



Maidstone Strategic  
Site Allocations  
Sustainability  
Appraisal

Interim Report

July 2012

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Prepared for:  
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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

URS (formally URS Scott Wilson) is commissioned by Maidstone Borough Council to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Council's emerging Core Strategy Local Plan. SA is a mechanism for considering the impacts of an emerging plan and reasonable alternatives on key elements of the environmental and socio-economic baseline, with a view to avoiding or mitigating adverse impacts and maximising the positives.

It is a legal requirement that this SA is undertaken in-line with the procedures prescribed by the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive<sup>1</sup>. Publication of an SA Report for consultation alongside the draft Core Strategy Local Plan will meet the following key requirement of the SEA Directive:

"Where an assessment is required by this Directive, [a]... report should be prepared... identifying, describing and evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives"

From the SA Report, it will be possible for readers to understand more about the sustainability justification for selecting the particular options and rejecting others. An understanding of the sustainability merits of preferred and alternative options is useful to the Council, as plan-makers; and is also helpful to stakeholders wishing to engage in this process.

Maidstone Borough Council is currently considering a number of sites which they intend to allocate as strategic development sites for employment or housing. These sites have been subject to an SA appraisal, which is documented in this report, and which will be made available alongside the preferred strategic allocations report for consultation. Following this consultation period, and taking into account the consultation responses received, the Council will incorporate the preferred strategic site allocations into the Core Strategy Local Plan. A further formal consultation period will be held towards the end of the year on the Core Strategy Local Plan (the Publication or Regulation 19 consultation). The findings of this interim SA appraisal will also feed into the Final SA Report, which will be prepared to accompany the Core Strategy Local Plan at the publication consultation.

### **1.2 This Interim SA Report**

Annex 1 of the SEA Directive prescribes the information that must be contained within the SA Report. Providing this information involves answering a series of questions. The questions that are answered within this interim report are shown in Table 1.1.

This Interim SA Report answers the first eight questions in Table 1.1, but does not answer the final question: 'How can we best monitor the plan's impacts?' This reflects the fact that the draft Core Strategy Local Plan is yet to be finalised (and so the residual effects of the plan, that will require monitoring, cannot yet be predicted). Once a final draft version of the Core Strategy Local Plan has been prepared, (taking into account the results of the appraisal of potential strategic site allocations set out in this interim SA Report), a further SA Report will be prepared that answers all nine appraisal questions. This final SA report will meet the requirements of the SEA Directive as set out above.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2001/42 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment; as transposed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004



**Table 1.1: Questions to be answered (sequentially) within the SA Report**

<i>Question used to structure the SA</i>	Corresponding requirement of the SEA Directive (the report must include...)
<b>What is the plan seeking to achieve?</b>	<b>“an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes”</b> (Annex I(a))
<b>What’s the sustainability ‘context’?</b>	<b>“an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes”</b> (Annex I(a)) <b>“the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”</b> (Annex I(e))
<b>What’s the situation <u>now</u>?</b>	<b>“the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme”</b> (Annex I(b)) <b>“the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected”</b> (Annex I(c))
<b>What would the situation be <u>without</u> the plan?</b>	<b>“the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme”</b> (Annex I(b))
<b>What are the key issues that should be a focus of the appraisal?</b>	<b>“any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC [Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive] and 92/43/EEC”</b> (Annex I(d))  (Note impacts on European sites will be specifically addressed through Habitats Regulations Assessment)
<b>How has the plan developed up to this point?</b>	<b>“an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information”</b> (Annex I(h))  <b>“the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”</b> (Annex I(e))
<b>How has the appraisal at this current stage been undertaken?</b>	<b>“an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information”</b> (Annex I(h))
<b>What are the appraisal findings and recommendations at this current stage?</b>	<b>“the likely significant effects (1) on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors”</b> (Annex I(f))  <b>“the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme”</b> (Annex I(g))
<b>How can we best monitor the plan’s impacts?</b>	<b>“a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring...”</b> (Annex I(i))



**2 WHAT IS THE CORE STRATEGY LOCAL PLAN (INCLUDING STRATEGIC SITE ALLOCATIONS) SEEKING TO ACHIEVE?**

“an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes”  
 (SEA Directive, Annex I(a))

The Core Strategy Local Plan, when adopted, will form part of the suite of local development documents, referred to as the Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy Local Plan, through its vision, strategic objectives and policies sets out a strategic planning framework which will guide development in the Borough until 2026. The Core Strategy Local Plan is the key strategic document in the LDF and all other DPDs and any SPDs must be in conformity with it.

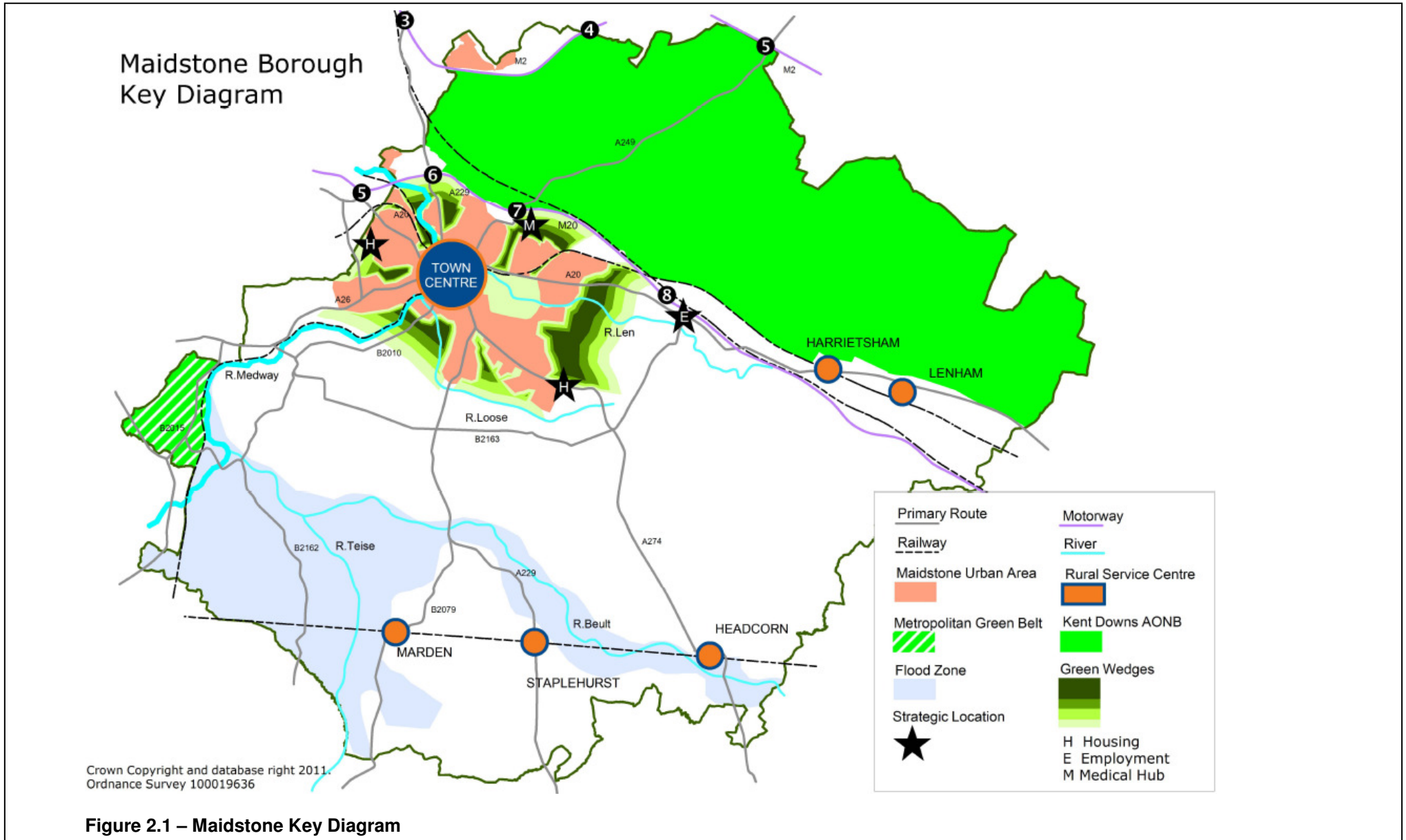
The Core Strategy Local Plan will set the broad pattern of development for the location of new housing, employment and community facilities, while setting out strategies for preserving and enhancing the natural and built environment. (See Figure 2.1 – Maidstone Key Diagram).The Core Strategy Local Plan is the geographical translation of Maidstone’s Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Core Strategy Local Plan will include a number of designated strategic site allocations which will assist to deliver the required housing and employment development to the end of the plan period. A number of candidate sites have been put forward for this purpose and are the subject of this appraisal and current consultation. A final list of strategic sites will be incorporated into the final draft of the Core Strategy Local Plan, and this will be consulted upon in December 2012.

**2.1 What is the plan not trying to achieve?**

The Core Strategy Local Plan is a strategic plan, and as such does not attempt to address every detailed planning issue. Rather, detailed issues will be considered when planning applications are made for each site allocated within the Core Strategy Local Plan. Allocation within the Core Strategy Local Plan is not a guarantee that a site will be granted planning permission.

The strategic nature of the strategic site allocations is reflected in the appraisal. SA is a mechanism for drawing upon and integrating evidence-based understanding of sustainability issues, with a view to predicting the impacts of the plan in terms of those issues. However, it would be superfluous to seek to understand detailed sustainability issues where the plan is strategic and hence where its effects on detailed issues will always be inherently uncertain. Best practice dictates that the approach taken to SA should be proportionate to the plan-making context.



**3 WHAT IS THE SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT?**

“an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and **relationship with other relevant plans and programmes**”  
 (SEA Directive, Annex I(a))

“**the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme** and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”  
 (SEA Directive, Annex I(e))

**3.1 Key messages from policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives context review**

A review of the sustainability context, in relation to spatial planning in Maidstone, was undertaken in 2005 with findings set out within the Maidstone SA Scoping Report. Subsequent to the publication of the Scoping Report, there were updates to the sustainability context:

- In 2007 as part of the SA of the Preferred Options of the Core Strategy.
- In 2009 as part of the review and update of the Maidstone SA Scoping Report.
- In 2011 as part of the SA of the Regulation 25 Public Consultation Document – Core Strategy.

**Table 3.1** sets out the key messages which can be drawn from these policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives context reviews that are of particular relevance to a SA of the strategic site allocations. These messages have been updated where appropriate, including to take account of the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework and other key documents since 2011.

**Table 3.1: Key messages from the policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives context review**

Topic	Key messages
Urban Area	<p>The <b>National Planning Policy Framework</b> (2012) identifies twelve core principles for land-use planning which should underpin plan-making and decision-taking. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our <i>main urban areas</i>, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;</li> <li>- contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment... <i>Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value...</i></li> <li>- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value;</li> <li>- actively manage patterns of growth to make fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, <i>focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.</i></li> </ul> <p>Under the <b>South East Plan</b>, the prime focus for development in the region should be urban areas, in order to foster accessibility to employment, housing, retail and other services, and avoid unnecessary travel. In particular, the Plan identifies a network of 22 regional hubs, of which Maidstone is one.</p>

Topic	Key messages
	<p>The previous Government announced its Growth Points initiative in October 2006, which aimed to support high rates of housing delivery over the first ten years of the South East Plan. Nine growth points were subsequently announced including Maidstone. Under the South East Plan, Maidstone Borough as a whole must deliver on average 554 net additional dwellings each year (a total of 11,080 over the Plan period, 2006 – 2026).</p> <p>The housing trajectory in the 2010/11 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) confirmed that there was a 5 year supply of housing land in the Borough. To deliver the housing targets strategic sites will be allocated through the Core Strategy and smaller sites will be allocated in subsequent Local Plans.</p>
<p>The urban/rural fringe</p>	<p>Policy C5 in the <b>South East Plan</b> on managing the rural-urban fringe states that LDDs – in this case the Core Strategy– should identify issues and opportunities that require action to deliver a sustainable multi-functional rural-urban fringe; plan positively for facilities connected with the sustainable management of urban areas; and identify any parts of the rural urban fringe around settlements that are currently or potentially subject to dereliction. Within the South East the rural-urban fringe represents an important asset and the Plan identifies that there is potential to make better use of these areas to meet wider objectives.</p> <p>The South East Plan emphasises that developments in and around urban areas, including new urban extensions should be well designed and consistent with the principles of urban renaissance and sustainable development (Policy SP3). In addition, the Plan states that local authorities should target positive management on areas where urban extensions are planned including engaging local communities and landowners to ensure early consideration is given to landscape and biodiversity enhancement, woodland management, recreation provision and access routes.</p> <p>Within the urban fringe the provision and maintenance of green and blue infrastructure (GBI) is particularly important and the role of the fringe in improving accessibility to the countryside is a prime concern.</p> <p>Additionally, Policy AOSR7 states that the LDF at Maidstone will “<i>avoid coalescence between Maidstone and Medway towns conurbation.</i>”</p> <p>The South East Plan cites research which has shown that the urban rural fringe serves an important role both functionally (i.e. what it can do for the area’s operation) and structurally (i.e. how it serves to define the area) for the South East; and further research has identified how a functional relationship may be provided for through greater interaction and integration between ten key functions: (linkages to the country, a gateway to the town, promotion of health, outdoor classroom, recycling and renewable energy centre, productive landscape, cultural legacy, nature reserve, engine for regeneration and place for sustainable living.</p> <p>The Council has found (Maidstone Urban Capacity Study, 2006 &amp; Maidstone Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2009) that not all future development in the Borough can reasonably be accommodated within the existing built up area of the Borough’s towns and villages and it will be necessary to bring forward development on greenfield sites.</p>
<p>Air Quality and causes of climate change</p>	<p><b>The Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010)</b> - The Regulations transpose into UK law set standards (binding limit values) and assessment criteria for air quality, as required by the EU Air Quality Directive and Daughter Directives.</p> <p><b>Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2010)</b> required under the Environment Act 1995 - sets out plans to improve and protect air quality in the UK. It considers ambient air quality only, leaving occupational exposure, in-vehicle exposure and indoor air quality to be addressed separately. The strategy sets health-based objectives for nine main air pollutants. The pollutants covered are:</p>

Topic	Key messages
	<p>Benzene; 1,3-butadiene; carbon monoxide (CO); lead; nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>); ozone; particles (PM<sub>10</sub>); sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>); and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Performance against these objectives is monitored where people are regularly present and might be exposed to air pollution.</p> <p><b>The Ambient Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)</b> replaced nearly all the previous EU air quality legislation and was made law in England through the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010. It includes limits for smaller particulates (PM<sub>2.5</sub>).</p> <p><b>The Climate Change Act (2008)</b> requires that greenhouse gas production in the UK is reduced by at least 80% by 2050 against a 1990 baseline (excluding aviation).</p> <p>Subsequent to the setting of stringent targets within the UK Climate Change Act (2008), the <b>UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009)</b> sets out the path for the UK to meet legally-binding target to ensure 15% of energy comes from renewable sources by 2020.</p> <p>The Government's <b>National Planning Policy Framework (2012)</b> highlights the importance of local authorities supporting a move to a low-carbon economy, including through: planning for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>The NPPF identifies as 'core planning principles' the need to 'support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate', including accounting for flood risk, reusing resources, converting existing buildings, and encouraging the use of renewable energy. A key role for planning in securing radical reductions in GHG emissions is envisioned, with specific reference made to meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008.</p> <p>In terms of adaptation, the NPPF requires Local Plans to take account of the effects of climate change in the long term. New developments should be planned so that they avoid increased vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Where new development is at risk to such impacts, this should be managed through adaptation measures.</p> <p>The NPPF states that new and existing developments should be prevented from contributing to, or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution. More specifically, it makes clear that planning policies should be compliant with and contribute towards EU limit values and national objectives for pollutants. This includes taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and cumulative impacts on air quality.</p> <p>The Coalition Government has continued to support the previous Government's target that all new homes should be zero carbon from 2016. Step changes in Building Regulations Part L are leading to this, and authorities are encouraged to use the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) (CLG 2006) to increase energy efficiency standards in new development.</p> <p>Recent guidance from the Committee on Climate Change highlights the important role that local authorities can play in delivering emission reductions and sets out benchmark ambitions for them. Planning functions are described as being a 'key lever in reducing emissions and adapting localities to a changing climate', with it considered particularly important that local authorities use these to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforce energy efficiency standards in new buildings and extensions;</li> </ul>



Topic	Key messages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce transport emissions by concentrating new developments in existing cities and large towns and/or ensuring they are well served by public transport;</li> <li>• Work with developers to make renewable energy projects acceptable to local communities;</li> <li>• Plan for infrastructure such as low-carbon district heating networks, green and blue infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems; and</li> <li>• Avoid increasing the area’s risk to climate change impacts by locating new development in areas of lowest flood risk.</li> </ul>
<p>Biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure</p>	<p><b>The EU Sustainable Development Strategy, adopted in 2006</b>, includes an objective to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010. The UK is also a Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), a principal objective of which is the conservation of biodiversity.</p> <p>Commitment to the CBD led to the preparation of the <b>1994 UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)</b>, the overall goal of which is to conserve and enhance biodiversity within the UK and to contribute to efforts to conserve global biodiversity. The UK BAP identifies our most threatened biodiversity assets and includes action plans for the recovery of priority species and habitats.</p> <p>More recently, at the European level, a new <b>EU Biodiversity Strategy</b> was adopted in May 2011 in order to deliver on the established Europe-wide target to ‘halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020’. The Strategy promotes the need to take an ‘ecosystem services’ approach to thinking about and conserving biodiversity, i.e. recognising the importance of biodiversity in terms of its role as ‘our life insurance, giving us food, fresh water and clean air, shelter and medicine, mitigating natural disasters, pests and diseases and contribut[ing] to regulating the climate’.</p> <p>In order to contribute to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, the NPPF states that the planning system should look to minimise impacts on biodiversity, with net gains in biodiversity to be provided wherever possible.</p> <p>The <b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</b> calls upon local authorities to set criteria based policies for the protection of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, giving weight to their importance not just individually but as a part of a wider ecological network.</p> <p>To contribute to national and local targets on biodiversity, the NPPF states that planning policies should promote the ‘preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks’ and the ‘protection and recovery of priority species’. Positive planning for ‘green and blue infrastructure’ is recognised as part of planning for ecological networks.</p> <p>The <b>Natural Environment White Paper</b> (June 2011) sets out the importance of a healthy, functioning natural environment to sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal well-being. It aims to facilitate greater local action to protect and improve nature; create and create a green economy in which economic growth and the health of our natural resources sustain each other and markets, business and Government better reflect the value of nature. The White Paper is also focused on strengthening the connections between people and nature to the benefit of both. It includes commitments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks by 2020;</li> <li>• Establish a new voluntary approach to biodiversity offsetting to be tested in</li> </ul>

Topic	Key messages
	<p>pilot areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable partnerships of local authorities, local communities and landowners, the private sector and conservation organisations to establish new Nature Improvement Areas; and</li> <li>• Work with local authority partnerships to identify and address barriers to using green and blue infrastructure to promote sustainable growth.</li> </ul> <p>The White Paper drew on the findings of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (2011) (NEA), a major project that was able to draw conclusions on the ‘substantial’ benefits that ecosystems provide to society directly and through supporting economic prosperity. The NEA identified development as a key driver of ecosystem loss and biodiversity offsets as a possible means of increasing ‘private sector involvement in conservation and habitat creation’.</p> <p>The Government has also published <i>Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services</i> (2011), which builds on the Natural Environment White Paper and sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea and seeks to deliver a real step change in conservation.</p> <p>The Wildlife Trusts ‘<b>Living Landscape</b>’ initiative focuses on the conservation of biodiversity over large areas of land where habitats are fragmented. This approach, which is essentially an alternative approach to focusing on conservation of protected areas, is thought to be necessary in order to reverse declines in biodiversity. Within Living Landscapes, a spatial approach to ecological restoration is applied with the aim of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting and maximising the value of areas that are already rich in wildlife;</li> <li>• Expanding, buffering, and creating connections and stepping stones between these areas; and</li> <li>• Making the wider landscape more permeable to wildlife.</li> </ul> <p>The hope is that this restoration will both provide a healthy environment in which wildlife can thrive and enhance those natural processes that benefit people. A partnership approach is called for, with central and local government, agencies, the private sector and voluntary bodies required to act together to ensure ecological restoration, including through cross-boundary co-operation.</p> <p><b>National Planning Policy Framework (2012)</b> – One of the twelve core planning principles within the NPPF sets out the need for planning to contribute towards conserving and enhancing the natural environment. A key theme of the NPPF is to conserve and enhance the natural environment through minimising the impacts of new development on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity.</p> <p><b>The South East Green Infrastructure Framework (2009)</b> provides guidance to local authorities on how to provide the green infrastructure that is required by the South East Plan. According to the Framework, green infrastructure should be fully integrated in the plan-making process and consideration of green infrastructure should begin at the earliest stages of that process. Green infrastructure provision should be considered in relation to the needs of a particular area.</p>



Topic	Key messages
	<p>The <b>Kent Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (1997)</b> identifies those species and habitats most under threat, and sets out an agenda for action. The key objectives include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To maintain and, where practicable, to enhance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the overall populations and natural ranges of native species and the quality and range of wildlife habitats and ecosystems;</li> <li>• internationally and nationally important and threatened species, habitats and ecosystems;</li> <li>• species, habitats and natural and managed ecosystems that are characteristic of Kent;</li> <li>• the biodiversity of natural and semi-natural habitats, where this has diminished over recent decades.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) To increase public awareness of, and involvement in, conserving biodiversity.</li> <li>3) To identify priorities for habitat and species conservation in Kent and set realistic targets and timescales for these.</li> </ol> <p>The BAP identifies that development plans have a major role to play in protecting important habitats and species from unsuitable development and that it is therefore essential that our intentions towards such issues are clearly defined in these documents, in order that they can be effective in protecting the biodiversity of Kent. The following identified actions are particularly relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate site protection policies for Local Wildlife Sites (formerly known as SNCIs) in all development plans.</li> <li>• Protect remaining semi-natural habitats, whether designated or not, through policies, strategies and development plans.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Maidstone Biodiversity Strategy: A Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014</b> sets out a series of key objectives. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop and consolidate a sound biological knowledge base.</li> <li>• To consistently translate national biodiversity targets into effective action at the local level.</li> <li>• To examine local biodiversity status and issues, and identify conservation targets for locally important habitats.</li> <li>• To develop sustainable local partnerships to help deliver programmes for biodiversity conservation, education and environmental stewardship.</li> <li>• To increase public awareness of, and participation in, conserving biodiversity locally.</li> <li>• To ensure that opportunities for biodiversity conservation and enhancement are identified and fully considered via all statutory and local processes and initiatives.</li> <li>• To provide a basis for measuring and monitoring progress in biodiversity conservation at a local level, and contributing to national efforts.</li> </ul>
Community wellbeing	<p>In relation to equality for groups recognised through the <b>Equalities Act (2008)</b>, the following messages are relevant to site allocations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address gender-specific concerns, including the need for gender-specific support services and to address gender-specific barriers to employment for women;</li> <li>• Promote participation of all community groups, including disabled people, in sport at the highest levels;</li> <li>• Ensure that all services meet the needs of the BME population and disabled people and address barriers to accessing services;</li> <li>• Tailor regeneration activity to respond to the needs of BME communities and to</li> </ul>

Topic	Key messages
	<p>tackle inequality and disadvantage; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and address barriers to employment to attract BME people and disabled people into local jobs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity (2005)</b> promotes prosperity for all, through promotion of good governance, empowering communities and tackling disadvantage.</p> <p>The social role of the planning system is defined in the <b>National Planning Policy Framework (2012)</b> as 'supporting vibrant and healthy communities', with a 'core planning principle' being to 'take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all'. It should aim to achieve places that promote social interaction, and which are safe and accessible.</p> <p>The NPPF advises that planning policies should promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. High quality open spaces should be protected or their loss mitigated, unless a lack of need is established.</p> <p>Specific protection and promotion of town centres is also encouraged in the NPPF, with it stating that local planning authorities should 'define the extent of town centres', set 'policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations', and 'promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres'.</p> <p><b>Maidstone 2020 'The Strategy for the Community' (The Sustainable Community Strategy for Maidstone Borough 2009-2020) (2009)</b> identifies the following priorities for the Borough:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a vibrant economy, create prosperity and opportunities for all.</li> <li>To develop an efficient, sustainable, integrated transport system.</li> <li>Build stronger and safer communities.</li> <li>Create healthier communities and support older people to lead more active and independent lives.</li> <li>Make Maidstone Borough a place where people of all ages - children, young people and families - can achieve their aspirations.</li> <li>Develop Maidstone Borough's urban and rural communities as models for 21st Century quality and sustainable living.</li> <li>Build a thriving sporting, creative and cultural life for all.</li> <li>Retain and enhance Maidstone Borough's distinctive history, landscape and character.</li> </ul>
Economy	<p>The <b>Local Growth White Paper (2010)</b> states that government interventions should support investment that will have a long term impact on growth, working with markets rather than seeking to create artificial and unsustainable growth. In some cases this means focusing investment at areas with long term growth challenges, so that these areas can undergo transition to an economy that responds to a local demand. Places that are currently successful may also wish to prioritise activity to maximise further growth by removing barriers, such as infrastructure constraints. However, the White paper also emphasises that: <i>This does not mean that every place will grow at the same rate or that everywhere will, or will want to, become an economic powerhouse. Long term economic trends make differences in economic performance inevitable and these can and do change over time.</i></p> <p>Specific examples of areas where it makes sense for Government intervention to tackle market failures include: investment in infrastructure; tackling barriers such as</p>

Topic	Key messages
	<p>transport congestion and poor connections; other support to areas facing long term growth challenges where this can help them manage their transition to growth industries; and strategic intervention where it can stimulate private sector investment in new green technology in strategic locations.</p> <p>Finally, the White Paper identifies that economic policy should be judged on the degree to which it delivers strong, sustainable and balanced growth of income and employment over the long-term. More specifically, growth should be: broad-based industrially and geographically, ensuring everyone has access to the opportunities that growth brings (including future generations), whilst also focused on businesses that compete with the best internationally.</p> <p>The Government's objectives, as set out within the <b>National Planning Policy Framework (2012)</b> are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century</li> <li>• Promote the vitality and viability of town centres, and meet the needs of consumers for high quality and accessible retail services; and</li> <li>• Raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas by promoting thriving, inclusive and locally distinctive rural economies.</li> </ul> <p>The NPPF emphasises the need to respond positively to market signals, as well as seeking to stimulating the market through: removing barriers to investment; and responding positively to wider opportunities for growth and coordinating investment by providing a long-term strategy. Central to this must be allocation of sites to <i>'promote development and flexible use of land, providing detail on form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate'</i>. In terms of the need to 'removing barriers to investment' there is an emphasis on the provision of infrastructure for transport, minerals, waste, energy, telecoms, flood protection, water supply and water quality.</p> <p>The NPPF highlights the contribution the planning system can make to 'building a strong, responsive economy', by 'ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure'.</p> <p>A commitment to securing economic growth is set out in the NPPF. This is in order to 'create jobs and prosperity', to build on 'the country's inherent strengths' and to meet the 'twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future'. This should include supporting existing, new and emerging business sectors, including positively planning for 'clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries'.</p> <p>The NPPF states that local plans should 'support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas' and 'promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses'.</p> <p><b>The Sustainable Community Strategy for Maidstone Borough 2009-2020 (2009)</b> includes a goal to "Develop a vibrant economy, create prosperity and opportunities for all" and a cross cutting goal to "Tackle health, education and employment inequalities in areas of disadvantage". A series of objectives and targets related to the first goal have been included in the SCS. It should be noted that the accompanying text recognises that some of these objectives and targets may need to be reviewed in light of the current economic crises. The key objectives and targets by related issue have been included in the table below:</p>

Topic	Key messages
	<p><b>The Maidstone Borough Council Strategic Plan 2009-2012</b> sets out how the Council will work to achieve its objectives and contribute to the goals in Maidstone’s Sustainable Community Strategy. Priority Theme 1 of five is ‘A place to achieve, prosper and thrive’, stressing the importance of economic development and regeneration initiatives. It also sets out key objectives to deliver objective for ‘economy and prosperity’ identified in the SCS.</p> <p>The Maidstone Borough <b>Economic Development Strategy</b> (2008) was prepared in response to the challenges facing the Maidstone economy, and the new responsibilities facing the Council and partners for driving economic development. It includes a vision to create by 2028: “a model 21st century county town, a distinctive place, known for its blend of sustainable rural and urban living, excellence in public services, dynamic service sector-based economy, and above all, quality of life”. It identifies a series of priority actions to strengthen the competitiveness of the Maidstone economy, and sets out a detailed action plan to support these proposals, together with lead responsibilities and timetables for delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing sector specialisms;</li> <li>• creating a more innovative and entrepreneurial economy;</li> <li>• attracting and retaining investment;</li> <li>• developing a culture of lifelong learning;</li> <li>• investing in transport and infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p>Another key local document is the <b>Maidstone Local Action Plan (LAP) 2008-2011</b>, which is based on the priorities and targets for Kent set out in Kent Agreement 2 (KA2). Adopted from KA2 a high priority is ‘economic success’ – National Indicator (NI) 163 – Proportion of population aged 19- 64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 2 or higher and NI 171 New business registration rate. However, the Maidstone Local Action Plan (LAP) 2008-2011 has not been updated or reviewed since its publication and National Indicators are no longer monitored. The current version of the Kent Agreement is Kent Agreement 4 (KA4).</p>
Flood Risk	<p><b>Flood and Water Management Act 2010</b></p> <p>The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires flood and coastal erosion risk management authorities (that did not previously have such a duty) to aim to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development when exercising their flood and coastal erosion risk management functions. The Government has published <b>Guidance for risk management authorities on sustainable development in relation to their flood and coastal erosion risk management functions</b> (Oct 2010) Sustainable development in the context of flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• taking account of the safety and wellbeing of people and the ecosystems upon which they depend;</li> <li>• using finite resources efficiently and minimising waste;</li> <li>• taking action to avoid exposing current and future generations to increasing risk; and</li> <li>• improving the resilience of communities, the economy and the natural, historic, built and social environment to current and future risks.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of alternatives to standard engineering approaches, which in many cases may be deployed alongside existing flood and coastal erosion risk management, which relate to the development of strategic sites include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings, and retro-fitting at risk properties, including historic buildings, with flood resilience</li> </ul>

Topic	Key messages
	<p>measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).</li> <li>• Planning and development control to reduce the impact of new developments on flood and coastal erosion risk.</li> <li>• Utilising the environment, such as management of the land to reduce runoff, harnessing peatlands and wetlands to store water, restoring and expanding salt marshes, or sustaining beaches and shingle ridges to dissipate wave energy and reduce risks to communities.</li> <li>• Identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere.</li> <li>• Planning to roll back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion.</li> </ul> <p><b>National Planning Policy Framework (2012)</b> – One of the twelve core planning principles set out within the NPPF is to “support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change...”</p> <p>The NPPF calls for the diversion of development away from areas of highest flood risk, or where development is necessary, ‘making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere’. Local Plans in turn should be ‘supported by Strategic Flood Risk Assessment’, and policies should manage flood risk from all sources, taking account of the advice of the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies. A sequential, risk-based approach should be taken to the location of development, taking into account the effects of climate change.</p> <p>According to <b>Maidstone’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)</b> there are areas in Maidstone at risk from frequent flooding as they are located in the functional floodplain of the River Medway, River Len, River Loose and their tributaries. Flood risk is particularly high in the southwest of the Borough and there is some flood risk through Maidstone town, along river courses. The SFRA indicates that the majority of flood risk from watercourses within Maidstone is from fluvial flooding, although there is some risk of tidal flooding in the vicinity of Allington.</p>
<p>Housing and affordable housing</p>	<p>The key objectives set out within <b>Laying the Foundations (A Housing Strategy for England) (2011)</b> include to: support the delivery of new homes; support choice and quality for tenants; tackle the empty homes problem; and to deliver better quality of homes, places and housing support.</p> <p><b>National Planning Policy Framework (2012)</b> – A key theme set out within the NPPF is the need to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes.</p> <p>The NPPF states that in order to ‘boost significantly the supply of housing’ local planning authorities should meet the ‘full, objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing’ in their area, so far as this is consistent with the policies set out in the NPPF. A ‘supply of specific deliverable sites’ should be identified, sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against requirements, with an additional buffers set to ensure ‘choice and competition in the market’.</p> <p>Local planning authorities are also called upon by the NPPF to ‘widen opportunities for homeownership’ and to ‘create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities’. This includes ensuring the provision of affordable housing onsite or externally where robustly justified. Plans for housing mix should be based upon ‘current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community’.</p> <p>The NPPF states that empty housing and buildings should also be identified and</p>

Topic	Key messages
	<p>brought back into residential use where appropriate. Larger developments are suggested as sometimes being the best means of achieving a supply of new homes, with these to be developed in accordance with the 'principles of Garden Cities'.</p> <p>The following summary of progress on housing was produced by the Chartered Institute of Housing, The National Federation of Housing, and Shelter (2012).</p> <p>The <b>Housing Report (2012)</b> collates the official figures available on housing in order to establish whether the Government's approach to housing is succeeding. It analyses the Government's performance under a number of main headings, the following of which are of particular relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Housing Supply</i>: A small increase of new build is recorded, but this is from a historically low base. The number of completions in 2011 was 38% below the 2007 peak and there has been a fall in overall starts</li> <li>- <i>Overcrowding</i>: This situation is worsening, and current measures to take under-occupation may not necessarily resolve the problem.</li> <li>- <i>Homelessness</i>: There has been a large increase in homeless acceptances and rough sleepers, with this problem potentially exacerbated by further cuts to Housing benefit during 2013</li> <li>- <i>Empty Homes</i>: Despite 720,000 homes currently being classed as empty, the situation seems to be an improving one. This is particularly the case with long-term empty homes, which are the major problem in this area.</li> <li>- <i>Home Ownership</i>: House prices are relatively steady, sales are up, and affordability is increasing. However, homeownership rates are falling and there is a decline in low cost ownership sales. Home ownership remains out of reach for most people.</li> </ul> <p>A challenge identified for the Government is to produce a step change in housing in order to meet the nations needs and aspirations, especially given that:</p> <p><i>'Many of the external pressures on the housing market, ranging from a growing and ageing population to falling incomes, are likely to intensify over the coming years'.</i></p> <p>Housing priorities set out within the <b>Maidstone Housing Strategy 2011/12 to 2014/15</b> will be to: develop sustainable communities; increase choice and improve the quality of life for vulnerable people; improve our existing homes; and improve access to housing advice and work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in Maidstone.</p>
Gypsies and travellers	<p><b>The Planning Policy for Travellers Sites (2012)</b> sets out the Government's planning policy for traveller sites. The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.</p> <p>To help achieve this, Government's aims in respect of traveller sites include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning</li> <li>• to ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites</li> <li>• to encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale</li> <li>• that plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development</li> <li>• to promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites</li> <li>• that plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of</li> </ul>



Topic	Key messages
	<p>unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective.</p>
<p>Land use, landscape and the historic environment</p>	<p><b>The National Planning Policy Framework (2012)</b> – Two of the twelve core planning principles set out in the NPPF emphasise the need to conserve the natural and historic environment. In achieving sustainable development, a key theme set out within the NPPF is to conserve and enhance the historic and natural environment. The NPPF sets out the need for local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy in their local plans for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. The NPPF also highlights the need to protect and enhance valued landscapes.</p> <p>The NPPF states that local planning authorities should set out in their local plan a ‘positive strategy’ for the ‘conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment’, including those heritage assets that are most at risk. These assets should be recognised as being an ‘irreplaceable resource’ that should be conserved in a ‘manner appropriate to their significance’.</p> <p>In relation to the historic environment, the NPPF calls upon local planning authorities to take account of the ‘the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits’ that conservation can bring, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to ‘local character and distinctiveness’.</p> <p>According to the NPPF, considerations of the impact of a proposed development on a designated heritage asset should place great weight on the assets conservation. In addition, the effect of proposed developments on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account when determining applications.</p> <p>The NPPF states that the planning system should protect and enhance valued landscapes. This should include setting criteria based policies against which proposals for development that affect landscape areas will be judged.</p> <p>In particular, the NPPF notes that ‘great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty’ due to their high status of protection in ‘relation to landscape and scenic beauty’.</p> <p>The NPPF emphasises the ‘great importance’ of Green Belts, with local planning authorities encouraged to ‘plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, with inappropriate development in these areas ‘not be approved except in very special circumstances’.</p> <p>According to the NPPF, planning policies and decisions should look to ‘encourage the effective use of land’ through the reuse of land which has been previously developed, ‘provided that this is not of high environmental value’. The benefits of best and most versatile agricultural land should also be taken into account.</p> <p>The UK Government is a signatory to the <b>European Landscape Convention</b>. This aims to encourage public authorities within member states to adopt policies and measures for the protection, management and planning of all landscapes, whether outstanding or ordinary, that determine the quality of people’s living environment.</p> <p><b>The Heritage Protection Review White Paper (2007)</b> sets out a vision of a unified and simplified heritage protection system which will provide more opportunities for public involvement and community engagement. Some of the key objectives within the document include the need to develop a unified approach to the historic environment, maximise opportunities for inclusion and involvement and support sustainable communities by putting the historic environment at the heart of an effective planning system.</p>



Topic	Key messages
	<p><b>The Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (2012)</b> replaces the landscape character assessment section of the Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Guidelines (2000). The assessment includes key characteristics; landscape condition and sensitivity; and landscape guidelines. The report identifies 58 Borough-wide landscape character areas across the rural area of the Borough.</p>
<p>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility</p>	<p><b>The Government’s Strategy for Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (2008)</b> is to take account of transport’s wider impact on climate change, health, quality of life and the natural environment. Transport systems should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support national economic competitiveness and growth, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks;</li> <li>• Reduce transport’s emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of tackling climate change;</li> <li>• Contribute greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society; and</li> <li>• Improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a healthy natural environment.</li> </ul> <p><b>The National Planning Policy Framework (2012)</b> – One of the twelve core planning principles set out within the NPPF is to “actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable”. The NPPF emphasises the need for Local Authorities to work with neighbouring authorities and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development. It also highlights that encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.</p> <p>In terms of transport policies, the NPPF notes that these will have an important role in ‘contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives’. It calls for the transport system to be balanced ‘in favour of sustainable transport’, with developments to be located and designed to facilitate these modes of travel.</p> <p>The NPPF states that encouragement to be given to those solutions that ‘support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion’, whilst strategies should be developed for the provision of ‘viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development’.</p> <p>In order to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure and other activities, the NPPF calls for planning policies that aim for ‘a balance of land uses’. Wherever practical, key facilities should be located within walking distance of most properties.</p> <p>The purpose of the <b>Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-16 (LTP3)</b> is to set out the County Council’s priorities for local transport investment for the period 2011-16. LTP3 identifies a series of transport related objectives. These include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce journey times for personal travel, business and freight;</li> <li>• provide transport infrastructure to support regeneration and housing;</li> <li>• provide transport infrastructure;</li> <li>• support the function of the County’s international gateways;</li> <li>• reduce and reverse the impact of transport on public health;</li> <li>• encourage and enable more physically active travel;</li> <li>• improve access by and integrate public transport, walking and cycling;</li> </ul>

Topic	Key messages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce traffic levels;</li> <li>• improve carbon efficiency of current forms of transport;</li> <li>• encourage the use of more sustainable transport like public transport, walking and cycling; and</li> <li>• reduce and reverse the impact of new infrastructure on the natural environment.</li> </ul>
Waste	<p>Whilst the <b>National Planning Policy Framework</b> does not contain specific waste policies, local authorities should have regard to the frameworks policies so far as relevant. The environmental role set out for planning includes a reference to minimising waste, whilst local planning authorities should set out strategic policies to deliver waste management infrastructure.</p> <p>According to <b>PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (2005)</b> all planning authorities should, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities, prepare and deliver planning strategies that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help deliver sustainable development through driving waste management up the waste hierarchy, addressing waste as a resource and looking to disposal as the last option, but one which must be adequately catered for;</li> <li>• enable sufficient and timely provision of waste management facilities to meet the needs of their communities;</li> <li>• help secure the recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment, and enable waste to be disposed of in one of the nearest appropriate installations;</li> <li>• protect green belts but recognise the particular locational needs of some types of waste management facilities when defining detailed green belt boundaries; and</li> <li>• ensure the design and layout of new development supports sustainable waste management.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Kent Waste Local Plan, adopted in March 1998</b>, contains policies which relate to development for the disposal of refuse or waste material in Kent and Medway. It sets a county-wide strategy for waste disposal, including the identification of specific site opportunities for waste management and disposal facilities. The timescale of the Plan is to 2011. However, the Kent Waste Sites Preferred Options Consultation was published in May 2012.</p> <p>The plan's objectives include changing the ways by which waste is now dealt with in Kent. This entails the development of cleaner technologies. It means moving away from the current reliance on landfill and towards alternatives including Integrated Waste Management Facilities which embrace re-use and recycling and / or waste to energy.</p>
Water resources and quality	<p><b>The EU Water Framework Directive (2000)</b> requires all inland and coastal waters to achieve at least 'good status' by 2015 or, where this is not possible, by 2021 or 2027. The Environment Agency has prepared draft River Basin Management Plans that show how these requirements will be met by 2025. This includes a plan for the Thames River Basin District which covers the majority of the borough, the small remainder falling within the South East River Catchment Management Plan.</p> <p><b>Future Water – the government water strategy for England (2008)</b> sets out the Government's vision for the water sector by 2030. The Strategy requires planning authorities to work closely with water companies and the Environment Agency on timing and numbers of new households in areas likely to see the greatest growth. Addresses a range of water-related issues including managing water demand through increased water efficiency and reduced water wastage; enhancing future water supply through new infrastructure; addressing water quality through tackling pollution;</p>

Topic	Key messages
	<p>managing surface water runoff through sustainable drainage; and managing river and coastal flood risk.</p> <p><b>Water White Paper – Water for Life (2012)</b> sets out the Government vision for a more resilient water sector, a more efficient and customer-focussed water industry, and where water is valued as the precious resource it is. It states the measures it will take to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystems, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources.</p> <p>The <b>National Planning Policy Framework</b> states that local planning authorities should produce strategic policies to deliver the provision of a variety of infrastructure, including that necessary for water supply.</p> <p>The Environment Agency highlights the importance of integrating development planning and water planning, including the need to adopt stringent water efficiency policies; take account of the findings of Water Cycle Studies; set policy relating to SuDS, contamination and ecological enhancement; and identify suitable development for groundwater sensitive areas.</p> <p>Since 2010, all affordable housing is to be constructed to Code Level 3, which sets water consumption at 105 l/hd/d for internal use for an average year.</p> <p>The <b>Water Cycle Study Outline Report (2010)</b> identifies those elements of the water cycle which represent a particular issue for Maidstone, particularly collection and treatment of waste water, and current consumption rates of drinking water.</p>

**4 WHAT'S THE BASELINE SITUATION?**

“the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme”  
 (SEA Directive, Annex I(b))

“the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected”  
 (SEA Directive, Annex I(c))

A review of the sustainability baseline, in relation to spatial planning in Maidstone, was undertaken in 2005 with findings set out within the Maidstone SA Scoping Report. Subsequent to the publication of the Maidstone SA Scoping Report, the baseline review was updated in 2009 as part of a review of the first Scoping Report and in 2011 as part of the SA of the Core Strategy Regulation 25 Public Participation Consultation Document. Table 4.1 presents a summary of messages from the baseline review (as updated in 2009 and 2011, along with key messages from most recent evidence that has been produced since 2011) that are of relevance to the strategic site allocations. This includes additional messages arising out of new evidence documents that have been produced since the Regulation 25 SA report was prepared in 2011. These new evidence documents include the following, although not all of these are relevant to a sites assessment:

- 2011 - Employment Land Review Partial Update
- 2012 - Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment
- 2011 - Sustainable Construction in Maidstone Study<sup>2</sup>
- 2012 - Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment<sup>3</sup>

Those wishing to learn more about the sustainability baseline can do so by accessing the SA Scoping Report at:

[http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/planning/local\\_development\\_framework/sa\\_scoping\\_report.aspx](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning/local_development_framework/sa_scoping_report.aspx)

**Table 4.1: Key messages from the baseline review**

Urban Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to reduce congestion in the town centre</li> <li>• The need to improve air quality in the town centre</li> <li>• The need to regenerate the town centre and combat deprivation</li> <li>• The need to provide quality office space in the town centre</li> <li>• The need to enhance the public realm, including green and blue infrastructure</li> </ul>
The urban/rural fringe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to give early consideration to landscape and biodiversity enhancement, woodland management, recreation provision and access routes</li> <li>• The need to protect areas of biodiversity including ancient woodlands and local wildlife sites</li> <li>• The need to ensure that strategic development sites are well placed to provide access to adequate employment opportunities, a range of community facilities and good public transport, walking and cycling links to the town centre and other key services</li> <li>• The need to ensure that strategic development sites promote and do not detract from the regeneration of Maidstone town</li> <li>• A critical mass of development will be required to ensure the provision of necessary</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Not relevant to this assessment as this is a topic based evidence document, it does not relate to spatial policy or allocation of sites.

