

# LENHAM

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2017-2031

QUALITY GROWTH QUALITY LIFE



**POST EXAMINATION DRAFT**

**JUNE 2020**

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



# LENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 A Plan for Lenham**

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

### **1.2 Structure of the Plan**

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

### **1.3 Who has prepared the Plan?**

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

### **1.4 What is in the Neighbourhood Plan?**

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

### **1.5 What is not in the Neighbourhood Plan?**

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

### **1.6 What is the process for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan?**

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

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

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

## **1.7 Review of the Neighbourhood Plan**

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



## 2. Lenham Today: Physical and Policy Background

### 2.1 The Study Area

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

## 2.2 The Local Plan

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



### **3. Lenham Tomorrow: Vision Statement**

#### **3.1 Vision**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 4. Design Quality

### 4.1 High quality design and local distinctiveness

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

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

## **Quality Design: Policy D1**

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

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

## 4.2 Small scale development

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

### Small scale residential development and householder extensions: Policy D2

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

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

### 4.3 Innovation and variety

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



**Innovation and Variety: Policy D3**

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

**4.4 Self and Custom-build housing**

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

**Design for self and custom build homes: Policy D4**

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

**4.5 Parking in residential areas**

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

**Residential Car Parking Design: Policy D5**

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

## 5. Promoting active, smarter and sustainable travel

### 5.1 Walking and cycling

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

#### Active travel: Policy AT1

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

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

## **5.2 Public transport**

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

### **Public transport: Policy AT2**

**Support will be given to proposals that:**

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

### **Design to encourage sustainable transport: Policy AT3**

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

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

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

### **Active and sustainable travel projects: Policy AT4**

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

## **6. Enhancing and protecting green space**

### **6.1 Natural and amenity green space**

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

#### **Natural and amenity green space: Policy GS1**

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

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

### **6.2 Local Green Space**

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

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

### **6.3 The Cricket Ground**

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

#### **Proximity**

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

#### **Local Significance**

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

#### **Extent and Durability**

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

### **6.4 The Allotments**

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

#### **Proximity**

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

#### **Local Significance**

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

### **Extent and Durability**

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

## **6.5 The Village Pond and Associated Open Land**

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

### **Proximity**

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

### **Local Significance**

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

### **Extent and Durability**

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

## **6.6 The Bowling Green**

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

### **Proximity**

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

**Local Significance**

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

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

**Extent and Durability**

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

**6.7 Court Lodge Meadow**

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

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

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

**Proximity**

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

**Local Significance**

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

6.7.6 The Meadow has special significance for the following reasons:

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

**Extent and Durability**

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

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

## **6.8 Green Space Policy**

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

### **6.8.2 Local Green Space: Policy LGS1**

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

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

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

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

### **Countryside Protection: Policy CP1**

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

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

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

## 7. Employment

### 7.1 Existing Situation and Planning Context

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

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

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



### 7.2 Lenham Square

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

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

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

7.2.4 Policy EMP1 below seeks to support the position of the Square within the Parish and encourage the implementation of a scheme of environmental and traffic improvement. Such a scheme could be funded by developer contributions, through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Parish Council will seek to investigate opportunities for grant funding, possibly to top up any CIL funds at the appropriate time. CIL includes a neighbourhood (or parish) portion and this Plan identifies the need for a scheme of environmental improvement at the Square as a priority for the investment of the neighbourhood portion of the CIL fund.

7.2.5 The Plan supports the pre-eminence of Lenham Square as the social and commercial hub of the Parish. Opportunities to provide additional parking at acceptable locations will be supported. Lenham Square is shown on the Policies Map.

**Lenham Square: Policy EMP1**

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

**7.3 Lenham Station**

7.3.1 Lenham is a thriving and vibrant economic and social centre. The Plan supports proposals which can reinforce and support the employment potential of the Parish, subject to important environmental safeguards.

7.3.2 The Plan adopts a strategy of allocating sites in a spatial pattern which can facilitate a pattern of sustainable transport within the Parish. The selected sites are all within relatively easy walking or cycling distance of key facilities, such as schools, shops and social and community facilities. The pattern of site selection also facilitates the provision of a new circular bus route using the development access roads.

