



SEVENOAKS DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

REGULATION 18
CONSULTATION

2025





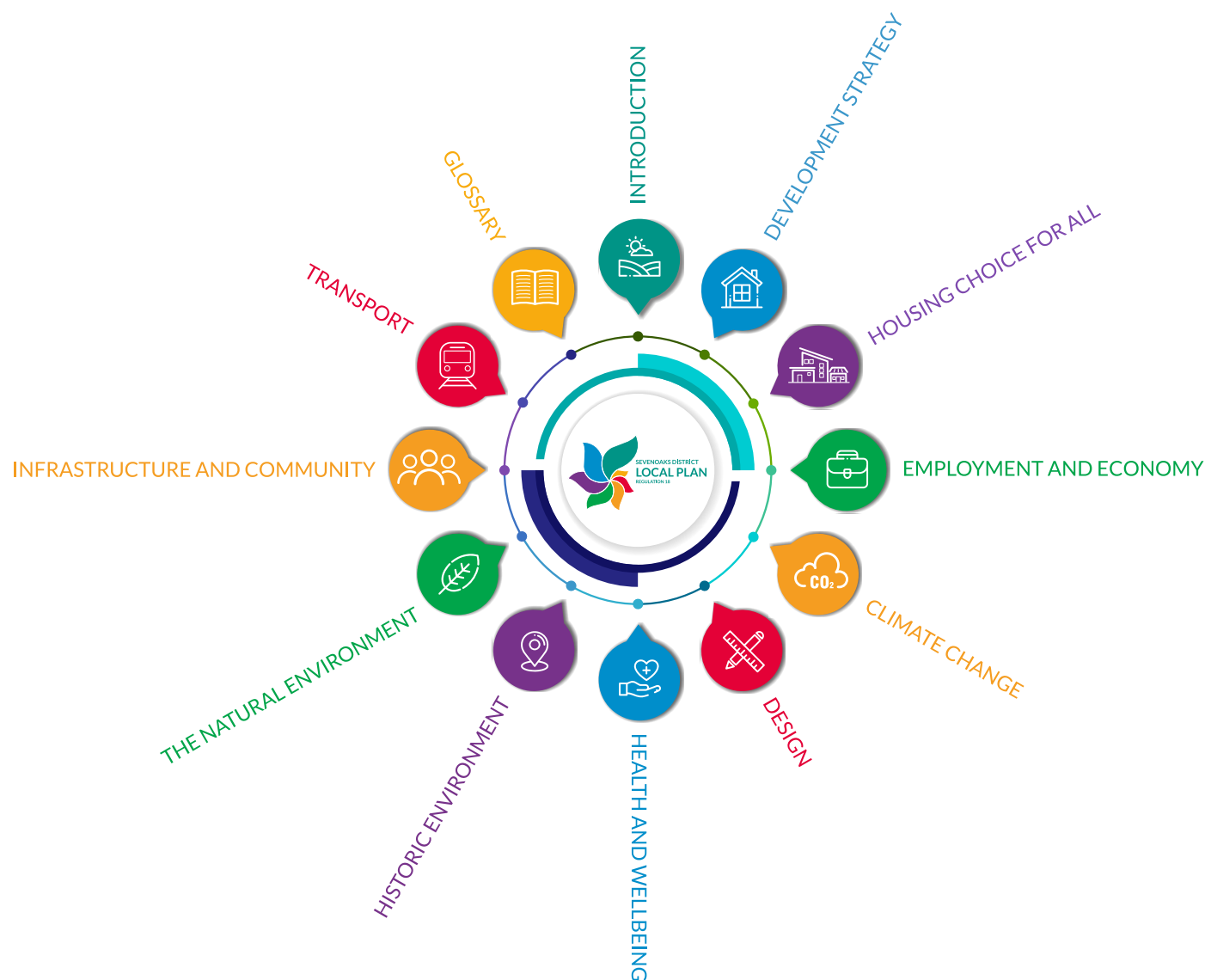
SEVENOAKS DISTRICT **LOCAL PLAN**

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2025

Sevenoaks District Local Plan

Our plan is split into the following key topics:



Sevenoaks District Local Plan – Regulation 18 Consultation 2025

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Foreword

I am very pleased to introduce this Regulation 18 consultation on the emerging Sevenoaks District Local Plan. This document sets out the policies and proposals that will guide development across our District over the next fifteen years, shaping the places where we live, work, and enjoy our natural environment.

At its core, the Plan is driven by a clear and ambitious vision, underpinned by three key principles:

- Delivering strategic infrastructure to support planned growth
- Creating healthy, inclusive communities
- Achieving design excellence in all new development

The Plan responds to the current and future needs of our communities. It seeks to deliver much-needed new homes—including affordable housing—while promoting health and wellbeing, protecting the character of our towns and villages, and safeguarding the overwhelming majority of our Green Belt. Where development is proposed, it will be of high quality, sensitive to its surroundings, and designed to minimise environmental impact.

We are also committed to supporting a strong and resilient local economy. The Plan includes policies to maintain vibrant high streets, encourage investment, and ensure the continued delivery of essential infrastructure.

However, we face a significant challenge.

Government has set a housing requirement of 17,175 new homes between 2027 and 2042. With 93% of the District designated as Green Belt—the third highest proportion in England—and over 60% recognised as National Landscape, we have had to carefully consider a limited number of Green Belt sites. These are located close to existing settlements, transport links, and services, and include areas of ‘grey belt’ land that may already be developed.

The policies in this Plan are based on robust evidence and have been shaped through collaboration with infrastructure providers, statutory bodies, and other key stakeholders. Alongside strategic proposals, the Plan includes a range of criteria-based policies to manage development and protect our natural and built environment.

We are running a series of pop-up events throughout the consultation period and I strongly encourage you to take part. Your feedback is vital in helping us shape a Local Plan that reflects the aspirations and priorities of our communities.

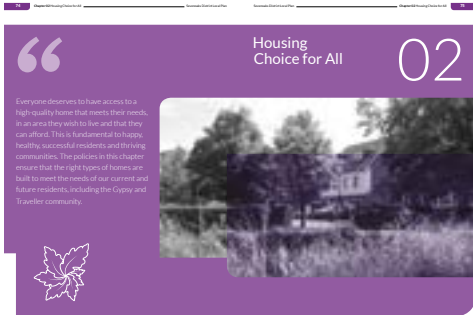
Foreword from

Councillor Nigel Williams

Development and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder

October 2025

How to use this document



Chapter Divider

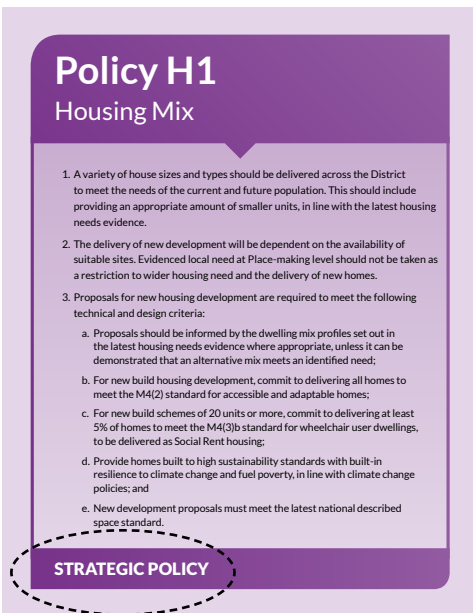
The document is split into 10 Chapters covering the key issues and topics for the Local Plan.

Strategic Objectives

- OB8: Deliver market and affordable homes to reflect the latest information on housing needs.
- OB9: Optimise the supply of new homes in existing settlements.
- OB10: Ensure new housing development makes best and most efficient use of land.

Strategic Objectives

Each topic chapter sets out to meet at least one Strategic Objective and the relevant objectives are identified at the start of each chapter. The objectives reflect the key Vision and how this will be achieved.



Policy Table

Policies are identified throughout each Chapter, which set out how our Local Plan objectives and vision can be addressed, both strategically and through Development Management. Strategic Policy pages feature a full-page tinted background, with a “Strategic Policy” label at the bottom of the table.

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The Sevenoaks District Local Plan explains how the Council intends to meet its development needs and protect the environment within the District up to 2042. The document focuses on the opportunities for new homes, employment spaces and infrastructure provision within and around existing settlements. We are keen to receive your views on the proposed policies and allocations and hope that you will take the opportunity to submit your views.



Introduction

00





How to Comment

The Sevenoaks District Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation period runs from 12:00am on Thursday 23 October 2025 until 11:59pm on Thursday 11 December 2025.

Copies of the supporting documentation can be viewed online at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/emerginglocalplan. Comments can be submitted via our online survey, on the Sevenoaks District Council website, using the link above.

Online responses are preferred, however, where you are unable to respond online a PDF version of the survey can be downloaded and printed from the consultation page on our website.

Alternatively, paper forms can be collected from the following locations during normal opening hours:

- Sevenoaks District Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1HG
- Your local Town or Parish Council
- Any library within the Sevenoaks District

Completed paper forms should be sent by post to the Strategic Planning Team at Sevenoaks District Council using the address above.

Comments should be received no later than 11:59pm on Thursday 11 December 2025.

The Purpose of the Consultation

This Local Plan is issued for consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Our initial Local Plan consultation ran from 16 November 2022 – 11 January 2023 and focused on making the best and most efficient use of land in towns and settlements across the District, reflecting the strategy for meeting development needs, as explained in Chapter 01.

Our second Regulation 18 consultation ran from 23 November 2023 – 11 January 2024 considered land across the District, adjacent to our urban areas, and seeks comments on our proposed policies and site allocations. Alongside proposed allocations, additional potential sites are included in order to gather further information from our local communities, as well as statutory consultees, such as highways and infrastructure providers.

This third Regulation 18 consultation focuses on the updates to policies in light of the new policy and guidance published by Government, the implications they have on us as a District and how we intend to address the changes.

The consultation questions relate to specific policies, but there is an opportunity to provide additional information or comments at the end of the consultation.

The document includes both strategic and non-strategic policies, as is indicated on the list of policies.

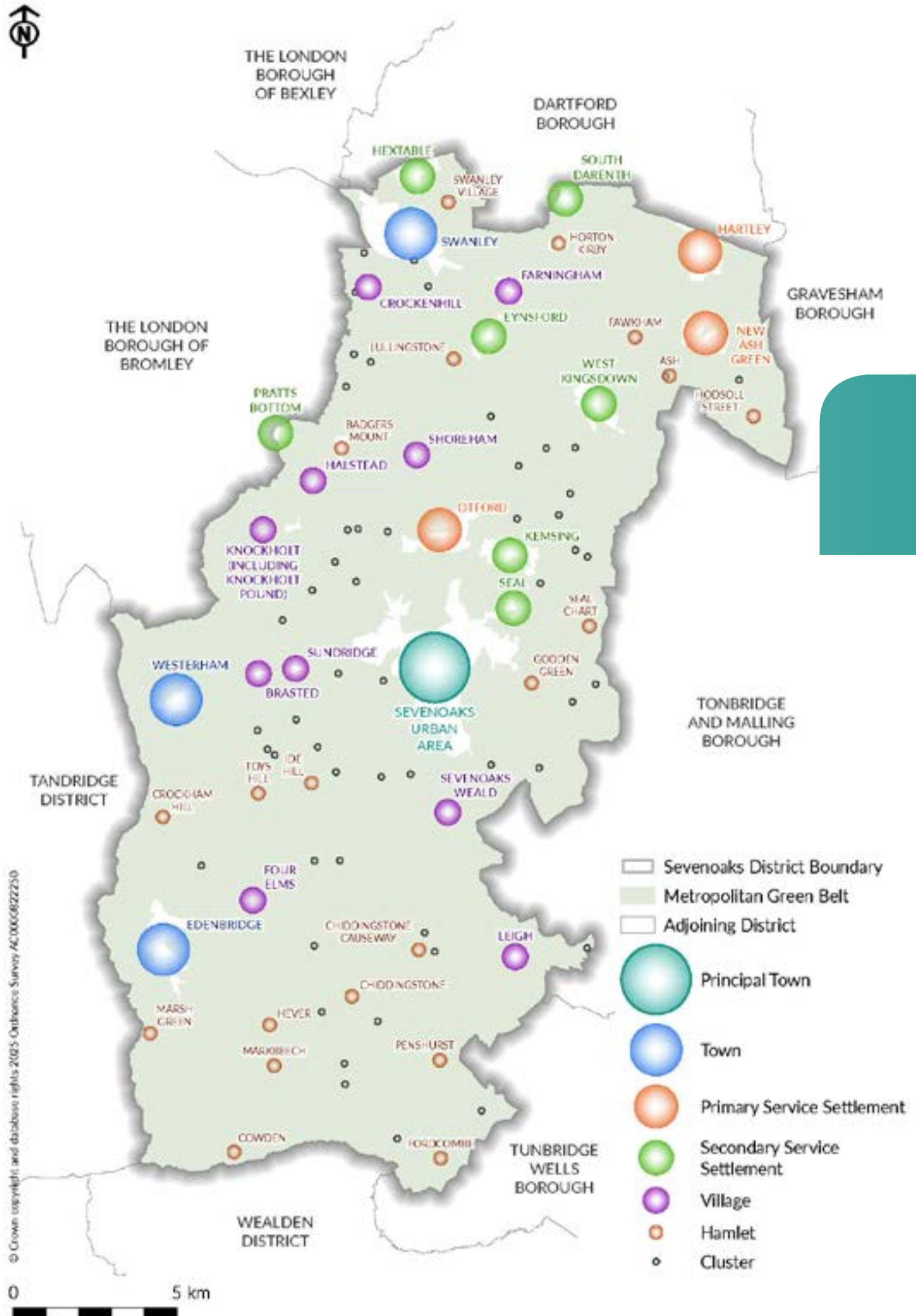


Figure 0.1: Distribution of Settlements and Neighbouring Authorities

What is the District Like?

Sevenoaks District is located in West Kent, with the edge of Greater London to the north-west, Surrey to the west and East Sussex to the south.

The District has eight Neighbouring Authorities; London Borough of Bexley, London Borough of Bromley, Dartford, Gravesham, Tandridge, Tonbridge & Malling, Tunbridge Wells and Wealden.

Sevenoaks District covers approximately 143 square miles and has a population of 121,262 (2023 ONS Data).

There are a total of 97 settlements in Sevenoaks District, as set out in the District's updated Settlement Hierarchy (October 2025).

This includes the Principal Town of Sevenoaks Urban Area, the Towns of Swanley, Edenbridge and Westerham and many smaller settlements, with the largest being our Primary Service Settlements Hartley, Otford and New Ash Green.



Figure 0.2: Regional Context





Demographics

The population of the District is expected to grow, and the structure of the population expected to change, over the Plan period, due to an ageing population, an increase in birth rate and internal migration patterns (largely due to people moving out of London into Sevenoaks). 28% of the District's population are currently aged 60 and over, with this figure expected to increase to 30.9% in 2032*. The median age of residents within the District, as of 2023, is 44.6 (ONS Data) with a steady rise from the 2011 median age of 43.3 (ONS Data). This growing population and changing age structure presents a key challenge for the District.

There are areas of affluence in the District, as well as pockets of deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. The IMD uses information about income, employment, health, education, crime and living environment to rank every small area in England from 1 (most deprived) to 32,844 (least deprived). According to the IMD, Sevenoaks District is the second least deprived local authority in Kent, behind Tunbridge Wells Borough, although there are areas that are within the 30% most deprived in the country, namely Swanley St Mary's and Swanley White Oak.

Sevenoaks District has generally high house prices. In 2025, the median house price in the District is £536,000, this is up 7.7% from the previous year, making it around 15.8 times the average annual income of the District. This makes it very difficult for first time buyers and young families to remain in the District. There is a requirement to provide 17,235 new homes over the plan period, including a buffer for flexibility in delivery, in order to meet the needs of the growing population. This includes a high proportion of affordable homes and specialist accommodation for older people.

The District has the lowest level of unemployment in Kent. The residents of the District are generally well qualified with only 7.9% of the population having no academic qualifications. There are a number of employment areas within the District, including at Vestry Estate in Northern Sevenoaks and in Swanley. The majority of residents work in the West Kent area, with more than 40% working in Greater London. The District also has a strong rural economy, and many residents work from home, but issues with connectivity and broadband are common.

* 2022-based population projections, ONS





Landscape and Setting

The District has a high quality landscape with a mostly rural character. 60% of the District lies within the Kent Downs or High Weald National Landscapes.

There are many areas of woodland, much of which is designated as Ancient Woodland. Parts of the District afford impressive views over Kent and the south east, particularly from the North Downs and the Greensand Ridge. The District is also rich in biodiversity with many Wildlife Reserves, designated areas as well as the Rivers Darent, Eden and Medway.

There are many historic settlements in the District, as is reflected in the high number of Conservation Areas and listed buildings. The District boasts many nationally recognised heritage assets including the historic estates of:

- Knole;
- Chartwell;
- Hever Castle;
- Penshurst Place; and
- Lullingstone Castle.

Other places of interest include the National Trust village at Chiddingstone, Eynsford Castle ruin, Lullingstone Roman Villa, Otford Palace and Toys Hill (the birthplace of the National Trust).

