

Allocations and Development Management Plan

Adopted February 2015



Local Plan

Foreword



The Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) is the next stage in the Local Plan for Sevenoaks District. It acts as a tool to implement and build on the strategic vision of the Core Strategy and plays an important role in shaping the future of the District up to 2026.

The ADMP includes site specific allocations for open space, residential, employment and mixed use as well as policies for managing development across the District. It was adopted by the Council on 17th February 2015 after extensive evidence gathering, consultation and examination by an independent inspector.

The Plan promotes sustainable development that will meet the needs of current as well as future generations. It identifies land for potential development subject to planning permission, promotes good design

and promotes the conservation and enhancement of the Districts high quality natural and built environment.

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Sevenoaks District Council.

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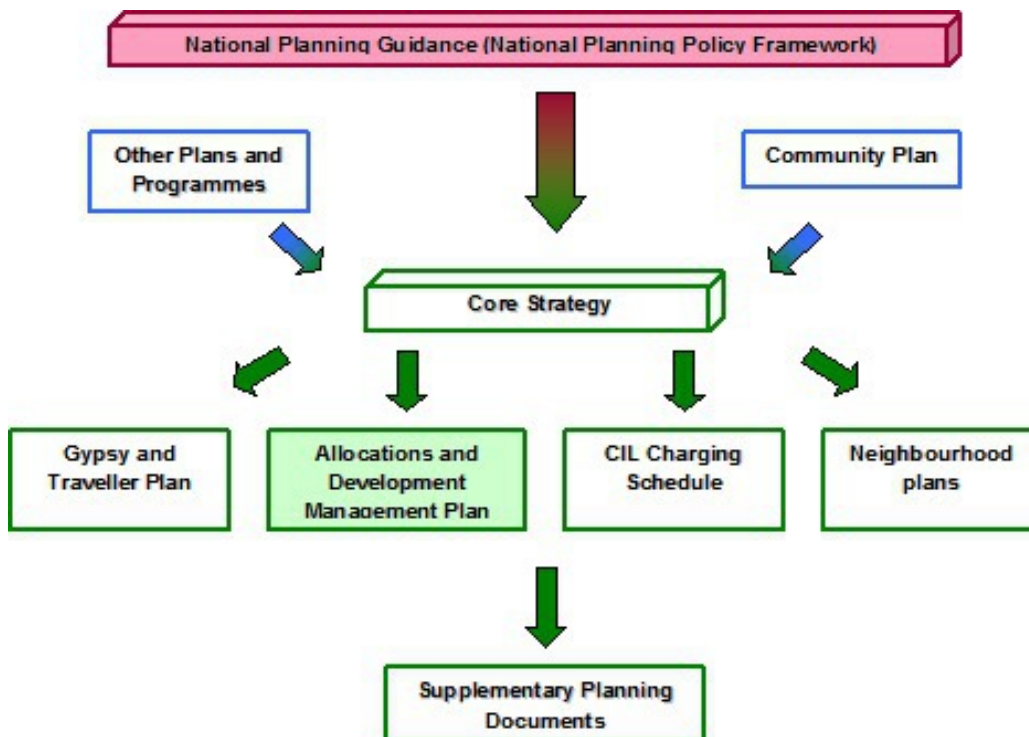
Background Information

In accordance with the Government's planning system, the Council is preparing the Local Plan (formerly known as the Local Development Framework) for the period up to 2026. The Local Plan replaces the Sevenoaks District Local Plan, 2000 (further detail is included at Appendix 1) and will include the Core Strategy, the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) and the Gypsy and Traveller Plan. A number of supplementary planning documents will also sit alongside to give additional guidance to the implementation of policies.

A Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule has been produced to set out contributions to be sought from developers to fund infrastructure improvements.

1 The Core Strategy was adopted in February 2011 and sets out the Council's general strategy for the amount and location of future development in the District. The Allocations and Development Management Plan must be consistent with the Core Strategy and is the Local Plan document that:

- Allocates specific sites for new development such as housing and employment
- Defines sites to be protected in their current use such as open space and employment
- Designates boundaries for the Green Belt
- Contains detailed policies for determining planning applications and
- Replaces all remaining policies saved from the Sevenoaks District Local Plan 2000. (Further detail is included at Appendix 1)



About the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP)

In the process of developing the Allocations and Development Management Plan, the District Council has consulted on potential site allocations and policies. This document contains the adopted policies and allocations for the Sevenoaks District. The stages of production for the ADMP are outlined below:

<u>Plan Stage</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
Allocations (Options) Consultation	Jan to March 2010
Development Management Policies and Outstanding Allocations 'Options' consultations	May 2011 to August 2012
Publication of Submission Document (Deposit stage) Consultation	Spring 2013
Submission to the Secretary of State	November 2013
Examination in Public	March 2014
Main Modifications Consultation	August 2014
Inspector's Report	December 2014
Adoption of ADMP	February 2015

The ADMP was submitted to the Secretary of State who appointed the Planning Inspectorate to conduct an examination into the soundness of the plan. The Plan was found sound subject to modifications which have been incorporated into this adopted Plan.

Sustainability Appraisal

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is used to test the component LDF documents to ensure that they do not conflict with the aims of sustainable development. The Sustainability Appraisal objectives for the Local Plan and the Core Strategy have previously been agreed and set the parameters for subsequent Plans to ensure consistency. The sustainability effects of sites and policies have been considered against a range of economic, social and environmental objectives. The outcomes of the SA process have assisted in determining which sites and policies provide the most sustainable development opportunities.

The allocations and policies listed in this document have been appraised against a set of defined criteria, in accordance with the Local Plan Sustainability Objectives to assess their suitability. A sustainability statement will be published to accompany the adopted Allocations and Development Management Plan. This statement will outline how sustainability considerations and consultation responses were reflected in the plan and how implementation of the plan will be monitored in the future.

Policies Map and Site Maps

The adopted policies and allocations are shown on the accompanying Policies Map. The housing, mixed use and employment allocations are also accompanied by more detailed site maps and development guidance as Appendices to the adopted document.

Supporting Background Evidence

As part of the wider Local Plan process, the District Council have prepared or commissioned supporting evidence which forms background evidence in the policy formulation process. These studies cover a range of issues including housing, employment, retail, open space and flooding. The individual documents and any subsequent amendments or updates can be viewed on the Planning Policy pages of the Council's website at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/localplan

Monitoring the Performance of the Plan

For each section of the plan there is a list of performance indicators, which are the measures that will be used to monitor how the policies are working. The Allocations and Development Management Plan is to be read alongside the Core Strategy and as such there are performance indicators which measure the success of policies in both documents. For some indicators there are also targets, which cover critical measures of success for the plan as a whole.

The Authority Monitoring Report will report on progress against performance indicators and targets and recommend actions where necessary to keep the plan on track. Where key performance indicators are repeatedly not met, and there is no specific explanation or extenuating circumstances, this would trigger a review of the Plan or a targeted review of the specific policies.

Adoption

The Allocations and Development Management Plan was adopted by the Council on 17th February 2015.

1. Sustainable Communities and Development Principles

1. Sustainable Communities and Development Principles

1.1 The principles of sustainable development are fundamental to planning policy set out at a national level and through all policies and proposals of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan.

1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 6-16 set out that sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning, and that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Core Strategy

1.3 The Core Strategy promotes sustainable development. It is the over-arching planning document that sets out the Council's vision, strategic objectives and broad policies for the amount and location where future development should be sustainably located in the District over the period 2006 -2026, as well as a number of generic policies concerning, for example, design quality, sustainable development and infrastructure provision.

1.4 Subject to the findings of an up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which the Council will commence in early 2015, the Council commits to undertake an early review of the Core Strategy, in part or in whole, within the next five years, in accordance with the National Planning Practice Guidance, in order to ensure that it has an up-to-date suite of policies and proposals in place to deliver sustainable growth in accordance with the NPPF.

1.5 A summary of the approach included in the Core Strategy is set out below:

- to locate development in sustainable locations on previously developed land, ensuring that the main focus for major development is in Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge;
- to meet housing provision of 3,300 dwellings primarily in existing urban areas and at a smaller scale in village settlements. The Core Strategy targets at least two thirds of new housing to be in Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge and at least half in Sevenoaks and Swanley; criteria are set for allocating sites to meet the needs of gypsies, travellers and if necessary travelling showpeople.
- to retain, intensify and regenerate existing business areas primarily at Sevenoaks, Swanley, and Edenbridge and Major Developed Sites in rural areas, locate new business development in urban areas, review poorly located non-strategic employment land for other uses and support appropriate diversification of the rural economy in a sustainable manner.
- to locate new retail development within existing retail centres, focussing on Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge, whilst allowing for local needs in other settlements;
- to promote specific regeneration opportunities comprising mixed use developments in the centres of Swanley and New Ash Green;
- to locate major forms of traffic generating development in sustainable locations, accessible by a range of transport modes;
- to generally maintain the extent of the Green Belt with the case for any small scale adjustments to cater for situations where land no longer contributes to the Green Belt considered through this Allocations and Development Management Plan;

1. Sustainable Communities and Development Principles

- to safeguard existing open spaces, sport and recreational facilities that meet community needs and improve provision where necessary.
- to maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the District including provision of a network of habitat corridors as part of the Green Infrastructure Network.
- to protect the high quality environment from inappropriate development.
- to ensure that all new development is designed to a high quality and where possible makes a positive contribution to the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated.
- to ensure that new development takes account of the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change including encouraging sustainable construction through measures to reduce energy consumption and promote the use of renewable energy.
- to ensure new development in areas of poor air quality incorporates measures in the design and orientation that demonstrate an acceptable environment will be created for future occupiers.
- to ensure that any infrastructure and service improvements needed to support delivery of Core Strategy objectives and policies or resolve existing deficiencies are brought forward in a co-ordinated and timely manner and that new development makes an appropriate contribution towards any improvements required as a result of new development.

1.6 The following are the key Core Strategy objectives in respect of Climate Change and the Environment:

- To ensure that new development takes account of the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change including principles of sustainable development, such as locating development to minimise energy use, promoting travel patterns that reduce the need to travel by car, and encouraging sustainable construction including measures to reduce energy consumption and promote the use of renewable energy.
- To ensure new development takes place in a way that contributes to an improvement in the District's air quality.

1.7 Core Strategy Policy SP1 sets out specifically that:

'New development should create safe, inclusive and attractive environments that meet the needs of users, incorporate principles of sustainable development and maintain and enhance biodiversity'.

Sustainable Construction

1.8 The Core Strategy places great emphasis on the importance of sustainable construction, with the Code for Sustainable Homes as the key mechanism and this is covered at a strategic level through Policy SP2 of the Core Strategy.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

1.9 The NPPF does not contain specific waste policies, since national waste planning policy will be published alongside the National Waste Management Plan for England. However currently the National Planning Policy for Waste, seeks to ensure that waste

1. Sustainable Communities and Development Principles

disposal is a last resort and that re-use, recycling and composting should be the priority. It is unlikely that the approach to waste management will be altered significantly.

1.10 Development proposals will be required to make adequate arrangements for the provision of recycling.

Water Pollution and Efficiency

1.11 Developers must be mindful that the pollution of ground water and/or surface water is an offence under the Water Resources Act 1991. Also, the Water Framework Directive requires there to be no deterioration in water status. Efficiency of water use is also a consideration in determining planning applications.

Flooding

1.12 Increased surface water run-off from a development can affect both adjoining sites and more remote sites further downstream by increasing the risk of flooding. Run-off can also physically damage the river environment itself. Surface water run-off is a mandatory component of the Code for Sustainable Homes applied by the District Council. Where possible the Council encourages developers to utilise Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), unless following adequate assessment, soil conditions and/or engineering feasibility demonstrates this method is inappropriate.

1.13 In terms of addressing flood risk in development proposals the NPPF (paragraphs 100-104) and the associated Technical Guidance require the use of a sequential test when considering development proposals, to determine the suitability of types of development within the different flood zones (Zone 1 Little or No Risk less than 0.1% annual probability; Zone 2 - Low to Medium Risk 0.1% to 1.0% annual probability; Zone 3 - High Risk greater than 1.0% annual probability). Core Strategy Policy LO1 states that development will be located to avoid areas at risk of flooding and more detailed guidance is set out within National Planning Policy. Consequently there is no requirement for a specific localised policy.

Allocations and Development Management Plan

1.14 This Plan, in conjunction with the adopted Core Strategy, is a positive plan to promote development, unless the adverse impacts of allowing such development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies set out in the Local Plan and NPPF.

1.15 Some of the Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, whilst others are site - or area-specific and apply only to the appropriate areas illustrated on the relevant Map. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, the District 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 avoided.

1.16 Policy SC1 draws together the sustainable approach to ensure that the fundamental principles of sustainable development underpin all development proposals whether they be of a strategic or non-strategic nature.

1. Sustainable Communities and Development Principles

1.17 Development that is consistent with the NPPF and Core Strategy will be regarded as sustainable subject to complying with the more detailed policies in this plan where relevant.

Policy SC 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Where appropriate to the proposed development, proposals should have regard to:

- a) the compatibility and suitability of the proposal to its location;
- b) the impact of the proposal on the surrounding environment, landscape, habitats and biodiversity, including the Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- c) the contribution to creating balanced communities;
- d) the conservation and enhancement of the Districts cultural heritage;
- e) the contribution to and impact on the District's economy; and
- f) the impact on existing infrastructure and contribution to new supporting infrastructure.

Performance Indicators for Sustainable Communities and Development Principles

Proportion of completed housing in main settlements of Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge; *(68% of the housing supply is predicted to be within Sevenoaks Urban Area and Swanley. 74% of the housing supply is predicted to be within Sevenoaks Urban Area, Swanley and Edenbridge.) CS indicator*

Change in Employment floor space in the Main Settlements; *(The overall stock of employment land to be maintained) CS indicator*

1. Sustainable Communities and Development Principles

Proportion of additional employment floor space in Urban Confines; *(The overall stock of employment land to be maintained) CS indicator*

Proportion of completed housing in Urban Confines; *(No new dwellings were allowed on appeal by the Planning Inspectorate within the Green Belt) CS indicator*

Changes in Settlement Hierarchy services and facilities score for individual settlements; *(No loss of services and facilities that serve the local community within rural settlements) CS indicator*

2. The Environment

2.1 A distinctive feature of the District is the high quality of the natural and built environment which contains a wealth of nationally and locally important designated environmental areas such as the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and 42 Conservation Areas. All these features contribute to the special quality and character of many parts of the District. The District's towns and villages include other areas of distinctive character as illustrated in Character Area Assessments. Outside the built up areas, the distinctive landscape character is illustrated in the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD. A key responsibility of the plan is to ensure their continued protection, conservation and enhancement through sensitive design which is well suited to its context.

General Design Principles

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Sustainable development involves achieving positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including replacing poor design with better design. One of the Government's core planning principles is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Improving design quality and conservation is a key Core Strategy theme. The Spatial Vision of the Core Strategy envisages that all development should demonstrate high quality and compatibility with the area, whilst also emphasising the need to incorporate sustainability principles.

2.3 Core Strategy Policy SP1 specifically addresses Design of New Development and Conservation and specifies that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated. It goes on to make it clear that account should be taken of guidance adopted by the Council in the form of Kent Design, local Character Area Assessments, Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Village Design Statements and Parish Plans. In rural areas account should be taken of guidance in the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD and AONB Management Plans and other AONB supporting guidance. Account should also be taken of any adopted Neighbourhood Plans, prepared by local communities.

2.4 Policy EN1 provides a detailed framework for assessing planning applications against Core Strategy Policy SP1. It gives criteria against which proposals can be assessed so as to deliver high quality design that responds to local character. Dependent on the context of the proposal, the local character may be formed by the built up area or the landscape character of the extensive countryside. Issues of key importance to design such as the scale, height, site coverage and the layout are to be assessed when considering the detailed design of a proposal, along with other considerations such as parking and the protection and enhancement of biodiversity. Development should ensure that the need to create and maintain a safe environment is addressed, including minimising opportunities for crime, fear of crime, disorder or anti-social behaviour. These criteria included in Policy EN1 will be the delivery mechanism for the strategic Core Strategy design policy.

2.5 In addition Core Strategy Policy SP7 sets out the approach to density of new development in differing locations and stresses the importance in ensuring that within urban areas, sites are used to their full potential subject to environmental considerations.

2.6 In assessing opportunities for retaining and enhancing green infrastructure features, the District Council will consider both green infrastructure and the water environment and where possible will seek enhancement opportunities to restore, recreate and extend biodiversity potential. Further guidance can be found in the biodiversity technical appendix of the Kent Design Guide and Planning for a Healthy Environment - good practice guidance for green infrastructure and biodiversity, (Town & Country Planning Association/ The Wildlife Trusts, 2012).

2.7 Ensuring new development meets the test of time is an important consideration in delivering sustainable development. Consequently criteria set out in "Building for Life" and other post-occupation assessments will be used as an additional tool for assessing design quality, both at planning application and building completion stages, and the Council will encourage developers to use it in developing proposals.

2.8 Matters of amenity protection have been separated from the basic design principles, which is a departure from the previous approach adopted by Saved Local Plan Policy EN1. The basis for doing this is to ensure greater and more focussed decision making. For example applications that should be refused solely on amenity grounds, but are fully acceptable in design aspects, will be underpinned by a single clear policy (See Policy EN2).

Policy EN1 - Design Principles

Proposals which would create high quality design and meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) the form of the proposed development would respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the area;
- b) the layout of the proposed development would respect the topography and character of the site and the surrounding area and sensitively incorporate natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site;
- c) the proposal would not result in the loss of buildings, open spaces or green infrastructure that would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area;
- d) the proposal would ensure satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians and provide adequate parking and refuse facilities;
- e) the proposal would incorporate, within the design opportunities for increasing biodiversity potential, where possible, and retaining and enhancing Green Infrastructure features including sustainable drainage systems. Proposals that affect a site's existing biodiversity and Green Infrastructure should be designed in a way that avoids or mitigates any potential harm;
- f) the design of new buildings and the layout of spaces, including footways, car and cycle parking areas, would be permeable and provide connectivity with neighbouring areas;

2. The Environment

g) new development would be inclusive and where appropriate make satisfactory provision for the safe and easy access of those with disabilities; and

h) the design of new developments would result in the creation of a safe and secure environment and incorporate adequate security measures and features to deter crime, fear of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.

Where appropriate, new developments should include infrastructure that meets modern communication and technology needs and restricts the need for future retrofitting. Such infrastructure should include Broadband, high speed internet cabling, digital TV cabling and provision of a power supply that would support green technology initiatives such as in home electric car charging points.

Subject to the above considerations development should make efficient use of the land on which it is proposed.

Where appropriate, proposals should include details and strategies for the effective management and maintenance of sites following their completion.

Delivery Mechanisms:

The Kent Design Guide, Residential Extensions, the Residential Character Area Assessment and the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPDs provide detailed design guidance for development. The Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Management Plans will be used where relevant.

Amenity

2.9 The concept of amenity relates to the living conditions of those that will be affected by development proposals either as a future occupant or a neighbour. It is the aim of the Core Strategy and Community Plan to ensure that all development provides an acceptable standard of amenity for its occupants and does not result in significant harmful effects to surrounding uses. Harmful effects can include overlooking, loss of privacy or light, noise and pollution. Advice on overlooking, privacy and loss of light can be found in section 5 (Amenity Considerations) of the Residential Extensions SPD. Paras 2.38 - 2.45 of this plan set out how noise levels will be measured and interpreted in association with Policy EN7 (Noise Pollution). Paras 2.46 - 2.47 of this plan explain how air pollution will be interpreted and paras 10.6 - 10.7 set out how transport impact will be measured and interpreted in association with Policy T1 (Mitigating Travel Impact). In addition, Government have issued National Planning Practice Guidance which explains the measurement and impacts of noise air quality and light pollution in considerable detail.

2.10 The effects of some developments, such as a poorly designed house extension, can have direct impacts on neighbouring occupiers. Others can cumulatively impact on the general amenity of an area. As such, all development proposals, including intensification of uses and cumulative impacts of similar uses, will be expected to have regard to the

amenity of neighbouring uses and occupiers, occupiers of the proposed development and the wider environment. Proposals that seek to introduce sensitive uses, such as residential development, into areas of poor environmental quality will be resisted unless amenity can be adequately safeguarded, such as through mitigation and environmental improvements.

Policy EN2 - Amenity Protection

Proposals will be permitted where they would provide adequate residential amenities for existing and future occupiers of the development and would safeguard the amenities of existing and future occupants of nearby properties by ensuring that development does not result in, and is not located in areas where occupiers of the development would be subject to, excessive noise, vibration, odour, air pollution, activity or vehicle movements, overlooking or visual intrusion and where the built form would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, or light enjoyed by the occupiers of nearby properties.

Delivery Mechanisms:

The National Planning Practice Guidance, the Kent Design Guide, the Residential Extensions, the Residential Character Area Assessment and the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPDs provide detailed design guidance.

Heritage Assets

2.11 'Heritage Assets' is the term used to describe the highly valued components which make up the historic character of the District, they can be buildings, monuments, woodland, particular street scenes or areas, landscapes or outstanding views. Heritage assets can be nationally or locally designated by the Local Planning Authority, or those identified during the determination of planning applications.