7.3.3 By opening up the potential for access to the south of Lenham Station, the Plan achieves several key planning objectives as follows:

- 1) The opportunity to provide a pedestrian crossing over the third railway line at the Station. This could be achieved via a project funded by CIL or another form of government grant. Crossing the third railway line gives the opportunity for the residential development sites to the south of the railway to have pedestrian access to the Station.
- 2) The scheme could also facilitate disabled access at the station from both the north and the south side.
- 3) Additional car parking could be provided to serve the station.
- 4) By introducing pedestrian and vehicular access to the south, the Plan can facilitate a scheme of development around the station which would form a secondary social and commercial hub serving the south of Lenham.
- 5) It is envisaged that uses which could be supported both to the north and south of the station could include:
  - a) car parking;
  - b) limited retail use on a scale not to undermine the pre-eminence of Lenham Square and its surroundings;

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

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

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

#### **Land North and South of the Railway Station: Policy EMP2**

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

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

#### **Providing for a mix of Employment Opportunities – Policy EMP3**

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



## 8. Community Facilities

### 8.1 Community Facilities: Introduction

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

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

#### **Community Facilities: Policy CF1**

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

### 8.2 Lenham Community Centre

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

#### **Lenham Community Centre: Policy CF2**

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

### 8.3 Lenham Health Centre (Len Valley Practice)

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

#### **Health Infrastructure: Policy CF3**

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

### 8.4 Education

8.4.1 The construction of 1000 dwellings on the Strategic Housing Delivery Sites (SHDS), together with the construction of the existing housing commitments (364 dwellings), will create a requirement for additional

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

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

#### **Secondary Education**

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

#### **Primary Education**

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

#### **Nursery Education**

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

#### **Lenham Primary School: Policy ED1**

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

#### **The Lenham School: Policy ED2**

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

**Nursery Education: Policy ED3**

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



## 9. Tourism

### 9.1 Tourism

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

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

#### Tourism: Policy TOU1

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



## 10. Air Quality and renewables

### 10.1 Introduction

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

### 10.2 Electric vehicles

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

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

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

#### **Charging Points for Electric Vehicles: Policy AQ1**

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

### 10.3 Renewable energy generation

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

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

#### **Renewable Energy Generation: Policy AQ2**

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



## 11. Strategic Housing Delivery Sites

### 11.1 Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 11.2 SHDS General Planning Requirements

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

### **Policy SHDS1: Strategic Housing Delivery Sites: General Requirements**

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

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

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

**Policy SHDS2: Housing Delivery Sites: Design principles:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**11.3.1 Area 1: North East of Lenham Village Extension**

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

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

**Highways, Access and Transportation**

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

**Open Space**

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

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

#### **Design and Layout**

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

### **11.3.2 Area 2: South West of Lenham Village Extension**

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

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

#### **Highways, Access and Transportation**

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

#### **Open Space**

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

#### **Design and Layout**

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

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

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

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

##### **Highways, Access and Transportation**

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

##### **Open Space**

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

##### **Design and Layout**

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

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

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

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

**Highways, Access and Transportation**

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

**Open Space**

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

**Design and Layout**

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

### **11.3.3 Area 3: North West of Lenham Village Extension**

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

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

**Highways Access and Transportation**

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

**Open Space**

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

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

#### Design and Layout

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

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

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

#### Policy - Strategic Housing Delivery Site 6 - William Pitt Field

##### Land at William Pitt Field

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

##### Highways, Access and Transportation

7. Access will be taken from Old Ham Lane.

##### Open Space

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

##### Design and Layout

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

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

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

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

**Highways, Access and Transportation**

**11. Access will be taken from Loder Close.**

**Open Space**

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

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

**Design and Layout**

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

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

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



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

### 12.1 Community Infrastructure Levy

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



## 12.2 Strategic Infrastructure Levy Projects and Exclusions

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

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

**TABLE LNP ONE – COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY PROJECTS AND EXCLUSIONS**

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

### Lenham Square

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

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

#### **Southern Access to Lenham Station**

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

#### **Expansion of Lenham Primary School**

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

#### **Improvement to Local Doctors’ Facilities**

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

#### **Improvements to the footpath/cycleway network**

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

#### **Development Access Roads**

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

## **Affordable Housing**

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

## **12.3 Neighbourhood (or Lenham Parish) Infrastructure Projects**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Developer Contributions – Policy DC1**