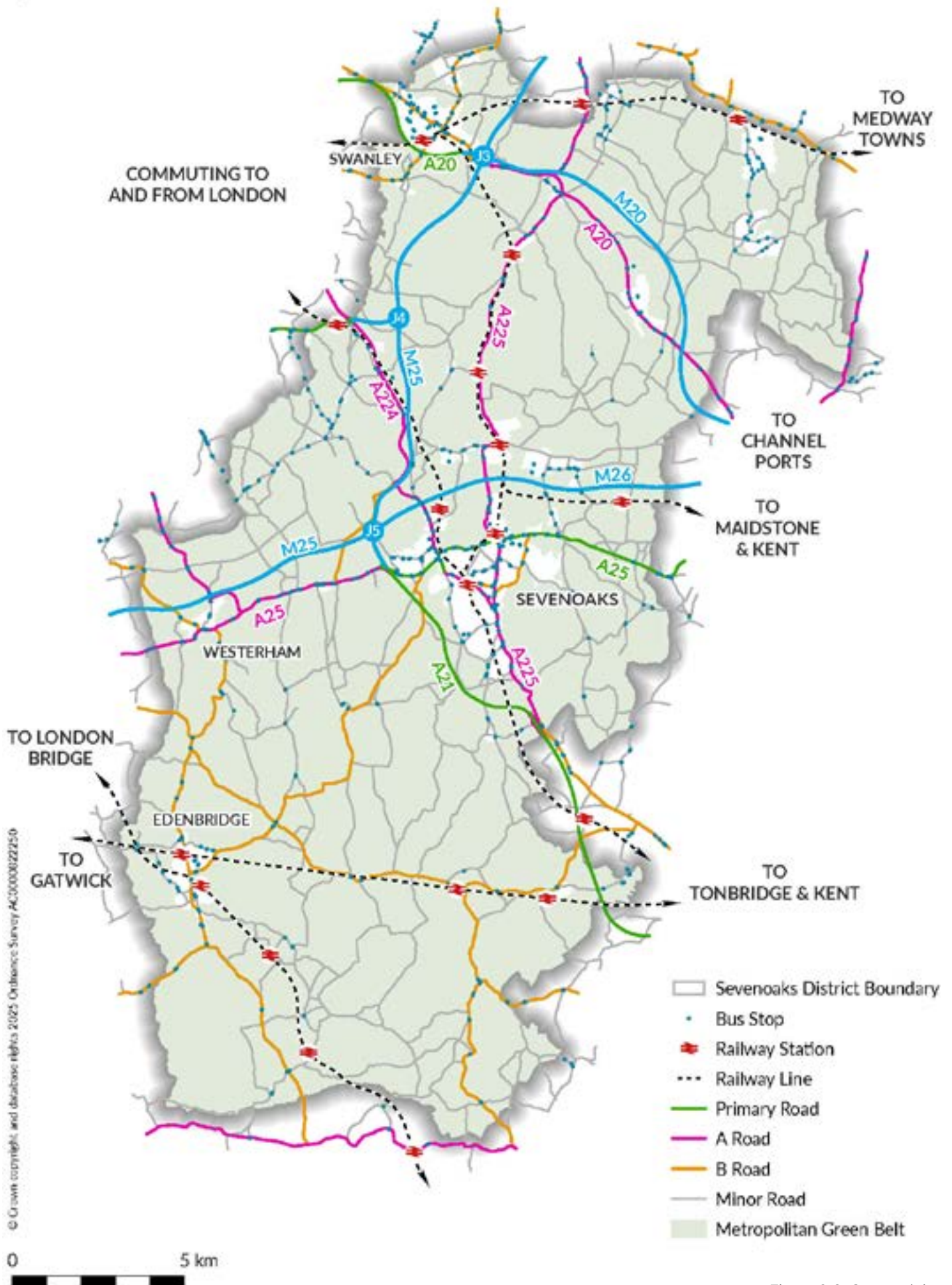


Figure 0.3: Connectivity

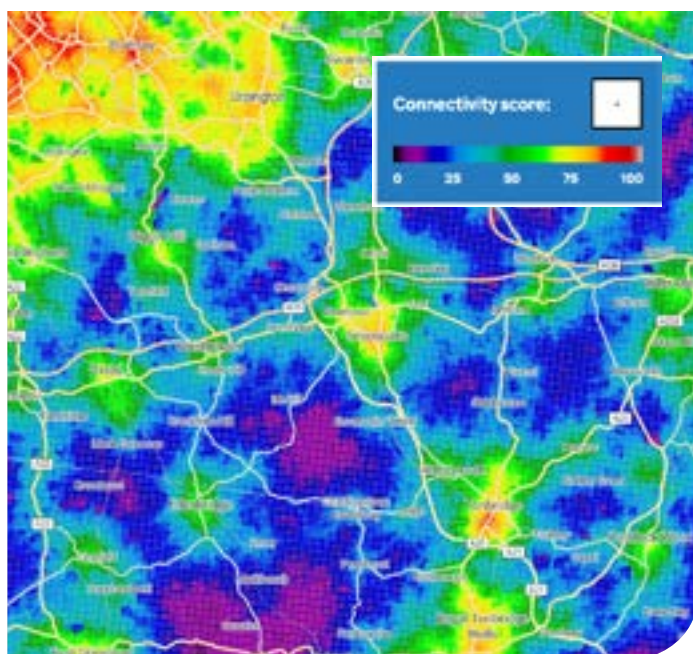


Connectivity

Sevenoaks District is a popular place to live, partly because of its proximity to London and accessibility to Europe. Strong road connections are provided by the strategic road network providing good links to the wider region.

There are 14 train stations within the District, as well as others located just beyond the District border, many of which provide services into Central London in under an hour. The District is also well located for Gatwick and Heathrow airports, as well as the Channel Ports, Ashford and Ebbsfleet International stations.

Central Government have recently launched into beta a new service called the Connectivity Tool. The service allows us to review our District split up into small tiles with each one given a specific Connectivity score from 0 to 100. The score is determined by a multitude of factors such as road networks, proximity to larger settlements, presence of walking routes etc. The visual below showcases the District as a whole and the corresponding scores.



Central Government's Connectivity Tool allows us to review our District Connectivity score.

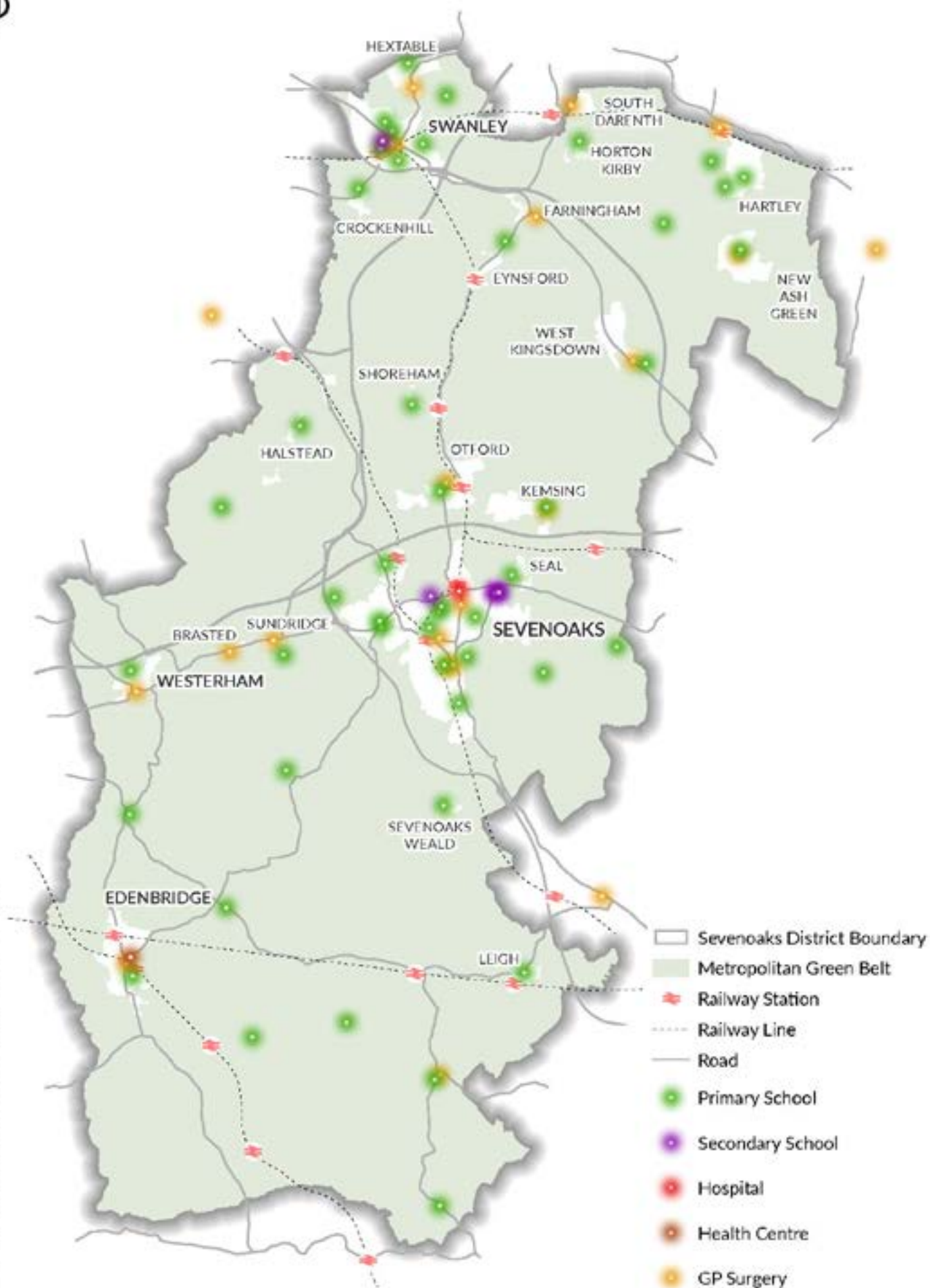


Figure 0.4: Doctors Surgeries, Hospitals, Primary and Secondary Schools in the District



Healthcare, Education and Retail

We want to ensure that the District is a safe place for all to live, work and travel, while encouraging healthy lifestyles and providing people with access to good quality healthcare. There are two minor injury hospitals: Sevenoaks Hospital and the new Edenbridge Memorial Health Centre, as well as 18 doctors surgeries.

There are no major medical facilities within the District for residents, who have to travel out of District to Tunbridge Wells Hospital, the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) (Orpington), Queen Mary's Hospital (Sidcup), Darent Valley Hospital (Dartford), Maidstone Hospital and London hospitals.

Education within the District is varied with a mixture of state and private, primary and secondary provision. Whilst there are 43 primary schools, there are only three state secondary schools and two annexes within the District:

- Knole Academy
- Orchards Academy
- Trinity School
- Weald of Kent Grammar School Sevenoaks Annex and
- Tunbridge Wells Boys Grammar School Sevenoaks Annex.

Many children are being sent outside of the District, or privately, for their secondary education.

The District has vibrant town centres with many independent shops and a good retail offering. There is, however, some strong competition from nearby areas including Tunbridge Wells, Bromley and Bluewater. Some areas are in need of regeneration, including Swanley Town Centre and New Ash Green Village Centre. Areas outside of the towns are served by local services and facilities within villages. These services are of great value to local communities and contribute to the District's rural economy.

Strategic Issues

The Council thinks that following issues and considerations will be influential in shaping spatial development in Sevenoaks District over the period of the Plan. They have informed the development of the Spatial Vision, that underpins the objectives and all strategic policies.

11. Promoting healthy communities:

The global pandemic has reinforced the importance of spatial planning in maintaining public health. Policies should provide scope to deliver health infrastructure and promote positive physical and mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

12. Tackling the challenge of climate change:

The impact of climate change will be a significant and pressing challenge for all of us over the period of this Local Plan. The objectives and strategic policies support the Council's corporate agenda, to reduce carbon emissions.

13. Delivering design excellence:

High quality design is central to the delivery of the strategic objectives in this Plan. It lies at the heart of maintaining local character and more fundamentally, delivering places and spaces that function in a manner that is consistent with our planning policies.

14. Supporting the delivery of strategic infrastructure:

The Local Plan must provide mechanisms to deliver the necessary infrastructure to support planned growth.



In addition, the following three elements of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) are central themes throughout this Plan:

15. Homes to meet local needs:

Sevenoaks District remains an expensive place to live and many residents continue to struggle to find a home to meet their needs. Delivering genuinely affordable homes remains a key priority for the Council.

16. Agile and competitive economy and resilient town centres:

Many of the existing trends, such as online shopping and home working, that have shaped our local economy, have accelerated over recent years. Policies in the Plan must provide a response to these issues alongside other Council strategies, to ensure our economy remains strong and resilient to change.

17. Protecting the natural and historic environment:

Natural resources and heritage assets remain key aspects of the District-wide character and continue to be valued by local residents. The emerging Local Plan will pursue a character-led approach to growth that protects these aspects.

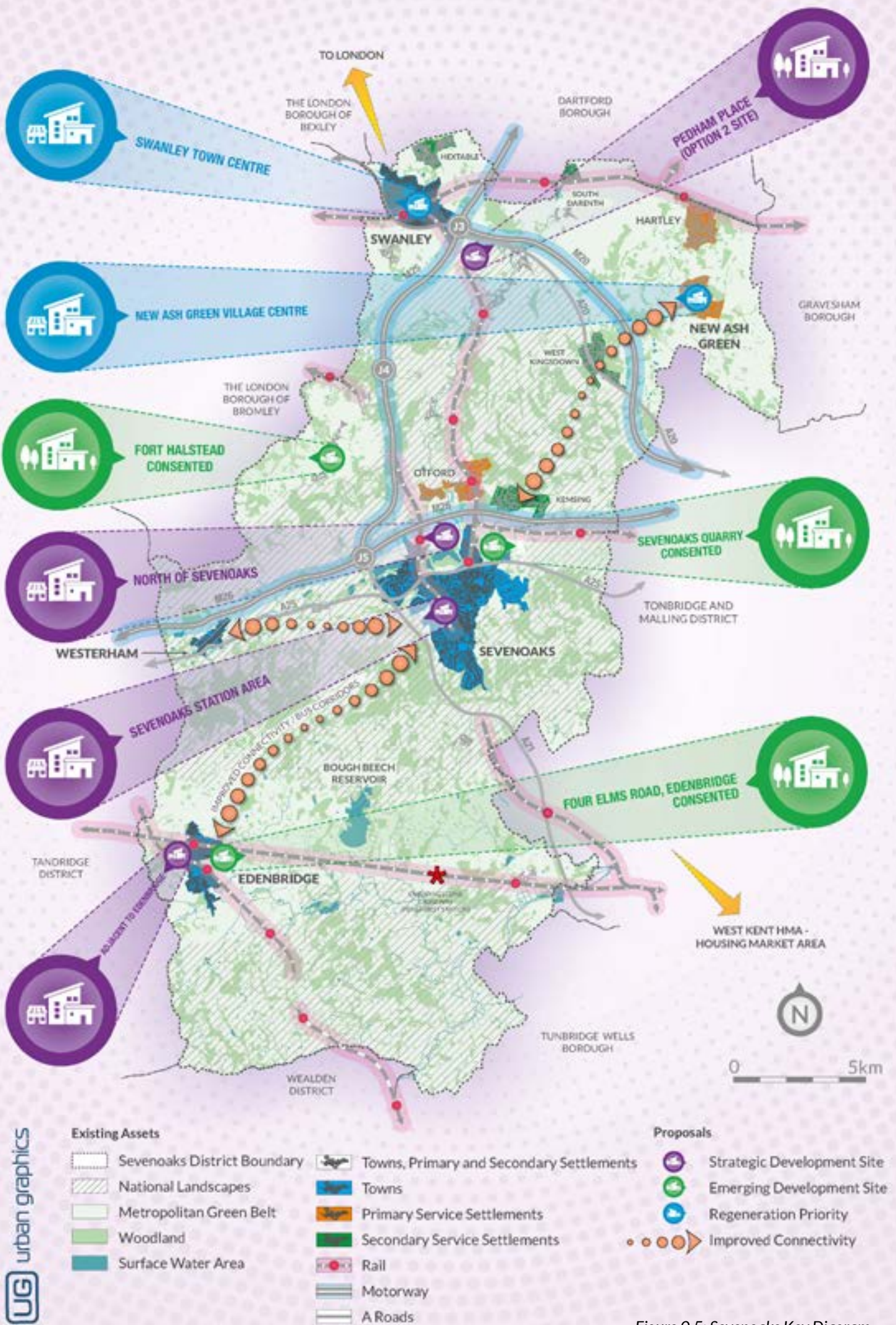


Figure 0.5: Sevenoaks Key Diagram

Vision & Objectives

The Spatial Vision is vitally important in that it is both a starting point for all aspects of the Plan and a statement of how the District will look at the end of the Local Plan period, if strategic objectives are successfully delivered. The Vision has been informed by evidence that supports this Local Plan and also reflects the Council's wider objectives on matters such as Climate Change and Health and Wellbeing.

Key aspects of the Spatial Vision will be:

v1. Promoting healthy communities:

Incorporating green space and healthy design principles, to encourage good physical and mental health. Recognition of health as a principle that cuts across all policies in the Plan.

v2. Tackling the challenge of climate change:

Minimising carbon emissions and adapting to a changing climate.

v3. Delivering design excellence - in our built environment that responds to our distinctive local character and creates the heritage of the future:

Demanding well-designed spaces that deliver exceptional places to live, work and relax, provide innovative ways to support mental and physical wellbeing.

v4. Supporting the delivery of strategic infrastructure:

To meet the needs of all residents, businesses and visitors we want to deliver sustainable, high quality and resilient infrastructure. This will include a sustainable movement network, high quality open spaces that offer health, wellbeing and social benefits, excellent education, health and sports facilities close to where people live, and appropriate investment in robust utilities and digital infrastructure.

v5. Homes to meet local needs:

Boosting the supply of homes including much needed affordable homes across the District.

v6. Agile and competitive economy and resilient town centres:

Through vital and viable, unique and flexible town centres, capitalising on the strategic location of the District and its functional economic links. Ensuring the delivery of the right type of employment space and supporting the rural economy and tourism are equally important in encouraging economic competitiveness.

v7. Protecting the natural and historic environment::

Our District's valuable natural and historic built environment makes an important contribution to the quality of life of our residents and all who visit.

Table 1

Vision and Objectives

VISION	OBJECTIVES
v1. Promoting healthy communities: Incorporating green space and healthy design principles, to encourage good physical and mental health. Recognition of health as a principle that cuts across all policies in the Plan.	WE WILL: OB1: Recognise the link between the places and spaces that we live in and the quality of residents' mental and physical health. OB2: Work closely with healthcare providers to develop policies that promote good physical and mental health as an outcome.
v2. Tackling the challenge of climate change: Minimising carbon emissions and adapting to a changing climate.	WE WILL: OB3: Ensure that tackling the challenges of climate change strongly influences development taking place in the District. OB4: Provide sufficient flexibility in policies to implement changing national standards, best practice and evidence base updates that will inevitably occur over the Local Plan period. OB5: Empower residents to make lifestyle choices that positively contribute to minimising carbon emissions.
v3. Delivering design excellence - in our built environment that responds to our distinctive local character and creates the heritage of the future: Demanding well-designed spaces that deliver exceptional places to live, work and relax, provide innovative ways to support mental and physical wellbeing.	WE WILL: OB6: Deliver a character-led approach to development that demonstrates the Government's priorities for well-designed places. (National Design Guide, 2021: The Ten Characteristics of Place). OB7: Require the production of design codes for new development that meet the provisions of national planning guidance.
v4. Supporting the delivery of strategic infrastructure: To meet the needs of all residents, businesses and visitors we want to deliver a sustainable movement network, provide high quality open spaces that offer health, wellbeing and social benefits, deliver excellent education, health and sports facilities close to where people live, and ensure appropriate investment in robust utilities and digital infrastructure.	WE WILL: OB8: Work with stakeholders to address barriers that prevent residents from making sustainable transport choices. OB9: Support equal access to public transport services for all residents. OB10: Co-ordinate the delivery of necessary infrastructure to support planned growth.

