
17. Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
18. Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.
19. Connections to the existing cycle network from Park Wood to the town centre, and by upgrading the PROW network to accommodate cycles.
20. Improvements to frequency and/or quality of bus services along A274 Sutton Road corridor.

Policy H1(6) North of Sutton Road, Otham

Policy H1 (6)

North of Sutton Road, Otham

North of Sutton Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 286 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The provision of a 15 metre landscape buffer along the site's northern boundary incorporating a pedestrian route and cycle way, which will be constructed and planted before the occupation of the first dwelling.
2. Provision of a minimum 10 metres wide structural landscape buffer provided and maintained along the eastern boundary of the site.
3. Development should be sited in order to preserve the setting of the listed building, Bicknor Farmhouse, in close proximity to the site's eastern boundary.

Access

4. A new access road of a width suitable to accommodate contra-flow traffic and adjacent footways to be taken from the A274 Sutton Road.

Noise

5. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the A274 Sutton Road.

Air quality

6. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

7. Provision of an equipped play area within the site together with contributions towards improvements at Senacre Recreational Ground or Parkwood Recreational Ground or any other open space area within a two mile radius of the development.

Highways and transportation

8. Pedestrian and cycle links to existing residential areas, A274 Sutton Road and Gore Court Road including a pedestrian and cycle crossing on the A274 to link the site to Langley Park.
9. Provision of a cycling and pedestrian link to connect with site H1(9) Bicknor Farm.
10. Provision of a new road between Gore Court Road and Sutton Road through the site.
11. Provision of a Toucan crossing on the A274 Sutton Road to connect the site to site H1(5) Langley Park.

Strategic highways and transportation

12. Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
13. Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
14. Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.
15. Improvements to frequency and/or quality of bus services along A274 Sutton Road corridor.

Policy H1(7) North of Bicknor Wood, Gore Court Road, Otham

Policy H1 (7)

North of Bicknor Wood, Gore Court Road, Otham

North of Bicknor Wood, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 190 dwellings at an average density of 27 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

The site will not be released until:

1. Access from Sutton Road to Gore Court Road is completed in association with site H1(6) North of Sutton Road; and
2. A woodland belt ranging from a minimum of 40 metres to 80 metres in width linking the eastern section of Bicknor Wood to East Wood is planted.

Design and layout

3. An undeveloped section of land will be retained on the eastern part of the site.
4. Provision of a 15 metre wide landscape buffer along the site's boundary with Bicknor Wood incorporating a pedestrian route and cycle way, which will be constructed and planted before the occupation of the first dwelling.
5. Provision of a woodland belt ranging from a minimum of 40 metres to 80 metres in width to link the eastern section of Bicknor Wood to East Wood.

Access

6. Access will be taken from Gore Court Road connecting to the spine road on site H1(6) North of Sutton Road.

Air quality

7. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

8. Provision of approximately 3.99ha of open space within the site together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

9. Pedestrian and cycle links to existing residential areas, White Horse Lane and Gore Court Road and Bicknor Farm (policy H1(9)).
10. Widening of Gore Court Road between the new road and White Horse Lane.

Strategic highways and transportation

11. Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
12. Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
13. Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.
14. Improvements to capacity at the A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction.
15. Improvements to frequency and/or quality of bus services along A274 Sutton Road corridor.

Policy H1(8) West of Church Road, Otham

Policy H1 (8)

West of Church Road, Otham

West of Church Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 440 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The tree line along the western boundary of the site will be enhanced, to protect the amenity and privacy of residents living in Chapman Avenue.
2. An undeveloped section of land will be retained along the western boundary of the site, to protect the amenity and privacy of residents living in Chapman Avenue.
3. The Church Road frontage will be built at a lower density from the remainder of the site, to maintain and reflect the existing open character of the arable fields on the eastern side of Church Road and to provide an open setting to St Nicholas Church.

4. Retain non-arable land to the north and east of St Nicholas Church, to protect its setting.
5. Retain discrete section of land at the south east corner of the site to provide a 15 metres wide landscape buffer to ancient woodland (bordering site at this location), to be planted as per the recommendations of a landscape survey.

Access

6. Access will be taken from Church Road only.

Air quality

7. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

8. Provision of approximately 2.88ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

9. Widening of Gore Court Road between the new road and White Horse Lane.

Strategic highways and transportation

10. Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
11. Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
12. Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.
13. Improvements to capacity at the A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction.
14. Improvements to frequency and/or quality of bus services along A274 Sutton Road corridor.

Policy H1(9) Bicknor Farm, Sutton Road, Otham

Policy H1 (9)

Bicknor Farm, Sutton Road, Otham

Bicknor Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 335 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. An undeveloped section of land will be retained on the eastern part of the site to protect the parkland setting of Rumwood Court.
2. The provision of a 15 metre landscape buffer along the site's western boundary adjacent to the ancient woodland at Bicknor Wood.
3. Development should be sited in order to preserve the setting of the listed buildings, Bicknor Farmhouse, in the south west corner of the site, and Rumwood Court to the east.
4. Public footpath KM94 will be retained and improved, continuing the link between Sutton Road and White Horse Lane.

Access

5. Access will be taken from the A274 Sutton Road.
6. Pedestrian and cycle access will be taken through site H1(6) North of Sutton Road, and to site H1(7) North of Bicknor Wood.

Noise

7. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the A274 Sutton Road.

Air quality

8. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

9. Provision of a minimum of 1.23ha of open space within the site together with contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents.

Strategic highways and transportation

10. Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
11. Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
12. Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.
13. Improvements to capacity at the A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction.
14. Connections to the existing cycle network from Park Wood to the town centre, and by upgrading the PROW network to accommodate cycles.
15. Improvements to frequency and/or quality of bus services along A274 Sutton Road corridor.

Policy H1(10) South of Sutton Road, Langley

Policy H1 (10)

South of Sutton Road, Langley

South of Sutton Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 800 dwellings at an average density of 24 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The majority of the natural/semi-natural open space required by criterion 1 above shall be provided on that part of the site lying to the east of PROW KH364. This area shall also incorporate SuDS surface water drainage mitigation.
2. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance, with particular emphasis on the Loose Stream/Langley Loch and Langley Church and other heritage assets adjacent to the site.
3. The proposals will be designed and laid-out to provide an appropriate and strong visual relationship between the new development and the hamlet of Langley Park, whilst preserving the setting of the existing listed buildings and protecting the amenity and privacy of existing residential properties.

4. Development should be sited in order to preserve or enhance the setting of the listed buildings surrounding the site.
5. A new pedestrian and cycle route will be provided running east-west from Sutton Road to Brishing Road connecting with the planned route through the adjacent site at Langley Park.
6. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Access

7. Primary access will be taken from the A274 Sutton Road.
8. Secondary access will be taken through site H1(5) Langley Park subject to agreement with the Highways Authority and Borough Council.
9. A separate cycle and pedestrian access will be provided to site H1(5) Langley Park subject to agreement with the Highways Authority and Borough Council.

Noise

10. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the A274 Sutton Road.

Air quality

11. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Drainage

12. Development proposals will demonstrate that any necessary new or improved foul and surface water including SuDS drainage infrastructure required to serve the development to ensure no increased risk of flooding off-site, will be delivered in parallel with the development, in consultation with Southern Water and the Environment Agency.
13. The provision of appropriate contributions as proven necessary will be sought for the improvement of flood mitigation impacting this site.

Open space

14. Provision of 14ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(3) together with any additional on-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Community infrastructure

15. The development will provide for a primary school within the developable area of the site, the details of which shall be agreed with the local education authority.

Highways and transportation

16. Provision of a new footway on the northern side of Sutton Road.
17. The provision of additional pedestrian and cycle crossings across the A274 in the vicinity of Langley Church/Horseshoes Lane and in the vicinity of Rumwood Court.

Strategic highways and transportation

18. Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
19. Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.
20. Improvements to capacity at the A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction.
21. Connections to the existing cycle network from Park Wood to the town centre, and by upgrading the PROW network to accommodate cycles.
22. Improvements to frequency and/or quality of bus services along A274 Sutton Road corridor.

Policy H1(11) Springfield, Royal Engineers Road and Mill Lane, Maidstone

Policy H1 (11)

Springfield, Royal Engineers Road and Mill Lane, Maidstone

Springfield, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 500 dwellings at an average density of 132 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A high density scheme will be developed reflecting that the site is in an edge of town centre location.
2. The landscaping scheme for the development will reflect the parkland character of the locality.
3. The historic nature of the site should be respected and listed buildings retained dependant on advice given by the Borough Council.

Access

4. Access will be taken from the A229 Springfield and A229 Royal Engineers roundabouts only.

Ecology

5. Subject to further evaluation of their value, retain trees subject to a (woodland) tree preservation order as per advice from the Borough Council.

Air quality

6. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Land contamination

7. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Open space

8. Provision of approximately 4.8ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.
9. Provision of publicly accessible open space to include the provision of a pocket park to the rear (west) of the existing Springfield Mansion on the former tennis court/car park area in addition to the existing area of public open space shown on the policies map which shall be retained as part of the development and/or contributions.

Highways and transportation

10. Improvements to and provision of pedestrian and cycle links, to facilitate connections from the site to and through Maidstone town centre.
11. Complementary improvements to the eastern bank of the river towpath for pedestrian and cycle use.

Policy H1(12) 180-188 Union Street, Maidstone

Policy H1 (12)

180-188 Union Street, Maidstone

180-188 Union Street, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 30 dwellings at an average density of 56 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The existing ragstone walling to Tufton Street on the site's western boundary and Union Street on its northern boundary shall be retained.
2. Development shall be designed to step-down in height away from the Union Street frontage to ensure an appropriate relationship to Friars Court to the south given the topography of the site.
3. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape

4. The development proposals are designed to take into account of the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans. Existing prominent trees should be retained as part of the development scheme where they have an appropriate safe useful life expectancy. Otherwise, they should be removed and their loss mitigated with appropriate semi-mature feature trees.

Access

5. Primary access shall be taken from Union Street, with only secondary access to Queen Anne Road.

Contamination

6. The development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Air Quality

7. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council and to include appropriate planting and landscaping within the site will be implemented as part of the development.

Policy H1(13) Medway Street, Maidstone

Policy H1 (13)

Medway Street, Maidstone

Medway Street, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 40 dwellings at an average density of 200 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A high density scheme will be developed reflecting that the site is in a town centre location.
2. The development layout will include significant landscaping including tree planting.

Access

3. Access will be taken from Medway Street only.

Noise

4. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in respect of its town centre location.

Air quality

5. Appropriate air quality measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Highways

6. Improvements to and provision of pedestrian and cycle links, to facilitate connections from the site to and through Maidstone town centre.

Policy H1(14) American Golf, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone

Policy H1 (14)

American Golf, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone

American Golf, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 60 dwellings at an average density of 75 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A high density scheme will be developed reflecting that the site is in a town centre location.

Access

2. Access will be taken from the A26 Tonbridge Road only.

Noise

3. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in respect of its town centre location.

Air quality

4. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Land contamination

5. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Highways and transportation

6. Improvements to and provision of pedestrian and cycle links, to facilitate connections from the site to and through Maidstone town centre.

Note: The council will encourage a joint development with the immediately adjacent Slencrest House site allocated under policy H1(16) to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive design approach.

Policy H1(15) 6 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone

Policy H1 (15)

6 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone

6 Tonbridge Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 15 dwellings at an average density of 150 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A high density scheme will be developed reflecting that the site is in a town centre location.

Access

2. Access will be taken from the A26 Tonbridge Road only.

Noise

3. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in respect of its town centre location.

Air quality

4. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Land contamination

5. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Highways and transportation

6. Improvements to and provision of pedestrian and cycle links, to facilitate connections from the site to and through Maidstone town centre.

Policy H1(16) Slencrest House, 3 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone

Policy H1 (16)

Slencrest House, 3 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone

Slencrest House, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 10 dwellings at an average density of 67 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The brick Victorian building 3 Tonbridge Road will be retained to maintain its relationship with no1 Tonbridge Road and to preserve the street scene.
2. The design of any development will reflect the exposed location of the site on the slopes of the Medway Valley in a prominent position overlooking the town centre and will be subject to the results and recommendations of a visual impact assessment that addresses the potential impact of any development from College Road and the All Saints area including the Lockmeadow footbridge.
3. The eastern/south eastern elevation shall be well articulated given the exposed location of the site.

4. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
5. A high density scheme will be developed reflecting that the site is in a town centre location.

Heritage

6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment that addresses the archaeological implications arising from the development and in particular the adjacent Roman cemetery site.

Landscape

7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.

Contamination

8. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Noise

9. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in respect of its town centre location and the adjacent railway.

Air Quality

10. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Note: The council will encourage a joint development with the immediately adjacent American Golf site allocated under policy H1(14) to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive design approach.

Policy H1(17) Laguna, Hart Street, Maidstone

Policy H1 (17)

Laguna, Hart Street Maidstone

Laguna, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 76 dwellings at an average density of 253 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A high density scheme will be developed reflecting that the site is in an edge of town centre location.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Hart Street only.

Air quality

3. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Land contamination

4. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Highways and transportation

5. Complementary improvements to the eastern bank of the river towpath for pedestrian and cycle use.

Policy H1(18) Dunning Hall (off Fremlin Walk), Week Street, Maidstone

Policy H1 (18)

Dunning Hall (off Fremlin Walk), Week Street, Maidstone

Dunning Hall, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 14 dwellings at an average density of 467 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The development proposals shall show a building of a maximum of three-four storeys in height.
2. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
3. The development shall provide for a replacement church hall for the United Reformed Church.
4. The development proposals include a construction management plan given the site's location.

Heritage

5. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment that addresses the impact on adjacent designated and non-designated heritage assets and the archaeological implications of any development.

Contamination

6. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Air Quality

7. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Policy H1(19) 18-21 Foster Street, Maidstone

Policy H1 (19)

18-21 Foster Street, Maidstone

18-21 Foster Street, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 5 dwellings at an average density of 125 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The development will respect the established 'building line' along Foster Street.

2. Should the development comprise houses these should be no more than two-storeys in height plus basements. Their design shall reflect the strong and unifying detailing of the existing dwellings on Foster Street with projecting bays at ground and basement level, centrally located entrances and the use of contrasting brick banding and quoins. The front gardens shall be bounded by a low brick wall surmounted by railings.
3. Should the development comprise apartments any block should be no higher than two-three storeys. Its design should also seek to incorporate elements of the unifying detailing currently found in Foster Street as indicated above.
4. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Contamination

5. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Air Quality

6. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Policy H1(20) Wren's Cross, Upper Stone Street, Maidstone

Policy H1 (20)

Wren's Cross, Upper Stone Street, Maidstone

Wren's Cross, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 60 dwellings at an average density of 150 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The layout shall show the retention and restoration of the Georgian House and its rear additions and the former barrack block.
2. The layout should seek to retain and restore the Superintendent's house and coach house/stable block unless it is clearly demonstrated through an appropriate heritage statement, structural survey and detailed schedule of works/costings that this is not viable.

3. Any application should be accompanied by a detailed viability assessment and appraisal showing that the development proposed is the minimum necessary to secure criteria 1 and 2 above.
4. An appropriate legal mechanism is entered into to secure the completion of the restoration/renovation works comprised in criteria 1 and 2 at an agreed point in the delivery of the development together with payment of a bond that will be repaid in stages once scheduled works are completed.
5. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
6. The development should show any new buildings no higher than three-storeys adjacent to the retained heritage assets rising to no more than four to five storeys at the junction of Upper Stone Street and Foster Street.
7. The development should show any building located at the junction of Foster Street and Upper Stone Street designed with active elevations to both streets.
8. The development should provide for an enhanced public realm and better segregation from traffic along the Upper Stone Street frontage including improved pedestrian and cycle facilities and appropriate landscaping provided. Existing prominent trees should be retained as part of the development scheme where they have an appropriate safe useful life expectancy. Otherwise they should be removed and their loss mitigated with appropriate semi-mature feature trees.
9. Given the noise and air quality issues relating to the site, the development should provide for an appropriate set-back of buildings fronting Upper Stone Street in conjunction with criterion 8 above.

Heritage

10. Any application is accompanied by a detailed Heritage and Archaeological Impact Assessment that addresses the elements included in criteria 1 and 2 above.

Landscape/Ecology

11. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
12. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Air Quality

13. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Noise

14. Development will be subject to a noise survey to demonstrate any necessary attenuation measures in respect of the site's town centre location adjacent to a highway.

Contamination

15. The development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Drainage and Flood risk

16. The development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding off-site.

Note: Should the premises and car park currently excluded from the eastern boundary of the development site become available, it should form part of a comprehensive redevelopment scheme.

Policy H1(21) Barty Farm, Roundwell, Thurnham

Policy H1 (21)

Barty Farm, Roundwell, Thurnham

Barty Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 122 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. An undeveloped section of land will be retained along the southern and western boundaries of the site, and landscape buffers will be included in these areas to protect the amenity and privacy of residents living in Water Lane and Roundwell.
2. The eastern section of the site will be built at a lower density to reflect the existing open character of the countryside beyond.

Access

3. Access will be taken from Roundwell only.

Air quality

4. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

5. Provision of a minimum of 0.4ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

6. Improvements to and provision of pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre.
7. Appropriate contributions towards improvements to secure vehicle and cycle parking at Bearsted railway station.

Policy H1(22) Whitmore Street, Maidstone

Policy H1 (22)

Whitmore Street, Maidstone

Whitmore Street, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 5 dwellings at an average density of 50 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A medium density scheme will be developed reflecting the urban context of this allocation.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Whitmore Street only.

Air quality

3. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Land contamination

4. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Highways and transportation

5. Improvements to and provision of pedestrian and cycle links, to facilitate connections from the site to and through Maidstone town centre.

Policy H1(23) North Street, Barming

Policy H1 (23)

North Street, Barming

North Street, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 35 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The character of this development will be complementary to its semi-rural location at the edge of the urban area.
2. The North Street frontage will be set back from the road by a minimum 5 metres to maintain the open character of this location.

Access

3. Access will be taken from North Street only.

Air quality

4. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

5. Provision of approximately 0.77ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

6. Highway and footway improvements to North Street, Barming will be implemented as proven necessary.

Policy H1(24) Postley Road, Tovil

Policy H1 (24)

Postley Road, Tovil

Postley Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 62 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The western boundary of the site will be landscaped in order to screen the development from views from the west, and to protect the setting of the listed building, Bockingford House, and Loose Valley conservation area.
2. The western section of the site will be built at a lower density to reflect the existing open character of the countryside beyond.
3. The hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the site will be enhanced in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and existing housing on Richmond Way to protect the amenity and privacy of residents.
4. The function of public footpath KB33A is to be retained, and consideration given to the safety of future users and occupiers of the development.

Access

5. Access will be taken from Postley Road only.

Air quality

6. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

7. Provision of a play/amenity area within the site, together with contributions towards improvements at the publicly accessible areas of the Loose Valley Local Wildlife Sites and additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

8. Complementary improvements to public footpath KB33A, connecting Postley Road to Teasaucer Hill and Cripple Street.

Policy H1(25) Bridge Industrial Centre, Wharf Road, Tovil

Policy H1 (25)

Bridge Industrial Centre, Wharf Road, Tovil

Bridge Industrial Centre, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 15 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. A medium-high density scheme reflecting the surrounding area's densities will be developed whilst acknowledging the site's location close to the River Medway and potential flood risk.
2. Development shall provide for a strong visual and functional relationship with the River Medway.
3. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
4. Development proposals will address through appropriate design the issue of privacy for the occupiers of existing properties in Wharf Road and The Tail Race.

Access

5. Vehicular access will be taken from Wharf Road only. A secondary pedestrian and cycle access capable of being used as an emergency access will be provided from Lower Tovil.

Flooding

6. Development will be designed to take into account the recommendations of a comprehensive flood risk assessment which has been undertaken to a methodology agreed with the Environment Agency. The flood risk assessment must demonstrate measures to address egress and access and measures to reduce local flood risk.
7. Measures are secured to ensure adequate site drainage including through the implementation of sustainable drainage measures.

Contamination

8. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Air Quality

9. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Community infrastructure

10. Appropriate contributions towards community infrastructure including improvement to medical facilities in Tovil Parish will be provided where proven necessary.

Policy H1(26) Tovil Working Men's Club, Tovil Hill, Maidstone

Policy H1 (26)

Tovil Working Men's Club, Tovil Hill, Tovil

Tovil Working Men's Club, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 20 dwellings at an average density of 43 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The ragstone wall fronting Tovil Hill to the west of the existing site access shall be retained/repared as necessary and a new section of ragstone wall provided returning into the site on the west side of the access road to connect with the existing wall.
2. The development shall be designed to address both the existing Tovil Hill frontage and the newly created internal road to provide an appropriate street scape to the development.
3. The development proposals shall show both a reduction in both the width and a re-alignment of the existing site access road at a point not less than 10m from the back edge of the carriageway in Tovil Hill, to seek to ensure a more cohesive site layout can be provided.
4. The development will retain access to the remaining rear car park area serving the Working Men's Club.
5. The development shall retain the existing hedgerows/planting on the site's northern boundary with Betsy Clara House and its eastern boundary to the Masonic Centre car park, to maintain appropriate screening for the development.
6. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape/Ecology

7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
8. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Noise

9. The development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the adjacent highway.
10. The design of the development shall consider the potential implications for residential amenity of future occupiers arising from the use of the existing beer garden of the Royal Paper Mill PH.

Contamination

11. The development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Drainage and Flood risk

12. The development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding off-site.

Community infrastructure

13. Appropriate contributions towards community infrastructure including improvement to medical facilities in Tovil Parish will be provided where proven necessary.

Policy H1(27) Kent Police HQ, Sutton Road, Maidstone

Policy H1 (27)

Kent Police HQ, Sutton Road, Maidstone

Kent Police HQ, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 112 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A medium density scheme will be developed reflecting the urban context of this allocation.
2. Trees and hedges lining the southern, eastern and western boundaries of the allocation will be retained and enhanced to provide appropriate screening.

Access

3. Access will be taken from Lansdowne Avenue only.
4. Pedestrian access to the site will be made from footpath KB27 (along the south western boundary).

Air quality

5. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

6. Provision of 1.6ha of outdoor sports pitches in accordance with policy OS1(4) together with contributions towards improvements to Mangravet Recreation Ground, Queen Elizabeth Square play area and sports facilities at Parkwood Recreation Ground or Mote Park Adventure Zone.

Strategic highways and transportation

7. Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
8. Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
9. Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.

10. Improvements to capacity at the A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction.
11. Improvements to frequency and/or quality of bus services along A274 Sutton Road corridor.

Policy H1(28) Kent Police training school, Sutton Road, Maidstone

Policy H1 (28)

Kent Police training school, Sutton Road, Maidstone

Kent Police training school, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 90 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. A medium density scheme will be developed reflecting the urban context of this allocation.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Queen Elizabeth Square only.

Air quality

3. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

4. Contributions towards improvements to Mangravet Recreation Ground, Queen Elizabeth Square play area, sports facilities at Parkwood Recreation ground or Mote Park Adventure Zone and additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Strategic highways and transportation

5. Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
6. Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
7. Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.

8. Improvements to capacity at the A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction.
9. Improvements to frequency and/or quality of bus services along A274 Sutton Road corridor.

Policy H1(29) New Line Learning, Boughton Lane, Maidstone

Policy H1 (29)

New Line Learning, Boughton Lane, Maidstone

New Line Learning, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 220 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The character of this development will be complementary to its semi-rural location at the edge of the urban area.
2. The existing hedgerow and trees on the southern boundary of the site will be retained and enhanced with structural landscaping where necessary, to provide screening from the open countryside.

Access

3. Access will be taken from Boughton Lane only.
4. Pedestrian and cycle access will be made to footpath KB26 on the eastern boundary of the site.
5. Pedestrian and cycle access will be made to footpath KM98 on the southern boundary of the site.

Ecology

6. Provision of a 15 metres wide landscape buffer along the western boundary of the site adjacent to the designated area of ancient woodland (Five Acre Wood), to be planted as per recommendations detailed in a landscape survey.
7. Subject to further evaluation of their value, trees subject to a (woodland) tree preservation order will be retained, as per advice from the Borough Council.

Air quality

8. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

9. Replacement sports facilities will be provided, as agreed by the Borough Council, before development of this site commences.

Strategic highways and transportation

10. Highway improvements at Boughton Lane and at the junction of Boughton Lane and the A229 Loose Road.

Policy H1(30) West of Eclipse, Maidstone

Policy H1 (30)

West of Eclipse, Old Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone

West of Eclipse, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 35 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. An undeveloped section of land will be retained on the north eastern part of the site to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the M20 motorway.
2. A minimum 15 metre landscape buffer shall be provided along the site's western boundary adjacent to the ancient woodland and no footpath, cycle or track-way shall be provided within this safeguarded area.
3. The layout and landscaping of the site shall be designed to minimise the impact of development on the adjacent ancient woodland to the west of the site through appropriate siting of the built development.

Access

4. Access will be taken from Bearsted Road only.

Noise

5. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the M20 motorway.

Air quality

6. Appropriate air quality measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Open space

7. Provision of approximately 0.15ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

8. Complementary improvements to footpath KB9 that runs along the south western boundary of the site.
9. Mitigation measures towards peak time congestion at Junction 7 of the M20 motorway.

Policy H1(31) Bearsted Station Goods Yard, Bearsted

Policy H1 (31)

Bearsted Station Goods Yard, Bearsted

Bearsted Station Goods Yard, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 20 dwellings at an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The former Goods Shed and Weighbridge House which are Grade II designated heritage assets shall be restored and retained and as appropriate converted/re-used as part of the development. The development shall provide for an appropriate setting for these buildings.
2. The development shall provide for an increased provision of station parking spaces by a minimum of 10 spaces within the site as part of the proposals.
3. The proposals shall demonstrate that development would not have an adverse impact on the stability of the adjacent development fronting Ware Street on the higher ground to the south and west of the site, in particular the Methodist Church if changes to the existing banking and topography are proposed.
4. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape/Ecology

5. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Heritage

7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment that addresses the impact of the development on the character and setting of the designated heritage assets within the site and Bearsted conservation area.

Noise

8. The development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the adjacent railway line.

Contamination

9. The development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Drainage and Flood risk

10. The development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding off-site.

Policy H1(32) Cross Keys, Bearsted

Policy H1 (32)

Cross Keys Bearsted

Cross Keys, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 50 dwellings at an average density of 17 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The western part of the site other than the two existing lock-up garage sites and the proposed site access road from Cross Keys serving the development shall be maintained free of development as open land as shown on the policies map, to preserve existing heritage assets, in the interests of ecology and biodiversity and to ensure development does not take place in areas subject to flood risk.
2. The development proposals must be accompanied by a detailed long-term management plan for this undeveloped land to be prepared in the interests of preserving the biodiversity and ecology as well as the archaeology within the area, which shall include details of public access, if any, to the land.
3. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape and ecology

4. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance. The assessment will specifically address the impact of the development on views to and from the North Downs escarpment and from the public access area on the higher land to the south of the site including from PROW KM75 and KM328.
5. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Heritage

7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment that addresses the impact on adjacent designated and non-designated heritage assets and the archaeological implications of any development.

Flooding and water quality

8. The submission of a comprehensive flood risk assessment which has been undertaken to a methodology agreed with the Environment Agency. The FRA must demonstrate measures to address egress and access and measures to reduce local flood risk.
9. Measures are secured to ensure adequate site drainage including through the implementation of sustainable drainage measures.

Air Quality

10. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Access

11. The principal vehicular access to the development shall be taken from Cross Keys.

Open space

12. Provision of 2.4ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(5).

Highways and transportation

13. Improvements to and provision of pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre.

Policy H1(33) South of Ashford Road, Harrietsham

Policy H1 (33)

South of Ashford Road, Harrietsham

South of Ashford Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 113 dwellings at an average density of 24 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. An undeveloped section of land will be retained on the eastern and southern parts of the site to create a buffer between development and the adjacent open countryside.

2. Provision is made on the northern frontage of the site with the A20 Ashford Road for small scale convenience shopping to enhance the quality and range of shops available in the village.
3. The site layout is designed to fully integrate the development and the proposed improvements to the A20 Ashford Road to ensure a comprehensive approach to the improvements of the public realm and highways safety.

Access

4. Access will be taken from the A20 Ashford Road only.

Noise

5. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the M20 motorway and the HS1 railway line.

Open Space

6. Provision of 1.37ha of natural/semi-natural open space and 0.5ha of allotments in accordance with policy OS1(6) together with contributions towards outdoor sports facilities and provision for children and young people at Glebe Fields.

Strategic highways and transportation

7. A20 Ashford Road highways improvements to include carriageway narrowing, reduction of the speed limit and pedestrian crossing facilities.

Policy H1(34) Mayfield Nursery, Ashford Road, Harrietsham

Policy H1 (34)

Mayfield Nursery, Ashford Road, Harrietsham

Mayfield Nursery, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 49 dwellings at an average density of 33 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The woodland areas along the southern boundary of the site will be retained, in order to screen new housing from the railway line.
2. The line of trees along the eastern and western boundaries of the site will be retained and enhanced, in order to provide a suitable buffer between the existing housing to the west and the adjacent open countryside to the east.

Access

3. Access will be taken from the A20 Ashford Road only.

Noise

4. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the railway line.

Highways and transportation

5. Improvements to and provision of pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre.

Strategic highways and transportation

6. A20 Ashford Road highways improvements to include carriageway narrowing, reduction of the speed limit and pedestrian crossing facilities.

Policy H1(35) Church Road, Harrietsham

Policy H1 (35)

Church Road, Harrietsham

Church Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 80 dwellings at an average density of 25 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The line of trees along the northern boundary of the site will be retained, if proven necessary, to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the A20 Ashford Road.
2. Development should be sited in order to preserve the setting of the Grade II listed almshouses in the south east corner of the site.

Access

3. Access will be taken from the A20 Ashford Road only.

Noise

4. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the M20 motorway and HS1 railway line.

Open space

5. Provision of 0.91ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(7) together with contributions towards outdoor sports facilities and equipped play areas at Booth Field and Glebe Field. Additional on-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

6. Package of measures including the upgrading and realignment of part of Church Road, localised repositioning of white lining on the A20 and provision of a ghost island right turn lane; provision of new and improved footways and improvements to the existing "splitter island" to provide a pedestrian crossing point.

Strategic highways and transportation

7. A20 Ashford Road highways improvements to include carriageway narrowing, reduction of the speed limit and pedestrian crossing facilities.

Policy H1(36) Old School Nursery, Station Road, Headcorn

Policy H1 (36)

Old School Nursery, Station Road, Headcorn

Old School Nursery, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 9 dwellings at an average density of 45 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Retain the trees along the southern boundary of the site in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the railway line.
2. Enhance the hedgerow along the western boundary of the site in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the existing railway station car park.

Access

3. Access will be taken from Station Road only.

Noise

4. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the railway line.

Land contamination

5. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Open space

6. Contributions towards open space provision for children and young people, and outdoor sports facilities within a one mile radius of the development.

Policy H1(37) Ulcombe Road and Mill Bank, Headcorn

Policy H1 (37)

Ulcombe Road and Mill Bank, Headcorn

Ulcombe Road and Mill Bank, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 220 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. An undeveloped section of land will be retained along the southern part of the site, in order to restrict development to an area outside of any identified flood zones.
2. Retain and enhance hedges and trees along the northern boundary of the site in order to screen new housing from the adjacent open countryside.

Access

3. Primary access will be taken from either Kings Road or Mill Bank.
4. Secondary access will be taken from Ulcombe Road.

Open space

5. Provision of a minimum of 1.5ha of natural/semi-natural open space within the site together with contributions towards Hoggs Bridge Green

play area. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents.

Highways and transportation

6. Extension of the 30 mph limit and upgrading of road markings on Ulcombe Road, Headcorn.

Strategic highways and transportation

7. Signalisation of the Kings Road / Mill Bank junction, Headcorn.

Policy H1(38) Grigg Lane and Lenham Road, Headcorn

Policy H1 (38)

Grigg Lane and Lenham Road, Headcorn

Grigg Lane and Lenham Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 86 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Retain and enhance hedges and trees along the eastern boundary of the site in order to screen new housing from the adjacent open countryside.

Access

2. Primary access will be taken from Lenham Road.
3. Secondary/emergency access will be taken from Grigg Lane subject to agreement with the Highways Authority.
4. Pedestrian and cycle access will be taken from Grigg Lane.
5. Pedestrian and cycle linkages will be provided, to ensure good links to existing residential areas and the village centre.

Open space

6. Provision of a minimum of 0.09ha of natural/semi-natural open space within the site, together with contributions towards improvements to existing facilities within the vicinity of the site, including Hoggs Bridge play area and playing fields, Hoggs Bridge Green Allotments, Headcorn recreation ground and Grigg Lane sports ground.

Highways and transportation

7. Package of measures at Grigg Lane and Oak Lane, Headcorn including the provision of footways on Oak Lane, footway works on Grigg Lane and improvements at the junction of Oak Lane /Wheeler Street (A274).

Policy H1(39) South of Grigg Lane, Headcorn

Policy H1 (39)

South of Grigg Lane, Headcorn

South of Grigg Lane, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 55 dwellings at an average density of 31 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Retain and enhance hedges and trees along the southern boundary of the site in order to screen new housing from the adjacent open countryside.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Grigg Lane only.
3. Pedestrian and cycle access will be taken from Sharp's Field and Grigg Lane respectively.
4. Pedestrian and cycle linkages will be provided, to ensure good links to existing residential areas and the village centre.

Open space

5. Provision of 1.18ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(11) together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

6. Appropriate contributions towards improving and making safe the pedestrian environment along Grigg Lane and Oak Lane, subject to agreement with the Highways Authority.

Policy H1(40) Knaves Acre, Headcorn

Policy H1 (40)

Knaves Acre, Headcorn

Knaves Acre, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 5 dwellings at an average density of 25 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The function of public footpath KH606 is to be retained, and consideration given to the safety of future users and occupiers of the development.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Knaves Acre only.

Policy H1(41) North of Lenham Road, Headcorn

Policy H1 (41)

North of Lenham Road, Headcorn

North of Lenham Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 48 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The existing trees and hedgerows on the site's western, eastern and north eastern boundaries shall be retained subject to the results of the arboricultural survey required by criterion 4.
2. Development shall be designed to protect the amenities and privacy of the adjacent residential properties to the west of the site.
3. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape/Ecology

4. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape appraisal undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.

5. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Access

7. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site will be from Lenham Road.

Flood risk and drainage

8. Development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a sustainable surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding off-site.

Open space

9. Provision of 0.1ha of amenity green space in accordance with policy OS1(10) together with contributions towards open space, equipped play area and outdoor sports facilities at Hoggs Bridge.

Highways and transportation

10. Package of measures on Lenham Road, Headcorn including extension of the 30 mph limit, construction of appropriate visibility sightlines and new dropped kerb crossings.

Strategic highways and transportation

11. Signalisation of the Kings Road / Mill Bank junction, Headcorn.

Policy H1(42) Tanyard Farm, Old Ashford Road, Lenham

Policy H1 (42)

Tanyard Farm, Old Ashford Road, Lenham

Tanyard Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 155 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The hedgerow and line of trees along the northern and southern boundaries of the site will be retained and substantially enhanced by new planting in order to protect the setting of the Kent Downs AONB, and to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the A20 Ashford Road and Old Ashford Road.
2. The function of restricted byway KH433 is to be retained, and consideration given to the safety of future users and occupiers of the development.
3. The development proposals shall be designed to maintain existing vistas and views of the Lenham Cross from Old Ashford Road, through the site and along PROW KH433.
4. Development proposals shall incorporate substantial areas of internal landscaping within the site to provide an appropriate landscape framework for the site to protect the setting of the Kent Downs AONB. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability reflecting the location of the site as part of the setting the Kent Downs AONB incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
5. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance that particularly addresses the impact of development on the character and setting of the Kent Downs AONB.