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



## Appendix A: Glossary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Listed Building** - building of special architectural or historic interest.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Appendix B: Acknowledgements

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

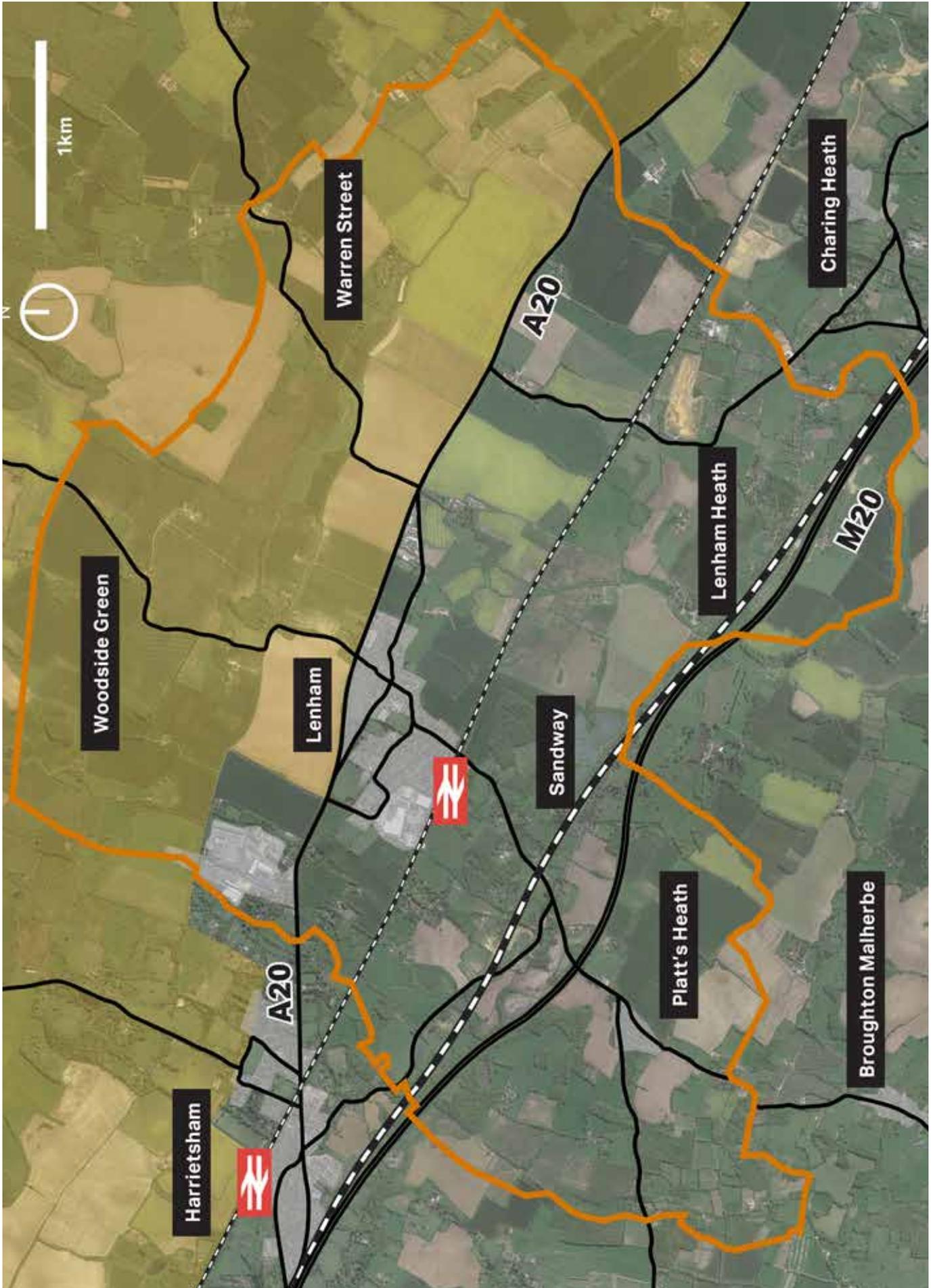
We are also grateful to members of the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group, comprising both Parish Councillors and Residents, who have committed their time, energy and passion to preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and helping to shape a better future for Lenham.