VISION	OBJECTIVES
v5. Homes to meet local needs: Boosting the supply of homes including much needed affordable homes across the District.	WE WILL: OB11: Deliver market and affordable homes to reflect the latest information on housing needs. OB12: Optimise the supply of new homes in existing settlements. OB13: Ensure new housing development makes best and most efficient use of land.
v6. Agile and competitive economy and resilient town centres: Through vital and viable, unique and flexible town centres, capitalising on the strategic location of the District and its functional economic links. Ensuring the delivery of the right type of employment space and supporting the rural economy are equally important in encouraging economic competitiveness.	WE WILL: OB14: Promote resilient and agile town centres that are able to respond to change. OB15: Support the delivery of new employment land which meets the needs of a modern economy. OB16: Safeguard and optimise the use of existing employment land. OB17: Support the diversification of the rural economy. OB18: Grow the tourism sector with a particular focus on providing more visitor accommodation.
v7. Protecting the natural and historic environment: Our District's valuable natural and historic built environment makes an important contribution to the quality of life of our residents and all who visit.	WE WILL: OB19: Ensure the District retains a high quality natural environment over the period of the Local Plan including delivering biodiversity net gain on new development. OB20: Continue to support development that protects and enhances the District's historic environment and ensures that it can be enjoyed by future generations.

“

This Plan will deliver the new homes that our communities need, the right type of employment spaces and vibrant high streets to ensure a healthy economy and new infrastructure to support growth, whilst protecting the natural environment and our built heritage. This development strategy seeks to achieve these goals.



Development Strategy

01





New homes are required for a growing population and must be delivered if the District is to remain a vibrant place to live and economically competitive.

Development Strategy

01

Sevenoaks District is subject to numerous social, economic and environmental pressures that define our complex and often competing development needs. New homes are required for a growing population and new employment space must be delivered if the District is to remain economically competitive. Supporting infrastructure is essential, if planned growth is to be truly sustainable. The need to protect our green and natural spaces for current and future populations, has also never been greater. The proposed development strategy within this chapter provides a framework to meet these needs.







- 1.1** This development strategy and the Plan as a whole responds to and aligns with national planning policy, to promote sustainable development across the District. In accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development (NPPF para. 11 a-b), this Local Plan aims to positively plan for the development needs of the District, including housing, infrastructure, employment and retail, it aims to protect and improve the environment and respond to climate change. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with NPPF Chapter 3 (Plan-making), to provide a clear, deliverable, evidenced-based plan, as a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.
- 1.2.** This Local Plan focuses on delivering the Council's Spatial Vision to 2042, which complies with the NPPF requirement that plans should cover at least a 15-year timeframe from adoption. It is informed by an up-to-date evidence base and focuses on meeting the overarching objective of national planning policy and guidance to bring forward sustainable development.
- 1.3** Once adopted, the Plan will have primacy in planning decisions. This means the Council will be required to determine planning applications in accordance with policies, unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Council expects new development proposals to reflect the conclusions of relevant evidence base documents that have informed the production of policies in the document.
- 1.4** The Local Plan must be positive in planning for new homes to meet our pressing needs and some difficult choices will need to be made in seeking the right balance between providing new homes supported by infrastructure, protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, and supporting the urban and rural economies. It is vital that new development both makes the best and most efficient use of land in sustainable locations and is of the highest quality sustainable design.



Summary of Development Needs

- 1.5 This Local Plan considers how best to meet identified development needs, as far as possible, given wider objectives. The headline needs for this District are:

Table 1.1: Development Needs

Homes	1,145 units per annum 1,145 x 15 years = 17,175 units over plan period (a figure provided by central government)
Employment floorspace	40,400 sqm
Gypsy and Traveller pitches	192 pitches
Retail floorspace	Maintaining existing provision

- 1.6 The Government has developed a new standardised assessment methodology for assessing housing need, which is a stock-based approach that is then adjusted to take account of affordability. For Sevenoaks, this means the provision of 1,145 homes per year. To put this figure in context, this would more than quadruple the approximately 250 homes which have been delivered each year over the past 10 years. Rolled forward, the Council's housing need for a fifteen-year Plan period to 2042 is 17,175 homes.

- 1.7 The four central threads or drivers which run through this plan are:

- Supporting the delivery of strategic infrastructure
- Developing healthy communities
- Promoting design excellence
- Tackling the challenge of climate change

Meeting development needs, particularly housing needs, within a constrained environment is clearly a defining factor for this Plan. But just as important is the need to place a high value on the varied and distinctive places and communities that make up Sevenoaks District and ensure that any new development respects these differences and is designed to respond to **local character**. We want to create **healthy communities**, not just houses, and these places need to be supported by services and **infrastructure** to promote **wellbeing**, so that people and future generations will choose to live and work in these sustainable locations. We will promote low carbon development to help tackle the challenge of **climate change**.

- 1.8 We are working closely with our town and parish councils who are preparing and have adopted Neighbourhood Plans for their areas. Where site allocations are proposed in areas that are developing a Neighbourhood Plan, the Local Plan will set the high-level strategic aims in terms of land-use and the approximate quantum of development, and the Neighbourhood Plan can provide more detail in terms of design, infrastructure and local character and distinctiveness. Communities may also consider preparing 'Parish Priorities Statements', introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 as an optional and 'light touch' alternative to Neighbourhood Plans.

DEVELOPMENT NEEDS PLAN PERIOD 2027 – 2042

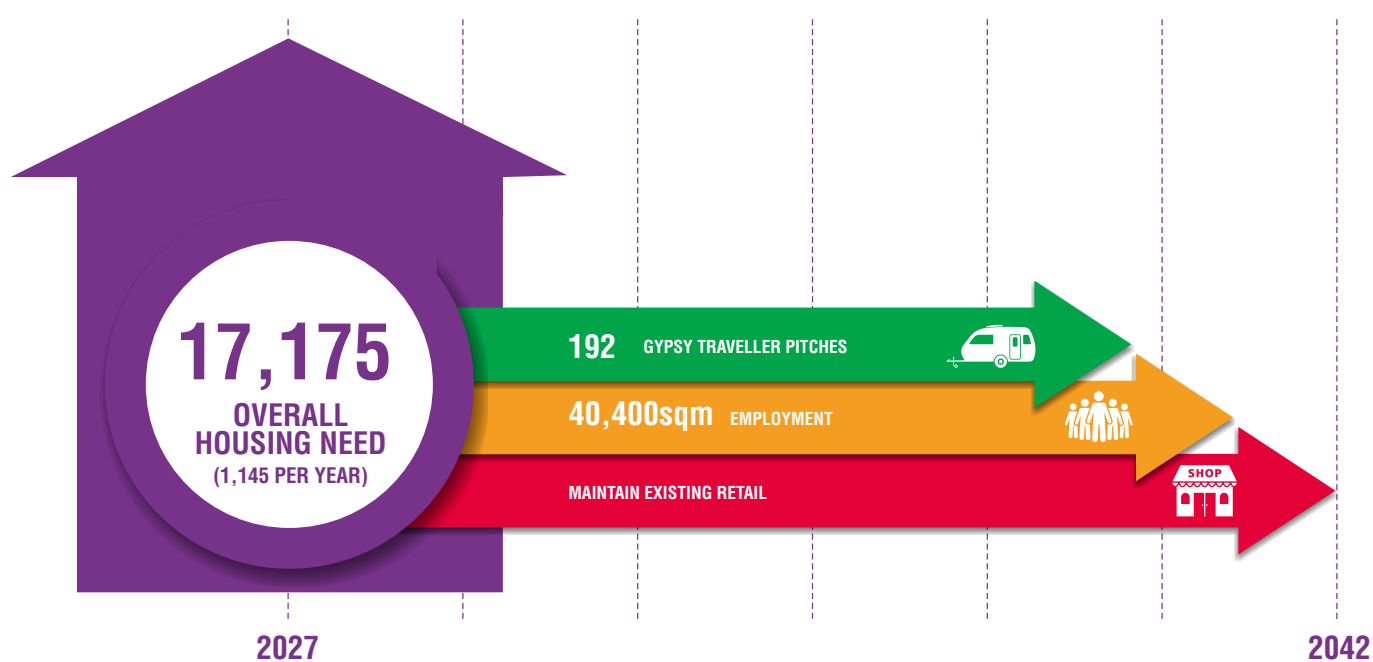


Figure 1.1: Development Needs Plan Period 2027–2042

PLACE-MAKING PRIORITIES

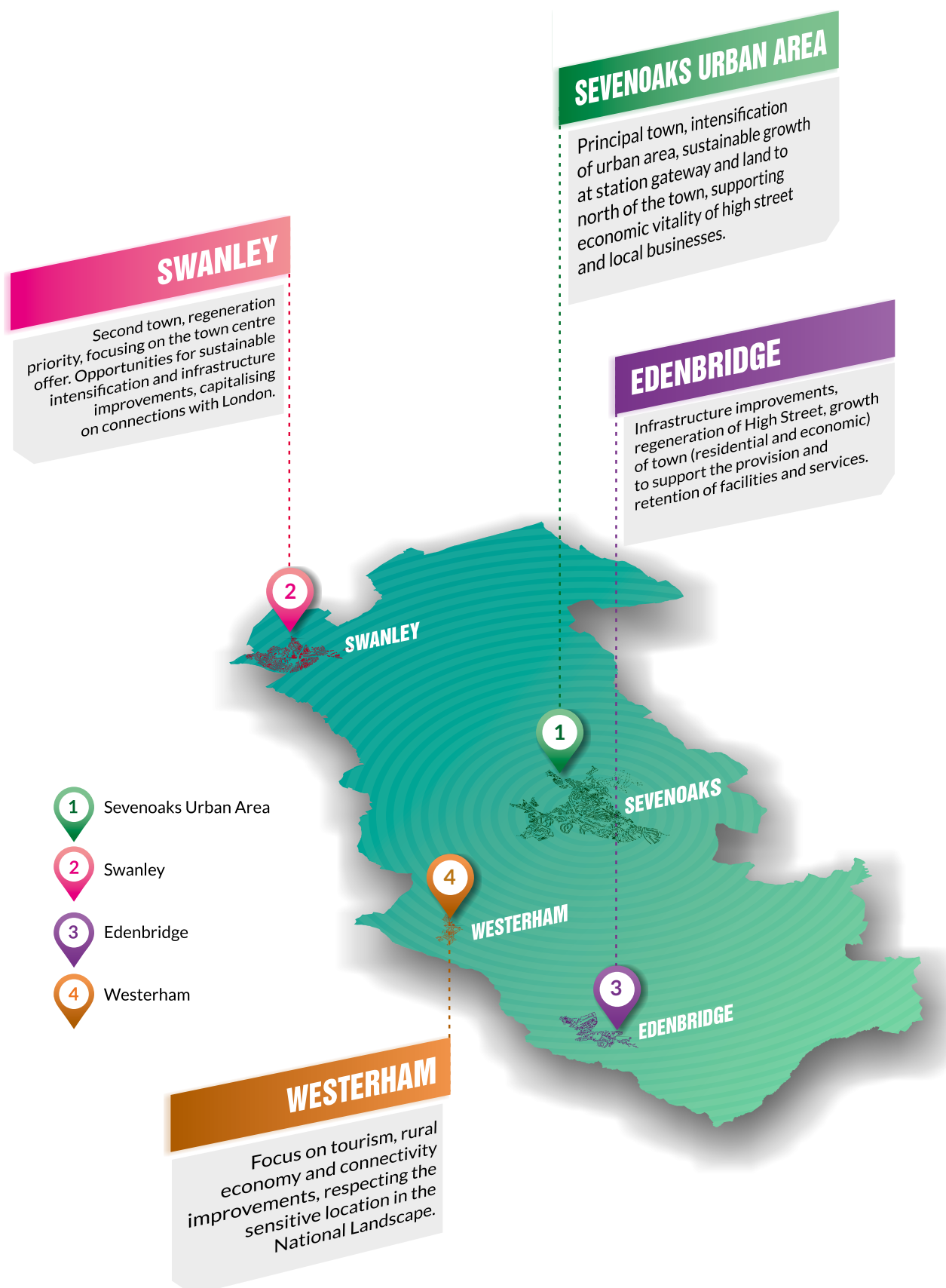


Figure 1.2: Place-Making Priorities



Development Strategy

- 1.9 The Council's strategy is to meet development needs in sustainable locations. The first Regulation 18 consultation focused on opportunities in existing settlements and the second Regulation 18 considered the potential contribution of Green Belt land adjacent to higher-tier settlements. This third Regulation 18 consultation focuses on a broader range of settlements, outside the National Landscape. Green Belt boundaries will only be amended where all other reasonable alternatives have been fully examined, including opportunities in neighbouring authorities.



Previous Regulation 18 Consultations

- 1.10** The first Regulation 18 consultation (winter 2022/23) fully explored opportunities to accommodate strategic development needs in existing settlements, focusing on optimising development within the boundaries of the District's towns and villages, as the most sustainable locations in the District for growth, well served by public transport and with good access to services and facilities. It considered three density scenarios for the settlements based on examples of well-designed and high quality schemes in the District and a 'character-led' approach to growth which supports the delivery of appropriate densities that make the best and most efficient use of land. The middle 'Optimum' or 'balanced' option, which considered densities between 50 and 150 DPH in urban areas, was most popular, suggesting there is recognition of the challenging balance which needs to be struck between building at higher density in towns versus building in the Green Belt. This has fed into the densities outlined in the development briefs for proposed site allocations in the Plan.
- 1.11** The second Regulation 18 consultation (winter 2023/24) broadened the growth strategy beyond settlement boundaries, since it was clear that the District was unable to meet its needs within the existing urban areas. It considered the potential contribution of Green Belt land, based on a Stage Two Green Belt Assessment (2023) which focused in finer-grain detail on the areas adjacent to eight higher-tier settlements (towns and service settlements)
- Towns** – Sevenoaks, Swanley, Edenbridge and Westerham
- Service Settlements** – Otford, New Ash Green, Hartley and West Kingsdown
- 1.12** Development in and around these eight settlements was considered to be sustainable, since these higher tier settlements support a range of existing services and facilities. However, none of the Local Plan growth options considered within this previous consultation sought to meet the new local housing need figure, and therefore an amended development strategy is now required.





Duty to Co-operate

- 1.13** Assistance with meeting need continues to be discussed with neighbouring authorities through the Duty to Co-operate.
- 1.14** The NPPF (para.147) makes it very clear that before considering Green Belt release, all other reasonable options for meeting development needs should be fully examined. It directs authorities to develop a strategy which first:
1. Makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites/underutilised land.
 2. Optimises density of development, particularly in town centres and locations well served by public transport.
 3. Is informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities as to whether they could accommodate need.
- 1.15** However, there are numerous barriers which may prevent neighbouring authorities from assisting with any of Sevenoaks' unmet needs. Please see Fig. 1.5 which sets out the strategic constraints within these areas including Green Belt, National Landscapes (previously AONB), Flood Zones and internationally-designated wildlife sites. These authorities are also required to meet their own challenging needs, in addition to potentially meeting the unmet needs of authorities other than Sevenoaks. The challenges of reaching any agreement via multi-lateral discussions are not insignificant, particularly in the absence of a sub-regional strategy.
- 1.16** Clearly there will be a balance between how much can be achieved within the highly constrained settlements within Sevenoaks District, which make up 7% of the District, what might be achieved elsewhere in neighbouring authorities through the Duty to Cooperate, and what might be achieved through potential Green Belt release. However, given the above barriers to neighbouring authorities assisting with meeting Sevenoaks' needs, it is considered for present purposes that this Plan should seek to meet Sevenoaks' full needs.
- 1.17** NPPF policy that "any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for" (paragraph 62) also involves considering whether Sevenoaks can meet any of its neighbours' unmet need. Given the highly constrained nature of Sevenoaks district and the already very challenging local housing need figure, however, it is not considered feasible for this Plan to seek to meet additional need.

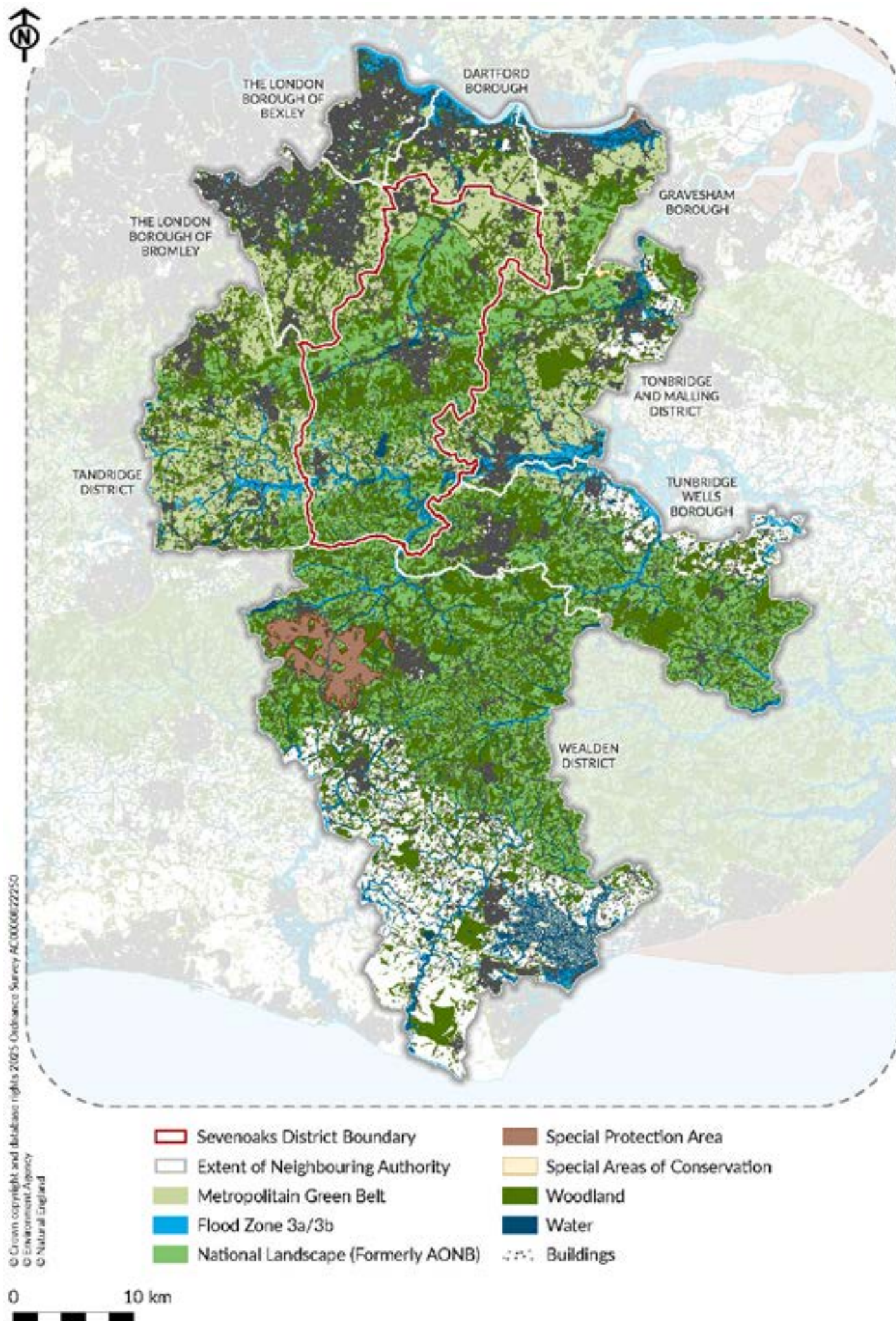


Figure 1.3: Map of Constraints in Neighbouring Authorities



Development Strategy and Grey Belt

1.18 This Plan sets out two development scenarios or growth options or spatial strategies. Both of these options include sites which were found to be suitable through the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) process, including sites within settlements and on the edge of higher-tier settlements, in the Green Belt. The growth strategy focuses on:

- Urban sites (i.e. within existing settlement confines, at optimised density)
- Previously Developed Land (PDL) or Brownfield land (either within or adjacent to a settlement)
- Poorly-performing Green Belt, now known as 'grey belt' (adjacent to a higher tier settlement or train station)

1.19 The concept of 'grey belt' was introduced through the NPPF (2024) and is defined as follows:

Grey belt: land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes* (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143 (copied below). 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (e.g. National Landscapes) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.