2.12 Heritage Assets include:

- Scheduled Monuments
- Archaeological Sites
- Listed Buildings
- Locally Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas
- Registered and Non-registered historic Parks and Gardens
- Ancient Woodland and Ancient Trees
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

2.13 Sevenoaks District is characterised by a significant legacy of historic towns and villages, with many listed buildings, Conservation Areas and extensive areas of ancient woodland. These Heritage Assets and their settings are a key feature of the District, as they provide interest, variety, local character and distinctiveness to the many settlements and wider countryside.

2. The Environment

2.14 Some of these Heritage Assets and features are protected by other policies or legislation, for instance if they are a listed building, Scheduled Monument or covered by a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, the complex history of the landscape means that there are many sites and features which do not have a specific designation. Nevertheless these should also be conserved and enhanced because of their contribution to the wider landscape and to the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. To ensure this, regard should be given to the Council's Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD.

2.15 Heritage Assets are an irreplaceable resource and they should be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. Any harm or loss will require a clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of heritage assets of the highest significance, such as scheduled monuments, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, will be wholly exceptional. The Spatial Vision of the Core Strategy sets out that the high quality natural built and historic environment will be conserved and enhanced. Core Strategy Policy SP1 Design of New Development and Conservation states that the District's heritage assets and their settings will be protected and enhanced.

Archaeology

2.16 Scheduled monuments are protected against disturbance, and therefore prior consent from the Secretary of State is required for all works affecting such monuments, whether or not those works require planning permission. Some types of work, generally related to agriculture or gardening, where these activities are already being carried out, are allowed to proceed without such consent.

2.17 Owners are encouraged to maintain their Scheduled Monuments in good condition by adopting sympathetic land uses. However, as scheduling is not comprehensive, this Plan makes provision for the protection of future Scheduled Monuments and archaeological sites, as well as those that have already been identified.

Listed Buildings

2.18 National legislation provides for the protection of Listed Buildings under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. There is a presumption in favour of retaining Listed Buildings so permission to demolish will be the exception and only allowed if all other options to retain the building are demonstrated to have been thoroughly explored.

2.19 The repair, renovation, alteration and extension of a Listed Building should not be at the expense of its intrinsic value. It is important to guard against unnecessary change or over-restoration. In any change, materials should be sympathetic to those used in the original building. In particular the District Council will resist applications that result in the loss of traditional features that could be preserved.

2.20 Listed Buildings may become vacant and derelict if no acceptable use can be found. The original use may be the most appropriate and will be encouraged where possible. Alternative uses for a listed building, compatible with its character and built form, will be encouraged where the original use of the building is no longer viable.

2.21 Where this is not practicable the alternative use proposed must not require alteration to the extent that the character and historical importance of the building is destroyed or materially harmed.

2.22 Where the District Council considers that a proposal would have an impact on the setting of a Listed Building, it will require the submission of illustrative and technical material to allow that impact to be properly assessed. This will include details to show the existing situation and the precise effect on the fabric and character of the Listed Building and its setting.

2.23 Planning permission will be refused where the District Council considers that the proposal would dominate the Listed Building or buildings within its curtilage by scale, form, mass or appearance or harm the visual relationship between the Listed Building and its formal or natural landscape setting.

Locally Listed Buildings

2.24 The Council aims to produce a List of Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest during the plan period, to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Conservation Areas

2.25 Conservation Areas are designated not on the basis of individual buildings but because of the overall quality of the area, its mix of uses, historic layout, characteristic materials, scale and detailing of buildings and open spaces. It also takes into account the need to protect trees, hedges, walls, railings and other characteristic features. Once designated, special attention must be paid in all planning decisions to the desirability of conserving or enhancing its character and appearance, as required by Core Strategy Policy SP1 Design of New Development and Conservation. The choice of materials and detailed design are vital elements in achieving new buildings which preserve the local character and distinctiveness which typifies the District's Conservation Areas.

2.26 In order to assess the impact of proposals whether for redevelopment or alterations/additions to buildings, the District Council will require an appropriate level of detail including drawings or other pictorial material which shows the proposed development in its setting.

Demolition in Conservation Areas

2.27 When considering proposals for demolition of buildings within a Conservation Area, the District Council will be looking for any redevelopment to provide a level of visual quality equivalent to that of the existing buildings in the Conservation Area.

2. The Environment

Policy EN3 - Demolition in Conservation Areas

Proposals involving the demolition of a non-listed building in Conservation Areas will be assessed against the contribution to the architectural or historic interest of the area made by that building.

Buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area should be conserved. Where a building makes no significant contribution to the area, consent for demolition will be given subject to submission and approval of a detailed plan for redevelopment or after use of the site.

Registered and Non-registered Parks and Gardens

2.28 English Heritage has compiled a Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England which includes 17 sites within the District. Kent County Council have also compiled an independent list of Historic Parks and Gardens which includes 20 sites within the District. Although no additional statutory controls on development are available, the Local Planning Authority considers that both Registered and non-Registered Historic Parks and Gardens are an important part of the area's heritage and make a significant contribution to the character of the area in which they are located. New development may not be in the best interests of the conservation of the site and principal buildings. Any development must have careful regard to the important landscape architecture of the site and the setting of the historic buildings within the site. The Council will expect sufficient information to be submitted with all applications to enable the impact of development on a historic park or garden to be properly assessed.

Ancient Woodland

2.29 National policy requires the protection of Ancient Woodland, Veteran and Ancient trees from further loss or damage and the District Council will expect applicants with proposals within or adjoining Ancient Woodland or sites containing ancient or veteran trees, to conserve and, where possible, enhance the woodland and to demonstrate that any potential harm can be mitigated. As irreplaceable habitats, proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees will not be granted planning permission unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss. Where these tests can be met, the District Council will expect applicants with proposals affecting ancient woodland or sites containing ancient or veteran trees to provide mitigation and/or compensation measures that seek to address the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

2.30 The importance of the wider landscape character of the District is recognised by the extent of the High Weald and Kent Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The AONB designation gives these areas the highest protection in terms of their landscape and scenic beauty and highlights the importance of the conservation of the wildlife and the

cultural heritage of these landscapes. The character of the AONB's will be conserved and enhanced primarily through Core Strategy Policy LO8 - Countryside and the Rural Economy.

2.31 Policy EN4 seeks to draw together a comprehensive approach to conserving and enhancing the District's Heritage Assets.

Policy EN4 - Heritage Assets

Proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.

Applications will be assessed with reference to the following:

- a) the historic and/or architectural significance of the asset;
- b) the prominence of its location and setting; and
- c) the historic and/or architectural significance of any elements to be lost or replaced.

Where the application is located within, or would affect, an area or suspected area of archaeological importance an archaeological assessment must be provided to ensure that provision is made for the preservation of important archaeological remains/findings. Preference will be given to preservation in situ unless it can be shown that recording of remains, assessment, analysis report and deposition of archive is more appropriate.

Landscape

2.32 The extensive area of landscape outside the towns and villages contributes significantly to the character of the District. The NPPF outlines the importance of protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and Policy LO8 of the Core Strategy ensures that the distinctive features that contribute to the special character of the landscape will be protected and, where possible, enhanced.

2.33 61% of the District is located within the Kent Downs or High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The NPPF gives great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and their setting, giving them the highest status of protection. The distinctive character of the AONBs plays an important part in defining the overall character of Sevenoaks District. Proposals in AONBs will be assessed against Core Strategy Policy LO8, ADMP Policy EN5 and other relevant policies. The AONB Management Plans and associated guidance set out a range of measures to conserve and enhance the distinctive features of each AONB. Any proposal within the AONB must take into account the guidance set out in the appropriate AONB Management Plan and any relevant more specific AONB guidance for example the Kent Downs AONB Landscape Design Handbook (2006), Kent Downs AONB Farmstead Guidance (2012) and Managing Land for Horses (2011).

2.34 The character of the AONBs and the remainder of the countryside within the District is defined in the adopted Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD. The SPD identifies a number of different character areas and will be used to assess the impact of proposals

2. The Environment

on landscape character. Tranquillity forms part of the character of certain parts of the landscape within the District as identified by the SPD. Proposals should respect the local landscape character and the specific features identified in the SPD. In addition, proposals should also enhance the character of the countryside by helping secure the landscape actions within the SPD where this would be feasible in relation to the proposal.

Policy EN5 - Landscape

The Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and their settings will be given the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Proposals within the AONB will be permitted where the form, scale, materials and design would conserve and enhance the character of the landscape and have regard to the relevant Management Plan and associated guidance.

Proposals that affect the landscape throughout the District will be permitted where they would:

- a) conserve the character of the landscape, including areas of tranquillity; and
- b) where feasible help secure enhancements in accordance with landscape actions in accordance with the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD.

Delivery Mechanisms:

The Kent Downs and High Weald Management Plans

The Kent Downs AONB Landscape Design Handbook (2006), Kent Downs AONB Farmstead Guidance (2012) and Managing Land for Horses (2011) and associated guidance

The Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD

Parish Plans

The Residential Extensions SPD

Outdoor Lighting

2.35 Artificial lighting is essential in some locations for reasons of safety and security. However, insensitive lighting can cause what is termed as "light pollution". Sevenoaks District, as a predominantly rural area, is sensitive to light pollution through sky glow which can affect the character of the countryside and have a negative impact on biodiversity.

2.36 External lighting is needed for commercial use and for some community and sports facilities such as floodlit sports pitches. Whilst the lighting has to be adequate for the purpose, it is important that there is no significant nuisance to the amenity of surrounding

properties or the wider countryside. This may require the use of planning conditions to limit the times when lighting is used to minimise the disturbance. The use of low energy lighting will be encouraged.

2.37 In assessing the impact of lighting that affects the outdoor environment or neighbouring uses, the current level of lighting will be taken into account in accordance with advice in the National Planning Practice Guidance.

Policy EN6 - Outdoor Lighting

Proposals for lighting that affect the outdoor environment which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) where associated with a wider development, the proposal would be well integrated within the scheme;
- b) any impact on the night sky would be minimised through time-limited and user activated lighting, the alignment of lamps, provision of shielding and selection of appropriate lighting type and intensity;
- c) there would be no harmful impact on privacy or amenity for nearby residential properties;
- d) the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of any Heritage Asset which may be affected;
- e) any potential impacts on wildlife would be avoided or adequately mitigated where avoidance is not possible; and
- f) where proposals affect Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or open countryside, it can be demonstrated that the lighting is essential for safety or security reasons.

Where these criteria are met, proposals incorporating the use of low energy lighting will be encouraged.

Noise Pollution

2.38 The NPPF states (paragraph 123) that planning policies should aim to avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development.

2.39 The Noise Policy Statement for England (DEFRA, March 2010) seeks to promote good health and a good quality of life through the effective management of noise within the context of Government policy on sustainable development.

2.40 Noise sensitive developments should be located away from existing sources of significant noise, and potentially noisy developments should be located in areas where noise will not be such an important consideration or where its impact can be minimised. Acceptable noise levels will be based on technical guidance and the advice of noise specialists.

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2.41 The DEFRA statement references "significant adverse" and "adverse" that are currently being applied to noise impacts, for example, by the World Health Organisation. They are:

2.42 NOEL - No Observed Effect Level - is the level below which no effect can be detected. In simple terms, below this level, there is no detectable effect on health and quality of life due to the noise.

2.43 LOAEL - Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level - is the level above which adverse effects on health and quality of life can be detected.

2.44 SOAEL - Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level - is the level above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur.

2.45 These levels can assist local planning authorities in their consideration of sensitive and noise related development. Conditions may be attached to any planning permission to ensure adequate attenuation of noise emissions or to control the noise at source.

Policy EN7 - Noise Pollution

Proposals which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

a) development would not have an unacceptable impact when considered against the indoor and outdoor acoustic environment including existing and future occupiers of the development and the amenities of existing and future occupants of nearby properties; and

b) development would not result in unacceptable noise levels from existing noise sources that cannot be adequately mitigated.

Where proposals for high noise generating development would affect Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or open countryside or sites designated for their biodiversity value, development will not be permitted if it would undermine the character or harm the biodiversity of these areas.

Air Quality and Odour

2.46 Policy SP2 of the Core Strategy sets out the policy approach to air quality. Air pollutants (including dust and odour) have been shown to have adverse effects on health and the environment. Emissions arising from any development including indirect emissions such as those attributable to associated traffic generation must therefore be considered in determining planning applications.

2.47 Certain developments, such as hot food takeaways, workshops and activities associated with the keeping of animals, can cause a detrimental effect on amenity due to odour nuisance. Consequently, consideration will be given to the odour levels likely to be produced from such premises and their proximity to sensitive development, e.g. residential properties, when determining such planning applications. Proposals that have an unacceptable impact on amenity in terms of odour will be resisted in line with Policy EN2 of this document.

Performance Indicators for the Environment:

Performance of new housing against Building for Life criteria; *(Two thirds of new housing development to be rated good or better against the Building for Life criteria and no development to be rated poor) (CS Indicator). All developments within the AONB to achieve full marks on criterion 5 (Character) and 6 (Working with the site and context).*

Percentage of new dwellings completed meeting the Lifetime Homes Standard; *(CS Indicator)*

Changes in Settlement Hierarchy services and facilities score for individual settlements; *(No loss of services and facilities that serve the local community within rural settlements) (CS indicator)*

Change in number of Heritage Assets; *(No loss of listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, scheduled monuments or sites of archaeological interest.) (CS Indicator)*

The Proportion of Conservation Areas with up to date Appraisals; *(CS Indicator)*

Change in Conservation Area extents; *(No reduction in the extent of Conservation areas due to insensitive development) (CS Indicator)*

Number of applications for demolitions in Conservation Areas *(No demolitions should be granted contrary to advice from the Conservation Officer and/or English Heritage)*

Progress in implementing countryside projects in the District, including AONB Management Plan projects affecting the District *(CS Indicator)*

3. Housing and Mixed Use Development

3. Housing and Mixed Use Development

3.1 For new homes to meet the needs of current and future residents, it is important that they are designed to a high quality and create an attractive environment that functions well, where people want to live, which meets their needs, and which creates a sense of place where community identity can develop.

3.2 Residential proposals should therefore be consistent with the adopted Core Strategy housing policies and comply with the policies in the Sustainable Communities and Development Principles and Environment chapters of this document. In addition the Residential Extensions and Residential Character Area Assessment SPDs contain detailed design advice to assist in achieving quality living environments and residential areas.

Core Strategy Housing Objectives

- To increase the proportion of affordable housing in new development in response to the level of local housing need from those unable to rent or buy in the open market. To make specific provision for small scale affordable housing schemes to meet identified local needs in rural areas.
- To ensure that the form of future provision for housing meets the changing needs of the District's population, including provision for a greater proportion of older people and small households, and meets the needs of the gypsy and traveller community.
- To make efficient use of urban land for housing, with higher density development focused on the most accessible locations in and adjoining town centres, through well-designed schemes that do not compromise the distinct character of the local environment.
- To support new housing in local service centres and service villages of a design, scale, character and tenure appropriate to the settlement and support the provision and retention of services and facilities that meet a local need and existing employment opportunities.

3.3 In addition to the above objectives, the Core Strategy sets out the general quantity and distribution of housing development, which sets the framework for the allocations in this document.

Housing Supply

3.4 The Council has carried out a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) that informed the Core Strategy.

3.5 The assessment demonstrated that the housing provision figure of 3,300 dwellings (2006-2026) for the District can be met from sites located within existing built up settlements, enabling the Green Belt to continue to be protected. It was also further identified through the Core Strategy process that a significant number of the housing supply comes in the form of existing completions and commitments through outstanding full or outline planning permissions. As at 1st April 2014, the completions (2006-2014) and permissions amount to 2,755 units.

3. Housing and Mixed Use Development

3.6 The housing sites identified for allocation were established through a detailed evidence base process. A call for sites was undertaken in 2007, which informed the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) that was published in 2008. This process effectively requested landowners/agents to submit land which they considered to have development potential for a range of uses. A review of the SHLAA was undertaken in Summer 2009 and an 'Options' Draft of the Allocations DPD presented the identified housing sites for consultation in early 2010. The 'options' draft was a scoping exercise to establish the key planning issues and development constraints for sites for consideration at this detailed stage.

3.7 Each site was considered through detailed assessment and analysed against the consultation comments received. New sites presented for consideration during the 'options' stage, were subsequently assessed and added where consistent with Core Strategy policy. Sites that were shown to be unsuitable through the initial 'options' consultation process were removed at this stage.

3.8 Following scrutiny of the SHLAA methodology and process during the Core Strategy, in which the Inspector deemed the methodology to be appropriate, the Council updated its housing supply to a base date of 1st April 2014. Based on this assessment the Council can currently demonstrate a housing land supply of 4,282¹ dwellings for the plan period of 2006 -2026. This amounts to a surplus of approximately 980² units over and above the provision identified (3,300) in the Core Strategy, which will provide flexibility in the housing supply.

<u>Summary of Housing Supply Components as at 1 April 2014</u>	<u>No. of units</u>
Completions 2006 - 2014	1,725
Permissions (at 01.04.2014)	1,030
Housing Allocations	684
Units from Mixed Use	357
Windfall Allowance ³	486
<u>TOTAL</u>	4,282
Fort Halstead (EMP3)	450
<u>TOTAL plus Fort Halstead</u>	4,732

1.Figure excludes 450 at Fort Halstead

2.Figure excludes 450 at Fort Halstead

3.A windfall allowance has been added to the housing land supply based on past contributions to reflect a more accurate assessment of housing supply and the consequent demand on infrastructure

3. Housing and Mixed Use Development

3.9 It therefore remains the position that the Council can meet its Core Strategy housing target without the need to release land in the Green Belt and by focusing development within the existing urban and village locations of the District. Further to this, in accordance with the Core Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy, housing allocations will primarily be focused on the existing principal towns in the District over other smaller settlements in order to promote the most sustainable development options.

3.10 In order to ensure that housing supply remains flexible the Core Strategy (through LO6) identifies land at Enterprise Way Edenbridge as a reserve site for housing. The policy states that the site would be brought forward for development after 2015 only if required to maintain a five year supply of housing land in the District.

3.11 However, following publication of the NPPF, it is considered that there is a need to bring forward the reserve site now to boost the supply of housing in the District where this would not conflict with strategic objectives (such as protection of the Green Belt and AONB) and the site is included in the residential development allocations in Policy H1. The site has scope for a mix of different types of affordable and market housing. This could include accommodation contributing to housing supply for those with particular needs including a care home facility.

Affordable Housing

3.12 Affordable housing is clearly needed in Sevenoaks District. Policy SP3 of the Core Strategy introduced a new (gross) sliding thresholds which will trigger the requirement for on-site affordable housing provision. The Policy applies to the allocations set out within this chapter.

Housing Allocations

3.13 Policy H1 sets out the proposed residential allocations for the period up until 2026. All proposals should comprise high quality sustainable designs in accordance with Core Strategy Policies and Policy EN1 of this Plan. Proposals will also be subject to the specific development guidance set out for each site at Appendix 3. Location plans for each of the housing allocation sites are included at Appendix 3 and the mixed use allocation sites at Appendix 5.

3.14 The Council will support and monitor the implementation of existing residential planning permissions that have been granted. The Council will generally resist any reduction in the number of dwellings already permitted on a site in order to achieve the housing targets.

3.15 The policy includes an indicative dwelling yield for each site based on an assessment of an appropriate density that takes into consideration the location and context of the sites. Densities, as proposed in Core Strategy Policy SP7, are generally sought in order to achieve sustainable forms of development, and reduce unnecessary use of greenfield land. However, to ensure that new development integrates well within the local character of established areas, some allocations have been subject to densities below those set out in Policy SP7. It must be emphasised that the yields are approximate and the actual dwelling yield that might be achieved on each site could vary from that indicated. It will be

3. Housing and Mixed Use Development

for planning applications to demonstrate how high quality sustainable designs can achieve an appropriate density for each site.

Policy H1 - Residential Development Allocations

The following sites, as defined in Appendix 3, are allocated for residential development purposes to deliver the Core Strategy housing requirements (3,300 units) over the period until 2026.

These sites will provide for a range of housing types, density, mix and tenure and will be subject to the site areas and design guidance as set out in detail at Appendix 3.

REF	SETTLEMENT/SITE ADDRESS	APPROXIMATE NO. UNITS
<u>Sevenoaks Urban Area</u>		
H1(a)	Car Park, Hitchen Hatch Lane	17
H1(b)	Cramptons Road Water Works, Cramptons Road	50
H1(c)	Sevenoaks Gasholder Station, Cramptons Road	39
H1(d)	School House, Oak Lane & Hopgarden Lane	19
H1(e)	Johnsons, Oak Lane & Hopgarden Lane	18
H1 (f)	Greatness Mill, Mill Lane ⁴	20
	Sub Total	163
<u>Swanley</u>		
H1(g)	Bevan Place	46
H1(h)	Bus Garage/Kingdom Hall, London Road	30
H1(i)	Land West of Cherry Avenue (mixed housing and open space)	50
	Sub Total	126
<u>Other Settlements</u>		
H1(j)	57 Top Dartford Road, Hextable	14
H1(k)	Foxs Garage, London Road, Badgers Mount	15
H1(l)	Land adjacent to London Road, Westerham	30
H1(m)	Currant Hill Allotments, Westerham	20
H1(n)	Land at Croft Road, Westerham	15
H1 (o)	Warren Court, Halstead	25

4.Planning permission has been granted for 26 units (SE/13/01635)

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H1 (p)	Land West of Enterprise Way, Edenbridge	276
	Sub Total	395
	GRAND TOTAL	684

Delivery Mechanism

See detailed design guidance in Appendix 3

Mixed Use Development

3.16 Paragraph 38 of the NPPF recognises that larger scale residential developments offer opportunities to provide employment, community and housing benefits as part of comprehensive site developments. The advantages of the mixed use approach includes reducing the need for people to travel to and from work and can increase the variety of activity on sites at different days and times of the week, which aids the reduction and opportunity for crimes to take place. Mixed use development will only be promoted where it is consistent with Core Strategy policy. The purpose is to assist delivery of the Core Strategy housing requirements (3300 units) over the period 2006 - 2026 and to provide additional appropriate uses that complement the provision of new houses.

