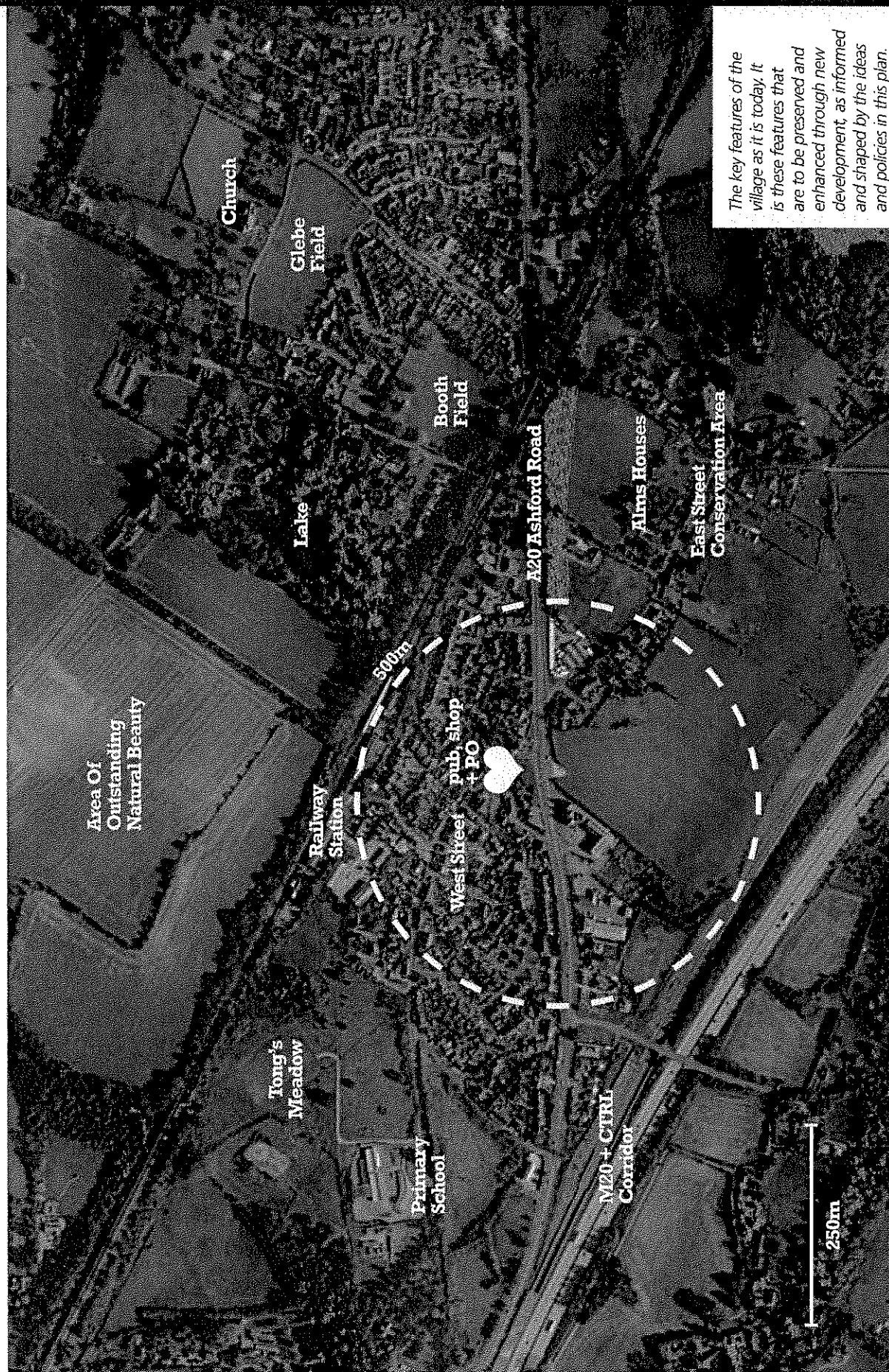