1.20 The NPPF states that "Where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give priority to previously developed land, then consider grey belt which is not previously developed, and then other Green Belt locations" (paragraph 148). The Council has followed this approach.

* Green Belt purposes: a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

1.21 The Council has undertaken a further Green Belt assessment to identify grey belt in the District. Due to the dispersed settlement pattern in this area, with many smaller settlements, villages and hamlets, much of the Green Belt in the District can be identified as grey belt (as the effect of the definition of grey belt is now to focus Green Belt protection on land near towns and large built-up areas). Only eight Green Belt assessment parcels have been identified as being not grey belt and these are predominantly located in the strategic gap between Swanley and Hextable, at the edge of Greater London near Pratt's Bottom, and in Otford.

1.22 However, for grey belt to be considered for allocation and development, it needs to be situated in a sustainable location, with particular reference to public transport accessibility, as set out in NPPF para. 148. The settlement hierarchy has recently been updated, to provide an audit of all the services and facilities in the different tiers of settlement across the District. This evidence has been used to identify which settlements are sustainable and have the potential to future accommodate growth. Sevenoaks town, as the District's principal town, will be expected to accommodate the greatest level of growth, followed sequentially by the District's other three towns (Swanley, Edenbridge and Westerham). The next tier down (service settlements) will be the focus for more modest growth, together with settlements, outside the National Landscape, where there is good public transport accessibility (i.e. a train station).

Principal Town – Sevenoaks Urban Area

(including Bessels Green, Chipstead, Dunton Green, and Riverhead)

Towns – Swanley, Edenbridge, Westerham[†]

Primary Service Settlements – Hartley, Otford[†], New Ash Green

Secondary Service Settlements – West Kingsdown, Eynsford[†], Seal[†], Kemsing[†], South Darenth, Pratts Bottom, Hextable

Train stations (outside National Landscape) – Knockholt, Leigh, Penshurst (Chiddingstone Causeway)

[†] Settlements fully or partially within the National Landscape - only PDL or within settlement sites considered in National Landscape.

1.23 The intention of the development strategy is to seek to focus major growth outside of the National Landscape (AONB), since there is a statutory duty to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscapes. Further, for major development, the NPPF provides that planning permission should be refused other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest (paragraph 190). The NPPF requires the identification and prioritisation of less important “grey belt” land, and National Landscape areas are excluded from the definition of grey belt, where the application of policies relating to the National Landscape designation would provide a strong reason for restricting or refusing development. This is not to say that grey belt cannot be identified in the National Landscape, and there may be instances where the National Landscape would not provide a strong reason for restricting development, for example in relation to the redevelopment of a brownfield or urban site. However at the site allocations stage, there is usually more limited information available than at a planning application stage and it can be challenging to be able to come to an assessment of the impact on the National Landscape, when full scheme details are unknown. Therefore, a proportionate and sequential approach is proposed, initially considering urban and brownfield, but not greenfield, locations in the National Landscape. This approach has been discussed with the two AONB Units in the area.

The two options within this consultation are:

Option 1 – Baseline suitable sites

Option 2 – Baseline suitable sites plus stand-alone settlement in a single location (Pedham Place)

1.24 The two options revolve around the inclusion or exclusion of Pedham Place, a greenfield site which is located in both the Green Belt and National Landscape, and whether it is preferable to exclude this development and not meet full need, or to meet full need by including this single strategic site in the National Landscape.

1.25 It is acknowledged that Option 2 would have an impact on the National Landscape. We have undertaken additional landscape and visual assessment to understand the impact of development in the National Landscape, testing an option which disperses growth on medium-sized sites on the edge of three settlements (Sevenoaks, Westerham and West Kingsdown), and an option which concentrates growth in one location within National Landscape (Pedham Place). Our evidence* suggests that the latter strategy is the least impactful approach to accommodating development needs in the National Landscape and the most capable of accommodating mitigation and supporting strategic infrastructure.

1.26 NPPF paragraph 146 states that exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release include where an authority cannot meet its identified need for homes by other means; and that in that case, authorities should review Green Belt boundaries and propose Green Belt alterations to meet needs in full, unless the review provides clear evidence that doing so would fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt, when considered across the area of the plan. The Council does not consider that either Option 1 or Option 2 would have that effect.

* [Sevenoaks landscape and visual evidence | Sevenoaks District Council](#)

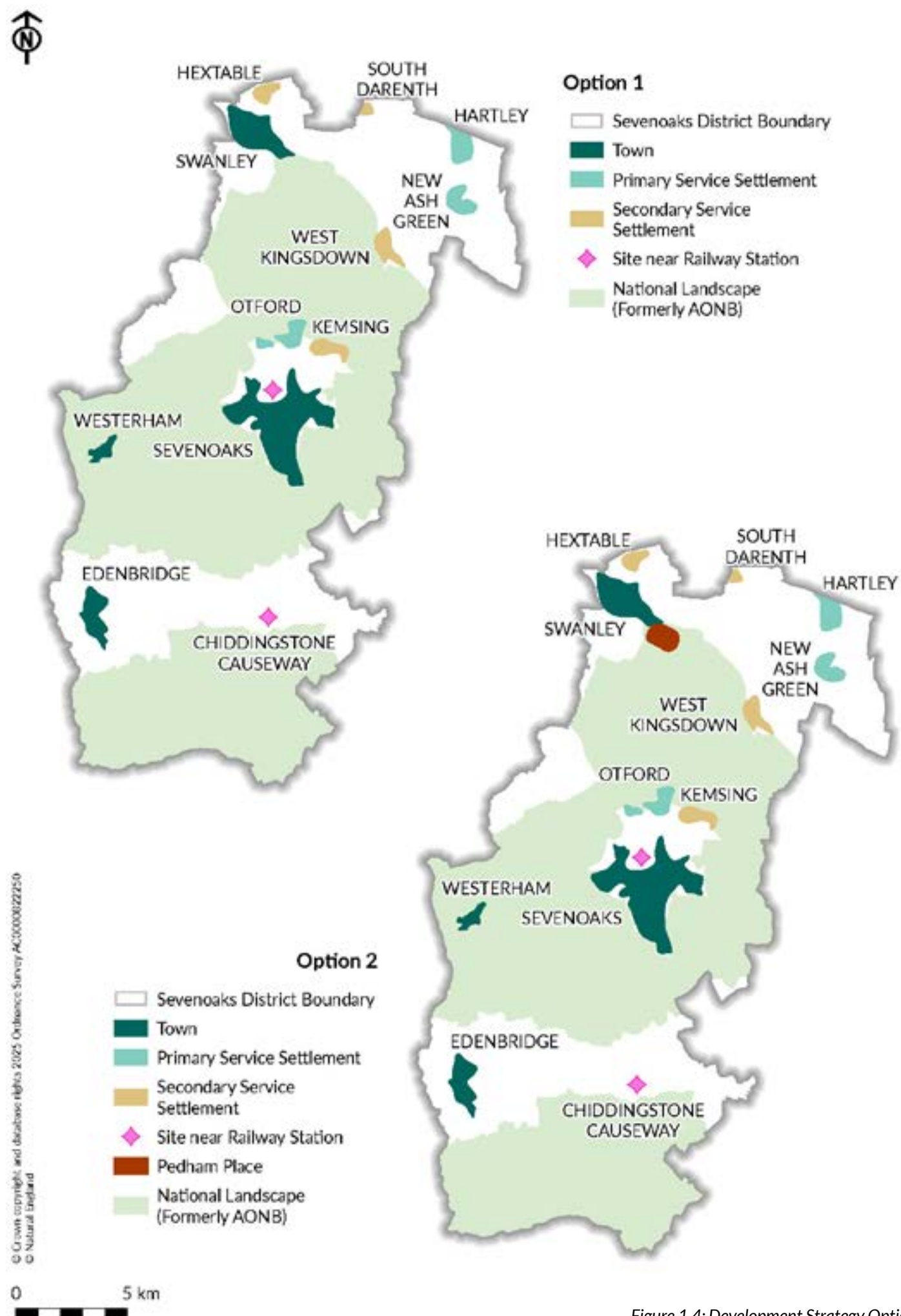


Figure 1.4: Development Strategy Options

Table 1.2: Development Strategy Options

	OPTION 1: 'Suitable sites'	OPTION 2: 'Plus Pedham'
Suitable sites within existing settlements, brownfield land and sites on edge of settlements/near train stations	✓	✓
Standalone settlement in National Landscape and Green Belt (Pedham Place)		✓
Sites proposed for allocation	11,443	14,022
Extant permissions* sites with planning permission at 31 March 25 (units not started and under construction)	3,978	3,978
Windfalls / small sites allowance (average completions on small sites (75) x12 years of plan (to avoid double counting years 1-3))	900	900
Potential identified through discussions with neighbouring authorities	0 (TBC)	0 (TBC)
TOTAL	16,321	18,900
Approx excess/shortfall (from 17,175)	Shortfall of 854	Excess of 1,725
SUMMARY	Modest Shortfall	Meets need with a small buffer

*Extants are listed within the Five Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) Statement - October 2025

Golden Rules for Grey Belt and Social Value

1.27 Where grey belt land is identified in a sustainable location, before it can come forward for development, it will need to meet the 'golden rules' which are set out in NPPF paragraph 156. These require developments to provide:

- 50% affordable housing on major greenfield sites;
- necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure; and
- the provision of new or improved green spaces that are accessible to the public.

1.28 In addition, major sites will be required to submit brief 'Social Value' summaries, setting out how the proposed development will benefit both existing and new communities, what facilities will be provided, and how the scheme promotes 'Good Growth' in the District. This involves recognising and maximising the positive social, economic, and environmental impacts of the development, ensuring that growth benefits all residents. We wish to embed social value into the planning process through an evidence-based and community-led approach.

Strategic Sites

1.29 A small number of sites were submitted to the Council and assessed to be suitable through the SHELAA which have the potential to accommodate strategic-scale growth and provide a range of facilities and services in addition to housing. These uses could potentially include education, leisure, recreation, employment and community uses. The Government's garden community programme, which sets an entry threshold of 1,500 units, was used as a guide determine the scale of these strategic sites.

1.30 Detailed site development briefs have been prepared to present clear priorities and an ambitious vision for each site and explore optimum densities. Development briefs for urban sites have been updated from the previous consultation and development briefs for Green Belt sites are now available for the majority of Green Belt sites and will be available for all sites at Regulation 19 consultation next year.

1.31 The first three sites below are included in both Option 1 and Option 2 and Pedham Place is only included in Option 2.

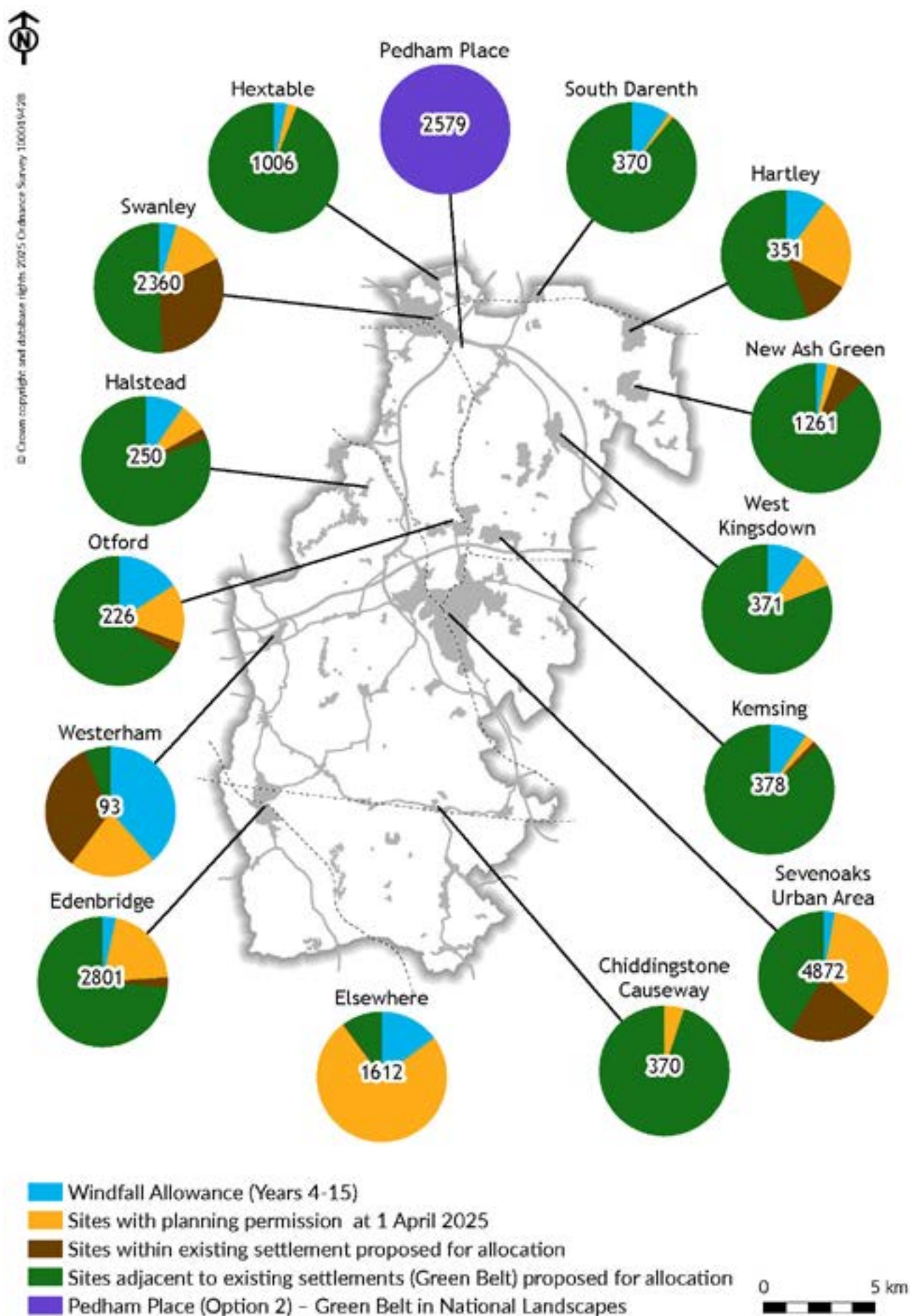
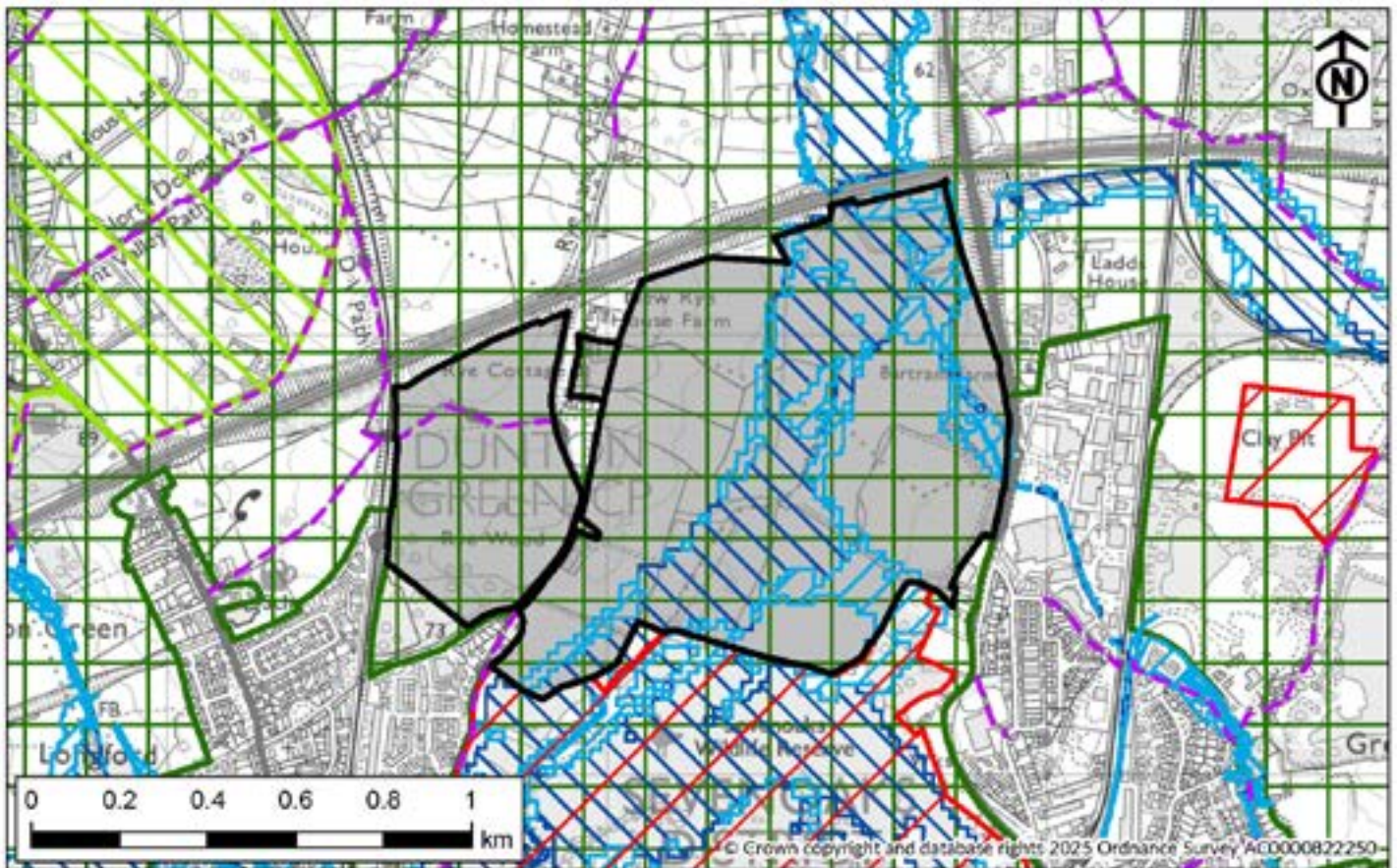


Figure 1.5: Pie charts showing housing supply components, by geographical area (A4)



- Site Boundary
- Public Right Of Way
- Site of Special Scientific Interest

- National Landscape (Formerly AONB)
- Metropolitan Green Belt

- Flood Zone 2
- Flood Zone 3

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Figure 1.6: Land north of Sevenoaks, west of Otford Road Site Location

Land North of Sevenoaks, West of Otford Road (1,500 homes)

1.32 This is a large (100 ha) greenfield site to the north of Sevenoaks town, bounded by the motorway (M26) to the north, Otford Road to the east, the railway line and Dunton Green station to the west and Sevenoaks Nature Reserve to the south. Rye Lane and the River Darent both run through the site. It is a well-contained grey belt site on the edge of the District's principal town, outside the National Landscape, with good access to local amenities and public transport. Dunton Green station lies immediately to the west of the site and Bat and Ball station to the east. Approximately a quarter of the site is subject to Flood Zone Three and it is adjacent to an SSSI (Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve/Gravel Pits), and the development will need to be designed to respond to these constraints. It is promoted for 1,500 units, and a site of this scale would also need to accommodate a local centre and a range of other uses, such as community, leisure and open space. The site could also help alleviate east-west movement through the town and public transport and active travel should be prioritised within and through the development.