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

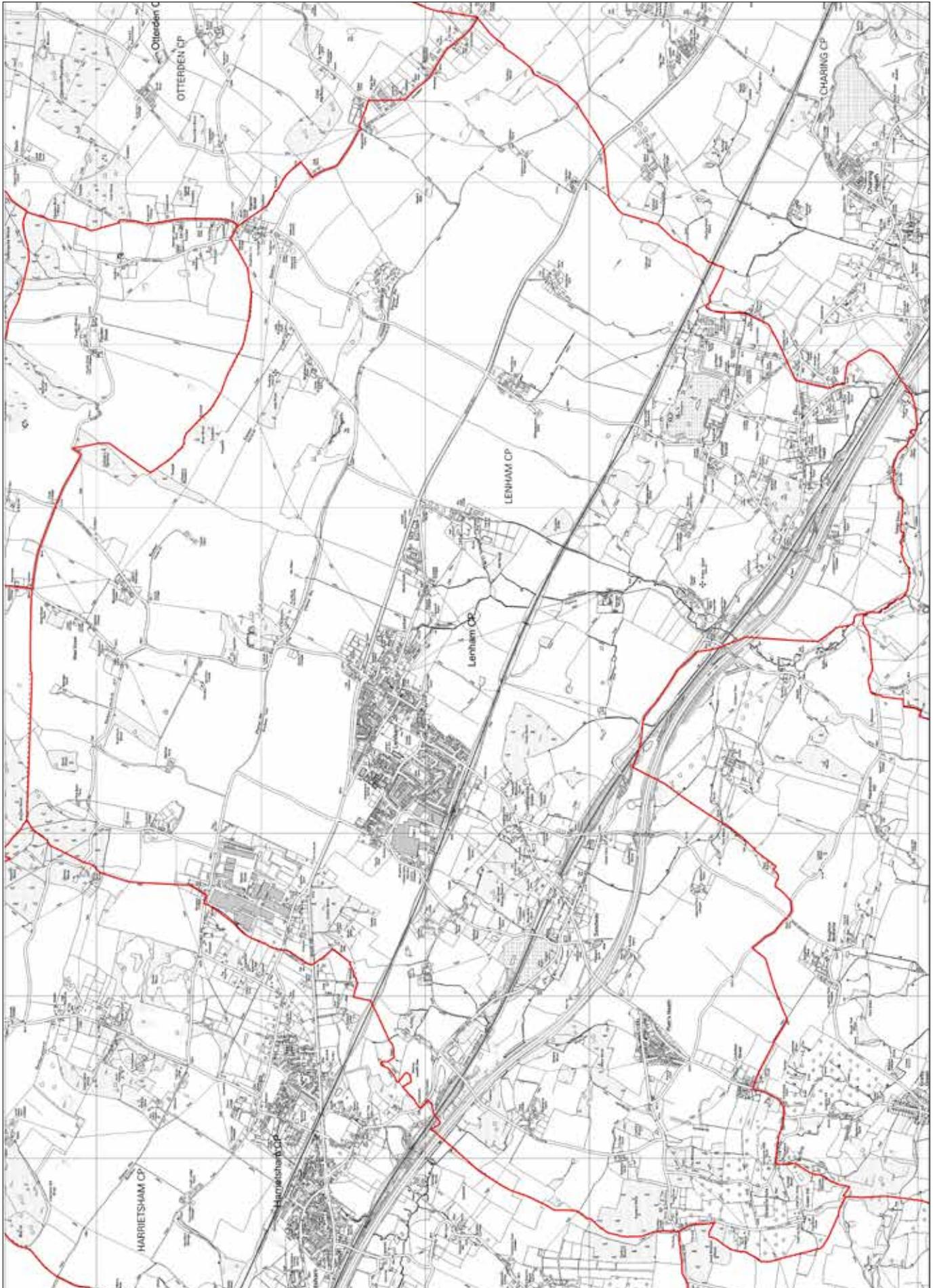
We would also like to thank Hailsham Town Council for providing the framework for this Plan.