3.17 Policy H2 sets out those sites that are considered suitable for mixed use development, primarily incorporating a significant element of residential development.

Policy H2 - Mixed Use Development Allocations

The following sites (0.2 hectares or greater), as defined in Appendix 5, are allocated for mixed use development that incorporates an element of residential development.

These sites will provide for a range of employment, retail and community facilities in addition to housing types, density, mix and tenure considered appropriate. For further details on the appropriate mix of uses on these sites, please see the development guidance at Appendix 5. Allocations will be subject to the site areas and design guidance as set out in Appendix 5.

REF	SETTLEMENT/SITE ADDRESS	INDICATIVE SITE
H2(a)	Delivery & Post Office/BT Exchange, South Park, Sevenoaks Mixed use - residential and retail (town centre site)	42
H2(b)	United House, Goldsel Road, Swaney Mixed use - residential and B1(a) office	185

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H2(c) Swanley Centre, Nightingale Way, Swanley (only as part of regeneration proposals) Mixed use - retail, community facilities, residential and employment (town centre site)	0
H2(d) Station Approach Edenbridge Mixed use - residential and employment	20
H2(e) New Ash Green Village Centre, New Ash Green (only as part of regeneration proposals) Mixed use - retail, employment, community facilities and residential (village centre site)	50
H2(f) Powder Mill, Leigh ⁵ Mixed use - residential and employment	60
TOTAL	357

Delivery Mechanism

See detailed design guidance in Appendix 5

Planning Briefs for mixed-use sites will be prepared as appropriate

Housing for People with Special Needs, including Older People

3.18 Sevenoaks District is experiencing a steady increase in the number of its population over retirement age. This trend is likely to continue, and will result in more very old people who are likely to require community care or accommodation in nursing homes. Other groups in society also require 'institutional accommodation' and it is important that adequate provision is made to meet the full spectrum of local needs.

3.19 Residential Institutions are defined in Class C2 of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). This definition covers residential institutions and other non-custodial institutions where a significant element of care is provided for the residents. This can cover a range of uses such as nursing and convalescent homes; community care and care homes for the elderly; centres for those with severe disabilities; and residential schools.

3.20 The Council strongly supports the provision of housing to meet the requirements of people in special need of help or supervision where they are fully integrated into existing communities and located in sustainable locations, as set out in Core Strategy Policy SP5. The development guidance accompanying each site at Appendix 3 and Appendix 5 identifies sites that are particularly suitable for this form of housing due to their proximity to facilities or the gentle topography of the area. Examples of inappropriate environments for residential institutions would include those properties that do not have

5.Planning permission has been granted for 73 units (SE/14/00487)

3. Housing and Mixed Use Development

access to garden areas of an adequate size or areas where the topography makes it difficult for pedestrians.

3.21 The Council has also identified a specific requirement, as set out in the Supporting People Strategy 2010-15, for a Young Persons Unit (approximately nine units), to provide assisted living for vulnerable young people, including care leavers. The District Council will work with partners and landowners to identify and bring forward a suitable site, well-connected to the town centre.

Housing within Urban Confines

3.22 For new homes to meet the needs of current and future residents, it is important that they are designed to a high quality and create an attractive environment that functions well, where people want to live, which meets their needs, and which creates a sense of place where community identity can develop. Higher residential densities are required in the principal settlements of Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge to maximise the efficient use of previously developed land and in the interests of achieving more sustainable forms of development, and reducing use of greenfield land. There is no reason why higher densities should compromise the quality of new development.

3.23 Within existing built confines all proposals for new or replacement dwellings will be assessed against the design, amenity, safety and environmental principles set out in Policies SC1, EN1 and EN2. Proposals for the temporary or permanent location of a mobile home or caravan in the confines of an existing settlement will be considered in the same manner as a new permanent dwelling.

Residential Subdivision

3.24 Subdivision of large dwellings often provides opportunities to create smaller units of accommodation, which can be of benefit to the settlement, especially where there are identified shortages of smaller homes. The proposal should not harm the amenities of surrounding residents in accordance with Policy EN2. Proposals for subdivision in the Green Belt need to be carefully considered to ensure that there is no greater impact on openness.

Policy H3 - Residential Subdivision

Within the built confines of existing settlements proposals for the subdivision of residential properties into smaller units which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) the building would be structurally suitable for subdivision;
- b) the proposal, including any extensions, hard standing, enclosure or other ancillary element would reflect the form, integrity and character of the building and its surroundings; and
- c) Suitable parking and access arrangements could be achieved.

Within the Green Belt the conversion of a residential property into smaller units will be permitted where the above criteria are met and where the proposal (including any ancillary works such as car parking provision) would not have a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Residential Annexes

3.25 Residential annexes within urban confines (not in the Green Belt) are acceptable in principle where their proposed use is ancillary to the enjoyment of the main house and where there is a demonstrable tie to the host dwelling. In most instances annexes ancillary to the enjoyment of a dwelling house can be constructed as permitted development, therefore a detailed policy is not required. Developments that do require planning permission will be assessed against the design and amenity policies within this document.

3.26 Where proposals would result in the creation of a new self contained dwelling the proposal will be considered in the same way as a new dwelling.

Loss of Housing Stock

3.27 The Council considers it has appropriate policies/strategies in place to maximise housing options and make best use of the existing housing stock, taking into account national policy set out in the Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities: Powers and Duties and Planning Guidance on urban renaissance and sustainability. These include:

- Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012
- The SHMA 2008 (to be updated)
- Sevenoaks District Empty Homes Action Plan 2009
- Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy 2008
- Houses in Multiple Occupancy. HMO Information Pack
- Core Strategy Policies.

3.28 To support these policies/strategies a stock condition survey was undertaken in 2004 and has been updated in 2010/11. This updates information on:

- Level of private and public sector stock unfit for habitation.
- SAP (energy efficiency measure) rating of public and private dwellings.
- Condition of Mobile homes.

3.29 The SHMA highlights under occupation as an issue. Paragraph 5.3.13 of the Core Strategy outlines the Council's approach to reducing the level of "under occupation" of family homes. West Kent Housing Association which manages the majority of the social housing in the District also operates the Small is Beautiful scheme which offers incentives for tenants downsizing.

3.30 The Council is being pro-active through its housing strategies, in bringing empty properties back into use for affordable housing. The Sevenoaks District Empty Homes Action Plan 2009 aims to continue enabling empty homes to be brought back into use, thereby providing further usable and decent homes. Proposals that allow tenants to

3. Housing and Mixed Use Development

downsize will be supported subject to the proposal not conflicting with relevant housing policies such as replacement dwellings in the Green Belt (Policy GB4).

Policy H4 -Reuse and Protection of Existing Housing Stock

The Council will support proposals that bring empty properties back into residential use or provide opportunities for tenants to downsize.

The loss of housing stock through change of use or redevelopment will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that:

- a) the dwelling no longer provides accommodation of a satisfactory standard and is incapable of being improved at reasonable expense;
- b) the locality and character of the surroundings are no longer appropriate for residential purposes; or
- c) the dwelling is located within a Primary or Secondary Retail Frontage, a Neighbourhood or Village Centre Area or land allocated for business uses within Policy EMP1, as defined in Appendices 4, 7 and 8.

Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People

3.31 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' was published in March 2012, alongside the NPPF and suggests that local authorities should work collaboratively to meet needs, in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate.

3.32 The District Council commissioned a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment to provide an update on the current need in the District and to consider how the issues on local and historic demand could be addressed.

3.33 A Gypsy and Traveller Plan is being prepared which will set an overall level of future provision of accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people. The Council is seeking to identify acceptable sites to be allocated, taking account of relevant planning policy guidance, in the Gypsy and Traveller Plan. National planning guidance maintains the approach that Gypsy and Traveller development is inappropriate in the Green Belt. For this reason, sites outside the Green Belt must be assessed as the first in a sequence of options. This in turn means assessing the suitability of sites allocated for housing development in the ADMP.

3.34 It is unlikely that a site currently proposed for housing development would be re-allocated as a gypsy site as this is not likely to be viable or deliverable. One option under consideration is to substitute the affordable housing requirement for gypsy site provision on a very limited number of suitable sites.

Performance Indicators for Housing and Mixed Use Development:

Progress on delivering new housing on Housing Allocation sites; (*Housing allocations completed in line with the phasing set out in the development guidance in Appendix 3 of the ADMP.*)

Progress on delivering new housing on Mixed Use Allocation sites; (*All mixed use allocation sites completed in line with the phasing set out in the development guidance in Appendix 5 of the ADMP.*)

Additional completed units from residential subdivision; (*No additional completed units granted contrary to policy or overturned at appeal following a refusal.*)

Number of completed housing sites with a net loss of units; (*No more than 5% of completed housing sites to have net loss during the plan period.**)

** Since 2006, 548 housing sites have been completed of which 7 (2.8%) had an overall net loss of units.*

4. The Economy and Employment

4. The Economy and Employment

4.1 The Council is committed to providing and preserving a range of employment sites for a variety of business uses. These sites need to be in sustainable locations, provide modern and flexible opportunities for existing businesses, and offer attractive sites for new employers. It is also important to support the rural economy and rural businesses. This in turn will maintain and enhance the economic wellbeing of the District in the future.

Core Strategy Objective

- To provide land for employment development to support the future development of the District's economy.

4.2 The Core Strategy sets out that the employment land provision for the District over the plan period, excluding major developed employment sites is 86.1 hectares. Following work on the proposed allocations this figure has reduced to 79.6 hectares (75.5ha of existing sites and 4.1ha new allocation at Broom Hill, Swanley) primarily as a result of detailed boundary amendments to better represent the existing extent of established employment sites. This recalculation has no effect on future requirements.

4.3 In 2007, the District Council commissioned an Employment Land Study to assess both the demand and supply of land in Sevenoaks, to help meet future needs. The study shows that the majority of sites in the District are still required to provide a range of premises. It is therefore essential that designated employment land, with the exception of those sites identified for alternative uses, is protected from other non employment generating uses and to ensure that adequate land and premises are available to support and regenerate the local economy.

4.4 In 2011 the Council commissioned a review of the current employment forecasts previously published in 2007. This identified that the long-term demand trends for Sevenoaks District show a change since the 2008-09 recession, with a flat forecast of demand for additional office floorspace. The report also shows that space required for storage and distribution purposes is expected to grow in line with the economy but space required for manufacturing activities is expected to continue to decline.

4.5 The trends affecting change in the demand for employment space in the rural economy are considered to be similar to those underlying the broader economy.

Employment Allocations

4.6 Core Strategy Policy SP8 is the overarching strategic policy that provides for the retention and creation of employment and business facilities and opportunities throughout the District. It is founded on an evidence base that identifies that employment land supply and demands are broadly in balance over the Core Strategy period (to 2026) (URS Long Term Employment Space Projections, 2011).

4.7 Core Strategy Policy SP8 allows for allocated employment sites to be redeveloped for other uses if it can be demonstrated that there is 'no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for business purposes during the Core Strategy period'. The Council will expect an applicant seeking a release under Policy SP8 to provide information to show that the site has been unsuccessfully marketed, for use of the existing buildings or partial

or comprehensive redevelopment, for a period of at least one year, at a time when the site is available or will be available shortly. The Council will expect marketing to have been proactively carried out for uses potentially suitable for the site and at the appropriate price. In addition, the Council will expect the applicant to demonstrate that forecast changes in market conditions will not result in take up of all or part of the site. In considering this forecasting assessment, the Council will, where relevant and amongst other potentially relevant site-specific issues, have regard to the extent to which the evidence from the applicant suggests that:

- there is insufficient forecast demand for the specific land uses currently on the site;
- the location and accessibility of the site prevents it from being attractive for business uses, including any specific types of provision (including business start up units or serviced offices) that may be most appropriate for the location;
- the quality of existing buildings and infrastructure requires refurbishment or redevelopment which evidence suggests would not be viable, if necessary; and
- the redevelopment for alternative uses would provide non-business use (Use Class B) jobs.

4.8 Core Strategy Policy SP8 promotes a flexible approach to the use of land for business and employment purposes and as such it is the role of this document to formally identify the sites to which Policy SP8 of the Core Strategy applies.

4.9 Individual location plans for each of these existing sites, indicating the site boundaries, are included in Appendix 4.

Policy EMP1 - Land for Business

In accordance with Policy SP8 of the Core Strategy the following existing employment sites, as defined in Appendix 4, will be retained, intensified and regenerated for B1 - B8 uses. The provision of sites for small and medium size businesses and "start-up" facilities, will be supported.

	Site Address	Total Area (hectares)
	<u>Sevenoaks</u>	
EMP1(a)	Vestry Road, Sevenoaks	11.3
EMP1(b)	Bat & Ball Enterprise Centre, Sevenoaks	1.8
EMP1(c)	British Telecom, Sevenoaks	1.8
EMP1(d)	Erskine House,	0.5
EMP1(e)	Hardy's Yard, Riverhead	1.3
EMP1(f)	High Street, Sevenoaks	1.5
EMP1(g)	London Road, Sevenoaks	4.0

4. The Economy and Employment

EMP1(h)	Morewood Close (Excluding Housing Area), Sevenoaks	3.7
EMP1(i)	South Park , Sevenoaks	0.2
EMP1(j)	Tubs Hill House, Tubs Hill Road, Sevenoaks	0.4
EMP1(k)	Lime Tree Walk, Sevenoaks	0.6
	Sub Total	27.1
	<u>Swanley</u>	
EMP1(l)	Wested Lane Industrial Estate, Swanley	8.2
EMP1(m)	Swanley Town Council Offices, Swanley	0.4
EMP1(n)	Swan Mill, Goldsel Road, Swanley	2.6
EMP1(o)	Horizon House, Swanley	0.3
EMP1(p)	Media House, Swanley	0.3
EMP1(q)	Moreton Industrial Estate, Swanley	1.8
EMP1(r)	Park Road Industrial Estate, Swanley	1.3
EMP1(s)	Southern Cross Ind. Estate, Swanley	1.9
EMP1(t)	Teardrop Industrial Estate, Swanley	3.4
EMP1(u)	The Technology Centre, Swanley	1.9
	Sub Total	22.1
	<u>Edenbridge</u>	
EMP1(v)	Station Road, Edenbridge	18.8
EMP1(w)	Edenbridge / Warsop Trading Centre	1.6
	Sub Total	20.4

<u>Other Settlements</u>		
EMP1(x)	Westerham Trading Centre, Westerham	3.7
EMP1(y)	Blue Chalet Industrial Park, West Kingsdown	0.9
EMP1(z)	West Kingsdown Industrial Estate, West Kingsdown	0.5
EMP1(zz)	Horton Kirby Trading Estate, South Darenth	0.8
	Sub Total	5.9
	GRAND TOTAL	75.5

Major Developed Employment Sites in the Green Belt

4.10 There are a number of employment sites in the District, divorced from existing settlements, that have become built up over the years and which are designated as "Major Developed Sites" in the Green Belt in the Sevenoaks Core Strategy and under guidance previously set out in PPG2. The first three sites are also located in the Kent Downs AONB:

- Fort Halstead, Halstead
- North Downs Business Park, Dunton Green
- Chaucer Business Park, Kemsing
- Glaxo Smith Kline, Leigh

4.11 Under the Major Developed Sites (MDS) designation the owners of these sites were able to carry out limited development consistent with criteria set out in Annex C of PPG2. However, since the adoption of the Core Strategy, the NPPF no longer references MDS designation, and has instead set out that limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land) is appropriate development, provided it does not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The NPPF (paragraph 89) also states that the replacement of any building in the Green Belt is appropriate development, provided the new building is not materially larger than the one it replaces and is in the same use.

4.12 Whilst the NPPF (paragraph 89) sets out what is appropriate development in the Green Belt and no longer provides Local Authorities with the opportunity to designate Major Developed Sites, the Council recognises that three of the sites identified continue to be major employers in the District, these being:

1. Fort Halstead, Halstead
2. North Downs Business Park, Dunton Green
3. Chaucer Business Park, Kemsing

4.13 As such these three sites have been formally identified within the plan as sites which are considered to be important employment generating sites, where proposals consistent with Green Belt and AONB policy will be supported.

4. The Economy and Employment

Policy EMP2 - Major Developed Employment Sites in the Green Belt

The following three sites identified in the Core Strategy, as defined in Appendix 6, are considered to be important employment generating sites, where proposals consistent with Green Belt policy will be supported:

MDES 1 Fort Halstead, Halstead

MDES 2 North Downs Business Park, Dunton Green

MDES 3 Chaucer Business Park, Kemsing

Delivery Mechanism:

See Employment Allocation Maps in Appendix 4

4.14 Details of the four previously defined MDS sites are included below.

Fort Halstead

4.15 Fort Halstead is a previously developed site within the Green Belt and the Kent Downs AONB that was originally a Ministry of Defence research establishment and is still occupied by defence related industries. It remains a major employer in the District.

4.16 Proposals for a major residential-led mixed use redevelopment of the site were considered and rejected through the Core Strategy process. However the Core Strategy states (para 4.5.21) that the main requirements of the current occupiers of Fort Halstead, QinetiQ and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), may vary during the Plan period. It adds that the implications of a future decline in occupancy of the site will be considered within the policy framework of the Core Strategy and relevant national planning policy

4.17 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy, DSTL, the largest employer, has announced its intention to withdraw from the site by 2017/18. The Council is working with DSTL, QinetiQ and the site owners to assess and mitigate the impact on the local economy of the planned withdrawal. The landowners have stated their intention to bring forward a planning application to redevelop the site for a mix of uses including commercial and residential.

4.18 The departure of DSTL creates an opportunity to redevelop the site to meet modern business needs. Any redevelopment should meet the following broad objectives:

1. *It should be employment-led and should maintain the site's role as an important employment site in the District.* Provision should be made for a range of employment uses sufficient to provide for approximately 1,200 jobs, equivalent to the level of employment on site prior to the announced withdrawal of DSTL. There should be flexibility to accommodate types of business with different space needs. Employment-uses should

include provision for the retention of Qinetiq in premises to meet their needs and opportunities to attract and accommodate similarly high skilled jobs should be fully explored and planned for. Although not an essential requirement there would be some benefit in including a hotel which could complement other development on the site and assist in improving hotel provision in the District.

2. *It should be deliverable.* The Council recognizes that delivery of employment-led redevelopment is dependent on the development being viable. It has reviewed the viability of options for redevelopment in the light of the landowner's emerging proposals. This review shows that redevelopment for employment use alone would not be viable and therefore unlikely to come forward in a period that would enable the jobs lost by the departure of DSTL to be replaced in a timely manner. However, with the inclusion of residential development alongside the employment uses, there is the prospect of making the whole development viable. There is substantial development on the site at present, and a CLUED has been granted by the Council (SE/03/02897/LDCEX). The existing employment density of the site is relatively low which means there is scope to replace the existing jobs in a redevelopment on only part of the site creating space for significant residential development as part of a comprehensive development while still keeping within the existing developed area. Evidence produced on behalf of the landowner and reviewed by the Council shows that a development providing replacement employment provision and incorporating approximately 450 dwellings could potentially be accommodated within the existing built confines and without adverse impact on the AONB or an increase in development in the Green Belt. Such a development represents a useful addition to the Council's housing land supply and should enable a range of housing types and tenures to be included.

3. *It should be comprehensive.* Fort Halstead is a large site and the departure of DSTL could effectively render the whole site redundant unless redevelopment is undertaken. Redevelopment needs to be comprehensive and integrated to ensure a high quality outcome for the whole site and secure a viable future for QinetiQ on the site. A development agreement and phasing plan will be needed to ensure that the development is delivered as a whole in a timely way and in a way that is truly employment-led.

4. *It should comply with sustainable development principles.* This should include provision of appropriate community facilities on site proportionate to the scale of the development, sustainable transport proposals for accessing the site, sustainable construction methods and provision of green infrastructure and measures to conserve and enhance the Kent Downs AONB in which the site is situated.

5. *It should result in no increased impact on the openness of the Green Belt and AONB within which the site lies.* This means that development should be contained within the Major Employment Site boundary. In addition the overall quantity of development on the site should not increase (with the CLUED used as a reference point) and the height of buildings should also be contained to avoid any increased visual impact on the surrounding area. Existing woodland around the site incorporates ancient woodland that should be protected in its own right but in addition needs to be retained to ensure the developed site remains well-screened. As far as possible, the overall development should contribute positively to the AONB.