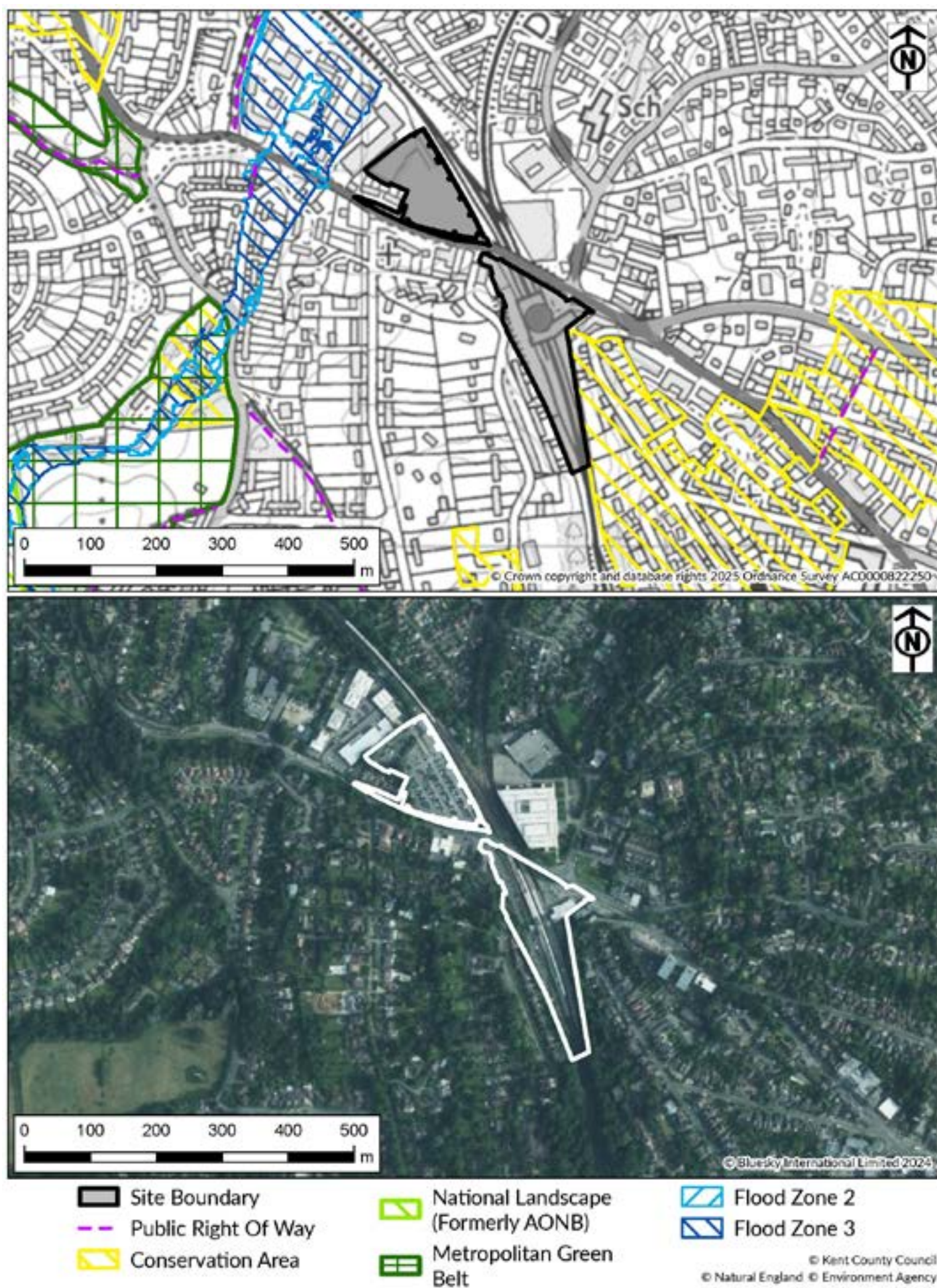


Figure 1.7: Sevenoaks Railway Station Location

Sevenoaks Railway Station

- 1.33** The Council recognises the significant development potential of land at and surrounding Sevenoaks Railway Station. There are opportunities to improve the public realm, enhance the arrival experience, complement the nearby town centre and make a significant contribution towards District-wide development needs, through optimising density in this sustainable location. The local context, including the topography and scale of development already in the area, combined with the accessibility of the location, highlights this as an area of significant development opportunity. Development around the station supports the Council's wider objective to make the best and most efficient use of brownfield land in existing settlements, thereby reducing the need to release Green Belt land.
- 1.34** The station area is one of the most accessible locations in Sevenoaks District, with fast and frequent train services to London, the south coast and across the wider county of Kent. Located approximately 750 metres to the north-west of the main retail and commercial core of Sevenoaks town, the station itself comprises a modern glass box style ticket hall to the west of London Road and a surface car park of 517 parking spaces to the north-west. Both the immediate station area and the adjacent car park provide an opportunity to increase the efficiency of the current land uses to unlock development potential, for example through car park decking, a multi-story car park, or by building above the car park and the station.
- 1.35** The station buildings are surrounded by an eclectic selection of land uses and under utilised sites, which give a unique but somewhat uncoordinated appearance. Overall, the area would benefit from a clearer sense of identity and cohesion that reinforces its relationship to Sevenoaks town centre, and other nearby development opportunities.
- 1.36** Working with local stakeholders, including Network Rail, the Council has prepared a development brief for the Station Area which provides a clear spatial vision, and considers factors such as the quantum and type of uses, scale and massing, development phasing and how these aspirations could be delivered. This works builds on existing evidence and Plans, such as the Neighbourhood Plan for Sevenoaks Town, the Town Centre Strategy, District Wide Characterisation Study and Settlement Capacity Study.
- 1.37** The Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan considers the site's potential for 'compact mixed-use development including retail and food and drink around the station, office, petrol station and new residential units'. In terms of opportunities, the Neighbourhood Plan highlights the:
- Significant opportunity for development that will transform the sense of arrival into Sevenoaks and could establish a new urban quarter for the town;
 - Scale typically four to six storey with taller building marking the station;
 - Opportunity to reconsider transport interchange and public realm treatment at the station.
- Our Strategy:**
1. Ensures development is co-ordinated to create a clear identity for the area;
 2. Brings forward a range of active uses and a vibrant new neighbourhood, which respects existing uses, residents and local character;
 3. Re-enforces the relationship between the station, the town centre and the development at Sevenoaks Quarry; including via improved walking and cycling links;
 4. Coordinates the proposals with other development opportunities, including land east of the High Street, to deliver a coherent offer for the town;
 5. Promotes the brownfield development opportunities, through optimised density, in this highly sustainable location;
 6. Makes the most of the existing public transport accessibility, encourage improvements to the rail network and explore the potential to create a more formalised public transport hub;
 7. Delivers an enjoyable and attractive environment for local residents and the many thousands of people that pass through the station each year;
 8. Responds to new ways of living and working that have emerged post Covid; and
 9. Creates a new destination for Sevenoaks town around the station that adds value and variety and brings prosperity to the wider District.
- 1.38** In addition to new residential development, it is considered that the area has the potential to support other uses, including flexible workspaces, a retail offer that complements the nearby town, cultural and community uses and improvements to the public realm.



Wasps Stadium

1.39 Separate to the Pedham Place proposals, Wasps Rugby Football Club has also put forward proposals for a new multipurpose stadium complex (24-28,000 seats), training ground facilities and a hotel on adjacent land, inside the M25, within Crockenhill parish. This mixed-use masterplan includes facilities which could host sport, concerts, conferences and events. The proposed locations are greenfield sites, adjacent to Swanley, which is classified as a town in the settlement hierarchy and has a wide range of services, facilities and public transport infrastructure. The sites are in the Green Belt, but they are classified grey belt in a sustainable location. They have low landscape sensitivity and are not in a flood zone. A quarter of the site is in the National Landscape (AONB) and this portion of the site would not be considered suitable for development. The sites would require new access points and further details need to be provided to demonstrate how the scheme and proposed uses will be accommodated and impact on the highways network.

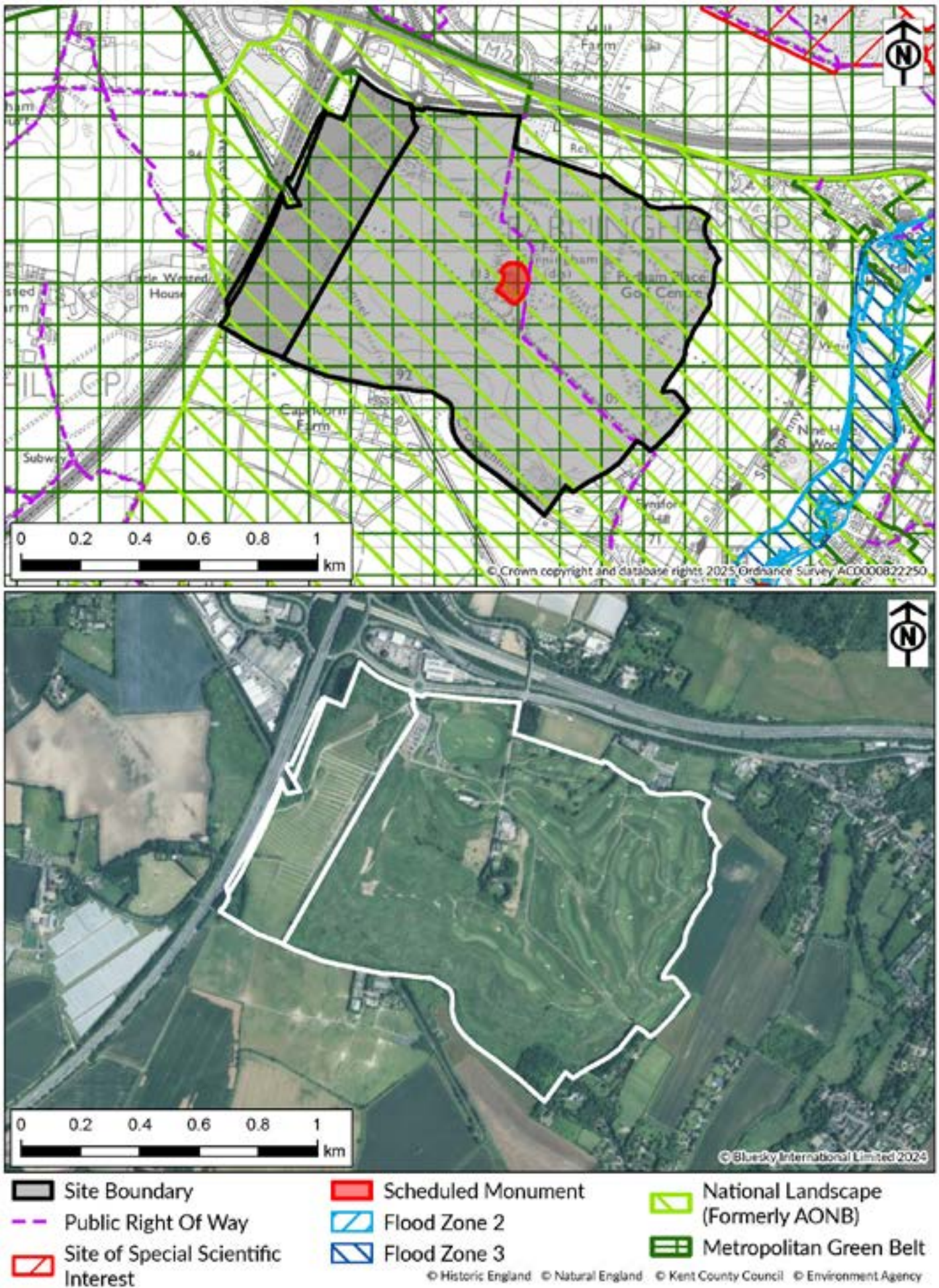


Figure 1.9: Pedham Place Location

Pedham Place (2,500 homes)

1.40 Pedham Place (140 ha) has been identified as a potential standalone settlement, providing a range of facilities and services in addition to housing (2,500 units). These uses could potentially include education, leisure, recreation, employment and community uses. Pedham Place is located in both the Green Belt and the Kent Downs National Landscape and the development would therefore need to demonstrate that it is in the public interest, in relation to major development in the National Landscape. Pedham Place is currently a golf course, located at J3 of the M25, on the edge of Swanley, but within the parishes of Farningham and Eynsford. The site was included as a 'broad location for growth' in the previous draft Plan, which was agreed by full Council and then subject to examination back in 2019. In the last Regulation 18 consultation (winter 2023/24), it was included as one of the growth options, as it was considered a large enough site to be a standalone settlement, providing its own education and employment opportunities and would bring the benefit of it being able to secure co-ordinated infrastructure investment, on the edge of the District's second town and at the junction of the M25/M20. The site received mixed support/objection from across the District with concerns focusing on impact on local infrastructure, particularly traffic congestion and visual impact on the area. The Government's recent planning reforms exclude AONB/National Landscape from its definition of 'grey-belt' land, where the application of policies relating to it would provide a strong reason for restricting development. Therefore, this site is not currently included as a site allocation in Option 1 of this consultation, but it will be tested through Option 2 and the Sustainability Appraisal as a potential option to meet full need.

Policy ST1

A Balanced Strategy for Growth

This Plan seeks to deliver a balanced strategy for 'good growth' over a fifteen year period to 2042, as outlined on the Key Diagram, and aims to ensure that a minimum of 1145 dwellings pa, together with 40,400 sqm of employment floorspace is developed, supported by strategic infrastructure and services.

Development should be focused within the boundaries of existing settlements, including building at optimised densities and prioritising the use of previously developed 'brownfield land'. There will be a particular focus on sites that are close to services and facilities and/or well-connected by public transport, walking and cycling. Major schemes will be required to demonstrate they have made best and most efficient use of land, deliver social value and take account of all relevant evidence base documents.

Development proposals will be expected to comply with the place-making proposals and priorities listed in the supporting text and Neighbourhood Plans.

The main towns within the District – Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge, will sequentially be the focus for development, having regard to their role and function, with more moderate development within the Service Settlements. There will be small-scale limited development and infilling in villages and hamlets.

Sustainable patterns of development will be promoted by amending Green Belt boundaries only in 'exceptional circumstances', where 'greybelt' sites have been identified which have good access to services and facilities, including public transport, and their release has limited impact on the purposes of the Green Belt. This is likely to be on the edge of higher-tier settlements, adjacent to train stations and/or a free-standing settlement.

Development within the National Landscape (previously AONB) will be limited to that which can be accommodated whilst still conserving and enhancing its key characteristics, this being mostly small-scale, only promoting larger proposals where exceptional circumstances and public interest are demonstrated.

STRATEGIC POLICY



Consultation Questions:

1. Which is your preferred option?
 - a. Option 1
 - b. Option 2
 - c. None of the above
2. Please explain your answer.
3. Are you aware of any additional sites which we have not yet considered?



Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations

The following new housing and mixed-use sites are included as potential allocations for development. The sites will provide a range of housing types, density, mix and tenure and are subject to the site areas and development guidance.

Unimplemented housing and mixed-use site allocations from the ADMP (2015) have been carried forward into this Local Plan and are also listed in the table.

The site capacities shown in this policy have been provided by the site promoters. Capacities will be tested further, through Development Brief work, ahead of Regulation 19 publication and therefore, these figures may be subject to change. Sites with an asterisk (*) have had a Development Brief prepared for this Regulation 18 consultation.