Access

6. Access will be taken from Old Ashford Road only.

Noise

7. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the A20 Ashford Road.

Highways and transportation

8. Extension of the 30 mph limit on the Old Ashford Road to the site and extension of the footway on the northern side of the road.

Policy H1(43) Glebe Gardens, Lenham

Policy H1 (43)

Glebe Gardens, Lenham

Glebe Gardens, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 10 dwellings at an average density of 23 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The line of trees along the southern and eastern boundaries of the site will be enhanced in order to protect the setting of the Grade II listed Tanyard Farmhouse.
2. The pond in the north of the site will be enhanced as part of the development of the site.
3. Development will be subject to the results of an archaeological pre-determination assessment.

Access

4. Access will be taken from Glebe Gardens only.

Highways and transportation

5. Improvements to footpath KH399 that runs adjacent to the southern boundary of the site, connecting St Mary's Church to Tanyard Farm.

Policy H1(44) Howland Road, Marden

Policy H1 (44)

Howland Road, Marden

Howland Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 44 dwellings at an average density of 18 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The woodland on the north western part of the site will be retained.
2. The hedgerow along the northern boundary of the site will be enhanced in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the railway line.
3. Development should be sited in order to preserve the setting of the listed buildings in the south east corner of the site.

Access

4. Access will be taken from Howland Road only.

Noise

5. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the railway line.

Open space

6. Provision of approximately 0.83ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

7. Footpath widening and traffic calming on Howland Road, Marden.

Strategic highways and transportation

8. Package of improvements to Marden Rail Station including provision of a new shelter, additional seats, CCTV and lighting as part of one scheme, and provision of a cycle park as part of another scheme.

Policy H1(45) Stanley Farm, Plain Road, Marden

Policy H1 (45)

Stanley Farm, Plain Road, Marden

Stanley Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 85 dwellings at an average density of 22 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Retain and enhance hedges and trees along the southern and western boundaries of the site in order to screen new housing from the adjacent open countryside.
2. Development should be sited in order to preserve the setting of the listed building, Jewell House, to the east of the site.
3. The function of public footpaths KM281 and KM283 are to be retained, and consideration given to the safety of future users and occupiers of the development.

Access

4. Access will be taken from Plain Road only.
5. Pedestrian and cycle access will be provided from the site to Napoleon Drive, to ensure good links to existing residential areas and the village centre, and to the existing open space adjacent to the north west corner of the site.

Open space

6. Provision of approximately 1.6ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

7. Complementary improvements to public footpath KM281, connecting the site to Albion Road.
8. Complementary improvements to public footpath KM283, connecting Plain Road to Thorn Road.

Strategic highways and transportation

9. Package of improvements to Marden Rail Station including provision of a new shelter, additional seats, CCTV and lighting as part of one scheme, and provision of a cycle park as part of another scheme.
10. Package of measures including the upgrading of the zebra crossing on Goudhurst Road to a pelican crossing, the provision of a pedestrian crossing on Church Green, traffic calming measures and improvements to bus infrastructure.

Policy H1(46) The Parsonage, Goudhurst Road, Marden

Policy H1 (46)

The Parsonage, Goudhurst Road, Marden

The Parsonage, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 144 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Retain and enhance hedges and trees along the southern and eastern boundaries of the site in order to screen new housing from the adjacent open countryside.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Goudhurst Road only.
3. Pedestrian and cycle access will be provided, to ensure good links to existing residential areas and the village centre, and to the existing open space adjacent to the north east corner of the site.

Open space

4. Provision of 2.16ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(8) together with a minimum of 0.85ha of allotments/amenity green space/provision for children and young people and contributions towards Marden Playing Fields.

Strategic highways and transportation

5. Package of improvements to Marden Rail Station including provision of a new shelter, additional seats, CCTV and lighting as part of one scheme, and provision of a cycle park as part of another scheme.
6. Package of measures including the upgrading of the zebra crossing on Goudhurst Road to a pelican crossing, the provision of a pedestrian crossing on Church Green, traffic calming measures and improvements to bus infrastructure.

Policy H1(47) Marden Cricket and Hockey Club, Stanley Road, Marden

Policy H1 (47)

Marden Cricket and Hockey Club, Stanley Road, Marden

Marden Cricket and Hockey Club, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 124 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Retain and enhance hedges and trees along the southern and eastern boundaries of the site in order to screen new housing from the adjacent open countryside.

Access

2. Access will be taken from either Albion Road or Stanley Road, subject to agreement with the Highways Authority.
3. Pedestrian and cycle access will be provided, to ensure good links to existing residential areas and the village centre.

Open space

4. Provision of 0.497ha of amenity green space within the site, together with contributions towards outdoor sports facilities, equipped play areas for children and young people, and allotments and community gardens at Marden Playing Fields, Cockpits and Napoleon Drive.

Highways and transportation

5. Complementary improvements to public footpath KM276, connecting the site to Howland Road.

Strategic highways and transportation

6. Package of improvements to Marden Rail Station including provision of a new shelter, additional seats, CCTV and lighting as part of one scheme, and provision of a cycle park as part of another scheme.
7. Package of measures including the upgrading of the zebra crossing on Goudhurst Road to a pelican crossing, the provision of a pedestrian crossing on Church Green, traffic calming measures and improvements to bus infrastructure.

Policy H1(48) South of The Parsonage, Goudhurst Road, Marden

Policy H1 (48)

South of The Parsonage, Goudhurst Road, Marden

South of The Parsonage, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 50 dwellings at an average density of 26 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. A landscaped buffer of at least 15m in width shall be provided to the western boundary and for approximately 110m along the southern boundary from the SW corner of the site, to provide screening and to ensure habitat connectivity.
2. An undeveloped and landscaped buffer of a minimum of 30m is provided at the site's eastern boundary, to provide a buffer/screening for the development to the open countryside to the east of the site.
3. The existing trees and hedgerow dividing the site from The Parsonage along the northern site boundary are retained except (if required) where the removal of the minimum number necessary to provide access to the site from the adjacent development site is clearly justified.
4. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape/Ecology

5. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape appraisal undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.
6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Access

8. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site will only be from the adjacent development site to the north (The Parsonage, H1(46)).

Flood risk and drainage

9. Development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a sustainable surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding off-site.

Open space

10. Provision of a minimum of 0.57ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Strategic highways and transportation

11. Package of measures including the upgrading of the zebra crossing on Goudhurst Road to a pelican crossing, the provision of a pedestrian crossing on Church Green, traffic calming measures and improvements to bus infrastructure

Policy H1(49) Hen and Duckhurst Farm, Marden Road, Staplehurst

Policy H1 (49)

Hen and Duckhurst Farm, Marden Road, Staplehurst

Hen and Duckhurst Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 250 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Retain and enhance hedges and trees along the northern and western boundaries of the site in order to screen new housing from the adjacent open countryside.
2. A suitable landscape buffer will be provided to appropriately screen views of the electricity substation.

Access

3. Primary access will be taken from Marden Road subject to agreement with the Highways Authority.
4. Secondary and/or emergency access will be taken from Lodge Road subject to agreement with the Highways Authority.

5. Pedestrian and cycle access will be taken from Lodge Road to ensure safe connection to the industrial estate and nearby railway station.
6. Pedestrian and cycle linkages will be provided, to ensure good links to existing residential areas and the village centre.

Noise

7. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the railway line and industrial estate.

Open space

8. Provision of a minimum of 4.66ha of formal/semi-natural open space and allotments within the site together with contributions towards Lime Trees Playing Fields.

Community infrastructure

9. Appropriate contributions towards community strategic infrastructure in particular foul water drainage will be provided where proven necessary so that there is nil detriment to existing infrastructure capacity.

Highways and transportation

10. Package of measures in north western Staplehurst including the provision of pedestrian and cycle links to the railway station, provision of a pedestrian and cycle crossing on Marden Road, bus infrastructure improvements, traffic calming and the extension of the 30 mph limit on Marden Road.

Strategic highways and transportation

11. Capacity improvements at the junction of A229, Headcorn Road, Station Road and Marden Road, Staplehurst.
12. Improvements to public and passenger facilities at Staplehurst Rail Station.

Policy H1(50) Fishers Farm, Fishers Road, Staplehurst

Policy H1 (50)

Fishers Farm, Fishers Road, Staplehurst

Fishers Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 400 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Retain and enhance hedges and trees along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site in order to screen new housing from the railway line and adjacent open countryside.
2. The eastern section of the site will be built at a lower density to reflect the existing open character of the countryside beyond.
3. The proposals will be designed to include areas of open space that retain the integrity and connectivity of the existing framework of ponds, hedgerows and trees within the site.

Access

4. Primary access will be taken from Headcorn Road subject to agreement with the Highways Authority.
5. Secondary and/or emergency access will be taken from Fishers Road subject to agreement with the Highways Authority.
6. Pedestrian and cycle access will be taken from Fishers Road and Hurst Close.
7. Pedestrian and cycle linkages will be provided, to ensure good links to existing residential areas and the village centre.

Noise

8. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the railway line.

Open space

9. Provision of a minimum of 4.47ha of natural/semi-natural open space within the site together with contributions towards off-site provision/improvements required in accordance with policy DM22. Should the site be sub-divided through the development management process proportionate provision/contributions will be required. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents.

Community infrastructure

10. Appropriate contributions towards community strategic infrastructure in particular foul water drainage will be provided where proven necessary so that there is nil detriment to existing infrastructure capacity.

Highways and transportation

11. Package of measures in north eastern Staplehurst including the provision of a pedestrian and cycle crossing on Headcorn Road, bus infrastructure improvements, extension of the 30 mph speed limit on Headcorn Road.

Strategic highways and transportation

12. Capacity improvements at the junction of A229, Headcorn Road, Station Road and Marden Road, Staplehurst.
13. Improvements to public and passenger facilities at Staplehurst Rail Station.

Policy H1(51) North of Henhurst Farm, Staplehurst

Policy H1 (51)

North of Henhurst Farm, Staplehurst

North of Henhurst Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 60 dwellings at an average density of 24 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The northern section of the site only as defined on the policies map, approximately 2.5ha, will be developed for residential purposes, to ensure the impact on the surrounding landscape is minimised.
2. The development will provide pedestrian/cycle path links to PROW KM312 and KM302A to provide enhanced connections to the village centre and facilities.
3. The woodland belt on the site's eastern boundary will be retained and an appropriate buffer to the woodland provided within the development.

4. A buffer of at least 15m with no development within it shall be provided to the western site boundary with the ecological area secured as part of the development at Oliver Road to the north of the site.
5. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape/Ecology

6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.
7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
8. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Access

9. Vehicular access to the site will be from Oliver Road.
10. Emergency access will be via Bell Lane (PROW KM302A), which will require some upgrading.

Flood risk and drainage

11. Development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a sustainable surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding off-site.

Open space

12. Provision of 1.22ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(9) together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents.

Strategic highways and transportation

13. Capacity improvements at the junction of A229, Headcorn Road, Station Road and Marden Road, Staplehurst.
14. Improvements to public and passenger facilities at Staplehurst Rail Station.

Policy H1(52) Hubbards Lane and Haste Hill Road, Loose

Policy H1 (52)

Hubbards Lane and Haste Hill Road, Loose

Hubbards Lane and Haste Hill Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 20 dwellings at an average density of 33 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The hedgerows along the southern and eastern boundaries of the site will be enhanced in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and existing housing on Hubbards Lane and Haste Hill Road to protect the amenity and privacy of residents.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Hubbards Lane only.

Policy H1(53) Boughton Lane, Boughton Monchelsea and Loose

Policy H1 (53)

Boughton Lane, Boughton Monchelsea and Loose

Boughton Lane, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 75 dwellings at an average density of 28 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. Development will be restricted to the 2.7ha located to the south of Leonard Gould Way and to the rear of 'Slade House', 'Milldean', 'Grove Cottage', 'Cherry Lodge' and 'Pendale', Pickering Street.

2. The remaining 7.1ha of land to the east and north east of the development site will be provided as public open space (in accordance with criterion 13) or will remain undeveloped.
3. The retention and reinforcement where necessary of existing boundary hedgerows and tree belts.
4. The character of the development and its resultant density will reflect its role as a transition site on the edge of the urban area.
5. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Access

6. Access will be taken from Boughton Lane from the northern site boundary running southwards, to ensure the open space area is not unacceptably severed.
7. The provision of pedestrian and cycle access to PROW KM55 on the southern boundary of the site.

Heritage Impact

8. The development proposals are designed to take into account a detailed Heritage and Archaeological Impact Assessment that addresses the impact of the development on the setting of the adjacent Slade House.

Landscape/Ecology

9. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.
10. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
11. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Flood risk and drainage

12. Development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a sustainable surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding along the River Loose at The Quarries and downstream from The Quarries.

Open space

13. Provision of 1.49ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(15) together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents.

Strategic highways and transportation

14. Highway improvements at Boughton Lane and at the junction of Boughton Lane and the A229 Loose Road.

Policy H1(54) Boughton Mount, Boughton Lane, Boughton Monchelsea

Policy H1 (54)

Boughton Mount, Boughton Lane, Boughton Monchelsea

Boughton Mount, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 25 dwellings at an average density of 14 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. Built development will be restricted to the currently developed area (approx 1.8ha) north of the Ha-Ha and Folly and will exclude the area of the existing pond.
2. The layout shall show the retention and restoration of the Ha-Ha, The Folly, the water tower and barn, the walls surrounding the former walled garden and other ragstone walls within the site.
3. The layout shall show the restoration of the parkland/garden associated with the former house containing The Folly and Ha-Ha as publicly accessible open space.
4. Any application should be accompanied by a detailed viability assessment and appraisal showing that the development proposed is the minimum necessary to secure criteria 2 and 3 above.
5. An appropriate legal mechanism is entered into to secure the completion of the restoration/renovation works comprised in criteria 2 and 3 at an agreed point in the delivery of the development together with payment of a bond that will be repaid in stages once scheduled works are completed.

6. The proposed layout will retain and reinforce the existing woodland and planting along the site's northern boundary.
7. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Access

8. Vehicular access to the development shall only be from Boughton Lane.

Heritage Impact

9. Any application is accompanied by a detailed Heritage and Archaeological Impact Assessment that addresses the elements included in criteria 2 and 3 above and also addresses the archaeological impact/implications of the retained former cellars of the previous house.

Landscape/Ecology

10. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.
11. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
12. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Contamination

13. The development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Drainage and Flood risk

14. The development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding along the River Loose at The Quarries and downstream from The Quarries.

Open space

15. Provision of 0.15ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(16) together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents.

Strategic highways and transportation

16. Highway improvements at Boughton Lane and at the junction of Boughton Lane and the A229 Loose Road.

Policy H1(55) Junction of Church Street and Heath Road, Boughton Monchelsea

Policy H1 (55)

Junction of Church Street and Heath Road, Boughton Monchelsea

Junction of Church Street and Heath Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 40 dwellings at an average density of 32 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The proposed layout respects the setting and relationship of The Lodge (to Boughton Monchelsea Place) to Heath Road and the junction with Church Street/Church Hill and maintains a set-back of a minimum of 15m for development at the junction of Church Street and Heath Road.
2. The proposed layout retains the existing hedgerow to Heath Road and provides an appropriate buffer to the existing woodland in the NE corner of the site.
3. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape

4. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.

Drainage and Flood risk

5. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a detailed flood risk assessment and a surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding along the River Loose at The Quarries and downstream from The Quarries.

Heritage impact

6. Development will be subject to the result and recommendations of a Heritage Impact Assessment that addresses the impact of the development on the setting of The Lodge and the Registered Historic Park to Boughton Monchelsea Place.

Ecology/biodiversity

7. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures particularly in relation to the adjacent woodland to the NE corner of the site.

Community facilities

8. Appropriate contributions towards community infrastructure including improvement to medical facilities in Boughton Monchelsea Parish will be provided where proven necessary.

Strategic highways and transportation

9. Linton Crossroads junction improvements.

Policy H1(56) Lyewood Farm, Green Lane, Boughton Monchelsea

Policy H1 (56)

Lyewood Farm, Green Lane, Boughton Monchelsea

Lyewood Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 25 dwellings at an average density of 20 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. Built development will be restricted to the current developed area of the chicken sheds (approximately 1.25ha). The remaining area will be given over to landscaping/open space/garden in order to provide an appropriate setting for development given its sensitive context.

2. Landscaping shall be provided on the western site boundary adjacent to the existing woodland and PROW KM104A to assist in the screening of and providing a setting for the new development from the west.
3. Landscaping shall also be provided along the site boundary with Lyewood Oast.
4. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance, that in particular addresses the impact of the development from Cliff Hill and PROW KM100 that runs east/north east from Cliff Hill towards Pested Bars Road and from Green Lane and Old Tree Lane.
5. The proposed layout shall respect the clustered pattern of development that characterises the groups of dwellings within this part of Boughton Monchelsea parish. There will be no built development to the north of the existing chicken sheds.
6. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Access

7. Vehicular access to the site will only be from Green Lane.
8. The design of the site access road will retain and incorporate PROW KM106 in the section between its junction with Green Lane and the existing driveway to Lyewood Oast.
9. A footpath/cycle path will be provided along the frontage to Green Lane on land within the landowner's control to the north of the existing hedgerow (which shall be retained) from a point east of KM104A until the site access road.

Drainage and Flood risk

10. Development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a sustainable surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding along the River Loose at The Quarries and downstream from The Quarries.

Contamination

11. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Archaeology

12. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a detailed archaeological impact assessment.

Open space

13. Provision of 0.15ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(17) together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents.

Community facilities

14. Appropriate contributions towards community infrastructure including improvement to medical facilities in Boughton Monchelsea Parish will be provided where proven necessary.

Highways

15. Appropriate contributions towards improvements at the junction of the B2163 Heath Road with the A229 Linton Road/Linton Hill at Linton Crossroads.

Policy H1(57) Hubbards Lane, Loose

Policy H1 (57)

Hubbards Lane, Loose

Hubbards Lane, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 8 dwellings at an average density of 20 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. Structural landscaping will be provided on the eastern and southern boundaries of the site to provide a suitable buffer between the site and the agricultural unit to the east.
2. Development proposals should seek to retain as much of the existing hedgerows on the western boundary as possible, to help retain the existing natural character of the site.

Access

3. Access to the site will be from Hubbards Lane and the scheme design should take account of the potential for the development to be affected by car parking associated with the Cornwallis Academy at peak times.

Policy H1(58) Linden Farm, Stockett Lane, Coxheath

Policy H1 (58)

Linden Farm, Stockett Lane, Coxheath

Linden Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 74 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The line of trees along the western boundary of the site will be retained in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the adjacent playing fields, and to protect the amenity and privacy of residents living at Linden Farm.
2. The hedgerow along the southern boundary of the site will be enhanced in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the village hall facilities.

Access

3. Access will be taken from Stockett Lane only.

Open space

4. Provision of 0.6ha of outdoor sports facilities within the site.

Highways and transportation

5. Extension of the footway on the western side of Stockett Lane to the site access.
6. Appropriate contributions towards mitigation measures to improve the crash record at the junction of Stockett Lane and the B2163 Heath Road.

Policy H1(59) Heathfield, Heath Road, Coxheath

Policy H1 (59)

Heathfield, Heath Road, Coxheath

Heathfield, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 110 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The hedgerow tree screen/windbreak along the western boundary of the site will be retained and reinforced with additional landscaping in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and existing housing on Aspian Drive, and to protect the amenity and privacy of residents living in Aspian Drive.
2. The hedgerow along the northern boundary of the site will be retained to form a natural break between housing allocations.
3. The hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the site will be retained in order to soften the landscape views from the east.
4. Development should have regard to the public footpath running along the eastern boundary of the site.

Access

5. Access will be taken from Heath Road only.

Open space

6. Provision of 0.5ha of amenity green space in accordance with policy OS1(13) together with contributions towards improvements to facilities at Stockett Lane.

Strategic highways and transportation

7. Linton Crossroads junction improvements.

Policy H1(60) Forstal Lane, Coxheath

Policy H1 (60)

Forstal Lane, Coxheath

Forstal Lane, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 195 dwellings at an average density of 25 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The hedgerow along the western boundary of the site will be retained in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and existing housing on Wilberforce Road and Springett Way, and to protect the amenity and privacy of residents living in these roads.
2. The hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the site will be retained in order to soften the landscape views from the east.
3. The hedgerow along the southern boundary of the site will be retained to form a natural break between housing allocations.

Access

4. Access will be taken from Forstal Lane only.

Open space

5. Provision of a minimum of 1.4ha of open space within the site, together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22.

Highways and transportation

6. Provision of a formal footway link between the site and Mill Lane.
7. Improvements to the footpath that runs along the eastern boundary of the site.

Strategic highways and transportation

8. Linton Crossroads junction improvements.
9. Appropriate contributions towards mitigation measures to improve the crash record at the junction of Stockett Lane and the B2163 Heath Road.

Policy H1(61) North of Heath Road (Older's Field), Coxheath

Policy H1 (61)

North of Heath Road (Older's Field) Coxheath

North of Heath Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 55 dwellings at an average density of 24 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The layout will provide for a range of dwelling types and sizes to ensure an appropriate mix of accommodation is provided.
2. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
3. Residential development shall take place on not more than 2.25ha of the site as indicated on the policies map and shall be accessed from the B2163 Heath Road.

Landscape/Ecology

4. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance in place at the time of the submission of an application.
5. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may, as a result, be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Flood risk and drainage

7. Development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a sustainable surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding either on-site or off-site.

Open space

8. Provision of 1.12ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(12) together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents and should provide for connectivity to existing open spaces.

Access

9. Vehicular access shall be taken from the B2163 Heath Road.
10. Improvements to PROW KM46 from Heath Road as far as its junction with KM46 (Pleasant Valley Lane) for the benefit of both pedestrian and cycle access will be provided.

Highways and transportation

11. The existing pedestrian footpath on the north side of Heath Road that currently terminates at Wakehurst Close shall be extended across the site frontage as far as PROW KM46.

Strategic highways and transportation

12. Linton Crossroads junction improvements.

Policy H1(62) Clockhouse Farm, Heath Road, Coxheath

Policy H1 (62)

Clockhouse Farm, Heath Road, Coxheath

Clockhouse Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 72 dwellings and 43 care home bedspaces at an average density of 32 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The proposals retain and significantly enhance the existing eastern boundary hedgerow to define the edge of the village and to help screen and soften the visual impact of development when approaching the village from the east.
2. The proposals retain and significantly enhance the existing southern boundary hedgerow to separate the development from the farm complex to the south east and to form a definite, substantial landscaped boundary to the site.

Access

3. Access will be taken from Heath Road only.

Ecology

4. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.

Highways and transportation

5. The proposals deliver a footpath link along the southern side of Heath Road to connect with the existing foot way to the village centre.
6. Contributions are secured for the upgrading of village bus stops to provide step free access on/off the buses.

Strategic highways and transportation

7. Linton Crossroads junction improvements.

Policy H1(63) East of Eyhorne Street, Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne

Policy H1 (63)

East of Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne

East of Eyhorne Street, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 10 dwellings at an average density of 33 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Structural landscaping will be implemented along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site in order to screen the edge of development from the open countryside and to protect the setting of the Grade II* listed Godfrey House.
2. The hedgerow along the western boundary of the site will be enhanced in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and existing housing on Eyhorne Street to protect the amenity and privacy of residents.

Access

3. Access will be taken from Eyhorne Street only.

Noise

4. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the railway line.

Policy H1(64) West of Eyhorne Street, Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne

Policy H1 (64)

West of Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne

West of Eyhorne Street, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 14 dwellings at an average density of 12 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The line of trees along the north eastern boundary of the site will be retained in order to provide a suitable buffer between new housing and the railway line.
2. Structural landscaping will be implemented along the north western boundary of the site in order to screen the edge of development from the open countryside, and to protect the setting of the Kent Downs AONB.
3. The hedgerow along the south eastern boundary of the site will be enhanced in order to protect the setting of the Grade II* listed Godfrey House.

Access

4. Access will be taken from Eyhorne Street only.

Noise

5. Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary attenuation measures in relation to the railway line.

Open space

6. Contributions towards improvements to existing play equipment and outdoor sports facilities at Hollingbourne Recreational Ground and Cardwell play area.

Policy H1(65) Adjacent to The Windmill PH, Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne

Policy H1 (65)

Adjacent to The Windmill PH, Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne

Adjacent to The Windmill PH, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 15 dwellings at an average density of 10 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. A low to medium density scheme will be developed reflecting the context of this allocation.
2. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials and design cues from the adjacent Conservation Area and other designated Heritage Assets.
3. The existing hedges along the boundary with properties in Eyhorne Street will be retained and reinforced and a buffer of at least 15m provided between the development and the adjacent wooded area in the western corner of the site. The hedgerow and trees along PROW KH199 will be retained except where the vehicular access to the site is formed.

Heritage Impact

4. The development proposals are designed to take into account a detailed Heritage and Archaeological Impact Assessment that addresses the setting of the adjacent designated Heritage Assets.

Access

5. Access will be taken from Eyhorne Street via the existing track serving the village hall and Grove Mill House.

Landscape/Ecology

6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.

7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
8. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Flood risk and drainage

9. Development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a sustainable surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding off-site.

Policy H1(66) Brandy's Bay, South Lane, Sutton Valence

Policy H1 (66)

Brandy's Bay, South Lane, Sutton Valence

Brandy's Bay, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 40 dwellings at an average density of 27 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The proposed site layout will retain the existing streams within and adjacent to the site boundaries open and un-culverted.
2. The development will provide ecological mitigation/enhancement areas and landscaped buffers along the North, East and South site boundaries to ensure appropriate habitat connectivity and the retention of existing trees and hedgerows.
3. The layout shall provide for a centrally positioned access road off South Lane with landscaping to the site boundaries and trees along the new access road.
4. The scheme shall provide for a footpath link from the site's entrance on South Lane to PROW KH505 at an appropriate access point on the southern site boundary to improve pedestrian connectivity with the existing settlement, the adjacent bus stops in Headcorn Road, and the countryside to the east.

5. The site layout will be designed to accommodate the difference in site levels west to east across the site without extensive excavation and re-modelling of the land form.
6. The layout will provide for a range of dwelling types and sizes to ensure an appropriate mix of accommodation is provided.
7. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability incorporating the use of vernacular materials.

Landscape/Ecology

8. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.
9. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
10. The development proposals are designed to take into account the result of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be recommended, together with any necessary mitigation/enhancement measures.

Contamination

11. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a land contamination survey.

Flood risk and drainage

12. Development will be subject to the results of a detailed flood risk assessment and a sustainable surface water drainage strategy that demonstrates that surface water run-off from the site will not lead to an increased risk of flooding off-site.

Open space

13. Contributions towards enhanced play and open space facilities.

Policy H1(67) Vicarage Road, Yalding

Policy H1 (67)

Vicarage Road, Yalding

Vicarage Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 65 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Structural landscaping will be implemented along the eastern, southern and western boundaries of the site in order to screen the edge of development from the open countryside, and to protect the setting of Yalding conservation area.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Vicarage Road only.

Highways and transportation

3. Extension of the footway along Vicarage Road to the site.
4. Improvements to the footpath that runs adjacent to the southern boundary of the site.

Policy H1(68) Bentletts Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford

Policy H1 (68)

Bentletts Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford

Bentletts Yard, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 10 dwellings at an average density of 5 dwellings per hectare. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and Layout

1. The layout of development shall reflect the rural character of the area to create the appearance of one or more clusters of farm buildings

2. Development proposals will be of a high standard of design and sustainability, incorporating the traditional domestic and agricultural building designs and materials of Kent Vernacular architecture.
3. Lighting on the site should be carefully designed so that it minimises landscape, heritage and ecological impacts.

Heritage Impact

4. Development should preserve and/or enhance the setting of the listed building known as The Pest House at the entrance to the site.

Landscape/ecology

5. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance available at the time of the submission of an application.
6. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
7. Retention, enhancement and reinforcement of existing trees and hedgerows along the site's northern and southern boundaries to provide substantial structural landscaping to screen the development from the surrounding countryside.
8. The development proposals are designed to take account of the results of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific survey that may, as a result, be recommended together with any necessary mitigation / enhancement measures.
9. The development should be designed to ensure that land suitable for use as Great Crested Newt habitat should not be lost to development. Any landscaping and ecological enhancements at the western end of the site should include provision of a wildlife pond.

Land contamination and viability

10. It should be demonstrated that contamination of the site resulting from its scrap yard use has been remediated to the satisfaction of the local authority and the Environment Agency.
11. Any application should be accompanied by a detailed viability assessment and appraisal.

Flooding and water quality

12. The submission of a flood risk assessment which has been undertaken to a methodology agreed with the Environment Agency.
13. Measures should be secured to ensure adequate site drainage, including the implementation of sustainable drainage measures. Sustainable Urban Drainage measures should seek to enhance potential Great Crested Newt habitat.

Highways and transportation

14. Appropriate improvements to, or contribution towards, the junction with Claygate Road.

Policy OS1 Strategic open space allocations

8.1 To support the appropriate delivery of development identified in the local plan, the council has identified suitable sites to secure the provision of open space to meet and/or contribute towards the open space requirements in accordance with the standards set out in policy DM22.

Policy OS1

Open space allocations

The following sites, as shown on the policies map, are identified for provision of publicly accessible open space to complement the growth identified in the local plan.

Policy reference	Site name, address	Approx. ha	Open space typology
(1)	Oakapple Lane, Barming	1.50	Natural/semi-natural open space
(2)	Langley Park, Sutton Road, Boughton Monchelsea	7.65	Informal open space (nature conservation area)
(3)	South of Sutton Road, Langley	14.00	Natural/semi-natural open space
(4)	Kent Police HQ, Sutton Road, Maidstone	1.60	Outdoor sports provision (3-5 sports pitches)
(5)	Cross Keys, Bearsted	2.40	Natural/semi-natural open space
(6)	South of Ashford Road, Harrietsham	1.37	Natural/semi-natural open space
		0.50	Allotments
(7)	Church Road, Harrietsham	0.91	Natural/semi-natural open space
(8)	The Parsonage, Goudhurst Road, Marden	2.16	Natural/semi-natural open space
(9)	North of Henhurst Farm, Staplehurst	1.22	Natural/semi-natural open space
(10)	North of Lenham Road, Headcorn	0.10	Amenity green space
(11)	South of Grigg Lane, Headcorn	1.18	Natural/semi-natural open space

Policy reference	Site name, address	Approx. ha	Open space typology
(12)	North of Heath Road (Older's Field), Coxheath	1.12	Natural/semi-natural open space
(13)	Heathfield, Heath Road, Coxheath	0.50	Amenity green space
(14)	Former Syngenta Works, Hampstead Lane, Yalding	4.40	Natural/semi-natural open space
(15)	Boughton Lane, Loose and Boughton Monchelsea	1.49	Natural/semi-natural open space
(16)	Boughton Mount, Boughton Monchelsea	0.15	Natural/semi-natural open space
(17)	Lyewood Farm, Boughton Monchelsea	0.15	Natural/semi-natural open space

Policy H2 Broad locations for housing growth

9.1 In addition to the specific site allocations made under policy H1, the council has identified Maidstone town centre, Invicta Park Barracks on Royal Engineers Road and Lenham as future broad locations for housing growth, where the expectation is that development will not take place at these locations until the latter end of the plan period (2026-2031).

Maidstone Town Centre

9.2 It is acknowledged that there is an oversupply of poorer quality office stock in the town centre which is no longer fit for purpose. This has the effect of suppressing the town centre office market and thereby inhibiting new development which could better meet modern business needs. A route to tackle this is to rationalise the supply of the poorest stock through conversion or redevelopment to alternative uses. Over the time frame of the plan it is anticipated that the value of the lowest quality office stock, in terms of rents, will fall further making redevelopment for alternative uses increasingly viable. With a corresponding uplift in the market for town centre apartments, this trend could see the delivery of significant new housing in and around the town centre. The impact of the temporary permitted development entitlements for changes of use from office accommodation to residential use⁽¹¹⁾ has yet to be fully assessed, although a number of prior notifications have been submitted. In view of the market shifts needed, full delivery is unlikely to be realised until the end of the plan period. The town centre broad location has the potential to deliver in the order of 700 additional homes.

Invicta Park Barracks, Maidstone

9.3 Invicta Park Barracks covers a substantial area (41 ha) to the north of the town centre. It comprises a range of military buildings, including army accommodation, set within expansive parkland. The site is currently home to the 36 Engineer Regiment. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has categorised the site as a 'retained' site in its most recent estates review (2013), rather than a 'core' site which has a more secure future, although there are no immediate plans to vacate this site.

9.4 The MoD keeps its property portfolio under regular review. The MoD has confirmed to the council that, in the longer term, there could be some prospect that the site may be declared surplus and so become available for alternative uses. In recognition of this potential and the clear need to plan positively for it, in the event that the site does become surplus to MoD requirements (again it is advised there are no immediate plans to vacate the site), the local plan identifies Invicta Park Barracks as a broad location which is unlikely to come forward for housing growth until the end of the local plan period (post 2026). The site has the potential to deliver in the order of 1,300 new homes.

11 Through the new Housing and Planning Bill 2015, the Government has signalled its intention to make permanent temporary permitted development rights which have enabled offices to be converted to new homes without having to apply for planning permission. The council will maintain a watching brief and respond as appropriate.

Lenham

9.5 Lenham is identified as a rural service centre in the local plan, primarily because of the range of services and facilities in the village, transport infrastructure, local employment opportunities and the fact that the village serves its local population and surrounding areas.

9.6 Land adjacent to the east and west of Lenham's built form is considered suitable to accommodate additional housing in the region of 1500 dwellings in total if required towards the latter end of the plan period (post 2026). The topography of this area is low lying and does not have the same landscape or infrastructure constraints as some other areas of the borough. However, it is accepted that a number of infrastructure improvements and mitigation measures (e.g. transport, highways, education, health, sporting facilities) would be required to ensure that any future development is integrated into the existing fabric of the settlement and to ensure that Lenham remains a sustainable settlement.

Policy reference	Area	Approximate Dwellings yield
H2(1)	Maidstone town centre	700
H2(2)	Invicta Park barracks	1,300
H2(3)	Lenham	1,500

Table 9.1 Broad locations for housing growth

Policy H 2

Broad locations for housing growth

The broad locations for future housing growth allocated under policies H2(1) to H2(3) have the potential to deliver up to 3,500 homes to meet the borough's housing need post 2026. These locations will deliver a range of developments of varying sizes, types and densities. In addition to the specific requirements set out in the detailed policies for the broad locations, all sites should meet the following criteria.

1. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a phase one ecological survey as determined by the council.
2. Appropriate surface water and robust flood mitigation measures will be implemented where the site coincides with identified flood zones 2 and 3 and shall be subject to a flood risk assessment, including sites in Flood Zone 1 greater than 1ha in area, and shall incorporate sustainable drainage systems.
3. Provision of, or contributions towards, publicly accessible open space should be made in accordance with policy DM22.

4. Provision of affordable housing and a suitable mix of dwelling sizes should be made in accordance with policies DM11 and DM13.
5. An individual transport assessment for each development, to be submitted to and approved by the Borough Council in consultation with Kent County Council as the highway authority and Highways England, where appropriate, will demonstrate how proposed mitigation measures address the cumulative impacts of all sites taken together.
6. Appropriate contributions towards strategic and local infrastructure will be provided where proven necessary.

Policy H2(1) Maidstone town centre

Policy H2 (1)

Maidstone town centre broad location for housing growth

Maidstone town centre, as defined on the policies map, is identified as a broad location in accordance with policy H2 for approximately 700 dwellings. Development must comply with policy SP4. The council will prepare a master plan to develop the vision for the town centre and to guide development proposals.

