

Session 8 –Employment

No.	Issue.	Timescale.	Response.
8.1	Delete PC/89 proposed change to SS1. In that policy the employment floorspace requirement Figures should remain gross figures as at 2011 base date (not net at 2014).	28/11/16	The council has deleted proposed change PC/89 and the associated change PC/90 from the comprehensive schedule of proposed changes.
8.2	EMP1(1) Mote Road MBC to provide further wording in relation to a viability assessment requirement that would seek to maximise the amount of office floorspace in a viable mixed development.	28/11/16	The council has added a viability criterion to Policy EMP1 (1). The policy and supporting text, as proposed to be amended, is reproduced below.
8.3	EMP1(1) Mote Road MBC proposed change PC/91 is supported subject to removal of last sentence of paragraph 13b and first sentence of paragraph 13c.	28/11/16	The Council has updated the proposed change PC/91 to reflect the wording agreed in Session 8. The policy and supporting text, as proposed to be amended, is reproduced below.
8.4	EMP1(5) Woodcut Farm Inspector to give further consideration to the justification for the Woodcut Farm allocation and the appropriate development mix having regard in particular to the landscape impacts and to the identified need quantitative and qualitative needs for employment floorspace.	28/11/16	This action is for the Inspector. The Council will respond in relation to any further action that arises.
8.5	There is an apparent quantitative need for 24,000sqm B1a office floorspace to which EMP1(5) Woodcut Farm might contribute. However the claimed need for B1c/B8 floorspace there exceeds the net quantitative requirement of 6,500sqm. It is said to relate to a qualitative need, especially in relation to access to the M20. If so, the Plan text needs to include a justification for that qualitative need which at present only appears in the background evidence. MBC should	28/11/16	The Council has made a proposed change to criterion 4 of Policy SS1 and to paragraph 15.2 of the supporting text for Policy EMP1(5). The changes are set out below. Further changes to the policy have been discussed and agreed with the site's developers following the hearing. The additional proposed changes to Policy EMP1(5) which have been

	provide revised wording for SS1 and paragraph 15.2 in this regard.		agreed between the two parties are set out below and can be summarised as; 1 – addition to the first section of the policy to state that the site will deliver at least 7,500 sqm of B1a/b floorspace 2 –additional criterion to confirm that serviced land for 3,300sqm of B1a/b floorspace will be delivered in a first phase of development 3 - confirmation of area covered by 500sqm limit at and above the 55m contour line . 4 –revision to the previous proposed change to allow for units of up to 2,500sqm (previously 2,000sqm) on the west of the stream
8.6	Council to modify EMP1(5) site plan to identify the highest part of the site where footplates limited to 500sqm and to cross refer to this in the policy.	28/1/16	The amended site plan is appended.
8.7	MBC to identify what amount of office floorspace and other development was included at Woodcut Farm in the traffic modelling and whether this corresponded to the floorspace indicated in the planning application or to the 16,000sqm of office floorspace indicated in the Employment and Retail Topic Paper.	28/11/16	The M20 Junctions Assessment (TRA037) used the average of the jobs indicated in the planning application for Woodcut Farm (15/503288) which stated between 746 and 1020 jobs, i.e. 883 jobs. The application Environmental Statement/Transport Assessment tested 7,500sqm of B1a/b floorspace of which 5,360sqm was B1a.
8.8	The analysis of junction 8 site assessments document to be added to the library if not already there.	21/11/16	The document referred to is the SA which accompanied the Strategic Sites consultation (2012). This has now been placed in the document library (reference ORD 043).

8.9	RMX1(2) Maidstone East Council to amend policy to include reference to office provision in the allocation policy for Maidstone East so as to marry with existing text in paragraph 13.12 which already allows for such provision.	28/11/16	The Council has made a proposed change which is set out below.
8.10	Discussion of Policies DM20 and DM41 in relation to rural business development to be deferred to Session 11.	16/11/16	The discussion was deferred as per the action point and matters were discussed during Session 11.

