

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

DRAFT PLAN FOR SUBMISSION (REGULATION 19)



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Foreword

Welcome to Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan Review – Regulation 19 Consultation Draft.

Whether you are a resident, a business, an investor or simply somebody who is interested in the future of Kent's County Town, this is an important document. The consultation seeks comments on the proposed spatial strategy via which the Council intends to accommodate growth in housing, employment, retail and other activities up to 2037, together with the physical, social and economic infrastructure necessary to make this work and a range of policies designed to maximise local benefits and minimise environmental impact.

This consultation also comes at a time of some continuing uncertainties. These include the ongoing recovery from a global pandemic, market adjustments following the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, shifting trends in retailing and post pandemic work patterns, and government intentions around potential change to the English planning system. Added to these uncertainties, is the very definite need for us to ensure that our strategy for accommodating growth over the next 15 years, embraces our commitment to ensuring that Maidstone plays its full part in addressing the climate change emergency.

Notwithstanding these wider uncertainties and challenges, there are very good reasons why we must progress this Local Plan Review in a timely manner. Principal amongst these is the need to have an adopted plan in place to ensure that we retain control of where development takes place in our borough and avoid a scenario in which the balance is tilted in favour of the development industry and our decisions are taken by Government appointed inspectors rather than our own locally elected Councillors.

Having mentioned the context to, and importance of this plan, it would be wrong not to recognise the potential scale of change contained herein. Maidstone's annual housing target is set by Government, and in common with the rest of Kent and the South East, this target is challenging. In the 2017 Local Plan, the borough is charged with delivering 883 new dwellings each year. In this Local Plan Review, we must provide in the region of 1160 units each year. This is a significant increase, and it is of course not simply about the number of residential units, it is about the infrastructure, jobs and services needed to support this number. It is for this reason that the plan proposes two larger scale Garden Community developments that will start to deliver housing in volume from the late 2020's onwards. This has been a conscious decision, as it is only through building at this scale, we can enable new development to meet the entirety of its own infrastructure needs at the point of delivery, together with new local centres, employment, leisure, education, and other provision that will actually add facilities which existing communities can also take advantage of, rather than continuing to put pressure on existing services.

Given the continuing uncertainties in the employment market, this plan also takes a deliberate approach to exceed the objectively assessed target for employment land provision. As our national and local economies rebalance, it is our belief that recovery and growth will be best achieved by offering the maximum choice and flexibility to those wishing to create jobs through either new investment or re-investment in our borough. However, even with this approach, we will need to maintain a close eye on market trends and review our strategy regularly.

Our Town Centre sits at the very heart of our borough and our communities. It too has suffered over the last 18 months, as have town centres across the length and breadth of the country. The role of our town centre in our economic, social and cultural life is paramount, and for this reason it is proposed that in parallel with this Local Plan Review, Maidstone Borough Council will work with partners to prepare an ambitious new Town Centre Strategy. This strategy will form the basis of a transformational programme of projects and activities designed to generate new investment in high added value jobs, an improved retail, leisure, cultural and arts offer, new community and education infrastructure and new and enhanced green spaces and river frontages. Key to this ambition, will be the reaffirmation of Maidstone's role as the County Town of Kent.

In addition to managing our borough's physical and economic growth, this plan also contains policies set across broader and critical agendas such as the protection and enhancement of our natural environment and ensuring that going forward we develop Maidstone in a sustainable manner and keep issues such as biodiversity and climate change at the top of our agenda. Indeed, the importance of these issues, and of the quality of our built environment, is such that the Council is in the process of commissioning a separate Development Plan Document around Design and Sustainability. This document will go through a process similar to the main Local Plan Review, and you will be consulted separately on it as it progresses.

As a result of the global pandemic, work to assess our accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People was delayed. Therefore, this will also be the subject of a specific Development Plan Document which will be consulted upon separately, as will the update to our Community Infrastructure Charging Levy.

It is of course impossible to summarise in a few paragraphs a document which contains policies and proposals which will influence how so many of our urban and rural environments develop over the next 15 years. But I hope I have said enough to encourage you to read the document and to share your views with us.

Councillor Paul Cooper

Chair – Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee

1. INTRODUCTION

How to Comment

- 1.1 We welcome your comments on the policies and proposals set out in this Local Plan Review Regulation 19 document. Please use the proforma that accompanies this document to make comments.

The consultation runs from 29th October – 12th December

About this Consultation

- 1.2 This document is the third public consultation on the review of the adopted Local Plan 2017. The first consultation took place in 2019 and was entitled 'Scoping, Themes and Issues' and the second consultation was entitled 'Preferred Approaches'. Since then, a great deal of additional work has been undertaken and Maidstone Borough Council is now in a position to consult on the draft Local Plan Review document that we intend to submit for Independent Examination by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.
- 1.3 This consultation is aimed at a range of stakeholders, from the local community through to landowners, developers, businesses, statutory undertakers and neighbouring local authorities.
- 1.4 All policies from the adopted Local Plan 2017 have been considered and you will see that the structure of the main chapters of this consultation document reflects the overall structure of the adopted Local Plan 2017. Some of the adopted Local Plan 2017 policies are still necessary and will be retained. Others need modification and others are no longer needed. There are also new policies within this document that did not feature in the adopted Local Plan 2017. This consultation is an opportunity to comment on the soundness and legal compliance of this document.

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Background to the Local Plan

- 2.1 Maidstone Borough Council's (MBC's) activities impact on the lives of people living and working in the borough in a variety of ways. From collecting refuse from homes and businesses, keeping our public open spaces clean, tidy and fit for purpose, actively intervening to make the borough 'open for business', managing the housing register and finding safe places to live for those in greatest housing need, all the way to managing the elections in the borough, the council's responsibilities and activities are diverse.
- 2.2 This responsibility is reflected in MBC's Strategic Plan, which highlights its responsibility "to make every effort to deliver its services and produce cohesive plans for – economic, environmental, social and cultural prosperity. We have stewardship of our future and it is important that we get it right".
- 2.3 One part of MBC's statutory responsibilities is as the Local Planning Authority. This means the council has a statutory responsibility for determining planning applications and is responsible for preparing and maintaining a local plan for the borough.
- 2.4 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan (MBLP) was adopted in October 2017 and covers the period to 2031, anticipating and planning for the new homes, business premises, shops and infrastructure needed over the plan period.
- 2.5 This Local Plan Review document updates and supersedes the 2017 Local Plan, whilst 'saving' relevant policies contained within it, and ensuring that it is in line with the latest national planning requirements, including extending the plan period to 2037/38. The Local Plan Review is a key document that sets the framework to guide the future development of the Borough. It plans for homes, jobs, shopping, leisure and the environment, including biodiversity and climate change, as well as the associated infrastructure to support new development. It explains the 'why, what, where, when and how' development will be delivered through the strategy that plans for growth and renewal whilst at the same time protects and enhances the borough's natural and built assets.
- 2.6 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review is supported by a robust and proportionate evidence base, has been produced in accordance with government requirements, including the duty-to-co-operate, and considers several relevant national and local plans and strategies.
- 2.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is published by the government. The NPPF explains the statutory provisions and provides guidance to both the community and local government about the operation of the planning system and how the government's planning policies should be applied. The suite of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) adds further context, and should be read in conjunction with, the NPPF. The Local Plan Review does not repeat national policy, but it does explain how the policy has been applied.

2.8 The Local Plan Review:

- Sets out the scale and distribution of development.
- Identifies, by site, where development will be located.
- Identifies where development will be constrained; and
- Explains the infrastructure required to help deliver the plan.

2.9 In considering proposals for development, the Borough Council will apply all relevant policies of the plan. It is therefore assumed that the plan will be read as a whole and cross-referencing between plan policies has been minimized.

2.10 The Local Plan forms part of the overall Development Plan for the borough. Development Plans, which include adopted Local Plans and adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans, are central to the planning system and are needed to guide the decision-making process for land uses and development proposals. Other documents within the Development Plan are:

- North Loose Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031 (2016)
- Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031 (2020)
- Loose Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2031 (2019)
- Marden Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031 (2020)
- Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan (2021)
- Lenham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031 (2021)
- Otham Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2035 (2021)
- Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 as amended by Early Partial Review (2020)
- Kent Mineral Sites Plan (2020)
- South East Marine Plan (2021)

2.11 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan identifies Mineral Safeguarding Areas whose purpose is to avoid the unnecessary sterilization of any mineral resources through incompatible development. Development proposals coming forward within the Minerals Safeguarding Areas located within Maidstone Borough will therefore need to comply with minerals safeguarding policies in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The extent of the Minerals Safeguarding Areas are shown on the Policies Map accompanying the Local Plan Review.

2.12 Neighbourhood Development Plans, which are also called Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums. A Neighbourhood Plan attains the same legal status as other documents within the Development Plan once it has been agreed at referendum and is made (brought into legal force) by the Borough Council. Government advises that a Neighbourhood Plan should support the strategic development needs set out in an adopted Local Plan and plan positively to support local development. Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared in accordance with the NPPF and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review.

3.1 There are a number of adopted supplementary planning documents (SPD) and planning advice notes, which provide supplementary guidance to local and national planning policies. The following SPDs and advice notes are saved:

- Affordable and local needs housing (SPD)
- Kent Design Guide (2005)
- Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006: SPG4 Vehicle Parking Standards
- Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3-Residential Parking
- London Road Character Area Assessment SPD (2008)
- Loose Road Character Area Assessment SPD (2008)
- Residential Extensions SPD (2009)
- Domestic and Medium Scale Solar PV Arrays (up to 50KW) and Solar Thermal (2014)
- Large Scale (>50KW) Solar PV Arrays (2014)
- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2021-2026
- London Road walking and cycling assessment (2019)
- Maidstone walking and cycling assessment (2018)
- Building for Life 12 (2018)
- Delivering Growth (2017)
- Community Facilities in North Ward Feasibility Study (2017)
- Air Quality Guidance (2017)
- Public Art Guidance (2017)
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy: Action Plan (2017)
- Maidstone Tri Study (2017)

3. SPATIAL PORTRAIT & KEY LOCAL ISSUES

Spatial Portrait

- 3.1 The borough of Maidstone covers approximately 40,000 hectares and is situated in the heart of Kent. Maidstone is the County Town of Kent and approximately 75% of its 171,800 population live in the urban area. The Maidstone urban area, located in the north west of the borough, has a strong commercial and retail town centre, with Maidstone comprising one of the largest retail centres in the south east. A substantial rural hinterland surrounds the urban area, part of which enjoys designation due to its high landscape and environmental quality. The borough encompasses a small section of the Metropolitan Green Belt (1.3%), and 27% of the borough forms part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

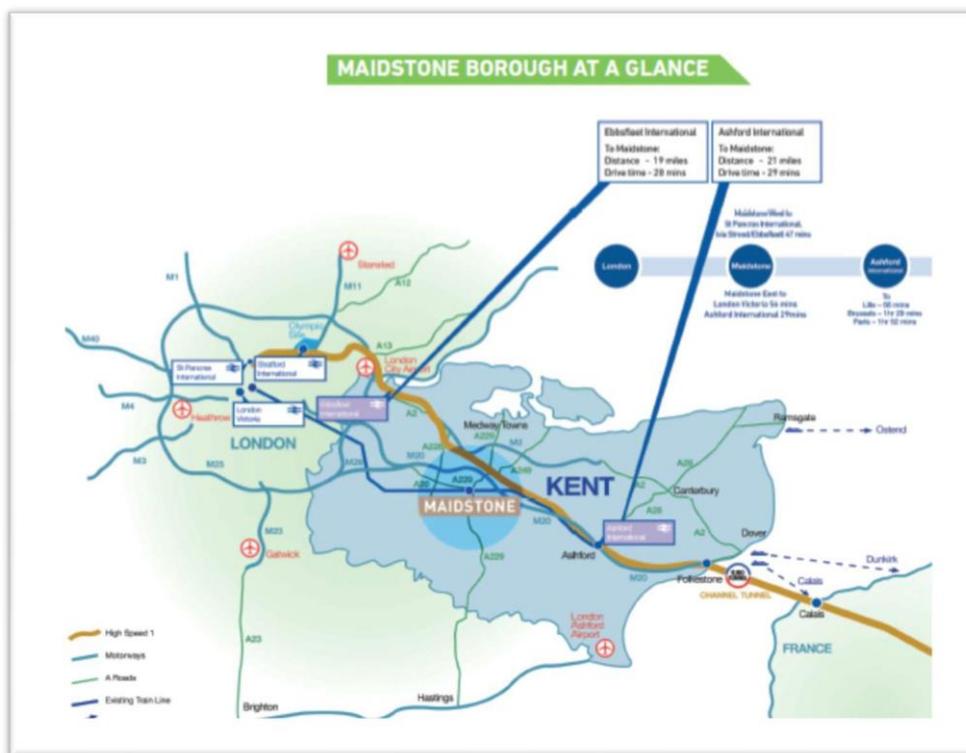


Figure 3.1 – Maidstone Borough at a glance

- 3.2 The borough is strategically located between the Channel Tunnel and London with direct connections to both via the M20 and M2 motorways. Three central railway stations in the town connect to London, Ashford, Tonbridge and to the Medway Towns. Maidstone Borough has a close interaction with the Medway Towns that provide a part of the borough's workforce. The town centre acts as the focus for retail development throughout the borough and has an important role to play in the visitor economy with the tourist information centre located at Maidstone Museum.

- 3.3 The rural centres of Harrietsham and Lenham lie on the Ashford International - Maidstone East - London Victoria line; and Headcorn, Marden and Staplehurst lie on the Ashford International, Tonbridge - London Charing Cross and London Cannon Street lines. Yalding lies on the Medway Valley Line, Paddock Wood - Maidstone West - Maidstone Barracks - Strood.
- 3.4 The Channel Tunnel link known as High Speed 1 (HS1) runs through the borough, providing fast links into London (a service links to HS1 from Maidstone West station, via Strood to Ebbsfleet). A number of main highway routes cross the borough including the A20, A229, A249, A274 and A26.
- 3.5 The borough is relatively prosperous with a considerable employment base and a lower-than-average unemployment rate compared to Kent. However, the borough has a relatively low wage economy that has led to out-commuting for higher paid work.
- 3.6 The local housing market crosses one adjacent borough boundary into Tonbridge and Malling, with relationships identified with the Ashford, Medway, Tunbridge Wells, and London housing markets. All of these markets are influenced by their proximity to London, resulting in relatively high house prices.
- 3.7 There are parts of the borough that would benefit from renewal, primarily including Maidstone town centre and there are pockets of deprivation that exist, particularly in the urban area. The rural service centres and larger villages provide services to the rural hinterland and some larger villages also play a vital part in the rural economy. There are a number of significant centres of economic activity in and around the rural settlements, and smaller commercial premises are dotted throughout the borough.
- 3.8 Agriculture remains an important industry to the borough including the traditional production of soft fruits and associated haulage and storage facilities.
- 3.9 The borough is fortunate to benefit from a number of heritage and natural assets including 41 conservation areas, over 2,000 listed buildings, 26 scheduled ancient monuments and 15 registered parks and gardens important for their special historic interest. Seven percent of the borough is covered by areas of ancient woodland, there are 63 local wildlife sites, 34 verges of nature conservation interest, 11 sites of special scientific interest, three local nature reserves and a European designated special area of conservation. The River Medway flows through the borough and the town centre and, together with its tributaries, is one of the borough's prime assets. Protection of the borough's distinct urban and rural heritage remains an important issue for the council.
- 3.10 The council is making provision for new housing and employment growth, together with associated infrastructure, whilst at the same time emphasising that growth is constrained by Maidstone's high-quality environment, the extent of the floodplain, and the limitations of the existing transport systems and infrastructure. There is also likely to be increased pressure to compete with nearby Ebbsfleet Garden City, the Kent Thames Gateway and Ashford to attract inward investment. The challenge for this LPR is to manage the potential impacts of future growth to ensure that development takes place in a sustainable manner that supports the local economy whilst safeguarding the valuable natural and built assets of the borough.

The LPR’s Strategic Issues

3.11 Table 3.1 brings together the NPPF’s strategic themes and the Strategic Plan’s priorities and outcomes, the NPPF strategic themes and the associated strategic issues for Maidstone borough. This table helps provide the basis for the structure of the remaining chapters of this document.

NPPF	Strategic Plan	Local Plan Review
Strategic Theme (Para 20)	Priorities & Outcomes	Strategic Issue
Set out an overall strategy for the scale, pattern and quality of development and make sufficient provision for...		
<p>...Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure, and other commercial development</p>	<p>Embracing growth & enabling infrastructure</p> <p>Council leads masterplanning and invests in new places which are well designed.</p> <p>Key employment sites are delivered</p> <p>Skills levels and earning potential of our residents are raised</p> <p>Local commercial and inward investment is increased</p> <p>Homes & Communities</p> <p>Existing housing is safe, desirable and promotes good health and well being</p> <p>Housing need is met including affordable housing Homelessness and rough sleeping are prevented</p> <p>A thriving place</p> <p>Our town and village centres are fit for the future</p> <p>A vibrant leisure and cultural offer</p>	<p>Meeting the borough’s local housing need and helping to meet needs across the relevant Housing Market Area/s</p> <p>Ensuring a sufficient supply of affordable housing</p> <p>Ensuring sufficient land and floorspace is provided to support economic growth in the borough and to contribute to the needs of the wider economic market area</p> <p>Ensuring that Maidstone has a vital and vibrant town centre which maintains its role in the sub-region and that a network of local centres continue to serve local retail and service needs.</p>

NPPF	Strategic Plan	Local Plan Review
Strategic Theme (Para 20)	Priorities & Outcomes	Strategic Issue
<p>Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation</p>	<p>Safe, clean & green</p> <p>A borough that is recognised as clean and well cared for by everyone</p> <p>People feel safe and are safe</p> <p>An environmentally attractive and sustainable borough</p> <p>Embracing growth and enabling infrastructure</p> <p>Sufficient infrastructure is planned to meet the demand of growth</p> <p>Heritage is respected</p>	<p>Ensuring that the borough’s environmental assets such as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Landscapes of Local Value, the countryside and Green Belt are suitably protected and enhanced.</p> <p>Tackling the biodiversity emergency by ensuring that the borough’s biodiversity and wildlife habitats are suitably protected and enhanced</p> <p>Ensuring that the borough’s historic assets are conserved and enhanced</p> <p>Contributing to an overall improvement in air quality, in particular in the Maidstone Air Quality Management Area.</p> <p>Managing the risk of flooding from all sources.</p> <p>Tackling the climate change emergency by taking a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change</p>

4. SPATIAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The council's vision for the borough is set out in the 2019 Strategic Plan:

Maidstone: *A vibrant, prosperous, urban and rural community at the heart of Kent where everyone can realise their potential.*

Local Plan Review Spatial Vision

- 4.2 Having regard to the Borough's Strategic Plan, as well as the other matters and strategic issues that the LPR will need to address, the proposed spatial vision for the LPR is as follows:

By 2037: *Embracing growth which provides improved infrastructure, economic opportunity, services, spaces, and homes for our communities, while addressing biodiversity and climate change challenges and protecting our heritage, natural and cultural assets.*

Spatial objectives

- 4.3 The objectives below respond to the strategic issues and other matters noted in the document, as well as the spatial vision identified above. They will help deliver on the vision as stated.

1. THROUGH THE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW THE COUNCIL WILL PROVIDE FOR, DURING THE PLAN PERIOD, A BALANCE OF NEW HOMES AND RELATED RETAIL AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE BOROUGH

- 4.4 By 2037 prosperity set out in the vision will be achieved through the strategic direction of growth set out in the LPR. The emphasis will be on increasing developing skilled employment opportunities in the borough alongside developing learning opportunities, having regard to the roles of centres across the borough and existing and improved accessibility patterns:
- i. Principally within the Maidstone urban area, with a particular focus on the renewal of the town centre, including the Invicta Barracks strategic development location;
 - ii. Within two new garden communities at Heathlands and Lidsing;
 - iii. With significant employment locations at the former Syngenta Works and Woodcut Farm
 - iv. To a lesser extent at the six rural service centres of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden, Coxheath and Staplehurst consistent with their range of services and role; and
 - v. Limited development at the four larger villages of East Farleigh, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding;
 - vi. To support the sustainable future of smaller villages and hamlets where appropriate.

2. MAINTENANCE OF THE DISTINCT CHARACTER AND IDENTITY OF VILLAGES AND THE URBAN AREA

- 4.5 The roles of the rural service centres and larger villages will be strengthened through the retention of existing services, the addition of new infrastructure where possible, and the regeneration of employment sites including the expansion of existing employment sites where appropriate. Development throughout the borough will be required to provide a mix of housing tenures to allow for the creation of sustainable communities and be of high-quality using design that responds to the local character of areas and incorporates sustainability principles.

3. PROTECTION OF THE BUILT AND NATURAL HERITAGE, INCLUDING THE KENT DOWNS AONB AND ITS SETTING, THE SETTING OF THE HIGH WEALD AONB AND AREAS OF LOCAL LANDSCAPE VALUE;

- 4.6 Development will have regard to safeguarding and maintaining the character of the borough's landscapes including the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and their settings. Development will also conserve and enhance other distinctive landscapes of local value and heritage designations whilst facilitating the economic and social well-being of these areas, including the diversification of the rural economy.

4. ENSURING THAT DEVELOPMENT ADEQUATELY MITIGATES AND ADAPTS TO CLIMATE CHANGE, WHILST ADDRESSING THE ISSUES OF FLOODING AND WATER SUPPLY AND THE NEED FOR DEPENDABLE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE REMOVAL OF SEWERAGE AND WASTEWATER;

- 4.7 To recognise the climate change emergency by ensuring that development supports the Council's ambition of becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2030 by delivering sustainable and, where possible, low carbon growth which protects the borough's natural environment. The Council will, through local plan policy, seek to facilitate the necessary infrastructure to enable residents and businesses to minimise their impact on and respond to climate change. Developments will have considered the potential for the site to be delivered in a low carbon way, the incorporation of zero or low carbon technologies, and will include provision to enable future technologies and climate change adaptation. Additionally, development will give high regard to protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

5. PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY, AND PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE MULTI-FUNCTIONAL NATURE OF THE BOROUGH'S OPEN SPACES, RIVERS AND OTHER WATERCOURSES;

- 4.8 To recognise the biodiversity emergency through protection and enhancement of biodiversity. To retain and enhance the character of the existing green and blue infrastructure and to promote linkages between areas of environmental value;
- 4.9 The delivery of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will develop and enhance a high-quality network of green and blue spaces building on the assets that already exist

6. PROVISION OF STRATEGIC AND LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT NEW DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH INCLUDING A SUSTAINABLE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY, ADEQUATE WATER SUPPLY, SUSTAINABLE WASTE AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT, ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS HEALTH, SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

- 4.10 The Council will seek to ensure that key infrastructure and service improvements needed to support delivery of the Maidstone Borough LPR are brought forward in a coordinated and timely manner, and that new development makes an appropriate contribution towards any infrastructure needs arising as a result of such new development. The Council will achieve this through close working with infrastructure providers.
- 4.11 Through the delivery of the Integrated Transport Strategy, Maidstone will seek a transport network that supports a prosperous economy and provides genuine transport choices to help people make more journeys by modes such as public transport, walking and cycling.
- 4.12 The infrastructure will support the growth projected by the Local Plan to 2031 and LPR by 2037 with a focus on large scale developments, such as proposals at the new garden communities at Heathlands and Lidsing, with an aspiration for self-sufficiency.

7. IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF AIR WITHIN THE AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA (AQMA)

- 4.13 Developments within, and with the potential to adversely impact the boroughs AQMA will be required to mitigate their impact, including on human health, having regard to both on-site design and travel patterns and modes of travel.

8. RENEWAL OF MAIDSTONE URBAN AREA WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON MAIDSTONE THE TOWN CENTRE AND AREAS OF SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEPRIVATION.

- 4.14 To transform the offer, vitality and viability of Maidstone town centre including its office, retail, residential, leisure, cultural and tourism functions together with significant enhancement of its public realm and natural environment including the riverside. As the County Town of Kent, Maidstone's urban area will be revitalised by the regeneration of key commercial and residential sites and areas of existing deprivation, supported by the creation of employment opportunities, the regeneration of key sites, continued investment in the town centre and improvements to access. The town centre will be a first-class town centre that will enable Maidstone to retain its role in the retail hierarchy of Kent by the creation of a distinctive, accessible, safe and high-quality environment for the community to live, work and shop in. The town centre will be regenerated by encouraging a wide range of new development including shops, businesses, residential development, cultural and tourism facilities, and enhanced public spaces for people to enjoy and for activities that will attract residents and visitors. There will also be focus on provision of appropriate social infrastructure as well as accessibility, permeability, and sustainability of the town centre.

9. REDRESSING THE LOW WAGE ECONOMY BY EXPANDING THE EMPLOYMENT SKILLS BASE TO TARGET EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- 4.15 The plan aims to provide for investment in employment space across the borough and in the town centre in a manner which maximises choice and flexibility as a mechanism to attract a more diverse range of employment with increased levels of higher added value, local jobs. However, if this is to be both economically and environmentally sustainable, it is important that local residents and communities are equipped with the skills to compete for the employment and training opportunities that result from this investment, and to continue to develop their skills base throughout their careers and beyond.
- 4.16 In achieving this, the plan will need to work in parallel with other documents such as the borough's Economic Development Strategy, and with other agencies such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, Invest in Kent and both local and sub regional Higher Education and Further Education providers to ensure that these links are made, as a direct result of development, and that opportunities are created at the best locations for the delivery of this education and training.

10. MEETING HOUSING NEEDS BY DELIVERING AFFORDABLE HOUSING, LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING, ACCOMMODATION FOR THE ELDERLY, ACCOMMODATION TO MEET GYPSY AND TRAVELLER NEEDS, AND ACCOMMODATION TO MEET RURAL HOUSING NEEDS;

- 4.17 To support new housing in villages that meet local needs and is of a design, scale, character and location appropriate to the settlement and which supports the retention of existing services and facilities; A better mix and balance of housing will be provided, and the density and location of development will be carefully considered.

- 4.18 To provide for future housing that meets the changing needs of the borough's population including provision for an increasingly ageing population and family housing; an appropriate tenure mix; affordable housing and; accommodation to meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community.

11. ENSURING THAT ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT IS BUILT TO A HIGH STANDARD OF SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- 4.19 To ensure that new development is of high-quality design, making a positive contribution to the area including protection of built and natural heritage and the protection and enhancement of biodiversity; development will be required to take account of the impact of climate change. To ensure that new development takes account of the need to mitigate its impact on and respond to climate change, implementing sustainable construction standards for both residential and non- residential schemes.

5. THE BOROUGH SPATIAL STRATEGY

5.1 One of the principal aims of the Local Plan is to set out clearly the council's proposals for the spatial distribution of development throughout the borough based on the vision and objectives of the plan. This section determines the housing and economic development targets for the plan period and describes the council's approach to the distribution of development. The justification for this approach has been derived from the NPPF, the Sustainability Appraisal and the substantial, ongoing evidence base that has been produced by the council.

The Plan Period

5.2 The LPR plan period runs from 2022-2037, extending an additional 6 years beyond the current Local Plan period which ends in 2031.

Requirements

5.3 As a minimum, local plans should provide for objectively assessed needs for housing, including affordable housing, as well as other uses including land for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation; employment; and retail.

5.4 Much of the need required over the period 2022-2037 is met through the existing Local Plan 2017. The policies in this document update and add to this document, but some original policies, notably site allocations, will be retained. This is set out in the relevant chapters below.

5.5 For the reasons set out elsewhere in this document, including delays due to COVID-19 with producing the Gypsy & Traveller (G&T) needs assessment, new G&T allocations are not included in this document. A separate G&T Development Plan Document will be produced to address this.

Housing Needs

5.6 Key to delivering the targets will be the availability of suitable sites and the provision of supporting infrastructure.

5.7 The Government, through the NPPF and associated Planning Practice Guidance, has introduced a new 'standard method' to calculate the boroughs minimum housing need. This takes projected household growth and applies an upward adjustment based on the affordability characteristics of the area – the average house price-to-earnings ratio. This standard method has been reviewed in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and based on 2021 data results in a local housing need for 1,157 dwellings per annum in Maidstone Borough, which equates to 17,355 dwellings over the proposed 2022-37 plan period for the Local Plan Review.

5.8 Current allocations and permissions (Extant Supply including 2017 allocations, broad locations and other extant permissions), forecast windfall completions, and contributions from broad locations beyond the 2017 Plan period (Invicta Barracks) have the potential to meet some of this target amount:

- Extant Supply at 1st April 2022 = 7,870 units
- Windfall development (2022-2037) = 2,738
- Invicta Barracks (2031-2037) = 800 units

- 5.9 Windfall development is updated based on latest trends and forecasts. The estimated windfall contribution 2022-2037 is 2,738 additional units. A modelled quantum of development of 603 units is anticipated to be included in the extant housing figure. This represents the amount of windfall anticipated to be granted planning permission during the 2021/22 financial year.
- 5.10 At Invicta Barracks, 500 units are expected to come forward during the Local Plan 2017 period (2011-2031), with the remaining 800 units coming forward over the period 2022-2037.
- 5.11 In November 2019 The Council's Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Committee adopted 5 planning guidance documents setting out its aspirations for the regeneration of town centre sites. These added design guidance and capacity certainty to a number of sites which were identified in Policy H2(1) – Town Centre Broad Location.
- 5.12 When the new site capacities are considered against the ranges included in the 2017 Local Plan, there is an expected uplift of 883 units. It should be noted that while these sites benefit from the certainty of having published planning guidance, they still need to secure full planning consent. For the purposes of identifying the current target, these sites are assumed to be “priced in”, and count as a reduction in the overall target amount.
- 5.13 Totalling all these changes together provides a significant shift downwards in the Borough's future housing need. The new calculation is 17,355 (new target) – (7,870 (modelled extant supply @1st April 2022) + 2,738 (windfall 2022-2037) + 800 (Invicta) + 883 (town centre opportunity sites)) gives a new total of **5,064** units.

Commercial Development Needs

- 5.14 National Planning Practice Guidance requires Local Planning Authorities to understand existing business needs in terms of both their current and future requirements in the preparation of local plans. This includes identification of the Functional Economic Market Area, assessment of recent employment land supply and loss patterns, as well as understanding of the current market and wider signals relating to economic growth, diversification and innovation.
- 5.15 The council's Employment Need Assessment identifies that the minimum floorspace required to meet need based on job growth forecasts (labour demand) is 101,555m² (gross) for employment uses over the period 2022-2037. This essentially re-sets the requirement from 2022 and is not in addition to the current local plan requirement. This figure is then translated into a land take requirement (in hectares), based on assumptions of the type of employment and its location in the borough. For example, offices located within Maidstone town centre are assumed to achieve a higher job density than offices located elsewhere in the borough and will therefore have differing plot ratios applied. This will have implications on the overall land needed to provide the required floorspace.
- 5.16 The NPPF (2019) indicates that local plans should allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure and other development needed in town centres, for at least 10 years. The retail need should be met in full and should not be compromised by limited site supply. Through application of a sequential approach, designated town centres should be the first choice for locating retail, leisure and main town centre uses.
- 5.17 Based on the expected population growth, combined with analysis of national and local retail trends and Experian forecasts; the objectively assessed projected retail floorspace requirements (sqm, gross) for all traditional retailing as well as food and beverage uses over the plan period to 2037 is 13,769m².

- 5.18 However, it is recognised that the changing nature of retail industry makes medium to long term planning inherently uncertain. Even short-term planning is challenging in the wake of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic. With this in mind, the plan will allocate floorspace to meet the forecast retail needs over the first 10 years of the plan period, to 2032 only. This is in accordance with national guidance. The total floorspace required is therefore 10,847m² to 2032 and this is comprised as follows:
- 4,243m² convenience retail
 - 626m² comparison retail
 - 5,798m² food & beverage

Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs

- 5.19 There is a potentially significant emerging need for Gypsy & Traveller accommodation. As noted elsewhere in this document, work on a dedicated Development Plan Document will be undertaken at the earliest available opportunity.

Settlement Hierarchy

- 5.20 Development will be delivered at the most sustainable towns and village locations in the borough where employment, key services and facilities together with a range of transport choices are available or accessible. Due to the quantum of need, new growth locations have been identified in the form of garden settlements and strategic development locations. This is illustrated in the below settlement hierarchy, which reflects the Local Plan Review preferred spatial approach to new housing.
- 5.21 In 2021, the Council commissioned a study into its Settlement Hierarchy. This informs the settlement hierarchy set out below.

Maidstone Borough Settlement Hierarchy

County Town

Maidstone

Garden Settlements

Heathlands, Lidsing

Strategic Development Location

Invicta Barracks

Leeds-Langley Corridor (potential)

Rural Service Centres

Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden, Staplehurst, Coxheath

Larger Villages

East Farleigh, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence, Yalding,

Smaller Villages & Hamlets

Ulcombe, Laddingford, Kingswood, Teston, Boxley, Bredhurst, Chart Sutton, Detling, Grafty Green,
Hunton, Platt's Heath, Stockbury, Boughton Monchelsea

The Countryside

Maidstone County Town

- 5.22 As the largest and most sustainable location for development, Maidstone town is the focus for a significant proportion of new housing, employment and retail development in the borough. Cultural and tourism facilities are an important contributor to the success of the town centre and opportunities to retain and enhance such facilities in the town centre and the wider urban area are an important consideration. A fundamental objective of the council's strategy is to ensure that the town's growth brings about the renewal of the town centre and other areas in need of renewal. Optimum use has been made of the development and redevelopment opportunities that exist within the urban area. A new Town Centre Strategy is proposed which will guide development at this location, including ensuring that housing growth is balanced by employment growth and new infrastructure.

- 5.23 The town of Maidstone cannot accommodate all of the growth that is required on existing urban sites, and the most sustainable locations for additional planned development are at the edge of the urban area, expanding the boundary of the settlement in these locations. A characteristic of Maidstone is the way tracts of rural and semi-rural land penetrate into the urban area. This feature results from the way the town has developed from its centre along radial routes and river corridors enveloping the land of former country estates. These green and blue corridors have a variety of functions in addition to the contribution they make to the setting of the town, including a local anti-coalescence function by maintaining open land between areas of development spreading out from the town; providing residents with access to open green space and the wider countryside; as well as providing biodiversity corridors. The council will maintain this network of green and blue infrastructure, whilst recognising that a limited amount development may offer opportunities for enhancement provided the function of the corridors is not compromised.
- 5.24 A Broad location for future housing growth has also been identified within the town centre boundary. The Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery (KIMS) is now completed at junction 7 of the M20, and the Local Plan identifies this location for the expansion of medical facilities to create a cluster of associated knowledge-driven industries that need to be in close proximity to one another. The strategic location at junction 7 also includes replacement retail facilities at the adjacent Newnham Court Shopping Village, to deliver a comprehensively planned scheme with supporting infrastructure.

Garden Settlements

- 5.25 Heathlands and Lidsing present suitable and deliverable opportunities to deliver sustainable growth. They will both be delivered according to garden community principles, with value captured from the raising of land values coming from the change of uses on these sites to help to fund infrastructure improvements, and place-shaping facilities. They will both operate as sustainable locations in their own right but will also help to provide opportunities for surrounding areas in terms of improved employment opportunities and service choice.
- 5.26 Heathlands is a Council-proposed stand-alone new settlement, with the potential to accommodate around 5,000 new homes and a mix of employment and services within the Plan Period, and beyond. Development will be focused on the delivery of a new rail station on the Maidstone-Ashford line, with new infrastructure and employment opportunities focused around this.
- 5.27 Lidsing is a significant site in largely unified ownership to the south of the Medway urban area. It has strategic access to the M2 via Junction 4 and presents as an excellent opportunity to create new employment uses harnessing this accessibility. The delivery of approximately 2,000 new homes both within and beyond the Plan Period will enable the delivery of improved infrastructure that will benefit surrounding areas including enhanced bus routes linking Lordswood and Hempstead, as well as improved general access to the M2, and enhancements to the infrastructure within the Capstone valley.

Strategic Development Locations

- 5.28 Invicta Barracks is a strategic development location identified in the existing 2017 Local Plan. It has the potential to deliver c1,300 new homes as well as a range of new service in a strategic urban location to the north of the town centre.
- 5.29 Lenham was identified as a broad location in the 2017 Local Plan and will be built out across the Plan period up to 2037.
- 5.30 The Leeds-Langley corridor will be safeguarded to enable the potential future delivery of an improved transport connection linking M20 J8 and the A274. It is not currently known whether and what quantum of development will be needed to help create the business case for this new route, and as such this Plan seeks to ensure that any development that takes place within this corridor does not act to sterilise this opportunity.

Rural Service Centres

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

Larger Villages

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

Smaller Villages

- 5.33 Some of the borough's smaller villages can provide for a very limited amount of housing development. This will be led by local communities through neighbourhood plans and rural exception sites.

The Countryside

- 5.34 It is important that the quality and character of the countryside outside of settlements in the hierarchy is protected and enhanced whilst at the same time allowing for opportunities for sustainable development that supports traditional land-based activities and other aspects of sustainable development in rural areas and makes the most of new leisure and recreational opportunities that need a countryside location. The individual identity and character of settlements should not be compromised by development that results in unacceptable coalescence.
- 5.35 In addition to the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Metropolitan Green Belt and sites of European and national importance, the borough includes vast tracts of quality landscape, including parts of the Greensand Ridge and the Low Weald, together with the Medway, the Loose and the Len river valleys. The council will protect its most valued and sensitive landscapes.

POLICY LPRSS1 – MAIDSTONE BOROUGH SPATIAL STRATEGY

- 5.36 The new Local Plan spatial strategy is an evolution of that contained within the Local Plan 2017. Changes are flagged below for ease of use.

Maidstone Borough spatial strategy 2022-2037

1. Between 2022 and 2037 provision is made through the granting of planning permissions and the allocation of sites for 17,746 new dwellings;
2. Between 2022 and 2037 provision is made through the granting of planning permissions and the allocation of sites for a minimum of:
 - i. 33,430m² floorspace for office use;
 - ii. 27,135m² floorspace for industrial use;
 - iii. 40,990m² floorspace for warehousing use;
3. Between 2022 and 2037 provision is made through the granting of planning permissions and the allocation of sites for:
 - i. 5,726 m² floorspace for retail (convenience) use;
 - ii. 1,116m² floorspace for retail (comparison) use; and
 - iii. 6,927m² floorspace for food and beverage use.
4. New land allocations that contribute towards meeting the above provisions are identified on the policies map.

Maidstone Urban Area

5. Maidstone urban area will continue to be a focus for development in the borough. Best use will be made of available sites within the urban area. Renewal is prioritised within the town centre, which will continue to be the primary retail and office location in the borough, and for which further detailed masterplanning is proposed to ensure that the maximum benefit is realised from development in the town centre.

Garden Settlement & Strategic Development Locations

6. New, sustainable Garden Settlements are identified at Lenham Heath and Lidsing which will provide new homes, jobs and services, all delivered to garden community principles.
7. A Strategic Development Location is identified at Invicta Barracks, with potential for development in the Leeds-Langley corridor to support and enable a possible addition to the highway network linking the A274 with M20 J8.

Employment Sites

8. 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 2037. The site will make a substantial contribution to the need for new office space in the borough as well as meeting the 'qualitative' need for a new, well serviced and well connected mixed use employment site suitable for offices, industry and warehousing, and will thereby help to diversify the range of sites available to new and expanding businesses in the borough. Redevelopment of the former Syngenta Works site near Yalding will make a significant contribution to the provision of employment uses. A number of smaller sites for employment use are allocated around the borough to accommodate a diverse range of employment types.

Rural Service Centres

9. Coxheath, Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst rural service centres will be the secondary focus for housing development with the emphasis on maintaining and enhancing their role and the provision of services to meet the needs of the local community. Suitably scaled employment opportunities will also be permitted.

Larger Villages

10. The larger villages of East Farleigh, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding will be locations for limited housing development consistent with the scale and role of the villages.

Other locations

11. Smaller villages may have the potential to accommodate limited growth which will contribute to ensuring that local services are supported, and sustainable communities are maintained. This plan allows for limited growth in the smaller villages, by designating these as 'broad locations'. This will enable local communities to facilitate development and influence its location and timescale for delivery through Neighbourhood Plans. The identified smaller village locations are Boughton Monchelsea, Ulcombe, Laddingford, Kingswood, Teston, Boxley, Bredhurst, Chart Sutton, Detling, Grafty Green, Hunton, Platt's Heath, and Stockbury.
12. Small scale employment opportunities will be permitted at appropriate locations to support the rural economy.
13. In other locations, protection will be given to the rural character of the borough avoiding coalescence between settlements, including Maidstone and surrounding villages, and Maidstone and the Medway Gap/Medway Towns conurbation.
14. The green and blue network of multi-functional open spaces, rivers and water courses, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and landscapes of local value will be conserved and enhanced.

Infrastructure

15. Infrastructure schemes that provide for the needs arising from development will be supported. New residential and commercial development will be supported if sufficient infrastructure capacity is either available or can be provided in time to serve it.

Comparison between Local Plan 2017 & the Local Plan Review

HOUSING NUMBERS

Current Planned Growth 2011-2031	Additional growth 2022-2037
17,660 new dwellings	5,455 new dwellings
187 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 11 Travelling Showpeople plots;	Not identified yet (assessment ongoing)

COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE

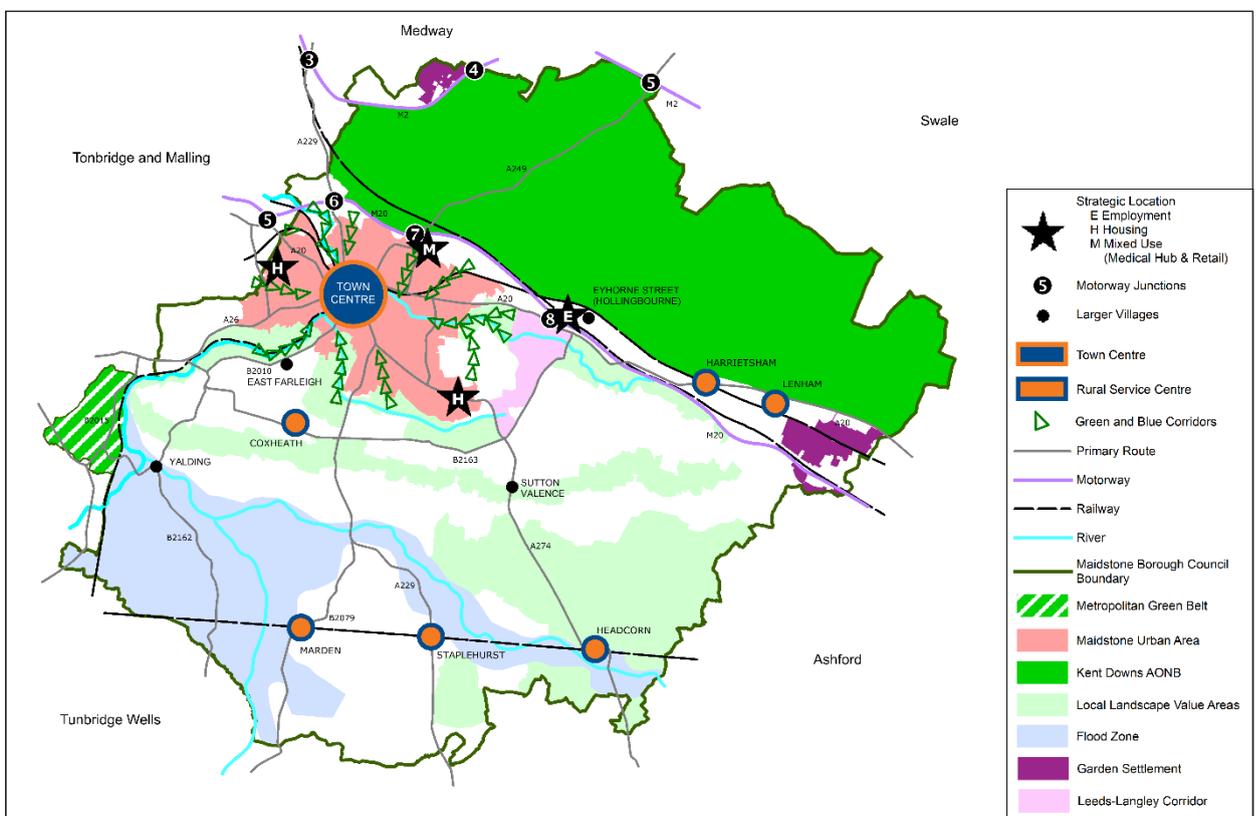
Local Plan 2017 total floorspace 2011-2031 (sqm, gross)	Total floorspace 2022-2037 (sqm, gross)
39,830m ² floorspace for office use	33,430m ²
20,290m ² floorspace for industrial use	27,135m ²
49,911m ² floorspace for warehousing use	40,990m ²
100,000m ² floorspace for medical use	0m ²
6,100m ² floorspace for retail use (convenience goods)	5,726m ² *
23,700m ² floorspace for retail use (comparison goods)	1,116m ² *
0m ² floorspace for food and beverage use	6,927m ² *

**It should be noted that retail figures are provided for a 2037-time horizon. However, the plan seeks to meet need for the first ten years of the plan period, in accordance with government guidance.*

Small Sites Requirement

5.37 The NPPF requires that land is identified for at least 10% of the borough-wide housing requirement on sites no larger than 1Hectare in size. This is to be identified through the brownfield register and the development plan. The brownfield register contains sites included in previous plans and with planning consent with a capacity of 1,535 units on sites smaller than 1 hectare, and the allocations in this Plan contain 469 units on sites of less than 1 Hectare. Thus together, land is identified for 2004 unit, which is above 10% of the Local Plan Target of 1,775.

Key Diagram



Maidstone Borough Key Diagram

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Figure 5.3 – Key Diagram

6. SPATIAL STRATEGIC POLICIES

- 6.1 This chapter sets out the contributions by different geographic locations in the Borough to be made to meet the needs for the development identified in the Local Plan Review evidence base. The section starts by setting out the contributions made to achieve meeting the need in Maidstone Town Centre, then the remaining urban area and so on using the ordering set out in the settlement hierarchy identified in this plan.

LPRSP1: Maidstone Town Centre

Introduction

- 6.2 Maidstone has a successful town centre, but there is scope for improvement. It has been, and continues to be, a centre for public administration, reflecting Maidstone's county town role. Both the County and Borough Councils are located in the town centre along with other public sector employers such as the Passport Office and the HM Prison Service. Coupled with public administration, business, financial and professional services are particularly important economic sectors and between them they account for a third of employment in the local economy with the town centre acting as a particular hub for these activities. This is reflected in the volume of office floorspace in the town centre, which is estimated to be some 192,000m².
- 6.3 Maidstone town centre is also a significant shopping destination, offering a predominately outdoor, street-based shopping environment. There is some 141,000m² of retail floorspace within the town centre boundary. The town centre has a good balance of major, national retailers alongside a strong, independent offer. The former are particularly concentrated in Fremlin Walk, the southern end of Week Street and The Mall, the town's main indoor shopping centre. The town centre benefits from a high representation of major retailers and has a particular strength in clothing and footwear shops. The presence of a critical mass of national chain stores is an important factor in attracting shoppers into the town which in turn helps to attract and retain the major retailers themselves.
- 6.4 The local independent shops are principally found within the Royal Star Arcade and along Gabriel's Hill, Pudding Lane and Union Street. These shops add to the town centre's distinctiveness and complement and support the mainstream shopping offer. The larger retail units on the west side of the river have a predominantly complementary role to the main shopping area. Whilst these units are close to the core of the town centre 'as the crow flies', the routes across the river for pedestrians and cyclists are indirect and, to a degree, unattractive to use which limits the potential for sustainable linked trips.
- 6.5 The town centre like others across the country faces challenges from changing retailing patterns, as more people turn to the internet for their purchases. Many national retailers are responding to the changing environment by consolidating their national store networks into a portfolio of fewer, larger stores. For Maidstone there is the challenge of competition from other Kent town centres such as Ashford, Tunbridge Wells and the Medway towns, as well as from Bluewater.

- 6.6 Maidstone town centre also supports a wide range of leisure, cultural and tourist attractions and enjoys an active nighttime economy. The majority of cultural and tourist facilities are based around the historic core of the town and include the Hazlitt Theatre on Earl Street, the Maidstone museum on St Faith's Street and the Archbishops Palace and All Saints Church to the south. Lockmeadow is the town's major leisure and entertainment complex whilst Earl Street has become a particular focus for restaurants and cafés.
- 6.7 Maidstone historically is a significant location for office employment in Kent. Since 2013 there has been a steady rate of conversions of office stock to residential use. It is acknowledged that there was an oversupply of poorer quality office stock in the town centre which was no longer fit for purpose. This had the effect of suppressing the town centre office market and thereby inhibiting new investment in stock which could better meet modern business needs. In order to protect the remaining good quality office stock in the town centre, Article 4 Directions have been issued.
- 6.8 There is still potential to rationalise the supply of the poorest stock through conversion or redevelopment to alternative uses. The reduction in stock has been significant and in order for Maidstone to retain its position in the regional office market, new stock will need to be developed. There is little scope for the value of the lowest quality office stock, in terms of rents, to increase with further falls in values further making redevelopment for alternative uses increasingly viable. If a corresponding uplift in the market for town centre apartments can be instigated, there is the potential for highly viable sites for residential and new town centre uses to be delivered.
- 6.9 The combination of the centre's historic fabric, riverside environment and accessible green spaces helps give the town its distinct and attractive character. The town centre benefits from the select number of green spaces interspersed through it, such as Brenchley Gardens and Trinity Gardens, and further afield the substantial, award winning facilities of both Whatman Park and Mote Park.
- 6.10 The River Medway is the key natural landscape feature within the town centre. The river corridor acts as a contrast with the urban townscape, provides pedestrian and cycleway routes and serves as a wildlife corridor by linking urban habitats with the countryside beyond. The River Len, a tributary of the Medway, also runs through the town centre, often unseen and unappreciated in culverts.
- 6.11 Maidstone historically is the key crossing point of the Medway and as such has main roads passing through its centre. This has manifested itself as a gyrational network around the centre linking the A20, A229, A26 and A274. The quality and attractiveness of the town centre as a pedestrian-oriented location has long been a focus, with many upgrades resulting in a significant pedestrian-friendly area spanning Gabriel's Hill, High Street, Week Street, and most recently Earl Street. Vehicles are generally pushed to the perimeter of the town centre, but access to parking within and adjacent to the centre is generally good. Public transport access within the centre is good with trains linking Maidstone town centre with London, Ashford, Tonbridge, Paddock Wood, and the Medway towns. This contributes considerably to Maidstone's commercial catchment. Buses also link the surrounding areas, with the bus station currently located as a part of the Mall.
- 6.12 The town centre is also the focus of wider initiatives which will add to the vitality of the town centre and increase its draw. Town Centre Management is a long-standing initiative which acts to maximise the appeal of the town centre including through the organisation of promotional events and crime reduction initiatives. The recently established One Maidstone will be delivering projects associated with marketing, events, regeneration and culture.

Town Centre Opportunity Sites

- 6.13 There are a range of opportunities to bring forward new town centre renewal. Five such key opportunities were identified through the Town Centre Opportunity Guidance documents published by the council in 2019. These provide guidance on the future development of:
- Gala Bingo
 - Len House
 - Maidstone Riverside
 - Maidstone West
 - Mote Road
- 6.14 There are also other opportunities that will present themselves over the Plan period. The “churn” of land uses in the town centre is generally higher than that elsewhere, and this will continue to present opportunities for renewal and new uses in the town centre. These opportunity sites are included as allocations in this document, as set out in Policy LPRSP1.

Town Centre Opportunity Areas



Figure 2.1. Maidstone Town Centre Opportunity Sites

Town Centre Boundary

- 6.15 The town centre boundary identifies the area covered by the policy LPRSP1. It has resulted from a positive assessment of the opportunities for:
- Sites containing the main focus of town centre uses;
 - the existing character and form of development and it's potential for change;
 - the visual, physical and functional form within and around the primary shopping area; and
 - the potential for appropriate development opportunities.

Shops in the Town Centre

- 6.16 Evidence¹ produced for the Local Plan Review (prior to the Covid-19 pandemic) sets out that the centre is performing well in retail terms, signified by stabilising vacancy rates and the presence of major retailers, especially in the primary shopping area. Vacancy rates are higher, however, in the more peripheral shopping areas which detracts from the overall vitality and viability of the town centre. A flexible approach to allowing service and leisure uses in these locations will help to improve unit occupation and diversify the mix of uses in the town centre. The town centre assessment has identified the importance of restaurants, cafés and coffee shops as well as personal retail (hairdressers etc.) and leisure uses in encouraging people to extend the length of their visit to the town centre.
- 6.17 The EDNS¹ forecasts the need for new shopping floorspace in the town for both traditional comparison and convenience shopping, as well as for food and beverage space, over the time frame of the Local Plan. The study takes account of predicted changes in shopping patterns such as the increasing role of the internet, population growth and expenditure growth, as well as accounting for the impacts of Brexit and Covid-19. There are limits to predicting retail trends over such an extended period and, as such, the findings for the latter part of the plan period in particular must be regarded as broad indications of retail capacity rather than absolute quantum's. This uncertainty is recognised through the NPPF, as allocations for town centre uses are only required for the first ten years of the plan. A further review of the capacity forecasts will therefore be needed during the LPR plan period to ensure continued provision of appropriate levels of floorspace in the town centre.

¹ Economic Development Needs Study (EDNS) 2019 and 2020, and Addendum 2021

- 6.18 In terms of indicative floorspace requirements over the whole plan period, as well as floorspace allocation requirements over the first ten years of the plan, for all town centre shopping, food and drink uses, the Economic Development Needs Study Addendum (2021) evidence sets out the following:

Use		Year	
	Use Class	2032	2037
Maidstone Town Centre			
Convenience retail	E(a) use	1,716sqm	2,362sqm
Comparison retail	E(a) use	0 sqm	0 sqm
Food/beverage	E(b) use	4,394sqm	5,023 sqm
Sub-total:		6,110sqm	7,385sqm

Table 6.1 – Indicative town centre floorspace requirements

- 6.19 68% of the town centre’s identified floorspace need over the plan period is for food and beverage uses, with zero floorspace need identified for comparison retail and just 32% of the floorspace identified for convenience retailing. The town centre is anticipated to accommodate 54% of the borough’s total identified retail/food and beverage floorspace needs to 2037. The remaining floorspace needs are to be met within the Garden Settlements (35%) and elsewhere in the borough (11%) – to serve local needs.
- 6.20 To accommodate needs in the early part of the plan period, the key focus will be to prioritise the re-use of vacant town centre floorspace to maximise the post-covid economic recovery of the town centre. In terms of new floorspace provision, the key sites with opportunity for significant new retail development will be Len House (LPRSA145), the Maidstone East/Royal Mail Sorting Office site (LPRSA146) and the King Street Car Park (LPRRMX1(3)).
- 6.21 These sites have capacity to accommodate in excess of 5,000m² of commercial, business and services uses floorspace (Class E Uses) and would accommodate a significant portion of the identified town centre need for such uses to 2037. They are sequentially the first-choice sites with close, direct walking connections to the heart of the town centre and further scope to enhance the quality and attractiveness of the route through a scheme of enhanced public realm, as well as improved public transport connections. The Maidstone East site is considered a suitable location for convenience shopping and food/beverage uses, particularly suited to users of the rail services. The Mall is the town centre’s main indoor shopping centre and is currently reasonably well occupied as one of the key anchor locations in the town centre. The building is, however, becoming dated with its layout and internal environment is less suited to modern retailers’ requirements compared with both Fremlin Walk and competing centres further afield such as Tunbridge Wells, Canterbury, Ashford and Bluewater. Without positive and significant intervention there is a considerable risk that the commercial attractiveness of the centre will decline over the plan period to the detriment of the town centre as a whole.

- 6.22 In response, the council will actively support the longer-term redevelopment of the wider area that encompasses The Mall, the multi storey car park fronting Romney Place and Sainsburys as well as the King Street car park site (policy RMX1(3)), both on the north side of King Street. As well as re-providing the existing quantum of floorspace, a comprehensive scheme could deliver net additional shopping floorspace and help meet the retail growth predicted for later in the plan period. Redevelopment will help to sustain and enhance the commercial health of the town centre. A scheme in this location is unlikely to come forward until the latter end of the plan period. The council will work with its partners to help bring the site forward, and to address issues of site assembly and physical constraints of the site. Identifying this area for longer term growth brings clarity in respect of the future of the town centre.
- 6.23 The Local Plan defines the 'primary shopping area' for the purposes of applying the sequential test (policies LPRCD1 and LPRCD2). The sequential test requires that new retail development is directed to within the primary shopping area first, then to edge of centre sites (within 300m of the primary shopping area) before out of centre sites. The primary shopping area encompasses the core retail part of the town centre only; there is further significant retailing on more outlying streets.

Offices in the Town Centre

- 6.24 The permitted development rights for changes of use from office accommodation to residential use have had a significant effect on the potential supply of residential units in the town centre. At 1st April 2020, a total of 1,344 dwellings had been consented through prior notification within the town centre since the PD rights came into effect in 2013. There remains additional poor-quality office floorspace identified in the town centre from which to realise further residential opportunities, yielding approximately 350 dwellings during the plan period. As of 1 April 2020, 70% of this identified poor quality office stock remains available for conversion to residential use.
- 6.25 Office-based businesses are an important component in the commercial success of the town centre. The town centre is a sustainable location for offices, and it offers the dual benefits of having good transport connections and a full range of services and facilities close at hand.
- 6.26 The town centre office market has been challenging for a number of years. The last significant new office building completed in the town centre was the Countygate development early in the last decade. There is a significant supply of poorer quality office stock which is less suited to modern occupier requirements because this stock is generally older, is not suited to flexible sub-division, is less energy efficient and has limited or no dedicated car parking. This over supply has had the effect of suppressing values. Coupled with a confirmed supply of business park office development at locations such as Kings Hill and Eclipse Park, the net effect is that new 100% office development is unlikely to be viable in the current market and would not proceed without a substantial pre-let. This position is not unique to Maidstone; the market in many regional office locations is reported to be constrained at present.
- 6.27 A route to tackle this issue is to address the oversupply of poorer quality stock. Changes to the General Permitted Development Order enable the conversion of office space to residential use without the need for planning permission from the council and this could continue to secure a step change. A number of factors are likely to need to be in place for the office to residential conversions and redevelopment schemes in the town centre to come forward:

- The value of office stock, in terms of rents, to fall further so that redevelopment for alternative uses becomes viable;
 - Existing tenant leases to come to an end; and
 - An uplift in the market for town centre apartments.
- 6.28 It is expected that modern office buildings with car parking which remain fit for purpose will continue to be occupied and remain part of the office stock within the town centre. These sites are designated in the plan for office use (E(g) Use Class) (policy LPRSP11(a)).
- 6.29 The EDNS identifies a minimum requirement for 33,430sqm (GEA) of new office floorspace across the borough over the plan period. It does not specify how much of this requirement should be accommodated within the town centre. However, in planning for sustainable growth, the town centre is the most accessible, sustainable location for such development. One of the key opportunities and a top priority for new office development will be the Maidstone East/Royal Mail Sorting Office site (LPRSA146). This prominent site has capacity to accommodate in the region of 5000m² of office floorspace, which is directly served by rail, bus and taxi services, as well as offering commuter parking.
- 6.30 Allocations at Powerhub Building and Baltic Wharf (LPRSA148) and Mote Road (LPRSA151) also provide significant opportunity for the development of new office floorspace within the town centre and should be developed using the Town Centre Opportunity Guidance approved by the council in 2019.

Houses in the Town Centre

- 6.31 Whilst commercial uses are the priority for the town centre, residential uses in and around the town centre positively benefit the retail and employment uses by providing local demand, vitality and vibrancy especially during the evening. This can be achieved by improving links from the surrounding areas into the centre, as well as through new town centre residential development, in particular as part of mixed-use schemes.
- 6.32 Maidstone town centre has strong characteristics associated with premium property values (access to public transport and services and amenities), but at present the price in the town centre is generally lower than elsewhere in the borough. This is largely due to the stock in the town centre being smaller than elsewhere and lacking in desirable features such as private outdoor space. Generating better quality stock, and improving surrounding environments has the potential to rebalance this relationship.
- 6.33 There has been a pattern of the delivery of high proportions of affordable (social and affordable rent) housing in and around the town centre, reaching back to post-war developments and continuing to this day. A strategic approach to ensuring that there is a balanced set of housing tenures across the town centre will be required to ensure sustainable and balanced communities are achieved here.
- 6.34 Minimum space standards will be a key tool in ensuring new stock is of a high quality, and the mix of houses that provide a choice for a range of households (individuals, couples, small families, larger families, older people) should be provided in line with the 2019 SHMA.

Accessibility to, from and around the Town Centre

- 6.35 A key function and strength of the town centre is as a transport hub. Improving accessibility into and around the town centre is also important for sustaining and improving the commercial health of the town centre. Key measures will be identified in an updated Integrated Transport Strategy, including seeking improved connectivity to and through the town centre by all modes, a revised approach to car parking management and improvements to active transport infrastructure.