<sup>3</sup> Not relevant to this assessment as none of the sites put forward are proposed for Gypsy or Traveller Accommodation

	<p>strategic and community infrastructure and a step change in high quality sustainable development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to ensure that the villages retain their distinctive identity and that the character and setting of the conservation areas are protected.</li> <li>• The Council has found (Maidstone Urban Capacity Study, 2006 &amp; Maidstone Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2009) that not all future development in the Borough can reasonably be accommodated within the existing built up area of the Borough's towns and villages and it will be necessary to bring forward development on greenfield sites.</li> </ul>
Urban fringe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to ensure that new development at the edge of the urban area facilitates access to the urban fringe and countryside, particularly through the provision and maintenance of green and blue infrastructure</li> <li>• The need to ensure that any parts of the urban fringe which are currently or potentially subject to dereliction are considered</li> <li>• Coalescence between Maidstone and Medway towns (and Tonbridge and Malling) conurbations is avoided</li> <li>• The distinctive character and identity of villages are preserved and protected</li> <li>• Opportunities to improve the function of the urban fringe are exploited</li> <li>• The need to protect areas of biodiversity including ancient woodlands and local wildlife sites.</li> <li>• The Council has found (Maidstone Urban Capacity Study, 2006 &amp; Maidstone Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2009) that not all future development in the Borough can reasonably be accommodated within the existing built up area of the Borough's towns and villages and it will be necessary to bring forward development on greenfield sites.</li> </ul>
Air Quality and causes of climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to improve air quality in the AQMAs, including the town centre, key road junctions and the M20</li> <li>• The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet Government's targets</li> <li>• The need to increase the renewable energy capacity in the Borough</li> <li>• The need to adapt to climate change.</li> </ul>
Biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and protected areas in Maidstone (informed by the Maidstone Biodiversity Action Plan).</li> <li>• The need to enhance existing green spaces and where an under provision has been identified, contributions from development should be sought.</li> <li>• The need to conserve and enhance water courses and their benefits to biodiversity and public amenity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Maidstone Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2011)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 habitats are considered a priority within the Borough: all but one (Urban Green Space) are UK priority habitats.</li> <li>• The majority of the Borough is covered by arable and horticulture land practices. However, Maidstone holds a large amount of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, a UK priority habitat. A large amount of calcareous grassland, representing 9% of the county resource is found in the Borough.</li> <li>• Reports predating the Maidstone LBAP identified habitat fragmentation as an issue for Kent and saw this being exacerbated by estimated changes in the distributions of species as predicted by climate change. However the Conservation Status Map developed in the LBAP indicates a large amount biodiversity action in the Borough is currently achieving connectivity of key UK priority habitats in a strategic and co-ordinated manner.</li> <li>• Through environmental stewardship schemes run by Natural England (NE) and the Forestry Commission (FC) a significant area of Maidstone is currently managed to promote biodiversity (no figure provided, just a GIS-based figure).</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The challenge of meeting the needs of a growing population and particularly the</li> </ul>

wellbeing	<p>elderly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to reduce inequalities in the Borough by addressing the issues of the most deprived areas and the most vulnerable groups and particularly the young and deprived</li> <li>The low performance of some of the schools in the Borough</li> <li>The impacts of air quality on health</li> <li>Reducing the number of road accidents.</li> </ul>																																																																																			
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to maintain and enhance the characteristics of the Borough that contribute to attracting high quality and high value business and workers, e.g. quality public realm and green space, availability of suitable land, premises and facilities</li> <li>The need to encourage new business creation particularly those which may lead to specialisation of the economy and innovation</li> <li>The current inequalities in income and employment within the Borough.</li> </ul> <p><b>Maidstone Borough Council Employment Land Review, Partial Update (July 2011) –</b>  This ELR Partial Update focussed on reviewing the demand and supply projections for the Borough over the Plan Period to 2026 and hence providing the Council with an updated land requirement position which can be taken forward through the Local Development Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The total net requirement for B class employment land within Maidstone Borough is between 6.9ha and 16.8ha over the remainder of the Plan Period. This is dominated by the forecast requirement and relatively low supply of warehouse stock within the Borough. Table 4.2 below shows how this supply splits into the different employment uses.</li> </ul> <p><b>Table 4.2: Forecast Net Employment Land Requirement 2010 to 2026</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="2">Office</th> <th colspan="2">Industrial</th> <th colspan="2">Warehouse</th> <th colspan="2">Total</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Min</th> <th>Max</th> <th>Min</th> <th>Max</th> <th>Min</th> <th>Max</th> <th>Min</th> <th>Max</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Demand (sqm)</td> <td>33,926</td> <td>56,246</td> <td>-3,718</td> <td>1,594</td> <td>58,698</td> <td>94,058</td> <td>88,906</td> <td>151,898</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supply (sqm)</td> <td colspan="2">40,903</td> <td colspan="2">-747</td> <td colspan="2">18,248</td> <td colspan="2">58,404</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Floorspace Requirement (sqm)</td> <td>-6,977</td> <td>15,343</td> <td>-2,971</td> <td>2,341</td> <td>40,450</td> <td>75,810</td> <td>30,502</td> <td>93,494</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Land Requirement (ha)</td> <td>-0.5</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>-0.7</td> <td>0.6</td> <td>8.1</td> <td>15.2</td> <td>6.9</td> <td>16.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Table 4.3 shows that the majority of employment land (14.6 hectares in total) will be required in the two phases between 2017-2021 and 2022-2026.</li> </ul> <p><b>Table 4.3: Indicative Phasing of Land Requirements (all values in hectares)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2010-2011</th> <th>2012-2016</th> <th>2017-2021</th> <th>2022-2026</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Office</td> <td>-1.1</td> <td>0.3</td> <td>0.9</td> <td>0.9</td> <td>1.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Industrial</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>-1.6</td> <td>1.1</td> <td>1.1</td> <td>0.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Warehouse</td> <td>-0.4</td> <td>5.0</td> <td>5.3</td> <td>5.3</td> <td>15.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>-1.5</td> <td>3.7</td> <td>7.3</td> <td>7.3</td> <td>16.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Between 0.25ha (min) and 1.74ha (max) of grade A office space will be required in Maidstone between 2010 and 2026.</li> </ul>		Office		Industrial		Warehouse		Total		Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Demand (sqm)	33,926	56,246	-3,718	1,594	58,698	94,058	88,906	151,898	Supply (sqm)	40,903		-747		18,248		58,404		Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	-6,977	15,343	-2,971	2,341	40,450	75,810	30,502	93,494	Land Requirement (ha)	-0.5	1.0	-0.7	0.6	8.1	15.2	6.9	16.8		2010-2011	2012-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	Total	Office	-1.1	0.3	0.9	0.9	1.0	Industrial	0.0	-1.6	1.1	1.1	0.6	Warehouse	-0.4	5.0	5.3	5.3	15.2	Total	-1.5	3.7	7.3	7.3	16.8
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Flood Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to take the findings of the SFRA into account in preparing policies and allocating sites for new development</li> <li>The need to include SuDS as part of new developments</li> <li>The need to ensure that the sewer infrastructure is appropriate to the levels of new</li> </ul>																																																																																			



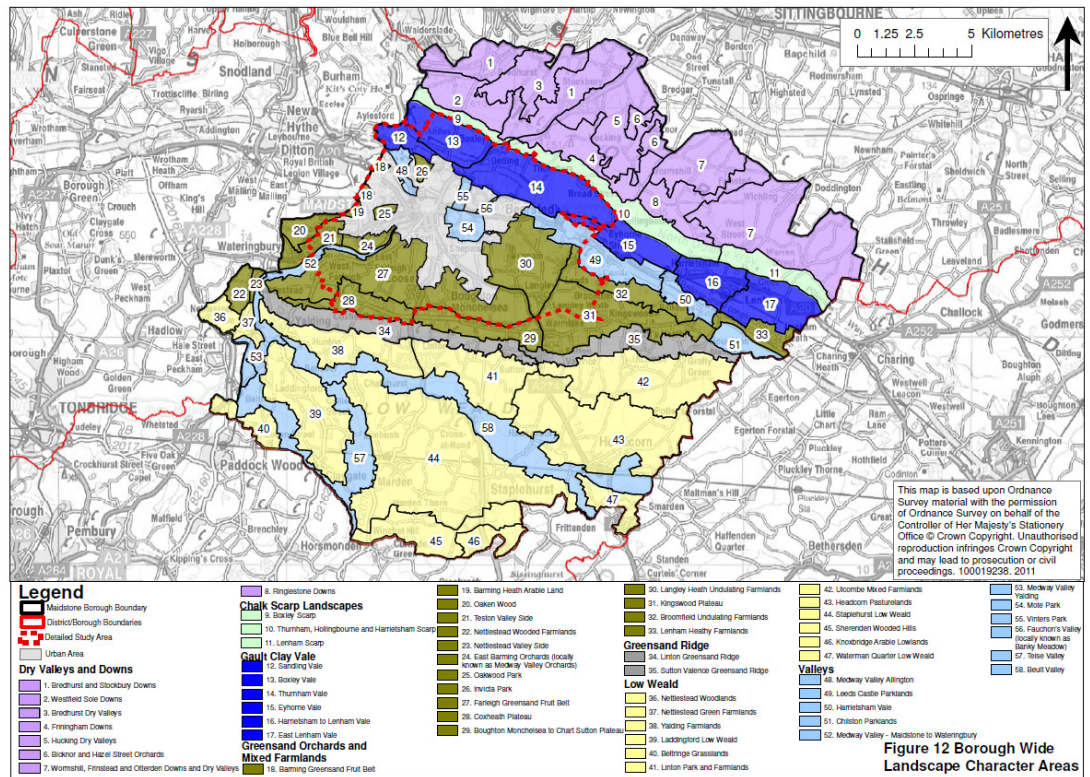
	development.
Housing and affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the provision of affordable housing in a sustainable manner</li> <li>• To ensure that the size of new homes, particularly affordable housing meet the needs of the existing and future population, including elderly people.</li> </ul> <p><b>2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of need for affordable housing across the housing market area and a shortfall in comparison with existing provision. For example, there will be an overall annual shortfall in affordable housing in Maidstone of 292 homes. In view of this the study recommends a target of at least 40% affordable housing for all suitable sites.</li> <li>• The need relative to present housing supply is the greatest for three to four bedroom accommodation.</li> <li>• The need relative to supply is much greater in the rural part of the Borough.</li> <li>• Around 90% of new social renting housing should have three or more bedrooms.</li> <li>• There is an oversupply of market flats in Central Maidstone.</li> </ul>
Gypsies and travellers	<p><b>Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment: Maidstone (2012)</b></p> <p>The primary purpose of the assessment was to provide an evidence base to inform the future development of planning policies through the Local Development Framework. This report presents the projection of requirements for the following periods: 2011 – 2016; 2016 – 2021; and 2021 – 2026.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The assessment estimated that there are at least 863 local Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in the borough. The population was found across a range of accommodation types.</li> <li>• There are 2 socially rented sites in the borough. These are managed by Kent County Council and together provide accommodation over 33 pitches.</li> <li>• There are 65 authorised permanent private sites in the borough. Together these accommodate approximately 237 caravans which equates to 139 pitches/households.</li> <li>• There are 17 authorised private sites with temporary consent in the borough. Together these accommodate approximately 74 caravans which equates to 43 pitches/households.</li> <li>• There are 31 unauthorised developments (land owned by Gypsies and Travellers but developed without planning permission) within the borough. It is estimated that these sites accommodate approximately 51 pitches/households.</li> <li>• It is estimated that there are at least 42 households living in bricks and mortar housing in the borough.</li> <li>• It is estimated that there are 3 authorised yards for Travelling Showpeople in the borough. Together it is estimated these provide accommodation for 5 plots/households.</li> <li>• There is little to no evidence of significant need for accommodation arising from the presence of unauthorised encampments within the borough.</li> </ul> <p>The survey of Gypsies and Travellers also identified some of the important characteristics of the local population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household size is significantly larger than in the settled/non-Traveller population at 3 persons across the whole sample.</li> <li>• A significant minority of the sample (17%) were households over 60 years of age.</li> <li>• The majority of Gypsies and Travellers in trailers and in housing can be seen to belong, in some way, to the borough. The vast majority of people had lived in the borough for over 10 years. Most of these were born or had strong family links in the area.</li> <li>• The local population is dominated by Romany Gypsies (84%) with smaller numbers of Irish Travellers (9%) and Travelling Showpeople (3%).</li> <li>• There was a mix of households who still travelled and those who no longer travelled. A number of those who no longer travelled cited education, health and age related reasons</li> </ul>



	<p>for becoming more sedentary.</p> <p>Table 4.4 below provides a summary of gypsy, traveller and travelling Showpeople and pitch and plot need in Maidstone between 2011 and 2026.</p> <p><b>Table 4.4: Summary of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation and Pitch and Plot Need (2011 – 2026)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need Total (No. of pitches)</th> <th>Travelling Showpeople Plot Need Total (No. of plots)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Current authorised residential provision (pitches/plots)</td> <td>172</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Residential need 2011-2016 (pitches/plots)</td> <td>105</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Residential need 2016-2021 (pitches/plots)</td> <td>25</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Residential need 2021-2026 (pitches/plots)</td> <td>27</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Residential need 2011-2026 (pitches/plots)</td> <td>157</td> <td>9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The strategic housing sites will be subject to the Core Strategy affordable housing policy which seeks financial contributions towards public Gypsy and Traveller sites.</p>		Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need Total (No. of pitches)	Travelling Showpeople Plot Need Total (No. of plots)	Current authorised residential provision (pitches/plots)	172	5	Residential need 2011-2016 (pitches/plots)	105	7	Residential need 2016-2021 (pitches/plots)	25	1	Residential need 2021-2026 (pitches/plots)	27	1	Residential need 2011-2026 (pitches/plots)	157	9
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<p>Land use, landscape and the historic environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to protect the Borough’s landscape and historic assets from inappropriate development.</li> <li>• The need to maximise the amenity and regeneration value of Maidstone’s historic environment.</li> <li>• The need to identify and avoid if appropriate remediate contaminated land in the Borough.</li> </ul> <p><b>Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (2012)</b></p> <p>The initial Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Guidelines were adopted by Maidstone Borough Council in 2000. Since then changes have occurred with respect to landscape character assessment methodology as well as to the physical fabric of Maidstone’s countryside. To account for these changes the <b>Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (2012)</b> (LCA) replaces the landscape character assessment section of the Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Guidelines (2000). The main findings of the 2012 LCA are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The significant majority of the Borough’s landscape character areas are of good condition and high sensitivity and tend to relate to the more rural areas away from Maidstone and the Medway Towns further north.</li> <li>• Very little of the Borough’s landscape is of poor condition and low sensitivity.</li> <li>• The great majority of Maidstone’s urban periphery is abutted by landscape of good condition and high sensitivity, with only a relatively small area to the north west being of low-moderate condition and low sensitivity. At the finer level of detail, there is wider range of conditions and sensitivities but there is no obvious consistent pattern.</li> <li>• The area of the North Downs AONB lying between Maidstone and Medway Towns is assessed as falling within a range of sensitivities (moderate to high) and condition (poor to good) , largely reflecting the intense urban pressures this area is experiencing.</li> </ul> <p>The report includes key landscape characteristics; landscape condition and sensitivity; and landscape guidelines for the 58 Borough-wide Landscape Character Areas identified across</p>																		

the rural area of the Borough (shown in Figure 4.1 below).

Figure 4.1: Detailed Landscape Character Areas



Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility

- The need to reduce congestion in Maidstone town
- The need to improve access and public transport, particularly in rural areas
- The additional pressure that new development will put on the transport network
- The need to maintain or improve the links with London.

	<p><b>Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) (Draft 2012)</b></p> <p>The Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) will set out the future direction for transport in Maidstone until 2026. It describes the policy and local context of the existing transport network, sets out the challenges faced and how the borough proposes to address these challenges; the greatest being how to provide the transport infrastructure necessary to support new development planned to 2026. The ITS supports Maidstone’s Core Strategy. Key issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The principal constraint on the borough’s road network is the single crossing point of the River Medway at the town centre bridge gyratory, where the A20, A26 and A229 meet. From this point, congestion spreads along the main radial approaches to Maidstone during the morning and evening peaks, leading drivers to seek alternative routes for longer journeys around the periphery of the town, including the B2246 Hermitage Lane and B2163 Heath Road</li> <li>• The Maidstone transport model conducted in 2012 forecasts that by the end of the Core Strategy period in 2026, a combination of background traffic growth and planned housing and employment development will increase the number of person trips in Maidstone during the morning peak hour from 38,000 to 54,000 (or 21%). This could have the effect of increasing inbound morning peak travel times to between 15 and 28 minutes on the main arterial routes. In this scenario, the level of connectivity across the borough would be significantly reduced and the impacts on the local economy, air quality and the general health and wellbeing of the population would be severe.</li> <li>• Congestion is an issue on the M20 within Maidstone Borough. A volume to capacity ratio of 85% is considered the maximum acceptable limit by the Highways Agency. The section of the M20 between Junctions 4 and 5 is already exceeding this threshold during the morning peak. Volume to capacity ratios between Junctions 6 and 7 and Junctions 7 and 8 are also forecast to exceed 90% by 2026, which will have a negative impact on journey time reliability for long-distance traffic. This issue is exacerbated by the widespread use of the M20 for local journeys during peak periods, as commuters seek to avoid the congestion on the main arterial routes into Maidstone.</li> <li>• The majority of traffic entering the urban area at peak times is heading for destinations within the town itself, including the town centre, the secondary schools and the Hospital.</li> <li>• Maidstone has a low average vehicle occupancy relative to the UK average of 1.6 persons per car. This results in an inefficient use of road space and hence greater traffic congestion. The ITS aims for a reduction in the number of car-based trips into Maidstone town centre during peak periods, which can be achieved through interventions such as maintaining the Park and Ride service and improving public transport. This would improve the reliability and hence attractiveness of public transport, as well as providing businesses and freight operators with greater journey time reliability.</li> <li>• The supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. It is crucial that MBC and its partners avoid an overprovision of parking,..</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy identifies five primary infrastructure improvements (or actions) that must be delivered by this strategy and are the highest priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing highway improvement schemes at strategic locations in the north west and south east of Maidstone Urban Area and in the vicinity of M20 Junction 7 and M20 Junction 8</li> <li>• Improvements to transport infrastructure at selected Rural Service Centres</li> <li>• Action 16: Build a ‘bus only’ northbound lane on the A274 Sutton Road between its junction with Willington Street and the Wheatsheaf Junction</li> <li>• Facilitate an improvement of bus services to ensure a 7min frequency is achieved on the majority of radial routes to the town centre within the Maidstone Urban Area.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 18: Maintain the existing P&amp;R sites at the current level of service</li> </ul>
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain positive trends in terms of household waste recycling, composting and reduction.</li> <li>• To minimise the amount of waste from all sources going to landfill.</li> </ul>
Water resources and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maidstone is located in a water scarce area, which will be exacerbated due to climate change and future growth and development.</li> <li>• The need to improve the water quality of Maidstone’s water courses in line with the Water Framework Directive requirements.</li> <li>• The need to ensure distribution and location of new development takes the water supply and sewerage infrastructure into account.</li> </ul> <p><b>Maidstone Water Cycle Study Outline Report 2010</b></p> <p>The study found that proposed development of 11,080 new dwellings plus creation of 10,000 new employment opportunities in Maidstone Borough in the period from 2006 to 2026 can be accommodated by the water environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available water resources in the Medway catchment area are limited. They are considered by the Environment Agency to be over-licensed i.e. environmental damage would occur if all abstractors took the full amount of water allowed under their licenses.</li> <li>• Greater use of water demand techniques is required to reduce the impact of the developments on available water resources. New building regulations require that new homes be designed to deliver water efficiency of 125 l/hd. Given the stress on water resources in the Maidstone area, it is recommended that Maidstone BC aim for the lower target of 115 l/hd from new developments where possible.</li> <li>• South East Water’s 5 year Business Plan includes investments needed in the trunk main system to distribute water to new developments. However, the lead-in time needed to complete these investments may influence the allowable timing of developments.</li> <li>• Southern Water plan to upgrade the existing wastewater treatment works serving Maidstone in the period 2010 to 2015, following which it should have adequate capacity to accept additional wastewater from the proposed new developments.</li> <li>• The ecological status of the river Medway into which treated wastewater is discharged is poor. The Environment Agency may require Southern Water to increase the standard of treatment provided. Southern Water fully understand the necessary treatment processes to achieve this and existing land is available at the treatment works site for construction of associated infrastructure.</li> <li>• The capacity of the existing sewerage system to accept additional flows is limited. Significant new investment will be required to allow wastewater from new developments to be transferred to the treatment works. Such works will be costly and time consuming to implement.</li> <li>• The location of some sites in the functional floodplain will limit permissible development.</li> </ul>

## 5 WHAT WOULD THE SITUATION BE WITHOUT THE CORE STRATEGY LOCAL PLAN?

**“the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme”**

(SEA Directive, Annex I(b))

Without the designation of strategic site allocations within the Core Strategy Local Plan the Borough is likely to experience continued pressure to develop greenfield sites to meet the high demand for housing and its housing target to the end of the plan period. Development that is brought forward (particularly housing) will be more likely fail to meet the sustainable development principles set out in national policy (National Planning Policy Framework) in terms of being well located in relation to existing services and facilities, to sustainable transport infrastructure and to town centres and local employment areas. Under provision of family dwellings and affordable housing to meet the identified need will also be likely. Poor access to community services and facilities may exacerbate existing socio-economic conditions in Maidstone’s already disadvantaged areas; which may continue to suffer current or increasing levels of deprivation across all indicators.

In terms of transport and accessibility considerations, there will be no constraint in terms of the location of new housing or employment development, potentially leading to development of inaccessible and poorly located sites and thus high levels of private car use will continue or be exacerbated (with associated greenhouse gas emissions and further negative impact on local air quality) and traffic congestion particularly within the Maidstone Urban Area may worsen as a result. The development of the Core Strategy and the associated Integrated Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan provide an opportunity to co-ordinate the implementation and funding of transport improvements and other infrastructure generated by the development of the allocated strategic sites. Without this planning framework sites would come forward for development in an *ad hoc* manner and it would be difficult to address the relationship between land use and the transport network in a coordinated manner.

This will have subsequent knock-on effects by reducing the attractiveness of the area as a place to do business. The separate Integrated Transport Strategy and Local Transport Plan will offset this to an extent by encouraging a modal shift towards more sustainable transport patterns. Proximity to London means that a large number of highly skilled residents will continue to commute to the capital for work, especially if the relationship and accessibility between new strategic employment sites and new housing is not planned and considered.

The fragmentation of Maidstone’s high quality biodiversity corridors will likely continue and the chance to enhance their value to people’s quality of life, and the economy through tourism may be lost unless development and its supporting infrastructure is planned in a co-ordinated manner. Otherwise, degradation, fragmentation and further isolation of habitats and landscape character due to the unregulated location and potential cumulative effects of development may result.

The capacity of the existing sewerage system to accept additional flows is limited, and works to increase capacity will be costly and time consuming to implement. This system could fail if development occurs in the wrong areas before investment to increase capacity can be implemented. The development of the Core Strategy and the associated Infrastructure Delivery Plan provide an opportunity to co-ordinate the implementation and funding of infrastructure improvements generated by the development of the allocated strategic sites. Without this planning framework sites would come forward for development in an *ad hoc* manner and it would be difficult to address the relationship between land use and infrastructure requirements in a coordinated manner.



The ecological status of the river Medway into which treated wastewater is discharged is currently poor. This may continue to deteriorate if development is not carefully timed with the implementation of improvements to the Aylesford Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW).

In terms of the economy - without improved office provision it is possible that businesses of this type will be (re)directed to areas with better resources and transport links. Strategic employment sites provide opportunities to diversify the range of jobs available in the borough, and such diversification might be difficult to achieve without the provision of such sites. As a consequence the trend for Maidstone's professionals to commute out of the area will continue. Maidstone will not fulfil its regional role offered by its status as the county town and the potential this has for encouraging inward investment.

## 6 WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES?

“any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC [Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive] and 92/43/EEC [Special Areas of Conservation under the Habitats Directive]”

(SEA Directive, Annex I(d))

The Maidstone SA Scoping Report (2009) and more recent baseline update (2011 and 2012) set out in the previous chapter identify a number of important sustainability issues for the Borough. The key social, environmental and economic issues that are relevant to the strategic allocation of sites for employment and housing are set out below:

### Social

- The challenge of meeting the needs of a growing population and particularly the elderly.
- The potential need for new primary school provision in both the north west and south east of the Borough, to serve population growth in these areas.
- The need to reduce inequalities in the Borough by addressing the issues of the most deprived areas and the most vulnerable groups and particularly the young and deprived.
- To ensure the provision of affordable housing in a sustainable manner that meets the needs of the existing and future population, including elderly people.
- To ensure that the size of new homes meets the needs of the existing and future population, and takes into account the need relative to the present supply is the greatest for three- to four-bedroom accommodation, and that the need relative to supply is much greater in the rural part of the Borough.
- The need to improve access and public transport, particularly in rural areas.
- The need to ensure that sites which are allocated as strategic housing sites are well placed to provide access to adequate employment opportunities, a range of community facilities and good public transport, walking and cycling links to the town centre and other key services.
- A critical mass of development will be required to generate the necessary funding for and viability of strategic and community infrastructure and a step change in high quality sustainable development.

### Environmental

- The need to give early consideration to landscape and biodiversity enhancement, woodland management, recreation provision and access routes.
- The need to protect areas of biodiversity including ancient woodlands and local wildlife sites, particularly in the identified biodiversity opportunity areas, which provide opportunities to develop and restore potential wildlife corridors.
- The need to ensure that new development at the edge of the urban area facilitates access to the nearby countryside, particularly through the provision and maintenance of green and blue infrastructure.
- The need to ensure that any parts of the urban fringe which are currently or potentially subject to dereliction are considered for redevelopment.
- The need to avoid coalescence between Maidstone and Medway towns (and Tonbridge and Malling).
- The area of the North Downs AONB lying between Maidstone and Medway Towns has been assessed as falling within a range of sensitivities (moderate to high) and



condition (poor to good), largely reflecting the intense urban pressures this area is experiencing (2012 Landscape Assessment).

- The great majority of Maidstone's urban periphery is abutted by landscape of good condition and high sensitivity, with only a relatively small area to the north west being of low-moderate condition and low sensitivity.
- The need to manage the impacts of growth (particularly traffic) including through the continued and improved provision of alternatives to private cars. Predicted hard transport measures and improvement (e.g. possible new rail services, Thameslink and Maidstone West high speed routes) will not meet the predicted theoretical demand. Behavioural change through the adoption of softer transport measures such as walking and cycling will be needed to accommodate increased trip demand on the transport network.
- The need to improve air quality in the AQMAs, including the town centre, key road junctions and the M20. This would be partly addressed by reducing congestion in the town centre.
- The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet Government's targets.
- The need to protect the Borough's landscape and historic assets from inappropriate development.
- The need to take the findings of the SFRA and new flood management responsibilities arising from the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 into account in preparing policies and allocating sites for new development. This includes the requirement for SuDS as part of new developments, in recognition of sewerage infrastructure constraints in Maidstone town.
- The need to improve the water quality of Maidstone's water courses in line with the Water Framework Directive requirements, including the River Medway, into which the Aylesford Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) current discharges.
- The need to ensure distribution, location and phasing of new development takes account of current water supply and sewerage infrastructure constraints.

### Economic

- The need to maintain and enhance the characteristics of the Borough that contribute to attracting high quality and high value business and workers, e.g. quality public realm and green space, availability of suitable land, premises and facilities.
- The need to encourage new business creation particularly those which may lead to specialisation of the economy and innovation.
- The current inequalities in income and employment within the Borough.
- The additional pressure that new development will put on the transport network.
- The need to maintain or improve linkages with London.
- The need to provide high quality office space in Maidstone town centre to revitalise the town centre.
- The need to address the continued demand for warehousing stock and provide for a range of job opportunities by allocation of new employment land, which is well located to the primary road network.
- There is a lack of available sites to provide for a dispersed development pattern for economic development (as demonstrated by the 2009 call for sites exercise), A large site with the capacity for a critical mass of employment uses (i.e. a strategic employment site) would create benefit in terms of being a high profile site in Kent, and it would aid viability in terms of servicing costs and quality landscaping.

The key sustainability issues for spatial planning in Maidstone are reflected in the sustainability objectives and sub-objectives that were identified within the Maidstone SA Scoping Report (2005) - see **Table 6.1** below.

**Table 6.1: Sustainability objectives for Maidstone**

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives
1. To ensure that the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home	Will it improve the mix of dwelling sizes and tenures?
	Will it increase the number / proportion of decent homes?
	Will it improve the supply of affordable housing?
	Will it address changes in future housing need?
	Will it increase the supply of Lifetime Homes?
2. To reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment	Will it limit development in the flood plain?
	Will it reduce the number of properties affected by flood incidents?
	Will it employ the use of SuDS?
3. To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health	Will it reduce rates of sickness and death?
	Will it improve accessibility to local GP?
	Will it reduce noise pollution?
	Will it encourage healthy lifestyles, including travel choices?
4. To reduce poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas in the Borough and the rest	Will it reduce poverty and social exclusion in those areas most affected?
	Will it reduce the number of households in fuel poverty?
	Will it reduce the number of households with no central heating?
	Will it reduce the number of children living in low income Households?
5. To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work	Will it increase the numbers of school-leavers achieving GCSE passes?
	Will it increase numbers undertaking further and higher education?
	Will it enhance opportunities for adult education?
	Will it encourage training opportunities for higher quality employment?
6. To reduce crime and the fear of crime	Will it reduce actual levels of crime?
	Will it reduce the fear of crime, esp. among vulnerable individuals / communities?
	Will it aid in adopting Safer by Design technologies?
7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities	Will it increase the ability of people to influence decisions?
	Will it encourage engagement with community activities?
	Will it increase opportunities for consultation?
8. To improve accessibility to all services and facilities	Will it improve access for the disabled?
	Will it improve accessibility to health, education, shopping and

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives
	leisure?
	Will it enhance community and public transport?
9. To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough	Will it increase the numbers involved in cultural activities?
	Will it increase the number of cultural enterprises/ organisations in the Borough?
10. To improve efficiency in land use	Will it use land that has been previously developed in preference to Greenfield?
	Will it re-use buildings and materials?
	Will it protect and enhance the best and most versatile agricultural land?
11. To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve	Will it improve air quality?
	Will it reduce other forms of pollution such as light pollution?
	Will it improve travel choice?
	Will it reduce the need for travel by car / lorry?
	Will it reduce the need to travel for long distances?
	Will it reduce the need to travel for commuting?
12. To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts	Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases?
	Will it reduce traffic volumes?
	Will it encourage travel by means other than the car?
	Will it assist in preparing the Borough for impacts of climate change?
	Will it assist in new homes meeting the BREEAM standards?
13. To conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and geodiversity	Will it protect sites designated for nature conservation interest?
	Will it help achieve Biodiversity Action Plan targets?
14. To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment	Will it protect or enhance sites, features of areas of historical, archaeological, or cultural interest (including conservation areas, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and scheduled monuments)?
	Will it enhance, protect and make accessible for enjoyment the Borough's water environment?
	Will it create vibrant, multifunctional countryside in and around towns?
	Will it protect and enhance the historic environment within built-up areas?
	Will it protect and enhance open spaces of amenity and recreational value?
	Will it maintain and enhance the character of landscape and townscape?
15. To reduce waste generation, dumping and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste	Will it reduce household and other forms of waste?
	Will it increase waste recovery and recycling?
	Will it encourage waste treatment locally?
	Will it increase opportunities for domestic recycling?

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives
16. To achieve sustainable water resources management	Will it reduce water consumption?
	Will it reduce the generation of wastewater?
	Will it encourage the re-use of water?
	Will it improve the quality of the Borough's rivers?
	Will it improve the quality of the Borough's groundwater?
17. To increase energy efficiency, and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Borough	Will it increase the proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources?
	Will it reduce the demand for energy?
18. To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough	Will it ensure high and stable levels of employment?
	Will it promote 'conditional growth' (balancing growth with housing provision and investment in social infrastructure)?
	Will it stimulate economic revival in priority regeneration areas?
	Will it increase provision of better quality jobs /skilled employment?
	Will it ensure the correct mix of skills to meet the current and future needs of local employers?
	Will it encourage the development of a buoyant, sustainable tourism sector?

**7 HOW HAS THE CORE STRATEGY LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPED UP TO THIS POINT?**

“an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information”  
(SEA Directive, Annex I(h))

“the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and **the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation**”  
(SEA Directive, Annex I(e))

**7.1 Introduction**

Preparation of Maidstone Borough Council's Core Strategy began in 2006 when the Council sought the public's views on local issues and options through a series of café conversations. Following the public response, 12 draft spatial development scenarios were assessed before publishing a **Preferred Option** (known as Option 7C) for public consultation in 2007.

Option 7C was an edge of centre and urban regeneration led approach that included a dwelling target of 10,080 houses for the plan period between 2006 and 2026. At that time in 2007, a total of 3,000 dwellings had been built or were in the pipeline; the focus of development was in a single strategic development area of 5,000 dwellings together with a strategic link road to serve it; and the balance of housing was located within and adjacent to the urban area and larger villages. To balance housing growth with employment opportunities and to increase prosperity, Option 7C also identified a need to provide for at least 10,000 new jobs in a range of sectors and locations.

Option 7C was developed within the context of an emerging South East Plan, an adopted Kent and Medway Structure Plan and national policy that focused on the redevelopment of brownfield sites at high densities. The Preferred Option was subject to public consultation in January 2007, and was supported by 56% of respondents to the consultation.

Following consultation on Option 7C in 2007, the Core Strategy programme was delayed while the Council gathered a considerable amount of evidence to respond to a representation (and subsequent planning application) seeking land at junction 8 of the M20 motorway for a strategic rail freight interchange allocation. The Council ultimately rejected the representation, and the planning application was subsequently dismissed at appeal.

The Core Strategy programme restarted in June 2009 with a review of the evidence base and changes that had occurred since 2007. Across the UK changes to the economic climate had generally affected the deliverability of housing and associated infrastructure needed to support new development, and there were further changes as to how new development and supporting infrastructure could be funded. The revision of Planning Policy Statement 12 (creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning) in 2008 and the publication of guidance on the tests of soundness by the Planning Inspectorate placed a greater emphasis on ensuring Core Strategies were deliverable. New plan making regulations were also introduced in 2008 and 2009. The regional spatial strategy (South East Plan) was adopted in May 2009, which superseded the Kent & Medway Structure Plan (2006).

Dwelling completions and outstanding planning permissions had risen from 3,000 units in 2007 to 5,800 units in 2010 and there was further potential for 1,770 units comprising identified brownfield sites and a windfall allowance, resulting in a need to find greenfield land for 3,230 units at 1 April 2010. By contrast, greenfield sites for 7,000 dwellings were required in 2007:

5,000 dwellings were to be focused in a single strategic development area supported by a strategic link road, the balance of 2,000 units distributed around the urban area and at the larger villages. By 2010 development of a strategic development area would not commence until the latter part of the Core Strategy plan period and, given expected build rates, only about 2,600 homes could be built by 2026 (as opposed to 5,000 previously).

These changes, coupled with the fact that development that had been built or granted planning consent since 2006 could not contribute towards new infrastructure, cast doubts on the delivery of Preferred Option 7C.

The Council concluded that a strategic link road of an acceptable design (alignment and length) could not be adequately funded within the plan period to 2026 because of the need for a wide range of infrastructure (identified through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan) to support new housing, employment and other development. The concentration of 2,600 homes in one location without a link road would have an unacceptable impact on congestion and air quality. Additional evidence also demonstrated that a single large strategic development area to the south east of the urban area would have a negative impact upon the historic and wildlife-rich landscape in this vicinity<sup>4</sup>.

The absence of funding for the strategic link road to serve 5,000 dwellings, coupled with the adverse impact 2,600 homes would have on the area without such a link, meant Option 7C was no longer deliverable so the Core Strategy would be found unsound.

## 7.2 The move towards Options Testing

Following the restart of the Core Strategy programme (June 2009), the Council focused on updating the evidence base and reviewing local issues that the Core Strategy needed to address, such as providing for gypsy and traveller accommodation, defining the rural service centres, and town centre regeneration. The draft vision and objectives for the Core Strategy were considered by Members in June 2010<sup>5</sup>. By that time, the government had signalled its intention to revoke regional strategies but the new plan making system had yet to be outlined and primary legislation introduced.

In July 2010 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government attempted to revoke regional strategies and imposed housing targets<sup>6</sup> and advised local planning authorities to continue to develop Core Strategies, reflecting local peoples' aspirations and decisions on important issues. Where development plan documents were being prepared, local planning authorities could decide to review or revise their emerging policies in the light of the revocation, whilst ensuring that the requirements for soundness and other policy requirements under current legislation are met. Maidstone Borough Council responded by agreeing to progress its Core Strategy<sup>7</sup>, and to review the appropriate housing target and the implications of any change to the strategy; to consider a locally derived local Gypsy and Traveller figure; and to undertake a review the gaps that would be created by the revocation of the South East Plan.

The action to revoke regional strategies was subsequently challenged and, following a judicial review, the Secretary of State's decision of the 6 July was quashed on the 10 November 2010 by the High Court. Consequently the South East Plan remained part of the development plan for Maidstone until the revocation of regional strategies could be pursued through the Localism Act. However, given the work that had been undertaken on option testing, which had had regard to the range of South East Plan policies, Members agreed to undertake public

<sup>4</sup> Landscape Character Assessment 2012

<sup>5</sup> Local Development Document Advisory Group 28 June 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Letter to Chief Planning Officers: Revocation of Regional Strategies 6 July 2010

<sup>7</sup> Local Development Document Advisory Group 26 July 2010



consultation on a local housing target of 10,080 dwellings in a dispersed distribution of development for the period 2006 to 2026<sup>8</sup>. The methodology developed for option testing and the outcome of testing is set out below.

### 7.3 Developing the Methodology for Options Testing

Mindful of the need to balance housing and employment development with transport infrastructure, and to develop local policies that were in general conformity with South East Plan policies including the protection of natural assets, supporting the character of rural areas, and reducing transport congestion, the Council developed an approach to test a range of housing targets and development distribution patterns. These options reflected community and Borough priorities, and took into account a wide range of factors including the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Strategic Plan: for Maidstone to have a growing economy and to be a decent place to live.

The methodology<sup>9</sup> (Appendix 1) was objectively assessed by the Council's Business and Transformation team. Significant work was undertaken to identify the important factors in determining a local housing target and development distribution for the Borough. Several key factors were used as a starting point for developing the model:

- Meeting Housing Need
- Delivering Economic Prosperity
- Housing Figures and Trends
- Past Policy Targets
- Commitments and Completions
- Environmental Capacity
- Land Availability
- Infrastructure Capacity (including transportation)
- Place Making<sup>10</sup>
- Sustainability through Sustainability Appraisal
- Risks<sup>11</sup>
- Localism.

Thirty elements (focusing on those that would have a varying impact on the five options tested<sup>12</sup>) were then used to explore some of the key factors further and, using an impartial scoring system, the Council identified its top five priorities for setting a local housing target:

- Physical and social regeneration of the urban area
- Attracting investment in higher and further education/training
- Delivering additional transport infrastructure

<sup>8</sup> Cabinet 9 February 2011

<sup>9</sup> Cabinet 29 September 2010

<sup>10</sup> Through achieving an urban-rural balance, invigorating the town centre and maintaining the town's stellar shape with green corridors and links

<sup>11</sup> Risks to achieving the strategy in terms of deliverability, flexibility and viability

<sup>12</sup> Cabinet 29 September 2010

- Expanding the roles of the rural service centres
- Priority given to impact on water resources.

The full list of prioritised elements is attached at Appendix 2.

Maidstone's Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2009) established a framework for assessing the Core Strategy policies. The key factors were checked against the objectives of the Scoping Report in order to build the sustainability appraisal of options into the testing process, and to minimise the adverse impacts of the strategy and maximise the positive impacts.

To test a range of options and establish a local housing target and the distribution of development, the Council undertook:

- A review of past and present data;
- An assessment of the Council's strategic policies set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Strategic Plan, together with the draft spatial vision and spatial objectives of the Core Strategy;<sup>13</sup>
- A reality check for the development options tested, to ensure the option is deliverable and flexible.

#### 7.4 Options Testing: Housing Target and the Distribution of Development

The Council initially agreed to test 5 development options<sup>14</sup>, three dwelling targets and two spatial distribution patterns:

- 8,200 dwellings with a dispersed pattern;
- 10,080 dwellings with a dispersed pattern;
- 10,080 dwellings including a strategic development area;
- 11,000 dwellings with a dispersed pattern;
- 11,000 dwellings including a strategic development area.

A target of 8,200 dwellings for Maidstone was set out in the draft South East Plan 2006, and is similar to that of Maidstone's zero net migration growth of 7,900 dwellings<sup>15</sup>. The 10,080 dwelling target reflected Maidstone's Growth Point status<sup>16</sup>, and was supported by both the County and Borough Councils at the South East Plan Examination in Public 2006/07. A target of 11,000 dwellings was set at a time when the abolition of regional strategies was thought to be imminent, but generally reflected the adopted South East Plan 2009 target of 11,080.

Although the Council had moved away from Option 7C because a south east strategic link road could no longer be funded, nor 5,000 dwellings delivered within the plan period, two development distribution patterns were tested: dispersal and a reduced concentration of dwellings to the south east of the urban area (of approximately 2,600 dwellings). The 8,200 dwelling target was not high enough to be delivered through a strategic development area so was tested in a dispersed pattern only.

<sup>13</sup> Local Development Document Advisory Group 28 June 2010

<sup>14</sup> Cabinet 29 September 2010

<sup>15</sup> Maidstone Borough Council demographic and labour supply forecasts, Kent County Council Research and Intelligence Unit (2010)

<sup>16</sup> The government introduced funding to support applications from Councils that were prepared to increase their house building rates by at least 20%, averaging a minimum of 500 dwelling p.a., to assist in overcoming obstacles to housing delivery

The Council engaged with a broad range of stakeholders, including the infrastructure providers, to gather information as part of the process for option testing. The cost of infrastructure required to support an option of 8,200 dwellings in a dispersed pattern of development was considerably in excess of the funds that could be secured through development, leading to a very high risk that this option could not be delivered. This option did not meet the Council's objectives and aspirations for growth and regeneration, nor would such a target be in general conformity with the South East Plan so it was rejected<sup>17</sup>.

The remaining four options had contrasting strengths due to the broad differences in the development distribution patterns. Some options better met the housing need and prosperity aspirations of the Council while others minimised the impact of development on environmental and ecological capacity. Certain options were better at delivering infrastructure and place making, while others built more flexibility and choice into the strategy or better balanced urban and rural development. Development could fund the infrastructure required to deliver the remaining four options, including transportation measures.

Consequently, the Council sought to develop its preferred option by drawing together the strengths of the various options tested, through technical evaluation and local knowledge, and set a local housing target of 10,080 dwellings to be provided in a dispersed pattern of development for public consultation<sup>18</sup>. The 2011 preferred option (10,080 homes delivered in a dispersed pattern) ensured the Core Strategy was affordable and deliverable, and took account of the demand for new and affordable housing, the availability of suitable development sites<sup>19</sup>, and the need for new infrastructure required to support new development.

In arriving at the preferred option, consideration was given to:

- Maximising the use of existing infrastructure;
- A focus on physical and social regeneration of brownfield sites and Maidstone's urban area (including the town centre);
- Additional development at the rural service centres to accommodate new housing (including affordable housing);
- Deliverability (the range and choice of development locations and deliverable infrastructure);
- Continuing economic prosperity and attracting investment in higher and further education/training;
- Balancing housing and employment opportunities;
- Protecting the best landscape and habitats, and minimising the impact of development;
- Meeting locally arising need; and
- Ensuring a good supply of housing that is affordable and widely distributed by location, type and tenure.

## 7.5 Conformity with the NPPF and the South East Plan

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2012. It makes clear that regional strategies form part of the development plan until such time as they are abolished by

<sup>17</sup> Cabinet 9 February 2011

<sup>18</sup> Cabinet 9 February 2011

<sup>19</sup> Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009 and Strategic Sites Assessment 2009

Order using the powers of the Localism Act (2011). The NPPF also confirms that local planning authorities can continue to draw on evidence that informed the preparation of regional strategies to support local plan policies (paragraph 218).

The 10,080 dwelling target was originally derived from regional planning guidance (RPG9), with a 20% increase above natural growth to qualify for new growth point funding. In submitting its bid, the Council's technical research included a number of studies on the local economy and employment, inward investment, housing needs and urban capacity, as well as the High Street Ward feasibility study. The bid explained that an increased target of 10,080 dwellings from 2006 to 2026, as opposed to a draft regional strategy target of 8,200 dwellings, would represent a modest increase of 94 dwellings p.a. Given the Borough's known housing land supply and delivery rates, together with potential identified through the urban capacity study, the Council was confident it could meet this challenge provided growth point infrastructure investment was available to free up the operation of the town and to support urban renaissance.

The target was appraised against the following criteria: the need for affordable housing, synergy with the Kent growth areas, the achievement of sustainable development, the focus of new development at the existing urban area, supporting transport infrastructure, impact of development on the environment, and the impact on water supply and flooding. Maidstone's Growth Point submission was supported by SEERA<sup>20</sup> and the Secretary of State.

Following the South East Plan EiP in 2006/07, the Panel<sup>21</sup> recommended a 10,080 dwelling target for Maidstone Borough, which was supported by the Borough and County Councils. The Secretary of State, however, imposed an additional 1,000 dwellings, arguing that, as a regional hub and growth point, the Borough had a need and the capacity to accommodate more housing, and that a 10,080 target did not adequately meet the need and demand for housing. The Secretary of State considered this view to be supported by substantially higher levels of completions achieved in recent years and the significantly high housing trajectory for the Borough. The Council challenged the increased target, referring to evidence submitted as part of the growth point bid that supported a target of 10,080 dwellings for the plan period. The Council highlighted the Borough's water supply constraints and a lack of evidence to support assertions of local need/demand. The high levels of dwelling completions at that time reflected unique opportunities for large urban redevelopment sites built at the height of the economic cycle that could not be sustained. The Council also refuted the statement that its housing trajectory was high – the 20-year target to 2026 would only be exceeded by 18 units at that time.

Since 2008, the Council has produced further evidence that impacts on development capacity for the Borough, including the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Strategic Sites Assessment, Water Cycle Strategy, Landscape Character Assessment, and studies on demographics, employment, retail and the town centre<sup>22</sup>. The high levels of dwelling completions cannot be sustained and the housing trajectory does not demonstrate a surplus of housing land.

The Core Strategy must be in general conformity with all policies of the NPPF and the South East Plan, including those that protect the environment and relieve traffic congestion. Unlike the higher housing target tested, 10,080 dwellings can be delivered without relying on Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment sites that are difficult to develop<sup>23</sup>. The infrastructure required to deliver 10,080 dwellings with a dispersed development distribution model can be

<sup>20</sup> South East England Regional Assembly

<sup>21</sup> South East Plan Examination in Public Panel Report (2007)

<sup>22</sup> Available at [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk)

<sup>23</sup> Strategic Sites Assessment 2009

funded, landscape impact can be mitigated, and congestion can be addressed through the Integrated Transport Strategy.

The Council is not aware of any compelling evidence to suggest a move away from a target of 10,080 dwellings.

## **7.6 Developing the preferred approach to the distribution of housing development**

Taking into account the number of dwellings that were completed or had an outstanding planning permission at 1 April 2010, coupled with identified urban brownfield sites and a windfall allowance in the latter years of the plan, the Council identified a need to allocate 3,230 dwellings on greenfield sites. This included a contingency allowance for unimplemented permissions.

Using the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009 and the Strategic Sites Assessment 2009 to identify potential development sites, two strategic housing locations were identified to the north west and the south east of the urban area to accommodate approximately 975 units and 1,000 units respectively. The five rural service centres would receive around 1,130 dwellings, and the balance would be accommodated on smaller sites around the urban periphery.

## **7.7 Developing the preferred approach to the Employment Target and distribution of employment development**

There are tried and tested methodologies for undertaking employment land reviews. The Employment Land Review Partial Update (ELR) published in 2011 sets out the B1 to B8 use class<sup>24</sup> employment requirements for the Borough from 2010 to 2026, having regard to the objectives of the Economic Development Strategy and the latest monitoring data available. The total requirement equated to a maximum of 16.8ha for the Borough. One hectare of this requirement was for office development that could be accommodated in the town centre, resulting in the need to find 15.8ha of employment land for use classes B2 to B8.

Following an initial call for sites for employment use in 2009, it was clear there were not enough sites to meet this demand in a dispersed development pattern, so a site with capacity for a critical mass of employment uses was needed. A large site offers the opportunity to create a strategic employment site with the benefit of being a high profile site in Kent, and it would aid viability in terms of servicing costs and quality landscaping. A critical mass of employment land together with additional good quality local and strategic landscaping and open space in this vicinity could deliver the infrastructure required to support in the region of 11ha of employment land, the balance of need being dispersed on smaller sites at the urban periphery and at the rural service centres. This approach offered choice and flexibility of sites.

Demand for B2 to B8 employment uses requires good access to motorways and A-roads. Highway capacity at junctions 6 and 7 of the M20 motorway is constrained, and the availability of land for this type of use is restricted, but junction 8 had capacity and the available land that would allow this employment use to come forward. Structural landscaping to mitigate the impact of development, as well as good design, is critical to the allocation of land at junction 8.

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<sup>24</sup> For offices, industrial and warehouse uses

## 7.8 The Allocation of Strategic Sites

The Core Strategy Public Participation Draft was published for consultation in September 2011. The key diagram identified 4 strategic development locations:

- North west of the urban area for approximately 975 dwellings
- South east of the urban area for approximately 1,000 dwellings
- Junction 8 of the M20 motorway for 11 hectares (net) employment land (B2 and B8 use classes)
- Junction 7 of the M20 for a medical campus in association with an approved clinic.

As a result of issues raised by respondents to the autumn 2011 consultation which called for the allocation of strategic sites in the Core Strategy, together with the publication of the NPPF which encourages the inclusion of strategic development allocations in local plans, the Council resolved to allocate sites within the strategic locations identified on the draft key diagram and to undertake a partial public consultation on the Core Strategy<sup>25</sup>. It was concluded that this approach would give certainty to the public and the development industry by identifying the quantum and site specific locations for development. It gives the Council control over the release of development sites and offers clarity to the public and developers.

The balance of smaller housing and employment sites, including those to be allocated at the rural service centres, will be the subject of a further call for sites as part of preparation of the Development Delivery Local Plan that will follow the Core Strategy. Maidstone defines strategic housing sites as sites that individually or collectively yield the equivalent of one year's housing land requirement, i.e. 504 dwellings.

The Council issued a fresh call for employment and housing sites between 11 May and 15 June 2012 inviting landowners, developers and their agents to use a pro forma to submit information about available sites within the strategic locations. All known sites within the strategic locations have been assessed on an equal basis, including legacy sites the Council was previously aware of, even if no further information came forward as part of the call for sites. The categories that the council sought information on, so that it could assess the suitability of sites for development, included but were not limited to:

- Current use
- Adjacent uses
- Landscape
- Ecology
- Site access/transport issues
- Air quality issues
- Noise pollution
- Flood zone
- Access to services.

Each site was also assessed for necessary infrastructure requirements, such as junction improvements within the wider strategic location, and these identified needs have been included in the strategic site allocation policies that will be subject to public consultation in

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<sup>25</sup> Cabinet 16 May 2012



August/September 2012. Viability information and assessment, to come later in the Core Strategy process (December 2012), will further guide the realistic amount of contributions that can be expected from a site. The objective is to allocate sites that can deliver the associated necessary infrastructure.

Public consultation on the preferred site allocations will commence for 6 weeks from 17 August 2012 to 1 October 2012 in accordance with regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Public consultation on the Publication version of the Core Strategy (Regulation 19) is programmed to run for 7 weeks between 14 December 2012 and 1 February 2013.