Policy H2(2) Invicta Park Barracks, Maidstone

Policy H2 (2)

Invicta Park Barracks, Maidstone broad location for housing growth

Invicta Park Barracks is identified as a broad location in accordance with policy H2 for up to 1,300 dwellings towards the end of the local plan period (post 2026). Should the site come forward within the growth location, as defined on the policies map, before the local plan is reviewed, the following criteria must be met in addition to other policies of this local plan:

1. Preparation and submission of a development brief and a master plan prepared in conjunction with and for approval by the council to guide development;
2. Integration of new development within the existing landscape structure of the site (supported by ecological, arboricultural, and landscape and visual impact assessments together with the identification of detailed mitigation measures where appropriate);
3. Ensuring requisite community facilities, which may include neighbourhood shopping and health and education facilities, are delivered in conjunction with housing;
4. Provision of publicly accessible open space, including natural and semi-natural open space, as proven necessary, and/or contributions;
5. Off-site highway improvements as necessary to mitigate the impact of development;
6. Securing a network of public footpath and cycling routes through the site;

7. Preservation of features of ecological importance, including the retention and enhancement of wildlife corridors, and ensuring that connection with ecological features and corridors outside the site is maintained/enhanced;
8. Enhanced walking, cycling and public transport connections to the town centre and local area;
9. Preservation of Park House (Grade II*) and its setting, in particular the parkland to the north and east of Park House to include removal of existing built development at 1-8 (consecutive) The Crescent to enhance/restore the parkland setting; and
10. Development proposals must demonstrate that the necessary sewerage infrastructure is either available, or can be delivered in parallel with the development.

Policy H2(3) Lenham

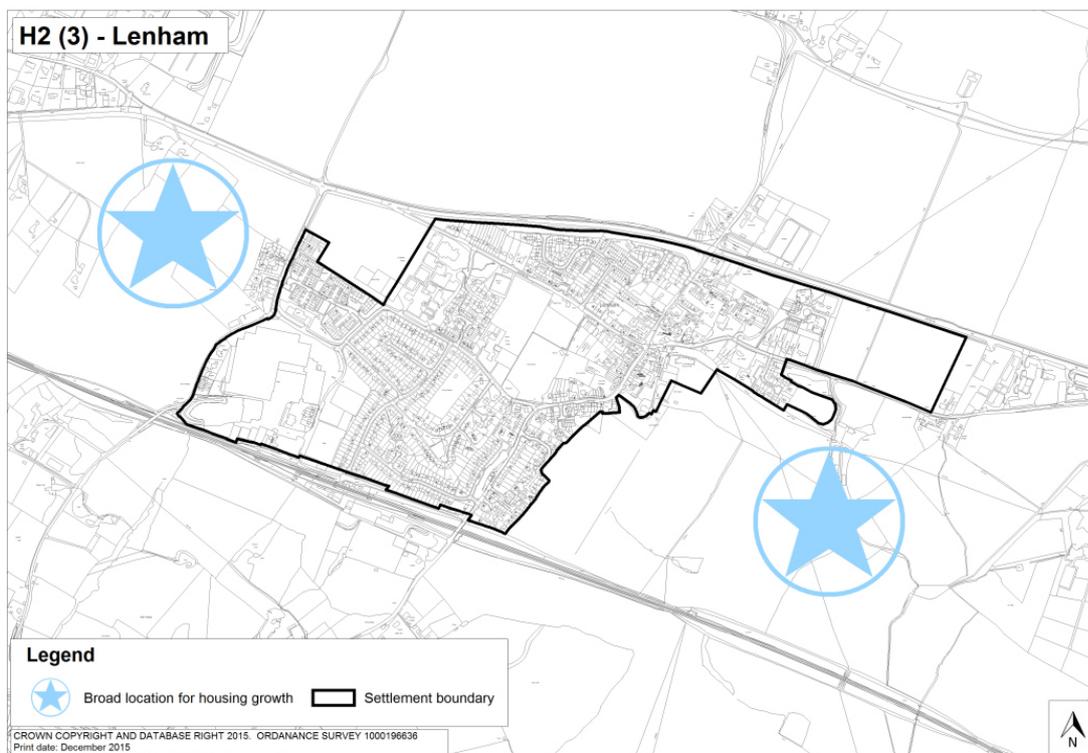
Policy H2 (3)

Lenham broad location for housing growth

The rural service centre of Lenham is identified as a broad location in accordance with policies SP8 and H2 for up to 1,500 dwellings towards the end of the local plan period (post 2026). If the council's housing land supply position requires this broad location, as illustrated on the inset plan, to come forward before the local plan is reviewed the following criteria must be met in addition to other policies of this local plan:

1. Preparation and submission of a master plan prepared in conjunction with and for approval by the council to guide development;
2. Submission of necessary ecological, arboricultural, and landscape and visual impact assessments with detailed mitigation schemes where appropriate;
3. Individual transport assessment for each development, to be submitted to and approved by the Borough Council in consultation with Kent County Council, as the highway authority, demonstrating how proposed mitigation measures address the cumulative impacts of all the sites taken together;
4. Provision of, or contributions towards infrastructure improvements that benefit public transport users, pedestrians and cyclists in and around the village;

5. Provision of, or contributions towards community infrastructure (e.g. schools, medical facilities, youth facilities), where proven necessary;
6. Provision of publicly accessible open space, including natural and semi-natural open space, as proven necessary, and/or contributions;
7. Appropriate surface water and robust flood mitigation measures will be implemented where deemed necessary, subject to a flood risk assessment, incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems;
8. A feasible solution shall be identified to provide wastewater treatment capacity so that water quality objectives set by the Environment Agency are not compromised, and the necessary wastewater treatment capacity can be delivered in parallel with the development; and
9. Development proposals must demonstrate that the necessary sewerage infrastructure is either available, or can be delivered in parallel with the development.



11 . Gypsy and Traveller site allocations

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Policy GT1 Gypsy and Traveller site allocations

11.1 The Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSA) revealed a need for 187 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches to be provided in the borough during the period October 2011 and March 2031. A further 11 plots for Travelling Showpeople will be required over the same period.

11.2 A request for potential Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople sites was included as part of the call for sites undertaken for the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. The sites that came forward were assessed. Faced with the significant scale of pitch need which the GTTSA reveals, the search was significantly broadened. Established Gypsy and Traveller sites were assessed for their capacity for additional pitches, and sites which either had no planning permission or a temporary planning permission were also reviewed to assess whether any are suitable for permanent Gypsy accommodation. Sites which had been rejected for non-Gypsy and Traveller uses in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Strategic Economic Development Land Availability Assessment, together with sites previously considered for a potential public Gypsy site, were also tested.

11.3 The sites assessed as appropriate for allocation are listed in the table below.

Policy Reference	Site address	Total no. pitches	Net pitch gain
GT1(1)	The Kays, Heath Road, Linton	2	1
GT1(2)	Greenacres (plot 5), Church Hill, Boughton Monchelsea	2	1
GT1(3)	Chart View, Chart Hill Road, Chart Sutton	4	2
GT1(4)	Land at Blossom Lodge, Stockett Lane, Coxheath	6	6
GT1(5)	Little Boarden, Boarden Lane, Headcorn	3	2
GT1(6)	Rear of Granada, Lenham Road, Headcorn	2	1
GT1(7)	The Chances, Lughorse Lane, Hunton	4	4
GT1(8)	Kilnwood Farm, Old Ham Lane, Lenham	4	2
GT1(9)	1 Oak Lodge, Tilden Lane, Marden	2	2
GT1(10)	The Paddocks, George Street, Staplehurst	4	2

Policy Reference	Site address	Total no. pitches	Net pitch gain
GT1(11)	Bluebell Farm, George Street, Staplehurst	4	2
GT1(12)	Cherry Tree Farm, West Wood Road, Stockbury	2	2
GT1(13)	Flips Hole, South Street Road, Stockbury	5	5
GT1(14)	The Ash, Yelsted Road, Stockbury	5	5
GT1(15)	Hawthorn Farm, Pye Corner, Ulcombe	5	3
GT1(16)	Neverend Lodge, Pye Corner, Ulcombe	2	1

Table 11.1 Gypsy and Traveller site allocations

Policy GT 1

Gypsy and Traveller site allocations

The sites allocated under policies GT1(1) to GT1(16) will deliver approximately 41 pitches for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation to assist in meeting needs during the plan period. Development will be permitted provided the criteria for each site set out in the detailed site allocation policies are met.

Policy GT1(1) The Kays, Heath Road, Linton

Policy GT1 (1)

The Kays, Heath Road, Linton

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 1 permanent pitch at The Kays, Heath Road, Linton, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 pitches
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off Heath Road.
3. The additional pitch is located towards the rear of the site and not forward of the existing mobile home.

Policy GT1(2) Greenacres (Plot 5), Church Hill, Boughton Monchelsea

Policy GT1 (2)

Greenacres (Plot 5), Church Hill, Boughton Monchelsea

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 1 permanent pitch at Greenacres (plot 5), Church Hill, Boughton Monchelsea, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off Church Hill.
3. The additional pitch is sited on the existing hardstanding and not beyond the site boundaries defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for
 - i. the retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedge line along the site frontage to Church Hill; and
 - ii. the establishment of a landscaped boundary to the south of the site comprising native species to provide an effective screen to the development.

Policy GT1(3) Chart View, Chart Hill Road, Chart Sutton

Policy GT1 (3)

Chart View, Chart Hill Road, Chart Sutton

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at Chart View, Chart Hill Road, Chart Sutton, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off Chart Hill Road
3. The additional pitches are sited within the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for the retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedgeline along the site frontage to Chart Hill Road and of the native hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the site.

Policy GT1(4) Land at Blossom Lodge, Stockett Lane, Coxheath

Policy GT1 (4)

Blossom Lodge, Stockett Lane, Coxheath

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 6 permanent pitches at Blossom Lodge, Stockett Lane, Coxheath, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 6 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off Stockett Lane.
3. The additional pitch is sited within the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for the retention and future maintenance of the hedgerows and tree planting along the site's northern, southern, western and eastern boundaries and the native hedgerow bordering the public footpath which crosses the site.

Policy GT1(5) Little Boarden, Boarden Lane, Headcorn

Policy GT1 (5)

Little Boarden, Boarden Lane, Headcorn

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at Little Boarden, Boarden Lane, Headcorn, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 3 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for:
 - i. The retention and future maintenance of the existing landscaping along the frontage to Boarden lane as an effective screen to the development; and
 - ii. The retention and maintenance of the existing landscaping along the south western boundary and its extension with native planting along the whole of the boundary to form an effective screen to the development.

Policy GT1(6) Rear of Granada, Lenham Road, Headcorn

Policy GT1 (6)

Rear of Granada, Lenham Road, Headcorn

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 1 permanent pitch to the rear of Granada, Lenham Road, Headcorn, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off Lenham Road.
3. The additional pitch is sited on the existing area of hardstanding in the eastern part of the site and not beyond the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for

- i. the retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedgeline along the site's southern, eastern and northern boundaries
- ii. the establishment of a native species landscaped boundary along the western edge of the site to create a more permanent boundary

Policy GT1(7) The Chances, Lughorse Lane, Hunton

Policy GT1 (7)

The Chances, Lughorse Lane, Hunton

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 4 permanent pitches at The Chances, Lughorse Lane, Hunton, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The total site capacity does not exceed 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for the retention and future maintenance of the existing landscaped boundaries of the site and the further enhancement of the northern boundary with native species planting to provide an effective screen to the development.
3. The siting of development should ensure a 15m buffer between development and Nine Acre Shaw (ancient woodland) to the south west.

Ecology

4. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.

Policy GT1(8) Kilnwood Farm, Old Ham Lane, Lenham

Policy GT1(8)

Kilnwood Farm, Old Ham Lane, Lenham

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at Kilnwood Farm, Old Ham Lane, Lenham, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design & layout

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off Old Ham Lane.
3. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for the retention and future maintenance of the trees and woodland along the northern, western and eastern boundaries of the site to secure the effective screening of the site
4. The siting of the additional mobile homes maintains a 15m buffer to the Ancient Woodland.
5. A ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and an ecological enhancement and wildlife management plan for the site is approved.

Policy GT1(9) 1 Oak Lodge, Tilden Lane, Marden

Policy GT1 (9)

1 Oak Lodge, Tilden Lane, Marden

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at 1 Oak Lodge, Tilden Lane, Marden, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. The substantial landscape buffer to the north west and west of the site is retained and maintained.

Policy GT1(10) The Paddocks, George Street, Staplehurst

Policy GT1 (10)

The Paddocks, George Street, Staplehurst

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at The Paddocks, George Street, Staplehurst, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off George Street.
3. The additional pitches are sited within the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for
 - i. the retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedgeline along the site's frontage to George Street
 - ii. the establishment of a native species landscaped boundary along the rear (northern) edge of the site to create a more permanent boundary
5. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.

Policy GT1(11) Bluebell Farm, George Street, Staplehurst

Policy GT1 (11)

Bluebell Farm, George Street, Staplehurst

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at Bluebell Farm, George Street, Staplehurst, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off George Street.
3. The additional pitches are sited within the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for:
 - i. the retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedgeline along the site's frontage to George Street;
 - ii. the establishment of a native species landscaped boundary along the rear (northern) edge of the site to create a more permanent boundary.

5. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.

Policy GT1(12) Cherry Tree Farm, West Wood Road, Stockbury

Policy GT1 (12)

Cherry Tree Farm, West Wood Road, Stockbury

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at Cherry Tree Farm, West Wood Road, Stockbury, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for:
 - i. The retention and future maintenance of the existing hedges along the eastern and western boundaries of the site which provide an effective screen to the development; and
 - ii. The establishment of a landscaped boundary to the north of the site to provide an effective screen to the development.

Policy GT1(13) Flips Hole, South Street Road, Stockbury

Policy GT1 (13)

Flips Hole, South Street, Stockbury

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 5 permanent pitches at Flips Hole, South Street, Stockbury, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The total site capacity does not exceed 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for the retention and future maintenance of the existing landscaped boundaries of the site to provide an effective screen to the development.

Policy GT1(14) The Ash, Yelsted Road, Stockbury

Policy GT1 (14)

The Ash, Yelsted Road, Stockbury

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 5 permanent pitches at The Ash, Yelsted Road, Stockbury, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The total site capacity does not exceed 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for the retention, enhancement and future maintenance of the existing landscaped boundaries of the site to provide an effective screen to the development.

Policy GT1(15) Hawthorn Farm, Pye Corner, Ulcombe

Policy GT1 (15)

Hawthorn Farm, Pye Corner, Ulcombe

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 3 permanent pitches at Hawthorn Farm, Pye Corner, Ulcombe, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The total site capacity does not exceed 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for:
 - i. The retention and future maintenance of the woodland area which lies to the south of the site and of the hedge and tree belts along the south east and north east boundaries of the site which together form an effective screen to the development; and
 - ii. The establishment of a landscaped boundary along the north western and south western edges of the site to provide an effective screen to the development.

Policy GT1(16) Neverend Lodge, Pye Corner, Ulcombe

Policy GT1 (16)

Neverend Lodge, Pye Corner, Ulcombe

In accordance with policy GT1, planning permission for 1 permanent pitch at Neverend Lodge, Pye Corner, Ulcombe, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches
2. Access to the site is via the existing access.
3. The additional pitch is sited in the south eastern corner of the site adjacent to the existing permitted mobile and not beyond the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for
 - i. The retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedge line along the site's western frontage; and
 - ii. The establishment of a native species landscaped boundary along the eastern edge of the site to create a more permanent boundary
5. A biodiversity enhancement strategy for the site is approved.

Policy RMX1 Retail and mixed use site allocations

13.1 A number of sites are allocated in this local plan for a combination of uses. The allocation at Newnham Park will deliver both a prestigious medical campus and replacement retail facilities. The council's priority location for new retail development is the Maidstone East/Sorting Office site in the town centre and this site additionally has capacity to deliver an element of housing in a highly sustainable location. Similarly the King Street car park site in conjunction with the adjacent former AMF bowling site could provide for both retail and residential development also within the town centre. In the rural area, the former Syngenta site near Yalding was previously used for agro-chemicals production and is now vacant. Securing a significant proportion of employment uses on this site alongside housing will have important sustainability benefits.

Newnham Park

13.2 Newnham Park is a 28.6 hectare site located to the north of the urban area adjacent to junction 7 of the M20 motorway. Newnham Court Shopping Village dominates the western part of the allocated site, and the Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery (KIMS) hospital is located on the northern perimeter of the site served by a new access road. Expanded hospital facilities and associated development to form a medical campus will create a specialist knowledge cluster that will attract a skilled workforce to support the council's vision for economic prosperity.

13.3 Newnham Court Shopping Village has been developed (and continues to develop) in a piecemeal fashion over time and, consequently, the visual appearance of this site is poor. The inclusion of the Shopping Village with the medical campus as part of the allocation will deliver a comprehensively planned development that will provide quality buildings in a parkland setting.

13.4 A rectangular field of approximately three hectares to the south east of the development site is identified for new woodland planting, to be developed as a parkland nature reserve and transferred into the ownership of a trust to ensure its long term maintenance. This field offers the opportunity to provide for net gains in biodiversity and ecological connectivity between the large expanses of ancient woodland.

13.5 Newnham Park is located in the countryside and lies within the setting of the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), where particular attention needs to be paid to conserving and enhancing the distinctive character of the landscape. Existing landscape features within the site boundaries should be retained where possible, and the site is subject to tree preservation orders. There are constraints to development particularly along boundaries adjacent to the Local Wildlife Site/ancient woodland where a landscape buffer of between 15m and 30m will be required, together with a minimum 15m landscape buffer to be planted each side of the stream running through the site. Most of the site is of limited ecological value, the areas of interest primarily focused at the edges of the site and along the stream.

13.6 Building heights will be restricted across the whole site to two storeys. Exceptionally there are two locations within the site where modestly higher buildings may be achievable. The first of these lies towards the north of the site,

immediately west of the stream and south of the KIMS phase 1 development where the site topography would enable a building of up to 4 storeys to be achieved. The second location is at the entrance to the site where buildings of up to three storeys would be acceptable. In all cases buildings should be designed and sited to respond to the site's undulating topography and should avoid any significant site levelling in the creation of development platforms for example by the use of terracing.

13.7 The medical campus will deliver up to 100,000m² of specialist medical facilities and associated uses, of which 25,000m² will provide for related offices and research and development. Appropriate uses on the site will include hospital or healthcare facilities, specialist rehabilitation services, medical related research and development, central laboratory facilities, and medical training. Medical facilities to the west of the existing stream will be delivered in advance of those being provided on land to the east of the stream.

13.8 The regeneration and revitalisation of Maidstone's town centre is a priority and the town centre will continue to be the primary retail and office location in the borough. Development will predominantly comprise replacement premises for the existing garden centre and for the shops already established on-site (equating to some 14,300m²) and a limited amount of additional floorspace at Newnham Court Shopping Village (up to 700m²) within the vicinity of the existing retail footprint, as shown on the policies map. Restrictions on the type of goods sold and the class A and D2 uses operating should ensure that the Village is complementary rather than in conflict with the vitality and viability of the town centre and should ensure that the character and appearance of the area is consistent with its sensitive location. The town centre functions successfully due to the mix of uses in close proximity to each other. Consequently, new additional non-retail floorspace (i.e. that which does not fall within use class A1) at Newnham Park, such as cafés, restaurants and public houses, together with banks and estate agents, are unlikely to be acceptable. Similarly, leisure uses such as cinemas and bowling alleys, and other uses that are likely to conflict with the town centre, will not be permitted. Subject to restrictions on the type of goods sold, retail premises that have a unique and recognised "out of town" format, such as 'homeware' offers, could be acceptable on the allocated site provided conflict with town centre uses would be unlikely. The height and bulk of the retail units will need to be controlled in this sensitive landscape location and for this reason conventional retail warehouse style buildings will not be acceptable. In order to assess the impact of proposals on the town centre, a retail impact assessment will be required.

13.9 Critical to the successful development of Newnham Park is the provision of appropriate transport infrastructure. Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the New Cut roundabout, with bus and emergency access from the A249 Sittingbourne Road. A bus interchange will be provided as part of the retail development, together with a car park management plan. A Travel Plan will be required to accompany a planning application. Permeability is an important aspect of the site's development, and enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to the residential areas of Grove Green, Vinters Park and Penenden Heath, and to Eclipse Business Park, will be provided.

Maidstone East and Royal Mail sorting office

13.10 Maidstone East is a long standing development site located close to the heart of Maidstone town centre. Combined with the adjacent Royal Mail Sorting Office site, which has more recently become available, there is the opportunity to achieve a substantial retail-led redevelopment here which will help to regenerate this part of the town centre. The site is in a key gateway location, prominent in views from the station, from the Medway valley to the west and, to a lesser degree, from Fairmeadow. The delivery of a successful retail-led mixed use scheme here will do much to upgrade the quality and attractiveness of this northern entrance to the town centre.

13.11 This edge of centre site is considered suitable for a combination of comparison and convenience retailing. This could include a large foodstore and/or smaller units in a variety of formats. The site already benefits from direct links via Week Street to the main shopping areas of the town centre and an important element in any scheme will be upgrading of the quality and attractiveness of this pedestrian route to help maximise the prospect of linked trips. Providing an element of comparison shopping in units fronting onto Sessions Square will particularly help to attract shoppers from the rest of the town centre to the development and vice versa.

13.12 Housing is seen as an important supporting use on this site. Residential development could be delivered in separate blocks either to the west of the site or possibly south of the railway line fronting Brenchley Gardens, or on upper floors above the retail development. Additionally, a subsidiary element of office development would be acceptable provided this does not compromise the retail requirements for the site expressed in policy RMX1(2).

13.13 The overall station environment will also be uplifted, improving overall accessibility to and within the station, increasing the prominence of the station building itself and facilitating easier transfer between buses, trains and taxis. Network Rail has specific requirements for the site relating to the provision of commuter car parking and track maintenance.

13.14 Sessions House is a prominent listed building which faces and over-looks the site. Development heights will be controlled to limit the impact on views of the building from the west and would not normally exceed 5 storeys. There is also the opportunity through the development to achieve a better frontage to the western side of Sessions House Square.

13.15 A development proposal could also encompass Cantium House as part of a comprehensive scheme if this site becomes available.

King Street car park/AMF Bowling

13.16 The King Street multi storey car park site has recently been cleared and is being used as a surface level car park for the short term. Together with the adjacent AMF Bowling site which has recently been demolished, this area offers a significant redevelopment opportunity close to the heart of the town centre to deliver a mix of ground floor retail and residential uses. This area could be brought

forward in conjunction with the wider redevelopment of The Mall proposed for the longer term. This would enable a comprehensive approach to development on both sides of King Street at this gateway location to the town centre.

Former Syngenta site, Yalding

13.17 The former Syngenta site near Yalding was previously used for agro-chemicals production and is now vacant. The site has been cleared of buildings, apart from an office building at the site entrance, and the land has been remediated to address the contamination resulting from its previous use. Securing a significant proportion of employment uses on this site alongside housing will have important sustainability benefits. Comprehensive measures to address flood risk will be required in association with development.

Policy reference	Site address	Approximate retail floorspace m ²	Approximate employment floorspace m ²	Approximate no. housing units
RMX1(1)	Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone	15,000m ² (12)	100,000m ² (medical and associated uses)	N/A
RMX1(2)	Maidstone East and former Royal Mail sorting office, Sandling Road, Maidstone	10,000m ²	N/A	210
RMX1(3)	King Street car park and former AMF Bowling site, Maidstone	1,400m ²	N/A	53
RMX1(4)	Former Syngenta works, Hampstead Lane, Yalding	N/A	8,600m ² (B1/B2)	200

Table 13.1 Retail and mixed use site allocations

12 Comprising replacement for existing built floorspace and for existing display areas that have open A1 consent plus 700 m2

Policy RMX 1

Retail and mixed use allocations

The sites allocated under policies RMX1(1) to RMX1(4) will deliver a mix of retail, employment and housing development to meet the borough's needs. The sites provide for approximately 463 dwellings (accounted for in the total housing land supply under policy H1), 26,400m² retail floorspace and 108,600m² employment floorspace. Development will be permitted provided the criteria for each site set out in the detailed site allocation policies are met.

Policy RMX1(1) Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone

Policy RMX1 (1)

Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone

Newnham Park, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for a medical campus of up to 100,000m², a replacement retail centre of up to 15,000m² and a nature reserve. A development brief, to be approved by the council, will detail the way in which medical facilities, retail redevelopment and the nature reserve, together with integral landscaping and supporting infrastructure, are delivered in an integrated and coordinated manner. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Phased provision of a maximum of 100,000m² of specialist medical facilities set within an enhanced landscape structure of which 25,000m² will provide for associated offices and research and development.
2. Provision of a replacement garden centre and replacement retail premises of up to 14,300m² gross retail floorspace and additional provision of retail floorspace not exceeding 700m² gross retail floorspace which is not to be used for the sale of clothing, footwear, accessories, jewellery and watches. All replacement and additional retail floorspace shall be confined to the vicinity of the existing footprint of the current retail area as shown on the policies map. New additional non-A1 floorspace will not be appropriate. The retail development should include the provision of a bus interchange and a car park management plan.
3. Creation of a parkland nature reserve of approximately 3 hectares on land to the south east of the site, as shown on the policies map, and through a legal agreement transferred to a Trust.
4. Construction of buildings of high quality design in a sustainable form that reflect the site's prime location as a gateway to Maidstone.
5. Mitigation of the impact of development on the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting through:
 - i. The provision of new structural and internal landscaping to be phased in advance of development;
 - ii. The retention and enhancement of existing planting. Where the loss of selected existing planting is unavoidable, appropriate compensatory planting must be provided;
 - iii. The use of the topography in site layout plans to exclude development on the higher, more visually prominent parts of the site;
 - iv. The restriction of building heights across the whole site to a maximum of two storeys. Exceptionally a building of up to 4 storeys could be accommodated on the land adjacent to the existing KIMS (phase 1) development to the immediate west of the stream and

buildings of up to 3 storeys could be accommodated at the entrance to the site;

- v. The use of low level lighting; and
 - vi. The use of green roofs where practical.
6. Medical facilities on land to the west of the existing stream will be delivered in advance of medical facilities on land to the east of the stream.
 7. The additional retail floorspace must be of an out of town format that is complementary to town centre uses and, by means of a sequential sites assessment, demonstrably require an out of town location. Large scale retail warehousing style buildings will not be acceptable in this sensitive landscape location.
 8. Submission of a retail impact assessment which clearly demonstrates that the retail development has no significant adverse impact on town and local centres.
 9. Provision of a landscape buffer of between 15m and 30m in width along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site in order to protect Ancient Woodland, with tracts of planting extending into the body of the development.
 10. Provision of a landscaped buffer of a minimum 15m in width on both sides of the existing stream running north-south through the site (minimum 30m width in total), in order to enhance the amenity and biodiversity of this water body.
 11. Submission of a full landscape assessment to be approved by the council.

Access

12. Vehicular access to the site from the New Cut roundabout, with bus and emergency access from the A249 Sittingbourne Road.
13. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to the residential areas of Grove Green, Vinters Park and Penenden Heath, and to Eclipse Business Park.
14. Submission of a Travel Plan, to include a car park travel plan, to be approved by the Borough Council.

Archaeology

15. Provision of a watching archaeological brief in order to protect any heritage assets found on-site.

Ecology

16. Submission of an ecology survey and detailed mitigation measures.

Highways and transportation

17. Submission of a full Transport Assessment to identify off-site highway improvements to serve the development, to be secured in a phased manner by the provision of infrastructure or through contributions by means of a signed legal agreement prior to the commencement of development.
18. Capacity improvements and signalisation of Bearsted roundabout and capacity improvements at New Cut roundabout. Provision of a new signal pedestrian crossing and the provision of a combined foot/cycle way between these two roundabouts.
19. Traffic signalisation of the M20 J7 roundabout, widening of the coast bound off-slip and creation of a new signal controlled pedestrian route through the junction.
20. Capacity improvements at M2 J5 (located in Swale Borough).
21. Upgrading of Bearsted Road to a dual carriageway between Bearsted roundabout and New Cut roundabout.
22. Increased frequency of 333 / 334 route to provide a bus service with 15 minute intervals between the site and the town centre, potentially to include the provision of bus priority measures on New Cut Road to include traffic signals at the junction with the A20 Ashford Road.
23. Improved bus links to the site from the residential areas of Grove Green and Penenden Heath.

Policy RMX1(2) Maidstone East and former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone

Policy RMX1 (2)

Maidstone East and former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone

Maidstone East and former Royal Mail Sorting Office, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development for up to 10,000m² comparison and convenience retail and approximately 210 dwellings. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The provision of up to 10,000m² of comparison and convenience shopping floorspace and some 210 dwellings.

2. The provision of a more prominent station entrance fronting onto Sessions House Square/Week Street.
3. Development is designed to respond to the listed Sessions House and its setting. Development should provide an 'active' frontage comprising individual retail units facing the west side of Sessions House Square and provide direct pedestrian entrance into the development via this frontage.
4. Development is designed to achieve a visual and physical connection between Sessions Square and Brenchley Gardens.
5. The overall height and bulk of development is controlled to limit the overall incursion in views of Sessions House from the west.
6. Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site is undertaken and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured.
7. The provision of commuter car parking to serve Maidstone East railway station.
8. Maintenance access for Network Rail to the western end of the railway tracks is secured.
9. The incorporation of landscaped elements within the overall scheme design including the retention of existing landscape features where possible. Where the loss of existing landscape features is unavoidable, appropriate compensatory planting must be provided.

Access

10. The scheme enables the improved, safe and convenient interchange between buses, trains and taxis, including through the provision of improved pick up/drop off facilities.
11. Full disabled access to the station and platforms is secured.
12. Highway access is taken from Sandling Road. An additional, in-bound only access to the Sorting Office part of the site could be taken from Fairmeadow.

Ecology

13. Development will be subject to the results and recommendations of a Phase 1 ecological survey.

Flooding and water quality

14. The submission of a detailed surface water drainage strategy for the development based around sustainable drainage principles .

Noise

15. The submission of a transportation noise assessment and the delivery of resultant noise attenuation measures in particular for residential development sited close to the railway line and/or Fairmeadow.

Air Quality

16. The submission of an air quality assessment and emissions reduction plan to be agreed with the council.

Land contamination

17. The submission of a land contamination assessment and the delivery of resultant mitigation measures.

Public realm

18. Improvements at Sessions House Square and Week Street to provide an enhanced public open space and public realm.
19. Contributions to a comprehensive public realm enhancement scheme for the stretch of Week Street linking the site to the junction with Fremlin Walk, and from the site to Brenchley Gardens, to significantly upgrade the quality and attractiveness for pedestrians.

Policy RMX1(3) King Street car park and former AMF Bowling site, Maidstone

Policy RMX1 (3)

King Street car park and former AMF Bowling site, King Street, Maidstone

King Street car park and former AMF Bowling site, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for up to 1,400m² comparison and/or convenience retail floorspace and approximately 53 dwellings. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The provision of up to 1,400m² of comparison and/or convenience shopping floorspace at ground floor level and up to 53 dwellings.
2. Development is designed to respond to the character and qualities of the conservation area to the north.

Noise

3. The submission of a noise assessment and the delivery of resultant noise attenuation measures.

Air quality

4. The submission of an air quality assessment and emissions reduction plan to be agreed with the council.

Land contamination

5. The submission of a land contamination assessment and the delivery of resultant mitigation measures.

Public Realm

6. Footpath and public realm improvements on King Street between the junction of Wyke Manor Road and the site.

Policy RMX1(4) Former Syngenta works, Hampstead Lane, Yalding

Policy RMX1 (4)

Former Syngenta works, Hampstead Lane, Yalding

Former Syngenta Works, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of approximately 8,600m² of employment floorspace and approximately 200 dwellings. In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Provision of at least 8,600m² of employment floorspace located in the western part of the site closest to the railway line and the retention or re-provision of the office building fronting Hampstead Lane.
2. The height of new employment buildings should not exceed that of the existing office building.
3. Subject to the flood risk assessment, residential development of some 200 dwellings to be located on the eastern portion of the site.
4. Within the site boundary, an area of land to the south (13ha) is to be retained as a nature conservation area.

5. The significant landscape belt which lies to the south of the development area is retained, maintained and enhanced to provide a clear boundary to the developed parts of the site, to act as a buffer to the Local Wildlife Site and to screen views of development from the attractive countryside to the south and from the properties in Parsonage Farm Road.
6. The retention, maintenance and enhancement of the landscape belts along the western boundary of the site, on both sides of the railway line, and along the eastern boundary adjacent to the canalised section of the river, to screen and soften the appearance of the development.

Access

7. Access will be taken from Hampstead Lane only.

Ecology

8. The site lies adjacent to the Hale Ponds and Pastures Local Wildlife Site. A survey which assesses the site's ecological potential must be submitted. The development proposals must provide for the delivery of appropriate habitat creation and enhancement measures in response to the survey findings including the creation and enhancement of wildlife corridors, and, if required, mitigation measures.

Flooding and water quality

9. The submission of a comprehensive flood risk assessment which has been undertaken to a methodology agreed with the Environment Agency. The FRA must demonstrate measures to address egress and access and measures to reduce local flood risk. Contributions may be requested for measures to reduce flood risk to dwellings in Yalding.
10. Measures are secured to ensure adequate site drainage, including through the implementation of sustainable drainage measures.

Land contamination

11. Demonstration that contamination of the site resulting from its previous use has been remediated to the satisfaction of the local authority and the Environment Agency.

Open space

12. Provision of 4.4ha of natural/semi-natural open space in accordance with policy OS1(14) together with additional on/off-site provision and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as required in accordance with policy DM22. Open space should be sited to maximise accessibility to new and existing residents.

Highways and transportation

13. Safety improvements to the level crossing at Hampstead Lane, Yalding.
14. Provision of a right turn lane on Hampstead Lane at its junction with Maidstone Road.
15. Submission of a comprehensive transport assessment and travel plan to set out how opportunities for sustainable transport will be maximised including, if necessary, delivery of improvements to public transport and pedestrian connections to Yalding.
16. Public rights of way improvements, including providing an alternative to the 'at grade' pedestrian footpath crossing of the railway.

Policy EMP1 Employment site allocations

15.1 The Strategic Employment Land Availability Assessment assessed the potential of a range of sites to accommodate new office, industrial and warehousing/storage development. Sites assessed as suitable, available and achievable and appropriate for allocation in the local plan are listed in the table below.

15.2 There is a unique opportunity in the borough to provide a prestigious business park at Junction 8 of the M20 that is well connected to the motorway network and that can provide for a range of job needs up to 2031. This will help to diversify the range of sites available to new and expanding businesses in the borough to help accommodate future demand. Land at Woodcut Farm is allocated to provide for a mix of business uses comprising industrial, offices and distribution/logistics. High quality office development is sought, such as that required by company headquarters for example, providing complementary provision to the town centre.

15.3 The site, which is some 25.8ha in total, is situated to the west of the A20/M20 junction (junction 8). It comprises the wedge of land lying between the M20 to the north east and the A20 to the south west. The site is agricultural land, divided into fields by hedgerows which predominately run in a north-south direction. The site is also bisected north-south by a watercourse which eventually runs into the River Len to the south of the A20. The land is undulating, the ground rising up from either side of the watercourse. To the south the site borders a number of dispersed properties which front onto the A20 (Ashford Road). To the south east the site is bounded by Musket Lane. To the north west lies Crismill Lane and a substantial tree belt which fronts onto this lane. The site boundary then follows the hedge belt which adjoins Crismill Lane approximately half way down its length and links to the complex of buildings at Woodcut Farm and turns south to the A20, running along the eastern boundary of the fields which front onto the Woodcut Farm access.