Quality in the Town Centre Environment

- 6.36 Capitalising on the centre's existing environmental assets is a further way to support sustainable growth in the town centre and to further enhance its commercial appeal, and attractiveness to visitors. Alongside obvious assets including the rivers Medway and Len, the town centre's bowl topography allow impressive 360-degree landscape views from elevated positions.
- 6.37 The town centre has a significant historic core, which as the centre has evolved has become fragmented through a varied set of new buildings of a wide variety and architectural quality. There is a need to create greater consistency between the historic, modern, and contemporary buildings to improve the overall sense of place within the centre. In recent years there have been improvements to the street furnishings and surfaces, and now much of the core of the town centre is prioritised for pedestrians.
- 6.38 The town centre has good quality open spaces on its doorstep, notably Benchley Gardens, Whatman Park, and Trinity Park, as well as close proximity to Mote Park. Improved linkages to and between the existing green spaces and riverside environment within the town centre will help to improve access to all of these for users of the centre. The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will help to identify the principles that should be followed, and the Town Centre Strategy will include specific initiatives for implementation, including 'greening' the town centre and help to adapt to, and mitigate against, climate change.

Maidstone Town Centre Strategy

- 6.39 A longer-term vision to improve the Town Centre will be brought forward in a Town Centre Strategy to 2050. The strategy will seek to increase investment and improve the services within, and operation of the town centre over the period to 2050. It will help to deliver wider corporate priorities and bring in a range of external stakeholders in order enable Maidstone to be a modern and relevant county town.
- 6.40 The strategy is designed to provide clarity for our long-term vision for Maidstone town centre and to create a comprehensive strategy and delivery plan to achieve this, reflecting Maidstone's pivotal role as the county town of Kent.
- 6.41 The strategy will be underpinned by core principles which reflect the vision for the borough as a vibrant and prosperous urban and rural community at the heart of Kent, where everyone can realise their potential and fulfil their aspirations, of a borough that works for everyone.
- 6.42 The town centre strategy will help guide regeneration; development; provision of infrastructure; the use of our town centre spaces and support to the town centre communities over the next five to ten years bring together other council strategies; including: The Integrated Transport Strategy, Housing Strategy, Arts & Culture Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and Corporate Strategy.

Maidstone Town Centre Vision 2050

Securing the future role of Maidstone as the County Town of Kent and as a focus for investment in a wide range of infrastructure, employment, retail and leisure facilities. By 2050 a renewed Maidstone town centre will be a distinctive, safe and high- quality place that has:

Retained its best environmental and heritage features, including the riverside, historic buildings and the enhanced public realm, facilitating a more active and multi-functional set of urban spaces;

Provided a variety of well-integrated attractions for all ages including new shopping, businesses, leisure, tourism, and cultural facilities; and

Improved access for all.

Key components in realising this vision are:

Enhancing the diversity of the retail offer, supporting a continued balance between independent and multiple retailers;

Creating a highly sustainable location resilient to future climate change;

Establishing the town centre as an attractive hub for business building on the town centre's assets and environment to maximise its sphere of influence and access to labour;

Creating a stronger mix and balance of uses within the centre to support long term viability including where appropriate residential development;

Delivery of new high quality community, health and education infrastructure;

Adding higher value jobs, new approaches to sustainable working and sustainable living patterns;

Sequencing the delivery of development such that improvements to jobs and infrastructure are provided alongside new housing;

Ensuring the centre's green and blue infrastructure, and public realm is enhanced to attract new investment;

Developing the visitor economy and creating an attractive and healthy living and working environment;

Improving infrastructure connectivity to other areas through improved rail services and stations and embracing technology

Providing a pattern of both accessibility and service provision/activity which encourages all of the borough and beyond to identify with the Town Centre, and

Tackling congestion and air quality issues through improvements in provision for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, including public transport.

Enhancing the built and historic environment of the town so that it has a stronger character for new build to reference in design and materials.

POLICY LPRSP1 – MAIDSTONE TOWN CENTRE

- 1) The continued renewal of Maidstone town centre, as defined on the policies map, is a priority. This will be achieved through the completion of a Town Centre Strategy to secure:**
 - a) The consolidation of Maidstone’s position as the County Town of Kent;
 - b) Retaining and enhancing a varied and well integrated shopping offer, including;
 - i) The protection and consolidation of retail uses within the primary shopping area;
 - ii) Outside the primary shopping area, allowing for a wider range of supporting uses including those that contribute to the evening and night time economy;
 - c) Increasing local employment levels, capitalising on the COVID-19 catalysed decentralisation trend from London, including;
 - i) The retention of the best quality office stock whilst allowing for the redevelopment of lower quality offices;
 - ii) Introduction of new workspace into the centre to enable the growth of a range of businesses and enterprises.
 - d) Producing a step-change in the centre’s infrastructure, leisure and cultural facilities;
 - e) Select opportunities for residential redevelopment;
 - f) The retention of the best environmental features, including the riverside, and delivery of schemes to improve the public realm and pedestrian environment as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
 - g) Achieving improved accessibility to and through the town centre through the measures in the Integrated Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

- 2) Development in the town centre should:**
 - a) Demonstrate a quality of design that responds positively to the townscape, including ensuring the conservation and enhancement of the town centre’s historic fabric. Additionally for sites adjacent to the Rivers Len and Medway, development should:
 - i) Respond positively to the rivers’ setting as seen in both short range views and in longer range views from the river valley sides; and
 - ii) Ensure public access throughout the centre is maintained and enhanced.
 - b) In the case of tall buildings, be appropriately located to avoid or minimise impact on assets of heritage significance.
 - c) Contribute to a high-quality public realm and improvement schemes for the town centre to ensure adaptation to a warming climate as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

- 3) Through a combination of site allocations, identified broad locations and the granting of planning permissions, development in the town centre will deliver in the region of 3,059 new homes, 6,169sqm of commercial floorspace, and 6,462sqm of retail/food and drink floorspace to 2037. This includes the following:**

Category	Reference	Site address	New homes	Commercial floorspace (sqm)	Retail floorspace (sqm)
LP17 allocation	H1(18)	Dunning Hall (off Fremlin Walk), Week Street	14	0	0
LP17 allocation	RMX1(3)	King Street car park	0	0	700 ¹
Sub-total:			14	0	700
Opportunity site	LPRSA151	Mote Road (Permission: 20/505707/FULL)	172	1,169	0
Opportunity site	LPRSA147	Gala Bingo & Granada House	40	TBD	TBD
Opportunity site	LPRSA145	Len House (Permission: 20/501029/FULL)	159	0	3,612 ²
Opportunity site	LPRSA148	Maidstone Riverside	650	TBD	TBD
Opportunity site	LPRSA149	Maidstone West	201	0	TBD
Sub-total:			1,222	1,169	3,612
LPR allocation	LPRSA146	Maidstone East/ Royal Mail sorting office ³	500	5,000	2,000
LPR allocation	LPRSA144	High Street/Medway Street ⁴	50	0	150
Sub-total:			604	5,000	2,150
Broad location	The Mall		400	0	0
Broad location	Office conversion		119 ⁵	0	0
Broad location	Sites TBC reflecting Town Centre Strategy, but could include: Sessions House; Broadway; Sites on Week St, Mill Street Car Park and others		700	TBD	TBD
Sub-total:			1,219	0	0
TOTAL:			3,059	6,169	6,462

¹Revised floorspace amount and boundary to account for delivery of homes on part of the original site

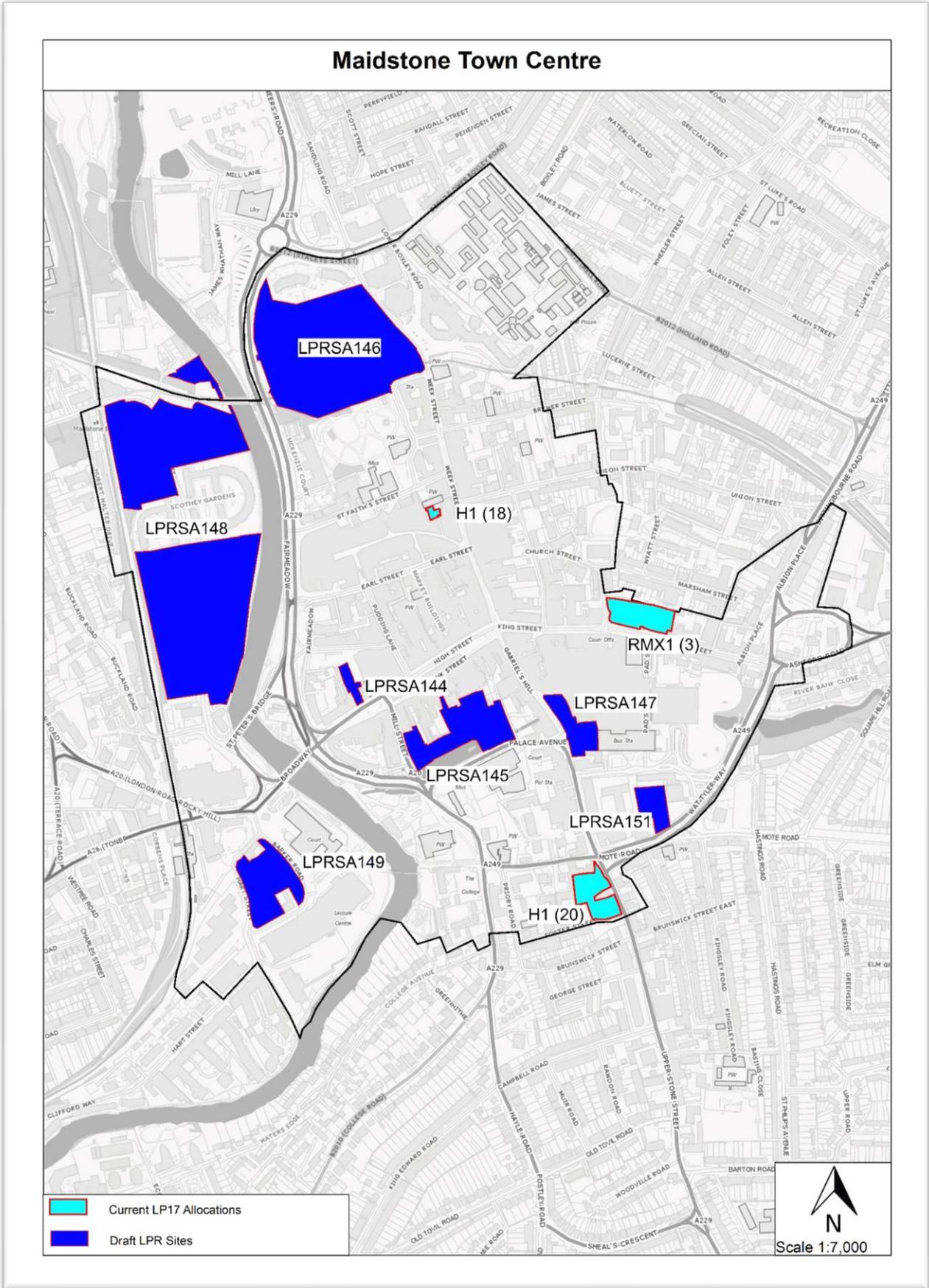
²Permission for flexible commercial floorspace including retail, financial and professional, café or restaurant, drinking establishment, offices, clinic or health centre, crèche or day nursery, gymnasium or indoor recreational purposes uses

³Supersedes LP17 allocation RMX1(2) Maidstone East/Royal Mail Sorting Office

⁴Supersedes LP17 allocation H1(13) Medway Street

⁵Remaining balance of the LP17 broad location figure of 350 new homes from conversion of poor quality office stock. Figure from AMR 2019/20.

This policy will be revisited and updated to reflect the forthcoming Town Centre Strategy.



LPRSP2: Maidstone Urban Area

Introduction

- 6.43 Development has been significant in the urban area over the early years of the 2017 Plan, and there is a need to ensure that infrastructure is balanced with current and planned allocations. This policy should be read alongside other policies in the plan, including LPRSP3 & LPRSP1.
- 6.44 Policy LPRSP2 is specifically concerned with the built-up area of Maidstone that is outside the identified town centre boundary but within the urban boundary as shown on the policies map. This area has a varied mix of housing, shopping and community facilities, a range of business locations, a number of attractive green spaces and good transport links that all act in combination to make Maidstone an attractive place to live and work.
- 6.45 As the town has grown over the centuries areas of distinct architectural character have emerged. Adopted Character Area Assessment SPDs detail the locally distinctive character of an area and offer guidance on improving the quality of an area. During the Local Plan period, change within the urban area will tend to be incremental in nature due to infilling and select redevelopment of appropriate urban sites. Development proposals at all locations within the urban area should look to include links to open spaces.
- 6.46 Land allocations within the urban area specifically at locations close to the town centre will comprise a mix of uses, which will include retail and community facilities, where possible. All development, including major planned development at the edge of the urban area to meet housing and employment needs is to be supported by necessary infrastructure.
- 6.47 A number of key infrastructure requirements have been identified for provision within the Maidstone urban area as set out in the policy below. There is a significant strategic need for additional secondary school provision within the borough. The Valley Invicta Academy Trust has recently received approval from the Department for Education for an application for free school status and, subject to planning permission, funding has been provisionally secured for a scheme on land adjacent to Invicta Grammar School and Valley Park School.

Regeneration in the Urban Area

- 6.48 There are four neighbourhoods within the urban area that have been identified as being in need of regeneration: Park Wood, High Street, Shepway North and Shepway South. These areas currently fall within the 20% most deprived in the country. Development within or adjoining these locations will look to close the gap between these areas and other parts of Maidstone by focusing on improving accessibility to quality green spaces, health services, equal access to education and training opportunities, and job creation through improvements in public transport and active travel.

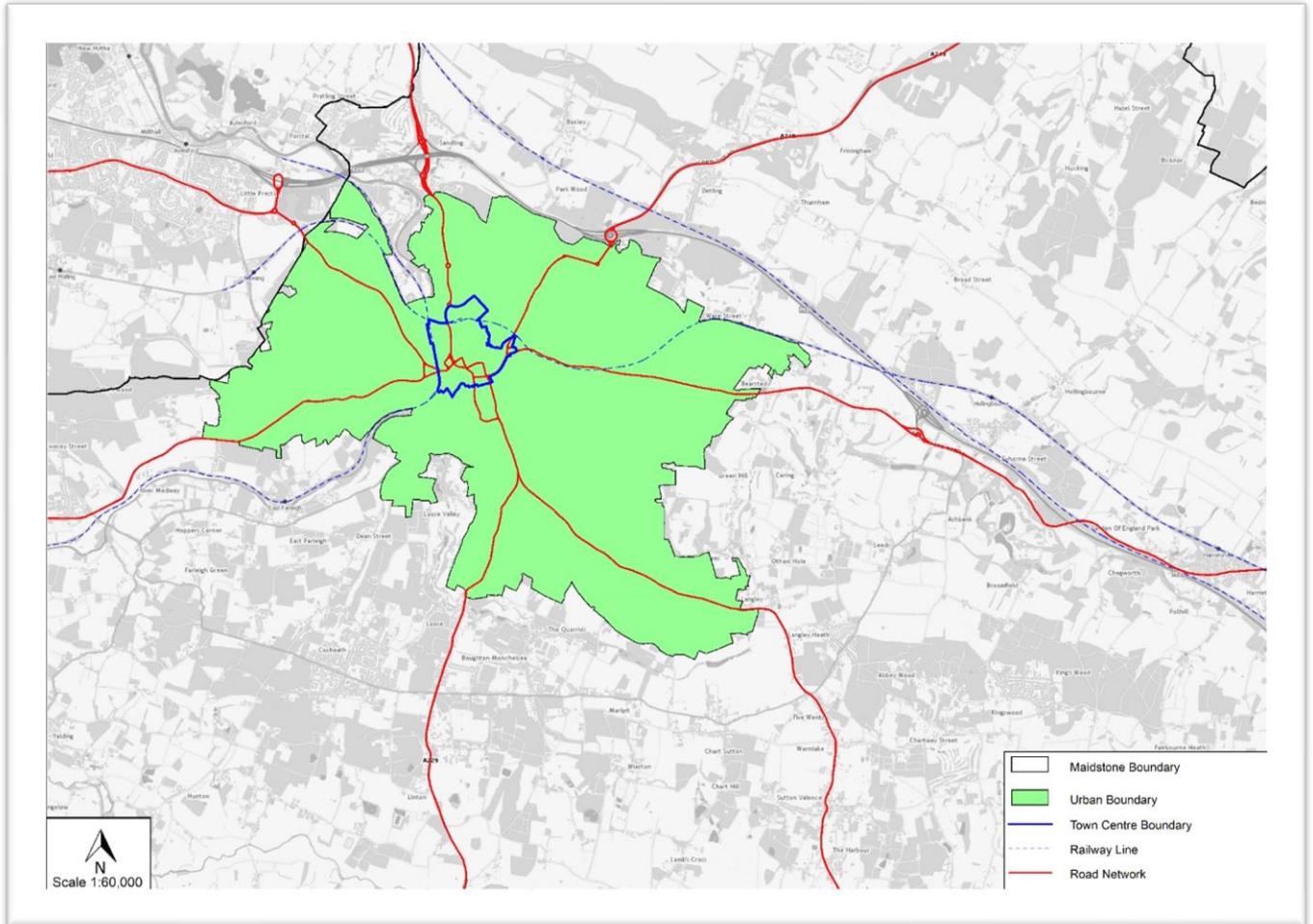


Figure 2.1. Maidstone Urban Area

POLICY LPRSP2 – MAIDSTONE URBAN AREA

- 1) **As a sustainable location, Maidstone urban area, as defined on the policies map, will be a key focus for new development.**
- 2) **Within the urban area and outside of the town centre boundary identified in policy SP4, Maidstone will continue to be a good place to live and work. This will be achieved by:**
 - a) Allocating sites at the edge of the town for housing and business development;
 - b) The development and redevelopment or infilling of appropriate urban sites in a way that contributes positively to the locality's distinctive character;
 - c) Retaining well located business areas;
 - d) Maintaining the network of district and local centres, supporting enhancements to these centres in accordance with the overall hierarchy of centres;
 - e) Retaining the town's green spaces and ensuring that development positively contributes to the setting, accessibility, biodiversity and amenity value of these areas as well as the River Medway and the River Len; and
 - f) Supporting development that improves the health, social, environmental and employment well-being of those living in identified areas of deprivation.
- 4) **Strategic policy LPRSP3 sets out the requirements for development around the edge of the urban area. Elsewhere in the urban area land is allocated for housing, retail and employment development together with supporting infrastructure.**
 - a) Approximately 1,846 new dwellings will be delivered on 23 existing Local Plan sites in accordance with policies H1(11) to H1(30).
 - b) Approximately 178 additional units will be delivered in the urban area on sites LPRSA 366, 152 and 303.
 - c) Fourteen existing sites at Aylesford Industrial Estate, Tovil Green Business Park, Viewpoint (Boxley), Hart Street Commercial Centre, The Old Forge, The Old Brewery, South Park Business Village, Turkey Mill Court, Eclipse Park, County Gate, Medway Bridge House, Albion Place, Victoria Court and Lower Stone Street (Gail House, Link House, Kestrel House and Chaucer House) are designated Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities in the urban area (policy SP11(a)).
 - d) Key infrastructure requirements to be delivered either through Section 106 obligations or via CIL include:
 - i. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure, including junction
 - ii. Improvements, capacity improvements to part of Bearsted Road, improved pedestrian/cycle access and bus prioritisation measures, in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(11) to H1(30);
 - i. Additional secondary school capacity including one form entry expansions of the Maplesden Noakes School and Maidstone Grammar School;
 - ii. Additional primary school provision through one form entry expansion of South Borough Primary School;

- iii. Provision of new publicly accessible open space; and
- iv. Improvements to health infrastructure including extensions and/or improvements at Brewer Street Surgery, Bower Mount Medical Centre, The Vine Medical Centre, New Grove Green Medical Centre, Bearsted Medical Practice and Boughton Lane Surgery.

LPRSP3: Development at the edge of Maidstone

Introduction

- 6.49 In the current 2017 Local Plan there has been significant growth identified to the north west, and (particularly) the south east of Maidstone. The developments allocated in the current plan are at various stages of construction, with some having fully built out, some under construction, and some parcels still awaiting to start construction. The urban fringe of Maidstone has demonstrated that it is a deliverable location for new housing growth, but the expansion of the urban boundary now risks coalescing with surrounding villages.
- 6.50 This plan seeks to restrict additional growth at the edges of Maidstone to protect the integrity of surrounding villages in the medium term. This doesn't mean that no sites are allocated in these areas, but additional development on the scale of the 2017 Plan is not included. As such a single consolidated policy for the additional growth around the edge of Maidstone is proposed in the Local Plan Review.
- 6.51 The edge of Maidstone is still needed to play an important part in meeting housing need across the borough. In addition to the south east and north western extensions, modest sites are identified to the north, north-east, south, and south-west of the Urban Area.
- 6.52 It is appropriate that the existing policy wording ensuring the sustainable completion of the 2017 allocations is included, and this is encompassed in the Policy below.

North West

- 6.53 The north west strategic development location benefits from good access to the M20 motorway, the A20 and the A26. There are capacity challenges that will need to be considered with the local transport network, including key junctions at the M20 junction 5 and at the northern and southern ends of Hermitage Lane. The council will work to address these challenges with Kent County Council, Highways England and the developers of the sites in this location.
- 6.54 Local services in this part of the town are good and include a mix of health and education facilities which are within walking distance or accessible by frequent public transport services.
- 6.55 Retail options are also good at this location. In addition to local convenience stores, the town centre is easily accessible, as is the Quarry Wood retail location across the borough boundary in Aylesford, which provides a mix of convenience and comparison goods.
- 6.56 At this location the council is keen to retain the separation between the edges of Barming and Allington and the edge of the Medway Gap settlements in Tonbridge and Malling Borough i.e., Aylesford, Ditton and Larkfield. To the north, long range landscape views that would be affected by developing these sites has been considered by the Planning Inspectorate, which concluded that it was acceptable to develop at east of Hermitage Lane.
- 6.57 The north west strategic development location has been comprehensively planned in respect of supporting infrastructure and connectivity between sites.

South East

- 6.58 The south east strategic development location benefits from its proximity to Maidstone's urban area and the town centre, where key community infrastructure, local services and employment opportunities are located. A further benefit is that there are opportunities to expand and improve on existing services and facilities in this area, and to put new infrastructure in place to accommodate the demands arising from an increase in population.
- 6.59 Some forms of infrastructure provision have historically not kept pace with development. This has been a contributory factor to some issues such as a congested road network, a shortage of affordable housing, deficiencies in open space provision and poor access to key community facilities in certain areas. New development on the urban periphery in the south east will be underpinned with a coordinated infrastructure approach for the area, which will focus on tackling congestion and air quality issues, improving accessibility to the town centre and providing the community services, facilities and accessible open space necessary to mitigate for the increase in population. This is reflected in some of the site allocation policies, where highways improvements such as junction improvements and bus priority measures on the A274 are proposed, along with significant areas of new public open space, two new primary schools and a community hall.
- 6.60 At this location the council is keen to limit as much as possible the extension of development further into the countryside along both sides of the A274, Sutton Road. This ensures that the more sensitive landscapes in this area will remain protected and development will be consolidated around the urban edge to make best use of new and existing infrastructure.
- 6.61 The south east strategic development location has been comprehensively planned in respect of supporting infrastructure and connectivity between sites.

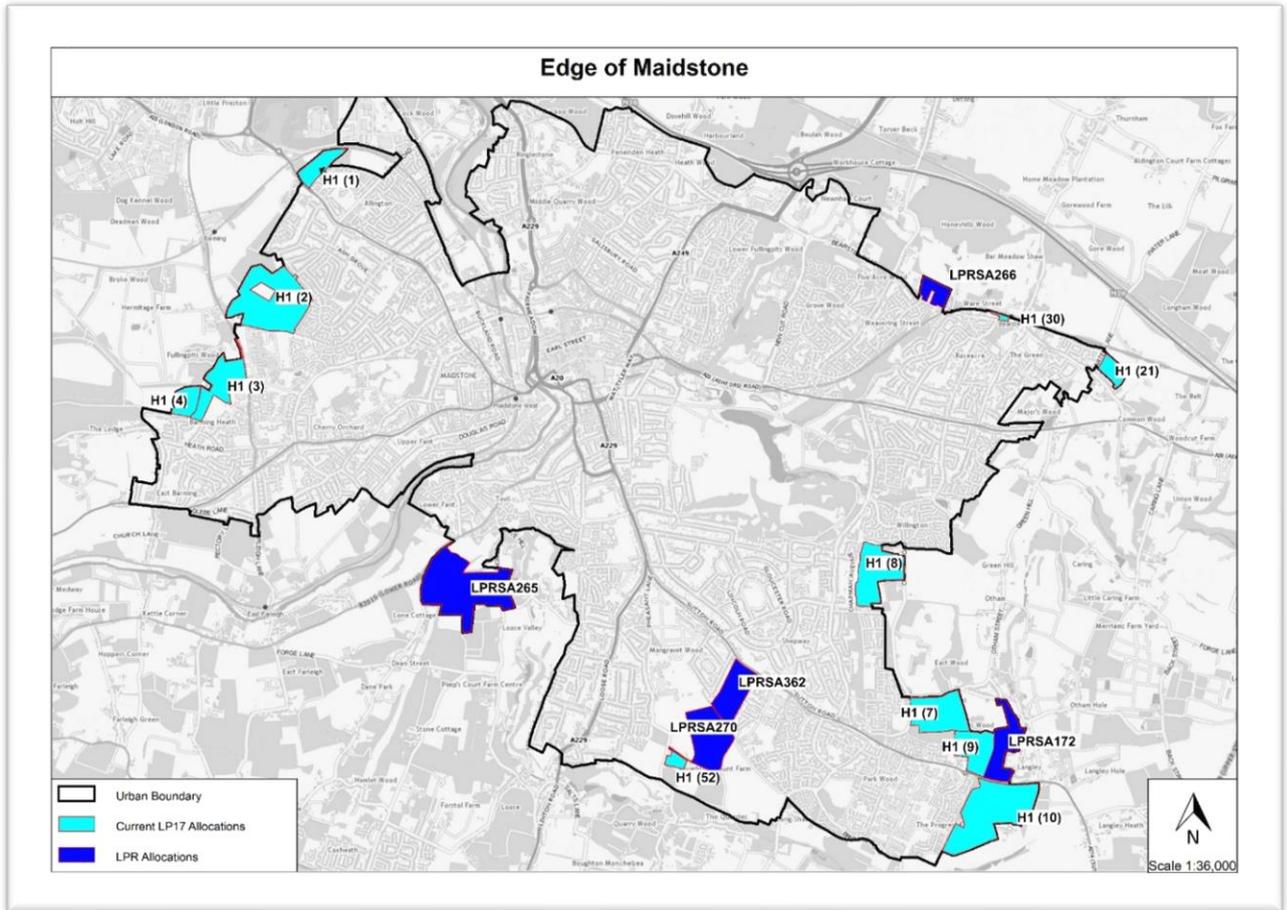


Figure 3.1. Development at the edge of Maidstone's Urban Area

POLICY LPRSP3 – EDGE OF THE MAIDSTONE URBAN AREA

The south eastern Urban Area

Land to the south east of the urban area is allocated as a strategic development location for housing growth with supporting infrastructure.

1. In addition to development, redevelopment and infilling of appropriate sites in accordance with other policies in the Plan, approximately 1,765 new dwellings will be completed on Local Plan 2017 allocated sites H1(7) to H1(10) and 75 on LPRSA172.
2. The existing Parkwood Industrial Estate is designated as an Economic Development Area in order to maintain employment opportunities (policy SP11(a)).
3. Key infrastructure requirements for the south-east strategic development location include:
 - Highway and transport infrastructure improvements including: junction improvements on the A274 Sutton Road incorporating bus prioritisation measures, the installation of an extended bus lane in Sutton Road, together with improved pedestrian and cycle access, in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(7) to H1(10);
 - New primary schools on site H1(10) and expansion of an existing primary school within south east Maidstone;
 - A new community centre and local shopping facilities will be provided on site H1(5) to serve new development;
 - New publicly accessible open space will be provided in accordance with Policy INF1 and existing OS1 Policies; and
 - Improvements to health infrastructure including extensions and/or improvements at The Mote Medical Practice, Orchard Medical Centre, Wallis Avenue Surgery and Grove Park Surgery.

North Western Urban Area

4. In addition to development, redevelopment and infilling of appropriate sites in accordance with other policies in the Plan, approximately 1,157 new dwellings will be delivered on three sites allocated in the Local Plan 2017 (policies H1(2) to H1(4)).
5. The existing 20/20 sites at Allington and Hermitage Mills are designated as Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities (policy SP11(a)).
6. Key infrastructure requirements for the north-west strategic development location include:
 - i. Highway and transport infrastructure including improvements to: the M20 junction 5 roundabout; junctions of Hermitage Lane/London Road and Fountain Lane/Tonbridge Road;
 - ii. pedestrian and cycle access; and public transport, including provision of a new bus loop in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(2) to H1(4)

- iii. A new two form entry primary school, community centre and local shopping facilities will be provided on-site H1(2) to serve new development; New publicly accessible open space will be provided in accordance with Policy INF1 and existing OS1 Policies
- iv. Improvements to health infrastructure including extensions and/or improvements at Barming Medical Practice, Blackthorn Medical Centre, Aylesford Medical Centre and Allington Park or Allington Clinic.

The remainder of the urban edge

- 7. In addition to development, redevelopment and infilling of appropriate sites in accordance with other policies in the Plan, approximately 723 new dwellings will be delivered on ten sites (policies LPRSAs 265, 270, 172, 362, and 266).

LPRSP4: Garden Settlement Scale Developments

Introduction

- 6.62 The council indicated when releasing the Call for Sites in March 2019 that it was interested in considering garden communities as a method of accommodating future housing need over the Local Plan Review Period.
- 6.63 New Garden Communities need to be of a sufficient scale to deliver meaningful supporting infrastructure. The Government defines ‘garden villages’ as being of between 1,500 and 10,000 homes and ‘garden towns’ as being of 10,000+ homes. They can be new, freestanding settlements or a new neighbourhood created through a major extension to an existing urban area. In either case, they are areas which are comprehensively planned and coordinated from the outset where the new homes and other forms of development will be built over an extended number of years.
- 6.64 New Garden Communities should utilise opportunities afforded by the scale of development to achieve the highest standards for transport accessibility, sustainability, internalisation and multi-modal connectivity. Upgrades to highway capacity may be required to support these sites and this must be fully assessed, however it should be the objective to minimise the impact on the public highway first by limiting motor vehicle trip generation and to consider highway capacity upgrades second.
- 6.65 New Garden Communities also offer the prospect of achieving mixed, balanced communities through the supply of a range of types and tenures of housing and a highly integrated approach to the provision of supporting infrastructure, facilities and mix of uses. This integration, co-ordination and delivery-focus are likely to be best achieved by taking a masterplanning approach to the delivery of new garden communities.
- 6.66 The Council has published a Garden Communities Prospectus which draws together the local and national aspirations for what developments at the Garden Settlement Scale should achieve. These have directly informed the drafting of the policies for the two-garden settlement-scale developments allocated in this plan.
- a) Create a distinctive place to live at a sustainable scale which responds to local character;
 - b) Provide a clear, holistic masterplan that integrates the new development with its surroundings;
 - c) Give residents the best opportunities to follow healthy lifestyles, allowing activity to be built into their daily lives and providing opportunities to buy and grow healthy food along with ensuring that health services are close at hand;
 - d) Ensure that generous amounts of green space, landscaping, trees, and hedgerows are integrated into the design of the development - with the purposes of achieving biodiversity net gain, an attractive setting for development, informal recreational space, and attractive walking and cycling links;

- e) Enable and encourage the adoption of sustainable and active travel habits within the site and connecting to the local area through design by prioritising accessibility, active modes of travel, public transport, low emission technologies and by optimising integration of those services and infrastructure;
- f) Include buildings and places designed with a strong focus on energy efficiency, reduced carbon emissions and climate change mitigation;
- g) Provide for a mix of uses including employment, retail, leisure and other local services which offer opportunities to the new and surrounding communities;
- h) Provide exceptional connectivity through superfast broadband;

LPRSP4(A): Heathlands Garden Settlement

Introduction

- 6.66 Heathlands has many of the key features and is well located for a sustainable garden settlement. There is access to the road network via the A20 to the north, and rail access can be achieved along the Maidstone-Ashford rail line. It's location at the foot of the North Kent Downs will provide a very attractive setting for the new residents, but care must be taken to ensure that the potential impact on views from the Kent Downs are minimised and mitigated.
- 6.67 The site provides the opportunity to improve biodiversity in the area through measures to enhance ancient woodland and existing green corridors; Improved access to the open countryside utilising existing and new network of footpaths will promote health and well-being.
- 6.68 A robust Framework Masterplan is emerging, which demonstrates that there is the potential for a high-quality new settlement at this location, utilising the A20 and existing rail links as well as contributing towards a future business case for a new M20 junction.
- 6.69 The western portion of the site is constrained due to an existing minerals allocation and the existing Lenham Wastewater Treatment facility, and these constraints will be addressed through phasing and masterplanning; with the need for phasing to ensure that the minerals allocation is not compromised.
- 6.70 A range of designated and non-designated heritage assets are found both on and around the site and due regard will need to be had to their significance through a detailed masterplanning process.

Vision for Heathlands Garden Settlement

- 6.71 A new garden community rooted in garden village design principles, Heathlands Garden Settlement will become a new sustainably planned place with connected, walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods for the residents of Heathlands, Lenham, Lenham Heath and Charing in which to live and work. There will be new local jobs, community facilities, schools, cafes shops, and leisure facilities set in high quality public spaces creating an active and animated environment with enhanced biodiversity. To facilitate healthy lifestyles, high quality connected landscapes and green infrastructure will be for exercise, sport, play, walking, cycling, and leisure, sitting alongside facilities for growing food. Pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport will be priorities helping sustainable travel opportunities with convenient and safe linkages within Heathlands, to surrounding communities and to new community facilities. There will be a sensitive transition between the AONB and Heathlands, with a heathland landscape and strong planting in the northern parcels, and landscaped spaces for village greens, parks, commons and naturalistic green spaces throughout. A new Heathlands Rail Station along the Ashford-Maidstone line will be explored to achieve a wider sustainable connected network, providing opportunities for residents and businesses along the A20 corridor. Homes will be for all stages of life with affordable provision and will be of a high-quality innovative design reflecting the local vernacular, incorporating its heritage and landscape character. Flexible business space and communal workspace facilities will be provided for new and established local companies and for those that reside locally.

POLICY LPRSP4(A) – HEATHLANDS GARDEN SETTLEMENT

The Council will work with the promoter to produce an agreed Supplementary Planning Document to masterplan and facilitate the site’s delivery. The following criteria must be met in addition to other policies of this Local Plan:

1) Phasing & Delivery

- a) Housing completions are anticipated to commence 2029;
- b) Phased release of land parcels of varying size and density to enable a range of developers to bring the site forward for development.
- c) Infrastructure will be delivered on a phased basis, when it is needed and as early as possible in the development process where key infrastructure is concerned, in accordance with an agreed phasing strategy.

2) Housing:

- a) Approximately 5,000 new homes, including 1,400 homes within the period 2029-37;
- b) A target amount of 40% affordable housing;
- c) Range of house types including across tenures, mix, including for inter-generational living.

3) Landscape & Design:

- a) Development of the site will adopt measures to minimize the potential for harm and maximise the potential for beneficial changes to the setting of the Kent Downs AONB;
- b) All built development will be broadly contained within the 110-115m contours to the north of the railway line, with the exception of new road, pedestrian and cycle accesses from the A20;
- c) How the development will present an appropriate edge to respond to views from the Pilgrims Way within the Kent Downs AONB.
- d) A landscape scheme will be prepared to inform design parameters including for views into and from the AONB;
- e) Provision of appropriate interfaces with existing buildings which will be retained on and around the site;
- f) How the settlement will be designed to provide an appropriate relationship and connectivity to Lenham, Lenham Heath & Charing, whilst utilising existing and new linkages between the settlements;
- g) Investigating how density will be optimised, particularly around the areas with the best access to the potential new rail station, district and local centres, and high-quality open spaces.

4) Employment/ Commercial

- a) Development should aim to provide for as close to 5,000 new jobs as feasible and viable;
- b) A new District Centre adjacent to a potential new railway station, including a significant knowledge-based employment offer;
- c) Two new Local Centres, one as part of the early phases of development, and one as part of later phase, each including an element of employment space
- d) A minimum of 14 hectares of dedicated new employment land.

5) Infrastructure

- a) Bespoke infrastructure funding agreement based on the value captured by the development, expected to be higher than that which would ordinarily be captured using a borough CIL approach, and should be spent on infrastructure locally, and in the surrounding areas, particularly Lenham and Charing, where suitable.
- b) Two new three form entry primary schools will be required,
- c) Secondary education provision through either contributions for off-site provision or on-site facilities, or a combination of the two.
- d) The delivery of an improved or new waste water treatment facility;
- e) A comprehensive set of local community infrastructure commensurate with a new community of approximately 5,000 new homes, principally split between the three new centers;
- f) A full suite of open spaces will be delivered in accordance with Policies SP13 & INF1 including extensive green infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of the settlement, including amenity green space, play space, sports provision, allotments and natural and semi-natural open space.

6) Transport Connections

- a) A business case for a new rail station will continue to be explored on the Maidstone-Ashford rail line, with suitable alternative connectivity to the existing station at Lenham if the case is not made;
- b) Two new access connections on to the A20 will be provided to the north of the development, on routes which cross the Maidstone-Ashford rail line to connect with the southern part of the site.
- c) A good public transport facility through the site with new bus routes that provide linkages to the potential new station or existing Lenham Station and between the homes, district and local centres, Lenham secondary school, new schools and other local facilities and adjacent local areas;
- d) A network of pedestrian and cycle paths throughout the site, linking the district centre and local centres to the housing and employment areas, and beyond to the open countryside and to surrounding settlements;
- e) Potential connection to a new M20 junction as a result of cumulative development between M20 Junctions 8 & 9

7) Environmental

- a) A new country park around the Stour River south of the site, including a wetlands area to assist with the filtration of nitrates & phosphates arising within the upper Stour catchment, having regard to Natural England's advice in July 2020 regarding nutrients entering the River Stour;
- b) Climate Change adaptations and mitigations aimed at ensuring the new settlement is operationally net zero in terms of carbon emissions;
- c) 20% biodiversity net gain will be expected to be achieved on-site;
- d) There are several areas of potential archaeological sensitivity across the site, and these should be surveyed and development should respond to their significance, in particular the potential for multi-period archaeological remains associated with prehistoric and later activity around Chapel Farm, Mount Castle, and Lenham Forstal;
- e) Site design and layout shall be informed by a sensitive response to local and historic assets and landscapes Built heritage that development will need to have regard to includes:

- Royston Manor (grade II* listed)
 - Chilston Park Registered Park and Garden
 - A number of grade II listed buildings where their setting has the potential to be affected by the development
 - Listed buildings within the setting of the site including at Lenham and Chilston Park
- f) Use of sustainable drainage methods to manage surface water flooding issues and ensure flood risk is not exacerbated elsewhere including a site-wide Flood Risk Assessment will be required;
- g) noise and drainage mitigation measures are identified where required integrated within the design and layout of the site;
- h) Development creates a number of ecological corridors through the site, including along or parallel to the Great Stour
- 8) Governance and Stewardship:** will be set out identifying:
- a) How the 30-year vision will be fulfilled;
- b) How the settlement will be community-managed;
- c) Maintenance of infrastructure, urban realm, and open spaces will be carried out;
- d) Roles for utilities and infrastructure operators;
- e) How revenues from development will be recycled within the site to meet the above requirements.
- f) And ensuring that key infrastructure such as public transport can be delivered in a timely manner as the settlement grows, including consideration of risks and actions to maintain their viability and deliverability.

LPRSP4(B): Lidsing Garden Community

Introduction

- 6.72 The Lidsing proposal provides a large, deliverable development that could come forward from the middle years of the LPR period. The site will operate as an urban extension to the Medway urban area, but development will be designed to Garden Settlement standards set out in Policy LPRSP4.
- 6.73 The site contains the opportunity for a significant employment offer as part of the development mix, and the council considers that this is appropriate given the strategic access granted to the M2 via Junction 4. Additionally, there is potential to add a new arm to the M2 J4 roundabout, which aims to improve how that junction functions as well as providing a new direct access to the motorway network from North Danes Way.
- 6.74 At present there is little connection between the Lordswood and Hempstead areas of Medway, and this proposal aims to not only link them via orbital bus route but provide an additional service node to complement their existing facilities.

- 6.75 The site adjoins the Kent Downs AONB to the south, as well as the Capstone Valley to the north, which is of considerable local value. The site has the potential to deliver significant improvements to interconnectivity between these assets. A small section of the AONB would be required to establish a new arm to M2 J4 roundabout, and the proposal includes a substantial potential enhancement to the AONB to mitigate this impact. Further mitigation should include how the junction improvement is designed to minimise impact both there and across the site.
- 6.76 There is the potential for the site to make a positive contribution to the reframing of the Capstone Valley as a country park, and in particular by establishing enhanced walking and cycling links north south through the valley.
- 6.77 The council recognises that many aspects of this site have at least as much of an impact on parts of the urban area within Medway as Maidstone Borough. The council has sought constructive engagement through Duty to Co-operate discussions to ensure that issues are discussed, solutions are proposed, and areas of common ground and disagreement are identified.

Vision for Lidsing Garden Community

- 6.78 In 2057, Lidsing Garden Community will be an established and thriving new community with a distinctive local character, form and identity which provides strong linkages with the surrounding urban and rural services, facilities and communities and will serve to enhance the open space network of the Capstone Valley.
- 6.79 Lidsing Garden Community will be an exemplar urban extension containing 2,000 new homes that focuses on improving connectivity in south Medway. This connectivity will be in the form of a connection between North Dane Way and a new motorway junction on the M2. Routes across the site will be significantly improved and particularly a new orbital bus route will be a benefit to the wider community. Lidsing Garden Community will be a holistically planned new settlement which enhances the natural environment of its location in proximity to the Kent Downs AONB and its relationship with the Capstone Valley. The southern portion of the Capstone Valley will become a connecting point for a range of trips that will benefit existing and future residents linking Lordswood to the west with Hempstead to the east and creating strong leisure links north – south through the site connecting Capstone Country Park with the AONB.
- 6.80 The creation of this new Garden Community will change the character of this area, creating a new place within Medway with its own unique identity, well-related to existing communities at Hempstead, Lordswood, and Bredhurst. It will be a settlement centred on a well-defined landscape infrastructure that links new places to live through an integrated leisure strategy that converges on a new local centre that provides retail, sporting, education and health facilities. Lidsing Garden Community will provide a genuinely landscape-led settlement which responds robustly to the challenges and opportunities of climate change, adopting models of best practice as an exemplar development.

POLICY LPRSP4(B) – LIDSING GARDEN COMMUNITY

The Council will work with the promoter to produce an agreed Supplementary Planning Document to masterplan and facilitate the site's delivery. The following criteria must be met in addition to other policies of this Local Plan:

1) Phasing & Delivery

- a) Starting in approximately 2027;
- b) A mix of sizes of land parcels should be provided to enable development by a range of types and sizes of developers;
- c) Ensure that environmental mitigations are delivered in advance of construction, and that requisite infrastructure is ready to operate upon occupation.

2) Housing:

- a) 2,000 new homes in total, including 1,300 units within the Plan period up to 2037;
- b) A target amount of 40% affordable housing;
- c) Range of housing typologies based on the Council's latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment, including across tenure, mix of sizes of units, including for generational living.

3) Masterplanning and design parameters:

- a) Development will proceed in accordance with a detailed design code agreed between the Local Planning Authority and promoter;
- b) Development of the site will be landscape-led to ensure that there are positive enhancements to the Capstone Valley and Kent Downs AONB setting;
- c) The overall utility of the Capstone Valley will be significantly enhanced including for recreation;
- d) The development will create a positive out-facing edge when viewed from Lordswood, Hempstead and the AONB to the south;
- e) Floorplates may need to be restricted where they impact upon the setting of the AONB.
- f) Appropriate interfaces will be created with existing buildings which will be retained on and around the site to protect their significance;
- g) Design will reflect how the settlement's shape is configured with regards its relationship to the Medway urban area, as well as the AONB and Bredhurst;
- h) Investigating how density can be optimised, particularly around the areas with the best access to services and high-quality open spaces.

4) Employment/ Commercial

- a) Development should exceed 2,000 new jobs as feasible and viable due to the area's excellent connectivity to the Strategic Road Network;
- b) 14 Ha of new employment space will be created, focused on the improved motorway access;
- c) A new Local centre of not less than 1,500m² of retail, leisure and services will be created, strategically located on a new orbital bus route with good access to employment, Hempstead, and Lordswood;

5) Infrastructure

- a) A bespoke infrastructure funding agreement based on the value captured from the development, expected to be higher than that which would ordinarily be captured using a borough CIL approach, and should be spent on infrastructure locally, and in the surrounding areas where suitable.
- b) A new 3FE primary school within or adjacent to the local centre, and a contribution towards the creation of a new secondary school in the Capstone Valley area;
- c) A comprehensive set of local infrastructure commensurate with a new community of 2,000 new homes, principally focused on the new local centre;
- d) A full suite of open space will be delivered in accordance with Policy INF1:
 - i. 3.33 Ha Amenity green space,
 - ii. 1.19 Ha Play space
 - iii. 7.6 Ha sports provision
 - iv. 0.95 Ha of allotments
 - v. 31 Ha natural/ semi natural open space

6) Transport Connections

- a) A new connection to the M2 at Junction 4 will be created, enabling improved connections across the Capstone Valley and into Medway;
- b) A new orbital bus route linking Lordswood & Hempstead, and linking to the Medway town centres will be created;
- c) New half-hourly bus services to be provided between the site and Chatham via North Dane Way.
- d) Cycling & Walking links throughout the site, and strategically north-south along the Capstone Valley and into the wider Medway area will be created;
- e) Priority, through design, throughout the site for vulnerable road users and active travel modes.
- f) Measures to prevent rat-running in local roads, including through Bredhurst and Boxley.
- g) (Placeholder for any required offsite capacity improvements, as necessary.)

7) Environmental

- a) A Climate Change adaptations and mitigation strategy based on national and local guidelines;
- b) A minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain will be expected to be delivered on-site;
- c) There are several areas of potential archaeological sensitivity across the site, and these should be surveyed and development should respond to their significance;
- d) Sustainable drainage methods are implemented to manage surface water flooding issues and ensure that flood risk is not exacerbated elsewhere including a site-wide Flood Risk Assessment will be required;
- e) Noise and drainage and light pollution mitigation measures are integrated within the design;
- f) Heritage to be responded to within the site include site of a 20th century military balloon installation.
- g) A financial contribution shall be made to mitigate recreational impact on the Medway Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar.
Site design and layout shall be informed by a sensitive response to local historic assets and landscapes.

8) Governance arrangements will be set out identifying how:

- a) How the 30-year vision will be fulfilled;
- b) The settlement will be community-managed;
- c) Maintenance of infrastructure, urban realm, and open spaces will be carried out;
- d) Roles for utilities and infrastructure operators;
- e) How revenues from development will be recycled within the site to meet the above requirements.
- f) To ensure that key infrastructure such as public transport can be delivered in a timely manner as the settlement grows, including consideration of risks and actions to maintain their viability and deliverability.

LPRSP5: Strategic Development Locations

Introduction

- 6.81 The current Local Plan 2017 has Broad Locations for growth at Maidstone Town Centre, Invicta Barracks, and Lenham. These locations have and will continue to make an important contribution to growth within the Plan period. Invicta Barracks and Lenham continue to be progressed and are set out in Policies SP5(b) and (c) below.
- 6.82 There is potential for strategic development to assist in the delivery of a new road linking the M20J8 with the A274 around Langley. The consideration of how this new highway could be delivered is a requirement of Local Plan 2017 Policy LPR1.

POLICY LPRSP5 – STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT LOCATIONS

- 1) Strategic Development Locations will be delivered across the Plan Period for:
 - a) 1,300 units at Invicta Barracks
 - b) 1,000 units within the Lenham broad location for housing growth
- 2) A potential strategic development location will be safeguarded for delivering a new Leeds-Langley Relief Road.

LPRSP5(A): Potential Development in the Leeds-Langley Corridor

Introduction

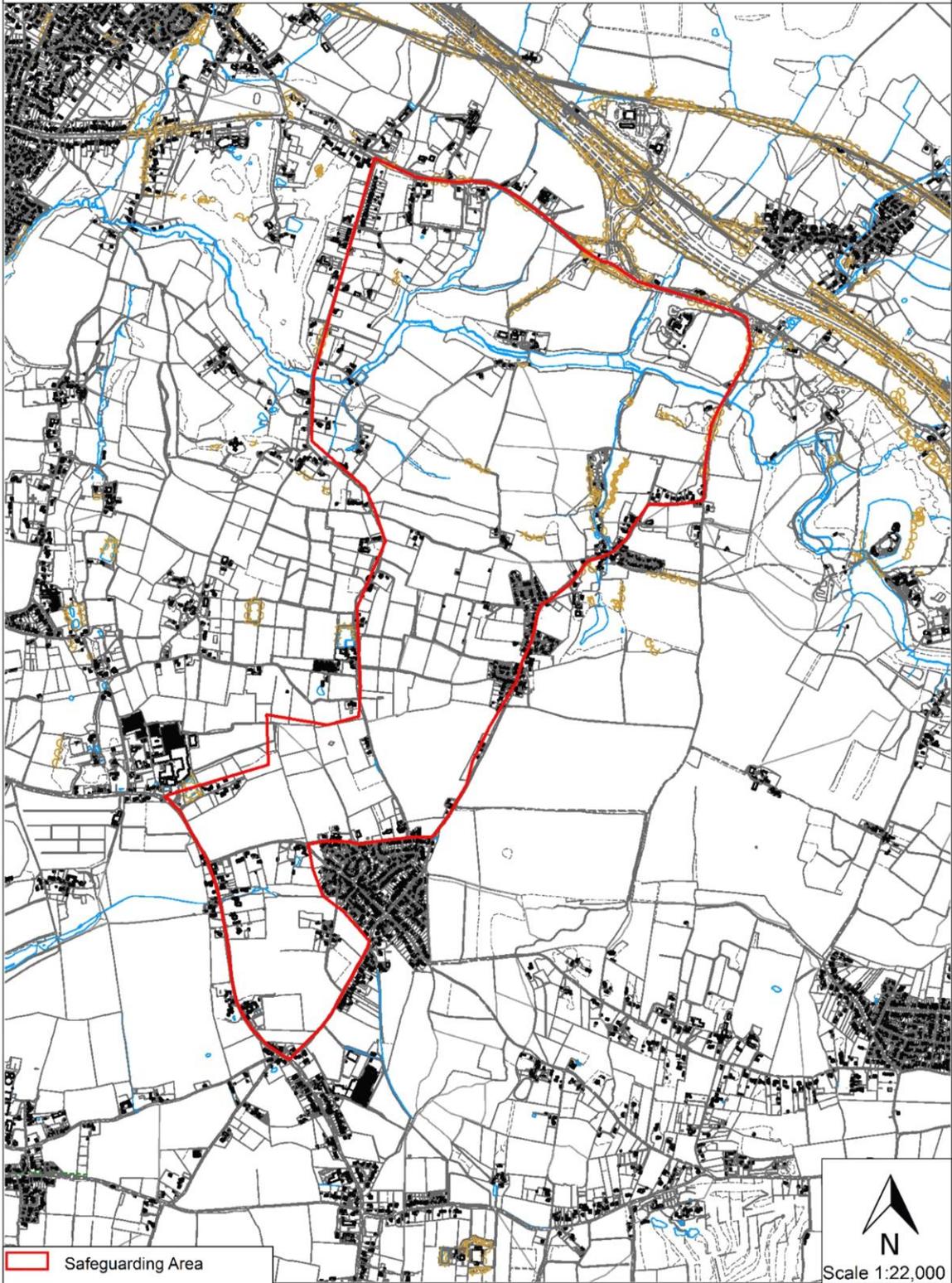
- 6.83 The reconsideration of the business case for the delivery of a Leeds - Langley relief road is a requirement of the Local Plan 2017 set out in Policy LPR1. Since the adoption of that plan various things have happened.
- 6.84 The local Highways Authority (Kent County Council) has confirmed that whilst it will not currently be seeking to promote a route in this corridor, should Maidstone Borough Council require such a route to support future development the Local Highway Authority will work to assist this.
- 6.85 The council has undertaken a study to meet the criteria laid out in the Local Plan 2017 Policy LPR1 as part of the Local Plan Review. The results of the study concluded that whilst previous route alignments considered were feasible in principle as transport projects, they would be unlikely, in spatial planning terms, to support significant development. Therefore, as standalone projects the route alignments considered had limitations in regard to being able to make a strong enough business case for funding.
- 6.86 To overcome these issues the council commissioned further work from independent consultants. This work was to identify variations to the previously considered alignments and would release sufficient enabling development to support the delivery of the road. The Study concluded that an approximate quantum of growth in the region of 3,995 residential units would be capable of funding a scheme without third party funding, should this be unavailable.
- 6.87 The council has supported this work by testing the transport implications of such a highway connection on the local and strategic network through transport modelling. The scheme tested was a highway only scheme.
- 6.88 Alongside the testing of a highway scheme, to fulfil the requirements of Local Plan 2017 Policy LPR1, the council also tested alternatives to a Leeds Langley Highway Scheme. This included a do-nothing scenario and a public transport led solutions along the A274.
- 6.89 In advance of the above work as part of the call for sites exercise, which formed part of the Local Plan Review, local landowners have identified a significant amount of land within the vicinity of the potential highway intervention for mixed use development.
- 6.90 At the current time, the delivery of a new road is not confirmed by the local Highways Authority. Discussions are ongoing however regarding how a scheme may be designed.
- 6.91 With this in mind, a safeguarded area is proposed which requires prospective developments in this area to demonstrate that they do not prejudice the future creation of a new route. This covers the minimum area considered necessary to protect both the alignment of the road and the area necessary for enabling development identified as needed to make the scheme feasible. The safeguarding direction does not preclude development in this area. Existing permissions and allocations remain extant, but upon renewal or variation of consents, Policy SP5(A) will apply.

- 6.92 Discussions between KCC, MBC, local landowners and other stakeholders will continue, with the potential for a future Development Plan Document to be produced to guide development of the route in partnership with landowners & KCC. It will also be expected that development at the scale anticipated to fund and deliver a scheme will bring forward the normal range of other associated infrastructure. However, there is no new development proposed by this plan within the safeguarded area at the current time.

POLICY LPRSP5(A) – DEVELOPMENT IN THE LEEDS-LANGLEY CORRIDOR

1. Land within the corridor defined on the policies map, will be safeguarded for potential future development, which will be required to provide a quantum of enabling development which will meet its own and future highway needs and to provide connectivity between M20 junction 8 and the A274.
2. Development proposals which come forward in the defined corridor will be assessed for their potential to prejudice the delivery of a new highway. Proposals for new residential and commercial development coming forward in the defined corridor will need to be accompanied by a masterplan demonstrating how the development of the site potentially contributes to or does not inhibit the delivery of a Leeds Langley relief road.

LPRSP5(A) - LLRR Safeguarding Area



LPRSP5(B): Development at Invicta Barracks

Introduction

- 6.93 Invicta Park Barracks covers a substantial area (41 ha) to the north of the town centre. It comprises a range of military buildings, including army accommodation, set within expansive parkland. The site is currently home to the 36 Engineer Regiment.
- 6.94 The MoD keeps its property portfolio under regular review. As part of the MoD review (November 2016) Invicta Park Barracks will be released by 2027. The Local Plan identifies Invicta Park Barracks as a broad location which is unlikely to come forward for housing growth until the end of the Local Plan period. The site has the potential to deliver in the order of 1,300 new homes. Over the plan period the council is working with the MoD to encourage an earlier delivery of the site.

POLICY LPRSP5(B) – INVICTA BARRACKS STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT LOCATION

Invicta Park Barracks is identified as an allocation for up to 1,300 dwellings from the middle of the Local Plan period. The Council will work with the promoter to produce an agreed Supplementary Planning Document to masterplan and facilitate the site's delivery. The following criteria must be met in addition to other policies of this Local Plan:

1. Preparation and submission of a development brief and a master plan prepared in conjunction with and for approval by the council to guide development;
2. Integration of new development within the existing landscape structure of the site (supported by ecological, arboricultural, and landscape and visual impact assessments together with the identification of detailed mitigation measures where appropriate);
3. Ensuring requisite community facilities, which may include neighbourhood shopping and health facilities in addition to a new through-school, are delivered where proven necessary and in conjunction with housing;
4. Provision of publicly accessible open space, including natural and semi-natural open space, as proven necessary, and/or contributions;
5. Off-site highway improvements as necessary to mitigate the impact of development;
6. Securing a network of public footpath and cycling routes through the site;
7. Preservation of features of ecological importance, including the retention and enhancement of wildlife corridors, and ensuring that connection with ecological features and corridors outside the site is maintained/enhanced;
8. Enhanced walking, cycling and public transport connections to the town centre and local area;
9. Preservation of Park House (Grade II*) and its setting, in particular the parkland to the north and east of Park House to include removal of existing built development at 1-8 (consecutive) The Crescent to enhance/restore the parkland setting; and
10. Development proposals must demonstrate that the necessary sewerage infrastructure is either available or can be delivered in parallel with the development.

Infrastructure

A bespoke infrastructure funding agreement based on the value captured from the development and expected to be higher than that which would ordinarily be captured using a borough CIL approach will be pursued, with the expectation that this should be spent on infrastructure locally, and in the surrounding areas where suitable.

LPRSP5(C): Lenham broad location for housing growth

Introduction

- 6.95 The rural service centre of Lenham was identified as a broad location in the Local Plan 2017 to accommodate 1,000 dwellings post April 2021. Transport links to Maidstone and other retail and employment centres by bus and rail are good.
- 6.96 Housing site allocations and associated infrastructure requirements have been made through the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan 2021, which complements how environmental, social, design and economic objectives of the Local Plan will be met and to demonstrate the physical and functional integration of the site(s) within Lenham.
- 6.97 Master planning of the area will be essential to achieve a high-quality design and layout, landscape and ecological mitigation, and appropriate provision of supporting physical, social and green infrastructure.
- 6.98 It is important that development of Lenham takes place in a manner that is well integrated with the existing communities of Lenham, so that they are seen as, and function as, the village which they adjoin, rather than stand-alone communities. In order to ensure a coordinated and planned approach, proposals for development within Lenham which come forward prior to an agreed Neighbourhood Plan and/or the Local Plan Review being adopted will be refused.

POLICY LPRSP5(C) – LENHAM BROAD LOCATION FOR HOUSING GROWTH

Implementation and future revisions to the Neighbourhood Plan will incorporate and address the following principles in the delivery of 1,000 homes as per the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan:

1. Make efficient use of land and provide a broad range of housing choice by size and tenure (including market and affordable housing) and cater for people with special housing needs;
2. Outline measures to mitigate the traffic impacts from development on the strategic and local roadnetworks;
3. Identify appropriate provision of, or contributions towards infrastructure improvements;
4. Incorporate primary school(s) and secondary school(s) if the scale of development justifies on-site provision, or if not, contributions to provision off-site in order to meet the needs generated by the broad location;
5. Ensure development is fully integrated with the surrounding village through shared community uses, and a variety of transport modes including walking, cycling and public transport;
6. Provide, commensurate with the scale of development, a network of open spaces and green infrastructure for amenity, play, sport and recreation, including allotments, local nature reserves woodlands, green spaces and wildlife corridors. Such provision should respond positively to the wider area to ensure enhanced linkages and networks;
7. Incorporate appropriate landscape treatment which ensures that developments can be satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding area;
8. Protect and, where possible, enhance any features of biodiversity value on site or which are off-site but might be affected by the proposed development;
9. Incorporate an appropriate flood risk management strategy and measures for its implementation
10. Ensure adequate provision is made for enhanced and comprehensive sewerage infrastructure.

LPRSP6: Rural Service Centres

Introduction

- 6.99 Outside of Maidstone town centre and urban area, rural service centres are considered to be highly sustainable settlements in Maidstone's settlement hierarchy. The planned development and maintenance of sustainable communities underpins the council's approach to rural areas where the primary aim is to direct development towards rural settlements that can best act as service centres for their local population and surrounding rural communities. Rural service centres play a key part in the economic and social fabric of the borough and contribute towards its character and built form. They act as a focal point for trade and services by providing a concentration of public transport networks, employment opportunities and community facilities that minimise car journeys.
- 6.100 The Settlement Hierarchy is established in Policy SS1 and is unchanged in regard to the Rural Service Centres as identified in the 2017 Local Plan. The 2021 Settlement Hierarchy Assessment considered the services and facilities available in each settlement and recommends that Coxheath holds comparable characteristics to other Rural Service Centres across the borough. The Rural Service Centre settlements are as follows:
- Coxheath
 - Harrietsham
 - Headcorn
 - Lenham
 - Marden
 - Staplehurst



Figure 6.1. Rural service centres in Maidstone Borough

- 6.101 The rural service centres will continue to be focal points where improved infrastructure and the strategic location of new development will reduce the need to travel and will help to maintain and improve on the range of essential local services and facilities. It is important that the rural service centres remain sustainable settlements with the services and facilities necessary to support a growing population. Additional infrastructure will be required as the plan continues to be developed, to respond to the additional growth set out in this spatial strategy. At the current time the infrastructure requirements are carried forwards from the Local Plan 2017, and these will be supplemented as necessary in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 6.102 Rural service centres are considered to have high deliverability due to their land price-house price balance. There is a need to ensure that sufficient land is allocated to meet need across the borough and across the plan period, and to meet the needs of the individual settlements.