**8 HOW HAS THE APPRAISAL AT THIS CURRENT STAGE BEEN UNDERTAKEN?**

“an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information”  
(SEA Directive, Annex I(h))

**8.1 Introduction**

The allocation of strategic sites through the Core Strategy will be appraised through a two stage process. The first stage of the process is to appraise all of the candidate sites which have come forward through the call for sites process. This appraisal (which is the subject of this report), will help to inform the selection of strategic sites for allocation. The second stage of the process will be to appraise the draft allocation policies themselves. The second stage analysis will take place to inform the development of the publication Core Strategy and will be published in December (alongside the Publication Draft Core Strategy Local Plan).

The strategic site allocations consultation document sets out Maidstone Borough Council’s *preferred* options for strategic site allocations for employment and housing. These strategic sites have been appraised in this report alongside new sites that were put forward through the most recent ‘call for sites’ (which closed on the 15 June 2012). The approach that has been taken to appraising the candidate strategic sites in this report is set out below.

**8.2 Strategic Site Allocations appraisal: A criteria-based approach**

There is a need to appraise the potential strategic site allocations against the key sustainability issues / objectives established for Maidstone through scoping (as set out in the Maidstone SA Scoping Report, 2005). Using the data that is available, it has been possible to test the performance of each site in terms of a number of specific criteria – as set out in the proforma in **Table 8.2**. Where possible, we have used a series of GIS layers to help us to identify the spatial implications of development of these sites as they relate to the SA objectives, bearing in mind their strategic significance. Certain attributes which relate to the appraisal criteria in the proforma have been mapped and overlaid across the strategic site boundaries. The series of maps we have used to assist us with the appraisal process are set out at Appendix 3.

As demonstrated within **Table 8.3**, the criteria have been developed to reflect, as closely as possible, the sustainability objectives identified through scoping. It has been more difficult to address some of the SA objectives for a number of reasons. For example, there may not be a direct link between the SA objective and the act of allocating of a site for development, such as those SA objectives which relate to social issues such as cultural activity, educational achievement or crime. For others, there may be a more direct link, but data is not available, at least not at the disaggregated locality or detailed site level. Or it may be that the detail of how the site is developed has the potential to meet certain SA objectives or sub-criteria, but this information is not available at the strategic allocation stage – for example, will the site deliver buildings that are sustainably constructed? Given the strategic nature of site allocations, there is often only limited certainty regarding the precise nature of development that will come forward, and so the establishment of a ‘cause-effect relationship’ is difficult.

Performance against each of the criteria in the proforma has been categorised using a traffic-light system. Effects are described and evaluated taking account of the sustainability context /

baseline and key issues established through scoping, as well as detailed information on each site, provided by the Council on a site assessment proforma (developed for policy making purposes). This has been further informed by a consideration of the mapped attributes as described above. Consideration has been given to the potential for effects to be direct/indirect, cumulative, short/medium/long-term, and permanent / temporary. Where a site flag's up as red, this equates to the prediction of a significant negative effect, whilst amber indicates that there could be some 'room for improvement'. Green indicates that there is no reason to suggest any problems that need addressing at this (strategic) stage. Recommendations are made to ensure that the plan includes measures to ensure that predicted negative effects are avoided or mitigated.

In the summary and conclusion section of the proforma, the performance of the appraised site against each SA topic (each topic encompasses one or more of the SA objectives) has been graded as follows:

Table 8.1: Maidstone Strategic Site Allocations SA Topic Summary Assessment Grading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The allocation of this site is likely to have a <b>Very Positive</b> impact on the SA objectives within this SA topic</li> <li>• The allocation of this site is likely to have a <b>Positive</b> impact on the SA objectives within this SA topic</li> <li>• It is <b>uncertain</b> or there is insufficient information on which to determine the impact of the allocation of this site on the SA objectives within this SA topic</li> <li>• <b>No Effect</b> – there is no identified link between allocation of this site and the SA objective.</li> <li>• The allocation of this site is likely to have a <b>negative</b> impact on the SA objectives within this SA topic</li> <li>• The allocation of this site is likely to have a <b>very negative</b> impact on the SA objectives within this SA topic</li> </ul>

When determining the likely significance of effects, consideration has been given to the characteristics of the effects and the sensitivity of the receptors involved. For example, the following can all determine whether effects may be significant:

- Probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects;
- Cumulative nature of effects;
- Magnitude and spatial extent of the effects; and
- Value and vulnerability of area likely to be effected.

**Table 8.2: Strategic Site Allocation Site Appraisal Proforma**

The following proforma has been developed and used to appraise the strategic sites.

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	
Strategic Location	
Site name/address	
Landowner	
Agent	
Current Use	
Proposed Use	
Greenfield/PDL	
Site area (jha)	
Site Origin	
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	
Adjacent to built up area	
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	
<b>Discount</b>	
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	
Current use	
Adjacent uses	
Planning and other designations	
Planning History	
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	
Accessibility to existing centres and services:	
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health	

SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated. <b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well <b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area	
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	
How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>		

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	
SA Topic: Economy		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	



<p>Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?</p>	<p><b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas<sup>26</sup> within the Borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas within the Borough.</p>	<p>To assist in answering this question, the English Indices of Deprivation 2010 (IMD 2010) have been considered. The indices are the Government's official measure of multiple deprivation at small area level and provide a consistent measure of relative deprivation across England. The IMD 2010 combines a total of 38 indicators from seven topic areas (domains) to arrive at an overall deprivation score and rank for each LSOA in England (the LSOA with a rank of 1 is the most deprived and 32,482 the least deprived). The seven domains are: Income; Employment; Health and Disability; Education, Skills and Training; Barriers to Housing and Services; Crime; and Living Environment.</p>
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**SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility**

- SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health
- SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest
- SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?
- SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities
- SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve
- SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
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<sup>26</sup> A Lower layer Super Output Area (LSOA) is a geographical area designed for the collection and publication of small area statistics. It is used on the Neighbourhood Statistics site, and has a wider application throughout national statistics. LSOAs give an improved basis for comparison throughout the country because the units are more similar in size of population than, for example, electoral wards.

How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R =</b> >800m <b>A =</b> 400 - 800m <b>G =</b> <400m	
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R =</b> >800m <b>A =</b> 400 - 800m <b>G =</b> <400m	
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R =</b> >800m <b>A =</b> 400 - 800m <b>G =</b> <400m	

### SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R =</b> significant adverse effect <b>A =</b> Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G =</b> No adverse effect	
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8)?	<b>R =</b> Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A =</b> <1km of an AQMA <b>G =</b> >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	

### SA Topic: Water resources and quality

SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A =</b> Yes <b>G =</b> No	
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A =</b> Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G =</b> Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	

SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R =</b> Includes grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A =</b> Includes grade 3 agricultural land <b>G =</b> Does not include grade 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R =</b> Does not include previously developed land <b>A =</b> Partially within previously developed land <b>G =</b> Entirely within previously developed land	
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R =</b> On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A =</b> Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G =</b> Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R =</b> Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A =</b> Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G =</b> Not on or adjacent to a listed building.	
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<b>R =</b> Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.	

	<p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>													
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>													
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	
Scale														
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.													
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													

<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.  <b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.  <b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation<sup>27</sup>?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation  <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character<sup>28</sup> for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated  <b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated  <b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	
<p><b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b></p>		
<p><b>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</b>  <b>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</b>  <b>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</b></p>		

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that current Local Plan policies which relate to the strategic gap or anti-coalescence policies may not be carried forward into the Core Strategy. However for completeness, where sites fall within these currently designated areas, this has been noted in relation to this appraisal question.

<sup>28</sup> It should be noted that a number of the current Local Plan local landscape designations will not be carried forward into the Core Strategy. These local designations will be replaced by a criteria based policy approach which looks at local landscape character in terms of scale, condition and sensitivity. However for completeness, where sites fall within these currently designated areas, this has been noted in relation to this appraisal question.

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a <b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	
Is the site at risk from groundwater, sewer or surface water flooding?	<b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded. <b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.	
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the Borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the Borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the Borough	
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a	



effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<p>significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400-800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats</p> <p><b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	
Will allocation impact upon a Biodiversity Opportunity Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>	
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?		

<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>To assist in answering this question, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation Domain on Access to Housing and Services (2010) has been considered. This indicator measures the physical and financial accessibility to housing and key local services and is split into two sub-domains: Geographical Barriers – which relate to the physical proximity of GP surgeries, primary schools, shops and Post Offices, and Wider Barriers - which relate to access to housing, e.g. affordability, homelessness and overcrowding. The indicators are combined to arrive at a deprivation score and rank for each LSOA in England.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	
<h3>Summary and Conclusions</h3>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Very Positive</b> / <b>Positive</b> / <b>Unclear</b> / <b>No Effect</b> / <b>Negative</b> / <b>Very Negative</b> - any comments or details</p>	
<h3>Mitigation or Enhancement Measures</h3>	
<p>Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:</p>	

**Table 8.3: The ‘match’ between SA objectives and site appraisal criteria**

The following table demonstrates the fit between the SA objectives and sub-objectives and the appraisal questions contained within the SA proforma.

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives
<p>1. To ensure that the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</p>	<p>Will it improve the mix of dwelling sizes and tenures?</p>	<p>No criteria have been developed to assess this objective. At strategic allocation stage it is not possible to determine what mix of sizes and tenures will be delivered on each site, or whether the homes will be built to decent homes/lifetime homes standards. These sub-objectives will be addressed through the development of policies in the Core Strategy in relation to the Code for Sustainable Homes (decent homes) and affordable housing requirements. These policies will apply to all strategic housing sites.</p> <p>Due to the unavailability of spatially disaggregated data, it has not been possible to test the degree to which housing allocations are targeted at localities within Maidstone where there is acute housing need (i.e. need for affordable housing for those people who are otherwise at risk of homelessness) or market demand for new housing.</p>
	<p>Will it increase the number / proportion of decent homes?</p>	
	<p>Will it improve the supply of affordable housing?</p>	
	<p>Will it address changes in future housing need?</p>	
	<p>Will it increase the supply of Lifetime Homes?</p>	
<p>2. To reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</p>	<p>Will it limit development in the flood plain?</p>	<p>Covered by proforma question: Is allocation within a flood zone?</p>
	<p>Will it reduce the number of properties affected by flood incidents?</p>	<p>This information is not available at the strategic allocation stage. However the question is partially addressed through the proforma questions which relate to the allocation of sites within certain flood zones and any known incidents of surface water flooding.</p>
	<p>Will it employ the use of SuDS?</p>	<p>This information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage.</p>
<p>3. To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p>	<p>Will it reduce rates of sickness and death?</p>	<p>There is no direct causal link between health and the strategic site allocations. However the proforma includes a number of questions which relate to providing opportunities for a healthier and more active lifestyle – i.e. questions which relate to air quality, access to community and health facilities, including open space and sports facilities, and opportunities to travel by walking/cycling.</p>
	<p>Will it improve accessibility to local GP?</p>	<p>Covered by proforma question: How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?</p>
	<p>Will it reduce noise pollution?</p>	<p>Covered by proforma question: Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for</p>

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives
		adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?
4. To reduce poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas in the Borough and the rest	Will it encourage healthy lifestyles, including travel choices?	Partially covered by proforma questions relating to proximity to cycle routes, and to outdoor sports facilities, childrens play space and publically accessible greenspace.
	Will it reduce poverty and social exclusion in those areas most affected?	Partially covered by proforma questions which address the location of new development in relation to the community services/facilities/employment opportunities that people need to access to provide for their employment and social needs, particularly those who cannot afford to travel by private vehicle. Also covered by the question: Will allocation result in development in deprived areas alongside those questions which relate to proximity to public transport? These elements will all contribute to addressing poverty and social exclusion.
5. To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work	Will it reduce the number of households in fuel poverty?	No criteria have been developed to assess these sub-objectives. This information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage.
	Will it reduce the number of households with no central heating?	
	Will it reduce the number of children living in low income Households?	
	Will it increase the numbers of school-leavers achieving GCSE passes?	
	Will it increase numbers undertaking further and higher education?	No criteria have been developed to assess these sub-objectives. This information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage.  Spatially desegregated data is available to enable an understanding of how crime rates vary across the Borough. However, it would not be possible to say, with any certainty, that a site allocation would have an effect on the baseline, and so sites have not been tested against a crime related criterion.  These sub-objectives will be addressed through the development of policies in the Core Strategy in relation to design and specifically, the inclusion of crime prevention measures through the design process. This policy will apply to all
6. To reduce crime and the fear of crime	Will it enhance opportunities for adult education?	
	Will it encourage training opportunities for higher quality employment?	
	Will it reduce actual levels of crime?	
	Will it reduce the fear of crime, esp. among vulnerable individuals / communities?	
	Will it aid in adopting Safer by Design technologies?	

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives
		strategic sites.
7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities	Will it increase the ability of people to influence decisions?	No criteria have been developed to assess these sub-objectives. This information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage
	Will it encourage engagement with community activities?	
	Will it increase opportunities for consultation?	
8. To improve accessibility to all services and facilities	Will it improve access for the disabled?	Given the strategic nature of site allocations, it would not be possible to appraise the potential for effects in terms of accessibility for the disabled - this information is not available at this stage.
	Will it improve accessibility to health, education, shopping and leisure?	Addressed by the following proforma questions:  How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?  How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service/ secondary school/primary school/outdoor sports facilities/publically accessible greenspace/childrens play space?
	Will it enhance community and public transport?	This information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage.
9. To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough	Will it increase the numbers involved in cultural activities?	No criteria have been developed to assess these sub-objectives. There is no direct causal link between these objectives and the allocation of sites for housing or employment development.
	Will it increase the number of cultural enterprises/ organisations in the Borough?	
10. To improve efficiency in land use	Will it use land that has been previously developed in preference to Greenfield?	Addressed by proforma question: Will allocation make use of previously developed land?
	Will it re-use buildings and materials?	No criteria have been developed to assess this sub-objective. This information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage.
	Will it protect and enhance the best and most versatile agricultural land?	Addressed by proforma question: Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?
11. To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve	Will it improve air quality?	Covered by proforma question: Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8)?  Proximity will be a good indicator of the degree to which development could result in increased traffic in the AQMA and thus possible negative impacts on air quality; however, without further site specific understanding it will always be difficult to predict an effect with any certainty.
	Will it reduce other forms of pollution such	No criteria have been developed to

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives			
	as light pollution?	assess this sub-objective. This information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage.			
	Will it improve travel choice?	This sub-criteria is partially addressed by the proforma questions:  How far is the nearest cycle route/bus stop/rail station?  For each site, it has been possible to capture proximity to public transport and cycle routes, i.e. the infrastructure that enables people to choose alternatives to travelling by private car. However, it has not been possible to give consideration to the quality of the public transport service that is available.			
	Will it reduce the need for travel by car / lorry?	This sub-criteria is addressed by the proforma questions which ask how far the site is from the Maidstone Urban Area, from community, health, school and open space facilities and from employment locations – i.e. could future residents meet their needs within the local area, without needing to use a vehicle. It is also covered by questions relating to the provision of public transport – i.e. proximity to bus stops, rail stations and cycle routes.			
	Will it reduce the need to travel for long distances?	This sub-criteria is addressed by the proforma questions which ask how far the site is from the Maidstone Urban Area, from community, health, school and open space facilities and from employment locations – i.e. could future residents meet their needs within the local area, without needing to travel long distances.			
	Will it reduce the need to travel for commuting?	This sub-criteria is addressed by the proforma questions which ask how far the site is from the Maidstone Urban Area, and from employment locations – i.e. could future residents find employment in the local area, thus reducing the need to travel long distances to work.			
12. To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases?</td> <td rowspan="3">These sub-criteria are partially addressed by the proforma questions which ask how far the site is from the Maidstone Urban Area, from community, health, school and open space facilities and from employment locations and the proximity of public transport or cycling infrastructure – i.e. could future residents/employees meet their needs within the local area, without needing to use a vehicle, or needing to travel long distances – thus reducing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Will it reduce traffic volumes?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Will it encourage travel by means other than the car?</td> </tr> </table>	Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases?	These sub-criteria are partially addressed by the proforma questions which ask how far the site is from the Maidstone Urban Area, from community, health, school and open space facilities and from employment locations and the proximity of public transport or cycling infrastructure – i.e. could future residents/employees meet their needs within the local area, without needing to use a vehicle, or needing to travel long distances – thus reducing	Will it reduce traffic volumes?	Will it encourage travel by means other than the car?
Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases?	These sub-criteria are partially addressed by the proforma questions which ask how far the site is from the Maidstone Urban Area, from community, health, school and open space facilities and from employment locations and the proximity of public transport or cycling infrastructure – i.e. could future residents/employees meet their needs within the local area, without needing to use a vehicle, or needing to travel long distances – thus reducing				
Will it reduce traffic volumes?					
Will it encourage travel by means other than the car?					

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives
		<p>greenhouse gas emissions and traffic volumes. It doesn't address the human behaviour element however – i.e. the infrastructure may be available, but people may still choose to travel by private vehicle.</p> <p>Will it assist in preparing the Borough for impacts of climate change?</p> <p>Will it assist in new homes meeting the BREEAM standards?</p> <p>No criteria have been developed to assess these sub-objectives. It is not possible to determine this information at the strategic site allocation stage. These sub-objectives will be addressed through the development of policies in the Core Strategy in relation to the Code for Sustainable Homes (decent homes) and BREEAM standards for non-residential development. These policies will apply to all strategic sites.</p>
<p>13. To conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and geodiversity</p>	<p>Will it protect sites designated for nature conservation interest?</p> <p>Will it help achieve Biodiversity Action Plan targets?</p>	<p>Covered by proforma questions: Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)? Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats? Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve? Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity corridor?</p> <p>The proforma questions capture proximity to existing assets that are important from a perspective of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity within the district. This is helpful, as it identifies sites that include biodiversity assets, and so may result in very direct impacts (e.g. loss of habitat). It also highlights those sites that are in close proximity to a biodiversity asset. In some instances, proximity can indicate likely recreational impacts. However, this will not always be the case, depending on the nature the development, the nature of the biodiversity asset and the physical linkages / barriers that exist between them.</p> <p>The questions do not cover whether development of the sites would <i>enhance</i> biodiversity, this information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage.</p> <p>Assistance in answering these questions has been provided by commentary provided by Maidstone Borough Council's Parks and Leisure Team, the Kent Wildlife Trust and Kent County Council Biodiversity Officer.</p>



Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives
<p>14. To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment</p>	<p>Will it protect or enhance sites, features of areas of historical, archaeological, or cultural interest (including conservation areas, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and scheduled monuments?)</p>	<p>Addressed by the proforma question:  Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument/Listed Building/Conservation Area/ Registered Park or Garden?  Proximity is important, as it is a proxy for identifying the potential for impacts to the setting of heritage assets. However, development in close proximity to a heritage asset will not always result in negative effects, and can often result in positive effects. As a result the potential for allocations to have a significant effect has also been considered by Maidstone's heritage specialists and Kent County Council's Heritage Officer.</p>
	<p>Will it enhance, protect and make accessible for enjoyment the Borough's water environment?</p>	<p>Addressed by the proforma question: Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the Borough?</p>
	<p>Will it create vibrant, multifunctional countryside in and around towns?</p>	<p>Partially addressed by the proforma questions which relate to loss of land in the green belt and impacts on the Kent Downs AONB, but this question is not really relevant to allocation of housing/major employment sites.</p>
	<p>Will it protect and enhance the historic environment within built-up areas?</p>	<p>Addressed by the proforma question: Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument/Listed Building/ Conservation Area/registered Park or Garden?  Proximity is important, as it is a proxy for identifying the potential for impacts to the setting of heritage assets. However, development in close proximity to a heritage asset will not always result in negative effects, and can often result in positive effects.</p>
	<p>Will it protect and enhance open spaces of amenity and recreational value?</p>	<p>Addressed by the proforma question:  How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (&gt;2ha in size)?  Will allocation lead to a loss of land within the Green Belt/community facilities?  However the question does not answer the "enhance" element of this question – this information is not available at the site allocation stage.</p>
	<p>Will it maintain and enhance the character of landscape and townscape?</p>	<p>Addressed by the proforma questions:  Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local</p>

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives
		<p>landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p> <p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p> <p>Assistance in answering these questions has been provided by commentary provided on each site by the MBC landscape team.</p>
15. To reduce waste generation, dumping and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste	Will it reduce household and other forms of waste?	No criteria have been developed to assess this objective. Given the strategic nature of site allocations, it would not be possible to appraise the potential for effects in terms of supporting good waste management - this information is not available at this stage.
	Will it increase waste recovery and recycling?	
	Will it encourage waste treatment locally?	
	Will it increase opportunities for domestic recycling?	
16. To achieve sustainable water resources management	Will it reduce water consumption?	<p>No criteria have been developed to assess these sub-objectives. Given the strategic nature of site allocations, it would not be possible to appraise the potential for effects in terms of supporting good water management on site - this information is not available at this stage.</p> <p>Consideration has not been given in this Interim SA Report to the potential for the strategic site allocations to place a burden on the capacity for effective wastewater treatment (which could, in turn, have implications for water quality).</p> <p>While there is limited spare capacity in some of the key existing sewers running through the centre of Maidstone town, which has the potential to restrict the number of new homes which can be provided to the south east of Maidstone town these constraints can be overcome through investment in the sewerage system. Southern Water has been consulted on the proposed distribution of development, including 975 dwellings to the north west, 1000 in the south east and potential employment allocations at Junction 7 and Junction 8. Southern Water has not objected to the proposed 1000 dwellings to the south east. There is a need to upgrade the Aylesford WWTW which serves the town and the proposed growth will exacerbate this, but this upgrade is provided for within Southern Water's own 5 year implementation plan. Therefore wastewater capacity is not</p>
	Will it reduce the generation of wastewater?	
	Will it encourage the re-use of water?	
	Will it improve the quality of the Borough's rivers?	

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives
		<p>expected to be a significant issue for the town.</p> <p>Likewise consideration has not been given in this Interim SA Report to the potential for allocations to place a burden on water supply as South East Water have stated that they will have sufficient water resources available to meet the expected increase in demand from the proposed levels of development, and there is no particular locational constraint in this respect, although water efficiency measures may be required.</p>
	<p>Will it improve the quality of the Borough's groundwater?</p>	<p>Partially addressed by the following proforma questions which relate to a potential negative impact on these resources:</p> <p>Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?</p> <p>Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?</p> <p>However the question does not cover whether development of the site would <i>improve</i> groundwater quality, this information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage.</p> <p>SPZ1 does not represent a major constraint for most (non-polluting) types of development. However, within SPZ1 development can only discharge clean roof runoff to ground (i.e. not from car parks) which can make meeting runoff requirements more challenging. In particular, there can be a need for more above ground storage SuDS.</p>
<p>17. To increase energy efficiency, and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Borough</p>	<p>Will it increase the proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources?</p>	<p>This information is not available at the strategic site allocation stage. This sub-objective will be addressed through the development of a policy in the Core Strategy which seeks a % of energy requirements of development to be from renewable resources. This policy will apply to all strategic sites.</p>
	<p>Will it reduce the demand for energy?</p>	<p>This is partially addressed by the questions in the proforma which relate to proximity of housing and employment to each other, and to community services/facilities and public transport provision. These will all contribute to a reduction in the demand for energy. Energy consumption on site however, is not covered by the proforma questions.</p>

Maidstone sustainability objective	Sub-objectives	Fit between the SA Proforma appraisal questions and the SA objectives and sub-objectives
		<p>This sub-objective will be partially addressed through the development of policies in the Core Strategy in relation to the Code for Sustainable Homes (decent homes) and BREEAM standards for non-residential development. These policies will apply to all strategic sites.</p>
<p>18. To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough</p>	<p>Will it ensure high and stable levels of employment?</p> <p>Will it promote 'conditional growth' (balancing growth with housing provision and investment in social Infrastructure)?</p> <p>Will it stimulate economic revival in priority regeneration areas?</p> <p>Will it increase provision of better quality jobs /skilled employment?</p> <p>Will it ensure the correct mix of skills to meet the current and future needs of local employers?</p> <p>Will it encourage the development of a buoyant, sustainable tourism sector?</p>	<p>The following proforma questions:</p> <p>“How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)</p> <p>Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?</p> <p>Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?”</p> <p>attempt to address these questions, in terms of identifying those sites which are best placed to stimulate economic revival in priority regeneration areas, and to provide the sorts of premises that will attract businesses that offer higher quality jobs.</p> <p>Loss of employment land/space is helpful to some extent but it does not capture the nature of any effects in terms of <i>who</i> might be impacted. Ideally, it would be possible to understand whether an allocation might lead to loss of jobs amongst a sector of the population that will find it more difficult to find suitable work elsewhere, and so may find themselves at risk of long-term unemployment.</p> <p>‘Conditional growth’ is addressed by the cumulative impact questions at the end of the proforma.</p> <p>It is not possible to address skills mix or employment levels through this process as there is no obvious causal link with the allocation of sites for housing or employment – it is not known what type of employment will be offered at this stage.</p>

**9 WHAT ARE THE APPRAISAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AT THIS CURRENT STAGE?**

“the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors”  
(SEA Directive, Annex I(f))

“the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme”  
(SEA Directive, Annex I(g))

**9.1 Introduction**

This section presents a summary of the findings of the criteria-based appraisal of the strategic site allocations. Copies of the completed appraisal proformas setting out the detailed appraisal findings are presented in **Appendix 4**.

A number of recommendations for mitigation or enhancement have been made that will be taken into account by the Council prior to publication of the draft Core Strategy Local Plan (alongside consultation responses to these sites and any other evidence that becomes available). The ‘story’ of how SA findings and recommendations have been taken into account will be told within the SA Report published alongside the draft Core Strategy Local Plan (publication stage).

**9.2 Summary conclusions from the strategic site allocations appraisal**

Set out below are the summary conclusions from the criteria-based appraisal of the strategic site allocations. A total of 19 sites have been assessed, which consist of:

- Seven sites proposed for housing development to the south east of the Maidstone Urban Area.
- Eight sites proposed for housing development to the north west of the Maidstone Urban Area.
- Three sites proposed for employment development near Junction 8 of the M20.
- One site proposed for employment development near Junction 7 of the M20.

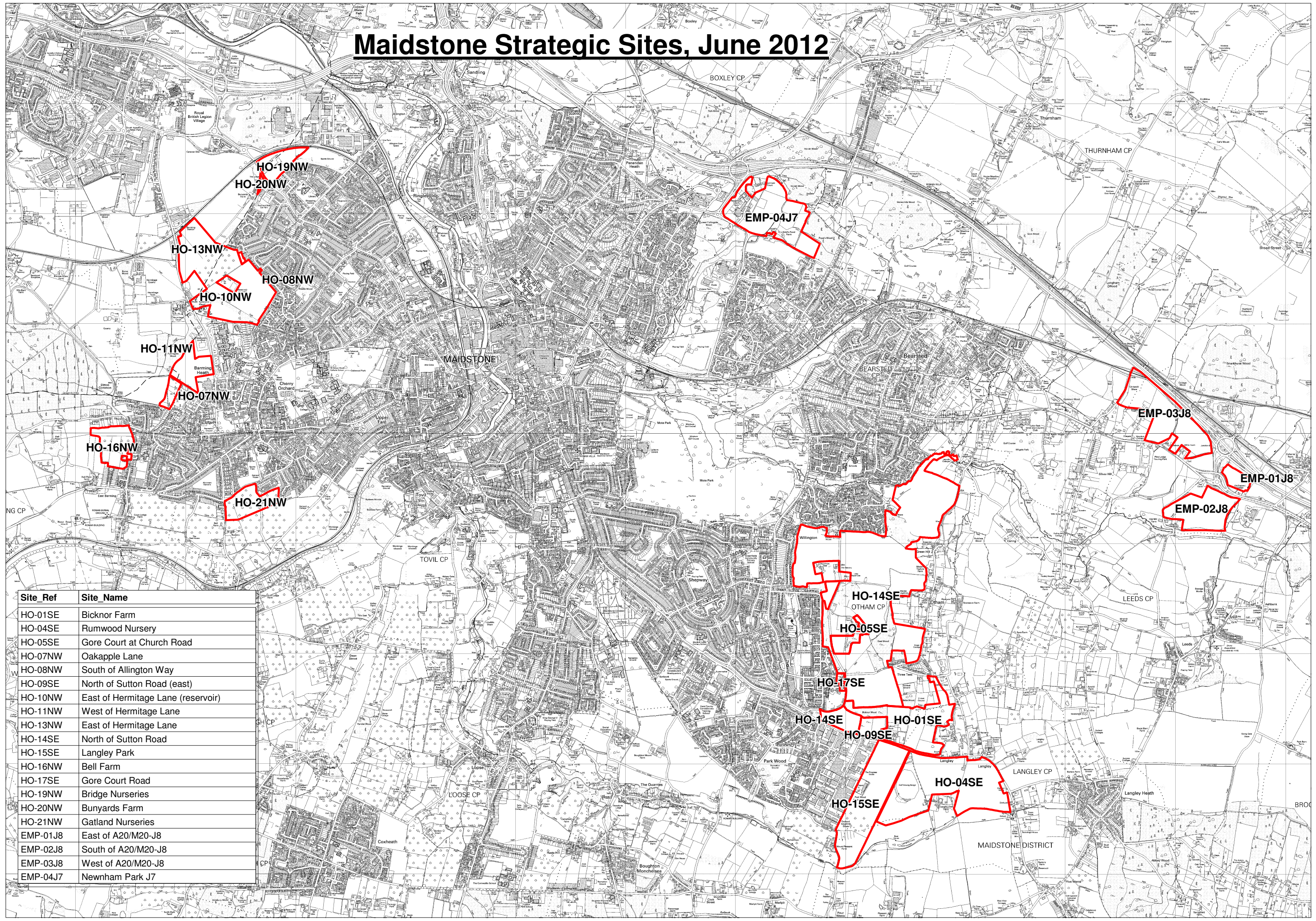
These sites are depicted on Figure 9.1.

The summary findings for each of these sites are presented here, by geographical area. Full appraisal findings can be found within Appendix 4.

**Figure 9.1: Maidstone Candidate Strategic Sites**



# Maidstone Strategic Sites, June 2012



Site Ref	Site Name
HO-01SE	Bicknor Farm
HO-04SE	Rumwood Nursery
HO-05SE	Gore Court at Church Road
HO-07NW	Oakapple Lane
HO-08NW	South of Allington Way
HO-09SE	North of Sutton Road (east)
HO-10NW	East of Hermitage Lane (reservoir)
HO-11NW	West of Hermitage Lane
HO-13NW	East of Hermitage Lane
HO-14SE	North of Sutton Road
HO-15SE	Langley Park
HO-16NW	Bell Farm
HO-17SE	Gore Court Road
HO-19NW	Bridge Nurseries
HO-20NW	Bunyards Farm
HO-21NW	Gatland Nurseries
EMP-01J8	East of A20/M20-J8
EMP-02J8	South of A20/M20-J8
EMP-03J8	West of A20/M20-J8
EMP-04J7	Newnham Park J7



### 9.3 South East Maidstone Strategic Allocations for Housing

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-01-SE
Site name/address	Land at Bicknor Farm – SHLAA site ref 030
Site area (ha)	26.65 ha – 3.4ha of site is taken up by Bicknor Wood to the north west
Site Origin	SHLAA and recent Call for Sites 2012
Site Description	<p>The site abuts Sutton Road to the south, open countryside to the north, woodland to the northwest and is part bounded to the west by Bicknor Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building Rumwood Court, also a Grade II listed building, forms part of the eastern boundary of the site. The site is adjacent to other SHLAA sites on its western fringe, most notably;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Plan strategic allocation Land North of Sutton Road (ref 127 &amp; 145) which border the site to the west; and</li> <li>• SHLAA sites 118 &amp; 144 to the north</li> </ul> <p>The main body of land comprises pony paddocks which are flat and featureless apart from some trees (with Tree Protection Orders) towards the eastern edge of the site.</p>
Current use	Agriculture/open countryside, part residential use
Adjacent uses	Small pockets of residential Parkwood Industrial Estate, opposite site (south of Sutton Road). A small and narrow section to the north east of the site extends to the hamlet of Three Tees near Otham.
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a range of services including a primary school, secondary school and post office. In long term, delivery of new housing on adjacent sites in conjunction with this site could potentially lead to additional community services to serve the site.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has reasonable transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site is well served by existing bus stops and cycle lane links nearby Senacre Estate to Maidstone town centre.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to increase in traffic movements.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.</p>	

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Unclear** – development on the site would lead to the loss of grade 3 agricultural land. However, the site is not located within the Green Belt. Bicknor Farmhouse (on site) to west and Rumwood Court (adjacent to site) to the east are both Grade II listed buildings. Development on the site could potentially have an adverse impact on these buildings. Allocation of site for development could potentially have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character as this is distinctly rural. The site, like most of the south east sites, does not contain any Historic Environment Records.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zone 2, 3a or 3b.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear/Negative** – The significance of any adverse effects on biodiversity would need to be determined by a preliminary ecological assessment as several species specific ecological surveys are likely to be required. There are no direct impacts on designated open space. The layout and scale of new development on the site would have to ensure that TPOs on the site and Bicknor wood are preserved; and the ancient woodland towards the north of the site is protected. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. The scope, level and achievability of any necessary ecological mitigation would need to be assessed, perhaps in the context of the wider south-east allocations area. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Grade II listed buildings are located on and adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on these buildings or their settings should be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development.
- There are numerous TPOs to the east and northeast of site. Any potential new development should be designed to ensure that no trees which are the subject TPOs are lost.
- Mitigation measures should be put in place to minimise the potential for development at this location to result in deterioration of the woodlands around the site.
- A preliminary ecological assessment will be required to determine the need for more detailed species specific surveys. The scope, level and achievability of any necessary ecological mitigation should be assessed in the context of the wider south-east allocations area.
- Sites within the south east urban periphery strategic location should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space.
- Archaeological mitigation measures
- In-bound bus lane would be important for improving accessibility and journey times to town centre and reducing contributions to congestion/air quality issues.

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-04-SE
Site name/address	Land South of Sutton Road (Rumwood Nursery -SHLAA site ref 035A)
Site area (ha)	44ha
Site Origin	SHLAA and strategic sites call for sites 2012
Site Description	<p>This is a large site immediately south of Sutton Road and separated from the urban edge of Maidstone by Langley Park Farm West (a previously allocated site for residential development). Apart from a few detached dwellings, a school, a small allotment and a church, Sutton Road forms a continuous boundary along the site's northern and eastern edge. The distance between the site and Sutton Road varies along its length from approx 1m to 15m but mostly there is a grass strip approx 3m wide.</p> <p>The site is visible from Sutton Road but is shielded for the most part by a box hedge along its edge. When travelling toward the Five Wents Junction on Sutton Road, there are clear and uninterrupted views of the site's open nature and the spire at St Mary's Church, Langley. Similarly when travelling towards Maidstone there is clear views of the site as it slopes gently upwards before levelling out nearer to Langley Park Farm West.</p> <p>The western edge of the site is in use as a golf driving range and a small number of large detached dwellings adjoin the south west corner of the site. The rest of the site's southern boundary follows the Loose Stream which flows into Langley Loch. The site slopes downwards gently in a south easterly direction and the majority of the site is in horticultural use. The only building on the site is a steel framed horticultural building near the junction of Sutton Road and New Road. The central and eastern parts of the site are used for the growing of plants for Rumwood Nursey.</p>
Current use	Horticulture/open countryside
Adjacent uses	Golf driving range/open countryside/farmland
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site located in reasonable proximity to a range of services given its rural location. In long term, delivery of new housing on nearby sites could potentially lead to additional community services to serve the site but most services would have to be accessed by private vehicle unless bus/cycle improvements delivered.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located in proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate which will provide some accessible job opportunities for future residents. However it is a reasonable distance from Maidstone town centre, especially at the far eastern end of the site. Commuters may be inclined to travel by car, increasing congestion, unless bus lane improvements are delivered.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Negative</b> – site is reasonably well served by existing bus stops and a cycle lane links nearby Parkwood Estate to Maidstone town centre. However many longer journeys are likely to be by private vehicle unless bus and cycle route improvements are delivered.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to increased traffic movements, especially given the distance of this site from the railway network and town centre.</p>	

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Very Negative** – entirety of site located within Southern Anti-Coalescence Belt. Policy ENV32 of the Maidstone Local Plan 2000 (Saved Policies) states that development in this area will not be permitted. Development on the site could have a detrimental impact on the setting of 5 Grade II listed buildings adjacent to the site. Allocation of site for development would have a significant negative impact on the local high quality rural landscape character, especially if none of the nearby sites in south east Maidstone are developed. The site does not contain any Historic Environment Records.

**Flood Risk:**

**Negative** – the southernmost edge of the site (at boundary with Loose Stream) is in flood zones 2 & 3. Flooding of the remainder of the site is highly unlikely. This effect will need to be mitigated.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Positive** – in general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any adverse effects on biodiversity and green and blue Infrastructure although ecological surveys are likely to be required to support a planning application. Kent Wildlife Trust has however expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- 5 Grade II listed buildings are located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on these buildings should be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development.
- Archaeological mitigation measures
- In order to restrict surface water run off, sustainable drainage should be implemented on the site.
- In-bound bus lane would be vital for improving accessibility and journey times to town centre and reducing contributions to congestion/air quality issues.
- Sites within the south east urban periphery strategic location should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space..

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-05-SE
Site name/address	Gore Court, Church Road – SHLAA site ref 112
Site area (ha)	4.51 ha
Site Origin	SHLAA call for sites. Not in 2012 call for sites
Site Description	<p>The land being promoted for development at Gore Court, Church Lane comprises approximately 4.5ha. The developable area is within the same ownership of Gore Court House (a Grade II listed building) and is well screened from that particular building by mature trees.</p> <p>The site is bounded by East Wood to the south east, open countryside to the north and south and the western boundary with Church Road, a narrow road of rural character, comprising of woodland (approx 20m strip) forming part of the screen between the site and Woolley Road (Senacre/Shepway) to the west. The site is currently in use as a private garden to Gore Court.</p>
Current use	Garden/private amenity
Adjacent uses	Farmland and open countryside. A large section of the site to the west lies in close proximity to Woolley Road and a number of the small residential estates that use Woolley Road to connect to Willington Street.

## Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Very positive** – site located in close proximity to a range of community services/facilities and to the town centre and development may contribute to the delivery of further services/facilities.

### Economy:

**Positive** – site located in reasonable proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has reasonable transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

### Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:

**Positive** – The site is located off a rural lane and approximately five and ten minutes walk to existing bus stops. Access would be improved by construction of an in-bound bus lane to Maidstone town centre) and there is potential to link into the cycle route network lane which links nearby residential areas to Maidstone town centre. Road access is more constrained.

### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and congestion and have a negative impact on air quality.

### Water resources and quality:

**Unclear** – The delivery of new development on the site will increase the pressure on existing water resources in the local area as well as wastewater transport and treatment facilities.

### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**Unclear** – Development of the site could potentially have a detrimental impact on the open park land setting of the Gore Court House listed buildings although these buildings are well screened from the site. There are no heritage environment records on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Unclear** – site is not located within a flood zone. However incidents of surface water flooding have been recorded in this area.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Negative** – There are 2 BAP habitats and ancient woodlands located in close proximity to the site. The design of new development would need to ensure there was no detrimental impact on these habitats. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- An in-bound bus lane from Willington Street to Wheatsheaf Jcn on Sutton Road is being considered. This would improve public transport access between the site and Maidstone town centre and would significantly reduce journey times for bus users
- The woodland strip should be conserved and reinforced, with linkages made to the nearly ancient woodland.
- Sites within the south east urban periphery strategic location should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space..
- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-09-SE
Site name/address	Land north of Sutton Road – east side (SHLAA site 127)
Site area (ha)	3.85ha
Site Origin	Local Plan allocation – also SHLAA call for sites & Strategic Sites call for sites
Site Description	<p>The site is part of a larger site allocated in the Local Plan 2000 (policy H3) and can be described as open and attractive agricultural land immediately north of Sutton Road and quite a distance from the town centre. Bicknor Wood screens the site well in views from White Horse Lane to the north, and from the public footpath to the north-east. The site's western boundary is not clearly defined where it merges with its adjacent previously allocated site. To the south, the southern side of Sutton Road has an urban character and appearance along the entire frontage (Parkwood Estate). This would limit the intrusive effect of housing, since this part of Sutton Road is not wholly rural. Travelling east, the site marks an abrupt end to the town on the northern side of the road and its rural character and appearance make it part of Maidstone's countryside setting.</p> <p>The principle of development on this site was established in the Local Plan 2000. It is considered that the site is well located with regard to existing services and is not subject to any major constraint. It has an extensive frontage to a main road, the A274, along which there are regular bus services into and out of Maidstone. It lies immediately opposite a major employment area, Parkwood Industrial Estate and adjacent to the residential area of Parkwood, which has a good range of shops and community services.</p>
Current use	Residential, commercial, agricultural, open countryside
Adjacent uses	Site is allocated for residential development in the Local Plan 2000
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Very positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a range of community services/facilities and to the town centre and may contribute to the delivery of further services/facilities.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located in very close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has reasonable transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Very positive</b> – site is well served by existing bus stops and cycle lane links. There is good road access.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site located within the Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to an increase in carbon emissions from traffic movements.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.</p> <p><b>Land use, landscape and the historic environment:</b>  <b>No Effect</b> – development on the site would lead to the loss of grade 3 agricultural land. A Grade II listed building is</p>	



located opposite the site but development is unlikely to impact on its setting. Allocation of site for development could potentially have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character as it has a countryside setting. However when seen from Gore Court Road, whilst the site is open agricultural land, it is also the foreground for commercial buildings and uses fronting Sutton Road and this brings an element of urban intrusion into this area already. The site is well screened to the south by Parkwood Industrial Estate. The site, like most of the south east sites, does not contain any Historic Environment Records.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site not in any flood zone.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Positive** – in general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any adverse effects on biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure. The significance of any adverse effects on biodiversity would however need to be determined by a preliminary ecological assessment as several species specific ecological surveys are likely to be required. The scope, level and achievability of any necessary ecological mitigation would need to be assessed, perhaps in the context of the wider south-east allocations area. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- An in-bound bus lane from Willington Street to Wheatsheaf Jcn on Sutton Road is being considered. This would improve public transport access between the site and Maidstone town centre and would significantly reduce journey times for bus users
- A preliminary ecological assessment will be required to determine the need for more detailed species specific surveys. The scope, level and achievability of any necessary ecological mitigation should be assessed in the context of the wider south-east allocations area.
- Sites within the south east urban periphery strategic location should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space.
- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Archaeological mitigation measures

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-14-SE
Site name/address	Land at Gore Court (SHLAA site ref 144)- now also includes land north of Sutton Road (west)
Site area (ha)	Up to 150ha
Site Origin	SHLAA call for sites and Strategic Sites Call for Sites
Site Description	<p>This is a very large site comprising predominantly land in agricultural use with an absence of trees within the internal field areas. Areas of trees and woodland are present including the woodland belt between Church Road and Wooley Road designated as an Area of Local Landscape Importance and a larger woodland block east of Gore Court (East Wood) which is classified as Ancient Woodland.</p> <p>Perhaps it is best to break it into two sections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. North of Gore Court</li> <li>2. South of Gore Court</li> </ol> <p><b>North</b> There is little separation of the site along parts of the western and northern boundaries along the suburban edge. The boundaries are mostly hedgerows but to the very north of this section the boundary forms part of the River Len valley 'corridor', which mainly consists of unmanaged scrub and emerging woodland. There is a stronger well-treed hedgerow boundary to much of the western part of the site which abuts the backs of properties on Woolley Road, Shepway.</p> <p>Access is an issue in the northern section of the site, particularly its distance to Sutton Road (A274) and the narrow roads (Church Road/Gore Court Road) that link to this main transport artery into the town centre. Access to Willington street (which would provide the option of linking to Sutton Road or Ashford Road (A20)) is possible but this would result in directing traffic on narrow roads through the established residential areas of Downswood and Senacre.</p> <p><b>South</b> This section of the site is bounded to the west by the residential area of Senacre. A strip of woodland ranging from 20m - 80m wide screens the site from the urban edge. Gore Court Road/Church Road lies adjacent to the woodland to the east and the majority of the site comprises open countryside/woodland. The southern section of the site (south of White Horse Lane) is a large, level, rectangular field bounded by Gore Court Road to the west, White Horse Lane to the north and Bicknor Wood to the south. It is also in relatively close proximity to Sutton Road (A274) and Gore Court Road allows access to this main link to the town centre. Bicknor Wood separates the site from its most southerly section, which is the Local Plan (Policy H3) allocated site (Land North of Sutton Road, west). This section is also dealt with in a separate proforma.</p> <p>To the east, the site largely comprises open countryside and agricultural land and only a very small section of the site borders residential properties (at Three Tees, Otham). The boundary of the site to the east is a variety of paddocks, woodland belts, gardens, orchards, farmsteads etc. The settlement pattern is sparse, with Otham Conservation area nearby.</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b> Land to the south of Gore Court (particularly south of White Horse Lane) is more suitable for development, primarily because it can be better accessed from Sutton Road/ Gore Court Road and also because Bicknor Wood and East Wood have the potential to screen development. It is also important to note that the southernmost section of this site is already allocated for residential development and offers good access to services, employment and public transport.</p>
Current use	Open countryside/woodland/agriculture
Adjacent uses	Residential/agriculture
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very positive** – site located in reasonable proximity to a range of community services/facilities and to the town centre and may contribute to the delivery of further services/facilities.

**Economy:**

**Positive** – site located in reasonable proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and good transport links to Maidstone town centre can be established. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Positive** – site is well served by existing bus stops (but would be improved by construction of an in-bound bus lane to Maidstone town centre) and there is potential to link into the cycle route network lane which links nearby residential areas to Maidstone town centre. Road access is more constrained particularly in the northern part of the site.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and congestion and have a negative impact on air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage. Potential for adverse impact on the River Len unless mitigation measures are adopted.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Negative** – Development in the northern half of the site would lead to the loss of a large area of Grade 2 agricultural land. Development of the site could also potentially have a detrimental impact on the open park land setting of listed buildings at Gore Court, on the setting of the Otham Village conservation area and on the landscape character of the area (particularly if the northern part of the site were developed). There are no Historic Environment Recordss for this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Negative** –Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage. The layout of new development on the site would need to be in accordance with flood risk policy as the northern section of the site has areas within flood zones 2 and 3. Some surface water flooding has been recorded in the vicinity of White Horse Lane which runs east-west across the site.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Negative** – There are 2 BAP habitats located on the site (woodland and neutral grassland) and the Spot Lane SSSI is located towards the northern boundary. The site lies adjacent to the LWS along Len Valley at the north east tip of the site. The site includes a number of remnant woodland blocks including ancient woodlands. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Grade II listed buildings are located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on the settings of these buildings

should be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development.

- There are numerous TPOs to the north of site. New development should be designed to ensure that no trees which are the subject TPOs are lost.
- An in-bound bus lane from Willington Street to Wheatsheaf Jcn on Sutton Road is being considered. This would improve public transport access between the site and Maidstone town centre and would significantly reduce journey times for bus users
- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Archaeological mitigation measures
- A Flood Risk Assessment should be undertaken to inform development, given the flood risk issues at the northern tip of the site and records of surface water flooding in the vicinity of White Horse Lane.
- A buffer zone should be established between new development and the River Len LWS of at least 15m.
- A hydrological assessment should be undertaken to establish the direction of the flows across the site and ensure that the water quantity and quality within the river system and the LWS can be protected.
- Existing woodland and BAP habitat (woodland and neutral grassland) should be protected and connected. Any loss of habitat should be compensated by provision elsewhere.
- A preliminary ecological assessment should be undertaken to determine the need for more detailed species specific surveys.
- Sites within the south east urban periphery strategic location should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space.
- Any development on the eastern border with Otham should be well screened/set back to preserve the setting of the conservation area.