15.4 The site is located in the countryside and lies within the setting of the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site falls within the White Heath Farmlands landscape character sub-area ⁽¹³⁾ where landscape condition is poor overall, partially because of the fragmentation caused by the existing highway infrastructure. Landscape sensitivity for the character sub-area is recorded as moderate, the landscape providing the setting of the Kent Downs (AONB).

15.5 The site itself has been specifically assessed in the Maidstone Landscape Capacity Study (2015). This finds that the site has a high degree of sensitivity in landscape terms and an accordingly low capacity to accommodate new employment-related development.

15.6 This being the case, development proposals must be planned with very careful attention to the site's visual and physical relationship with the AONB, responding to the site's topography and natural landscape features in terms of the scale, design, siting, use, orientation, levels and lighting of buildings and associated development, alongside infrastructure and landscaping requirements.

13 Landscape Character Area Assessment 2012 - ref 49-2

15.7 To achieve a high quality scheme in this prime location, a campus style development will be delivered in a parkland setting. This will be created through the retention and enhancement of existing tree and hedge belts, including those subject to Tree Preservation Orders no. 19 of 2007 and no. 17 of 2007, and substantial additional structural landscaping within the site in the form of shaws and woodland blocks. This should include the retention and reinforcement of the streamside vegetation. Landscape buffers will also be established along the principal site boundaries, including to help provide a setting to the Grade II listed Woodcut Farmhouse and to help secure the residential amenity of nearby residential properties.

15.8 Buildings will cover no more than 40% of the site. This figure excludes the western most field, of some 9ha in area, which is reserved as an undeveloped area to include an enhanced landscape buffer to establish a clear and strong boundary between the development and the wider countryside to the east of Bearsted. This area should be managed and structured as open woodland with associated biodiversity benefits and the potential to establish woodland pasture in the future.

15.9 The flatter area of the site, to the east of the stream, is better able to accommodate larger footprint buildings up to 10,000sqm with heights restricted to a maximum of 12m. To the west of the stream the land rises and is suited to smaller footprint buildings up to 8m in height. The siting, scale and detailed design of development within this area must also have particular regard to the setting of Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II listed).

15.10 There are archaeological remains in the immediate vicinity of the site, including an Anglo-Saxon burial site. Measures appropriate to the actual archaeological value of the site, revealed by further survey as needed, will be addressed. There are no statutory or non-statutory sites of nature conservation importance within the site and the County Ecologist advises that the potential for impacts on designated sites is limited. As is normal practice for a proposal of this nature, an ecological scoping study will be required to establish the presence of, and potential for, any impacts on protected species.

15.11 Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the A20 Ashford Road and a Transport Assessment will identify the scope of improvements required to the junctions (and associated approaches) at:

- the M20 Junction 8 (including the west-bound on-slip and merge);
- the A20 Ashford Rd/M20 link road roundabout;
- the A20 Ashford Rd/Penford Hill junction;
- the A20 Ashford Rd/Eyehorne Street/Great Danes Hotel access; and
- the Willington Street/A20 Ashford Rd junction.

15.12 The site is located on a bus route (A20) but without significant additional dedicated measures it is highly likely that workers and visitors travelling to and from the site will be highly reliant on their private cars. A Travel Plan will be required to demonstrate how development will deliver significantly improved access by sustainable modes, in particular by public transport but this could also include cycling, walking and car share initiatives

Policy reference	Site address	Approximate Amount of employment floorspace m ²
EMP1(1)	Mote Road, Maidstone	Up to 8,000m ² (B1)
EMP1(2)	West of Barradale Farm, Maidstone Road, Headcorn	5,500m ² (B1, B2, B8)
EMP1(3)	South of Claygate, Pattenden Lane, Marden	6,800m ² (B1, B2, B8)
EMP1(4)	West of Wheelbarrow Industrial Estate, Pattenden Lane, Marden	14,500m ² (B1, B2, B8)
EMP1(5)	Woodcut Farm, Bearsted Road, Bearsted	Up to 49,000m ² (B1c; B2; B1a; B8)

Table 15.1 Employment site allocations

Policy EMP 1

Employment allocations

The sites allocated under policies EMP1(1) to EMP1(5) will deliver approximately 83,800m² employment floorspace to help meet employment needs during the plan period. Development will be permitted provided the criteria for each site set out in the detailed site allocation policies are met.

Policy EMP1(1) Mote Road, Maidstone

Policy EMP1 (1)

Mote Road, Maidstone

Mote Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for redevelopment of up to 8,000 m² office floorspace (B1 use class). Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. Where possible development should be sited to create frontage blocks to Mote Road/Wat Tyler Way and to Romney Place.
2. The development preserves the setting of the listed properties in Romney Place.
3. Development does not exceed 9 storeys in height.

Noise

4. The submission of a noise assessment and the delivery of appropriate noise attenuation measures as part of the development.

Air quality

5. The submission of an air quality assessment and appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development.

Land contamination

6. The submission of a land contamination report and appropriate mitigation measures to be implemented prior to development commencing.

Policy EMP1(2) West of Barradale Farm, Maidstone Road, Headcorn

Policy EMP1 (2)

West of Barradale Farm, Maidstone Road, Headcorn

West of Barradale Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of 5,500m² employment floorspace (B1, B2, B8 use classes). Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The proposals incorporate structural landscaping along the north-western boundary of the existing industrial complex to help screen both the existing and proposed development in views from the north.
2. The proposals incorporate substantial, enhanced landscape buffers along the western and south western boundaries of the site to reinforce the separation of the site from development to the south.

Access

3. Access will be taken from the A274.

Ecology

4. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.
5. Landscaping belts should link to one another and to water bodies within the site to provide habitat connectivity.

Flooding and water quality

6. Surface water run off is managed using sustainable drainage techniques.

Highways and transportation

7. Provision of a footway along the A274 from the access to the site to connect with the existing footway to the south, and provide pedestrian access to the existing bus stops.

Policy EMP1(3) South of Claygate, Pattenden Lane, Marden

Policy EMP1 (3)

South of Claygate, Pattenden Lane, Marden

South of Claygate, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development 6,800m² employment floorspace (B1, B2, B8 use classes). Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The proposals incorporate a landscaping scheme which enhances the planting along the eastern and southern boundaries to soften the appearance of the development in views from the east and to provide a landscape buffer to the railway line to the south.

Access

2. Access will be taken from Pattenden Lane only.

Ecology

3. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.

Flooding and water quality

4. Surface water run off is managed using sustainable drainage techniques.

Policy EMP1(4) West of Wheelbarrow Industrial Estate, Pattenden Lane, Marden

Policy EMP1 (4)

West of Wheelbarrow Industrial Estate, Pattenden Lane, Marden

West of Wheelbarrow Industrial Estate, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development of 14,500m² employment floorspace (B1, B2, B8 use classes). Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design and layout

1. The northern and western boundaries of the site are defined with additional planting to strengthen the boundary and to soften the appearance of the development in short range views from the west and from the north.
2. Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site is undertaken and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured.
3. The siting and height of buildings and landscaping safeguards the flight path of the air ambulance.

Access

4. Access will be taken from Pattenden Lane.

Ecology

5. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.

Flooding and water quality

6. Surface water run off is managed using sustainable drainage techniques.

Policy EMP1(5) Woodcut Farm, Ashford Road, Bearsted

Policy EMP1(5)

Woodcut Farm, Ashford Road, Bearsted

Woodcut Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development for up to 49,000m² mixed employment floorspace (B1c; B2; B1a; B8). In the event of a demand arising, an element of hi-tech and/or research and development (B1(b)) would be appropriate as part of the overall mix of B class uses on the site. The employment, landscaping and infrastructure elements will be delivered in an integrated and co-ordinated manner that respect the site's visual and physical relationship with the Kent Downs AONB. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.

Design & layout

1. The proposals create a spacious parkland setting for development through the addition of substantial internal landscaping which will help to break up the visual appearance of the development in particular in views from the AONB; buildings will cover not more than 40% of the developed site area.
2. The development proposals will respect the topography of the site by minimising the need for site excavation.
3. Landscape buffers of at least 15m in width are established along the site's boundaries to M20 and to Musket Lane which will also to help secure the setting to Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II listed) and the amenity of residential properties at Chestnuts and White Heath. Development will have a landscaped frontage to A20.
4. An area of 9ha to the north and north west of Woodcut Farm is secured as an undeveloped landscape area in the form of open woodland including the addition of a landscape buffer of at least 30m along the eastern boundary. Future management of this area will be secured by means of legal agreement and maintained in perpetuity.
5. Larger footprint buildings are accommodated in the field to the east of the stream up to a maximum unit size of 10,000sqm with building ridge heights not to exceed 12m. Units should be orientated end-on to predominant views to and from the AONB.
6. Development on the field to the west of the stream comprises smaller units with graded building heights that take account of the site's topography with building ridge heights not to exceed 8m. The siting, scale and detailed design of development must have regard to Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II) and its setting.

Landscape and ecology

7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance. The assessment will specifically address the impact of development on views to and from the Kent Downs AONB escarpment. This will include environmental enhancements of the wider landscape beyond the allocation boundaries through financial contributions using the mechanism of a S106 agreement.
8. The development proposals are designed to take account of the results of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be necessary, together with any necessary mitigation and significant enhancement measures.

Archaeology

9. The proposals are designed to take account of the archaeological interest on the site as revealed through appropriate survey.

Access

10. Vehicular access to the site will be from A20 Ashford Road.

Highways and transportation

11. Improvements to capacity at the A20/Willington Street junction.
12. Package of measures to provide bus stops, pedestrian refuges and improvements to the footway on the northern side of the A20 Ashford Road.
13. Development will contribute, as proven necessary through a Transport Assessment, to improvements at the following junctions:
 - i. the M20 Junction 8 (including the west-bound on-slip and merge);
 - ii. the A20 Ashford Rd/M20 link road roundabout;
 - iii. the A20 Ashford Rd/Penford Hill junction;
 - iv. the A20 Ashford Rd/Eyhorne Street/Great Danes Hotel access; and
 - v. the Willington Street/A20 Ashford Rd junction.
14. Development will deliver a significant package of sustainable transport measures to secure access to the site by a range of sustainable modes, including the provision of a subsidised bus route, and must be supported by the implementation of a Travel Plan.

Policy DM1 Principles of good design

17.1 Good design is the fundamental principle underpinning good planning. It has a very important impact upon the quality of the environment and the way in which places function. The National Planning Policy Framework places great emphasis upon raising the quality of the built, natural and historic environment and the quality of life in all areas. It attaches great importance to the securing of high quality design and seeks to ensure that all development contributes to making places better for all.

17.2 The council aspires to achieve high quality design throughout the borough, and policy DM1 seeks to manifest this aim and will be used to assess all development requiring planning permission. In order to achieve high quality design, the council expects that proposals will positively respond to and, where appropriate, enhance the character of their surroundings. It is important that development contributes to its context.

17.3 Key aspects of built development will be the scale, height, materials, detailing, mass, bulk and site coverage. These features should relate well, and respond positively, to the context in which they are seen. Good design should also address the functioning of an area, including accessibility to all, linkages to local services, and issues of crime. New development should integrate well into the built, natural and historic environment and should address the connections between people and places, including vehicle and pedestrian movement.

17.4 In establishing the use and designing the layout and site coverage of development, landscape shall be integral to the overall design of a scheme and needs to be considered at the beginning of the design process. In appropriate locations, local distinctiveness should be reinforced and natural features worthy of retention be sensitively incorporated. It is also important that all new development protects and enhances any on-site biodiversity and geodiversity features, or provides sufficient mitigation measures, and in areas at risk of flooding, inappropriate development should be avoided.

17.5 In assessing the appropriateness of design, the council will have regard to adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments and the Kent Design Guide, which provide specific information about local character and distinctiveness and give guidance on design principles. Regard will also be given to the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.

17.6 Proposals which fail to take opportunities to secure high quality design will be resisted.

Policy DM 1

Principles of good design

Proposals which would create high quality design and meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- i. Create designs and layouts that are accessible to all, and maintain and maximise opportunities for permeability and linkages to the surrounding area and local services;
- ii. Respond positively to and where possible enhance, the local, natural or historic character of the area. Particular regard will be paid to scale, height, materials, detailing, mass, bulk, articulation and site coverage - incorporating a high quality, modern design approach and making use of vernacular materials where appropriate;
- iii. Create high quality public realm and, where opportunities permit, provide improvements, particularly in town centre locations;
- iv. Respect the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses and provide adequate residential amenities for future occupiers of the development by ensuring that development does not result in excessive noise, vibration, odour, air pollution, activity or vehicular movements, overlooking or visual intrusion, and that the built form would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy or light enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby properties;
- v. Respect the topography and respond to the location of the site and sensitively incorporate natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds worthy of retention within the site. Particular attention should be paid in rural and semi-rural areas where the retention and addition of native vegetation along the site frontage should be used as positive tool to help assimilate development in a manner which reflects and respects the local and natural character of the area;
- vi. Provide a high quality design which responds to areas of heritage, townscape and landscape value or uplifts an area of poor environmental quality;
- vii. Orientate development, where possible, in such a way as to maximise the opportunity for sustainable elements to be incorporated and to reduce the reliance upon less sustainable energy sources;
- viii. Protect and enhance any on-site biodiversity and geodiversity features where appropriate, or provide sufficient mitigation measures;
- ix. Safely accommodate the vehicular and pedestrian movement generated by the proposal on the local highway network and through the site access;
- x. Create a safe and secure environment and incorporate adequate security measures and features to deter crime, fear of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour;
- xi. Avoid inappropriate new development within areas at risk from flooding, or mitigate any potential impacts of new development within such areas whereby mitigation measures are integral to the design of buildings;
- xii. Incorporate measures for the adequate storage of waste, including provision for increasing recyclable waste;
- xiii. Provide adequate vehicular and cycle parking to meet adopted council standards; and
- xiv. Be flexible towards future adaptation in response to changing life needs.

Account should be taken of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments, the Maidstone Borough Landscape Character Guidelines SPD, the Kent Design Guide and the Kent Downs Area of Natural Beauty Management Plan.

Policy DM2 Sustainable design

17.7 Recognition of climate change and its contributing factors will be an important consideration in the future of development across the borough. New developments should wherever possible incorporate mitigating measures, while still achieving the high quality designs that make the borough a desirable place to live and work.

17.8 The Climate Change Act 2008 sets two legally binding targets, a 34% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, leading to an 80% emissions cut by 2050, both of which are set against a 1990 baseline. Maidstone Borough Council adopted the Kent Environment Strategy in 2011, which itself seeks a 60% cut in greenhouse gas emissions (measured as CO2 equivalent) against 1990 levels by 2030.

17.9 In terms of water efficiency, all new homes already have to meet the mandatory national standard set out in the Building Regulations (of 125 litres/person/day). The NPPG states that, in relation to new housing development, local planning authorities have the option to set additional technical requirements exceeding the minimum standards required by Building Regulations in respect of water. Maidstone is situated within an area of serious water stress⁽¹⁴⁾. Development should therefore plan positively to minimise its impact on the already serious water stress in the region, and on the natural water cycle resources and promote water efficiency. For this reason, Policy DM2 seeks the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day in relation to new dwellings. The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is the most appropriate/recognisable assessment methods by which to judge and require increased sustainability standards in new non-residential developments. In relation to water, non-residential developments will be expected to reach a minimum of the Very Good BREEAM standard.

17.10 In terms of energy efficiency and carbon emissions for residential development, this will be achieved through a strengthening of the energy performance requirements in Part L of the Building Regulations (incorporating carbon compliance, energy efficient fabric and services). For non-residential uses, proposals should achieve a minimum of the Very Good BREEAM standard.

14 Water stressed areas - final classification, Environment Agency, July 2013

Policy DM 2

Sustainable design

1. New dwellings, where technically feasible and viable, should meet the Building Regulations optional requirement for tighter water efficiency.
2. Non-residential development, where technically feasible and viable, should meet BREEAM Very Good including addressing maximum water efficiencies under the mandatory water credits.
3. In order to maximise carbon efficiency, all homes will be required to meet the strengthened on-site energy performance standards of Building Regulations.
4. Proposals for new non-domestic buildings should achieve BREEAM Very Good for energy credits where technically and financially viable.
5. Should BREEAM be replaced, or any national standards increased, then this requirement will also be replaced by any tighter standard appropriate to the borough.

Policy DM3 Historic and natural environment

17.11 Maidstone's historic and natural environment is a fundamental part of the borough's economic wealth and social well being, the benefits of which are far-reaching. It is essential to ensure these historic and natural asset bases remain robust and viable.

Historic environment

17.12 Maidstone has been shaped and influenced by a long past history, the legacy of which is a strong and rich cultural heritage. The Archbishop's Palace and Leeds Castle are two high profile heritage assets but the borough also abounds with many other historical buildings. These heritage assets contribute to the strong sense of place which exists across the borough. However, this rich historical resource is very vulnerable to damage and loss. The local plan allows some flexibility for the re-use and conversion of historic assets but care must be taken to ensure this does not lead to unacceptable adverse impacts. Small scale changes over time, especially the standardisation of building materials and practices can erode the special character and appearance of places, and the setting of historic features such as listed buildings and scheduled monuments, which can be crucial in maintaining historic integrity.

17.13 The local plan will ensure the qualities and local distinctiveness of the historic environment are recognised and protected. This will be achieved in part through the protection of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas from inappropriate development. The local plan will seek to encourage a greater understanding of designated and non-designated heritage

assets and their values through partnership working with communities, developers and asset managers. The council will encourage mutually beneficial and sustainable proposals to conserve and enhance heritage assets for future generations whilst acknowledging the social and economic challenges faced by land owners and managers.

17.14 All development proposals will be expected to be accompanied by an initial survey to establish what on-site assets there are. Sufficient information to assess the direct and indirect effects of development on past or present heritage assets together with any proposed prevention, mitigation or compensation measures will also be required.

Green and blue infrastructure

17.15 Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) is a network of natural components of open space and water which lie within and between the borough's towns and villages and which provide multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. Maidstone borough contains a wide range of green open spaces together with a number of rivers and streams. Key assets include the Kent Downs AONB, the River Medway and its tributaries, Mote Park, and the distinctive green corridors which help shape Maidstone town. Amongst other things, these green spaces and blue corridors provide reservoirs for biodiversity and recreation; act as corridors for the movement of animals, plants and people; and provide opportunities for the protection and enhancement of the local landscape and historic assets; water management, green education, and the mitigation of climate change impacts.

17.16 Green and blue infrastructure has the capacity to deliver a wide range of positive outcomes in line with the objectives of the sustainable community strategy including:

- Helping to attract and retain higher paying employers;
- Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, water and air quality;
- Promoting distinctive landscapes and townscapes;
- Helping in the creation of an efficient, sustainable, integrated transport system;
- Helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change; and
- Creating healthier communities.

17.17 The green and blue infrastructure is considered to be of such importance that a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) has been produced. The strategy will look to encourage the creation of links and stepping stones to help in the movement of people and wildlife across the built up urban area. In the rural areas the focus will be more on land management, and creating and enhancing landscape and habitat networks. The strategy will also seek to identify those areas of the borough where deficiencies exist and look to provide guidance on how these can be overcome. The council will promote a partnership approach with developers, land owners and neighbouring local authorities, including Kent County Council, to help achieve the objectives of the Strategy.

17.18 The growth proposed in the borough provides a chance to increase the value of accessible green spaces and blue corridors. New development will be expected to contribute towards the goal of a linked network which extends across the borough and beyond. Development schemes will be expected to contribute towards improved connectivity through the provision of footpaths and cycle routes that are part of a strategic network; space for nature that contributes to the larger landscape-scale pattern of connected habitat; and the provision of imaginative recreational facilities that give educational and physical health benefits to local people. The council will liaise with neighbouring local authorities, including Kent County Council, to ensure potential linkages at all scales and across administrative boundaries are recognised in the development of specific proposals. Developers will also be expected to provide details of how the green and blue infrastructure elements of their proposal, including publicly accessible open spaces, sites managed for their biodiversity, geodiversity or heritage interest, will be managed and maintained over the long-term.

17.19 Publicly accessible open space, recreation and tourism are essential elements of sustainable communities, contributing towards health, quality of life, sense of place and overall well-being. Spaces and facilities form a part of the overall green and blue infrastructure network and within built up areas can provide local linkage between the town centre, urban neighbourhoods and the surrounding countryside. The needs and deficiencies in publicly accessible open spaces and facilities, and the open space standards, are identified in the local plan and details on implementation will be included in the green and blue infrastructure strategy.

Climate change

17.20 Climate change is resulting in ever more variable weather patterns, the outcomes of which include flooding and drought. Natural systems are able to adapt to these consequences. However, adverse changes to the natural systems can result in increases in damage to property and compensation costs, and a decrease in water resource resilience. A green and blue infrastructure approach represents a means to positively tackle these issues. It can offer alternative flood mitigation strategies, such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and the creation of water meadows. It is able to provide the means to capture and store rainwater, as well as help improve water quality. Development proposals will be expected to take full account of climate change and mitigate for any anticipated climate change impacts.

Water Framework Directive

17.21 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) looks to improve the local water environment for people and wildlife, and promote the sustainable use of water. The Directive applies to all surface water bodies, including lakes, streams and rivers as well as groundwater. The overall aim of the WFD is for all water bodies to reach good status by 2027. In Maidstone this would mean improving their physical state, preventing deterioration in water quality and ecology, and improving the ecological status of water bodies. The WDF introduced the concept of integrated river basin management and such plans should influence

development plans. Maidstone lies within the Thames River Basin District and in December 2009 the Environment Agency published the Thames River Basin Management Plan (RBMP).

17.22 The council will continue to work in partnership with the Environment Agency and other bodies to help achieve the goals of the WFD and actions of the Thames RBMP. The council will also actively encourage development proposals to include measures to mitigate against the deterioration of water bodies and adverse impacts on Groundwater Source Protection Zones, and/or incorporate measures to improve the ecological status of water bodies as appropriate.

Biodiversity

17.23 Maidstone is a biodiverse district endowed with a variety of habitats including heathlands and chalk downlands, orchards and ancient woodland, river valleys and ponds, wildflower meadows and parklands. All of these are underpinned by an equally diverse array of soils. Soils are a fundamental element of the ecosystems found within these habitats but one which is highly susceptible to damage. The council will work in partnership with land owners, land managers and developers to encourage better soil handling practices to avoid the degradation of soil and ensure soil functions are maintained as appropriate.

17.24 The broad range of habitats forms an extensive network across rural and urban areas, including previously developed land. Many sites are important for their nature conservation and geological interest, and are designated for their protection. In Maidstone, these include a site of international importance, namely the North Downs Woodlands Special Area of Conservation (SAC), nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), locally important Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR). Current designated nature conservation sites will be noted on the policies map.

17.25 As a result of increasing development pressures in the past many of the borough's biodiversity assets have been lost, damaged or fragmented. In response to this decline the council has acted in partnership with other bodies to undertake surveys of the borough's habitats and ancient woodlands. It has also adopted the Maidstone Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), a key element of which is the establishment of a connecting network of sites and corridors on a landscape scale. By reconnecting fragments of habitats to form a mosaic, the natural environment is provided with the means to become self-sustaining as well as being better able to respond to and adapt to climate change.

17.26 Development proposals will be expected to be supported by an initial survey of on-site assets. Surveys must be undertaken at the appropriate time of year for the relevant habitats, species, flora and fauna. Where harm to protected species or habitats is unavoidable, developers must ensure suitable mitigation measures are implemented to enhance or recreate the features, either on or off-site, and bring sites into positive conservation management. Sufficient information to assess the direct and indirect effects of development on protected sites, species, biodiversity or geology, and any proposed prevention, mitigation or compensation measures must be provided. Proposals should particularly seek

to avoid damaging and fragmenting existing habitats. Opportunities to contribute towards the UK priority habitats and species in Maidstone and any additional Maidstone LBAP habitats and species should be maximised.

17.27 Development likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity and conservation objectives of internationally important nature conservation sites is unlikely to meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive. Such development will not be considered favourably. Damage must be minimised in those exceptional cases where the strategic benefits of a development clearly outweigh the importance of a local nature conservation site, species, habitat or geological feature. Any remaining impacts must be fully mitigated and a mitigation strategy accompany the planning application. Compensation will only be acceptable in exceptional circumstances.

17.28 The borough has already experienced development applications that have, in certain areas, required the trans-location of wildlife to receptor sites in alternative off-site locations. Such sites are important in ensuring adequate provision of suitable habitats for valued and protected species and should be protected and maintained. Natural England should be consulted on development proposals that will have an adverse impact on receptor sites, either directly or indirectly. It is extremely unlikely that the trans-location of wildlife from one receptor site to another would be permitted under licence for the purposes of allowing development.

Landscape

17.29 The visual character of Maidstone's landscape is highly valued by those living, working and visiting here. A significant proportion of the borough benefits from high quality landscapes. A large area of the borough lies within the Kent Downs AONB, a nationally important landscape designation and a strong level of protection will be given to this designation and its setting, set out in policy SP17. However, all of the landscapes play an important role in contributing to the borough's environmental, economic and social values. Therefore all landscapes, rather than just those that are designated, will be viewed as a natural asset. This is in line with the European Landscape Convention.

17.30 The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the protection of valued landscapes. For Maidstone, these landscapes are identified as the Greensand Ridge, the Low Weald, and the river valleys of the Medway, the Loose and the Len, which are afforded protection in policy SP17.

17.31 A landscape character assessment, together with capacity studies, forms part of the evidence base and should be used to inform development and land management proposals. They are a descriptive tool which identify and describe variations of landscape character, distinguishing the features that give a locality its 'sense of place' and pinpointing what makes it distinctive, setting out information on landscape character, condition and sensitivity in a comprehensive and objective way. The documents identify the positive attributes of a landscape which need protecting or enhancing as well as the negative aspects, which can be restored or otherwise improved upon. In cases where development is proposed on sensitive sites more detailed landscape and visual assessments will be required.

Policy DM 3

Historic and natural environment

1. To enable Maidstone borough to retain a high quality of living and to be able to respond to the effects of climate change, developers will ensure that new development protects and enhances the historic and natural environment, where appropriate, by incorporating measures to:
 - i. Protect positive historic and landscape character, heritage assets and their settings, areas of Ancient Woodland, veteran trees, trees with significant amenity value, important hedgerows, features of biological or geological interest, and the existing public rights of way network from inappropriate development and ensure that these assets do not suffer any adverse impacts as a result of development;
 - ii. Avoid damage to and inappropriate development within or adjacent to:
 - a. Cultural heritage assets protected by international, national or local designation and other non-designated heritage assets recognised for their archaeological, architectural or historic significance, or their settings;
 - b. Internationally, nationally and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; and
 - c. Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats.
 - iii. Control pollution to protect ground and surface waters where necessary and mitigate against the deterioration of water bodies and adverse impacts on Groundwater Source Protection Zones, and/or incorporate measures to improve the ecological status of water bodies as appropriate;
 - iv. Enhance, extend and connect designated sites of importance for biodiversity, priority habitats and fragmented Ancient Woodland; support opportunities for the creation of new Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats; create, enhance, restore and connect other habitats, including links to habitats outside Maidstone Borough, where opportunities arise;
 - v. Provide for the long term maintenance and management of all heritage and natural assets, including landscape character, associated with the development;
 - vi. Mitigate for and adapt to the effects of climate change; and
 - vii. Positively contribute to the improvement of accessibility of natural green space within walking distance of housing, employment, health and education facilities and to the creation of a wider network of new links between green and blue spaces including links to the Public Rights of Way network.

2. Protect and enhance the character, distinctiveness, diversity and quality of Maidstone's landscape and townscape by the careful, sensitive management and design of development.
3. Where appropriate, development proposals will be expected to appraise the value of the borough's historic and natural environment through the provision of the following:
 - i. An ecological evaluation of development sites and any additional land put forward for mitigation purposes to take full account of the biodiversity present, including the potential for the retention and provision of native plant species;
 - ii. Heritage and arboricultural assessments to take full account of any past or present heritage and natural assets connected with the development and associated sites; and
 - iii. A landscape and visual impact assessment to take full account of the significance of, and potential effects of change on, the landscape as an environmental resource together with views and visual amenity.
4. Publicly accessible open space should be designed as part of the overall green and blue infrastructure and layout of a site, taking advantage of the potential for multiple benefits including enhanced play, wildlife, sustainable urban drainage, tree planting and landscape provision. The form and function of green infrastructure will reflect a site's characteristics, nature, location and existing or future deficits.
5. Development proposals will not be permitted where they lead to adverse impacts on natural and heritage assets for which mitigation measures or, as a last resort, compensation appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts cannot be achieved.

Account should be taken of the Landscape Character Guidelines SPD, the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan.

Policy DM4 Development on brownfield land

17.32 One of the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework encourages the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, provided it is not of high environmental value. This is known as brownfield land and a large proportion of brownfield sites in the Maidstone urban area have been developed at high densities for housing in recent years, particularly in and adjacent to the town centre along the River Medway. Making the best use of previously developed land will continue to be encouraged throughout the lifetime of this plan.

17.33 It is important to ensure that brownfield land is not underused and that the most is made of vacant and derelict land and buildings in order to reduce the need for greenfield land, which is a finite resource and often of higher quality in terms of landscape and biodiversity.

17.34 Brownfield development is essential for urban regeneration and, if designed to a high standard, it brings homes, jobs and services closer together; reduces dependency on the car; and strengthens communities.

Policy DM 4

Development on brownfield land

1. Proposals for development on previously developed land (brownfield land) in Maidstone urban area, rural service centres and larger villages that make effective and efficient use of land and which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - i. The site is not of high environmental value; and
 - ii. If the proposal is for residential development, the density of new housing proposals reflects the character and appearance of individual localities, and is consistent with policy DM12 unless there are justifiable planning reasons for a change in density.
2. Exceptionally, the residential redevelopment of brownfield sites in the countryside which meet the above criteria and which are in close proximity to Maidstone urban area, a rural service centre or larger village will be permitted provided the redevelopment will also result in a significant environmental improvement and the site is, or will be made, demonstrably accessible by sustainable modes to Maidstone urban area, a rural service centre or larger village.

Policy DM5 Air quality

17.35 Pollution due to dust and poor air quality, resulting from either existing sites or proposed developments, has the potential to adversely affect human health and the environment in Maidstone Borough. It is therefore essential that these issues are adequately assessed through the development management process.

17.36 The National Planning Policy Framework requires planning policies to sustain compliance with EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas. The council has a responsibility to work towards achieving these targets and does this through the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime. Through this function the council has identified 6 areas currently exceeding EU guideline values and has an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) in place in order to identify measures aimed at reducing air pollution at these locations.

17.37 The hotspots are located at key transport junctions but the AQAP covers the wider Maidstone Urban Area designated by the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in recognition of the nature of road networks and traffic movements. This action plan contributes to the delivery of the national air quality strategy.

17.38 The air quality action plan identifies key partners and their responsibility for delivering measures to improve air quality in the exceedance areas. The primary focus is placed on achieving modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport and low emission transport. The council's Integrated Transport Strategy is designed to address this objective. This policy will support the ITS and AQAP by:

- Promoting infrastructure that encourages the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality;
- Locating development close to transport infrastructure and community services and facilities to minimise trip generation;
- Installing charging points to facilitate expected increases in electric vehicle ownership;
- Requiring developers to mitigate more effectively against emissions from new developments through soft measures such as landscaping and tree planting; and
- Requiring developers to contribute to funding measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development

17.39 The council will review the significance of the air quality impacts from new proposals in line with national guidance. Evaluation of air quality impacts will take into account factors such as the number of people affected, the absolute levels and the predicted magnitude of the changes in pollutant concentrations, the scale and kind of the proposed mitigation. The evaluation will also take into account how the impacts from the development relate to the principles contained within the council's air quality action plan and other relevant strategic guidance documents.

17.40 It is recognised that planning can play an important role in improving air quality and reducing individuals' exposure to air pollutants. Whilst planning cannot solve immediate air quality issues, it has a role to play so any likely scheme impacts are reasonably mitigated. It is also important to ensure cumulative impacts of developments are responded to in a fair and proportionate way. In order to achieve this, a Low Emission Strategy will be developed going forward.

17.41 The Low Emission Strategy will outline the principles behind defining the scale of a development and its likely impact depending on its location and proximity to exceedance areas and the public. It will be developed in line with emerging best practice and national guidelines and be developed to support the Air Quality Action Plan.

Policy DM 5

Air Quality

Proposals that have an impact on air quality that meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. Proposals located close to identified air quality exceedance areas as defined through the Local Air Quality management process will require a full Air Quality Impact Assessment in line with national and local guidance;
2. Proposals within or adjacent to Air Quality Management Areas that are likely to have a negative impact on air quality should identify sources of emissions to air from the development and an Emissions Statement identifying how these emissions will be minimised and mitigated against must be provided; and
3. Proposals in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas or of a sufficient scale to impact local communities should, where necessary, incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact.

Policy DM6 Non-conforming uses

17.42 Some uses may be detrimental to the quality of the environment and a nuisance to neighbouring land users. The Borough Council therefore seeks to ensure that new development is appropriately sited and mitigated so that it does not cause a nuisance through noise or other disturbance to users in the local area.

17.43 It is recognised that certain uses may be more appropriate at rural sites, because there may be a lower number of sensitive users nearby, or due to land requirements, such as catteries and kennels, waste or recycling uses (which are normally a matter for determination by the County Council), as well as recreation uses including shooting and motor sports.

17.44 Policy DM1 ensures that development respects the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Policy DM 6

Non-conforming uses

Proposals for development which could create, intensify or expand noisy or noxious uses or which would generate volumes or types of traffic unsuited to the local area, will only be permitted if they meet such other exceptions as indicated by policies elsewhere in this plan.

Policy DM7 External lighting

17.45 Lighting can be an important factor of good design. Appropriate types and levels of lighting can contribute positively towards a sense of place, whilst poorly designed lighting schemes can damage local amenity and biodiversity interests. The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to limit light pollution in locations which are particularly sensitive to light, such as intrinsically dark landscapes.

17.46 The council recognises that carefully designed external lighting can enhance the night-time economy and have benefits for security and the viability of recreational facilities. However, inappropriate and excessive external lighting can not only be both visually obtrusive and inefficient in energy terms, but can also damage rural character in areas containing little built development, and can have highway safety implications for drivers. Protected species, such as bats, tend to avoid well-lit areas and lighting schemes should ensure that ecological issues are fully considered in their design.

17.47 The council will seek to secure well-designed lighting schemes, which are suitable for their environments. External lighting should play its role in achieving sustainable development. Where appropriate the recommendations within the Institute of Lighting Engineers Technical Report Number 5 will be considered as a guide to maximum levels of luminance. Low level bollard lighting will be supported where appropriate. The council will also encourage the use of PIR motion sensor lighting for business development and public buildings, in order to provide energy efficiency savings.

Policy DM 7

External lighting

1. Proposals for external lighting which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - i. It is demonstrated that the minimum amount of lighting necessary to achieve its purpose is proposed;

- ii. The design and specification of the lighting would minimise glare and light spillage and would not dazzle or distract drivers or pedestrians using nearby highways; and
 - iii. The lighting scheme would not be visually detrimental to its immediate or wider setting.
2. Lighting proposals that neighbour or are near enough to significantly affect areas of nature conservation importance, e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves and County Wildlife Sites will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

Policy DM8 Residential extensions, conversions and redevelopment within the built up area

17.48 The following policy relates to residential extensions, conversions and redevelopment within the built up area. Policy DM35 deals with conversions of rural buildings in the countryside and Policy DM36 with rebuilding and extending dwellings in the countryside.