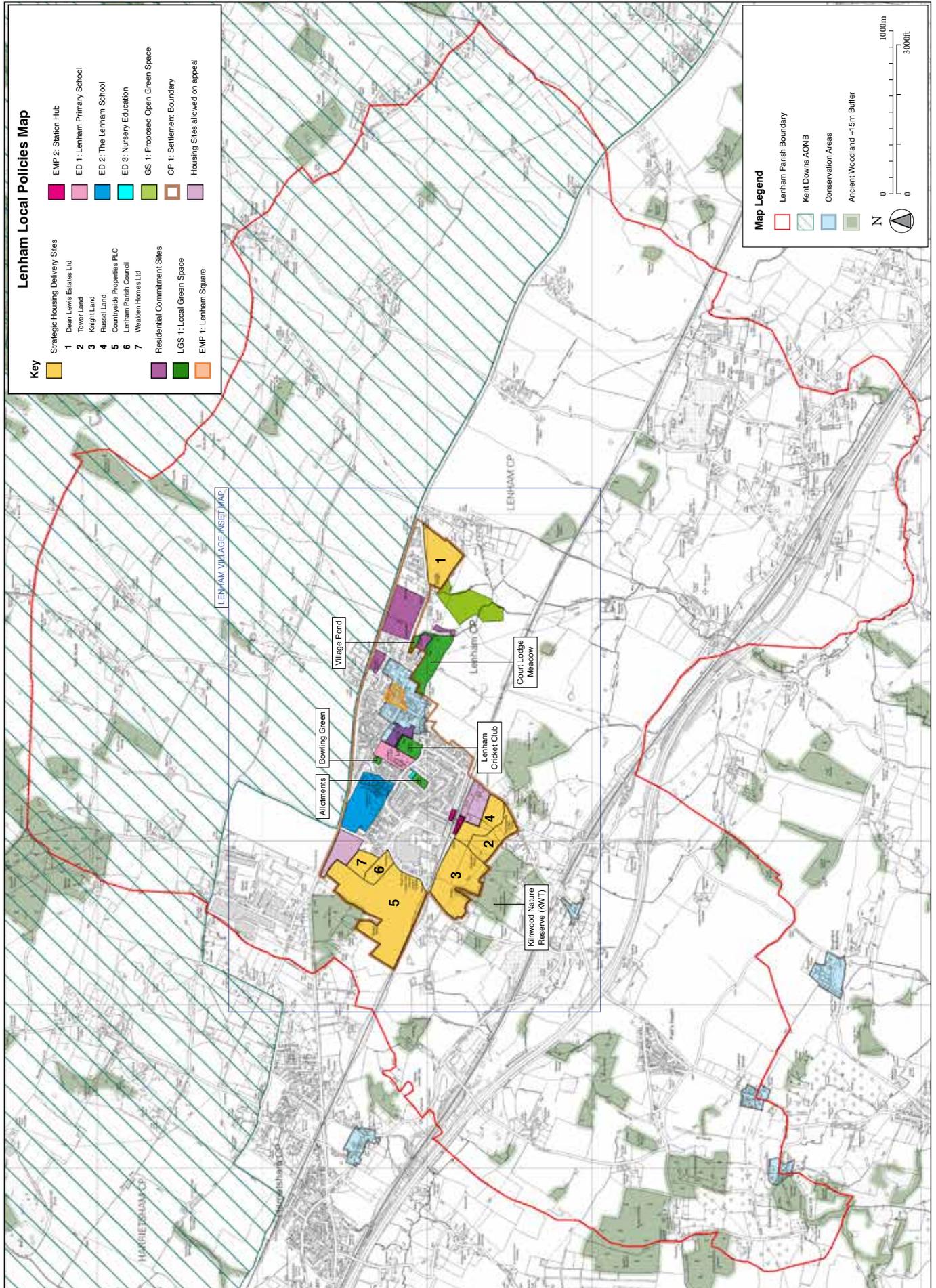
### Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Parish Boundary - Map