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
SEVENOAKS URBAN AREA – PRINCIPAL TOWN				
SEV1*	Pinetops, 5 Crownfields	Urban	HO	20
SEV2*	Abacus Furniture, Farm Road Garages	Urban	HO	10
SEV3*	Land rear of Bowerwood House, 15 St Botolphs Road	Urban	HO	7
SEV4*	42-44 Bullfinch Lane, Riverhead	Urban	HO	5
SEV5*	Land at Cramptons Road, Sevenoaks	Urban	HO	50
SEV6	Garages off Hillingdon Avenue	Urban	HO	11
SEV7	Garage court off Hillingdon Avenue	Urban	HO	8
SEV8	DG Autos off Bradbourne Vale Road	Urban	HO	28
SEV9	Land off Morewood Close, Sevenoaks	Urban	HO	69
SEV10	9 Clare Way, Sevenoaks	Urban	HO	8
SEV11	6 Pounsley Road / Darenth Lane and 20 London Road, Dunton Green	Urban	HO	6
SEV12*	Sevenoaks Station and Car Park, Morewood Close	Urban	MX	420

Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
SEV13*	Land east of High Street, Sevenoaks	Urban	MX	350
SEV14*	Delivery & Post Office / BT Exchange, South Park (ADMP)	Urban	MX	100
SEV15	109-119 St Johns Hill, Sevenoaks	Urban	MX	18
SEV16	Rye Cottage, Rye Lane, Dunton Green	Partial PDL	HO	30
SEV17	Land west of Brittain's Lane, Sevenoaks	GF	HO	65
SEV18	Land behind the Croft, Bradbourne Vale Road	GF	HO	6
SEV19*	Land east of London Road, Dunton Green	GF	HO	250
SEV20	Land north of Barnett Field, Blackhall Lane	GF	HO	10
SEV21	Land west of the Croft, Bradbourne Vale Road	GF	HO	10
SEV22	Land west of allotments, Bradbourne Vale Road	GF	HO	60
SEV23	Land to the rear of 34 Chipstead Park, Sevenoaks	GF	HO	32
SEV24*	Land north of Sevenoaks, west of Otford Road	GF	HO	1,500
SEV25	Bakers Yard, Otford Road, Sevenoaks	GF	MX	50
TOTAL				3,123

Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
SWANLEY - TOWN				
SWAN1*	Garages, Conifer Way	Urban	HO	8
SWAN2*	Bus Garage, Kingdom Hall (ADMP)	Urban	HO	30
SWAN3*	Bevan Place (ADMP)	Urban	HO	36
SWAN4	Gulf Petrol Station off London Road	Urban	HO	5
SWAN5	Whiteoak Garage off London Road	Urban	HO	17
SWAN6	Garages off Russett Way	Urban	HO	8
SWAN7	Garages south of Alder Way	Urban	HO	6
SWAN8	Garages north of Conifer Way	Urban	HO	5
SWAN9	Media House, Azalea Drive, Swanley	Urban	HO	180
SWAN10*	Swanley Centre (ADMP)	Urban	MX	450
SWAN11	Land north and south of Maidstone Road	Partial PDL	MX	253
SWAN12	Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, Beechenlea Lane	Partial PDL	MX	165
SWAN13*	Land at Lullingstone Avenue, Swanley	GF	HO	110
SWAN14	Land north of railway line and west of Beechenlea Lane	GF	HO	300
SWAN15*	Land north of Moultain Hill, Swanley	GF	MX	370
TOTAL				1,943



Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
EDENBRIDGE – TOWN				
EDEN1	Garage courts to the north of The Plat	Urban	HO	5
EDEN2	Land to the rear of Stanholm, Mill Hill, Edenbridge	Urban	HO	5
EDEN3	Land east of Cedar Drive, Edenbridge	Urban	HO	5
EDEN4	Land north of Springfield Road, Edenbridge	Urban	HO	8
EDEN5*	Edenbridge War Memorial Hospital	Urban	MX	34
EDEN6*	78-80 and 82-84 High Street, Leathermarket	Urban	MX	14
EDEN7	Gabriels Farm House, Mill Hill, Edenbridge	Partial PDL	HO	10
EDEN8*	Land west of Ashcombe Drive and Meadow Lane, Edenbridge	GF	HO	80
EDEN9*	Land north of Skinners Lane, Edenbridge	GF	HO	150
EDEN10*	Land at Crouch House Road, Edenbridge	GF	HO	300 (+ 50 C2)
EDEN11	Land at Lingfield Road, Edenbridge	GF	HO	75
EDEN12	Land south west of Skinners Farm, Edenbridge	GF	HO	155
EDEN13	Land west of Lingfield Road Recreation Ground and east of Skeynes Farm Cottis, Lingfield Road, Edenbridge	GF	HO	70
EDEN14*	Land at Breezehurst Farm, Crouch House Road	GF	MX	450
EDEN15	Land east of Mead Road, Edenbridge	GF	MX	120
EDEN16	Land at Swan Lane, Edenbridge (wider site)	GF	MX	600
TOTAL				2,131

Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
WESTERHAM – TOWN				
WEST1*	Currant Hill Allotments, Westerham (ADMP)	Urban	HO	26
WEST2	Garage courts off Ash Road, Westerham	Urban	HO	5
WEST3	Pitts Car Park, High Street, Westerham	PDL	HO	6
TOTAL				37
HARTLEY – PRIMARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT				
HART2	Land at Brambledown and Wellfield, Hartley	Urban	HO	40
HART3	Fawkham Business Park, Fawkham Road, Fawkham	PDL	HO	31
HART4	Land at Ash Road, Hartley	Partial PDL	HO	9
HART5	Orchard Farm, Fawkham Road, Longfield	Partial PDL	HO	40
HART6	Land adjacent to Banckside and Downs Valley, Hartley	GF	HO	114
TOTAL				234
OTFORD – PRIMARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT				
OT1*	Ryecroft, Ryecroft Road, Otford	Urban	HO	7
OT2	Land west of Hale Lane, Otford	GF	HO	150
TOTAL				157
NEW ASH GREEN – PRIMARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT				

Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
NAG1*	The Forge, Ash	Urban	HO	10
NAG2	The Royal Oak Car Park	Urban	HO	9
NAG3*	New Ash Green Village Centre (ADMP)	Urban	MX	70
NAG4	Heaver Trading Estate & Swan Meadows Farm, Ash Road, New Ash Green	PDL	HO	80
NAG5*	Grosvenor, Church Road, Hartley	GF	HO	5
NAG6	Land west of New Ash Green	GF	HO	280
NAG7	Land at Slides Farm, North Ash Road, New Ash Green	GF	HO	150
NAG8	Melsetta, Church Road, Hartley	GF	HO	5
NAG9	Land south of Redhill Road, New Ash Green	GF	MX	580
TOTAL				1,189
WEST KINGSDOWN - SECONDARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT				
WK1*	Land on the east side of London Road, West Kingsdown	GF	HO	15
WK2*	Land at London Road, West Kingsdown	GF	HO	189
WK3	Land east of Fawkham Road, West Kingsdown	GF	HO	75
WK4	Richardsons Farm, West Kingsdown	GF	HO	21
TOTAL				300



Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
EYNSFORD – SECONDARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT				
EYN1	Land adjacent to Little Mote, High Street, Eynsford	Urban	HO	5
TOTAL				5
KEMSING – SECONDARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT				
KEM1	Land west of Park Lane, Kemsing	Urban	HO	5
KEM2	Land on the south side of West End, Kemsing	GF	HO	7
KEM3	Land at Childsbridge Lane, Kemsing	GF	HO	20
KEM4	Land to the west of Childsbridge Lane, Kemsing	GF	HO	120
KEM5	Land at West End, Kemsing	GF	MX	181
TOTAL				333
SOUTH DARENTH – SECONDARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT				
SD1	The Cottage and associated land, Holmesdale Road, South Darenth	Partial PDL	HO	20
SD2	Land north of Gorrings Avenue, Southdowns	Partial PDL	HO	20 (C2 units)
SD3	Land east of Gorrings Avenue, Southdowns	GF	HO	5 (C2 units)
SD4	Land north of Rabbits Road, South Darenth	GF	HO	40
SD5	Land south of Prince Charles Avenue, Southdowns, South Darenth	GF	HO	30 (C2 units)
SD6	Land south of Victoria Drive, Southdowns, South Darenth	GF	HO	6 (C2 units)
SD7	Land south of garages, Prince Charles Avenue, Southdowns, South Darenth	GF	HO	8 (C2 units)
SD8	Land at Horton Road, South Darenth	GF	MX	200
TOTAL				329

Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
HEXTABLE – SECONDARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT				
HEX1	Former Oasis Academy, 37 Egerton Avenue, Hextable	PDL	HO	178
HEX2	Meadow View (aka Fen's Farm), Top Dartford Road	GF	HO	200
HEX3	Land west of College Cottages, Hextable	GF	HO	23
HEX4	Land rear of College Cottages, Hextable	GF	HO	40
HEX5	Land south of Egerton Avenue, Hextable	GF	HO	8
HEX6	Land adjacent 72 Lower Road, Hextable	GF	HO	9
HEX7	Land at 70 Lower Road, Hextable	GF	HO	9
HEX8	Land south of Lower Road, Hextable	GF	HO	198
HEX9	Land adjacent Puddledock Lane, Top Dartford Road	GF	HO	30
HEX10	Stanhill Farm, north west of Hextable, Puddledock Lane	GF	HO	250
TOTAL				945

Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
VILLAGES - BRASTED, FOUR ELMS AND HALSTEAD				
BRASTED				
BR1	The White House, Brasted	Partial PDL	MX	7
FOUR ELMS				
FE1	The Limes and Jonquils, Bough Beech Road	PDL	HO	12
HALSTEAD				
HAL1	Land south of Parkside and Southdene, Halstead	Urban	HO	7
HAL2	Land west of Beaumont Yard, Crow Drive, Halstead	PDL	HO	39
HAL3	Beaumont, Otford Lane, Halstead	PDL	HO	130
HAL4	Helipad Site, Crow Drive, Fort Halstead	PDL	HO	20
HAL5	Highfield Farm & Knocka Villa, Crow Drive, Halstead	PDL	HO	12
TOTAL				227

Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
HAMLETS AND CLUSTERS				
CHIDDINGSTONE CAUSEWAY (PENSURST STATION)				
CC1	The Highways Depot, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway	PDL	HO	8
CC2	Station Yard, Station Hill, Chiddingstone Causeway	Partial PDL	HO	43
CC3	Land opposite Penshurst Station, to the rear of the Little Brown Jug, Chiddingstone Causeway	GF	HO	300
HORTON KIRBY				
HK1	Land at Oakview Stud Farm, Lombard Street	PDL	HO	45
HK2	The Stables at Oakview Stud Farm, Lombard Street	Partial PDL	HO	45
SWANLEY VILLAGE				
SV1	Old Forge Yard, Swanley Village Road, Swanley Village	PDL	HO	9
NOAHS ARK				
NOA1	Baldwin's Yard, Noahs Ark, Kemsing	PDL	HO	40
TOTAL				490
OPTION 1 TOTAL				11,443



Policy ST2

Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GREENFIELD (GF)	USE	NO. OF UNITS
ALL OF OPTION 1				11,443
POTENTIAL NEW SETTLEMENT AT PEDHAM PLACE (OPTION 2 ONLY)				
PED1	Land at Pedham Place Golf Club	GF	MX	2,579
OPTION 2 TOTAL				14,022

STRATEGIC POLICY

“

Everyone deserves to have access to a high-quality home that meets their needs, in an area they wish to live and that they can afford. This is fundamental to happy, healthy, successful residents and thriving communities. The policies in this chapter ensure that the right types of homes are built to meet the needs of our current and future residents, including the Gypsy and Traveller community.



Housing Choice for All

02





“Everyone deserves to have access to a high-quality home that meets their needs, in an area they wish to live and that they can afford.”

Housing Choice for All

02

Strategic Objectives

- OB8: Deliver market and affordable homes to reflect the latest information on housing needs.
- OB9: Optimise the supply of new homes in existing settlements.
- OB10: Ensure new housing development makes best and most efficient use of land.



Sevenoaks District is a very popular and well-connected place to live, but this also makes it expensive. Boosting the supply of market and affordable housing and ensuring the right types of homes are built in the right places will create a more dynamic housing market with more movement and where more people can find a suitable home that meets their needs.

DISTRICT-WIDE HOUSING NEEDS

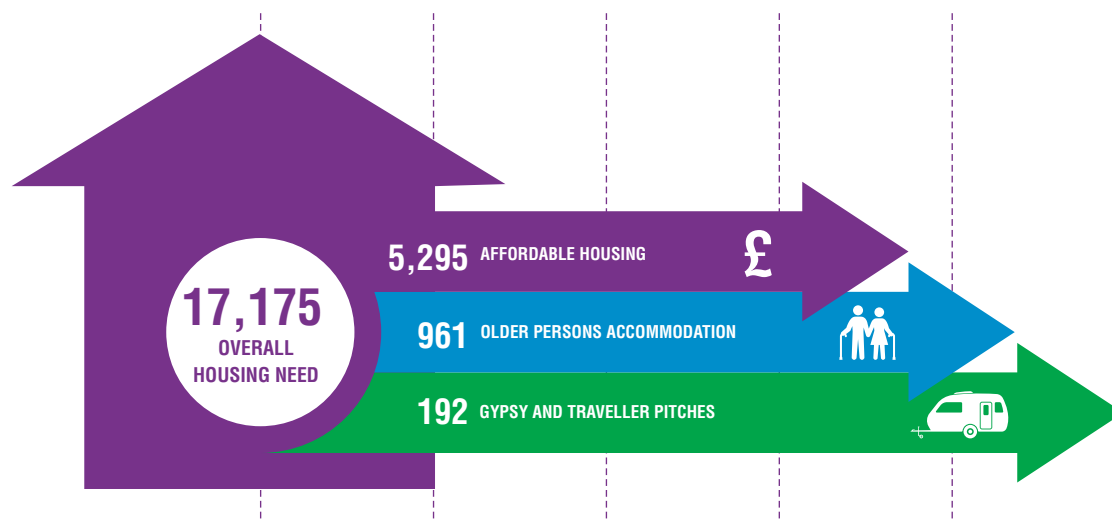


Figure 2.1: District-wide Housing Needs

OLDER PERSONS HOUSING NEEDS

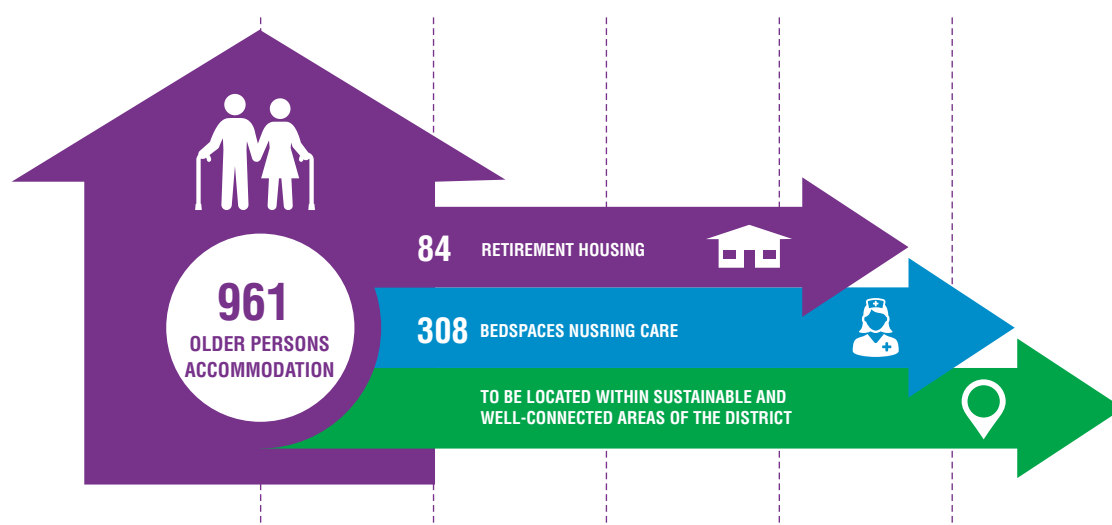


Figure 2.2: Older Persons Housing Needs



Housing Choice for All

2.1 The District is facing some significant challenges in relation to housing:

- **A growing and ageing population**

The population of the District is expected to grow by 5.1% over the Plan period up to 2042¹. But more significantly the proportion of people aged over 65 is expected to grow by 7,616 over the same period and by 2042 it is expected that residents aged 65 and over will make up almost 26% of the total population. Accommodating the changing needs of households will be key in order to provide greater choice for existing and future generations and to promote healthy and sustainable communities.

- **A need for new housing**

Using the Government's standard methodology for calculating housing need, there is a need for 1,145 new homes per year over the Plan period up to 2042, including a high proportion of new affordable homes and homes suitable for older people, presenting a major step change in the number of new homes needed compared with the previous Local Plan.

- **Affordability of housing**

Median house prices in the District are almost £100,000 higher than in the south east², and the highest in Kent, making it very difficult for first time buyers and young families to remain in the District. Delivering new housing that is genuinely affordable in an area where land prices are ever-increasing presents a major challenge.

- **Challenges to the supply of housing**

The District is significantly constrained by Green Belt and National Landscapes (previously 'AONB'). Not only does this put the larger built-up areas under pressure to deliver new housing development at higher densities without compromising character, it also impacts our rural communities, where generally there are fewer housing choices for those in need.

- **Ensuring choice in the housing market**

The structure of the District's population is expected to change and new housing development must meet the needs of our current and future residents in order to create a dynamic and balanced housing market.

2.2 The policies within this chapter aim to address these challenges, not just by boosting the delivery of market and affordable housing, but by ensuring that the right types of homes are built to meet the needs of our changing population.

¹ Population Projections – local authority based by single year of age, ONS

² House Price Statistics for Small Areas, ONS, April 2025

Housing Mix

Housing Mix

- 2.3** A mix of homes of different sizes and types to meet the needs of the current and future population is essential to help create inclusive, healthy and mixed communities. The District is home to a variety of household types including families, singles, older people, people with a range of disabilities and people wishing to build their own homes.
- 2.4** The Targeted Review of Local Housing Needs 2025 (TRLHN), our key evidence on housing needs, tells us that the structure of the population is expected to change over the plan period. The delivery of new housing development should reflect the changing needs of households in order to provide greater choice for existing and future generations and to promote healthy and sustainable communities.

Size of Homes

- 2.5** The District has a high proportion of larger homes, with 3 and 4+ bedroom homes making up 67.2% of the total housing stock. An ageing population means that household sizes are expected to fall over the Plan period. By building more housing with a focus on smaller and family homes, this will increase the proportion of lower cost housing available to buy so that first time buyers and young families have greater choice in the market, as well as enabling older people to downsize or 'rightsize', which will then have the knock-on effect of freeing up additional family housing.

Types of Homes

- 2.6** The housing stock needs to adapt to meet the requirements of an ageing population, and to provide choices for older people who may be thinking of moving or who may need to move as their current home no longer matches their needs. A growing population is also expected to result in a substantial growth in people with dementia and mobility problems, and some of these households will require adaptations to properties to meet their changing needs whilst others may require more specialist accommodation or support. This can be achieved through the design features of the optional technical standards set out in the Building Regulations under M4(2) accessible and adaptable dwellings and M4(3)(b) wheelchair user dwellings.