Policy EMP1(1) – Mote Road, Maidstone

<p>[additional supporting text]</p> <p><u>13.a This site comprises a 0.4ha site which lies within a wider parcel of land bounded by Romney Place, Lower Stone Street and Mote Road/Wat Tyler Way. The site is currently used for surface level car parking for nearby business uses and redevelopment represents an opportunity to make better use of this site. As it is located within the town centre, it is potentially suitable for a mix of uses including offices, residential and leisure uses.</u></p> <p><u>13.b The site has the potential to contribute to the identified need for additional office floorspace (24,000sqm by 2031). This is only likely to be achieved if the scheme includes other, higher value uses, most specifically residential. The site is therefore allocated for residential-led mixed use development which will include a significant component of office floorspace. Substantial new retail development on this site is unlikely to be acceptable as it is at some distance from the primary shopping area and lacks easy, direct walking links. [deletion in accordance with Inspector's Action Point 8-3].</u></p> <p><u>13.c Whilst the site has previously had a planning consent for a 9 storey office block, an acceptable design solution for the site could also comprise a small number of lower-rise development blocks. [deletion in accordance with Inspector's Action Point 8-3] Development of the site will need to bring townscape improvements to this part of the town centre, including by establishing an improved frontage to Wat Tyler Way. The scale, siting and design of the development will have particular regard to the setting of the Grade II listed Romney Terrace to the north of the site.</u></p> <p><u>13.d The policy does not prescribe amounts of floorspace of different uses as the overall development capacity of the site will be highly dependent on the specific scheme which comes forward. The evidence supporting the Local Plan highlights that the expected demand for office floorspace will predominantly be from small businesses who will seek to occupy small office units, often within multi-tenant managed 'workspaces'. This type of provision operates on a different financial model than a traditional single occupier office, generating different financial returns and, potentially, having different build costs. The viability assessment accompanying an application should test the impacts of different forms of development and management of the</u></p>	<p>PC/91 (further amended as part of Action Points 8.2 and 8.3)</p>
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<p><u>office space on the development viability to demonstrate how the provision of office floorspace has been maximised. In respect of residential capacity, Policy DM12 sets out the density range acceptable on a town centre site.</u></p>	
<p>Policy EMP1(1)RMX1(x) Mote Road, Maidstone</p> <p>Mote Road, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for <u>residential-led mixed use development to include a significant element of office floorspace (B1a). redevelopment of up to 8,000 sqm office floorspace (B1 use class). An element of additional residential development would also be appropriate as a supporting, secondary use [PC/46]. Leisure uses (D2) would also be appropriate as part of the mix of uses on this site.</u> Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.</p> <p>Design and layout</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where possible development should be sited to create frontage blocks to Mote Road/Wat Tyler Way and to Romney Place. 2. The development preserves the setting of the listed properties in Romney Place. 3. Development does not exceed 9 storeys in height. <p><u>Uses</u></p> <p><u>x. The development should maximise the amount of office floorspace which will be delivered relative to other uses. This should be demonstrated by means of a viability assessment that considers alternative delivery and management approaches and their impact on viability. It should clearly set out the sales and build costs assumptions used and demonstrate that the amount of office floorspace is the maximum which could be provided as part of a viable development.</u></p> <p>Noise</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The submission of a noise assessment and the delivery of appropriate noise attenuation measures as part of the development. <p>Air quality</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The submission of an air quality assessment and appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the development. <p>Land contamination</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. The submission of a land contamination report and appropriate mitigation measures to be implemented prior to development commencing. 	<p>PC/92</p> <p>PC/93</p>

Policy SS1 – Maidstone Borough spatial strategy (criterion 4)