17.49 The conversion of larger residential properties to self-contained flats and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) aids the provision of accommodation for smaller households and contributes towards a mix and choice of homes, advocated by the National Planning Policy Framework. HMOs differ from self contained flats as bedrooms/bed sitting rooms are private but other facilities, such as bathrooms and kitchens, are shared. The National Planning Policy Framework also places emphasis upon the quality of new residential development and requires a good standard of amenity to be provided for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

17.50 The council wishes to ensure that new residential units are attractive, high quality places to live, which respond positively to the local area. Good quality development should be of a scale and layout which provides attractive and comfortable places to live. The intensified use of dwellings to create smaller households can cause problems for nearby residents, for example noise and disturbance from increased traffic movements and requirements for parking. Policy DM8 seeks to control the potential problems arising from such proposals.

17.51 Residential extensions generally benefit the community by increasing the amount and quality of accommodation in the borough. However, careful design is necessary, in order to prevent a reduction in the quality of living conditions for adjoining residents and the built environment in general. The adopted Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (May 2009) will be used to guide the assessment of proposals for residential extensions.

Policy DM 8

Residential extensions, conversions and redevelopment within the built up area

1. Within the defined boundaries of the urban area, rural service centres and larger villages, proposals for the extension, conversion or redevelopment of a residential property which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - i. The scale, height, form, appearance and siting of the proposal would fit unobtrusively with the existing building where retained and the character of the street scene and/or its context;
 - ii. The traditional boundary treatment of an area would be retained and, where feasible, reinforced;
 - iii. The privacy, daylight, sunlight and maintenance of a pleasant outlook of adjoining residents would be safeguarded; and
 - iv. Sufficient parking would be provided within the curtilage of the dwelling without diminishing the character of the street scene.

2. Within the defined boundaries of the urban area, rural service centres and larger villages, proposals for the conversion or redevelopment of a dwelling to self-contained flats or the use of a building as a house in multiple occupation which also meet the following criterion will be permitted:
 - i. The intensified use of the building and its curtilage would not significantly harm the appearance of the building or the character and amenity of the surrounding area.

Policy DM9 Residential premises above shops and businesses

17.52 'Living over the shop' can have a positive impact upon the vitality of town centres and other commercial areas. Once shoppers and workers depart, residential units to upper floors can provide a sense of life and occupation, which can add to a perception of security and vitality. 'Living over the shop' also helps to create a sense of place and mix of uses advocated by the National Planning Policy Framework.

17.53 The council wishes to support such proposals in all suitable locations, where good standards of living can be provided for future occupiers. New proposals will be required to meet the design criteria set out in policy DM1. The loss of residential accommodation above retail and business premises will be resisted unless the circumstances of the site render it unsuitable for continued occupation.

Policy DM 9

Residential premises above shops and businesses

1. The council will permit 'living over the shop' projects in all suitable premises in the town centre, district and local centres, and village shops.
2. Change of use from residential accommodation in premises where the ground floor is (or last was) in class A retail or class B1 business uses within town, district or local centres will be permitted, provided it can be shown that the accommodation is no longer suitable or is potentially unsuitable for residential occupation because of location or design.

Policy DM10 Residential garden land

17.54 Within the built up areas of the borough's towns and villages, there is significant pressure for the development of residential garden land. Such development, typically involving the subdivision of existing residential curtilages, can often appear cramped and damage the existing pattern of development. The council wishes to only permit development where it can be absorbed within the existing character, pattern and layout of the built environment without detriment to visual amenity. All new development should respect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and their quality of life. It should be designed to avoid an unacceptable loss of privacy, light or outlook and also excessive levels of noise from activities, processes and traffic movements.

Policy DM 10

Residential garden land

Within the defined boundaries of the urban area, rural service centres and larger villages, development of domestic garden land to create new buildings which meet the following criteria will be permitted provided:

- i. The higher density resulting from the development would not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area;
- ii. There is no significant loss of privacy, light or outlook for adjoining properties and/or their curtilages;
- iii. Access of an appropriate standard can be provided to a suitable highway; and
- iv. There would be no significant increase in noise or disturbance from traffic gaining access to the development.

Policy DM11 Housing mix

17.55 The key requirements for a mixed community are a variety of housing, particularly in terms of tenure and price, and a mix of different households such as families with children, single person households and older people. The borough is made up of a variety of household types including, for example, older people who have specific housing needs that are different to the needs of large families and different again to those of disabled people. Maidstone Borough Council recognises that to truly promote sustainable communities there must be a mix of types of housing that are provided in any given development or location. Through providing a mix of housing types the borough will be able to accommodate the needs of an increasingly diverse population within the borough. The council will actively seek to balance communities where particular house sizes or tenures have become prevalent beyond an evidenced need.

17.56 Evidence detailed in the Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2015 guides the profiles of development that are required in urban and rural locations. This evidence is valuable in determining the local housing picture and as a consequence which types and tenures of housing are required. The council will not, however, set specific targets within policy because these would result in inflexibility and a situation where imbalances could begin to occur over time.

17.57 Custom and self-build housing is housing built or commissioned by individuals or associations of individuals for their own occupation. National Planning Policy and Guidance sets out the need for local planning authorities to identify and take account of such housing need in their area when planning for a mix of dwellings. Whilst the SHMA has not identified a need for custom and self-build housing to be strategically allocated in Maidstone, it is clear that this sector can play a key role in helping achieve a higher level of home ownership, and that policies should be flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time.

17.58 Developers will need to access a range of sources, including the SHMA, to help shape their proposals. Local stakeholders, including parish councils, may often be able to provide targeted information that assists an applicant to submit a locally relevant scheme. Where affordable housing is proposed or required, the housing register will provide additional guidance.

Policy DM 11

Housing mix

Maidstone Borough Council will seek to ensure the delivery of sustainable mixed communities across new housing developments and within existing housing areas throughout the borough.

1. In considering proposals for new housing development, the council will seek a sustainable range of house sizes, types and tenures (including plots for custom and self-build) that reflect the needs of those living in Maidstone Borough now and in years to come.

2. Accommodation profiles detailed in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015 (or any future updates) will be used to help inform developers to determine which house sizes should be delivered in urban and rural areas to meet the objectively assessed needs of the area. In relation to affordable housing, the council will expect the submission of details of how this information has been used to justify the proposed mix.
3. Where affordable housing is to be provided, developers should also take into consideration the needs of households on the council's housing register and discuss affordable housing requirements with the council's housing team at the pre-submission stage of the planning process.
4. Large development schemes will be expected to demonstrate that consideration has been given to custom and self-build plots as part of housing mix.
5. The council will work with partners to facilitate the provision of specialist and supported housing for elderly, disabled and vulnerable people.
6. Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation requirements will form part of the borough need for housing.

An affordable and local needs housing supplementary planning document will be produced to expand on how the proposals in this policy will be implemented.

Policy DM12 Density of housing development

17.59 The development strategy for the borough is based on meeting future housing requirements through best use of previously developed land before releasing greenfield sites for development in order to protect the borough's valuable landscape and biodiversity assets. Using land efficiently means that each site will contribute more, so less land is needed in total. Consequently, the council has introduced a range of net densities that take account of development site characteristics and locations. In all cases development will only be acceptable where schemes are well designed and do not compromise the overall character of the area. The net densities of individual sites allocated under policies H1 and RMX1 will vary where more detailed site information is available.

Policy DM 12

Density of housing development

All new housing will be developed at a density that is consistent with achieving good design and does not compromise the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated.

Subject to this overriding consideration:

1. At sites within and close to the town centre new residential development will be expected to achieve net densities of between 45 and 170 dwellings per hectare.
2. At sites adjacent to the urban area new residential development will be expected to achieve a net density of 35 dwellings per hectare.
3. At sites within or adjacent to the rural service centres and larger villages as defined under policies SP5-10 and SP11-16 respectively new residential development will be expected to achieve a net density of 30 dwellings per hectare.

In other settlements not listed above new residential development will be expected to achieve a net density of 30 dwellings per hectare. Development proposals that fail to make efficient use of land for housing, having regard to the character and location of the area, will be refused permission.

Policy DM13 Affordable housing

17.60 The Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment supports the approach of seeking a proportion of dwellings to be provided on-site for affordable housing needs. The council has a net affordable housing need of 5,800 homes from 2013 to 2031⁽¹⁵⁾, equivalent to 322 households each year. This is a significant need for the borough and a clear justification for the council to seek affordable dwellings through new development schemes.

17.61 Viability testing indicates that affordable housing is achievable across the borough on sites of five or more dwellings. To support community integration, affordable housing will be provided on-site, and alternative provision will not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify it. Any proposals for off-site or financial provision must be made at the time of the application.

17.62 Affordable housing targets will differentiate across the borough by geographical area and existing land use; this is due to relative issues such as sales values and policy considerations. Further viability testing has confirmed that the rural areas in Maidstone are more viable than urban locations, and brownfield sites (previously developed land) within urban areas are less viable than greenfield sites. Viability testing demonstrates that a 40% affordable housing rate can be achieved in the rural areas and a 30% rate within the redefined urban area. A 30% affordable housing requirement for the strategic urban brownfield site allocation at Springfield (policy H1(11)), which is important for the delivery of the local plan would result in limited capacity to provide for necessary supporting infrastructure because of site constraints. The Springfield residential

15 Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment (June 2015)

site allocation can accommodate a rate of 20% affordable housing which allows for an appropriate balance of affordable housing with the need to provide for infrastructure.

17.63 In order to respond to the identified need for affordable housing of different tenures through the period of the plan, the council will seek an indicative target of 70% affordable rented or social rented housing, or a mixture of the two, and 30% intermediate affordable housing (shared ownership and/or intermediate rent). This ratio was used for strategic viability testing purposes and has been shown to be viable. Specific site circumstances may affect the viability of individual proposals and the council recognises that the need for different tenures may also vary over time⁽¹⁶⁾.

17.64 To ensure proper delivery of affordable housing, developers are required to discuss proposals with the council's housing department at the earliest stage of the application process, to ensure the size, type and tenure of new affordable housing is appropriate given the identified needs. Where economic viability affects the capacity of a scheme to meet the stated targets for affordable housing provision, the council will expect developers to examine the potential for variations to the tenure and mix of provision, prior to examining variations to the overall proportion of affordable housing.

17.65 Retirement homes (sheltered housing) and extra care homes (assisted living) are not as viable as other residential uses in Maidstone. A 20% affordable housing rate will be sought for such developments, which will allow for an appropriate balance between affordable housing need and supporting infrastructure provision.

17.66 Residential care homes or nursing homes, where 24 hour personal care and/or nursing care are provided, are shown to be even less viable than retirement homes. Population projections predict that 18% of the borough's residents will be over 70 years of age by 2031, compared with 12% in 2011, resulting in a need for 980 additional care home places in the borough. Despite significant investment in recent years, the care homes market shows weak prospects in terms of providing any affordable housing so a zero rate is set.

17.67 Developers will be required to pay for viability assessments and any cost of independent assessment. The council will only consider reducing planning obligations if fully justified through a financial appraisal model or other appropriate evidence.

17.68 The affordable and local needs housing supplementary planning document will contain further detail on how the policy will be implemented.

16 Through the new Housing and Planning Bill 2015, the Government has signalled its intention to place a duty on local planning authorities to require a proportion of Starter Homes on all reasonably-sized sites. The council will maintain a watching brief and respond as appropriate.

Policy DM 13

Affordable housing

On housing sites or mixed use development sites of five residential units or more, the council will require the delivery of affordable housing.

1. The target rates for affordable housing provision within the following geographical areas, as defined on the policies map, are:
 - i. Maidstone urban area 30%, with the exception of policy H1(11) Springfield, Royal Engineers Road 20%; and
 - ii. Countryside, rural service centres and larger villages 40%.
2. Affordable housing provision should be appropriately integrated within the site. In exceptional circumstances, and where proven to be necessary, off-site provision will be sought in the following order of preference:
 - i. An identified off-site scheme;
 - ii. The purchase of dwellings off-site; or
 - iii. A financial contribution towards off-site affordable housing.
3. The indicative targets for tenure are:
 - i. 70% affordable rented housing, social rented housing or a mixture of the two; and
 - ii. 30% intermediate affordable housing (shared ownership and/or intermediate rent).

Developers are required to enter into negotiations with the council's Housing department, in consultation with registered providers, at the earliest stage of the application process to determine an appropriate tenure split, taking account of the evidence available at that time.

4. The council will seek provision of 20% affordable housing for schemes that provide for retirement housing and/or extra care homes.
5. The council has set a zero affordable housing rate for for fully serviced residential care homes and nursing homes.
6. Where it can be demonstrated that the affordable housing targets cannot be achieved due to economic viability, the tenure and mix of affordable housing should be examined prior to any variation in the proportion of affordable housing.

The affordable and local needs housing supplementary planning document will contain further detail on how the policy will be implemented.

Policy DM14 Local needs housing

17.69 Market housing in the borough's rural settlements can be both expensive and in limited supply. Affordable housing, although addressing the issue of expense, can also be in limited supply.

17.70 This means that local people can often be forced to move away from the settlement that they call home, or that they must share a dwelling beyond a point that is reasonably comfortable for them to do so.

17.71 Outside of Maidstone, the five rural service centres and the five larger villages, the amount of market housing that is planned will be more limited. This means that many rural communities may not benefit from a general supply of affordable housing as provided for in policy DM13.

17.72 The council must therefore work in close partnership with parish councils and local stakeholders in order to maintain and promote sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities.

17.73 Local needs housing seeks to address the lack of general supply by allowing the development of exception sites under agreed local needs, sustainability and environmental criteria. The housing must remain affordable in perpetuity and priority will be given to occupants who have a specified connection to the settlement – often being residential, employment or family.

17.74 Rural service centres will benefit from some general affordable housing as a result of planned development, but there may also be cases where local needs housing is required.

Policy DM 14

Local needs housing

The council will work with parish councils and local stakeholders to bring forward sustainably located local needs housing at its rural communities. The council will grant planning permission subject to the following criteria.

1. Development has been proven necessary by a local needs housing survey approved by the council which has been undertaken by or on behalf of the parish council(s) concerned. In consultation with the parish council and registered provider of social housing, the council will determine the number, size, type and tenure of homes to be developed after assessing the results of the survey. The council will also use the housing register to determine where there may be unmet housing needs.
2. People meeting the relevant occupation criteria will be given priority to occupy local needs housing (under the council's housing allocation scheme).
3. Local needs housing will remain available in perpetuity to meet the need for which it was permitted. This will be secured by planning conditions and/or legal agreements as appropriate.

4. Sustainability of the site and its settlement will be a prime consideration in decision making. The council will give preference to settlements and communities where a range of community facilities and services, in particular school, health, and shopping are accessible from the site preferably on foot, by cycle or on public transport. The site must also be safely accessed to and from the public highway by all vehicles using the site at all times.
5. The scale of development must be in proportion to the context of the settlement where it is located.
6. Where national landscape, ecological and heritage designations are affected by the proposed development, the necessity for development must be proven to outweigh the purpose for which the designation is made.

An affordable and local needs housing supplementary planning document will be produced to expand on how the proposals in this policy will be implemented.

Policy DM15 Nursing and care homes

17.75 In line with national trends, the population of the borough is ageing and this will result in an increasing demand for elderly accommodation over the time frame of the local plan. Population projections predict that by 2031 18% of the borough's residents will be over 70 years of age compared with 12% in 2011.

17.76 The accommodation needs of our ageing population will vary. Some will be able to continue to live in their own homes with the option, potentially, of receiving care at home. Specialist sheltered accommodation and/or extra care accommodation will also help to meet needs. In planning terms such accommodation falls within C3 use (dwelling house). In addition there will be a further demand for care and nursing home places particularly for the more frail elderly; it is estimated that 980 additional nursing and care home places will be needed in the borough (2011-31).

17.77 Nursing and care homes fall within the C2 use class (residential institutions). The identified need for additional nursing and care home places will be addressed through the granting of planning consents. Planning applications for nursing and care homes in the identified settlement hierarchy will be assessed using the following policy. Such homes are places of work as well as residences and proposals for new build and redevelopment should be located within the borough's identified main settlements which have the best levels of accessibility by public transport. Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to nursing and care homes will be assessed using policy DM35 whilst an extension to an existing care home located in the rural area will be considered under policy DM41. Commensurate on-site parking will be required for both staff and visitors.

Policy DM15

Nursing and care homes

Within the defined boundaries of the urban area, rural service centres and larger villages, proposals for new nursing and residential care homes through new build, conversion or redevelopment and for extensions to existing nursing and residential care homes which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The proposal will not adversely affect the character of the locality or the amenity of neighbouring properties by means of noise disturbance or intensity of use; or by way of size, bulk or overlooking; and
2. Sufficient visitor and staff vehicle parking is provided in a manner which does not diminish the character of the street scene.

Policy DM16 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation

17.78 Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers is a specific type of housing that councils have the duty to provide for under the Housing Act (2004). Gypsies and Travellers historically resorted to the Maidstone area because of their involvement in agriculture, particularly hop and fruit picking. These patterns have prevailed, especially in the Weald area, and the borough has a significant number of pitches mostly on small, privately owned sites. Going forward, the aim for the local plan is to contribute towards the creation of sustainable communities by making an appropriate scale of pitch provision which balances the reasonable need for lawful accommodation with the responsibility to protect the environment.

17.79 National guidance in 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' sets out the definitions of 'Gypsies and Travellers' and 'Travelling Showpeople' to be used for planning purposes.

17.80 The criteria in the policy below will guide the determination of planning applications and also the allocation of specific sites. It is preferable for sites to be located close to existing settlements where there are community facilities such as schools and health services. Frequently, because of land availability, more rural sites are proposed. Where such sites are proposed, the impact of development on the landscape and rural character is an important factor in respect of the wider objective of protecting the intrinsic character of the countryside.

Policy DM 16

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation

Planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation will be granted if the site is allocated for that use or if the following criteria are met:

1. Local services, in particular school, health and shopping facilities, are accessible from the site preferably on foot, by cycle or on public transport;
2. The development would not result in inappropriate harm the landscape and rural character of the area, in particular the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt. Impact on these aspects will be assessed with particular regard to:
 - i. Local landscape character;
 - ii. Cumulative effect - the landscape impact arising as a result of the development in combination with existing caravans; and
 - iii. Existing landscape features - development is well screened by existing landscape features and there is a reasonable prospect of such features' long term retention.

Additional planting should be used to supplement existing landscaping but should not be the sole means of mitigating the impact of the development.

3. The site can be safely accessed to and from the highway by all vehicles using the site on a regular basis;
4. The site is not located in an area at risk from flooding (zones 3a and 3b) based on the latest information from the Environment Agency or a specific Flood Risk Assessment which has been agreed by the Environment Agency; and
5. The ecological impact of the development has been assessed through appropriate survey and a scheme for any necessary mitigation and enhancement measures confirmed.
6. In addition to the above criteria the following applies to Travelling Showpeople accommodation only:
 - i. The site should be suitable for the storage and maintenance of show equipment and associated vehicles.

Policy DM17 Town centre uses

17.81 The National Planning Policy Framework defines the main town centre uses as retail, leisure and entertainment, offices, arts, culture and tourism and the town centre is the first choice location for these uses. Applicants will be expected to have demonstrably followed a sequential approach when selecting development sites for town centre uses, including fully exploring how the scheme could be adapted so that it could be accommodated on a more central site (i.e.'disaggregation'). The sequential approach, whereby in centre and then edge of centre sites are selected above well connected out of centre sites, is underpinned by the principle that sites closest to existing centres are likely to be better served by public transport and be more accessible by walking and cycling. Development on such sites also increases the prospect of linked trips, whereby one journey into the centre can serve a number of purposes.

17.82 The National Planning Policy Framework provides the definitions of 'edge of centre' and 'out of centre' sites. For retail uses the site's relationship to the primary shopping area is the key factor in determining whether a site is in, edge or out of centre. This is defined on the policies map. For other town centre uses the key factor is the site's relationship to the town centre boundary, which is also shown on the policies map. Applicants should follow the approach to sequential sites' assessment set out in the Communities and Local Government (CLG) document 'Practice Guidance on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach December 2009', together with the tests set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 24). The local plan also identifies a number of district and local centres across the borough, which serve more localised shopping and service needs, and these should also be regarded as centres for the purposes of a sequential search for retail sites.

17.83 In assessing the impact of proposals, applicants should also follow the approach in the CLG practice guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 26). Additionally, applicants will be expected to give specific analysis to the impact of their proposals on the retailers in the primary shopping frontages because maintaining the health of this core retail area is considered to be particularly important in sustaining the future vitality and viability of the town centre.

17.84 The local plan identifies the Maidstone East/Royal Mail Sorting Office, which is an important regeneration site, as a priority site for new retail development at the edge of the town centre. Out of centre retail proposals which would undermine the delivery of this key allocated site will not be supported.

Policy DM 17

Town centre uses

1. Proposals for main town centre uses should be located in an existing centre unless:
 - i. By means of a sequential approach, it is demonstrated that the proposal could not be accommodated first on a site within an existing

- centre and the proposal is located at the edge of an existing centre, or second it is demonstrated that the proposal could not be accommodated on a site within or at the edge of an existing centre and the proposal is located on an accessible out of centre site; and
- ii. By means of an impact assessment it is demonstrated that a retail, office or leisure proposal would not result in a significant adverse impact, cumulative or otherwise, on the vitality and viability of an existing centre or undermine the delivery of a site allocated for the use proposed.
2. Proposals located at the edge of an existing centre or out of centre should ensure the provision of specific measures which will improve the quality and function of sustainable connections to the centre, in particular walking and cycling routes and public transport links and specific measures which will mitigate the impact of the proposal on the identified centre or centres. The nature, extent and permanence of the measures will be directly related to the scale of the proposal.

Policy DM18 District centres, local centres and local shops and facilities

17.85 Local convenience shops and other such facilities can play an important role in sustainable development, by meeting the day-to-day needs of local communities. The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet such needs.

17.86 Whilst the council recognises the importance of securing viable uses for premises, this must also be balanced against the needs of the community. Changes in the economy sometimes lead to public houses becoming vacant and alternative uses being sought. However, for some communities, especially in rural areas, these facilities provide both important services and leisure opportunities.

17.87 Where the loss of a local convenience shop or facility is proposed, the council will expect such an application to be supported by a viability report, prepared by a qualified professional within the relevant industry, together with financial accounts and marketing information illustrating that the use is no longer viable. Accounts should, where possible, cover a three year period. The council will also give consideration to the availability of comparable alternative facilities. In assessing this, the feasibility of such alternatives being used will be considered, including not only the distance from the potential users, but also the attractiveness and likelihood of the route being used. The impact of the loss of a local facility may be greater in village locations, where alternatives are less accessible. Well located local facilities can be positive assets, which are available to all, including those without cars and with mobility problems.

17.88 Within the borough, the council has identified district and local centres which fulfil the function of providing essential local facilities as a group. District centres serve a wider catchment than a local centre and will typically cater for

weekly resident needs. A district centre will usually comprise groups of shops, often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library. Local centres include a range of small shops serving a small catchment. Typically, amongst other shops, a local centre might include a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway and launderette. In rural areas, large villages may perform the role of a local centre. Additionally, there are small parades of shops throughout the borough of purely neighbourhood significance.

17.89 The council wishes to maintain the existing retail function together with supporting community uses in these locations, in the interests of securing sustainable, well-functioning communities. Within the defined district and local centres, new non A or D use classes⁽¹⁷⁾ will be resisted at ground level in order to maintain the retail role of the centres. The provision of additional retail and/or community facilities, plus a new local centre to complement the new residential development scheme at Langley Park, will be supported for similar sustainability reasons.

Policy DM 18

District centres, local centres and local shops and facilities

1. The council will seek to maintain and enhance the existing retail function and supporting community uses in the following district centres, as defined on the policies map:
 - i. Mid Kent Centre, Castle Road, Allington;
 - ii. Grovewood Drive, Grove Green;
 - iii. Heath Road, Coxheath;
 - iv. The Square, Lenham;
 - v. High Street, Headcorn;
 - vi. High Street and Church Green, Marden; and
 - vii. High Street, Staplehurst.

2. The council will seek to maintain and enhance the existing retail function and supporting community uses in the following local centres, as defined on the policies map:
 - i. Ashford Road, Bearsted;
 - ii. The Green/The Street, Bearsted;
 - iii. Marlborough Parade, Beverley Road, Barming;
 - iv. Cherry Tree, Tonbridge Road;
 - v. Boughton Parade, Loose;
 - vi. Egremont Road, Madginford;
 - vii. Parkwood Parade;

17 A use classes comprise A1 shops, A2 financial and professional services, A3 food and drink, A4 pubs and bars, and A5 hot food takeaways; D use classes comprise non residential community uses and small scale leisure uses.

- viii. Sandling Lane, Penenden Heath;
 - ix. Senacre Square, Woolley Road;
 - x. Northumberland Court, Shepway;
 - xi. Snowdon Parade, Vinters Park;
 - xii. Mangravet, Sutton Road/Mangravet Avenue;
 - xiii. High Street/Benover Road, Yalding; and
 - xiv. Hermitage Walk, Hermitage Lane.
3. A new local centre will be provided as part of a new residential development scheme at Langley Park.
4. In considering planning proposals which would involve or require the loss of existing post offices, pharmacies, banks, public houses or class A1 shops selling mainly convenience goods outside local and district centres, consideration will be given to the following:
- i. Firm evidence that the existing uses are not now viable and are unlikely to become commercially viable;
 - ii. The availability of comparable alternative facilities in the village or the local area; and
 - iii. The distance to such facilities, the feasibility of alternative routes being used, and the availability of travel modes other than by private motor vehicle.

Policy DM19 Signage and shop fronts

17.90 Signage and shop fronts have a significant impact upon the attractiveness and vitality of shopping and other commercial areas. The National Planning Policy Framework requires that new development integrates well into the built environment. Advertisements which are poorly placed can result in visual clutter which both detracts from the quality of the built environment and leads to a more confused and less coherent visual presentation. Unsympathetic shop fronts and fascias can also damage the character of their locality, especially in conservation areas.

17.91 The council wishes to support commercial and retail frontage and signage schemes which are in sympathy with, and contribute positively towards, the visual amenity of their locality. The scale, design and detailing of such schemes should respect and visually complement their surroundings, being appropriately designed for their context.

17.92 Solid external shutters which completely cover a shop or other commercial front are visually unattractive and generally detract from the vitality of commercial areas. In order to preserve the quality of the built environment, the council will seek alternative security solutions such as internal lattice grilles, security systems or use of laminated glass. In some cases, external roller shutters having an open grille design which let light on to the street may be acceptable,

subject to the housing being unobtrusive and unlikely to harm the character of the building or street scene. Solid external roller shutters will only be approved where an overriding security need can be demonstrated. Such evidence is likely to include details of break-ins and information from Kent police confirming that roller shutters are necessary and the only viable security solution.

Policy DM 19

Signage and shop fronts

Proposals for new signage and for shop (A1) or other commercial (A2-A5) fronts which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- i. The size, design, positioning, materials, colour and method of illumination of signage would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding area;
- ii. The proposal would not result in the loss of a traditional shop front or features and details of architectural or historic interest;
- iii. The proposal would be in sympathy with the architectural style, materials and form of the building(s) of which it would form part and the character of the neighbouring properties; and
- iv. Where a fascia is to be applied, it would be of an appropriate height which would be in scale with the overall height of the shop front and other elements of the building.

Policy DM20 Economic development

17.93 The local economy is characterised by its strong base in administration and professional services, as well as public services, stemming in particular from Maidstone's county town role. The town centre is an established focus for shopping and leisure activities, drawing trade from both within the town and beyond, in particular the Malling area, Medway and Sittingbourne. The qualifications profile is relatively low in Maidstone with less than one third of residents qualified at NVQ Level 4 or above. This is below the Kent (33.6%) and national (35%) averages. More people in Maidstone are also qualified at below level 2 compared to Kent as a whole. The 2011 Census shows that some 1240 more people were leaving the borough for work than coming in, a reversal of the situation in 2001 when more people commuted into Maidstone to work. More out-commuters are working in managerial, professional, and technical occupations, while those commuting into Maidstone tend to be in skilled / semi-skilled occupations. Whilst the average earnings of those who commute out of the borough is higher than that of those who work in the borough, because of the prevalence of higher paid jobs in London as well as a preponderance of lower wage employment in the borough, the gap has been narrowing over recent years⁽¹⁸⁾ In general unemployment in the borough is low when compared with the Kent and national picture⁽¹⁹⁾.

18 Annual Monitoring Report 2011/12.

19 'Unemployment in Kent' Research & Evaluation Bulletin, Kent County Council (September 2013)

17.94 For Maidstone Borough to grow in a sustainable manner the increase in house building has been aligned with growth in local employment. Economic growth will be achieved through a range of provision and for the purposes of the local plan, and in line with the NPPF, economic development includes the following uses:

- Uses within Class B of the Use Class Order including offices, research and development, warehouses and industry
- Public and social uses such as health and education
- Town centre uses such as retail, leisure, entertainment, arts, cultural and tourism development.

17.95 The net additional land requirements for B class uses and retail to 2031 are to be delivered through the allocation of sites and the granting of planning permissions. Other economic growth will be created through tourism, social infrastructure provision such as education and health care, construction and other small scale opportunities such as the conversion or extension of rural buildings that will not necessarily require the allocation of land. The council's adopted Economic Development Strategy (2015) sets out an economic vision for the borough in 2031 through its 'ambition statement'. The strategy goes on to identify five priorities to capitalise on the borough's economic assets and to create the right conditions for growth. These are 1) retaining and attracting investment; 2) stimulating entrepreneurship; 3) enhancing Maidstone town centre; 4) meeting skills needs and 5) improving the infrastructure.

17.96 A significant proportion of Maidstone's growth in B class uses is expected to come from office-based employment. The first choice location for new office development will be the town centre. The council is aiming to create the right conditions for growth in the town centre through a comprehensive approach, improving accessibility, enhancing the public realm and encouraging a range of commercial uses, primarily retail, office and leisure related. This is directed through the specific policies of the local plan. A particular issue is the quantity of long-term vacant office stock in the town centre and the identification of appropriate alternative uses for such stock. Analysis suggests that some 25,000sqm of the borough's stock of office floorspace is long term vacant⁽²⁰⁾. Such stock, which is no longer fit for purpose, is unlikely to be fully re-occupied and its loss to other uses is unlikely to adversely impact on the borough's economic growth.

17.97 In addition to town centre office sites, there is a complementary role for offices at beyond centre sites which are well connected to the highway network, such as Eclipse Park in recognition of the differing market demand that such sites meet.

17.98 The proposed strategic site allocation at Junction 7 is a particular opportunity to create a hub for medical related businesses, capitalising on the development of the Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery, to attract high value, knowledge intensive employment and businesses as a boost to the local economy. This site will also deliver additional general office space in a high quality environment. Outline consent has recently been granted for the medical hub

20 Qualitative Employment Site Assessment (2014) GVA

(subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement). The further specific sites allocated for additional employment development, including storage, warehousing and industrial development in line with identified needs, will help provide for a range of jobs of differing skill and wage levels as a way of helping to maintain a low unemployment rate going forward.

17.99 With the exception of some of the secondary office stock within the town centre, existing business sites and industrial estates are an important and appropriate part of the business stock for the future which can also help to provide for the range of employment needs. Policy DM21 directs the retention, intensification and regeneration of the identified Economic Development Areas. In addition, there is a significant stock of commercial premises outside these designated areas which also provide for local employment. Within Maidstone urban area and the Rural Services Centres the first preference will be for such existing sites to remain in employment generating uses.

17.100 Retail development makes a big contribution towards the economic health of the borough and reinforces Maidstone's role as County Town. Maidstone Town Centre is the primary focus for retail development within the borough with the RSCs also providing appropriate local levels of retail facilities as set out in the Centre Hierarchy. Retail provision elsewhere in the borough currently comprises district centres and a degree of out of town development.

17.101 Within the countryside economic development will be permitted for the conversion and extension of existing suitable buildings and established sites, farm diversification and tourism where this can be achieved in a manner consistent with local rural and landscape character in order that a balance is struck between supporting the rural economy and the protection of the countryside for its own sake. Policy DM41 sets out the considerations which will apply when established rural businesses want to expand their existing premises. There is also a trend towards greater homeworking which allows for a reduced impact on transport infrastructure.

17.102 Opportunities for further tourist related development will be supported in particular within the town centre as well as small scale initiatives that support the rural economy. The council will also promote education, leisure and cultural facilities, again within the town centre in particular, to retain a higher proportion of young and well educated people within the borough and in turn enhance the prospects of creating a dynamic local economy.

Policy DM 20

Economic development

The council is committed to supporting and improving the economy of the borough and providing for the needs of businesses. This will be achieved through the allocation of specific sites and through:

- i. The retention, intensification, regeneration of the existing industrial and business estates identified as Economic Development Areas as defined on the policies map;

- ii. The retention, intensification, regeneration and expansion of the existing economic development premises in Maidstone urban area and the rural service centres provided the site is in an appropriate location and suited to the economic development use in terms of scale, impacts and economic viability;
- iii. Enhancing the vitality and viability of Maidstone town centre and maintaining the hierarchy of retail centres;
- iv. Supporting proposals that encourage highly skilled residents to work in the borough to reduce out-commuting;
- v. Improving skills in the workforce in particular by supporting further and higher education provision within Maidstone's urban area;
- vi. Supporting improvements in information and communications technology to facilitate more flexible working practices;
- vii. Prioritising the commercial re-use of existing rural buildings in the countryside over conversion to residential use; and
- viii. Supporting proposals for the expansion of existing economic development premises in the countryside, including tourism related development, provided the scale and impact of the development is appropriate for its countryside location.

Policy DM21 Retention of employment sites

17.103 In addition to new allocations of employment land, it is important that a stock of existing employment sites is maintained. A range of well located commercial premises and sites need to be secured so that they can continue to be available to meet the needs of existing and modernising businesses. Policy DM21 identifies Economic Development Areas across the borough designated specifically for B class uses, which include sites with planning permission as well as established, existing employment locations.

17.104 The demand for office, manufacturing and warehouse premises can be expected to fluctuate over the plan period in line with changes in the economic cycle. It is important that these designated, good quality and productive sites are not permanently lost to alternative uses as a result of only short term changes in demand, whilst recognising that the permanent protection of a site that has no prospect of coming forward for its designated use is counter-productive for the local economy. Recent changes to the General Permitted Development Order enable the conversion of office space to residential use without the need for planning permission for a limited 3 year period (until 30 May 2016). Policy DM21 identifies locations with higher quality office floorspace for retention in the longer term, recognising that in the short term conversion to residential use could happen without consent. The recent General Permitted Development Order changes also allow up to 500m² of B1 floorspace to be used for B8 uses without the need for planning permission.

17.105 Planning applications which seek alternative non B class uses in identified Economic Development Areas will be supported only where there is clear evidence that substantiates why the site should not be retained for its designated use. This must include evidence of, and the outcomes from, the concerted marketing of the site for its designated uses for a continuous period

of at least 12 months prior to the applicant's submission via relevant commercial property publications and websites. In addition, applications should include an analysis of the on-going suitability of the site for its designated uses and its commercial viability for those uses. Both the suitability and viability assessments should evidence current market conditions and also the future prospects for the sectors for which the site is designated. The analysis of future prospects should look ahead at least 5 years to ensure a medium term view of market trends and employment land requirements is taken.

17.106 Exceptionally, a mixed use scheme which incorporates an element of non B class uses may be a means to achieve an overall upgrade in the quality of B class business floorspace on a designated site or bring underused premises into more productive use. The overall employment capacity of the site should be maintained or increased by such a scheme as measured by either the employment-generating floorspace provided or the number, permanence and quality of the jobs created. Any proposals for retail or leisure would also need to comply with policy DM17.

17.107 There is also a significant stock of B class employment premises and sites outside the designated Economic Development Areas. In the Maidstone urban area and the rural service centres, the redevelopment or expansion of existing sites for employment-generating uses will be supported. Redevelopment of such sites for non-employment generating uses will be permitted where the existing use has an adverse impact on residential amenity, causes highway safety issues or causes over-riding visual harm or where it is proven through the submission of a viability report that there is no realistic prospect of its commercial reuse.