POLICY LPRSP6 – RURAL SERVICE CENTRES

Within the designated rural service centres of Coxheath, Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst, the council will:

- 1) Focus new housing and employment development within the settlements when it is:
 - a) An allocated site carried forward from the 2017 Local Plan or newly allocated within this Local Plan Review;
 - b) Minor development such as infilling; or
 - c) The redevelopment of previously developed land that is of a scale appropriate to the size of the village.
- 2) Retain and improve existing employment sites and encourage new employment opportunities provided the site is in an appropriate location for, and suited to, the use.
- 3) Resist the loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces, whilst supporting new retail development, community services and green spaces to meet local need.
- 4) Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment appropriate to its significance. Proportionate historic environment assessment will be used to inform development and identify opportunities to enhance awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment to the benefit of the village and its community.

LPRSP6(A): Coxheath

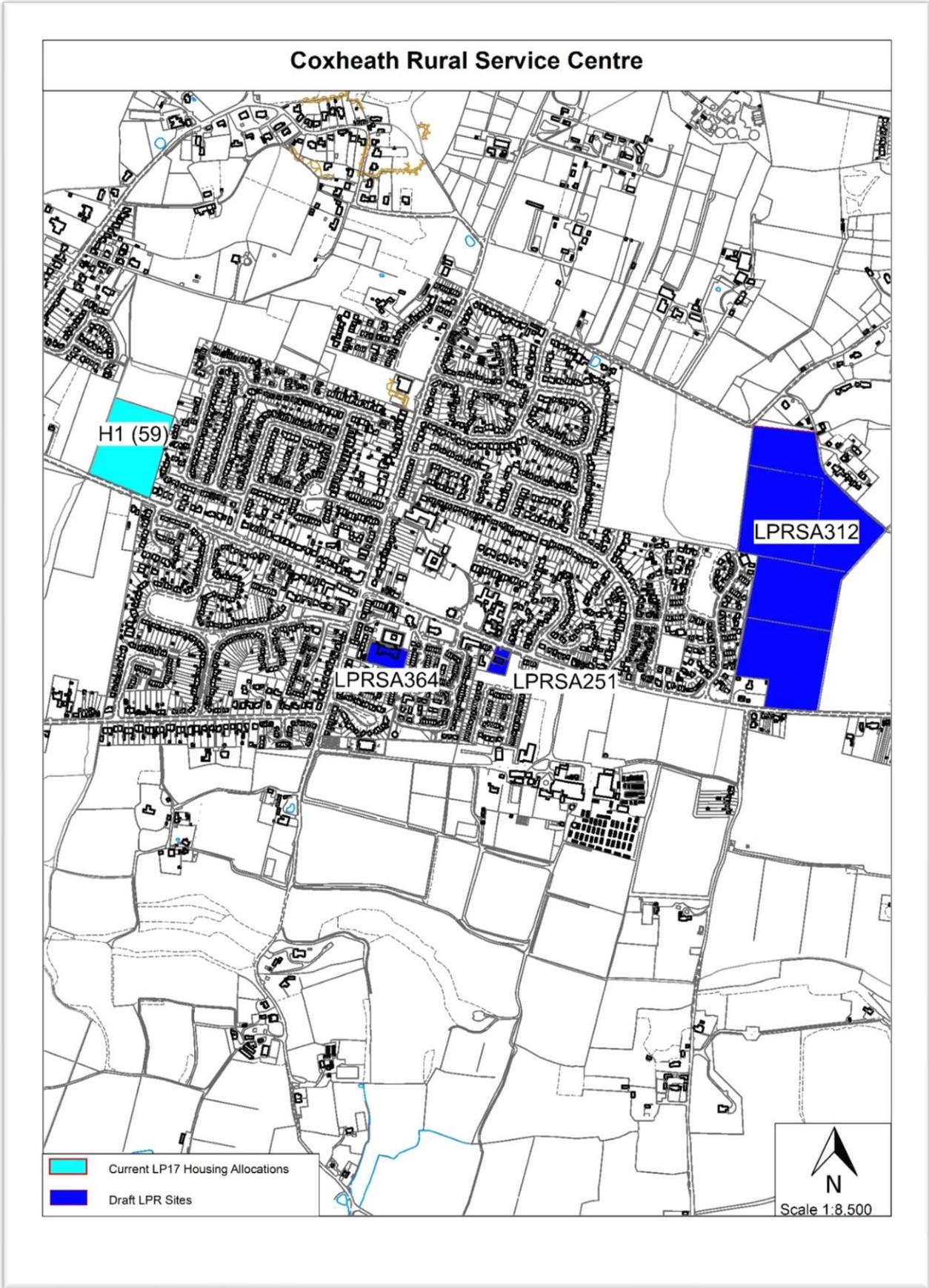
Introduction

6.103 Coxheath has the advantage of a compact urban form and a good offering of key services and facilities to support a growing population. Healthcare services in the village are particularly strong and include a GP surgery, a community trust clinic, chiropractic clinic and a pharmacy. However, the GP surgery is currently at capacity and any further development in Coxheath will be expected to contribute towards ensuring healthcare facilities can meet the demands of future growth. Coxheath does not have a train station but it has a regular bus service which connects the village to Maidstone town centre. Coxheath also has the advantage of being near to the town centre, which affords good access to a number of secondary schools and other facilities.

POLICY LPRSP6(A) – COXHEATH

At the larger village of Coxheath, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP7, approximately 55 new dwellings will be delivered on site H1(59), and 100 on LPRSA251, LPRSA312, and LPRSA364.
- 2) Key infrastructure requirements for Coxheath include:
 - a) Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure, including junction improvements at Linton Crossroads, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(59), LPRSA251, LPRSA312, and LPRSA364;
 - b) Improvements to open space which improve overall quality, and address forecast deficits of 0.8Ha amenity 1.5Ha play, 10.2Ha sports, 1.3Ha allotment, and 43.2Ha natural/semi-natural green space.
 - c) Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Orchard Medical Centre and Stockett Lane Surgery.
- 3) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11c.



LPRSP6(B): Harrietsham

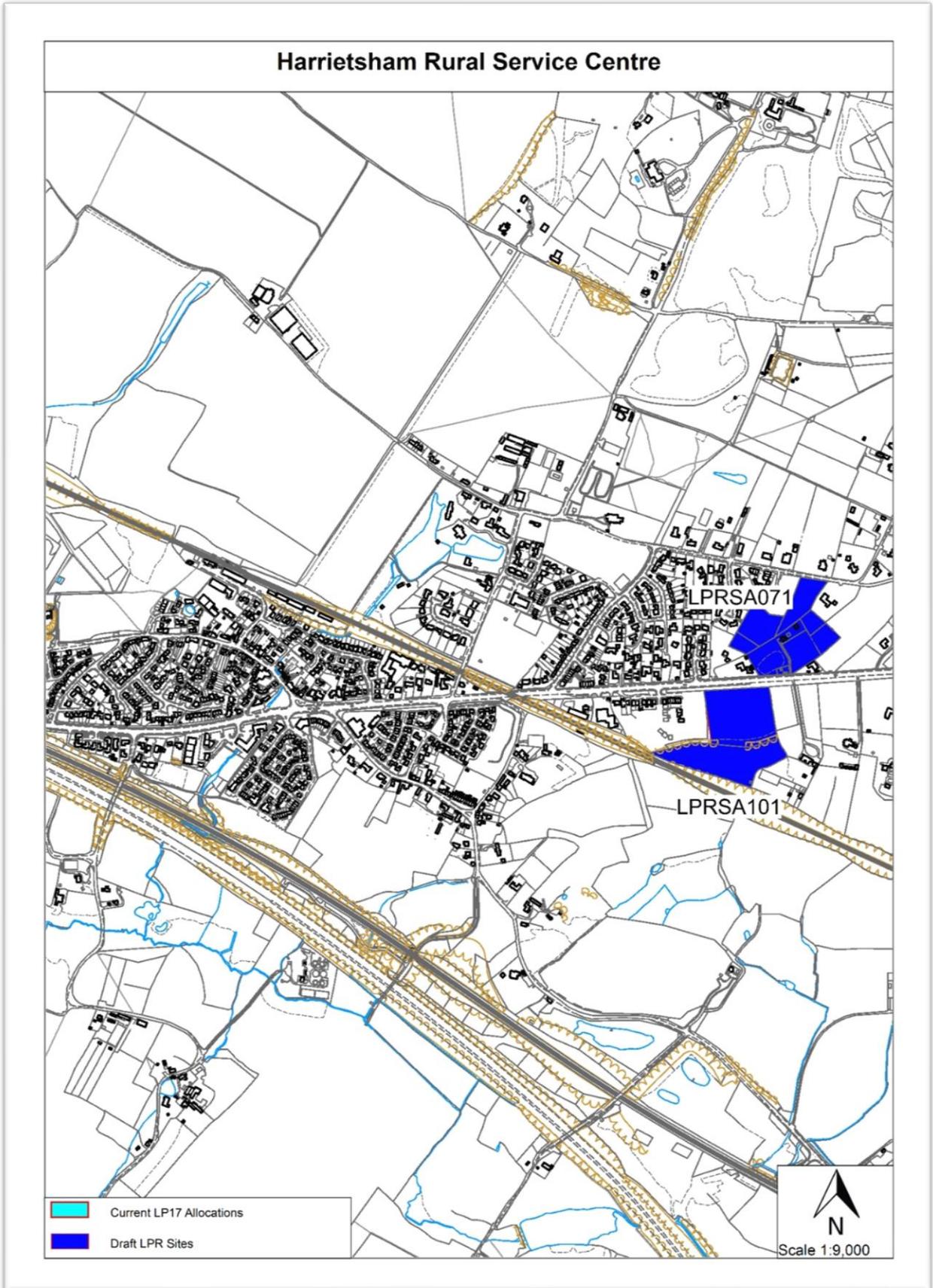
Introduction

6.104 Harrietsham provides a range of key services. Provision of and access to schools and community facilities in the village are adequate and will grow commensurate with any increase in population. The village has good public transport connections to Maidstone and other retail and employment centres. There is a local aspiration for replacement almshouses to support the local elderly population and for additional retail and play facilities, which are currently limited. Harrietsham has seen a number of new developments arising from the 2017 Local Plan, which alongside new housing has also helped to deliver new retail premises within the settlement.

POLICY LPRSP6(B) – HARRIETSHAM

At the rural service centre of Harrietsham, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP6, approximately 49 new dwellings will be delivered on site H1(33), and 100 on LPRSA071 and LPRSA101.
- 2) Two existing sites are designated as Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy LPRSP11a).
- 3) Key infrastructure requirements for Harrietsham include:
 - a) Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including improvements to the A20 Ashford Road, improvements to Church Road and the provision of additional pedestrian crossing points in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(33), LPRSA071 and LPRSA101.
 - b) Provision of a one form entry expansion at either Lenham or Harrietsham primary schools;
 - c) Improvements to open space which improve overall quality, and address forecast deficits of in 0.4Ha play, 4Ha sports, 0.2Ha allotment, and 12.4Ha natural/semi-natural green space.
 - d) Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Glebe Medical Centre.
- 4) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11(c).



LPRSP6(C): Headcorn

Introduction

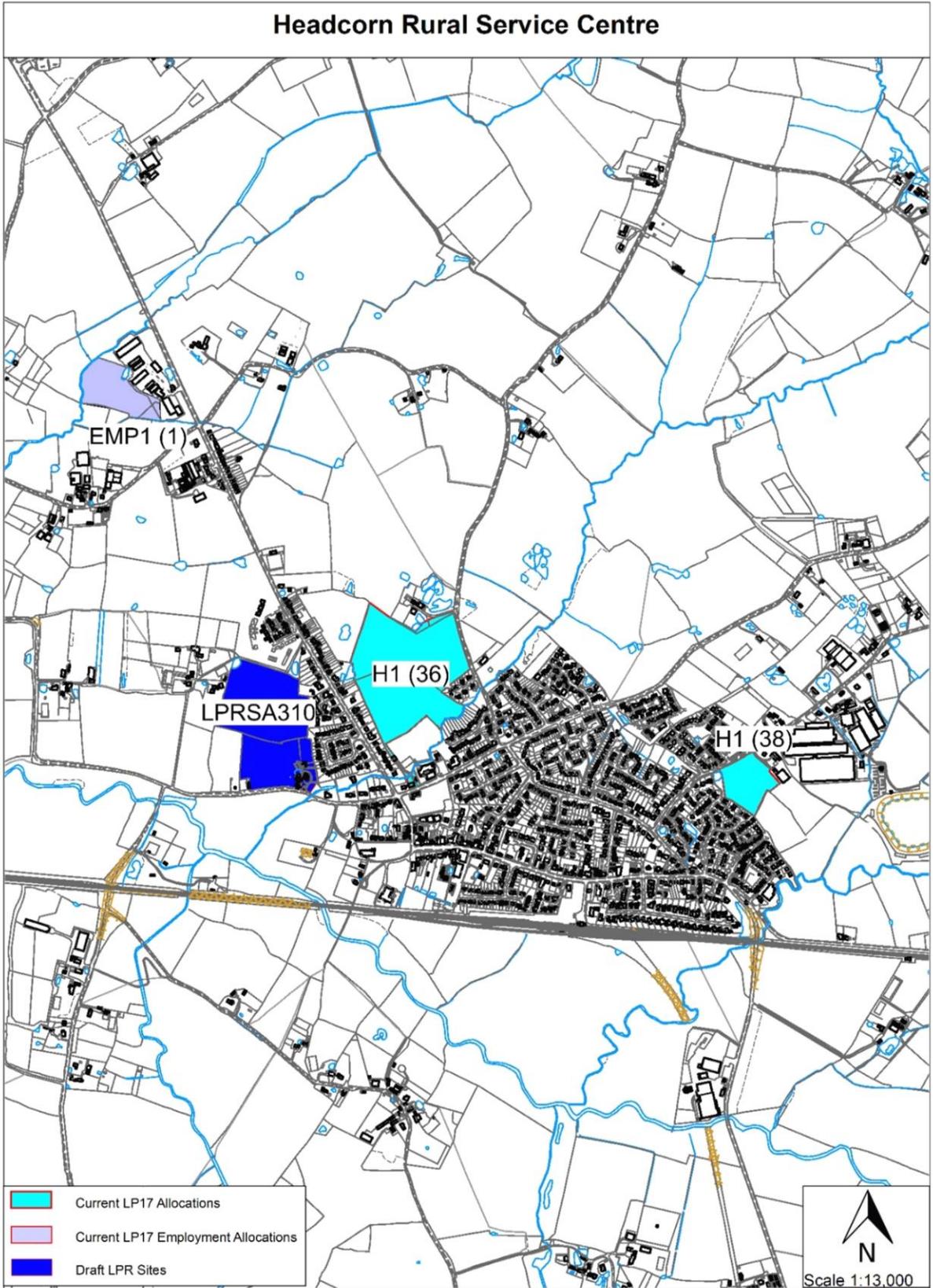
- 6.105 Headcorn has a diverse range of services and community facilities which are easily accessible on foot or by cycle due to the compact form of the village. There are local employment opportunities and there is a local wish to ensure that existing employment sites are kept in active employment use. A regular bus service runs between Headcorn and Maidstone and the village has good rail linkages to other retail and employment centres, including London. Flooding is an issue in Headcorn. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment advises strict controls on the location of development within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The village lies within a landscape of local importance where proposals should seek to contribute positively to the conservation and enhancement of the protected landscape in accordance with policy SP14. Headcorn is surrounded on three sides by the functional floodplain of the River Beult and its tributaries and additional capacity will be required in the sewer network and may be required at the wastewater treatment works in the period to 2031.

POLICY LPRSP6(C) – HEADCORN

At the rural service centre of Headcorn, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

1. In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP6, approximately 275 new dwellings will be delivered on three allocated sites H1(36) and H1(38), and 100 on LPRSA310.
2. Two existing sites are designated as Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy LPRSP11a), and a further 3,500m² employment floorspace is allocated (policy EMP1(1)).
3. Key infrastructure requirements for Headcorn include:
 - a. Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure, including junction improvements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure and improvements to pedestrian and cycle access, in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(36), H1(38) and LPRSA310
 - b. Provision of a one form entry extension to Headcorn Primary School;
 - c. Improvements to open space which improve overall quality, and address forecast deficits of 1Ha amenity, 1.1Ha play, 7.7Ha sports, 0.2Ha allotment, and 30.2Ha natural/semi-natural green space.
4. Additional capacity will be required in the sewer network and at the wastewater treatment works if required in the period to 2031; and
5. Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Headcorn Surgery.

6. The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11c.



LPRSP6(D): Lenham

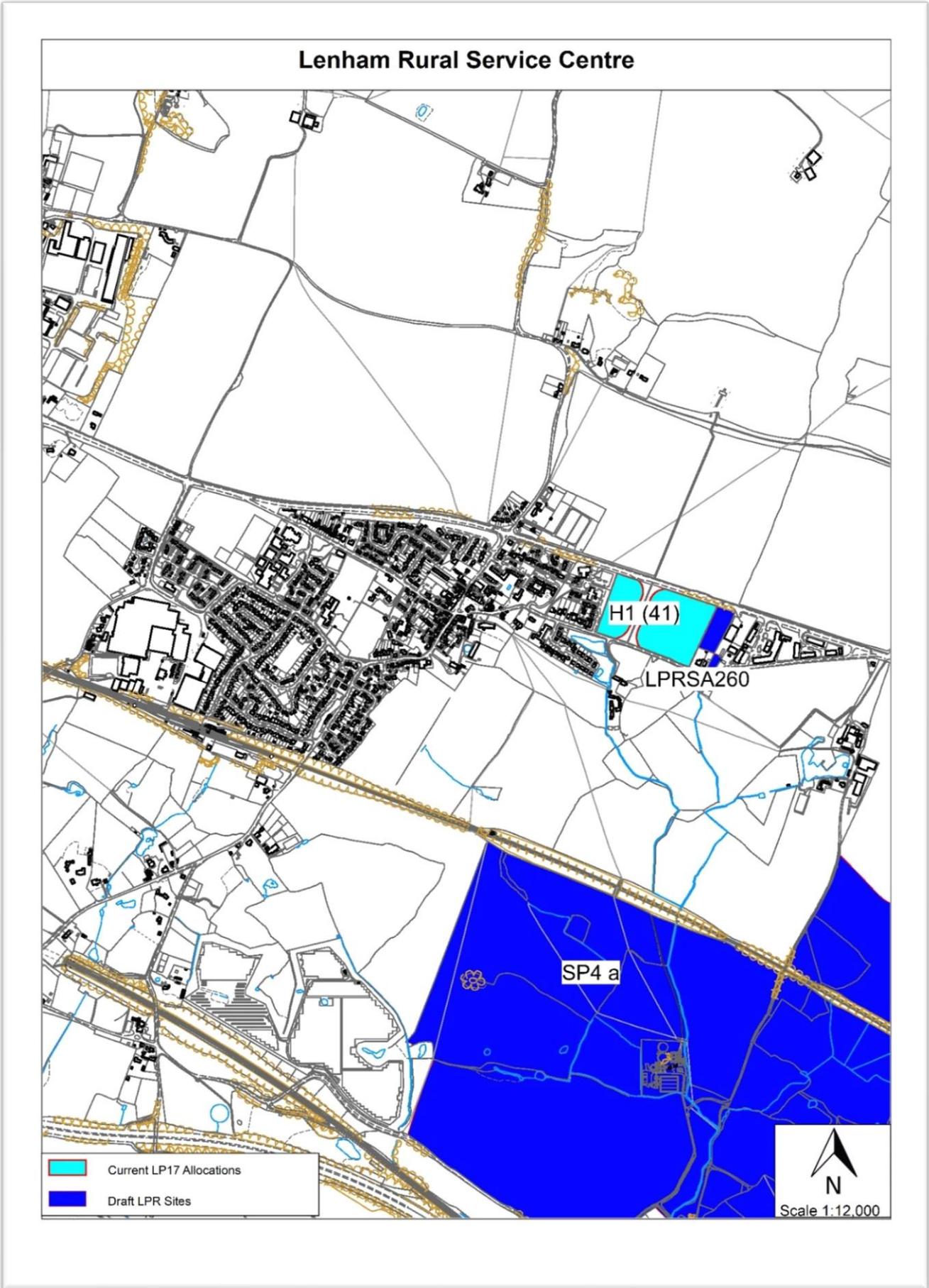
Introduction

- 6.106 Lenham has the key services and community facilities expected of a rural service centre. The village performs the best in terms of education facilities, with a primary school and nursery school located on the same site and is the only village to have a secondary school within the village boundary. Transport links to Maidstone and other retail and employment centres by bus and rail are good. There is a local aspiration for housing development in the village to sustain the thriving village centre and local businesses in general. Lenham lies within the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and it is recognised that there is a need to balance the benefits of utilising the most sustainable locations on the borough with the need to respect the setting of the AONB.
- 6.107 Lenham has a made Neighbourhood Plan which allocates land for circa 1,000 dwellings across three areas (7 sites including H1(41)). A new garden settlement at Heathlands to the east of Lenham, at Lenham Heath, is proposed as part of this plan. It is also recognised that the village of Lenham is a suitable settlement to deliver a select number of smaller scale sites.

POLICY LPRSP6(D) – LENHAM

At the rural service centre of Lenham, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP6, approximately 145 new dwellings will be delivered on one allocated site (policy H1(41)), in addition to six allocations in the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan which will deliver around 1,000 new dwellings.
- 2) Two pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policy GT1(8).
- 3) Three existing sites are designated as Economic Development Areas in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy LPRSP11a).
- 4) One new employment site allocation (LPRSA260) will deliver 2,500m² employment space.
- 5) Key infrastructure requirements for Lenham include:
 - a) Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including junction improvements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(41);
 - b) Provision of a one form entry expansion at either Lenham or Harrietsham primary schools;
 - c) Provision of 0.34 hectares of natural/semi-natural open space through Policy H1(41) and additional openspace as specified through the Neighbourhood Plan allocations.
 - d) Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at The Len Valley Practice.
 - e) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11c.



LPRSP6(E): Marden

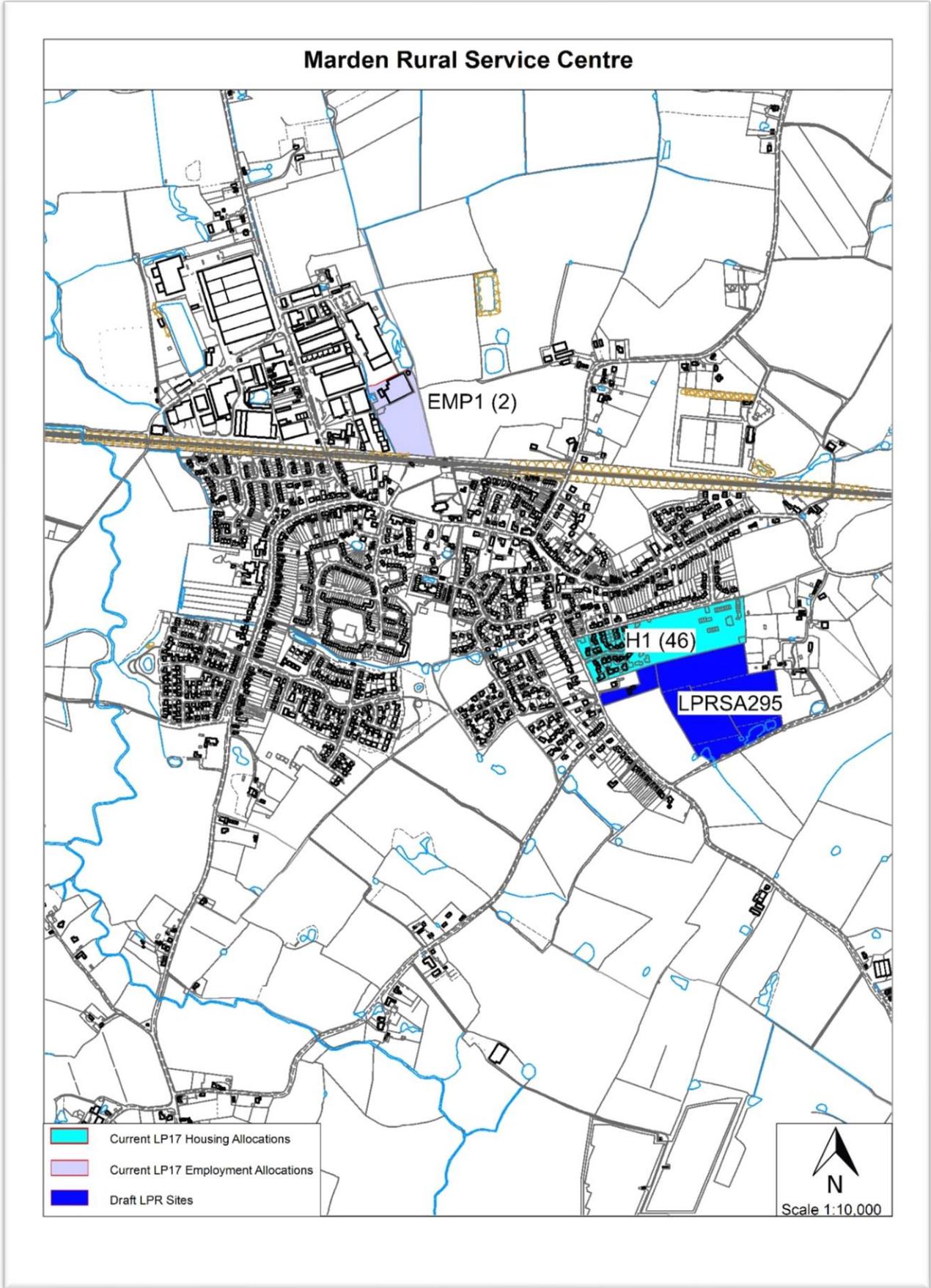
Introduction

6.108 Marden is a successful service centre, particularly in terms of employment opportunities, and also has strong key community facilities such as a medical centre, library and village hall. Marden has frequent rail connections to London and other retail and employment centres, which has created a demand for new development. This has to be balanced with the desire to ensure local people have access to affordable housing. Public transport connections to Maidstone are less frequent and require improvement. Flooding is an issue in Marden and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment advises strict controls on the location of development within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

POLICY LPRSP6(E) – MARDEN

At the rural service centre of Marden, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP6, approximately 124 new dwellings will be delivered on site H1 (46), and 113 on LPRSA295.
- 2) Two pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policy LPRGT1(9).
- 3) One existing site is designated as an Economic Development Area in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy LPRSP11a), and a further 4,084m² employment floorspace is allocated on one site (policy LPREMP1(2)).
- 4) Key infrastructure requirements for Marden include:
 - a) Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including railway station enhancements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(46), LPRSA295 and LPRSA314;
 - b) Provision of 0.6 form entry expansion at Marden Primary School;
 - c) Improvements to open space which improve overall quality, and address forecast deficits of in 0.9Ha play, 3.3Ha sports, 0.9Ha allotment, and 27.4Ha natural/semi-natural green space; and
 - d) Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Marden Medical Centre.
- 5) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11c.



LPRSP6(F): Staplehurst

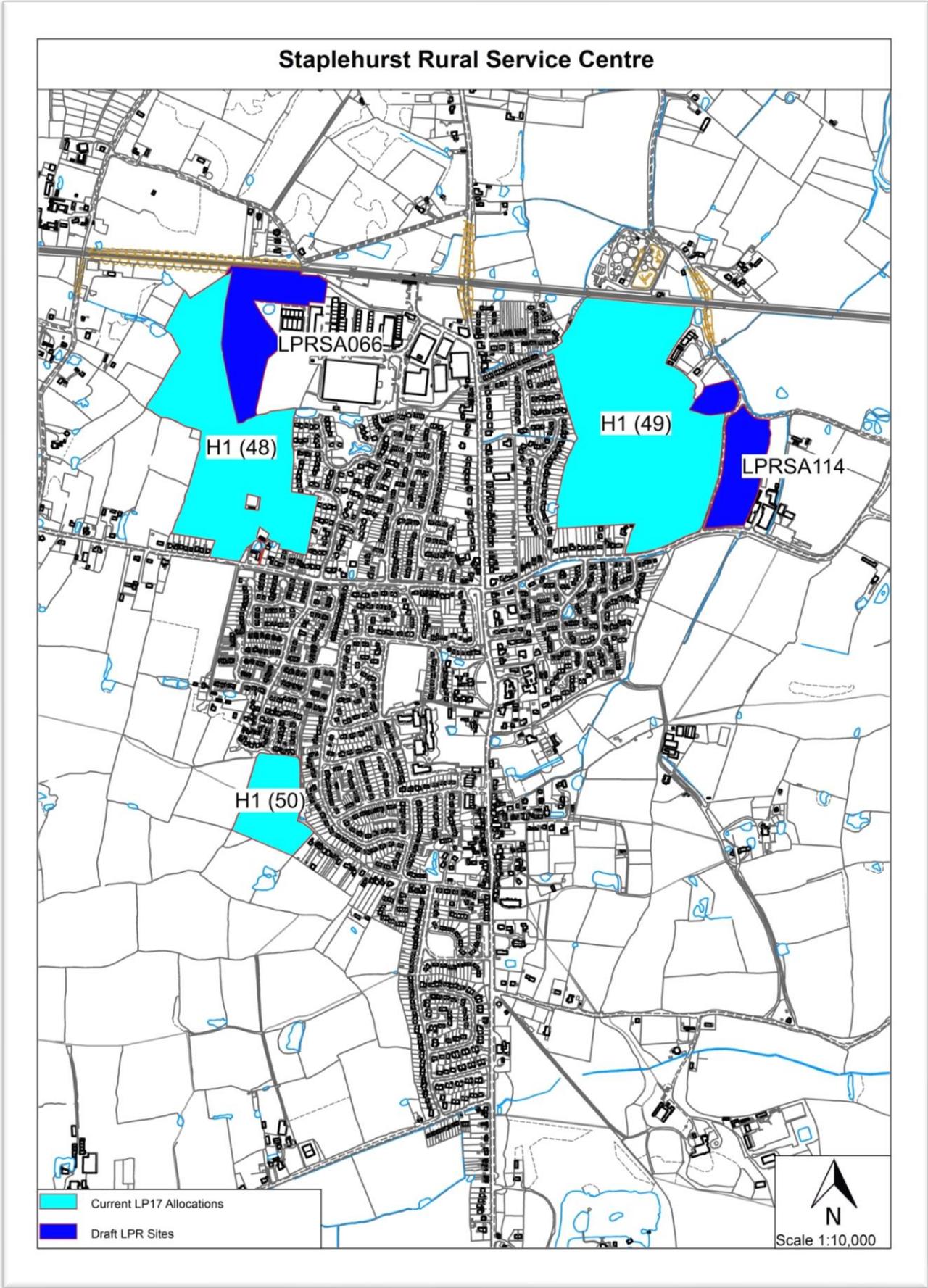
Introduction

6.109 Staplehurst is the largest of the rural service centres in terms of population and size and has a number of the key community services and facilities one would expect, including good health care services consisting of a health centre, pharmacy, optician and chiropractic clinic. The village also has more employment providers than most of the other service centres with the exception of Marden. Current transport infrastructure in Staplehurst is good and includes a train station but improvements to transport infrastructure are essential to cope with high levels of demand at peak times. Local aspirations for Staplehurst express a need for improvement to highways infrastructure in line with any new large-scale housing developments.

POLICY LPRSP6(F) – STAPLEHURST

At the rural service centre of Staplehurst, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP5, approximately 710 new dwellings will be delivered on sites H1(48) to H1(50), and 127 on LPRSA066 and LPRSA114.
- 2) Four pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policies LPRGT1(10) and LPRGT1(11).
- 3) One existing site is designated as an Economic Development Area in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy LPRSP11a).
- 4) Key infrastructure requirements for Staplehurst include:
 - a) Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including junction improvements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian and cycle access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(48) to H1(50) LPRSA066 and LPRSA114;
 - b) Provision of 0.5 form entry expansion at Staplehurst Primary School;
 - c) Improvements to open space which improve overall quality, and address forecast deficits of 2.4Ha amenity, 1.8Ha play, 9.1Ha sports, 1.6Ha allotment, and 51.9Ha natural/semi-natural green space.
 - d) Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Staplehurst Medical Centre.
 - e) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11c.



LPRSP7: Larger Villages

Introduction

6.110 The overall amount of development that will be acceptable in larger villages will be less than in the Rural Service Centres as they are comparatively less sustainable locations for meeting the development needs of the borough as a whole.

6.111 The 2021 assessment of population, village services and facilities has identified five villages that can be designated as larger villages, these are:

- East Farleigh
- Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne)
- Sutton Valence
- Yalding

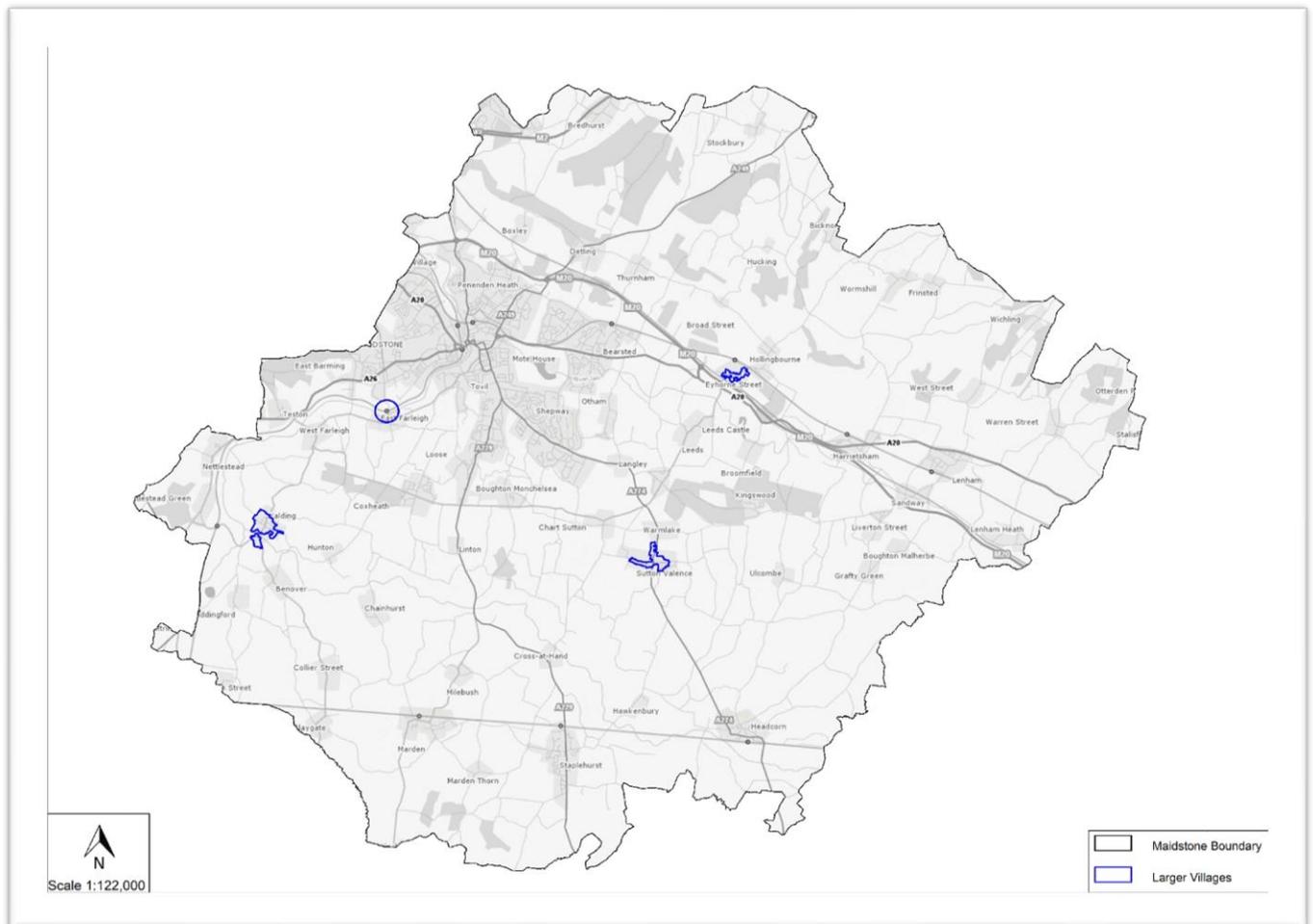


Figure 6.1. Larger Villages in Maidstone Borough

- 6.112 Based on the 2021 analysis of population, services and facilities, all four settlements are considered sustainable locations for limited new housing development provided that it is of a scale in keeping with their role, character and size. An appropriate increase in population would help to support village services and facilities. The continued sustainability of these settlements as places to live and work is dependent on the retention of local services that meet community needs coupled with the retention of adequate transport services to enable access to larger centres for those services that are not available locally.
- 6.113 Similar to the rural service centres, all four villages have different characteristics and there is variation in the limited range of services and facilities they provide.

POLICY LPRSP7 – LARGER VILLAGES

Within the designated larger villages of East Farleigh Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding, as shown on the policies map, the council will:

- 1) Focus new development within the settlements when it is:
 - a) An allocated site in the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan;
 - b) Minor development such as infilling; or
 - c) The redevelopment of previously developed land that is of a size appropriate to the role, character and scale of the village.
 - d) Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment appropriate to its significance. Proportionate historic environment assessment will be used to inform development and identify opportunities to enhance awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment to the benefit of the village and its community.
- 2) Resist the loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces, whilst supporting new retail development, community services and green spaces to meet local need.

LPRSP7(A): East Farleigh

Introduction

- 6.114 East Farleigh lies on the River Medway west of Maidstone, with services linked to the station which is just north of the river, and also at the intersection between Station Hill and Lower Rd, which is to the south. It lies within the Medway Valley Landscape of Local Value. There are a moderate number of services and light industrial sites in and around the settlement, there is a primary school in the southern part of the village. East Farleigh Bridge is a notable constraint on enabling safe access between the area south of the river and the rail station to the north. Although flood risk from the Medway is tightly defined within this part of the catchment, robust flood mitigation measures will have to form an essential part of any development proposal in the settlement.

POLICY LPRSP7(A) – EAST FARLEIGH

At the largervillage of East Farleigh, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP7, approximately 50 new dwellings will be delivered.
- 2) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11a.

LPRSP7(B): Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne)

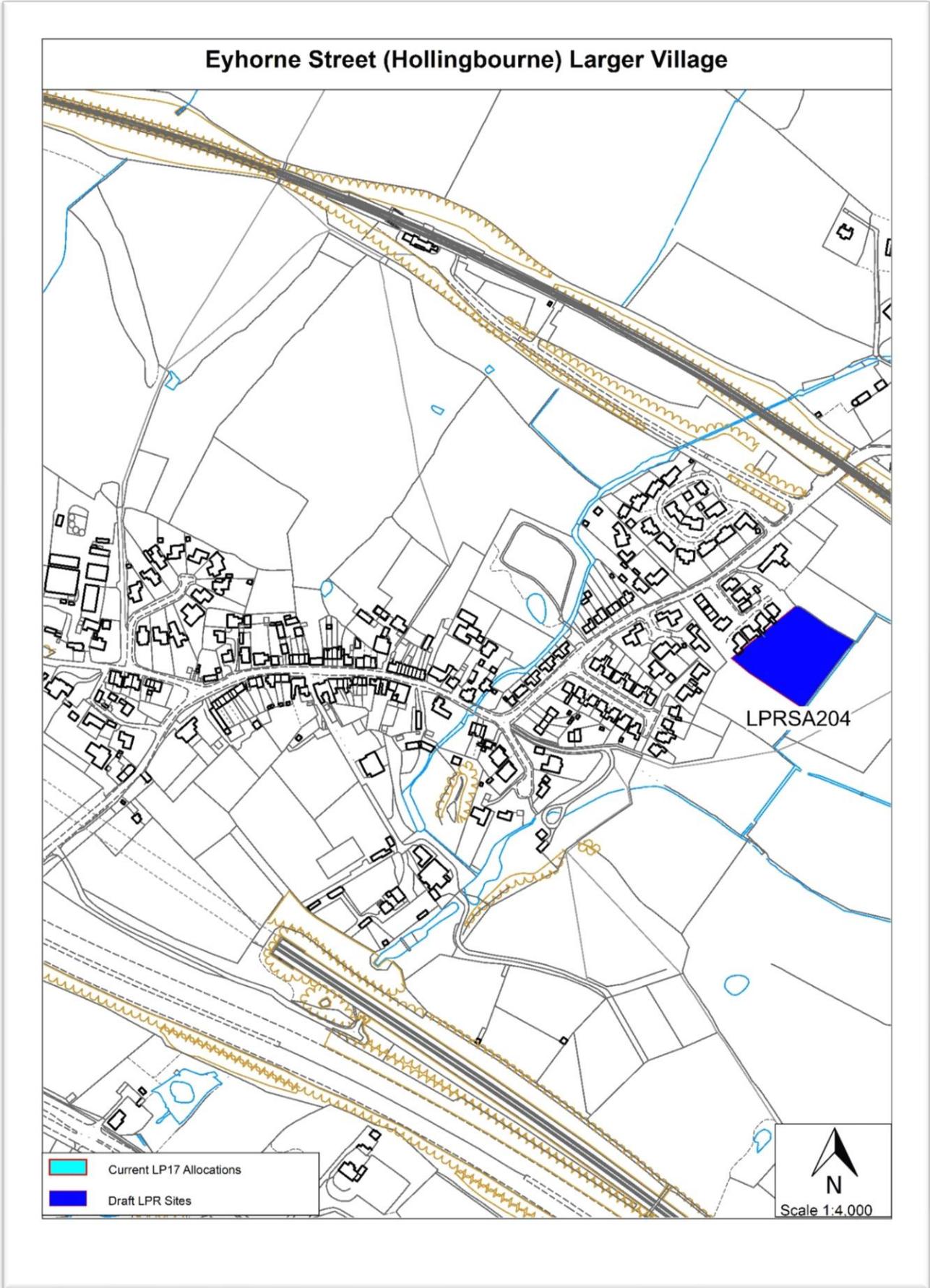
Introduction

- 6.115 Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne) is a linear settlement which lies to the northeast of Maidstone's urban area in the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The primary school, pre-school and one of the local playing fields are approximately 0.5km from the village centre. The village does not have a GP surgery or healthcare facilities apart from an osteopath clinic, but does have some good key facilities, including a village hall, local shop, post office, pubs and a restaurant. Rail connections to Maidstone town centre and other retail and employment destinations are good, and the village also has a regular bus service to the town centre.

POLICY LPRSP7(C) – EYHORNE STREET (HOLLINGBOURNE)

At the larger village of Eyhorne Street, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP7, approximately 15 new dwellings will be delivered on site H1(63) and 9 on LPRSA204.
- 2) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11a.



LPRSP7(C): Sutton Valence

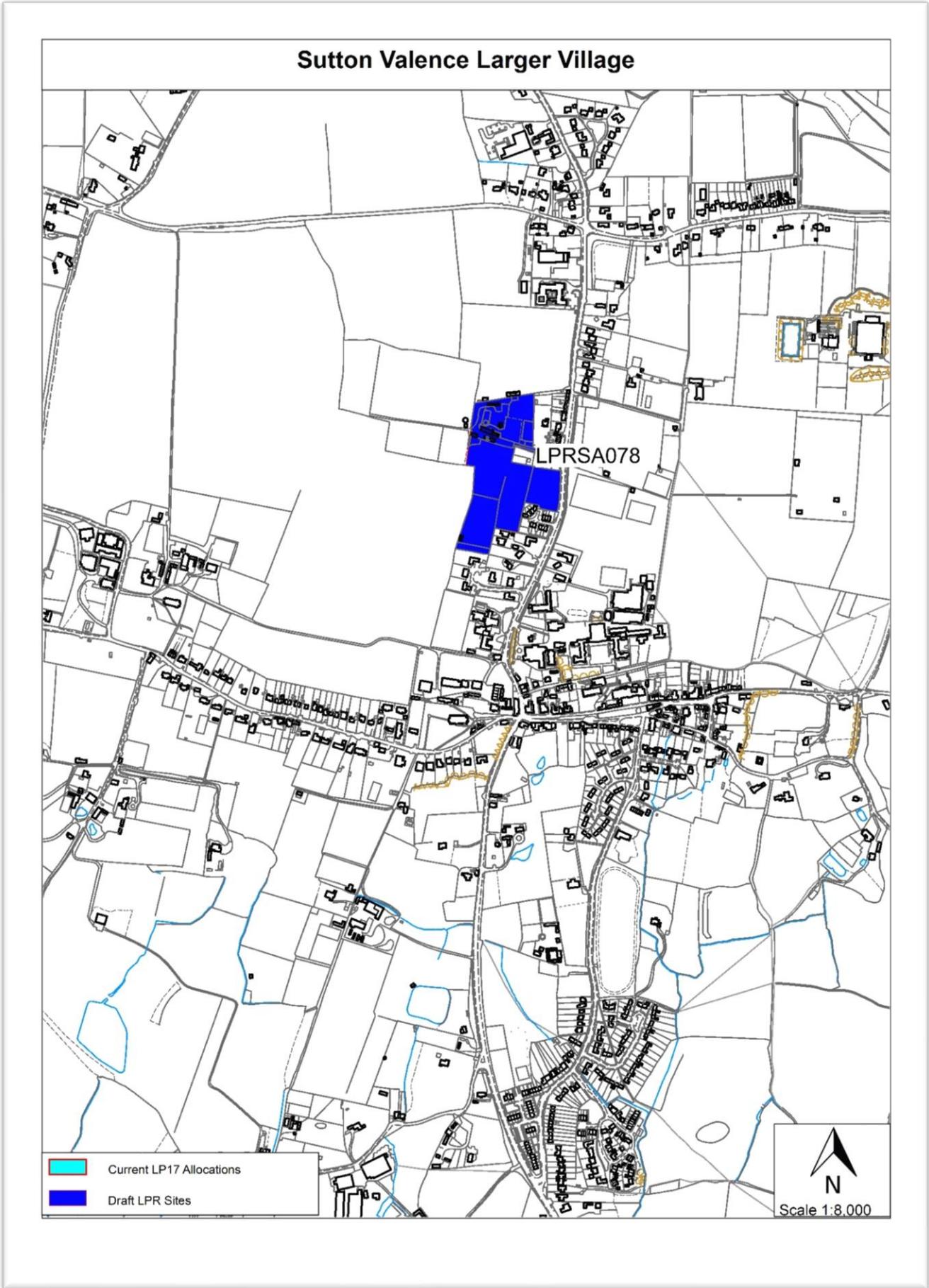
Introduction

6.116 Sutton Valence lies to the southeast of Maidstone's urban area, primarily on a plateau above the Greensand Ridge. The settlement performs well in the audit in terms of education facilities. There is a pre-school, primary school and the Sutton Valence boarding school, which caters for children from the age of 3 to 18. In terms of services and community facilities there are pubs, a church, a village hall, mobile library service and good playing pitches. The village has a medical practice but no dentist or pharmacy. Public transport connections to Maidstone town centre and Headcorn are good due to a regular bus service. The village does not have a train station.

POLICY LPRSP7(C) – SUTTON VALENCE

At the larger village of Sutton Valence, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP7, approximately 100 new dwellings will be delivered on allocated site policy LPRSA078.
- 2) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11c.
- 3) Key infrastructure requirements for Sutton Valence include:
 - a) Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Sutton Valence Surgery and Cobtree Medical Practice.
 - b) Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure, including junction improvements at and improvements to pedestrian access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(64) and LPRSA078.
 - c) Improvements to open space which improve overall quality, and address forecast deficits of 0.1Ha play space.



LPRSP7(D): Yalding

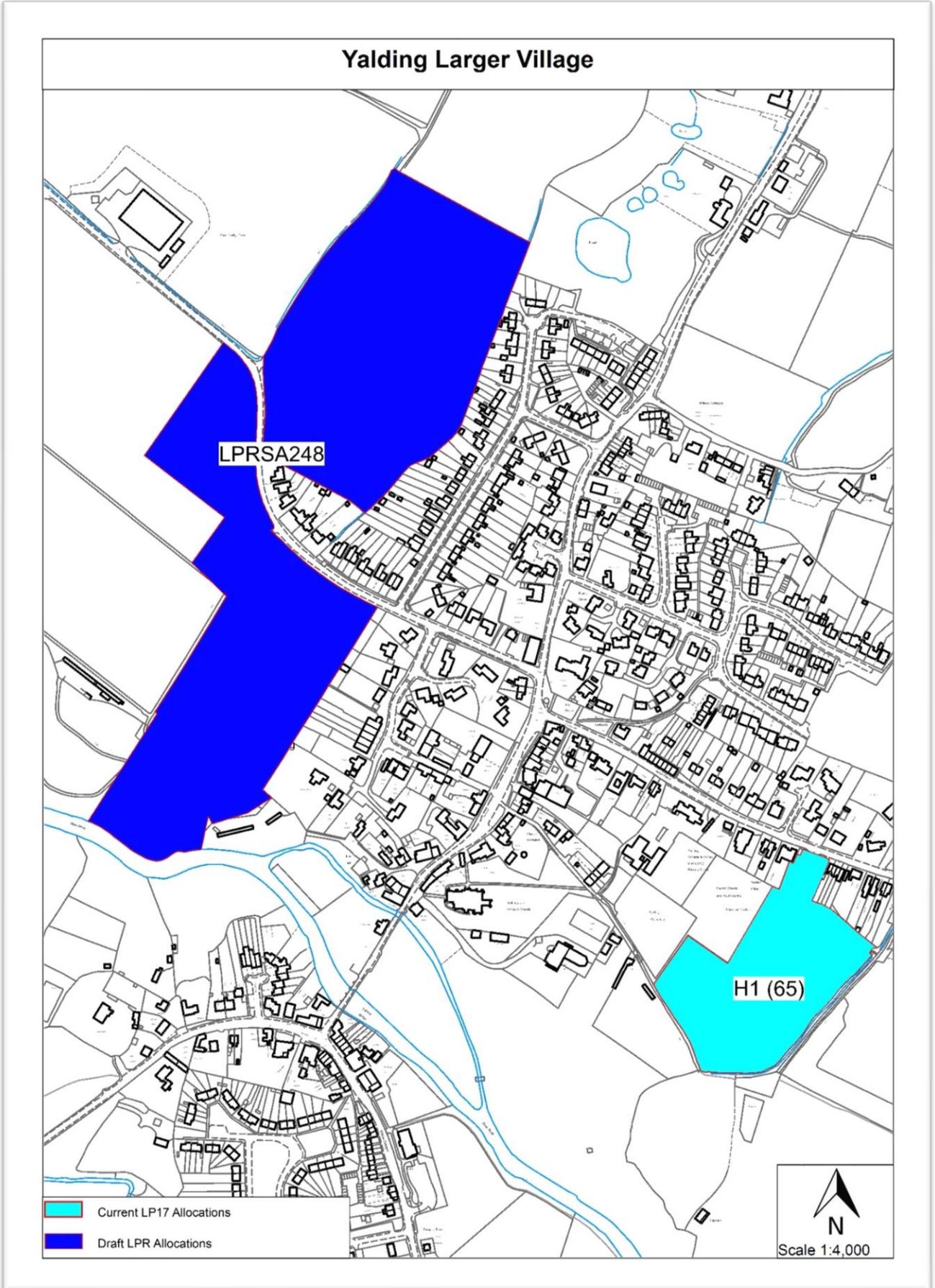
Introduction

- 6.117 Yalding has a number of the key services and facilities expected of a larger village. The village has a local shop, post office and GP surgery. The village is served by a nearby train station and has connections by bus to Maidstone town centre, which is essential in terms of access to secondary education. Yalding also has sustainable connections to nearby Paddock Wood, which also has a range of services and facilities, including a secondary school.
- 6.118 In addition to allocated development within the settlement, the council will support the redevelopment of the brownfield former Syngenta Works site, which lies to the west of Yalding village. It is important to ensure that safe and sustainable linkages between the Syngenta site and the village are provided if this development comes forward. Robust flood mitigation measures will have to form an essential part of any development proposal in the settlement. The size of the Syngenta site offers an opportunity for a sustainable drainage mitigation approach to flood prevention. Subject to the findings of the flood risk assessment, potential suitable uses for the site could include employment, leisure, commuter car parking and open space (in accordance with policy LPRSAEmp1).

POLICY LPRSP7(D) – YALDING

At the larger village of Yalding, as shown on the policies map, key services will be retained and supported.

- 1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP7, approximately 65 new dwellings will be delivered on site H1(65), and 100 on LPRSA248.
- 2) Key infrastructure requirements for Yalding include:
 - a) Improvements to highway and transportation infrastructure will be made in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policy H1(65) and LPRSA248. Key schemes include improvements to pedestrian access; and
 - b) Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Yalding GP Practice.
 - c) Improvements to open space which improve overall quality, and address forecast deficits of in 0.4Ha play, and 1.7Ha sports space.
- 3) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11c.



LPRSP8: Smaller Villages

Introduction

- 6.119 Smaller Villages are those rural settlements that are not defined as Larger Villages or Rural Service Centres. These settlements rely heavily on community-focused services. Community facilities can include clinics, health centres, day centres, playgrounds, playing fields and sports facilities, children's nurseries and schools, village halls and places of worship. Together with local village services, particularly with respect to village shops, post offices, healthcare facilities and public houses, provision of a basic level of community facilities are essential if small rural settlements are to remain vital and viable.
- 6.120 There has been a continued decline in local village services and the Local Plan will continue to resist any further losses. Any proposal for the re-use or re-development of an existing local village service will be required to be supported by clear evidence of non-viability, such as marketing the building or facility for a period of time to test whether another community interest, operator or owner could be found.
- 6.121 For sustainability reasons, the Local Plan priority is to locate new or improved community facilities in areas with a greater range of higher-order services; rural service centres and larger villages. However, in small villages new facilities may be permitted to serve the local community provided a clear need is demonstrated. Additionally, development which can be shown to positively support local services, as agreed with local communities, will be supported.
- 6.122 The Local Plan will resist the loss of any community facility that meets an essential community need and which is not available and reasonably accessible elsewhere. In all cases, another beneficial community use should be sought before permission is granted for the removal of these facilities.
- 6.123 Development on remote sites, or sites which do not appropriately reflect the existing envelope of smaller villages, is unlikely to be acceptable due to impact on the setting of the settlement within its countryside setting. As in other rural centres, infilling and the redevelopment of brownfield sites is encouraged.
- 6.124 Whilst some smaller villages have a limited range of services, consideration will be given to the public transport links to Rural Service Centres, Larger Villages and Maidstone. In appraising proposals for development in smaller villages, consideration will therefore be given to, the range of facilities and infrastructure offered, and its connectivity to services in larger settlements by means of public transport.
- 6.125 With the exception of Eyhorne Street, all the rural service centres and larger villages are designated neighbourhood areas. Other designated neighbourhood areas located in the countryside, together with non-designated rural settlements, can offer a limited opportunity for new residential development to support the continued sustainability of the settlement in accordance with policy SP8.

POLICY LPRSP8 – SMALLER VILLAGES

Within smaller settlements:

1. The council will resist the loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces, whilst supporting new retail development, community services and green spaces to meet local need.
2. Smaller villages offer a limited opportunity for new development which can support the continued sustainability of the settlement. This is estimated to come forward as broad location development, in the last 10 years of the Plan period. The quantities envisaged are:
 - 35 new units each at Ulcombe, Laddingford, Kingswood, and Teston
 - 25 new units at each of Boxley, Chart Sutton, Detling, Grafty Green, Hunton, Platt's Heath, and Stockbury
3. Within the Smaller Villages small scale housing development will be acceptable where all of the following apply:
 - a) The scale of the development is proportionate to the size of the settlement and the type and level of local services available
 - b) The development design takes account of landscape impact having regard to the setting of the settlement within the countryside.
 - c) It can be linked to the retention or expansion of specific infrastructure or service assets within the settlement;
 - d) It has community support, either through a Neighbourhood Plan, or other Parish endorsement, for example as a Rural Exception Site;
 - e) Where it is apparent that smaller villages are not set to meet the specific allocation of residential units, the council, through a future review of the Local Plan, will allocate sites to make up the shortfall

LPRSP9: Development in the Countryside

Introduction

6.126 Maidstone borough is predominantly rural with a large proportion of the population living in villages as well as on the fringes of the urban area. Much of the rural landscapes are of high quality with valuable agricultural and ecological resources within the borough. The countryside areas are highly accessible to those living and working in the urban areas, complemented by a wide and well-used public rights of way network. They also act as a major asset to attract new investment into the borough. However, this proximity to the urban area brings with it pressures arising from an increased level of demand for houses, recreation and jobs in the countryside. The countryside is defined as all those parts of the plan area outside the settlement boundaries of the Maidstone urban area, garden community developments, rural service centres and larger villages with defined settlement boundaries and is depicted on the policies map. The countryside has an intrinsic rural character and beauty that should be conserved and protected for its own sake. However, there is also a need to ensure a level of flexibility for certain forms of development in the countryside in order to support farming and other aspects of the countryside economy and to maintain mixed communities. This needs to be mitigated in a way that maintains and enhances the distinctive rural character of the more rural parts of the borough.

Rural Economy

6.127 Maidstone's rural economic character is diverse and complex in nature. The number of rural and agricultural businesses found within villages and rural service centres and the wider countryside account for a significant proportion of all firms in the borough. Small businesses are a particular feature of rural areas, as is homeworking, home-based businesses and live-work units. Agriculture remains an important influence, fulfilling a number of important and varied roles in the countryside, contributing to the local economy, and managing and maintaining much of the valued landscapes. It benefits from the fact that much of the soil within the borough comprises the highest grade and versatile agricultural land. However, in line with other businesses, agriculture needs to be able to react to new and changing markets and developments in technology. A more recent trend in agriculture is the response to demand for produce to be available on a year-round basis. This leads to land being put under intense pressure for almost industrial scale development that can have an adverse impact on the wider landscape and natural assets, such as wildlife, soil and water resources that require protection within the landscape. Another trend is the increasing interest in smaller-scale renewable energy installations. Further advice and guidance on the landscape implications of these activities will be given in the Landscape Character Guidelines SPD.

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

The Local Plan will continue to recognise the importance of supporting small-scale rural business

development. Its priority is to locate these businesses within the defined rural service centres. However, there are employment sites already located outside of these settlements and it is important to offer these businesses a degree of flexibility.

Small Villages

- 6.129 The attractiveness of the countryside is partly due to its scattered settlement pattern and buildings. The overall settlement pattern across the borough is characterised by a large number of small villages scattered across the countryside surrounding a handful of larger, more substantial settlements. It is important these settlements retain their individual identities as there can be a delicate balance between settlement proximity and separation.
- 6.130 There may be a need for some development to help ensure the sustainability of these smaller settlements, and this is covered in LPRSP8.

Design

- 6.131 The countryside is a sensitive location within which to integrate new development and the council will expect proposals to respect the high quality and distinctive landscapes of the borough in accordance with policy approach Q&D 4. In order to assist in the successful integration of new development into the countryside the council will ensure Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments are carried out as appropriate to assess suitability and to aid and facilitate the design process.

Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its Setting

- 6.132 A large part of the northern part of the borough lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is a visually prominent landscape that contributes significantly to the borough's high quality of life. It is an important amenity and recreation resource for both Maidstone residents and visitors and forms an attractive backdrop to settlements along the base of the Kent Downs scarp. It also contains a wide range of natural habitats and biodiversity. Designation as an AONB confers the highest level of landscape protection. The council has a statutory duty to have regard to the purposes of the designation, including the great weight afforded in national policy to its conservation and enhancement. Within the AONB, the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 provides a framework for conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area. The council has adopted the Management Plan and will support its implementation. Open countryside to the immediate south of the AONB forms a large extent of the setting for this designation. In Maidstone this is a sensitive landscape that is coming under threat from inappropriate development and is viewed as a resource that requires conservation and enhancement where this supports the purposes of the AONB.

- 6.133 The council will ensure proposals conserve and enhance the natural beauty, distinctive character, biodiversity and setting of the AONB, taking into account the economic and social well-being of the area. Rural diversification and land-based businesses in the Kent Downs AONB will only be acceptable where they help improve the special character of the AONB and are in accordance with the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan, supporting guidance and position statements. Economic development within the AONB should be located in existing traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit in smaller settlements, farmsteads or within groups of buildings in sustainable locations.
- 6.134 New development in the AONB should demonstrate that it meets the requirements of national policy. This will require high quality designs as set out in policy Q&D 4. To help developers produce designs of a suitably high quality, the council will continue to encourage the use of the Kent Downs AONB Unit's design guidance and publications.
- 6.135 The above considerations apply to the setting of the Kent Downs AONB. The Management Plan states that the setting of the Kent Downs AONB is 'broadly speaking the land outside the designated area which is visible from the AONB and from which the AONB can be seen but may be wider when affected by intrusive features beyond that.' It makes it clear that it is not formally defined or indicated on a map.
- 6.136 The foreground of the AONB and the wider setting is taken to include the land which sits at and beyond the foot of the scarp slope of the North Downs and the wider views thereof. It is countryside sensitive to change, with a range of diverse habitats and landscape features, but through which major transport corridors pass. Having due regard to the purposes of the designation is part of the council's statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. National policy (NPPF and NPPG) directs that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB. The duty is relevant to proposals outside the boundary of the AONB which may have an impact on the statutory purposes of the AONB. Matters such as the size of proposals, their distance, incompatibility with their surroundings, movement, reflectivity and colour are likely to affect impact. The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan advises that 'where the qualities of the AONB which were instrumental in reasons for its designation are affected, then the impacts should be given considerable weight in decisions. This particularly applies to views to and from the scarp of the North Downs.' It is considered therefore that it is not necessary to formally define the setting of the Kent Downs AONB and that the impact of development can be appropriately assessed through the criteria of the policy.