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-15-SE
Site name/address	Langley Park Farm West
Site area (ha)	32.9ha
Site Origin	Site is allocated for residential/employment use (light industry and high technology) in the Local Plan – also allocated for P&R – Site was put forward in recent call for sites
Site Description	<p>The site is located on the southern side of the A274 Sutton Road at the south eastern edge of Maidstone’s urban area. The nearest settlements are Chart Sutton (1km to the southeast) and Langley Heath (1.75km to the east). The hamlet of Otham lies 1km to the north.</p> <p>The site is bounded by a 7m woodland strip to the east, which shelters the site from a Golf Driving Range, and Parkwood Industrial Estate to the west. The northern part of the site is a rectangular relatively flat area of 27 hectares, extending from Sutton Road, which has a grass verge up to 5m wide, to the southernmost boundary of the Industrial Estate. This single field, used for arable production is relatively level with sparse hedging along the boundary to Sutton Road. There is a chain link fence and intermittent beech hedge along this boundary, which partially screens views from the A274.</p> <p>Maidstone Borough Council’s depot takes up a section of the site along its western boundary and breaks an otherwise continuous border with Parkwood Industrial Estate.</p> <p>The southernmost section of the site is a triangular area of 7 hectares which slopes from a ridge of comparatively higher ground in a southerly direction towards the Loose Stream, which flows out of Langley Loch. This area is used for open pasture with boundary Poplar shelter belts and offers a panoramic view of the open countryside to the south (in direction of Plough Wents Road/Heath Road). This parcel of land is bounded to the west by Brishing Road. The boundary is formed by a tall, road-side hedge with some trees. Brishing Road is at this point below the surface of the adjacent fields, and this, combined with the tall hedges, means the site is screened from view.</p> <p>On the northern side of Sutton Road in close proximity to the site there are two semi-detached dwellings and a Grade II listed farmhouse with stable yard.</p> <p>The principle of development on this site was established in the Local Plan 2000. It is considered that the site is well located with regard to existing services and is not subject to any major constraint. It has an extensive frontage to a main road, the A274, along which there are regular bus services into and out of Maidstone. It lies immediately adjacent to a major employment area, Parkwood Industrial Estate and the residential area of Parkwood, which has a good range of shops and community services. Furthermore, the site offers the potential for a 7ha countryside amenity on its southernmost section.</p>
Current use	Farm – open countryside
Adjacent uses	Industrial Estate/open land/golf driving range/ horticulture - nursery

## Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a range of services including a primary school, secondary school and post office. In the long term, delivery of new housing on adjacent sites could potentially lead to additional community services to serve the site and others.

**Economy:**

**Positive** – site located in close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has reasonable transport links to

Maidstone town centre. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Positive** – site is well served by existing bus stops and a cycle lane links nearby Parkwood Estate to Maidstone town centre. Good road access.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located within the Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to increased traffic movements.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Unclear** – Bicknor Farmhouse to the north of the site is a Grade II listed building. Development on the site could potentially have an adverse impact but this should be able to be mitigated. The southern tip of the site has a greater landscape importance which should be conserved and reinforced. The southern portion of the site may be more archaeologically sensitive, given the large number of features locally associated with outworks of the Iron Age oppidum at Quarry Wood, Boughton Monchelsea (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and the nearby site of a Roman bath house in the valley bottom.

**Flood Risk:**

**Positive** – Only the southernmost portion of the site (at boundary with Loose Stream) is in Flood Zones 2 & 3. Flooding of the remainder of the site is highly unlikely

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Positive** – In general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure. Breeding bird surveys are recommended and further surveys may be required, depending on the drainage scheme. Kent Wildlife Trust has however expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- A Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on this building could be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development. With suitable boundary planting to the Sutton Road boundary development of this site is unlikely to significantly adversely affect the setting of Bicknor Farmhouse.
- The southern tip of the site has a greater landscape importance which should be conserved and reinforced. Any development should extend no further than the shelter belt, leaving the valley intact as open countryside.
- To ensure that adverse impacts on air quality are minimised (site adjacent to AQMA), sustainable transport provision ought to be promoted on the site as part of new development.
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring Parkwood Industrial Estate, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- In order to restrict surface water run off, sustainable drainage should be implemented on the site.
- In-bound bus lane would be helpful for improving accessibility and journey times to town centre and reducing contributions to congestion/air quality issues.
- Sites within the south east urban periphery strategic location should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space.

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-17-SE
Site name/address	Land at Gore Court Road – SHLAA site ref 001
Site area (ha)	0.96ha
Site Origin	SHLAA call for sites – Not in recent Call for Sites 2012
Site Description	Site lies at eastern edge of Gore Court Road immediately adjacent to the urban edge of Maidstone. A public footpath runs adjacent to the site from Gore Court Road into the Senacre estate. Site has approximately 10 existing residential dwellings.
Current use	10 residential dwellings currently on the site
Adjacent uses	Residential to the west, woodland (ALLI) to the north and open countryside to the south and east.
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a range of services including a primary school, secondary school and post office. In long term, delivery of new housing on adjacent sites could potentially lead to additional community services to serve the site. It should be noted that the site is currently occupied by ten houses.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site is well served by existing bus stops and a cycle lane links nearby Senacre Estate to Maidstone town centre.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site located within Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for higher density housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to an increase in carbon emissions from greater traffic movements.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b>  <b>No Effect</b> – site is already developed for housing.</p> <p><b>Land use, landscape and the historic environment:</b>  <b>No Effect</b> – site is already developed for housing.</p> <p><b>Flood Risk:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located outside of flood zones 2, 3a or 3b. However surface water flooding has been recorded in the vicinity of White Horse Lane. A Flood Risk Assessment should be undertaken if the site is to be more intensively redeveloped.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:</b>  <b>No Effect</b> – site is already developed for housing. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.</p>	



## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Sites within the south east urban periphery strategic location should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space.
- If the site is redeveloped more intensively, surface water flooding issues should be investigated through a detailed Flood Risk Assessment and SUDS should be considered to address surface water runoff.

## 9.4 North West Maidstone Strategic Allocations for Housing

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-07-NW
Site name/address	Land at Oakapple Lane, Maidstone (Barming & Heath Ward)
Site area (ha)	2.7ha
Site Origin	2009 SHLAA call for sites
Site Description	The land is laid out in small parcels with hedgerows along the east and west sides with additional hedgerows running across the site east to west (just north of the middle). Public footpath KM12 runs down the western side (in the northern part) before crossing diagonally across the site to the south east corner. Public footpath KM11 runs along the southern boundary of the site. To the east of the site is Oakwood Hospital cemetery with residential development (in Broomshaw Road) to the south. To the north of the site is an agricultural field (West of Hermitage Lane site). To the west are open fields. The site is accessed from an unmade track leading to Oakapple Lane to the east.
Current use	Equestrian
Adjacent uses	South – residential. West – open land/agricultural. North – agricultural. East – Oakwood Hospital cemetery and then residential beyond.
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services and may help to deliver further services/facilities.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and Maidstone Hospital and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Hermitage Lane and at Barming Train Station located close to the site. Good road access.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and have a negative impact on air quality. Potential for vibration from Gallagher’s Quarry to the west.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.</p> <p><b>Land use, landscape and the historic environment:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area but would integrate well with surrounding development. Some adverse impact on existing hedgerows as some would be lost. There are extensive prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains to the immediate north of the site. Development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible on this site.</p>	

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Positive** – In general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure although a biodiversity opportunity would be lost in terms of potential acid soil woodland or acid grassland creation. Ancient woodland is located on the northern boundary of the site and would require a buffer. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- The woodland to the north of the site is ancient woodland and as such any development would need to include a buffer to this land.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that site is not adversely affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations at Gallagher's Quarry.
- Archaeological mitigation measures.

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-08-NW
Site name/address	Land south of Allington Way.
Site area (ha)	0.35
Site Origin	2012 Call for sites.
Site Description	L shaped site south of Allington Way. The site itself is open with elements of scrub and bushes on site. On the eastern boundaries of the site are fences to existing residential properties and on all other boundaries are a mixture of hedges and trees.
Current use	Open land.
Adjacent uses	Residential to the east and north. Orchard to the west. Open land designated for housing to the south.

## Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services and may help to deliver further services/facilities.

### Economy:

**Positive** – site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and Maidstone Hospital and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

### Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:

**Very Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Hermitage Lane and at Barming Train Station located close to the site.

### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and have a negative impact on air quality. Traffic noise would be an issue for residents (the site is located close to Maidstone Hospital and adjacent to Hermitage Lane), as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher's Quarry to the west.

### Water resources and quality:

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**Positive** – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area but would integrate well with surrounding development, including proposed new development on adjacent site. There are no sites of archaeological potential immediately adjacent however significant historic features have been discovered close by.

### Flood Risk:

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

### Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:

**Positive** – In general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure, but ecological surveys would be required to confirm this – part of the site may have significant ecological value. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Incorporate measures to ensure that the site is not adversely affected by noise pollution from Hermitage Lane and Maidstone Hospital.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that site is not adversely affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations at Gallagher's Quarry.

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-10-NW, HO-13-NW
Site name/address	Land East of Hermitage Lane (two sites within one area)
Site area (ha)	44.4 (including reservoir 1.74). 30.6 within Borough, remainder within Tonbridge and Malling.
Site Origin	2000 MBWLP housing allocation
Site Description	L shaped site south of Allington Way. The site itself is open with elements of scrub and bushes on site. On the eastern boundaries of the site are fences to existing residential properties and on all other boundaries are a mixture of hedges and trees.
Current use	1.74 ha in the centre of the site is a disused reservoir. The majority of the rest of the site, which is located within the Borough, is currently open farm land. Land in Tonbridge and Malling district is a mixture of farm/orchard uses.
Adjacent uses	South-east, east and north-east – residential. North (outside of Borough) – Barming railway station. West – open frontage on to Hermitage Lane, opposite, a number of uses including quarry. South – Maidstone hospital.
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b> <b>Very Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services and may help to deliver further services/facilities.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b> <b>Positive</b> – site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and Maidstone Hospital and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b> <b>Very Positive</b> – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Hermitage Lane and at Barming Train Station located close to the site. Good road access.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b> <b>Unclear</b> – site located adjacent/partly within the Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and have a negative impact on air quality. Traffic noise would be an issue for residents (adjacent to Hermitage Lane), as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher’s Quarry.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b> <b>Unclear</b> – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.</p> <p><b>Land use, landscape and the historic environment:</b> <b>Unclear</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area. Therefore, there could potentially be an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area. This would need to be mitigated through the design and layout of potential new development. Loss of grade 2 agricultural land. Parts of the site contain significant archaeological features and development should be avoided in these parts of the site.</p> <p><b>Flood Risk:</b> <b>Very Positive</b> – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.</p>	

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Negative** – Land to the north of the footpath/restricted byway is designated as public open space (Policy ENV24(xiii)). Allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity but ecological surveys would be required to confirm this – the south west part of the site may have significant ecological value and should be retained and enhanced for biodiversity purposes as the site lies within the Greensand Heath and Commons Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Allocation of site for development could potentially have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character. However, it is likely that this could be mitigated through delivering appropriate layout, scale and type of development.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that the site is not adversely affected by noise pollution from Hermitage Lane and Maidstone Hospital.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that site is not adversely affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations at Gallagher’s Quarry.
- Retain south-western part of the site for biodiversity enhancement purposes.
- Retain areas of designated public open space, or make provision or contributions to off-site provision.
- Incorporate community facilities if need is confirmed (GP, primary school).
- Archaeological predetermination evaluation necessary in some parts, development may be possible with archaeological mitigation measures elsewhere.



Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-11-NW.
Site name/address	Land west of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone (Heath Ward)
Site area (ha)	8.34
Site Origin	2009 SHLAA call for sites.
Site Description	The site is an arrow shaped piece of land with a frontage onto Hermitage Lane of approximately 230m. A small part of the site (the point of the arrow, furthest west) is within Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Public footpath KB34 runs along the north western boundary of the site. The site is opposite Maidstone Hospital and between commercial premises to the south and a reservoir facility to the north.
Current use	Currently in use for arable farming
Adjacent uses	South – commercial and residential beyond. West – woodland/open land/farm. North – reservoir and woodland. East – Hermitage Lane and then residential beyond.
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services and may help to deliver further services/facilities.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and Maidstone Hospital and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Hermitage Lane and at Barming Train Station located close to the site. Good road access.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and have a negative impact on air quality. Traffic noise would be an issue for residents (the site is located close to Maidstone Hospital and adjacent to Hermitage Lane), as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher’s Quarry to the west.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.</p> <p><b>Land use, landscape and the historic environment:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area but would integrate well with surrounding development. There are extensive prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains to the immediate north of the site but development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible.</p> <p><b>Flood Risk:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – In general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure. Ancient woodland is located on the northern boundary of the site and would require a</p>	

buffer. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- The woodland to the north of the site is ancient woodland and as such any development would need to include a buffer to this land.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that the site is not adversely affected by noise pollution from Hermitage Lane and Maidstone Hospital.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that site is not adversely affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations at Gallagher's Quarry.
- Archaeological mitigation measures.

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-16-NW
Site name/address	Bell Farm, North Street, Barming
Site area (ha)	10.17
Site Origin	SHLAA 2009 call for sites
Site Description	Site occupies northern half of western boundary to North Street. Site is generally open with some tree belts forming internal boundaries and some sections used as orchards. The site surrounds the small residential developments on the western side of North Street and abuts the northern edge of the Cedar Drive (accessed from A26 Tonbridge Road) and Matterdale Gardens (accessed from North Street) residential developments.
Current use	Used as a mixture of pasture and orchards.
Adjacent uses	South – residential. West – open land/farm. North – residential (North Pole Road). East – residential/pub.

## Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services. In the long term, delivery of new housing on this and nearby sites could potentially lead to the development of additional community services to serve the site.

### Economy:

**Positive** – site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

### Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:

**Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Tonbridge Road and at Barming Train Station located close to the site.

### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, subsequent increase in traffic movements, congestion and negative impacts on air quality. The site is close to Gallagher's Quarry and could potentially be affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations.

### Water resources and quality:

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**Very Negative** – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area, at the top of the valley in an Area of Local Landscape Importance (although it is noted that this designation is proposed to be removed by the Core Strategy). It is hidden from view from the A26 Tonbridge Road however it is visible from the opposite side of the Medway valley. Therefore, there could potentially be an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area. Likely adverse impact on the rural setting of the local listed buildings. Development would lead to loss of Grade 2 Agricultural Land. There are post-medieval buildings nearby and a Roman and prehistoric and medieval site 500m south. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.

### Flood Risk:

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – Allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity although this would need to be confirmed by a preliminary ecological assessment. There could be indirect impacts from recreational disturbance on the nearby LWS/ancient woodland. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above. Allocation of the site would not result in the loss of green or open space,. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Consider appropriate mitigation measures for ancient woodland to the north of the site and local listed buildings
- Ensure that any potential adverse impacts relating to vibration and dust from nearby quarrying emissions is addressed through noise, vibration and dust attenuation measures.
- Preliminary ecological assessment to confirm need for more detailed surveys
- Archaeological mitigation measures

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-19-NW
Site name/address	Bridge Nursery
Site area (ha)	5.5ha within Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) area, 1.5ha in Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) area.
Site Origin	Allocated site MBWLP 2000.
Site Description	Site is empty grassland with trees and shrubs. In the centre of the site is a rectangular area bordered by trees where a wartime pillbox building used to be sited. The site slopes down from west to east (A20 London Road towards the railway at the eastern end). Railway borders site, although 2/3 of the railway is in the TMBC area so would not border a large part of the proposed residential area directly. From west to east railway goes from an embankment to being level with the site. At the north eastern end of the site is a small wooded area with informal links through to the sports ground on Castle Way.
Current use	No current use. Empty field, used by walkers. Area in the middle of the site where a pillbox building used to be shows evidence of having been used/being used as an area to sleep.
Adjacent uses	South east – residential. North east – small woodland and sports ground. North – railway track and Allington 20/20 industrial estate beyond, including incinerator. West – A20 London Road, residential and small retail area (DFS).

## Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services. In the long term, delivery of new housing on nearby sites could potentially lead to the development of additional community services to serve the site.

### Economy:

**Positive** - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate, industrial estate to the north and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

### Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:

**Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on London Road and at Barming Train Station located close to the site.

### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Unclear** – This site is close to the M20 motorway and railway and therefore air and noise quality issues would be important at this locality. There is also an adjacent former landfill site (in Tonbridge & Malling District) to the north west as well as others to the south east.

### Water resources and quality:

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**Negative** – The site is generally hidden from long distance views by the Maidstone East railway line and the Maidstone incinerator. Views of the North Downs are possible from the site however it does not appear to have any significant landscape character value. However, the site is allocated as grade 2 agricultural land and is a Greenfield site. Development of the site would lead to a loss of high grade agricultural land. Site of wartime pillbox, prehistoric tools found to south. Development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Negative** – Development of this site may lead to the loss of designated open space. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20/railway, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- Archaeological mitigation measures.

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-20-NW
Site name/address	Bunyards Farm
Site area (ha)	9.53
Site Origin	2009 SHLAA call for sites.
Site Description	Small triangular strip at the north western edge of the Maidstone urban area.
Current use	Car wash
Adjacent uses	Residential, retail, park and ride to south. Residential/residential allocation to the east (across A20 London Road). Open land to north and west, with railway line to north although not immediately adjacent.
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services. In the long term, delivery of new housing on nearby sites could potentially lead to the development of additional community services to serve the site.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate, industrial estate to the north and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on London Road and at Barming Train Station located close to the site.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – This site is close to the M20 motorway and railway and therefore air and noise quality issues would be important at this locality. There is also an adjacent former landfill site (in Tonbridge &amp; Malling District) to the north west as well as others to the south east.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.</p> <p><b>Land use, landscape and the historic environment:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – Development of the site would represent re-use of previously developed land. The site is generally well contained; within a slight dip in the landform and by vegetation except to the south west where it is open to an apparently unmanaged field which rises slightly away from the site. The site is therefore generally well contained from the wider area and falls within the visual influence of the adjoining development. Prehistoric tools found to south. Site at least partly quarried. Development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible on this site.</p> <p><b>Flood Risk:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.</p>	



## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20/railway, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- Archaeological mitigation measures

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-21-NW
Site name/address	Land at Gatland Lane, Maidstone (Fant Ward)
Site area (ha)	0.41
Site Origin	2009 SHLAA call for sites
Site Description	The site has two substantial road frontages with Gatland Lane running along the northern side of the site and Farleigh Lane along the western side of the site. To the east of the site are residential properties within Cowdrey Close and Pitt Road. The existing use is agriculture with orchards and arable crop covering the majority of the site. Public footpath KB17 runs through the site from north to south with hedgerows on either side. There is a strong hedgerow to the boundary with Gatland Lane and a strong tree line along the boundary with Farleigh Lane. The site is on the side of the valley with long distance views possible from the East Farleigh side of the valley.
Current use	Agriculture – arable farming and orchard.
Adjacent uses	South – agriculture. West – residential. North – residential and recreation ground. East – residential.

## Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services. In the long term, delivery of new housing on other sites in the north west could potentially lead to the development of additional community services to serve the site.

### Economy:

**Positive** - site has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

### Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:

**Very Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Gatland Lane and at Farleigh Train Station located close to the site.

### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population and therefore traffic movements, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area.

### Water resources and quality:

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**Very Negative** –The site consists of 10 ha of orchard/former orchard/managed grassland allocated as grade 1 agricultural land. Development of the site would lead to a loss of the highest grade agricultural land. The site is on the side of a valley and provides a visual break from the development which has been recognised in the allocation within the Area of Local Landscape Importance. The fundamental change in character of the area and the creep of development south of Gatland Lane would encroach into this open area and would harm the landscape character, in particular from long distance views across the valley. No mitigation would be possible. A Roman urn find is recorded 300m west and the site is located in a general area of Roman potential. Development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3. Incidents of sewer flooding have been recorded nearby.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – Allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity although this would need to be confirmed by a preliminary ecological assessment and further detailed surveys as trees, hedgerows and field margins may provide supporting habitat. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Preliminary ecological assessment to inform need for more detailed surveys
- Archaeological mitigation measures

## 9.5 Junction 8 of the M20 Strategic Allocations for Employment

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	EMP-01-J8
Site name/address	Land to east of A20/M20 junction
Site area (ha)	Approx 3.5
Site Origin	Promoted by landowner
Site Description	<p>The site is located on the north side of the A20 Ashford Road. It is accessed from the Ashford bound carriageway of the slip road that is carried over the M20/A20 roundabout by a bridge.</p> <p>Adjacent to the site in its south eastern corner is a detached dwelling 'Old England Cottage'. This is a Grade II listed building. Old England Cottage is set at a considerably lower level than the site and the adjacent A20. There is a significant area of hardstanding to the front and west of the cottage and a detached garage to its rear close to the boundary with the site. It would appear that some of the building was in use as a Public House in the past, but two cottages were converted into a single dwelling in the early 1960s.</p> <p>The site is accessed via a metal field gate set back a considerable distance from the highway, behind Old England Cottage. The access is shared with that of Old England Cottage.</p> <p>The site is bounded on four sides by woodland and extensive planting. A stream forms the eastern site boundary, this passes under the A20 and then west of the Mecure Hotel before entering the River Len. The stream lies within a wooded area of the site (woodland is around 0.2ha).</p> <p>Beyond the woodland/planting to the north and west of the site lie the M20 and the slip road from the A20 to Junction 8 of the M20 which is located to the north west of the site.</p> <p>It is currently comprised of an open field used for grazing of cattle other than the woodland adjacent to the stream.</p> <p>The site falls approximately 15m from west to east towards the stream on the eastern boundary. It also rises northwards away from the A20 to a lesser extent.</p>
Current use	Grazing land
Adjacent uses	Highway land, woodland/planting and a dwelling

## Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**No Effect** – no significant effect.

### Economy:

**Positive** – the delivery of new employment development on the site (and potentially on adjacent sites) would have a very positive impact on the economy although the site is unlikely to be large enough to deliver a strategic employment location.

### Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:

**Negative** – The site is beyond easy walking distance from the rail stations and while bus route 510 passes the site, it only provides an hourly service to Maidstone, Bearsted, Lenham and Ashford on weekdays. This is likely to act as a

deterrent to the use of public transport to access the site. There is currently poor provision for walking and cycling. Highway access to the site is likely to be problematic and require extensive improvements. Congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Negative** - M20/A20 and HS1 are existing noise generators. However the proposed uses for this site are not ones which themselves are sensitive to noise disturbance. Consideration is needed on the noise impact of development on the site on adjacent users in particular Old England Cottage. Assuming no heavy industry, main air quality impact is expected to be from traffic generation. However, as areas of the northern edge are very close to the motorway an air quality assessment will be required to ensure that the site occupiers aren't being exposed to concentrations of air pollutants (NO<sub>2</sub> and particulates) greater than the relevant Air Quality Objectives. Congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location – with subsequent impacts on air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Negative** – Development of the site would lead to a loss of grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. Furthermore, any potential development would need to ensure that the Grade II listed building located adjacent to the site is not adversely impacted. The site is located in a sensitive location as the landscape provides the setting to the Kent Downs AONB to the north and lies within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map. Policy ENV34 of the Local Plan aims to protect the qualities and character of the area and gives priority to landscape considerations. Landscape implications may restrict the potential for new development on the site. The site is not in an identified area of archaeological potential.

**Flood Risk:**

**Unclear** – Parts of the site fall within flood zones 2 and 3. Development should be directed away from this area of the site.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – The site is located in close proximity to a LWS and lies in very close proximity to the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA). New development should be planned to avoid any adverse impact on either the LWS or the opportunities presented by the BOA. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- A Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on this building should be mitigated.
- The allocation of the site for development could potentially have an adverse impact on the local landscape character. This adverse impact should be mitigated through delivering appropriate layout, scale and type of development.
- Due to the proximity to the neighbouring M20, noise attenuation and air quality mitigation measures should be implemented.
- Development must be planned in a way to avoid areas of flood risk and consideration should be given to implementing sustainable drainage methods on the site.
- If this site were allocated for development public transport, walking and cycling improvements should be considered.
- Highway access to the site will require extensive improvements to the A20 to provide a suitable and safe means of access directly from the A20/M20.
- Potential for impacts to the identified designated sites are likely to be primarily focussed on the ditch connection between the site and the nearby Local Wildlife Site. This will need to be assessed in greater detail in terms of both the direct impact and the surface water drainage strategy for any development that takes place (at the planning application stage).

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	EMP-02-J8
Site name/address	Land to south of A20/M20 junction (Gallagher's site)
Site area (ha)	Developers estimate total site area to be 16.2ha. The developable area is estimated to be 13.2ha (within area created by land excavation) and, excluding highways, 11.6ha.
Site Origin	Promoted by developer
Site Description	<p>The site is situated to the south of the A20 at the point the A20 connects to J8 of the M20. It is bordered to the north by a tree and shrub-covered bank, which slopes steeply down to the A20, and by a wooden fence and to the west by Old Mill Road, a single track rural lane which connects to Leeds village. The boundary between Old Mill Lane and the site is defined by a tree and shrub covered bank which becomes gradually less pronounced beyond what appears to be a disused gated field access. Approaching the Old Mill Farm complex, as the lane turns south, the western most extent of the site can be seen.</p> <p>To the south the site excludes the collection of farm buildings at Old Mill Farm and the adjacent residential properties called Old Mill House and Old Mill Oast. To the south the site boundary follows the tree lined edge of the River Len which has been dammed to create a mill pond in this location. The extent of the tree belt extends to the east of the site beyond which a further pond lies. Further to the east is the Mercure Hotel.</p> <p>The site excludes an area of land to the north west which is a depot for Biffa Bins. The boundary between the proposal site and the Biffa Bins site is marked by a belt of trees (perpendicular to the A20) which can be seen at the crest of the rising ground in views from the A20 heading west. The boundary to the south of the Biffa site (parallel to the A20) comprises a fence.</p> <p>There is a gated agricultural access to the site off the A20 to the east of the A20 roundabout.</p>
Current use	The site is in agricultural use. The eastern slopes of the site has most recently been used for the growing of soft fruit..
Adjacent uses	To the north is the A20 and its intersection with the M20. The north west corner of the site abuts the Biffa Bins site which is accessed from Old Mill Lane. To the north west/west of Old Mill Lane is agricultural land (thought to be owned by Leeds Castle Estate). The farm complex of Old Mill Farm is to the south west of the site alongside the 2 residential properties of Old Mill House and Old Mill Oast. Beyond the woodland and mill pond to the south are agricultural fields and to the east, beyond a tree belt, is the Mercure Hotel. North of the site on the northern side of A20 is Old England Cottage (listed).

## Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**No Effect** - no significant effect.

### Economy:

**Very Positive** – the delivery of new employment development on the site (and potentially on adjacent sites) would have a very positive impact on the economy.

### Public Transport and Accessibility:

**Negative** - The site is beyond easy walking distance from the rail stations and while bus route 510 passes the site, it

only provides an hourly service to Maidstone, Bearsted, Lenham and Ashford on weekdays. This is likely to act as a deterrent to the use of public transport to access the site. There is currently poor provision for walking and cycling to local residential areas. However, whilst public transport is poor, access to the primary road network is good although congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Negative** - Traffic noise is a problem on this site due to the proximity of the M20 Motorway.. An issue would be the impact on the local road system from the considerable number of units that might be constructed on a site of this size. This in turn would have an adverse effect on already locally poor air quality. Congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location – with subsequent impacts on air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Very Negative** – Development of the site would lead to a loss of grade 2 agricultural land. Furthermore, any potential development would need to ensure that the Grade II listed building located opposite the easternmost corner of the site is not adversely impacted. Development of this site would bring substantial landscape change by virtue of the significant amount of excavation that would be required to create a level development platform. The altered landscape would be particularly visible in close range views from the A20 (in particular westbound) and from the PRow which crosses the site (and would need to be diverted). The site is also seen in views from the south, from footpaths to the west of Leeds. From this direction, the site is seen in the foreground to the North Downs AONB. Views from the AONB itself are limited. The site is in agricultural use and has a rural character. Development of the nature proposed would bring a significant change to this character. The site does have clearly defined boundaries formed by Old Mill Lane and Ashford Road to the west and north respectively and the watercourses of the LWS to the south and east, and beyond that to the east the Mecure Hotel. The site contains three recorded Historic Environmental Record sites and a pre-determination evaluation would be necessary to determine where development is possible.

**Flood Risk:**

**Unclear** – Small parts of the site along the southern and eastern boundaries fall within flood zone 3. New development on the site would need to be planned to avoid this area.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – The site is located in close proximity to areas of ancient woodland and the River Len Millponds and Carr Leeds LWS and lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. New development should be planned to avoid any adverse impact on either the LWS or the opportunities presented by the BOA. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- A Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on this building could be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development.
- Allocation of site for development would have a significant adverse impact on the local landscape character. If site were to be allocated, existing landscape boundaries would need to be protected and enhanced.
- A pre-determination archaeological evaluation would be necessary to confirm the significance of the actual archaeological interest on the site and determine where development is possible.
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- Traffic noise and air quality conditions should be imposed on this site at the planning application stage.
- Development must be planned in a way to avoid areas of flood risk and to avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- If this site were allocated for development public transport, walking and cycling improvements should be considered.
- Ecological mitigation and protection measures put forward by KCC and the Kent Wildlife Trust should be considered for inclusion in the allocation policy. These include a landscape buffer of at least 15m to the LWS.



Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	EMP-03-J8
Site name/address	Land to west of A20/M20 junction (land at Woodcut Farm)
Site area (ha)	Developers indicate a total site area of approximately 28ha of which 18ha would be developed and 10ha retained in agricultural use as a buffer to Bearsted to the west.
Site Origin	Promoted by landowners
Site Description	The site is situated to the west of the A20/M20 junction (junction 8). It comprises the wedge of land lying between the M20 to the north east and A20 to the south west. The site is agricultural land, divided into fields by hedgerows which predominately run in a north-south direction. The site is also bisected north-south by a watercourse which eventually runs into the River Len to the south of A20. The land is undulating, the ground rising up from either side of the watercourse. To the south the site abuts a number of dispersed properties which front onto the A20 (Ashford Road). To the south east the site is bounded by Musket Lane. The boundary to the M20 is denoted by the embankment up to the M20. To the north west lies Crismill Lane and a substantial tree belt which fronts onto this Lane. The site boundary then follows the hedge belt which adjoins Crismill Lane approximately half way down its length and links to the complex of buildings at Woodcut Farm and turns south to the A20, running along the eastern boundary of the fields which front onto the Woodcut Farm access (PRoW KH641).
Current use	The majority of the site is in agricultural use. The site also includes some of the buildings of Woodcut Farm.
Adjacent uses	<p>The site is bounded to the north east by the M20 and beyond this the Maidstone motorway services site and open agricultural land and wooded areas. To the north west, north of A20, is further agricultural land, interspersed with woodland copses. Between the western extremity of the site and the A20 to the south lie a number of scattered detached residential properties set in substantial grounds and part of the Woodcut Farm complex itself. Further to the east, the site surrounds on 3 sides 'Chestnuts' where there is a car wash, and the group of properties at White Heath, including the mortuary building of the Hollingbourne Union Workhouse, which themselves face the A20.</p> <p>On the south side of the A20, facing the site is the Pine Lodge Touring caravan park and, to the east of this an area of open agricultural fields. To the east of the site is the A20/M20 interchange itself.</p>
Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b> <b>No Effect</b> - no significant effect.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b> <b>Very Positive</b> – the delivery of new employment development on the site (and potentially on adjacent sites) would have a very positive impact on the economy.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b> <b>Negative</b> – The site is beyond easy walking distance from the rail stations and while bus route 510 passes the site, it only provides an hourly service to Maidstone, Bearsted, Lenham and Ashford on weekdays. This is likely to act as a deterrent to the use of public transport to access the site. There is currently poor provision for walking and cycling to local residential areas. However, whilst public transport is poor, access to the primary road network is good although congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location</p>	

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Negative** - Traffic noise is a problem on this site due to the proximity of the M20 Motorway. An issue would be the impact on the local road system from the considerable number of units that might be constructed on a site of this size. This in turn would have an adverse effect on already locally poor air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Negative** – Development of the site would lead to a loss of grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. However, up to 10ha of the site will remain undeveloped as a buffer to Bearsted to the west. Any potential development would need to ensure that the Grade II listed building and its setting (Woodcut Farmhouse) is not adversely impacted. An area of archaeological potential (AAP) is identified at the eastern end of the site, between Musket Lane and the M20 and a further AAP straddles the A20 and includes an area of the site between the properties on Musket Lane and Chestnuts. There are known archaeological remains in the immediate vicinity, including an Anglo-Saxon burial site.

As the site provides part of the setting for the Kent Downs AONB and the site is within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map there is potential for significant adverse effects which would need to be mitigated. Policy ENV34 of the Local Plan aims to protect the qualities and character of the area and gives priority to the landscape over other planning considerations.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – The site falls within flood zone 1.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – The site is located in close proximity to areas of ancient woodland and an LWS and lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. New development should be planned to avoid any adverse impact on either the LWS or the opportunities presented by the BOA. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- A Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on this building should be mitigated as proposed by the Maidstone Borough Council Heritage Team.
- A pre-determination archaeology evaluation would be necessary to confirm the significance of the archaeological interest of the site and determine where development is possible.
- The allocation of this site for development could potentially have an adverse impact on the local landscape character and nearby wildlife sites. Landscape and ecological mitigation measures put forward by the Maidstone Borough Council Landscape Team/Kent Wildlife Trust/KCC Biodiversity Officer should be addressed through the allocation policy.
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20, and on nearby properties from the proposed use, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- Consideration should be given to implementing sustainable drainage methods on the site.
- The layout of new development should be designed to ensure that trees that are the subject of TPOs on the site (and existing hedgerows) are retained.

## 9.6 Junction 7 of the M20 Strategic Allocations for Employment

Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	EMP – 04-J7
Site name/address	Land at Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone
Site area (ha)	Developer confirms 28.5ha
Site Origin	Call for sites
Site Description	Site currently used for a mix of uses - Newnham Court Farm, Veterinary clinic and Public House.
Current use	Submitted site plan includes existing Newnham Court Shopping Village and Garden Centre and associated uses and the land which has planning permission for the Kent Institute for Medical Surgery (KIMS). Land beyond these areas to the east comprises open fields.
Adjacent uses	To the west of the identified site lies the A249 and beyond that the business development of Eclipse Park which includes the Hilton Hotel. To the south, the site borders Bearsted Road beyond which to the south is Maidstone Crematorium. To the east and north, the site adjoins the wooded areas of Pope's Wood and Horish Wood. The M20 transects the latter woodland area and to the north west of the outlined site is Junction 7 of the M20.

### Sustainability Appraisal Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

#### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Positive** – Site appears to be relatively well served by community services in the area, and the proposed development would contribute further health facilities. However, the residential element of the development of the site may increase the demand on services in the area.

#### Economy:

**Very Positive** – the delivery of new development on the site will have a very positive impact on the economy. The site is accessible both in terms of public transport and to the primary road network and will contribute towards increasing local and more highly skilled job opportunities in Maidstone. A component of retail redevelopment on this site has been put forward through the Call for Sites submission process. This is confined to the vicinity of the existing footprint. The current proposed policy allows for up to 500 m<sup>2</sup> extra in the vicinity of the existing footprint, and that anything over this would be for the type of retail facilities that do not compete with the town centre. However to confirm whether or not there will be a negative impact a retail impact assessment on the town centre will be required for both comparison and convenience goods as part of the planning application process.

#### Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:

**Positive** – The site is accessible both in terms of public transport and to the primary road network. However, the site is not located in close proximity to an existing cycle route.

#### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Negative** - Traffic noise is a problem on this site due to the proximity of the M20 Motorway. Development on the site could also accentuate air quality issues currently present within the area.

#### Water resources and quality:

**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation) and the north eastern section of the site is in source protection zone 1. Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

#### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**Negative** – Development of the site would lead to a loss of grade 2 agricultural land. The identified site falls within the Strategic Gap defined on the Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan Proposals Map. Policy ENV31 of the Plan states that

development within the Strategic Gap will not be permitted which significantly extends the defined urban area. The site is also located within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map, where protection of landscape quality is a priority (Policy ENV34). The site is also directly adjacent to the AONB boundary. This may restrict the potential for new development on the site. An Area of Archaeological Potential comprising a post medieval mine is identified in the vicinity of the veterinary clinic (located to the rear of the shopping village).

**Flood Risk:**

**Positive** – the site is outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – trees that are the subject of TPOs are located on the site and there is ancient woodland located towards the north and east of the site. Any potential adverse effects on these designations as part of new development on the site would need to be mitigated.

This site is located approximately 2.5km south of the North Downs Woodlands SAC. This site is likely to be within the main visitor catchment and may therefore make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC, which in turn could place an increased management burden on the SAC. The site may also contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed further in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Allocation of site for development could potentially have an adverse impact on the local landscape character. This should be investigated further, including through a site visit and assessment.
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- New development would have to be designed and laid out to ensure that trees that are the subject of a TPO are protected.
- Appropriate measures (as advised by the KCC Wildlife Officer or Kent Wildlife Trust) should be implemented to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the ancient woodlands located in close proximity to the site.
- To ensure that adverse impacts on air quality are minimised (site adjacent to AQMA), a Travel Plan setting out sustainable transport provision should be required.
- Potential impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC should be investigated through the Core Strategy HRA update.
- A retail impact assessment on the town centre should be undertaken for both comparison and convenience goods to determine potential impact on the Maidstone town centre.

## 9.7 Summary of potential significant impacts, including significant cumulative impacts identified by the strategic sites allocations appraisal

### South East Maidstone Strategic Allocations for Housing

Allocation of these south-eastern housing sites could potentially have a significant adverse effect on the character of the local area, as they would extend the urban area boundary well beyond its current line - impacting on the attractive, open rural landscape which is currently a valued feature of this area.

Locating new housing development in this area also has the potential to have a detrimental impact on local nature conservation features, including several remnants of ancient woodland, BAP priority habitats, the Spot Lane SSSI and the River Len LWS. Kent Wildlife Trust has previously expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation which has been proposed relative to the potentially large increase in population in the south east area. It has been recommended that this should be addressed by an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space to alleviate pressure on the North Downs Woodland SAC.

The most northerly site in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approximately 4km from the North Downs Woodlands SAC, although there is no direct access route. Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC, which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. Other sites in the cluster are 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrims Way or North Downs Way, neither of which runs by or close to the south east Maidstone cluster of sites.

There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SACs on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster of housing sites is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Vinters Valley Park LNR, and Mote Park are all much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for future residents. The closest site in this cluster may however make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further through the updated Core Strategy HRA. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will also be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.

Most of these potential housing sites are relatively well served for community facilities, given their current rural location. However most of the sites would draw heavily on existing facilities/services in nearby Senacre and Parkwood. Depending on the capacity of the existing services/facilities in these areas, this could have either a positive or negative cumulative impact. The delivery of substantial new housing in the south east Maidstone area may provide an opportunity to deliver new or expanded community services to provide for the increase in population in this area and reduce the impact on existing services. A new primary school is one such example, a dedicated in-bound bus lane is another.

The majority of sites in the south east (with the exception of sites HO-15SE and HO14SE; and a corner of HO-04SE) fall within the 0-20% (i.e. most deprived) LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). As an undeveloped rural area it is not surprising that the sites score relatively lower in relation to physical access to community facilities when compared with the adjoining urban area. This poor rating may also be influenced however by the housing element of this domain, reflecting a relative lack of affordable housing in this rural area. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix which is delivered.

Significant off-site sewerage infrastructure will be required to serve the strategic locations in the Maidstone Urban Area. This may have a negative cumulative impact on the existing infrastructure (in particular sewers running through the centre of Maidstone town which have limited spare capacity) unless capacity improvements can be viably delivered. This is a particular constraint for the south east sites, because sewerage must be transported to the Aylesford WWTW, which is located to the north west of Maidstone. However Southern Water have been consulted on the proposed distribution of housing, including substantial housing (1000 dwellings) to the south east and have not objected to this proposal. The Aylesford WWTW will have to be upgraded and the proposed growth will exacerbate this, but this upgrade is provided for within Southern Water's five year implementation plan.

Likewise consideration has not been given in this Interim SA Report to the potential for allocations to place a burden on water supply. South East Water has stated that they will have sufficient water resources available to meet the expected increase in demand from the proposed levels of development and there is no particular locational constraint in this respect, although water efficiency measures may be required.

These housing sites will not offer any particular contribution to economic growth, although they may deliver high quality housing which could encourage the retention of higher skilled employees. Although there is no direct connection between the south east housing locations and the proposed strategic employment location at Junction 8 of the M20 the south east area is close to local employment facilities, and is relatively well located to town centre employment opportunities.

### **North West Maidstone Strategic Allocations for Housing**

The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of housing sites are approximately 3.8km from the North Downs Woodlands SAC, although there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster are 5-8km away from the SAC, and as indicated above, it is likely that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrims Way or North Downs Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster of housing sites.

As stated above, there is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC but data from other rural SACs on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside nearby and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that these existing open spaces provide the most likely recreational resource for future residents. However the closest site in this housing cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further in the Core Strategy HRA.

All housing sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will need to be investigated further in the updated Core Strategy HRA.



These north-western sites generally fall within lesser deprived areas with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010), (compared particularly with the south-eastern sites, which generally fall within the 0-20% or most deprived). However the largest site in the north west falls within the 20-40% most deprived. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix that is delivered. In terms of access to services, there is the potential for the development of additional community facilities to be part funded by housing development in this area (including in particular a GP surgery and primary school) which could assist to address any negative cumulative impacts on community facilities from the increase in local population.

Most of the sites are located close to the urban boundary, so there are no particular concerns with respect to connection to existing utilities. The housing sites in the north west are generally not as constrained by sewerage infrastructure constraints because they lie on the north-western side of Maidstone town (and thus much closer to the Aylesford WWTW) and do not rely on transport of waste through the older, more constrained sewers within the Maidstone town centre.

These housing sites will not offer any particular contribution to economic growth, although they may deliver high quality housing which could encourage the retention of higher skilled employees. Although there is no direct connection between the north west housing locations and the proposed strategic employment location at Junction 8 of the M20 the north west area is well located relative to the range of employment opportunities in Maidstone as a whole, including the town centre, and employment facilities in Tonbridge and Malling borough.

### **Junction 8 of the M20 Strategic Allocations for Employment**

Locating new strategic employment development in this vicinity has the potential to have a significant adverse effect on the environmental quality and character of the immediate area unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. This relates particularly to noise and air quality concerns arising from the proximity of the M20 and railway infrastructure, which would impact both on existing residents/businesses and on future occupiers.

Locating new strategic economic development off junction 8 of the M20 has the potential to have a significant adverse effect on the transport network, due to increased traffic generation from the strategic employment site adding to existing congestion issues. The draft Integrated Transport Strategy reports that volume to capacity ratios between Junctions 6 and 7 and Junctions 7 and 8 of the M20 are forecast to exceed 90% by 2026, which will have a negative impact on journey time reliability for long-distance traffic. A volume to capacity ratio of 85% is considered the maximum acceptable limit by the Highways Agency. This issue is exacerbated by the widespread use of the M20 for local journeys during peak periods, as commuters seek to avoid the congestion on the main arterial routes into Maidstone.

Other important issues include the potential adverse impact on landscape character – given the sensitive nature of this particular setting, with its proximity and relationship to the nearby AONB. Candidate sites EMP01 and EMP03 also fall within an area currently designated as a Special Landscape Area. There are potential varying impacts on local ecology. All three candidate sites fall within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Development of candidate site EMP02 has the potential for the greatest impacts on ecology, while candidate site EMP03 has the least.

The candidate strategic employment sites (with the exception of the Woodcut Farm site (EMP03) are located over 5km away from the North Downs Woodlands SAC. Data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the

closest strategic employment candidate site is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. As an employment location the scale of potential impacts in terms of recreational pressure, if any, will be less than those generated by a housing site. The potential for a significant adverse effect is thus lowered, but will still need to be investigated through the Core Strategy HRA. Allocation of the site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will again be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.

There are no identified concerns in relation to provision of utilities to serve this area, but sustainable transport provision and access to the primary road network will need to be addressed through transport infrastructure improvements.

The potential development of employment uses in this location will have a significant positive effect on economic growth in the Borough, providing a strategic, high profile location for new employers, fit for purpose new business stock and relatively accessible job opportunities for Maidstone residents.

However there is potential for a negative impact on the local economy in terms of journey time and reliability, due to the added cumulative impact of major new development in this area contributing to existing congestion between Junction 6 -7 and Junction 7-8 of the M20.

### **Junction 7 of the M20 Strategic Allocations for Employment**

Locating new strategic economic development off junction 7 of the M20 has the potential to have a significant adverse effect on the transport network, due to increased traffic generation from the strategic employment site adding to existing congestion issues. The draft Integrated Transport Strategy reports that volume to capacity ratios between Junctions 6 and 7 and Junctions 7 and 8 of the M20 are forecast to exceed 90% by 2026, which will have a negative impact on journey time reliability for long-distance traffic. A volume to capacity ratio of 85% is considered the maximum acceptable limit by the Highways Agency. This issue is exacerbated by the widespread use of the M20 for local journeys during peak periods, as commuters seek to avoid the congestion on the main arterial routes into Maidstone.

No further strategic development sites are proposed in close proximity to the Newnham Park site. Locating new development on Newnham Park in conjunction with existing development in the area could potentially have a significant adverse effect on local ecology due to the proximity of ancient woodland. There is potential for significant negative landscape impacts – on the AONB, the strategic gap and high quality landscapes (the site is currently designated as being within a Special Landscape Area); if further development was to take place in this location as a result of the precedent established by development of this site.

This site is located approximately 2.5km south of the North Downs Woodlands SAC. This site is likely to be within the main visitor catchment and may therefore make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC. This increased recreational activity may introduce a greater management burden for the SAC and this will be investigated further through the Core Strategy HRA review.

The mix of development proposed for this site is likely to increase the demand for access to services/facilities in the area. This may have a positive or negative cumulative effect, depending on existing capacity. There is reasonable access to most community facilities and others will be provided as part of the proposed development. Improved accessibility by sustainable modes should be considered including access to the town centre.

A component of retail redevelopment on this site has been put forward through the Call for Sites submission process. This is confined to the vicinity of the existing footprint. The current

adopted policy allows for up to 500 m<sup>2</sup> extra in the vicinity of the existing footprint, and that anything over this would be for the type of retail facilities that do not compete with the town centre. However to confirm whether or not there will be a negative impact a retail impact assessment on the town centre will be required for both comparison and convenience goods as part of the planning application process.

Although the site falls within some of the least deprived LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010), neighbouring areas are in the 40% most deprived and development of this site may assist to address this by providing health services as well as key worker/supported care housing.

It has been confirmed (by the site developer) that there are no constraints to provision of the necessary utilities on site.

The potential development of employment uses on this site in conjunction with employment development near Junction 8 of the M20 will have a significant positive effect on economic growth in the area, in particular by providing new jobs and associated housing for key workers (health).

However again, there is potential for a negative impact on the local economy in terms of journey time and reliability, due to the added cumulative impact of major new development in this area contributing to existing congestion between Junction 6 -7 and Junction 7-8 of the M20.

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## 10 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

This Interim SA Report has answered a series of 'appraisal questions'. The initial questions focus on establishing the sustainability 'baseline' and the key sustainability issues that should be a focus for the consideration of strategic site allocations within the Core Strategy Local Plan.

The answer to the question *'How has the Core Strategy Local Plan developed up to this point'* explains briefly the process of development of the Core Strategy Local Plan up to this point, and how the strategic site allocations presented at this current stage have been identified, drawing on a range of evidence including the findings of prior Sustainability Appraisal. This question will be covered in more depth within the SA Report published at the next stage in the plan-making process (publication). This final SA report will provide a full account of how the draft Core Strategy Local Plan has been developed from a consideration of alternatives through to a preferred option; and then to draft policies (and the influence that SA has had) – building on the explanation contained within this SA report.