<p><u>4. A prestigious business park at Junction 8 of the M20 that is well connected to the motorway network will provide for a range of job needs up to 2031. The site will provide for the additional warehousing floorspace needed and will also make a significant contribution to the need for additional office floorspace (B1a/B1b). Additionally, the site will meet the ‘qualitative’ need for</u></p>	
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<p><u>a new, well serviced and well connected mixed use employment site suitable for offices, industry and warehousing and will <i>thereby</i> help to diversify the range of sites available to new and expanding businesses in the borough to help accommodate future demand.</u></p>	
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Policy EMP1(5) – Woodcut Farm, Ashford Road, Bearsted

<p>15.1 The Strategic Employment Land Availability Assessment assessed the potential of a range of sites to accommodate new office, industrial and warehousing/storage development. Sites assessed as suitable, available and achievable and appropriate for allocation in the local plan are listed in the table below.</p>	
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<p>15.2 There is a unique opportunity in the borough to provide a prestigious business park at Junction 8 of the M20 that is well connected to the motorway network and that can provide for a range of job needs up to 2031. <u>Land at Woodcut Farm will provide for the 6,500sqm additional warehousing floorspace needed (B8; 2014-31) and will also make a significant contribution to the need for 24,000sqm of additional office/research & development floorspace (B1a/B1b) over the same period. Additionally, the site will meet the ‘qualitative’ need for a new, well serviced and well connected mixed use employment site which can meet the anticipated demand for small business orientated space, stand-alone industrial and manufacturing space built for specific end users and smaller scale distribution businesses as well as office type uses. This site will overcome this ‘qualitative’ gap in the borough’s existing portfolio of employment sites and will thereby help to diversify the range of sites available to new and expanding businesses in the borough to help accommodate future demand. Land at Woodcut Farm is allocated to provide for a mix of business uses comprising industrial, offices and distribution/logistics. High quality office development is sought, such as that required by company headquarters for example, providing complementary provision to the town centre.</u></p>	
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<p>15.3 The site, which is some 25.8ha in total, is situated to the west of the A20/M20 junction (junction 8). It comprises the wedge of land lying between the M20 to the north east and the A20 to the south west. The site is agricultural land, divided into fields by hedgerows which predominately run in a north-south direction. The site is also bisected north-south by a watercourse which eventually runs into the River Len to the south of the A20. The land is undulating, the ground rising up from either side of the watercourse. To the south the site borders a number of dispersed properties which front onto the A20 (Ashford Road). To the south east the site is bounded by Musket Lane. To the north west lies Crismill Lane and a substantial tree belt which fronts onto this lane. The site boundary then follows the hedge belt which adjoins Crismill Lane approximately half way down its length and links to the complex of buildings at Woodcut Farm and turns south to the A20, running along the eastern boundary of the fields which front onto the Woodcut Farm access.</p>	
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<p>15.4 The site is located in the countryside and lies within the setting of the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site falls within the White Heath Farmlands landscape character sub-area (13) where landscape condition is poor overall, partially because of the fragmentation caused by the existing highway infrastructure. Landscape sensitivity for the character sub-area is recorded as moderate, the landscape providing the setting of the Kent Downs (AONB).</p> <p>15.5 The site itself has been specifically assessed in the Maidstone Landscape Capacity Study (2015). This finds that the site has a high degree of sensitivity in landscape terms and an accordingly low capacity to accommodate new employment-related development.</p> <p>15.6 This being the case, development proposals must be planned with very careful attention to the site's visual and physical relationship with the AONB, responding to the site's topography and natural landscape features in terms of the scale, design, siting, use, orientation, levels and lighting of buildings and associated development, alongside infrastructure and landscaping requirements.</p> <p>15.7 To achieve a high quality scheme in this prime location, a campus style development will be delivered in a parkland setting. This will be created through the retention and enhancement of existing tree and hedge belts, including those subject to Tree Preservation Orders no. 19 of 2007 and no. 17 of 2007, and substantial additional structural landscaping within the site in the form of shaws and woodland blocks. This should include the retention and reinforcement of the streamside vegetation. Landscape buffers will also be established along the principal site boundaries, including to help provide a setting to the Grade II listed Woodcut Farmhouse and to help secure the residential amenity of nearby residential properties.</p> <p>15.8 Buildings will cover no more than 40% of the site. This figure excludes the western most field, of some 9ha in area, which is reserved as an undeveloped area to include an enhanced landscape buffer to establish a clear and strong boundary between the development and the wider countryside to the east of Bearsted. This area should be managed and structured as open woodland with associated biodiversity benefits and the potential to establish woodland pasture in the future.</p>	
<p>15.9 The flatter area of the site, to the east of the stream, is better able to accommodate larger footprint buildings up to 10,000sqm <u>5,000sqm</u> with heights restricted to a maximum of 12m. To the west of the stream the land rises and is suited to smaller footprint buildings <u>of up to 2,500sqm and</u> up to 8m in height. The siting, scale and detailed design of development within this area must also have particular regard to the setting of Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II listed). <u>On the highest part of the site, as shown on the policies map, to the east of the Woodcut Farm complex, building footprints will be limited to 500sqm.</u></p>	PC/94
<p>15.10 There are archaeological remains in the immediate vicinity of the site, including an Anglo-Saxon burial site. Measures appropriate to the actual</p>	