High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its Setting

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

Metropolitan Green Belt

- 6.138 Green Belts afford protection to the countryside from inappropriate development, and policies for their protection are set out in the NPPF. A small area (5.3km²) on the western edge of the borough is included within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The designation extends up to the borough boundary, contiguous with the Green Belt boundary in Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council's administrative area; and lies between Teston and Watlington and west of the River Medway, which includes the settlements of Nettlestead and Nettlestead Green. The council has undertaken a review of its Green Belt boundary (Maidstone Borough Council Metropolitan Green Belt Review, January 2016), which concluded there were no exceptional circumstances for revising the Green Belt boundaries within the borough.
- 6.139 A small area to the west of the borough lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB), incorporating the villages of Nettlestead and Nettlestead Green. The fundamental aims of the MGB are to prevent urban sprawl and to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The Local Plan will support sustainable development within the MGB provided it is not harmful to the open character of the designation in accordance with the NPPF.

Landscapes of Local Value

- 6.140 The council will seek to conserve and enhance its valued landscapes. The Kent Downs AONB and High Weald AONB and their settings and other sites of European and national importance are considered to be covered by appropriate existing policy protection in the NPPF, NPPG and other legislation. As well as this national policy guidance and statutory duty, the settings of the Kent Downs and High Weald AONBs are also afforded protection through the criteria of policy SP17 and no additional designation is therefore necessary. In addition to these areas, the borough does include significant tracts of landscape which are highly sensitive to significant change. Landscapes of local value have been identified and judged according to criteria relating to their character and sensitivity
- i. Part of a contiguous area of high-quality landscape;
 - ii. Significant in long distance public views and skylines;
 - iii. Locally distinctive in their field patterns, geological and other landscape features;
 - iv. Ecologically diverse and significant;
 - v. Preventing the coalescence of settlements which would undermine their character;
 - vi. Identified through community engagement;
 - vii. Providing a valued transition from town to countryside
- 6.141 Development proposals within landscapes of local value should, through their siting, scale, mass,

materials and design, seek to contribute positively to the conservation and enhancement of the protected landscape. Designated areas include parts of the Greensand Ridge and the Low Weald, and the Medway, the Loose and the Len river valleys. These landscapes were highlighted as areas of local value by the public through local plan consultations.

- 6.142 The Greensand Ridge lies to the south of Maidstone and is defined by the scarp face of the Ridge with extensive views across the Low Weald to the south. It is characterised by frequent small blocks of coppice and deciduous woodland, extensive orchards and frequent oast houses, with ragstone being a predominant material in walls and buildings.
- 6.143 The Medway Valley is characterised by the wide River Medway and steep valley sides where the valley incises the Greensand and is crossed by distinctive ragstone bridges. The area lends itself to much recreational land use including the Medway Valley Walk, although some sections are more wooded and remote in character. The Loose Valley lies to the south of Maidstone and is characterised by the Loose stream, mill ponds and springs with steep wooded valley sides, mature native woodland and traditional mill buildings and cottages. The Len Valley lies to the east of Maidstone and is bordered by Bearsted to the west. It is characterised by the River Len, historic mills and a network of pools with remnant orchards.
- 6.144 The Low Weald covers a significant proportion of the countryside in the rural southern half of the borough. The Low Weald is recognised as having distinctive landscape features: the field patterns, many of medieval character, hedgerows, stands of trees, ponds and streams and buildings of character should be conserved and enhanced where appropriate.

POLICY LPRSP9 – DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

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

- 1) Development proposals in the countryside will not be permitted unless they accord with other policies in this plan and they will not result in harm to the rural character and appearance of the area.
- 2) Agricultural proposals will be supported which facilitate the efficient use of the borough's significant agricultural land and soil resource provided any adverse impacts on the appearance and rural character of the landscape can be appropriately mitigated.
- 3) Great weight should be given to the conservation and enhancement of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 4) Proposals should not have a significant adverse impact on the settings of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 5) The Metropolitan Green Belt is shown on the policies map and development there will be managed in accordance with national policy for the Green Belt.
- 6) The distinctive landscape character of the Greensand Ridge, the Medway Valley, the Len Valley, the Loose Valley, and the Low Weald, as defined on the policies map, will be conserved and enhanced as landscapes of local value.
- 7) Development in the countryside will retain the separation of individual settlements.

Account should be taken of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and the Maidstone Borough Landscape Character Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document

7. THEMATIC STRATEGIC POLICIES

LPRSP10: Housing

Housing Requirement to 2037

- 7.1 The Government's standard method formula identified a minimum requirement for 17,355 new dwellings across the plan period.
- 7.2 The Council commissioned a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to build on the standard method and to identify the amounts and types of new housing that will likely be needed over the plan period. The assessment acknowledges that the level of need identified by the standard method will result in a significant growth in the population of around 26% between 2019-2037, and that this includes significant growth in the number of residents aged 65 and over.

Types of Housing

- 7.3 The subtypes of housing identified through the SHMA include affordable housing, wheelchair user housing, housing for older people as well as other specific housing market segments. Self-build need is recorded through the Council's self-build register, and the accompanying survey provides a more granular analysis of self-build need.
- 7.4 Successful developments are those which are fully inclusive, are built to necessary standards, and which deliver services and facilities. Development proposals should contribute towards meeting the needs of the whole community.
- 7.5 The plan seeks to deliver its overall housing need through a mixture of carried over allocations in the Local Plan 2017, new allocations, as well as windfall permissions. It will include a range of policies which will deliver the necessary types of housing need identified through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. These policies are supported by the Affordable Housing SPD.

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation

- 7.6 Gypsy, traveller, and travelling showpeople accommodation forms part of the overall need for the borough but is assessed outside of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. A new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA) has been commissioned and, whilst the GTTSAA has been delayed by Covid 19, discussions with the consultants undertaking the GTTSAA have indicated that there will be a significant need for new pitches in Maidstone Borough over the plan period.
- 7.7 During the Call for Sites exercise in 2019, only a small number of gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites were put forward for inclusion in the plan. This means the Borough is facing a significant shortfall of sites. Combining the fact that the GTTSAA has not been completed, the likely high level of need and the significant shortfall in sites that will not be met by Call for Sites submissions, the most appropriate course of action is to undertake a separate Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document.

LPRSP10(A): Housing Mix

Introduction

- 7.8 The key requirements for a mixed community are a variety of housing, particularly in terms of tenure and price, and a mix of different households such as families with children, single person households and older people. The borough is made up of a variety of household types including, for example, older people who have specific housing needs that are different to the needs of large families and different again to those of disabled people. Maidstone Borough Council recognises that to truly promote sustainable communities there must be a mix of types of housing that are provided in any given development or location. Through providing a mix of housing types the borough will be able to accommodate the needs of an increasingly diverse population within the borough. The council will actively seek to achieve balanced where particular house sizes or tenures have become prevalent beyond an evidenced need.
- 7.9 Evidence detailed in the Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2021 guides the profiles of development that are required in urban and rural locations. This evidence is valuable in determining the local housing picture and, as a consequence, the types and tenures of housing required.
- 7.10 Custom and self-build housing is housing built or commissioned by individuals or associations of individuals for their own occupation. National planning policy and guidance places a duty on local planning authorities to have regard to their self-build register when preparing planning policies. Historically, delivery of self-build permissions have been low, however the council's 2020 self-build need survey indicated that demand for plots on medium to large sites was also low. However, it is clear that this sector can play a key role in helping achieve a higher level of home ownership, and policies should be flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time.
- 7.11 Older people's housing need can be provided for by a range of housing types, from housing with support, housing with care and residential care home bedspaces. The SHMA (2021) identified a need for 2,142 dwellings either with support or care and a further 1,228 care bedspaces.
- 7.12 Developers will need to access a range of evidence sources, including the SHMA, to help shape their proposals. Local stakeholders, including parish councils, may often be able to provide targeted information that assists an applicant to submit a locally relevant scheme. Neighbourhood plans can also be used as a mechanism to allow some flexibility and local context while contributing to the overarching strategic needs of the borough. Where affordable housing is proposed or required, the housing register will provide additional guidance.
- 7.13 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation requirements forms part of the borough need for housing and is assessed and provided for separately.

POLICY LPRSP10(A) – HOUSING MIX

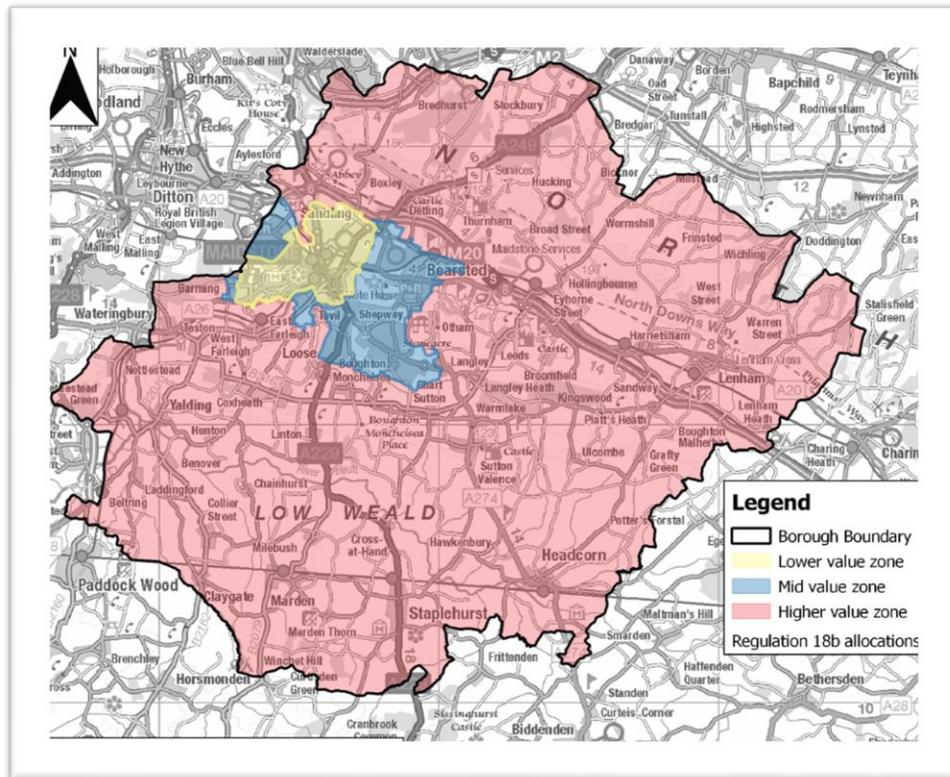
Maidstone Borough Council will seek to ensure the delivery of sustainable mixed communities across new housing developments and within existing housing areas throughout the borough.

- 1) In considering proposals for new housing development, the council will seek a sustainable range of house sizes, types and tenures (including plots for custom and self-build) that reflect the needs of those living in Maidstone Borough now and in years to come.
- 2) Accommodation profiles detailed in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021 (or any future updates) will be used to help inform developers to determine which house sizes should be delivered in urban and rural areas to meet the objectively assessed needs of the area. In relation to affordable housing, the council will expect the submission of details of how this information has been used to justify the proposed mix.
- 3) Where affordable housing is to be provided, developers should also take into consideration the needs of households on the council's housing register and discuss affordable housing requirements with the council's housing team at the pre-submission stage of the planning process.
- 4) Large development schemes will be expected to demonstrate that consideration has been given to serviced custom and self-build plots as part of housing mix in line with Policy HOU 9
- 5) The council will work with partners to support the provision of specialist and supported housing for elderly, disabled and vulnerable people.

LPRSP10(B): Affordable Housing

Introduction

- 7.14 The Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021 supports the approach of seeking a proportion of dwellings to be provided on-site for affordable housing needs. The council has a net affordable housing need 8385 homes from 2022 to 2037, equivalent to 559 households each year. This is a significant need for the borough and a clear justification for the council to seek affordable dwellings through new development schemes. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment also indicates that the need for rented affordable housing makes up 75% of the overall affordable housing need of the borough, with the remaining 25% of affordable need arising from demand for affordable homeownership products.
- 7.15 The NPPG refers to circumstances where infrastructure contributions through planning obligations should not be sought from developers: affordable housing should not be sought from developments of 9 units or less, or sites that have an area less than 0.5 hectares. The council's viability testing has assumed the national threshold of 10 dwellings for affordable housing. To support community integration, affordable housing will be provided on-site, and alternative provision will not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify it. Any proposals for off-site or financial provision must be made at the time of the application.
- 7.16 First Homes are a new and specific kind of discounted market sale product. First Homes must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value or a maximum of £250,000 and are available only to those who meet the First Homes eligibility criteria. Homes delivered through the First Homes scheme will be subject to a title restriction to ensure that the discount is passed on at transfer. Planning Practice Guidance stipulates that a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations should be First Homes.
- 7.17 Affordable housing requirements will differentiate across the borough by geographical area; this is due to relative issues such as sales values and policy considerations. Local Plan Review viability testing confirmed that the outer urban and rural areas in Maidstone are more viable than inner urban locations, and brownfield sites (previously developed land) within inner urban areas are less viable than greenfield sites. This viability testing demonstrated that a 40% affordable housing rate can be achieved in the high to mid value zones as identified in the map below. Viability testing has concluded that the low value zone, which encompasses the town centre and some of the inner urban area, is often unable to viably deliver affordable housing.



- 7.18 In order to respond to the identified need for affordable housing of different tenures through the period of the plan, the council will seek an indicative target of 75% affordable rented or social rented housing, or a mixture of the two, and 25% First Homes. This ratio was used for strategic viability testing purposes and has been shown to be viable. Where 25% of First Homes will not be adequate to meet the minimum 10% Affordable Home Ownership target set by the NPPF² then any shortfall can be met through the provision of First Homes or an alternative Affordable Home Ownership product.
- 7.19 The Government has introduced a vacant building credit to incentivise brownfield development on sites containing vacant buildings. In considering how the vacant building credit should apply to a particular development, the council will consider whether the building has been made vacant for the sole purposes of redevelopment and whether the building is covered by an extant or recently expired planning permission for the same or substantially the same development.
- 7.20 To ensure proper delivery of affordable housing, developers are required to discuss proposals with the council's housing department at the earliest stage of the application process, to ensure the size, type and tenure of new affordable housing is appropriate given the identified needs. Where economic viability affects the capacity of a scheme to meet the stated targets for affordable housing provision, the council will expect developers to examine the potential for variations to the tenure and mix of provision, prior to examining variations to the overall proportion of affordable housing.
- 7.21 The SHMA recommends that affordable home ownership homes are priced to be affordable to households who cannot afford lower quartile house prices.
Affordable rented housing has chargeable rent that is subject to the Homes England's Rent Standard or any such document and/or associated guidance that may be amended updated or replaced from time to time and is required to be offered to eligible householders in Housing Need at an open market rental level which does not exceed 80% of gross local market rent (inclusive of service charges) for an equivalent property of that size and location or the applicable Local Housing Allowance rate.

² NPPF (2021) Paragraph 65

- 7.23 Developers will be required to pay for viability assessments and any cost of independent assessment. The council will only consider reducing planning obligations if fully justified through a financial appraisal model or other appropriate evidence.
- 7.24 A 20% affordable housing rate will be sought for C3 retirement living developments on greenfield land and brownfield in the outer urban and rural areas, which will allow for an appropriate balance between affordable housing need and supporting infrastructure provision. Affordable housing will not generally be sought for schemes comprising solely Class C2 development. The use class of proposals submitted to the Local Planning Authority, including mixed use schemes, will be examined fully in order to ensure that affordable housing is provided where appropriate.
- 7.25 The Affordable and Local Needs Housing Supplementary Planning Document contains further detail on how the policy will be implemented.

POLICY LPRSP10(B) – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

On major housing development sites or mixed-use development sites where 10 or more dwellings will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more, the council will require the delivery of affordable housing.

- 1) The target rates for affordable housing provision within the following geographical areas, as defined on the policies map, are:
 - a) Greenfield development in mid and high value zones at 40%
 - b) Brownfield development in high value zone at 40%.
 - c) Development in the low value zone and brownfield development in the mid value zone will not normally be expected to deliver affordable housing, however where opportunities exist to provide affordable housing the council will seek to secure this.

- 2) Affordable housing provision should be appropriately integrated within the site. In exceptional circumstances, and where proven to be necessary, off-site provision will be sought in the following order of preference:
 - a) An identified off-site scheme;
 - b) The purchase of dwellings off-site; or
 - c) A financial contribution towards off-site affordable housing.

- 3) The indicative targets for tenure are:
 - a) 75% Social and affordable rented.
 - b) A minimum of 25% First Homes

- 4) On new build housing developments, the affordable housing element will be expected to meet the optional technical standard M4(2).

- 5) Developers are required to enter into negotiations with the council's Housing Department, in consultation with registered providers, at the earliest stage of the application process to determine an appropriate tenure split, taking account of the evidence available at that time.
 - a) The council will seek provision of 20% affordable housing for schemes that provide for C3 retirement housing on greenfield and brownfield sites in the rural and outer urban areas.
 - b) The council has set a zero affordable housing rate for fully serviced residential care homes and nursing homes.
 - c) Where it can be demonstrated that the affordable housing targets cannot be achieved due to economic viability, the tenure and mix of affordable housing should be examined prior to any variation in the proportion of affordable housing.

- 6) The Affordable and Local Needs Housing Supplementary Planning Document contains further detail on how the policy will be implemented.

LPRSP10(C): Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations

- 7.26 A new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA) has been commissioned and survey work for this study commenced in winter 2019/2020. Owing to the COVID-19 lockdowns and subsequent public health advice, the new GTTSAA has been delayed.
- 7.27 Whilst work on the GTTSAA has been delayed, discussions with consultants undertaking the GTTSAA have indicated that there will be a significant need for new pitches in Maidstone over the plan period to 2037. The Call for Sites exercise invited the submission of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, however only a small number were put forward for inclusion in the plan. As a consequence, Maidstone is facing a significant need for new pitches.
- 7.28 On the basis that the GTTSAA has not been completed and there will be a likely significant need for pitches, the most appropriate course of action is to undertake a separate Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document. This will be informed by the outcome of a Pitch Deliverability Assessment (to assess what proportion of the need can be met on existing sites through intensification or expansion) and if necessary, a targeted Call for Sites exercise to identify potential new sites so the needs of the community can be adequately and appropriately addressed and appropriate engagement can take place.
- 7.29 Sites previously allocated in the Local Plan 2017 will remain as allocations where these have not yet been fully delivered and these are set out in table 7.1 below.
- 7.29 Policy HOU8 (Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation) will be used to assess the suitability of sites that come forward for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople development.

Policy Reference	Site Address	Total No. Pitches	Net Pitch Gain
GT1(1)	The Kays, Heath Road, Linton	2	1
GT1(2)	Greenacres (plot 5), Church Hill, Boughton Monchelsea	2	1
GT1(3)	Land at Blossom Lodge, Stockett Lane, Coxheath	6	4
GT1(4)	Rear of Granada, Lenham Road, Headcorn	2	1
GT1(5)	Kilnwood Farm, Old Ham Lane, Lenham	4	2
GT1(6)	1 Oak Lodge, Tilden Lane, Marden	2	2
GT1(7)	The Paddocks, George Street, Staplehurst	4	2
GT1(8)	Bluebell Farm, George Street, Staplehurst	4	2
GT1(9)	Flips Hole, South Street Road, Stockbury	5	3
GT1(10)	The Ash, Yelsted Road, Stockbury	5	3
GT1(11)	Neverend Lodge, Pye Corner, Ulcombe	2	1

Table 7.1 – Gypsy and Traveller Allocations

POLICY LPRSP10(C) – GYPSY & TRAVELLER SITE ALLOCATIONS

- 1) The sites allocated and carried forward into this plan under policies GT1(1) to GT1(11) will deliver approximately 22 pitches for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation to assist in meeting needs up to 2031. Development will be permitted provided the criteria for each site set out in the detailed site allocation policies are met.
- 2) A new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document will be created to manage emerging need for the period until 2037.

Detailed Site Allocation Policies for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

POLICY LPRGT1(1) – THE KAYS, HEATH ROAD, LINTON

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 1 permanent pitch at The Kays, Heath Road, Linton, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

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

POLICY LPRGT1(2) – GREENACRES (PLOT 5), CHURCH LANE, BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 1 permanent pitch at Greenacres (Plot 5), Church Lane, Boughton Monchelsea, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

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

POLICY LPRGT1(3) – LAND AT BLOSSOM LODGE, STOCKETT LANE, COXHEATH

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 4 permanent pitches at Land at Blossom Lodge, Stockett Lane, Coxheath, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

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

POLICY LPRGT1(4) – REAR OF GRANADA, LENHAM ROAD, HEADCORN

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 1 permanent pitch at Rear of Granada, Lenham Road, Headcorn, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off Lenham Road.
3. The additional pitch is sited on the existing area of hardstanding in the eastern part of the site and not beyond the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for:
 - i. The retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedgeline along the site's southern, eastern and northern boundaries; and
 - ii. The establishment of a native species landscaped boundary along the western edge of the site to create a more permanent boundary

POLICY LPRGT1(5) – KILWOOD FARM, OLD HAM LANE, LENHAM

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at Kilwood Farm, Old Ham Lane, Lenham, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

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

POLICY LPRGT1(6) – 1 OAK LODGE, TILDEN LANE, MARDEN

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at 1 Oak Lodge, Tilden Lane, Marden, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. The substantial landscape buffer to the north west and west of the site is retained and maintained.

POLICY LPRGT1(7) – THE PADDOCKS, GEORGE STREET, STAPLEHURST

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at The Paddocks, George Street, Staplehurst, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off George Street.
3. The additional pitches are sited within the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for:
 - i. The retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedgeline along the site's frontage to George Street; and
 - ii. The establishment of a native species landscaped boundary along the rear (northern) edge of the site to create a more permanent boundary
5. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.

POLICY LPRGT1(8) – BLUEBELL FARM, GEORGE STREET, STAPLEHURST

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 2 permanent pitches at Bluebell Farm, George Street, Staplehurst, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. Access to the site is via the existing access off George Street.
3. The additional pitches are sited within the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for:
 - i. The retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedgeline along the site's frontage to George Street; and
 - ii. The establishment of a native species landscaped boundary along the rear (northern) edge of the site to create a more permanent boundary
5. An ecological assessment of the site is undertaken and the proposals incorporate necessary habitat creation, enhancement and mitigation measures.

POLICY LPRGT1(9) – FLIPS HOLE, SOUTH STREET ROAD, STOCKBURY

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 3 permanent pitches at Flips Hole, South Street Road, Stockbury, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for the retention and future maintenance of the existing landscaped boundaries of the site to provide an effective screen to the development.

POLICY LPRGT1(10) – THE ASH, YELSTED ROAD, STOCKBURY

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 3 permanent pitches at The Ash, Yelsted Road, Stockbury, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for the retention and future maintenance of the existing landscaped boundaries of the site to provide an effective screen to the development.

POLICY LPRGT1(11) – NEVEREND LODGE, PYE CORNER, ULCOMBE

In accordance with policy LPRSP10(c), planning permission for 1 permanent pitch at Neverend Lodge, Pye Corner, Ulcombe, as shown on the policies map, will be granted if the following criteria are met.

1. The total capacity of the site does not exceed 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.
2. Access to the site is via the existing access.
3. The additional pitch is sited in the south eastern corner of the site adjacent to the existing permitted mobile and not beyond the site boundaries as defined on the policies map.
4. A landscaping scheme for the site is approved which provides for:
 - i. The retention and future maintenance of the trees and hedge line along the site's western frontage; and
 - ii. The establishment of a native species landscaped boundary along the eastern edge of the site to create a more permanent boundary.
5. A biodiversity enhancement strategy for the site is approved.

LPRSP11: Economic Development

Introduction

- 7.30 Maidstone's location at the heart of Kent means that it shares strong economic relationships with neighbouring areas, in particular the 'Malling' part of Tonbridge and Malling and parts of Medway and Swale. The borough has seen its jobs base grow and diversify, accommodating significant enterprise growth and healthy rates of business survival as well as consistently strong population growth in recent years, suggesting that Maidstone remains an attractive place to work and live. However, the qualifications profile is relatively low in Maidstone with a less highly qualified workforce than the South East, particularly at NVQ level 4 and above. The borough also has a relatively low local workforce productivity and lower than average earnings (workplace and resident-based). The 2011 Census shows that some 1,180 more people were leaving the borough for work than coming in, a reversal of the situation in 2001 when more people commuted into Maidstone to work. More out-commuters are working in managerial, professional, and technical occupations, while those commuting into Maidstone tend to be in skilled / semi-skilled occupations. Whilst the average earnings of those who commute out of the borough is higher than that of those who work in the borough, because of the prevalence of higher paid jobs in London as well as a preponderance of lower wage employment in the borough, the gap has been narrowing over recent years. In general unemployment in the borough is low when compared with the Kent and national picture.
- 7.31 Looking to the future, economic growth will build upon the borough's existing strengths and unique assets where the borough already has a competitive advantage and will aim to deliver a step-change in economic performance and prosperity in a way that is beneficial to all parts of the community. The council's adopted Economic Development Strategy (2015) sets out an economic vision for the borough in 2031 through its 'ambition statement'. The strategy goes on to identify five priorities to capitalise on the borough's economic assets and to create the right conditions for growth. These are 1) retaining and attracting investment; 2) stimulating entrepreneurship; 3) enhancing Maidstone town centre; 4) meeting skills needs and 5) improving the infrastructure. This strategy is currently under review and is expected to be adopted prior to this Local Plan Review.
- 7.32 For the purposes of this Local Plan Review, and in line with the NPPF, economic development includes the following uses:
- Office, research and development, industrial and warehouse-based jobs (uses within Class E(g) and B of the Use Class Order);
 - Public and social uses such as health and education; and
 - Town centre uses such as retail, leisure, entertainment, arts, cultural and tourism development.
- 7.33 Evidence produced to underpin this Local Plan Review indicates that health and social care sectors are expected to be key drivers of employment growth within the borough. These jobs are not typically office, industrial or warehouse-based and so cannot be easily planned for in terms of likely future land take or premises needs. As per the NPPF, this Local Plan Review only allocates land/sites for businesses typically requiring office, industrial and warehouse floorspace. Other economic growth will be created through tourism, social infrastructure provision such as education and health care, construction and other small-scale opportunities such as the conversion or extension of rural buildings that will not necessarily require the allocation of land.

- 7.34 For the borough to achieve growth in a sustainable manner, local employment opportunities must be aligned with the rate and location of house building. The net additional land requirements for office, industrial and distribution/warehouse-based jobs (use classes E(g) and B) to 2037 are to be delivered through a combination of the allocation of sites across the borough and the granting of planning permissions. The allocated sites range in size from smaller mixed-use town centre sites, to extensions of existing industrial estates near Rural Service Centres, to large strategic sites including as part of new Garden Settlements. The Local Plan Review strategy is to oversupply a diverse range of sites to provide maximum choice and flexibility in the market, accounting for different sector locational and operational needs, and wider economic trends.

Offices

- 7.35 In addition to town centre office sites, there is a complementary role for offices at beyond-centre sites which are well connected to the highway network, such as Eclipse Park in recognition of the differing market demand that such sites meet. Provision will also be made for new office floorspace in the Garden Settlements to provide local employment opportunities for residents of the new communities and reduce the need for out-commuting.

Strategic employment sites

- 7.36 The strategic site allocation at Junction 7 (Local Plan Policy RMX1(1)) is a particular opportunity to create a hub for medical related businesses, capitalising on the development of the Kent Institute of Medicine and Surgery (KIMS), to attract high value, knowledge intensive employment and businesses as a boost to the local economy. This site will also deliver additional general office space in a high-quality environment. Outline consent has been granted for the medical hub and delivery of the permission is underway.
- 7.37 The former Syngenta Works site in Yalding is an allocation largely carried over from the Local Plan 2017, although it is now proposed for a mix of employment uses only. A former agro-chemicals production plant, this site is expected to deliver in excess of 46,000sqm of office, industrial and distribution floorspace. Similarly, Woodcut Farm strategic site is also allocated for a mix of employment uses delivering up to 49,000sqm of floorspace. It gained outline planning consent in 2018 and will remain an allocation as carried over from Local Plan 2017, until the site is delivered.

Garden Communities

- 7.38 The new garden communities at Heathlands and Lidsing will be delivered according to recognised garden city principles. This includes the provision of a wide range of jobs within easy commuting distance of homes. Both communities will include strategic employment locations offering a bespoke mix of floorspace types; capitalising on their unique opportunities such as proximity to the strategic road network, as well as reflecting their important landscape setting location. They will also offer further employment opportunities in their district and/or local centres.
- 7.39 Further specific sites across the borough are allocated for additional employment uses, including offices, storage, warehousing and industrial development to meet, as a minimum, identified needs. These sites will help provide for a range of jobs of differing skill and wage levels as a way of helping to maintain a low unemployment rate going forward.

Existing business sites/premises

- 7.40 With the exception of some of the secondary office stock within the town centre, existing business sites and industrial estates are an important and appropriate part of the business stock for the future which can also help to provide for the range of employment needs. Policy LPRSP11(a) directs the retention, intensification and regeneration of the identified Economic Development Areas. In addition, there is a significant stock of commercial premises outside these designated areas which also provide for local employment.

Within Maidstone Urban Area and the Rural Services Centres the first preference will be for such existing sites to remain in employment generating uses, notwithstanding changes to permitted development rights allowing certain changes of use without the need to obtain planning consent.

Retail and town centre uses

- 7.41 Retail development also makes a big contribution towards the economic health of the borough and reinforces Maidstone's role as County Town. Maidstone Town Centre is the primary focus for retail development within the borough with the Rural Service Centres also providing appropriate local levels of retail facilities as set out in the Retail Hierarchy. Retail provision elsewhere in the borough currently comprises District Centres, Local Centres and a degree of out-of-town development, in locations such as Eclipse Park. As Garden Settlements begin to deliver housing and employment opportunities, they will also provide retail opportunities in the form of new district and/or local centres – commensurate with the size of the local population.
- 7.42 Within the countryside, economic development will be permitted for the conversion and extension of existing suitable buildings and established sites, farm diversification and farm shops, and tourism where this can be achieved in a manner consistent with local rural and landscape character in order that a balance is struck between supporting the rural economy and the protection of the countryside for its own sake. Policy LPRCD6 sets out the considerations which will apply when established rural businesses want to expand their existing premises. There is also a trend towards greater homeworking which allows for a reduced impact on transport infrastructure.
- 7.43 Opportunities for further tourist related development will be supported in particular within the town centre as well as smaller scale initiatives that support the rural economy. The council will also promote education, leisure, heritage and cultural facilities, again within the town centre in particular, to retain a higher proportion of young and well-educated people within the borough and in turn enhance the prospects of creating a dynamic local economy.

Enhancing local employment opportunities

- 7.44 The Council is committed to 'inclusive growth' so that all parts of the Borough enjoy the fruits of investment in the Borough. Inclusive growth allows opportunities for everyone to participate in the growth process whilst making sure that benefits are shared.
- 7.45 Detailed research and analysis has identified 5 wards that have significant adverse socio-economic indices such as multiple deprivation, employment rate, total income, unemployment over 5 years, and working age population claiming benefits. Therefore, there are particular challenges in these areas.

- 7.46 Therefore, for major development schemes (for the purposes of this policy, defined as over 20 residential units and commercial floorspace of over 500 sq metres), for the construction phase, there is a requirement to seek to secure labour from across the Borough so that all residents have the opportunity to share in the benefits of growth, through apprenticeships or similar or directly. There may be particular circumstances whereby there is a need for emphasis on the 5 wards. Moreover, there is the same requirement for future occupiers of major developments (when there is a change in the use class) to secure labour either directly or indirectly and/or provide training opportunities. Improving skills is a priority for local training providers, the Department of Work and Pensions and further education, and developers will be required to 'tap into' this established network.
- 7.47 Therefore, applicants proposing major developments will be required to demonstrate (as part of supporting evidence accompanying major planning applications) that they have given positive consideration to these matters by showing evidence of engagement with training and educational providers. The Council will provide advice and co-ordination of this. Developers will be expected to enter into s106 legal agreements in order to fulfil commitments to these matters.

POLICY LPRSP11 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The council is committed to supporting and improving the economy of the borough and providing for the needs of businesses. This will be achieved through the allocation of a range of sites across the borough, including new strategic sites in both Garden Settlements (see policy LPRSP11(b)), and through:

1. The retention, intensification and regeneration of the existing industrial and business estates identified as Economic Development Areas as defined on the policies map;
2. The retention, intensification, regeneration and expansion of the existing economic development premises in Maidstone Urban Area and the Rural Service Centres provided the site is in an appropriate location, when considered against other policies of the plan, and suited to the economic development use in terms of scale, impacts and economic viability;
3. Enhancing the vitality and viability of Maidstone Town Centre and maintaining the hierarchy of retail centres;
4. Supporting proposals that encourage highly skilled residents to work in the borough to reduce out-commuting;
5. Improving skills in the workforce in particular by supporting further and higher education provision within Maidstone's Urban Area;
6. Supporting improvements in digital technology and communications to facilitate more flexible working practices;
7. Prioritising the commercial re-use of existing rural buildings in the countryside over conversion to residential use, in accordance with policy LPRQ&D5; and
8. Supporting proposals for the expansion of existing economic development premises in the countryside, including heritage and tourism related development, provided the scale and impact of the development is appropriate for its countryside location, in accordance with policy LPRCD6.

LPRSP11(A): Safeguarding existing employment sites and premises

Introduction

- 7.48 In order to create the right conditions for economic prosperity, it is very important that an adequate supply of land to meet development needs is provided across the borough. This means not only allocating new land for employment uses, but also maintaining a stock of existing employment sites too. This is particularly, important as they are generally well-located and well served by existing infrastructure; and are usually more readily capable of (re)development.
- 7.49 As part of the Local Plan Review, specialist consultants reviewed all 33 of the borough's Economic Development Areas to determine their suitability to meet future employment needs, based on each site's individual characteristics and overall quality. Criteria such as access to the strategic and local road network; proximity to labour and services; and attractiveness to the market, including vacancy and market activity on site were used in the assessment of sites. The assessment concluded that overall, the EDAs are generally well used and occupied by a range of businesses that appear to be serving a local business need. Whilst individual site scores varied, even those with lower scores still perform an important role in accommodating local business activity.
- 7.50 Table 11.1, below, identifies Economic Development Areas across the borough designated specifically for offices, industrial, and warehouse uses (E(g) and B Use Classes), which include sites with planning permission as well as established, existing employment locations. The boundary of Station Road/Lodge Road/Honeycrest Industrial Park, Staplehurst EDA has been amended slightly as part of this Local Plan Review, to reflect the new allocation of part of the site for residential purposes (see policy LPRSA066). The boundary of Pattenden Lane, Marden EDA has also been amended slightly to incorporate previous Local Plan allocation EMP1(3) as this site has largely been developed, plus existing commercial development as highlighted in the Marden Neighbourhood Plan further actions FA2, FA3 and FA4.

Table 11.1: Designated Economic Development Areas (EDA)

<p>1: The following locations, as defined on the policies map, are designated economic Development Areas primarily for office, industrial and warehouse/storage employment uses (classes E(g), B2 and B8):</p>
<p>Lordswood Industrial Estate, Walderslade; Aylesford Industrial Estate, Aylesford; 20/20 Business Park, Allington; Park Wood Industrial Estate, Maidstone; Tovil Green Business Park/Burial Ground Lane, Tovil; Station Road/Lodge Road/Honeycrest Industrial Park, Staplehurst; Pattenden Lane, Marden; Detling Airfield, Detling; Lenham Storage, Lenham; Marley Works, near Lenham; Barradale Farm, near Headcorn; Station Road, Harrietsham; Viewpoint, Boxley; Ashmills Business Park, Lenham; Tenacre Court/Roebuck Business Park, Ashford Road, Harrietsham; Hart Street Commercial Centre, Hart Street, Maidstone; Hermitage Mills, Hermitage Lane, Maidstone; Bearsted Green Business Centre (The Old Forge), Bearsted; Gallants Business Centre, East Farleigh; Headcorn South, Biddenden Road, near Headcorn; Woodfalls Industrial Estate, Laddingford; Warmlake Business Estate, near Sutton Valence; Bredhurst Business Park, Westfield Sole Road, Walderslade; The Old Brewery, London Road, Maidstone; and Brooklyn Yard, Sandling, Maidstone</p>
<p>2: The following locations, as defined on the policies map, are designated Economic Development Areas primarily for office employment use (class E(g)):</p>
<p>South Park Business Village, Maidstone; Turkey Mill Court, Maidstone; Eclipse Park, Maidstone; County Gate, Staceys Street, Maidstone; Medway Bridge House, Fairmeadow, Maidstone; 23/29 Albion Place, Maidstone; Victoria Court, Ashford Road, Maidstone; and West of Lower Stone Street comprising Gail House, Link House, Kestrel House and Chaucer House.</p>

- 7.51 The demand for office, manufacturing and warehouse premises can be expected to fluctuate over the plan period in line with changes in the economic cycle including significant and unexpected one-off occurrences such as we have seen with Brexit and Covid-19. It is important that these designated, good quality and productive employment sites are not permanently lost to alternative uses as a result of only short-term changes in demand, whilst recognising that the permanent protection of a site that has no prospect of coming forward for its designated use is counter-productive for the local economy.
- 7.52 Recent changes to the General Permitted Development Order and amendments to the Use Class Order enable, among other things, the conversion of office space to residential use or warehousing use³ without the need for planning permission, subject to certain criteria. Table 11.1 identifies locations with higher quality office floorspace for retention in the longer term, recognising that conversion to other uses within the E Use Class or residential use could happen without consent. Given that many properties within Class E (including retail, food and drink and offices) are able to change their use to residential without the need to obtain planning permission (subject to a number of limitations and conditions), Policy LPRSP11(a) only applies where planning permission is required.
- 7.53 Planning applications which seek alternative uses to E(g), B2 or B8 in identified Economic Development Areas will be supported only where there is clear evidence that substantiates why the site should not be retained for its designated use. This must include evidence of, and the outcomes from, the concerted marketing of the site for its designated uses for a continuous period of at least 12 months prior to the applicant's submission via relevant commercial property publications and websites. In addition, applications should include an analysis of the on-going suitability of the site for its designated uses and its commercial viability for those uses. Both the suitability and viability assessments should evidence current market conditions and also the future prospects for the sectors for which the site is designated. The analysis of future prospects should look ahead at least 5 years to ensure a medium-term view of market trends and employment land requirements is taken.
- 7.54 Exceptionally, a mixed-use scheme which incorporates an element of non-B or E(g) class uses may be a means to achieve an overall upgrade in the quality of business floorspace on a designated site or bring underused premises into more productive use. The overall employment capacity of the site should be maintained or increased by such a scheme as measured by either the employment-generating floorspace provided or the number, permanence and quality of the jobs created. Any proposals for retail or leisure would also need to comply with policy LPRCD1.
- 7.55 There is also a significant stock of B and E(g) class employment premises and sites outside the designated Economic Development Areas. In the Maidstone Urban Area and the Rural Service Centres, the redevelopment or expansion of existing sites for employment-generating uses will be supported. In accordance with national guidance⁴, redevelopment of such sites for non-employment generating uses will be permitted where the proposal would help meet an identified development need and would not undermine key economic sites or the vitality and viability of the town centres.
- 7.56 In the town centre specifically, there is a significant stock of office premises however the quality of these is mixed. A review of the town centre office stock reveals that the better-quality stock is not focused in a single or limited number of locations, rather it is dispersed through the town centre. Notwithstanding the current changes to permitted development rights, it is considered important to retain, where possible, the better-quality office premises to help sustain the town centre's role as an employment location. The larger scale (above 1000sqm) higher quality office premises are included in Policy LPRSP11(a) as their loss to alternative uses would have the greatest significance for the town centre's employment role.

³ Up to 500m² E(g) use office floorspace to B8 use warehousing floorspace

⁴ NPPF, paragraph 121.

POLICY LPRSP11(A) – SAFEGUARDING EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES AND PREMISES

Within designated Economic Development Areas

1. Designated Economic Development Areas, as identified in Table 11.1, will be safeguarded for employment uses, with the following exceptions:
 - i) Proposals that intensify the employment use of part of the site, supported by limited enabling development.
 - ii) Proposals for mixed use redevelopment incorporating elements of non B or E(g) class where they aim to provide for at least the same or an increase in the level of job opportunities as existed when the employment space was previously used, subject to viability and site specific circumstances.
2. Proposals that would lead to the partial or total loss of employment land/premises within the designated Economic Development Areas will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated:
 - i) That there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for the designated uses in the medium term, based on a viability assessment and robust marketing exercise; and
 - ii) That the proposal would not give rise to amenity conflicts with existing or proposed employment uses/activities in the vicinity of the site.
3. Proposals for the redevelopment of premises and the infilling of vacant sites for business uses will be permitted. Where such proposals are within countryside EDA locations, their design, scale and materials should be appropriate to the setting and should be accompanied by significant landscaping within, and at the edge of, the development.

Outside of designated Economic Development Areas

4. Elsewhere in the borough, outside of designated Economic Development Areas, permission will be granted for the expansion or intensification of existing industrial or business uses, recognising the specific locational requirements of different sectors, provided that the proposals:
 - i) Cannot be suitably relocated to an allocated employment/mixed-use site or designated Economic Development Area, or to a suitable site/premises within the Urban Area, Rural Service Centres or Larger Villages, as per the settlement hierarchy;
 - ii) Would be of a type and scale of activity that does not harm the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings nor harm the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties;
 - iii) Would be readily accessible by public transport, and by bicycle and foot, wherever possible, or contribute towards provision of new sustainable transport infrastructure to serve the area, in order to make the development accessible by those modes; and

- iv) Have a layout, access, parking, landscaping and facilities that are appropriate to the site and its surroundings.

Elsewhere in the borough

5. Elsewhere in the borough, outside of allocations or designated Economic Development Areas, applications seeking an alternative use of employment land/premises will only be supported where the proposal:
 - i) would help meet an identified need;
 - ii) Would not undermine key economic sites or the vitality and viability of the town centres, and is compatible with other policies in the framework; and
 - iii) Complies with all other relevant development plan policies.

LPRSP11(B): Creating new employment opportunities

Introduction

- 7.57 As well as the remaining allocations carried forward from the 2017 Local Plan, the Local Plan Review provides a range of additional sites to accommodate new employment and town centre uses, or a combination of such uses. The purpose of these allocations is to increase the range and choice of sites available and to address the desire for self-containment of settlements in terms of homes/jobs/services balance, a particularly important aspect in new Garden Communities where entirely new communities are being created. A number of sites in this plan are allocated for a mix of different uses, including employment, retail and residential.
- 7.58 The newly allocated LPRSA sites in the town centre (excluding the opportunity sites) are all redevelopment opportunities with varying existing levels of retail, office and residential floorspace on site. The flexible permitted development rights and changes to the Use Class Order also means that it is difficult at this point to allocate an accurate net floorspace amount to each site. The approach is therefore to allocate the sites in the LPR but to determine the level of employment and/or retail floorspace through the planning application process, based on the wider market conditions and demands at the time. The preference for all town centre sites will be for a mix of uses, with 'active' frontage uses on the ground floor and office/residential on upper floors.
- 7.59 The complete list of sites allocated for the provision of employment floorspace (E(g), and B Uses) or a mixture of uses including an element of employment floorspace to 2037 are shown below, along with further additional narrative for strategic employment sites.

Site Ref	Site Name	Growth Location	Indicative Capacity (sqm)			
			E(g) office m ²	B2 industrial m ²	B8 distribution m ²	Town centre uses m ²
LPRRMX1(3)	King Street Car Park	Maidstone Town Centre	-	-	-	700
LPRSA145	Len House	Maidstone Town Centre	-	-	-	3,612
LPRSA147	Gala Bingo & Granada House	Maidstone Town Centre	-	-	-	TBD
LPRSA148	Maidstone Riverside	Maidstone Town Centre	-	-	-	TBD
LPRSA149	Maidstone West	Maidstone Town Centre	-	-	-	TBD
LPRSA151	Mote Road	Maidstone Town Centre	1,169	-	-	-
LPRSA144	High St/ Medway St	Maidstone Town Centre	-	-	-	150
LPRSA146	Maidstone East	Maidstone Town Centre	5,000	-	-	2,000
LPRRMX1(1)	Newnham Park (Kent Medical Campus)	Maidstone Urban Area	21,270			14,300
LPREMP1(4)	Woodcut Farm	Maidstone Urban Area	49,000			-
EMP1(1)	West of Barradale Farm	Headcorn	3,500			-
EMP1(2)	South of Claygate	Marden	4,000			-
LPRSA260	Ashford Road	Lenham	2,500			-
LPRSA078	Haven Farm	Sutton Valence	-	-	-	788
LPRSAEmp 1	Former Syngenta Works	Yalding	46,000			-

Woodcut Farm LPREMP1(4)

- 7.60 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 2037. The Woodcut Farm site will meet the 'qualitative' need for a new, well serviced and well-connected mixed-use business park in the borough which can meet the anticipated demand for new offices, small business orientated space, stand-alone industrial and manufacturing space built for specific end users and smaller scale distribution businesses. 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. The key priority for the Woodcut Farm site is the delivery of new office/research & development and warehousing floorspace. Outline permission was granted in 2018 for a mixed-use commercial development comprising B1(a), B1(b), B1(c) and B8 units, with a maximum floorspace of 45,295m². The split is approximately 50/50 B1 and B8 uses and will contribute significantly towards the evidenced need for 74,330m² of this type of floorspace by the end of the plan period. Whilst the site is yet to deliver floorspace, works are occurring on site relating to pre-commencement conditions attached to the outline permission and should deliver over the next couple of years. As such, this site will be kept under review as the Local Plan Review progresses. At this stage, it remains important to continue to set out allocation specific detail regarding the development of the Woodcut Farm site, should the current permission fail to deliver or a new application were to come in. The site will provide at least 10,000m² of office floorspace, thereby contributing significantly towards the evidenced need for 24,600m² of this type of floorspace by the end of the plan period. High quality office development is sought providing complementary provision to the town centre. As the viability of office development may be challenging in the shorter term, land will be safeguarded specifically for E(g) uses, and for no other purpose, pending the viability position improving in the later part of the plan period. This approach will help ensure that the site delivers a genuine mixed B class use business park, which is what is required, rather than a logistics park or conventional industrial estate. Industrial (B2) and distribution (B8) uses are nonetheless appropriate as part of the mix of uses on the site and, in addition to the office requirement, the allocation will help deliver the additional floorspace which is required in the borough by 2037.
- 7.61 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 LentothesouthoftheA20. 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 halfway 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.
- 7.62 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 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)

- 7.63 The site itself was specifically assessed in the Maidstone Landscape Capacity Study (2015). This found that the site has a high degree of sensitivity in landscape terms and an accordingly low capacity to accommodate new employment-related development. This being the case, any future 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.
- 7.64 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.
- 7.65 Buildings will cover no more than 40% of the site. This figure excludes the westernmost 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.
- 7.66 The flatter area of the site, to the east of the stream, is better able to accommodate larger footprint buildings up to 5,000m² with heights restricted to a maximum of 12m. To the west of the stream the land rises and is suited to smaller footprint buildings of up to 2,500m² and 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). On the highest part of the site, as shown on the policies map, building footprints will be limited to 500m².
- 7.67 There are archaeological remains in the immediate vicinity of the site, including an Anglo-Saxon burial site. Measures appropriate to the actual archaeological value of the site, revealed by further survey as needed, will be addressed. There are no statutory or non-statutory sites of nature conservation importance within the site and the County Ecologist advises that the potential for impacts on designated sites is limited. As is normal practice for a proposal of this nature, an ecological scoping study will be required to establish the presence of, and potential for, any impacts on protected species
- 7.68 Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the A20 Ashford Road and a Transport Assessment will identify the scope of improvements required to the junctions (and associated approaches) at:
- the M20 Junction 8 (including the west-bound on-slip and merge);
 - the A20 Ashford Rd/M20 link road roundabout;
 - the A20 Ashford Rd/Penford Hill junction;
 - the A20 Ashford Rd/Eyhorne Street/Great Danes Hotel access;
 - and the Willington Street/A20 Ashford Rd junction.
- 7.69 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.

Former Syngenta Works, Hampstead Lane, Yalding LPRSAEMP1

- 7.70 The former Syngenta Works site near Yalding is a large, flat, previously developed or 'brownfield' site (19.5ha) about one kilometer to the west of Yalding village and adjacent to Yalding Railway Station. Immediately to the east of the site is a canalised section of the River Medway. The site was previously used for agro-chemicals production and was decommissioned in 2002/2003. The site has been cleared of buildings, apart from an office building at the site entrance, and the land has been remediated to address the contamination resulting from its previous use. Permission was granted in March 2020 for external works to the office building in the northwest corner and a new car park.
- 7.71 An outline planning application for the redevelopment of the site to provide a new business park of up to 46,447 sqm of B1(c), B2 and B8 accommodation with associated access, parking and infrastructure works, was submitted to the Council in 2019. This is broken down as: up to 21,655sqm light industrial uses (B1(c), now E(g)(iii) use class); and up to 24,792sqm of warehouse use (B8 use class). The proposal is for the site to be able to run 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. It includes an area outside of the allocation boundary, upon land designated as an 'ecological mitigation area'. However, through the application process, it is considered that development in this area would not result in any significant landscape or visual impacts above the allocated part of the site, and there would still be the amount of land required under the site policy (13ha) to the south that would be used for ecological mitigation and enhancement.
- 7.72 The whole site lies within Flood Zone 3a and any proposal must therefore fulfil the NPPF's Sequential and Exception Tests. The aim of the Sequential Test method set out in the NPPF is to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. If, following application of the Sequential Test, it is not possible for the development to be located in areas with a lower probability of flooding, the Exception Test can be applied. Crucial to any redevelopment of this brownfield site is the identification of a comprehensive scheme of flood mitigation which addresses the identified flood risk. Subject to such a scheme being achievable, the site is potentially suitable for employment uses.
- 7.73 The outline development proposal, as submitted in 2019, is yet to be determined pending the outcome of the Sequential and Exception Tests. However, in March 2021 Members of the Planning Committee voted to grant outline consent for the proposal, subject to completion of the Sequential/Exception Tests and necessary legal agreements – concluding that the development is acceptable and overwhelmingly compliant with the policy requirements. This major employment site in the borough is therefore recognised as a significant contributor to meeting employment floorspace needs over the plan period and can be expected to deliver in the short to medium term, given the advanced stage of obtaining planning consent.

Newnham Park (Kent Medical Campus) LPRRMX1(1)

- 7.74 Site LPRRMX1(1) Newnham Park remains allocated for a mix of uses, as it was in the 2017 Local Plan. Various permissions have been granted on the site and build out of the Innovation Centre and other associated Medical Campus buildings is well underway. Newnham Court Shopping Village has been developed (and continues to develop) in a piecemeal fashion over time, and, consequently, the visual appearance of the site is poor. In 2018, permission was granted for the redevelopment of the retail site in accordance with policy RMX1(1), however the works remain unimplemented. The policy will therefore remain in place to ensure the delivery of employment and retail floorspace over the plan period.

King Street Car Park, Maidstone LPRRMX1(3)

- 7.75 The King Street car park is currently a surface level car park, being used as such for the short term. Part of the original allocation from the 2017 Local Plan has been developed as the King's Lodge, apartments for retirement living. As such, the remaining car park continues to be allocated for a mix of ground floor retail and residential uses, however a more conservative retail capacity of 700sqm is now allocated to reflect the development that has already taken place. This area could be brought forwards in conjunction with the wider redevelopment of The Mall broad location proposed for the longer term. This would enable a comprehensive approach to development on both sides of King Street at this gateway location to the town centre.

POLICY LPRSP11(B) – CREATING NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Allocated sites – employment

1. The sites allocated under policies LPREMP1(1), LPREMP1(2), LPREMP1(4), LPRSAEmp1, and LPRSA260 will deliver approximately 105,000m² employment floorspace to help meet employment needs during the plan period. Development will be permitted provided the criteria for each site set out in the detailed site allocation policies are met.

Allocated sites – mixed use

2. The sites allocated under policies LPRRMX1(1), LPRRMX1(3), LPRSA078, LPRSA144, LPRSA145, LPRSA146, LPRSA147, LPRSA148, LPRSA149, and LPRSA151, will deliver a mix of approximately 27,439m² employment floorspace and 6,862m² net retail floorspace, along with new homes to help meet the borough's needs over the plan period. Development will be permitted provided the criteria for each site set out in the detailed site allocation policies are met.

Garden Settlements

3. Heathlands Garden Settlement is expected to provide approximately 19,110m² of employment floorspace and 4,764m² of retail* floorspace to 2037. Lidsing Garden Settlement is expected to provide approximately 42,998m² of employment floorspace and 1,055m² of retail* floorspace to 2037. Further details masterplans for each Garden Settlement.

*This includes convenience retail, comparison retail, food/beverage, and non-retail services e.g. hair dressers, estate agents, travel agents etc.

Rest of the borough

4. On non-allocated sites within Maidstone Urban Area or the Rural Service Centres, permission will be granted for industrial or business development, recognising the specific locational requirements of different sectors, provided that the proposals would:
 - a. Be of a type and scale of activity that does not harm the character, appearance or environments of the site or its surroundings or to the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties;

- b. Be readily accessible by public transport, wherever possible, and by bicycle and foot, or contribute towards provision of new sustainable transport infrastructure to serve the area, in order to make the development accessible by those modes; and
 - c. Have a layout, access, parking, landscaping and facilities that are appropriate to the site and its surroundings.
5. Major development schemes will be required to demonstrate how they have considered and provided for employment opportunities for all of the Borough's residents. There may be particular circumstances whereby there is a need for an emphasis on those residents living in Ringlestone, Parkwood so as to make a specific contribution to inclusive growth. Therefore, supporting statements evidencing this will be a requirement of major planning applications. Developers will be required to encapsulate their commitments by entering into s106 legal agreements in order to deliver labour opportunities for these residents in relation to the construction phase and post occupation phases of major new developments which necessitate a change in the use class.

LPRSP11(C): Town, District and Local Centres

Introduction

- 7.76 Within the borough, a network of centres has developed and evolved over time, providing facilities and services to communities. National policy encourages local authorities to support a competitive town centre, providing consumers with a diverse range of retail offer and individuality. Below Maidstone Town Centre as the principal centre in the borough, the council has identified a network of district and local centres which fulfil the function of providing essential local facilities as a group. District centres serve a wider catchment than a local centre and will typically cater for weekly resident needs. A district centre will usually comprise groups of shops, often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library. Local centres include a range of small shops serving a small catchment. Typically, amongst other shops, a local centre might include a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway and launderette. In rural areas, large villages may perform the role of a local centre. Additionally, there are small parades of shops throughout the borough of purely neighbourhood significance.
- 7.77 The evidence base produced for the Local Plan Review suggests that the existing centres are generally performing well. Sutton Valence, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne) and Yalding, whilst fulfilling their Local Plan role, were also identified as having scope for improvement in terms of provision of additional key services. The council wishes to maintain the existing retail function together with supporting community uses in these locations, in the interests of securing sustainable, well-functioning communities. Within the defined district and local centres, new non-E or F use classes will be resisted at ground level in order to maintain the retail role of the centres. The provision of additional retail and/or community facilities will be supported for similar sustainability reasons.
- 7.78 In addition to maintaining the existing network of centres and their relative function and role in the hierarchy, it is important that provision is made for the creation of new centres to support new development as set out in this Local Plan Review. The creation of entirely new Garden Communities at Heathlands and Lidsing, plus strategic development locations at Invicta Barracks and the Leeds Langley corridor will require supporting services and facilities in order to operate as sustainable communities

in their own right. The provision of new district and/or local centres commensurate with the scale of housing growth in these locations will therefore be supported. Furthermore, a new local centre is planned to complement the residential development scheme at Langley Park. Once established, these centres will be incorporated into the retail hierarchy through a subsequent review of the Local Plan.

POLICY LPRSP11(C) – TOWN, DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES

Town centre uses will be located according to the retail hierarchy as set out below, in order to promote choice, competition and innovation. Within these centres, as defined on the policies map, the council will seek to maintain and enhance the existing retail function and supporting community uses.

Town Centre: Maidstone Town Centre

District Centres: Mid Kent Centre, Castle Road, Allington;

Groveswood Drive, Grove Green;

Heath Road, Coxheath;

The Square, Lenham;

High Street, Headcorn;

High Street and Church Green, Marden; and

High Street, Staplehurst.

Local Centres: Ashford Road, Bearsted;

The Green/The Street, Bearsted;

Marlborough Parade, Beverley Road, Barming;

Cherry Tree, Tonbridge Road;

Boughton Parade, Loose;

Egremont Road, Madingford;

Parkwood Parade

Sandling Lane, Penenden Heath;

Senacre Square, Woolley Road;

Northumberland Court, Shepway;

Snowdon Parade, Vinters Park;

Mangravet, Sutton Road/Mangravet Avenue;

High Street/Benover Road, Yalding; and

Hermitage Walk, Hermitage Lane

A new local centre will be provided as part of a new residential development scheme

at Langley Park.

On large new settlements including Lidsing and Heathlands which are not within easy walking distance of existing shops and services, new district and/or local centres will be established to serve the needs of local residents. Such centres should be of a scale appropriate to the site and should not undermine the role or function of other centres within the retail hierarchy (including those in neighbouring authorities).

LPRSP12: Sustainable Transport

Introduction

- 7.79 Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local highway authority), Highways England, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) and addendum has been prepared by the council, with the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub. The ITS addresses a number of transport challenges as set out below.

Highway Network

- 7.80 Maidstone Borough has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, Tonbridge and Malling, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells, Swale and London. Four north-south and east-west primary routes pass through the town centre and numerous secondary routes run in concentric rings around the town, providing local links to the rural parts of the borough. Maidstone also enjoys good connections to the motorway network, including direct access to four junctions of the M20.
- 7.81 The principal constraint on the borough's urban road network is the single crossing point of the River Medway at the town centre bridges gyratory, where the A20, A26 and A229 meet. From this point, congestion spreads along the main radial approaches to Maidstone during the morning and evening peaks, leading drivers to seek alternative routes for longer journeys around the periphery of the town.
- 7.82 The policies for individual site allocations set out the requirements for contributions towards strategic and local highway infrastructure at key locations and junctions, and key improvements include:
- Capacity improvements and signalisation of Bearsted roundabout and capacity improvements at New Cut roundabout. Provision of a new signal pedestrian crossing and the provision of a combined foot/cycle way between these two roundabouts.
 - Improvements to M20 J7 roundabout, including widening of the coast bound off-slip and creation of a new signal-controlled pedestrian route through the junction.
 - Capacity improvements at M2 J5 (located in Swale Borough).
 - Upgrading of Bearsted Road to a dual carriageway between Bearsted roundabout and New Cut roundabout.
 - Interim improvement to M20 junction 5 roundabouts including a white lining scheme.
 - Traffic signalisation of M20 junction 5 roundabout and localised widening of slip roads and

circulatory carriageway.

- Capacity improvements at the junction of Fountain Lane and the A26 Tonbridge Road.
- Bus prioritisation measures on the A274 Sutton Road from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements.
- Improvements to capacity at the junctions of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and Sutton Road.
- Highway improvements at Boughton Lane and at the junction of Boughton Lane and the A229 Loose Road.
- Linton Crossroads junction improvements.
- Capacity improvements at the junction of A229, Headcorn Road, Station Road and Marden Road at Staplehurst.
- Capacity improvements at Hampstead Lane/B2015 Maidstone Road junction at Yalding.

7.83 The details of these schemes and further highway and transport improvements, including provision of a circular bus route to serve the north west Maidstone strategic development area, are set out in detail in the Integrated Transport Strategy and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Leeds-Langley Relief Road

7.84 Consideration of the potential construction of a LLRR is a requirement of Policy LPR1 of the review of the Local Plan Review. The case for the justification of the construction and the delivery of a LLRR lies with the County Council as the highway authority.

7.85 At the present time the final case has not been made, but early work suggests that it is likely that a quantum of new development would be needed to help fund it, therefore masterplanning via a business case for the whole corridor should be considered. An approach to ensuring that a strategic approach to delivery of new development and a potential new route is set out in SP5 and SP5(a).

Car Parking

7.86 The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the borough's retail economy, to facilitate access to areas where alternative travel modes are limited or unavailable, and to ensure that mobility impaired persons are able to access key education, employment and leisure opportunities. However, the supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can therefore contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. Therefore, it is crucial that the council and its partners avoid an over provision of parking, particularly in and around Maidstone town centre.

7.87 The ITS will seek to address parking issues by producing a refreshed Town Centre Parking Strategy. A key aspect of this strategy will be the use of measures to provide disincentives to the use of long-term car parking in the town centre whilst prioritising shoppers and visitors; by utilising long-stay town centre parking tariffs to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport such as Park and Ride and reviewing the Residents' Parking Zones to ensure they are fair, simple and meet the needs of all road users.

Park and Ride

7.88 The council has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s and was one of the first local authorities in the UK to introduce the concept. The service aims to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and has met with varying levels of success to date. Two sites are currently in operation at London Road and Willington Street, following the closure of the Sittingbourne Road site in February 2016, which in total comprise some 918 parking spaces.