4. The Economy and Employment

4.19 Policy EMP3 sets out requirements for future development and the principles that will apply when redevelopment proposals are being considered. The delivery mechanism to the policy proposes the preparation of a development brief for the site to provide a more specific agreed planning framework.

4.20 The Core Strategy states (para 4.5.20) that the defined boundary of the site from the Saved Local Plan will be reviewed to more fully reflect the developed area in business use. This review has been carried out and the new boundary is shown in Appendix 6

Policy EMP3 - Redevelopment of Fort Halstead

Fort Halstead, as defined in Appendix 6, is allocated as a Major Employment Site in the Green Belt.

Redevelopment proposals will be expected to achieve a range of employment uses appropriate to an employment site such as research and development, serviced offices and workshops and generate at least the number of jobs that the site accommodated immediately prior to the announced withdrawal of DSTL from the site. Redevelopment may also include a hotel. Land based employment, such as the management of the woodland and downland will also be supported, subject to the criteria below.

Residential development of up to 450 units may also be permitted provided it forms part of a mixed used scheme that delivers an employment-led development and is designed and sited in a way that is consistent with the provision of a range of employment uses appropriate to an employment site. It must also comply with other aspects of the policy.

The inclusion of appropriate community facilities and infrastructure to support the sustainable development of the site consistent with the policy will be required.

Redevelopment of the site will maintain or reduce the amount of built development on the site and be fully contained within the Major Employment Site Boundary. It should have no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The height of the buildings must take into account the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the countryside in this location.

Redevelopment proposals would be expected to:

- Be sustainable in respect of the location, uses and quantum of development and be accompanied by a Travel Plan incorporating binding measures to reduce dependency of future occupants on car use;
- Provide accessibility to jobs, shops and services by public transport, cycling or walking, including proposals for onsite provision proportionate to the proposed development;
- Make a positive contribution to the achievement of aims and objectives of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and conserve and enhance the natural beauty and tranquillity of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Confirm, by way of a Transport Assessment, that the development would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the local and strategic road networks;

- Protect and integrate the Scheduled Ancient Monument and listed buildings into the development with improved access and setting;
- Integrate existing dwellings located in close proximity to the boundary of the Major Employment Site into the new development;
- Incorporate principles of sustainable design and construction to minimise energy consumption in its construction and operation;
- Improve the provision and connectivity of green infrastructure, including the protection, enhancement and management of biodiversity and the provision of improvements to the Public Right of Way network.
- Provide for a comprehensive development and include a phasing plan, including phasing of infrastructure provision, showing how each phase of the development will contribute to the implementation of the policy.

Delivery Mechanism:

A Planning Brief will be prepared to guide the redevelopment of Fort Halstead, in consultation with, amongst others, the site owners, local parish councils, the Kent Downs AONB Unit and infrastructure providers.

Chaucer Business Park

4.21 Chaucer Business Park is located in Kemsing along Watery Lane. It covers an area of approximately 3.9 ha and there is no available developable land.

4.22 The site is primarily used for transport and storage or general business use with some manufacturing.

4.23 The site and most of the buildings are new and in good condition. There is on-site parking and good HGV access.

4.24 The Council promotes the continuation of the site in its current form. A plan showing the extent of the employment site is included in Appendix 6.

North Downs Business Park

4.25 North Downs Business Park is located in Dunton Green and is being used for a variety of activities including manufacturing and various business uses.

4.26 The business area is in good condition and the majority of the surveyed buildings are well maintained. There is on-site parking and good HGV access in most areas.

4.27 The Council promotes the continuation of the site in its current form. A plan showing the extent of the employment site is included in Appendix 6.

4. The Economy and Employment

Glaxo Smith Kline, Powder Mills, Leigh

4.28 In February 2010 Glaxo Smith Kline announced its intention to close its pharmaceutical site at Leigh, where it is the sole occupier.

4.29 The Council commissioned consultants to undertake an independent report into the potential to re-use the site in employment use. The Report undertaken by URS Scott Wilson stated that it was not viable for re-use solely for employment and that a residential led mixed use development would be the most appropriate re-use of the site.

4.30 Taking this into consideration the Council has allocated the site for residential mixed use development under Policy H2 of this document. This allocation may involve the preparation of a Planning Brief as a supplementary planning document to guide future redevelopment.⁶

Broom Hill

4.31 The Broom Hill development site, adjacent to the M25 in Swanley, is a longstanding employment land allocation. The Core Strategy proposes that it should be carried forward in the Allocations and Development Management Plan, subject to further consideration of the traffic impacts and the impact on on-site biodiversity. Employment development on the Broom Hill site has the potential to support the economic regeneration of Swanley.

4.32 The 'Employment Land Review' (2007) and the 'Employment Land Review Update' (2011) are based on the development of 4.1ha of the total 8.1ha allocated for employment use at Broom Hill. Planning permission was recently granted on appeal for residential development on the western half of the site for up to 61 dwellings, partly on the basis that employment requirements could still be met on the eastern half. The Council considers that the proposed allocation remains suitable for employment development, as well as providing opportunities for improved open space provision on the site and land in the Green Belt to the north.

Policy EMP4 - Business Allocation at Broom Hill, Swanley

A comprehensively planned employment development at Broom Hill, Swanley, as defined in Appendix 4, will be supported by the Council, subject to confirmation through a Transport Assessment that the transport impacts of development will be acceptable. Proposals should include:

- Development of 4.1 ha of employment land;
- Improved public access to open space through on site provision and improvements in the quality and connectivity of open space on Green Belt land to the north

The proposed layout of development should take account of the noise and air quality constraints that exist on the site and should be sensitive to the existing topography, green infrastructure features of the site and its surroundings and the amenity of nearby properties.

⁶Planning permission has been granted for 73 units (SE/14/00487)

Access to employment development on the site will be provided through the existing employment site to the south.

Enhancement of habitats on Green Belt land to the north of the site will ensure that there is no net adverse impact on biodiversity and, where possible, a net improvement should be secured.

Delivery Mechanism:

See Employment Allocation Maps in Appendix 4

Non-allocated Employment Sites

4.33 Redevelopment for mixed use of business sites in urban areas may exceptionally be permitted where such development would facilitate the regeneration of the site to more effectively meet the needs of modern business, where the employment capacity of the site, represented by the commercial floorspace, is maintained and where a mixed use development would represent a sustainable approach consistent with the general distribution of development.

4.34 Policy EMP5 below relates to Core Strategy Policy SP8 and acts as a supplementary development management policy to cover non-allocated employment sites. These sites will usually be below 0.2 ha, as sites above this threshold will have been assessed through the Council's Employment Land Review and either be allocated for employment purposes or recommended for release.

4.35 Policy EMP5 requires non-allocated lawful business premises and sites to have been unsuccessfully marketed for employment use for a period of at least 6 months before alternatives have been considered. The Council will expect marketing to have been undertaken proactively, for appropriate business uses of the site (including through both re-use and redevelopment) and at the appropriate rental or purchase price for the type of business land and/or buildings.

Policy EMP5 - Non-allocated Employment Sites

When considering proposals for the creation or loss of business uses on unallocated sites, the Council will assess the impact of the proposals on the environment, local economy and the local community.

For new proposals the Council will also consider the impact on the transport network and ensure there is no harm to surrounding uses, including nature conservation areas.

Proposals for mixed use redevelopment on existing unallocated business sites will be permitted providing the proposal includes a significant element of business use and the proposal complies with all other relevant planning policies.

4. The Economy and Employment

The Council will permit the loss of non-allocated lawful business premises and sites to other uses provided it can be demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Council, that the site has been unsuccessfully marketed for re-use in employment for a period of at least 6 months and that there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for business use at the site/premises in the longer term.

Performance Indicators for The Economy and Employment:

Maintenance of Employment Allocations and Major Developed Employment Sites in the Green Belt; *(No loss of Employment Allocations and Major Developed Employment Sites in the Green Belt)*

Progress on Broom Hill development; *(Development completed within the Plan period)*

Change in Employment floor space in non allocated sites; *(No annual net loss of employment floor space across the District).*

5. Town and Local Centres

5.1 The NPPF identifies the aims of town centres and suggests that the main uses which should be focused within them are retail development, leisure and entertainment facilities, offices and arts, culture and tourism development.

5.2 The Core Strategy includes the objective:

- To focus the majority of new housing, employment and retail development in the towns of Sevenoaks and Swanley and, to a lesser extent, in Edenbridge with smaller scale development in the larger villages which have a more limited range of local facilities.

5.3 Policy LO1 of the Core Strategy identifies the general distribution of development and confirms the roles of the main settlements within the District during the plan period. It confirms the following settlement hierarchy:

<u>Sevenoaks District Settlement Hierarchy</u>	
Principal Town:	Sevenoaks
Secondary Town:	Swanley
Rural Service Centre:	Edenbridge
Local Service Centres:	Westerham, New Ash Green and Otford
Service Villages:	Brasted, Crockenhill, Eynsford, Farningham, Halstead, Hartley, Hextable, Horton Kirby, Kemsing, Knockholt Pound, Leigh, Seal, Sevenoaks Weald, Shoreham, South Darenth, Sundridge and West Kingsdown.

5.4 New development will focus on the larger settlements, principally Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge, in line with Government planning advice and the principles of sustainability. However, local shopping provision is also an important facility within many of the District's neighbourhoods and smaller settlements. In these localised shopping centres small scale retail development should be allowed appropriate in scale to the settlements.

5.5 Defined town centre boundaries in previous Local Plans have worked well in focusing town centre uses in areas where there are the best opportunities for linked trips and for access by public transport, cycling and walking. The provision of sustainable transport and sufficient town centre parking also plays a key role in helping to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres. The Council will seek to broadly maintain the existing parking provision.

5. Town and Local Centres

Town and Local Centre Definitions

Town centre - A defined area, including the primary shopping area and areas predominately occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area.

Primary shopping frontage - primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods

Secondary shopping frontage - secondary frontages likely to include a diversity of uses such as retail uses, restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

Town centre uses:

- Retail Development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres);
- Leisure, entertainment facilities and the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, 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).

Local centre - locally significant areas of retail to which specific retail protection policies apply, in accordance with the NPPF. Local centres have been divided into neighbourhood and village centres in this plan.

Dead Town Centre Frontage - A façade that is blank, e.g. lacking in a window display, entrance and offers no life or activity to the street.

5.6 Under the town centre policies and designations, set out in the following sub-sections, ground floor development and changes of use which result in a reduction of town centre uses, i.e. not meeting the town centre definition above, within the designated town centres will be restricted. The policies also include a specific focus to ensure that the town centres remain the key areas for retail (Use Class A1) and other 'A Class' uses within the District. 'A Class' uses are:

A1 - Shops

A2 - Financial and Professional Services

A3 - Restaurants and Cafes

A4 - Drinking Establishments

A5 - Hot Food Takeaways

5.7 Applicants will be expected to show that proposals for change of use away from retail uses (Use Class A1) in certain areas within the town centres will meet the tests set out in the policies. In line with the NPPF (paragraph 24), proposals for retail development should look to locate within the town centre boundaries before considering alternative edge-of-centre or out-of-centre sites.

5.8 The Council will support the provision and enhancement of markets, in accordance with the NPPF (paragraph 23).

5.9 The aim of the town centre policies is to achieve and maintain vital and viable town centres in Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge that offer the quality, range and diversity of retail, services and community facilities to meet the needs of the populations they serve.

Sevenoaks

5.10 Sevenoaks has a successful town centre, which faces competition from larger centres outside the District and has suffered an increase in vacant premises as a result of the recession. Figure 4 of the Core Strategy identifies the town centre boundary for Sevenoaks and Policy LO3 sets out the strategic policy for development of the town centre, which includes maintaining a mix of uses (including retail, offices, cultural, leisure, hotel and residential development).

5.11 The 2009 Retail Study Update forecasts that there is likely to be some capacity for additional retail provision in Sevenoaks Town during the short to medium term. Core Strategy Policy LO3 makes provision for the development of approximately 4,000 sq m of new shopping floorspace. This will include redevelopment of land west of Blighs Meadow (which has planning consent) and land east of the High Street in the longer term. In addition, the Council will seek to broadly maintain the existing retail floorspace within the town. Within the Sevenoaks Primary Retail Frontage ground floor, approximately 71% of the Primary Retail Frontage was in A1 use (including those vacant units considered to have last been in A1 use) in July/August 2011 and July/August 2012.

5.12 Within Sevenoaks town centre, an area dominated by retail uses can be identified, designated as the Primary Retail Frontage (see Appendix 7). Policy TLC1 below seeks to maintain this predominance of retail within the Primary Frontage. A Secondary Retail Frontage is also identified in Sevenoaks town centre. This frontage contains a wider mix of uses, including banks, estate agents and restaurants, and is separated from the Primary Frontage by a significant physical barrier, such as a main road (Pembroke Road). The Secondary Frontage is characterised by an active frontage that contributes to the vitality of the town centre. Policy TLC1 seeks to maintain this active frontage, whilst allowing for a range of uses.

5. Town and Local Centres

Policy TLC1 - Sevenoaks Town Centre

a) within Sevenoaks Town Centre, residential, business, leisure, entertainment, arts, culture, tourism or community facility uses will be permitted where consistent with criteria b), c) and d):

- outside the Primary Retail Frontages and the area defined in Policy EMP1(g) for B1 Business Use, and
- on the upper floors of units within Sevenoaks Primary Retail Frontages where there will be no adverse impact on the functioning of the ground floor use.

b) within the Sevenoaks Primary Retail Frontage, at least 70% of the ground floor frontage will be maintained in A1 use. Where proposals would not lead to the percentage of A1 frontage falling below this level, A Class uses will be permitted where they would complement the predominant retail function and not lead to a dead town centre frontage during regular shopping hours.

c) within the Sevenoaks Secondary Retail Frontage, proposals for the use of ground floor premises for retail and other A Class uses will be permitted where they would not lead to a dead town centre frontage. Ground floor A Class uses will be maintained except where evidence is provided by the applicant to show that these uses are no longer financially viable. In such circumstances, non-residential town centre uses at ground floor level would be permitted.

d) within the areas defined in Policy EMP1, Business Uses will be retained or permitted.

Swanley Town Centre

5.13 Swanley town centre contains a pedestrianised shopping centre, which includes a large food superstore, to the north-west of the railway line and a range of predominately smaller retail and service units to the south-east. The Core Strategy notes that the centre suffers from a high level of vacancies and a limited range of stores.

5.14 The Retail Study Update 2009 shows that the town is only capturing a low proportion of available expenditure, particularly for non-food goods, and suggests that the attractiveness of the centre needs to be increased if local shoppers are to be brought back into the town. The Core Strategy (Policy L05) promotes regeneration to achieve a development that enables the town centre to better meet the needs of the community it serves, increasing its attractiveness so that its market share can increase. It is proposed that the regeneration scheme includes a mix of uses (including retail, offices, residential and community facilities).

5.15 The proposed approach in Policy TLC2 below is based on the existing town centre boundary (from Figure 5 of the Core Strategy) and frontages. It seeks to maintain a predominance of retail uses within the existing Primary Retail Frontage of the pedestrianised centre (see Appendix 7) and an active frontage and range of uses within the Secondary Retail Frontage. Proposals for the redevelopment of Swanley Town Centre should identify a new Primary Retail Frontage to take account of changes to the built form

and secure a proportion of these to remain in A1 use through condition. Within the Swanley Primary Retail Frontage ground floor, approximately 79% of the Primary Retail Frontage was in A1 use (including those vacant units considered to have last been in A1 use) in July/August 2011 and approximately 78% in July/August 2012, including a significant length of the superstore frontage.

Policy TLC2 - Swanley Town Centre

a) within Swanley Town Centre, residential, business, leisure, entertainment, arts, culture, tourism or community facility uses will be permitted where consistent with criteria b), and c):

- outside the Primary Retail Frontages, and
- on the upper floors of units within Swanley Primary Retail Frontages where there will be no adverse impact on the functioning of the ground floor use.

b) within the Swanley Primary Retail Frontage, at least 70% of the ground floor frontage will be maintained in A1 use. Where proposals would not lead to the percentage of A1 frontage falling below this level, A Class uses will be permitted where they would complement the predominant retail function and not lead to a dead town centre frontage during regular shopping hours. Proposals resulting in the change of use of existing non-A1 uses within the Primary Frontage to retail and other A class uses will be permitted where this would be complementary to the predominant retail function.

c) within the Swanley Secondary Retail Frontage, proposals for the use of ground floor premises for retail and other A Class uses will be permitted where they would not lead to a dead town centre frontage. Ground floor A Class uses will be maintained except where evidence is provided by the applicant to show that these uses are no longer financially viable units in these uses. In such circumstances, non-residential town centre uses at ground floor level would be permitted.

Edenbridge Town Centre

5.16 Edenbridge town centre provides a range of shops and facilities to serve the town and surrounding area. Core Strategy Policy L06 seeks to maintain a mix of retail and service uses. Edenbridge Town Centre also contains a number of dwellings along the main High Street, which make a positive contribution towards the mix of uses. However, in accordance with Policy L06, the Council will resist any proposals for new ground floor residential units where this would reduce the range of retail and service uses.

5.17 The Retail Study Update forecasts only limited scope for increasing convenience shopping provision. The Core Strategy does not identify a town centre boundary for Edenbridge but does suggest the need for 'a consolidated town centre' and a revised boundary to reflect the completion of the Co-operative food store (now Waitrose) and a greater focus to the south than the boundary in the Local Plan.

5. Town and Local Centres

5.18 A Primary Retail Frontage in the town centre can be identified, as proposed in Policy TLC3 below, which should be the focus of future retail activity. The Primary Retail Frontage excludes the area of the town centre designated in the Local Plan to the north of the Police Office and the Catholic Church of St Laurence. It is proposed that the area to the north of the Primary Retail Frontage is designated as the Northern Area of the town centre and an area to the south of the river, which includes protected retail units in the Local Plan, is designated as the Southern Area. In these areas, ground floor town centre uses and residential redevelopment will both be acceptable. The aim of this approach is to primarily focus new retail development on the Primary Retail Frontage and reduce the number of vacant units. Within the Edenbridge Primary Retail Frontage, approximately 51% of the Primary Retail Frontage ground floor was in A1 use (including those vacant units considered to have last been in A1 use) in July/August 2011 and approximately 50% in July/August 2012.

Policy TLC3 - Edenbridge Town Centre

a) within Edenbridge Town Centre, residential, business, leisure, entertainment, arts, culture, tourism or community facility uses will be permitted where consistent with criteria b) and c)

- outside the Primary Retail Frontage, and
- on the upper floors of units within Edenbridge Primary Retail Frontages where there will be no adverse impact on the functioning of the ground floor use.

b) within the Edenbridge Primary Retail Frontage, at least 45% of the ground floor frontage will be maintained in A1 use. Where proposals would not lead to the percentage of A1 frontage falling below this level, A Class uses will be permitted where they would complement the predominant retail function and not lead to a dead town centre frontage during regular shopping hours. Proposals resulting in the change of use of existing non-A1 uses within the Primary Frontage to retail and other A class uses will be permitted where this would be complementary to the predominant retail function.

c) in the Northern and Southern Areas of Edenbridge town centre, the balance between shops, services and community facilities and residential uses should be maintained, except where evidence is provided by the applicant to show that these non-residential uses are no longer financially viable. In such circumstances, residential redevelopment will be acceptable. Proposals that would result in changes between town centre uses in these areas will be permitted.

Local Centres

5.19 Local centres play an important role in meeting the day-to-day needs of many people in the District without the need to travel to a town centre. Local centres provide a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment and may include a small supermarket, post office, sometimes a pharmacy, a newsagent, launderette and hairdresser. Few local shopping centres within Sevenoaks District contain all of these

shops and services, however, these centres play an important role in meeting people's needs.

5.20 A distinction has been drawn between local centres within urban areas that contain a defined town centre (Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge) and other local centres. Centres meeting the former criteria have been identified as 'neighbourhood centres', whilst those meeting the latter are identified as 'village centres'.

5.21 Some local centres in Sevenoaks District also contain community facilities, such as libraries and doctors' surgeries. In rural areas, Core Strategy Policy L07 seeks to ensure that these community facilities are retained. Policy CF2 of this Plan would offer similar protection to community facilities in urban areas.

5.22 The aim of the local centre policies are:

- To ensure that shops and services in defined neighbourhood and village centres provide a range of day to day facilities for local residents and, therefore, reduce the need to travel.

Neighbourhood Centres

5.23 Neighbourhood centres should provide local shops and services that can meet the day-to-day needs of local residents with a reduced need to travel but should not undermine the vitality and viability of the town centre.

5.24 In order to be designated as a neighbourhood centre a group of shops and services should include a minimum number of retail units, one or more of which meets a day-to-day or routine need, and be of a large enough size to warrant designation. Centres have been designated if they meet the following criteria:

- They contain 5 or more A1 units; and
- They contain a supermarket, convenience store, newsagent, pharmacy or post office.