17.108 In the town centre specifically, there is a significant stock of office premises however the quality of these is mixed. A review of the town centre office stock reveals that the better quality stock is not focused in a single or limited number of locations, rather it is dispersed through the town centre;. Notwithstanding the current, temporary changes to permitted development rights, it is considered important to retain the better quality office premises to help sustain the town centre's role as an employment location. The larger scale (above 1000sqm) higher quality office premises are included in Policy DM21 as their loss to alternative uses would have the greatest significance for the town centre's employment role.

Policy DM 21

Retention of employment sites

1. The following locations, as defined on the policies map, are designated Economic Development Areas for use classes B1, B2 and B8:
 - i. Lordswood Industrial Estate, Walderslade;
 - ii. Aylesford Industrial Estate, Aylesford;
 - iii. 20/20 Business Park, Allington;
 - iv. Parkwood Industrial Estate, Maidstone;
 - v. Tovil Green Business Park/Burial Ground Lane, Tovil;

- vi. Station Road/Lodge Road/Honeycrest Industrial Park, Staplehurst;
 - vii. Pattenden Lane, Marden;
 - viii. Detling Airfield, Detling;
 - ix. Lenham Storage, Lenham;
 - x. Marley Works, near Lenham;
 - xi. Barradale Farm, near Headcorn;
 - xii. Station Road, Harrietsham;
 - xiii. Viewpoint, Boxley;
 - xiv. Ashmills Business Park, Lenham;
 - xv. Tenacre Court/Roebuck Business Park, Ashford Road, Harrietsham;
 - xvi. Hart Street Commercial Centre, Hart Street, Maidstone;
 - xvii. Hermitage Mills, Hermitage Lane, Maidstone;
 - xviii. Bearsted Green Business Centre (The Old Forge), Bearsted;
 - xix. Gallants Business Centre, East Farleigh;
 - xx. Headcorn South, Biddenden Road, near Headcorn;
 - xxi. Woodfalls Industrial Estate, Laddingford;
 - xxii. Warmlake Business Estate, near Sutton Valence;
 - xxiii. Bredhurst Business Park, Westfield Sole Road, Walderslade;
 - xxiv. The Old Brewery, London Road, Maidstone; and
 - xxv. Brooklyn Yard, Sandling, Maidstone.
2. The following locations, as defined on the policies map, are designated Economic Development Areas for use class B1:
- i. South Park Business Village, Maidstone;
 - ii. Turkey Mill Court, Maidstone;
 - iii. Eclipse Park, Maidstone;
 - iv. County Gate, Staceys Street, Maidstone;
 - v. Medway Bridge House, Fairmeadow, Maidstone;
 - vi. 23/29 Albion Place, Maidstone;
 - vii. Victoria Court, Ashford Road, Maidstone;
 - viii. West of Lower Stone Street comprising Gail House, Link House, Kestrel House and Chaucer House.
3. Within designated Economic Development Areas, change of use or redevelopment of a site or premises to non B class uses will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for the designated uses in the medium term.
4. Within designated Economic Development Areas, mixed use proposals incorporating an element of non B class uses may exceptionally be permitted where such development would facilitate the regeneration of the site to more effectively meet the needs of modern business and where the overall employment capacity of the site is maintained.
5. Outside the designated Economic Development Areas, the redevelopment and expansion of existing B class employment premises in Maidstone

urban area and the rural service centres for employment-generating uses will be supported.

Policy DM22 Open space and recreation

17.109 High quality, publicly accessible open space can bring about opportunities for promoting social interaction and inclusion in communities. Sports and recreation areas and facilities can contribute positively to the well being and quality of those communities. Open space can also have a positive impact upon the quality of the built environment and can be of ecological value. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the provision and retention of high quality open spaces, a stance that the council supports.

17.110 The council will seek to secure publicly accessible open space provision for new housing and mixed use development sites, in accordance with quantity, quality and accessibility standards set out in Policy DM22.

17.111 The preference is for new major developments to meet their open space requirements on-site or on adjacent sites that have been allocated in association with the housing development. This recognises the demand for additional publicly accessible open space to meet the needs of a growing population. Alternatively off-site provision in a location which is conveniently and safely accessible from the site will be acceptable if provision on-site is demonstrated to be inappropriate for reasons of site constraints, housing delivery expectations on allocated sites or location.

17.112 A financial contribution towards open space provision will be sought in lieu of new provision to improve existing sites and enhance the capacity of existing provision if:

- i. Suitable opportunities for new open space cannot be identified within the specified accessibility standards, or
- ii. A development is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the council to be too small to deliver new open space provision on-site.

In such cases the council will seek to secure high quality, significant structural landscaping to compensate for the non-provision of open space and ensure a high quality environment is secured for future residents. Financial contributions will be used towards the provision, improvement, maintenance and/or refurbishment of open space within the appropriate accessibility standard(s).

17.113 The council will produce an Open Space Supplementary Planning Document to provide further detail to support the implementation of policy, including the technical detail on how the quantitative standards will be applied taking account of existing provision within the relevant accessibility standards. The SPD will include the methodology for calculating the amount of open space required on each development, when on-site green space should be provided on larger sites (trigger points) and the amount of developer contributions (capital and maintenance) which will be required in lieu of on-site provision (index linked); and will outline the priorities for improvements to existing provision.

17.114 It is important to ensure that any new publicly accessible open space and sports provision preserves the quality of life for existing residents, as well as the visual amenity of the locality. Intense sports uses, such as multi use games areas, can generate significant amounts of noise; while sports and other recreation uses may include lighting, such as floodlighting. This can be harmful to the living environment of nearby occupiers and to the visual amenity of the countryside where levels of artificial lighting are generally very limited. The council will seek to ensure that new publicly accessible open space and recreation areas are appropriate to their setting in these regards.

17.115 Provision of open space should be an integral part of design and layout of development, and should be sited to make a contribution to biodiversity networks. The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will set out the aims and objectives for the provision and enhancement of green space in the borough over the period of the plan.

17.116 The council will expect future management and maintenance of new open spaces to be appropriately secured to the satisfaction of the council. The loss of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will be resisted, unless there is a proven overriding need for the development and there would be no resulting deficiency, or net loss, of such space/facilities in the locality. In considering the impact of the loss of open space, the council will have regard to the visual amenity and biodiversity value of the land in question.

Policy DM22

Publicly accessible open space and recreation

1. For new housing or mixed use development sites, the council will seek to deliver the following categories of publicly accessible open space provision in accordance with the specified standards:

i. **Quantity standards**

Open space type	Draft standard (ha/1000 population)	Minimum size of facility (ha)
Amenity green space (e.g. informal recreation spaces, recreation grounds, village greens, urban parks, formal gardens and playing fields)	0.7	0.1
Provision for children and young people (e.g. equipped play areas, ball courts,	0.25	0.25 excluding a buffer zone ⁽²¹⁾

21 but in cases where accessibility to children's and young peoples provision is poor, for example outside a reasonable walking distance or where the crossing of major roads is necessary, smaller areas of open space may be justified on-site.

Open space type	Draft standard (ha/1000 population)	Minimum size of facility (ha)
outdoor basketball hoop areas, skateboard parks, teenage shelters and "hangouts")		
Publicly accessible outdoor sports (e.g. outdoor sports pitches, tennis, bowls, athletics and other sports)	1.6	To meet the technical standards produced by Sport England or the relevant governing bodies of sport.
Allotments and community gardens (e.g. land used for the growing of own produce, including urban farms. Does not include private gardens)	0.2	0.66
Natural/semi-natural areas of open space (e.g. woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands, wetlands, open and running water, banks to rivers, land and ponds, wastelands, closed cemeteries and graveyards)	6.5	0.2

ii. **Quality Standards**

All new open spaces should meet the following general standards:

- a. Be designed as part of the green infrastructure network in a locality, contributing to local landscape character, connecting with local routes and green corridors for people and wildlife as well as providing multi-functional benefits such as addressing surface water management priorities;
- b. Provide a location and shape for the space which allows for meaningful and safe recreation and be sufficiently overlooked by active building frontages;
- c. Be easily found and accessible by road, cycleway, footpaths and public transport including by those with disabilities, with pedestrian crossings on roads where appropriate;
- d. Make the entrances accessible for all users, of appropriate size and inviting with a welcoming sign where appropriate;
- e. Provide clearly defined boundaries with fences or hedges where needed to ensure safety of users;

- f. Where appropriate provide interest and activities for a wide range of users in particular meeting the needs of elderly and less able users as well as children, young people and families;
- g. Where appropriate provide seats, litter bins and appropriate lighting to ensure safety of users without adversely affecting wildlife;
- h. Provide a range of planting, with appropriate mix of predominantly indigenous species, maintained to a good standard;
- i. Promote biodiversity on-site through design, choice of species and management practices;
- j. Submit an Open Space Layout and Design statement, to incorporate ecological management measures for approval by the council; and
- k. Provide a Management Plan with adequate resources identified for on-going management and maintenance.

In improving existing open space provision, the council will have regard to these standards.

iii. Accessibility Standards

If open space cannot be provided in full on development sites, due to site constraints, housing delivery expectations on allocated sites, or location, then provision should be provided off-site where it is within the distance from the development site identified in the accessibility standard.

Open space type	Accessibility standard (radius from open space)
Amenity green space (e.g. informal recreation spaces, recreation grounds, village greens, urban parks, formal gardens and playing fields)	400m
Provision for children and young people (e.g. equipped play areas, ball courts, outdoor basketball hoop areas, skateboard parks, teenage shelters and "hangouts")	600m
Publicly accessible outdoor sports (e.g. outdoor sports pitches, tennis, bowls, athletics and other sports)	1000m
Allotments and community gardens (e.g. land used for the growing of own produce, including urban farms. Does not include private gardens)	1000m
Natural/semi-natural areas of open space (e.g. woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands, wetlands, open and running water, banks to rivers, land and ponds, wastelands, closed cemeteries and graveyards)	300m (2ha site) 2km (20ha site) 5km (100ha site) 10km (500ha site)

2. A financial contribution in lieu of open space provision will be acceptable, provided:
 - i. The proposed development site would be of insufficient size in itself to make the appropriate new provision; or
 - ii. The open space cannot be accommodated on-site due to site constraints, housing delivery expectations on allocated sites or location, and alternative appropriate off-site provision cannot be identified.
3. Where it can be demonstrated that existing open space provision can either wholly or partially mitigate the impacts of development in accordance with the above standards, the council may seek a reduced level of provision or financial contribution. Developers should take full account of open space requirements at an early stage of the development management process and are encouraged to engage with the council to determine the most appropriate quantum, type and location of open space provision.
4. The council will operate the policy flexibly to secure the provision of the typologies of open space which are most needed in the relevant area, taking account of the above standards and the suitability of the site to accommodate the identified needs.
5. Proposals for, and including, new publicly accessible open space and recreation provision will, where feasible, seek to reinforce existing landscape character, as defined in the Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment.
6. Proposals for, and including, new publicly accessible open space and recreation provision shall respect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, by ensuring that development does not result in excessive levels of noise or light pollution. New lighting relating to such development will also preserve the character and visual amenity of the countryside.
7. Proposals for new development which would result in the net loss of open space or sport and recreation facilities will not be permitted unless there is a proven overriding need for the development. In addition, the development will only be permitted if:
 - i. There is no resulting deficiency in open space or recreation facilities in the locality when assessed against the quality standards of this policy; or
 - ii. An alternative provision, determined to be of an equivalent community benefit by the Borough Council and community representatives can be provided to replace the loss.

8. In dealing with applications to develop existing open areas within the urban area, rural service centres, larger villages and other locations, the Borough Council will have regard to the impact of the loss of the contribution that the existing site makes to the character, amenity and biodiversity of the area.

The Open Space supplementary planning document will contain further detail on how the policy will be implemented.

Policy DM23 Community facilities

17.117 In order to build well functioning, sustainable communities, it is essential that adequate community facilities are provided. The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the importance of creating healthy, inclusive communities, with appropriate facilities, to create attractive residential environments. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan lists the key social infrastructure needed to support the level of development planned for the borough. Community facilities encompass educational, cultural and recreational facilities, including schools, libraries, places of worship, meeting places, cultural buildings (such as museums and theatres) and sports venues.

17.118 The council seeks to resist the net loss of viable community facilities, as this runs contrary to the aim of achieving sustainable, inclusive communities.

17.119 School premises are generally only in operation during particular hours. These sites offer opportunities to provide additional community uses outside of school hours. Such dual uses can increase the range of community facilities and can help to maximise land usage in a suitable manner. The council will therefore encourage dual usage of educational premises in appropriate circumstances.

Policy DM 23

Community facilities

The adequate provision of community facilities, including social, education and other facilities, is an essential component of new residential development.

1. Residential development which would generate a need for new community facilities or for which spare capacity in such facilities does not exist, will not be permitted unless the provision of new, extended or improved facilities (or a contribution towards such provision) is secured by planning conditions or through legal agreements unless the specific facilities are identified for delivery through the Community Infrastructure Levy

2. Proposals which would lead to a loss of community facilities will not be permitted unless demand within the locality no longer exists or a replacement facility acceptable to the council is provided.
3. The council will seek to ensure, where appropriate, that providers of education facilities make provision for dual use of facilities in the design of new schools, and will encourage the dual use of education facilities (new and existing) for recreation and other purposes.

Policy DM24 Sustainable transport

Transport

17.120 Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local highway authority), Highways England, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub. The ITS needs to address a number of transport challenges as set out below.

Highway network

17.121 Maidstone borough has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, Tonbridge and Malling, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells and London. Four north-south and east-west primary routes pass through the town centre and numerous secondary routes run in concentric rings around the town, providing local links to the rural parts of the borough. Maidstone also enjoys good connections to the motorway network, including direct access to four junctions of the M20.

17.122 The principal constraint on the borough's urban road network is the single crossing point of the River Medway at the town centre bridges gyratory, where the A20, A26 and A229 meet. From this point, congestion spreads along the main radial approaches to Maidstone during the morning and evening peaks, leading drivers to seek alternative routes for longer journeys around the periphery of the town.

17.123 Strategic VISUM traffic modelling was jointly commissioned by the council and Kent County Council to assess traffic growth and the impact on the local highway network of background traffic growth and planned development in the period 2014 - 2031. The modelling indicates that by 2031, the combination of background traffic growth and planned housing and employment development will increase the number of person trips in Maidstone during the morning peak hour by 17%, demonstrating that robust solutions to Maidstone's transport challenges are required.

17.124 Maidstone has an average vehicle occupancy of approximately 1.23 persons per car, which is significantly lower than the UK average of 1.6 persons per car . This represents an inefficient use of road space and contributes to greater traffic congestion and air pollution. Whilst it is recognised that the private car will continue to provide the primary means of access in areas where alternative travel choices are not viable, the traffic data suggests that the ITS should focus on demand management measures that enable a higher people-moving capacity over the existing road network. Specifically, the strategy should aim for a reduction in the number of single-occupancy car trips into Maidstone town centre by long-stay commuters – particularly during peak periods – which can be achieved through interventions such as enhanced public transport provision on the main radial routes, Park and Ride and walking and cycling infrastructure. This approach, combined with targeted capacity improvements to strategic junctions such as the bridges gyratory in the town centre, would improve the reliability and hence attractiveness of public transport, as well as providing businesses and freight operators with greater journey time reliability.

17.125 Some of the VISUM modelling options tested included a proposed Leeds-Langley Relief Road (LLRR) that would relieve traffic on the current B2163 towards junction 8 of the M20 motorway. The results indicate that the construction of such infrastructure may have a beneficial impact on some traffic movement patterns in the south east sector of Maidstone. This is however seen against the context of traffic movements generally in which Maidstone town centre itself and intra-urban movements (from one part of the Maidstone urban area to another) are the key drivers behind trips on the network.

17.126 The case for the justification of the construction and the delivery of a LLRR lies with the County Council as the highway authority. To date, the detailed costings (estimates vary between £50 and £80 million), environmental and route appraisals and also an assessment of whether future housing requirements would necessitate and also support construction of a LLRR which will be required to progress the proposals, have not yet been undertaken. It is therefore considered appropriate to give detailed consideration to the potential construction of the LLRR post 2031 at the first review of the local plan (which will commence in 2022).

17.127 More detailed modelling (Linsig, ARCADY and PICADY) demonstrates improvements that can be made to the existing highway network, and detailed modelling has been completed for specific locations around the borough which have been identified as being potentially sensitive to future traffic flow changes as a result of new development. This is important because since 2011, which is the base date of the local plan, nearly half of the objectively assessed need for housing (over 9,000 dwellings) has been built or permitted. Through negotiation with developers, section106 funding has been secured for a number of highway improvements relating to dwellings delivered in the early part of the plan period. The policies for individual site allocations set out the requirements for contributions towards strategic and local highway infrastructure at key locations and junctions, and key improvements include:

- Capacity improvements and signalisation of Bearsted roundabout and capacity improvements at New Cut roundabout. Provision of a new signal pedestrian

crossing and the provision of a combined foot/cycle way between these two roundabouts.

- Traffic signalisation of the M20 J7 roundabout, widening of the coast bound off-slip and creation of a new signal controlled pedestrian route through the junction.
- Capacity improvements at M2 J5 (located in Swale Borough).
- Upgrading of Bearsted Road to a dual carriageway between Bearsted roundabout and New Cut roundabout.
- Interim improvement to M20 junction 5 roundabout including a white lining scheme.
- Traffic signalisation of M20 junction 5 roundabout and localised widening of slip roads and circulatory carriageway.
- Provision of an additional lane at the Coldharbour roundabout.
- Capacity improvements at the junction of Fountain Lane and the A26 Tonbridge Road.
- Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
- Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
- Package of measures to significantly relieve traffic congestion on Sutton Road and Willington Street.
- Improvements to capacity at the A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction.
- Highway improvements at Boughton Lane and at the junction of Boughton Lane and the A229 Loose Road.
- Linton Crossroads junction improvements.
- A20 Ashford Road highways improvements to include carriageway narrowing, reduction of the speed limit and pedestrian crossing facilities at Harrietsham.
- Signalisation of the Kings Road / Mill Bank junction at Headcorn.
- Capacity improvements at the junction of A229, Headcorn Road, Station Road and Marden Road at Staplehurst.
- Capacity improvements at Hampstead Lane/B2015 Maidstone Road junction at Yalding.

17.128 The details of these schemes and further highway and transport improvements, including provision of a circular bus route to serve the north west Maidstone strategic development area, are set out in detail in the Integrated Transport Strategy and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Car Parking

17.129 The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the borough's retail economy, to facilitate access to areas where alternative travel modes are limited or unavailable, and to ensure that mobility impaired persons are able to access key education, employment and leisure opportunities. However, the supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can therefore contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. Therefore it is crucial that the council and its partners avoid an over provision of parking, particularly in and around Maidstone town centre.

17.130 The ITS will seek to address parking issues by producing a refreshed Town Centre Parking Strategy. A key aspect of this strategy, for example, will be the use of measures to provide disincentives to the use of long-term car parking in the town centre whilst prioritising shoppers and visitors; by utilising long-stay town centre parking tariffs to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport such as Park and Ride and reviewing the Residents' Parking Zones to ensure they are fair, simple and meet the needs of all road users.

Park and Ride

17.131 The council has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s and was one of the first local authorities in the UK to introduce the concept. The service aims to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and has met with varying levels of success to date. Two sites are currently in operation at London Road and Willington Street, following the closure of the Sittingbourne Road site in February 2016, which in total comprise some 903 parking spaces.

17.132 During the 2012/13 financial year some 400,000 transactions were recorded on Park and Ride bus services, which equates to a fall of 7% from the previous year. The Park and Ride services are also available for use by concessionary pass holders, and indeed approximately half of the trips recorded in 2012/13 were made by this group.

17.133 The reduction in patronage can be partially explained by the recession and suppressed economic activity in the town centre. Usage of the Park and Ride service should also be considered in the context of the supply of town centre car parking (both public and private) and the associated parking tariffs. The Park and Ride service is used by both commuters and shoppers; however it accounts for just 2% of all person trips into the town centre during peak periods (excluding walking and cycling), compared to 12% for bus and 77% for private car . The service currently requires an annual subsidy and therefore the ITS is seeking to take a targeted approach to address this situation.

17.134 The ITS will seek to retain the existing sites at Willington Street and London Road. All sites are aimed at long-stay commuters into the town centre. Bus priority measures will also be provided on Park and Ride routes in tandem with the service.

Bus services

17.135 Maidstone borough has a well established bus network provided principally by Arriva, together with a number of smaller independent operators. The network is centred on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban areas with longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns, including Ashford, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and the Medway Towns.

17.136 Although KCC and the council do not directly influence the provision of commercial bus services, both authorities work closely with the operators to improve the quality of services and to ensure that the highway network is planned and managed in a way that facilitates the efficient operation of buses. This relationship has been formalised through the signing of a voluntary Quality Bus

Partnership (QBP) agreement, which includes commitments by Arriva, KCC and the council to work collectively to improve all aspects of bus travel and to increase passenger numbers.

17.137 Given the deletion of the previously proposed Park and Ride sites at Linton Crossroads and at Old Sittingbourne Road, the council will work with the service operators to procure express/limited stop bus services on the radial routes into Maidstone (particularly from the north including the Newnham Park Area and from the south on the A229 and A274) to the Town Centre and railway stations in the morning and evening peaks to encourage modal shift together with the implementation of bus priority measures to seek to secure the reliability and speed of such services.

17.138 A number of services cannot be provided commercially and are classed as socially necessary services that require subsidy from KCC. These primarily consist of school, rural, evening and weekend services, which provide access to education, employment, health care, or essential food shopping. KCC also completed the countywide roll out of the Kent Freedom Pass during 2009. The County Council now provides free travel on almost all public bus services in Kent Monday to Friday for an annual fee for young people living in the county and in academic years 7 to 11. The County Council also assumed responsibility from the council for the administration and funding of the statutory Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme for disabled people, their companions and those aged over 60, in April 2011. As the Local Education Authority, KCC also provides free or subsidised home-to-school transport to children who meet the criteria.

17.139 Through the ITS bus service frequencies will look to be increased (to at least every 7 minutes) on radial routes serving Maidstone town centre. (The A274 Sutton Road corridor from Park Wood already has an 8-minute frequency). Bus priority measures will be provided in order to encourage the use of public transport by seeking to ensure the reliability and frequency of services will continue to be made more accessible to all users.

17.140 The town's main bus interchange located at the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre is not fit for purpose. In the short term (1-2years), the council will work with the landowners of the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre and service providers to secure significant improvements to the existing bus station to increase its attractiveness and ease of use. In the medium to longer term, the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre and adjoining land, where the current bus interchange facility is located, is identified for potential redevelopment (policy SP4). As part of the regeneration of the site and area, the council will work with the Centre's owners (and other land owners that may be affected) together with the public transport operators to secure the provision of a new bus interchange facility that is more accessible, user-friendly and fit for purpose in the light of the desire for improved bus service provision and patronage across the borough.

Rail services

17.141 Three railway lines cross Maidstone borough, serving a total of 14 stations. The operator of the vast majority of rail services in the area is the south east franchise holder, Southeastern.

17.142 The principal rail route serving Maidstone town is the London Victoria to Ashford International line (also referred to as the Maidstone East Line), which includes stations at Maidstone East, Bearsted, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Lenham. The average journey time between Maidstone East and London Victoria is an hour and runs half-hourly. The London Charing Cross / Cannon Street to Dover Priory / Ramsgate line passes through the south of the borough, with stations at Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn. Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations are located in close proximity to the City of London and hence services on this line are heavily used by commuters, which places pressure on the limited station car park capacity in these villages.

17.143 The Medway Valley Line, connecting Strood and Paddock Wood, runs from north to south across the borough, with stations at Maidstone Barracks, Maidstone West, East Farleigh, Waterringbury, Yalding and Beltring. The line operates as part of the Kent Community Rail Partnership, which has delivered improvements to the stations and promoted the service widely. In May 2011, Southeastern commenced the operation of direct peak-time services between London St Pancras and Maidstone West via Strood and High Speed 1 on a trial basis. This has reduced rail journey times between Maidstone and London to 48 minutes and provided commuters from the town with the option of travelling to an alternative London terminus closer to the City. Collectively, these enhancements have contributed to a 25% increase in passenger numbers on the Medway Valley Line since 2007 , putting it in the top 10 lines nationally for ridership growth according to the Association of Train Operating Companies.

17.144 KCC published its Rail Action Plan for Kent in 2011, which sets out the County Council's objectives for the new South Eastern Franchise. The reinstatement of services between Maidstone and the City of London is the plan's top priority. It also recognises the need for the level of rail fares charged in Kent to offer better value for money and for the roll out of Smartcard ticketing offering combined bus and rail travel, similar to Transport for London's Oyster card .

Air quality

17.145 Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to poor air quality at both the local level and on a wider global scale. Indeed the entire Maidstone Urban Area has been declared an Air Quality Management Area, primarily due to the level of traffic congestion at peak times. The ITS will therefore support the delivery of the measures identified in the Maidstone Air Quality Action Plan to deliver an improvement in the air quality of the urban area and to reduce pollutant levels below the Air Quality Objective Levels set out by European legislation.

17.146 Development in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas should where necessary incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact. Examples of mitigation measures include:

- Using green infrastructure to absorb dust and other pollutants;
- Promoting infrastructure to encourage the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality
- Contributing funding to measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development

Influencing travel behaviour

17.147 Through the ITS the council, together with KCC, will seek to promote and support a range of initiatives to influence travel behaviour in the borough. This can be achieved through the use of Travel Plans, behaviour change programmes and introducing improvements to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling and the use of transport, car sharing and car clubs.

17.148 The council, together with KCC, will continue to promote and support the use of Travel Plans as a way of influencing travel behaviour away from journeys by private car to more sustainable modes. Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will continue to implement and monitor their own corporate Travel Plans as well as securing Travel Plans for new development as part of the planning process. Workplace and School Travel Plans will also continue to be developed, implemented and monitored through partnership working across the borough where appropriate.

Cycling and walking

17.149 Both KCC and the council are committed to the provision of a comprehensive cycle network for residents and visitors to Maidstone.

17.150 The borough currently has a number of cycle routes that link the town centre to the suburban areas; however connections within the town and further afield are limited and there is a lack of cycle parking at key destinations. Consequently, cycle use in Maidstone is very low, the 2011 Census travel to work data indicated that 1% of work trips were undertaken by bike. However 12% of journeys to work were made on foot.

17.151 The provision of attractive and safe walking and cycling routes with adequate cycle parking will be incorporated within the ITS. The borough's walking environment, its walking routes and its public realm will be developed and improved through local plan policies, the ITS, the IDP, and through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. The Maidstone Cycling Strategy will be developed through the ITS. These strategies and documents will have the aim of increasing the proportion of trips made by walking and cycling in the borough by 2031.

Assessing the transport needs of development

17.152 New developments have the potential to generate a considerable number of vehicular and pedestrian trips which in turn has both a direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. Improvements to public transport, walking, cycling and highway infrastructure to mitigate these impacts need to be in place to ensure the increase in trips generated will not lead to an unacceptable level of transport impact. To further minimise these impacts, measures and initiatives must be incorporated into the design of development to minimise vehicular trip generation. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, developed in accordance with KCC guidance will be expected to accompany all planning applications for new developments that reach the required threshold. New development proposals will also be expected to enter into legal agreements

to mitigate both their direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. The council will also seek to secure Construction Management Plans to minimise impacts from new developments during construction.

Policy DM 24

Sustainable transport

1. Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local highway authority), Highways England, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the Borough Council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy, prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to Maidstone town centre, in order to promote the town as a regionally important transport hub.
2. In doing so, the council and its partners will:
 - i. Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan and facilitates economic prosperity;
 - ii. Manage demand on the transport network through enhanced public transport and the continued Park and Ride services and walking and cycling improvements;
 - iii. Improve highway network capacity and function at key locations and junctions across the borough;
 - iv. Manage parking provision in the town centre and the wider borough to ensure it is fair and proportionate and supports demand management;
 - v. Improve transport choice across the borough and seek to influence travel behaviour;
 - vi. Protect and enhance public rights of way;
 - vii. Develop the strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, including increased bus service frequency along the radial routes into the town centre and its railway stations, particularly in the morning and evening peak travel times;
 - viii. Work with landowners and public transport operators to secure the provision of a new bus interchange facility that is more accessible, user-friendly and fit for purpose;
 - ix. Work with service providers to improve bus links to the rural service centres and larger villages, including route options and frequency;
 - x. Improve strategic links to Maidstone across the county and to wider destinations such as London;
 - xi. Ensure the transport network provides inclusive access for all users; and
 - xii. Address the air quality impact of transport.
3. Development proposals must:

- i. Demonstrate that the impacts of trips generated to and from the development are remedied or mitigated, including where feasible an exploration of delivering mitigation measures ahead of the development being occupied;
- ii. Provide a satisfactory Transport Assessment for proposals that reach the required threshold and a satisfactory Travel Plan in accordance with the threshold levels set by Kent County Council's Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans; and
- iii. Demonstrate that development complies with the requirements of policy DM5 for air quality.

Policy DM25 Public transport

Policy DM 25

Public transport

1. Within the bus and hackney carriage corridors, as defined on the policies map, the council and the highway authority will develop preference measures to improve journey times and reliability and make public transport more attractive, particularly on park and ride routes and the radial routes into the town centre. Such measures will include:
 - i. Bus priority measures at junctions;
 - ii. Prioritisation within traffic management schemes; and/or
 - iii. Enhanced waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities.
2. Proposals for major development will be permitted if adequate provision is made, where necessary and appropriate, within the overall design and site layout for the following facilities for public transport secured through legal agreements:
 - i. Priority or exclusive provision for public service vehicle access to or through the proposed development area;
 - ii. Safe and convenient passenger waiting facilities, information systems and signed pedestrian access routes;
 - iii. Suitable provision for disabled access to the waiting facilities from all parts of the development area; and
 - iv. Suitable provision for disabled access onto buses from the waiting facilities.

Policy DM26 Park and ride sites

Policy DM26

Park and Ride

The following sites, as defined on the policies map, are designated bus Park and Ride sites:

- i. London Road (to serve the A20 west corridor);
- ii. Willington Street (to serve the A20 east corridor).

Policy DM27 Parking standards

17.153 The NPPF gives local planning authorities an option to develop their own vehicle parking standards. Maidstone has approved vehicle parking standards published by Kent Highway Services as an interim measure for development management decisions, and the County gives advice on development proposals that generate a need for parking provision. The Kent parking standards apply to residential development throughout Maidstone Borough, setting maximum standards in town centre and edge of centre locations, and minimum standards in suburban areas and villages. They also apply to non-residential developments and to cycle and motorcycle parking provision. Policy DM27 sets criteria for vehicle parking standards to ensure that new development provides adequate off-street parking to accommodate the need generated by the development and to protect the surrounding area from inappropriate vehicle parking.

17.154 The council adopts a flexible approach to minimum and maximum parking standards to reflect local circumstances and the availability of alternative modes of transport to the private car. It also seeks to encourage innovative designs that can sufficiently demonstrate that a provision lower than the minimum standard is feasible and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding locality.

Policy DM 27

Parking standards

1. Car parking standards for residential development (as set out in Appendix B) will:
 - i. Take into account the type, size and mix of dwellings and the need for visitor parking; and
 - ii. Secure an efficient and attractive layout of development whilst ensuring that appropriate provision for vehicle parking is integrated within it.
2. Vehicle parking for non-residential uses will take into account:

- i. The accessibility of the development and availability of public transport;
 - ii. The type, mix and use of the development proposed;
 - iii. The need to maintain an adequate level of car parking within town centres to ensure that viability of the centres is not compromised; and
 - iv. That development proposals do not exacerbate on street car parking to an unacceptable degree.
3. Cycle parking facilities on new developments will be of an appropriate design and sited in a convenient, safe, secure and sheltered location.
 4. New developments should ensure that proposals incorporate electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- A parking standards supplementary planning document will be produced to expand on how the policy will be implemented.

Policy DM28 Renewable and low carbon energy schemes

17.155 In Maidstone Borough, parts of the natural landscape features and resources mean that there is a technical suitability for the construction of renewable and low carbon energy schemes, such as solar farms, wind farms and biomass. In the longer term, opportunities for such developments may also present themselves in urban areas particularly in relation to larger development schemes.

17.156 These schemes help to reduce regional and national carbon emissions and the council considers that, in the correct locations, such proposals are a benefit to the borough as a whole. Nevertheless, they need to be appropriately sited and not conflict with landscape character or existing uses. The council is keen that while it contributes to bringing about a low carbon future, the process of doing so should not affect the existing amenity of residents and businesses in a harmful way. Living environments should remain appropriate as such and the operation of businesses should not be impeded.

17.157 Where applications are submitted for larger scale renewable or low carbon energy schemes including, but not limited to, solar farms, wind farms and biomass, proposals will be judged on individual merits.

17.158 In January 2014, the council adopted planning policy advice notes⁽²²⁾ which provide technical advice to applicants and guidance on decision making, with regard to solar energy proposals. Where solar energy schemes are proposed, the guidance within the planning policy advice notes should be referenced.

17.159 Further guidance is available in the National Planning Practice Guidance, under the renewable and low carbon energy section.

22 Planning Policy Advice Note: Domestic and medium scale solar PV arrays (up to 50kW) and solar thermal; and Planning Policy Advice Note: Large scale (>50kW) solar PV arrays

Policy DM 28

Renewable and low carbon energy schemes

Applications for larger scale renewable or low carbon energy projects will be required to demonstrate that the following have been taken into account in the design and development of the proposals.

1. The cumulative impact of such proposals in the local area.
2. The landscape and visual impact of development, with particular regard to any impact on, or the setting of, the Kent Downs AONB or the setting of the High Weald AONB.
3. The impact on heritage assets and their setting.
4. The impact of proposals on the amenities of local residents, e.g. noise generated.
5. The impact on the local transport network.
6. The impact on ecology and biodiversity including the identification of measures to mitigate impact and provide ecological or biodiversity enhancement.
7. Preference will be given to existing commercial and industrial premises, previously developed land or agricultural land that is not classified as the best and most versatile.
8. Make provision for the return of the land to its previous use when the installations have ceased operation.

Policy DM29 Electronic communications

17.160 Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure plays a key role in sustainable economic growth, and high speed communication networks, including broadband, are also an important element in the provision of local community facilities and services. The National Planning Policy Framework lends strong support to the expansion of electronic communication networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband.

17.161 The council recognises the importance of such development and similarly adopts a positive approach to such development. New development (residential, employment and commercial) should provide ducting that is available for strategic fibre deployment. Other forms of infrastructure, such as facilities supporting mobile broadband and Wi-Fi, should be included where practicable.

17.162 Certain telecommunications developments do not require planning permission by virtue of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). However, local authorities are able to exercise some control over the siting and appearance of these developments. In these cases, and in the case of telecommunication developments subject to full planning control, the council will apply policy DM29.

17.163 In considering electronic communications development, the council will expect the operator to have regard to the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England (published July 2013) or any subsequent best practice guide. Development should be sited, where possible, to minimise visual impact.

Policy DM 29

Electronic communications

The council supports the expansion of electronic communications networks, including the provision of high speed broadband. Proposals for new masts and antennae by telecommunications and code systems operators will be permitted provided:

1. It has been demonstrated that mast or site sharing is not feasible and that the apparatus cannot be sited on an existing building or other appropriate structure that would provide a preferable environmental solution;
2. It has been demonstrated that an alternative, less environmentally harmful means of providing the same service is not feasible;
3. Every effort has been made to minimise the visual impact of the proposal;
4. Proposals adhere to current Government advice on the health effects of exposure to radio waves; and
5. Consideration has been given to the future demands of network development, including that of other operators.