- 7.89 The council will continue to review and improve the functionality and effectiveness of Park and Ride services in Maidstone, including through the investigation of whether additional sites may be available and deliverable to contribute towards wider objectives for sustainable transport and air quality.

Bus Services

- 7.90 Maidstone Borough has a well-established bus network provided principally by Arriva, together with a number of smaller independent operators. The network is centered on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban areas with longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns, including Ashford, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and the Medway Towns.
- 7.91 Although KCC and the council do not directly influence the provision of commercial bus services, both authorities work closely with the operators to improve the quality of services and to ensure that the highway network is planned and managed in a way that facilitates the efficient operation of buses. This relationship has been formalised through the signing of a voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) agreement, which includes commitments by Arriva, Nu-Venture, KCC and the council to work collectively to improve all aspects of bus travel and to increase passenger numbers.
- 7.92 Given the deletion of the previously proposed Park and Ride sites at Linton Crossroads and at Old Sittingbourne Road, the council will work with the service operators to procure express/limited stop bus services on the radial routes into Maidstone (particularly from the north including the Newnham Park Area and from the south on the A229 and A274) to the Town Centre and railway stations in the morning and evening peaks to encourage modal shift together with the implementation of bus priority measures to seek to secure the reliability and speed of such services.
- 7.93 A number of services cannot be provided commercially and are classed as socially necessary services that require subsidy from KCC. These primarily consist of school, rural, evening and weekend services, which provide access to education, employment, health care, or essential food shopping. KCC also completed the countywide roll out of the Kent Freedom Pass during 2009. The County Council now provides travel on almost all public bus services in Kent Monday to Friday for an annual fee for young people living in the county and in academic years 7 to 11. The County Council also assumed responsibility from the council for the administration and funding of the statutory Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme for disabled people, their companions and those aged over 60, in April 2011. As the Local Education Authority, KCC also provides free or subsidised home-to-school transport to children who meet the criteria.

Rail Services

- 7.94 Three railway lines cross Maidstone Borough, serving a total of 14 stations. The current operator of the vast majority of rail services in the area is Southeastern.
- 7.95 The principal rail route serving Maidstone town is the London Victoria to Ashford International line (also referred to as the Maidstone East Line), which includes stations at Maidstone East, Bearsted, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Lenham. The average journey time between Maidstone East and London Victoria is an hour and runs half-hourly. The London Charing Cross/Cannon Street to Dover Priory/Ramsgate line passes through the south of the borough, with stations at Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn. Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations are located in close proximity to the City of London and hence services on this line are heavily used by commuters, which places pressure on the limited station car park capacity in these villages.
- 7.96 The Medway Valley Line, connecting Strood and Paddock Wood, runs from north to south across the

borough, with stations at Maidstone Barracks, Maidstone West, East Farleigh, Wateringbury, Yalding and Beltring. The line operates as part of the Kent Community Rail Partnership, which has delivered improvements to the stations and promoted the service widely. In May 2011, Southeastern commenced the operation of direct peak-time services between London St Pancras and Maidstone West via Strood and High Speed 1 on a trial basis. This has reduced rail journey times between Maidstone and London to 48 minutes and provided commuters from the town with the option of travelling to an alternative London terminus closer to the City.

- 7.97 KCC published its updated Kent Rail Strategy in 2021, which sets out the County Council's objectives for the new Southeastern Franchise. The reinstatement of services between Maidstone and the City of London, support for Maidstone West platform extension and Maidstone East station improvements, improved connectivity along the Medway Valley Line and increased High Speed rail capacity in the Borough were its recommendations for the borough. It also recognises the need for the level of rail fares charged in Kent to offer better value for money and for the roll out of Smartcard ticketing offering combined bus and rail travel, similar to Transport for London's Oyster card.

Air Quality

- 7.98 Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to poor air quality at both the local level and on a wider global scale. Indeed, the main arterial road network in Maidstone and a section of the M20 motorway has been declared an Air Quality Management Area in 2017, primarily due to the level of traffic congestion at peak times. The ITS will therefore support the delivery of the measures identified in the Maidstone Low Emissions Strategy to deliver an improvement in the air quality of the urban area and to reduce pollutant levels below the Air Quality Objective Levels set out by European legislation.
- 7.99 Development in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas should where necessary incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact. Examples of mitigation measures include:
- Using green infrastructure to absorb dust and other pollutants;
 - Promoting infrastructure to encourage the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality; and
 - Contributing funding to measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development.
- 7.100 Since the adoption of the Local Plan 2017 air quality has been reported to have improved. The improvement has been so great that that a number of areas previously identified as air quality 'hotspots,' no longer appear to exceed the NO₂ annual mean objective. This is a result of a combination of local actions national trends, such as the cleaner more efficient fuels and the take up of electric and hybrid vehicles.

Influencing Travel Behaviour

- 7.101 Through the ITS the council, together with KCC, will seek to promote and support a range of initiatives to influence travel behaviour in the borough. This can be achieved through the use of Travel Plans, behaviour change programmes and introducing improvements to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling and the use of transport, car sharing and car clubs.

- 7.102 The council, together with KCC, will continue to promote and support the use of Travel Plans as a way of influencing travel behaviour away from journeys by private car to more sustainable modes. Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will continue to implement and monitor their own corporate Travel Plans as well as securing Travel Plans for new development as part of the planning process. Workplace and School Travel Plans will also continue to be developed, implemented and monitored through partnership working across the borough where appropriate.

Cycling and Walking

- 7.103 Both KCC and the council are committed to the provision of a comprehensive cycle network for residents and visitors to Maidstone.
- 7.104 The borough currently has a number of cycle routes that link the town centre to the suburban areas; however, connections within the town and further afield are limited and there is a lack of cycle parking at key destinations. Consequently, cycle use in Maidstone is very low, the 2011 Census travel to work data indicated that 1% of work trips were undertaken by bike. However, 12% of journeys to work were made on foot.
- 7.105 The provision of attractive and safe walking and cycling routes with adequate cycle parking is incorporated within the updated ITS. The borough's walking environment, its walking routes and its public realm will be developed and improved through local plan policies, the ITS, the IDP, and through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. These strategies and documents, together with the adopted Maidstone Walking and Cycling Strategy, will have the aim of increasing the proportion of trips made by walking and cycling in the borough by 2037.

Transport Modelling

- 7.106 It is recognized through transport modelling that new growth will add journeys onto the existing network, which is already at capacity during peak hours at certain points. New development is required, and as such there is a need to direct development to areas with travel choice, bring forward mitigation measures aimed at encouraging journeys to be taken by more sustainable modes, as well as increasing capacity where it is needed.
- 7.107 Transport modelling shows that the existing settlement hierarchy of Maidstone and the RSCs/ Larger Villages have generally better transport connections than elsewhere in the borough and continuing the LP17 pattern of growth is therefore potentially reasonable. Also tested however, is the benefits that could arise from directing more growth to garden settlements. These new settlements have the potential to be designed in a way which places a greater emphasis on public and active travel, as well as potentially the sharing of vehicles for certain trips.

POLICY LPRSP12 – SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

1. Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local highway authority), Highways England, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the Borough Council will manage any negotiations and agreements regarding schemes for mitigating the impact of development where appropriate on the local and strategic road networks and facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the Local Plan.
2. The Integrated Transport Strategy (2017) will be refreshed in the context of the Local

Plan Review with the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to Maidstone town centre, in order to promote the town as a regionally important transport hub.

3. In doing so, the council and its partners will:
 - a. Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan and facilitates economic prosperity;
 - b. Deliver modal shift through managing demand on the transport network through enhanced public transport and the continued Park and Ride services and walking and cycling improvements;
 - c. Improve highway network capacity and function at key locations and junctions across the borough;
 - d. Manage parking provision in the town centre and the wider borough to ensure it is fair and proportionate and supports demand management;
 - e. Improve transport choice across the borough and seek to influence travel behaviour;
 - f. Protect and enhance public rights of way;
 - g. Deliver strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, including increased bus service frequency along the radial routes into the town centre and its railway stations, particularly in the morning and evening peak travel times;
 - h. Work with landowners and public transport operators to secure the provision of a new bus interchange facility that is more accessible, user-friendly and fit for purpose;
 - i. Work with service providers to improve bus links to the rural service centres and larger villages, and other villages including route options and frequency;
 - j. Improve strategic links to Maidstone across the county and to wider destinations such as London;
 - k. Promote inclusive access for all users on the transport network provides;
 - l. Address the air quality impact of transport; and
 - m. Support the provision of and improvements to Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure.
4. Within the bus and hackney carriage corridors, as defined on the policies map, the council and the highway authority will develop preference measures to improve journey times and reliability and make public transport more attractive, particularly on park and ride routes, the radial routes into the town centre and in connecting the Garden Settlements. Such measures will include:
 - a. Bus priority measures along radial routes including bus prioritisation at junctions;
 - b. Prioritisation of sustainable transport modes along radial routes; and/or
 - c. Enhanced waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities.
5. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will support the implementation of the Local Plan Review and outlines how and when necessary infrastructure schemes will be delivered.

LPRSP13: Infrastructure Delivery

Providing the infrastructure needed to support growth

- 7.108 Infrastructure can be separated into three main categories; physical infrastructure (such as highways and public realm improvements), social and community infrastructure (such as schools, adult social services and cultural facilities) and green & blue infrastructure (such as play spaces, natural and semi-natural open space, and sports pitches).
- 7.109 The Local Plan shapes where new development should be located and also manages the pressure relating to speculative proposals through policy. It will provide new homes, jobs, services and thereby support social, economic and environmental objectives. The impact of development on local communities and the fabric of the existing built and natural environment is an important consideration. Managing this impact involves protecting existing infrastructure and securing the timely investment in new infrastructure.
- 7.110 The council has actively engaged with the main providers of infrastructure and has a good understanding of existing and emerging infrastructure requirements in the borough and its associated challenges in accommodating further development. The product of this engagement process is the updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which sets out the type, location and phasing of the infrastructure required to support the overall strategy for development in the Local Plan. It also details those who have responsibility for delivering the infrastructure, potential funding sources, estimated delivery timescales and estimated costs.
- 7.111 Where new development creates a need for new or improved site-specific infrastructure, provision of such infrastructure or contributions will be sought from developers (through S.106 & S.278 legal agreements) to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The key requirements of dedicated planning agreements are that they must be:
- Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms;
 - Directly related to the development; and
 - Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.
- 7.112 Site specific infrastructure requirements arise when there is a direct link between development and supporting infrastructure that is required to make the development happen. In some instances, perhaps due to site constraints or other considerations, it will be most appropriate to seek financial contributions through section 106 legal agreements in lieu of on-site/off-site provision.
- 7.113 In Maidstone Borough, some forms of infrastructure provision have historically not kept pace with development. This has been a contributory factor to some issues such as a congested road network, a shortage of affordable housing, deficiencies in open space provision and poor access to key community facilities in certain areas. There is concern that future growth will intensify this problem unless a coordinated effort is made to ensure that essential infrastructure accompanies new development at all times.
- 7.114 There are certain infrastructure typologies which are required when building new development. Connections to the highways and utilities network, and flood defences for example. Additionally, the delivery of new schools and health facilities will generally be delivered at a strategic scale and will not be delivered by most sites. Where there are competing demands for contributions towards the delivery of infrastructure, secured through section 106 legal agreements, the council will prioritise these demands in the manner listed below:

Infrastructure priorities for residential development:

1. Affordable housing
2. Transport
3. Open space
4. Education
5. Health
6. Community facilities
7. Public realm
8. Waste management
9. Public services, &
10. Libraries

Infrastructure priorities for business and retail development:

1. Transport
2. Public realm
3. Open space, &
4. Education/skills

7.115 The infrastructure prioritisation has been developed through engagement with infrastructure providers and key stakeholders. It is further explained in the Local Plan Review supporting evidence base, specifically in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Infrastructure Topic Paper. However, below is a summary the prioritisation:

- **Critical:** infrastructure that must be provided to enable physical development to occur. Failure to provide these pieces of infrastructure could result in significant delays in the delivery of development.
- **Essential:** infrastructure in this category is unlikely to prevent physical development in the short term, however failure to invest in it could result in delays in development in the medium to long term.
- **Desirable:** infrastructure that is required to deliver the overall spatial strategy objectives but is unlikely to prevent development in the short or medium term. Whilst not designated as critical or essential, the importance of this infrastructure to the delivery of sustainable development should not be underestimated.

7.116 The projects that are both expected to be delivered in the short-term and are critical in enabling development to occur are therefore most likely to be considered a top priority for delivery (see figure 1). Within Maidstone, the short-term critical infrastructure projects tend to be within highways and transportation.

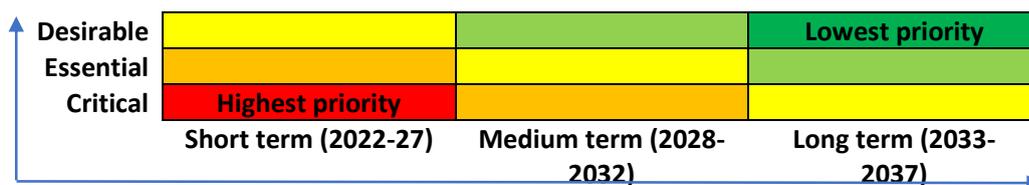


Figure 1. Prioritisation of infrastructure schemes

Utilities Infrastructure

- 7.117 Utilities are generally planned at the planning application stage, but where there are larger areas of development, such as in garden settlements and strategic development locations, opportunities to exploit economies of scale which allow for improved utilities access across the area should be seized. This may include combining trenches for services, ensuring connections for future phases are included, the oversizing of networks to accommodate further future growth, and the development of bespoke area-based infrastructure networks such as combined heat and/ or power networks.
- 7.118 There is an accelerating trend towards greater home working which allows for a reduced impact on transport infrastructure. In order to facilitate this option, developers of new sites will be encouraged to install optic cables (or the latest technology infrastructure) to serve new occupants.
- 7.119 Utility connections are charged directly to the developer rather than a requirement of developer contributions, therefore do not appear in the priorities list above.

Open spaces

- 7.120 The adequate provision of open spaces within the borough is critical to the health and enjoyment of local residents and will act to draw investment into the area. It is recognised that as Maidstone's population grows, the demand for open spaces will grow proportionately. Development creates value and thus the opportunity to create new open spaces. It is recognised that as Maidstone and our villages grow, land which is "open" in character may be lost to the expanding urban area. While positive features of the rural area can be retained, development should replace larger, more rural land, with smaller, more active, higher quality open spaces for communities to enjoy.
- 7.121 To support the appropriate delivery of development identified in the Local Plan, the council will identify opportunities to secure new open spaces, improve existing open spaces, and improve the access to and between open spaces to meet and/or contribute towards the open space requirements in accordance with the standards set out in INF1.

Funding Infrastructure Improvements

- 7.122 It is important to ensure that there is a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable in a timely fashion. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides the evidence that the council has an understanding of the infrastructure required to support delivery of the Local Plan, and how/when/where infrastructure will be provided. Funding for the infrastructure schemes listed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is expected to comprise a number of components:
- Existing resources (i.e., current/outstanding Section 106 Contributions);
 - New Homes Bonus;
 - Future site-specific provision (Including Section 106 contributions);
 - Community Infrastructure Levy; and
 - Outside organisations (e.g., NHS CCG, KCC, Central Government).
 - Direct delivery from developers (including Section 278 agreements and unilateral undertakings).
- 7.123 In some cases, a combination of the above finding sources will be needed to deliver identified infrastructure.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.125 The council implemented a Community Infrastructure Levy in 2018 following formal approval of a charging schedule in 2017. It is a non-negotiable financial levy fixed rate charging schedule collected from development but there is no site/spend relationship, and it must be paid once the development commences. CIL is used for strategic borough wide infrastructure.
- 7.125 The list of key infrastructure projects considered necessary to support the Local Plan (identified through consultation with infrastructure providers) is included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which accompanies the Plan. The priorities for funding as per national guidance are to be set out in the annual infrastructure funding statement.
- 7.126 The Local Plan focuses development at the Maidstone urban area, the rural service centres, larger villages and garden communities. Infrastructure is needed at a strategic level to support this growth. Strategic elements of the infrastructure required will be provided for, in part or whole, by the Community Infrastructure Levy. This could include but is not limited to:
- Environmental improvements to Maidstone town centre;
 - Improvements needed to transport infrastructure particularly in Maidstone urban area;
 - Additional education and community facilities or expansion to existing facilities; and
 - Strategic open space requirements.
- 7.127 New development will add incrementally to the need for strategic infrastructure. The Community Infrastructure Levy allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new development within the council's area. This is a fair, transparent and accountable levy which will be payable by the majority of new housing developments. The levy gives developers a clear understanding of what financial contribution will be expected towards the delivery of infrastructure. Some types of development are automatically exempt from the charge and the council can determine whether to charge the levy for other forms of development.
- 7.128 As a part of the Local Plan Review process the Council is undertaking a CIL review, the results of which will follow the Local Plan Review process. This will reflect the changing relationship between development costs and development values and will ensure that levy charges remain appropriate, reflect market conditions and bridge the funding gap for infrastructure.

Section 106 Agreements

- 7.129 Section 106 Agreements will continue to be used for site specific infrastructure on development sites, such as local provision of open space, habitat protection, flood mitigation, access roads and sustainable transport infrastructure.
- 7.130 Other infrastructure will also be provided on site via S.106 where it is of a strategic scale to do so and so this would be the best approach to secure infrastructure, for example the Garden Communities. However, the Council will ensure that there is no duplication of infrastructure spending and so the required infrastructure for these locations will be set out clearly in the site allocation policy.
- 7.131 Exceptionally, where developers face genuinely abnormal costs or for any other reason consider that paying the normal contribution towards infrastructure costs would seriously threaten the viability of a development, the council will be prepared to consider requests for a reduction subject to an "open book" approach being adopted.

7.132 In order to reflect NPPG, and also overcome the constraints imposed via the use of S106 agreements and/or Community Infrastructure Levy, normally S278 agreements under the Highways Act 1980 will be used to secure any necessary mitigation in connection with the Strategic Road Network.

7.133 Provision of affordable and local needs housing is dealt with in detail in policies LPRSP10b and LPRHOU6 respectively.

POLICY LPRSP13 – INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY

1. Where development creates a requirement for new or improved infrastructure beyond existing provision, developers will be expected to provide or contribute towards the additional requirement being provided to an agreed delivery programme. In certain circumstances where proven necessary, the council may require that infrastructure is delivered ahead of the development being occupied.
2. Detailed specifications of the site specific contributions required are included in the site allocation policies (these are not exhaustive lists). Development proposals should seek to make provision for all the land required to accommodate any additional infrastructure arising from that development. Dedicated Planning Agreements (S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990) will be used to provide a range of site specific mitigation, in accordance with the S106 tests, which will normally be provided on-site but may where appropriate be provided in an off-site location or via an in-lieu financial contribution. In some cases, separate agreements with utility providers may be required.
3. Where developers consider that providing or contributing towards the infrastructure requirement would have serious implications for the viability of a development, the council will require an "open book" approach and, where necessary, will operate the policy flexibly.
4. Where there are competing demands for contributions towards the delivery of infrastructure, secured through section 106 legal agreements, the council will prioritise these demands in the manner listed below:

Infrastructure priorities for residential development:

- i. Affordable housing
- ii. Transport
- iii. Open space
- iv. Education
- v. Health
- vi. Community facilities
- vii. Public realm
- viii. Waste Management
- ix. Public services, &
- x. Libraries

Infrastructure priorities for business and retail development:

- i) Transport
- ii) Public realm
- iii) Open space, &
- iv) Education/skills

This list serves as a guide to the council's prioritisation process, although it is recognised that each site and development proposal will bring with it its own issues that could mean an alternate prioritisation is used.

5. The Community Infrastructure Levy will continue to be used to secure contributions to help fund the strategic infrastructure needed to support the sustainable growth proposed in Maidstone Borough set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The CIL rate will be reviewed to reflect latest changes in development costs and land/floorspace values across the borough in line with viability evidence and the proposals contained within this plan.
6. Infrastructure schemes that are brought forward by service providers will be encouraged and supported, where they are in accordance with other policies in the Local Plan. New residential and commercial development will be supported if sufficient infrastructure capacity is either available or can be provided in time to serve it.
7. Open space development will be expected to be delivered meeting the following criteria:
 - i. Development which contributes to the creation of, or enhancement of the existing fabric of open spaces within the borough will be supported.
 - ii. All new development should make a contribution, either on site, or where not feasible, off- site to improving the borough's open spaces.
 - iii. On some strategic sites, open space will be allocated as a part of the land uses required within the site allocation.
 - iv. Existing local open spaces fitting the definition in NPPF Para 102 will be protected.
 - v. Unless stated in a site allocation new developments should make a contribution towards increasing and improving open space as set out in INF1.
8. The Council will investigate the need for an infrastructure guidance document in order to support the delivery of infrastructure in the Borough.

LPRSP14: The Environment

Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 7.135 Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) is a network of natural components of open space and water which lie within and between the borough's towns and villages and which provide multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. Maidstone borough contains a wide range of green open spaces together with a number of rivers and streams. Key assets include the Kent Downs AONB, the River Medway and its tributaries, Mote Park, and the distinctive green corridors which help shape Maidstone town. Amongst other things, these green spaces and blue corridors provide reservoirs for biodiversity and recreation; act as corridors for the movement of animals, plants and people; and provide opportunities for the protection and enhancement of the local landscape and historic assets, water management, green education, and the mitigation of climate change impacts.
- 7.136 In 2019 Maidstone Borough Council declared a climate change and biodiversity emergency and subsequently set out a climate change and biodiversity strategy and action plan. Green and blue infrastructure has the capacity to deliver a wide range of positive outcomes in line with the objectives of the council and to help meet the aims of the strategy and action plan including:
- Helping to attract and retain higher paying employers;
 - Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, water and air quality;
 - Promoting distinctive landscapes and townscapes;
 - Helping in the creation of an efficient, sustainable, integrated transport system;
 - Helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change; and
 - Creating healthier communities
- 7.137 The green and blue infrastructure is considered to be of such importance that a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) has been produced. The strategy looks to encourage the creation of links and steppingstones to help in the movement of people and wildlife across the built-up urban area. In the rural areas the focus will be more on land management and creating and enhancing landscape and habitat networks. The strategy will also seek to identify those areas of the borough where deficiencies exist and look to provide guidance on how these can be overcome. The council will continue to promote a partnership approach with developers, landowners and neighbouring local authorities, including Kent County Council, to help achieve the objectives of the Strategy.
- 7.138 The growth proposed in the borough provides a chance to increase the value of accessible green spaces and blue corridors. New development will be expected to contribute towards the goal of a linked network which extends across the borough and beyond. Development schemes will be expected to contribute towards improved connectivity through the provision of footpaths and cycle routes that are part of a strategic network; space for nature that contributes to the larger landscape-scale pattern of connected habitat; and the provision of imaginative recreational facilities that give educational and physical health benefits to local people. Additionally, opportunities should be sought to enhance blue infrastructure and connectivity of existing and proposed infrastructure within and beyond the borough. Particular attention should be given to maintaining watercourse connectivity and enhancement and the role this can play in improving water quality and enhancing biodiversity. The council will liaise with neighbouring local authorities, including Kent County Council, to ensure potential linkages at all scales and across administrative boundaries are recognised in the development of specific proposals. Developers will also be expected to provide details of how the green and blue infrastructure elements of their proposal, including publicly accessible open spaces, sites managed for their biodiversity, or geodiversity interest, will be managed and maintained over the long-term.

- 7.139 Publicly accessible open space, recreation and tourism are essential elements of sustainable communities, contributing towards health, quality of life, sense of place and overall well-being. Spaces and facilities form a part of the overall green and blue infrastructure network and within built up areas can provide local linkage between the town centre, urban neighbourhoods and the surrounding countryside. The needs and deficiencies in publicly accessible open spaces and facilities, and the open space standards, are identified in the Local Plan and details on implementation will be included in the green and blue infrastructure strategy.

Climate Change

- 7.140 Climate change is resulting in ever more variable weather patterns, the outcomes of which include flooding and drought. The Climate Change Act 2008 and (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 sets out the risks of climate change, objectives to tackle climate change and proposals and policies for meeting climate change. It places a requirement that the UK government by law has to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. Additionally, the act introduced a system of carbon budgets. However, adverse changes to the natural systems can result in increases in damage to property and compensation costs, and a decrease in water resource resilience. The Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency declaration and the subsequent Strategy and Action Plan set out the Council's aims in tackling the key related issues for the borough.
- 7.141 A green and blue infrastructure approach represents a means to positively tackle these issues. It can offer alternative flood mitigation strategies, such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and the creation of water meadows. It is able to provide the means to capture and store rainwater, as well as help improve water quality. In addition to green blue infrastructure, specific policies can ensure that new development is designed to ensure that its impact on climate change is reduced, and that resilience to climate change is increased.

Water Framework Directive

- 7.142 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) looks to improve the local water environment for people and wildlife and promote the sustainable use of water. The Directive applies to all surface water bodies, including lakes, streams and rivers as well as groundwater. The overall aim of the WFD is for all water bodies to reach good status by 2027. In Maidstone this would mean improving their physical state, preventing deterioration in water quality and ecology, and improving the ecological status of water bodies. The WFD introduced the concept of integrated river basin management and such plans should influence development plans. Maidstone lies within the Thames River Basin District and in December 2009 the Environment Agency published the Thames River Basin Management Plan (RBMP).
- 7.143 The council will continue to work in partnership with the Environment Agency and other bodies to help achieve the goals of the WFD and actions of the Thames RBMP. The council will also actively encourage development proposals to include measures to mitigate against the deterioration of water bodies and adverse impacts on Groundwater Source Protection Zones, and/or incorporate measures to improve the ecological status of water bodies as appropriate, and to incorporate Water Framework Directive mitigation measures into existing waterbodies.

Biodiversity

- 7.144 Maidstone is a biodiverse district endowed with a variety of habitats including heathlands and chalk downlands, orchards and ancient woodland, river valleys and ponds, wildflower meadows and parklands. All of these are underpinned by an equally diverse array of soils. Soils are a fundamental

element of the ecosystems found within these habitats but one which is highly susceptible to damage. The council will work in partnership with landowners, land managers and developers to encourage better soil handling practices to avoid the degradation of soil and ensure soil functions are maintained as appropriate.

- 7.145 The broad range of habitats forms an extensive network across rural and urban areas, including previously developed land. Many sites are important for their nature conservation and geological interest and are designated for their protection. In Maidstone, these include a site of international importance, namely the North Downs Woodlands Special Area of Conservation (SAC), nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), locally important Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR). Current designated nature conservation sites will be noted on the policies map.
- 7.146 As a result of increasing development pressures in the past, many of the borough's biodiversity assets have been lost, damaged or fragmented. In response to this decline the council has acted in partnership with other bodies to undertake surveys of the borough's habitats and ancient woodlands. It has also declared a biodiversity emergency and has developed a strategy and action plan to respond to this. In addition, the council has adopted the Maidstone Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), a key element of which is the establishment of a connecting network of sites and corridors on a landscape scale. By reconnecting fragments of habitats to form a mosaic, the natural environment is provided with the means to become self-sustaining as well as being better able to respond to and adapt to climate change.
- 7.147 Development proposals will be expected to be supported by an initial survey of on-site assets. Surveys must be undertaken at the appropriate time of year for the relevant habitats, species, flora and fauna. Where harm to protected species or habitats is unavoidable, developers must ensure suitable mitigation measures are implemented to enhance or recreate the features, either on or off-site, and bring sites into positive conservation management. Sufficient information to assess the direct and indirect effects of development on protected sites, species, biodiversity or geology, and any proposed prevention, mitigation or compensation measures must be provided. Proposals should particularly seek to avoid damaging and fragmenting existing habitats. Opportunities to contribute towards the UK priority habitats and species in Maidstone and any additional Maidstone LBAP habitats and species should be maximised.
- 7.148 Development that is likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in combination with other development, on the integrity of nature conservation sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's), Special Protection Areas (SPA's) or Ramsar sites is unlikely to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. Although proposals should consider their potential to adversely affect any European site, the European sites considered most likely to be affected by development provided for by the Local Plan Review and the types of effect most likely to be of concern and potential approaches to avoidance or mitigation of effects are considered below.
- 7.149 HRA of the Local Plan Review identified that three European sites are sensitive to air pollution from traffic in the borough: North Downs Woodland SAC. All This site is within 200m of the A229. Work has been undertaken to assess whether the Local Plan would result in increases in traffic on these roads of more than 1,000 AADT (or 200 HDVs), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in line with good practice guidance. An air quality assessment has been carried out by the Council to assess the effects on the SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites and mitigation is required to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of this site. Appropriate strategies will be developed in agreement with Natural England before the Local Plan is adopted and these will be implemented prior to adverse effects on integrity occurring; developer contributions would be used to support this.
- 7.150 HRA of the Local Plan Review identified that two European sites are sensitive to recreation pressure: North Downs Woodland SAC and Medway Estuary & Marshes SPA/Ramsar site.

- 7.151 Residential development within 6km of Medway Estuary & Marshes SPA/Ramsar site has been found through visitor surveys to contribute to disturbance of birds at the site and a mitigation strategy is in place to apply developer contributions to the management and monitoring of visitor pressure at the site. The Council will continue to support Natural England in the review of the mitigation strategy as new visitor survey data becomes available, to ensure that the strategy continues to be appropriate. New residential developments within 6km of the SPA/Ramsar will be required to make developer contributions, in accordance with the strategy.
- 7.152 The potential effects of recreation at North Downs Woodland SAC are less certain but it is considered that residential development within 7km of this site could contribute to adverse effects from recreation pressure. New residential developments within 7km of the SAC will be required to make developer contributions and the Council will work with Natural England to monitor and if necessary, mitigate any recreation pressure or air pollution effects at this site, with a strategy in place prior to adoption of the Local Plan.
- 7.153 The Stodmarsh SAC/SPA/Ramsar site is sensitive to increases in nitrogen and phosphorous arising from the River Stour. Natural England has agreed a mitigation strategy that requires developments within the Stour catchment to demonstrate that they will not result in a net increase in nitrogen and phosphorous at the Stodmarsh SAC/SPA/Ramsarsite. Developments in and around Lenham, including Heathlands Garden Settlement and the Lenham Broad Location for growth, will be required to meet the requirements of the mitigation/offsetting strategy, as set out in Natural England's advice note on Nutrient Neutrality issued in November 2020, or any updates to that advice.
- 7.154 SACs/SPAs/Ramsar sites downstream of Maidstone borough may also be affected by changes in water quality or quantity, via abstraction or discharge into rivers or groundwater. All major developments will be required to demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity in water supply and treatment infrastructure.
- 7.155 The borough has already experienced development applications that have, in certain areas, required the trans-location of wildlife to receptor sites in alternative off-site locations. Such sites are important in ensuring adequate provision of suitable habitats for valued and protected species and should be protected and maintained. Natural England should be consulted on development proposals that will have an adverse impact on receptor sites, either directly or indirectly. It is extremely unlikely that the trans-location of wildlife from one receptor site to another would be permitted under license for the purposes of allowing development.
- 7.156 The Environment Bill will bring into force a requirement for new developments to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain. The Bill indicates that there will be a requirement for a 10 per cent improvement in "biodiversity value" as a condition of planning permissions for new development. In its Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy, Maidstone Borough Council recognises the intrinsic value of biodiversity and the contributions it can make to the mitigation of climate change and the broad local support for protecting nature. It is essential therefore that new development makes a positive contribution to the delivery of enhanced biodiversity in the borough, through provision of Biodiversity Net Gain across all new development.
- 7.157 Proposed development in the Lenham and Lenham Heath areas, including the growth location, existing allocations and Heathlands, will need to explicitly follow the requirements set out in the Natural England advice letter on Nutrient Neutrality. Development in these areas has potential to impact on the Stodmarsh designated sites (SAC, SPA, Ramsar, SSSI, NNR) National Nature Reserve downstream in the Canterbury area and therefore will need to ensure that Natural England's advice note on Nutrient Neutrality has been followed, in order to meet the requirement of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

- 7.158 Developments discharging wastewater into or extracting water from the River Medway catchment or extracting groundwater may also affect water quality and quantity at coastal and estuarine European sites downstream of Maidstone borough. Water abstraction and discharge is regulated through permitting, and South East Water's Water Resources Management Plan 2019 plans ahead to 2080 to ensure that water infrastructure can meet requirements for housing growth as well as environmental protection.

Landscape

- 7.159 The visual character of Maidstone's landscape is highly valued by those living, working and visiting here. A significant proportion of the borough benefits from high quality landscapes. A large area of the borough lies within the Kent Downs AONB, a nationally important landscape designation and a strong level of protection will be given to this designation and its setting, set out in policy SP14(a). However, all of the landscapes play an important role in contributing to the borough's environmental, economic and social values. Therefore, all landscapes, rather than just those that are designated, will be viewed as a natural asset. This is in line with the European Landscape Convention.
- 7.160 The NPPF encourages the protection of valued landscapes. For Maidstone, these landscapes are identified as the Greensand Ridge, the Low Weald, and the river valleys of the Medway, the Loose and the Len, which are afforded protection in policy SP14(a).
- 7.161 A landscape character assessment, together with capacity studies, forms part of the local plan evidence base and should be used to inform development and land management proposals. They are a descriptive tool which identify and describe variations of landscape character, distinguishing the features that give a locality its 'sense of place' and pinpointing what makes it distinctive, setting out information on landscape character, condition and sensitivity in a comprehensive and objective way. The documents identify the positive attributes of a landscape which need protecting or enhancing as well as the negative aspects, which can be restored or otherwise improved upon. In cases where development is proposed on sensitive sites more detailed landscape and visual assessments will be required.
- 7.162 The Water Cycle Study 2014, the Kent Water for Sustainable Growth Study 2017, and the 2020 SFRA indicate that a number of the rural service centre catchment areas have at least some known problems with surface water which have a subsequent impact on the sewerage network. It is therefore important that surface water run-off from new development does not make this problem worse. All new developments should include the implementation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) that reduce surface water run-off. To ensure consistency across each rural service centre with respect to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, a detailed flood risk assessment is required prior to any development with the obvious intention of ensuring new development is located outside areas liable to flooding.

LPRSP14(A): Natural Environment

Introduction

- 7.163 Protection of the natural environment sits at the heart of the planning system. The Borough of Maidstone has a rich tapestry of natural environment assets which need to be protected and enhanced through the plan. The diversity of natural environment assets is evidenced through the number and range of protected sites which are protected via national and local designations. Maidstone Borough Council has committed to address the loss of biodiversity through the declaration of a climate change

and biodiversity emergency, and the adoption of a Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

- 7.164 Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate the protection of natural landscape assets including Ancient Woodland, veteran trees, hedgerows and features of biological and geological interest.
- 7.165 The Environment Act will introduce a requirement for new development to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. The Council are keen to demonstrate its commitment to enhancing biodiversity in the borough to align with the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan, and viability testing has indicated that the delivery of 20% net gain can be achieved. Developments will be expected to deliver a minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain as measured using the latest Natural England Biodiversity metric.
- 7.166 Recent advice from Natural England has highlighted the impact that new development can have on waterways, whether these be within or downstream of the borough. It is necessary for new development to demonstrate that it can achieve net nutrient neutrality in the Stour Catchment.

POLICY LPRSP14A – NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. To enable Maidstone Borough to retain a high quality of living, protect and enhance the environment, and to be able to respond to the effects of climate change, developers will ensure that new development incorporates measures where appropriate to:

- a. Deliver a minimum 20% on site Biodiversity Net Gain on new residential development, having regard to Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and/or Nature Recovery Networks. Biodiversity Net Gain should be calculated in accordance with the latest Natural England biodiversity metric or equivalent.
- b. Protect positive landscape character, areas of Ancient Woodland, veteran trees, trees with significant amenity value, important hedgerows, features of biological or geological interest, and the existing public rights of way network from inappropriate development and avoid significant adverse impacts as a result of development.
- c. Avoid damage to and inappropriate development considered likely to have significant direct or indirect adverse effects on:
 - i. Internationally, nationally and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity (either within or beyond the borough); and
 - ii. Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats;
- d. If significant harm to habitats and biodiversity cannot be avoided, then the mitigation hierarchy should be followed.

2. Control pollution to protect ground and surface waters where necessary and mitigate against the deterioration of water bodies and adverse impacts on

Groundwater Source Protection Zones, and incorporate measures to improve the ecological status of water bodies as appropriate; Major developments will not be permitted unless they can demonstrate that new or existing water supply, sewage and wastewater treatment facilities can accommodate the new development. Wastewater treatment and supply infrastructure must be fit for purpose and meet all requirements of both the permitting regulations and the Habitats Regulations (for example in relation to nutrient neutrality at the Stodmarsh SAC/SPA/Ramsar site)

3. **Enhance, extend and connect habitats to enhance the borough's network of sites that incorporates designated sites of importance for biodiversity, priority habitats and fragmented Ancient Woodland; support opportunities for the creation of new Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats; create, enhance, restore and connect other habitats, including links to habitats outside Maidstone Borough, where opportunities arise;**
 - a. Provide for the long-term maintenance and management of all natural assets, including landscape character, associated with the development;
 - b. Mitigate for and adapt to the effects of climate change; and
 - c. Positively contribute to the improvement of accessibility of natural green space within walking distance of housing, employment, health and education facilities and to the creation of a wider network of new links between green and blue spaces including links to the Public Rights of Way network.
4. **Where appropriate, development proposals will be expected to appraise the value of the borough's natural environment through the provision of the following:**
 - a. An Ecological Impact Assessment of development sites and any additional land put forward for mitigation purposes to take full account of the biodiversity present, including the potential for the retention and provision of native plant species;
 - b. Arboricultural assessments to take full account of any natural assets connected with the development and associated sites; and
 - c. A landscape and visual impact assessment to take full account of the significance of, and potential effects of change on, the landscape as an environmental resource together with views and visual amenity.
5. **Any required publicly accessible open space should be designed as part of the overall green and blue infrastructure and layout of a site, taking advantage of the potential for multiple benefits including increased physical activity, enhanced play, wildlife, sustainable urban drainage, tree planting and landscape provision. The form and function of green and blue infrastructure will reflect a site's characteristics, nature and location.**
6. **Development proposals will give weight to the protection of the following designated sites for biodiversity, as shown on the policies map, which will be equal to the significance of their biodiversity/geological status, their contribution to wider ecological networks and the protection/recovery of priority species as follows:**

- i. For internationally designated sites (SACs, SPAs, and Ramsar sites; including candidate sites), the highest level of protection will apply, as afforded by the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended).
 - ii. Other than in exceptional circumstances (as set out in the Regulations), development will only be permitted where the Council is satisfied that any necessary mitigation, management or monitoring measures are secured in perpetuity as part of the proposal and will be implemented in a timely manner, such that, in combination with other plans and development proposals, there will not be adverse effects on the integrity of a European site.
 - iii. For nationally designated sites (including candidate sites), development will only be permitted where it is not likely to have an adverse effect on the designated site or its interests (either individually or in combination with other developments) unless the benefits of the development at this site clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the designated site that make it of national importance and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Where damage to a nationally designated site cannot be avoided or mitigated, compensatory measures will be sought. Development will also accord with and support the conservation objectives of any biodiversity site management plans.
 - iv. For locally designated sites (including draft published sites), development likely to have an adverse effect will be permitted only where the damage can be avoided or adequately mitigated or when its need outweighs the biodiversity interest of the site. Compensation will be sought for loss or damage to locally designated sites.
 - v. Development in Lenham and Lenham Heath that would result in a net increase in population served by a wastewater system will need to ensure that it will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of Stodmarsh SAC/SPA/Ramsar site. Where a proposed development falls within the Stour Catchment (e.g. Lenham, east of Faversham Road), or where sewage from a development will be treated at a Waste Water Treatment Works that discharges into the river Stour or its tributaries, then applicants will be required to demonstrate that the requirements set out in the advice letter and accompanying methodology on Nutrient Neutrality issued by Natural England have been met. This will enable the Council to ensure that the requirements of the Habitats Regulations are being met.
- 7. The Council will work with Natural England to assess, monitor and if necessary mitigate any recreation pressure or air pollution effects at North Downs Woodland SAC. Any air pollution mitigation strategy will be developed and agreed with Natural England before the Local Plan is adopted and implemented prior to adverse effects on integrity occurring; developer contributions would be used to support this.**
- 8. Any development within 6km of the Medway Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar will be required to make a financial contribution to mitigate against additional recreational impact arising from development.**

Account should be taken of the Council's Landscape Character Guidelines SPD, Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan.

LPRSP14(B): Historic Environment

- 7.167 Maidstone Borough has been shaped and influenced by a long past history, the legacy of which is a strong and rich cultural heritage. In addition to an extensive and important archaeological heritage from prehistory, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval and later periods, the Borough contains an impressive and visible built heritage resource. In addition to the Borough's industrial heritage including military heritage, brewing, paper making and shipping along the Medway have been notable industrial influences. The borough's varied geology has been the source of locally distinctive building materials, namely Kentish ragstone, Wealden clay for brick and tile making and oak from the Wealden forests used in the construction of timber-framed buildings and weather boarding.
- 7.168 The diversity of heritage assets is recognised through designations made at the national level by Historic England such as listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and registered parks and gardens and also those identified more locally such as conservation areas, the parks and gardens included in the Kent Gardens Compendium and locally listed buildings. The term 'heritage asset' is defined in the NPPF and, in addition to these 'designated' assets, encompasses features of more localised significance, so called 'non-designated' heritage assets.
- 7.169 Collectively these heritage assets contribute to the strong sense of place which exists across the borough. This historic inheritance also has wider economic, social, including health, and cultural benefits. There are also particular economic, social and cultural benefits for Maidstone Town Centre. The Archbishop's Palace and Leeds Castle are two particularly high-profile examples which help to drive tourism in the borough. Mote Park is a registered historic park which both local residents and visitors' value highly as a popular recreational resource. Non-designated heritage assets also play an important role in the historic character of the Borough and historic. Features such as buildings, traditional field enclosures and monuments are also integral to the borough's high-quality landscape, particularly enjoyed by users of the borough's extensive public rights of way network.
- 7.170 This rich historical resource is, however, vulnerable to damage and loss including of local skills. This importance is signified by the fact that heritage assets are inherently irreplaceable; once lost they are gone forever. Through the delivery of its local plan, and its wider activities, the council will act to record, conserve and enhance the borough's heritage assets. This will be underpinned by actions taken in response to a heritage assessment review which will feed into later iterations of this Plan.

POLICY LPRSP14(B) – THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

To ensure their continued contribution to the economy, culture and image of Maidstone Borough, the characteristics, distinctiveness, diversity and quality of heritage assets will be conserved and, where possible, enhanced. This will be achieved by the council encouraging and supporting measures that secure the sensitive restoration, reuse, enjoyment, conservation and/or enhancement of heritage assets, in particular designated assets identified as being at risk, to include:

1. Collaboration with developers, landowners, parish councils, groups preparing neighbourhood plans and heritage bodies on specific heritage initiatives including proposals for conservation and appropriate re-use of historic assets (especially as drivers for local regeneration) and bids for funding;
2. Through the development management process, securing the sensitive management and

- design of development which impacts on heritage assets and their settings and positively incorporates heritage assets into wider development proposals.
3. Through the incorporation of positive heritage policies in neighbourhood plans which are based on analysis of locally important and distinctive heritage; and broad locations identified in the local plan.
 4. Ensuring relevant heritage considerations are a key aspect of site master plans prepared in support of development allocations and broad locations identified in the Local Plan and that specialist officers will be consulted at an early stage in the preparation of plans
 5. Through the reallocation of Non-Designated Heritage Assets to the Local List
 6. Through the review and reduction of assets recorded in the list of Heritage Assets at Risk held by Historic England
 7. Through reference to the Heritage Asset Assessment and Heritage Assessment of Proposed Housing Allocations matrix in all individual site policies
 8. Through the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and archaeological landscapes appropriate to their significance.

LPRSP14(C): Climate Change

Introduction

- 7.171 In April 2019 Maidstone Borough Council approved a motion recognising global climate and biodiversity emergencies. The council articulated this recognition through its new draft Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy which builds on the council's commitment to embed the climate and biodiversity emergency strategies across the organisation.
- 7.172 Planning plays a fundamental and decisive role in helping the council to deliver carbon neutrality and the National Planning Policy Framework embeds climate change and biodiversity at the heart of the planning system.
- 7.173 A statutory duty is placed upon LPAs under Section 19(1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, who are required to include in their Local Plans 'policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contribute to the mitigations of, and adaptation to, climate change'. Additionally, the Planning and Energy Act 2008 allows local planning authorities to set energy efficiency standards in their development plan policies that exceed the energy efficiency requirements of the building regulations.
- 7.174 The growth proposed in the borough has to be balanced with the need to respond to the climate change and biodiversity emergencies. New development will be expected to mitigate against and be adaptable to climate change through a range of measures outlined in the policy below.

POLICY LPRSP14(C) – CLIMATE CHANGE

To ensure that development in the borough mitigates and adapts to climate change, the council will:

1. Adopt a strategy for growth which delivers development in sustainable locations, well supported by or capable of delivering better services and public transport which will minimise the need to travel.
2. Encourage the delivery of sustainable buildings and a reduction of CO2 emissions in new development, having regard to the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy.
3. Encourage and support the delivery of low carbon energy and low carbon heat networks in new developments.
4. Support the provision of renewable energy infrastructure within new development.
5. Require the integration of blue-green infrastructure into qualifying new development in order to mitigate urban heat islands, enhance urban biodiversity, and to contribute to reduced surface water run off through the provision of SuDS.
6. Require development involving the creation of new dwellings, retail, and/or employment space to encourage a shift towards sustainable travel through:
 - a) prioritising active travel by ensuring good provision and connectivity of walking and cycling routes;
 - b) ensuring public transport accessibility and;
 - c) through the provision of electric vehicle infrastructure.
7. Require high levels of water efficiency in new residential development to ensure that water consumption should not exceed 110l per person per day.
8. Require new development involving the creation of new dwellings, retail floorspace and/or employment floorspace to plan for and respond to the impacts of climate change.
9. Require new development to include a Flood Risk Assessment where the site is located within Flood Zones 2 or 3, or is over 1 hectare in size.

LPRSP15: Design

Introduction

- 7.175 Good design is the fundamental principle underpinning good planning. It has a very important impact upon the quality of the environment and the way in which places function. The NPPF places great emphasis upon raising the quality of the built, natural and historic environment and the quality of life in all areas. It attaches great importance to the securing of high-quality design and seeks to ensure that all development contributes to making places better for all.
- 7.176 The council aspires to achieve high quality design throughout the borough, and this policy seeks to manifest this aim and will be used to assess all development requiring planning permission. In order to achieve high quality design, the council expects that proposals will positively respond to and, where appropriate, enhance the character of their surroundings. It is important that development contributes to its context.
- 7.177 Key aspects of built development will be the scale, height, materials, detailing, mass, bulk and site coverage. These features should relate well, and respond positively, to the context in which they are seen. Good design should also address the functioning of an area, including accessibility to all, linkages to local services, and issues of crime. New development should integrate well into the built, natural and historic environment and should address the connections between people and places, including vehicle and pedestrian movement.
- 7.178 In establishing the use and designing the layout and site coverage of development, landscaping shall be integral to the overall design of a scheme and needs to be considered at the beginning of the design process. In appropriate locations, local distinctiveness should be reinforced and natural features worthy of retention be sensitively incorporated. It is also important that all new development responds to climate change by reducing its impact and mitigating against the effects of climate change. Additionally, new development should protect and enhance any on-site biodiversity and geodiversity features, or provides sufficient mitigation measures, and in areas at risk of flooding, inappropriate development should be avoided.
- 7.179 In assessing the appropriateness of design, the council will have regard to adopted Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments, the National Design Guide 2019, and the Kent Design Guide, which provide specific information about local character and distinctiveness and give guidance on design principles. Regard will also be given to the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.
- 7.180 Proposals which fail to take opportunities to secure high quality design will be resisted.

POLICY LPRSP15 – PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DESIGN

Proposals which would create high quality design and should meet the following criteria, as appropriate, to be permitted:

1. Create designs and layouts that are accessible to all, and maintain and maximise opportunities for permeability and linkages to the surrounding area and local services;
2. Respond positively to, and where possible enhance, the local, natural or historic character of the area. Particular regard should be paid to scale, height, materials, detailing, mass, bulk, articulation and site coverage
3. Incorporation of a high quality, modern design approach and making use of vernacular materials where appropriate. For housing schemes vernacular materials should be used on a high proportion of buildings, particularly in key/prominent locations*;
4. Create high quality public realm and, where opportunities permit, provide improvements, particularly in town centre locations;
5. Respect the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses and provide adequate residential amenities for future occupiers of the development by ensuring that proposals do not result in, or its occupants are exposed to, excessive noise, vibration, odour, air pollution, activity or vehicular movements, overlooking, or visual intrusion, or loss of light to occupiers;
6. Respect the topography and respond to the location of the site and sensitively incorporate natural features such as natural watercourses, trees, hedges and ponds worthy of retention within the site. Particular attention should be paid in rural and semi-rural areas where the retention and addition of native vegetation appropriate to local landscape character around the site boundaries should be used as positive tool to help assimilate development in a manner which reflects and respects the local and natural character of the area;
7. Provide a high-quality design which responds to areas of heritage, townscape and landscape value or uplifts an area of poor environmental quality;
8. Orientate development, where possible, in such a way as to maximise the opportunity for sustainable elements to be incorporated, including to optimise access to sustainable transport modes, and to reduce the reliance upon less sustainable energy sources;
9. Protect and enhance any on-site biodiversity and geodiversity features;
10. Development shall have regard to relevant national and local design guides and codes;
11. Safely accommodate the vehicular and pedestrian movement generated by the proposal on the local highway network and through the site access;
12. Create a safe and secure environment and incorporate adequate security measures and features to deter crime, fear of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour;
13. Incorporate measures for the adequate storage of waste, including provision for increasing recyclable waste;

14. Provide adequate vehicular and cycle parking to meet adopted council standards; and
15. Be flexible towards future adaptation in response to changing life needs.
16. Ensure that new streets are tree lined and that opportunities have been taken to maximise the incorporation of trees within the development.

Account should be taken of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Character Area Assessments, the Maidstone Borough Landscape Character Guidelines SPD, the Kent Design Guide and the Kent Downs Area of Natural Beauty Management Plan.

* The separate design guidance will outline examples of vernacular materials and how they can be used well and where these are most appropriate.

8. DETAILED SITE ALLOCATION POLICIES

- 8.1 This Chapter deals with the land allocations that are necessary to meet our development targets for the period 2022 to 2037. This includes allocations for residential, employment and mixed-use development. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan was adopted in 2017 with a plan period of 2011 to 2031 so the allocations outlined in this section build on those and cater for the increased and amended growth scenarios, as well as the Plan horizon of 2037 for the Local Plan Review.
- 8.2 The Plan intends to roll forward those allocations from the Local Plan 2017 that remain deliverable and supersede some with new allocations. A list of such sites is outlined in Table 8.1. For those site allocations identified as saved the detailed policy allocation details outlined in Local Plan 2017 remain in place.

Retention of MBLP 2017 Site Allocations

Allocations complete	Allocations expected to complete 2020-22	Allocations not complete			Allocations Superseded	
					Superseded Policy	Superseded By
H1 (1)	H1 (5)	H1 (2)	H1 (22)	H1 (54)	H1 (13)	LPRSA 144
H1 (6)	H1 (16)	H1 (3)	H1 (24)	H1 (59)	RMX1 (2)	LPRSA 146
H1 (20)	H1 (23)	H1 (4)	H1 (25)	H1 (65)	RMX1 (4)	LPRSAEmp1
H1 (32)	H1 (29)	H1 (7)	H1 (26)	EMP1 (1)	RMX1 (5)	LPRSA 148
H1 (34)	H1 (31)	H1 (8)	H1 (27)	EMP1 (2)	RMX1 (6)	LPRSA 151
H1 (35)	H1 (33)	H1 (9)	H1 (28)	EMP1 (4)		
H1 (37)	H1 (39)	H1 (10)	H1 (30)	RMX1 (1)		
H1 (40)	H1 (43)	H1 (11)	H1 (36)	RMX1 (3)		
H1 (42)	H1 (45)	H1 (12)	H1 (38)			
H1 (44)	H1 (47)	H1 (14)	H1 (41)			
H1 (51)	H1 (53)	H1 (15)	H1 (46)			
H1 (55)	H1 (56)	H1 (17)	H1 (48)			
H1 (57)	H1 (58)	H1 (18)	H1 (49)			
H1 (61)	H1 (60)	H1 (19)	H1 (50)			
H1 (62)	H1 (63)	H1 (21)	H1 (52)			
H1 (64)	H1 (66)	These policies are not complete and are not anticipated to be completed before October 2022. They are expected to be retained in the Local Plan Review.			These policies are proposed to be superseded by new allocations. As such they are not expected to be retained in the Local Plan Review.	
EMP1(3)	These allocations are not complete but are anticipated to be completed before October 2022. They are not expected to be retained when the Local Plan Review is Adopted.					
These policies are complete and will not be retained when the Local Plan Review is Adopted.						

Table 8.1 – Local Plan 2017 allocations

- 8.3 In addition to the saved allocations, the Local Plan Review provides for new development allocations.

These are set out in an area-by-area fashion in order to provide clarity for stakeholders and follow the pattern of the Plan's spatial strategy. The areas are:

- Maidstone Town Centre
- Maidstone urban area
- Development of the edge of the Maidstone urban area
- Garden settlements
- Strategic development locations (Invicta Barracks, Leeds Langley Corridor & Lenham Broad Location)
- Rural service centres
- Larger Villages
- Smaller villages
- The countryside

New Site Allocations proposed in the Local Plan Review

8.4 As set out in Policy SS1 and SP1-7, the following site allocations are proposed to meet the objectively identified needs across the Plan period. These are additional to, and complement the development allocated in Policies SP1-7.

Site Ref	Site Name	Growth Location	Identified Capacity		
			Emp use m ²	Town centre use m ²	Resi units
LPRSA145	Len House	Maidstone Town Centre		3,600	159
LPRSA147	Gala Bingo & Granada House	Maidstone Town Centre		500	40
LPRSA148	Maidstone Riverside	Maidstone Town Centre	5,148	2,574	650
LPRSA149	Maidstone West	Maidstone Town Centre	1,034	517	130
LPRSA151	Mote Road	Maidstone Town Centre	1,250	0	172
LPRSA144	High St/ Medway St	Maidstone Town Centre		150	50
LPRSA146	Maidstone East	Maidstone Town Centre	5,000	2,000	500
LPRSA366	Springfield Tower	Maidstone Urban Area	-	-	150
LPRSA152	Former Royal British Legion Site	Maidstone Urban Area	-	-	8
LPRSA265	Land at Abbey Gate Farm	SW of Maidstone	-	-	250
LPRSA270	Land south of Police HQ	S of Maidstone	-	-	196
LPRSA172	Land at Sutton Road	SE of Maidstone	-	-	75
LPRSA362	Police HQ, Sutton Rd	SE of Maidstone	-	-	135
LPRSA266	North of Ware St	NE of Maidstone	-	-	67
LPRSA303	EIS Oxford Rd	E of Maidstone	-	-	20
LPRSA101	Land south of A20	Harrietsham	-	-	53
LPRSA071	Land at Keilen Manor	Harrietsham			47
LPRSA310	Land at Moat Rd	Headcorn	-	-	110
LPRSA260	Ashford Road	Lenham	2,500	-	-
LPRSA295	Land north of Copper Ln & Albion Rd	Marden	-	-	113
LPRSA066	Land east of Lodge Rd	Staplehurst	-	-	78
LPRSA114	Land at Home Farm	Staplehurst	-	-	49
LPRSA360	Campfield Farm	Boughton Monchelsea	-	-	30
LPRSA312	Land north of Heath Rd	Coxheath			85
LPRSA364	Kent Ambulance HQ	Coxheath			10
LPRSA251	Land at Former Orchard Centre Heath Rd	Coxheath			5
LPRSA204	Land south east of Eyhorne Street	Eyhorne St (H'bourne)	-	-	9
LPRSA078	Haven Farm & L/a 4 Southways	Sutton Valence	400	1,500	100
LPRSA248	North of Kenward Rd	Yalding	-	-	100

Table 8.2 – New allocations proposed in the Local Plan review

General requirements for all site allocations

Design

- 8.5 In addition to the requirements set out in the policies below, reference should be had to the NPPF, Building for Life 12, and other Government guidance where appropriate.

Open Space

- 8.6 Site allocations will be required to meet the requirements of Policies LPRSP13 & LPRINF1 in respect of the provision of accessible open/amenity space.
- 8.7 Where a site allocation refers to a specific open space requirement/typology, this reflects a specific need related to that development/location, which is to be delivered as part of the wider response to Policy LPRSP13 and does not necessarily represent the maximum sum of space required on site.
- 8.8 For town and village centre sites or other constrained sites such as heritage assets, where it is not possible to provide an appropriate level of open space on-site in accordance with policy LPRSP13 appropriate contributions will be sought to wider open space/public realm enhancements in the surrounding area.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 8.9 The open space or other requirements of any site allocation do not take into account the potential spatial requirements of any necessary response to biodiversity net gain or mitigation. In most instances the Council does not consider it appropriate to overlay both accessible amenity and biodiversity/habitat requirements due to the conflict which arises between recreation and habitat creation/preservation.

Sustainable Transport Measures

- 8.10 Whilst town centre sites typically benefit from access to enhanced levels of public transport, in many instances, with, for example, reduced levels of car ownership, they place increased pressure upon existing infrastructure. In accordance with Policy LPRSP12 sites may be required to make contributions to sustainable transport measures such as cycle hire, pedestrian/cycle route enhancement and public realm improvement.

Sites in Maidstone Town Centre

POLICY LPRSA144 – MEDWAY/ HIGH ST, MAIDSTONE

Land to the rear of 34-35 High Street and the land at Medway St car park is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 50 dwellings with 150m² of town centre uses. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- The site has the potential to deliver development at higher densities reflecting the site's town centre location.
- This site can be developed retaining the core of No 35 High St, which is an opportunity for significant improvement and retention of a historic asset and the scale of any new development shall have regard to the historic low scale nature of the High Street.
- The Medway Street and Fairmeadow frontages offer the opportunity for taller built elements, the scale and form of which will be informed by a townscape and heritage assessment.
- In addition to townscape and heritage assessments, regard shall be had to the impact of any scheme upon the wider setting of the Medway River
- Development will need to respect and where possible enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and other nearby heritage assets
- Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site is undertaken and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured. The development layout will include significant landscaping including tree planting.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.

Access/Highways and transportation

- Any application shall be accompanied by an assessment to demonstrate how the proposal impacts upon the availability of public car parking spaces in the town centre, together with appropriate mitigation where required.
- Town centre locations benefit from lower trip rates and lower car ownership levels, reducing the level of mitigation necessary.
- If a car free or reduced level of parking is proposed, proportionate contributions will be required to sustainable transport improvements within the town centre.
- Secure cycle parking for residents to be provided.

Noise

- Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary measures in respect of its town centre location. This shall include traffic and other town centre impacts upon future users, as well as an assessment to demonstrate that the ongoing viability of the adjacent town centre commercial uses is not adversely affected.

Air Quality

- Having regard to the site's setting adjacent to a heavily trafficked part of the highway network, appropriate air quality mitigation measures are to be integrated into the development.

Flood Risk

- Both the site configuration and uses shall demonstrate that regard has been had to the location of part of the site within and area of flood risk and incorporate appropriate flood resilient measures.
- Development should be directed to the area with the lowest flood risk, and the exceptions test may need to be met.
- More vulnerable uses should be directed to the areas within the site with the lowest risk from flooding.

Open Space

- Appropriate residential amenity space may take the form of balconies and/or terraces, subject to their ability to provide an acceptable level of amenity having regard to noise, air quality and adjacency of other uses.
- Amenity spaces should form an integrated element of the overall scheme design
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policies LPRSP13 & INF1, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the wider town centre.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place.

POLICY LPRSA145 - LEN HOUSE, MAIDSTONE TOWN CENTRE

Len House and the adjacent land is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 159 dwellings and approximately 3.600m² of retail, leisure or other appropriate town centre uses. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and Heritage

- The primary objective for this site must be to introduce a range of uses that optimise the long term viability of Len House, whilst ensuring that its heritage significance is not diminished.
- Any development proposals must be informed by a detailed assessment of the buildings significance and its relationship to surrounding heritage assets.
- Alterations/additions to the listed building will be permitted where it is demonstrated that they are the minimum necessary to achieve the above objective and where it is demonstrated that there are no viable alternative interventions.
- The internal configuration of Len House must respect the significance of the main internal spaces and key heritage features.
- Any external alterations or extensions to Len House must not detract from the historical significance of the building and its wider townscape role.
- New build elements on the adjacent former parking area must respect the setting and significance of Len House, as well as respect the wider surrounding heritage assets.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- The ecological significance of the Mill Pond must be respected and where possible enhanced
- Proposals shall enable the daylighting of the River Len at the eastern frontage to the site.

Noise

- Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary measures in respect of its town centre location. This shall include traffic and other town centre impacts upon future users, as well as an assessment to demonstrate that the ongoing viability of the adjacent town centre commercial uses is not adversely affected.

Air Quality

- Having regard to the site's setting adjacent to a heavily trafficked part of the highway network, appropriate air quality mitigation measures to be agreed with the council which will be implemented are to be integrated into part of the development.