5.25 A key characteristic of neighbourhood centres is that they provide a cluster of units in Use Class A within convenient walking distance of one another. This ensures that centres provide opportunities for linked trips. In identifying local centres, units in Use Class A (occupied or vacant) have only been considered if they are less than 50m (as the crow flies) from another unit in Use Class A (occupied or vacant). However, some units that are less than 50m have been excluded where the physical form of a settlement indicates that a particular unit does not form part of a cluster of units within convenient walking distance of one another (e.g. where a unit is separated from the centre by a major road or longer walking distance).

5.26 Under these criteria, the following areas within the urban areas of Sevenoaks and Swanley are defined as neighbourhood centres and would be subject to Policy TLC4.

- Northern St John's
- Southern St John's
- Tubs Hill and Station Parade
- London Road, Dunton Green (near Lennard Road)
- Riverhead

5. Town and Local Centres

- Manse Parade, Swanley

5.27 Plans showing the extent of each of these neighbourhood centres are included in Appendix 8.

5.28 No neighbourhood centres are designated in Edenbridge. Those existing retail units in Edenbridge and those in Sevenoaks and Swanley not designated as a neighbourhood centre should be protected where they are meeting a local need. These units would be subject to Policy CF2.

Village Centres

5.29 Policy L07 of the Core Strategy seeks to support the provision and retention of services and facilities that meet a local need and existing employment opportunities. It states:

'The loss from rural settlements of services and facilities that serve the local community will be resisted where possible. Exceptions will be made where equivalent replacement facilities are provided equally accessible to the population served, or where it is demonstrated, through evidence submitted to the Council, that the continued operation of the service or facility is no longer financially viable'.

5.30 In accordance with the aims and policies of the Core Strategy, the primary function of village centres should generally be to provide day-to-day shops and services for local residents that are appropriate for the scale and location of the settlement that they serve. However, some village centres that do not currently contain day-to-day shops and services for local residents may make a significant contribution towards the local economy, for example by providing shops and services for visitors. Given this, village centres are designated if they contain:

- 5 or more A1 units; or
- a supermarket and/or convenience store and 3 additional A1 units.

5.31 A key characteristic of village centres is that they provide a cluster of units in Use Class A within convenient walking distance of one another. This ensures that centres provide opportunities for linked trips. In identifying local centres, units in Use Class A (occupied or vacant) have only been considered if they are less than 50m (as the crow flies) from another unit in Use Class A (occupied or vacant). Some units that are less than 50m have been excluded where the physical form of a settlement indicates that a particular unit does not form part of a cluster of units within convenient walking distance of one another (e.g. where a unit is separated from the centre by a major road or longer walking distance).

5.32 On the basis of these criteria, the following areas are designated as village centres:

- Kemsing - The Parade
- Seal - High Street
- Otford - High Street
- Otford - Bubblestone Parade
- Brasted - High Street and the Green
- Westerham Centre
- Crockenhill - Broadway

- West Kingsdown - Hever Road
- New Ash Green Centre
- Hartley - Cherry Trees
- Hextable - Upper Main Road

5.33 Plans showing the extent of each of these local centres are included in Appendix 8.

5.34 In accordance with the Core Strategy, Westerham is no longer designated as a town centre and is instead designated as a village centre, subject to Policy TLC4.

5.35 Core Strategy Policy LO7 states that New Ash Green village centre will be regenerated so that it better meets the needs of the local community whilst respecting the distinctive character of the settlement. Policy TLC4 will apply to the village centre, see Appendix 8, until the centre is redeveloped. Following the redevelopment, the policy will apply to the main retail and service area of the village centre, which should be identified through any planning application. In order to ensure consistency with other village centre boundaries, the car parks in New Ash Green village centre are identified as within the centre boundary.

Policy TLC4 - Neighbourhood and Village Centres

Within neighbourhood and village centres, as defined in Appendix 8, a range of shops (including Use Class A1) and services (including Use Classes A2, A3, A4 and A5) will be maintained.

Changes of use between shopping and service uses within neighbourhood and village centres will be permitted where this would not lead to the loss of A1 units serving the day to day needs of the community or required to ensure that the centre is capable of meeting the day to day needs of the community during the plan period. Proposals resulting in a net loss of shopping or service uses will not be permitted unless evidence is provided to the Council to show that the operation of the facility is no longer financially viable and where there are no other realistic proposals for retail or service uses on the site, including through Community Right to Buy.

Appropriately located additional retail or service units in neighbourhood and village centres will be permitted where the proposal is of a scale appropriate to the centre and would not materially undermine the existing balance of uses.

Residential, business or community uses of the upper floors of units within neighbourhood and village centres will be encouraged where there will be no adverse impact on the functioning of the ground floor retail or community use.

Performance Indicators for Town and Local Centres:

Change in Retail floorspace in Main Settlements; (*Approximately 4000sqm net additional floorspace to be provided in Sevenoaks Town Centre by 2026.*) (CS Indicator)

Town Centre Health Check; (CS Indicator)

5. Town and Local Centres

Percentage of A1 frontage within Primary Frontages of Sevenoaks Town Centre; *(At least 70% A1 frontage within Primary Frontage of Sevenoaks Town Centre)*

Swanley regeneration scheme; *(A town centre regeneration scheme, consistent with the Core Strategy, to be approved within five years and completed within ten years of the Core Strategy adoption.) (CS Indicator)*

Percentage of A1 frontage within Primary Retail Frontage of Edenbridge Town Centre; *(At least 45% A1 frontage within Primary frontage of Edenbridge Town Centre.)*

Changes in Settlement Hierarchy services and facilities score for individual settlements; *(No loss of services and facilities that serve the local community within rural settlements,) (CS Indicator)*

6. Green Infrastructure and Open Space

6.1 Protecting and improving the environment has always been a central aim of the planning process and is a key element of the Core Strategy. The District has extensive countryside and a unique landscape character, including designated areas of biodiversity value, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and many areas of open space.

6.2 The importance of these open spaces is that they are often multifunctional, with a variety of uses and designations. They may provide for formal and informal recreation, they are valuable to local communities contributing to their character and landscape and providing important areas for wildlife.

6.3 The following key Core Strategy Objectives are relevant to Green Infrastructure and Open Spaces:

- To safeguard and maintain the openness of the Green Belt and the distinctive character and biodiversity of the district's landscapes, particularly in the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, whilst facilitating the economic and social well-being of these areas including the diversification of the rural economy by adopting a positive approach to small scale economic development proposals which re-use existing buildings.
- To ensure that a new development is designed to a high quality and where possible makes a positive contribution to the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated.
- To safeguard existing open space, sport and recreational facilities that meet community needs and improve provision where necessary;
- To maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the District.

6.4 The policies for the protection and enhancement of the landscape character, open space, sport and recreational facilities and biodiversity are contained in Core Strategy Policies LO8, SP10 and SP11.

Green Infrastructure

6.5 The NPPF (paragraphs 73-77) encourages the creation and enhancement of a network of open spaces and natural habitats and the Core Strategy specifies the need to identify the Green Infrastructure (GI) Network across the District.

The following areas can form part of networks of green infrastructure:

- Parks and gardens - including urban parks, country parks and formal gardens.
- Natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces - including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons and meadows), wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (e.g. cliffs, quarries and pits).
- Green corridors - including river and canal corridors, cycleways, and rights of way
- Outdoor sports facilities (with natural surfaces, either publicly or privately owned) including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas.

6. Green Infrastructure and Open Space

- Amenity greenspace (most commonly, but not exclusively, in housing areas) - including informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens.
- Provision for children and teenagers - including play areas, outdoor basketball hoops, and other more informal areas (e.g. 'hanging out' areas, teenage shelters).
- Allotments, community gardens, and city (urban) farms.
- Cemeteries and churchyards.
- Accessible countryside in urban fringe areas.
- Green roofs and walls.

Sevenoaks District's Green Infrastructure Network

6.6 In the District, the Green Infrastructure Network includes nationally designated areas such as:

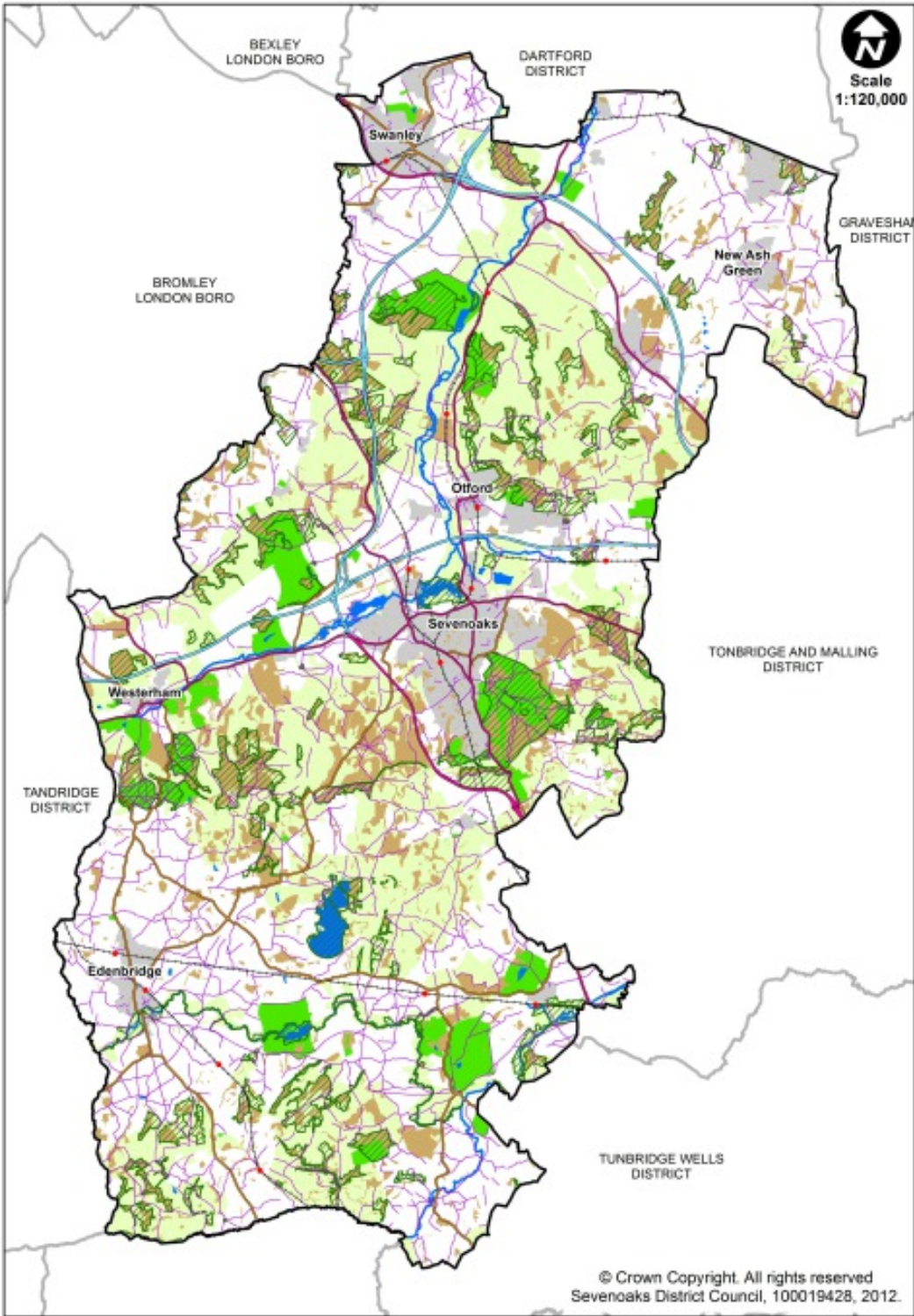
- Land of biodiversity value, including Biodiversity Opportunity Areas
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest, (SSSIs)
- Registered Historic parks and gardens
- Land designated under The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) including Common Land and Public Rights of Way (PROW)
- Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

and locally recognised sites such as:

- Local Wildlife Sites, identified by the Kent Wildlife Trust
- Kent Wildlife Trust Reserves
- Local Nature Reserves
- Roadside Nature Reserves
- Ancient woodlands
- Country Parks
- Tree Preservation Orders
- River corridors and open bodies of water
- Cycle routes
- Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens
- Amenity Greenspace
- Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space
- Provision for Children and Young People
- Outdoor Sports Facilities
- Allotments and Community Gardens
- Green Corridors
- Cemeteries and Churchyards

6. Green Infrastructure and Open Space

Map 1: The Existing Green Infrastructure Network across Sevenoaks District

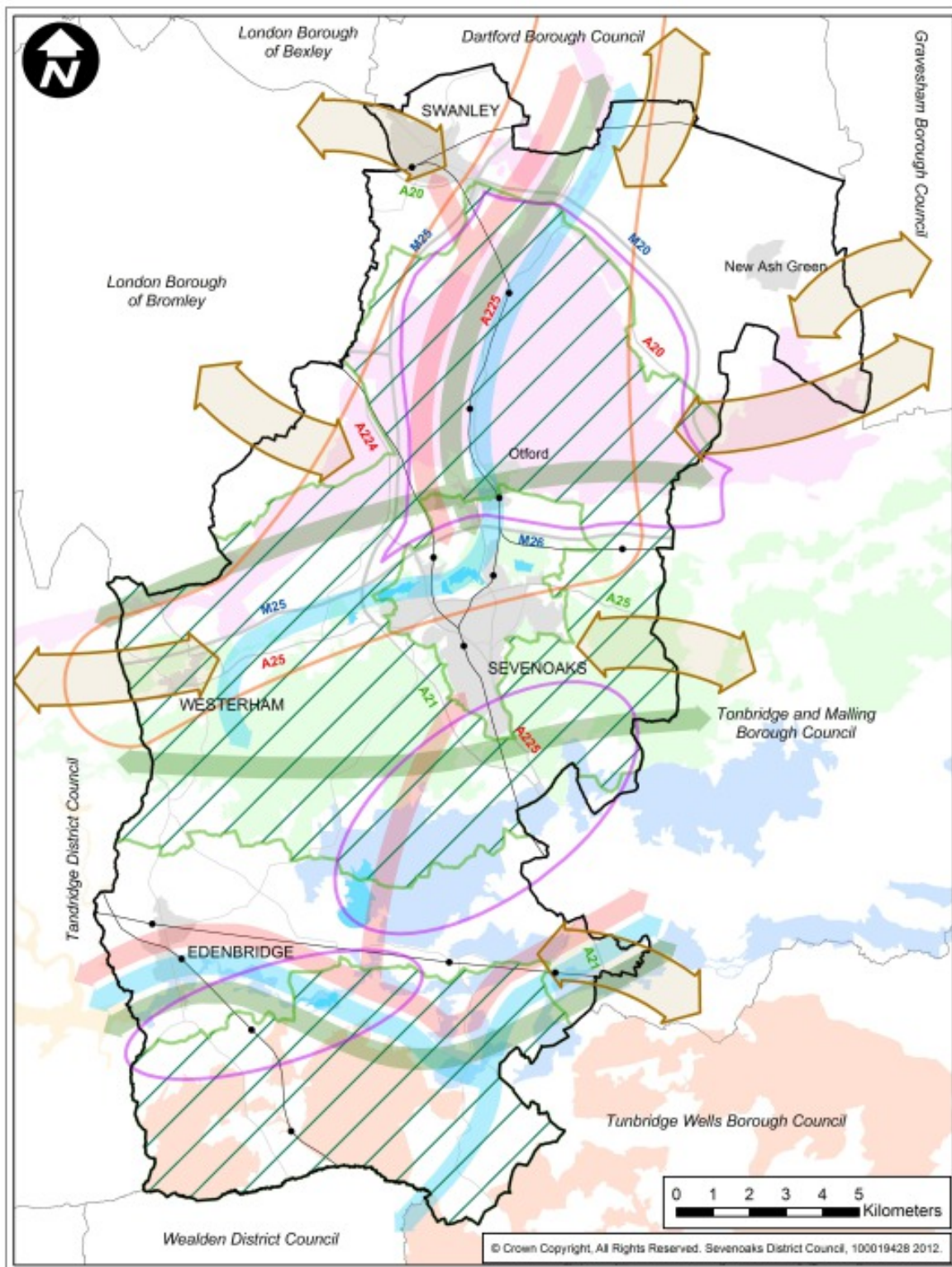


6. Green Infrastructure and Open Space



6. Green Infrastructure and Open Space

Map 2: Green Infrastructure Opportunities Across Sevenoaks District



Legend

-  Cycling Route Opportunities
 - improvements/extensions to existing routes
 - creation of new routes
-  Walking Route Opportunities
 - improvements to existing routes
 - creation of new connections
-  Rivers and Areas of Open Water
 - habitat and biodiversity improvements
 - removal of invasive species
-  Opportunities for Cross Boundary Linkages
-  Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 - North Downs AONB (North)
 - High Weald AONB (South)
-  Landscape Scale project areas
-  Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme

Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

-  Central North Downs
-  Greensand Heaths & Commons
-  High Weald
-  Medway & Low Weald Greensand & Gault

Green Infrastructure Opportunities across the District

6.7 The Core Strategy focuses development within the built confines of existing settlements and in allocating development seeks to protect sites designated for their wildlife, open space, amenity or recreational value. This approach means that the potential harmful effects of new development on the GI Network will be minimised.

6.8 The District's provision of new sites for development is relatively modest and this limits the scope for enhancing or creating additional green infrastructure as part of new development. Consequently it is important for the Council to work with partner organisations to deliver both landscape scale schemes as well as more localised projects, which both enhance the existing GI Network and increase the network across the District.

6.9 The definition of the Green Infrastructure Network has allowed opportunities to be identified which enhance and extend the network, including improving cross boundary linkages, which could be implemented during the plan period.

- Landscape and Countryside – e.g. Kent Orchards Project
- Habitats and Biodiversity - e.g. NWKCP Living Churchyards Project
- Cross Boundary Linkages – e.g. Extension of the Tonbridge to Penshurst Cycle Route
- Linkages within Sevenoaks District – e.g. Enhancement along the Darent Valley
- River Corridors and Areas of Open Water – e.g. Removal of Invasive Plant Species

Green Infrastructure and New Development

6.10 The provision of green infrastructure is a key aspect in delivering development of high quality. The use of landscaping and green spaces in development benefits the health and wellbeing of future occupants and allows new development to integrate with its surroundings. However GI provision goes beyond traditional site based landscaping, it requires development proposals to take into account not only the natural/semi natural features and biodiversity within a site (as sought by Policy EN1) but also links with the natural environment and its surroundings and where appropriate the wider character of the area (as sought by Policy EN1 and Core Strategy Policies SP10 and SP11).

6.11 The existing GI Network in the District is extensive and due to the extent of the Green Belt designation many GI features are already linked to each other by areas or corridors of undeveloped land, agricultural land, forestry or domestic gardens. Despite this it is important to give consideration to the possibilities for strengthening and enhancing these linkages particularly between wildlife corridors and open spaces within or connecting to urban areas.

6.12 Retaining existing features such as open space, trees and hedgerows, and historic features can help development to be more sensitively integrated into its surroundings and will allow the important links with the established GI Network to be maintained.

6.13 Incorporating existing features is also important for local biodiversity. Biodiversity is not confined to protected sites but occurs throughout rural and urban areas. New development, whether on previously developed or greenfield sites, provides opportunities

6. Green Infrastructure and Open Space

to create or restore areas of biodiversity. It is therefore expected that any GI associated with development will be based on the use of native or local species. Priority habitats and species for the District are set out in Kent Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and in Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA's).

6.14 It is also important that the GI within the site reinforces the character of the wider landscape. Key landscape features are identified in the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD and the AONB Management Plans. It is important not to underestimate the cumulative impact of smaller developments. The conservation and enhancement of key landscape features contributes to the GI Network and must be taken into account in all proposals.

6.15 GI also plays an important role in helping development adapt to climate change. Climate change is expected to cause increased winter rainfall and summer temperatures across the South East. GI can help reduce surface water runoff, provide natural shading, create important areas for species migration and help to regulate the temperature of buildings. Sustainable drainage systems should be included as part of on site green infrastructure to reduce the risk of surface water flooding. Any systems should have appropriate management arrangements.

6.16 GI can be incorporated into new development in a wide variety of ways. The nature and scale of the GI will depend on the type of development proposed and the existing character of the site and its surroundings. A range of GI should be explored in order to determine what is most appropriate for the site.

6.17 Examples include:

- Incorporating Living Roofs
- Use of sustainable drainage systems
- Connecting with existing PROW network
- Using plants and trees which extend existing habitats around site boundaries
- Using GI which reflects the special character of the landscape or Biodiversity Opportunity Area
- Formal and informal recreational GI (including the provision for children and young people where appropriate)

6.18 Occupiers of new development can increase the pressure on the GI Network particularly on open space and recreation facilities. The Council will require the provision of new or enhanced GI if development is proposed in areas where there is a deficiency in existing provision or in situations where the development itself would result in a deficiency in provision.

Policy GI 1 – Green Infrastructure and New Development

Proposals will be permitted where opportunities for provision of additional Green Infrastructure have been fully considered and would be provided where justified by the character of the area or the need for open space.

Any open spaces provided as part of new development should, wherever practical and appropriate, be located where they can provide a safe link for the population

and connectivity for biodiversity with the existing features of the Green Infrastructure Network.