Policy H1

Housing Mix

1. A variety of house sizes and types should be delivered across the District to meet the needs of the current and future population. This should include providing an appropriate amount of smaller units, in line with the latest housing needs evidence.
2. The delivery of new development will be dependent on the availability of suitable sites. Evidenced local need at Place-making level should not be taken as a restriction to wider housing need and the delivery of new homes.
3. Proposals for new housing development are required to meet the following technical and design criteria:
 - a. Proposals should be informed by the dwelling mix profiles set out in the latest housing needs evidence where appropriate, unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative mix meets an identified need;
 - b. For new build housing development, commit to delivering all homes to meet the M4(2) standard for accessible and adaptable homes;
 - c. For new build schemes of 20 units or more, commit to delivering at least 5% of homes to meet the M4(3)b standard for wheelchair user dwellings, to be delivered as Social Rent housing;
 - d. Provide homes built to high sustainability standards with built-in resilience to climate change and fuel poverty, in line with climate change policies; and
 - e. New development proposals must meet the latest national described space standard.

STRATEGIC POLICY

Provision of Affordable Housing

Provision of Affordable Housing

- 2.7** Affordable housing is provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It is a key issue in the District given the high house prices relative to incomes. In the 12 months to September 2024, the median house price in Sevenoaks District was £475,000*, the highest in Kent. House prices were 13.2 times annual earnings*, compared with 7.7 times across England. This means that many people are unable to afford a home of their own which is suitable for their needs on the open market without assistance. High housing costs have led to an increase in the number of households applying to join the Council's housing register, those privately renting rather than buying, and the out-migration of younger and economically active groups in search of cheaper housing elsewhere, including local essential workers.
- 2.8** The TRHLN 2025 identifies a net annual need of 353 households who are unable to afford a suitable home on the open market. Building new affordable homes will help to ensure that more households are suitably housed and the increase in the supply of affordable housing may help to slow down the rise in housing costs, giving those who aspire to own their own home a better opportunity to get onto the housing ladder.
- 2.9** In view of the scale of need, and subject to viability testing, it is considered that a target of 30% affordable housing on brownfield sites and 40% affordable housing on greenfield sites is realistic and achievable in light of the evidence, and will go some way in meeting the identified affordable housing need.

Grey Belt - 'Golden Rules'

- 2.10** In accordance with the 'Golden Rules' for grey belt sites (which includes PDL sites within the Green Belt), introduced at paragraphs 156-157 of the NPPF (2024), major residential developments on land meeting the definition of grey belt – areas within the Green Belt which do not significantly contribute to Green Belt purposes A, B and D – are now required to deliver at least 50% affordable housing, unless this would make the development of these sites unviable (when tested in accordance with national planning practice guidance on viability).
- 2.11** This means that major proposals on grey belt land within Sevenoaks District must provide 50% affordable housing. This uplift reflects the Government's aim to maximise the delivery of affordable homes on land released from the Green Belt; while ensuring developments remain viable and sustainable. The Council will apply this requirement to all qualifying grey belt proposals, in line with national policy.

Tenure Split

- 2.12** Given the acute need for affordable housing and in line with Government policy to maximise social rented accommodation, the TRHLN 2025 recommends a tenure split of 80% Social Rented and 20% Affordable Home Ownership, focusing on the delivery of shared ownership.
- 2.13** On grey belt sites, it is expected that the % uplift in affordable housing will be delivered as social rented housing. Social rented housing provides the most affordable option and is the primary tenure which meets the housing needs of those households accepted onto the Council's Housing Register.

³ *Housing Affordability in England and Wales: 2024 – Office for National Statistics (ONS)*

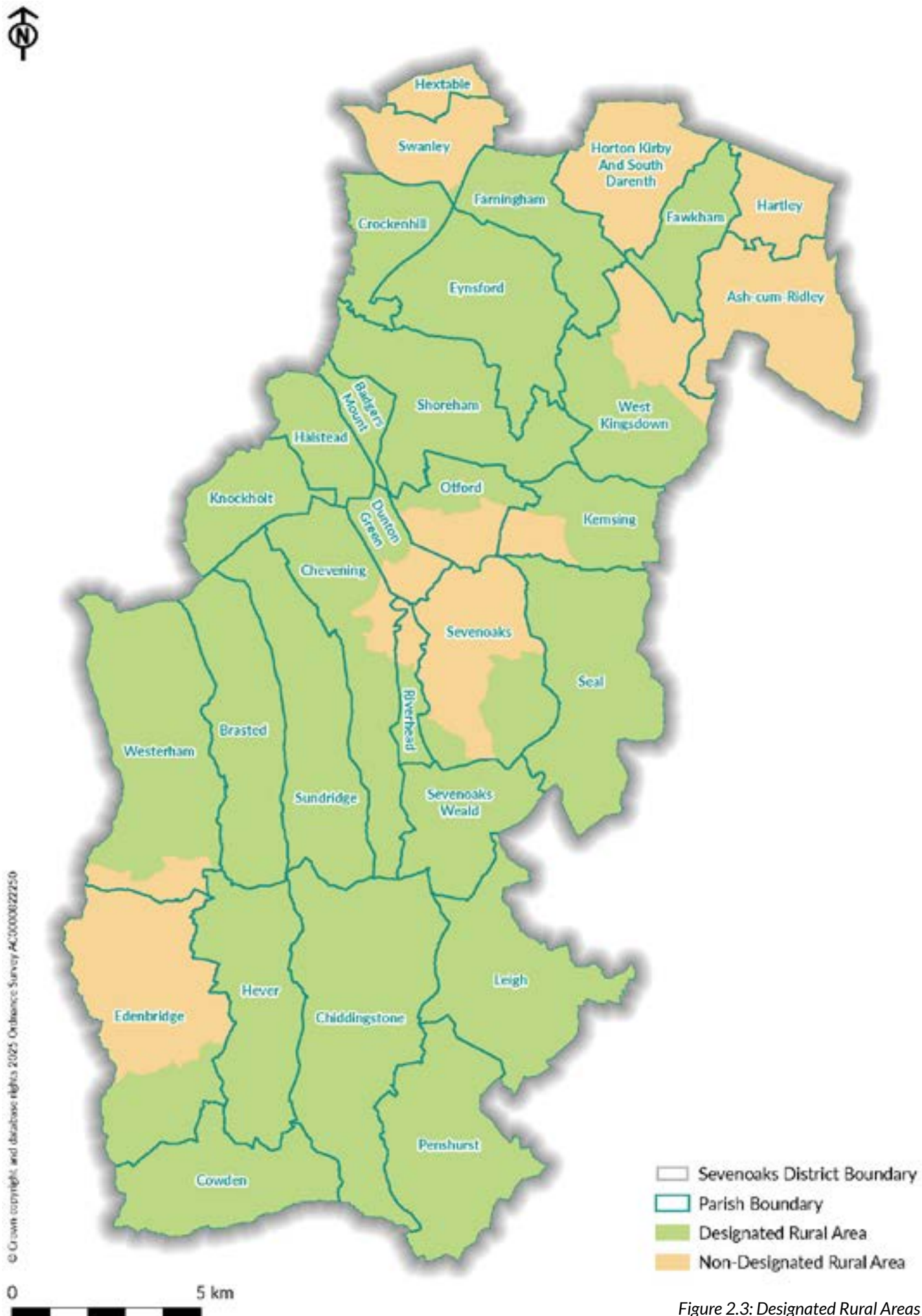


Figure 2.3: Designated Rural Areas

Policy H2

Provision of Affordable Housing

1. This Policy will boost the delivery of affordable housing from developments with market housing, ensuring that overall viability is not prejudiced and that a mix of tenures is provided that meet the needs of the current and future population.

Affordable Housing Contributions - Thresholds

2. All proposals for new housing development will be required to contribute to the provision of affordable housing in accordance with the following thresholds.

Number of new homes proposed (net) / size of site	Development is within a Designated Rural Area - % affordable housing required	Development is not within a Designated Rural Area - % affordable housing required
0-5 homes and site is less than 0.5 hectares	0	0
0-5 homes and site is 0.5 hectares or more	10%*	10%*
6-9 homes and site is less than 0.5 hectares	20%*	0
6-9 homes and site is 0.5 hectares or more	20%*	20%*
Site is 0.5 hectares or more and number of dwellings is unknown	30%**	30%**
10 homes or more on a brownfield site (where not Grey Belt), irrespective of size of site	30%**	30%**
10 homes or more on a greenfield site, irrespective of size of site	40%**	40%**
Major Grey Belt site, irrespective of size of site	50%**	50%**

3. In Designated Rural Areas (as defined under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985), lower thresholds apply in accordance with national policy.
4. Proposals that seek to bypass affordable housing requirements through artificial subdivision of sites (including any subdivided section that is sold separately), or sites where the proposal does not demonstrate that it makes best and most efficient use of land, such that the number of dwellings are contrived to be below Policy thresholds, will not be supported.



Policy H2

Provision of Affordable Housing

Delivery Mechanisms

5. The Council's starting point is that Affordable Housing should be provided on-site, in accordance with Policy requirements.
6. *The affordable housing is provided in the form of a financial contribution payable on completion of the development.
7. **This may trigger a small number of affordable homes, which may not provide a viable proposition for our Registered Provider partners. Only in exceptional circumstances, where on site provision is demonstrably unviable, a financial contribution in lieu of some or all of the affordable housing may be considered. This will be subject to robust justification and agreement with the Council. Any such contribution would be payable upon commencement of development. The Council's Housing Service will advise the Planning Officer on the appropriateness of this approach in individual cases.

Tenure Mix

8. Where the provision of on-site affordable housing applies, the required tenure split is 80% social rented housing and 20% shared ownership housing unless otherwise agreed by the Council's Housing Service. Additional social rented homes are required in relation to the grey belt uplift.

Viability

9. In accordance with national guidance, viability assessments will not be accepted on grey belt sites for the purpose of reducing developer contributions, including affordable housing.
10. If it is demonstrated that the required on-site provision is not viable or does not best meet identified housing needs and the Council agrees, one of the following options is to be agreed by the Council:
 - a. The provision of a reduced level of on-site affordable housing plus a financial contribution in lieu of the shortfall; or
 - b. The payment of a financial contribution in lieu of the provision of any on-site affordable housing.
11. If it can be demonstrated that the full affordable housing requirement is not viable and the Council agrees, a viability review is required upon first occupation or an alternative agreed trigger point. This is to ensure that any uplift in the development value of the scheme is shared and contributes to the affordable housing provision, whether this be on site or an off-site financial contribution.
12. All affordable housing delivered should not generate housing costs of more than 35% of the median household income, as demonstrated by robust evidence and/or published data.
13. Applicants are required to enter into discussions with the Council's Housing Service, in consultation with partner Registered Providers, at the earliest stage of the application process where the provision of on-site affordable housing applies.
14. To ensure delivery of affordable housing in line with Policy objectives, late-stage viability review mechanisms may be required on larger or phased developments, where appropriate.

Housing in Rural Areas

Housing in Rural Areas

- 2.14** Opportunities to provide new housing, especially affordable housing, in rural areas of the District (i.e. outside of urban confines) are much more limited than in the built-up areas because of the Green Belt. Less scope for development means fewer housing choices for those in need.
- 2.15** However, rural exception housing can provide affordable housing to meet local needs as an exception to other Local Plan policies. It means that sites that would not normally be suitable for development, because of planning policy constraints, can be developed solely for housing to meet local needs. Given the extensive network of rural settlements across the District, rural exception housing is a very important part of the housing stock.
- 2.16** The Local Housing Needs Study (2017) and our programme of parish needs surveys across the entirety of the District confirms a need for affordable housing in our rural areas, primarily new social housing. We are working with local communities and their preferred housing providers to identify and assist in delivering suitable sites for development. The planning agreement attached to such sites ensures affordable housing is protected in perpetuity to meet local needs.
- 2.17** We will also work with landowners of rural estates and Community Land Trusts to bring forward suitable rural exception housing to meet identified needs. This may be through an affordable housing provider or directly through the landowner where the Council's eligibility criteria for new affordable housing development partners can be met. The planning agreement attached to such development sites will ensure any landowner-led housing is delivered at the same cost to the tenant and held in perpetuity to meet identified housing needs.
- 2.18** The delivery of new development will be dependent on the availability of suitable sites. Evidenced local need at place-making level should not be taken as a restriction to wider housing need and the delivery of new homes.

Policy H3

Housing in Rural Areas

1. Proposals for new housing development in rural areas that meet a specific local need will be required to meet the following criteria, in order to be permitted as an exception to other Local Plan policies:
 - a. A local need has been identified, e.g. a current local housing needs survey, Housing Register data or other evidence of need approved by the Council;
 - b. The local need identified cannot be met by any other means through the development of non-Green Belt sites within the parish or, where appropriate, in the adjacent parish;
 - c. A thorough site options appraisal has been carried out; and
 - d. The selected site is located in a Designated Protected Area (DPA).
2. The Council expects rural exception housing schemes to provide 100% local needs housing to meet identified needs. However, if it can be demonstrated that a wholly local needs housing scheme is not viable or deliverable, and the Council agrees, an element of market housing may be permitted.
3. Proposals for up to 100% self-commissioned housing will be considered on rural exception sites where it can be demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Council, that the housing will meet an identified local housing need and providing the affordable housing tenure(s) and resident eligibility criteria are approved by the Council.



Housing for Older People

Housing for Older People

- 2.19** Sevenoaks District has an ageing population. In the 2021 Census, those aged 65 and over made up approximately 21.5% of the District's population. This age group is projected to increase to 25.7% over the Plan period, with an estimated additional 7,616 residents aged 65 and over by 2042**.
- 2.20** We need to respond to the changing population structure to ensure the housing offer across the District meets the needs of our older people, who are a vital and integral part of any local community. This can be done by delivering a broader housing offer for older people across the District and we are keen to diversify the range of more modern and appealing housing options available.
- 2.21** The TRLHN (2025) identifies a need for 961 additional units of specialist older persons accommodation over the plan period up to 2042, of which 84 units should be provided as retirement housing (e.g. sheltered and extra care housing) and 308 units to be provided in the form of bedspaces in registered care homes. It is important to note that older persons C3 accommodation is part of the overall housing need for Sevenoaks District.
- 2.22** The characteristics of different types of specialist accommodation is set out in the table below. We will work with partners, including KCC Adult Social Care and other infrastructure providers, to deliver the right types of older persons accommodation in the right places.

Type of specialist accommodation	What we expect to see in a proposal/ how this is characterised
Retirement housing e.g. sheltered and extra care (generally C3 use class)	Purpose-designed self-contained living units (e.g. apartments) containing at least one bedroom often with a mini-kitchen with washing machine and living room, although in some cases these facilities may be shared/communal. The nature of this type of accommodation is akin to a small dwelling capable of accommodating a small household rather than a single occupant occupying a single room. Access to 24-hour care and support from support staff, warden or alarm system. Policy H2 – Provision of Affordable Housing generally applies.
Specialist nursing / residential care (C2 use class)	Single bedrooms within a purpose-designed residential setting with communal kitchens, living rooms, quiet/family rooms, IT rooms and staff breakout rooms. Provision of personal and nursing care and support 24 hours a day with dedicated on-site nurse.

* Census 2021, Population by Local Authority Area, ONS

** Population Projections local authority based by single year of age, ONS

Table 2.1: Characteristics of Different Types of Specialist Accommodation



2.23 We must also ensure that these homes are accessible, adaptable and technology enabled, as well as being safe and warm and in established and vibrant neighbourhoods, recognising the importance of attachment to place, social connections and access to services and facilities. Getting this right has a significant impact on people's health and wellbeing. Good quality housing where people can maintain their independence helps to prevent physical frailty, supports positive mental health and reduces hospital admissions.



2.24 Loneliness amongst older people is a growing issue and housing options that will help to reduce this are encourage. In many cases family support networks are essential in providing informal care and combating loneliness and isolation. This means housing options need to be provided in all settlements, including rural villages, to ensure older people may remain within their existing communities. This could be provided as co-housing schemes.

Policy H4

Housing for Older People

1. Proposals for new retirement housing are required to meet the following technical and design criteria, in addition to the criteria set out in the Policy H1 (Housing Mix). Proposals should:
 - a. Reflect the latest independent evidence on older persons housing needs. Alternative methods of assessment, such as outdated reports, anecdotal evidence or generic evidence not tailored to older persons' specific needs, will not be considered appropriate;
 - b. Be within sustainably located and well-connected areas of the District, where there is easy access to shops, community facilities including healthcare, public transport and other services appropriate to the needs of the future occupiers;
 - c. May be located in rural villages where an up-to-date Local Housing Needs Survey or other independent evidence of need, as agreed by the Council, identifies a local need for older persons accommodation;
 - d. Incorporate the latest HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation) design principles, where possible, in order to offer attractive alternatives to the current home;
 - e. Incorporate an accessible lift in flatted developments of 2 or more storeys, unless otherwise agreed by the Council;
 - f. Provide access to private and/or communal outdoor space; and
 - g. Provide high quality homes built to high sustainability standards with built-in resilience to climate change and fuel poverty, which contributes towards addressing the challenge of climate change.
2. Developments of 50 or more dwellings (except 100% affordable housing schemes), in appropriate locations subject to the criteria above, will be expected to provide units for older people. This is to be informed by the latest evidence including up-to-date Local Housing Needs Surveys. The inclusion of housing suitable for older people on smaller sites is also encouraged.
3. Development proposals for older persons C3 accommodation forms part of the overall housing need for Sevenoaks District, and will trigger Policy H2 (Provision of Affordable Housing).

Build to Rent

Build to Rent

- 2.25** Increasing housing supply is challenging in a District that is so constrained, but it is clear that we need to find new ways of delivering new homes so that we can create a more dynamic housing market with more movement and where more people can find a suitable home that meets their need.
- 2.26** One way to do this is to build high-quality purpose-built homes for private rent that are professionally managed and provide shared spaces and services, known as 'build to rent'. The build to rent sector can play an important role in meeting our identified housing needs, by boosting the number of smaller and more affordable units and delivering homes that can house people across a range of income levels, ages and household types. Whilst build to rent is well suited to house mobile professionals, it can also provide homes for local essential workers, for families and for older people.
- 2.27** The TRLHN (2025) sets out that, in Sevenoaks District, the private rented sector accommodates around 13.5% of households. 19.4% of these are located in Sevenoaks Urban Area and Surrounds, followed by 15.3% in the Upper Darent Corridor and 13.3% in the South.
- 2.28** Looking forward, the TRLHN (2025) identifies that Build to Rent is a useful product for the provision of smaller unit requirements, and we know that the current private rental market is buoyant in Sevenoaks, with upward rent pressure and fast lets, which are indications that the market is popular and demand may increase over the plan period. We are keen to engage with build to rent providers on the options available to meet this need.
- 2.29** Build to Rent schemes are most appropriate in the built-up areas of Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge, reflecting the most sustainable and well-connected areas of the District where there is easy access to shops, community facilities and public transport. This will help to promote health and wellbeing, support the local economy, reduce carbon emissions and promote environmental sustainability. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken this into account in finalising their proposals.