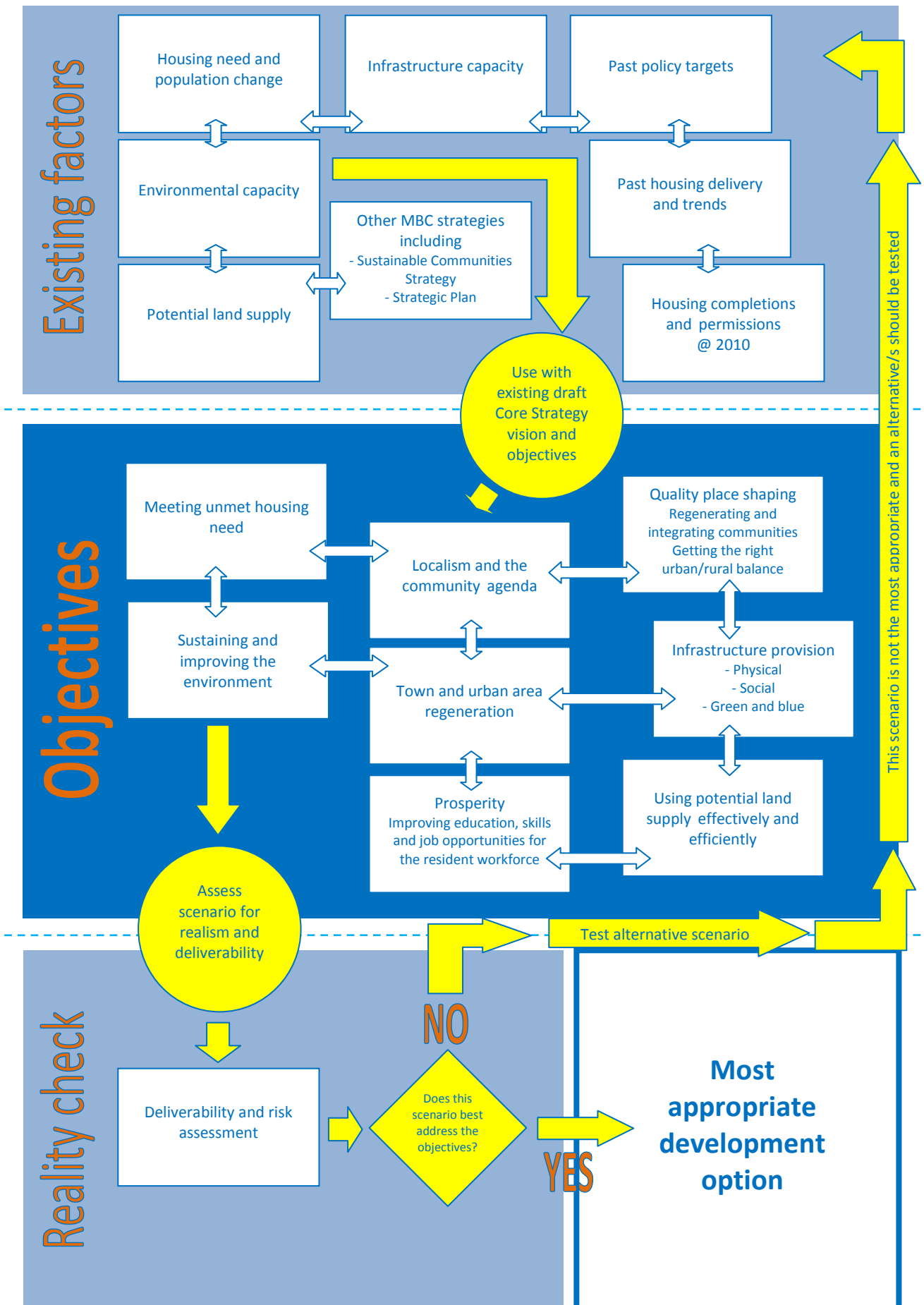
The answer to the question *'How has the appraisal at this current stage been undertaken'* explains that the appraisal at this current stage has involved consideration of a number of preferred strategic site allocations, alongside several additional sites put forward through a public call for sites. Each site has been assessed using a criteria-based appraisal proforma tailored to address the Maidstone SA objectives.

The answer to the question *'What are the appraisal findings and recommendations at this current stage'* will be taken into account by Maidstone Borough Council prior to development of the draft Core Strategy Local Plan (Publication Draft). Alongside the results of the consultation, the appraisal findings will assist the Council to decide which strategic sites to allocate for housing or employment in the Core Strategy Local Plan.

At the next stage, a final SA report will be prepared for consultation alongside the Core Strategy Local Plan that answers each of the appraisal questions above, as well as an additional question: *'How can we best monitor the Core Strategy Local Plan's impacts'*.

**11 APPENDIX 1 - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT TARGET PROCESS**

# Maidstone Borough Council – development target process

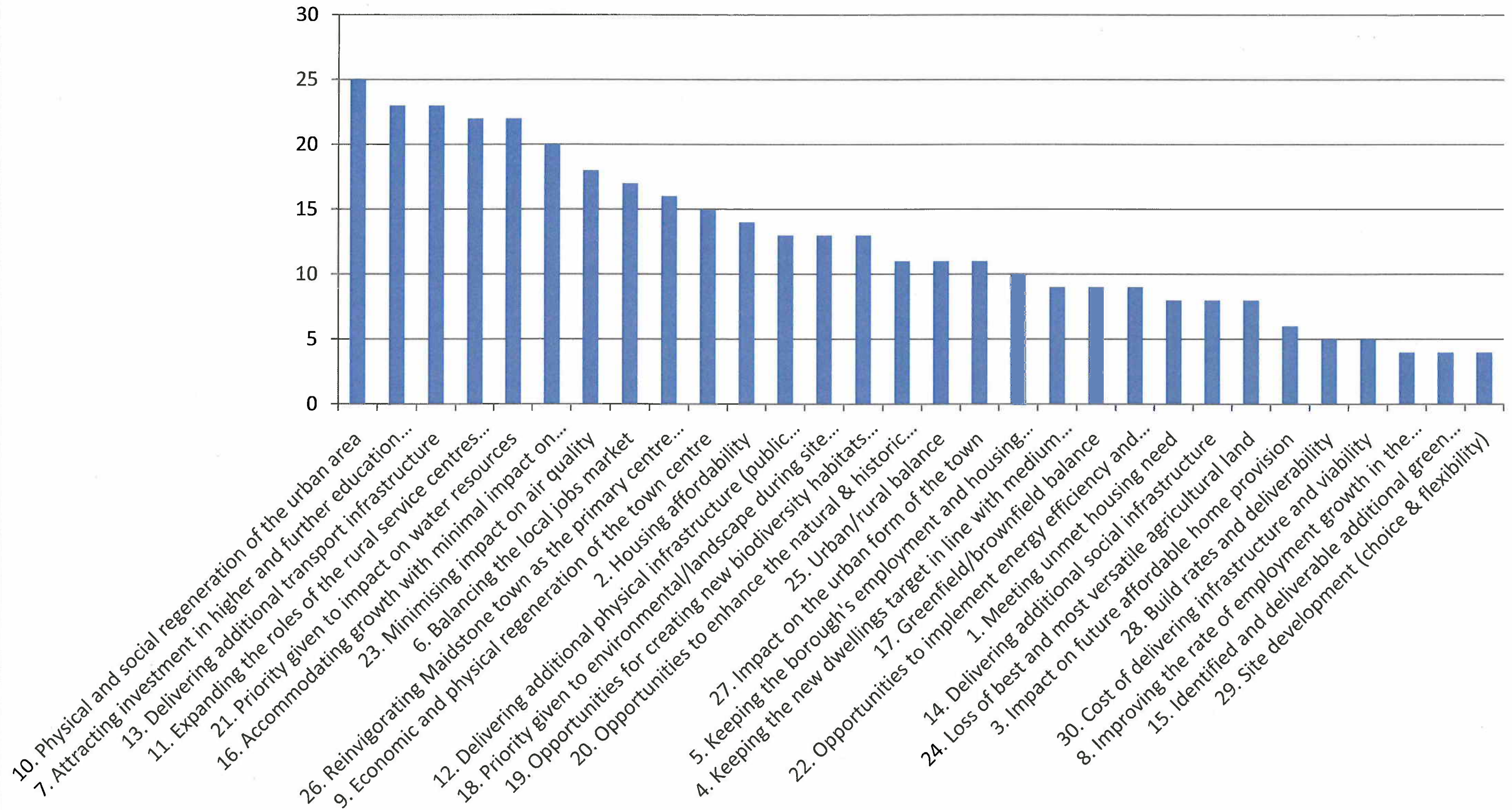




## 12 APPENDIX 2 – RESULTS OF MEMBERS CORE STRATEGY WORKSHOP

## Results of Members' Core Strategy Workshop 25 October 2010

### Priorities - Sorted from Highest Ranked to Lowest



**13 APPENDIX 3 – MAPS**

## 14 APPENDIX 4 – COMPLETED STRATEGIC SITE PROFORMAS

<b>SE1. Site Information</b>	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-01-SE
Strategic Location	South East Maidstone
Site name/address	Land at Bicknor Farm – SHLAA site ref 030
Landowner	John Mills Esq.
Agent	John Bishop & Associates, Wye, Ashford, Kent
Current Use	Agriculture/open countryside, part residential use
Proposed Use	Residential
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	26.65 ha – 3.4ha of site is taken up by Bicknor Wood to the north west
Site Origin	SHLAA and recent Call for Sites 2012
<b>Discounting (Housing Sites)</b>	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	No
Adjacent to built up area	No
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes
<b>Discount</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>2. Sustainability Appraisal</b>	
Site Description	<p>The site abuts Sutton Road to the south, open countryside to the north, woodland to the northwest and is part bounded to the west by Bicknor Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building. Rumwood Court, also a Grade II listed building, forms part of the eastern boundary of the site. The site is adjacent to other SHLAA sites on its western fringe, most notably;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Plan strategic allocation Land North of Sutton Road (ref 127 &amp; 145) which border the site to the west; and</li> <li>• SHLAA sites 118 &amp; 144 to the north</li> </ul> <p>The main body of land comprises pony paddocks which are flat and featureless apart from some trees (with Tree Protection Orders) towards the eastern edge of the site.</p>
Current use	Agriculture/open countryside, part residential use
Adjacent uses	Small pockets of residential Parkwood Industrial Estate, opposite site (south of Sutton Road). A small and narrow section to the north east of the site extends to the hamlet of Three Tees near Otham
Planning and other designations	None
Planning History	Nothing of significance

## SA Topic: Community wellbeing

### Accessibility to existing centres and services:

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health

SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest

SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work

SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities

SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities

SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<b>A</b> –If neighbouring sites developed, site will be adjacent.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>R</b> – The site is around 800m from the nearest GP service (Wallis Avenue Surgery). Also a GP at Grove Park near Morrisons.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site around 1km from nearest Secondary School (Senacre College). New Line Learning at Boughton Lane, Maidstone also nearby.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site around 700m from nearest Primary School (Bellwood Primary School). Parkwood Primary approx 1km from site.
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – Site around 500m from nearest Post Office (Parkwood Post Office)
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – The site would not lead to the loss of community facilities.

	<p><b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities</p> <p><b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities</p>	
<p><b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b></p> <p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities</p> <p>SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?</p> <p>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<p><b>A</b> = &gt;1.2km</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1.2km; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Three Tees Sports area (including football and cricket pitches) located on northern boundary of the site.
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<p><b>A</b> = &gt;1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1.2km or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – There do not appear to be any children’s play space in close proximity to the site.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;300m (ANGST)</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;300m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Amenity grassland located adjacent to Bicknor Woodland.
<p><b>SA Topic: Economy</b></p>		
<p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<p><b>R</b>= &gt;2400m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-2400m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m or allocation is not for housing</p>	<b>G</b> – The site is located less than 150m from the Parkwood Industrial Estate.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment</p> <p><b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem</p>	<b>G</b> – The site would not result in any loss of employment space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Area within the borough, according to the	<b>A</b> – Allocation not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Area within the borough, according



	Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Area within the borough.	to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.
<b>SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility</b>		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health            SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest            SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?            SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities            SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve            SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – 2 bus stops located on either side of A274 located around 150 metres from the site. Bus numbers 12, 13, 14, 24, 59 and 64.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – Nearest train station located around 4.5km from site (Maidstone East).
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There will be potential to connect site to existing cycle lane from Shepway to town centre through Senacre estate (located close to the site).
<b>SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change</b>		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health            SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve</p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>A</b> – Noise might be an issue close to Sutton Road but should be easy to mitigate.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA	<b>R</b> –Site lies within the Maidstone Town AQMA.

corridor (Junctions 5 to 8)))?	<p><b>A</b> = &lt;1km of an AQMA</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace</p>	
<b>SA Topic: Water resources and quality</b>		
<b>SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<p><b>A</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<p><b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1.
<b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b>		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land</p> <p><b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land</p>	<b>A</b> – Allocation of site would lead to loss of Grade 3a agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<p><b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land</p> <p><b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land</p> <p><b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land</p>	<b>R</b> – Site does not include previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.

	<p>impacts</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace</p>										
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p>	<b>R</b> – Bicknor Farmhouse (on site) to west and Rumwood Court (adjacent to site) to the east are both Grade II listed buildings.									
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation not on or adjacent to historic park / garden									
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area									
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>1.1</th> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td></td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1.1	Scale		1		Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2		Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<b>G</b> – (Scale – 5) The site does not currently contain any Historic Environment Records. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.
1.1	Scale										
1		Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided									
2		Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any									

3	part of the site is possible. Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?		<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G</b> - Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?		<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation will lead to no loss of land from the Green Belt although the site is located in close proximity to the Southern Anti-Coalescence Belt.</p>
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?		<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>A</b> – This is a contained site suffering from urban edge influences. The existing woodland should be conserved and reinforced with links to the ancient woodland and nearby parkland.</p>

SA Topic: Flood Risk		
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</p> <p>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</p> <p>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Not in Flood Zones 2 or 3 but there is a pond on site to the northeast.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>	<b>G</b> - Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded. There has been some surface water flooding recorded in the area.
SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure		
<p>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</p> <p>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> - Site around 250m from Ancient Woodland
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	<b>A</b> - There are numerous TPOs to the east and northeast of site. Bicknor Wood comprises approx 3.5ha of the site’s north west corner.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.

	<p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	
<p>Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>A</b> - The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR, are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400-800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Spot Lane Quarry is located towards the north of the site (around 1.7km).</p>

Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats</p> <p><b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats but an ecological survey is recommended by KCC.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation does not contain and is not adjacent to a LWS or LNR.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space or undesignated green space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain open or green space</p>	<p><b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<p><b>G</b> - No</p>
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Does not contain allotment space</p>
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>Allocation of the site along with sites HO-14SE, HO-15SE and HO-04SE could potentially have a significant adverse effect by extending the boundary of the urban area well beyond its current line and thus impacting on an attractive, open rural landscape, leading to a significant loss of rural character.</p> <p>Locating new development on this site in addition to other proposed sites in the south east area could have a detrimental impact on nearby features including the two areas of ancient woodland, BAP habitats and the Spot Lane SSSI. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area as well the potential impact on sensitive water bodies that form part of the hydrology system that feeds into the Loose Stream LWS.</p> <p>The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to the south east Maidstone cluster of sites.</p>	



	<p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>The site is located in close proximity to a number of community facilities including a primary school, secondary school and post office. The site is located close to an existing bus stop and cycle route. The site is therefore relatively well served for community facilities given its rural location and would draw heavily on the facilities in Senacre. Depending on the capacity of the existing services/facilities in this area this could have either a positive or negative cumulative impact. The delivery of development on neighbouring sites in the south east Maidstone area in conjunction with this site may provide additional community services that will serve the site.</p> <p>This site, like the majority in this area, falls within the 20% most deprived LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix. If development in this area is not to have a significant adverse cumulative effect on general community wellbeing however, barriers to access to community facilities will need to be addressed; either through improving access to existing facilities or by providing new facilities to service this area.</p> <p>Significant off-site sewerage infrastructure will be required to serve the strategic locations in the Maidstone Urban Area. This may have a negative cumulative impact on the existing infrastructure (in particular sewers running through the centre of Maidstone town which have limited spare capacity) unless capacity improvements can be viably delivered.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>

## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive** / **Positive** / **Unclear** / **No Effect** / **Negative** / **Very Negative** - any comments or details

### **Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Positive** – site located in close proximity to a range of services including a primary school, secondary school and post office. In long term, delivery of new housing on adjacent sites in conjunction with this site could potentially lead to additional community services to serve the site.

### **Economy:**

**Positive** – site located in close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has reasonable transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

### **Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Positive** – site is well served by existing bus stops and cycle lane links nearby Senacre Estate to Maidstone town centre.

### **Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to increase in traffic movements.

### **Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

### **Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Unclear** – development on the site would lead to the loss of grade 3 agricultural land. However, the site is not located within the Green Belt. Bicknor Farmhouse (on site) to west and Rumwood Court (adjacent to site) to the east are both Grade II listed buildings. Development on the site could potentially have an adverse impact on these buildings. Allocation of site for development could potentially have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character as this is distinctly rural. The site, like most of the south east sites, does not contain any Historic Environment Records.

### **Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zone 2, 3a or 3b.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear/Negative** – The significance of any adverse effects on biodiversity would need to be determined by a preliminary ecological assessment as several species specific ecological surveys are likely to be required. There are no direct impacts on designated green space. The layout and scale of new development on the site would have to ensure that TPOs on the site and Bicknor wood are preserved; and the ancient woodland towards the north of the site is protected. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. The scope, level and achievability of any necessary ecological mitigation would need to be assessed, perhaps in the context of the wider south-east allocations area. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Grade II listed buildings are located on and adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on these buildings or their settings should be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development.
- There are numerous TPOs to the east and northeast of site. Any potential new development should be designed to ensure that no trees which are the subject TPOs are lost.
- Mitigation measures should be put in place to minimise the potential for development at this location to result in deterioration of the woodlands around the site.
- A preliminary ecological assessment will be required to determine the need for more detailed species specific surveys. The scope, level and achievability of any necessary ecological mitigation should be assessed in the context of the wider south-east allocations area.
- Sites within the South East should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space.
- Archaeological mitigation measures
- In-bound bus lane would be important for improving accessibility and journey times to town centre and reducing contributions to congestion/air quality issues.

<b>1. Site Information</b>	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-04-SE
Strategic Location	South East Maidstone
Site name/address	Land South of Sutton Road (Rumwood Nursery -SHLAA site ref 035A)
Landowner	Controlled by Messrs Ashby/Fermor
Agent	DHA Planning
Current Use	Horticulture/open countryside
Proposed Use	Residential
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	44ha
Site Origin	SHLAA and strategic sites call for sites 2012
<b>Discounting (Housing Sites)</b>	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	No
Adjacent to built up area	No
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes
<b>Discount</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>2. Sustainability Appraisal</b>	
Site Description	<p>This is a large site immediately south of Sutton Road and separated from the urban edge of Maidstone by Langley Park Farm West (a previously allocated site for residential development). Apart from a few detached dwellings, a school, a small allotment and a church, Sutton Road forms a continuous boundary along the site's northern and eastern edge. The distance between the site and Sutton Road varies along its length from approx 1m to 15m but mostly there is a grass strip approx 3m wide.</p> <p>The site is visible from Sutton Road but is shielded for the most part by a box hedge along its edge. When travelling toward the Five Wents Junction on Sutton Road, there are clear and uninterrupted views of the site's open nature and the spire at St Mary's Church, Langley. Similarly when travelling towards Maidstone there is clear views of the site as it slopes gently upwards before levelling out nearer to Langley Park Farm West.</p> <p>The western edge of the site is in use as a golf driving range and a small number of large detached dwellings adjoin the south west corner of the site. The rest of the site's southern boundary follows the Loose stream which flows into Langley Loch. The site slopes downwards gently in a south easterly direction and the majority of the site is in horticultural use. The only building on the site is a steel framed horticultural building near the junction of Sutton Road and New Road. The central and eastern parts of the site are used for the growing of plants for Rumwood Nursey.</p>
Current use	Horticulture/open countryside

Adjacent uses	Golf driving range/open countryside/farmland
Planning and other designations	Entire site is part of the Southern Anti-Coalescence Belt
Planning History	None

## SA Topic: Community wellbeing

### Accessibility to existing centres and services:

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<b>A</b> – Separated from the urban edge of Maidstone by Langley Park Farm West (a previously allocated site for residential and employment development). If neighbouring sites developed, site will be adjacent.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> - Nearest GP is on Horseshoes Lane, Langley but GP's at Wallis Avenue, Parkwood and at Grove Park (near Morrisons) are also nearby
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>A</b> - Site around 1.7km from nearest Secondary School (Senacre College). New Line Learning also nearby.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site around 1.1km from nearest Primary School (Holy Family RC Primary School). Senacre and Parkwood primary schools are approx 1.5 miles from site
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p>	<b>A</b> – Site around 1km from nearest Post Office (Parkwood Post Office)

	<b>G =</b> <400m; or allocation is not housing	
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R =</b> allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A =</b> allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G =</b> allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G –</b> The site would not lead to the loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A =</b> >1.2km <b>G =</b> <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Three Tees Sports area 400m from the site.
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<b>A =</b> >1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space <b>G =</b> <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>A –</b> There do not appear to be any children’s play space in close proximity to the site.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R =</b> >300m (ANGST) <b>G =</b> <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R –</b> Amenity grassland located 800m from the site.
<b>SA Topic: Economy</b>		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R=</b> >2400m <b>A =</b> 1600-2400m <b>G =</b> <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G –</b> The site is located around 300m from the Parkwood Industrial Estate.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R =</b> Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A =</b> Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment	<b>G –</b> The site would not result in any loss of employment space.

	<b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas within the borough.	<b>A</b> – Allocation not within the 40% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.

### SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – 2 bus stops located on either side of A274 located around 150 metres from the site. Bus numbers 12, 13, 82.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – Nearest train station located around 5.5km from site (Maidstone East).
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> –The site can easily be connected to the existing cycle lane from Parkwood Industrial Estate to the town centre

### SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated	<b>A</b> – No adverse noise effects expected



arising from allocation of the site?	<b>G</b> = No adverse effect	
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8)))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>A</b> – Site lies on the outskirts of the Maidstone Town AQMA.

**SA Topic: Water resources and quality**

**SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1.

**SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment**

**Land Use:**

**SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to a loss of land within the Green Belt?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to the loss of land from the Green belt <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to the partial loss of land from the Green Belt <b>G</b> = Allocation will lead to no loss of land from the Green Belt	<b>G</b> – Allocation will lead to no loss of land from the Green Belt but the entire site is part of the Southern Anti-Coalescence Belt. Policy ENV32 of the Maidstone Local Plan 2000 (Saved Policies) states that development in this area will not be permitted.
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> - Generally Grade 2 across the broad area
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Site does not include previously developed land.

	<b>G =</b> Entirely within previously developed land	
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R =</b> On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A =</b> Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G =</b> Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G –</b> Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R =</b> Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A =</b> Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G =</b> Not on or adjacent to a listed building.	<b>R –</b> 5 Grade II listed buildings near boundary of site – including St Mary’s Church, Langley (Sutton Road) and a school building next to the church.
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<b>R =</b> Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A =</b> Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts. <b>G =</b> Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.	<b>G –</b> Allocation not on or adjacent to historic park / garden
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<b>R =</b> Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A =</b> Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts. <b>G =</b> Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area	<b>G –</b> Site not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area.
Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future? A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:	<b>R =</b> Scale 1 or 2 <b>A =</b> Scale 3 or 4 <b>G =</b> Scale 5	<b>G –</b> (Scale – 5) The site does not contain any Historic Environment Records. Development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible.

<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
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5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													
<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G</b> - Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>												
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>R</b> - Allocation of site for development could potentially have a significant adverse impact on the local landscape character as this site contributes greatly to the picturesque open rural landscape in this area. The land slopes to the east and south from this point with views of Langley and the wider countryside.</p>												
<p><b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b></p>														

SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a <b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>A</b> – The southeastern most corner of the site (at boundary with Loose Stream) is in flood zones 2 & 3. Flooding of the remainder of the site is highly unlikely.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded. <b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.	<b>G</b> - Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.
SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure		
SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site located 800m from ancient woodland.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	<b>G</b> – No protected trees on the site
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.

<p>Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site  <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site  <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>A</b> - The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Spot Lane Quarry is located towards the North of the site (around 2.3km).</p>
<p>Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>

Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation does not contain and is not adjacent to a LWS or LNR.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space? ((e.g. as identified in the Green Space Strategy)?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>	<b>R</b> – Does not contain designated open space. There is a golf driving range area within the western part of the site
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> - No
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – Does not contain allotment space

**Cumulative Effects**

Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>Allocation of the site along with sites HO-09SE, HO-14SE, HO-15SE and HO-01SE could potentially have a significant adverse effect by extending the boundary of the urban area well beyond its current line and thus impacting on an attractive, open rural landscape, leading to a significant loss of rural character and a risk of coalescence with the hamlet of Langley. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area.</p> <p>The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to the south east Maidstone cluster of sites.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter’s Valley Park LNR are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p>
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	All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?	<p>Significant off-site sewerage infrastructure will be required to serve the strategic locations in the Maidstone Urban Area – this may have a negative cumulative impact on the existing infrastructure (in particular sewers running through the centre of Maidstone town which have limited spare capacity) unless capacity improvements can be viably delivered.</p> <p>Site is relatively well served for community facilities given its rural location and would draw heavily on the facilities in Senacre and Parkwood. Depending on the capacity of these services this could have either a positive or negative cumulative impact.</p>
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?	Contribution to improvements to public transport links to town centre should be sought, including provision of a new dedicated bus lane.

## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**  
**Unclear** – site located in reasonable proximity to a range of services given its rural location. In long term, delivery of new housing on nearby sites could potentially lead to additional community services to serve the site but most services would have to be accessed by private vehicle unless bus/cycle improvements delivered.

**Economy:**  
**Positive** – site located in proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate which will provide some accessible job opportunities for future residents. However it is a reasonable distance from Maidstone Town Centre, especially at the far eastern end of the site. Commuters may be inclined to travel by car, increasing congestion, unless bus lane improvements are delivered.



**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Negative** – site is reasonably well served by existing bus stops and a cycle lane links nearby Parkwood Estate to Maidstone Town Centre. However many longer journeys are likely to be by private vehicle unless bus and cycle route improvements are delivered.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to increased traffic movements, especially given the distance of this site from the railway network and town centre.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Very Negative** – entirety of site located within the Southern Anti-Coalescence Belt. Policy ENV32 of the Maidstone Local Plan 2000 (Saved Policies) states that development in this area will not be permitted. Development on the site could have a detrimental impact on the setting of 5 Grade II listed buildings adjacent to the site. Allocation of site for development would have a significant negative impact on the local high quality rural landscape character, especially if none of the nearby sites in south east Maidstone are developed. The site does not contain any Historic Environment Records.

**Flood Risk:**

**Negative** – the southernmost edge of the site (at boundary with Loose Stream) is in flood zones 2 & 3. Flooding of the remainder of the site is highly unlikely. This effect will need to be mitigated.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Positive** – in general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any adverse effects on biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure although ecological surveys are likely to be required to support a planning application. Kent Wildlife Trust has however expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above. There is a golf driving range on site.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- 5 Grade II listed buildings are located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on these buildings should be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development.
- Archaeological mitigation measures
- In order to restrict surface water run off, sustainable drainage should be implemented on the site.
- In-bound bus lane would be vital for improving accessibility and journey times to town centre and reducing contributions to congestion/air quality issues.
- Sites within the South East should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space.

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-05-SE
Strategic Location	South East Maidstone
Site name/address	Gore Court, Church Road – SHLAA site ref 112
Landowner	James Easom Barker
Agent	
Current Use	Garden/private amenity
Proposed Use	Residential
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	4.51ha
Site Origin	SHLAA call for sites. Not in 2012 call for sites.
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes, Site is adjacent to Church Road which is separated from urban area by a strip of woodland approx 30m
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes
<b>Discount</b>	N
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	<p>The land being promoted for development at Gore Court, Church Lane comprises approximately 4.5ha. The developable area is within the same ownership of Gore Court House (a Grade II listed building) and is well screened from that particular building by mature trees.</p> <p>The site is bounded by East Wood to the south east, open countryside to the north and south and the western boundary with Church Road, a narrow road of rural character, comprises woodland (approx 30m strip) forming part of the screen between the site and Woolley Road (Senacre/Shepway) to the west. The site is currently in use as a private garden to Gore Court.</p>
Current use	Private garden.
Adjacent uses	Farmland and open countryside. A large section of the site to the west lies in close proximity to Woolley Road and a number of the small residential estates that use Woolley Road to connect to Willington Street.
Planning and other designations	Site is in the open countryside on the grounds of Gore Court, which has a small number of residential properties which were previously in use as estate buildings.
Planning History	Nothing of great relevance – Gore Court is a Grade II listed building and has been granted planning permission for alterations to doors and fenestration
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	

**Accessibility to existing centres and services:**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<b>A</b> – The western boundary of the site lies adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>R</b> – Site is around 1km from the nearest GP service (Wallis Avenue Surgery).
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site is around 1km from nearest Secondary School (Senacre College). New Line Learning near Linton corner also close.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site is around 200m from Senacre Wood Primary School.
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – Site around 500m from nearest Post Office (Willington Street Post Office).
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<p><b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities</p> <p><b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities</p> <p><b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community</p>	<b>G</b> – The site would not lead to the loss of community facilities.

	facilities	
<p><b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b></p> <p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health          SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest          SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities          SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?          SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<p><b>A</b> = &gt;1.2km  <b>G</b> = &lt;1.2km; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Three Tees Sports area (including football and cricket pitches) located around 400m from the site.
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<p><b>A</b> = &gt;1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space  <b>G</b> = &lt;1.2km or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – There do not appear to be any children’s play space in close proximity to the site.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;300m (ANGST)  <b>G</b> = &lt;300m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Site located 200m from amenity greenspace.
<p><b>SA Topic: Economy</b></p>		
<p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest          SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough</p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;2400m  <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m  <b>G</b> = &lt;1600m or allocation is not for housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Southern boundary is located around 600m from the Parkwood Industrial Estate.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment  <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment  <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem</p>	<b>G</b> – The site would not result in any loss of employment space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<p><b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.  <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super</p>	<b>A</b> – Allocation not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.

Output Areas within the borough.		
<b>SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility</b>		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health            SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest            SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?            SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities            SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve            SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m  <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m  <b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>G</b> – Bus stops located on Wooley Road and Sutton Road.
How far is the nearest train station?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m  <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m  <b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>R</b> – Site located 4.3km from Maidstone East train station.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m  <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m  <b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>G</b> – There may be potential to link to cycle network of nearby Shepway housing estate.
<b>SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change</b>		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health            SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<p><b>R</b> = significant adverse effect  <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated  <b>G</b> = No adverse effect</p>	<b>G</b> – No adverse effect.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA  <b>A</b> = &lt;1km of an AQMA  <b>G</b> = &gt;1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>R</b> – Site lies adjacent to the Maidstone Town AQMA.

SA Topic: Water resources and quality		
SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	A = Yes G = No	A – Site located within a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	A = Within Source Protection Zone 1 G = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	G – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1.
SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment		
Land Use:		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	R = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land A = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land G = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	A – Land is generally Grade 2 agricultural land in this area. However, this site is in use as a private garden
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	R = Does not include previously developed land A = Partially within previously developed land G = Entirely within previously developed land	R – Site does not include previously developed land.
Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	R = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts A = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely	G – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.



	to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace									
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.	<b>A</b> - Gore Court is a Grade II Listed Building.								
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.	<b>G</b> – Allocation not on or adjacent to historic park / garden								
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area								
Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future? A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:	<b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2 <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4 <b>G</b> = Scale 5	<b>G</b> – (Scale – 5) Not within an area where significant archaeological features have been found.								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
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2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.									
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.									

4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?		<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<b>G</b> - Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?		<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation will lead to no loss of land from the Green Belt.
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?		<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<b>G</b> – Site is already developed for housing.
<b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b>			
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</p> <p>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</p> <p>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>			

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not in flood zone.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>	<b>A</b> - Medium risk. Previous incidents of surface water flooding have been recorded in this area.
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> – Two areas of ancient woodland are located in close proximity to the site.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	<b>G</b> – No protected trees on the site
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European</p>	<b>A</b> - The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline

	<p>Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p>railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Spot Lane SSSI is located around 1.2km from the site.</p>
<p>Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<p><b>R</b> = site located in close proximity to BAP habitats including Deciduous woodland and Lowland Beech Yew. Pond present on site – may contain BAP species?</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation does not contain and is not adjacent to a LWS or LNR.</p>

	<b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace	
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area? <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<b>R</b> = Contains designated open space <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space	<b>G</b> - Does not contain designated open space
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<b>R</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>G</b> = No
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<b>R</b> = Contains allotment space <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space	<b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space

**Cumulative Effects**

<p>Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?</p>	<p>Allocation of the site along with sites HO-14SE, HO-09SE, HO-01SE, HO-15SE and HO-04SE could potentially have a significant adverse effect by extending the boundary of the urban area well beyond its current line and thus impacting on an attractive, open rural landscape, leading to a significant loss of rural character.</p> <p>More intensive redevelopment of this site in addition to other proposed sites in the south east area could have a detrimental impact on features including the two areas of ancient woodland, BAP habitats, the River Len and the Spot Lane SSSI. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area.</p> <p>The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to the south east Maidstone cluster of sites.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter’s Valley Park LNR are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p>
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	<p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>The site is located in close proximity to a number of community facilities including a primary school, secondary school and post office. The site is located in reasonable proximity to a bus stop and cycle route. The site is therefore relatively well served for community facilities and residents would draw heavily on the facilities in Senacre and Parkwood. Depending on the capacity of the existing services/facilities in this area this could have either a positive or negative cumulative impact. The delivery of development on neighbouring sites in the south east Maidstone area in conjunction with this site may provide additional community services that will serve the site.</p> <p>This site, like the majority in this area, falls within the 20% most deprived LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix. If development in this area is not to have a significant adverse cumulative effect on general community wellbeing however, barriers to access to community facilities will need to be addressed; either through improving access to existing facilities or by providing new facilities to service this area.</p> <p>The site is already developed for housing. However, significant off-site sewerage infrastructure will be required to serve the strategic housing locations in the south east. This may have a negative cumulative impact on the existing infrastructure (in particular sewers running through the centre of Maidstone town which have limited spare capacity) unless capacity improvements can be viably delivered. However, significant off-site sewerage infrastructure will be required to serve the strategic locations in this area.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>
<h2 style="text-align: left; margin: 0;">Summary and Conclusions</h2>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Very Positive</b> / <b>Positive</b> / <b>Unclear</b> / <b>No Effect</b> / <b>Negative</b> / <b>Very Negative</b> - any comments or details</p>	

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very positive** – site located in close proximity to a range of community services/facilities and to the town centre and development may contribute to the delivery of further services/facilities.

**Economy:**

**Positive** – site located in reasonable proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has reasonable transport links to Maidstone Town Centre. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Positive** – The site is located off a rural lane and approximately five and ten minutes walk to existing bus stops. Access would be improved by construction of an in-bound bus lane to Maidstone Town Centre) and there is potential to link into the cycle route network lane which links nearby residential areas to Maidstone Town Centre. Road access is more constrained.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and congestion and have a negative impact on air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – The delivery of new development on the site will increase the pressure on existing water resources in the local area.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Unclear**–Development of the site could potentially have a detrimental impact on the open park land setting of the Gore Court House listed buildings although these buildings are well screened from the site. There are no Heritage Environment Records on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Unclear** – site is not located within a flood zone. However incidents of surface water flooding have been recorded in this area.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Negative** – There are 2 BAP habitats and ancient woodlands located in close proximity to the site. The design of new development would need to ensure there was no detrimental impact on these habitats. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**



Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- An in-bound bus lane from Willington Street to Wheatsheaf Jcn on Sutton Road is being considered. This would improve public transport access between the site and Maidstone town centre and would significantly reduce journey times for bus users
- The woodland strip should be conserved and reinforced, with linkages made to the nearly ancient woodland.
- Sites within the South East should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural greenspace.
- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-09-SE
Strategic Location	South East Maidstone
Site name/address	Land north of Sutton Road – east side (SHLAA site 127)
Landowner	Controlled by Redrow Homes (eastern)
Agent	Peter Court Associates
Current Use	Open countryside/agricultural
Proposed Use	Residential
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	3.85ha
Site Origin	Local Plan allocation – also SHLAA call for sites & Strategic Sites call for sites
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes (opposite Parkwood Ind Est)
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes – particularly the western side of Land North of Sutton Road
<b>Discount</b>	<b>N</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	<p>The site is part of a larger site allocated in the Local Plan 2000 (policy H3) and can be described as open and attractive agricultural land immediately north of Sutton Road and quite a distance from the town centre. Bicknor Wood screens the site well in views from White Horse Lane to the north, and from the public footpath to the north-east. The site's western boundary is not clearly defined where it merges with its adjacent previously allocated site. To the south, the southern side of Sutton Road has an urban character and appearance along the entire frontage (Parkwood Estate). This would limit the intrusive effect of housing, since this part of Sutton Road is not wholly rural. Travelling east, the site marks an abrupt end to the town on the northern side of the road and its rural character and appearance make it part of Maidstone's countryside setting.</p> <p>The principle of development on this site was established in the Local Plan 2000. It is considered that the site is well located with regard to existing services and is not subject to any major constraint. It has an extensive frontage to a main road, the A274, along which there are regular bus services into and out of Maidstone. It lies immediately opposite a major employment area, Parkwood Industrial Estate and adjacent to the residential area of Parkwood, which has a good range of shops and community services.</p>
Current use	Open countryside/agricultural
Adjacent uses	Residential, commercial, agricultural, open countryside
Planning and other designations	Site is allocated for residential development in the Local Plan 2000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
Planning History	<p>Land to east</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 91/1391 – app for 80 bed hotel and leisure complex – refused</li> <li>• 01/0452 – outline application for residential development – withdrawn</li> </ul> <p>The Local Plan Inquiry notes that Land North of Sutton Road (sites east and west) was promoted for 266 dwellings</p>	
<h2>SA Topic: Community wellbeing</h2>		
<p><b>Accessibility to existing centres and services:</b></p> <p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health          SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest          SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work          SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities          SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities          SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<p><b>A</b> – If neighbouring sites developed, site will be adjacent.</p>
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<p><b>A</b> – The site is slightly less than 800m from the nearest GP service (Wallis Avenue Surgery).</p>
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site around 1km from nearest Secondary School (Senacre College). Also close to New Line Learning.</p>
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site around 800m from nearest Primary School (Bellwood Primary School). Parkwood also very close</p>

	<b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	(1000m).
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – Site around 500m from nearest Post Office (Parkwood Post Office)
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – The site would not lead to the loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Three Tees Sports area (including football and cricket pitches) located around 450m from site.
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – There do not appear to be any children’s play space in close proximity to the site.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R</b> – Amenity grassland located around 350m from the site
<b>SA Topic: Economy</b>		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G</b> – The site is located opposite the Parkwood Industrial Estate.

Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – The site would not result in any loss of employment space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough.	<b>G</b> – Allocation not within the 20% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.

### SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – 2 bus stops located on either side of A274 located opposite the site. Bus numbers 12, 13, 14, 24, 59 and 64.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – Nearest train station located around 5km from site (Maidstone East).
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There is potential to connect site through to Shepway north via Woolley Road; and into the existing network through Shepway to town centre via Maidstone Leisure centre and Mote Road. Also possible to easily connect through to cycle route at Mote Park.

### SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>A</b> – Noise might be an issue for dwellings alongside Sutton Road – and in close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site located within the Maidstone Town AQMA.
SA Topic: Water resources and quality		
SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1
SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment		
Land Use:		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>A</b> – Allocation of site would lead to loss of Grade 3a agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Site does not include previously developed land.

	<b>G =</b> Entirely within previously developed land	
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<p><b>R =</b> On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts</p> <p><b>A =</b> Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted</p> <p><b>G =</b> Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G –</b> Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<p><b>R =</b> Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A =</b> Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G =</b> Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p>	<b>A –</b> No listed buildings on site. However, Bicknor Farmhouse which borders the eastern edge of the site is Grade II listed. Although sited adjacent to Bicknor Farmhouse, the site is opposite the industrial estate and does not appear to be of any great landscape importance, and could be developed without any unacceptable impact on the setting of the listed building.
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<p><b>R =</b> Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A =</b> Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G =</b> Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<b>G –</b> Allocation not on or adjacent to historic park / garden
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<p><b>R =</b> Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A =</b> Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G =</b> Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<b>G –</b> Site not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area
Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?	<p><b>R =</b> Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A =</b> Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G =</b> Scale 5</p>	<b>G –</b> (Scale – 1) The site does not currently contain any Historic Environment Records. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.



<p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
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<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G</b> - Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>													
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation will lead to no loss of land from the Green Belt.</p>													
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Allocation of site for development could potentially have a detrimental impact on the local landscape</p>													

mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?	<p>appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	character as it has a countryside setting. However when seen from Gore Court Road, whilst the site is open agricultural land, it is also the foreground for commercial buildings and uses fronting Sutton Road and this brings an element of urban intrusion into this area already. The site is well screened to the south by Parkwood Industrial Estate.
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## SA Topic: Flood Risk

**SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home**  
**SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment**  
**SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not in any flood zone.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>	<b>G</b> - Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.

## SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure

**SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity**  
**SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> - Site around 400m from Ancient Woodland.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be</p>	<b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site but there are approximately 12 protected trees to the east of the site.

	mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site	<b>A</b> - The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.  There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.  All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to

		the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<b>R</b> = <400m <b>A</b> = 400-800m <b>G</b> = >800m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Spot Lane Quarry is located towards the North of the site (around 1.8km).
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats but Bicknor Wood forms a boundary to part of the site’s northern edge
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation does not contain and is not adjacent to a LWS or LNR.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area? <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<b>R</b> = Contains designated open space <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space	<b>G</b> – Does not contain designated open space.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<b>R</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>G</b> - No
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<b>R</b> = Contains allotment space <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space	<b>G</b> – Does not contain allotment space
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>Allocation of the site along with sites HO-15SE, HO-01SE and HO-04SE could potentially have a significant adverse effect by extending the boundary of the urban area well beyond its current line and thus impacting on an attractive, open rural landscape, leading to a significant loss of rural character.</p> <p>Locating new development on this site in addition to other proposed sites in the south east area could have a detrimental impact on nearby features including the two areas of ancient woodland, BAP habitats and the Spot Lane SSSI. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area.</p> <p>The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from</p>	

	<p>North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to the south east Maidstone cluster of sites.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>The site is located in relatively close proximity to a number of community facilities including a primary school, secondary school and post office. The site is located close to an existing bus stop and cycle route. The site is therefore relatively well served for community facilities given its rural location and would draw heavily on the facilities in Senacre and Parkwood. Depending on the capacity of the existing services/facilities in this area this could have either a positive or negative cumulative impact. The delivery of development on neighbouring sites in the south east Maidstone area in conjunction with this site may provide additional community services that will serve the site.</p> <p>This site, like the majority in this area, falls within the 20% most deprived LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix. If development in this area is not to have a significant adverse cumulative effect on general community wellbeing however, barriers to access to community facilities will need to be addressed; either through improving access to existing facilities or by providing new facilities to service this area.</p> <p>The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area. However, significant off-site sewerage infrastructure will be required to serve the strategic locations in the Maidstone Urban Area. This may have a negative cumulative impact on the existing infrastructure (in particular sewers running through the centre of Maidstone town which have limited spare capacity) unless capacity improvements can be viably delivered.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic</u></p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>

growth – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?

## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive** / **Positive** / **Unclear** / **No Effect** / **Negative** / **Very Negative** - any comments or details

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Very positive** – site located in close proximity to a range of community services/facilities and to the town centre and may contribute to the delivery of further services/facilities.

### Economy:

**Positive** – site located in very close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has reasonable transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

### Transport and Accessibility:

**Very positive** – site is well served by existing bus stops and cycle lane links. There is good road access.

### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Unclear** – site located within the Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to an increase in carbon emissions from traffic movements.

### Water resources and quality:

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**No Effect** – development on the site would lead to the loss of grade 3 agricultural land. A grade II listed building is located opposite the site but development is unlikely to impact on its setting. Allocation of site for development could potentially have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character as it has a countryside setting. However when seen from Gore Court Road, whilst the site is open agricultural land, it is also the foreground for commercial buildings and uses fronting Sutton Road and this brings an element of urban intrusion into this area already. The site is well screened to the south by Parkwood Industrial Estate. The site, like most of the south east sites, does not

contain any Historic Environment Records.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site not in any flood zone.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Positive** – in general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any adverse effects on biodiversity and green space. The significance of any adverse effects on biodiversity would however need to be determined by a preliminary ecological assessment as several species specific ecological surveys are likely to be required. The scope, level and achievability of any necessary ecological mitigation would need to be assessed, perhaps in the context of the wider south-east allocations area. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- An in-bound bus lane from Willington Street to Wheatsheaf Jcn on Sutton Road is being considered. This would improve public transport access between the site and Maidstone town centre and would significantly reduce journey times for bus users
- A preliminary ecological assessment will be required to determine the need for more detailed species specific surveys. The scope, level and achievability of any necessary ecological mitigation should be assessed in the context of the wider south-east allocations area.
- Sites within the South East should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural greenspace.
- Archaeological mitigation measures



<b>1. Site Information</b>	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-14-SE
Strategic Location	South East Maidstone
Site name/address	Land at Gore Court (SHLAA site ref 144)- now also includes land north of Sutton Road (west)
Landowner	Controlled by Bellway Homes South East Ltd
Agent	Boyer Planning Ltd
Current Use	Open countryside/woodland/agriculture
Proposed Use	Residential
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (ha)	Up to 150ha
Site Origin	SHLAA call for sites and Strategic Sites Call for Sites
<b>Discounting (Housing Sites)</b>	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes – particularly applies to eastern sections of site
<b>Discount</b>	N
<b>2. Sustainability Appraisal</b>	
Site Description	<p>This is a very large site comprising predominantly land in agricultural use with an absence of trees within the internal field areas. Areas of trees and woodland are present including the woodland belt between Church Road and Wooley Road designated as an Area of Local Landscape Importance and a larger woodland block east of Gore Court (East Wood) which is classified as Ancient Woodland.</p> <p>Perhaps it is best to break it into two sections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. North of Gore Court</li> <li>2. South of Gore Court</li> </ol> <p>North</p> <p>There is little separation of the site along parts of the western and northern boundaries along the suburban edge. The boundaries are mostly hedgerows but to the very north of this section the boundary forms part of the River Len valley 'corridor', which mainly consists of unmanaged scrub and emerging woodland. There is a stronger well-treed hedgerow boundary to much of the western part of the site which abuts the backs of properties on Woolley Road, Shepway.</p> <p>Access is an issue in the northern section of the site, particularly its distance to Sutton Road (A274) and the narrow roads (Church Road/Gore Court Road) that link to this main transport artery into the town centre. Access to Willington street (which would provide the option of linking to Sutton Road or Ashford Road (A20)) is possible but this would result in</p>

	<p>directing traffic on narrow roads through the established residential areas of Downswood and Senacre.</p> <p><b>South</b>  This section of the site is bounded to the west by the residential area of Senacre. A strip of woodland ranging from 20m - 80m wide screens the site from the urban edge. Gore Court Road/Church Road lies adjacent to the woodland to the east and the majority of the site comprises open countryside/woodland. The southern section of the site (south of White Horse Lane) is a large, level, rectangular field bounded by Gore Court Road to the west, White Horse Lane to the north and Bicknor Wood to the south. It is also in relatively close proximity to Sutton Road (A274) and Gore Court Road allows access to this main link to the town centre. Bicknor Wood separates the site from its most southerly section, which is the Local Plan (Policy H3) allocated site (Land North of Sutton Road, west). This section is also dealt with in a separate proforma.</p> <p>To the east, the site largely comprises open countryside and agricultural land and only a very small section of the site borders residential properties (at Three Tees, Otham). The boundary of the site to the east is a variety of paddocks, woodland belts, gardens, orchards, farmsteads etc. The settlement pattern is sparse, with Otham Conservation area nearby.</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b>  Land to the south of Gore Court (particularly south of White Horse Lane) is more suitable for development, primarily because it can be better accessed from Sutton Road/ Gore Court Road and also because Bicknor Wood and East Wood have the potential to screen development. It is also important to note that the southernmost section of this site is already allocated for residential development and offers good access to services, employment and public transport.</p>
Current use	Open countryside/woodland/agriculture
Adjacent uses	Residential/agriculture
Planning and other designations	None
Planning History	<p>None – apart from southernmost section adjacent to Sutton Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 00/0911 – withdrawn application for approx 150 dwellings of mixed tenure</li> <li>• 00/0175 - An outline application for residential development – refused</li> </ul> <p>The Local Plan Inquiry notes that North of Sutton Road was promoted for 266 dwellings – this includes the adjacent site to the east (SHLAA site 127).</p>
<b>SA Topic: Community wellbeing</b>	
<b>Accessibility to existing centres and services:</b>	
<p><b>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</b></p> <p><b>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</b></p> <p><b>SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work</b></p>	

SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<b>A</b> – The western boundary of the site lies adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – South-west corner of the site is around 500m from the nearest GP service (Wallis Avenue Surgery). There is also a GP at Grove Park near Morrisons.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – South-west corner of the site around 900m from nearest Secondary School (Senacre College).
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – South West Corner around 500m from Bellwood Primary School.</p> <p><b>G</b> – Western Boundary around 400m from Greenfields Community Primary School.</p> <p><b>G</b> – Northern boundary of the site around 500m from Madginford Park Infant and Junior School.</p>
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – Site around 300m from nearest Post Office (Parkwood Post Office)
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<p><b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities</p> <p><b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities</p>	<b>G</b> – The site would not lead to the loss of community facilities.