Additional green infrastructure and habitat restoration and/or re-creation, should be provided in accordance with the appropriate guidance contained in the Kent Design Guide and the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD and should take account of the guidance within the AONB Management Plans and associated guidance where appropriate.

Delivery Mechanism:

The Kent Design Guide, the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment SPD and the AONB Management Plans provide further guidance on Green Infrastructure. As well as developers, KCC Countryside Access, the Countryside Management Partnerships, the AONB unit and Parish Councils will advise on, and coordinate implementation of, improvement opportunities.

Open Space

6.19 The term open space includes both public and private spaces and covers any open space which contributes to the character of the locality and is important to the local community. It can be amenity space and/or equipped play areas, sports pitches, allotments, burial land, parks and gardens, civic spaces, urban fringe or areas of water such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs. These open spaces are important for recreational uses but also as part of the Green Infrastructure network of the District.

6.20 Open space and associated leisure facilities perform a wide variety of important functions, as well as providing space for recreation. The Core Strategy recognises the importance of such facilities for health and well being and their value to the local community, including:

- community health benefits are increased by providing areas for outdoor leisure, both formal and informal, facilitation of greater social interaction and fostering local identity and ownership;
- economically, open spaces are beneficial as they improve the perception of the local area which can make for a more enjoyable working and leisure experience. Property values are also likely to be higher in the vicinity of an open space;
- natural and semi-natural open spaces can provide habitat and biodiversity corridors that help safeguard natural heritage, provide water stores to reduce the potential for flooding and 'green lungs' that play an active role in achieving carbon neutral development; and
- enhancing the character of developments by preserving local heritage features.

6. Green Infrastructure and Open Space

6.21 All types of open space across the District were surveyed in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study 2009 and Core Strategy Policy SP10 protects open space. The open spaces specifically protected by this policy are the larger sites of over 0.2ha and are defined on the accompanying policies map. Smaller areas are protected by Policy EN2 and Core Strategy Policies SP10 and SP11.

6.22 School playing fields are an important component of the Green Infrastructure Network and can provide for important habitats and ecological benefits to an area. In accordance with the NPPF (paragraph 74), playing fields and other forms of open space that could be of value to the local community should be protected from development unless it can be demonstrated that the land is surplus to requirement. The Council therefore considers that where school playing fields become available, in the first instance use for sport and recreation should be retained.

6.23 Development that is ancillary to the use of the site as a playing field, such as new changing rooms, may be permitted where it does not affect the quality or quantity of the pitches or their use, nor impact on the quality and extent of the Green Infrastructure Network.

6.24 The NPPF (paragraphs 76-77) supports the idea that local communities should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. Where appropriate, the District Council will support communities in designating Local Green Space via Neighbourhood Planning.

Policy GI 2 - Loss of Open Space

Change of use or redevelopment of Green Infrastructure, Open Space, Sport or Recreation sites within the urban confines of towns and villages, as defined on the policies map, and redundant school playing fields will not be permitted unless the applicant demonstrates that:

- the open space is surplus to requirements; and that there is no need for an appropriate alternative community, sports or recreational use, or
- the loss will be mitigated by equivalent replacement provision (in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility) or
- the development is for alternative sports/recreational use.

Supporting development will be permitted where it is appropriate and ancillary to the use of the site as a community playing field or sports pitch.

There should be no significant adverse impact on the character of the local environment and any potential loss of biodiversity interests should be mitigated.

Proposals for built development on redundant school playing fields in the Green Belt, other than for essential facilities for outside sport and recreation will be refused.

Delivery Mechanism:

See detailed open space allocation maps on the policies map.

Performance Indicators for Green Infrastructure and Open Spaces:

Change in the Green Infrastructure Network; *(CS Indicator)*

Protection of Open Space Allocations; *(To maintain the Open Space allocations) (CS Indicator)*

Development of school playing fields; *(No development of school playing fields contrary to policy or overturned at appeal)*

7. The Green Belt

7. The Green Belt

7.1 Sevenoaks District adjoins London and is predominantly rural in character with 93% of the District designated as Metropolitan Green Belt.

7.2 The general purposes of the Green Belt are stated in the NPPF:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

7.3 Sevenoaks District lies entirely within the Green Belt. The particular function of the Green Belt in Kent is to preserve the open countryside between the edge of Greater London and the urban areas of the Medway towns, Maidstone, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells.

7.4 The approved Green Belt in West Kent extends to about 12-15 miles from the built-up edge of Greater London. Within West Kent, the Green Belt has an important role in preserving the identity of the separate communities and in curbing urban pressures by restraining the growth of towns and other settlements.

7.5 The most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness and the NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to keep land permanently open. Once Green Belts have been defined, the use of land in them has a positive role to play in fulfilling the following objectives:

- to provide opportunities for access to open countryside for the urban population;
- to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas;
- to retain attractive landscapes and enhance landscapes, near to where people live;
- to improve damaged and derelict land around towns;
- to secure nature conservation interest; and
- to retain land in agricultural, forestry and related uses.

7.6 The Green Belt also plays an important role in encouraging regeneration within existing built confines and this is particularly relevant at settlements such as Sevenoaks, Swanley and New Ash Green within the Sevenoaks District. The Core Strategy provides further detail on these regeneration proposals.

Core Strategy

7.7 The Spatial Vision of the Core Strategy supports national guidance and sets out that Sevenoaks District will provide for future development requirements by making effective use of urban land within existing settlements, while protecting the environment. Further to this the Council's development requirements for housing, employment and other such development as set out in the Core Strategy are based on maintaining the extent of the existing Green Belt and not releasing any Green Belt land for development.

7.8 The detailed objectives of the Core Strategy include:

- To safeguard the countryside around the District's towns and villages and promote change within them by making the best use of previously developed land.
- To safeguard and maintain the openness of the Green Belt and the distinctive character and biodiversity of the District's landscapes, particularly in the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, whilst facilitating the economic and social well-being of these areas including the diversification of the rural economy by adopting a positive approach to small scale economic development proposals which re-use existing buildings.

Development in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document

To support the policies for development in the Green Belt, the Council has prepared a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide applicants with advice on the way the Council will consider applications and how best to prepare Green Belt schemes.

The following key areas are included within the SPD;

- Overview of Green Belt policy;
- Limited infilling in the Green Belt;
- Residential and non-residential development proposals;
- Previously developed brownfield site redevelopment;
- Agriculture and Forestry;
- Leisure, tourism and equestrian development;
- Change of use of Green Belt land;
- Design Guidance; and
- Very special circumstances.

Control Over Development

7.9 The NPPF states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this include:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
- limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan;
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development; or

7. The Green Belt

- local needs housing on rural exception sites in accordance with Core Strategy Policy SP4.

7.10 The following policies set out the approach which the District Council will take to specific forms of development in the Green Belt.

Limited Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt

7.11 It is reasonable for those living in the Green Belt to be able to extend their properties to some degree, to cater for changing family needs or to provide essential basic amenities where these are not available or are inadequate.

7.12 The NPPF (paragraph 89) states that the extension or alteration of a building in the Green Belt is not inappropriate development as long as the extension does not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. It is within this context that proposals for extensions and alterations to dwellings will be considered.

7.13 It is important to note that existing dwellings in the Green Belt are entitled to the same permitted development rights as dwellings elsewhere (provided permitted development rights have not been removed), and therefore the local planning authority cannot control all extensions or alterations to dwellings in the Green Belt. The Council will give consideration to the removal of permitted development rights when assessing proposals to extend a dwelling in the Green Belt.

7.14 Through previous Local Plans the Council has applied a policy that allows the extension of dwellings in the Green Belt by up to 50% over and above the gross floor area of the original building.

7.15 Whilst the approach is considered to be successful in principle, it is acknowledged that floorspace alone does not always fully reflect the impact of extensions on the size of the original building and that alterations can be made to a building that increase the floorspace without significantly affecting the size of the building. For example some loft conversions create extra floorspace accommodation in the roof space but do not involve significant change to the roof form. Conversely development can occur that adds significantly to the physical size of the building without affecting floorspace, for example a replacement roof that is much bulkier but does not include extra accommodation.

7.16 Taking these considerations into account the Council has revised its Green Belt policy approach to ensure that the principles that would determine the acceptability of a scheme are based on design and the impact on the form and appearance of the original building, volume and bulk increase and associated impact that development would have on the openness of the Green Belt.

7.17 In order to ensure consistency the Council will continue to apply the same 50% floorspace increase to extensions. Proposals that comply with the 50% rule will not necessarily be approved if the extension is poorly designed or overly intrusive in the Green Belt.

7.18 In view of the above, any proposals for extensions or alterations to dwellings in the Green Belt will be required to meet the criteria set out in Policy GB1. They should also comply with other relevant Development Management Policies.

7.19 For the purpose of Policy GB1 "Original" means the dwelling as existing on 1st July 1948 even if the original dwellings has since been replaced. If no dwelling existed on that date, then "original" means the dwelling as first built after 1st July 1948. Extensions will only be allowed under the policy where the dwelling proposed to be extended remains intact on site.

7.20 Unlike previous versions of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan, the floorspace of the "original" dwelling does not include some outbuildings. Policy GB3 sets out the approach to outbuildings and any proposals for some outbuildings within 5m of the existing dwelling will be treated as an extension under Policy GB1.

7.21 Where applicants seek to demonstrate that an extension in the Green Belt complies with Policy GB1, the planning application must include justification of how the proposal complies with criteria a) and b) together with detailed floor space calculations to provide evidence of compliance with criterion c).

Policy GB1 - Limited Extension to Dwellings in the Green Belt

Proposals to extend an existing dwelling within the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) the existing dwelling is lawful and permanent in nature; and
- b) the design responds to the original form and appearance of the building and the proposed volume of the extension, taking into consideration any previous extensions, is proportional and subservient to the 'original' dwelling and does not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion; and

If the proposal is considered acceptable when considered against criteria a) and b), the following criterion will then be assessed and must also be met for the proposal to be considered appropriate:

- c) the applicant provides clear evidence that the total floorspace of the proposal, together with any previous extensions, alterations and outbuildings would not result in an increase of more than 50% above the floorspace of the "original" dwelling (measured externally) including outbuildings within 5m of the existing dwelling.

Planning applications that include the conversion of loft space through the addition only of roof lights will be permitted and will not be subject to the floorspace allowance in criterion c), provided there is no increase in volume or bulk to the existing building as result of the proposal. Proposals for loft conversions that include the addition of dormer windows or other alterations that create volume or bulk will be subject to criterion c).

Delivery Mechanism:

The Green Belt SPD and Residential Extensions SPD provide further guidance on development in the Green Belt

7. The Green Belt

Basements in the Green Belt

7.22 The construction of dwellings in the Green Belt with basements would not generally result in overly intrusive, bulky or high dwellings, or impact on the openness of the Green Belt in terms of the physical presence, providing that the basements are located entirely underground, are not visible externally and are not artificially raised above natural ground level.

7.23 Single storey basements which are entirely underground will be permitted for new and replacement dwellings in the Green Belt, in addition to the 50% increase in floorspace for above-ground extensions permitted within Policies GB1 and GB4. However, such structures must not exceed the footprint of the original dwelling (based on the footprint of the original building as at 1st July 1948 or, when it was first constructed, if this is later).

7.24 In addition where a basement is acceptable, permitted development rights for extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt may be removed to prevent unreasonably large sized dwellings (by controlling their scale and appearance) and to prevent any potential negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Policy GB2 - Basements Within Residential Developments in the Green Belt

Proposals to extend or replace a dwelling in the Green Belt that includes the provision of a basement which would meet the following criteria will be permitted and will not be subject to the floorspace allowance as set out in Policies GB1 and GB4:

- a) the basement would not exceed the footprint of the original dwelling (based on the footprint of the original building as at 1st July 1948 or, when it was first constructed, if this is later);
- b) the basement would be situated entirely underground with no part of it visible at any point externally;
- c) there would be no external windows, entrances or exits to the basement;
- d) the extension or replacement dwelling would not be artificially raised above natural ground level to accommodate the extension; and
- e) the elements of the proposal situated above ground would comply with Policy GB1 (extension) or GB4 (replacement dwellings) in all other respects;

For basement proposals that do not comply with the above, the floorspace of the basement shall be included within the calculation for the purpose of Policy GB1 or GB4.

Delivery Mechanism:

The Green Belt SPD provides further guidance on development in the Green Belt

Residential Outbuildings in the Green Belt

7.25 In order to maintain the openness of the Green Belt, it is important to ensure that new ancillary domestic outbuildings, such as garages and sheds, are considered appropriately.

7.26 Clusters of buildings would have a more intrusive impact upon Green Belt openness and if the proposed outbuilding would be located within 5m of the existing dwelling, proposals for residential outbuildings will be treated as an extension under Policy GB1.

7.27 It is recognised that permitted development rights exist for certain outbuildings, therefore where planning permission is required for these structures in the Green Belt, and where the outbuildings are more than 5m from the existing dwelling, they will be permitted in addition to the allowance under Policy GB1 if the design and cumulative impact would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive bulk or visual intrusion.

7.28 The Council will seek to ensure that such proposals do not dominate the main dwelling or its setting, and do not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt. Such buildings should be clearly ancillary to the main dwelling in terms of function and design.

7.29 Where permission is granted for an outbuilding, a condition may be imposed, or legal agreement required, to ensure that outbuildings are retained for purposes ancillary to the main dwelling and to prevent their conversion without the approval of planning permission. Consideration will also be given to the need to remove permitted development rights.

Policy GB3 - Residential Outbuildings in the Green Belt

Proposals for residential outbuildings, within the curtilage of an existing dwelling in the Green Belt, will be treated as an extension under Policy GB1 if the proposed outbuilding would be located within 5m of the existing dwelling.

Outbuildings located more than 5m from the existing dwelling will be permitted where the building, including the cumulative impact of other outbuildings and extension within the curtilage of the dwelling, would be ancillary to the main dwelling in terms of function and design and would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive bulk or visual intrusion

Delivery Mechanism:

The Green Belt SPD provides further guidance on development in the Green Belt

7. The Green Belt

Replacement Dwellings in the Green Belt

7.30 The NPPF (paragraph 89) states that the replacement of an existing building in the Green Belt is not inappropriate development if it is within the same use and not materially larger than the building it replaces. Proposals for replacement dwellings in the Green Belt will be considered against Policy GB4 below.

7.31 In order to minimise the impact of new development, replacement dwellings should be sited on, or close to, the site of the original dwelling, unless an alternative siting would reduce the visual impact of the building on the openness of the Green Belt. In such circumstances, a condition or Section 106 Agreement will be required to ensure the demolition of the existing dwelling.

7.32 Some building operations can be carried out under permitted development rights. These can have a significant impact on the character of the plot and its setting, and adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore, consideration will be given to the removal of relevant permitted development rights when assessing proposals to replace a dwelling. Proposals for replacement dwellings in the Green Belt will be required to meet the criteria set out in terms of design and amenity as well as other relevant Development Management Policies.

7.33 To ensure consistency with Policy GB1 above, it is considered that the gross floor area of a replacement dwelling can be up to 50% greater than the floor area of the original dwelling. In order to avoid a cumulative increase in the size of dwellings being replaced, the baseline will be made to the gross floor area of the original dwelling that existed on the site.

7.34 For the purpose of Policy GB4, "Original" means the dwelling as existing on 1st July 1948 even if the original dwellings has since been replaced. If no dwelling existed on that date, then "original" means the dwelling as first built after 1st July 1948. Replacements will only be allowed under the policy where the dwelling proposed to be replaced remains fully intact on site.

7.35 Where applicants seek to demonstrate that a replacement dwelling in the Green Belt complies with Policy GB4, the planning application must include justification of how the proposal complies with criteria a), b) and c), together with detailed floor space calculations to provide evidence of compliance with criterion d).

Policy GB4 - Replacement Dwellings in the Green Belt

Proposals to replace an existing dwelling within the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) the existing dwelling is lawful and permanent in nature;
- b) the design and volume proposed does not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion;
- c) the proposal adheres to the "original" dwelling curtilage; and

d) the applicant provides clear evidence that the total floorspace of the replacement dwelling, together with any retained extensions, alterations and outbuildings would not result in an increase of more than 50% above the floorspace of the "original" dwelling (measured externally).

Construction of permanent dwellings as replacements for mobile homes or caravans will not be permitted.

Delivery Mechanism:

The Green Belt SPD provides further guidance on development in the Green Belt

Dwellings Permitted Under Very Special Circumstances or As Rural Exceptions

7.36 Policies GB1, GB2, GB3 and GB4 will not apply to dwellings permitted under Very Special Circumstances or as rural exception (local needs) affordable housing schemes.

7.37 Since the introduction of Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts and the subsequent publication of the NPPF opportunities exist to pursue development in the Green Belt based on Very Special Circumstances where proposals are contrary to policy. Where developments are or have been allowed under Very Special Circumstances they have been permitted in instances where development would not usually have been allowed, and as such it is reasonable that further extensions that would impact on the openness should be resisted. The Council will therefore remove permitted development rights for developments allowed under Very Special Circumstances and will refuse future proposals for extensions and outbuildings that impact on Green Belt openness.

7.38 In a parallel process, Core Strategy Policy SP4 and predecessor policies from earlier versions of the Local Plan, have allowed small scale affordable housing developments in the Green Belt where rural housing needs surveys have demonstrated a local need for affordable housing. As these developments are, or have been, allowed as exceptions to normal Green Belt policy, and as affordable units to be maintained in perpetuity, it is not reasonable to allow significant future extensions and additions. As with Very Special Circumstance dwellings, the Council will remove permitted development rights and refuse future proposals for extensions and outbuildings that impact upon Green Belt openness.

Policy GB5 - Dwellings Permitted under Very Special Circumstances or as Rural Exceptions in the Green Belt

Where new dwellings are permitted in the Green Belt on grounds of very special circumstances or as part of a rural exception scheme, the Council will remove permitted development rights for extensions and outbuildings to prevent future additions that cumulatively impact upon the openness of the Green Belt.

7. The Green Belt

Applications to extend dwellings or erect or extend outbuildings to dwellings that have or are permitted on grounds of very special circumstances, or as part of a rural exception scheme will not be permitted.

Delivery Mechanism:

The Green Belt SPD provides further guidance on development in the Green Belt

Mobile Homes in the Green Belt

7.39 The temporary stationing of a residential mobile home or caravan, may be viewed favourably in the context of providing essential accommodation for the operation of an agricultural or forestry holding. This will usually be where a period of residence is required to establish the commercial viability of an ongoing venture, prior to demonstrating a case for a permanent dwelling. Where planning permission is granted, conditions will be imposed restricting the period of stationing, and limiting occupation to persons and direct relatives specifically employed on the holding in question. At such time as the mobile home is no longer required for these purposes it should be removed.

7.40 Mobile homes or caravans may also provide temporary accommodation during the period of construction of a new or replacement dwelling. The Local Planning Authority recognises the need that can arise, and such proposals will be viewed sympathetically subject to environmental considerations. The onus however remains with the applicant to demonstrate a genuine need. Where planning permission is granted, conditions will be imposed limiting the stationing of the mobile home or caravan to the period of construction, and requiring removal on completion of the new dwelling.

Policy GB6 - Siting of Caravans and Mobile Homes in the Green Belt

Proposals for the temporary or permanent location of a mobile home or caravan in the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) it is for residential accommodation, associated with an agricultural or forestry activity with a proven need; and
- b) the siting is acceptable in terms of location, access, environmental and local amenity considerations.

Re-use of a Building in the Green Belt

7.41 Core Strategy Policy SP 8 states that the sustainable development of the District's economy will be supported by giving priority to business uses, or tourist facilities, in the conversion of buildings in the rural area.

7.42 Conversion of buildings that require substantial rebuilding in order to make them suitable for re-use will not be permitted. As a starting point when determining whether a proposal constitutes substantial new rebuilding, the Council will wish to see a substantial proportion of the original structure maintained to protect its character.

7.43 Conversions are accepted where they will have no greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt or harm the visual amenity of the area. To avoid increasing impact, conversions that involve disproportionate extensions will not be considered acceptable.

7.44 Where the proposed conversion relates to an agricultural building, the applicant should demonstrate that the building is no longer required for agricultural purposes. Where it is demonstrated and accepted that there is no longer an agricultural need for the building, the Council will not permit the future construction of new agricultural buildings of the same type and nature unless it is satisfied that circumstances have significantly changed that would warrant allowing the proposal.

Policy GB7 - Re-use of a Building within the Green Belt

Proposals for the re-use of a building in the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) the proposed new use, along with any associated use of land surrounding the building, will not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt or harm the existing character of the area; and
- b) the applicant can demonstrate through a detailed structural survey and method statement that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and are capable of conversion without major or complete re-construction that would detract from their original character.

Where a proposal seeks the re-use of an agricultural building constructed within the last 10 years, it will be necessary for the applicant to demonstrate that there is no longer an agricultural need for the building, or that the building is no longer fit for its agricultural purpose.

Where it is accepted that there is no future agricultural need for the building, the Council will resist future proposals for new agricultural buildings, unless it is apparent that they are of a different type and nature than that previously identified as being surplus to requirements.