<p>archaeological value of the site, revealed by further survey as needed, will be addressed. There are no statutory or non-statutory sites of nature conservation importance within the site and the County Ecologist advises that the potential for impacts on designated sites is limited. As is normal practice for a proposal of this nature, an ecological scoping study will be required to establish the presence of, and potential for, any impacts on protected species.</p> <p>15.11 Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the A20 Ashford Road and a Transport Assessment will identify the scope of improvements required to the junctions (and associated approaches) at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the M20 Junction 8 (including the west-bound on-slip and merge); • the A20 Ashford Rd/M20 link road roundabout; • the A20 Ashford Rd/Penford Hill junction; • the A20 Ashford Rd/Eyhorne Street/Great Danes Hotel access; and • the Willington Street/A20 Ashford Rd junction. <p>15.12 The site is located on a bus route (A20) but without significant additional dedicated measures it is highly likely that workers and visitors travelling to and from the site will be highly reliant on their private cars. A Travel Plan will be required to demonstrate how development will deliver significantly improved access by sustainable modes, in particular by public transport but this could also include cycling, walking and car share initiatives</p>	
<p>Policy EMP1(5) Woodcut Farm, Ashford Road, Bearsted:</p> <p>Woodcut Farm, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for development for up to 49,000m² mixed employment floorspace (B1c; B2; B1a; <u>B1b</u>; B8) . <u>Office type uses (B1a & b) will be a substantial component of the mix of uses, with the site expected to make a significant contribution to the borough need for some 24,000sqm of new office floorspace by 2031, by providing 7,500sqm of B1a /B1b floorspace as a minimum. In the event of a demand arising, an element of hi-tech and/or research and development (B1(b)) would be appropriate as part of the overall mix of B class uses on the site.</u> The employment, landscaping and infrastructure elements will be delivered in an integrated and co-ordinated manner that respect the site's visual and physical relationship with the Kent Downs AONB.</p> <p>Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.</p> <p>Design & layout</p> <p>1. The proposals create a spacious parkland setting for development through the addition of substantial internal landscaping which <u>will be sympathetic to the site's countryside context and</u> which will help to break up the visual appearance of the development <u>including parking areas</u> in particular in views from the AONB <u>including through the use of substantial tracts of planting extending into the body of the development to achieve clear visual separation between individual buildings and between parking areas</u>; buildings will cover not more than 40% of the developed site area.</p> <p>2. The development proposals will respect the topography of the site by minimising the</p>	<p>PC/95 (incorporating further changes agreed after the hearing between MBC and the site's developers)</p>

need for site excavation.