	<b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health            SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest            SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities            SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?            SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment</p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<p><b>A</b> = &gt;1.2km  <b>G</b> = &lt;1.2km; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Three Tees Sports area (including football and cricket pitches) located towards the south-eastern corner of the site. A sports area is also located towards the north-western corner of the site close to Lenside Drive.
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<p><b>A</b> = &gt;1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space  <b>G</b> = &lt;1.2km or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – There do not appear to be any children's play space in close proximity to the site.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;300m (ANGST)  <b>G</b> = &lt;300m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – A number of areas of amenity grassland are located adjacent the north-western, eastern and south-western boundaries of the site.
<b>SA Topic: Economy</b>		
<p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest            SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough</p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<p><b>R</b>= &gt;2400m  <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m  <b>G</b> = &lt;1600m or allocation is not for housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Southern boundary is located around 300m from the Parkwood Industrial Estate.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite	<b>G</b> – The site would not result in any loss of employment space.

	<p>employment</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment</p> <p><b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem</p>	
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<p><b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas within the borough.</p>	<b>A</b> – Allocation not within the 40% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.
<p><b>SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility</b></p>		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?</p> <p>SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities</p> <p>SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve</p> <p>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400 - 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<p><b>G</b> – There are a number of bus stops located on existing roads surrounding the site including: Sutton Road; Wooley Road; Deringwood Drive; Spot Lane; and Ashford Road.</p> <p>An in-bound bus lane from Willington Street to Wheatsheaf Junction on Sutton Road is being considered. This would improve public transport access between the site and Maidstone town centre and would significantly reduce journey times for bus users.</p>
How far is the nearest train station?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400 - 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>R</b> – Nearest train station (Bearsted Station) located around 1.3km from the northern edge of the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m	<b>G</b> – There will be potential to connect site through to Shepway north via Wooley Road;

	<p><b>A</b> = 400 - 800m  <b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	and into the existing network through Shepway to town centre via Maidstone Leisure centre and Mote Road. Also possible to easily connect through to cycle route at Mote Park.
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**SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<p><b>R</b> = significant adverse effect  <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated  <b>G</b> = No adverse effect</p>	<b>A</b> – Noise might be an issue close to Sutton Road but should be easy to mitigate.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA  <b>A</b> = &lt;1km of an AQMA  <b>G</b> = &gt;1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>R</b> –Site lies within the Maidstone Town AQMA.

**SA Topic: Water resources and quality**

SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<p><b>A</b> = Yes  <b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<p><b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1  <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1.

**SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment**

**Land Use:**  
 SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land</p> <p><b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land</p>	<b>R</b> – The site comprises Grade 2 agricultural land
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<p><b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land</p> <p><b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land</p> <p><b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land</p>	<b>R</b> – Site does not include previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<p><b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p>	<p><b>A</b> – The following listed buildings are located adjacent to the site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gore Court – Grade II* listed.</li> <li>• The Rectory (Church Road) to the west of site is Grade II listed.</li> <li>• St Nicholas’ Church and Church House on Church Road, Otham are both Grade I listed</li> <li>• The Orchard Spot Public House on Mallards Way is Grade II listed</li> </ul>
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation not on or adjacent to historic park / garden however the parkland of the Grade II* listed Gore Court extends as far as the other side of the road, so there could be an impact on this.



	allocation is greenspace.													
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.  <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<p><b>R</b> – The site borders the village of Otham to the east, which is a conservation area.</p>												
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?  A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>1.1</th> <th>Scale</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1.1	Scale	1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2  <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4  <b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>G</b> – (Scale – 5) This site does not currently contain any Historic Environment Records. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.</p>
1.1	Scale													
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.													
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													
<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.  <b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.  <b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB</p>	<p><b>A</b> – There are long views across to the North Downs from the northern portion of the site.</p>												

	and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.	
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation will lead to no loss of land from the Green Belt.
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<b>A</b> - This site is a large expanse of land falling across two Greensand Orchards and Mixed Farmlands landscape character areas. The site is of mixed character - some parts of the site are visually contained and suffer from suburban edge pressures while other parts form a distinct open arable land which is largely unsettled.
<b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b>		
<p><b>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</b></p> <p><b>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</b></p> <p><b>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</b></p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> – Majority of site is not in any flood zone. However, the most northerly section – close to Mallards Way and Downswood is in flood zone 2 & 3 of the River Len.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded</p>	<b>A</b> – Some surface water flooding has been recorded in the vicinity of White Horse Lane which runs east-west across the site.

SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure		
SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and geodiversity		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Three blocks of ancient woodland are located on the site - one towards the east (East Wood), another towards the centre and a third to the west.</p>
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	<p><b>A</b> – There are numerous protected trees along the north western boundary. .</p>
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	<p><b>A</b> – The River Len runs along the northern boundary of the site. New development on the site would need to mitigate any potential negative impacts on the quality of the river, including through an appropriate buffer.</p>
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>A</b> - The most northerly site (this site) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the</p>

		<p>Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>R</b> – Spot Lane SSSI is located to the north west boundary of the site.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<b>R</b> – Site contains BAP habitats including Deciduous woodland and Lowland Beech Yew.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site  <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>R</b> –The site is adjacent to the LWS which runs along Len Valley at the north east tip of the site.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?  <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<b>R</b> – The River Len runs along the northern boundary of the site – this would require an appropriate buffer of at least 15m in width.
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space ?  <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>	<b>G</b> – The site does not contain any designated open space.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes  <b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> - No
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – <b>The site does not contain allotment space</b>

Cumulative Effects	
<p>Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?</p>	<p>Allocation of the site along with sites HO-09SE, HO-01SE, HO-15SE and HO-04SE could potentially have a significant adverse effect by extending the boundary of the urban area well beyond its current line and thus impacting on an attractive, open rural landscape, leading to a significant loss of rural character. However some parts of the site are more rural than others, with the southern part of the site less likely to have an adverse impact on landscape quality. There could also be adverse impacts on the open parkland setting of the listed buildings of Gore Court if HO-05SE is developed alongside the northern part of the site.</p> <p>Locating new development on this site in addition to other proposed sites in the south east area could have a detrimental impact on the integrity and viability of the various remnants of ancient woodland, the River Len LWS and biodiversity opportunity area, BAP habitats and the Spot Lane SSSI. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area.</p> <p>The most northerly site (this site) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to the south east Maidstone cluster of sites.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR, are much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over</p>	<p>The site is located in reasonable proximity to a number of community facilities including local schools, GPs and a post office. The site is located close to existing bus stops and could be incorporated into local cycle routes, although the nearest train station is some distance away. The site is therefore relatively well served for community facilities given its rural location and would draw heavily on the facilities in Senacre and Parkwood. Depending on the capacity of the existing services/facilities in this area this could have either a positive or negative cumulative impact. The delivery of development on this site, along with nearby sites in the south east Maidstone area may generate</p>

<p>capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>sufficient demand for and funding to secure additional community services that will serve the site.</p> <p>This site, like the majority in this area, falls within the 20% most deprived LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix. If development in this area is not to have a significant adverse cumulative effect on general community wellbeing however, barriers to access to community facilities will need to be addressed; either through improving access to existing facilities or by providing new facilities to service this area.</p> <p>The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area. However, significant off-site sewerage infrastructure will be required to serve the strategic locations in the Maidstone Urban Area. This may have a negative cumulative impact on the existing infrastructure (in particular sewers running through the centre of Maidstone town which have limited spare capacity) unless capacity improvements can be viably delivered.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>

## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive** / **Positive** / **Unclear** / **No Effect** / **Negative** / **Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very positive** – site located in reasonable proximity to a range of community services/facilities and to the town centre and may contribute to the delivery of further services/facilities.

**Economy:**

**Positive** – site located in reasonable proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and good transport links to Maidstone town centre can be established. It is likely that local job

opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Positive** – site is well served by existing bus stops (but would be improved by construction of an in-bound bus lane to Maidstone town centre) and there is potential to link into the cycle route network lane which links nearby residential areas to Maidstone town centre. Road access is more constrained, particularly in the northern part of the site.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and congestion and have a negative impact on air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage. Potential for adverse impact on the River Len unless mitigation measures are adopted.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Negative** – Development in the northern half of the site would lead to the loss of a large area of Grade 2 agricultural land. Development of the site could also potentially have a detrimental impact on the open park land setting of listed buildings at Gore Court, on the setting of the Otham Village conservation area and on the landscape character of the area (particularly if the northern part of the site were developed). There are no Historic Environment Records for this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Negative** –The layout of new development on the site would need to be in accordance with flood risk policy as the northern section of the site has areas within flood zones 2 and 3. Some surface water flooding has been recorded in the vicinity of White Horse Lane which runs east-west across the site.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Negative** – There are 2 BAP habitats (woodland and neutral grassland) located on the site and the Spot Lane SSSI is located towards the northern boundary. The site lies adjacent to the LWS along Len Valley at the north east tip of the site. The site includes a number of remnant woodland blocks including ancient woodlands. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of the report..

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:



- Grade II listed buildings are located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on the settings of these buildings should be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development.
- There are numerous TPOs within or on the boundaries of the site. New development should be designed to ensure that no trees which are the subject TPOs are lost.
- An in-bound bus lane from Willington Street to Wheatsheaf Jcn on Sutton Road is being considered. This would improve public transport access between the site and Maidstone town centre and would significantly reduce journey times for bus users
- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Archaeological mitigation measures
- A Flood Risk Assessment should be undertaken to inform development, given the flood risk issues at the northern tip of the site and records of surface water flooding in the vicinity of White Horse Lane.
- A buffer zone should be established between new development and the River Len LWS of at least 15m.
- A hydrological assessment should be undertaken to establish the direction of the flows across the site and ensure that the water quantity and quality within the river system and the LWS can be protected.
- Existing woodland and BAP habitat (woodland and neutral grassland) should be protected and connected. Any loss of habitat should be compensated by provision elsewhere.
- A preliminary ecological assessment should be undertaken to determine the need for more detailed species specific surveys.
- Sites within the South East should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural greenspace.
- Any development on the eastern border with Otham should be well screened/set back to preserve the setting of the conservation area.

<b>1. Site Information</b>	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-15-SE
Strategic Location	South East Maidstone
Site name/address	Langley Park Farm West
Landowner	Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd
Agent	Pegasus Planning Ltd, Bristol
Current Use	Open countryside (small section of site in use as MBC depot)
Proposed Use	Housing/mixed use
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	32.9ha
Site Origin	Site is allocated for residential/employment use (light industry and high technology) in Local Plan – also allocated for P&R – Site was put forward in recent call for sites
<b>Discounting (Housing Sites)</b>	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	
<b>Discount</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>2. Sustainability Appraisal</b>	
Site Description	<p>The site is located on the southern side of the A274 Sutton Road at the south eastern edge of Maidstone’s urban area. The nearest settlements are Chart Sutton (1km to the southeast) and Langley Heath (1.75km to the east). The hamlet of Otham lies 1km to the north.</p> <p>The site is bounded by a 7m woodland strip to the east, which shelters the site from a Golf Driving Range, and Parkwood Industrial Estate to the west. The northern part of the site is a rectangular relatively flat area of 27 hectares, extending from Sutton Road, which has a grass verge up to 5m wide, to the southernmost boundary of the Industrial Estate. This single field is relatively level with sparse hedging along the boundary to Sutton Road. There is a chain link fence and intermittent beech hedge along this boundary, which partially screens views from the A274.</p> <p>Maidstone Borough Council’s depot takes up a section of the site along its western boundary and breaks an otherwise continuous border with Parkwood Industrial Estate.</p> <p>The southernmost section of the site is a triangular area of 7 hectares which slopes from a ridge of comparatively higher ground in a southerly direction towards the Loose Stream, which flows out of Langley Loch. This area is used for open pasture with boundary Poplar shelter belts and offers a panoramic view of the open countryside to the south (in direction of Plough Went Road/Heath Road). This parcel of land is bounded to the west by Brishing Road. The boundary is formed by a tall, road-side hedge with some trees. Brishing Road is at</p>

	<p>this point below the surface of the adjacent fields, and this, combined with the tall hedges, means the site is screened from view.</p> <p>On the northern side of Sutton Road in close proximity to the site there are two semi-detached dwellings and a Grade II listed farmhouse with stable yard.</p> <p>The principle of development on this site was established in the Local Plan 2000. It is considered that the site is well located with regard to existing services and is not subject to any major constraint. It has an extensive frontage to a main road, the A274, along which there are regular bus services into and out of Maidstone. It lies immediately adjacent to a major employment area, Parkwood Industrial Estate and the residential area of Parkwood, which has a good range of shops and community services. Furthermore, the site offers the potential for a 7ha countryside amenity on its southernmost section.</p>
Current use	Open countryside (small section of site in use as MBC depot)
Adjacent uses	Industrial Estate/open land/golf driving range/ horticulture - nursery
Planning and other designations	Site is a local plan mixed use allocation (residential/employment). See policies H1(viii), H8, H24(viii), T17(iii) and ED1(iv)
Planning History	<p>00/0906: Outline application for a mixed use development comprising residential, employment uses falling within classes B1(a) (b) &amp; (c), B2, B8, Class A3, Classes C1 and C2, community facilities, public open space, park and ride facilities together with associated infrastructure with all matters except for means of access reserved for subsequent approval. Details as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12.8 hectares of housing, to be developed at an average density of 33 dwellings per hectare</li> <li>• 6 hectares of employment, including B1(a)(b) and (c), B2 and B8 together with A3, C1, C2</li> <li>• a site for provision of community facilities</li> <li>• 2.06 hectares of designated public open space within the development area</li> <li>• a site for the provision of a Park and Ride facility</li> <li>• a countryside amenity area, on the triangular area at the southern end of the site.</li> </ul> <p>Of note: The northern part of the land was allocated for development for employment purposes in the 1993 adopted Local Plan. There had been little market interest in the site and the latest Local Plan has made additional employment land available elsewhere. Instead, the Council resolved to promote both housing and employment development on this land to help bring forward the employment development in the area. The development of the land was seen to allow the creation of a new gateway to Maidstone on Sutton Road with a strong landscape belt replacing the current harsh edge of the Parkwood Industrial development and a 'country park' facility on the southern part of the land. On the other hand it should be recalled that the Local Plan Inspector found that development of this site would extend development into open countryside and that there would be some harm to the character and appearance of the area. He considered that harm could be limited by appropriate landscaping and that it was outweighed by the need for additional housing land which he considered to exist at that time.</p> <p>Decision Although originally minded to grant planning permission for the development the Council revised its conclusion following publication of PPS3, and following completion of an urban capacity study (UCS) and refused (31st Jan 2003) the application for two reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Urban Capacity Study demonstrates there is sufficient PDL within the borough to meet Structure Plan requirements (2001-2006). No need for further release of greenfield sites before this time and in the absence of any demonstrated need the development would be contrary to the advice contained in PPG 3: Housing</li> </ol>

2. The proposal would result in an extension to the built up area of Maidstone into the open countryside detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and setting of the town contrary to policies ENV1, RS1 and RS5 of Structure Plan. This harm is not overridden by any need for the land to be developed for housing purposes.  
 The decision was appealed and dismissed by the inspector – 9th Dec 2003 on grounds that the UCS was robust when measured against reasonable prospect, and justified a conclusion that greenfield sites were not required at the time.

00/1255: Residential development for 389 No. dwellings with garages, designated public open space, play areas and other associated infrastructure.  
 Decision: refused alongside 00/0906 on 31/1/2003 for same reasons as above.

## SA Topic: Community wellbeing

### Accessibility to existing centres and services:

- SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health
- SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest
- SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work
- SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities
- SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities
- SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<b>A</b> –site located adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>R</b> – The site is slightly less than 900m from the nearest GP service (Wallis Avenue Surgery).
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site around 1.5km from nearest Secondary School (Senacre College). New Line Learning also nearby.

How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m  <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m  <b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site around 500m from nearest Primary School (Holy Family RC Primary School). Parkwood approximately 1000m away.</p>
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m  <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m  <b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Site around 600m from nearest Post Office (Parkwood Post Office)</p>
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<p><b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities  <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities  <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities</p>	<p><b>G</b> – The site would not lead to the loss of community facilities.</p>
<p><b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b></p> <p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities  SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?  SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<p><b>A</b> = &gt;1.2km  <b>G</b> = &lt;1.2km; or allocation is not housing</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Three Tees Sports area (including football and cricket pitches) located around 400m from the site.</p>
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<p><b>A</b> = &gt;1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space  <b>G</b> = &lt;1.2km or allocation is not housing</p>	<p><b>A</b> – There do not appear to be any children’s play space in close proximity to the site.</p>
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;300m (ANGST)  <b>G</b> = &lt;300m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Amenity grassland located around 500m from site.</p>
<p><b>SA Topic: Economy</b></p>		
<p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<p><b>R</b>= &gt;2400m</p>	<p><b>G</b> – The site is located adjacent to the Parkwood Industrial Estate.</p>

	<p><b>A</b> = 1600-2400m  <b>G</b> = &lt;1600m or allocation is not for housing</p>	
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment  <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment  <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem</p>	<b>G</b> – The site would not result in any loss of employment space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<p><b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.  <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough.</p>	<b>A</b> – Allocation not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.

**SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m  <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m  <b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>G</b> – 2 bus stops located on either side of A274 located around 150 metres from the site. Bus numbers 12, 13, 14, 24, 59 and 64.
How far is the nearest train station?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m  <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m  <b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>R</b> –Maidstone East Train Station is located around 5.2km from site (Maidstone East). Bearsted Train Station is approximately 4km from site but is more difficult to access
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m  <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m  <b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>G</b> – There will be potential to connect the site to the existing cycle lane from Parkwood – through Shepway – to town centre via Maidstone Leisure centre and Mote Road. Also possible to easily connect through to cycle route at Mote Park. Connecting the southern part of the site along Brishing Road to Parkwood is also possible.

SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>A</b> – Noise quality will be an issue considering Maidstone Council Depot on site and proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>A</b> – Site lies adjacent to the Maidstone Town AQMA.
SA Topic: Water resources and quality		
SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace.
SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment		
Land Use:		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land	<b>G</b> – Allocation of site would not lead to loss of high grade agricultural land.



	<b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>A</b> – Maidstone Borough Council depot takes up a section of the site along the western boundary. The rest of the site is not previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.	<b>A</b> - Bicknor Farmhouse north of Sutton Road (and opposite the site) is Grade II listed.
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.	<b>G</b> – Allocation not on or adjacent to historic park / garden
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area
Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists	<b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2 <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4	<b>A</b> – (Scale – 4) The southern portion of the site may be more archaeologically sensitive, given the large number

<p>for archaeological features to be discovered in the future? A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>G = Scale 5</b></p>	<p>of features locally associated with outworks of the Iron Age oppidum at Quarry Wood, Boughton Monchelsea (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and the nearby site of a Roman bath house in the valley bottom.</p>
Scale														
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.													
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													
<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R =</b> In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated. <b>A =</b> In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated. <b>G =</b> Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G -</b> Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>												
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?</p>	<p><b>R =</b> Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation <b>A =</b> Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation <b>G =</b> Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G –</b> Allocation will lead to no loss of land from the Green Belt although site is located in close proximity to the Southern Anti-Coalescence Belt.</p>												

<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated  <b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated  <b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>A</b> – This is a visually contained site to the west, north and east. The land slopes southwards and the southern tip of site has a greater landscape importance than the rest of the site, which should be conserved and reinforced.</p>
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**SA Topic: Flood Risk**

SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home  
 SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
<p>Is allocation within a flood zone?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b  <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a  <b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>A</b> –Only the southernmost portion of the site (at boundary with Loose Stream) is in Flood Zones 2 &amp; 3. Flooding of the remainder of the site is highly unlikely</p>
<p>Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?</p>	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.  <b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>	<p><b>G</b> - Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>

**SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure**

SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity  
 SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
<p>Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW  <b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW  <b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site around 600m from Ancient Woodland</p>
<p>Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which</p>	<p><b>G</b> – No protected trees on the site</p>

	<p>cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	
<p>Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.</p>
<p>Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>A</b> - The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster. Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR, are all much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p>

		All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400-800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Spot Lane Quarry is located north of the site (around 2.1km).
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats</p> <p><b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation does not contain and is not adjacent to a LWS or LNR.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space (e.g. Millennium Greens) or undesignated green space (e.g. as identified in the Green Space Strategy)?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space or undesignated green space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain open or green space</p>	<b>G</b> – Does not contain open space although there is a golf driving range to the east ..
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> - No
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – Does not contain allotment space
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>Allocation of the site along with sites HO-01SE, HO14SE and HO-04SE could potentially have a significant adverse effect by extending the boundary of the urban area well beyond its current line and thus impacting on an attractive, open rural landscape, leading to a significant loss of rural character.</p> <p>Locating new development on this site in addition to other proposed sites in the south east area could have a detrimental impact on nearby features including the two areas of ancient woodland, BAP habitats and the Spot Lane SSSI. Kent Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area.</p>	

	<p>The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to the south east Maidstone cluster of sites.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster. Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are all much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>The site is located in close proximity to a number of community facilities including a primary school, secondary school and post office. The site is located close to an existing bus stop and cycle route. The site is therefore relatively well served for community facilities given its rural location and would draw heavily on the facilities in Senacre and Parkwood. Depending on the capacity of the existing services/facilities in this area this could have either a positive or negative cumulative impact. The delivery of development on neighbouring sites in the south east Maidstone area in conjunction with this site may provide additional community services that will serve the site.</p> <p>The southern end of this site falls within the 20% most deprived LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). The rest of the site is in the least deprived domain. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix. If development in this area is not to have a significant adverse cumulative effect on general community wellbeing however, barriers to access to community facilities will need to be addressed; either through improving access to existing facilities or by providing new facilities to service this area.</p> <p>The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area. However, significant off-site sewerage infrastructure will be required to serve the strategic locations in the Maidstone Urban Area. This may have a negative cumulative impact on the existing infrastructure (in particular sewers running through the centre of Maidstone town which have limited spare capacity) unless capacity improvements can be viably delivered.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>

conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to economic growth – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?

## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a range of services including a primary school, secondary school and post office. In long term, delivery of new housing on adjacent sites could potentially lead to additional community services to serve the site and others.

**Economy:**

**Positive** – site located in close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has reasonable transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.

**Transport and Accessibility:**

**Positive** – site is well served by existing bus stops and a cycle lane links nearby Parkwood Estate to Maidstone town centre. Good road access.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located within the Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to increased traffic movements.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**



**Unclear** –Bicknor Farmhouse to the north of the site is a Grade II listed building. Development on the site could potentially have an adverse impact but this should be able to be mitigated. The southern tip of the site has a greater landscape importance which should be conserved and reinforced. The southern portion of the site may be more archaeologically sensitive, given the large number of features locally associated with outworks of the Iron Age oppidum at Quarry Wood, Boughton Monchelsea (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and the nearby site of a Roman bath house in the valley bottom.

**Flood Risk:**

**Positive** – Only the southernmost portion of the site (at boundary with Loose Stream) is in Flood Zones 2 & 3. Flooding of the remainder of the site is highly unlikely

**Biodiversity and Green Space:**

**Positive** – in general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity and green space. Breeding bird surveys are recommended and further surveys may be required, depending on the drainage scheme. Kent Wildlife Trust has however expressed concerns regarding the inadequate natural habitat creation proposed for such a large increase in population in this area. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- A Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on this building could be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development. With suitable boundary planting to the Sutton Road boundary development of this site is unlikely to significantly adversely affect the setting of Bicknor Farmhouse.
- The southern tip of the site has a greater landscape importance which should be conserved and reinforced. Any development should extend no further than the shelter belt, leaving the valley intact as open countryside.
- To ensure that adverse impacts on air quality are minimised (site adjacent to AQMA), sustainable transport provision ought to be promoted on the site as part of new development.
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring Parkwood Industrial, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- In order to restrict surface water run off, sustainable drainage should be implemented on the site.
- In-bound bus lane would be helpful for improving accessibility and journey times to town centre and reducing contributions to congestion/air quality issues.
- Sites within the South East should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space to alleviate pressure on the North Downs Woodland SAC.

<b>1. Site Information</b>	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-17-SE
Strategic Location	South East Maidstone
Site name/address	Land at Gore Court Road – SHLAA site ref 001
Landowner	Could be approx 9 landowners
Agent	None
Current Use	Residential
Proposed Use	Residential
Greenfield/PDL	PDL
Site area (jha)	0.96ha
Site Origin	SHLAA call for sites – Not in recent Call for Sites 2012
<b>Discounting (Housing Sites)</b>	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes - between Gore Court Rd and Senacre Estate
Adjacent to built up area	Yes – forms part of urban area
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	
<b>Discount</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>2. Sustainability Appraisal</b>	
Site Description	Site lies at eastern edge of Gore Court Road immediately adjacent to the urban edge of Maidstone. A public footpath runs adjacent to the site from Gore Court Road into the Senacre estate. Site has approximately 10 existing residential dwellings.
Current use	Residential
Adjacent uses	Residential to the west, woodland (ALLI) to the north and open countryside to the south and east.
Planning and other designations	None
Planning History	Number of planning applications for minor development – e.g. conservatories and permission has been granted in 2007 and 2010 for an additional 2 dwellings in land rear of 4 Senacre Cottages (MA/07/2069 & MA/10/0717)
<b>SA Topic: Community wellbeing</b>	
<b>Accessibility to existing centres and services:</b>	
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work</p>	

SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site within Maidstone Urban Area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – The site is slightly less than 800m from the nearest GP service (Wallis Avenue Surgery).
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site around 1km from nearest Secondary School (Senacre College). Also close to New Line Learning.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site around 400m from nearest Primary School (Senacre Wood Primary School). Also close to Parkwood.
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – Site around 500m from nearest Post Office (Parkwood Post Office)
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<p><b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities</p> <p><b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities</p> <p><b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities</p>	<b>G</b> – The site would not lead to the loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>  SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?		

SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Site located 100m from sports field.
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – There do not appear to be any children’s play space in close proximity to the site.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Amenity grassland located adjacent 100m from site.
SA Topic: Economy		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G</b> – The site is located less than 600m from the Parkwood Industrial Estate.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – The site would not result in any loss of employment space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough.	<b>A</b> – Allocation not within the 40% most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Areas within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.
SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?		

**SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities**  
**SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve**  
**SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – Bus stop located on Woolley Road.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – Nearest train station (Bearsted Station) is located around 3km from the site
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There will be potential to connect site to existing cycle lane from Shepway to town centre through Senacre estate (located adjacent to the site).

**SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change**

**SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health**  
**SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>G</b> – Unlikely to be any adverse effect relating to noise.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> –Site lies within the Maidstone Town AQMA.

**SA Topic: Water resources and quality**

**SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal	<b>A</b> = Yes	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.

Aquifer?	<b>G = No</b>	
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A = Within Source Protection Zone 1</b> <b>G = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</b>	<b>G – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1.</b>
<b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b>		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land</b> <b>A = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land</b> <b>G = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land</b>	<b>G – Allocation of site would not lead to loss of high grade agricultural land.</b>
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R = Does not include previously developed land</b> <b>A = Partially within previously developed land</b> <b>G = Entirely within previously developed land</b>	<b>G – Entirety of site currently occupied by housing.</b>
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts</b> <b>A = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted</b> <b>G = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace</b>	<b>G – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.</b>
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.</b> <b>A = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</b>	<b>G = No listed building on or adjacent to the site.</b>

<p>Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?</p>	<p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p> <p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.  <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation not on or adjacent to historic park / garden</p>												
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.  <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>												
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?  A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2  <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4  <b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>G</b> – (Scale – 5) The site does not currently contain any Historic Environment Records.</p>
Scale														
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.													
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4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													



<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.  <b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.  <b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G</b> - Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation  <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation will lead to no loss of land from the Green Belt.</p>
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated  <b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated  <b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>G</b> – no adverse effect – site already developed</p>

**SA Topic: Flood Risk**

SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home  
 SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
<p>Is allocation within a flood zone?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b  <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a  <b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not in flood zone</p>
<p>Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water</p>	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface</p>	<p><b>A</b> - Surface water flooding recorded in vicinity of White</p>

flooding?	or groundwater flooding have been recorded. <b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.	Horse Lane.
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>A</b> - Site around 200m from Ancient Woodland
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	<b>G</b> – No protected trees on the site
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site	<b>A</b> - The site is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.  There is no visitor survey catchment data currently

		<p>obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster. Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are all much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Spot Lane Quarry is located towards the North of the site (around 1.5km).
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site  <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation does not contain and is not adjacent to a LWS or LNR.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?  <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space (e.g. Millennium Greens) or undesignated green space (e.g. as identified in the Green Space Strategy)?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space or undesignated green space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open or green space</p>	<b>G</b> – Does not contain designated open or green space. There is an area of amenity grassland around 100m from the site.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes  <b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> - No

Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – Does not contain allotment space
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>The most northerly site (Land at Gore Court, HO-14) in the south east Maidstone cluster of sites is approx 4km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route; Maidstone town itself, the mainline railway and the M20 all have to be crossed to visit this SAC which is a roundabout journey likely to deter all but the most dedicated walkers/cyclists. The other sites in the cluster are all 4 to 9 km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to the south east Maidstone cluster of sites.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster. Mote Park and Vinter's Valley Park LNR are all much closer (within 2km) such that they are the most likely recreational resource for residents.. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will be considered further. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>	
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?	<p>The site is located in close proximity to a number of community facilities including a primary school, secondary school and post office. The site is located close to an existing bus stop and cycle route. The site is therefore relatively well served for community facilities given its urban fringe location. The delivery of development on neighbouring sites in the south east Maidstone area in conjunction with this site may provide additional community services that will serve the site.</p> <p>This site, like the majority in this area, falls within the 20% most deprived LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix. If development in this area is not to have a significant adverse cumulative effect on general community wellbeing however, barriers to access to community facilities will need to be addressed; either through improving access to existing facilities or by providing new facilities to service this area.</p>	
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic</u>	No particular contribution.	

growth – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?

## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Positive** – site located in close proximity to a range of services including a primary school, secondary school and post office. In long term, delivery of new housing on adjacent sites could potentially lead to additional community services to serve the site. It should be noted that the site is currently occupied by ten houses.

### Economy:

**Positive** – site located in close proximity to Parkwood Industrial Estate and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that local job opportunities will be accessible to residents.

### Transport and Accessibility:

**Positive** – site is well served by existing bus stops and a cycle lane links nearby Senacre Estate to Maidstone town centre.

### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Unclear** – site located within Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for higher density housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area due to an increase in carbon emissions from greater traffic movements.

### Water resources and quality:

**No Effect** – site is already developed for housing.

### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**No Effect** – site is already developed for housing.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive**— site located outside of flood zones 2, 3a or 3b. However surface water flooding has been recorded in the vicinity of White Horse Lane. A Flood Risk Assessment should be undertaken if the site is to be more intensively redeveloped.

**Biodiversity and Green Space:**

**No Effect** – site is already developed for housing. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Sites within the South East should be covered by a policy that includes an extensive landscape scale mitigation scheme that will deflect people away from locally sensitive areas and provide alternative natural green space to alleviate pressure on the North Downs Woodland SAC.
- If the site is redeveloped more intensively, surface water flooding issues should be investigated through a Flood Risk Assessment and SUDS should be considered to address surface water runoff.

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-07-NW
Strategic Location	North West
Site name/address	Oakapple Lane, Maidstone (Barming & Heath Ward)
Landowner	Mrs V. Crouch & Mr. & Ms. B. Sumuchs
Agent	DHA Planning
Current Use	Equestrian
Proposed Use	Housing
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	2.7
Site Origin	2009 SHLAA call for sites
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes
<b>Discount</b>	<b>N</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	The land is laid out in small parcels with hedgerows along the east and west sides with additional hedgerows running across the site east to west (just north of the middle). Public footpath KM12 runs down the western side (in the northern part) before crossing diagonally across the site to the south east corner. Public footpath KM11 runs along the southern boundary of the site. To the east of the site is Oakwood Hospital cemetery with residential development (in Broomshaw Road) to the south. To the north of the site is an agricultural field (West of Hermitage Lane site). To the west are open fields. The site is accessed from an unmade track leading to Oakapple Lane to the east.
Current use	Equestrian
Adjacent uses	South – residential. West – open land/agricultural. North – agricultural. East – Oakwood Hospital cemetery and then residential beyond.
Planning and other designations	ENV31 – Strategic Gap.
Planning History	78/1807 - Portable stables – APPROVED.
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	
Accessibility to existing centres and services:	
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health	
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest	

SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated. <b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well <b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area	<b>A</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – Marigold Way GP surgery – 460m
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 900m from Bower Grove Primary and Secondary School. Other local primary schools at Westborough, St Simon Stock, Barming.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 900m from Bower Grove Primary and Secondary School. Oakwood Park within 1 mile.
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – Site 750m from closest Post Office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>  SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest		



SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – Site located 1.4km from Kent College Sports Centre.
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Barming Heath- 630m away.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R</b> – Amenity grassland is located around 350m from the site.
SA Topic: Economy		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>A</b> – Quarry Wood Industrial Estate located around 1.8km from the site.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site will not result in the loss of employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA within the borough.	<b>A</b> – Allocation will not result in development in an area within the 40% most deprived LSOA.
SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health		

SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There is a bus stop located on Hermitage Lane around 300m from the site.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> - Barming train station located around 1.8km from the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – There do not appear to be any cycle routes in close proximity to the site.

**SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>G</b> – No adverse effects anticipated. Potential vibration from Gallagher’s Quarry to the west?
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8)?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone Town AQMA.

**SA Topic: Water resources and quality**

SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
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Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to development within a SPZ.
<b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b>		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – Site allocated as grade 2 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Allocation does not include previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not impact on a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there	<b>G</b> – No listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.

	is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.													
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.												
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a conservation area.												
Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future? A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:	<b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2 <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4 <b>G</b> = Scale 5	<b>A</b> - (Score – 4) Extensive prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains to immediate north. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.												
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Scale														
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4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to	<b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and	<b>G</b> – Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and												

<p>impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p>there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.  <b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.  <b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p>negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation  <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to the loss of Green Belt Land.</p>
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated  <b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated  <b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area but is quite a contained site with views limited by its lack of road frontage. Substantial hedgerows bound the site and cross it and some of these would be lost if development occurred. To the south is significant residential development.</p>
<p><b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b></p>		
<p><b>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</b>  <b>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</b>  <b>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</b></p>		
<p>Appraisal Question</p>	<p>Significant effect criteria</p>	<p>Answer/Outcome</p>
<p>Is allocation within a flood zone?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b  <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a  <b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site within flood zone 1.</p>
<p>Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?</p>	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p>	<p><b>G</b> - Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>

	G = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.	
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>		
SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	R = Includes AW/ASNW A = <400m from an AW/ASNW G = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	A – Ancient Woodland located towards the north of the site (would require buffering).
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	R = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against A = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated G = No protected trees on the site	G – There are no protected trees on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	R = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough A = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives G = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	G – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the Borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	R = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site A = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site G = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site	A – The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.  There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on

		<p>the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 2.6km from Allington Quarry SSSI.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site  <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain and is not adjacent to any LWS or LNRs.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?  <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area although the Kent Landscape Information System identifies this site as having medium opportunity for the creation of acid soil woodland with minor opportunity for acid grassland.
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain designated open space.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes  <b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not designated for its geological or geomorphological importance.
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		

<p>Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?</p>	<p>The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>The Oakapple Lane site along with other identified sites located towards the north west of Maidstone is well served by existing community facilities. Alongside other larger allocations in the north west cluster, there is the potential for the development of additional community facilities to be part funded by new housing development in this area which will further enhance the offer in the area.</p> <p>This site falls within the least deprived LSOAs in the country (with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). However, a number of adjacent areas are within the 40% most deprived. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be no additional requirement for utilities infrastructure other than the normal costs of development on a greenfield site. The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>

**Summary and Conclusions**



The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services and may help to deliver further services/facilities.

**Economy:**

**Positive** - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and Maidstone Hospital and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Very Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Hermitage Lane and at Barming train station located close to the site. Good road access.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and have a negative impact on air quality. Potential for vibration from Gallagher’s Quarry to the west.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Positive** – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area but would integrate well with surrounding development. Some adverse impact on existing hedgerows as some would be lost. There are extensive prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains to the immediate north of the site. Development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Positive** – in general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity and green space although a biodiversity opportunity would be lost in terms of potential acid soil woodland or acid grassland creation. Ancient woodland is located on the northern boundary of the site and would require a buffer. Note potential

cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- The woodland to the north of the site is ancient woodland and as such any development would need to include a buffer to this land.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that site is not adversely affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations at Gallagher's Quarry.
- Archaeological mitigation measures

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-08-NW
Strategic Location	North west
Site name/address	Land south of Allington Way
Landowner	Hillreed Homes
Agent	Hillreed Homes
Current Use	Open land
Proposed Use	Residential
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	0.35
Site Origin	2012 Call for sites
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	N/A
<b>Discount</b>	<b>NO</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	L shaped site south of Allington Way. The site itself is open with elements of scrub and bushes on site. On the eastern boundaries of the site are fences to existing residential properties and on all other boundaries are a mixture of hedges and trees.
Current use	Open land.
Adjacent uses	Residential to the east and north. Orchard to the west. Open land designated for housing to the south (Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000).
Planning and other designations	Designated as strategic gap in the MBWLP 2000.
Planning History	No planning history.
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	
Accessibility to existing centres and services:	
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work</p>	

SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone urban area?	<b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated. <b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone urban area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well <b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone urban area	<b>A</b> – Site located adjacent to Maidstone urban area
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R</b> – Site located 800m from the closest doctors surgery.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>A</b> – Site 1.7km from Maidstone Girls Grammar School.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 800m from Allington Primary School.
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – Site 800m from closest Post Office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>  SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?		

SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Site located 1km from nearest outdoor sports facilities.
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Corben Close play area – 190m.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Amenity grassland is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site.
SA Topic: Economy		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G</b> – Quarry Wood Industrial Estate located around 1km from the site.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site will not result in the loss of employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>A</b> – Site not within the 40% most deprived LSOA within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.
SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?		

**SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities**  
**SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve**  
**SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There is a bus stop located on Allington Way around 200m from the site.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> - Barming train station located around 1km from the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>A</b> – 700m from regional route 12 (A20 London Road).

**SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change**

**SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health**  
**SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>R</b> –Traffic noise from Hermitage Lane would be an issue, as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher’s Quarry to the West.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> –Site is located within the Maidstone Town AQMA.

**SA Topic: Water resources and quality**

**SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal	<b>A</b> = Yes	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.

Aquifer?	<b>G</b> = No	
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to development within a SPZ.
<b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b>		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – Site allocated as grade 2 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Allocation does not include previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not impact on a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.	<b>G</b> – No listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.

<p>Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?</p>	<p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p> <p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.</p>												
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a conservation area.</p>												
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>A – (Score – 4)</b> No sites of archaeological potential immediately adjacent. However as noted on the east of Hermitage Lane site:</p> <p>“West of site around The Old Hermitage contains significant prehistoric remains, part of site north of hospital car park recorded as containing Roman burials. Flying bomb or wartime plane crash site in east of site. Development should be avoided in parts of the site. Predetermination evaluation necessary in some parts, development may be possible with conditioned archaeological measures elsewhere”</p>
Scale														
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
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5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													



<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G</b> -Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to the loss of Green Belt Land.</p>
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area. However it is a discreet site hidden from long distance and local views by surrounding landscape and uses.</p>
<p><b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b></p>		
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home            SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment            SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
<p>Appraisal Question</p>	<p>Significant effect criteria</p>	<p>Answer/Outcome</p>
<p>Is allocation within a flood zone?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b  <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site within flood zone 1.</p>

	<b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded. <b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.	<b>G</b> - Low risk. No previous incidents recorded.
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – No ancient woodland located in close proximity to the site.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	<b>G</b> – There are no protected trees on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on Blue Infrastructure in the Borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site	<b>A</b> – The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.

		<p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 1.2km from Allington Quarry SSSI.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats although a survey would be required.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site  <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain and is not adjacent to any LWS or LNRs.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?  <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open  <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain designated open space.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes  <b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not designated for its geological or geomorphological importance.
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		

<p>Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?</p>	<p>The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>This site along with other identified sites located towards the north west of Maidstone is well served by existing community facilities. There is the potential for the development of additional community facilities to be part funded by new housing development in this area which will further enhance the offer in the area.</p> <p>The site falls within the least deprived SOAs in the country (with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). However, a number of areas surrounding the site are within the 40% most deprived SOAs. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be no additional requirement for utilities infrastructure other than the normal costs of development on a greenfield site. The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>
<h2>Summary and Conclusions</h2>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both</p>	

in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive** / **Positive** / **Unclear** / **No Effect** / **Negative** / **Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services and may help to deliver further services/facilities.

**Economy:**

**Positive** - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and Maidstone Hospital and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Very Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Hermitage Lane and at Barming train station located close to the site.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and have a negative impact on air quality. Traffic noise would be an issue for residents (the site is located close to Maidstone Hospital and adjacent to Hermitage Lane), as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher’s Quarry to the west.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Positive** – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area but would integrate well with surrounding development, including proposed new development on adjacent site. There are no sites of archaeological potential immediately adjacent however significant historic features have been discovered close by.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Positive** – in general, allocation of the site unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity and green space, but ecological surveys would be required to confirm this – part of the site may have significant ecological value . Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Incorporate measures to ensure that the site is not adversely affected by noise pollution from Hermitage Lane and Maidstone Hospital.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that site is not adversely affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations at Gallagher's Quarry.

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-10-NW, HO-13-NW
Strategic Location	North west
Site name/address	Land East of Hermitage Lane (historically addressed as one site).
Landowner	Reservoir – South East Water/Swan Properties. Southern half of site (south of footpath/restricted byway, Croudace). North of byway – under option.
Agent	Barton Willmore/Croudace. Reservoir – David Hicken Associates.
Current Use	1.74 ha in the centre of the site is a disused reservoir. The majority of the rest of the site, which is located within the borough, is currently open farm land. Land in Tonbridge and Malling is a mixture of farm/orchard uses.
Proposed Use	Housing.
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield.
Site area (ha)	44.4 (including reservoir 1.74). 30.6 within borough, remainder within Tonbridge and Malling.
Site Origin	Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 housing allocation.
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes
<b>Discount</b>	<b>NO</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	This is a large site that runs from the Maidstone Hospital in the south to Barming railway station in the north. About half way along crossing the site south west to north east is the borough boundary where Tonbridge and Malling Borough begins. Within the borough (south of the boundary) is a disused water reservoir and a large area of open land surrounding it. The open land raises towards the south. Also running south west to north east and along the north western frontage of the reservoir is a public footpath/restricted byway. Towards the southern edge of the site is a large wooded area and south of this is more open land, adjacent to Maidstone Hospital. The area north of the footpath/byway is orchards and then open fields.
Current use	1.74 ha in the centre of the site is a disused reservoir. The majority of the rest of the site, which is located within the borough, is currently open farm land. Land in Tonbridge and Malling is a mixture of farm/orchard uses.
Adjacent uses	South-east, east and north-east – residential. North (outside of borough) – Barming railway station. West – open frontage on to Hermitage Lane with some residential, Opposite this, a number of uses including quarry and employment. South – Maidstone hospital.
Planning and other designations	The land south of the footpath/restricted byway is designated as a housing allocation in the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000. The allocated land is also identified for a GP surgery and a primary school. The remainder of the site is designated as either strategic gap or is

	outside of the borough.	
Planning History	<p>The site was allocated by the Inspector at the examination in public for the 2000 local plan. The Inspector concluded that the open area of the site encroached on the urban area rather than the opposite.</p> <p>Applications 01/0080 and 01/1510 were submitted by Croudace Ltd in 2001 and were refused non-determined/withdrawn respectively. At appeal the non-determined application was dismissed, upholding a council moratorium on the development of its greenfield allocations. 06/1546 (in 2006) determined that an environmental statement is not required for a mixed use development comprising 650 dwellings and 1,393m<sup>2</sup> of B1a employment space.</p>	
<b>SA Topic: Community wellbeing</b>		
<b>Accessibility to existing centres and services:</b>		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work</p> <p>SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities</p> <p>SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities</p> <p>SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone urban area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone urban area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone urban area</p>	<b>A</b> – The southern part of the site is located within the Maidstone urban area. The northern part of the site is located adjacent to the Maidstone urban area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>R</b> – Site located 900m from the closest doctors surgery but parts of the site will be close to Maidstone Hospital. Part of site currently allocated for a doctors surgery.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 1.4km from Maidstone Girls Grammar School.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 680m from Palace Wood Primary School. A further primary school may be needed as part of the development.



How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – Site 800m from closest Post Office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b> SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Site located 1km from nearest outdoor sports facilities.
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – 360m from playground at Keswick Drive.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> - Land to the north of the footpath/restricted byway is designated as public open space Policy ENV24(xiii).
<b>SA Topic: Economy</b>		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>A</b> – Quarry Wood Industrial Estate located around 2.4km from the site. Close proximity to Maidstone Hospital.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site will not result in the loss of employment land/space.

	<p>employment</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment</p> <p><b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem</p>	
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<p><b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA within the borough..</p>	<b>G</b> – The northern part of the site is located in an area within the 40% most deprived LSOAs.

**SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400 - 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>G</b> – There is a bus stop located on Hermitage Lane around 200m from the site.
How far is the nearest train station?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400 - 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>G</b> - Barming train station located adjacent to the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400 - 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m</p>	<b>A</b> – 680 metres from regional route 12 (A20 London Road).

**SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>R</b> – Site located on the eastern side of Hermitage Lane. Traffic noise would be an issue, as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher’s Quarry to the West.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Part of this site is located within the Maidstone Town AQMA.

## SA Topic: Water resources and quality

### SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to development within a SPZ.

## SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment

### Land Use:

### SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – Site allocated as grade 2 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Allocation does not include previously developed land.

Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<p><b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not impact on a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p>	<b>G</b> – No listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a conservation area.
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>R</b> - (Scale – 2) West of site around The Old Hermitage contains significant prehistoric remains, part of site north of hospital car park recorded as containing Roman burials. Flying bomb or wartime plane crash site in east of site.</p> <p>Development should be avoided in these parts of the</p>

<b>Scale</b>			site. Predetermination evaluation necessary in some parts, development may be possible with archaeological mitigation measures elsewhere.
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided		
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.		
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?		<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?		<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to the loss of Green Belt Land.</p>
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?		<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area. From the North Downs at the top of Blue Bell Hill (A229) the open part of this site (to be developed) is visible within the landscape.</p>

	(taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated <b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect	
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## SA Topic: Flood Risk

SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home  
 SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a <b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site within flood zone 1.

Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?

**A** = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.  
**G** = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.

**G** - Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.

## SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure

SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity

SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>A</b> – Ancient Woodland located towards the southern boundary of the site (opposite side of Hermitage Lane).
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	<b>A</b> – A number of TPOs are present on site that protect the main areas of existing trees including, the north east and south east boundaries and a large part of the wooded area that bisects north west to south east from the restricted byway. It is not proposed that these trees would be removed, however, an emergency access

		would likely be needed into Howard Drive on the north eastern boundary.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>A</b> – The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20 and HO-19) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400-800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 1.2km from Allington Quarry SSSI.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats</p> <p><b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats although deciduous woodland habitat is located towards the south western part of the site. It has been

		recommended that the south-western section of the site be retained and enhanced for biodiversity, as the potential for ecological interest in this area is likely to present the greatest ecological constraint to the site's development.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain and is not adjacent to any LWS or LNRs.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area? <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area.
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<b>R</b> = Contains designated open space <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space	<b>R</b> –Land to the north of the footpath/restricted byway is designated as public open space (Policy ENV24(xiii)).
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<b>R</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>G</b> – Site not designated for its geological or geomorphological importance.
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<b>R</b> = Contains allotment space <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>	
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed	This site along with other identified sites located towards the north west of Maidstone is well served by existing community facilities. There is the potential for the development of additional community facilities to be part funded	



<p>development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>by housing development on this site (doctors surgery, primary school) which will further enhance the offer in the area.</p> <p>The site falls within the 20 - 40% most deprived SOAs in the country (with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010) along with a number of adjacent areas. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be no additional requirement for utilities infrastructure other than the normal costs of development on a greenfield site. The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>No particular contribution – the site may deliver housing to encourage the retention of higher skilled employees.</p>

## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**  
**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services and may help to deliver further services/facilities.