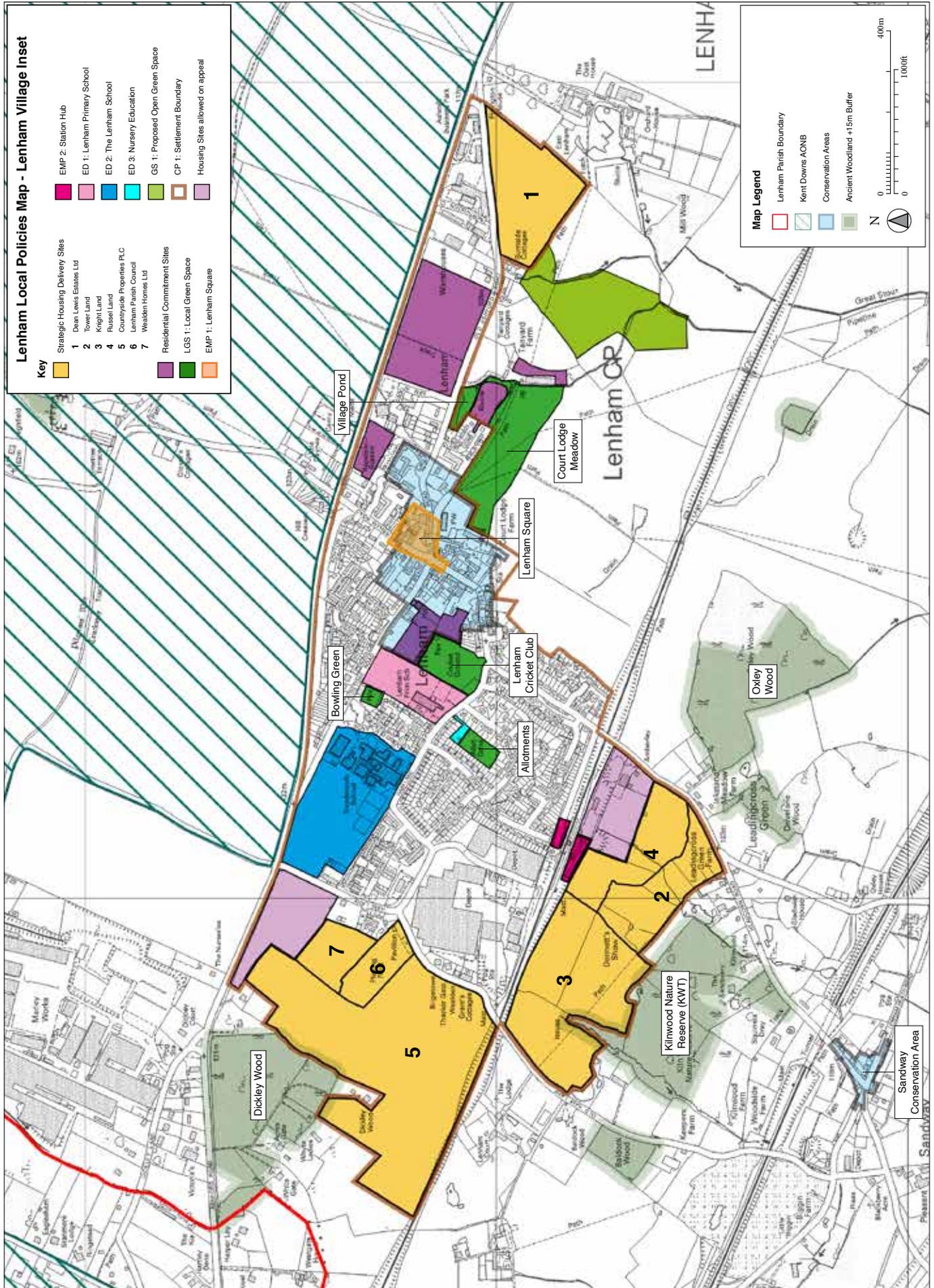
## Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Parish Boundary - Map