~~3. Landscape buffers of at least 15m in width are established along the site's boundaries, to M20 and to Musket Lane, which will also help secure the setting to Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II listed) and the amenity of residential properties at Chestnuts and White Heath. Development will have a landscaped frontage to A20.~~

3. Landscape buffers of at least 35m in depth are established along the site's boundary to the M20 including a new native woodland shaw, at least 15m to Musket Lane, at least 25m to the A20 including a planted bund, and at least 30m along the western boundary, which will also help secure the setting to Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II listed) and the amenity of residential properties at Chestnuts and White Heath. Tracts of structural landscaping will extend into development areas of at least 15m in width..

4. An area of 9ha to the north and north west of Woodcut Farm is secured as an undeveloped landscape area in the form of open woodland including the addition of a landscape buffer of at least 30m along the eastern boundary. Future management of this area will be secured by means of legal agreement and maintained in perpetuity.

5. Larger footprint buildings ~~will be~~ are accommodated in the field to the east of the stream up to a maximum unit size of ~~10,000sqm~~ 5,000sqm with building ridge heights not to exceed 12m. Units should be orientated end-on to predominant views to and from the AONB.

6. Development on the field to the west of the stream comprises smaller *units of up to 2,500sqm footprint* with g. Graded building heights that will take account of the site's topography with building ridge heights not to exceed 8m. On the highest part of the site to the east of the Woodcut Farm complex at and above the 55m contour line as shown on the policies map, building footprints will be limited to 500sqm. The siting, scale and detailed design of development must have regard to the conservation of Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II) and its setting.

[additional criterion]

X. The development proposals are designed to limit their visual impact including through the use of curved roofs on buildings, non-reflective materials, sensitive colouring, green roofs and walls on smaller footprint buildings (500sqm and below), and sensitive lighting proposals. Buildings should include active frontage elements incorporating glazing, and address both the A20 and M20.

[additional criterion]

Y. Land to accommodate a minimum of 3.300sqm of floorspace within Use Classes B1(a) and B1(b) will be provided with vehicular access and all necessary services including drainage and electrical power supply to the boundary of the plot prior to the first occupation of any units falling within Use Classes B1(c), B2 or B8.

Landscape and ecology

7. The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance. The assessment will specifically address the impact of

development on views to and from the Kent Downs AONB escarpment. This will include environmental enhancements of the wider landscape beyond the allocation boundaries through financial contributions using the mechanism of a S106 agreement.

8. The development proposals are designed to take account of the results of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be necessary, together with any necessary mitigation and significant enhancement measures.

Archaeology

9. The proposals are designed to take account of the archaeological interest on the site as revealed through appropriate survey.

Access

10. Vehicular access to the site will be from A20 Ashford Road.

Highways and transportation

11. Improvements to capacity at the A20/Willington Street junction.

12. Package of measures to provide bus stops, pedestrian refuges and improvements to the footway on the northern side of the A20 Ashford Road.

13. Development will contribute, as proven necessary through a Transport Assessment, to improvements at the following junctions:

- i. the M20 Junction 8 (including the west-bound on-slip and merge);
- ii. the A20 Ashford Rd/M20 link road roundabout;
- iii. the A20 Ashford Rd/Penford Hill junction;
- iv. the A20 Ashford Rd/Eyhorne Street/Great Danes Hotel access; and
- v. the Willington Street/A20 Ashford Rd junction.

14. Development will deliver a significant package of sustainable transport measures to secure access to the site by a range of sustainable modes, including the provision of a subsidised bus route, and must be supported by the implementation of a Travel Plan.