Access/Highways and transportation

- Town centre locations benefit from lower trip rates and lower car ownership levels, reducing the level of mitigation necessary.
- If a car free or reduced level of parking is proposed, proportionate contributions will be required to sustainable transport improvements within the town centre.
- Secure cycle parking for residents to be provided.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- Any development of the site shall take account of potential flood risk issues and ensure that the surface water drainage strategy does not increase the risk of surface water flooding

Open Space

- Appropriate residential amenity space may take the form of balconies and/or terraces, subject to their ability to provide an acceptable level of amenity having regard to noise, air quality and adjacency of other uses.
- Amenity spaces should form an integrated element of the overall scheme design.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policies LPRSP13 & INF1, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the wider town centre.

Contaminated Land

- The site will need to be made safe prior to development commencing

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place.

POLICY LPRSA146 - MAIDSTONE EAST, MAIDSTONE TOWN CENTRE

Maidstone East is included as a draft allocation for the development of a minimum of 500 dwellings, 2,000m² new retail, 5,000m² business and other appropriate town centre uses such as a medical facility. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design, Layout & Heritage

- The site shall be the subject of a comprehensive masterplan which has regard to its adjacency to the railway station and civic quarter, as well as the adjacent retail frontages.
- The masterplan shall be informed by a townscape and heritage assessment that identifies, for example, key views towards/from Sessions House, other heritage assets and Brenchley Gardens and other important areas of public realm.
- Any development shall incorporate a mix of uses which ensure that the site contributes positively to this town centre location, providing an active street frontage.
- Development proposals will be required to demonstrate that the opportunity for non-residential uses has been optimised.
- The form and scale of development on this site must be sensitive to the site's prominence and adjacency to heritage assets.
- Subsequent detailing and use of materials shall be of a high quality.
- The scheme shall deliver a more prominent station/forecourt entrance, whilst enhancing the public realm fronting onto Sessions House Square/Week Street.
- The development shall be designed to respond to its context and respect the setting of the listed Sessions House and other nearby heritage assets.
- The masterplan must demonstrate that a permeable scheme can be achieved, delivering improved visual and physical connections between Sessions Square and Brenchley Gardens.
- Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site shall be undertaken and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured.
- The development shall incorporate commuter car parking to serve Maidstone East station.
- Maintenance access for Network Rail to the western end of the railway tracks is secured.

Landscape/Ecology

- In addition to new areas of public realm, the development shall incorporate high quality communal and private amenity areas for residents. New landscaping shall make a positive contribution to place-making and provide the opportunity for habitat creation.
- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Having regard to the site's size, measures for positive biodiversity net gain shall be incorporated into the scheme

Noise

- Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary measures in respect of its town centre location, including both road and rail traffic impacts, as well as noise and activity arising from the site's town centre location.

Air Quality

- Appropriate air quality measures to be agreed with the council which will be implemented as part of the development. These shall ensure that new residents are not exposed to unacceptable conditions and to also ensure that the development does not adversely impact upon existing air quality levels.

Access/Highways and transportation

- Town centre locations benefit from lower trip rates and lower car ownership levels, reducing the level of mitigation necessary.
- If a car free or reduced level of parking is proposed, proportionate contributions will be required to sustainable transport improvements within the town centre.
- Secure cycle parking for residents to be provided.
- As part of the station forecourt enhancement scheme, the development shall enable enhancement to the interchange between buses, trains and taxis, including through the provision of improved pick up/drop off facilities.
- The development shall not inhibit the ability to achieve full disabled access to the station and platforms.
- Highway access to the residential development shall be taken from Sandling Road. An additional, in-bound only access to the former Sorting Office part of the site could be taken from Fairmeadow, subject to any impacts upon the wider public realm strategy.
- A service strategy for the non-residential elements will demonstrate that the amenity and quality of the residential element of the scheme is not undermined.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- The submission of a detailed surface water drainage strategy for the development based around sustainable drainage principles.

Open Space

- Appropriate residential amenity space may take the form of balconies and/or terraces and communal gardens, subject to their ability to provide an acceptable level of amenity having regard to noise, air quality and adjacency of other uses.
- Amenity spaces should form an integrated element of the overall scheme design.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policies LPRSP13(B) & LPRINF1, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the wider town centre.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.

Public Realm

- Improvements at Sessions House Square and Week Street to provide an enhanced public open space and public realm.
- Contributions to a comprehensive public realm enhancement scheme for the stretch of Week Street linking the site to the junction with Fremlin Walk, and from the site to Brenchley Gardens, to significantly upgrade the quality and attractiveness for pedestrians.

POLICY LPRSA147 - GALA BINGO & GRANADA HOUSE, MAIDSTONE TOWN CENTRE

Gala Bingo & Granada House is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 40 additional dwellings and no net loss of town centre uses. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- These two adjacent sites have the opportunity to be brought forward as a comprehensive scheme or as two adjacent sites coordinated by a single design brief.
- The Council has adopted an opportunity site framework for the site to guide future development, which highlights that:

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Any detailed design shall incorporate measures to enable the greening of the site, for example, the introduction of living walls.
- Should site characteristics limit the potential for on-site biodiversity benefits, it may be appropriate to make contributions to wider town centre biodiversity enhancement schemes.

Noise

- Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary measures in respect of its town centre location with particular regard to the impacts of vehicular traffic, service traffic to adjacent sites and the activity associated with the site's town centre location.
- The scheme shall be designed with adequate noise insulation for future residents in order that the ongoing viability of surrounding commercial uses is not compromised.

Air Quality

- The site lies within an area of poor air quality. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures are to be agreed with the council at an early stage of design development. These shall ensure that new residents are not exposed to unacceptable conditions and to also ensure that the development does not adversely impact upon existing air quality levels.

Access/Highways and transportation

- Town centre locations benefit from lower trip rates and lower car ownership levels, reducing the level of mitigation necessary.
- If a car free development is proposed, proportionate contributions will be required to sustainable transport improvements within the town centre.
- Secure cycle parking for residents to be provided.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- The site lies within Flood Zone 3, where vulnerable uses
- should be directed to the area with the lowest flood risk.

Open Space

- Appropriate residential amenity space may take the form of balconies and/or terraces, subject to their ability to provide an acceptable level of amenity having regard to noise, air quality and adjacency of other uses.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policies LPRSP13 & LPRINF1, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the wider town centre.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place

POLICY LPRSA148 - MAIDSTONE RIVERSIDE, MAIDSTONE TOWN CENTRE

Maidstone Riverside is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 650 dwellings 5,148m² of retail use and 2,574m² employment. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Existing Baltic Wharf building should be retained.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site is undertaken and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.

Noise

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

Air Quality

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

Access/Highways and transportation

- Provision of extra bus stops on existing route, along St. Peter's Street.
- Town centre locations benefit from lower trip rates, reducing the level of mitigation necessary.
- Suitable access to the highway network required and linkage to town centre active travel routes and schemes is recommended.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- Flood Zone 2 (53.06%) / Flood Zone 3 (8.3%) / None (38.64%)
- Development should be directed to the area with the lowest flood risk, and the exceptions test may need to be met

Open Space

- Appropriate residential amenity space may take the form of balconies and/or terraces, subject to their ability to provide an acceptable level of amenity having regard to noise, air quality and adjacency of other uses.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policies LPRSP13(B) & LPRINF1, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the wider town centre.

Contaminated Land

- Site should be made safe prior to any development commencing.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place.

POLICY LPRSA149 - MAIDSTONE WEST, MAIDSTONE TOWN CENTRE

Maidstone West is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 210 dwellings, and no net loss of town centre uses. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- The setting of St Peter's Church should be protected.
- Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site is undertaken and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.

Noise

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

Air Quality

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

Access/Highways and transportation

- Provision of a new suitable access or ensure existing access provisions meet standard and safety provisions.
- Town centre locations benefit from lower trip rates, reducing the level of mitigation necessary.
- Suitable access to the highway network required and linkage to town centre active travel routes and schemes is recommended.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- Flood Zone 2 (44.74%) / Flood Zone 3 (29.2%) / None (26.06%)
- Development should be directed to the area with the lowest flood risk, and the exceptions test may need to be met.

Open Space

- Appropriate residential amenity space may take the form of balconies and/or terraces, subject to their ability to provide an acceptable level of amenity having regard to noise, air quality and adjacency of other uses.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policies LPRSP13 & LPRINF1, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/ public realm improvements within the wider town centre.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.

POLICY LPRSA151 - MOTE ROAD, MAIDSTONE TOWN CENTRE

Mote Road is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 172 dwellings, and approximately 1,250m² new employment floorspace. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- A 'Opportunity Site Brief has been prepared for the site, to guide development. The following principles should guide the overall scheme.
- Development shall be of a high quality, creating a contemporary landmark building.
- Development shall create a strong built frontage to Mote Road/Wat Tyler Way, whilst also enabling the enhancement of the public realm to the frontage, incorporating new tree planting.
- The height and massing of buildings shall be informed by a townscape assessment which assess the potential impacts and benefits of the wider town centre skyline.
- The development shall demonstrate that the massing and form preserves the setting of the listed properties in Romney Place plus other nearby heritage assets.
- The scheme shall incorporate measures to mitigate climate change, including ASHP, renewable energy, heating and cooling.

Uses

- The development should seek to optimise the level of commercial floorspace that can be achieved on site with the aspiration to achieve a minimum of 2,000m² of office floorspace. Any scheme which includes a lesser amount of office floorspace should be accompanied by 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.
- The residential elements of the scheme shall be sited where they are not adversely impacted by the site's wider environmental conditions.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Any detailed design shall incorporate measures to enable the greening of the site, for example, the introduction of living walls.
- Should site characteristics limit the potential for on-site biodiversity benefits, it may be appropriate to make contributions to wider townscape enhancement schemes.

Access/Highways and transportation

- Town centre locations benefit from lower trip rates and lower car ownership levels, reducing the level of mitigation necessary.
- If a car free development or reduced level of parking is proposed, the application shall be accompanied by a parking management and impact assessment to demonstrate that optimal use is made of the site's capacity and to ensure no adverse impacts on surrounding residential streets. Where necessary, proportionate contributions will be required to sustainable transport improvements within the town centre.
- Secure cycle parking for residents to be provided.

Noise

- Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary measures in respect of its town centre location with particular regard to the impacts of vehicular traffic, service traffic to adjacent sites and the activity associated with the site's town centre location.
- The scheme shall be designed with adequate noise insulation for future residents in order that the ongoing viability of surrounding commercial uses is not compromised.

Air Quality

- The site lies within an area of poor air quality. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures are to be agreed with the council will be implemented as part of the at an early stage of design development. These shall ensure that new residents are not exposed to unacceptable conditions and to also ensure that the development does not adversely impact upon existing air quality levels

Open Space

- Notwithstanding the site's central urban location, the development shall provide a range of amenity areas for residents.
- Appropriate residential amenity space may take the form of balconies and/or terraces, subject to their ability to provide an acceptable level of amenity having regard to noise, air quality and adjacency of other uses.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policies LPRSP13 & LPRINF1, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/ public realm improvements within the wider town centre.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.

Land contamination

- The submission of a land contamination report and appropriate mitigation measures to be implemented prior to development commencing.

Maidstone Urban Area Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA152 – FORMER ROYAL BRITISH LEGION SOCIAL CLUB, MAIDSTONE

Former Royal British Legion Social Club is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 8 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Development will be subject to an acceptable strategy for the re-provision of the existing community/ leisure facilities on-site.
- The suggested site yield reflects a house typology. Higher yields may be possible with flatted typologies, but the scale and form of any building/s shall not adversely affect the setting of the adjacent public open space.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.

Access/Highways and transportation

- The development shall provide a new suitable access or ensure existing access provisions meet standard and safety provisions.

Open Space

- Provision of new open space on/off site provisions and/or, having regard to the adjacent POS, contributions towards off-site provision/improvements in accordance with Policy LPRSP13 & LPRINF1.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place

POLICY LPRSA303 – EIS OXFORD ROAD, MAIDSTONE

EIS Oxford Road is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 20 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Development will be subject to an acceptable strategy for the re-provision/re-location of the existing community facilities on-site.
- The suggested site yield reflects a house typology. Higher yields may be possible with flatted typologies, but the scale and form of any building/s shall be defined by the predominant character of the surrounding area.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- The site frontage shall reflect the open nature of the adjacent Oxford Gardens site.
- Any on-site landscaping shall incorporate specific measures to enable biodiversity net gain.
- The design of open spaces shall avoid conflict between recreational amenity and biodiversity functions.

Access/Highways and transportation

- Vehicular access shall be via Oxford Road via the provision of the existing/enhanced or new access point incorporating safety provisions.
- The development shall enable pedestrian/cycle permeability to Oxford Gardens.

Open Space

- Provision of new open space in accordance with Policy LPRSP13 & LPRINF1.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place.
- There is limited capacity on the sewerage network at the practical point of connection and so the occupation will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure.

POLICY LPRSA366 – SPRINGFIELD TOWER, ROYAL ENGINEERS ROAD

The former Springfield Library site is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 150 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Development shall respect the setting of the listed Springfield Mansion
- The scheme shall provide a positive aspect to Old Chatham Road
- Taller buildings will be subject to an acceptable townscape impact assessment and to be of a high quality design
- The height and scale of buildings shall respect the amenity of surrounding residential schemes.
- The layout of buildings should seek to encourage permeability through the site.
- Where viable the Council would support the inclusion of an active ground floor use.

Landscape / Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Any scheme must enhance the public realm surrounding the site.
- Any proposal shall respect any existing trees on site and should be accompanied by an arboricultural assessment. The removal of any existing trees shall be fully justified and accompanied by a replacement planting scheme. Such a scheme shall include measures to incorporate biodiversity net gain.

Access/ Highways and transportation

- The site's edge of centre location offers opportunities to incorporate measures to encourage lower trip rates and lower car ownership levels.
- Car parking provision should reflect the site's proximity to the town centre and Maidstone East. Any scheme shall be accompanied by a parking strategy that incorporates measures to mitigate the impacts of reduced parking levels and to mitigate the potential impacts of parking dispersing into the wider area, with proportionate financial contributions towards sustainable transport improvements within the vicinity of the site/town centre.
- Secure cycle parking for residents to be provided.

Noise

- Development will be subject to a noise survey to determine any necessary measures in respect of the site's adjacency to the A229.
- The scheme shall be designed with adequate noise insulation for future residents in order that the ongoing viability of surrounding commercial uses is not compromised.

Air Quality

- The site lies within an area where the air quality is affected by heavy traffic levels. Appropriate air quality mitigation measures are to be agreed with the Council which shall ensure that new residents are not exposed to unacceptable conditions and to also ensure that the development does not adversely impact upon existing air quality levels.

Open Space

- Having regard to the site's small footprint, suitable residential amenity space may take the form of balconies and/or terraces, subject to their ability to provide an acceptable level of amenity having regard to noise, air quality and adjacency of other buildings.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policies LPRSP13 & LPRINF1, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements in accordance with Policy DM.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.

Edge of Maidstone Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA266 - LAND AT WARE STREET, MAIDSTONE

Land at Ware Street is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 67 dwellings at an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- The PROW running thorough the site should be retained and enhanced. The site layout shall respect and enhance the setting of semi-rural character of the the PROW.
- The site access shall be located and designed so as to minimise the loss of mature trees fronting Ware Street and appropriate compensatory planting/habitat incorporated into the landscape scheme.
- The northern, western, and eastern boundaries shall be landscaped in a manner that reduces the impact of development upon the wider setting of the open land to the north and incorporates biodiversity enhancement measures.
- The layout, scale and design of buildings and landscaping shall have regard to the site's location within the wider setting of the AONB.
- The residential elements shall be defined by distinct character areas, incorporating a variety of typologies, materials, landscaping and street scenes.

Landscape/Ecology

- The site layout and landscaping shall ensure that all individual and group TPO trees are retained and located within areas that are not within private garden curtilages.
- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- A minimum of 0.7 ha of natural/semi-natural open space shall be provided and dedicated to habitat creation/biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local targets.
- Development shall be accompanied by an open space management plan

Access, Highways and transportation

- Provision of a new suitable access to meet relevant KCC standards and safety provisions.
- Capacity impact modelling required to identify any further mitigations required.

Open Space

- In addition to dedicated areas of natural open space, the scheme shall provide a minimum of 0.55 ha of accessible green amenity space, including children's play.
- LPRSP13(B) & LPRINF1

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place.

POLICY LPRSA265 - LAND AT ABBEY GATE FARM, SOUTH WEST OF MAIDSTONE

Land at Abbey Gate Farm is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 250 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Development of the site shall be informed by a landscape-led masterplan.
- The layout of buildings and landscaping shall be designed to mitigate visual impacts upon the adjacent countryside areas.
- New development should not be located on the higher ground adjacent to Dean Street, unless appropriate visual mitigation is proposed.
- The layout of streets and landscaping shall have regard to the site topography.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbour's amenity is protected.
- Development should preserve and enhance the setting of adjacent built heritage assets and the Loose Conservation Area.
- Development shall be informed by an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured.
- The residential elements shall be defined by distinct character areas, incorporating a variety of typologies, materials, landscaping and street scenes.
- Net densities within residential parcels may vary, but should average circa 30 dph. Higher density parcels will be subject to high quality design, residential amenity and open space.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora. Development should be designed to preserve ancient woodland.
- The Loose Valley LLV should be considered in setting out the layout of this site.
- A community woodland of no less than (5) ha shall be provided.
- A hedgerow enhancement plan for all boundaries.

Access, Highways and Transportation

- Vehicular access shall be from Dean Street.
- The main vehicular access shall take the form of a tree-lined/landscaped boulevard with appropriate.
- No vehicular access, other than emergency access shall be proposed from Stockett Lane/Straw Mill Lane.
- The alignment and setting of PROW should be retained and enhanced.
- Measures to enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the wider network shall be brought forwards, including where appropriate, connections to adjacent development sites and other off-site enhancements.
- Enhancements to public transport services, to bring a bus service into the site and with increased regularity.
- Development will be subject to appropriate improvement works to Dean Street and or any other off-site improvements works necessary to make the development acceptable

Open Space

- Open spaces shall incorporate no less than 2.0 ha of accessible green amenity space incorporating areas of children's play and community allotments.
- Semi/natural open space of no less than 3.0 ha shall be provided, the function of which will focus upon habitat creation and biodiversity net gain.
- Open spaces shall be subject to a landscape management strategy to be agreed with the Council, this shall set out measures for the long term management and maintenance of all public open spaces, semi/natural open space and ecology

Contaminated Land

- The site is r adjacent to a former landfill site and the site should be made safe prior to any development commencing.
- The surface water drainage strategy shall demonstrate that regard has been had to potential contamination risks.
- Ground piling shall not take place unless agreed by the Environment Agency.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

POLICY LPRSA270 - LAND AT PESTED BARS ROAD, SOUTH OF MAIDSTONE

Land south west of Pested Bars Road is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 196 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Principles

- Development will be subject to the prior agreement with the Council of a site-wide masterplan framework/phasing strategy.
- Such a framework will demonstrate that the site is planned and brought forward in a coordinated manner having regard to adjacent site allocations at the former Police HQ.
- Having regard to the scale of development, the masterplan framework shall incorporate an infrastructure impact assessment.
- Unless agreed by the Council as part of the development of the masterplan framework, the outline land budget shall be based upon:
 - No more than 11ha of net developable residential land
 - No less than 25 ha of open space, including accessible public open space, new biodiversity habitat
 - A community hub incorporating both community uses and integrated open space
 - Highway infrastructure that is designed to minimise land take and visual impacts

Access, Highways and transportation

- Development is subject to a combined highways access strategy that shall be developed in conjunction with LPRSA 362 and in agreement with the Council and KCC Highways.
- The principal vehicular access shall be through to Site Allocation LPRSA 362 and then on to Sutton Road.
- The development is subject to the junction to Sutton Road being designed to accommodate sufficient capacity for both Site Allocations 270 and 362.
- The site access and road layout shall be designed to enable passenger bus services to pass through the site and link to LPRSA362
- Any secondary vehicular access points, for example, to allow access to non-residential areas, shall be designed to avoid rat running through the site and be subject to evidence that they will not enable traffic levels that adversely affect the rural character and safety of surrounding lanes.
- The site shall secure good quality pedestrian/cycle permeability to the surrounding network.
- Development will be subject to the prior agreement with KCC regarding any requirements for off-site network improvements or mitigation.
- Development shall secure improvements to the setting of any PRoW that pass through or adjacent to the site

Design and Layout

- Development will be informed by a site-wide landscape-led masterplan to be agreed with the Council. This shall demonstrate that the masterplan and landscape strategy responds positively to the Loose Valley LLV.
- The layout of buildings and landscaping shall be designed to mitigate visual impacts upon the adjacent countryside areas.
- The masterplan framework will identify development parcels, the location of a community hub, together with the hierarchy, typology and location of strategic open spaces.

- The residential elements shall be defined by distinct character areas, incorporating a variety of typologies, materials, landscaping, open spaces and street scenes.
- Net densities within residential parcels may vary, but should average circa 30 dph. Higher density parcels will be subject to, landscape impacts and incorporate high quality design, residential amenity and open space.
- New development shall respect any variations in topography and incorporate appropriate visual mitigation.
- Design of the site will need to ensure any neighbour's amenity is protected.
- Development should preserve and enhance the setting of adjacent built heritage assets and The Quarries Conservation Area.
- Development shall be informed by an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site and the measures needed to address the assessment's findings secured.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/ flora.
- Existing trees and hedgerows shall be retained and enhanced.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- Development shall be subject to a landscape and ecology management plan that provides acceptable measures for the establishment and longer-term maintenance of open spaces across the site.

Open Space

- No less than 25ha of open space shall be provided, including proposals for a country park.
- The site-wide open space strategy shall have regard to the requirements of Policy SP13(B) & INF1.
- Open spaces shall incorporate no less than 2.0 ha of accessible green amenity space integrated in the residential development parcels incorporating areas of children's play.
- The scheme shall provide for and community allotments.
- Subject to liaison with Sport England and the Parish Council, appropriate provision for outdoor sports may be required.
- Semi/natural open space of no less than 5.0 ha shall be provided, the function of which will focus upon habitat creation and biodiversity net gain.
- Open spaces shall be subject to a landscape management strategy to be agreed with the Council, this shall set out measures for the long term funding, management and maintenance of all public open spaces, semi/natural open space and areas of biodiversity habitat.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place.
- If necessary, occupation will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure.

POLICY LPRSA172 - LAND NORTH OF SUTTON ROAD (WEST OF RUMWOOD COURT), SOUTH EAST OF MAIDSTONE

Land north of Sutton Road (west of Rumwood Court) is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 75 units. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- The layout of new housing shall respect the historical significance of the land, namely former landscaped grounds to Rumwood Court.
- The layout and form of development shall be informed by a heritage impact assessment that has regard to the significance of both built heritage assets and potential archeological significance.
- The Development shall secure a low-density landscape-led parkland character.
- The site contains a large number of TPO trees, which should be located within areas of public realm rather than private gardens.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- Development shall demonstrate that the layout, scale and form of development has regard to the need to preserve and enhance the setting of the grade II listed Rumwood Court.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement. Public access to such areas would normally be limited.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy
- The development shall be subject to a landscape management plan to secure the long-term management of all TPO trees and other areas of landscape.

Access, Highways and transportation

- Provision of suitable vehicular access via either Sutton Road or adjacent development at Bicknor Park that meets appropriate standards and safety provisions.
- There should be a presumption that the development will not rely upon vehicular access to Honey lane
- The layout should allow for the potential for the extension of bus connectivity via the adjacent Bicknor Park site.
- The site shall secure good quality pedestrian/cycle permeability.
- Development will be subject to the prior agreement with the Council and KCC regarding any requirements for off-site network improvements or mitigation, including potential cumulative impacts.

Open Space

- Provision of new open space on/offsite provisions in accordance with Policy SP13(B) & INF1.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator takeplace.
- There is limited capacity on the sewerage network at the practical point of connection and so the occupation will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure

POLICY LPRSA362 – MAIDSTONE POLICE HQ, SUTTON RD, MAIDSTONE

Maidstone Police HQ is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 247 dwellings and approximately 7,500sqm of commercial and community uses. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Principles

- Any development of this circa 10ha site will be subject to evidence that the redevelopment of the site does not undermine the successful relocation or delivery of public services and or accommodation.
- Development will be subject to the prior agreement of a site-wide masterplan framework/phasing strategy.
- Such a framework will demonstrate that the site is planned and brought forward in a coordinated manner having regard to adjacent site allocations at Pested Bars – LPRSA270.
- Having regard to the scale of development, the masterplan framework shall incorporate an infrastructure impact assessment.

Access and Highways

- The principal vehicular access shall be direct to Sutton Road.
- The junction to Sutton Road and the access road through the site shall be designed to accommodate the capacity of both the proposed development and that on the adjacent Pested Bars site LPRSA270.
- The access shall be designed to enable passenger bus services to pass through the site and to LPRSA270
- The access route through the site shall be designed as a tree-lined corridor.
- Secondary vehicular access to Queen Elizabeth Square and Lansdowne Avenue may be acceptable subject to highway safety, residential amenity, visual amenity and arboricultural impacts.
- The site shall secure good quality pedestrian/cycle permeability.
- Development to accord with any requirements for off-site highway network improvements or mitigation.

Uses

- The masterplan framework shall include an audit of existing buildings in terms of their condition and function, together with an assessment of their potential for conversion to alternative residential, commercial or community uses.
- Non-residential elements shall be sited so as to avoid adversely affecting existing and future residential amenity.
- The tenure and mix of residential units shall have regard to the Council's Affordable Housing SPD.

Design & Layout

- The existing open space at the Sutton Road frontage shall be retained as communal open space and not subsumed into private gardens/curtilages.
- Additional tree planting along the Sutton Road frontage.
- The existing buildings fronting Sutton Road shall be retained and converted for either residential or commercial uses, whilst retaining their 'civic' character.
- The retention and re-use of other buildings on the site will be subject to the Council's assessment of the above existing building survey, whilst also having regard to viability considerations.

- The residential elements shall be defined by distinct character areas, incorporating a variety of typologies, landscaping and street scenes.
- Net densities within residential parcels may vary, but should average circa 35 dph. Higher density parcels will be subject to high quality design, residential amenity and open space.

Open Space

- The development shall provide accessible open amenity space in accordance with Policy LPRSP13 & LPRINF1, with a minimum of 0.8ha of useable amenity green space (excluding the Sutton Road frontage) incorporating children's play, micro allotments and other functions that contribute positively to the future community.
- Development will be subject to an acceptable strategy to re-incorporate or relocate the allocated sports pitch.
- Off-site provision of elements of sport or natural open space will only be approved if integrated with the adjacent LPRSA 270 or an alternative location agreed by the Council.

Landscape & Ecology

- The scheme shall be designed to protect and enhance the existing boulevard on Lansdowne Avenue that is subject to a Tree Preservation Order.
- Existing open space locations such as the Memorial Gardens/bowling green should be retained and incorporated into a site-wide landscape strategy, unless appropriate alternatives are agreed with the Council.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement. Public access to such areas would normally be limited.
- Development should incorporate a level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be provided for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

Harrietsham Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA071 - LAND AT KEILEN MANOR, HARRIETSHAM

Land adjacent to Keilen Manor, Harrietsham is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 47 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate in order for the development to be acceptable.

Design and layout

- The development shall provide three distinct character areas comprising, circa; 0.7ha of woodland, 0.4 ha of ecology enhancement/open space, a development area of circa 1.4ha.
- Design and layout of the development will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- Development proposals will be of a high standard of design incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
- Development proposals shall incorporate substantial areas of internal landscaping, including street planting, within the site to provide an appropriate landscape framework for the site to protect the setting of the Kent Downs AONB.
- The northern and eastern sections of the development area will be built at a lower density and incorporate landscaping to respect the existing open character of the countryside beyond.
- The development will be set back from Marley Road behind retained open space and landscape buffers.
- Development shall also be set back from the A20 in order to retain the semi-rural character of the frontage. Any loss of existing hedgerow required for access purposes shall be minimized through design and compensated by replanted hedgerow behind the visibility splay.
- The development will provide ecological mitigation/enhancement areas and landscaped buffers along all boundaries with the retained woodland/ecological areas to ensure appropriate habitat connectivity with the retained woodland, ecology area and existing trees and hedgerows beyond the site boundaries.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- The development shall retain the circa 0.7ha area of existing woodland on the western part of the site, which shall be subject to a woodland and biodiversity enhancement/management plan.
- Provision of circa 0.4ha of retained open space to provide new habitat and amenity space on the northern part of the site.
- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Existing trees and hedgerow of amenity or ecological value will need to be retained as part of any development.
- The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance in place at the time of the submission of an application.
- The development proposals shall be designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.

Access, Highways and transportation

- The principal vehicular access shall be to the A20 with Provision of a suitable access to the primary road network that meet standards and safety provisions. Junction modelling will be required to demonstrate that a safe, suitable junction could be created.
- Improved access to both east and westerly bus services with enhanced bus stops and safe pedestrian access, including enhanced pedestrian crossing of the A20.
- A pedestrian and cycle route will be provided through the site connecting Marley Road with the A20.

Open Space

- In addition to the provision of approximately 0.7ha of woodland and the approximately 0.4ha norther area of amenity/ecology, the development area shall incorporate 0.1 ha of accessible amenity green/play space, together with additional on/off site provisions and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements as may be required to meet Policies INF1 & DM13

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities prior to the occupation of the development.

POLICY LPRSA101 - LAND SOUTH OF A20, HARRIETSHAM

Land south of A20 is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 53 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Development proposals will be of a high standard of design incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
- There shall be frontage development to the A20, set back to align with Mayfield development to the west.
- The woodland areas along the southern boundary of the site will be retained, in order to screen new housing from the railway line.
- The line of trees along the eastern boundary of the site will be retained and enhanced, in order to provide a suitable buffer to the adjacent open countryside to the east.
- The layout shall incorporate sustainable surface water drainage with ecological and landscape benefits.
- The layout should adequately protect the amenity and privacy of existing neighbouring residents, and in general alignment with the adjoining Mayfield development to the west.
- The design and layout should be designed so as to protect future occupiers from railway noise.
- The development will provide ecological mitigation/enhancement areas and landscaped buffers along site boundaries and across the central part of the site to ensure appropriate habitat connectivity and the retention of existing trees and hedgerows.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance in place at the time of the submission of an application.
- The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.

Access, Highways and transportation

- Provision of suitable access on the A20 that meet standards and safety provisions.

Open Space

- Provision of new open space in accordance with Policy SP13(B) & INF1.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policy SP13(B) the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision, with an emphasis upon addressing local shortfalls in the provision of allotments and sports pitches.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists / can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

Headcorn Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA310 – MOTE ROAD, HEADCORN

Land at Mote Road Headcorn is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 110 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- The development proposals shall be informed by a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance in place at the time of the submission of an application.
- Built development shall be set back from Moat Road and the western boundary.
- Residential density and typologies shall reflect the site's semi-rural setting
- The layout of new dwellings and roads shall respect the amenities and setting of adjacent residential properties.
- The residential elements shall be defined by distinct character areas, incorporating a variety of typologies, materials, landscaping and street scenes.
- Lower densities and built form on the western portion of the site shall reflect its adjacent to open countryside.
- The layout and form of buildings shall be designed to mitigate the rising topography with E-W landscaping introduced to break up the overall visual massing.
- The layout shall be designed so as to ensure that the substation adjacent to the SW corner of the site does not adversely affect the amenities of future residents.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement. Public access to such areas would normally be limited.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- The proposed landscaping scheme shall respect and protect TPO trees within the site or adjacent to boundaries.
- The existing hedgerow fronting Moat Road shall be retained and enhanced and the impacts of any access junction minimised and mitigated.
- Vehicular access routes within the development shall feature tree planting.

Access, Highways and transportation

- Vehicular access shall be via Mote Road, with junctions and sight lines designed to appropriate capacity and safety standards.
- Development will be subject to the provision of acceptable off-site pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the A274. Any new footways shall be designed to ensure that there are no adverse or ecological impacts and maintain the rural character of Mote Road.
- Development shall respect and enhance the setting of any PRoW within or adjacent to the site.

- Appropriate safe pedestrian access onto Maidstone Road will be required via the northern boundary of the site.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- The site should be designed to ensure that it has a positive impact on the River Beult catchment, and does not worsen local flood risks on Mote Road.
- The only vehicular access to the site is through Flood Zone 3. Any development will be dependent upon acceptable flood safety measures being agreed with the EA.

Open Space

- Provision of new open space on site shall be provided in accordance with Policy LPRSP13(B) & LPRINF1.
- Provision shall include no less than 1.9 ha of semi/natural open space the principle focus of which shall be to contribute to biodiversity net gain. The location and layout of such areas shall be designed to avoid conflict with accessible residential amenity spaces.
- No less than 0.8ha of open green amenity space shall be provided, incorporating appropriate children's play space to meet the needs of the development.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate open space typology in accordance with Policy SP13(B), the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the village.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

Lenham Site Allocations (employment only)

POLICY LPRSA260 – ASHFORD ROAD, LENHAM

Land at Ashford Road, Lenham is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 2,500m² of employment floorspace (E(g), B2 and B8 uses). Subject to retention of this site in the published Local Plan Review, the following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Design, scale bulk and massing shall reflect the edge of settlement location.
- Development proposals will be of a high standard of design incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
- Development proposals shall incorporate substantial areas of internal landscaping within the site to provide an appropriate landscape framework for the site to protect the setting of the Kent Downs AONB.
- An undeveloped section of land will be retained and landscaped to protect the amenity and privacy of existing neighbouring residents.
- The northern and eastern sections of the site will be built at a lower density to reflect the existing open character of the countryside beyond.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement. Such areas shall be protected from the adverse impacts of any operational activities.
- Development will be subject to the incorporation an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- Development proposals shall incorporate substantial areas of internal landscaping within the site to provide an appropriate landscape framework for the site to protect the setting of the Kent Downs AONB
- An undeveloped section of land will be retained and landscaped to protect the amenity and privacy of existing neighbouring residents.

Access, Highways and transportation

- The development shall be subject to the provision of suitable access to the highway.
- Development shall enable the provision of a bus stop on the existing 10x route adjacent to the site (with suitable pedestrian infrastructure).

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

Marden Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA295 - LAND AT COPPER LANE & ALBION ROAD, MARDEN

Land at Copper Lane and Albion Road is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 113 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- The two adjacent land parcels shall be designed and delivered through a joint masterplan with a single point of access to Albion Road and a joint strategy for open space provision.
- Lower densities should be located adjacent to sensitive boundaries.
- The south part of the site around the existing ponds shall be kept free of development with new landscaping to soften and break views from the south.
- Development should be integrated into the slope on the site to minimise landscape impact.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Structural landscaping will be required throughout the site to soften and break up the impact of built development.
- Structural landscaping will be required along the south edge to soften and break up the impact of built development in views from the south.
- Existing tree/hedge site boundaries shall be retained and enhanced apart from where required for vehicular or pedestrian access.
- The site's design should have regard to the setting of the High Weald AONB.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.

Access, Highways and transportation

- Provision of suitable vehicular access to Albion Road that meet adequate capacity standards and safety provisions.
- Development will be subject to the creation of safe pedestrian connections to the wider pedestrian network.

Open Space

- Provision of new open space onsite in accordance with Policy LPRSP13 & LPRINF1. Provision shall include not less than 1.25 ha of open space, with typologies in accordance with Policy LPRSP13. The strategy shall ensure that areas designed to support biodiversity net gain shall not be publicly accessible.
- Not less than 0.3 useable green open space shall be provided, incorporating children's play to meet the needs of the development.
- The function and quality of any open space shall not be prejudiced by a dual requirement to provide surface water drainage mitigation.

- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate level of on-site open space in accordance with Policy SP13(B), the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision targeted at known deficiencies in the area.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

Staplehurst Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA066 - LAND EAST OF LODGE RD, STAPLEHURST

Land east of Lodge Rd is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 78 dwellings on 3.8ha and approximately 1,000 sq.m of employment on 0.3 ha. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Layout and Design

- The layout of new homes and open spaces shall be designed to enable integration with the adjacent development site (MBLP 17 - H1 (48)), together with vehicular, cycle and pedestrian connections.
- New dwellings shall provide an appropriate level of separation from existing and proposed commercial uses and order to ensure that residential amenity is protected and to ensure that the ongoing viability of commercial uses is not prejudiced.
- The PROW on the northern boundary will be preserved and enhanced.
- The residential elements shall be defined by distinct character areas, incorporating a variety of typologies, materials, landscaping and street scenes.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement. Public access to such areas would normally be limited.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- The landscape scheme shall incorporate adequate buffers to both the existing and future employment uses and the railway line.
- Principal traffic routes through the site shall incorporate tree planting
- The development proposals shall be designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance in place at the time of the submission of an application.

Access, Highways and transportation

- Vehicular access shall be provided to both Lodge Road and the adjacent residential development site.
- The developer shall liaise with KCC Highways regarding and measures necessary to manage through traffic/rat running.
- The access to the proposed commercial uses will be via the Lodge Road spur adjacent to the Clinton Business Centre.
- The development shall enable measures to ensure that Lodge Road provides a safe and attractive pedestrian route between the site and Station Approach.

Open Space

- Provision of new open space on/off site provisions and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements in accordance with Policy SP13(B) & INF1. Officer.
- On-site provision of open space across the two parcels shall be coordinated through a masterplan and shall include a minimum of 0.25ha of green amenity and play space and a minimum of 0.6ha of semi/natural open space.
- Balancing ponds and swales shall not be counted towards on-site semi/natural open space needs unless it can be demonstrated that they provide appropriate and undisturbed ecological habitat.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

POLICY LPRSA114 - LAND AT HOME FARM, STAPLEHURST

Land at Home Farm (Sites A and B) is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 49 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- The two parcels of land shall be the subject of a single masterplan that provides an appropriate distribution of built development and open space having regard to the following guidelines.
- Development of Site A shall be set back from Headcorn Road.
- The north eastern section of site A and the entirety of Site B will be built at a lower density and incorporate landscaping buffers in order to reflect the settlement edge location and to preserve the rural lane character of both Pile and Sweetlands Lanes.
- Development along the eastern boundary should be sited and designed to ensure an appropriate relationship with neighbouring commercial uses, such that the amenity of future residents is acceptable and so that the ongoing commercial viability of the commercial unit is not prejudiced.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- The development proposals shall be designed to take into account the results of a LVIA undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- Public access to areas designated as habitat in any landscape masterplan would normally be limited to maintenance purposes.

Access, Highways and transportation

- Vehicular access to site A shall be via Headcorn Road, with the junction designed to minimize loss of existing hedgerow. There shall be no vehicular access from Site A to either Pile Lane or Sweetlands Lane.
- Vehicular access from Site B shall be located so as to minimize hedgerow loss and preferably, for highway safety reasons, be via Little Threads lane.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- The layout of residential accommodation should avoid the northern part of the site and the fringes of Flood Zone 2.
- A Flood Risk Assessment and surface water drainage strategy will be required alongside any planning application. This should demonstrate that sufficient on-site mitigation is achievable in order to ensure that the risk of flooding in adjacent areas is not increased.

Open Space

- The developments shall provide accessible open amenity space in accordance with Policy SP13(B) & INF1, to include a minimum of 0.18ha of useable amenity green space incorporating children's play, micro allotments and other functions that contribute positively to the future community.
- Site A shall also provide 0.85 ha of semi/natural space.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of necessary infrastructure.

Coxheath Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA251 - LAND AT THE FORMER ORCHARD CENTRE HEATH ROAD, COXHEATH

Land at Heath Road is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 5 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Development is subject to the prior relocation of the existing medical/community facilities.

Design and layout

- The site layout shall ensure that residential buildings are successfully integrated with adjacent non-residential uses.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- The site layout shall respect the setting of the adjacent open space.
- Development proposals will be of a high standard of design incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement.
- Should site characteristics limit the potential for on-site biodiversity benefits, it may be appropriate to make contributions to biodiversity enhancement schemes within the surrounding area.

Access, Highways and transportation

- The site shall utilise the existing access point to Heath Road, whilst also ensuring that shared access to adjoining sites is maintained.

Open Space

- The development shall provide new open space in accordance with Policy LPRSP13 & LPRINF1.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policy LPRSP13, the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the locality in accordance with Policy LPRSP13.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator takeplace.

POLICY LPRSA364 – KENT AMBULANCE HQ, COXHEATH

Land at the Kent Ambulance HQ is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 10 dwellings.

Design and layout

- The site layout shall ensure that residential buildings are successfully integrated with adjacent non-residential uses and their operations are not adversely affected.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- Development proposals will be of a high standard of design incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
- Development should preferably be accessed from John Day Close in order to enable better integration with the adjacent residential area and to avoid potential conflicts associated with an access through the adjacent medical site.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Should site characteristics limit the potential for on-site biodiversity benefits, it may be appropriate to make contributions to biodiversity enhancement schemes within the surrounding area.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement.
- Should site characteristics limit the potential for on-site biodiversity benefits, it may be appropriate to make contributions to biodiversity enhancement schemes within the surrounding area.

Access, Highways and transportation

- Provision of a suitable access point that meet standards and safety provisions.
- Access should preferably be taken from John Day Close.

Open Space

- The development shall provide new open space in accordance with Policy SP13(B) & INF1.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics to provide an appropriate level of on-site amenity space for residents in accordance with Policy SP13(B), the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the locality accordance with Policy SP13(B).

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator takeplace.

POLICY LPRSA312 - LAND NORTH OF HEATH RD – BEACON PARK

Land North of Heath Rd – Beacon Park is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 85 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Development proposals will be of a high standard of design incorporating the use of contextually derived vernacular materials.
- Both the northern and eastern boundaries shall incorporate lower densities and integrated landscaping to reflect their edge of village setting.
- A landscape buffer including tree planting, of no less than 15m shall be provided prior to development commencing on the site to ensure separation between the eastern edge of Coxheath and the western edge of Loose.
- The residential elements shall be defined by distinct character areas, incorporating a variety of typologies, materials, landscaping and street scenes.
- The layout of new dwellings and roads shall respect the amenities and setting of adjacent residential properties.
- Streets shall incorporate tree planting as part of an overall landscape management plan, with the visual impact of car parking mitigated.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation enhancement. Public access to such areas would normally be limited.
- The development proposals shall include provision for the protection and buffering as appropriate of the adjacent area of ancient woodland.
- Balancing ponds and swales shall not be counted towards on-site semi/natural open space needs unless it can be demonstrated that they provide appropriate and undisturbed ecological habitat.
- Provision shall include no less than 1.3 ha of semi/natural open space the principle focus of which shall be to contribute to biodiversity net gain. The location and layout of such areas shall be designed to avoid conflict with accessible residential amenity spaces. The development proposals shall be designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance in place at the time of the submission of an application.

Access, Highways and transportation

- Vehicular access shall be via Heath Road, with no vehicular connections to Forstal Lane.
- The new junction to Heath Road shall incorporate appropriate sight lines and be designed to appropriate capacity and safety standards.
- The site shall enable connectivity to existing/planned PRoW and cycle routes to the east and west of the site
- The site shall provide safe pedestrian and cycle routes through the site which are well supervised

Open Space

- The development shall provide accessible open amenity space in accordance with Policy SP13(B) & INF1, with a minimum of 0.26 ha of useable amenity green space incorporating elements such as children's play, micro allotments and other functions that contribute positively to the future community.
- Such amenity spaces should form an integrated element of the overall masterplan.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate open space typology in accordance with Policy SP13(B), the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the village.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

Boughton Monchelsea Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA360 – CAMPFIELD FARM, BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA

Land at Campfield Farm is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 30 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- Development proposals will be of a high standard of design incorporating traditional village typology with the use of vernacular materials.
- The development shall ensure that it does not adversely affect the setting and character of the adjoining countryside.
- This shall incorporate open spaces and new landscaping adjacent to areas of existing woodland to the north of the site.
- External lighting on the site should be carefully designed so that it minimises landscape and ecological impacts.
- Layout of the development will be subject to the results of an archaeological pre-determination assessment.
- The development shall ensure that an appropriate buffer is provided to the conservation area to the east.
- Design and layout of the site shall be informed by a landscape and visual impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced where possible in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement.
- Development will be subject to strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain within the broad location in accordance with national and local policy.
- The layout and design of development shall be informed by a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance in place at the time of the submission of an application.
- The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a detailed arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced where possible in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement.

Access, Highways and transportation

- The development shall ensure that a suitable vehicular access onto Haste Hill Road is secured and shall demonstrate that an appropriate access to third party sites on the shared access is maintained.
- The access shall be designed to a standard necessary to ensure that appropriate safety and capacity standards are met, whilst ensuring that the rural setting of the site is not adversely affected.
- The development shall ensure that appropriate improvements to pedestrian infrastructure are secured, whilst also ensuring that the character and functionality of PRoW KM69 is not adversely

affected.

Open Space

- The development shall provide on-site amenity green space in accordance with Policy SP13(B) & INF1, with a minimum of 0.07ha on-site incorporating children's play, in a manner that that contributes positively to the future community.
- Development of the site will enable the delivery and/or enhancement of a minimum of 0.5 ha of off-site semi/natural open or allotment space in the vicinity of the site.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

Eyhorne St (Hollingbourne) Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA204 - LAND SOUTH EAST OF BRICKFIELD'S CLOSE, EYHORNE STREET, EYHORNE ST (HOLLINGBOURNE)

Land south east of Brickfield's Close, Eyhorne Street is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 9 dwellings. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and layout

- The layout and character of the development shall have regard to the character and setting of the AONB.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- Development proposals will be of a high standard of design incorporating the use of vernacular materials.
- The layout should adequately protect the amenity and privacy of existing neighbouring residents.
- Landscaping shall be provided adjacent to areas of existing trees/woodland on the northern and eastern boundaries.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- Public access to areas designated as habitat in any landscape masterplan would normally be limited to maintenance purposes.
- The development proposals shall be designed to take into account the results of a LVIA undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance.
- The layout of the development shall be informed by an arboricultural survey, tree constraints plan and tree retention/protection plans.

Access, Highways and transportation

- The development shall be accessed via Brickfield's Close.
- The alignment and setting of public footpath KH198 on the southeastern boundary will be retained and enhanced within an area of natural/semi-natural open space.

Open Space

- Provision of new open space on or off site and/or contributions towards off-site provision/improvements in accordance with Policy SP13(B) & INF1.

Utilities Infrastructure

- Connections to the nearest points of the network (with adequate capacity) will be required for all utilities.
- The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place.

Sutton Valence Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA078 – LAND AT HAVEN FARM / SOUTHWAYS, SUTTON VALENCE

Land at Haven Farm/Southways is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 100 dwellings, approximately 400m² of local retail/business uses and a site to accommodate a doctors surgery of at least 1,500 sq.m together with approximately 50 parking spaces. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Principles

- Haven Farm, together with the adjacent Southways site (total site area approximately 7.0 ha) are to be brought forward to provide a new village hub, with medical and local retail/services uses, together with a new residential development and open spaces.
- The development of the two adjacent sites will be the subject of a masterplan that demonstrates that building layout, open space and highways access have been coordinated to ensure an efficient use of land with regard to highways and environmental impacts.
- The residential development of the rear agricultural element of the site is subject to the provision of a new, serviced medical surgery site at nil cost with the details of the land transfer and phasing enabling early delivery of the surgery in accordance with a framework to be agreed by the Council.
- The approximate land use balance is:
 - 110 dwellings across the two sites (including 5 self/custom build plots and 40% affordable housing)
 - 0.4 ha serviced site for local medical uses with access to North Street
 - 0.15ha site for local village services
 - 0.9ha new natural woodland
 - 0.35 ha of amenity green/children's play space

Design and layout

- Development shall be set back from the North Street Frontage with landscaping to retain the semi-rural character of the setting.
- All land parcels to be the subject of a comprehensive masterplan
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- The design of both the 'hub' and residential developments are to incorporate a rural vernacular.
- The residential elements shall be defined by distinct character areas, incorporating a variety of typologies, materials, landscaping and street scenes.
- The site layout and design of the site shall be informed by a landscape and visual impact assessment.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.

- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- Public access to areas designated as habitat in any landscape masterplan would normally be limited to maintenance purposes.
- Balancing ponds and swales shall not be counted towards on-site semi/natural open space needs unless it can be demonstrated that they provide appropriate and undisturbed ecological habitat.
- All landscaping to be principally native planting
- The proposed woodland area shall be the subject of a woodland delivery strategy and management plan
- Balancing ponds and swales shall not be counted towards on-site semi/natural open space needs unless it can be demonstrated that they provide appropriate and undisturbed ecological habitat.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement.

Access, Highways and Transportation

- The site will be accessed via a single point of access to North Street with the junction and sight lines designed to appropriate capacity and safety standards.
- There shall be no vehicular access via Southways.
- The development will enable the provision of new bus stops on North Street,
- The development shall provide a new pedestrian crossing facility between (the site) and the village hall/playing fields complex.
- The development shall deliver appropriate traffic speed management measures to North Street

Open Space

- No less than 0.35ha of open green amenity space shall be provided, incorporating appropriate children's play space to meet the needs of the development.
- The development shall deliver no less than 0.9ha of semi/natural open space the principle focus of which shall be to contribute to create new woodland and biodiversity net gain. The location and layout of such areas shall be designed to avoid conflict with accessible residential amenity spaces.
- Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate open space typology in accordance with Policy SP13(B), the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision/public realm improvements within the village.

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

Yalding Site Allocations

POLICY LPRSA248 - LAND NORTH OF KENWARD ROAD, YALDING

Land to the north and south of Kenward Road totalling 9.1 ha is included as a draft allocation for the development of approximately 100 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. The following conditions are considered appropriate to be met before development is permitted.

Design and Layout

- The development shall provide approximately 100 dwellings north and south of Kenward Road at a density not exceeding 30 dph, in a manner that enables the rounding off of the adjacent residential areas at a similar density.
- The remainder of the land south of Kenward Road shall be laid out as a new community open space.
- The development shall be subject to a single masterplan which demonstrates phasing of both built development and open spaces.
- Both housing development areas will be informed by an LVIA and incorporate boundary landscaping.
- Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident's amenity is protected.
- Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.

Landscape/Ecology

- A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or-off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.
- Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.
- Public access to areas designated primarily as habitat in any landscape masterplan would normally be limited to maintenance purposes.
- Balancing ponds and swales shall not be counted towards on-site semi/natural open space needs unless it can be demonstrated that they provide appropriate and undisturbed ecological habitat.
- All landscaping to be principally native planting.
- The proposed open spaces and new habitat shall be the subject of a delivery strategy and long-term management plan.
- Balancing ponds and swales shall not be counted towards on-site semi/natural open space needs unless it can be demonstrated that they provide appropriate and undisturbed ecological habitat.
- Existing tree/hedgerow margins should be retained/enhanced in order to provide the opportunity for biodiversity habitat creation/enhancement.
- The development proposals shall be designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment undertaken in accordance with the principles of guidance in place at the time of the submission of an application.

Access, Highways and Transportation

- Access points to both sites shall provide junction and sight lines designed to appropriate capacity and safety standards.
- Both site access points shall incorporate appropriate pedestrian crossing points to Kenward Road.
- The southern site shall enable appropriate access to the adjacent agricultural holding in a manner that does not adversely impact upon the amenity and safety of residents and users of the open

space.

- The southern site shall provide parking for users of the open space in a manner that does not adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding area.
- Replacement provision shall also be provided for any loss of on-street residential parking.
- The development shall deliver appropriate traffic speed management measures to North Street.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- The site should be designed to ensure that it has a positive impact on the River Beult catchment, and does not worsen local flood risks on Mote Road.
- The only vehicular access to the site is through Flood Zone 3. Any development will be dependent upon acceptable flood safety measures being agreed with the EA.

Open Space

- The provision of open space shall have regard to Policy SP13(B) & INF1.
- The proposed open spaces across both sites and new biodiversity areas shall be the subject of a delivery strategy and long-term management plan.
- The residential parcel north of Kenward Road shall incorporate both green amenity and play space in a location that is safe for children and well supervised, plus elements of semi natural informal open space.
- The land south of Kenward Road shall provide public open space in the form of approximately:
 - 0.4ha of community allotments/growing area
 - ha of new Riverside landscape/habitat
 - ha of informal open space
 - 0.5ha of recreational open space

Utilities Infrastructure

- The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.
- Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.

9. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

POLICIES

What are Development Management Policies?

- 9.1 The purpose of the second part of the Local Plan Review is to set out the development management policies.
- 9.2 The purpose and parameters of development management policies are outlined in national planning policy. It indicates that development management policies are non-strategic policies that deal with a range of detailed issues. They are also part of the policy framework alongside the strategic policies previously outlined. They aim to achieve the delivery of the Vision, Strategic Objectives and overall strategy of the Local Plan Review through shaping and aiding the consideration and determination of development proposals.
- 9.3 The policies aim to deal with detailed issues relevant to planning decision making in the Borough. Generally, they provide further detail to the thematic strategic policies. Specifically, they help decision makers to review the acceptability of certain types of development. In order to focus the approaches to design and sustainability-related matters, the Council will produce a Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document.

How do Development Management Policies link to the Strategic Policies?

- 9.4 The policies set out in this section do not cover all policy areas and, where principles for development are addressed by national policies or in the strategic thematic and place-based policies contained earlier in this document, they are not repeated. However, the council considers it prudent to group its approaches to the development management policies by theme. The themes are in line with the strategic policies contained within this document, which, in turn, are consistent with those themes identified in national planning policy. The links between the strategic policies and the non-strategic topic areas are highlighted in table 9.1.

THEME	LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2021 STRATEGIC POLICIES	DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES
Housing	LPRSP10 (a-d) – Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LPRHou 1: Development on brownfield land • Policy LPRHou 2: Residential extensions, conversions, annexes, and redevelopment within the builtup area • Policy LPRHou 3: Residential premises above shops and businesses • Policy LPRHou 4: Residential garden land • Policy LPRHou 5: Density of residential development • Policy LPRHou 6: Affordable local need housing on rural exception sites • Policy LPRHou 7: Specialist residential accommodation • Policy LPRHou 8: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation • Policy LPRHou 9: Custom & self-build housing • Policy LPRHou 10: Build to rent proposals • Policy LPRHou 11: Rebuilding, extending and subdivision of dwellings in the countryside
Economy	LPRSP11 (a-c) – Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LPRCD1: Chops, facilities and services • Policy LPRCD2: Primary Shopping Area • Policy LPRCD3: Accommodation for rural workers • Policy LPRCD4: Live-work units • Policy LPRCD5: New agricultural buildings and structures • Policy LPRCD6: Expansion of existing businesses in rural areas • Policy LPRCD7: Equestrian development • Policy LPRTL1: Mooring facilities and boat yards • Policy LPRTL2: Holiday lets, caravan and camp sites
Transport	LPRSP12 – Sustainable transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LPRTRA1: Air Quality • Policy LPRTRA2: Assessing the transport impacts of development • Policy LPRTRA3: Park & ride • Policy LPRTRA4: Parking Standards
Infrastructure	LPRSP13 – Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LPRINF1: Publicly accessible open space and recreation • Policy LPRINF2: Community facilities • Policy LPRINF3: Renewable and low carbon energy schemes • Policy LPRINF4: Digital Communications and Connectivity
Environment	LPRSP14 (a-c) – The Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LPREnv 1: Development affecting heritage assets • Policy LPREnv 2: Change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden land • Policy LPREnv 3: Caravan storage in the countryside
Design	LPRSP15 – Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LPRQ&D 1: Sustainable design • Policy LPRQ&D 2: External lighting • Policy LPRQ&D 3: Signage and shop fronts building frontages • Policy LPRQ&D 4: Design principles in the countryside • Policy LPRQ&D 5: Conversion of rural buildings • Policy LPRQ&D 6: Technical Standards • Policy LPRQ&D 7: Private open space standards

Table 9.1 Development Management Policies & relationship with LPR Strategic policies

How have the Development Management Policies been reviewed?

- 9.5 The council has reviewed the Development Management Policies set out in the Local Plan 2017 to update and develop new ones as part of the Local Plan Review process. This has been done via the statutory stages of consultation, internal review with colleagues in Development Management and also an assessment of those policies based on the evidence base and current national policy guidance and legislation.
- 9.6 The conclusions in relation to the Development Management policies in the Local Plan 2017 are set out in table 9.2 below. The table illustrates whether a policy is to be kept or removed from the Local Plan (retain or delete). Action details set out the level of change to a policy and then the policy is given a new policy reference number to reflect that some policies are to be deleted and new ones added.

Local Plan (2017) Policy	Retain or Delete	Action details	New LPR DM policy reference
DM1	Retain	Move to strategic policy section	LPRSP15
DM2	Retain	Split between strategic and DM policies	LPRQ&D 1
DM3	Retain	Move to strategic policy section	LPRSP14
DM4	Retain	Amend	LPREnv 1
DM5	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 1
DM6	Retain	Amend	LPRTA1
DM7	Delete	Include in DM1	LPRSP15
DM8	Retain	Amend	LPRQ&D 2
DM9	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 2
DM10	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 3
DM11	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 4
DM12	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 5
DM13	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 6
DM14	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 7
DM15	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 8
DM16	Retain	Amend	LPRCD1
DM17	Retain	Amend	LPRCD1
DM18	Retain	Amend	LPRQ&D 3
DM19	Retain	Amend	LPRINF1
DM20	Retain	Amend	LPRINF2
DM21	Retain	Amend	LPRTA2
DM22	Retain	Amend	LPRTA3
DM23	Retain	Amend	LPRTA4
DM24	Retain	Amend	LPRINF3
DM25	Retain	Amend	LPRINF4
DM26	Retain	Amend	LPRTL1
DM27	Delete	Delete	
DM28	Delete	Delete	
DM29	Retain	Amend	LPRCD1

Local Plan (2017) Policy	Retain or Delete	Action details	New LPR DM policy reference
DM30	Retain	Amend	LPRQ&D 4
DM31	Retain	Amend	LPRQ&D 5
DM32	Retain	Amend	LPRHou 11
DM33	Retain	Amend	LPREnv 2
DM34	Retain	Amend	LPRCD3
DM35	Retain	Amend	LPRCD4
DM36	Retain	Amend	LPRCD5
DM37	Retain	Amend	LPRCD6
DM38	Retain	Amend	LPRTL2
DM39	Retain	No action	LPREnv 3
DM40	Retain	Amend	LPRCD1
DM41	Retain	No action	LPRCD7

Table 9.2. Review of Policies in the Local Plan 2017

Are there any new Development Management Policies?

- 9.7 As a part of the Local Plan Review work, new development management policies need to be added to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. Set out in table 9.3 are a list of new policies by theme.

Thematic area	New policy approach	New LPR DM policy reference
Housing	Custom & Self-build housing	LPRHou 9
Housing	Build to rent	LPRHou 10
Economy	Primary Shopping Area	LPRCD 2
Quality & Design	Technical Standards	LPRQ&D 6
Quality & Design	Private open space standards	LPRQ&D 7

Table 9.3. New non-strategic policies

Housing

- 9.8 Maidstone has a diverse housing market, population and as a result need as outlined in the SHMA (2021). This has led to the development of strategic policies LPRSP10 (a-c) to outline the strategy for growth to meet the needs of the Borough's population into the future.
- 9.9 To support the need for housing growth and deliver the vision and objectives of the Local Plan Review and the borough's Strategic Plan, a few policies are required to carefully manage residential housing growth. It has been identified that there are preferred approaches regarding the following areas of housing development:
- housing on brownfield land;
 - the development of existing housing over time;
 - density;
 - types and tenures,
 - Specialist accommodation needs;
 - gypsy and traveller development; and
 - custom and self-build housing.

POLICY LPRHOU 1: DEVELOPMENT ON BROWNFIELD LAND

- 9.10 One of the core principles of the NPPF encourages the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, provided it is not of high environmental value. This is known as brownfield land or previously developed land and a large proportion of brownfield sites in the Maidstone urban area have been developed at high densities for housing in recent years, particularly in and adjacent to the town centre along the River Medway. Making the best use of previously developed land will continue to be encouraged throughout the lifetime of this plan.
- 9.11 National planning policy defines brownfield land as previously developed land in annex two. It applies to land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure and infrastructure that has not blended into the landscape. It excludes certain forms of development; for example: agricultural, forestry, minerals extraction, landfills and greenfield land such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments.
- 9.12 It is important to ensure that brownfield land is not underused and that the most is made of vacant and derelict land and buildings in order to reduce the need for greenfield land, which is a finite resource and often of higher quality in terms of landscape and biodiversity.
- 9.13 Brownfield development is essential for urban regeneration and, if designed to a high standard, it brings homes, jobs and services closer together; reduces dependency on the car; and strengthens communities.
- 9.14 A number of brownfield sites in current or previous economic use are located in the countryside. Such sites are outside of the settlement boundaries, and countryside restraint policies apply. However, the council will consider proposals for residential development on brownfield sites in rural areas, subject to key considerations. Key considerations will include: The level of harm to the character and appearance of an area; The impact of proposals on the landscape and environment; Any positive impacts on residential amenity; What sustainable travel modes are available or could reasonably be provided; What traffic the present or past use has generated; and the number of car movements that would be generated by the new use, and what distances, if there are no more sustainable alternatives. Residential gardens in urban areas are excluded from the definition of a brownfield site.