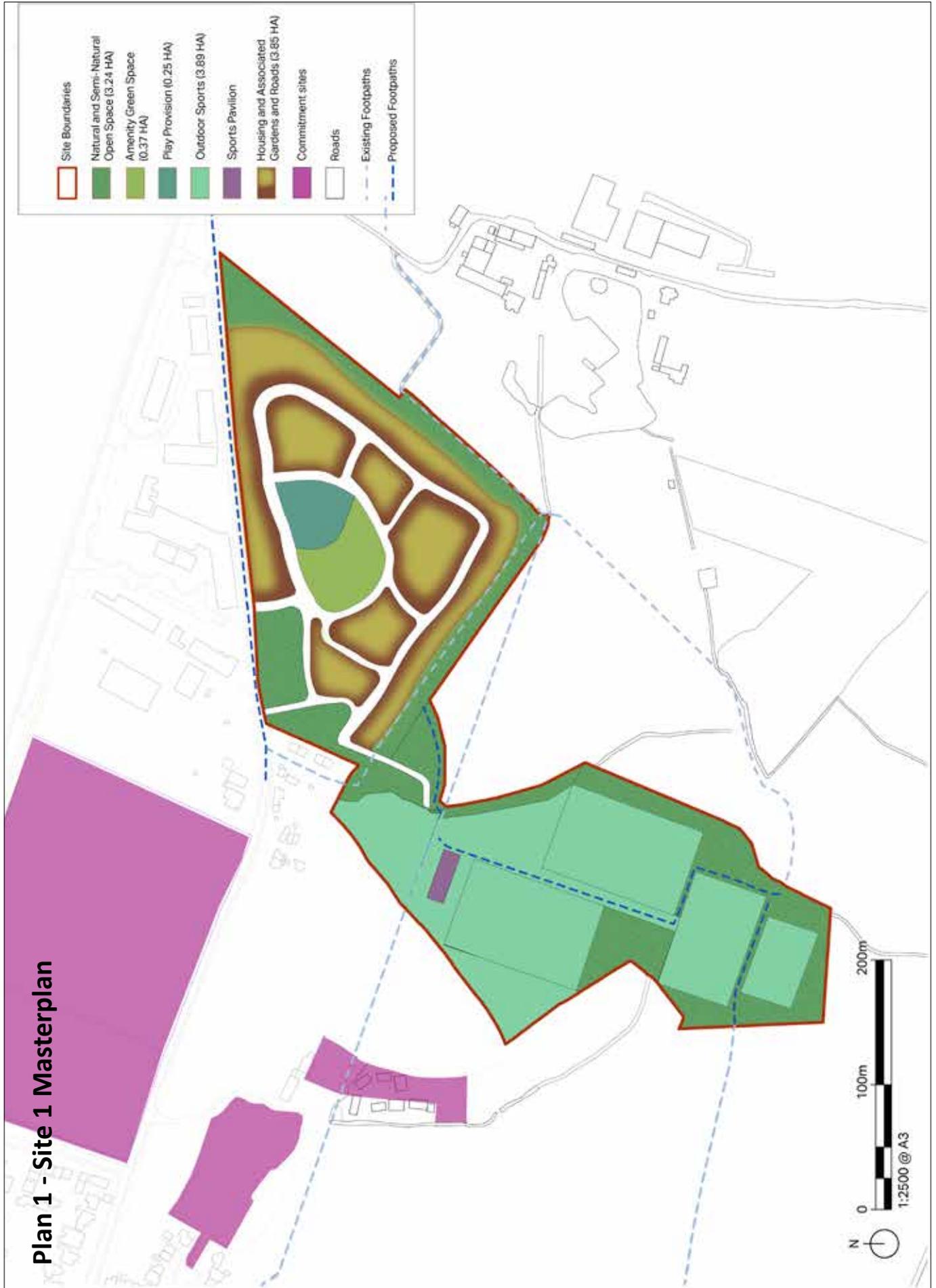
# Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Local Policies - Map



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



# Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 1 Site 1 Masterplan



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



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



# Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 4 Overall Masterplan

**Plan 4 - Overall Masterplan**