Policy DM30 Mooring facilities and boat yards

17.164 Mooring facilities and boatyards can provide tourism and recreation facilities which can contribute positively towards the economy. The National Planning Policy Framework lends strong support to the building of a robust economy, including within rural areas. The River Medway, which runs through both the urban and rural parts of Maidstone Borough, is an important asset, which provides opportunities to enhance tourism and recreation facilities through additional and enhanced mooring facilities. The council wishes to safeguard existing boat yards, in order to protect water-based recreation facilities. The

River Medway contributes positively towards a varied range of recreational facilities and this enhances the attractiveness and diversification of the borough for local communities and visitors.

17.165 However, in order to safeguard the rural character of the countryside and the quality of the built environment, it is important that such proposals are limited in scale and that their cumulative impact is not harmful to amenity. Much of the River Medway is seen in the context of highly sensitive townscape and landscapes, such as the Maidstone All Saints' Church Conservation Area, the valley formation of high landscape quality through Teston, East and West Farleigh and the Green Belt at Nettlestead.

17.166 The council will also have regard to the advice of the Environment Agency in assessing flooding issues.

Policy DM 30

Mooring facilities and boat yards

1. Further small scale and short term mooring facilities will be permitted at the following locations subject to the views of the Environment Agency:
 - i. Allington
 - ii. Maidstone town centre
 - iii. Wateringbury
 - iv. East Farleigh
 - v. Yalding
 - vi. Stoneham

And provided that all of the following criteria are met:

- vii. There is no loss of flood plain or land raising;
 - viii. The impact, including cumulative impact, shall preserve landscape quality, ecology and uses of the river and valley in the locality;
 - ix. Proposals create no operational problems for other river users, including fishermen;
 - x. Facilities are provided for disposal of boat toilet contents;
 - xi. The site is capable of being adequately screened and it being possible to provide appropriate landscaping with indigenous species; and
 - xii. The presence of any similar uses in the locality and the combined effect of any such concentration would be acceptable in terms of environmental impact and highway safety.
2. The council will not permit the redevelopment to other uses of boat yards that are in use, or have the potential to be used, in connection with water-based recreation.

Policy DM31 Primary shopping frontages

18.1 The primary shopping frontages are the identified parts of Maidstone town centre where retail uses are concentrated. These primary frontages are shown on the policies map and include the key shopping locations of Fremlin Walk and The Mall together with the connecting stretch of Week Street. In these frontages the proportion of ground floor floorspace ⁽²³⁾ dedicated to retail uses (use class A1) is some 85% or above (at May 2013). This part of the town centre is principally occupied by national retailing chains and is where the town centre's supply of larger shop units (above 500m²) is predominantly found. The attraction of the town centre for shoppers is particularly influenced by the presence of national retailers, and retaining the overall and predominant retail character of this area and a critical mass of such operators is important in sustaining ongoing vitality.

18.2 The large unit occupied by House of Fraser is the key anchor store in Fremlin Walk. It is the largest unit in the town centre (east of the river) and that best suited for a major, modern department store. Retaining such a department store in the town centre will be important in sustaining the centre's continuing attraction as a shopping destination. Recognising this more strategic significance, the House of Fraser unit has been identified as a primary frontage in its own right to control the loss, or partial loss, of this unit to non A1 uses.

18.3 A further important factor in maintaining vitality of the town centre is the presence of associated cafés and restaurants which encourage people to stay in the town centre for longer, as well as banks, building societies and other retail services such as hairdressers and travel agents for both day-to-day and more specialist needs. Allowing shops and cafés to extend their opening hours is a way of attracting people into the town centre later into the evening. As well as retaining the predominant retail character of the central part of the town, existing retail floorspace also contributes to meeting predicted needs for the town centre.

18.4 The objective of policy DM31 is to ensure retail (A1) remains the predominant use in this area. In addition it allows for limited retail-based supporting uses in a manner so as not diminish the overall prime retail purpose of this part of the town centre.

18.5 Following notification to the local planning authority, recent amendments to the General Permitted Development Order (2015) enable A1 premises of less than 150m² floorspace to be temporarily changed to A2 (professional and financial services), A3 (cafés and restaurants) or B1 (offices) without the need for planning permission. This change of use can be enacted for a finite period of two years after which the premises must revert to their previous lawful use. A permanent change of use for beyond the two year period would require the submission of a planning application, and the considerations of policy DM31 would apply.

23 the exception is The Mall where frontage figures for the lower ground floor, ground floor and upper floor have been estimated separately

Policy DM 31

Primary shopping frontages

The primary shopping frontages in Maidstone town centre are shown on the policies map. To ensure that retail (A1) remains the predominant use within the primary shopping frontages, development will be permitted where:

- i. The proposal is for retail (A1) use; or
- ii. The proposal is for a professional and financial services use (A2), a café and restaurant use (A3), a drinking establishment (A4), a community use (D1) or a leisure use (D2) and would not result in the percentage of ground floor retail (A1) floorspace in the frontage block in which the development would be located falling below 85%.

Policy DM32 Secondary shopping frontages

18.6 In the secondary frontage areas, also shown on the policies map, the retail units are generally smaller (under 500m²) and occupied by a mix of both national and local independent retailers. The latter have an important role in adding to the diversity and distinctiveness of the shopping 'offer' in Maidstone town centre. The approach of policy DM32 is to enable a broader range of uses to include professional services (A2), cafés and restaurants (A3) and pubs and wine bars (A4) which contribute to the wider appeal of the town centre. Earl Street in particular has become popular for food and drink outlets making it a destination in its own right.

18.7 A feature of vibrant and attractive town centre streets is the prevalence of entrances and open, glazed frontages to premises at ground floor level. An open frontage to the street, with views in to and out of the premises, is an invaluable way of enlivening the street scene. This is a characteristic of retail type uses, and community and leisure proposals in the secondary shopping areas should also be specifically designed to incorporate such active frontages.

Policy DM 32

Secondary shopping frontages

The secondary shopping frontages in Maidstone town centre are shown on the policies map. Development within the secondary frontages will be permitted where:

- i. The proposal is for a retail use (A1), a professional and financial services use (A2), or a café and restaurant (A3); or
- ii. The proposal is for a drinking establishment (A4) or hot food takeaway (A5) provided the development, either alone or cumulatively with other A4 and A5 uses in the frontage, does not have an adverse impact on

- local amenity, including as a result of fumes, noise, hours of operation or the visual impact of ducting ; or
- iii. The proposal is for a leisure or community use which accords with policy DM33.

In all cases, proposals should establish or retain an 'active frontage' to the street.

Policy DM33 Leisure and community uses in the town centre

18.8 Allowing for a variety of leisure uses (Class D2) to meet growing indoor leisure needs as well as more community uses (class D1) such as health centres, crèches and community centres within the town centre will add to its diversity and will extend both its appeal and periods of activity throughout the day. Allowing these types of uses, including within the secondary shopping area, could similarly increase the prospects of vacant premises being brought into use. It is the case, however, that both these use class are quite broad and cover a wide variety of uses, so the impact of individual uses within the classes may be very different. The degree and nature of those impacts on local amenity need to be assessed as part of the overall assessment of proposals.

18.9 Changes of use can sometimes create concentrations of single uses, where the cumulative effects can also cause local problems. Proposals should be assessed not only on their positive contribution to diversification, but also on their cumulative effects on local amenity.

18.10 Community and leisure proposals in the secondary shopping areas should also be specifically designed to incorporate active frontages which are characteristic of shopping streets and can help to add to their overall vibrancy.

Policy DM 33

Leisure and community uses in the town centre

Proposals for leisure uses (Class D2) and community uses (Class D1) in the town centre which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- i. The development, including in combination with any similar uses in the locality, should not have a significant impact on local amenity, including as a result of noise and hours of operation; and
- ii. The proposal establishes or retains an 'active frontage' to the street.

Policy DM34 Design principles in the countryside

19.1 Policy SP17 sets out the types of development which would be acceptably located within the borough's countryside. The local plan seeks high quality designs in all types of development but policy DM34 sets out additional principles to ensure high quality designs are realised in the borough's countryside.

Policy DM 34

Design principles in the countryside

Outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map, proposals which would create high quality design and meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. Conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the Kent Downs AONB and its setting;
2. Outside of the Kent Downs AONB, not result in harm to the identified landscapes of local value, landscapes which have been shown to have a low capacity to accommodate change, and in all other locations respect the landscape character of the locality;
3. Outside the Kent Downs AONB, not result in harm to landscape of highest value and respect the landscape character of the locality;
4. Not result in unacceptable traffic levels on nearby roads; unsympathetic change to the character of a rural lane which is of landscape, amenity, nature conservation, or historic or archaeological importance or the erosion of roadside verges;
5. Where built development is proposed, there would be no existing building or structure suitable for conversion or re-use to provide the required facilities. Any new buildings should, where practicable, be located adjacent to existing buildings or be unobtrusively located and well screened by existing or proposed vegetation which reflect the landscape character of the area; and
6. Where an extension or alteration to an existing building is proposed, it would be of a scale which relates sympathetically to the existing building and the rural area; respect local building styles and materials; have no significant adverse impact on the form, appearance or setting of the building, and would respect the architectural and historic integrity of any adjoining building or group of buildings of which it forms part.

Account should be taken of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and the Maidstone Borough Landscape Character Guidelines SPD.

Policy DM35 Conversion of rural buildings

19.2 Kent has a long agricultural history, with many buildings and structures having been constructed over the centuries to support the agricultural industry. Government advice in the National Planning Policy Framework supports the re-use of redundant buildings where an enhancement to their setting would result. It also places emphasis upon the building of a strong, rural economy, which the conversion of redundant rural buildings can support.

19.3 However, the quantity and quality of buildings in the countryside in Maidstone borough brings increasing pressure for their re-use. In line with the objective to protect the quality of rural landscapes for their intrinsic value and openness, it is necessary that buildings considered for re-use are of permanent and substantial construction, not requiring major or complete reconstruction and that their resulting form and appearance is in keeping with the simple, functional character inherent in rural areas.

19.4 The quality and condition of rural buildings in the borough varies considerably. This wide range of buildings includes buildings such as oast houses, which are indigenous only to the hop growing areas of the country and exemplify the historical development of agriculture in Kent. Many of these vernacular buildings have a degree of significance which merits consideration as a heritage asset. These functional buildings are often of simple form and character, so external alterations require careful consideration.

19.5 In order to support the objective of promoting a strong, rural economy, the council will allow business or recreation uses for redundant rural buildings. Such uses are of a more functional nature than residential uses, and typically require less physical changes, having a lesser impact upon the countryside and rural character. Residential conversions can be detrimental to the fabric and simple form and character of the building. They therefore require particular attention, in order to prevent a loss of rural character and local identity.

Policy DM 35

Conversion of rural buildings

Outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map, proposals for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The building is of a form, bulk, scale and design which takes account of and reinforces landscape character;
2. The building is of permanent, substantial and sound construction and is capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;
3. Any alterations proposed as part of the conversion are in keeping with the landscape and building character in terms of materials used, design and form;

4. There is sufficient room in the curtilage of the building to park the vehicles of those who will live there without detriment to the visual amenity of the countryside; and
5. No fences, walls or other structures associated with the use of the building or the definition of its curtilage or any sub-division of it are erected which would harm landscape character and visual amenity.

In addition to the criteria above, proposals for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings for commercial, industrial, sport, recreation or tourism uses which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

6. The traffic generated by the new use would not result in the erosion of roadside verges, and is not detrimental to the character of the landscape;
7. In the case of a tourist use, the amenity of future users would not be harmed by the proximity of farm uses or buildings; and
8. In the case of self-catering accommodation a holiday occupancy condition will be attached, preventing their use as a sole or main residence.

Proposals for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings for residential purposes will not be permitted unless the following additional criteria to the above are met:

9. Every reasonable attempt has been made to secure a suitable business re-use for the building;
10. Residential conversion is the only means of providing a suitable re-use for a listed building, an unlisted building of quality and traditional construction which is grouped with one or more listed buildings in such a way as to contribute towards the setting of the listed building(s), or other buildings which contribute to landscape character or which exemplify the historical development of the Kentish landscape; and
11. There is sufficient land around the building to provide a reasonable level of outdoor space for the occupants, and the outdoor space provided is in harmony with the character of its setting.

Policy DM36 Rebuilding and extending dwellings in the countryside

19.6 The intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is an important asset of the borough, which is recognised by the National Planning Policy Framework and the local plan and which is highly sensitive to development. However, in order to support rural communities, a level of flexibility for certain forms of development in rural areas is required.

19.7 In appropriate circumstances, the council will support the rebuilding of a lawful residential dwelling or an extension to an existing dwelling. In considering such proposals, the council will have particular regard to the mass and visual prominence of the resulting building, including the cumulative impact of such changes. The volume of new development will be more critical than its footprint.

19.8 The term 'original dwelling' refers to the dwelling as it was on 1st July 1948 or, if built later, as it was when first erected and granted planning permission.

Policy DM 36

Rebuilding and extending dwellings in the countryside

Outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map, proposals for the replacement of a dwelling in the countryside which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The present dwelling has a lawful residential use;
2. The present dwelling is not the result of a temporary planning permission;
3. The building is not listed;
4. The mass and volume of the replacement dwelling is no more visually harmful than the original dwelling;
5. The replacement dwelling would result in a development which individually or cumulatively is visually acceptable in the countryside; and
6. The replacement dwelling is sited to preclude retention of the dwelling it is intended to replace, or there is a condition or a planning obligation to ensure the demolition of the latter on completion of the new dwelling.

Proposals to extend dwellings in the countryside which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

7. The proposal is well designed and is sympathetically related to the existing dwelling without overwhelming or destroying the original form of the existing dwelling;
8. The proposal would result in a development which individually or cumulatively is visually acceptable in the countryside;

9. The proposal would not create a separate dwelling or one of a scale or type of accommodation that is capable of being used as a separate dwelling; and
10. Proposals for the construction of new or replacement outbuildings (e.g. garages) should be subservient in scale, location and design to the host dwelling and cumulatively with the existing dwelling remain visually acceptable in the countryside.

Policy DM37 Change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden land

19.9 Changes in the agricultural industry sometimes result in vacant agricultural land being sold off as individual plots. In some cases this land is simply retained as open pasture land. However, planning permission is required where agricultural land is used to form an enlarged domestic garden, for example, where land is regularly mown and laid to lawn or used as an outdoor seating and play area.

19.10 Significant swathes of the borough, particularly in the Medway valley and Greensand fruit belt, are graded as high quality agricultural land under the DEFRA classification. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises the benefits of best and most versatile agricultural land. Where agricultural land is highly graded (grade 1 or grade 2) and is functionally well located for agricultural purposes, such that future agricultural use is feasible, the council will seek to resist its irreversible loss to domestic use.

19.11 The change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden land is also, in principle, contrary to the objective of safeguarding the open, rural character of the countryside, which is advocated by the National Planning Policy Framework. The domestication of the countryside, through the replacement of open pasture with lawns, domestic plants and garden furniture is generally harmful to the integrity and character of rural landscapes. This policy will safeguard against inappropriate and excessive extensions to domestic gardens.

19.12 In some cases, applicants may seek development that results in the infill of an area between existing clear boundaries to existing built development. Where development constitutes such infilling and is in keeping with the layout of the existing built environment, the impact upon the countryside is likely to be minimised.

Policy DM 37

Change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden land

Planning permission will be granted for the change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden if there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the countryside and/or the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Policy DM38 Accommodation for agricultural and forestry workers

19.13 The maintenance of land in agricultural use generally aids the preservation of the rural character of the countryside and the rural economy. The National Planning Policy Framework lends strong support to the rural economy and seeks to promote agricultural and land based rural businesses. It also recognises that residential development in the countryside may be justified when there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work.

19.14 In considering whether a dwelling is essential, the council will apply functional and, if appropriate, financial tests. It is the needs of the holding, not the preferences of the individuals concerned, which will determine whether a dwelling is essential or not. The council will condition any planning permission to ensure that proposed dwellings and, where appropriate, existing dwellings remain in agricultural occupancy.

19.15 If a new dwelling is essential to support a new farming activity, whether on a newly created agricultural unit or an established one, it should normally be provided by a caravan or other temporary accommodation for the first three years. This is to ensure that the enterprise is viable and to prevent the retention of unnecessary built development within the countryside.

Policy DM 38

Accommodation for agricultural and forestry workers

Proposals to site a caravan or other form of temporary housing accommodation for an agricultural or forestry worker outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The dwelling and its siting on an agricultural or forestry holding are essential for the efficient development and running of the enterprise there;
2. The need is for accommodation for a full time worker;
3. There is clear evidence that the enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis and that there is a firm intention and ability to develop it;
4. No other housing accommodation is already available locally to meet the need;
5. The necessary accommodation cannot be provided by the conversion of a building on the holding; and
6. The necessary accommodation would be sited with any farmstead or other group of rural buildings on the holding.

Where a temporary planning permission is granted for a dwelling, the council will:

7. Limit the permission to a term of no more than 3 years;
8. Limit the occupation of the accommodation to a person solely or mainly working, or last working in the locality in agriculture or forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person and to any resident dependants;
9. Require the removal of the temporary accommodation within 3 months after the expiry of the permission; and
10. Require the restoration of the site within 12 months after the expiry of the permission in accordance with a scheme agreed with the local planning authority unless a permission is granted for a permanent dwelling there.

Proposals for a new permanent agricultural or forestry dwelling in the countryside outside defined settlement boundaries in support of existing agricultural or forestry activities on well-established units which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

11. There is a clearly established existing functional need for the dwelling;
12. The need relates to a full time worker or one who is primarily employed in agriculture and does not relate to a part time requirement;
13. The unit and the agricultural or forestry activity have been established for at least 3 years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound, and have a clear prospect of remaining so;
14. The functional need could not be fulfilled by another dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the worker(s) concerned; and
15. The new dwelling is no larger in size than is justified by the needs of the enterprise or more expensive to construct than the income of the enterprise can sustain.

The council will limit the occupation of any dwelling to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture or forestry, or a widow of such a person, and to any resident dependents.

In addition to the above criteria, account should be taken of the Kent Farmsteads Guidance and the Kent Downs AONB Farmstead Guidance.

Policy DM39 Live-work units

19.16 A live-work unit is defined as “the genuine and permanent integration of living and working accommodation within a single self-contained unit, where the principal occupier both lives at and works from the property.”

19.17 In terms of the Use Classes Order live-work is “sui generis”, in other words unique or “of its own kind”. Live-work does not therefore fall neatly into any specific class within the Use Classes Order. In practical terms it is a composite use that brings together, within a single unit, residential (use class C3) and workspace. The workspace element would generally be expected to fall within the B1 use class, as, by definition being integral to a living space, the work use undertaken would have to be capable of being carried out in a residential area without detriment to residential amenity.

19.18 In practical terms this usually means use class B1(a) offices, but the work element of live/work could conceivably include small scale B1(c) light industrial use. In some instances it might include uses which do not fall strictly within the B use class such as a treatment room for an alternative health practitioner, or an artists’ studio.

19.19 The construction of new live/work buildings will be restricted to the defined urban area and the defined boundaries of the rural service centres and larger villages. New-build live/work units in the countryside would result in additional development of uses which can be located elsewhere. In the countryside permission will be restricted to appropriate proposals for the conversion and re-use of existing buildings.

19.20 If a large extension to the building would be necessary to provide appropriate workspace and living accommodation planning permission will not be granted. The council’s policy on rural building conversions to create live-work units relates to the re-use of existing buildings, not to the extension and re-use of rural buildings.

19.21 It is also important that a conversion creates a workspace which can accommodate a genuine business use. The workspace element of a conversion should be at least 30% of the total floorspace. While the policy refers to an ancillary residential use it is not considered that this means that the employment premises must be larger than the residential accommodation and a 30% designation will normally be acceptable provided that the resulting employment premises are sufficient to accommodate a genuine business use.

19.22 Nevertheless, the employment premises are of primary importance in terms of a live-work conversion; it is on this basis that permission would be granted for a conversion scheme and occupation of the ancillary residential accommodation is always tied to the use of these employment premises. The calculation of floorspace in the rural building will include ground and first floor accommodation.

19.23 For conversion and re-use applications, the council will require a full application, with detailed drawings of elevations showing the impact of the conversion on the building and its setting. Permitted development rights for subsequent alterations will normally be withdrawn.

19.24 The occupancy of the living space on new-build or conversion schemes will be restricted to a person directly involved with the business being operated. The council will impose a condition prohibiting occupation of the living accommodation until after the works necessary for the establishment of an employment generating use have been completed. The council will also impose a condition which retains the workspace.

Policy DM 39

Live-work units

1. The construction of new-build live-work units will be restricted to the defined urban area and settlement boundaries of the rural service centres and larger villages. New-build live-work units outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map will not be permitted.
2. Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to employment generating uses with ancillary living accommodation which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - i. The building is of a form, bulk and general design which is in keeping with its rural surroundings;
 - ii. The building is of permanent, substantial and sound construction and is capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;
 - iii. Any alterations proposed as part of the conversion are in keeping with the rural character of the building in terms of detailed design, form and materials;
 - iv. There is sufficient room in the curtilage of the building to park the vehicles of those who will live there without detriment to the visual amenity of the countryside;
 - v. No fences, walls or other structures associated with the use of the building or the definition of its curtilage or any sub-division of it are erected which would harm the visual amenity of the countryside;
 - vi. The proposals are well related to the existing road network with direct access off a public road, and will not require construction of a new long track to serve the building;
 - vii. The proposals will not create conditions prejudicial to highway safety;
 - viii. The building is not situated in an isolated location, relative to local services such as shops, schools and public transport;
 - ix. The domestic curtilage is minimal, unobtrusive and capable of being screened;
 - x. The building is of sufficient size to accommodate a genuine business use and that any residential accommodation will be ancillary to that use; The workspace element of the conversion should comprise at least 30% of the total floorspace; and
 - xi. The development is not situated in the farmyard of a working farm where conversion would prejudice the future operation of a farming business.

3. The council will impose a condition prohibiting occupation of the living accommodation until after the works necessary for the establishment of an employment generating use have been completed. The council will also impose a condition which retains the workspace.

Policy DM40 New agricultural buildings and structures

19.25 Certain agricultural and forestry developments do not require planning permission provided that the development falls within one of the categories set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). However, most of these permitted developments need to be submitted to the council for their prior approval of siting, design and external appearance. Developments that are not covered by this Order require planning permission in the usual way. The National Planning Policy Framework lends strong support to the rural economy and seeks to promote agricultural and land based rural businesses. The maintenance of land in agricultural use generally aids the preservation of the rural character of the countryside and the rural economy.

19.26 Whilst the council generally seeks a positive approach towards agricultural development, it is important to ensure that new development is justified and appropriately sited, in order to minimise the impact upon the openness, character and appearance of the countryside. Development will be required to comply with Policy DM34 Design principles in the countryside.

19.27 In recent years, changing consumer demands and production techniques have seen an increase in the use of polytunnels or other similar semi-permanent structures for cultivation purposes in the countryside. Such structures can have a significant visual impact on the landscape and due to their impermeable nature can result in increased surface water run-off. There is also a concern that such development has an impact on biodiversity. These potential negative impacts should however, be seen against the benefit that an increased growing season can have for the rural economy and the increased period where locally grown produce is available thus reducing reliance on imported produce.

Policy DM 40

New agricultural buildings and structures

Proposals for new agricultural buildings or structures on land in use for agricultural trade or business which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The proposal is necessary for the purposes of agriculture;
2. The proposal would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of existing residents;
3. The building or structure would be located within or adjacent to an existing group of buildings, in order to mitigate against the visual impact

of development, unless it can be demonstrated that a more isolated location is essential to meet the needs of the holding. Where an isolated location is essential the site should be chosen to minimise the impact of the building or structure on the character and appearance of the countryside; and

4. In the case of polytunnel development in addition to the above, the council will expect proposals to address the following issues:
 - i. How surface water run-off will be dealt with and controlled;
 - ii. The inclusion of a rotation programme for the covering/uncovering of the structures/frames, which explores the possibility of following the seasons; and
 - iii. The inclusion of a programme for the maintenance and enhancement of existing field margins in the interests of encouraging biodiversity.

Policy DM41 Expansion of existing businesses in rural areas

19.28 There are already many industrial and business enterprises located in rural areas. Some are long established, others normally small-scale, have been granted planning permission to operate in disused rural buildings. Many of these enterprises will over time need to expand and/or diversify. While such expansion is desirable for job creation, it can radically change the nature of the enterprise and its impact on the local environment. It is therefore important to weigh carefully the advantages to the rural economy of job creation or an improved industrial/business facility against the potential for an adverse impact on the rural environment. Where significant adverse impacts would result, rural businesses requiring expanded premises should look to relocate to one of the Economic Development Areas identified in policy DM21 or to a site within Maidstone urban area or one of the rural service centres.

19.29 In all cases where permission for expansion is granted, the council will require reasonable measures to be taken to ameliorate the impact, not only of the extension but also of the existing enterprise, on the local environment. Such measures, where required, will normally be considered essential for the grant of permission. Where necessary, planning agreements may be used to secure environmental improvements. Conditions will also be imposed to ensure there is adequate landscaping, parking and servicing provision.

Policy DM 41

Expansion of existing businesses in rural areas

Where significant adverse impacts on the rural environment and amenity would result from expansion, rural businesses requiring expanded premises should look to relocate to one of the Economic Development Areas identified in policy DM21 or to a site within Maidstone urban area or one of the rural service centres. Where it is demonstrated that there would be no significant

adverse impacts on the rural environment or amenity or that relocation cannot be achieved, the expansion of existing industrial or business enterprises which are currently located outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map will be permitted where;

1. There is no significant increase in the site area of the enterprise. Minor increases and rounding off the existing site will be acceptable;
2. There is no significant addition of new buildings. New buildings may be permitted, provided they are small in scale and provided the resultant development as a whole is appropriate in scale for the location and can be satisfactorily integrated into the local landscape;
3. The increase in floorspace would not result in unacceptable traffic levels on nearby roads or a significant increase in use of an existing substandard access;
4. The new development, together with the existing facilities, will not result in an unacceptable loss in the amenity of the area. In particular the impact on nearby properties and the appearance of the development from public roads will be of importance; and
5. The open storage of materials can be adequately screened from public view throughout the year.

Policy DM42 Holiday caravan and camp sites

19.30 Holiday caravan and camp sites provide alternative forms of accommodation which can add to the tourist attraction of the borough. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises the importance of sustainable tourism for a prosperous rural economy. However, the provision of tourist facilities must be balanced against the need to protect the quality of the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty. Holiday caravan and camp sites should be located outside the borough's most sensitive landscape areas, in particular outside the Kent Downs AONB, and should not be prominent in the landscape and should be well screened.

19.31 In order to prevent the creation of isolated residential uses in rural areas, which would conflict with the aims of sustainable development, a holiday occupancy condition will be attached to any planning permissions.

Policy DM 42

Holiday caravan and camp sites

1. Proposals for sites for the stationing of holiday caravans and/or holiday tents outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map will be permitted where;

- i. The proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss in the amenity of the area. In particular the impact on nearby properties and the appearance of the development from public roads will be of importance;
 - ii. The site would be unobtrusively located and well screened by existing or proposed vegetation and would be landscaped with indigenous species.
2. A holiday occupancy condition will be attached to any permission, preventing use of any unit as a permanent encampment.

Policy DM43 Caravan storage in the countryside

19.32 In many cases, it is impractical to store private caravans within the curtilage of dwellings. However, open storage of caravans can be an intrusive feature of rural landscapes. Within Maidstone Borough, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a highly sensitive and open landscape of national importance. In this area, the council will resist proposals for open storage of caravans, in order to preserve the quality of this valued landscape. In other locations, such development should be appropriately screened and sited, where it would not be isolated or prominent in the landscape.

Policy DM 43

Caravan storage in the countryside

Proposals for the open storage of private caravans outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map which meet the following criteria will be permitted where:

1. The site lies outside the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting;
2. Prior to use of the site commencing, it is comprehensively screened, where possible with indigenous species, on a year round basis. The screening may include bunds, tree and shrub planting and fencing in appropriate locations, and there will be no unacceptable impact on the landscape or environment;
3. Security arrangements would not be intrusive. In the case of lighting this will be used only where demonstrably required and will be directional so as to minimise light pollution;
4. The proposal would not result in a concentration of sites; and
5. The proposal is situated close to existing built development, including residential accommodation.

Policy DM44 Retail units in the countryside

19.33 The creation and expansion of rural businesses can contribute towards a prosperous rural economy. However, whilst promoting a strong rural economy, the National Planning Policy Framework also recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, which is a valuable asset. Retail development in the countryside, if not strictly controlled, can also run counter to the objectives of sustainable development, by creating additional journeys to rural locations and potentially impacting on village shops. It is therefore necessary to restrict development to that which primarily actively supports the maintenance of land in agricultural and other appropriate land based uses, such as farm shops primarily retailing produce at, and produced upon, their holding.

19.34 In considering such development, the council will view positively proposals where a significant proportion of produce, in terms of turnover, would originate upon the farm holding where it would be sold and, in granting planning permission, will consider the imposition of conditions to restrict the type of goods and extent of produce which does not originate upon the holding, for sustainability reasons. The council will seek to resist retail proposals in rural locations where the business case is not considered to justify such a location.

Policy DM 44

Retail units in the countryside

1. Proposals involving retail sales of fresh produce at the point of production (or originating from the farm holding) outside defined settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - i. A significant proportion, based on annual turnover, of the range of goods offered for sale continues to be fresh produce grown and sold on the farm holding in question;
 - ii. The range of any additional sale goods would be restricted to agricultural produce and the offer for sale of other goods, including packaged or preserved food products, would not exceed a minimal level;
 - iii. The proposal would not demonstrably damage the viability of district centres and village shops; and
 - iv. Re-use or adapt appropriate farm buildings where they are available; new buildings will only be considered exceptionally.
2. In granting planning permission for farm shops, the council may impose conditions to restrict the amount of produce which originates outside the farm holding in which the proposed development is located and also to restrict the proportion of non food and other items to be sold, unless the proposal provides for a more sustainable alternative for the local community.

Policy DM45 Equestrian development

19.35 Horse riding remains a popular leisure activity in the borough. The National Planning Policy Framework advises that recreational facilities can make an important contribution to health and wellbeing of communities. Whether planning permission is needed for the use of land and buildings for horses and equestrian activities depends on whether the horses are used for agricultural, recreational or commercial purposes. The use of land for grazing (which is part of the definition of agriculture in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) is widely taken to include the grazing of horses and so does not require planning permission. The need for planning permission arises when horses are kept on the land. Horses are considered to be 'kept' when their food is supplemented over and above any grazing that takes place or shelter is provided for them. This can be in the form of stables or field shelters. If these circumstances exist the land is no longer used for agricultural purposes but is used for the keeping of horses. Planning permission is necessary for this change of use.

19.36 In order to protect the openness of the countryside, the use of existing buildings is preferred to the erection of new structures for equestrian purposes. Where this is not possible, the scale, siting and finish should be chosen to minimise visual impact and avoid prominent and isolated development. The proposed development should not be of a degree of permanence that could be adapted for other use in the future. Consideration must also be given to the security and safety of the animals being kept upon the land. For commercial proposals (10 stables or more), the council will only grant consent where the manager or owner of the animals makes adequate provision for the security of the site.

Policy DM 45

Equestrian development

Proposals for domestic or commercial stables or associated equestrian development which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The conversion of existing buildings would be used in preference to new built development;
2. New stables and associated buildings would be grouped with existing buildings on the site wherever possible, and are not of a degree of permanence that could be adapted for other use in the future;
3. The cumulative impact of the proposed equestrian development has been shown to be considered, and where appropriate this has been mitigated;
4. All new development is of a design which is sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of scale, materials, colour and details;

5. Proposals will include lighting only where it can be proven to be necessary;
6. The proposal is accompanied by an integral landscaping scheme including boundary treatments which reflect the landscape character of the area;
7. The proposal contains an appropriately sited and designed area for the reception of soiled bedding materials and provision for foul and surface water drainage;
8. Adequate provision is made for the safety and comfort of horses in terms of size of accommodation and land for grazing and exercising;
9. The site would have easy access to bridleways and/or the countryside; and
10. For proposals of 10 stables or more, adequate provision is made for the security of the site in terms of the location of the proposed development in relation to the manager or owner of the animals.

Policy ID1 Infrastructure delivery

Providing the infrastructure needed to support growth

20.1 Infrastructure can be separated into three main categories; physical infrastructure (such as highways and public realm improvements), community infrastructure (such as schools, adult social services and cultural facilities) and green infrastructure (such as play spaces, natural and semi-natural open space, and sports pitches).

20.2 The local plan shapes where new development should be located and also manages the pressure relating to speculative proposals through policy. It will provide new homes, jobs, services and thereby support social, economic and environmental objectives. The impact of development on local communities and the fabric of the existing built and natural environment is an important consideration. Managing this impact involves protecting existing infrastructure and securing the timely investment in new infrastructure.

20.3 The council has actively engaged with the main providers of infrastructure including parish councils at the rural service centres and larger villages and has a good understanding of existing infrastructure in the borough and its associated constraints to further development. The product of this engagement process is the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which sets out the type, location and phasing of the infrastructure required to support the overall strategy for development in the local plan. It also details those who have responsibility for delivering the infrastructure, potential funding sources and estimated delivery timescales.

20.4 Where new development creates a need for new or improved site specific infrastructure, provision of such infrastructure or contributions will be sought from developers (through S.106 legal agreements) to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The key requirements of dedicated planning agreements are that they must be:

- Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.

20.5 Site specific infrastructure requirements arise when there is a direct link between development and supporting infrastructure that is required to make the development happen. It will often be provided within the development site boundary or may need to be provided adjacent to the site or in another off-site location. In some instances, perhaps due to site constraints or other considerations, it will be most appropriate to seek financial contributions through section 106 legal agreements in lieu of on-site/off-site provision.

20.6 In Maidstone Borough, some forms of infrastructure provision have historically not kept pace with development. This has been a contributory factor to some issues such as a congested road network, a shortage of affordable housing, deficiencies in open space provision and poor access to key community facilities in certain areas. There is concern that future growth will intensify this problem unless a co-ordinated effort is made to ensure that essential infrastructure accompanies new development at all times.

20.7 Where there are competing demands for contributions towards the delivery of infrastructure, secured through section 106 legal agreements, the council will prioritise these demands in the manner listed below:

Infrastructure priorities for residential development:

1. Affordable housing
2. Transport
3. Open space
4. Public realm
5. Health
6. Education
7. Social services
8. Utilities
9. Libraries
10. Emergency services
11. Flood defences

Infrastructure priorities for business and retail development

1. Transport
2. Public realm
3. Open space
4. Education
5. Utilities
6. Flood defences

20.8 There is a trend towards greater home working which allows for a reduced impact on transport infrastructure. In order to facilitate this option, developers of new sites will be encouraged to install optic cables (or the latest technology infrastructure) to serve new occupants.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

20.9 It is important to ensure that there is a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable in a timely fashion. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides the evidence that the council has an understanding of the infrastructure required to support delivery of the local plan, and how/when/where infrastructure will be provided. Funding for the infrastructure schemes listed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is expected to comprise a number of components:

- Existing resources (i.e. current/outstanding Section 106 Contributions)
- New Homes Bonus
- Mainstream public funding (e.g. Local Growth Fund, Local Sustainable Transport Fund)
- Future site specific provision (Including Section 106 contributions)
- Community Infrastructure Levy

20.10 The finance from the first four funding sources listed above will not be sufficient to fund the total amount of infrastructure provision that is being sought. The Community Infrastructure Levy is intended to reduce the funding gap that exists once existing resources (to the extent that they are known) have been

taken into account. If a funding shortfall remains once the CIL charging levy is determined there will be a need to prioritise key infrastructure projects to ensure that the overall strategy within the local plan can be delivered. The list of key infrastructure projects considered necessary to support the local plan (identified through consultation with infrastructure providers) is included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which accompanies this document. Transport based schemes form the majority of the delivery plan, which reflects a need to address an historic underspend on transport infrastructure in Maidstone Borough. Financing transport based schemes through CIL is considered a council priority.