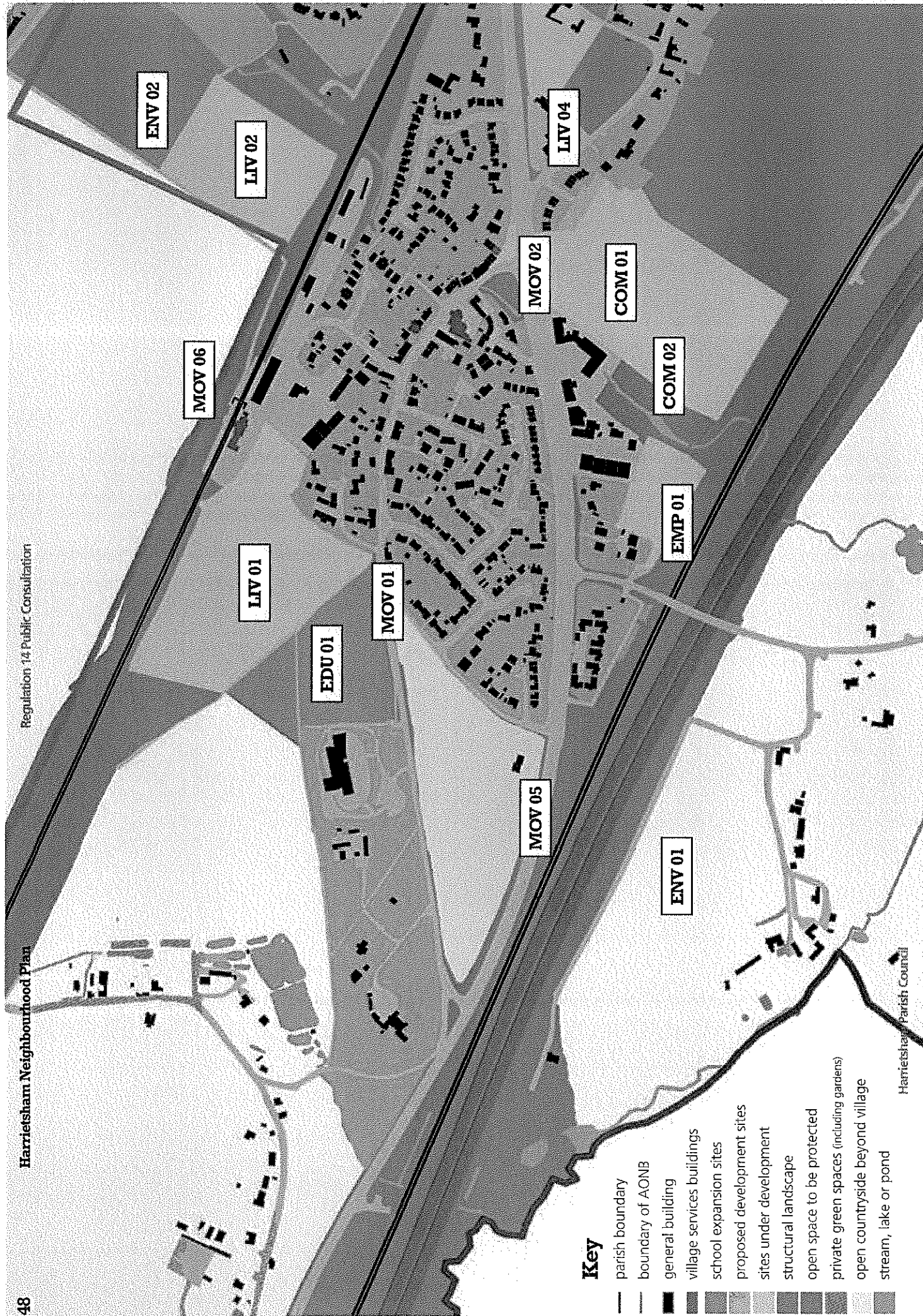