Delivery Mechanisms:

The Green Belt SPD provides further guidance on development in the Green Belt

7. The Green Belt

Extension and Replacement of Non-residential Buildings in the Green Belt

7.45 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that the extension or alteration of a building in the Green Belt is not inappropriate development, as long as the extension does not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

7.46 Paragraph 89 also goes on to state that the replacement of an existing building in the Green Belt is not inappropriate development if it is within the same use and not materially larger than the building it replaces.

7.47 Since this approach applies to a much wider range of uses and scale of proposals, from the extension or replacement of a small workshop to that of a very large scale warehouse, the Council do not feel that it would be appropriate to include a floor space figure to guide what is acceptable.

7.48 Proposals for extensions and replacements to non-residential buildings in the Green Belt will therefore be considered against Policy GB8 below.

Policy GB8 - Limited Extension to Non-residential Buildings in the Green Belt

Proposals to extend an existing non-residential building within the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) the existing building is lawful and permanent in nature; and
- b) the design and volume of the proposed extension, taking into consideration the cumulative impact of any previous extensions, would be proportional and subservient to the 'original' building and would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion.

Policy GB9 - Replacement of a Non-residential Building in the Green Belt

Proposals to replace an existing non-residential building within the Green Belt which would meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) the existing building is lawful and permanent in nature;
- b) the design and volume of the proposed replacement building would not be materially larger than the 'original' building and would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion; and
- c) the replacement building would be within the same use as the building to be demolished

Delivery Mechanisms:

The Green Belt SPD provides further guidance on development in the Green Belt

Green Belt Boundary Review

7.49 The NPPF states that when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. It also states that once Green Belt boundaries are established they should only be altered in exceptional circumstances (paragraphs 83-84).

7.50 The Core Strategy established that Green Belt land was not required to meet the Council's development needs up to 2026. However, in line with paragraph 4.1.17 of the Core Strategy the Council has undertaken a detailed review of the District's Green Belt boundary and provided opportunity for land owners to promote examples of anomalies where it was felt that the land no longer contributed to Green Belt openness and where exceptional circumstances exist that would justify an amendment to the settlement boundary.

7.51 The Council considered all of the representations received during the consultation stage and concluded that there are three instances of sites demonstrating exceptional circumstances that warrant a minor amendment of the green belt boundary.

7.52 The Council is also responsible for the preparation of the Gypsy and Traveller Plan and there may be exceptional circumstances for allocating land in the Green Belt in order to meet part of the identified need.

Billings Hill Shaw, Hartley (Map 3)

7.53 The small parcel of land indicated on Map 3 overleaf is returned to the Green Belt. This area was previously included within the Green Belt, until the adoption of the 1994 Swanley Planning Area Local Plan, when it was removed, although there is no written justification for this amendment. Representations were made by the Parish Council in relation to the subsequent Local Plan in 2000, urging that the land at Billings Hill Shaw be included in the Green Belt. The Inspector commented at that time that the non-inclusion of the land in the Green Belt was an anomaly and that there was a clear case for its inclusion in the Green Belt to provide a rational and coherent boundary along the highways margin of Billings Hill Shaw. In the Inspector's view, the apparent error in the previously defined boundary (from 1994) provided justification for an amendment. Notwithstanding the Inspector's report, the Council maintained the existing boundary in the Local Plan (2000) but noted in the Plan that:

'the Council recognises the force of the Inspector's recommendation in respect of the land at Billings Hill Shaw. In particular the need to rectify two "apparent" (cartographical) errors made in 1984 and 1994 in the line of the Green Belt boundary. This would clearly incorporate this land within the Green Belt and re-establish the Hartley Village envelope at this point. The Council will, therefore, be proposing a change in the Green belt boundary to rectify this error at the earliest opportunity.'

7.54 The Council has reviewed the land in question, which is covered in trees and is clearly differentiated from the adjoining housing estate from which it is separated by a clearly defined boundary (Billings Hill Shaw Road). The site is subject to a Tree Preservation Order, and the continuous strip of trees extends onto the land to the west of the site. The area

7. The Green Belt

to the west of the site is included within the Green Belt, and the site in question is of similar character to this land. Its character is associated more closely with the surrounding countryside than the developed area. It is considered that the highways margin of Billings Hill Shaw provides a rational and coherent Green Belt boundary. These considerations, together with the comments of the previous Local Plan Inspector who recommended the site be included in the Green Belt and the Council's acceptance that the error would be rectified at the earliest opportunity, provide the exceptional circumstances to justify the amendment to the Green Belt in this location.

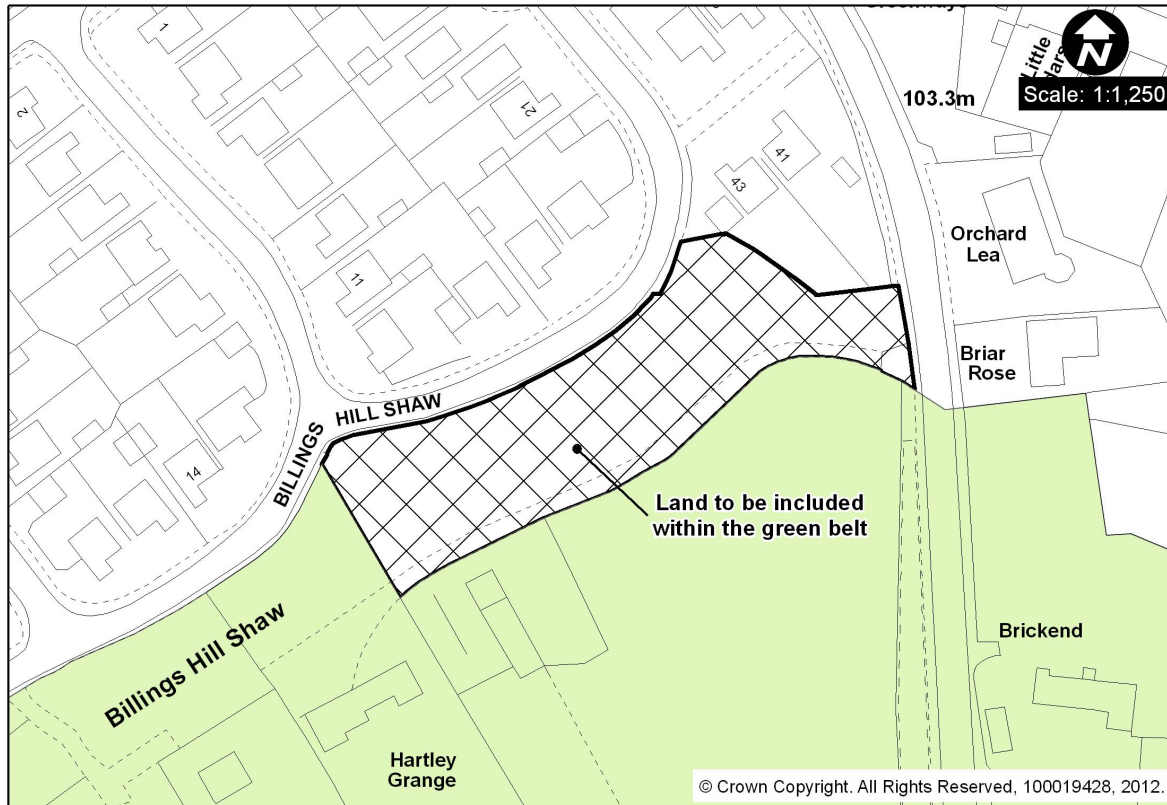
Warren Court, Halstead (Map 4)

7.55 Part of the previously developed Warren Court site is allocated as an employment site within the Green Belt in the adopted Local Plan. The developed site is currently occupied by a poor quality commercial development and new development would not have an adverse impact on the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt. The part of the previously developed site allocated for housing development is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt, to bring the area within the village envelope. Policy H1 proposes that part of previously developed site be reallocated for residential development and part be retained in the Green Belt as a buffer to Deerleap Wood and to contribute to the visual amenity of the Green Belt. The site abuts the village boundary and all these factors contribute to the exceptional circumstances that justify an amendment to the settlement boundary.

Land at College Road and Crawfords, Hextable (Map 5)

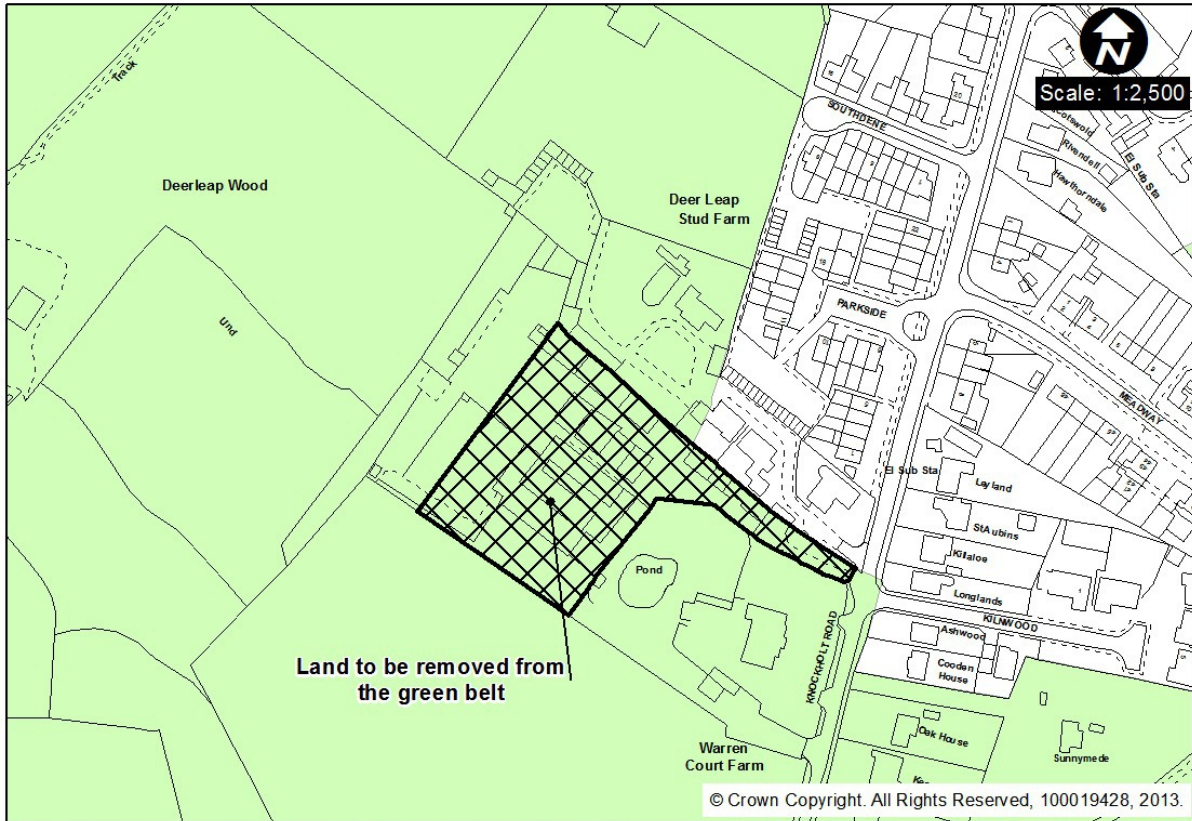
7.56 This site comprises a number of buildings clustered around a court yard which is used for car parking. The buildings are in active use including Parish Council offices, residential, workshops, community uses and storage. The buildings are permanent buildings and there has been new development on the site since the Green Belt was first designated in 1958. Most are single storey buildings with pitched roofs. The number, location and scale of the buildings mean that the site now has more of a built up character and its contribution to the openness of the green belt is diminished. The level of built development on the site, its location adjacent to the village envelope and the change in character of the site since the original Green Belt designation all contribute to the exceptional circumstances that justify an amendment to the settlement boundary and exclusion from the Green Belt.

Map 3 Area designated as Green Belt, Hartley

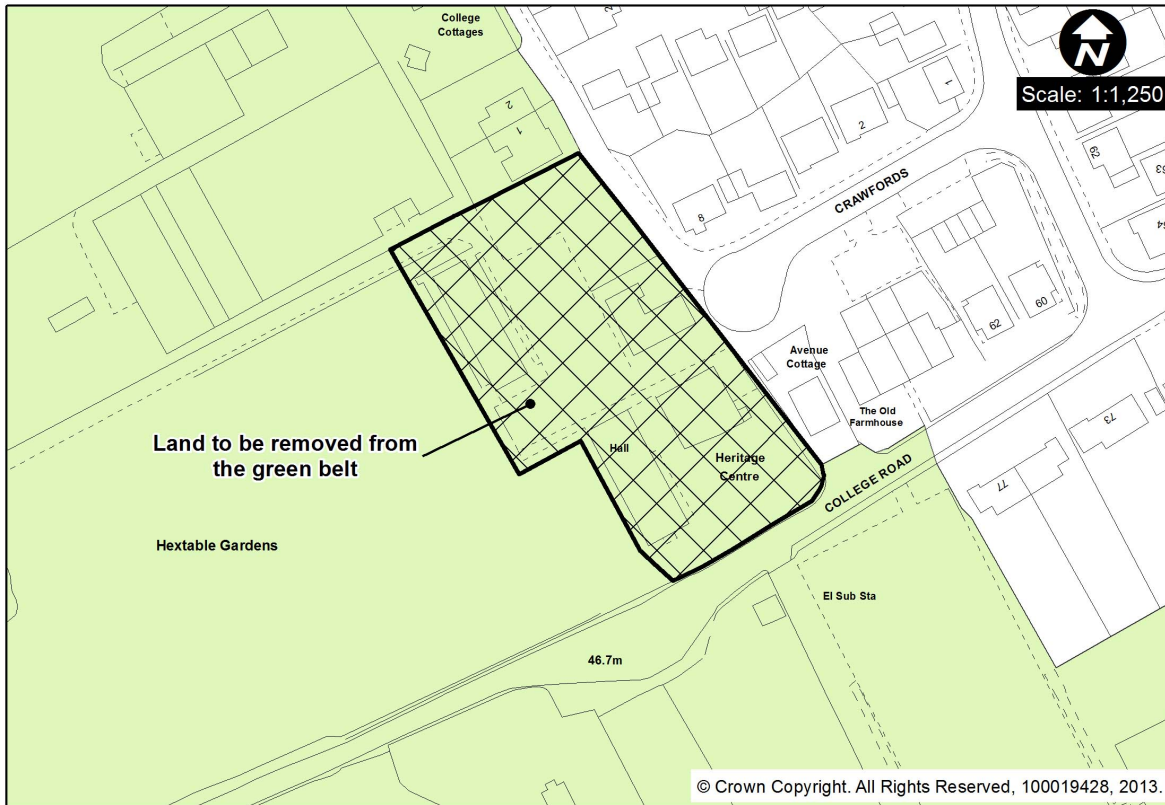


7. The Green Belt

Map 4 Area removed from the Green Belt, Halstead



Map 5 Area removed from the Green Belt, Hextable



7. The Green Belt

Policy GB10 - Green Belt Boundary

The Green Belt boundary will be maintained with the exception of small scale adjustments.

- a) Land at Billings Hill Shaw, Hartley, as defined in Map 3, is designated as Green Belt land
- b) Land at Warren Court, Halstead, as defined in Map 4, is removed from the Green Belt
- c) Land at College Road and Crawfords, Hextable, as defined in Map 5, is removed from the Green Belt

Performance Indicators for The Green Belt:

Proportion of additional employment floorspace in Urban Confines; *(90% of newly built employment (B use classes), excluding replacement buildings, to be within the Urban Confines during the plan period.**)*

Proportion of completed housing in Urban Confines; *(80% of housing units to be built within Urban Confines.***)*

Proportion of residential Green Belt applications overturned at appeal for:

- Extensions
- Basements
- Outbuildings
- Replacement dwellings;

(No refused proposals for extensions, basements, outbuildings or replacement dwellings overturned at appeal.)

Net additional caravan/mobile home units for agricultural and forestry workers in the Green Belt; *(No refused proposals for additional caravan/mobile home units for agricultural and forestry workers in the Green Belt overturned at appeal.)*

*** Since 2006, 1.4% of additional newly built (excluding replacements) employment (B use classes) floorspace built within the District was within the Green Belt.*

****Since 2006, 80% of net housing was built within the Urban Confines. Of the remaining 20%, 17% completed housing units were considered appropriate development within the Green Belt including rural exception sites, conversions of existing buildings and redevelopment of sites where there is no greater harm to the openness of the Green Belt.*

8. Leisure and Tourism

8.1 Sevenoaks District has a wide range of natural and cultural attractions throughout the area. They form the basis of the tourism industry that is vital to the local economy. The protection and enhancement of local natural and built assets will be encouraged, whilst promoting the continued responsible growth of the industry.

8.2 The existing Green Infrastructure network provides a range of access opportunities to the natural environment which is a valuable resource in its own right providing a range of activities for visitors. Activities to explore the unspoilt countryside, via the public rights of way network, exist in the form of cycling and walking and these will be encouraged. Any proposals which affect access the countryside should have regard to Policies GI1 and GI2.

8.3 The Council has adopted an Economic Development Action Plan, which sets out a range of initiatives to support the District's economy, include supporting the rural economy and tourism.

Core Strategy

8.4 Paragraph 5.4.10 of the Core Strategy states that there is scope for further tourist-related development in the District and the location policies give support to hotel development in Sevenoaks and Swanley and improved facilities for visitors in Edenbridge, together with small scale initiatives to support tourism in rural areas.

Tourist Accommodation and Attractions

8.5 The NPPF defines the main uses to which the town centre policies apply and include hotels as key town centre uses.

8.6 The NPPF also supports the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings. It states that support should be given to sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This includes supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres.

8.7 At a local level hotels and guest houses provide necessary serviced accommodation for visitors and business customers wishing to visit the District. To sustain the continued growth of the tourism industry in Sevenoaks District, the Council will seek to protect existing tourist accommodation and resist proposals to convert tourist accommodation, such as hotels, into non-tourism uses.

8.8 The impact of extensions to existing hotels and guest houses will need to be carefully considered, particularly with regard to residential amenity, under Policy EN2.

8.9 It is important to retain tourist accommodation and visitor attractions not least for economic benefit and it would be inappropriate to lose such facilities to other forms of development.

8. Leisure and Tourism

Policy LT1 - Tourist Accommodation and Visitor Attractions

The benefits to the local economy will be recognised in considering proposals for tourist accommodation or facilities.

Existing tourist accommodation and visitor attractions will be protected from conversion to non-tourism use unless it is demonstrated that the use is no longer viable or inappropriately sited.

Equestrian Development

8.10 Horse and other equestrian-related activities are popular forms of recreation in the countryside that can fit in well with farming activities, and help diversify the rural economy.

8.11 The Core Strategy acknowledges this and identifies horse riding as a significant recreational activity which can offer benefits to rural communities. The Council will support equine enterprises that maintain environmental quality and countryside character.

8.12 The NPPF (paragraph 81) states that once the Green Belt has been defined, its land use has a positive role to play in providing access to the open countryside for the urban population; and in providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation near urban areas. It allows for the construction of new buildings which provide essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with its purposes, e.g. small stables.

8.13 The NPPF (paragraph 109) sets out the Government's objectives for rural areas, which include the need to protect the most valued landscapes and environmental resources, as well as providing appropriate leisure opportunities that benefit rural businesses, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. The NPPF (paragraph 28) states that local authorities should support activities which contribute to the rural economy and/or promote recreation in, and the enjoyment of, the countryside. At the same time account needs to be taken of the need to protect natural resources and features of landscape value. The NPPF (paragraph 112) recognises that the presence of the best and most versatile agricultural land should be taken into account alongside other sustainability considerations, when determining planning applications.

8.14 Whilst Government guidance supports equestrian development, horse related activities such as stables and paddocks, both individually and cumulatively, can have a significant impact on the character of the area. These impacts require careful consideration. The scale of buildings is a principal consideration and for this reason new buildings for indoor equestrian centres may not be permitted in the Green Belt. A Supplementary Planning Document will be produced giving more detailed guidance on the issues and appropriateness of such development. It should also be noted that the welfare of the animals is an important factor and guidance on standards from the British Horse Society will be taken in to consideration in determining applications for horse related activities. Kent Downs AONB Unit's Managing Land for Horses, 2011, will also be taken into account in determining applications within the Kent Downs AONB where relevant.

Policy LT2 - Equestrian Development

Proposals for equestrian buildings, facilities and activities which would meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) buildings would be appropriate in scale to their setting and would be closely related to existing farm buildings or other groups of buildings that are well screened from public view;
- b) for proposals that involve new facilities for the keeping of horses, sufficient grazing land and off road riding areas would be available and would not harm the amenities of surrounding residents;
- c) the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment and sewage disposal, and
- d) the development would not result in harm to the character of the landscape or the ecological value of the area in which it is situated.

Proposals for equestrian development in the Green Belt will be permitted where the scale of the development is appropriate to a Green Belt setting, and where the cumulative impact of other buildings, does not harm the openness of the Green Belt.

Where stables or associated equestrian buildings are proposed they should be designed and constructed in materials appropriate to a rural area and should not be of a size and degree of permanence that they could be adapted for other use in the future.

The conversion of rural buildings to equestrian centres or stables would be acceptable

Delivery Mechanism:

The Equestrian Development SPD will provide further guidance.