Policy LPRHou 1: Development on brownfield land

1. Proposals for development on previously developed land (brownfield land) on land outside of smaller villages and the countryside that make effective and efficient use of land and which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - a. Where the site has poor environmental value; and
 - b. If the proposal is for residential development, the density of new housing proposals reflects the character and appearance of individual localities and is consistent with policy Hou 5 unless there are justifiable planning reasons for a change in density.
2. In exceptional circumstances, the residential redevelopment of previously developed land in the countryside and smaller villages which meet the above criteria will be permitted provided the redevelopment will also result in:
 - a. meets the Council standards as set out in other policies in this plan.
 - b. and the site is, or can reasonably be made, accessible by sustainable modes to Maidstone urban area, a rural service centre or larger village or provides bespoke working from home space.

POLICY LPRHOU 2: RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS, CONVERSIONS, ANNEXES & REDEVELOPMENT IN THE BUILT-UP AREA

- 9.15 The following policy relates to residential extensions, conversions, annexes and redevelopment within the built-up area that fall outside those developments allowed by permitted development rights. The term conversion here refers to change from one type of residential use to another, rather than a separate use: for example, a dwelling house to a set of self-contained flats or houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). HMOs differ from self-contained flats as bedrooms/bed sitting rooms are private but other facilities, such as bathrooms and kitchens, are shared. The NPPF also places emphasis upon the quality of new residential development and requires a good standard of amenity to be provided for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 9.16 The council wishes to ensure that new residential units are attractive, high quality places to live, which respond positively to the local area. Good quality development should be of a scale and layout which provides attractive and comfortable places to live. The intensified use of dwellings to create smaller households can cause problems for nearby residents, for example noise and disturbance from increased traffic movements and requirements for parking. Policy HOU2 seeks to control the potential problems arising from such proposals.
- 9.17 Residential extensions generally benefit the community by increasing the amount and quality of accommodation in the borough. However, careful design is necessary, in order to prevent a reduction in the quality of living conditions for adjoining residents and the built environment in general. The adopted Residential Extensions SPD (May 2009) will be used to guide the assessment of proposals for residential extensions.

Policy LPRHou 2: Residential extensions, conversions, annexes, and redevelopment within the built-up area

- 1 On land outside of the countryside and undefined settlements proposals for the extension, conversion or redevelopment of a residential property which meet the following criteria will be permitted if:
 - i. The scale, height, form, appearance and siting of the proposal would fit unobtrusively with the existing building where retained and the character of the street scene and/or its context;
 - ii. The traditional boundary treatment of an area would be retained and, where feasible, reinforced;
 - iii. Adjoining residents would avoid unacceptable loss of privacy, outlook or light and would avoid unacceptable intrusion from noise or odour; and
 - iv. Sufficient parking would be provided within the curtilage of the dwelling without diminishing the character of the street scene.
- 2 On land outside the countryside and undefined settlements proposals for the conversion or redevelopment of a dwelling to self-contained flats or the use of a building as a house in multiple occupation which also meet the following criterion will be permitted:
 - i. The intensified use of the building and its curtilage would not significantly harm the appearance of the building or the character or amenity of the surrounding area.

POLICY LPRHOU 3: RESIDENTIAL PREMISES ABOVE SHOPS & BUSINESSES

- 9.18 'Living over the shop' can have a positive impact upon the vitality of town centres and other commercial areas. Once shoppers and workers depart, residential units to upper floors can provide a sense of life and occupation, which can add to a perception of security and vitality. 'Living over the shop' also helps to create a sense of place and mix of uses advocated by the NPPF.⁵
- 9.19 The phrase 'living over the shop' refers to the developments at the first-floor level and above, where the ground floor level is occupied by a development in one of the following use classes: E(a), E(b), E(c)(i), E(c)(ii), E(c)(iii), E(g)(i), F2(a).⁶ The preferred approach would apply to proposals including the uses listed above that fall outside of permitted development rights. For example, schemes that are larger than what is presently permitted or involve external alterations etc. The approach would also be geographically limited to identified centres (district & local).

Policy LPRHou 3: Residential premises above shops and businesses

- 1 The council will permit 'living over the shop' projects that meet the following criteria:
 - a. They are above deemed suitable premises (including uses in class E & F.2 of the use class order).
 - b. The premises are located in the identified town centre, district and local centres, or above existing village shops;
 - c. They accord with the relevant parking standards as set out in the Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3: RESIDENTIAL PARKING (2008)
 - d. They meet servicing requirements, such as bin storage/collections and deliveries; and;
 - e. The proposal would not be negatively impacted by surrounding noise and air quality issues.
- 2 Change of use from residential accommodation in premises where the ground floor is (or last was) in class E or class F2 within town, district or local centres will be permitted, provided it can be shown that the accommodation is no longer suitable or is potentially unsuitable for residential occupation because of amenity issues caused by location, design, noise or air quality issues.

POLICY LPRHOU 4: RESIDENTIAL GARDEN LAND

- 9.20 Within the built-up areas of the borough's towns and villages, there is significant pressure for the development of residential garden land. Such development, typically involving the subdivision of existing residential curtilages, can often appear cramped and damage the existing pattern of development. The council wishes to only permit development where it can be absorbed within the existing character, pattern and layout of the built environment without detriment to visual amenity. All new development should respect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and their quality of life. It should be designed to avoid an unacceptable loss of privacy, light or outlook and also excessive levels of noise from activities, processes and traffic movements.

⁵ MHCLG, *National Planning Policy Framework*, paragraph, 86 (2021), p.25

⁶ Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)

Policy LPRHou 4: Residential garden land

Within the defined boundaries of the urban area, rural service centres and larger villages development of domestic garden land to create new buildings which meet the following criteria will be permitted provided:

1. The higher density resulting from the development would not result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area;
2. There would be no significant loss of privacy, light or outlook for adjoining properties and/or their curtilages;
3. Access of an appropriate standard can be provided to a suitable highway;
4. There would be no significant increase in unacceptable impact on amenity by noise or disturbance from traffic gaining access to the development.
5. The scale, height, form, appearance and siting of the proposal would fit unobtrusively with the existing building where retained and the character of the street scene;
6. Any loss of biodiversity is to be offset elsewhere in line with Policy LPRSP14(a)

POLICY LPRHOU 5: DENSITY OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 9.21 The development strategy for the borough is based on meeting future housing requirements through the best use of suitable, previously developed land before releasing other sites for development in order to protect the borough's valuable landscape and biodiversity assets. The setting of minimum densities for residential developments will help the council to achieve this and make best use of land, whilst also being in line with national planning policy (NPPF paragraph 125) and proposed policy LPRSP10(b).

Policy LPRHou 5: Density of residential development

All new housing will be developed at a density that is consistent with achieving good design and does not compromise the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated. Development proposals that fail to make efficient use of land for housing, having regard to the character and location of the area, will be refused permission. Subject to these overriding considerations the following minimum densities are expected in the following locations:

1. At sites within the town centre new residential development will be expected to achieve a net density of 150 dwelling per hectare.
2. Sites within inner urban area (800 metres from the town centre) a net density of 75 dwellings per hectare
3. Sites within outer urban area (within the urban boundary of Maidstone, but not within the inner urban area) a net density of 35 dwellings per hectare
4. Sites within identified Garden Communities will be expected to achieve a net density of 40 dwellings per hectare
5. At sites within or adjacent to the rural service centres, larger and smaller villages as defined under policies LPRSP1-8 new residential development will be expected to achieve a net density of 30 dwellings per hectare where that is compatible with the individual settings of those sites.

POLICY LPRHOU 6: AFFORDABLE LOCAL HOUSING NEED ON RURAL EXCEPTION SITES INCLUDING FIRST HOMES

- 9.22 Policy LPRSP10 (c) seeks to set out the council's affordable housing need and the general requirements for it across the borough. However, in rural areas, as defined outside of the settlement boundaries and urban areas, affordable housing can be in limited supply due to a lack of market housing allocated in rural locations. Rural Exception Sites are a way to bring forward affordable housing in rural locations where it would not normally be allowed.
- 9.23 Rural Exception Sites are defined in national planning policy.⁷ They refer to sites that are not allocated for residential use in the Local Plan, but that are proposed for affordable housing in perpetuity and address the identified needs of the local community in which they are proposed.
- 9.24 Market housing in the borough's rural settlements can be both expensive and in limited supply. Affordable housing, although addressing the issue of expense, can also be in limited supply and so Rural Exception Sites are a good way to allow people in rural communities to stay local rather than be forced to move elsewhere to find housing.
- 9.25 First Homes were introduced in 2021 as a new affordable home ownership product, and national policy requires that a minimum of 25% of new affordable homes are offered as this product, to eligible buyers, and at a minimum discount of 30% of market value or £250,000, whichever is the lesser. Policy LPRSP10(b) sets out the council's overall need and mix of affordable housing as 25% First Homes, and 75% social/affordable rented product, in line with the need identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 9.26 The Written Ministerial Statement (May 2021) supports the delivery of First Homes via Rural Exception Sites outside designated rural areas, where these are adjacent to existing settlements and First Homes make up 100% of the new units to be delivered. However, there is scope to introduce a limited amount of market housing where this is essential to enable delivery, and/or other types of affordable housing where there is a significant identified local need.
- 9.27 Unlike Rural Exception Sites, First Homes cannot be located in the AONB or Green Belt and therefore regard must be had to national policy and guidance to guide which locations are suitable for each affordable housing product.

Policy LPRHou 6: Affordable local need housing on rural exception sites including First Homes

Outside of the Maidstone urban area, the rural service centres and larger villages, the council will work with parish councils and local stakeholders to bring forward affordable local needs housing for its rural communities in line with the latest government guidance. The council will grant planning permission subject to the following criteria.

1. Development has been proven necessary by a local needs housing survey approved by the council which has been undertaken by or on behalf of the parish council(s) concerned. In consultation with the parish council and prospective provider of social/affordable housing (registered provider or build to rent landlord).

⁷ MHCLG, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Annex 2 (2021), p.71

2. The council in line with the requirements of national planning policy will determine the number, size, type and tenure of homes to be developed after assessing the results of the survey. The council will also use the housing register and SHMA to determine where there may be unmet housing needs.
3. In the first instance affordable local needs housing will remain available in perpetuity to meet the need for which it was permitted. This will be secured by planning conditions and/or legal agreements as appropriate. If this cannot be done, then the subsidy applied will be recycled into alternative affordable housing provision.
4. Sustainability of the site and its settlement will be a prime consideration in decision making. The council will give preference to settlements and communities where a range of community facilities and services, in particular school, health, and shopping are accessible from the site preferably on foot, by cycle or on public transport. The site must also be safely accessible to and from the public highway by all vehicles using the site at all times.
5. The scale of development must be in proportion to the context of the settlement where it is located.
6. Where a proposed development for First Homes lies adjacent to the existing settlement and is located outside the Green Belt and AONB.
7. Applications for First Homes will be required to deliver 100% First Homes, unless there is a significant identified local need for other types of affordable housing. Where it can be demonstrated that it is necessary to incorporate market housing to enable delivery of First Homes, any market housing element of the scheme should make up a limited proportion of the overall number of dwellings to be provided.
8. Where national landscape, ecological and heritage designations are affected by the proposed development, proposals must have regard to the designation and its purpose whilst complying with national policy and guidance. Development proposals shall have regard to areas of higher landscape sensitivity and heritage value.
9. Any loss of biodiversity is to be offset elsewhere in line with Policy LPRSP14(a)

The delivery of this policy is outlined further in the Affordable and Local Needs Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2020 or successor documents.

POLICY LPRHOU 7: SPECIALIST RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

- 9.28 The policy refers to accommodation for older and disabled persons. These have been grouped together to reflect the National Planning Practice Guidance.⁸ Specifically, this policy will cover specialist residential accommodation (including nursing homes, care homes, and extra care accommodation) that fall within use class C2 providing some form of care package and communal facilities more than a lounge.
- 9.29 In line with national trends, the population of the borough is ageing, and this will result in an increasing demand for elderly accommodation over the time frame of the Local Plan. Population projections

⁸ MHCLG, *National Planning Practice Guidance*, Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 63-006-20190626 (2019)

predict that by 2037 23% of the borough's residents will be over 65 years of age compared with 19% in 2019.⁹

- 9.30 Similar to the age profile of the borough's population those persons with disabilities are increasing. From 2019-37 the number of persons with a long-term health problem or disability will increase by 10,105 or 35%.¹⁰
- 9.31 The SHMA identifies three sub-categories of specialist residential accommodation for older people:
- **Retirement living or sheltered housing** which comprises self-contained units with some shared facilities and on-site supportive management.
 - **Enhanced sheltered housing** which typically has 24/7 staffing cover and some shared meals.
 - **Extra care** which provides personal or nursing care. These facilities may include dementia care. These are counted as bedspaces.
- 9.32 The SHMA identifies a total need of 2,142 retirement living and enhanced sheltered housing units over the plan period comprising a mix of rented and leasehold tenures, and an additional 1,228 extra care bedspaces.
- 9.33 Because of the significant size of the need for this type of housing, the council will support, on appropriate sites, including site allocations, delivery of housing that meets this need. Regard will be had to the need to provide all types of specialist residential accommodation.

Policy LPRHou 7: Specialist residential accommodation

1. On land within or adjacent to the boundaries of Maidstone urban area, Rural Service Centres, and larger villages, proposals for new retirement living, sheltered housing, enhanced sheltered housing and extra care facilities, through new build, conversion or redevelopment and for extensions to existing nursing and residential care homes which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a. The site is located adjacent to the settlement boundary;
- b. The proposal is sustainably located with accessibility by public transport;
- c. The proposal will not adversely affect the character of the locality or the amenity of neighbouring properties including by means of noise disturbance or intensity of use; or by way of size, bulk or overlooking; and
- d. Sufficient visitor and staff vehicle parking is provided in a manner which does not diminish the character of the street scene.

2. Proposals for specialist residential accommodation in unsustainable locations, and not within or adjacent to the defined boundaries of the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres and larger villages will not be permitted.

3. Existing specialist residential accommodation will be protected from loss through either redevelopment or conversion. Any change outside that permitted will need to demonstrate the lack of need for the facility within the borough.

⁹ Icen, *Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (May 2021), p.82

¹⁰ Icen, *Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (May 2021), p.84

POLICY LPRHOU 8: GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE ACCOMMODATION

- 9.34 Maidstone Borough has a significant population of Gypsies and Travellers, who live on mostly small, privately owned sites outside of the urban area.
- 9.35 Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers is a specific type of housing that councils have the duty to provide for under the Housing Act (2004). Gypsies and Travellers historically resorted to the Maidstone area because of their involvement in agriculture, particularly hop and fruit picking. Now the borough has a significant number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches mostly on small, privately owned sites. Going forward, the aim for the local plan is to contribute towards the creation of sustainable communities by making an appropriate scale of pitch provision which balances the reasonable need for lawful accommodation with the responsibility to protect the environment.
- 9.36 National guidance in 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' sets out the definitions of 'Gypsies and Travellers' and 'Travelling Showpeople' to be used for planning purposes.
- 9.37 The criteria in the policy below will guide the determination of planning applications and also the allocation of specific sites. It is preferable for sites to be located close to existing settlements where there are community facilities such as schools and health services. Frequently, because of land availability, more rural sites are proposed. Where such sites are proposed, the impact of development on the landscape and rural character is an important factor in respect of the wider objective of protecting the intrinsic character of the countryside. The Council will produce separate more detailed guidance through the planned Development Plan Document relating to the development of outbuildings associated with Gypsy and Traveller development.

Policy LPRHou 8: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation

1. Planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation will be granted if the site is allocated for that use and proposals comply with the site allocation criterion, or if the following criteria are met:
 - I. Caravans to meet the definition of a caravan in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act (1960)¹¹ and the Caravan Sites Act (1968)¹²;
 - II. The planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople, as set out in Planning Policy for Traveller sites (2015)¹³ is met;
 - III. Local services, in particular school, health and shopping facilities, are accessible from the site preferably on foot, by cycle or on public transport;
 - IV. The development would not result in significant harm to the landscape and rural character of the area. Impact on these aspects will be assessed with particular regard to:
 - a. Local landscape character;
 - b. Cumulative effect - the landscape impact arising as a result of the development in combination with existing lawful caravans;

¹¹ Caravans Sites and Control of Development Act 1960: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/8-9/62>

¹² Caravans Sites Act 1968: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1968/52/contents>

¹³ Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites>

- c. Existing landscape features - development is well screened by existing landscape features and there is a reasonable prospect of such features' long-term retention;
 - d. Additional planting should be used to supplement existing landscaping but should not be the sole means of mitigating the impact of the development;
 - e. Prominent boundary treatments should be screened/softened by existing and/or proposed landscaping
- V. The site can be safely accessed to and from the highway by all vehicles using the site on a regular basis;
 - VI. The site is not located in an area at risk from flooding (zones 3a and 3b) based on the latest information from the Environment Agency or a specific Flood Risk Assessment which has been agreed by the Environment Agency; and
 - VII. The ecological impact of the development has been assessed through appropriate survey and a scheme for any necessary mitigation and enhancement measures confirmed.
2. In addition to the above criteria the following applies to Travelling Showpeople accommodation only:
- I. The site should be suitable for the storage and maintenance of show equipment and associated vehicles.
3. Applications for further ancillary development (including out buildings/dayrooms etc) on a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site will be permitted if the following criteria are met:
- I. Criteria 1 (IV) (a-c) of this policy is met; and;
 - II. The scale and form of any development respects its setting.

POLICY LPRHOU 9: CUSTOM & SELF-BUILD HOUSING

- 9.38 Self-build plots are plots of land which are made available for individuals to design and build their own home whereas custom build plots are provided by site developers to the specification of individuals which may or may not follow a basic design pattern.
- 9.39 There is a legal responsibility to keep a register of individuals and interested associations of individuals that are seeking a plot of land to construct a self or custom build house as a sole or main residence.¹⁴ In submitting planning applications for self and custom housebuilding, regard shall be had to specific needs identified in the Council's self and custom housebuilding survey and register.
- 9.40 As set out in Policy LPRSP10(b) the council supports the principle of self and custom build housing and aims to meet the needs of those identified on the registers that it keeps. However, it also needs to manage the development of this type of housing to make sure it is appropriate. It is important to ensure that larger schemes deliver design coherence and are carefully planned and managed to ensure clarity for individual plot holders.

¹⁴ Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016)

Policy LPRHou 9: Custom & self-build housing

1. The council will support self and custom build development that are in suitable and sustainable locations, conform to the other policies in the plan, and meet the following criteria:
 - a. On outline applications where there are 5 or more proposed custom build dwellings on a single site, the application must be accompanied by a Design Brief detailing: layout; design parameters, including the design code; phasing plan and; evidence to demonstrate how the scheme meets the definition of self and custom build.
 - b. All proposals for custom & self-build are supported by evidence of need, and applicants shall engage with the council to understand the requirements of the authority's self and custom build register in order to ensure effective delivery of sites
2. The revision of self-build or custom build housing to open market housing will be permitted in the following circumstance:
 - a. Evidence is provided to the council that plots have been prominently marketed for sale to self or custom builders through the Council's Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register and through any relevant organisations, and a buyer has not be found within a 24-month period.

POLICY LPRHOU 10: BUILD TO RENT PROPOSALS

- 9.41 National policy and guidance support the diversification of the housing market in order to speed up the delivery of the residential accommodation. One way to do this is through support for the build to rent sector. This is supported by strategic policy LPRSP10a housing mix that supports a range of housing tenures to come forward.
- 9.42 Since 2016 there has been a national growth in the build to rent market mainly aimed at younger age groups up to 35-year-old.¹⁵ In more recent years this growth has been occurring in Maidstone Borough, especially within the Maidstone urban area.¹⁶ One of the reasons for this are the higher-than-average rents that can be obtained from flatted development in Maidstone.¹⁷ Therefore, the council has thought it prudent to develop a new policy approach to manage this form of development.
- 9.43 The Planning Practice Guidance has a requirement that where a demand is identified, authorities should include a plan policy setting out their approach to promoting and accommodating build to rent housing.¹⁸ Build to rent developments will bring new providers into the UK housing market. This will increase local competition. A build to rent scheme is long term and so where a sale of a build to rent scheme is proposed, there should not be a withdrawal of the affordable housing contribution. The accompanying S106 should set out what should happen if any homes within a build to rent scheme are sold/converted before the end of the covenant period.
- 9.44 The S106 should consider such scenarios and, in particular, include a mechanism to recoup ('clawback') the value of the affordable housing provision that is withdrawn if affordable private rent homes are

¹⁵ Iceni, *Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (March 2021), p.103

¹⁶ Iceni, *Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (March 2021), pp.103-104

¹⁷ Iceni, *Maidstone Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (March 2021), p.104

¹⁸ MHCLG, *National Planning Practice Guidance*, Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 60-001-20180913 (2018)

converted to another tenure. Build to rent schemes allows occupants to live at a property for longer. The NPPF glossary states that build to rent developers will as a norm offer longer tenancy agreements of 3 years or more. Whilst there is no requirement for authorities to apply national space standards to the borough, build to rent home schemes can bring higher quality and better managed accommodation to the private rental market. The process for managing affordable private rent units should also be set out in the S106. The Planning Practice Guidance outlines that affordable private rent homes within any particular scheme should be constructed and managed to the same high-quality standards as the private rental homes. The NPPF states that affordable housing on build to rent schemes should be provided by default in the form of affordable private rent and other affordable housing policies in the plan.

Policy LPRHou 10: Build to rent proposals

1. In line with recommendations of the SHMA (2021) and national planning policy and guidance the council has developed the following policy for build to rent proposals.
2. Planning permission will be granted for developments of self-contained, private rented homes which:
 - a. Are located in Maidstone Town centre, within close proximity, and larger strategic sites;
 - b. Are secured in single ownership providing solely for the rental market for an extended period minimum 20-year term with provision for clawback of affordable housing contributions should the covenant not be met;
 - c. Provide tenancies for private renters for an extended period above normal contract lengths with a break clause in the tenant's favour and structured and limited in-tenancy rent increases agreed in advance;
 - d. Provide a high standard on-site management of the accommodation; and
 - e. Provide for a mix of unit sizes in accordance with Policy LPRSP10b;
 - f. Provide on-site affordable housing, in line with the requirements set out in the Affordable Housing SPD.

POLICY LPRHOU 11: REBUILDING, EXTENDING AND SUBDIVISION OF DWELLINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- 9.45 The intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is an important asset of the borough, which is recognised by the NPPF and the Local Plan and which is highly sensitive to development. However, to support rural communities, a level of flexibility for certain forms of development in rural areas is required.
- 9.46 In appropriate circumstances, the council will support the rebuilding of a lawful residential dwelling, extension or subdivision to an existing dwelling in line with the NPPF.¹⁹ In considering such proposals, the council will have regard to the mass and visual prominence of the resulting building, including the cumulative impact of such changes. The volume of new development will be more critical than its footprint.
- 9.47 The term ‘original dwelling’ refers to the dwelling as it was on 1st July 1948 or, if built later, as it was when first erected and granted planning permission.

Policy LPRHou 11: Rebuilding, extending and subdivision of dwellings in the countryside

1. Outside of the Maidstone urban area, larger villages and rural service centres as defined on the policies map, proposals for the replacement of a dwelling in the countryside which accord with national policy and meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - i. The present dwelling has a lawful residential use;
 - ii. The present dwelling is not the result of a temporary planning permission;
 - iii. The building is not listed;
 - iv. The mass and volume of the replacement dwelling is no more visually harmful than the original dwelling;
 - v. The replacement dwelling would result in a development which individually or cumulatively is visually acceptable in the countryside;
 - vi. The replacement dwelling is sited to preclude retention of the dwelling it is intended to replace, or there is a condition or a planning obligation to ensure the demolition of the latter on completion of the new dwelling;
 - vii. The traditional boundary treatment of an area would be retained;
 - viii. Access points in number and width should be kept to a minimum to preserve the character of the countryside and rural lanes; and
 - ix. The replacement dwelling would not have a negative impact on neighboring residential amenity (privacy, daylight, sunlight, overshadowing or overbearing).
2. Proposals to extend dwellings in the countryside which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - i. The proposal is well designed and is sympathetically related to the existing dwelling without overwhelming or destroying the original form of the existing dwelling;

¹⁹ MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 80 (2021), p.22

- ii. The proposal would result in a development which individually or cumulatively is visually acceptable in the countryside;
 - iii. The proposal would not create a separate dwelling or one of a scale or type of accommodation that is capable of being used as a separate dwelling;
 - iv. Proposals for the construction of new or replacement outbuildings (e.g., garages) should be subservient in scale, location and design to the host dwelling and cumulatively with the existing dwelling remain visually acceptable in the countryside; and
 - v. The proposal would not have a negative impact on neighbouring residential amenity (privacy, daylight, sunlight, overshadowing or overbearing).
3. Proposals for the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling should meet the following criteria:
- i. The proposal will ensure that any existing and proposed dwellings meet the minimum space standards.
 - ii. Adequate off street parking access is maintained for existing and provided for new dwellings.
 - iii. The development will preserve the amenity of neighbouring properties.
4. In all instances account should be taken of the Residential Extensions SPD.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

- 9.48 Building a strong, competitive economy and supporting a prosperous rural economy, as well as ensuring the vitality of town centres are key parts of national policy and guidance. NPPF sections 6 and 7 set out that policies should help create the conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt, as well as support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities.
- 9.49 The Local Plan Review considers the strategic level drivers for economic, retail and leisure development in Policies LPRSP1 and LPRSP11. This section adds further detail to LPRSP1 and LPRSP11 through specifically looking at the following areas:
- Main town centre uses;
 - Primary shopping areas;
 - Leisure and community uses;
 - Rural worker accommodation and live work units;
 - Expansion of businesses;
 - Farm shops and equestrian development; and
 - Rural tourism, leisure and recreation.

POLICY LPRCD1: SHOPS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 9.50 Maidstone has a very strong town centre, along with a network of much smaller but important district and local centres, which, although overshadowed by the strength of Maidstone town centre, have a vital role in providing easy access to shops, services and facilities. It is important that this strategic network and hierarchy of centres is maintained to ensure that shops and services are as accessible as possible.
- 9.51 As the County town of Kent, Maidstone town centre is where the vast majority of commercial development should occur, in line with the NPPF's town centre first approach. Sequential tests and impact assessments will be required where proposals for main town centre uses are put forward outside of the defined centres.
- 9.52 For clarity, the definition of the main town uses and town centres that has been adopted in this approach are those set out in the NPPF Annex 2: Glossary. As a result, town centres refer to city centres, town centres, district centres, and local centres.²⁰
- 9.53 Within the borough, the council has identified district and local centres (policy LPRSP11(c)) which fulfil the function of providing essential local facilities as a group. The council wishes to maintain the existing retail function together with supporting community uses in these locations, in the interests of securing sustainable, well-functioning communities.

Leisure and Community Uses

- 9.54 Allowing for a variety of leisure uses to meet growing and diversifying indoor leisure needs as well as more community uses such as health centres, creches and community uses within the defined centres

²⁰ MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework, Annex 2: Glossary (2021), p.68

will add to their diversity, providing centralised services and facilities, and will extend both their appeal and periods of activity throughout the day. Encouraging and supporting these types of uses could also increase the prospects of vacant premises being brought into use. It is important that where such proposals are located within defined centres, they are designed in such a way that establishes or maintain an 'active frontage' onto the street. This means creating interest and activity, and engaging those in the street, often through the use of glazing, as opposed to blank walls or fences.

- 9.55 Outside of the defined centres, leisure and community uses may also be appropriate to meet local needs, however it will be important that such proposals are sustainably located and accessible by public transport.

Convenience Shops and Facilities

- 9.56 Local convenience shops and other such facilities outside of any defined centres can also play an important role in sustainable development, by meeting the day-to-day needs of local communities. The NPPF seeks to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet such needs.

Farm Shops in the Countryside

- 9.57 The creation and expansion of rural businesses can contribute towards a prosperous rural economy. However, whilst promoting a strong rural economy, the NPPF also recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, which is a valuable asset. Retail development in the countryside, if not strictly managed, can also run counter to the objectives of sustainable development, by creating additional journeys to rural locations and potentially impacting on village shops. It is therefore necessary to limit development to that which primarily actively supports the maintenance of land in agricultural and other appropriate land-based uses, such as farm shops primarily retailing produce at, and produced upon, their holding.

Policy LPRCD1: Shops, facilities and services

Main Town Centre Uses

1. Maidstone town centre is the principal town centre in the borough. Proposals for main town centre uses will be directed sequentially to within the town's Primary Shopping Area (as defined on the policies map) but then to the wider town centre. After Maidstone, priority will be given to improving the retail, leisure and community facilities in the District Centres then Local Centres, as defined in the retail hierarchy (policy LPRSP11(c)).
2. Proposals for retail, leisure and other uses (including entertainment, cultural and tourist uses as well as other mixed-uses) that would support the vitality and viability of the centres in the retail hierarchy below Maidstone Town Centre will be directed sequentially to the District Centres, Local Centres, then to edge-of-centre location and, only if suitable sites are not available, to accessible out-of-centre locations, provided that:
 - i. By means of an impact assessment it is demonstrated that the proposal would not result in a significant adverse impact, cumulative or otherwise, on the vitality and

- viability of an existing centre or undermine the delivery of a site allocated for the use proposed (see criterion 4); or
- ii. The development is in the countryside and is in accordance with criterion 6 of this policy or Policy LPRCD6; or
 - iii. The development is designed to only serve the needs of the neighbourhood.
3. Proposals located at the edge of an existing centre or in out-of-centre locations should not lead to unsustainable trip generation from outside their catchments. They should ensure the provision of specific measures to improve the quality and function of sustainable connections to the centre, in particular walking and cycling routes and public transport links and specific measures which will mitigate the impact of the proposal on the identified centre or centres. The nature, extent and permanence of the measures will be directly related to the scale of the proposal.
 4. Proposals for leisure, community and other such uses should, wherever possible, establish or maintain an active frontage onto the street.

Impact assessment

5. Where an impact assessment is required, the following gross floorspace thresholds will apply:
 - i. Proposals over 2,500sqm within the Maidstone Urban Area as defined on the policies map
 - ii. Proposals over 400sqm beyond the Maidstone Urban Area as defined on the policies map

District and Local Centres

6. In seeking to maintain and enhance the existing retail function and supporting community uses in the District and Local Centres, new non-E or F class uses at ground floor level within the defined centres will generally be resisted.

Elsewhere in the borough

7. Outside of the defined network of centres, the following types of retail provision will be supported:
 - i. Small-scale ancillary uses within employment sites (see policy LPRSP11(A));
 - ii. Small shops within residential areas to serve the local area; or
 - iii. Sale of fresh produce at the point of production (or originating from the farm holding) where:
 - a) A significant proportion, based on annual turnover, of the range of goods offered for sale continues to be fresh produce grown and sold on the farm holding in question;
 - b) The range of any additional sale goods would be restricted to local farm/holding produce and the offer for sale of other goods, including packaged or preserved food products, would not exceed a minimal level;
 - c) The proposal would not demonstrably damage the viability of district centres and village shops; and
 - d) Re-use or adapt appropriate farm buildings where they are available; new buildings will only be considered exceptionally.
8. In granting planning permission for farm shops under criterion 7.iii), the council may impose conditions and/or S106 obligations to restrict the amount of produce which originates

outside the farm holding in which the proposed development is located and also to restrict the proportion of non-food and other items to be sold, unless the proposal provides for a more sustainable alternative for the local community.

9. Where proposals involve or require the loss of existing post offices, pharmacies, banks, public houses or class-F2 shops selling mainly convenience goods outside local and district centres, consideration will be given to the following:
 - i. Firm evidence that the existing uses are not now viable and are unlikely to become commercially viable;
 - ii. The availability of comparable alternative facilities in the village or the local area; and
 - iii. The distance to such facilities, the feasibility of alternative routes being used, and the availability of travel modes other than by private motor vehicle.

POLICY LPRCD2: PRIMARY SHOPPING AREA

- 9.58 Town centres should provide a range and mix of complementary uses. A balance between retail, entertainment and leisure activity will help town centres compete with online shopping and ensure their continued vitality and viability. Maidstone town centre needs a good mix of uses that extend activity throughout the daytime and into the evenings. There is a need for new retail floorspace over the plan period, as set out in policy LPRSS1. Additionally, a flexible approach to accommodating leisure and cultural uses ensures the town centre is responsive to the evolving market offer. Furthermore, it is recognised that offices and residential uses can also help support the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre by increasing footfall at all times of day and night and providing a sense of community.
- 9.59 The Primary Shopping Area is at the heart of Maidstone Town Centre and contains streets that are dominated by shops and have the greatest pedestrian footfall. It is important to retain the function of the Primary Shopping Area, as large numbers of shops in close proximity to each other are important for the convenience of shoppers and to the attractiveness of the centre. This area can also play an important social role as an accessible central place to meet other people.
- 9.60 The Council will therefore seek to focus retail and leisure activity in the town centre and will resist their loss within the Primary Shopping Area. Proposals for ground floor uses outside Class E will only be allowed if the development does not harm the character of the areas that function as the heart of the town centre. On upper floors, there will be support for a more diverse range of uses, such as residential

Policy LPRCD2: Primary Shopping Area

1. Within the Primary Shopping Area in Maidstone Town Centre, as shown on the policies map, the change of use from Class E at ground floor level to other uses will be acceptable if compatible with the focus of the Primary Shopping Area as the heart of the town centre. Proposals will also be assessed against the following:
 - i. The location and prominence of the premises within the Primary Shopping Area;
 - ii. The floor space and length of the frontage of the premises;
 - iii. The number, distribution and proximity to other non-class E premises, or with planning permissions for such use, within the Primary Shopping Area and throughout the town centre;
 - iv. The particular nature and character of the proposed uses, including the level of pedestrian

- activity associated with it;
- v. The level of vacancies in ground floor properties; and
 - vi. Whether the proposed use will give rise to noise, smell or other environmental problems.
2. Outside of the Primary Shopping Area but within town centre, the change of use from class E²¹ at ground floor level to a pub or drinking establishment, amusement centre/arcade, launderette, community use, leisure or recreational use, or residential use, will be acceptable in principle, provided that:
- i. The overall town centre character is not undermined;
 - ii. The proposed use contributes positively to the town centre as the focus of commercial or community life; and
 - iii. There is no detrimental effect on the visual or other special character or amenities of the surrounding area.

POLICY LPRCD3: ACCOMMODATION FOR RURAL WORKERS

- 9.61 The NPPF lends strong support to the rural economy and seeks to promote agricultural, and land based rural businesses. It also recognises that residential development in the countryside may be justified when there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work.

Policy LPRCD3: Accommodation for Rural Workers

1. Proposals to site a caravan or other form of temporary housing accommodation for a rural worker outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
 - a. The dwelling and its siting are essential for the efficient development and running of the enterprise there;
 - b. The need is for accommodation for a full-time worker;
 - c. There is clear evidence, such as a business plan, that the enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis and that there is a firm intention and ability to develop it;
 - d. No other housing accommodation is already available locally to meet the need;
 - e. The necessary accommodation cannot be provided by the conversion of a building on the holding; and
 - f. The necessary accommodation would be sited with any farmstead or other group of rural buildings on the holding.
2. Where a temporary planning permission is granted for a dwelling, the council will:
 - a. Limit the permission to a term of no more than 3 years;
 - b. Limit the occupation of the accommodation to a person solely or mainly working, or last working in the locality in a rural occupation, or a widow or widower of such a person and to any resident dependents;
 - c. Require the removal of the temporary accommodation within 3 months after the expiry of the permission; and

²¹ Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)

- d. Require the restoration of the site within 12 months after the expiry of the permission in accordance with a scheme agreed with the local planning authority unless a permission is granted for a permanent dwelling there.
3. Proposals for a new permanent rural occupation dwelling in the countryside outside defined settlement boundaries in support of existing rural activities on well-established units which meet the following criteria will be permitted:
- a. There is a clearly established existing functional need for the dwelling;
 - b. The need relates to a full-time worker or one who is primarily employed in agriculture and does not relate to a part time requirement;
 - c. The unit and the activity have been established for at least 3 years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound, and have a clear prospect of remaining so;
 - d. The functional need could not be fulfilled by another dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the worker(s) concerned; and
 - e. The new dwelling is no larger in size than is justified by the needs of the enterprise or more expensive to construct than the income of the enterprise can sustain.
4. The council will limit the occupation of any dwelling to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in a rural occupation, or a widow/widower of such a person, and to any resident dependents.

In addition to the above criteria, account should be taken of the Kent Farmsteads Guidance and the Kent Downs AONB Farmstead Guidance.

POLICY LPRCD4: LIVE-WORK UNITS

- 9.62 A live-work unit is defined as “the genuine and permanent integration of living and working accommodation within a single self-contained unit, where the principal occupier both lives at and works from the property.” In terms of the Use Classes Order live work is “sui generis”, in other words unique or “of its own kind”. Live work does not therefore fall neatly into any specific class within the Use Classes Order²². In practical terms it is a composite use that brings together, within a single unit, residential (use class C3) and workspace. Usually, this workspace is an office space, but the work element of live/work could conceivably include small scale light industrial use. In some instances, it might include uses such as a treatment room for an alternative health practitioner, or an artists’ studio.
- 9.63 As we adapt to different ways of working, with increased levels of homeworking, this policy sets out detailed criteria around the construction of a purpose built live-work unit.

²² Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)

Policy LPRCD4: Live-work units

1. Proposals for the development of new-build live-work units will be supported within the boundaries of the Urban Area, Rural Service Centres and Larger Villages as set out in the settlement hierarchy, subject to satisfying other relevant policies in the plan. New-build live-work units outside of the Urban Area, Rural Service Centres and Larger Villages settlement boundaries will not be permitted.
2. Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to employment generating uses with ancillary living accommodation will be supported, subject to meeting the following criteria:
 - i. The building is of a form, bulk and general design which is in keeping with its rural surroundings;
 - ii. The building is of permanent, substantial and sound construction and is capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;
 - iii. Any alterations proposed as part of the conversion are in keeping with the rural character of the building in terms of detailed design, form and materials;
 - iv. There is sufficient room in the curtilage of the building to park the vehicles of those who will live there without detriment to the visual amenity of the countryside;
 - v. No fences, walls or other structures associated with the use of the building or the definition of its curtilage or any sub-division of it are erected which would harm the visual amenity of the countryside;
 - vi. The proposals are well related to the existing road network with direct access off a public road, and will not require construction of a new long track to serve the building;
 - vii. The proposals will not create conditions prejudicial to highway safety;
 - viii. The building is not situated in an isolated location, relative to local services such as shops, schools and public transport;
 - ix. The domestic curtilage is minimal, unobtrusive and capable of being screened;
 - x. The building is of sufficient size to accommodate a genuine business use and that any residential accommodation will be ancillary to that use; The workspace element of the conversion should comprise at least 30% of the total floorspace; and
 - xi. The development is not situated in the farmyard of a working farm where conversion would prejudice the future operation of a farming business.
3. The council will impose a condition prohibiting occupation of the living accommodation until after the works necessary for the establishment of an employment generating use have been completed. The council will also impose a condition which retains the workspace.

POLICY LPRCD5: NEW AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

- 9.64 The NPPF lends strong support to the rural economy and seeks to promote agricultural and land based rural businesses. The maintenance of land in agricultural use generally aids the preservation of the rural character of the countryside and the rural economy.
- 9.65 Certain agricultural and forestry developments do not require planning permission provided that the development falls within one of the categories set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. However, most of these permitted developments need to be submitted to the council for their prior approval of siting, design and external appearance. Developments that are not covered by this Order require planning permission in the usual way.
- 9.66 This policy sets out the council's approach to assessing applications for agricultural buildings and structures, where planning permission is required.

Policy LPRCD5: New agricultural buildings and structures

1. Proposals for new agricultural buildings or structures on land in use for agricultural trade or business which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- i. The proposal is proportionate and necessary for the purposes of agriculture;
- ii. The proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of existing residents; and
- iii. The building or structure would be located within or adjacent to an existing group of buildings, in order to mitigate against the visual impact of development, unless it can be demonstrated that a more isolated location is essential to meet the needs of the holding. Where an isolated location is essential the site should be chosen to minimise the impact of the building or structure on the character and appearance of the countryside.

2. In the case of-developments for structures such as polytunnels or Cravo greenhouses, in addition to the above criteria, the council will expect proposals to address the following issues:

- i. How surface water run-off will be dealt with and controlled within the boundaries of the site;
- ii. The inclusion of a rotation programme for the covering/uncovering of the structures/frames, which explores the possibility of following the seasons; and
- iii. The inclusion of a programme for the maintenance and enhancement of existing field margins in the interests of encouraging biodiversity.

POLICY LPRCD6: EXPANSION OF EXISTING BUSINESSES IN RURAL AREAS

9.67 There are already many industrial and business enterprises located in rural areas. Some are long established, others normally small-scale, have been granted planning permission to operate in disused rural buildings. Many of these enterprises will over time need to expand and/or diversify, further supporting a prosperous rural economy. While such expansion is desirable for job creation, it can radically change the nature of the enterprise and its impact on the local environment. It is therefore important to carefully weigh the advantages to the rural economy of job creation or an improved industrial/business facility against the potential for an adverse impact on the rural environment.

Policy LPRCD6: Expansion of existing businesses in rural areas

1. Planning permission will be granted for the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses in the countryside where:

- i. New buildings and proposed access thereto are appropriate in scale and provided the resultant development as a whole is appropriate in scale for the location and can be satisfactorily integrated into the local landscape;
- ii. The increase in floorspace would not result in unacceptable traffic levels or types on nearby roads or a significant increase in use of an existing substandard access;
- iii. The new development, together with the existing facilities, will not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the area. In particular the impact on nearby properties and the appearance of the development from public roads will be of importance; and
- iv. No open storage of materials will be permitted unless adequately screened from public view throughout the year.

2. Where significant adverse impacts on the rural environment and amenity would result from expansion, rural businesses requiring expanded premises should look to relocate to one of the Economic Development Areas identified in policy LPRSP11(a) or allocated employment sites as identified in policy LPRSP11(b), or to a site within Maidstone Urban Area or one of the Rural Service Centres.

POLICY LPRCD7: EQUESTRIAN DEVELOPMENT

- 9.68 Horse riding remains a popular leisure activity in the borough. The NPPF advises that recreational facilities can make an important contribution to health and wellbeing of communities. Whether planning permission is needed for the use of land and buildings for horses and equestrian activities depends on whether the horses are used for agricultural, recreational or commercial purposes. Where the land is no longer used for agricultural purposes but is used for the keeping of horses, planning permission is necessary for this change of use. This policy sets out the criteria for equestrian development, where planning permission is required.

Policy LPRCD7: Equestrian development

Proposals for domestic or commercial stables or associated equestrian development which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The conversion of existing buildings would be used in preference to new built development;
2. New stables and associated buildings would be grouped with existing buildings on the site wherever possible, and are not of a degree of permanence that could be adapted for other use in the future;
3. The cumulative impact of the proposed equestrian development has been shown to be considered, and where appropriate this has been mitigated;
4. All new development is of a design which is sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of scale, materials, colour and details;
5. Proposals will include lighting only where it can be proven to be necessary;
6. The proposal is accompanied by an integral landscaping scheme including boundary treatments which reflect the landscape character of the area;
7. The proposal contains an appropriately sited and designed area for the reception of soiled bedding materials and provision for foul and surface water drainage;
8. Adequate provision is made for the safety and comfort of horses in terms of size of accommodation and land for grazing and exercising;
9. The site would have easy access to bridleways and/or the countryside; and
10. For proposals of 10 stables or more, adequate provision is made for the security of the site in terms of the location of the proposed development in relation to the manager or owner of the animals.

Tourism, Leisure and Recreation

- 9.69 The NPPF recognises the importance of sustainable tourism and leisure developments in supporting a prosperous rural economy. Maidstone Borough is fortunate to have a strong rural tourism offering, with agriculture, viticulture, countryside and river recreation opportunities. These policies aim to support the vitality of the rural tourism, leisure and recreation industry whilst balancing the need to protect the intrinsic characteristics of the countryside that make it an attractive place to visit.

POLICY LPRTL1: MOORING FACILITIES AND BOAT YARDS

- 9.70 Mooring facilities and boatyards can provide tourism and recreation facilities which can contribute positively towards the economy. The River Medway, which runs through both the urban and rural parts of Maidstone Borough, is an important asset, which provides opportunities to enhance tourism and recreation facilities through additional and enhanced mooring facilities. The council wishes to safeguard existing boat yards, in order to protect water-based recreation facilities. The River Medway contributes positively towards a varied range of recreational facilities and this enhances the attractiveness and diversification of the borough for local communities and visitors.

Policy LPRTL1: Mooring facilities and boat yards

1. Proposals for ancillary riverbank development associated with further small scale and short-term mooring facilities will be permitted at the following locations subject to the views of the Environment Agency:
 - i. Allington;
 - ii. Maidstone town centre;
 - iii. Wateringbury;
 - iv. East Farleigh;
 - v. Yalding; and
 - vi. Stoneham;

And provided that the following criteria are met:

 - vii. There is no loss of flood plain or land raising;
 - viii. The impact, including cumulative impact, shall preserve landscape quality, ecology and uses of the river and valley in the locality;
 - ix. Proposals create no operational problems for other river users, including fishermen;
 - x. Facilities are provided for disposal of boat toilet contents;
 - xi. The site is capable of being adequately screened through provision of appropriate landscaping with indigenous species; and
 - xii. The presence of any similar uses in the locality and the combined effect of any such concentration would be acceptable in terms of environmental impact and highway safety.
2. The council will not permit the redevelopment to other uses of boat yards that are in use, or have the potential to be used, in connection with water-based recreation.

POLICY LPRTL2: HOLIDAY LETS, CARAVAN AND CAMP SITES

- 9.71 With such a diverse rural tourism offer, it is important to provide alternative, diverse forms of accommodation to encourage visitors to stay for extended periods of time in the borough. However, the provision of tourist facilities must be balanced against the need to recognise the quality of the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty. Proposals must also accord with the criteria set out under LPRSP14 in relation to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt.

Policy LPRTL2: Holiday lets, caravan and camp sites

1. Proposals for sites for the stationing of holiday lets, caravans and/or holiday tents outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map will be permitted where:
 - i. The proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss in the amenity of the area. In particular the impact on nearby properties and the appearance of the development from public roads will be of importance; and
 - ii. The site would be unobtrusively located and well screened by existing or proposed vegetation and would be landscaped with indigenous species.
2. A holiday occupancy condition will be attached to any permission, preventing use of any unit as a permanent dwelling.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Introduction

9.72 The promotion of sustainable transport is a key part of national policy and guidance. NPPF section 9 'Promoting sustainable transport' sets out that transport issues should be considered 'from the earliest stages of plan-making'. This consultation has considered the strategic level drivers for the sustainable transport in Policy LPRSP12. This policy adds further detail to LPRSP12 through specifically looking at the following areas:

- Air quality;
- Transport assessment;
- Park & ride; and;
- Parking standards.

POLICY LPRTRA1: AIR QUALITY

9.73 Pollution due to dust and poor air quality, resulting from either existing sites or proposed developments, has the potential to adversely affect human health and the environment in Maidstone Borough. It is therefore essential that these issues are adequately assessed through the development management process.

9.74 The NPPF requires planning policies to sustain compliance with EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas. The council has a responsibility to work towards achieving these targets and does this through the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime. Through this function the council has identified 1 area currently exceeding guideline values (exceedance areas) and has an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) in place in order to identify measures aimed at reducing air pollution at these locations.

9.75 The hotspot is located on Upper Stone Street, Maidstone. The AQMA, updated in 2017, covers the main arterial road network in Maidstone and a section of the M20 motorway in recognition of the nature of road networks and traffic movements. This action plan contributes to the delivery of the national air quality strategy.

9.76 The Maidstone Low Emission Strategy (2017) combines the air quality action plan and low emission strategy into one document. It identifies key partners and their responsibility for delivering measures to improve air quality in the exceedance areas and across the borough. Good progress has been made on many of the actions included in the Action Plan, including adopting new Air Quality Planning Guidance, and undertaking a feasibility study into a Low Emission Zone. The review of the Park and Ride service has also been completed and has resulted in a new service using Euro VI buses. A lot of progress has also been made on our 'Clean Air for Schools' programme.

9.77 With this in mind the latest annual status report (2020) indicated that air quality in Maidstone has improved over recent years 2017-2019 to the extent that a number of areas previously identified as air quality 'hotspots,' for example, the High Street and Well Road, no longer appear to exceed the NO₂ annual mean objective.

9.78 A focus to improve air quality has been placed on achieving modal shift to walking, cycling and public

transport and low emission transport. The council's Integrated Transport Strategy is designed to address this objective. This policy will support the ITS and LES by:

- Promoting infrastructure that encourages the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality;
- Locating development close to transport infrastructure and community services and facilities to minimise trip generation;
- Installing charging points to facilitate expected increases in electric vehicle ownership;
- Requiring developers to mitigate more effectively against emissions from new developments through soft measures such as landscaping and tree planting; and
- Requiring developers to contribute to funding measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development.

9.79 The significance of any air quality impact arising from development can be affected by a number of factors, including the scale, nature and location of development. For instance, a large housing development located outside of the AQMA may still have significant negative impacts on air quality within the AQMA, whereas a small-scale residential extension within the AQMA may not have any perceptible impact on air quality. Similarly, a single additional dwelling may have a negative impact on an exceedance area whilst major development located elsewhere in the borough may not impact the AQMA itself but may generate significant negative impacts in other locations. The council will review the potential significance of the air quality impacts from new proposals taking account of these factors and in line with national guidance. However, in the first instance the Council will require air quality mitigation measures to be in place as standard.

9.80 Where an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) is required, development proposals will be required to assess the existing air quality in the study areas, to predict the future air quality without the development in place and to predict the future air quality with the development, and mitigation, in place. As part of this process, the assessment should consider the potential cumulative impacts of development. The AQIA should also take into account how the impacts from the development relate to the principles and measures contained within the council's Air Quality Action Plan and other relevant strategic guidance documents. Where the need for mitigation measures is identified through an AQIA, the delivery of these measures will be secured through planning condition or through s106 planning obligations.

9.81 It is recognised that planning can play an important role in improving air quality and reducing individuals' exposure to air pollutants. Whilst planning cannot solve existing air quality issues, it can ensure that any likely impacts are effectively mitigated.

9.82 It is also important to ensure that these existing air quality issues, and the cumulative impacts of developments, are responded to in a proactive and effective way. In order to achieve this, the council uses the Maidstone Borough Council Air Quality Planning Guidance (2017) and Low Emission Strategy (2017). These documents provide a timely opportunity to address these long-standing issues, and the council will consider a wide range of options and measures, including further support for sustainable transport measures and the design principles and requirements, as part of this process. As well as the Air Quality Planning Guidance (2017) and the Low Emission Strategy (2017), forthcoming national policy changes are likely to have implications for the local plan policy.

Policy LPRTRA1: Air Quality

Proposals that have an impact on air quality will be permitted, subject to the following criteria being met:

1. Proposals for development which have the potential, by virtue of their scale, nature and/or location, to have a negative impact on air quality at identified exceedance areas, as defined through the Local Air Quality Management process, will be required to submit an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) to consider the potential impacts of pollution from individual and cumulative development, and to demonstrate how the air quality impacts of the development will be mitigated to acceptable levels;
2. Proposals for development which have the potential, by virtue of their scale, nature and/or location, to have a significant negative impact on air quality within identified Air Quality Management Areas will be required to submit an AQIA to consider the potential impacts of pollution from individual and cumulative development, and to demonstrate how the air quality impacts of the development will be mitigated to acceptable levels, even where there will be no negative impact at identified exceedance areas;
3. Other development proposals, where criteria 1 and 2 do not apply, but which by virtue of their scale, nature and/or location have the potential to generate a negative impact on air quality within identified Air Quality Management Areas will not be required to submit an AQIA, but should demonstrate how the air quality impacts of the development will be minimised; and
4. Development proposals which have the potential, by virtue of their scale, nature and/or location, to have a significant negative impact on air quality outside of identified Air Quality Management Areas will submit an AQIA to consider the potential impacts of pollution from individual and cumulative development, and to demonstrate how the air quality impacts of the development will be mitigated to acceptable levels.

POLICY LPRTRA2: ASSESSING THE TRANSPORT IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT

- 9.83 New developments have the potential to generate a considerable number of vehicular and pedestrian trips which in turn can have both direct and cumulative impacts on the transport network. Improvements to public transport, walking, cycling and highway infrastructure may be required to mitigate identified impacts to ensure the increase in trips generated will not lead to severe residual transport impacts. To further minimise these impacts, measures and initiatives must be incorporated into the design of development to minimise vehicular trip generation. The trip generation impacts of development will be considered in the context of any sustainable transport gains from the proposals. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans developed in accordance with KCC guidance will be expected to accompany all planning applications for new developments that reach the required threshold. Where appropriate, new development proposals will be expected to enter into legal agreements to secure the delivery of mitigation to address both their direct and cumulative impacts on the transport network. The council will also seek to secure Construction Management Plans to minimise impacts from new developments during construction.

Policy LPRTRA2: Assessing the Transport Impacts of Development

Development proposals must:

1. Demonstrate that the impacts of trips generated to and from the development are accommodated, remedied or mitigated to prevent severe residual highway safety or capacity impacts
2. Demonstrate that any measures necessary to mitigate the transport impacts (in terms of highway safety and capacity as well as air quality) of development are viable and will be delivered at the appropriate point in the proposed development's buildout. This will be ahead of first occupation for some measures and at an agreed trigger point for others.
3. Provide a satisfactory Transport Assessment for proposals that reach the required threshold and a satisfactory Travel Plan in accordance with the threshold levels set by Kent County Council's Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans and in Highways England guidance; and
4. Demonstrate that development complies with the requirements of policy TRA1 for air quality and the guidance included in the Kent County Council Kent Design Guide.

Proposals for development will be permitted if adequate provision is made, where necessary and appropriate, within the overall design and site layout for the following facilities for public transport and active travel secured through legal agreements:

1. Priority or exclusive provision for public transport vehicle access to or through the proposed development area.
2. Safe and convenient passenger waiting facilities, information systems and signed pedestrian access routes to public transport services;
3. Suitable provision for disabled access to public transport waiting facilities from all parts of the development area; and
4. Suitable provision for disabled access onto buses from the waiting facilities.
5. Priority for pedestrians and vulnerable road users through design throughout the development.
6. Suitable provision for safe active travel connectivity connecting the site to the local area.

Development proposals will be considered in the context of both their impacts in terms of motor vehicle movements and overall sustainability. The impacts of development on the functionality of the highways network will be considered in the context of any sustainable transport gains that are proposed to accompany them.

POLICY LPRTRA3: PARK AND RIDE

9.87 The role of park and ride is to provide an alternative to the private car from the outer parts of an urban area to the centre. It is to help combat congestion, air quality issues and bring about environmental benefits

9.88 Maidstone has supported the principle of Park and Ride for a long time. The first site serving the town opened in 1989. At present there are two park and ride sites within Maidstone Borough serving the urban area. These include:

- Willington Street Park and Ride

- London Road Park and Ride

- 9.89 Combined these sites provided a capacity of approximately 918 parking spaces, and a regular service from them to the town centre.
- 9.90 The Council will keep under regular review future need for park and ride provision, and will consider alternative sites, if required.

Policy LPRTRA3: Park & Ride

The following sites, as defined on the policies map, are designated bus Park and Ride sites:

- i. London Road (to serve the A20 west corridor); and
- ii. Willington Street (to serve the A20 east corridor).

The council will seek to protect these sites to be maintained as Park and Ride sites and will seek opportunities for new Park and Ride sites in the borough, especially in and around the Maidstone Urban Area.

POLICY LPRTRA4: PARKING

- 9.91 Vehicle parking standards ensure that new developments provide adequate off-street parking to accommodate for the need generated by the development and to protect the surrounding locality from adverse vehicle parking.
- 9.92 Kent County Council, as the Highways authority, set out current vehicle parking standards for residential developments within their document Interim Guidance Note 3 (IGN 3) to the Kent Design Guide. These apply to residential development throughout Maidstone Borough, setting maximum standards in town centre and edge of centre locations, and minimum standards in suburban areas and villages. These standards however do not refer to cycle or motorcycle parking provision, which is instead set out in the former Supplementary Planning Guidance 4 (SPG 4) to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan. SPG 4 also sets out vehicle parking standards for new non-residential developments. The Borough Council currently rely on advice from Kent County Council for non-residential standards, of which LPRSP4 forms the basis for discussions, along with national policy on parking and sustainable transportation.
- 9.93 The Borough Council adopts a flexible approach to minimum and maximum parking standards to reflect local circumstances and the availability of alternative modes of transport to the private car. It also seeks to encourage innovative designs that can sufficiently demonstrate that a provision lower than the minimum standard is feasible and would not have any unacceptable adverse impacts on the surrounding locality.
- 9.94 Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure can take the form of either active or passive provision. Active provision is the installation of fully wired and connected charging points which meets the immediate and short term need for Electric Vehicle infrastructure. Passive provision provides the necessary underlying infrastructure, for example the capacity to be connected to the electricity network on a space-by-space basis through the provision of ducting. Such passive provision allows for the futureproofing of new development so that it will be able to meet the need for emerging demand, and also allows for a flexible approach to account for future changes to technology.

Policy LPRTRA4: Parking

1. Car parking standards for new residential developments will be assessed against the requirements set out in KCC's Interim Guidance Note 3 (IGN3) to the Kent Design Guide or any subsequent revisions or superseding documents produced by the Highways Authority.
2. For all new non-residential developments, and for cycle and motorcycle parking in residential developments, provision for all types of vehicle parking should be made in accordance with advice by Kent County Council as Local Highway Authority. As a starting point of reference, consideration should be given to the standards set out in the former Supplementary Planning Guidance 4 (SPG4) to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan.
3. The council may depart from established maximum or minimum standards to take account of:
 - a) Specific local circumstances that may require a higher or lower level of parking provision for reasons including as a result of the development site's accessibility to public transport, shops and services, highway safety concerns and local on-street parking problems;
 - b) the successful restoration, refurbishment and re-use of listed buildings or buildings affecting the character of a conservation area;
 - c) allow the appropriate re-use of the upper floors of buildings in town centres or above shop units;
 - d) Innovative design that can sufficiently justify a reduced provision of vehicle parking

Any departure from the adopted standards will be informed by consultation with the Local Highways Authority.

New developments should ensure that proposals incorporate electric vehicle charging infrastructure as follows:

- a) New residential dwellings with private on-curtilage parking provision shall provide active Electric Vehicle charging points at a minimum of 1 per dwelling of sufficient capacity to enable as a minimum Mode 3 at 7kW with Type 2 connector – 230v AC 32 Amp single phase charging.
- b) New residential dwellings with private allocated off-curtilage parking provision shall provide cabling to all spaces where practical to allow for future installation of charging points. Cabling shall be of sufficient capacity to enable as a minimum Mode 3 at 7kW with Type 2 connector – 230v AC 32 Amp single phase charging.
- c) Proposals for residential development which includes the provision of communal parking shall provide electric vehicle infrastructure at a rate of 50% active Electric Vehicle charging points, and 50% passive Electric Vehicle charging points.
4. Proposals for non-residential development which includes the provision of parking shall provide electric vehicle charging points at a minimum rate of 50% active Electric Vehicle charging points, and 50% passive Electric Vehicle charging points

INFRASTRUCTURE

Introduction

- 9.95 The timely delivery of infrastructure is critical in ensuring truly sustainable growth. This consultation has considered the strategic level drivers for the infrastructure delivery in Policy LPRSP13. This section adds further detail to LPRSP13 through specifically looking at the following areas:
- Publicly accessible open space;
 - Community facilities;
 - Digital communications; and
 - Utilities, specifically renewable and low carbon energy schemes
- 9.96 Matters relating to other infrastructure provision such as public realm and transport are detailed under their separate relevant thematic sections.

POLICY LPRINF1: PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

- 9.97 High quality, publicly accessible open space can bring about opportunities for promoting social interaction and inclusion in communities. Sports and recreation areas and facilities can contribute positively to the wellbeing and quality of those communities. Open space can also have a positive impact upon the quality of the built environment and can be of ecological value.
- 9.97 The NPPF encourages the provision and retention of high-quality open spaces, a stance that the council strongly supports. The council will seek to secure publicly accessible open space provision for new housing and mixed use development sites, in accordance with quantity, quality and accessibility standards set out in the below policy.

Policy LPRINF1: Publicly accessible open space and recreation

1. For new housing or mixed-use development sites, the council will seek to deliver the following quantum of each category of publicly accessible open space provision in accordance with the specified standards below:

Quantity standards

Open space type	Standard (ha/1000 population)	Minimum size of facility (ha)
Amenity green space (e.g., informal recreation spaces, recreation grounds, village greens, urban parks, formal gardens and playing fields)	0.7	0.1
Provision for children and young people (e.g., equipped play areas, ball courts, outdoor basketball hoop areas, skateboard parks, teenage shelters and "hangouts")	0.25	0.25 excluding a buffer zone (*)
Publicly accessible outdoor sports (e.g., outdoor sports pitches, tennis, bowls, athletics and other sports)	1.6	To meet the technical standards produced by Sport England or the relevant governing bodies of sport.
Allotments and community gardens (e.g., land used for the growing of own produce, including urban farms. Does not include private gardens)	0.2	0.66
Natural/semi-natural areas of open space (e.g., woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands, wetlands, open and running water, banks to rivers, land and ponds, wastelands, closed cemeteries and graveyards)	Make a contribution towards maintaining the borough-wide target of 6.5 Ha of natural/ semi-natural open space per 1,000 head of population.	