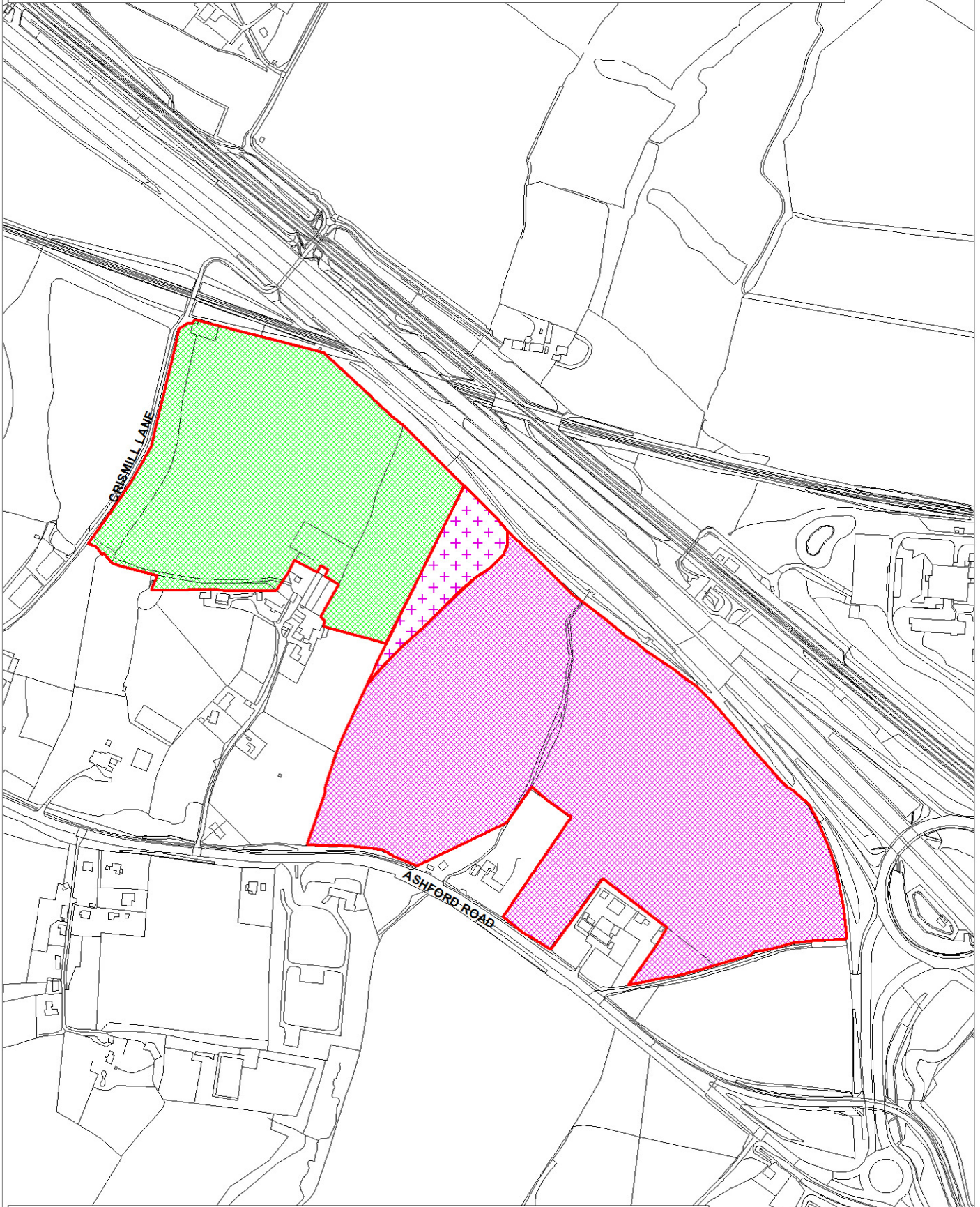
Policy RMX1(2) – Maidstone East and former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone

Amend the first paragraph of Policy RMX1(2) as follows;




Maidstone East and former Royal Mail Sorting Office, as shown on the policies map, is allocated

<p>for development for up to 10,000m² comparison and convenience retail and approximately 210 dwellings. <u>Office floorspace would also be appropriate as part of the mix of uses on this site.</u> In addition to the requirements of policy H1, planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met.</p>	
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EMP1 (5) - Woodcut Farm, Ashford Road, Bearsted



Legend

-  Employment allocation
-  Landscaped area
-  Building footprints limited to 500sqm

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