Harrietsham Village Context



The key features of the village as it is today. It is these features that are to be preserved and enhanced through new development, as informed and shaped by the ideas and policies in this plan.



Policy COM01

Mixed Used Community Heart

Residential-led development to comprise range of house types. This development is to incorporate a new public space, new community meeting hall (or similar) and one or more retail units on the northern part of the site, fronting onto the A20.

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

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

The northern edge of the site fronting onto the A20 Ashford Road needs to provide new public realm in the form of a small civic square or market place, with new retail and community accommodation on its southern edge. The architectural and design approach here needs to be of a very high standard as it will act as a shop window for Harrietsham. The new public realm, in the form of a small civic square



A task group examines views of the site from the south during the three-day design event (COM01).

or market place, will provide the much needed outdoor focal space for the village, long sought after by Harrietsham residents. Harrietsham can finally find its missing village heart.

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

The southern part of the site can accommodate a new residential development, with good pedestrian links to the west onto East Street and westwards

Site Size

6.8 hectares approx.

Current Use

Previously Developed Land, restored as Agricultural Grazing Land and Pasture.

Site Conditions

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

Reasons For Inclusion

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

Landowner or Developer Support? Yes.

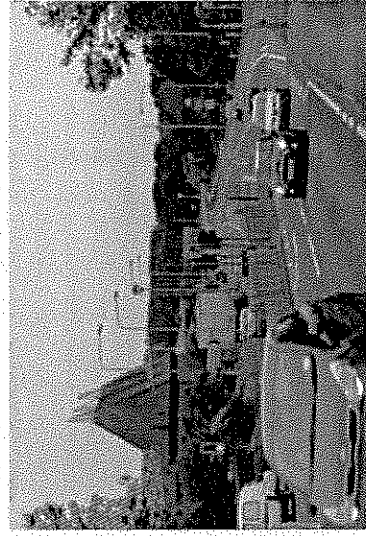


The existing village green at the southern end of West Street can be better incorporated to the wider village through modifications to the Ashford Road (MOV02).

towards the Roebuck Business Park via the allotment gardens. Vehicle access for residents will be from the A20 Ashford Road to the north and limited access from the west via the business park. There should be no vehicle access to the east.

Constraints to the extent of this residential development are twofold. The first is the negative impact of noise from the CTRL and M20 corridor to the south. This impact effectively sterilises a strip of land to the south that will need to be planted to provide a noise buffer to new residents. The second potential limiting factor is the long distance views of the site that can be obtained from higher ground to the south, towards the Green Sands Ridge.

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



Changes to the A20 Ashford Road (MOV02) to make it less divisive will help unite north and south of the village and create a new focal space for Harrietsham.

Policy MOV02

Create a New High Street

Modifications to the Ashford Road to reduce the width of the carriageway, widen the footways and reduce the speed of traffic as it passes through the heart of the village. To create better connections between the pub, post office and shop on West Street and the new mixed use development south of the Ashford Road.

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

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

Policy EMP01

Additional Employment Land

This is safeguarded land for the expansion of the employment site south. To respond to demand for additional employment space, as and when required.

The Roebuck Business Park has been a successful addition to the village in recent years, providing a range of employment opportunities for local people and accommodation to a range of businesses. In order to retain a balance between a living and working village, there will be need for an increase in employment land in proportion with the anticipated increase in residential land. To this end, an expansion southwards of the current business park is proposed. Employment land should be unaffected by the CTRL and M20 corridor noise issue that blights land in this area for residential uses.

Once an expansion of the Roebuck Business Park is achieved, there may be opportunity for the existing Station Road employment land to be redeveloped for smaller scale employment uses (i.e. non-HGV based). In doing so, many large vehicles would no longer be required to use West Street and Station Road, both narrow and unsuited to such movements.

Policy COM02

Additional Allotments Land

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

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



More space for allotments needs to be created and existing ones enhanced (COM02).

Policy ENV01

Open Countryside

Protection of open countryside on the edge of the village and beyond, with particular regard for the AONB and other areas of special landscape designation.

The land beyond the new expanded village envelope is to be protected as open countryside. This plan acknowledges that building on green fields will be inevitable to meet the housing numbers sought by the Rural Service Centre designation but through good planning and good design, these developments can create positive new "edge conditions" to the village that create a new and permanent boundary to the village envelope.

In doing so, these developments will form "hard and robust" outer edges to the village and prevent future outwards growth. Instead, any further development post the plan period will need to concentrate on intensification of existing developed areas.

The countryside beyond the village is protected through national designations (e.g. AONB) and through local development plan policies of Maidstone Borough Council. Policy ENV01 of the Harrietsham Neighbourhood Plan reinforces these policies with a neighbourhood level policy designed to limit further outward growth of the village.



As the village grows, so too should the employment opportunities within the village envelope. An expansion of the existing business park (EMP01) is therefore proposed.



Successful implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan policies will be critical to protecting open countryside beyond the village envelope (ENV01).

Layout + Design Principles Diagram

EXISTING FEATURES

1. Post Office + Club
2. The Roebuck Pub
3. Village Shop

NEW FEATURES

4. Enhance the existing Village Green
5. New Civic Space
6. New Retail + Commercial Uses
7. Green Focal Space for New Residents
8. Expanded Allotments
9. Expanded Employment Land

ACCESS + MOVEMENT

- A. Junction between Ashford Road, Willow Close + Roebuck Business Park to become a gateway to the traffic-calmed central area
- B. Junction between Ashford Road + East Street to become a gateway to the traffic-calmed central area

to Maidstone