20.11 The local plan focuses development at the Maidstone urban area, the rural service centres and larger villages. Infrastructure is needed at a strategic level to support this growth. Strategic elements of the infrastructure required will be provided for by the Community Infrastructure Levy. This could include but is not limited to:

- Environmental improvements to Maidstone town centre;
- Improvements needed to transport infrastructure particularly in Maidstone urban area;
- Additional education and community facilities or expansion to existing facilities; and
- Strategic open space requirements.

20.12 New development will add incrementally to the need for strategic infrastructure. The Community Infrastructure Levy allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new development within the council's area. This is a fair, transparent and accountable levy which will be payable by the majority of new housing developments. The levy gives developers a clear understanding of what financial contribution will be expected towards the delivery of infrastructure. Some types of development are automatically exempt from the charge and the council can determine whether to charge the levy for other forms of development.

20.13 As the council moves towards developing its Community Infrastructure Levy it will need to make decisions about which types of development it wishes to place the charge on. Proceeds from the levy will be applied to identified projects within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, with contributions being pooled and generally applied on an off-site basis.

20.14 The council will produce a Charging Schedule setting out the levy rate(s). Viability testing will be undertaken to ensure a levy is set that strikes an appropriate balance between the desirability of funding infrastructure from the levy and the potential impacts of the levy on the viability of development across the borough. Once the levy is set, it will be applied to all development that meets the qualifying criteria.

20.15 Section 106 Agreements will continue to be used for site specific infrastructure on development sites, such as local provision of open space, habitat protection, flood mitigation, access roads and sustainable transport infrastructure.

20.16 Exceptionally, where developers face genuinely abnormal costs or for any other reason consider that paying the normal contribution towards infrastructure costs would seriously threaten the viability of a development, the council will be prepared to consider requests for a reduction subject to an "open book" approach being adopted.

20.17 Provision of affordable and local needs housing is dealt with in detail in policies DM13 and DM14 respectively.

Policy ID 1

Infrastructure Delivery

1. Where development creates a requirement for new or improved infrastructure beyond existing provision, developers will be expected to provide or contribute towards the additional requirement being provided to an agreed delivery programme. In certain circumstances where proven necessary, the council may require that infrastructure is delivered ahead of the development being occupied.
2. Detailed specifications of the site specific contributions required are included in the site allocation policies. Development proposals should seek to make provision for all the land required to accommodate any additional infrastructure arising from that development. Dedicated Planning Agreements (S.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990) will be used to provide the range of site specific facilities which will normally be provided on-site but may where appropriate be provided in an off-site location or via an in-lieu financial contribution. In some cases, separate agreements with utility providers may be required.
3. Where developers consider that providing or contributing towards the infrastructure requirement would have serious implications for the viability of a development, the council will require an "open book" approach and, where necessary, will operate the policy flexibly.
4. Where there are competing demands for contributions towards the delivery of infrastructure, secured through section 106 legal agreements, the council will prioritise these demands in the manner listed below:
Infrastructure priorities for residential development:
 - i. Affordable housing
 - ii. Transport
 - iii. Open space
 - iv. Public realm
 - v. Health
 - vi. Education
 - vii. Social services
 - viii. Utilities
 - ix. Libraries

- x. Emergency Services
- xi. Flood defences

Infrastructure priorities for business and retail development:

- xii. Transport
- xiii. Public realm
- xiv. Open space
- xv. Education
- xvi. Utilities
- xvii. Flood defences

This list serves as a guide to the council's prioritisation process, although it is recognised that each site and development proposal will bring with it its own issues that could mean an alternate prioritisation is used.

5. The Community Infrastructure Levy will be used to secure contributions to help fund the strategic infrastructure needed to support the sustainable growth proposed in Maidstone Borough set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Once the levy is set, it will be applied to all development that meets the qualifying criteria. A framework for decision making on the allocation of CIL receipts will be developed alongside the CIL Charging Schedule.

Monitoring

21.1 Local plan policies are set out to deliver sustainable growth to meet identified needs for housing and employment and associated infrastructure, and to conserve and enhance the borough's built and natural heritage. The plan aspires to improve Maidstone's standing in terms of retail and economic development performance whilst also promoting increased use of the borough's cultural and heritage assets and its green spaces.

21.2 An effective and robust monitoring framework is essential to ensure that the plan not only facilitates the delivery of the amount and type of development that is required, and in the right place and at the right time, but also protects and enhances those aspects of the historic and natural environment that contribute to the form and character of the borough. In developing the local plan allocations and policies, the council has been aware of the risks to delivery and has sought to mitigate these through: a dispersed development strategy which allows a range of landowners and developers the opportunity to contribute to development in the borough; the promotion of sites which are known to be available; and understanding viability and operating a positive and flexible approach where it can be demonstrated that viability would hamper delivery.

21.3 The results of monitoring will enable the council to understand the progress being made towards the local plan objectives and targets and how the local plan is contributing to the delivery of the corporate objectives set out in the Maidstone Borough Council Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

21.4 Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's desire to "boost significantly the supply of housing" and hence there must be a strong focus on housing delivery in the monitoring framework. The council will monitor delivery of its 20 year housing trajectory and its 5 year supply position as well as its supply of pitches to meet its need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.

21.5 Given its aspirations for growth, the council will also monitor the delivery of employment opportunities by measuring the net additional floorspace created either by new construction or change of use.

21.6 Key supporting infrastructure requirements are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which also indicates potential funding sources for each project. It will be vital to robustly monitor delivery of identified schemes in order to support housing and economic development growth during the plan period.

21.7 The council is also keen to protect and enhance the historic and natural environment and the state of the environment will form part of the monitoring targets.

21.8 The following sections illustrate the monitoring framework for both the local plan policies and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The results of the monitoring will be set out in monitoring reports which will be updated annually and published on the council's website.

Local plan performance targets

Housing completions and distribution

21.9 A number of elements are contained within plan policies that contribute to housing delivery. The local plan sets targets for the number of new homes that are required to meet objectively assessed housing needs in the period 2011-31 with the identified settlements in the hierarchy all making a contribution to the overall housing target. Provision of sufficient housing underpins the social dimension of sustainable development as identified in the National Planning Policy Framework.

21.10 The Housing Information Audit, completed annually, updates the housing land supply position, and informs progress against the housing trajectory set out in the plan and the five-year supply position. The housing delivery indicators will be monitored through the annual monitoring reports. Consideration of appeal decisions and planning consents granted will also aid monitoring of certain indicators.

Key Monitoring Indicator 1

Performance indicator: Actual housing development completed compared with the housing trajectory.

Related policies: SS1; H1; H1(1) – H1(68); H2; H2(1) – H2(3); RMX1; RMX1(1) – RMX1(4); DM9; DM10; DM35; DM38; DM39

Targets:

Number of dwellings			
2011-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	2027-2031
4,640	4,640	4,640	4,640

Retain a 5 year supply of housing land throughout the plan period.

Affordable housing

21.11 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies the borough's affordable housing need, as well as its objectively assessed need for market housing. Affordability is a major issue in the south-east of England, and the plan will need to deliver a significant quantum of affordable housing during its lifetime, recognising, too, the need for varying tenures to meet specific needs.

21.12 Delivery of affordable housing will be measured through the annual Housing Information Audit, and will be reported in the annually produced monitoring reports.

Key Monitoring Indicator 2

Performance indicators: Affordable housing development completed as a percentage of total dwellings completed; and affordable housing development permitted as a percentage of total dwellings permitted.

Related policies: DM13; DM14

Target:

Number of affordable homes as a percentage of all dwellings completed and permitted	
Maidstone urban area	30%
Policy H1(11) Springfield, Royal Engineers Road	20%
Countryside, rural service centres and larger villages	40%

Nursing and residential care homes

21.13 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment also sets out an objectively assessed need for the provision of care home accommodation (C2 use class) for the plan period. With a recognised growth in the population of those over the age of 75, it is important for the plan to monitor the provision of such housing.

Key Monitoring Indicator 3

Performance indicator: Actual new nursing and residential care home accommodation completed as set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Related policies: DM15

Target:

Nursing and residential care home bedspaces			
2011-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	2027-2031
245	245	245	245

Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

21.14 The plan sets out target figures for the provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers as well as for Travelling Showpeople. These targets will be monitored.

Key Monitoring Indicator 4

Performance indicator: Actual Gypsies and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots provided compared with the need identified in the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.

Related policies: DM16; GT1; GT1(1) - GT1(16)

Targets:

Gypsy and Traveller pitches			
2011-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	2027-2031
105	25	27	30

Travelling Showpeople plots			
2011-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	2027-2031
7	1	1	2

Housing density

21.15 The Local Plan seeks to make effective use of land in order to achieve housing targets and it is important that this is monitored.

Key Monitoring Indicator 5

Performance indicator: Actual densities achieved on allocated and windfall sites compared with the densities set out in the local plan.

Related policies: DM12; H1(1) – H1(68); H2; H2(1) – H2(3); RMX1; RMX1(1) – RMX1(4)

Target:

Delivery of allocated sites at the indicative density in the site policy and windfall sites at densities set within Policy DM12.

Quality design

21.16 The local plan seeks to achieve high quality design for all types of development which is appropriate to the local context and it is important that progress in achieving such requirements of the local plan are being met.

Key Monitoring Indicator 6

Performance indicator: Delivery of site allocations in accordance with specified policy criteria for design.

Related policies: DM1; DM34; H1(1) – H1(68); H2; H2(1) – H2(3); RMX1; RMX1(1) – RMX1(4)

Target:

Delivery of site allocations in accordance with specified policy criteria for design.

Economic development delivery

21.17 To balance the growth in housing it will be imperative to ensure sufficient growth in both employment opportunities, through the provision of floorspace to accommodate both expansion of existing and new businesses, and an adequate supply of comparison and convenience retail provision. Making sufficient land available for employment uses forms the economic role in the three dimensions of sustainability identified in the National Planning Policy Framework.

21.18 Monitoring of the provision of employment floorspace will be undertaken through the Commercial Information Audit which will be completed annually and published in monitoring reports on the council's website.

Key Monitoring Indicator 7

Performance indicator: Actual economic development and retail floorspace completed compared with the local plan target.

Related policies: SS1; SP1 – SP10; RMX1; RMX1(1) – RMX1(4); EMP1; EMP(1) – EMP(5); DM20; DM21; DM35; DM39; DM41; DM44

Targets:

Office (m ²)			
2011-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	2027-2031
9,957	9,957	9,957	9,957

Industry (m ²)			
2011-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	2027-2031
5,073	5,073	5,073	5,073

Warehouse (m ²)			
2011-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	2027-2031
12,478	12,478	12,478	12,478

Retail (m ²)				
	2016	2021	2026	2031
Comparison (cumulative)	5,550	12,400	18,800	23,700
Convenience (cumulative)	3,700	4,400	5,250	6,100

Provision of Recreational Open Space

21.19 Equally important in terms of sustainability is the provision of sufficient publicly accessible recreational open space within the settlements in the hierarchy. The local plan sets delivery standards for quantity, quality and accessibility to ensure that as well as housing, future development sites also provide opportunities for promoting social interaction and inclusion in communities. Delivery will be monitored using planning application information, and will be updated in the monitoring reports annually.

Key Monitoring Indicator 8

Performance indicator: Actual publicly accessible open space provided compared with the Local Plan allocations.

Related policies: OS1; SP1 – SP10; RMX1(1); RMX1(4); EMP1(4); DM22

Target:

Delivery of quantity of open space required on allocated housing sites and as allocated in Policy OS1.

Transport and Air Quality

21.20 The urban area suffers from congestion during peak travel times and is reliant on a system of old roads and a one-way system. The improvement scheme planned for the Bridge Gyratory system which should be implemented during 2016 will alleviate some of the congestion but will not solve all of the existing problems.

21.21 An Integrated Transport Strategy supports the local plan and promotes a range of measures including highway junction capacity improvements and sustainable public transport improvements to mitigate increased journeys that will be associated with a growth in housing and employment in the identified settlements. Coupled with the promotion of modal shift toward increased walking and cycling, the council aims to proportionally reduce car-based trips.

21.22 There are a number of identified Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) in the borough and the council will work to mitigate the impact of transport on these areas. The emerging Low Emissions Strategy will focus on actions to address the levels of pollutants in hot-spots across Maidstone and has given consideration to the Integrated Transport Strategy and local plan in its preparation.

Key Monitoring Indicator 9

Performance indicators: Delivery of transport air quality initiatives and changes in air quality in Air Quality Management Areas.

Related policies: DM24 - DM26; DM5

Targets:

Delivery of transport schemes listed within the Integrated Transport Strategy and those proposals required in association with developing allocated sites.

100% of applications to submit a travel plan in accordance with the threshold levels set by Kent County Council's Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans.

100% of applications which likely to have a negative impact on air quality within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area to provide an Emissions Statement identifying how these emissions will be minimised and mitigated.

100% of applications in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas or of a sufficient scale to impact local communities incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact.

Built and natural environment

21.23 The local plan seeks to protect and enhance those aspects of the historic and natural environment that contribute to the distinctive character of the borough. It is important to monitor whether environmental assets are being retained whilst accommodating growth.

Key Monitoring Indicator 10

Performance indicator: The retention of designated assets.

Related policies: DM1; DM3; DM16; DM30; DM34

Targets:

No loss of listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments, ancient woodlands, veteran trees, or sites of archaeological interest.

No reduction in the extent of Conservation Areas due to insensitive development.

No housing development permitted in areas liable to flood where contrary to Environment Agency recommendations.

Local services and infrastructure

21.24 The Local Plan seeks to retain district and local centres and community facilities to serve villages and local neighbourhoods and these will be further supported by new development. It will be important to monitor any decline in local provision.

21.25 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the individual infrastructure schemes that are required to facilitate the operation of development schemes, how they will be delivered, who is responsible, the anticipated timescale, the level of importance and the associated level of risk. Successful implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is critical to the delivery of the local plan, so it is important to monitor progress with a view to taking any action to ensure successful delivery, or a satisfactory alternative, should the need arise.

Key Monitoring Indicator 11

Performance indicators: The number of shops and community uses within designated District and Local Centres, and delivery of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Related policies: DM18; DM23; IDP1

Targets:

No change in the number of shops and community uses within designated District and Local Centres.

Delivery of each of the identified schemes within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan on schedule.

Review of the Local Plan

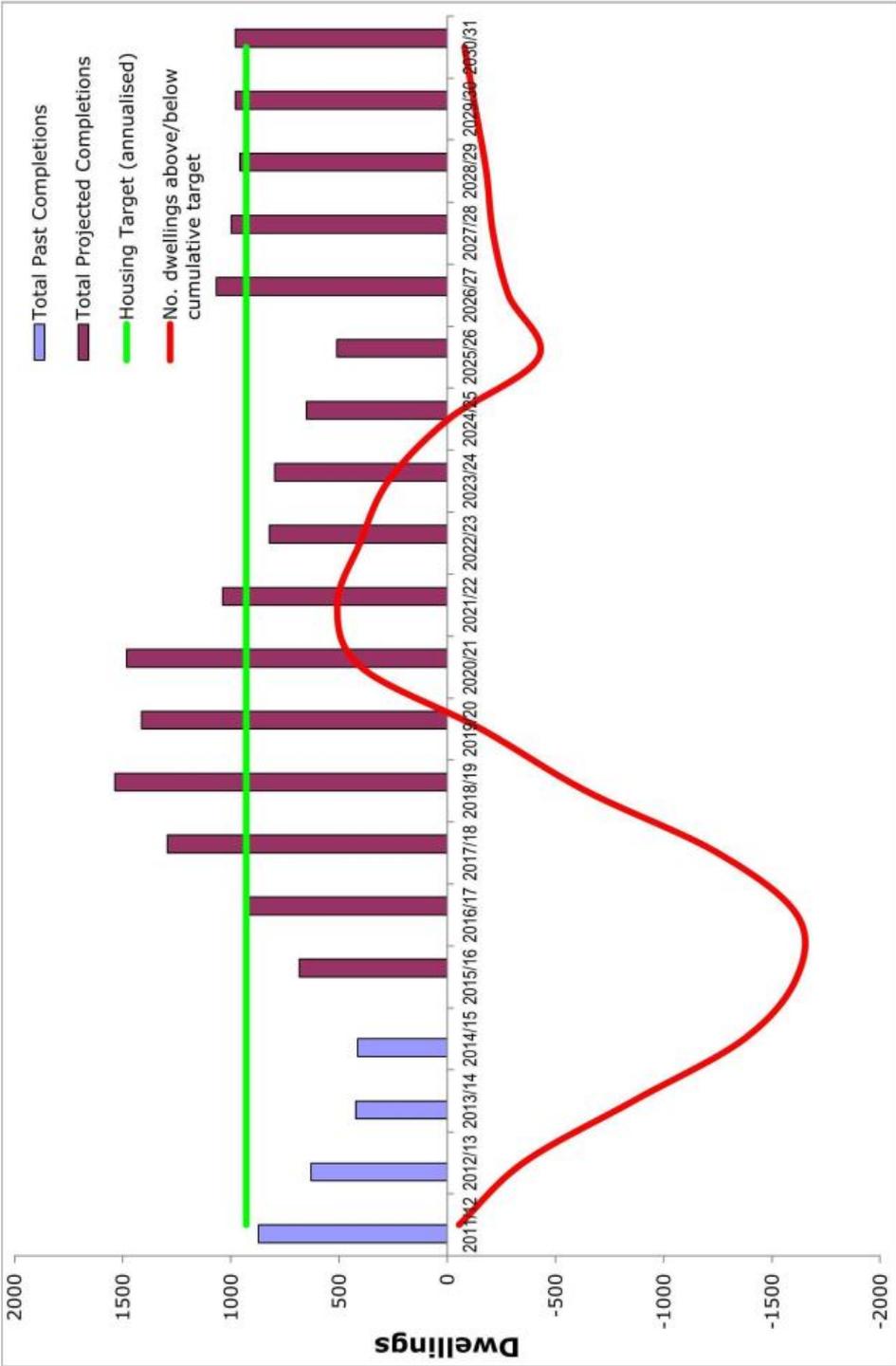
21.26 It is important to ensure that an up-to-date planning policy framework is maintained to help meet identified need and coordinate well planned development and supporting infrastructure.

21.27 The council is confident that the Local Plan can deliver the substantial growth required to meet objectively assessed need over the plan period. Existing planning consents and development interest and activity clearly demonstrate that substantial development will be delivered in the earlier parts of the plan period. Allocations in the local plan offer a degree of certainty to developers and a dispersed approach to site allocations allows a range of landowners and developers the opportunity to contribute to development in the borough. When considering proposals, the Borough Council takes a positive approach to sustainable development which reflects the NPPF. The local plan seeks a number of benefits from development but retains a flexible approach where it can be demonstrated that viability would hamper delivery.

21.28 Progress in delivery into the longer term will depend on a number of factors, including national and international economic and environmental factors. Similarly, the need for development and the planning policy context may shift as the longer term is reached.

21.29 The council will monitor policies in the plan annually following its adoption using this framework. Monitoring of the key local plan targets will indicate if there is a need to amend the approach in parts of the plan.

21.30 For these reasons, the council considers it prudent to commence a review the plan, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and its supporting evidence in a timely manner and a review of the local plan will commence in 2022.



Residential parking standards (policy DM27)

Location	Town centre	Edge of centre	Suburban	Suburban edge/ village/ rural
On-street controls	On-street controls preventing all (or all long stay) parking	On-street controls, resident's scheme and/or existing saturation (Note 3)	No, or very limited, on-street controls	No on-street controls, but possibly a tight street layout
Nature of guidance	Maximum (Note 1)	Maximum	Minimum (Note 6)	Minimum (Note 6)
1 & 2 bed flats	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Form	Controlled (Note 2)	Not allocated	Not allocated	Not allocated
1 & 2 bed houses	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1.5 spaces per unit
Form	Controlled (Note 2)	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible
3 bed houses	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1.5 spaces per unit	2 independently accessible spaces per unit
Form	Controlled (Note 2)	Allocation possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one or both spaces possible
4+ bed houses	1 space per unit	1.5 spaces per unit	2 independently accessible spaces per unit	2 independently accessible spaces per unit

Form	Controlled (Note 2)	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of both spaces possible (Note 7)	Allocation of both spaces possible (Note 7)
Are garages acceptable? (Note 4)	Yes, but with areas of communal space for washing etc.	Yes, but not as a significant proportion of overall provision	Additional to amount given above only	Additional to amount given above only
Additional visitor parking (Note 5)	Public car parks	Communal areas, 0.2 per unit	On-street areas, 0.2 per unit	On-street areas, 0.2 per unit

Notes:

1. Reduced, or even nil provision is encouraged in support of demand management and the most efficient use of land.
2. Parking/garage courts, probably with controlled entry.
3. Reduced, or even nil provision acceptable for rented properties, subject to effective tenancy controls.
4. Open car ports or car barns acceptable at all locations, subject to good design.
5. May be reduced where main provision is not allocated. Not always needed for flats.
6. Lower provision may be considered if vehicular trip rate constraints are to be applied in connection with a binding and enforceable Travel Plan.
7. Best provided side by side, or in another independently accessible form. Tandem parking arrangements are often under-utilised.

Superseded policies

The following adopted local plan documents (formerly known as development plan documents – DPD) will be superseded by this local plan:

Document Title:	Date of Adoption:	Replaced by policies:
Affordable Housing DPD	2006	DM13
Open Space DPD	2006	DM22 and OS1

The following are Maidstone Borough-wide 2000 Local Plan policies which were saved in 2007. These policies will be superseded by this local plan:

Saved policy ref	Policy name:	Replaced by policies in this local plan:
ENV6	Landscaping, Surfacing and Boundary Treatment	SP17; DM1; DM3; DM16; H1; OS1
ENV7	Riverside Zone of Special Townscape Importance	DM1
ENV8	Advertising and Retail Frontage	DM19
ENV21	Strategic Transportation Corridors	DM1; DM24
ENV22	Urban Open Space	DM22
ENV23	Loss of Open Space and Recreation Facilities	DM22
ENV24	Site Specific Public Open Space Allocations	OS1 and H1
ENV25	Allotments	DM22
ENV26	Development Affecting Public Footpaths and Public Rights of Way	DM3; DM24
ENV27	New Footpath, Cycleway and Bridleway Proposals	DM24
ENV28	Development in the Countryside	SP17
ENV30	Metropolitan Green Belt	SP17
ENV31	Strategic Gap	SP17

Saved policy ref	Policy name:	Replaced by policies in this local plan:
ENV32	Southern Anti-Coalescence Belt	SP17
ENV33	Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	SP17
ENV34	Special Landscape Areas	SP17
ENV35	Areas of Local Landscape Importance	SP17
ENV41	Ponds, Wetlands and Marshlands	DM1; DM3
ENV42	Roadside Verges	DM34
ENV43	Agricultural Buildings	DM40
ENV44	Conversion of Rural Buildings for Commercial, Industrial, Recreation and Tourism Purposes	DM35
ENV45	Conversion of Rural Buildings for Residential Purposes	DM35
ENV46	Equestrian Development	DM45
ENV49	External Lighting	DM7
H1	Housing Land Allocations	H1
H3	North of Sutton Road, Maidstone/Otham	H1(6)
H8	Langley Park Farm West, Boughton Monchelsea/Langley	H1(5)
H9	Beaconsfield Road/Eccleston Road/Wharf Road, Tovil	Former allocation completed
H10	Hart Street, Lockmeadow, Maidstone	Former allocation predominantly completed; H1(17)
H11	Hook Lane, Harrietsham	Former allocation completed
H12	East of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone	H1(2)
H13	Bridge Nursery, Maidstone	H1(1)
H14	Hayle Place, Tovil	Former allocation completed

Saved policy ref	Policy name:	Replaced by policies in this local plan:
H15	West of Royal Engineers' Road, Maidstone	Former allocation partially completed; H1(11)
H16	Oliver Road, Staplehurst	Former allocation completed
H18	Extensions to Residential Properties	DM8; DM36
H21	Self-Contained Flats	DM8; DM35
H22	Houses in Multiple Occupation	DM8; DM35
H25	Sheltered Accommodation	DM11
H26	Nursing and Residential Care Homes	DM15; DM35
H27	Rural Settlements (Minor Development)	SS1; SP5; SP11
H28	Rural Settlements with the potential for new residential development in excess of minor development	SS1; SP5
H31	Change of Use from Agriculture to Domestic Garden	DM37
H32	Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside	DM36
H33	Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside	DM36
H35	Temporary Accommodation for Agricultural Workers	DM38
ED1	Allocations of Employment Land	EMP1; EMP1(1); EMP1(2); EMP1(3); EMP1(4); EMP1(5);
ED2	Retention of Employment Sites	DM20; DM21
ED5	St. Michael's Close, near Aylesford	DM21
ED7	Lockmeadow	Former allocation completed
ED8	Maidstone East Railway Station	RMX1(2)
ED9	Storage and Distribution Uses	EMP1; EMP1(1); EMP1(2); EMP1(3); EMP1(4); EMP1(5);

Saved policy ref	Policy name:	Replaced by policies in this local plan:
ED11	Zeneca Works, Yalding	RMX1(4)
ED12	Detling Airfield Industrial Estate	DM21
ED13	Brake Bros, Rose Lane, Lenham Heath	No equivalent policy
ED14	Lenham Storage, Ham Lane, Lenham	DM21
ED15	Marley Works, Lenham	DM21
ED16	Open Storage of Private Caravans	DM43
ED17	Serviced and Self-Catering Tourist Accommodation	DM20; DM35; SP17
ED18	Town Centre Hotel Sites	DM17
ED19	Loss of Tourist Accommodation	No equivalent policy
ED20	Holiday Caravan and Camping Sites	DM42
ED21	Conference or Exhibition Centre	DM17
ED25	Mooring Facilities	DM30
T1	Integrated Transport Strategy	DM24
T2	Public Transport Preference Measures	DM25
T3	Public Transport for Major Developments	DM24; DM25
T7	Safeguarding Railway Lines	No equivalent policy
T13	Parking Standards	DM1; DM27
T15	Non-Residential Parking in the Town Centre	SP4; DM27
T17	Park and Ride	DM26
T18	Highways Construction, Widening and Junction Improvements	DM24
T19	Boat Yards	DM30

Saved policy ref	Policy name:	Replaced by policies in this local plan:
T20	Headcorn Airfield	DM1; DM34
T21	Accessibility of New Developments	DM24
T23	Need for Highway/Public Transport Improvements	DM24; ID1
R1	New Retail Development	SS1; SP1; SP2; SP3; SP4; SP5; SP11
R2	Major Retail Proposals Exceeding 500m ²	SS1; SP1; SP5; RMX1(1); RMX1(2); RMX1(3)
R3	Maidstone Town Centre	SP4
R4	Fremlin Centre	DM31
R6	Maidstone East Railway Station	RMX1(2)
R7	Core Shopping Area in the Town Centre	DM31; DM32
R8	Secondary Shopping Areas in the Town Centre	DM32
R9	Tertiary Town Centre Areas	DM32
R10	Local Centres	DM18
R11	Local Convenience Shops, Post Offices & Pharmacies	DM18
R12	Retail Proposals Outside Defined Built-Up Areas	DM44
R16	Amusement Arcades	DM32
R17	Takeaways, Restaurants, Cafés, Bars and Pubs	DM31; DM32
R18	Car Showrooms	No equivalent policy
R19	Living Over the Shop	DM9
CF1	Seeking New Community Facilities	DM23; ID1
CF2	Re-Using Public Land and Community Facilities	DM23

Saved policy ref	Policy name:	Replaced by policies in this local plan:
CF3	Loss of Community Facilities	DM18; DM23
CF6	Medical Service Provision on Allocated Housing Sites	ID1
CF8	Primary Schools	ID1
CF9	Dual Use of School Facilities	DM23
CF12	Community Halls	ID1
CF14	Nightclubs, Sports, Leisure and Entertainment Uses	DM33
CF16	Off-Site Sewers	ID1

Superseded Supplementary Documents

The following adopted supplementary planning documents (SPD) will be superseded by this local plan:

Document Title:	Date of Adoption:	Replaced by:
Sustainable Construction SPD	2006	Policies DM1; DM2

Saved Supplementary Planning Documents and Planning Policy Advice Notes

Maidstone has adopted supplementary planning documents (SPD) and planning policy advice notes. These documents provide supplementary guidance to local and national planning policies. The following SPDs and advice notes will be saved alongside this local plan:

- London Road Character Area Assessment SPD (2008)
- Loose Road Character Area Assessment SPD (2008)
- Residential Extensions SPD (2009)
- Kent Design Guide 2005 (2009)
- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 (Second Revision) (2014)
- Domestic and Medium Scale Solar PV Arrays (up to 50KW) and Solar Thermal (2014)
- Large Scale (>50KW) Solar PV Arrays (2014)
- Kent vehicle parking standards 2006 (approved 2015)
- Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006: SPG4 Vehicle Parking Standards (approved 2015)
- Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3-Residential Parking 2008 (approved 2015).

Acronym	Term	Description
-	Affordable Rented Housing	Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. (Source: NPPF glossary). In December 2015 the Government proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework which, if agreed, would mean that a wider range of housing types would be 'affordable housing'.
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	The levy will help pay for the infrastructure required to support new development. This includes development that does not require planning permission. The levy should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies unless the new development makes the deficiency more severe. The levy can be charged by local authorities in England and Wales – but they do not have to. Authorities that wish to charge a levy need to develop and adopt a CIL charging schedule. Councils must spend income from the levy on infrastructure to support the development of the area but they can decide what infrastructure to spend it on and it can be different to that for which it was originally set. Authorities should set out on their Web site what they will use CIL for (Reg 123 list).
	Community Strategy	The Community Strategy is produced by a partnership of the local public, private, voluntary and community sector with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic well being of their areas. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the strategic, spatial representation of the Community Strategy 2009 - 2020 Your community, our priority, refreshed in 2013.

Acronym	Term	Description
-	Core Strategy	The Core Strategy is a Development Plan Document. Maidstone Borough's draft Core Strategy has evolved into the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government	The Department of Communities and Local Government is the central Government department responsible for housing, local government, planning and building, public safety and emergencies, community and society.
-	Development Plan	The Development Plan includes adopted local plans and neighbourhood plans. Decisions on planning applications should follow the Development Plan unless other relevant planning factors indicate otherwise.
DPD	Development Plan Document	A DPD is a spatial planning document that is subject to independent examination and, once adopted, becomes part of the Development Plan. Under new regulations, DPDs are known as local plans.
EA	Environment Agency	The Environment Agency is the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales, with particular responsibilities for river, flooding and pollution. (www.environment-agency.gov.uk)
GBI	Green and Blue Infrastructure	The term is used in Maidstone borough to refer collectively to the active planning, creation, management and protection of multifunctional green spaces and water bodies (the blue element) in built and urban environments. The term includes but is not limited to parks and gardens, natural and semi natural open spaces, green corridors, outdoor sports facilities, allotments and river corridors. The primary functions of GBI are to conserve and enhance biodiversity, create a sense of space and place, and support healthy living by increasing outdoor recreational opportunities for people.

Acronym	Term	Description
-	Gypsies and Travellers	Planning policy for traveller sites (DCLG, August 2015) defines Gypsies and Travellers as "Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such."
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment	HRA tests the impacts of a proposal on nature conservation sites of European importance – Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas – and is also a requirement under EU legislation for certain plans and projects.
	Highways England	Highways England is the public body responsible for the operation, maintenance and improvement of the country's motorways and trunk roads.
HE	Historic England	Historic England is the government's expert advisor on the country's heritage . HE gives advice to local planning authorities, government departments, developers and owners on development proposals affecting the historic environment.
-	Intermediate Rented Housing	Housing at prices or rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents. These can include shared equity products (e.g. Home Buy), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent but does not include affordable rented housing.
KCC	Kent County Council	The county planning authority, responsible for producing the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plans. Kent County Council is also responsible for roads, schools, libraries and social services in the county.
LNR	Local Nature Reserves	Local Nature Reserves are formally designated areas. They are places with

Acronym	Term	Description
		wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. (www.naturalengland.org.uk)
MBC	Maidstone Borough Council	The local planning authority responsible for producing the local plan and supplementary planning documents.
MBLP	Maidstone Borough Local Plan	The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the key document within Maidstone's local planning policy framework that sets the framework to guide the future development of the borough. It plans for homes, jobs, shopping, leisure and the environment, as well as the associated infrastructure to support new development. It explains the 'why, what, where, when and how' development will be delivered through a strategy that plans for growth and regeneration whilst at the same time protects and enhances the borough's natural and built assets. The plan will cover the period from 2011 to 2031.
MBWLP	Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000	The Local Plan was adopted by the council in 2000 and it set the policy framework for determining planning applications. The MBWLP contains planning policies for protecting the environment and proposals for allocating sites for new development in the borough. From 28 September 2007 only some of the policies in the MBWLP continue to form part of the Development Plan: such policies are called "saved" policies. Once adopted, the Maidstone Borough Local Plan will supersede the saved MBWLP policies once adopted.
	Monitoring Report	The Monitoring Report is prepared annually and provides a framework with which to monitor and review the effectiveness of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan policies.
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	The NPPF was published in March 2012 and it sets out the government's

Acronym	Term	Description
		planning policies for England and how these must be applied. Local plan policies must be in conformity with the NPPF.
NPPG	National Planning Policy Guidance	The NPPG provides additional guidance on how the national policies in the National Planning Policy Framework should be interpreted and applied.
NE	Natural England	Natural England is the government's advisor for the natural environment in the country.
S106	Section 106 legal agreements	Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally binding agreement or planning obligation with a land developer in connection with the granting of planning permission for a development. The obligation is termed a Section 106 Agreement. The purpose of such agreements is to mitigate the impacts of the development proposed provided the matters being addressed are directly related to the development being permitted, and can include sums of money.
-	Social Rented Housing	Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime, or rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency as a condition of grant.
-	Sustainability/sustainable development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This definition was created in 1987 at the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission).

Acronym	Term	Description
SA	Sustainability Appraisal	The SA is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives, including social, economic and environmental objectives.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	SEA is a generic term used to describe the environmental assessment of policies, plans and programmes. The European SEA Directive requires a formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use.
SEDLAA	Strategic Economic Development Land Availability Assessment	The purpose of a Strategic Economic Development Land Availability Assessment is to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for employment over the plan period.
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	The purpose of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitable location and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period. (Source: NPPF)
-	Spatial planning	Spatial planning is the term used to describe bringing together and integrating policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. Examples of other policy documents relevant to the Local Plan are the council's Housing Strategy, Community Strategy and Economic Development Strategy as well as the Integrated Transport Strategy.
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment	A Strategic Housing Market Assessment assesses the local planning authority's full objectively assessed need for new homes. This is expressed as the number of new homes needed over the time period the Local Plan covers. The SHMA also considers affordable housing needs

Acronym	Term	Description
		and the need for additional care home places. The National Planning Practice Guidance advises that local planning authorities work with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	An SPD provides further detail to a policy or a group of policies set out in a local plan. A SPD can provide additional detail about how a policy should be applied in practice. SPDs are a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.
-	Travelling Showpeople	Planning policy for traveller sites (DCLG, August 2015) defines Travelling Showpeople as "Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above."
-	Unidentified Sites or Windfall Sites	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the local plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available (NPPF glossary).

Table E.1 Glossary

The policies map, which is available electronically on the council's website, forms part of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. For ease of reference, a supplementary document that contains individual location plans for allocated development sites accompanies this local plan.