Brands Hatch

8.15 Part 4.5 of the Core Strategy acknowledges that that Brands Hatch (as defined on the Policies Map) has become a centre, in the Green Belt, for sport and leisure activities based on the motor racing circuit.

8.16 Due to its location the countryside in this area must be conserved and the distinctive features that contribute to the special character of the landscape and its biodiversity will be protected and enhanced where possible. Notwithstanding, the Council is supportive of the role that Brands Hatch plays in the District's economy and in terms of attracting visitors into the District. Motor sport uses within the existing site extent defined on the Policies Map, will therefore be supported provided activity does not result in increased noise levels affecting adjoining residential properties. Proposals for new development in the vicinity of Brands Hatch will be assessed against Policy EN6 Noise Pollution.

8. Leisure and Tourism

8.17 Noise generating activities or development proposals which would involve over-intensification of urban uses in the Green Belt and/or loss of natural visual and aural screening will not be supported.

Policy LT3 - Brands Hatch

The Council is supportive of the role Brands Hatch plays in the District's economy and in attracting visitors to the District. The Council will permit proposals for outdoor sport, recreation and leisure activities in connection with, or ancillary to, the existing motor sport use at Brands Hatch as defined on the Policies Map.

The following criteria will apply to all proposals:

- a) the proposed development would not result in increased noise levels experienced by nearby residential properties;
- b) the character of the area, including trees and woodland would be retained and reinforced;
- c) the proposed development would be appropriate in scale and character to the existing uses or buildings and
- d) vehicular movements would be substantially confined to the existing access on the A20.

Performance Indicator for Leisure and Tourism:

Additional Hotel and Tourist Accommodation Units in Urban Confines and Green Belt; *(No net loss of hotel and tourist accommodation in the District)*

Additional Tourist attractions and facilities; *(No net loss of tourist attractions and facilities in the District)*

Number of equestrian related applications overturned at appeal; *(No refused equestrian related development overturned at appeal)*

Development at Brands Hatch; *(No refused proposals for development at Brands Hatch overturned at appeal)*

9. Community Facilities

Re-Use of Redundant School Buildings

9.1 While most schools will continue to be used for either primary or secondary education there may be some sites that will become vacant over the plan period.

9.2 The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should plan positively for the provision and integration of community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments (paragraph 70).

9.3 Whilst it is recognised that residential or commercial development of vacant school sites would attract much higher values, vacant school buildings and redundant playing fields could provide an opportunity to meet the shortfall for recreational or community uses as highlighted in the Council's Open Space and Leisure study, including facilities such as community centres (that could include buildings for religious purposes), allotments and health facilities.

9.4 The sites are generally located where there is good access to residential areas and public transport and could become the focus for local community facilities.

9.5 Where buildings or sites become available these should first be considered for community use. Only where there is no community need for the buildings or sites will other uses be considered.

9.6 Where it can be demonstrated that these facilities are not required, residential development will be permitted but should include affordable housing. The Sevenoaks area has an ageing population and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment indicates a need to provide housing including residential care homes or sheltered housing for this group of people. Well located former school sites may be suited to this form of residential development.

9.7 All new proposals for the re-development of school sites and buildings should also have regard to Policy GI2 with regards to the loss of school playing fields.

Policy CF1 - Re-use of Redundant School Buildings

Where school buildings become vacant or redundant and there is no requirement for an alternative educational use, priority should be given to reusing the buildings or site to address local need for community facilities.

Proposals for change of use or redevelopment for alternative non community uses will only be considered if it is demonstrated by the applicant that there is no identified community need that can be facilitated through the site, or that community facilities that meet the identified need are incorporated into a wider mixed use scheme. Alternative uses that may be acceptable in this instance, subject being located close to services, include residential care homes or sheltered housing.

9. Community Facilities

Loss of Local Services and Facilities

9.8 Community facilities provide for the health and wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. The provision of local community facilities, such as post offices, banks, public houses, schools, surgeries, churches, community facilities, and public transport, help to build sustainable communities by supporting the local economy and/or providing day-to-day facilities in locations where there is less need for people to travel by car.

9.9 Core Strategy Policy L07 seeks to retain local services and facilities within rural settlements, where possible, to maintain the sustainability of these settlements. Policy CF2 of this document extends this approach to services and facilities serving local neighbourhoods within Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge to ensure that the communities within these towns continue to have reasonable access to services that meet their day-to-day needs. Policy CF2 does not apply within Sevenoaks, Swanley or Edenbridge town centres, where separate policies apply. Alongside community facilities, the policy will apply to retail units that are considered to be meeting a local need outside the town and neighbourhood centres.

9.10 Community Right to Buy, which was introduced in the Localism Act, will give communities new powers to help them buy local facilities threatened with closure, which might offer communities an alternative option to retain community facilities.

Policy CF2 - Loss of Local Services and Facilities

The loss of local services and facilities that are within Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge urban areas will be resisted where they are serving a local need. Exceptions will be made where equivalent replacement facilities equally accessible to the population served are provided, or where it is demonstrated, through evidence submitted to the Council, that the continued operation of the service or facility is no longer financially viable

Performance Indicators for Sustainable Communities and Development Principles:

Changes in Settlement Hierarchy services and facilities score for individual settlements; *(No loss of services and facilities that serve the local community within rural settlements) CS Indicator*

Development of redundant school buildings; *(No development of redundant school buildings where the applicant was not able to show that alternative community uses were not previously considered.)*

10. Travel and Transport

10.1 A Transport Strategy for Sevenoaks District has been prepared by Kent County Council, which informs the LDF process. The Strategy proposes measures to address key transport issues that arise as a result of future development proposals across the District.

10.2 The key transport issues for the District are considered to be:

- Congestion around Sevenoaks Town Centre and Swanley;
- Heavy dependency on rail for commuting, particularly to London leading to growing need and further improvements to services;
- Major gaps in the current bus network between New Ash Green and Sevenoaks and poor access to the south of the District;
- There is high car ownership;
- Provision for cycling is generally low throughout the District;
- Rural areas have a dispersed population with a reliance on the car;
- Community transport is currently provided and its importance will increase as the currently ageing population will increase its reliance on those facilities as they no longer have access to a car;
- Parking problems exist around commuter stations and in town centres;
- Air quality management areas are increasing and will require traffic management to assist and mitigate.

10.3 Government policy is to promote more sustainable transport choices, to improve access to major trip generators by non-motorised modes, and to reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

Core Strategy Objective

- To ensure that new development takes account of the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change including principles of sustainable development, which include locating development to minimise energy use, promoting travel patterns that reduce the need to travel by car, and encouraging sustainable construction including measures to reduce energy consumption and promote the use of renewable energy.

10.4 Although the potential for using public transport and non-recreational walking and cycling is more limited in small rural settlements within the Sevenoaks District, the same overall policy approach is required. In addition, in recognition of increasingly sedentary lifestyles, the health impacts of travel, and the health benefits from walking and cycling, national policy initiatives seek to improve health through encouraging use of walking and cycling which are sustainable modes.

10.5 Responsibility for transport is generally shared between central government and its agencies and Kent County Council. However, the District Council also has planning responsibilities, which can have important transport implications. For example, by ensuring development takes place in locations that are accessible by a range of modes of transport, the District Council can promote more sustainable travel patterns by reducing reliance on the private car.

10. Travel and Transport

Mitigating Travel Impact

10.6 It is important that all development mitigates its transport impact. 'Major development' proposals or development proposals with 'significant transport implications' will be required to produce a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan. In determining whether or not a transport assessment is required, the Council will have regard to Kent County Council's 'Transport Assessments and Travel Plans' (2008), or any subsequent replacement, and guidance from KCC as local highway authority.

10.7 An assessment of transport implications in a Transport Statement should be submitted alongside all other development proposals where there is considered to be a transport impact to enable the applicant to demonstrate to the Council that they have properly considered the transport impact of the proposal and taken into account how to mitigate them. The level of detail will vary according to the scale and complexity of the application. Guidance on when a Transport Statement should be carried out and what it should contain has been prepared by the Department of Transport. Planning permission will be refused where appropriate mitigation cannot be achieved.

Policy T1 - Mitigating Travel Impact

New developments will be required to mitigate any adverse travel impacts, including their impact on congestion and safety, environmental impact, such as noise and tranquillity, pollution and impact on amenity and health. This may mean ensuring adequate provision is made for integrated and improved transport infrastructure or other appropriate mitigation measures, through direct improvements and/or developer contributions.

Vehicle Parking

10.8 Car parking standards will ensure that new developments provide adequate off-street parking to accommodate the needs they generate and to protect surrounding areas and development. Developers will be required to provide car parking spaces in accordance with the relevant standards.

10.9 Current vehicle parking standards for residential developments applied in Sevenoaks District are set out in KCC's Interim Guidance Note 3 (IGN3) to the Kent Design Guide. These standards set maxima standards in town centre and edge of centre locations and minima standards in suburban area and villages (see Appendix 2). For non-residential standards, the District Council rely on advice from Kent County Council, as the local transport authority. This advice should take into account national policy on parking, including encouraging sustainable modes of transport and maintaining road safety. Maximum standards in former Supplementary Planning Guidance 4 (SPG4) to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan provide a starting point for this advice.

10.10 The residential standards in IGN3 and some of the standards in SPG4 cover the space needs of residents, visitors, employees and customers, but do not provide for the space requirements of vehicles which deliver and collect goods. Consequently, in addition

to the requirements set out in these standards, sufficient space will also be required within the site to allow for the parking and manoeuvring of such vehicles.

10.11 Insufficient parking associated with new development can lead to inappropriate parking on streets and verges creating highway safety problems and unsightly environments. A flexible approach is therefore required to reflect the availability of non-car alternatives and the proximity of key services, shops and jobs. Generally, development will only be permitted where it is in accordance with KCC's current Parking Standards. The District Council will encourage KCC to keep parking standards under review as the evidence base behind them continues to develop.

Policy T2 - Vehicle Parking

Vehicle parking provision, including cycle parking, in new residential developments should be made in accordance with the current KCC vehicle parking standards in Interim Guidance Note 3 to the Kent Design Guide (or any subsequent replacement). (See Appendix 2).

Vehicle parking provision, including cycle parking, in new non-residential developments should be made in accordance with advice by Kent County Council as Local Highway Authority or until such time as non-residential standards are adopted.

Notwithstanding this the Council may depart from established maxima or minima standards in order to:

- a) take account of specific local circumstances that may require a higher or lower level of parking provision, 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) ensure 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) account for the existing parking provision (whether provided on or off-site) already attributed to the building's existing use when a redevelopment or change of use is proposed and for the use of existing public car parks outside of normal working/trading hours by restaurants and leisure uses.

Provision of Electrical Vehicle Charging Points

10.12 The Core Strategy identifies that Sevenoaks District has high average CO₂ emissions and energy consumption levels, therefore new development should take account of the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change and ensure development contributes to an improvement in the District's air quality.

10. Travel and Transport

10.13 To do this the Council will encourage the shift to low emission electrical vehicles by promoting charging points in appropriate locations throughout the District. The Council will seek provision in places where they will be well-used and will not interfere with the safe movement of traffic.

10.14 It is expected that charging technology will advance rapidly over the next 10-20 years as the use of electric vehicles increases, however there is some uncertainty as to whether alternative technologies will develop and therefore this policy will be kept under regular review. To take into account the uncertainty regarding the future of electric vehicles the policy takes a flexible approach that allows it to respond to this technological evolution or decline, with the initial emphasis on determining suitable locations and developments for public charging points rather than setting rigid standards.

10.15 The Council will seek the inclusion of public vehicle charging points within suitable major development schemes in line with the criteria contained in Policy T3. Due to charging times, the most suitable locations are likely to be within developments in town centres, employment areas, tourist and leisure locations and any others that attract visitors for a substantial period of time.

10.16 Where under Policy T3 it is concluded that a public point is not appropriate, it would still be advisable to design the development to accommodate such provision at a later date if there is sufficient demand, for example by incorporating appropriate ducting and electrical supply capacity to avoid expensive retrofitting.

10.17 Whilst public vehicle charging points will not be suitable in all commercial development, the Council recognises that the majority of existing electric vehicle charging takes place overnight at home. Therefore all new houses with a garage or vehicular accesses should include an electrical socket with suitable voltage and wiring for the safe charging of electric vehicles. Where possible schemes for new apartments and sites with separate parking areas should include a scheme for at least one communal charging point.

Policy T3 - Provision of Electrical Vehicle Charging Points

For all major non-residential development proposals the applicant should set out within their Transport Assessment a scheme for the inclusion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

In considering whether a publicly accessible charging point is appropriate the Council will have regard to:

- a) the accessibility of the location;
- b) the suitability of the site as a long stay destination during charging;
- c) the number of existing and proposed publicly accessible charging points in the surrounding area;
- d) the potential impact of providing electric vehicle charging points on development viability.

Within new residential developments all new houses with a garage or vehicular accesses should include an electrical socket with suitable voltage and wiring for the safe charging of electric vehicles.

Schemes for new apartments and houses with separate parking areas should include a scheme for at least one communal charging point.

In non-residential developments where it is not appropriate to provide electric vehicle charging points, new development should be designed to include the electrical infrastructure in order to minimise the cost and disturbance of retrofitting at a later date.

Performance Indicator for Travel and Transport:

Number of developments which include publicly assessable electric vehicle charging points. *(A net increase in electric vehicle charging points over the plan period)*

Number of developments with adopted Travel Plans; *(CS Indicator)*

Number of developments which depart from Vehicle Parking Guidance Note; *(No developments permitted which depart from Vehicle Parking Guidance Note)*

Glossary

This Glossary has status only as a guide to planning terminology used in this document and should not be used as a source for statutory definitions. All definitions have been produced by Sevenoaks District Council unless referenced otherwise.

Affordable housing

Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

The Environment Act 1995 requires local councils to regularly assess the air quality in their area to see if any of the key pollutants in the National Air Quality Strategy are likely to exceed the targets currently set. In locations where this is likely to happen and where the public are exposed to the pollution, the Council is required to designate an 'Air Quality Management Area'.

Ancient Monument

Section 61(12) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 defines an ancient monument as 'any scheduled monument' and 'any other monument which in the opinion of the Secretary of State is of public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest attaching to it.'

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)

A report prepared by local planning authorities assessing progress with and the effectiveness of a Local Plan.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

An area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Together with National Parks, AONB represent the nation's finest landscapes. AONB are designated by the Natural England.

Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA)

Regional priority areas of opportunity for restoration and creation of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats areas of greatest potential for restoration and creation. They are areas of opportunity, not constraint. The BOAs are designated by the South East England Biodiversity Forum.

BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method)

BREEAM is the world's most widely used environmental assessment method for buildings. BREEAM assesses buildings against a set criteria and provides an overall score which will fall within a band providing either a; PASS, GOOD, VERY GOOD, EXCELLENT or OUTSTANDING rating.

Climate Change Adaptation

Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. Various types of adaptation can be distinguished, including anticipatory, autonomous and planned adaptation.

Code for Sustainable Homes

The Code measures the sustainability of a new home against nine categories of sustainable design, rating the 'whole home' as a complete package. The Code uses a 1 to 6 star rating system to communicate the overall sustainability performance of a new home. The Code sets minimum standards for energy and water use at each level.

Conservation Areas

Areas of special architectural or historical interest, where development should preserve and enhance their special character and qualities. These areas are designated by the Local Planning Authority under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which gives them statutory recognition and protection.

Core Strategy

The Local Plan core strategy is the spatial vision for what a local authority wants to achieve. It contains a set of strategic policies that are required to deliver the vision including the broad approach to the quantity and location of development.

Development Plan Documents (DPD)

The documents that a local planning authority must prepare (to make up its Local Plans), and which have to be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination. Should include the following elements

- Core Strategy
- Site specific allocations of land and development management policies
- Policies Map (with inset maps, where necessary).

Green Belt

A designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas, which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped

Green Corridors

Strips of land or water including river and canal banks, cycle ways and rights of way which connect areas of green infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

Green Infrastructure goes beyond traditional site based landscaping. It requires an assessment of both the natural/semi natural features and biodiversity within the site, and further its links with the natural environment of its surroundings and where appropriate the wider character of the area.

The provision of Green Infrastructure can include :

- Incorporating Living Roofs
- Connecting with existing PROW network
- Using plants and trees which extend existing native habitats around site boundaries
- The provision Formal and informal recreational spaces (including the provision for children and young people where appropriate)

Green Infrastructure Network (GI Network)

The following areas can form part of networks of green infrastructure:

- Parks and gardens - including urban parks, country parks and formal gardens.
- Natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces - including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons and meadows), wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (e.g. cliffs, quarries and pits).
- Green corridors - including river and canal banks, cycleways, and rights of way
- Outdoor sports facilities (with natural surfaces, either publicly or privately owned) including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas.
- Amenity greenspace (most commonly, but not exclusively, in housing areas) - including informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens.
- Provision for children and teenagers - including play areas, outdoor basketball hoops, and other more informal areas (e.g. 'hanging out' areas, teenage shelters).
- Allotments, community gardens, and city (urban) farms.
- Cemeteries and churchyards.
- Accessible countryside in urban fringe areas.
- River and canal corridors.
- Green roofs and walls.

Gypsies and Travellers

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.

Housing Trajectory

Local Planning Authorities are required to prepare a housing trajectory. This provides a position statement comparing past performance on housing supply with anticipated future rates of housing development. The trajectory is updated each year as part of the Authority Monitoring Report.

Infrastructure

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

Listed Building

A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II* or II with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building, and any buildings or permanent structures (e.g. wells within its curtilage). Designated by English Heritage.

Living Roofs

Roofs which consist of organic materials and which can be capable of supporting biodiversity.

Local Plan

The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan. The term includes old policies which have been saved under the 2004 Act.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

The LDS sets out the programme for preparing the Local Plan.

Local Wildlife Site

Local wildlife sites, previously known as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs), are sites which are important to nature conservation interests in a local context. They are designated by the Kent Wildlife Trust.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

This web-based guidance has replaced and consolidated a number of planning guidance documents and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) to produce a concise guide. The resource has been produced to be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The role of the NPPG is to inform local authorities, organisations and individuals of the planning system and the processes that are involved in plan-making and planning applications. Further information on the NPPG can be found at <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>.

Permitted Development

A national grant of planning permission which allow certain building works and changes of use to be undertaken, without having to make a planning application. Permitted development rights are subject to conditions and limitations to control impact and to protect local amenity i.e. limited to size, height, time limitations for works to be carried out, landscape constraints etc. These rights are set out in the Town and Country Planning

(General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). Further information can be found at <http://www.legislation.co.uk> and <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>.

Registered Parks and Gardens

A park or garden of special historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II. Designated by English Heritage.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment - from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce carbon emissions. Renewable and low-carbon energy supplies include, but not exclusively, those from biomass and energy crops; CHP/CCHP (and micro-CHP); energy-from-waste; ground source heating and cooling; hydro; solar thermal and photovoltaic generation; wind generation.

Settlement Hierarchy

The arrangement of settlements within a given area in order of importance.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A site identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (e.g. plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out the processes to be used by the local authority in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all local development documents and development control decisions. It is an essential part of the Local Plan.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

This assessment provides an overview of the methodology, assumptions, uncertainties, tasks undertaken and the links to the wider sustainability appraisal process. It provides policy recommendations and guidance for the application of the Sequential Test, the preparation of flood risk assessments and the use of sustainable drainage systems, within the Council's administrative boundary.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment should:

- Assess the likely level of housing that could be provided if unimplemented planning permissions were brought into development.
- Assess land availability by identifying buildings or areas of land (including previously developed land and Greenfield) that have development potential for housing, including within mixed use developments.
- Assess the potential level of housing that can be provided on identified land.

- Where appropriate, evaluate past trends in windfall land coming forward for development and estimate the likely future implementation rate.
- Identify constraints that might make a particular site unavailable and/or unviable for development.
- Identify sustainability issues and physical constraints that might make a site unsuitable for development.
- Identify what action could be taken to overcome constraints on particular sites.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

A Strategic Housing Market Assessment should:

- Estimate housing need and demand in terms of affordable and market housing.
- Determine how the distribution of need and demand varies across the plan area, for example, as between the urban and rural areas.
- Consider future demographic trends and identify the accommodation requirements of specific groups such as, homeless households, Black and Minority Ethnic groups, first time buyers, disabled people, older people, Gypsies and Travellers and occupational groups such as key workers, students and operational defence personnel.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

SPDs provide further guidance regarding how Local Plan policies should be implemented.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

Assessment of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the Local Plan.

Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)

An alternative approach from the traditional ways of managing runoff from buildings and hardstanding. They can reduce the total amount, flow and rate of surface water that runs directly to rivers through stormwater systems.

Use Class Order

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. In many cases involving similar types of use, a change of use of a building or land does not need planning permission. Planning permission is not needed when both the present and proposed uses fall within the same 'class', or if the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order says that a change of class is permitted to another specified class. Full details of the different use classes can be found on <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>

Windfall Site

A site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan. Most "windfalls" are referred to in a housing context. They tend to be very small sites for one or a small number of homes.

The publication is available in large print and can be explained in other languages by calling 01732 227000

For information or to purchase additional copies of this publication please contact the Planning Policy Team.

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