* but in cases where accessibility to children's and young people's provision is poor, for example outside a reasonable walking distance or where the crossing of major roads is necessary, smaller areas of open space may be justified on-site.

Quality Standards

All new open spaces should meet the following general standards:

1. Be designed as part of the green infrastructure network in a locality, contributing to local landscape character, connecting with local routes and green corridors for people and wildlife as well as providing multi-functional benefits such as addressing surface water management priorities;
2. Be designed to encourage physical activity to improve mental well-being & health inequalities;
3. Provide a location and shape for the space which allows for meaningful and safe recreation and be sufficiently overlooked by active building frontages;
4. Be easily found and accessible by road, cycleway, footpaths and public transport including by those with disabilities, with pedestrian crossings on roads where appropriate;
5. Make the entrances accessible for all users, of appropriate size and inviting with a welcoming sign and directions/map where appropriate;
6. Provide clearly defined boundaries with fences or hedges where needed to ensure safety of users;
7. Where appropriate provide interest and activities for a wide range of users in particular meeting the needs of elderly and less able users as well as children, young people and families;
8. Where appropriate provide seats, cycle furniture, litter bins and appropriate lighting to ensure safety of users without adversely affecting wildlife;
9. Provide a range of planting, with appropriate mix of predominantly indigenous species, maintained to a good standard;
10. Promote biodiversity on-site through design, choice of species and management practices;
11. Submit an Open Space Layout and Design statement, to incorporate ecological management measures for approval by the council; and
12. Provide a Management Plan with adequate resources identified for on-going management and maintenance.

In improving existing open space provision, the council will have regard to these standards.

Accessibility Standards

If open space cannot be provided in full on development sites, due to site constraints, housing delivery expectations on allocated sites, or location, then provision should be provided off-site where it is within the distance from the development site identified in the accessibility standard.

Open space type	Accessibility standard (radius from open space)
Amenity green space (e.g., informal recreation spaces, recreation grounds, village greens, urban parks, formal gardens and playing fields)	400m
Provision for children and young people (e.g., equipped play areas, ball courts, outdoor basketball hoop areas, skateboard parks, teenage shelters and "hangouts")	600m
Publicly accessible outdoor sports (e.g., outdoor sports pitches, tennis, bowls, athletics and other sports)	1000m

Allotments and community gardens (e.g., land used for the growing of own produce, including urban farms. Does not include private gardens)	1000m
Natural/semi-natural areas of open space (e.g., woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands, wetlands, open and running water, banks to rivers, land and ponds, wastelands, closed cemeteries and graveyards)	300m (2ha site) 2km (20ha site) 5km (100ha site) 10km (500ha site)

POLICY LPRINF2: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- 9.98 In order to build well-functioning, sustainable communities, it is essential that adequate community facilities are provided. The NPPF emphasises the importance of creating healthy, inclusive communities, with appropriate facilities, to create attractive residential environments. Community facilities encompass educational, cultural and recreational facilities, including schools, libraries, places of worship, pubs, meeting places, cultural buildings (such as museums and theatres) and sports venues.
- 9.99 The council seeks to resist the net loss of viable community facilities, as this runs contrary to the aim of achieving sustainable development. Any loss will need to be provided elsewhere or sufficiently evidenced. Evidence will be expected to show a lack of need locally (use or over provision of similar uses), and no commercial viability (evidence of ‘proper marketing’ demonstrating a lack of interest in the site and not being financially sustainable). The Council has taken the definition of ‘proper marketing’ from RICS Valuation – Global Standards (2020) or successor documents. This does not provide a definitive timescale, but rather bases it on a project by project and general market conditions.

Policy LPRINF2: Community facilities

Adequate accessibility to community facilities, including social, education and other facilities, is an essential component of new residential development.

1. Residential development which would generate a need for new community facilities or for which spare capacity in such facilities does not exist, will not be permitted unless the provision of new, extended or improved facilities (or a contribution towards such provision) is secured as appropriate by planning conditions, through legal agreements, or through the Community Infrastructure Levy.
2. Proposals requiring planning permission which would lead to a loss of community facilities will not be permitted unless:
 - It is evidenced that a need within the locality no longer exists, and it is not commercially viable (supported by audited financial reports and a reasonable level of proper marketing evidence);
 - or a replacement facility acceptable to the council is provided or secured.
3. The council will seek to ensure, where appropriate, that providers of education facilities make provision for dual use of facilities in the design of new schools and will encourage the dual use of education facilities (new and existing) for recreation and other purposes.

POLICY LPRINF3: RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY SCHEMES

- 9.100 In Maidstone Borough, parts of the natural landscape features and resources mean that there is a technical suitability for the construction of renewable and low carbon energy schemes, such as solar farms, wind farms and biomass. In the longer term, opportunities for such developments may also present themselves in urban areas particularly in relation to larger development schemes.
- 9.101 These schemes help to reduce regional and national carbon emissions and the council considers that, in the correct locations, such proposals are a benefit to the borough as a whole. Nevertheless, they need to be appropriately sited and not conflict with landscape character or existing uses. The council is keen that, while it contributes to bringing about a low carbon future, the process of doing so should not affect the existing amenity of residents and businesses in a harmful way. Living environments should remain appropriate as such and the operation of businesses should not be impeded.
- 9.102 Following its declaration of a climate change and biodiversity emergency in 2019, Maidstone Borough Council adopted its Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and action plan in 2020. In this strategy, the council committed to exploring the potential to support partners in the delivery of Combined Heat and Power and District Heating Scheme developments across the borough. In response to this strategy, MBC will support the development of Combined Heat and Power and District Heating Schemes where they accord with policies elsewhere in the plan.

Policy LPRINF3: Renewable and low carbon energy schemes

1. Applications for larger scale renewable (as defined by the Planning Policy Advice Note (2014): Domestic and medium scale solar PV arrays (up to 50kW) and solar thermal; and Planning Policy Advice Note: Large scale (>50kW) solar PV arrays) or low carbon energy projects will be required to demonstrate that the following have been considered in the design and development of the proposals:
 - i. The cumulative impact of such proposals in the local area;
 - ii. The landscape and visual impact of development;
 - iii. The impact on heritage assets and their setting;
 - iv. The impact of proposals on the amenities of local residents, e.g., noise generated;
 - v. The impact on the local transport network; and
 - vi. The impact on ecology and biodiversity including the identification of measures to mitigate impact and provide ecological or biodiversity enhancement.
2. Preference will be given to existing commercial and industrial premises, previously developed land, or agricultural land that is not classified as the best and most versatile.
3. Provision for the return of the land to its previous use must be made when the installations have ceased operation.
4. Proposals for Combined Heat and Power and District Heating Schemes will be supported where any above ground infrastructure is acceptable on amenity and design grounds, and where such developments accord with policies elsewhere in the plan.

POLICY LPRINF4: DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS & CONNECTIVITY

- 9.103 Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure plays a key role in sustainable economic growth, and digital technologies have been a major driving force in influencing and shaping commerce and society in recent years. The development of high-speed communication networks, including broadband and mobile technology, are also significant in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. The NPPF strongly promotes the expansion of such electronic communication networks, including telecommunications, high speed broadband, and digital services.
- 9.104 Whilst certain telecommunications works are not required to obtain planning permission from the local authority, it is important that where permission is required, applications can be assessed against a suitable policy.
- 9.105 For the Council to support sustainable development in the borough it feels it is important to provide a high level of digital connectivity through superfast broadband. One of the most efficient and effect ways of doing this is via fibre to the premise (FTTP) for new developments where appropriate. FTTP refers to fibre optically wired internet broadband connecting directly to a building (home, business or community facility etc.). These connections can provide speeds of up to 1Gbit per second, much faster than conventional copper cabling.
- 9.106 Other options are non-next general access technologies. These refer options such as: fibre to the cabinet and then a copper cable to the property, via a satellite connection, or the mobile phone network.
- 9.107 At present 93.6% of premises in the borough are connected to superfast broadband (>30 Mbps) compared to an England average of 97.4%.²³ A total of 22.47% of premises have a direct fibre optic connection slightly under the England average of 23.2%.²⁴ However there are pockets of poor connection in the rural areas of the borough.²⁵

²³ <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E07000110>

²⁴ <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E07000110>

²⁵ <https://labs2.thinkbroadband.com/local/broadband-map#12/51.1989/0.4846/uso/nonsuperfast/>

Policy LPRINF4: Digital Communications and Connectivity

The Council wishes to enhance digital communications and connectivity and as such it will support proposals to improve the digital communications network in Maidstone borough allowing greater mobile connectivity and connectivity to properties and businesses.

Digital connectivity

1. To support the best digital connectivity and improve access to superfast broadband all residential and employment developments within Maidstone Urban Area, Rural Service Centres, Larger Villages and Garden Settlements, including site allocations promoted in this Plan, will enable FTTP. In other areas, all residential developments over five dwellings and employment proposals of 500sqm or more (including through conversion) will enable FTTP.
2. For schemes under these thresholds, the council's expectation is that provision for FTTP will be achieved, where practical. Where it can be demonstrated that FTTP is not practical due to special circumstances, (such as issues of viability, the inability to provide the appropriate physical trench, and proximity to the nearest breakout point on the fibre network), then other non-Next Generation Access technologies, including wired and wireless infrastructure, providing all-inclusive internet access speeds in excess of 30Mbps, should be delivered wherever practical.

Mobile connectivity

3. Proposals for the enhancement of mobile connectivity including through the provision of mobile data networks (such as 5G mobile data), will be supported, subject to compliance with relevant policies in this Plan, and with national policy.

Where permission is required, proposals for new masts and antennae by telecommunications and code systems operators will be supported provided:

- i. It has been demonstrated that mast or site sharing is not feasible and that the apparatus cannot be sited on an existing building or other appropriate structure that would provide a preferable environmental solution;
- ii. It has been demonstrated that an alternative, less environmentally harmful means of providing the same service is not feasible;
- iii. Every effort has been made to minimise the visual impact of the proposal;
- iv. Proposals adhere to current Government advice on the health effects of exposure to radio waves; and
- v. Consideration has been given to the future demands of network development, including that of other operators.

ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

9.108 National Government planning policy recognises that a key purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment.²⁶ The council's vision places a 'safe, clean and green' environment at the heart of its ambitions for Maidstone to 2045. Outlined in this section are policies relating to:

- Historic environment;
- Agricultural land; and;
- Countryside and Landscapes.

POLICY LPRENV 1: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

9.109 As stated in Policy LPRSP14(b) Maidstone Borough has a diverse and varied range of heritage assets. These are given protection via the NPPF and various other forms of legislation. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. This policy applies to all heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens. In addition, the Council will also seek to safeguard locally significant heritage (including non-designated heritage assets).

9.110 When making a decision concerning a listed building or its setting, the council must have regard to the desirability of preserving the building and/or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The Act also places the duty on the council in making its decisions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas in the borough.

9.111 Development proposals have the potential to impact on archaeological assets, including through instatement of drainage systems. This policy will ensure that an appropriate level of assessment is undertaken in investigation and development works.

9.112 In the determination of planning applications, this preferred approach sets out the approach to development affecting a heritage asset.

Policy LPRENV 1: Development affecting heritage assets

1. Applicants will be expected to ensure that new development affecting a heritage asset incorporates measures to conserve, and where possible enhance, the significance of the heritage asset and its setting. This includes responding positively to views of and from that asset.
2. Where appropriate, development proposals will be expected to respond to the value of the historic environment by the means of a proportionate Heritage Assessment which assesses and takes full account of:
 - i. Any heritage assets, and their settings, which could be impacted by the proposals;

²⁶ MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework, sections 15 & 16, paragraphs 170-202 (2019)

- ii. The significance of the assets; and
- iii. The scale of the impact of development on the identified significance.

3. Where development is proposed for a site which includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, applicants must submit a proportionate landscape assessment by way of an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. This will be used to inform development and identify opportunities to enhance awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment to the benefit of the community.

4. The council will apply the relevant tests and assessment factors specified in the National Planning Policy Framework when determining applications for development which would result in the loss of, or harm to, the significance of a heritage asset and/or its setting.

5. In the circumstances where the loss of a heritage asset is robustly justified, developers must make the information about the asset and its significance available for incorporation into the Historic Environment Record.

POLICY LPRENV 2: CHANGE OF USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND TO DOMESTIC GARDEN LAND

- 9.113 Changes in the agricultural industry sometimes result in vacant agricultural land being sold off as individual plots. In some cases, this land is simply retained as open pasture land. However, planning permission is required where agricultural land is used to form an enlarged domestic garden, for example, where land is regularly mown and laid to lawn or used as an outdoor seating and play area.
- 9.114 Significant swathes of the borough, particularly in the Medway valley and Greensand fruit belt, are graded as high-quality agricultural land under the DEFRA classification. The NPPF recognises the benefits of best and most versatile agricultural land. Where agricultural land is highly graded (grade 1 or grade 2) and is functionally well located for agricultural purposes, such that future agricultural use is feasible, the council will seek to resist its irreversible loss to domestic use.
- 9.115 The change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden land is also, in principle, contrary to the objective of safeguarding the open, rural character of the countryside, which is advocated by the NPPF. The domestication of the countryside, through the replacement of open pasture with lawns, domestic plants and garden furniture is generally harmful to the integrity and character of rural landscapes. This policy will safeguard against inappropriate and excessive extensions to domestic gardens.
- 9.116 In some cases, applicants may seek development that results in the infill of an area between existing clear boundaries to existing built development. Where development constitutes such infilling and is in keeping with the layout of the existing built environment, the impact upon the countryside is likely to be minimised.

Policy LPREnv 2: Change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden land

Planning permission will be granted for the change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden if

1. There would be no harm to the character and appearance of the countryside; and
2. There would be no loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land

POLICY LPRENV 3: CARAVAN STORAGE

- 9.117 It is often impractical to store private caravans within the curtilage of dwellings due to their size. However, open storage of caravans can be an intrusive feature of rural landscapes. Within Maidstone Borough, there are some highly sensitive landscape areas such as the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and as such the council feels it is appropriate to have a policy to manage this scenario.
- 9.118 For the purpose of this policy a caravan is considered to be “... any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed or being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) ...”, as defined by section 29 of the Caravan sites and Control of Development Act 1960.

Policy LPREnv 3: Caravan storage in the countryside

Proposals for the open storage of private caravans outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map which meet the following criteria will be permitted where:

1. The site lies outside the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting;
2. The site is already well screened year-round by buildings and/or planting and that screening is to be reinforced as necessary with planting by indigenous species;
3. Security arrangements would not be intrusive. In the case of lighting this will be used only where demonstrably required and will be directional so as to minimise light pollution;
4. The proposal would not result in a concentration of sites; and
5. The proposal is situated close to existing built development, including residential accommodation.

QUALITY AND DESIGN

Introduction

- 9.119 The quality and design of places is key to national policy and guidance. The social objective of the sustainable development principle core to the NPPF outlines the need for a ‘well-designed and safe built environment’. This is supported by section 12 of the NPPF ‘Achieving well-designed places. Maidstone Borough Council strives to improve design build quality and has done work to support this through the production and use of design documents such as Maidstone Building for Life 12 and the Kent Design Guide (2005).
- 9.120 This section will focus on design relating to the following areas:
- Principles of good design;
 - Sustainable design;
 - Signage and frontage;
 - Lighting;
 - Design in the countryside;
 - Technical standards; and;
 - Private amenity space.

POLICY LPRQ&D 1: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

- 9.121 Recognition of climate change and its contributing factors will be an important consideration in the future of development across the borough. In 2019 the council declared a climate emergency, and new developments should wherever possible incorporate mitigating measures, while still achieving the high-quality designs that make the borough a desirable place to live and work.
- 9.122 Sustainable design refers to the way in which buildings of all uses will be developed across the borough to have longevity and mitigate the impacts of their development. This looks over the long-term life of the development as well and the short-term construction phase.
- 9.123 The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is the most appropriate/recognisable assessment methods by which to judge and require increased sustainability standards in new non-residential developments.
- 9.124 In terms of energy efficiency and carbon emissions for residential development, this will be achieved through a strengthening of the energy performance requirements in Part L of the Building Regulations (incorporating carbon compliance, energy efficient fabric and services). For non-residential uses, proposals should achieve a minimum of the Very Good BREEAM standard.

Policy LPRQ&D 1: Sustainable design

Applications for new development involving the erection or conversion of a building should demonstrate how sustainability has been incorporated into the design, construction, and operation of the development.

1. Proposals for new development shall demonstrate how the scheme has adopted a 'fabric first' approach to sustainable design, by incorporating energy efficiency measures into new buildings.
2. New dwellings should meet the Building Regulations optional requirement for tighter water efficiency of 110l per person, per day.
3. Non-residential development, where appropriate and technically feasible and viable, should meet BREEAM Technical Standard (2018) Very Good rating including addressing maximum water efficiencies under the mandatory water credits.
4. Proposals for new non-domestic buildings should achieve BREEAM Very Good for energy credits where appropriate and technically and financially viable. Should BREEAM be replaced, or any national standards increased, then this requirement will also be replaced by any tighter standard appropriate to the borough.
5. All developments will be expected to incorporate 10% on-site renewable or low carbon energy production where appropriate. This shall be measured as a percentage of overall consumption.
6. Where possible new development should be designed and orientated so as to ensure that it responds to or allows for future adaptation to the impacts of climate change over its lifetime.
9. New development proposals shall incorporate into the fabric of the building bird, bat and bee habitats, and shall provide the planting of native tree and shrub species, wildflower grasses, and habitats for insects and invertebrates where appropriate.
10. All development where on-site renewable energy is provided will be expected to incorporate battery energy storage where feasible.

POLICY LPRQ&D 2: EXTERNAL LIGHTING

- 9.125 Lighting can be an important factor of good design. Appropriate types and levels of lighting can contribute positively towards a sense of place, whilst poorly designed lighting schemes can damage local amenity and biodiversity interests. National Policy and guidance seek to limit light pollution in locations which are particularly sensitive to light, such as intrinsically dark landscapes.
- 9.126 Light pollution or obtrusive light can have a negative impact on ecology and physiology and therefore should be minimized where possible. Glare from external lighting can intrude on to the tranquility of a place and this should be avoided in certain landscapes and habitats. Particular consideration should be given to dark skies of the Kent Downs AONB, as set out in the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan.
- 9.127 The policy applies to any proposals for external lighting schemes within the borough that are either individual or part of a larger more comprehensive scheme.

Policy LPRQ&D 2: External lighting

1. Proposals for external lighting schemes will be permitted if they meet the following criteria:
 - I. It is demonstrated by illuminance contour diagrams that the minimum number, intensity and height and timing of lighting necessary to achieve its locationally appropriate purpose is proposed;
 - II. The design and specification of the lighting would minimise glare and light spillage and would not dazzle or distract drivers or pedestrians using nearby highways;
 - III. The lighting scheme would not be visually detrimental to its immediate or wider setting, particularly intrinsically dark landscapes and would be of appropriate colour temperature for its location and ecological impact;
 - IV. The impact on wildlife and biodiversity is minimised through appropriate mitigations;
 - V. Any development affecting protected species follows relevant specific guidance on lighting
2. Lighting proposals that are within or are near enough to significantly affect areas of nature conservation and landscape importance, e.g., Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, County Wildlife Sites, Local nature Sites, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and need to take account of any specific guidance on lighting that is relevant to these identified sites.

POLICY LPRQ&D 3: SIGNAGE AND BUILDING FRONTAGES

- 9.128 Signage and shop fronts have a significant impact upon the attractiveness and vitality of shopping and other commercial areas. The NPPF requires that new development integrates well into the built environment. Advertisements which are poorly placed can result in visual clutter which both detracts from the quality of the built environment and leads to a more confused and less coherent visual

presentation. Unsympathetic shop fronts and fascia's can also damage the character of their locality, especially in conservation areas.

9.129 This policy covers all developments – either independent or part of a comprehensive scheme, adjustments to or new signage, or building frontages of specific building types that would require planning permission.

Policy LPRQ&D 3: Signage and building frontages

Proposals for new signage and for shop or other commercial fronts (use classes E and F)²⁷, as well as new frontages for pubs and takeaways which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The number, size, design, positioning, materials, colour, method and level of illumination of signage would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding area;
2. The proposal would not result in the loss of a traditional shop front or features and details of architectural or historic interest;
3. The proposal would be in sympathy with the architectural style, materials and form of the building(s) of which it would form part and the character of the neighbouring properties; and
4. Where a fascia is to be applied, it would be of an appropriate height which would be in scale with the overall height of the shop front and other elements of the building.

In town, district and local centres as set out in policy LPRSP11(c), signage should be at ground floor level unless there is sufficient justification for them above this level.

POLICY LPRQ&D 4: DESIGN PRINCIPLES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

9.130 The achievement of high-quality design in all developments is important. In addition to the requirements of policy LPRSP9, where development is proposed in the countryside the design principles set out in policy LPRQ&D 5 must be met.

9.131 National planning policy and guidance place a lot of emphasis on the design of development and its importance. The council is supportive of this approach, and have adopted/endorsed appropriate design guidance, such as Maidstone Building for Life 12 (2018) and the Kent Design Guide (2005).

9.132 The town has a large rural hinterland that is home to some nationally and locally designated landscapes and numerous heritage assets, which, along with their settings need to be carefully managed. Account should be taken of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and the Maidstone Borough Landscape Character Guidelines SPD. Plus, any heritage assets (including designated assets and those locally identified) as defined by national policy.

9.133 The countryside also provides a habitat for a plethora of wildlife, and biodiversity. This is useful to work with as the council seeks to the tackle climate change in the Borough.

²⁷Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)

Policy LPRQ&D 4: Design principles in the countryside

Outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map, proposals which would create high quality design, satisfy the requirements of other policies in this plan and meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The type, siting, materials and design, mass and scale of development and the level of activity would maintain, or where possible, enhance local distinctiveness including landscape features;
2. Impacts on the appearance and character of the landscape would be appropriately mitigated. Suitability and required mitigation will be assessed through the submission of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments to support development proposals in appropriate circumstances;
3. Proposals would not result in unacceptable traffic levels on nearby roads; unsympathetic change to the character of a rural lane which is of landscape, amenity, nature conservation, or historic or archaeological importance or the erosion of roadside verges;
4. Where built development is proposed, there would be no existing building or structure suitable for conversion or re-use to provide the required facilities. Any new buildings should, where practicable, be located adjacent to existing buildings or be unobtrusively located and well screened by existing or proposed vegetation which reflect the landscape character of the area; and
5. Where an extension or alteration to an existing building is proposed, it would be of a scale which relates sympathetically to the existing building and the rural area; respect local building styles and materials; have no significant adverse impact on the form, appearance or setting of the building, and would respect the architectural and historic integrity of any adjoining building or group of buildings of which it forms part.
6. Where design, layout and landscaping has considered the need to respond and adapt to climate change.
7. Where possible, the design should include local and sustainable materials.
8. Where possible in consideration of other elements of this policy renewable energy generation methods should be included.

POLICY LPRQ&D 5: CONVERSION OF RURAL BUILDINGS

9.134 Maidstone Borough has a large and varied rural hinterland, with many buildings and structures having been constructed over the centuries to support the rural economy. Government advice in paragraph 79 of the NPPF supports the re-use of redundant buildings where an enhancement to their setting would result. It also places emphasis upon the building of a strong, rural economy, which the conversion of redundant rural buildings can support.

9.135 This policy is applicable to buildings located outside of the defined settlement boundaries and therefore fall within the scope of Policy LPRSP9 – ‘The Countryside’. ‘Rural buildings’ are those used in support of the rural economy and capture not just those used by agricultural industries, but also those for the

purposes of tourism and leisure.

9.136 Policy Q&D5 covers all forms of development where planning permission is required.

Policy LPRQ&D 5: Conversion of rural buildings

The conversion of rural buildings will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- i. The building is of a form, bulk, scale and design which takes account of and reinforces landscape character;
- ii. The building is of demonstrable permanent, substantial and sound construction and is capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;
- iii. Any alterations proposed as part of the conversion compliments the landscape and building character in terms of materials used, design and form;
- iv. There is sufficient room in the curtilage of the building to park the vehicles of those who will live there without detriment to the visual amenity of the countryside; and
- v. No fences, walls or other structures associated with the use of the building or the definition of its curtilage or any sub-division of it are erected which would harm landscape character and visual amenity.

Conversion for non-residential purposes

In addition to criteria 1(i – v) above, proposals for the conversion of existing rural buildings for commercial, industrial, sport, recreation or tourism uses must also ensure that:

- i. The traffic generated by the new use would not result in the erosion of roadside verges, and is not detrimental to the character of the landscape; and
- ii. In the case of a tourist use, the amenity of future users would not be harmed by the proximity of farm uses or buildings. For self-catering accommodation proposals, a holiday occupancy condition will be attached, preventing their use as a sole or main residence.

Conversion for residential purposes

In addition to criteria 1(i – v) above, proposals for the conversion of existing rural buildings specifically for residential purposes will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- i. In the interest of supporting a prosperous rural economy, every reasonable attempt has been made to secure a suitable commercial re-use for the building;
- ii. Residential conversion is the optimal viable use of: a heritage asset; a listed building; an unlisted building of quality and traditional construction which is grouped with one or more listed buildings in such a way as to contribute towards the setting of the listed building(s); or other buildings which contribute to landscape character or which exemplify the historical development of the Kentish landscape; and
- iii. There is sufficient land around the building to provide a reasonable level of outdoor space for the occupants, and the building and outdoor space enhance the immediate setting.

POLICY LPRQ&D 6: TECHNICAL STANDARDS

9.137 In March 2015, the Government introduced new technical standards covering water usage, internal space requirements, accessibility, and adaptability.²⁸

9.138 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should ‘create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The National Planning Practice Guidance further qualifies this by recommending that where a local planning authority wishes to require technical standards they should do so by reference in their local plan.²⁹

Policy LPRQ&D 6: Technical Standards

All new development will be expected where possible to meet the new technical standards as follows:

- 1) internal space standards as set out in Table 4

Number of bedrooms	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey Dwellings (M ²)	2 storey Dwellings (M ²)	3 storey Dwellings (M ²)	Built-in storage (M ²)
1b	1p	39 (37)*	-	-	1.0
	2p	50	58	-	1.5
2b	3p	61	70	-	2.0
	4p	70	79	-	
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

Table 4. Nationally described space standards (m2)

- 1) Accessibility and adaptable dwellings standard M4 (2) or any superseding standards in line with evidence of the SHMA, national planning policy and guidance.
- 2) New dwellings shall be built to the higher levels of water efficiency of 110l per person per day as set out in building regulations part G of the Building Regulations.

²⁸ MHCLG, National Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraphs: Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 56-005-20150327 to 019 Reference ID: 56-019-20150327 (2015)

²⁹ MHCLG, National Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 56-002-20160519 (2016)

POLICY LPRQ&D 7: PRIVATE AMENITY SPACE STANDARDS

- 9.139 A private outdoor space is one which is not overlooked from the street or other public place. For a house or ground floor flat a garden with direct access is the best solution. For other forms of flats this refers to a balcony, roof garden or patio. Privacy is important in design being raised local planning guidance. Both the Kent Design Guide (2005) and Maidstone Building for Life 12 (2018) raise it as an important issue.
- 9.140 The quality of such spaces and their scale is also important as well as just their existence. In 2018 Maidstone Borough Council adopted the Maidstone Building for Life 12 standard as planning guidance to the help decision making and designers to improve design quality in the Borough. It sets out 12 areas to review when a development is being formed. One of the 12 recommendations is around external storage and amenity space. Due to the success of this document the council is minded to formalise the recommendations from it in policy.
- 9.141 For houses, the space must be sufficient to provide the following: outdoor seating area, small shed, clothes drying area, area of play, planting space (for trees and shrubs). This can be accommodated in a garden with a 10m depth and the width of the dwelling.
- 9.142 For a flatted scheme, the outdoor space must be of a scale to support the following: a clothes drying area and a small table and chairs to allow inhabitants and visitors to sit outside. This space should grow depending on the occupants of the flat, but a minimum of 5m² should be provided as standard

Policy LPRQ&D 7: Private open space standards

All new dwellings created through subdivision, conversion or new build should have private amenity space that meets the following:

1. be located adjacent to the dwelling unless exceptional circumstances are stated;
2. Have an external access to the private space;
3. For houses, the rear garden is at least equal to the ground floor footprint and not triangular in shape; and;
4. For flats, have a space (balcony or terrace) large enough for two persons to use and for drying clothes and which provides for sufficient privacy. Where it is not feasible to provide balconies for all flats, a quality private communal space must be provided for occupants to use (in addition to any necessary public open space provision).

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Introduction

- 10.1 Local plan policies will deliver sustainable growth to meet housing, employment and other identified needs and associated infrastructure in a way which also aims to conserve the borough's built and natural heritage.
- 10.2 An effective and proportionate monitoring framework is essential to ensure that the plan delivers the amount and type of development that is required, in the right place and at the right time, and also that any risks to the plan's delivery are highlighted promptly so that correcting action can be implemented in good time.
- 10.3 In developing the local plan allocations and policies, the council has been aware of the risks to delivery and has sought to mitigate these through; its development strategy, which allows a range of landowners and developers the opportunity to contribute to development in the borough; the promotion of sites which are known to be available; and understanding viability and operating a positive and flexible approach where it can be demonstrated that viability would hamper delivery.
- 10.4 The results of monitoring will enable the council to understand the progress being made towards the local plan's key objectives. A comprehensive monitoring framework is set out on the following pages. This identifies targets for key policies in the plan, specific triggers which would indicate that targets may not be met and, in such circumstances, the actions to be taken in response. A number of contextual indicators are also included which, whilst not linked directly to the application of the local plan's policies, will provide helpful understanding of broader trends at play in the borough. The outcomes of monitoring against the identified targets will be reported annually in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).

Topics

- 10.5 The overall performance of the plan's policies will be monitored through review of appeal decisions and of applications granted as a departure from the local plan.
- 10.6 The NPPF sets out the Government's desire to "significantly boost the supply of homes" and hence there must be a strong focus on housing delivery in the monitoring framework. The council will monitor delivery of past and anticipated future housing delivery including its housing trajectory and its 5-year supply position as well as its supply of pitches to meet its need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.
- 10.7 Given its aspirations for growth, the council will also monitor the delivery of employment and retail opportunities including by measuring the net additional floorspace created either by new construction or change of use.
- 10.8 Key supporting infrastructure requirements are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which also indicates potential funding sources for each project. It is vital to monitor delivery of identified schemes to ensure that the specific mitigation needed to support the plan's growth is coming forward during the plan period.
- 10.9 In addition to the above there are a variety of further monitoring indicators addressing the full scope of the local plan.

Indicator no.	Indicator	Target	Trigger	Action	Policy
General/Whole Plan					
M1	Number and nature of departures from the Local Plan granted consent per year	[no specific target]	Analysis of departures reveals a significant trend/ issue in the nature of departures obtaining consent.	Consider the need for changes to the Local Plan as part of a Local Plan Review.	Whole Plan
M2	Appeals lost against Local Plan policy per year	[no specific target]	Analysis of appeal decisions reveals a significant policy omission/ issue.	Consider the need for changes to the Local Plan as part of a Local Plan Review.	Whole Plan
M3	Successful delivery of the schemes in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) required to support the development in the Local Plan Review	Timely delivery of the critical and essential schemes identified in the IDP.	Annual update of the IDP identifies risks to the delivery of critical/ essential schemes, including: Risk of a shortfall in funding Risk to the timing of delivery.	Work with infrastructure providers to identify actions to overcome barriers preventing timely delivery of infrastructure. Consider the need for a review of the IDP.	LPRSP13
Housing					
M4	Progress on allocated housing sites per annum	Timely delivery of allocated sites.	Persistent shortfall in annual completions on allocated sites compared with target rates in the trajectory.	Review deliverability of housing sites and address barriers to delivery including bringing sites contained within the long-term trajectory forward, where necessary.	LPRSP4(a) LPRSP4(b) LPRSA policies

M5	5-year housing supply (including NPPF buffer)	The target meets the cumulative housing requirement for that 5-year period.	A 5-year housing land supply cannot be demonstrated considering previous delivery and future targets.	Review deliverability of housing sites and broad locations (as appropriate), including bringing sites contained within the long term trajectory forward. Consider reviewing the plan, starting with a call for sites.	LPRSS1
M6	Housing trajectory: Predicted housing delivery over the plan period	The target is the annualised cumulative housing target for the plan period.	A supply of housing cannot be demonstrated for the remaining plan period.	Consider reviewing the plan, starting with a call for sites.	LPRSS1
M7	Windfalls: delivery of housing on unidentified sites	Number of completions corresponds with windfall allowance. Location of all types of windfalls corresponds with spatial strategy.	Windfalls over phasing period (3-5 years) deviate significantly from the windfall allowance. Windfalls deviate significantly from the spatial strategy over phasing period (3-5 years).	Reconsider windfall allowance element of housing trajectory and its contribution to overall housing land supply. Consider whether policy changes are required to bring about greater consistency and limit greenfield development as part of the review of the Local Plan.	LPRSS1
M8	Prior Notification office to residential conversions in the town centre	The number of completions corresponds with the allowance made in the trajectory	Completions over a phasing period (3-5 years) deviate significantly from the allowance made in the trajectory.	Reconsider this element of the housing trajectory and its contribution to overall housing land supply.	LPRSS1
M9	Prior notification uses classes falling under E	[no specific target]	[no specific trigger]	[no specific action]	LPRSS1

	to residential conversions in the primary shopping area and the wider town centre.	This is a contextual indicator to monitor wider changes in social housing demand.			
M10	Number of entries on the self-build register Number of plots for self- build units consented per annum	Number of self- build plots consented over a phasing period (3-5 years) corresponds to the borough- specific interest on the self- build register.	Sustained low delivery of self-build plots over a phasing period (3-5 years) compared with registered interest.	Review approach towards self-build plot provision, including with Registered Providers and housebuilders.	LPRSP10(a)
M11	Number of dwellings of different sizes (measured by number of bedrooms) consented per annum	Mix of dwellings consented corresponds to the dwelling size mix outlined in the SHMA.	Sustained and significant mismatch in the dwelling mix consented compared with that outlined in the SHMA over a phasing period (3-5 years).	Review interpretation of Policy SP10a SP19. Work with housebuilders to identify and address the mismatch.	LPRSP10(a)
M12	Number and tenure of affordable homes delivered (including starter homes)	Number and tenure of affordable homes completed and consented per annum matches policy requirement.	Affordable housing delivery over phasing period (3-5 years) falls significantly below annual requirement. Tenure of affordable housing delivered over phasing period (3-5 years) deviates significantly from indicative policy target.	Work with Registered Providers to secure greater delivery or change to tenure of delivery. Promote council owned sites for affordable housing. Review interpretation of approach regarding off-site contributions.	LPRSP10(b)
M13	Affordable housing as a proportion of overall housing delivery in	SP10bpercentage requirements achieved on all qualifying	Proportion of affordable housing delivered in the respective geographical	Review approach towards affordable housing provision,	LPRSP10(b)

	geographical policy areas consented and completed relative to Policy SP10b requirements. The geographical areas are: Low Mid High Springfield	developments in geographical areas.	areas over phasing period (3-5 years) deviates significantly from indicative policy targets.	including with Registered Providers.	
M14	Density of housing development in Policy HOU5 and LPRSA policies	Achievement of overall net housing densities specified in Policy HOU5 in/ adjacent to the town centre, urban area, rural service centres and larger villages.	Evidence of a trend in achieved net densities significantly above/below the rates specified in Policy HOU5 and LPRSA policies	Consider the need for a review of housing land supply (trajectory). Consider the need to revise indicative densities as part of a Local Plan Review	LPRSA policies LPRHOU5
M15	Number of older people's units delivered.	Net numbers of housing support, housing with care, older persons care bedspace, over the next 5-year period matches requirement (including any backlog).	Evidence of policy not being effective in delivering additional places including: low numbers of places consented and completed relative to identified needs significant number of refused applications.	Liaise with providers to identify barriers to delivery.	LPRHOU7
M16	Number of applications on the Housing Register	[no specific target] This is a contextual indicator to monitor wider changes in social housing demand.	[no specific trigger]	[no specific action]	
M17	Number of homeless households in the borough	[no specific target]	[no specific trigger]	[no specific action]	

		This is a contextual indicator to monitor wider changes in social housing demand.			
M18	House price: earnings ratio	[no specific target] This is a contextual indicator to monitor wider changes in the local housing market.	[no specific trigger]	[no specific action]	
Employment					
M19	Total amount of employment floorspace (E (g), B2, B8) consented and completed per annum	Net increase in employment floorspace sufficient to meet identified needs by end of the plan period.	Evidence of persistent under provision of employment land and/or Local Plan sites not meeting the economy's requirements including: Slow/ no delivery of allocated sites Significant employment land supply on windfall sites in addition to and/or in preference to the allocations/ EDAs Significant other floorspace (not E (g), B2, B8) being delivered on allocated sites/ EDAs Overall delivery falling short of identified requirements	Identify if barriers to delivery can be overcome e.g., through the Development Management process, including resolving specific site constraints. Consider the need for changes to the employment land strategy as part of the Local Plan review.	LPRSS1
M20	Amount of employment floorspace by type	Net increase in employment floorspace within EDAs.	As above.	As above.	LPRSP11(a)

	consented and completed within Economic Development Areas per annum				
M21	Amount of employment floorspace by type Consented and completed on allocated sites per annum	Timely delivery of allocated sites.	As above.	As above.	LPRSS1 LPRSA policies
M22	Amount of employment land/ floorspace within Economic Development Areas and allocated sites and elsewhere lost to non-employment uses	No net loss of employment (E (g), B2 and B8) floorspace within EDAs and allocated sites and elsewhere.	As above.	As above.	LPRSP11(a) LPRSA policies
M23	Percentage unemployment rate	[no specific target] This is a contextual indicator to monitor wider changes in the local economy.	[no specific trigger]	[no specific action]	
M24	Number of jobs in the borough	[no specific target] This is a contextual indicator to monitor wider changes in the local economy.	[no specific trigger]	[no specific action]	
Retail					
M25	Amount of additional comparison and convenience retail	Net increase in convenience and comparison floorspace sufficient to keep pace with identified needs and in	Evidence of Local Plan policies and/ or sites not meeting the identified need for additional retail	Identify if barriers to delivery can be overcome e.g., through the Development Management process,	LPRSS1

	<p>floorspace consented and completed per annum by area: Within the town centre Edge of centre Out of centre</p>	<p>appropriate locations up to end of the plan period.</p>	<p>floorspace, including: Slow/ no delivery of allocated sites Significant retail floorspace being delivered on sequentially less preferable sites in addition to/ in preference to allocations Pipeline supply of convenience/ comparison floorspace falling significantly below the forecast requirement over phasing period (5 years).</p>	<p>including resolving specific site constraints. Consider the need for changes to the retail allocations/ policies as part of the Local Plan review.</p>	
M26	<p>Amount of convenience and comparison retail floorspace consented and completed on allocated sites per annum</p>	<p>Timely delivery of allocated sites.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>LPRSS1 LPRSA policies</p>
Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling Showpeople accommodation					
M27	<p>Annual delivery of permanent pitches/ plots (allocated and unidentified sites)</p>	<p>Net increase in permanent pitches/plots sufficient to keep pace with identified needs up to end of plan period. .</p>	<p>The number of permanent pitches/ plots consents granted significantly above or below identified needs over phasing period (5 years).</p>	<p>Consider the need for changes to the Local Plan Review allocations and/ or revising the allocation policies as part of a review.</p>	<p>LPRSS1 LPRSP10(c) LPRHOU8</p>

M28	Delivery of permanent pitches on allocated sites	Timely delivery of allocated sites.	Evidence of Local Plan Review sites not meeting the identified need for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches including: low/ no delivery of allocated sites Significant number of pitches permitted on unidentified sites in addition to/ in preference to allocations.	Consider the need for changes to the Local Plan Review allocations and/ or revising the allocation policies as part of a review of the Local Plan/Development Plan Document.	LPRSS1 LPRSP10(c)
M29	Five-year supply position	Five-year supply of Gypsy pitches in place.	No confirmed five-year supply of Gypsy pitches.	The lack of a 5-year land supply will be a significant consideration in planning decisions when considering applications for the grant of temporary planning permission.	LPRSS1
M30	Number of caravans recorded in the bi-annual caravan count	[no specific target] This is a contextual indicator to provide a snapshot of Gypsy provision in the borough.	[no specific trigger]	[no specific action]	
Heritage					
M31	Number of and nature of cases resulting in a loss of designated heritage asset as a result of development	No loss of designated heritage assets over the monitoring period as a result of development.	Analysis of the relevant consents shows a loss of designated heritage assets over the monitoring period as a result of development.	Review reasons for loss to ensure correct application of Local Plan policies.	LPRENV 1

M32	Change in the number of entries on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register	Decrease in the number of entries from 2016 baseline.	Sustained increase in the number of entries from 2016 baseline.	Review approach towards interventions, including with potential stakeholders and landowners.	LPRSP14(b)
M33	Progress towards creating borough wide local listing register	Annual progress	No progress by end of calendar year	Review priorities of conservation team	LPRSP14(b)
M34	Number of conservation area appraisals and management plans adopted	This is a contextual indicator to provide a snapshot of conversation appraisals/management plan adoption.	Not meeting the 3 a year target because lack of resources.	Review priorities of conservation team	LPRSP14(b)
Natural Environment – Biodiversity					
M35	Loss of designated wildlife sites as a result of development (hectares)	No loss of designated wildlife sites as a result of development (hectares).	Analysis of the relevant consents shows a loss of designated wildlife sites over the monitoring period as a result of development.	Review reasons for loss to ensure correct application of Local Plan policies.	LPRSP14(a)
M36	Loss of Ancient Woodland as a result of development (hectares)	No loss of Ancient Woodland as a result of development (hectares).	Analysis of the relevant consents shows a loss of Ancient Woodland over the monitoring period as a result of development.	Review reasons for loss to ensure correct application of Local Plan policies.	LPRSP14(a)
Agricultural Land					
M37	Loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land as a result of development (hectares)	No overall loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land as a result of consented development on non- allocated sites (major applications only).	Analysis of the relevant consents shows a significant overall reduction in the amount of the best agricultural land over the monitoring	Review whether a specific change of approach is needed through the development management process and/or at a review of the Local Plan.	LPRSP9 LPRSP14(a)

			period as a result of consents for major development on non-allocated sites.		
Good Design and Sustainable Design					
M38	Number of qualifying developments failing to provide BREEAM very good standards for water and energy credits	No qualifying developments fail to provide BREEAM very good standards for water and energy credits over the monitoring period.	Analysis of the relevant consents shows that qualifying developments are failing to comply with the terms of Policy LPR Q&D1.	Review reasons for failure to comply, to ensure correct application of Local Plan policies.	LPRQ&D1
M39	Approved Developments granted on appeal after failing to achieve satisfactory standards on design grounds	No sustained failure in the application of Policy SP15 identified through appeals that are subsequently allowed on design grounds	Analysis of review outcomes reveals a sustained failure in the application of Policy SP15 over the review period (5 years).	Review the application of Policy SP15 in the development management process.	LPRSP15
Open Space					
M40	Loss of designated open space as a result of development (hectares)	No loss of designated open space as a result of development (hectares).	Analysis of the relevant consents shows a loss of designated open space over the monitoring period as a result of development.	Review reasons for loss to ensure correct application of Local Plan policies.	LPRINF1
M41	Delivery of new or improvements to existing designated open space in association with housing and mixed-use developments	Delivery of new or improvements to existing designated open space in accordance with Policy LPRINF1 and, where appropriate, LPRSA policies.	Open space improvements and new open space is not delivered in accordance with LPRINF1 and, where appropriate, LPRSA policies.	Review reasons for failure to comply, to ensure correct application of Local Plan policies.	LPRSA policies LPRINF1
Flood Risk					
M42	Planning applications with a	100%	Development in FZ2, FZ3 or critical drainage area.	Review reasons for failure to comply, to ensure	LPRSP14(c)

	flood risk assessment in FZ2 or FZ3 or greater than 1ha.			correct application of Local Plan policies.	
M43	Development within FZ2 and FZ3 or critical drainage area.	Delivery of development minimised over FZ2 and FZ3.	Development in FZ2, FZ3 or critical drainage area.	Review strategic flood risk assessment as part of plan update to understand opportunities and risks associated with flooding.	LPRSP14(c)
Air Quality					
M44	Progress in achieving compliance with EU Directive/ national regulatory requirements for air quality within the AQMA	Improvement in air quality at identified exceedance areas measured from the 2011 baseline and from previous year. New “existing” baseline to also be established.	Evidence of worsening situation in respect of air quality at exceedance areas and/or elsewhere within the AQMA.	Review reasons for loss to ensure correct application of LP policies. Identify if barriers to improving air quality can be overcome e.g., though the Development Management process, including resolving specific site constraints. Consider the need for updates to the Air Quality Action Plan and/or policies for sustainable transport and air quality as part of a review of the Local Plan.	LPRSP12 LPRTRA1 LPRTRA2
M45	Large scale applications accompanied by an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) which demonstrate that the air quality impacts	All applications demonstrate compliance with Policy TRA1 requirements.	Applications being refused due to non-compliance with Policy TRA1.	Consider need for production of local planning guidance to provide further detail on the delivery and implementation of	LPRTRA1

	of development will be mitigated to acceptable levels			TRA1. Consider the need for updates to the Air Quality Action Plan and/or policies for sustainable transport and air quality as part of a review of the Local Plan	
M46	Applications which demonstrate that the air quality impacts of development will be mitigated to acceptable levels	All applications demonstrate compliance with Policy TRA1 requirements.	Applications being refused due to non- compliance with Policy TRA1.	Consider need for production of local planning guidance to provide further detail on the delivery and implementation of TRA1. Consider the need for updates to the Air Quality Action Plan and/or policies for sustainable transport and air quality as part of a review of the Local Plan	LPRTRA1
Infrastructure					
M47	Planning obligations – contribution prioritisation (SP13)	Developer contributions are secured in accordance with policy prioritisation.	Analysis reveals that significant deviations from contribution prioritisation are occurring.	Identify reasons for deviation and consider the need to review the approach. Need a delivery team to report on this.	LPRSP13

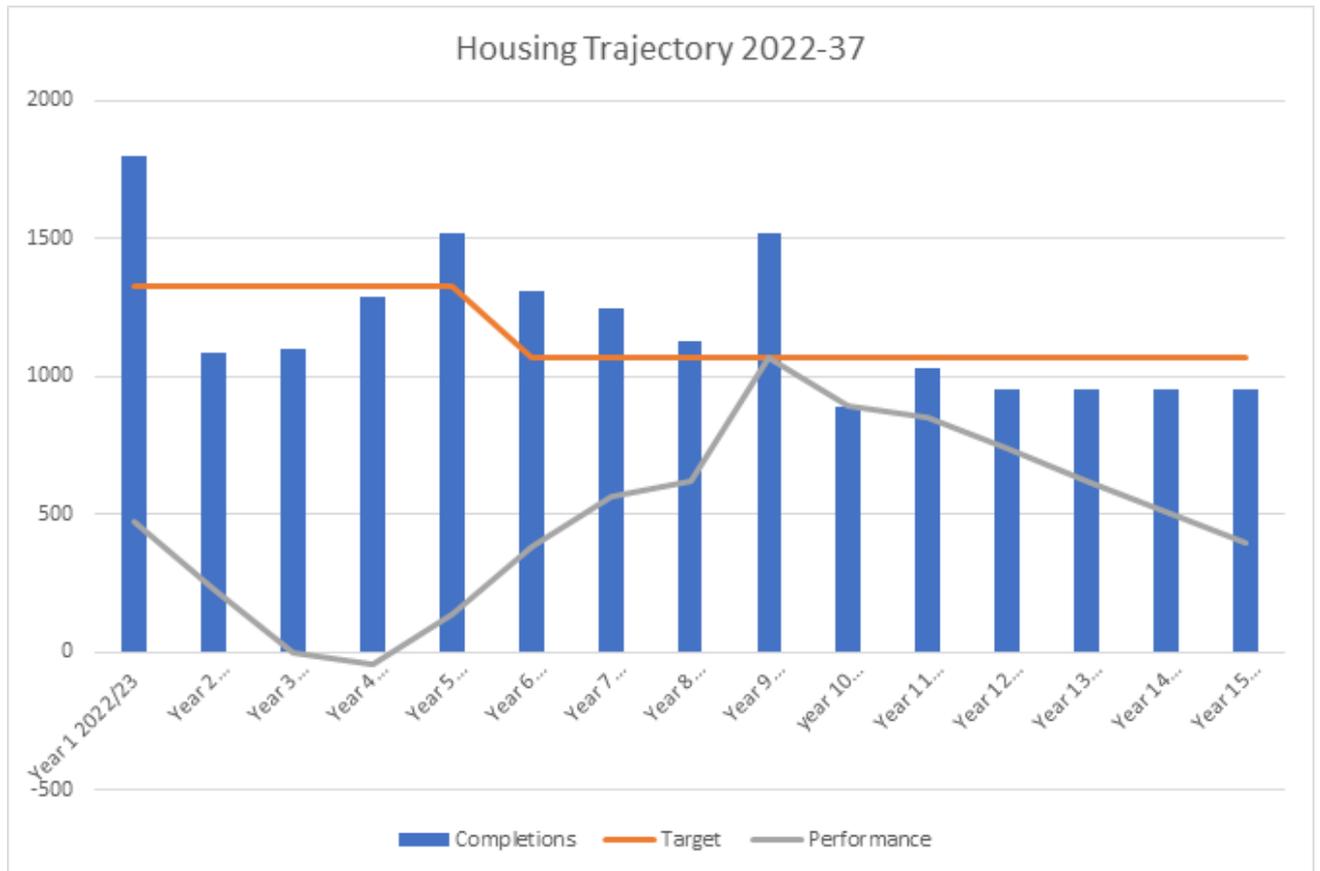
M48	Planning obligations – number of developments with planning obligations secured	Where infrastructure needs generated by development proposals are identified, all developer contributions sought are secured.	Analysis reveals that some/all contributions sought are not being secured in a significant proportion of cases despite the identification of needs arising.	Identify reasons for non-contributions and consider the need to review the approach and/or viability evidence. Need a delivery team to report on this.	LPRSP13
M49	Delivery of infrastructure through planning obligations/ conditions	All measures/ financial contributions secured through planning obligations/ conditions are delivered/ spent or allocated to be spent.	Analysis reveals that measures secured through planning obligations/ conditions are not being delivered.	Identify reasons for non-delivery and consider the need to review the approach and/ or viability evidence. Need a delivery team to report on this.	LPRSP13 LPRSP1 – LPRSP8 LPRSP12 LPRTRA2
M50	Review Introduction of CIL Charging Schedule	CIL will be reviewed following adoption of Local Plan Review.	Delay to timetable and/or Government changes to CIL framework.	Reconsideration of CIL review timing	LPRSP13
M51	Garden Settlements: delivery of infrastructure	This would have a target based around delivering sustainable development and the indicators would include the specific headline infrastructure for the site.	Analysis reveals that measures secured through planning obligations/ conditions are not being delivered.	Identify reasons for non-delivery and consider the need to review the approach and/ or viability evidence. Need a delivery team to report on this.	LPRSP4(a) LPRSP4(b)
M52	Number of infrastructure delivery planning conditions met vs conditions varied to delay delivery	Infrastructure delivered in a timely manner.	Analysis reveals that measures secured through planning obligations/ conditions are not being delivered at the	Identify reasons for delayed delivery and consider the need to review the approach and/ or viability	LPRSP13

			intended point (such as “ahead of occupation”).	evidence.	
M53	% of new development enabling FTTP; residential and employment	All development within urban area, RSC, LV, and Garden Settlements. All developments over 5 dwellings or 500sqm of employment floorspace within the rural area	Meeting 90% of the target	Identify reasons for non-provision and consider review of approach.	LPRINF4
Transport					
M54	Identified transport improvements associated with Local Plan site allocations	Timely delivery of the identified transport improvements associated with Local Plan site allocations.	Identification of risks to the implementation of required schemes including: delivery delay potential funding shortfall.	Identify measures to overcome barriers to delivery. Consider the need to review the ITS.	LPRSP4(a) LPRSP4(b) LPRSP5(a) LPRSP5(b) LPRSP5(c) LPRSA policies
M55	Sustainable transport measures to support the growth identified in the Local Plan and as set out in the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS); Walking & Cycling Strategy and LCWIP.	Timely delivery of sustainable transport improvements to support the growth identified in the Local Plan. Achievement of the targets set out in paragraph 9.2 of the ITS.	Failure to identify specific measures to accord with Policy LPRTRA. Failure to deliver the specific measures identified. Failure to achieve targets in paragraph 9.2 of the ITS.	Consider the need to review the ITS.	LPRSP12 LPRTRA2

M56	Provision of Travel Plans for appropriate development	All qualifying development to provide a satisfactory Travel Plan.	Analysis reveals a significant number of qualifying developments failing to provide an adequate Travel Plan.	Identify reasons for non-provision and consider the need to review the approach.	LPRSP12 LPRTRA2
M57	<p>Achievement of modal shift through:</p> <p>No significant worsening of congestion as a result of development</p> <p>Reduced long stay town centre car park usage</p> <p>Improved ratio between car parking costs and bus fares</p> <p>Increased number of cycles parked in shopping and employment areas, as well as at transport hubs.</p> <p>Increased levels of active travel reported through monitored Travel Plans and KCC School Travel Plans.</p>	Reduced reliance on the private motor vehicle, increased levels of active travel and reduced congestion.	Analysis reveals that indicators are not being achieved.	Review of the ITS, Walk & Cycle Strategy	LPRSP12

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Housing Trajectory



Appendix 2: Glossary

Acronym	Term	Description
	Affordable Housing	<p>The NPPF defines affordable housing as: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:</p> <p>a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).</p> <p>b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household’s eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.</p> <p>c) Discounted market sales housing is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to</p>

Acronym	Term	Description
		<p>ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.</p> <p>d) Other affordable routes to home ownership is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low-cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.</p>
AQMA	Air Quality Management Areas	Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.
	Ancient Woodland	An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland (PAWS).
	Article 4 Direction	Restricts permitted development rights in relation to a particular area or site such as in a conservation area, or a particular type of development.
AMR	Authority Monitoring Report	The Monitoring Report provides a framework with which to monitor and review the effectiveness of local plans and policies.
	Brownfield Land	See Previously Developed Land
	Brownfield Register	Registers of previously developed land that local planning authorities consider to be appropriate for residential development, having regard to criteria in the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Registers) Regulations 2017. Local planning authorities will be able to trigger a grant of permission in principle for residential development on suitable sites in their registers where they follow the required procedures.

Acronym	Term	Description
	Clean Air Zones	A Clean Air Zone defines an area where targeted action is taken to improve air quality and resources are prioritised and coordinated in order to shape the urban environment in a way that delivers improved health benefits and supports economic growth.
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group	Clinical Commissioning Groups are responsible for commissioning most of the hospital and community NHS services in the area they cover.
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	The levy will help pay for the infrastructure required to support new development. This includes development that does not require planning permission. The levy should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies unless the new development makes the deficiency more severe.
	Comparison retail (A1 use)	Retail items not bought on a frequent basis, for example televisions and white goods (fridges, dishwashers etc.)
	Convenience retail (A1 use)	The provision of everyday essential items, such as food
	Designated heritage asset	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation
	Development Plan	Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.
DPD	Development Plan Document	A DPD is a spatial planning document that is subject to independent examination. Under new regulations, DPDs are now known as local plans.
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

Acronym	Term	Description
	Experian	Detailed monthly forecasts with supporting qualitative reports to help understand more about the UK economy - specifically how it will perform over the next cycle.
FEMA	Functional Economic Market Area	Key economic markets broadly corresponding to sub-regions or city regions
	Garden Settlement	A holistically planned new settlement which enhances the natural environment and offers high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy, and sociable communities. The main characteristics are: A purpose-built new settlement, or large extension to an existing town A community with a clear identity and attractive environment It provides a mix homes, including affordable and self-build Planned by local authorities or private sector in consultation with the local community.
	Geodiversity	The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils, and landforms.
GBI	Green and Blue Infrastructure	The term is used in Maidstone borough to refer collectively to the active planning, creation, management and protection of multifunctional green spaces and water bodies (the blue element) in built and urban environments. The term includes but is not limited to parks and gardens, natural and semi natural open spaces, green corridors, outdoor sports facilities, allotments, and river corridors. The primary functions of GBI are to conserve and enhance biodiversity, create a sense of space and place, and support healthy living by increasing outdoor recreational opportunities for people.
	Green Infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
GEA	Gross external area	Broadly speaking the whole area of a building taking each floor into account. GEA will include: Perimeter wall thickness and external projections Areas occupied by internal walls (whether structural or not) and partitions Columns, piers, chimney breasts, stairwells, lift wells etc.

Acronym	Term	Description
		Lift rooms, plant rooms, tank rooms, fuel stores, whether or not above roof level Open-sided covered areas (should be stated separately).
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment	HRA tests the impacts of a proposal on nature conservation sites of European importance – Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas – and is also a requirement under EU legislation for certain plans and projects.
	Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
HDT	Housing Delivery Test	Measure's net additional dwellings provided in a local authority area against the homes required, using national statistics and local authority data. The Secretary of State will publish the Housing Delivery Test results for each local authority in England every November.
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan	The Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies the infrastructure schemes necessary to support the development proposed in the Local Plan and outlines how and when these will be delivered.
KMC	Kent Medical Campus	Permission granted for 98,000m ² A1, B1, C2 and D1 flexible accommodation for health, education, and life science companies.
	Larger Villages	Most sustainable settlements in Maidstone's settlement hierarchy after the town centre, urban area and rural service centres: Coxheath, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne), Sutton Valence and Yalding
	Leeds-Langley Relief Road	The Relief Road has over recent years been contemplated as a 50mph single carriageway - where the design standards would be more sympathetic to the topography, land use and local hamlets - providing environmental benefits by removing through traffic from both villages. The scheme supports the Strategic Statement objectives of supporting existing businesses and encouraging economic activity with housing growth and job creation by reducing congestion and improving infrastructure and accessibility.

Acronym	Term	Description
	Local Green Space	Land designated through local and neighbourhood plans which allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them.
LIS	Local Industrial Strategy	Local Industrial Strategies will be long-term, based on clear evidence and aligned to the national Industrial Strategy. They should set out clearly defined priorities for how cities, towns and rural areas will maximise their contribution to UK productivity. Local Industrial Strategies will allow places to make the most of their distinctive strengths. They will better coordinate economic policy at the local level and ensure greater collaboration across boundaries.
LNR	Local Nature Reserves	Local nature reserves are formally designated areas. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. (www.naturalengland.org.uk)
LP17	Maidstone Borough Local Plan	The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the key document that sets the framework to guide the future development of the borough. It plans for homes, jobs, shopping, leisure and the environment, as well as the associated infrastructure to support new development. It explains the 'why, what, where, when and how' development will be delivered through a strategy that plans for growth and regeneration whilst at the same time protects and enhances the borough's natural and built assets. The plan covers the period from 2011 and 2031.
	Main town centre uses	Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).
MSA	Minerals Safeguarding Area	An area designated by minerals planning authorities which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept

Acronym	Term	Description
		safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	The NPPF was published in February 2019 and it sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these must be applied. Local plan policies must be in conformity with the NPPF.
	Neighbourhood Plan	A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance	The PPG provides additional guidance on how the national policies in the National Planning Policy Framework should be interpreted and applied.
PDL	Previously Developed Land	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.
	Primary Frontage	Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods.
	Primary Shopping Area	Area where retail development is concentrated.
	Rural exception sites	Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's

Acronym	Term	Description
		discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.
	Rural Service Centres	Most sustainable settlements in Maidstone's settlement hierarchy after the town centre and urban area: Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst
	Schools Capacity Survey	The school capacity survey is a statutory data collection that all local authorities must complete every year. Local authorities must submit data about: school capacity (the number of places and pupils in a school year), pupil forecasts (an estimation of how many pupils there will be in future), capital spend (the money schools and local authorities spend on their buildings and facilities).
	Secondary Frontage	Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.
S106	Section 106 legal agreements	Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally binding agreement or planning obligation with a land developer in connection with the granting of planning permission for a development. The obligation is termed a Section 106 Agreement. The purpose of such agreements is to mitigate the impacts of the development proposed provided the matters being addressed are directly related to the development being permitted and can include sums of money.
	Self-build and custom-build housing	Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing.
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise	A category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro, and/or an

Acronym	Term	Description
		annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million euro
SELEP	South East Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP = A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation	Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	A study carried out by one or more local planning authorities to assess the risk to an area from flooding from all sources, now and in the future, taking account of the impacts of climate change, and to assess the impact that land use changes and development in the area will have on flood risk.
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	The purpose of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability, and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for employment over the plan period.
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment	A Strategic Housing Market Assessment assessed the local planning authority/s full objectively assessed need for new homes. This is expressed as the number of new homes needed over the time period the local plan covers. The SHMA also considers affordable housing needs and the need for additional care home places. The National Planning Practice Guidance advises that local planning authorities work with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.

Acronym	Term	Description
SPD	Supplementary Planning Documents	An SPD provides further detail to a policy or a group of policies set out in a local plan. An SPD can provide additional detail about how a policy should be applied in practice. SPDs are a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.
SA	Sustainability Appraisal	The SA is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives, including social, economic, and environmental objectives.
	Sustainable Transport Modes	Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.
	Town Centre	Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising, or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.
	Use classes	The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'
	Windfall sites	Sites not specifically identified in the development plan