**Economy:**  
**Positive** - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and Maidstone Hospital and has good transport links to Maidstone Town Centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**  
**Very Positive** – site well served by public transport. There are bus stops located on Hermitage Lane and at Barming train station located close to the site. Good road access.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent/partly within the Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and have a negative impact on air quality. Traffic noise would be an issue for residents (adjacent to Hermitage Lane), as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher’s Quarry.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Unclear** – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area. Therefore, there could potentially be an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area. This would need to be mitigated through the design and layout of potential new development. Loss of Grade 2 agricultural land. Parts of the site contain significant archaeological features and development should be avoided in these parts of the site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Negative** – Land to the north of the footpath/restricted byway is designated as public open space (Policy ENV24(xiii)). Allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity but ecological surveys would be required to confirm this – the south west part of the site may have significant ecological value and should be retained and enhanced for biodiversity purposes as the site lies within the Greensand Heath and Commons Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Allocation of site for development could potentially have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character. However, it is likely that this could be mitigated through delivering appropriate layout, scale and type of development.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that the site is not adversely affected by noise pollution from Hermitage Lane and Maidstone Hospital.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that site is not adversely affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations at Gallagher's Quarry.
- Retain south-western part of the site for biodiversity enhancement purposes.
- Retain areas of designated public open space, or make provision or contributions to off-site provision.
- Incorporate community facilities if need is confirmed (GP, primary school)
- Archaeological predetermination evaluation necessary in some parts, development may be possible with archaeological mitigation measures elsewhere.

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-11-NW
Strategic Location	North west
Site name/address	Land west of Hermitage Lane, Maidstone (Heath Ward)
Landowner	Swan Properties
Agent	DHA Planning
Current Use	Currently in use for arable farming
Proposed Use	Housing
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	8.34
Site Origin	2009 SHLAA call for sites
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes
<b>Discount</b>	<b>NO</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	The site is an arrow shaped piece of land with a frontage onto Hermitage Lane of approximately 230m. A small part of the site (the point of the arrow, furthest west) is within Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Public footpath KB34 runs along the north western boundary of the site. The site is opposite Maidstone Hospital and between commercial premises to the south and a reservoir facility to the north.
Current use	Currently in use for arable farming.
Adjacent uses	South – commercial and residential beyond. West – woodland/open land/farm. North – reservoir and woodland. East – Hermitage Lane and then residential beyond.
Planning and other designations	ENV31 – Strategic Gap.
Planning History	88/2253 - Construction of divisional offices workshop district depots and service reservoir with booster pump station – REFUSED.
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	
Accessibility to existing centres and services:	
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and</p>	

remain in work SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone urban area?	<b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated. <b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone urban area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well <b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone urban area	<b>A</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone urban area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – 460m from Marigold Way GP surgery.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 750m from Bower Grove Primary and Secondary School. Other local primary schools at Westborough, St Simon Stock, Barming.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 750m from Bower Grove Primary and Secondary School. Oakwood Park within 1 mile.
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – Site 750m from closest Post Office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b> SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		

SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Site located 1.2km from Kent College Sports Centre.
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – 630m from Barming Heath.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R</b> – Amenity grassland is located around 350m from the site.
SA Topic: Economy		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G</b> – Quarry Wood Industrial Estate located around 1.8km from the site. Site opposite Maidstone Hospital.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site will not result in the loss of employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>A</b> – Allocation will not result in development in an area within the 40% most deprived LSOA.
SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest		

SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There is a bus stop located on Hermitage Lane around 200m from the site.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> - Barming train station located around 1km from the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – There do not appear to be any cycle routes in close proximity to the site.

### SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>R</b> – This site is situated close to Hermitage Lane and opposite Maidstone Hospital. Traffic noise would be an issue, as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher’s Quarry to the West.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8)))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone Town AQMA.

### SA Topic: Water resources and quality

SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to development within a SPZ.

## SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment

### Land Use:

SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – Site allocated as grade 2 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Allocation does not include previously developed land.

### Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:

SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities

SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not impact on a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.	<b>G</b> – No listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.



	<p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p>													
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.												
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a conservation area.												
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>A</b> – (Scale – 4) Extensive prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains to immediate north. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.</p>
Scale														
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.													
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													

Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<b>G</b> - Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to the loss of Green Belt Land.
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<b>G</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area with significant development to the south and Maidstone Hospital to the east on the opposite side of Hermitage Lane. Long distance views would be screened by the woodland to the north west of the site.
<b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b>		
<p><b>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</b></p> <p><b>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</b></p> <p><b>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</b></p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p>	<b>G</b> – Site within flood zone 1.

	<b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded. <b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.	<b>G</b> - Low risk. No previous incidents recorded.
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>A</b> – Ancient Woodland located along the north western boundary of the site – requires buffer.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	<b>G</b> – There are no protected trees on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the Borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site	<b>A</b> – The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.

		<p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 2.2km from Allington Quarry SSSI.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site  <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain and is not adjacent to any LWS or LNRs.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?  <b>G</b> = Not within a opportunity area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site is not formally designated as public open space.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes  <b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not designated for its geological or geomorphological importance.
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		

<p>Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?</p>	<p>The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>This site along with other identified sites located towards the north west of Maidstone is well served by existing community facilities. There is the potential for the development of additional community facilities to be part funded by new housing development in this area which will further enhance the offer in the area.</p> <p>Part of this site falls within the 40% most deprived SOAs in the country (with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010) along with a number of adjacent areas. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be no additional requirement for utilities infrastructure other than the normal costs of development on a greenfield site. The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>
<h2>Summary and Conclusions</h2>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both</p>	

in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services and may help to deliver further services/facilities.

**Economy:**

**Positive** - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and Maidstone Hospital and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Very Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Hermitage Lane and at Barming Train Station located close to the site. Good road access.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, which could subsequently increase traffic movements and have a negative impact on air quality. Traffic noise would be an issue for residents (the site is located close to Maidstone Hospital and adjacent to Hermitage Lane), as would noise and, in particular, vibration from nearby Gallagher’s Quarry to the west.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Positive** – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area but would integrate well with surrounding development. There are extensive prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains to the immediate north of the site but development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green Space:**

**Very Positive** – In general, allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure. Ancient woodland is located on the northern boundary of the site and would require a buffer. Potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of the report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- The woodland to the north of the site is ancient woodland and as such any development would need to include a buffer to this land.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that the site is not adversely affected by noise pollution from Hermitage Lane and Maidstone Hospital.
- Incorporate measures to ensure that site is not adversely affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations at Gallagher's Quarry

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-16-NW
Strategic Location	North west
Site name/address	Bell Farm, North Street, Barming
Landowner	N/A
Agent	Alex Anderson Pegasus Planning
Current Use	Used as a mixture of pasture and orchards.
Proposed Use	Housing
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (ha)	10.17
Site Origin	SHLAA 2009 call for sites
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes
<b>Discount</b>	<b>N</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	Site occupies northern half of western boundary to North Street. Site is generally open with some tree belts forming internal boundaries and some sections used as orchards. The site surrounds the small residential developments on the western side of North Street and abuts the northern edge of the Cedar Drive (accessed from A26 Tonbridge Road) and Matterdale Gardens (accessed from North Street) residential developments.
Current use	Used as a mixture of pasture and orchards.
Adjacent uses	South – residential. West – open land/farm. North – residential (North Pole Road). East – residential/pub.
Planning and other designations	The site is located in an Area of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI).
Planning History	There is no planning history on site.
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	
Accessibility to existing centres and services:	
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health	
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest	



SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone urban area?	<b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated. <b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone urban area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well <b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone urban area	<b>A</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone urban area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R</b> – Site located 1.1km from Marigold Way GP surgery.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 1.1km from Bower Grove Primary and Secondary School.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 100m from Barming Primary School.
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Site 150m from closest Post Office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b> SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		

SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>A</b> – Site located 1.8km from Kent College Sports Centre.
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – 600m South Street play area.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible green space (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Amenity grassland is located adjacent to the site.
SA Topic: Economy		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>A</b> – Quarry Wood Industrial Estate located around 2km from the site.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site will not result in the loss of employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>A</b> – Allocation will not result in development in an area within the 40% most deprived LOSA.
SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?		

**SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities**  
**SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve**  
**SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There is a bus stop located on Tonbridge Road around 200m from the site.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> - East Farleigh railway station 2.1km from site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – There do not appear to be any cycle routes in close proximity to the site.

**SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change**

**SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health**  
**SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>A</b> – Site is close to Gallagher’s Quarry and could potentially be affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone Town AQMA.

**SA Topic: Water resources and quality**

**SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
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Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to development within a SPZ.
<b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b>		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – Site allocated as grade 2 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Allocation does not include previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not impact on a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there	<b>R</b> – Development of the site opposite the listed buildings at Broomfield and The Oast House, Heath Road, would remove the last vestiges of rural setting for this historic farm group to the detriment of their significance. There

	is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.	would be a lesser impact on St. Cuthbert's Cottage															
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.															
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a conservation area.															
Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future? A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:	<b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2 <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4 <b>G</b> = Scale 5	<b>A</b> – (Scale – 4) Post-medieval buildings nearby. Roman and prehistoric and medieval site 500m south. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.															
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>1.1</th> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td></td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td></td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td></td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			1.1	Scale		1		Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2		Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3		Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4		Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.
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4		Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.															

5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to the loss of Green Belt Land.</p>	
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area. The site sits at the top of the valley and is hidden from view from the A26 Tonbridge Road, however, is visible from the opposite side of the Medway valley. Therefore, there could potentially be an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area. This would need to be mitigated through the design and layout of potential new development. The site is located in an Area of Local Landscape Importance.</p>	
<b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b>			
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</p> <p>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</p> <p>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>			
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome	

Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site within flood zone 1.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>	<b>G</b> - Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> – Ancient Woodland located towards the north of the site. Ecological survey would be required – potential indirect impacts such as recreational disturbance
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	<b>G</b> – There are no protected trees on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on Blue Infrastructure in the Borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a</p>	<b>A</b> – The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20 and HO-19) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (such as this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most

	significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site	visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.  There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<b>R</b> = <400m <b>A</b> = 400-800m <b>G</b> = >800m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site 3.1km from Allington Quarry SSSI.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats but an ecological survey would be required.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain and is not directly adjacent to any LWS or LNRs.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area? <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<b>R</b> = Contains designated open space <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain open space.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<b>R</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>G</b> – Site not designated for its geological or geomorphological importance.
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<b>R</b> = Contains allotment space	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.



	G = Does not contain allotment space	
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20 and HO-19) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (including this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>	
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to <u>access existing services/infrastructure</u> ?	<p>The Bell Farm site along with other identified sites located towards the north west of Maidstone is well served by existing community facilities. When considered alongside the other large allocations in the north west cluster, there is the potential for the development of additional community facilities as part of new housing development which will further enhance the offer in the area.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be no additional requirement for utilities infrastructure other than the normal costs of development on a greenfield site. The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area.</p>	
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?	No particular contribution.	
<b>Summary and Conclusions</b>		
The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are		

likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services. In the long term, delivery of new housing on this and nearby sites could potentially lead to the development of additional community services to serve the site.

**Economy:**

**Positive** - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate and has good transport links to Maidstone Town Centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Tonbridge Road and at Barming Bridge Train Station located close to the site.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Unclear** – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population, subsequent increase in traffic movements, congestion and negative impacts on air quality. The site is close to Gallagher’s Quarry and could potentially be affected by vibration and dust from quarrying operations.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Very Negative** – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area, at the top of the valley in an Area of Local Landscape Importance. It is hidden from view from the A26 Tonbridge Road however it is visible from the opposite side of the Medway valley. Therefore, there could potentially be an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area. Likely adverse impact on the rural setting of the local listed buildings. Development would lead to loss of Grade 2 Agricultural Land. There are post-medieval buildings nearby and a Roman and prehistoric and medieval site 500m south. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – Allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity although this would need to be confirmed by a preliminary ecological

assessment. There could be indirect impacts from recreational disturbance on the nearby LWS/ancient woodland. Note potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC identified above. Allocation of the site would not result in the loss of open space.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Consider appropriate mitigation measures for recreational impacts on the ancient woodland to the north of the site and the loss of rural setting of the local listed buildings
- Ensure that any potential adverse impacts relating to vibration and dust from nearby quarrying emissions is addressed through noise, vibration and dust attenuation measures.
- Preliminary ecological assessment to confirm need for more detailed surveys
- Archaeological mitigation measures

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-19
Strategic Location	North west.
Site name/address	Bridge Nursery.
Landowner	Taylor Wimpey.
Agent	Taylor Wimpey.
Current Use	Open field (part allocated as residential, part allocated as community facilities in Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000).
Proposed Use	Residential.
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield.
Site area (jha)	5.5ha within Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) area, 1.5ha in Tonbridge Malling Borough Council (TMBC) area.
Site Origin	Allocated site – Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000.
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes.
Adjacent to built up area	Yes.
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	N/A.
<b>Discount</b>	<b>NO</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	Site is empty grassland with trees and shrubs. In the centre of the site is a rectangular area bordered by trees where a wartime pillbox building used to be sited. The site slopes down from west to east (A20 London Road towards the railway at the eastern end). Railway borders site, although 2/3 of the railway is in the TMBC area so would not border a large part of the proposed residential area directly. From west to east railway goes from an embankment to being level with the site. At the north eastern end of the site is a small wooded area with informal links through to the sports ground on Castle Way.
Current use	No current use. Empty field, used by walkers. Area in the middle of the site where a pillbox building used to be shows evidence of having been used/being used as an area to sleep.
Adjacent uses	South east – residential. North east – small woodland and sports ground. North – railway track and Allington 20/20 industrial estate beyond, including incinerator. West – A20 London Road, residential and small retail area (DFS).
Planning and other designations	Designated for residential and open space in MBWLP 2000.
Planning History	00/1712 – 80 units – refused. 90/0997 – Turning area for buses – withdrawn. 88/1123 – Outline residential – refused. 86/0006 – Outline residential – refused. 81/0519 – Residential development – refused.
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	

Accessibility to existing centres and services:		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work</p> <p>SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities</p> <p>SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities</p> <p>SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone urban area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone urban area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone urban area</p>	<b>G</b> – The southern part of the site is located within the Maidstone urban area. The northern part is located within the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>A</b> – Site located around 600m from closest doctors surgery.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>A</b> – Site 1.7km from Maidstone Girls Grammar School.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 300m from Allington Primary School.
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 100m from closest Post Office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<p><b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities</p> <p><b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities</p> <p><b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.

	facilities	
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b> SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Site adjacent to sports recreation ground.
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – 220m, Adisham Drive.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Amenity grassland is located around 200m from the site.
<b>SA Topic: Economy</b>		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G</b> – Quarry Wood Industrial Estate located around 1km from the site. There is also an industrial estate located towards the north of the site on the other side of the railway.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site will not result in the loss of employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas(LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>G</b> – Allocation will result in development in an area within the 40% most deprived LSOA (part of the site is located within the 40% most deprived LSOA).

## SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There is a bus stop located on London Road (close to the Beaver Road junction).
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>A</b> - Barming train station located around 1.5km from the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – Regional route 12 runs along the south western boundary of the site.

## SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>R</b> – This site is close to the M20 motorway and railway and therefore noise quality issues would be important at this locality.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8)))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA.  This site is close to the M20 motorway and railway and therefore air quality issues would be important at this locality. There is also an adjacent former landfill site (in

		Tonbridge & Malling District) to the North West as well as others to the South East.
<b>SA Topic: Water resources and quality</b>		
<b>SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to development within a SPZ.
<b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b>		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – land allocated as Grade 2 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>A</b> – Area in the middle of the site where a building used to be.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not impact on a SAM.



	<p>impacts</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace</p>							
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p>	<b>G</b> – No listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.						
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.						
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a conservation area.						
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>A</b> – (Scale – 4) Site of wartime pillbox, prehistoric tools found to south. Development with archaeological mitigation measures should be possible on this site.</p>
Scale								
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided							
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.							

3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?		<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<b>G</b> - Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?		<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to the loss of Green Belt Land.
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?		<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<b>G</b> – The site is generally hidden from long distance views by the Maidstone East railway line and the Maidstone incinerator. Views of the North Downs are possible from the site.
<b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b>			

SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home		
SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment		
SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a <b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site within flood zone 1.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded. <b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.	<b>G</b> - Low risk. No previous incidents recorded.
SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure		
SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – No ancient woodland located within 400m of the site.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	<b>A</b> – A number of tree protection orders exist on site including a number of trees in the area where the pillbox building used to exist and a number of trees along the north eastern edge of the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.

<p>Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site  <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site  <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>A</b> – This site and HO-20-NW are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. This site may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Site around 100m from Allington Quarry SSSI.</p>
<p>Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats but KCC advise that an ecological survey should be undertaken.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site  <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain and is not adjacent to any LWS or LNRs.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Biodiversity Opportunity</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>

Area?	<b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area?	
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<b>R</b> = Contains designated open space <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space	<b>R</b> - The whole site is identified as public open space – Policy ENV24(xi).
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<b>R</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>G</b> – Site not designated for its geological or geomorphological importance although the Allington Quarry SSSI is located around 100m from the site.
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<b>R</b> = Contains allotment space <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (this site and HO-20-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster are 5-8km away from the SAC. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>	
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?	<p>The Bridge Nursery site along with other identified sites located towards the north west of Maidstone is well served by existing community facilities. When considered alongside the larger allocations in the north west cluster, there is the potential for the development of additional community facilities as part of new housing development which will further enhance the offer in the area.</p> <p>This site falls partially within the least deprived SOAs in the country (with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010) and partially within the 40% most deprived. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be no additional requirement for utilities infrastructure other than the normal costs of</p>	

	development on a greenfield site. The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area.
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?	No particular contribution.
<h2>Summary and Conclusions</h2>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative</b> - any comments or details</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services. In the long term, delivery of new housing on nearby sites could potentially lead to the development of additional community services to serve the site.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate, industrial estate to the north and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Positive</b> – the site is well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on London Road and at Barming train station located close to the site.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – This site is close to the M20 motorway and railway and therefore air and noise quality issues would be important at this locality. There is also an adjacent former landfill site (in Tonbridge &amp; Malling District) to the north west as well as others to the south east.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.</p>	

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Negative** – The site is generally hidden from long distance views by the Maidstone East railway line and the Maidstone incinerator. Views of the North Downs are possible from the site however it does not appear to have any significant landscape character value. However, the site is allocated as grade 2 agricultural land and is a Greenfield site. Development of the site would lead to a loss of high grade agricultural land. Site of wartime pillbox, prehistoric tools found to south. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Negative** – Development of this site would lead to the loss of designated open space. Potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report..

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20/railway, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- Archaeological mitigation measures

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-20-NW.
Strategic Location	North west.
Site name/address	Bunyard Farm.
Landowner	Unknown.
Agent	John Clarke Kingsway Properties
Current Use	Car wash.
Proposed Use	Residential.
Greenfield/PDL	PDL.
Site area (jha)	9.53
Site Origin	2009 SHLAA call for sites.
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes.
Adjacent to built up area	Yes.
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	N/A.
<b>Discount</b>	<b>NO.</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	Small triangular strip at the north western edge of the Maidstone urban area
Current use	Car wash
Adjacent uses	Residential, retail, park and ride to south. Residential/residential allocation to the east (across A20 London Road). Open land to north and west, with railway line to north although not immediately adjacent.
Planning and other designations	Outside of urban area – no designation
Planning History	1) 06/0480, BUNYARD FARM, LONDON ROAD, MAIDSTONE, ME160LP, A consultation with Maidstone Borough Council by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council for 25 no. apartments, access, parking and associated open space as shown on 0648/06/2, 0648/05/2 Rev C, 2382.020, received on 17/03/06. Raise Objections, 03/06/2006. 2) 06/0629, BUNYARD FARM, LONDON ROAD, MAIDSTONE, ME160LP, Outline application for the creation of 20 no. apartments with access parking and associated open space. Siting, means of access, design and external appearance to be considered at this stage and landscaping reserved for future consideration, Withdrawn, 19/05/2006.
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	
Accessibility to existing centres and services:	



SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone urban area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone urban area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone urban area</p>	<b>A</b> – Site located adjacent to Maidstone urban area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Site located around 350m from closest doctors surgery.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>A</b> – Site 1.7km from Maidstone Girls Grammar School.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 300m from Allington Primary School.
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Site 250m from closest Post Office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<p><b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities</p> <p><b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities</p> <p><b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.

**Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Site located around 300m from nearest outdoor sports facilities.
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Juniper Close, 380m.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Amenity grassland is located around 300m from the site.
SA Topic: Economy		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing or employment	<b>G</b> – Quarry Wood Industrial Estate located around 1km from the site. There is also an industrial estate located towards the north east of the site on the other side of the railway.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site will not result in the loss of employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>G</b> – Allocation will result in development in an area within the 40% most deprived LSOA (part of the site is located within the 40% most deprived LSOA).
SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility		

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities? SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There is a bus stop located on London Road (close to the Beaver Road junction). The London Road park and ride site is located at Beaver Road.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> - Barming train station located around 1.5km from the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – Regional route 12 passes the northern edge of the site (A20 London Road).
SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>R</b> – This site is in the extreme North West of the Borough. It is close to the M20 motorway and railway and therefore noise quality issues would be important at this locality.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA.  This site is in the extreme North West of the Borough. It is close to the M20 motorway and railway and therefore air quality issues would be important at this locality.

SA Topic: Water resources and quality		
SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to development within a SPZ.
SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment		
Land Use:		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – Site does not include grade 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>A</b> – Site partially within previously developed land.
Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not impact on a SAM.

	to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace									
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.	<b>G</b> – No listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.								
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.								
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area	<b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a conservation area.								
Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future? A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:	<b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2 <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4 <b>G</b> = Scale 5	<b>A</b> – (Scale – 4) Prehistoric tools found to south. Site at least partly quarried.  Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a		
Scale										
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided									
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.									
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a									

	planning approval.		
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?		<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<b>A</b> – Site within 5km of the Kent Downs AONB.
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?		<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to the loss of Green Belt Land.
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?		<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<b>G</b> – The sites is generally well contained within a slight dip in the landform and by vegetation except to the south west where it is open to an apparently unmanaged field which rises slightly away from the site. The site is therefore generally well contained from the wider area and falls within the visual influence of the adjoining development.
<b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b>			
<p><b>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</b></p> <p><b>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</b></p> <p><b>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</b></p>			

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b <b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a <b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site within flood zone 1.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded. <b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.	<b>G</b> = Low risk. No previous incidents recorded.
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – No ancient woodland located within 400m of the site.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	<b>G</b> – No protected trees on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on Blue Infrastructure in the Borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site	<b>A</b> – This site and HO-19-NW are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way

	<p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p>or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that this site is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside nearby and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents. The site may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC however so this will need to be considered further.</p> <p>The site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m  <b>A</b> = 400-800m  <b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Site around 700m from Allington Quarry SSSI.</p>
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats  <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site  <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain and is not adjacent to any LWS or LNRs.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?  <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>
Will allocation impact upon designated open space (e.g. Millennium Greens) or undesignated green space (e.g. as identified in the Green Space Strategy)?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space or undesignated green space  <b>G</b> = Does not contain open or green space</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain open or green space.</p>
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes  <b>G</b> = No</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not designated for its geological or geomorphological importance although the Allington</p>



<p>Will allocation impact upon allotment space?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<p>Quarry SSSI is located around 100m from the site. <b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.</p>
<h3>Cumulative Effects</h3>		
<p>Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?</p>	<p>This site and HO-19-NW are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. Parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that this site is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside nearby and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents. The site may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC however so this will need to be considered further.</p> <p>The site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>	
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>The Bunyard Farm site along with other identified sites located towards the north west of Maidstone is well served by existing community facilities. When considered alongside the larger allocations in the north west cluster, there is the potential for the development of additional community facilities as part of new housing development which will further enhance the offer in the area.</p> <p>This site falls within the least deprived LSOAs in the country (with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010). However, a number of adjacent areas are within the 40% most deprived. Barriers to housing may therefore be positively addressed by the provision of new housing in this area, depending on the size and tenure mix.</p> <p>The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area.</p>	
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>	

land, premises and facilities?

## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

### Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:

**Very Positive** – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services. In the long term, delivery of new housing on nearby sites could potentially lead to the development of additional community services to serve the site.

### Economy:

**Positive** - site located close to Quarry Wood Industrial Estate, industrial estate to the north and has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that accessible local job opportunities will be available to future residents.

### Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:

**Positive** – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on London Road and at Barming train station located close to the site.

### Air Quality and causes of climate change:

**Unclear** – This site is close to the M20 motorway and railway and therefore air and noise quality issues would be important at this locality. There is also an adjacent former landfill site (in Tonbridge & Malling District) to the north west as well as others to the south east.

### Water resources and quality:

**Unclear** – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

### Land use, landscape and the historic environment:

**Very Positive** – Development of the site would represent re-use of previously developed land. The site is generally well contained within a slight dip in the landform and by vegetation except to the south west where it is open to an apparently unmanaged field which rises slightly away from the site. The site is therefore generally well contained from the wider area and falls within the visual influence of the adjoining development. Prehistoric tools found to south. Site at least partly quarried. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** –Potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of the report..

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Archaeological mitigation measures

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	HO-21-NW
Strategic Location	North West
Site name/address	Land at Gatland Lane, Maidstone (Fant Ward)
Landowner	Unknown
Agent	David Evison/Gleeson Developments Ltd
Current Use	Agriculture – arable farming and orchard
Proposed Use	Housing
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	9.53
Site Origin	2009 SHLAA call for sites.
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	Yes
Adjacent to built up area	Yes
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	Yes
<b>Discount</b>	<b>No</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	The site has two substantial road frontages with Gatland Lane running along the northern side of the site and Farleigh Lane along the western side of the site. To the east of the site are residential properties within Cowdrey Close and Pitt Road. The existing use is agriculture with orchards and arable crop covering the majority of the site. Public footpath KB17 runs through the site from north to south with hedgerows on either side. There is a strong hedgerow to the boundary with Gatland Lane and a strong tree line along the boundary with Farleigh Lane. The site is on the side of the valley with long distance views possible from the East Farleigh side of the valley.
Current use	Agriculture – arable farming and orchard
Adjacent uses	South – agriculture. West – residential. North – residential and recreation ground. East –residential.
Planning and other designations	ENV35 – Area of Local Landscape Importance
Planning History	74/0708 - Residential development – REFUSED – DISMISSED AT APPEAL 81/0715 - Residential development – REFUSED
SA Topic: Community wellbeing	
Accessibility to existing centres and services:	
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health	

SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone urban area?	<b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated. <b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone urban area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well <b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone urban area	<b>A</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone urban area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R</b> – Site located 890m from Marigold Way GP surgery.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 250m from Bower Grove Primary and Secondary School.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Site 250m from Bower Grove Primary and Secondary School.
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R</b> – Site 900m from closest Post Office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b> SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health		

SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?  
 SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Site located 900m from Kent College Sports Centre.
How far is the nearest children's play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from 'neighbourhood' children's play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – 315m from Elmstone Lane play area.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Amenity grassland is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site.

## SA Topic: Economy

SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing or employment	<b>R</b> – Quarry Wood Industrial Estate located around 3km from the site.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site will not result in the loss of employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>G</b> – Allocation will result in development in an area partially within the 40% most deprived LSOA.

## SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – There is a bus stop located on Gatland Lane adjacent to the site.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>A</b> – East Farleigh train station located around 800m from the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – There do not appear to be any cycle routes in close proximity to the site.

### SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>G</b> – No adverse effects anticipated.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone Town AQMA.

### SA Topic: Water resources and quality

SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to development within a SPZ.
SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment		
Land Use:		
SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> - 10 ha of orchard/former orchard/managed grassland are allocated as Grade 1.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Allocation does not include previously developed land.
Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:		
SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not impact on a SAM.



<p>Will allocation impact upon a listed building?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.  <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.  <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – No listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.</p>										
<p>Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.  <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.</p>										
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.  <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to a conservation area.</p>										
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?  A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>1.1</th> <th>Scale</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1.1	Scale	1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2  <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4  <b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>A</b> - (Scale – 4) Roman urn find 300m west. General area of Roman potential. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.</p>
1.1	Scale											
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided											
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.											
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.											
4	Low level archaeology											

	anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>G</b> - Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to the loss of Green Belt Land.</p>	
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Site is located on outskirts of existing urban area. The site is on the side of a valley. It is very prominent from the East Farleigh side and provides a visual break from the development north of Gatland Lane down to the river Medway with only interspersed development in between. This has been recognised in the allocation within the Area of Local Landscape Importance. The fundamental change in character of the area and the creep of development south of Gatland Lane would encroach into this open area and would harm the landscape character, in particular from long distance views across the valley. No mitigation would be possible.</p>	

SA Topic: Flood Risk		
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</p> <p>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</p> <p>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site within flood zone 1.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>	<b>G</b> - Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded. Incidents of sewer flooding have been recorded nearby.
SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure		
<p>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</p> <p>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – No ancient woodland located within 400m of the site.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	<b>G</b> – There are no protected trees on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the Borough.

	<p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	
<p>Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>A</b> – The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (such as this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim’s Way or North Down’s Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further.</p> <p>All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (that run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400-800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site 3.1km from Allington Quarry SSSI.</p>
<p>Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats</p> <p><b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats but a survey will be required.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain and is not adjacent to any</p>

Nature Reserve?	<p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	LWS or LNRs.
Will allocation impact upon a Biodiversity Opportunity Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within a biodiversity opportunity area.
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain open or green space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain open space. Allotments lie to the north west of the site.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not designated for its geological or geomorphological importance.
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<h2>Cumulative Effects</h2>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>The most northerly sites in the north west cluster of sites (HO-20-NW and HO-19-NW) are approx 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and there is no direct access route. The other sites in this cluster (such as this site) are 5-8km away from the SAC. Moreover, parking at North Downs Woodlands is very limited such that most visitors will probably be pedestrians or cyclists coming along the Pilgrim's Way or North Down's Way, neither of which runs by or close to this cluster.</p> <p>There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest site in this cluster is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. There is a considerable amount of open access countryside near this cluster and Oaken Wood or Millennium River Park are much closer (within 2km) such that this is the most likely recreational resource for residents of this cluster. The closest site in this cluster may make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC and this will need to be considered further. All sites may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (that run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>	
Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?	<p>The Gatland Nurseries site along with other identified sites located towards the north west of Maidstone is well served by existing community facilities. Furthermore, as part of the larger allocations in the north west cluster, there is the potential for the development of additional community facilities as part of new housing development which will further enhance the offer in the area.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be no additional requirement for utilities infrastructure other than the normal costs of development on a greenfield site. The site is located adjacent to the Maidstone urban area, so there is likely to be potential to link to the existing infrastructure currently serving this area.</p>	

<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>No particular contribution.</p>
<h2 style="background-color: #cccccc; padding: 5px;">Summary and Conclusions</h2>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative</b> - any comments or details</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site located in close proximity to a good range of community services. In the long term, delivery of new housing on other sites in the north west could potentially lead to the development of additional community services to serve the site.</p> <p><b>Economy:</b>  <b>Positive</b> - site has good transport links to Maidstone town centre. It is likely that job opportunities will be accessible to future residents.</p> <p><b>Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:</b>  <b>Very Positive</b> – site well served by public transport. Bus stops are located on Gatland Lane and at East Farleigh train station located close to the site.</p> <p><b>Air Quality and causes of climate change:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site located adjacent to Maidstone Town AQMA. Development of the site for housing will lead to an increase in the local population and therefore traffic movements, which could potentially have a detrimental impact on the air quality of the area.</p> <p><b>Water resources and quality:</b>  <b>Unclear</b> – site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.</p> <p><b>Land use, landscape and the historic environment:</b></p>	

**Very Negative** –The site consists of 10 ha of orchard/former orchard/managed grassland allocated as grade 1 agricultural land. Development of the site would lead to a loss of the highest grade agricultural land. The site is on the side of a valley and provides a visual break from the development which has been recognised in the allocation within the Area of Local Landscape Importance. The fundamental change in character of the area and the creep of development south of Gatland Lane would encroach into this open area and would harm the landscape character, in particular from long distance views across the valley. No mitigation would be possible. A Roman urn find is recorded 300m west and the site is located in a general area of Roman potential. Development with archaeological measures should be possible on this site.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – site located outside of flood zones 2 and 3. Incidents of sewer flooding have been recorded nearby.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear**– Allocation of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on biodiversity although this would need to be confirmed by a preliminary ecological assessment and further detailed surveys as trees, hedgerows and field margins may provide supporting habitat. The northern boundary of the site abuts an area of green space. Potential cumulative impacts on North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of the report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Consider low-car use development/air quality mitigation measures
- Preliminary ecological assessment to inform need for more detailed surveys
- Archaeological mitigation measures

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	EMP-01-J8
Strategic Location	J8
Site name/address	Land to east of A20/M20 junction
Landowner	Mr R H Wiles
Agent	
Current Use	Grazing land
Proposed Use	Employment
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	Approx 3.5
Site Origin	Promoted by landowner
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	
Adjacent to built up area	
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	
<b>Discount</b>	<b>(Y/N)</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	<p>The site is located on the north side of the A20 Ashford Road. It is accessed from the Ashford bound carriageway of the slip road that is carried over the M20/A20 roundabout by a bridge.</p> <p>Adjacent to the site in its south eastern corner is a detached dwelling 'Old England Cottage'. This is a Grade II listed building. Old England Cottage is set at a considerably lower level than the site and the adjacent A20. There is a significant area of hardstanding to the front and west of the cottage and a detached garage to its rear close to the boundary with the site. it would appear that some of the building was in use as a Public House in the past, but two cottages were converted into a single dwelling in the early 1960s.</p> <p>The site is accessed via a metal field gate set back a considerable distance from the highway, behind Old England Cottage. The access is shared with that of Old England Cottage.</p> <p>The site is bounded on four sides by woodland and extensive planting. A stream forms the eastern site boundary, this passes under the A20 and then west of the Mecure Hotel before entering the River Len. The stream lies within a wooded area of the site (woodland is around 0.2ha).</p> <p>Beyond the woodland/planting to the north and west of the site lie the M20 and the slip road from the A20 to Junction 8 of the M20 which is</p>



	<p>located to the north west of the site.</p> <p>It is currently comprised of an open field used for grazing of cattle other than the woodland adjacent to the stream</p> <p>The site falls approximately 15m from west to east towards the stream on the eastern boundary. It also rises northwards away from the A20 to a lesser extent.</p>
Current use	Grazing land
Adjacent uses	Highway land, woodland/planting and a dwelling
Planning and other designations	The site lies within the North Downs Special Landscape Area
Planning History	<p>MA/89/233 Backfilling to original ground levels utilising surplus soil and restoration to agriculture (KCC Consultation) APPROVED 04/02/1990</p> <p>The central and western sections of the site were affected by the application and the work was undertaken as part of the construction of the adjacent M20 motorway.</p> <p>In 1958 excavation of sand was also approved to take place on part of the site in connection with the original Maidstone bypass works. (MK2/58/0272)</p>

## SA Topic: Community wellbeing

### Accessibility to existing centres and services:

- SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health
- SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest
- SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work
- SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities
- SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities
- SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p>	<b>R</b> – Site not adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area and wouldn't be if other sites were allocated.

	<b>G =</b> Within the Maidstone Urban Area	
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<b>R =</b> >800m <b>A =</b> 400m – 800m <b>G =</b> <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<b>R =</b> >3900m <b>A =</b> 1600-3900m <b>G =</b> <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R =</b> >3900m <b>A =</b> 1600-3900m <b>G =</b> <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R =</b> >800m <b>A =</b> 400m – 800m <b>G =</b> <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R =</b> allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A =</b> allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G =</b> allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G –</b> Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest		
SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A =</b> >1.2km <b>G =</b> <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<b>A =</b> >1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space <b>G =</b> <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R =</b> >300m (ANGST) <b>G =</b> <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing

SA Topic: Economy		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G</b> – Site 6.7km from Maidstone Town Centre. However, development of site for employment use would deliver employment provision in the area.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Use of the site will not involve the loss of any employment land/space – it will provide employment space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>A</b> – Site not within 40% most deprived LSOA within the Borough.
SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities? SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – Bus stop located on junction of Ashford Road and Musket Lane.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m	<b>R</b> – Site 6.7km from Maidstone East Train Station, 2.08km from Hollingbourne Station and 4.32 km from

	<b>G</b> = <400m	Bearsted station.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – No cycle routes are located in close proximity to the site.
<b>SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change</b>		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>R</b> – M20/A20 and HS1 are existing noise generators. However the proposed uses for this site are not ones which themselves are sensitive to noise disturbance. Consideration is needed on the noise impact of development on the site on adjacent users in particular Old England Cottage.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site adjacent to the M20 corridor AQMA. A potential issue would be the impact on the local road system from the considerable number of units that might be constructed on a site of this size. This in turn would have an adverse effect on already locally poor air quality.
<b>SA Topic: Water resources and quality</b>		
SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal	<b>A</b> = Yes	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.

<p>Aquifer?</p>	<p><b>G</b> = No</p>	
<p>Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?</p>	<p><b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1 <b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1</p>
<p><b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b></p>		
<p><b>Land Use:</b></p> <p>SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use</p>		
<p>Appraisal Question</p>	<p>Significant effect criteria</p>	<p>Answer/Outcome</p>
<p>Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Site located on a mixture of grade 2 and 3 agricultural land.</p>
<p>Will allocation make use of previously developed land?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Site does not include previously developed land.</p>
<p><b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b></p> <p>SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</p>		
<p>Appraisal Question</p>	<p>Significant effect criteria</p>	<p>Answer/Outcome</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.</p>
<p>Will allocation impact upon a listed building?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</p>	<p><b>A</b> –Old England Cottage is located immediately to the SE of the site and is Grade II listed.</p>

<p>Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?</p>	<p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p> <p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.</p>												
<p>Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<p><b>G</b> – No conservation areas within or in the immediate vicinity of the site.</p>												
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>G</b> – (Scale 5) The majority of the site has potentially been excavated and back-filled twice in the past. The site is not in an identified area of archaeological potential.</p> <p>On the basis of current information there are no known archaeological remains within the site itself. Old England Cottage is identifiable as an inn on the 1st Ed OS map and it is a listed building. It is of heritage interest and although it is not located within the site boundaries any proposed development needs to take its setting and historic character into consideration. There are several known archaeological sites in the area, especially prehistoric and Roman sites, and there could be some similar remains surviving on this site.</p>
Scale														
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.													
3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													

<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>A</b> – This is a visually contained site between the A20 and M20 bounded by tree and verge planting with short views of rising land heading west on the A20. It is a sensitive location as the landscape provides the setting to the Kent Downs AONB to the north. The LCA 2012 actions include 'restore and improve the rural setting to the KD AONB north of M20 by avoiding expansion of development'.</p>
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to the Green Belt.</p>
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>R</b> – New development on the site could potentially have an adverse effect on the landscape character of the area. Significant cut and fill required to create a level development platform would result in a significant change to the prevailing form of the landscape and potentially the setting of the listed building. Furthermore, the site is within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map. Policy ENV34 of the local plan aims to protect the qualities and character of the area and places priority on landscape considerations.</p>
<p><b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b></p>		
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home          SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment          SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
<p>Appraisal Question</p>	<p>Significant effect criteria</p>	<p>Answer/Outcome</p>
<p>Is allocation within a flood zone?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p>	<p><b>A</b> – The area immediately adjacent to the stream on the eastern boundary (within the existing woodland) and to</p>

	<p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	the east of Old England Cottage is within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>	<b>G</b> = Low risk
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – No ancient woodland located within 400m of the site.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	<b>G</b> – No protected trees on the site
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a</p>	<b>G</b> – The site is over 5km away from the North Downs Woodlands SAC. There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC’s on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest of the strategic employment candidate sites is probably on



	significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site	the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. As an employment location the scale of potential impacts in terms of recreational pressure, if any, will be less than those generated by a housing site.  Allocation of the site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<b>R</b> = <400m <b>A</b> = 400-800m <b>G</b> = >800m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site located around 3.2km from Spot Lane SSSI.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats although parkland habitat lies adjacent to the site.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace	<b>A</b> – There are no LWS located on or adjacent to the site although there is a LWS nearby which may be impacted by changes to the hydrology of the site.
Will allocation impact upon a Biodiversity Opportunity Area	<b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area? <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area	<b>R</b> - The site lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. It also has a medium habitat opportunity for the creation of acid grassland; and a minor opportunity for the creation of acid soil woodland.
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<b>R</b> = Contains designated open space <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain designated open space
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<b>R</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>G</b> – No
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<b>R</b> = Contains allotment space <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed	Locating new strategic economic development off junction 8 of the M20 has the potential to have a significant adverse effect on the environmental quality and character of the area unless appropriate mitigation measures are	

<p>development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?</p>	<p>implemented. This relates particularly to noise, air quality and congestion of the transport network arising from increased traffic generation from the strategic employment site when added to existing traffic movements. The draft Integrated Transport Strategy reports that volume to capacity ratios between Junctions 6 and 7 and Junctions 7 and 8 of the M20 are forecast to exceed 90% by 2026, which will have a negative impact on journey time reliability for long-distance traffic. A volume to capacity ratio of 85% is considered the maximum acceptable limit by the Highways Agency. This issue is exacerbated by the widespread use of the M20 for local journeys during peak periods, as commuters seek to avoid the congestion on the main arterial routes into Maidstone.</p> <p>The site is over 5km away from the North Downs Woodlands SAC but has the potential to result in a significant effect. There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA). Data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision (similar to the North Downs Woodlands SAC) indicate that even the closest of the strategic employment candidate sites is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. As an employment location the scale of potential impacts in terms of recreational pressure, if any, will be less than those generated by a housing site. The potential for a significant adverse effect is thus lowered, but will still need to be investigated through the Core Strategy HRA. Allocation of the site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will again be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>In view of the proximity of other development (and the potential delivery of development on neighbouring sites), it is anticipated that there is potential for the site to be served by the main utilities (electricity and mains water).</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>The potential development of employment uses in this location will have a significant positive effect on economic growth in the borough, providing a strategic, high profile location for new employers, fit for purpose new business stock and relatively accessible job opportunities for Maidstone residents. There is potential for a negative impact on the local economy in terms of journey time and reliability, due to the added cumulative impact of major new development in this area contributing to existing congestion between Junction 6 -7 and Junction 7-8 of the M20.</p>
<h2>Summary and Conclusions</h2>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are</p>	

likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive** / **Positive** / **Unclear** / **No Effect** / **Negative** / **Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**No Effect** – no significant effect.

**Economy:**

**Positive** – the delivery of new employment development on the site (and potentially on adjacent sites) would have a very positive impact on the economy although the site is unlikely to be large enough to deliver a strategic employment location.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Very Negative** – The site is beyond easy walking distance from the rail stations and while bus route 510 passes the site, it only provides an hourly service to Maidstone, Bearsted, Lenham and Ashford on weekdays. This is likely to act as a deterrent to the use of public transport to access the site. There is poor provision for walking and cycling. Highway access into the site is likely to be problematic and require extensive improvements. Congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Negative** - M20/A20 and HS1 are existing noise generators. However the proposed uses for this site are not ones which themselves are sensitive to noise disturbance. Consideration is needed on the noise impact of development on the site on adjacent users in particular Old England Cottage. Assuming no heavy industry, main air quality impact is expected to be from traffic generation. However, as areas of the northern edge are very close to the motorway an air quality assessment will be required to ensure that the site occupiers aren't being exposed to concentrations of air pollutants (NO2 and particulates) greater than the relevant Air Quality Objectives. Congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location – with subsequent impacts on air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Negative** – Development of the site would lead to a loss of grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. Furthermore, any potential development would need to ensure that the Grade II listed building located adjacent to the site is not adversely impacted. The site is located in a sensitive location as the landscape provides the setting to the Kent Downs AONB to the north and lies within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map. Policy ENV34 of the Local Plan aims to protect the qualities and character of the area and gives priority to landscape considerations. Landscape implications may restrict the potential for new development on the site. The site is not in an identified area of archaeological potential.

**Flood Risk:**

**Unclear** – Parts of the site fall within flood zones 2 and 3. Development should be directed away from this area of the site.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – The site is located in close proximity to a LWS and lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. New development should be planned to avoid any adverse impact on either the LWS or the opportunities presented by the BOA. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- A Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on this building should be mitigated.
- The allocation of the site for development could potentially have an adverse impact on the local landscape character. This adverse impact should be mitigated through delivering appropriate layout, scale and type of development.
- Due to the proximity to the neighbouring M20, noise attenuation and air quality mitigation measures should be implemented.
- Development must be planned in a way to avoid areas of flood risk and consideration should be given to implementing sustainable drainage methods on the site.
- If this site were allocated for development public transport, walking and cycling improvements should be considered.
- Highway access to the site will require extensive improvements to provide a suitable and safe means of access directly from the A20/M20.
- Potential for impacts to the identified designated sites are likely to be primarily focussed on the ditch connection between the site and the nearby Local Wildlife Site. This will need to be assessed in greater detail in terms of both the direct impact and the surface water drainage strategy for any development that takes place (at the planning application stage).

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	EMP-02
Strategic Location	J8
Site name/address	Land to south of A20/M20 junction (Gallagher's site)
Landowner	Gallagher Properties Ltd has a 25 year option from the Rochester Bridge Trust
Agent	DHA
Current Use	The site is in agricultural use.
Proposed Use	Employment
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	Developers estimate total site area to be 16.2ha. The developable area is estimated to be 13.2ha (within area created by banking) and, excluding highways, 11.6ha.
Site Origin	Promoted by developer
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	
Adjacent to built up area	
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	
<b>Discount</b>	<b>(Y/N)</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	<p>The site is situated to the south of the A20 at the point the A20 connects to J8 of the M20. It is bordered to the north by a tree and shrub-covered bank, which slopes steeply down to the A20, and by a wooden fence and to the west by Old Mill Road, a single track rural lane which connects to Leeds village. The boundary between Old Mill Lane and the site is defined by a tree and shrub covered bank which becomes gradually less pronounced beyond what appears to be a disused gated field access. Approaching the Old Mill Farm complex, as the lane turns south, the western most extent of the site can be seen.</p> <p>To the south the site excludes the collection of farm buildings at Old Mill Farm and the adjacent residential properties called Old Mill House and Old Mill Oast. To the south the site boundary follows the tree lined edge of the River Len which has been dammed to create a mill pond in this location. The extent of the tree belt extends to the east of the site beyond which a further pond lies. Further to the east is the Mercure Hotel.</p> <p>The site excludes an area of land to the north west which is a depot for Biffa Bins. The boundary between the proposal site and the Biffa Bins site is marked by a belt of trees (perpendicular to the A20) which can be seen at the crest of the rising ground in views from the A20 heading west. The boundary to the south of the Biffa site (parallel to the A20) comprises a fence.</p> <p>There is a gated agricultural access to the site off the A20 to the east of the A20 roundabout.</p>
Current use	The site is in agricultural use. The eastern slopes of the site had most recently been used for the growing of soft fruit.
Adjacent uses	To the north is the A20 and its intersection with the M20. The north west corner of the site abuts the Biffa Bins site which is accessed from

	Old Mill Lane. To the north west/west of Old Mill Lane is agricultural land (thought to be owned by Leeds Castle Estate). The farm complex of Old Mill Farm is to the south west of the site alongside the 2 residential properties of Old Mill House and Old Mill Oast. Beyond the woodland and mill pond to the south are agricultural fields and to the east, beyond a tree belt, is the Mercure Hotel. North of the site on the northern side of A20 is Old England Cottage (listed).	
Planning and other designations	The site abuts the 'River Len Millpond and Carr, Leeds' Local Wildlife Site to the east and south. The tree covered bank between the site and A20 to the north is identified as a roadside verge of nature conservation interest, which MBWLP Policy ENV42 also aims to protect from harmful development, as is a short section of Old Mill Road, south of the Old Mill farm complex.	
Planning History	None.	
<b>SA Topic: Community wellbeing</b>		
<b>Accessibility to existing centres and services:</b>		
<p>SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest</p> <p>SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work</p> <p>SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities</p> <p>SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities</p> <p>SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough</p>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<b>R</b> – Site not adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area and wouldn't be if other sites were allocated.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation is not housing.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation is not housing.

How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R</b> = >3900m <b>A</b> = 1600-3900m <b>G</b> = <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G</b> – Allocation is not housing.
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400m – 800m <b>G</b> = <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Allocation is not housing.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b> SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Allocation is not housing.
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Allocation is not housing.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – Allocation is not housing.
<b>SA Topic: Economy</b> SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e.	<b>R</b> = >2400m	<b>G</b> – Site 6.3 km from Maidstone Town Centre. However, development of site for employment use would deliver

employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	employment provision in the area.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Use of the site will not involve the loss of any employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived <u>Lower layer</u> Super Output Areas ( <u>LSOA</u> ) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived <u>LSOA</u> .	<b>A</b> – Site not within 40% most deprived <u>LSOA</u> within the Borough.

**Deleted:** Super Output Areas

**Deleted:** Super Output Areas within the borough; or allocation is greenspace.

### SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – Bus stop located on junction of Ashford Road and Musket Lane (hourly service on weekdays to Maidstone, Bearsted, Lenham and Ashford.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – Site 6.7km from Maidstone East Train Station. Site is approximately 4.32km from Bearsted station and 2.1 km miles from Hollingbourne station
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – No cycle routes are located in close proximity to the site.

### SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change



**SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health**  
**SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<p><b>R</b> = significant adverse effect</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No adverse effect</p>	<b>R</b> – Traffic noise is a problem on this site due to the proximity of the M20 Motorway. There is also a risk of noise impact from on-site activity on nearby residential properties.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;1km of an AQMA</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>R</b> – Site adjacent to the M20 corridor AQMA. A potential issue would be the impact on the local road system from the considerable number of units that might be constructed on a site of this size. This in turn would have an adverse effect on already locally poor air quality.

**SA Topic: Water resources and quality**

**SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management**

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<p><b>A</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<p><b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1

**SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment**

<b>Land Use:</b>
<b>SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use</b>

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – Site located on grade 2 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Site does not include previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b> SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.	<b>A</b> – Old England Cottage (Grade 2) is situated to the north of the A20, opposite the easternmost corner of the site.
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden. However given the site’s elevated nature, it is possible that some impact might result on the setting of the historic parkland of Leeds Castle, particularly as it rises beyond the castle to the east, from where development might be visible over the top of the castle. This would have to be ascertained by a more detailed landscape study. However, substantial site levelling is proposed and this is likely to curtail and may negate any visual impact from Leeds Castle grounds.

<p>Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.  <b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.  <b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<p><b>G</b> – No conservation areas within or in the immediate vicinity of the site. However given the site's elevated nature, there might potentially also be a visual impact from the Leeds Lower Street Conservation Area, particularly in the vicinity of the Parish Church from which there are open views to the west. However, substantial site levelling is proposed and this is likely to curtail or may negate any visual impact from the CA.</p>												
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p><u>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</u></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2  <b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4  <b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><del><b>R</b> = (Scale – 2)</del> The site contains three recorded Historic Environment Record sites representing post medieval quarry activity, The discovery of a Roman coin hoard in 1959 and of a single coin. <del>There is a historic mill complex to the south forming part of the complex of Mill Farm. There are suggestions that this site may have Roman origins as Roman finds were located here. The mill is of post medieval or earlier date and is a site of heritage interest. There are indications of post medieval quarrying immediately beyond the north west corner and this might account for the local view of "caves" being here. Some of the quarrying may extend into this site. The site also has a band of 4<sup>th</sup> Terrace River Gravels running across the site north east to south west. These have potential for rare and important palaeolithic remains. A pre-determination evaluation would be necessary to determine where development is possible.</del></p>
Scale														
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
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3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.													
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.													
<p>Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.  <b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Site around 500m from Kent Downs AONB. In landscape terms, the site is viewed as foreground to AONB in views from PROWs to south (to west of Leeds village) .</p>												

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**A** = Within an area where significant archaeological features are present, or it is predicted that such features could be found in the future, but it would be possible to mitigate significant negative impacts on these features. ¶  
**G** = Not within an area where significant archaeological features have been found, or are likely to be found in the future.

	<p>there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to the Green Belt.</p>
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>R</b>– There is potential for new development on the site to significantly adversely affect the local landscape character of the area as development would result in substantial and unavoidable landscape change</p>
<p><b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b></p>		
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</p> <p>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</p> <p>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
<p>Is allocation within a flood zone?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Small parts of the site along the southern and eastern boundaries fall within Flood Zone 3.</p>
<p>Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?</p>	<p><b>A</b> = Medium risk – previous incidents of sewer, surface or groundwater flooding have been recorded.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk – no previous incidents of flooding have been recorded.</p>	<p><b>G</b> = Low risk</p>

## SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure

SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and geodiversity

SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> – Ancient woodland located beyond the southern boundary of the site.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	<b>G</b> – No protected trees on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p>	<b>A</b> – There are two ponds adjacent to the site.. This site is adjacent to the River Len Millponds and Carr Leeds LWS on its southern and eastern boundaries. The site is designated for its wet woodland and wetland habitats including a mill pond, the River Len and wet meadow habitat. Protection measures have been proposed.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>G</b> – The site is over 5km away from the North Downs Woodlands SAC. There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest of the strategic employment candidate sites is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. As an employment location the scale of potential impacts in terms of recreational pressure, if any, will be less than those generated by a housing site.</p> <p>Allocation of the site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the</p>

		updated Core Strategy HRA.
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<b>R</b> = <400m <b>A</b> = 400-800m <b>G</b> = >800m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site located around 2.5km from Spot Lane SSSI.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats <b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats directly on the site although features and habitats that indicate the potential for protected species presence on or near to the site have been identified.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site <b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> - Site is adjacent to the River Len Millponds and Carr Leeds LWS on its southern and eastern boundaries. If allocated, mitigation through an additional landscape barrier to the LWS to the south/east is needed (landscape buffer of at least 15m).
Will allocation impact upon a Biodiversity Opportunity Area	<b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area? <b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area	<b>R</b> – Yes – site lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<b>R</b> = Contains designated open space <b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain open space.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<b>R</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>G</b> – No
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<b>R</b> = Contains allotment space <b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	Locating new strategic economic development off junction 8 of the M20 has the potential to have a significant adverse effect on the environmental quality and character of the area unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. This relates particularly to noise, air quality and congestion of the transport network arising from increased traffic generation from the strategic employment site when added to existing traffic movements. The draft Integrated Transport Strategy reports that volume to capacity ratios between Junctions 6 and 7 and Junctions 7 and 8 of the M20 are forecast to exceed 90% by 2026, which will have a negative impact on journey time reliability for long-distance traffic. A volume to capacity ratio of 85% is considered the maximum acceptable limit by the Highways Agency. This issue is exacerbated by the widespread use of the M20 for local journeys during peak periods, as commuters seek to avoid the congestion on the main arterial routes into Maidstone.	

	<p>The site is over 5km away from the North Downs Woodlands SAC but has the potential to result in a significant effect. There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA). Data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision (similar to the North Downs Woodlands SAC) indicate that even the closest of the strategic employment candidate sites is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. As an employment location the scale of potential impacts in terms of recreational pressure, if any, will be less than those generated by a housing site. The potential for a significant adverse effect is thus lowered, but will still need to be investigated through the Core Strategy HRA. Allocation of the site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will again be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>It has been confirmed (by the site developer) that the site can be served by foul drainage, surface water drainage, water supply, telecoms and electricity. This will ensure that sufficient utilities infrastructure is provided as part of new development in the area within putting pressure on existing utilities infrastructure in the area.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>The potential development of employment uses in this location will have a significant positive effect on economic growth in the borough, providing a strategic, high profile location for new employers, fit for purpose new business stock and relatively accessible job opportunities for Maidstone residents. There is potential for a negative impact on the local economy in terms of journey time and reliability, due to the added cumulative impact of major new development in this area contributing to existing congestion between Junction 6 -7 and Junction 7-8 of the M20.</p>
<h2>Summary and Conclusions</h2>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative</b> - any comments or details</p> <p><b>Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:</b></p>	

**No Effect** - no significant effect.

**Economy:**

**Very Positive** – the delivery of new employment development on the site (and potentially on adjacent sites) would have a very positive impact on the economy.

**Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility:**

**Very Negative** - The site is beyond easy walking distance from the rail stations and while bus route 510 passes the site, it only provides an hourly service to Maidstone, Bearsted, Lenham and Ashford on weekdays. This is likely to act as a deterrent to the use of public transport to access the site. There is poor provision for walking and cycling to local residential areas. Access to the primary road network is good however congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Negative** - Traffic noise is a problem on this site due to the proximity of the M20 Motorway. An issue would be the impact on the local road system from the considerable number of units that might be constructed on a site of this size. This in turn would have an adverse effect on already locally poor air quality. Congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location – with subsequent impacts on air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Very Negative** – Development of the site would lead to a loss of grade 2 agricultural land. Furthermore, any potential development would need to ensure that the grade II listed building located opposite the easternmost corner of the site is not adversely impacted. Development of this site would bring substantial landscape change by virtue of the significant amount of excavation that would be required to create a level development platform. The altered landscape would be particularly visible in close range views from the A20 (in particular westbound) and from the PROW which crosses the site (and would need to be diverted). The site is also seen in views from the south, from footpaths to the west of Leeds. From this direction, the site is seen in the foreground to the North Downs AONB. Views from the AONB itself are limited. The site is in agricultural use and has a rural character. Development of the nature proposed would bring a significant change to this character. The site does have clearly defined boundaries formed by Old Mill Lane and Ashford Rd to the west and north respectively and the watercourses of the LWS to the south and east, and beyond that to the east the Mecure Hotel. The site contains three recorded Historic Environmental Record sites and a pre-determination evaluation would be necessary to determine where development is possible.

**Flood Risk:**

**Unclear** – Small parts of the site along the southern and eastern boundaries fall within Flood Zone 3. New development on the site would need to be planned to avoid this area.

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – The site is located in close proximity to areas of ancient woodland and the River Len Millponds and Carr Leeds LWS and lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. New development should be planned to avoid any adverse impact on these environmental designations. Potential cumulative impacts on



the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- A Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on this building could be mitigated through appropriate layout, design and scale of development.
- Allocation of site for development would have a significant adverse impact on the local landscape character. If site were to be allocated, existing landscape boundaries would need to be protected and enhanced.
- A pre-determination archaeological evaluation would be necessary to confirm the significance of the actual archaeological interest on the site and determine where development is possible.
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- Traffic noise and air quality conditions should be imposed on this site at the planning application stage.
- Development must be planned in a way to avoid areas of flood risk and to avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- If this site were allocated for development public transport, walking and cycling improvements should be considered.
- Ecological mitigation and protection measures put forward by KCC and the Kent Wildlife Trust should be considered for inclusion in the allocation policy. These include a landscape buffer of at least 15m to the LWS..

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	EMP-03-J8
Strategic Location	J8
Site name/address	Land to west of A20/M20 junction (land at Woodcut Farm)
Landowner	Messrs Leggat
Agent	Hobbs Parker
Current Use	The majority of the site is in agricultural use. The site also includes some of the buildings of Woodcut Farm.
Proposed Use	Employment. Developer's submission proposes B8 – 25,000sqm B1 (light industrial)/B2 – 20,000sqm B1 (offices) – 3,750sqm
Greenfield/PDL	Greenfield
Site area (jha)	Developers indicate a total site area of approximately 28ha of which 18ha would be developed and 10ha retained in agricultural use as a buffer to Bearsted to the west.
Site Origin	Promoted by landowners
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	
Adjacent to built up area	
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	
<b>Discount</b>	<b>(Y/N)</b>
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	The site is situated to the west of the A20/M20 junction (junction 8). It comprises the wedge of land lying between the M20 to the north east and A20 to the south west. The site is agricultural land, divided into fields by hedgerows which predominately run in a north-south direction. The site is also bisected north-south by a watercourse which eventually runs into the River Len to the south of A20. The land is undulating, the ground rising up from either side of the watercourse. To the south the site abuts a number of dispersed properties which front onto the A20 (Ashford Road). To the south east the site is bounded by Musket Lane. The boundary to the M20 is denoted by the embankment up to the M20. To the north west lies Crismill Lane and a substantial tree belt which fronts onto this Lane. The site boundary then follows the hedge belt which adjoins Crismill Lane approximately half way down its length and links to the complex of buildings at Woodcut Farm and turns south to the A20, running along the eastern boundary of the fields which front onto the Woodcut Farm access (PRoW KH641).
Current use	The majority of the site is in agricultural use. The site also includes some of the buildings of Woodcut Farm.

Adjacent uses	<p>The site is bounded to the north east by the M20 and beyond this the Maidstone motorway services site and open agricultural land and wooded areas. To the north west, north of A20, is further agricultural land, interspersed with woodland copses. Between the western extremity of the site and the A20 to the south lie a number of scattered detached residential properties set in substantial grounds and part of the Woodcut Farm complex itself. Further to the east, the site surrounds on 3 sides 'Chestnuts' where there is a car wash, and the group of properties at White Heath, including the mortuary building of the Hollingbourne Union Workhouse, which themselves face the A20.</p> <p>On the south side of the A20, facing the site is the Pine Lodge Touring caravan park and, to the east of this an area of open agricultural fields. To the east of the site is the A20/M20 interchange itself.</p>
Planning and other designations	<p>The site is within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map. Policy ENV34 aims to protect the qualities and character of the area and gives priority to the landscape over other planning considerations. Policy ENV34 will be superseded by the Core Strategy when it is adopted.</p>
Planning History	<p>91/0908 – outline application for the erection of buildings for a multiscreen cinema, tennis centre, function suite/disco, ten pin bowling, restaurant etc for Maidstone FC. Refused 12th November 1991.</p> <p>07/2092 – outline application for rail road freight interchange. Refused 2nd February 2009. Appeal dismissed 5th August 2010.</p>

## SA Topic: Community wellbeing

**Accessibility to existing centres and services:**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Site not adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area and wouldn't be if other sites were allocated.</p>

	<b>G =</b> Within the Maidstone Urban Area	
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<b>R =</b> >800m <b>A =</b> 400m – 800m <b>G =</b> <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<b>R =</b> >3900m <b>A =</b> 1600-3900m <b>G =</b> <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest primary school?	<b>R =</b> >3900m <b>A =</b> 1600-3900m <b>G =</b> <1600m; or allocation is not housing.	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest post office?	<b>R =</b> >800m <b>A =</b> 400m – 800m <b>G =</b> <400m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>R =</b> allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities <b>A =</b> allocation incorporates existing community facilities <b>G =</b> allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities	<b>G –</b> Allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities.
<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b>		
SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health		
SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest		
SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities		
SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities?		
SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A =</b> >1.2km <b>G =</b> <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<b>A =</b> >1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space <b>G =</b> <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R =</b> >300m (ANGST) <b>G =</b> <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>G –</b> Allocation is not housing

## SA Topic: Economy

SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G</b> – Site 5.5km from Maidstone Town Centre. However, development of site for employment use would deliver employment provision in the area.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Use of the site will not involve the loss of any employment land/space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>A</b> – Site not within 40% most deprived LSOA within the Borough.

## SA Topic: Public Transport and Sustainable Accessibility

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – Bus stop located on junction of Ashford Road and Musket Lane. Hourly service on weekdays to Maidstone, Bearsted, Lenham and Ashford.
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m	<b>R</b> – Site 5.6km from Maidstone East Train Station.

	<b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	Hollingbourne Station and Bearsted station also beyond 2km of the site.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – No cycle routes are located in close proximity to the site.

### SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>R</b> – Traffic noise is a problem on this site due to the proximity of the M20 Motorway and there is some risk of noise impact from the proposed use of the site on adjacent residential properties.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8))?	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA <b>A</b> = <1km of an AQMA <b>G</b> = >1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace	<b>R</b> – Site adjacent to the M20 corridor AQMA. A potential issue would be the impact on the local road system from the considerable number of units that might be constructed on a site of this size. This in turn would have an adverse effect on already locally poor air quality.

### SA Topic: Water resources and quality

SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<b>A</b> = Yes <b>G</b> = No	<b>A</b> – Site located within a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source	<b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1	<b>G</b> – Site not within Source Protection Zone 1

Protection Zone?	<b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace	
<b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b>		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land <b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land <b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land	<b>R</b> – Site located on a mixture of grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. Some land (7 - 10ha) is proposed to remain undeveloped.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land <b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land <b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land	<b>R</b> – Site does not include previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative impacts <b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts. <b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts. <b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.	<b>R</b> – Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II) is located towards the southern boundary of the site.
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park /	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a historic park/garden.

garden?	<p>there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>													
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<b>G</b> – No conservation areas within or in the immediate vicinity of the site.												
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.	5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<p><b>R – (Scale – 2)</b> An area of archaeological potential (AAP) is identified at the eastern end of the site, between Musket Lane and the M20 and a further AAP straddles the A20 and includes an area of the site between the properties on Musket Lane and Chestnuts. There are known archaeological remains in the immediate vicinity, including an Anglo-Saxon burial site. A pre-determination evaluation would be necessary to confirm the significance of the archaeological interest of the site and determine where development is possible.</p>
Scale														
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided													
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Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?	<b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot	<b>A</b> – Site in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB. The landscape provides the setting of the AONB to the												



	<p>be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p>north and has a undeveloped countryside character, which is sensitive to development. The site is within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map. Policy ENV34 of the local plan aims to protect the qualities and character of the area and gives priority to the landscape over other planning considerations.</p>
<p>Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not within or adjacent to the Green Belt.</p>
<p>Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?</p>	<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>A</b> – New development on the site could potentially have an adverse effect on the landscape character of the area. The impacts of development could be mitigated through careful siting and design of development and a development approach which respects this landscape setting.</p>
<p><b>SA Topic: Flood Risk</b></p>		
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home            SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment            SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>G</b> – The site falls within flood zone 1. A tributary of the Len crosses the site N to S.</p>
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water	<p><b>R</b> = High risk</p>	<p><b>G</b> - Low risk</p>

flooding?	<b>A</b> = Medium risk <b>G</b> = Low risk	
<b>SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>		
<b>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and geodiversity</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough's countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW <b>A</b> = <400m from an AW/ASNW <b>G</b> = >400m; or allocation is greenspace	<b>A</b> - A Local Wildlife Site, also designated as ancient woodland lies 130m from the site on the far side of the M20. There are small ancient woodland pockets and a Local Wildlife site present within 600m of the south of the site
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against <b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site	<b>A</b> – There are 2 areas of protected trees located on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	<b>G</b> – Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough. A tributary of the Len crosses the site N to S.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site <b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site	<b>G</b> – The site is approximately 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and has the potential to result in a significant effect. There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA) but data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision indicate that even the closest of the strategic employment candidate sites is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. As an employment location the scale of potential impacts in

		<p>terms of recreational pressure, if any, will be less than those generated by a housing site.</p> <p>Allocation of the site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400-800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site located around 2.4km from Spot Lane SSSI.
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats</p> <p><b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats. Although deciduous woodland habitat lies adjacent to the site.
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> – A Local Wildlife Site, also designated as ancient woodland lies 130m from the site on the far side of the M20.
Will allocation impact upon a biodiversity opportunity area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<b>R</b> – Site Lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault BOA.
Will allocation impact upon designated open space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain open space.
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>G</b> – No
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<b>G</b> – Site does not contain allotment space.
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		
Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?	<p>Locating new strategic economic development off junction 8 of the M20 has the potential to have a significant adverse effect on the environmental quality and character of the area unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. This relates particularly to noise, air quality and congestion of the transport network arising from increased traffic generation from the strategic employment site when added to existing traffic movements. The draft Integrated Transport Strategy reports that volume to capacity ratios between Junctions 6 and 7 and Junctions 7 and 8 of the M20 are forecast to exceed 90% by 2026, which will have a negative impact on journey time reliability for</p>	

	<p>long-distance traffic. A volume to capacity ratio of 85% is considered the maximum acceptable limit by the Highways Agency. This issue is exacerbated by the widespread use of the M20 for local journeys during peak periods, as commuters seek to avoid the congestion on the main arterial routes into Maidstone.</p> <p>The site is approximately 3.8km from North Downs Woodlands SAC and has the potential to result in a significant effect. There is no visitor survey catchment data currently obtainable for this SAC (this is being investigated for the Core Strategy HRA). Data from other rural SAC's on the urban edge in Kent that have poor parking provision (similar to the North Downs Woodlands SAC) indicate that even the closest of the strategic employment candidate sites is probably on the outskirts of the main visitor catchment. As an employment location the scale of potential impacts in terms of recreational pressure, if any, will be less than those generated by a housing site. The potential for a significant adverse effect is thus lowered, but will still need to be investigated through the Core Strategy HRA. Allocation of the site may contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will again be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>It has been confirmed (by the site developer) that the site can be served by foul drainage, surface water drainage, water supply, telecoms and electricity. This will ensure that sufficient utilities infrastructure is provided as part of new development in the area within putting pressure on existing utilities infrastructure in the area.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>The potential development of employment uses in this location will have a significant positive effect on economic growth in the borough, providing a strategic, high profile location for new employers, fit for purpose new business stock and relatively accessible job opportunities for Maidstone residents. . There is potential for a negative impact on the local economy in terms of journey time and reliability, due to the added cumulative impact of major new development in this area contributing to existing congestion between Junction 6 -7 and Junction 7-8 of the M20.</p>
<h2 style="text-align: left; margin: 0;">Summary and Conclusions</h2>	
<p>The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:</p> <p><b>Very Positive</b> / <b>Positive</b> / <b>Unclear</b> / <b>No Effect</b> / <b>Negative</b> / <b>Very Negative</b> - any comments or details</p>	

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**

**No Effect** - no significant effect.

**Economy:**

**Very Positive** – the delivery of new employment development on the site (and potentially on adjacent sites) would have a very positive impact on the economy.

**Transport and Accessibility:**

**Very Negative** – The site is beyond easy walking distance from the rail stations and while bus route 510 passes the site, it only provides an hourly service to Maidstone, Bearsted, Lenham and Ashford on weekdays. This is likely to act as a deterrent to the use of public transport to access the site. There is poor provision for walking and cycling currently. Accessibility to the primary road network will be good but congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**

**Negative** - Traffic noise is a problem on this site due to the proximity of the M20 Motorway. An issue would be the impact on the local road system from the considerable number of units that might be constructed on a site of this size. This in turn would have an adverse effect on already locally poor air quality. Congestion on the M20 is likely to be exacerbated by development in this location – with subsequent impacts on air quality.

**Water resources and quality:**

**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation). Any potential impact on this would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Negative** – Development of the site would lead to a loss of grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. However, up to 10ha of the site will be remain undeveloped as a buffer to Bearsted to the west. Any potential development would need to ensure that the Grade II listed building and its setting (Woodcut Farmhouse) is not adversely impacted. An area of archaeological potential (AAP) is identified at the eastern end of the site, between Musket Lane and the M20 and a further AAP straddles the A20 and includes an area of the site between the properties on Musket Lane and Chestnuts. There are known archaeological remains in the immediate vicinity, including an Anglo-Saxon burial site.

As the site provides part of the setting for the Kent Downs AONB and the site is within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map there is potential for significant adverse effects which would need to be mitigated. Policy ENV34 of the Local Plan aims to protect the qualities and character of the area and gives priority to the landscape over other planning considerations.

**Flood Risk:**

**Very Positive** – The site falls within flood zone 1...

**Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure:**

**Unclear** – The site is located in close proximity to areas of ancient woodland and an LWS and lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. New development should be planned to avoid any adverse impact on either the LWS or the opportunities presented by the BOA.. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed in Section 9 of this report.

## Mitigation or Enhancement Measures

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- A Grade II listed building is located adjacent to the site. Any potential impact on this building should be mitigated as proposed by the MBC heritage team.
- A pre-determination archaeology evaluation would be necessary to confirm the significance of the archaeological interest of the site and determine where development is possible.
- The allocation of this site for development could potentially have an adverse impact on the local landscape character and nearby wildlife sites. Landscape and ecological mitigation measures put forward by the Maidstone Borough Council Landscape Team/Kent Wildlife Trust/KCC Biodiversity Officer should be addressed through the allocation policy.
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20, and on nearby properties from the proposed use, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- Consideration should be given to implementing sustainable drainage methods on the site.
- The layout of new development should be designed to ensure that trees that are the subject of TPOs on the site (and existing hedgerows) are retained.

1. Site Information	
Number (linked to GIS database)	EMP – 04-J7
Strategic Location	Junction 7
Site name/address	Land at Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Maidstone
Landowner	Harvestore systems (Holdings) Ltd
Agent	DHA
Current Use	Mix of uses - Vacant open fields, Newnham Court Shopping Village, Veterinary clinic and Public House. Tertiary hospital is under construction.
Proposed Use	<p>Submitted site plan includes existing Newnham Court Shopping Village and Garden Centre and associated uses and land which has planning permission for the Kent Institute for Medical Surgery (KIMS) and a wider area.</p> <p>The uses proposed by the developer are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional medical facilities including neuro-rehabilitation centre, pathology labs</li> <li>• Research &amp; Development/B1 &amp; B2</li> <li>• Medical training facilities</li> <li>• Assisted care homes</li> <li>• Key worker housing</li> <li>• Retail</li> </ul>
Greenfield/PDL	Part PDL/part greenfield
Site area (jha)	Developer confirms 28.5ha + 3.03ha rectangular field to SE
Site Origin	Call for sites (and historic submissions)
Discounting (Housing Sites)	
Adjacent to Maidstone Urban Area	
Adjacent to built up area	
Could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well	
Discount	
2. Sustainability Appraisal	
Site Description	<p>Newnham Park located to the north of the urban area, approximately 2.5km from the town centre, adjacent to junction 7 of the M20 motorway. The site is bounded by Horish Wood to the north and Pope's Wood to the east. To the south is Bearsted Road and Gidds Pond Cottages, beyond which is Vinters Park Crematorium, Vinters Park Local Nature Reserve, and the Grove Green housing estate. The eastern boundary is formed by the A249 Sittingbourne Road, beyond which are Eclipse Business Park and the Hilton Hotel.</p> <p>Newnham Court Shopping Village dominates the western part of the site, and the Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery (KIMS) hospital is</p>

	<p>under construction on the northern perimeter of the site, together with a new access road. The shopping village comprises a range of facilities including a garden centre, a number of ancillary retail units, cafés, a veterinary surgery, a childcare nursery, and a quantum of small business uses. To the far south east of the development site is a rectangular field of 3.03 hectares identified for new woodland planting.</p> <p>Newnham Park is located in the countryside and lies within the setting of the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The site is reasonably well screened by mature ancient woodland to the north and east, mature trees and other vegetation along Bearsted Road to the south, and sparser planting on the western boundary. There are long and medium distance views of the site from the North Downs; limited views from Gidds Pond Cottages and properties located to the south east of the allocation; and fleeting views from local roads. There are existing landscape features within the site boundaries and the site is subject to tree preservation orders.</p> <p>The topography of the site is gently undulating, sloping down from the north west and from the south east perimeters into a shallow valley of a stream that runs north-south through the site. Newnham Park is partially developed, and the remainder of the site is agricultural use although not actively farmed.</p>
Current use	Submitted site plan includes existing Newnham Court Shopping Village and Garden Centre and associated uses to the west, and the land which has planning permission for the Kent Institute for Medical Surgery (KIMS) to the north. Land beyond these areas comprises open fields.
Adjacent uses	To the west of the identified site lies the A249 and beyond that the business development of Eclipse Park which includes the Hilton Hotel. To the south, the site borders Bearsted Road beyond which to the south is Maidstone Crematorium. To the east and north, the site adjoins the ancient woodland areas of Pope’s Wood and Horish Wood. The M20 transects the latter woodland area, and to the north west of the outlined site is Junction 7 of the M20.
Planning and other designations	<p>The identified site falls within the Strategic Gap defined on the Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan Proposals Map. Policy ENV31 of the Plan states that development within the Strategic Gap will not be permitted which significantly extends the defined urban area. It falls within the Special Landscape Area where protection of landscape quality is a priority (Policy ENV34), and forms part of the setting of the nationally designated Kent Downs AONB.</p> <p>The ancient woodland to the north and east (adjacent to the site boundary) is an identified Local Wildlife Site (Horish Wood, etc) Land facing the site to the south of Bearsted Rd and east of New Cut Road is identified as public open space in the Local Plan (ENV24 (ii)) and Vinters Park to the west of New Cut Road is an Area of Local Landscape Importance (Policy ENV35). Eclipse Park is an identified employment site in the Local Plan (Policies ED1 and ED4)</p>
Planning History	'Newnham Court Shopping Village' has an extensive planning history, although no significant recent applications. Part of the area towards the rear of the overall site has consent for 'Tertiary Medical Centre comprising a complex of eight buildings ranging from two to four storeys, car parking, landscaping, access road and associated highways improvements' under MA/07/0382, and subsequent amendments made under MA/09/0973. This will provide for a range of eight buildings totalling some 16,386sqm plus access roads and car parks on 2.5ha of the site.
<p><b>SA Topic: Community wellbeing</b></p>	



**Accessibility to existing centres and services:**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 5: To raise educational achievement levels across the Borough and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 9: To encourage increased engagement in cultural activity across all sections of the community in the Borough

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the site from the Maidstone Urban Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Not adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area, or a built up area and would not be adjacent even if other sites were allocated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area or the built up area, or could be adjacent if other sites allocated as well</p> <p><b>G</b> = Within the Maidstone Urban Area</p>	<b>A</b> – Site located adjacent to the Maidstone Urban Area.
How far is the nearest medical hub or GP service?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>G</b> – Although the site is currently located 1.5km from nearest doctors surgery the site will provide medical facilities.
How far is the nearest secondary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site located 1.4km from Invicta Grammar School.
How far is the nearest primary school?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;3900m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 1600-3900m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;1600m; or allocation is not housing.</p>	<b>G</b> – Site located 1.4km from Eastborough Primary School.
How far is the nearest post office?	<p><b>R</b> = &gt;800m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400m – 800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &lt;400m; or allocation is not housing</p>	<b>R</b> - Site located 2.2km from nearest post office.
Would the allocation lead to a loss of community facilities	<p><b>R</b> = allocation would lead to a loss of community facilities</p> <p><b>A</b> = allocation incorporates existing community facilities</p> <p><b>G</b> = allocation would not lead to a loss of community facilities</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation would not lead to loss of community facilities.

<b>Accessibility to outdoor facilities and greenspace:</b> SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 7: To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities? SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest outdoor sports facilities?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km <b>G</b> = <1.2km; or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – There are pay-to-play tennis courts, outdoor bowls and football pitches at Penenden Heath 1.2 km away (based on a centre point –centre point measurement).
How far is the nearest children’s play space?	<b>A</b> = >1.2km from ‘neighbourhood’ children’s play space <b>G</b> = <1.2km or allocation is not housing	<b>G</b> – There is a childrens play area at Penenden Heath, 1.2km away.
How far is the nearest area of publicly accessible greenspace (>2ha in size)?	<b>R</b> = >300m (ANGST) <b>G</b> = <300m; or allocation is not housing	<b>R</b> – Site located around 500m from Penenden Heath and 350m from public open space at Grove Green.
<b>SA Topic: Economy</b> SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest SA Objective 18: To sustain economic growth, develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness of the Borough		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How accessible is local employment provision (i.e. employment sites or the nearest local service centre?)	<b>R</b> = >2400m <b>A</b> = 1600-2400m <b>G</b> = <1600m or allocation is not for housing	<b>G</b> – Site located 1.6km from Maidstone Town Centre and 0.5km from the Eclipse Business Park. Site would deliver employment opportunities.
Will allocation result in loss of employment land/space?	<b>R</b> = Allocation will lead to significant loss of onsite employment <b>A</b> = Allocation will lead to some loss of onsite employment <b>G</b> = Loss of employment space is not a problem	<b>G</b> – Allocation will not lead to a loss of employment space.
Will allocation result in development in deprived areas?	<b>A</b> = Not within the 40% most deprived Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) within the borough, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2010. <b>G</b> = Within the 40% most deprived LSOA.	<b>A</b> – Site not within the 40% most deprived LSOA.

**SA Topic: Transport and Accessibility**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 4: To improve poverty and social exclusion and close the gap between the most deprived areas of the Borough and the rest  
 SA Objective 7: To create and sustain, vibrant, attractive and clean communities?  
 SA Objective 8: To improve accessibility to all services and facilities  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve  
 SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
How far is the nearest bus stop?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>G</b> – Bus stop located adjacent to the site on Bearsted Road
How far is the nearest train station?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – Site located 1.2km from Bearsted Train Station.
How far is the nearest cycle route?	<b>R</b> = >800m <b>A</b> = 400 - 800m <b>G</b> = <400m	<b>R</b> – Site does not appear to be close to existing cycle route.

**SA Topic: Air quality and causes of climate change**

SA Objective 3: To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health  
 SA Objective 11: To reduce road congestion and pollution levels and ensure air quality continues to improve

Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Are there potential noise problems with the site – either for future occupiers or for adjacent/nearby occupiers arising from allocation of the site?	<b>R</b> = significant adverse effect <b>A</b> = Adverse effect / effect that can be mitigated <b>G</b> = No adverse effect	<b>R</b> – The M20 and HS1 are significant existing sources of noise. Some of the proposed uses for this site could be considered sensitive to noise disturbance. Consideration is needed on the noise impact of development on the site on adjacent users of Newnham Court and the residents of the terraced houses along Bearsted Road.
Is the allocation within or near to an AQMA (Maidstone)	<b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to an AQMA	<b>R</b> - The Maidstone AQMA lies immediately to the north, west and south of the site but the site itself falls outside

Town - (the existing urban boundary) and the M20 corridor (Junctions 5 to 8)?	<p><b>A</b> = &lt;1km of an AQMA</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;1km of an AQMA; or allocation is greenspace</p>	of the designation.
<b>SA Topic: Water resources and quality</b>		
<b>SA Objective 16: To achieve sustainable water resources management</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Is the site located within or adjacent to a Principal Aquifer?	<p><b>A</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<b>A</b> – Site located on a principal aquifer.
Will allocation lead to development within a Source Protection Zone?	<p><b>A</b> = Within Source Protection Zone 1</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within Source Protection Zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> – The bulk of the site lies within SPZ3 but the extreme northeast corner falls within both SPZ2 and SPZ1.
<b>SA Topic: Land use, landscape and the historic environment</b>		
<b>Land Use:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 10: To improve efficiency in land use</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation lead to loss of high quality agricultural land?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land</p> <p><b>A</b> = Includes Grade 3 agricultural land</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not include 1, 2 or 3 agricultural land</p>	<b>A</b> – Site broadly allocated as grade 2 agricultural land.
Will allocation make use of previously developed land?	<p><b>R</b> = Does not include previously developed land</p> <p><b>A</b> = Partially within previously developed land</p> <p><b>G</b> = Entirely within previously developed land</p>	<b>A</b> – Part of the site is previously developed land.
<b>Landscape, townscape and the historic environment:</b>		
<b>SA Objective 7. To create and sustain vibrant, attractive and clean communities</b>		
<b>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</b>		
<b>Appraisal Question</b>	<b>Significant effect criteria</b>	<b>Answer/Outcome</b>
Will allocation impact upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument?	<b>R</b> = On a SAM OR Allocation will lead to development adjacent to a SAM with the potential for negative	<b>G</b> – Site not on or adjacent to a SAM.

	<p>impacts</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adjacent to a SAM that is less sensitive / not likely to be impacted</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a SAM; or allocation is greenspace</p>							
Will allocation impact upon a listed building?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a listed building but there is not thought to be potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to a listed building.</p>	<b>G</b> – No listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.						
Will allocation impact upon a registered historic park / garden?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a historic park / garden but there is not the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not on or adjacent to historic park / garden; or allocation is greenspace.</p>	<b>G</b> – Allocation not on or adjacent to historic park / garden						
Will allocation impact upon a Conservation Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there is the potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to a Conservation Area but there is no potential for negative impacts.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area</p>	<b>A</b> – The Grove Green Conservation Area is located approximately 0.5km from the site but there is potential for limited views from this into the site.						
<p>Does the site lie within an area with significant archaeological features/finds or where potential exists for archaeological features to be discovered in the future?</p> <p>A 5 point scale has been used to rank the options with regard to archaeology. This is:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scale</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scale		1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided	2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.	<p><b>R</b> = Scale 1 or 2</p> <p><b>A</b> = Scale 3 or 4</p> <p><b>G</b> = Scale 5</p>	<b>A</b> – (Scale – 4) An Area of Archaeological Potential comprising a post medieval mine is identified in the vicinity of the veterinary clinic (located to the rear of the shopping village)
Scale								
1	Development of this site (or part of) should be avoided							
2	Pre-determination assessment should be carried out to clarify whether development of any part of the site is possible.							

3	Significant archaeology could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
4	Low level archaeology anticipated which could be dealt with through suitable conditions on a planning approval.		
5	No known archaeological potential on the site or part of it.		
Is the site located within or in proximity to and/or likely to impact on the Kent Downs AONB?		<p><b>R</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and there is the potential for negative impacts which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p><b>A</b> = In close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB but there is less potential for negative impacts or negative impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not in close proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and negative impacts on the AONB are unlikely.</p>	<p><b>A</b> – Site located within 5km of Kent Downs AONB. The site lies immediately adjacent to the Kent Downs AONB, the boundary of which runs alongside the M20 to the north. Possible need for cut-and-fill to create level development platforms may have significant landscape impacts.</p>
Is the site in the Green Belt? If so, would development on this site cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation?		<p><b>R</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt and development would cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>A</b> = Within or adjacent to the Green Belt but development would not cause harm to the objectives of the Green Belt designation</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within or adjacent to the Green Belt</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site not located or adjacent to the Green Belt.</p>
Would development of the site lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape character for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts could not be achieved?		<p><b>R</b> = Significant adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) which cannot be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>A</b> = Adverse effect (not significant) or adverse effect (taking into account scale, condition and sensitivity issues) that can be appropriately mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = Opportunity to enhance landscape character or there would no adverse effect</p>	<p><b>A</b> –The identified site falls within the Strategic Gap defined on the Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan Proposals Map. Policy ENV31 of the Plan states that development within the Strategic Gap will not be permitted which significantly extends the defined urban area. The site is also located within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map, where protection of landscape quality is a priority (Policy ENV34). This may restrict the potential for new development on the site.</p>

SA Topic: Flood Risk		
<p>SA Objective 1: To ensure the residents of Maidstone have the opportunity to live in a well designed, sustainably constructed, decent and affordable home</p> <p>SA Objective 2: To reduce the risk of flooding and resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment</p> <p>SA Objective 12: To address the causes of climate change and ensure that the Borough is prepared for its impacts</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Is allocation within a flood zone?	<p><b>R</b> = Flood risk zone 3b</p> <p><b>A</b> = Flood risk zone 2 or 3a</p> <p><b>G</b> = Flood risk zone 1; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>G</b> – Site not in any flood zone.
Is the site at risk from groundwater or surface water flooding?	<p><b>R</b> = High risk</p> <p><b>A</b> = Medium risk</p> <p><b>G</b> = Low risk</p>	<b>G</b> = Low risk
SA Topic: Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure		
<p>SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the Borough’s biodiversity and geodiversity</p> <p>SA Objective 14: To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the Borough’s countryside, open space and historic environment</p>		
Appraisal Question	Significant effect criteria	Answer/Outcome
Will allocation impact upon an Ancient (AW) or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)?	<p><b>R</b> = Includes AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>A</b> = &lt;400m from an AW/ASNW</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;400m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<b>A</b> - Ancient Woodland located on the northern and eastern boundaries of the site.
Are there any trees on the site protected by tree preservation orders (TPOs)?	<p><b>R</b> = significant effect on the protected trees which cannot be mitigated against</p> <p><b>A</b> = adverse effect on the protected trees but this can be mitigated</p> <p><b>G</b> = No protected trees on the site</p>	<b>A</b> – TPOs located on the site.
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on blue infrastructure in the borough?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect but there may be alternatives</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a</p>	<b>G</b> – A water course runs north-south through the site but allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough.

	significant effect on blue infrastructure in the borough	
Will allocation of the site result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of a European designated site for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, RAMSAR sites)?	<p><b>R</b> = Allocation of the site is likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Allocation of the site has potential to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated Site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Allocation of the site is unlikely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of a European Designated site</p>	<p><b>A</b> - This site is located approximately 2.5km south of the North Downs Woodlands SAC. This site is likely to be within the main visitor catchment and may therefore make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC, which in turn could place an increased management burden on the SAC. The site may also contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (<u>which run closest to the SAC</u>) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	<p><b>R</b> = &lt;400m</p> <p><b>A</b> = 400-800m</p> <p><b>G</b> = &gt;800m; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>R</b> – The site lies within 2km of the Wouldham to Detling Escarpment SSSI to the north west. This SSSI also forms part of the North Downs Woodlands Special Area of Conservation.</p>
Does the site contain any Maidstone/Kent BAP priority species or habitats?	<p><b>R</b> = Site contains BAP priority species or habitats</p> <p><b>G</b> = Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain BAP priority species or habitats.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Local Wildlife Site or Local Nature Reserve?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains or is adjacent to an existing site</p> <p><b>A</b> = Contains or is adjacent to a proposed site</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain and is not adjacent; or allocation is greenspace</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Vinters Valley Park LNR is located adjacent to the site, south of Bearsted Road. Horish Wood to the north and Pope’s Wood to the south east are both ancient woodland and fall within the Horish Wood Local Wildlife Site.</p>
Will allocation impact upon a Biodiversity Opportunity Area?	<p><b>R</b> = Within a biodiversity opportunity area?</p> <p><b>G</b> = Not within a biodiversity opportunity area</p>	<p><b>R</b> – Much of the site lies within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area for habitat enhancement, restoration and creation. There is medium opportunity for acid grassland and heath creation with minor opportunity for creation of acid soil woodland.</p>
Will allocation impact upon designated open space (e.g. Millennium Greens)?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains designated open space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain designated open space</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Site does not contain designated open space but there is an area of amenity grassland located in close proximity to the site.</p>
Is the site designated for its geological or geomorphological importance?	<p><b>R</b> = Yes</p> <p><b>G</b> = No</p>	<p><b>G</b> - No</p>
Will allocation impact upon allotment space?	<p><b>R</b> = Contains allotment space</p> <p><b>G</b> = Does not contain allotment space</p>	<p><b>G</b> – Does not contain allotment space</p>
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>		



<p>Will locating new development on this site, in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, have a significant adverse effect on the <u>environmental quality or character</u> of the area?</p>	<p>No further strategic development sites are proposed in close proximity to the Newnham Park site. Locating new development on Newnham Park in conjunction with existing development in the area could potentially have a significant adverse effect on local ecology due to the proximity of several ancient woodlands. There is potential for significant negative landscape impacts – on the AONB, the strategic gap and the Special Landscape Area if further development was to take place in this location alongside this site.</p> <p>Locating new strategic development off junction 7 of the M20 has the potential to have a significant adverse effect on the environmental quality and character of the area unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. This relates particularly to noise, air quality and congestion of the transport network arising from increased traffic generation from site when added to existing traffic movements. The draft Integrated Transport Strategy reports that volume to capacity ratios between Junctions 6 and 7 and Junctions 7 and 8 of the M20 are forecast to exceed 90% by 2026, which will have a negative impact on journey time reliability for long-distance traffic. A volume to capacity ratio of 85% is considered the maximum acceptable limit by the Highways Agency. This issue is exacerbated by the widespread use of the M20 for local journeys during peak periods, as commuters seek to avoid the congestion on the main arterial routes into Maidstone.</p> <p>This site is located approximately 2.5km south of the North Downs Woodlands SAC. This site is likely to be within the main visitor catchment and may therefore make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC, which in turn could place an increased management burden on the SAC. The site may also contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (<u>which run closest to the SAC</u>) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed further in Section 9 of this report.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed development in the vicinity, cause problems for <u>local community services and infrastructure</u> in the vicinity, for example through an increase in population which results in stretching these services so they are over capacity? Could it provide or contribute to the provision of such infrastructure if required? Is it well located to access existing services/infrastructure?</p>	<p>The mix of development proposed for this site is likely to increase the demand for access to services/facilities in the area. This may have a positive or negative cumulative effect, depending on existing capacity. There is reasonable access to most community facilities and others will be provided as part of the proposed development. Improved accessibility by sustainable modes should be considered, including access to the town centre.</p> <p>Although the site falls within the some of the least deprived LSOA in the country with respect to the IMD Barrier to Housing and Services Domain (2010), neighbouring areas are in the 40% most deprived and development of this site may assist to address this by providing health services as well as key worker/supported care housing.</p> <p>It has been confirmed (by the site developer) that the site can be served by foul drainage, surface water drainage, water supply, telecoms and electricity. This will ensure that sufficient utilities infrastructure is provided as part of new development in the area without putting pressure on existing utilities infrastructure in the area.</p>
<p>Will new development on this site, when considered in conjunction with other existing and proposed</p>	<p>The potential development of employment uses on this site in conjunction with employment development near Junction 8 of the M20 will have a significant positive effect on economic growth in the area, in particular by providing new jobs and associated housing for key workers (health). The site is relatively accessible via public transport and</p>

<p>development in the vicinity contribute to <u>economic growth</u> – for example by improving the viability of Maidstone town centre (in particular the office space offer), providing for the local retention of higher skilled employees, or by improving the availability of suitable land, premises and facilities?</p>	<p>is readily accessible to the strategic road network.</p> <p>There is potential for a negative impact on the local economy in terms of journey time and reliability, due to the added cumulative impact of major new development in this area contributing to existing congestion between Junction 6 -7 and Junction 7-8 of the M20, alongside strategic employment development at Junction 8.</p>
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## Summary and Conclusions

The following conclusions set out the likely significant positive or adverse effects of development on this site on the sustainability of each of the sustainability topic areas; both in the immediate local area, in the Borough and across local authority boundaries (cross-boundary impacts); in the short, medium and long-term; and whether the effects are likely to be temporary or permanent:

**Very Positive / Positive / Unclear / No Effect / Negative / Very Negative** - any comments or details

**Community wellbeing, including accessibility to services:**  
**Positive** – Site appears to be relatively well served by community services in the area, and the proposed development would contribute further health facilities. However, the residential element of the development of the site may increase the demand on services in the area.

**Economy:**  
**Very Positive** – the delivery of new development on the site will have a very positive impact on the economy. The site is accessible both in terms of public transport and to the primary road network and will contribute towards increasing local and more highly skilled job opportunities in Maidstone. A component of retail redevelopment on this site has been put forward through the Call for Sites submission process. This is confined to the vicinity of the existing footprint. The current adopted policy allows for up to 500 m<sup>2</sup> extra in the vicinity of the existing footprint, and that anything over this would be for the type of retail facilities that do not compete with the town centre. However to confirm whether or not there will be a negative impact a retail impact assessment on the town centre will be required for both comparison and convenience goods as part of the planning application process.

**Transport and Accessibility:**  
**Positive** – The site is accessible both in terms of public transport and to the primary road network. However, the site is not located in close proximity to an existing cycle route.

**Air Quality and causes of climate change:**  
**Negative** - Traffic noise is a problem on this site due to the proximity of the M20 Motorway. Development on the site could also accentuate air quality issues currently present within the area.

**Water resources and quality:**  
**Unclear** – The site is located on a primary aquifer (bedrock designation) and the north eastern section of the site is in source protection zone 1. Any potential impact on this

would need to be investigated at a later stage.

**Land use, landscape and the historic environment:**

**Negative** – Development of the site would lead to a loss of grade 2 agricultural land (although this land may no longer be in agricultural use). The identified site falls within the Strategic Gap defined on the Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan Proposals Map. Policy ENV31 of the Plan states that development within the Strategic Gap will not be permitted which significantly extends the defined urban area. The site is also located within the North Downs Special Landscape Area defined on the MBWLP Proposals Map, where protection of landscape quality is a priority (Policy ENV34). The site is also directly adjacent to the AONB boundary. This may restrict the potential for new development on the site. An Area of Archaeological Potential comprising a post medieval mine is identified in the vicinity of the veterinary clinic (located to the rear of the shopping village).

**Flood Risk:**

**Positive** – the site is outside of flood zones 2 and 3.

**Biodiversity and Green Space:**

**Unclear** – trees that are the subject of TPOs are located on the site and there is ancient woodland located towards the north and east of the site. Any potential adverse effects on these designations as part of new development on the site would need to be mitigated.

This site is located approximately 2.5km south of the North Downs Woodlands SAC. This site is likely to be within the main visitor catchment and may therefore make some contribution to increased regular visitor activity on the SAC, which in turn could place an increased management burden on the SAC. The site may also contribute cumulatively to traffic movements on the A229 or A249 (which run closest to the SAC) and this will be investigated in the updated Core Strategy HRA. Potential cumulative impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC are discussed further in Section 9 of this report.

**Mitigation or Enhancement Measures**

Any significant adverse effects identified through the appraisal for each site should be reflected in mitigation measures expressed through plan policy. The following mitigation or enhancement measures are suggested:

- Allocation of site for development could potentially have an adverse impact on the local landscape character. This should be investigated further, including through a site visit and assessment.
- In order to avoid any detrimental noise impact on the site from the neighbouring M20, noise attenuation measures should be implemented.
- New development would have to be designed and laid out to ensure that trees that are the subject of a TPO are protected.
- Appropriate measures (as advised by the KCC Wildlife Officer or Kent Wildlife Trust) should be implemented to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the ancient woodlands located in close proximity to the site.
- To ensure that adverse impacts on air quality are minimised (site adjacent to AQMA), a Travel Plan setting out sustainable transport provision should be required.
- Potential impacts on the North Downs Woodlands SAC should be investigated through the Core Strategy HRA update.
- A retail impact assessment on the town centre should be undertaken for both comparison and convenience goods to determine potential impact on the Maidstone town centre.