Policy H5

Build to Rent

1. Proposals for Build to Rent schemes are required to meet the following technical and design criteria, in addition to the criteria set out in the Policy H1 - Housing Mix:
 - a. Be within the built-up areas of Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge. These are sustainably located and well-connected areas of the District where there is easy access to shops, community facilities and public transport;
 - b. Meet the definition of Build to Rent as set by national policy, including single ownership and management and a minimum tenancy length of three years;
 - c. Provide 20% on-site affordable housing in the form of one and two bedroom Affordable Private Rented homes, with rents capped at 80% of the open market value including any service charges, with full nominations rights to the Council. Where appropriate, the Council may seek a proportion of affordable housing to be delivered as Social Rent or another tenure, in line with local housing needs and viability;
 - d. Provide high quality homes built to high sustainability standards with built-in resilience to climate change and fuel poverty, which contributes towards addressing the challenge of climate change; and
2. Proposals of 100 units or more, except on 100% affordable housing schemes, within the built-up areas of Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge, will be expected to provide Build to Rent units, where appropriate and viable, and in line with the above criteria. The inclusion of Build to Rent units on smaller sites is also encouraged.

Smaller Sites

Smaller Sites

- 2.30** The NPPF (2024) requires us to identify land to accommodate at least 10% of our housing requirements on sites no larger than 1 hectare. Sevenoaks District needs to build approximately 17,175 new homes over the next 15 years, with 1,718 of these coming from sites no larger than one hectare (generally referred to as smaller sites).
- 2.31** Historically small sites have been crucial to housing delivery in Sevenoaks District and they continue to offer opportunities to grow the housing stock. Over the last five years small sites in our built-up areas have provided 26% of built homes district-wide.
- 2.32** The Settlement Capacity Study (SCS) (2022) initially identified the potential for approximately 1,000 new homes to come forward within existing built-up areas (i.e. in urban confines outside of the Green Belt), based on current development densities. Since then, further work has been undertaken to assess these sites in more detail for suitability and availability. A significant proportion of these sites comprise former garage courts, which were found to offer redevelopment opportunities due to their location. Sites which are considered both suitable and available (i.e. where landowner support has been confirmed) have been taken forward as proposed allocations, at Policy ST2 - Housing and Mixed-Use Site Allocations.
- 2.33** Whilst the sites vary in character, ownership and existing use, they are all considered achievable and capable of contributing meaningfully to housing delivery. Encouraging their development in a manner consistent with the wider policies of this Plan remains vital in meeting the small sites requirements of the NPPF (2024).
- 2.34** This policy aims to encourage these sites to come forward and assist in demonstrating their deliverability/developability over the Plan period. This approach also supports our development strategy by increasing densities and making effective use of land in our existing built-up areas.

Policy H6

Smaller Sites

1. Proposals for new housing development on qualifying sites (no larger than one hectare) will be required to meet the following technical and design criteria:
 - a. The proposal demonstrates that it makes the best and most efficient use of land (in line with Policy H7 [Housing Density and Intensification]), utilising higher densities where appropriate, whilst also contributing to the creation of healthy spaces with improved connectivity;
 - b. The proposal meets identified development needs and contributes towards the delivery of different types and sizes of new homes;
 - c. Any loss of employment, retail or community use is robustly evidenced and reprovided where required; and
 - d. Provides high quality homes built to high sustainability standards with built-in resilience to climate change and fuel poverty, which contributes towards the Council's commitment to tackle the challenge of climate change.

Housing Density and Intensification

Housing Density and Intensification

- 2.35** This Plan sets a clear expectation for new residential development to make the best and most efficient use of land and respect local character. Designing new developments to accommodate higher densities of residential and business uses when they are within easy walking distance of a town and local centres and public transport hubs is the principal platform for sustainable development. Homes across the District have traditionally been built at a relatively low density and proposals continue to come forward, within sustainable locations, at densities below 35 units per hectare, which is now considered an inefficient use of land. There is scope to make better use of land, particularly on sites that are within settlements or close to public transport hubs.
- 2.36** The Council recognises that it is not necessary for new development to match the density of surrounding land uses. Well-designed higher density schemes can add variety and vitality to our places and spaces. Increasing the density of development in sustainable locations can help to ensure that land is used in the most efficient way, and that less land overall is developed. In Sevenoaks District, there are competing demands for use. The need for new homes is high, but the Green Belt covers the vast majority of the District. It is therefore crucial that the limited amount of land within settlement boundaries is used efficiently when considering proposals for new development.
- 2.37** Optimum densities should enhance the function of our places and meet the provisions of other policies in this Plan. Whilst there are some locations across the District that are suited to taller buildings there are other mechanisms for delivering higher density in a sustainable way. This includes intensification of under-developed locations in existing settlements and the development of low-rise and medium-rise higher density typologies including terraced housing, townhouses and four to six storey apartment buildings.



2.38 It is considered that there are six types of areas that are suited to higher density development:

- **Towns and local centres:** these are described as having the best access to services and therefore are the most sustainable and suitable for denser forms of development;
- **Walking distance to towns and local centres:** these areas encapsulate the 15 minute neighbourhood concept and advocate neighbourhoods in which those who live there can find everything they need in terms of work, retail, and leisure within 15 minutes of their home, via sustainable transport modes;
- **Train stations:** areas within a 10 minute walk of train stations are recognised;
- **Bus stops:** areas within a 5 minute walk of bus stops are recognised;
- **Bus service zones:** reflects the areas covered by a regular bus service; and
- **High frequency transit spots:** ranks train stations and bus stops based on their frequency and service with Swanley and parts of Sevenoaks ranked the highest.

2.39 When considering appropriate densities, proposals for new residential development should also reflect the conclusions of the Council's District Wide Character Study, respecting the sensitivity of places to change. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how these considerations have been taken into account and be prepared to discuss development options at the pre-application stage.

2.40 The initial Regulation 18 consultation in Winter 2022/23 highlighted that the preferred density option amongst respondents was the middle 'Optimum' option, which proposed modest density increase across all sites, including 150+dph in town centre locations and transport nodes, 100dph in built up areas and 50dph on the edge of built up areas, although the responses were fairly evenly split between the three options presented. For proposed site allocations, the Development Brief for the site will also indicate an expected density range based on site-specific considerations.



Policy H7

Housing Density and Intensification

1. Proposals for new housing development should explore the opportunities to achieve higher densities.
2. Proposals are expected to adhere to the following guidelines, where they can be achieved without a detrimental impact on local character or amenity:
 - a. In highly sustainable locations including town centre locations and close to transport hubs, densities in excess of 150 dwellings per hectare should be achieved;
 - b. In existing urban confines in higher tier settlements*, densities of 50-150 dwellings per hectare should be achieved; and
 - c. At the edge of the urban confines of higher tier settlements*, densities of 40-60 dwellings per hectare should be achieved.
 - d. Within and at the edge of villages* and rural locations, densities of 30-60 dwellings per hectare should be achieved.
3. These guidelines are in reference to the net density of a site. Densities should be measured in relation to the developable area which includes:
 - a. Private and communal open space;
 - b. Internal streets;
 - c. Multi-functional public space intended principally for the benefit and enjoyment of occupiers of the development; and
 - d. Non-residential uses within a mixed-use building that also contains residential accommodation.
4. Net density excludes public open space, the streets along the boundary of the site that serve a wider area and any non-residential uses that are not located above or below residential accommodation.

* Settlements are defined as Towns and Service Settlements, as set out within the Settlement Hierarchy.

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding

- 2.41** Self-build and Custom Housebuilding can offer a range of benefits over developer-built housing. People may choose this route for various reasons, for example where their current or future needs are not being met by volume housebuilding. It can allow for more bespoke or flexible design and, in some cases, may offer a more affordable housing option.
- 2.42** The Council maintains and publicises a Self and Custom Build Register, which forms part of the evidence base and helps to monitor demand for plots. As of 30 October 2024 (the close of Base Period 9), there were 334 individuals on the register. The strongest preferences are for detached 3 and 4 bedroom properties, particularly in Sevenoaks Urban Area and surrounds.
- 2.43** The Local Plan supports the provision of self-built plots to meet this demand and to fulfil the Council's 'duty to grant planning permission' under the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015. Proposals for Self and Custom Build must be located in sustainable locations, with good access to public transport, walking and cycling routes, local services, and community facilities.
- 2.44** The Council has worked with the Right to Build Task Force to develop a bespoke action plan for Self-build and Custom Housebuilding in Sevenoaks District. The action plan sets out practical measures to increase the delivery of available plots, including streamlining planning processes and introducing a dedicated Local Plan policy. Together, the action plan and this new policy framework aim to make Self-build and Custom Housebuilding a viable and accessible housing option across the District.
- 2.45** Initial findings from the TRLHN (2025) indicate a growing interest in Self-build and Custom Housebuilding as a preferred housing option in Sevenoaks District, particularly amongst households seeking more affordable or adaptable housing solutions.

Policy H8

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding

1. The Council will support proposals for Self-build and Custom Housebuilding where they:
 - a. Are located sustainably, within or adjacent to existing settlements, with access to public transport and active travel options, to be informed by the most recent Settlement Hierarchy methodology;
 - b. Are of a scale and design appropriate to their setting;
 - c. Provide safe and suitable access to the public highway; and
 - d. Can be served by existing or planned infrastructure, including utilities (unless part of a wider scheme which will bring forwards its own infrastructure provision).
2. On residential development sites of 10 dwellings or more, at least 5% of plots must be made available, rounded to the nearest whole plot, for self-build or custom housebuilding, as demonstrated by the latest local housing needs evidence, unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. There is no demand for such plots, as evidenced by the Council's Self and Custom Build Register; or
 - b. The provision would make the development unviable
3. The Council will support the allocation of sites specifically for Self-build and Custom Housebuilding in Neighbourhood Plans and through rural exception sites, where they meet local housing needs.
4. Proposals for Self-build and Custom Housebuilding must demonstrate how they will deliver serviced plots and ensure that the initial occupiers will have primary input into the design and layout of their new homes.
5. Where plots remain unsold after being marketed for at least 12 months, they may revert to general market housing, subject to agreement with the Council. The development will be expected to comply with Policy H2 (Provision of Affordable Housing). In such cases, the affordable housing contribution will be recalculated in line with the requirements of Policy H2.

Gypsies and Travellers

Site Allocations

- 2.46 Gypsy and Travellers are an important part of the Sevenoaks District community and national policy states that we must plan for their housing needs in the same way as for the settled community. The most recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was undertaken in 2025, and this takes account of the updated definition of Gypsies and Travellers, as published in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (2024).
- 2.47 The GTAA (2025) identifies a need for 192 additional pitches up to 2042. Of this need, 115 pitches are needed in the first five years and 77 over the longer-term period 2030/31 to 2042/23, as shown in Table 2.2.

Residential Pitch Need		Sevenoaks District
A.	5 Year Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2025/26 to 2029/30)	115
Longer-term need		
B.	Over period 2030/31 to 2034/35	29
C.	Over period 2035/36 to 2039/40	26
D.	Over period 2040/41 to 2042/43	22
E.	Longer-term need Total (B + C _D)	77
Total Shortfall 2025/26 to 2042/43		192

Table 2.2: Gypsy and Traveller pitch need 2025/26 to 2042/43 (from GTAA 2025)

2.48 This need takes account of:

- The baseline number of households on all types of sites (authorised, unauthorised and temporary authorised sites) as at June 2025;
- Existing households planning to move in the immediate (0-5 years) and longer (up to 2042) time period (currently on sites and also from bricks and mortar) and where they are planning to move to; and
- Emerging households currently on sites and planning to emerge in the immediate (0-5 years) and longer (up to 2042) time period and stay within the study area on a pitch.

2.49 The GTAA also identified a potential range of supply options which could provide between 140 and 151 pitches. There is therefore a residual need for between 41 and 52 pitches to be met through additional pitches on existing or new sites.

2.50 A strategy to identify locations for additional permanent pitches has been developed, subject to site sustainability and suitability. Consideration has and will continue to be given to whether a site:

- a. Is sustainable, prioritising those close to the District's higher tier settlements (as defined by the Council's Settlement Hierarchy) and existing services and facilities;
- b. Has existing pitches, and whether those are permanent, temporary or unauthorised;
- c. Has impact on local character, prioritising those lying outside of National Landscapes and with existing built form;
- d. Has impact on protected areas such as Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); and
- e. Will provide an acceptable living environment for future occupants in terms of size, noise and air quality and is not located within an area likely to flood.

2.51 It is noted that the allocations proposed in Policy GT1 (Provision for the Gypsy and Traveller Community) do not yet meet the need identified in full. Additional work will be undertaken ahead of the Regulation 19 consultation to identify further sites for allocation to meet this need.

2.52 Under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, the Council is required by law to license caravan sites and mobile homes, unless they fall into the category of exempted sites. Licensing is undertaken by the Council's Housing Team.

Policy GT1

Provision for the Gypsy and Traveller Community

The following sites are proposed to be allocated for Gypsy and Traveller pitches

Site Ref	Address	Proposed Additional Permanent Pitches	Total pitches on site (existing and proposed)
EDEN17	Seven Acres Farm, Edenbridge	5	15
HAL6	Station Court, Sevenoaks Road, Halstead	12	16
SV3	Park Lane Farm, Park Lane, Swanley Village	1	3
EDEN15	Mead Road, Edenbridge	5	5

STRATEGIC POLICY

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

- 2.53** Not all Gypsy and Traveller pitches will be delivered through Local Plan site allocations. Proposals for new permanent gypsy and traveller pitches, as well as transit pitches, are likely to come forward and therefore for development management purposes we are proposing the following policy.
- 2.54** This policy reflects the updated NPPF (2024) and PPTS (2024). Policy GT2 (Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation) ensures that proposals for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation are considered equally alongside other forms of housing, with a focus on sustainability, integration and meeting identified local needs.

Travelling Showperson Accommodation

- 2.55** The latest GTAA (2025) did not identify a specific need for Travelling Showperson Accommodation but Policy GT2 (Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation) will ensure that any future applications are considered equally alongside other forms of housing, with a focus on sustainability, integration and meeting identified local needs.

Policy GT2

Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation

1. Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers on residential and transit pitches on sites and Travelling Showpeople on plots on yards must take account of the policies within the Local Plan and the latest national policy. Proposals will be supported where they meet the following criteria:
 - a. The site/yard should be located close to services and facilities and access to public transport. Sites/yards within or adjacent to towns or service settlements, as defined by the Settlement Hierarchy, will be preferred;
 - b. Sites/yards should promote social inclusion and community cohesion;
 - c. The site/yard provides an acceptable living environment for future occupants in terms of size, noise, air quality and design quality, and is not located within an area likely to flood;
 - d. Safe and convenient vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access can be provided to the site site/yard;
 - e. The development minimises potential impacts on the surrounding character, landscape (including National Landscapes) and biodiversity;
 - f. Proposals within the Green Belt must demonstrate Very Special Circumstances, unless they fall within one of the exceptions set out in national policy. Where land has been identified locally as 'grey belt', this will be considered in the context of its contribution to Green Belt purposes A, B and D specifically;
 - g. Associated buildings, including amenity blocks, must be proportionate in scale and bulk to the pitches proposed; and
 - h. The proposal aligns with the most recent assessment of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson need and contributes to meeting identified needs.

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Sevenoaks District has a thriving economy which enjoys the locational benefit of being close to London and within a successful area of Kent and the wider south-east region. Taking advantage of this position is essential to maintaining and growing the economy.



Employment and Economy

03





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We want to support existing and new businesses, rural communities, town and local centres, and the tourism sector.

Employment and Economy

03

Strategic Objectives:

- OB14: Promote resilient and agile town centres that are able to respond to change.
- OB15: Support the delivery of new employment land which meets the needs of a modern economy.
- OB16: Safeguard and optimise the use of existing employment land.
- OB17: Support the diversification of the rural economy.
- OB18: Grow the tourism sector with a particular focus on providing more visitor accommodation.



The policies within this Chapter seek to further build a strong, competitive economy across Sevenoaks District. Reflecting the Council's Economic Needs Study 2022, and its 2025 update, the economic strategy of this Local Plan is to protect and optimise existing employment land, deliver the right type of new employment land in the right places, secure vibrant town and local centres, grow the tourism sector and diversify the rural economy.

Delivering Economic Success

- 3.1 The NPPF (2024) requires local plans to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, taking into account existing needs and wider opportunities for development. For Sevenoaks District, the vision is to foster a dynamic, growing and inclusive economy for businesses, communities and visitors that is kind to the environment, contributes to the health and wellbeing of all and supports the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change.
- 3.2 The local economy is strong and Sevenoaks District, like much of west Kent, is characterised by high levels of economic activity and a skilled resident workforce. In 2023, the gross value added (GVA) in the District was £5,098 million, which was the third highest in Kent and a 14.5% increase from 2022. The GVA per job was the highest in Kent at £79,610, representing a five year increase of 18.6%. However, the economic and technological landscapes are evolving at accelerating rates, and when considered with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit, there remains a great deal of change and uncertainty, even several years later in 2025. Furthermore, land in the District is heavily constrained by the Green Belt and National Landscapes, and the availability of land for growth is more limited than in other areas. Subsequently, development in the District will need to be innovative and flexible in its approach to delivering economic success.
- 3.3 To inform the economic strategy of this Local Plan, the Council commissioned an Economic Needs Study (ENS) in 2022, followed by its 2025 update. Together they form a robust assessment of the performance of the District's economy and commercial property market and determine future employment floorspace needs over the plan period to 2042. They conclude that the office market, although relatively small, is mainly well-functioning, with its core strength in the 2,000 to 5,000 square foot range. However, this is under severe pressure from residential conversions which, up to the monitoring year 2024/25, result in a net loss of office floorspace (this includes consented development not yet implemented). The industrial market is performing well and growing, driven in part by an increased demand for storage and distribution floorspace. This has led to minimal vacancy rates throughout the District.



- 3.4 The ENS uses Cambridge Econometrics projections to forecast future job demand in the District. It then compares this, alongside allowances for vacancy rates and, in the case of office floorspace, unplanned losses, against the existing and consented supply (up to and including the monitoring year 2024/25). This results in a minimum quantity of office (Use Class E(g)i) and industrial (Use Classes B2 and B8) floorspace that needs to be planned for over the plan period, and this is set out in Table 3.1. For industrial floorspace, this includes a 20% buffer because a significant proportion of the District's consented supply relies on two large schemes whose timescale for delivery has been uncertain, these being at Broom Hill in Swanley and Fort Halstead near Halstead.
- 3.5 The ENS suggests that the majority of new office floorspace will act as a replacement of that lost to residential conversions and recommends that this should be delivered in town centres, with a preference for Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge. For industrial floorspace, and based on the existing concentrations of the District's successful activity, the recommendation is that there should be a particular focus on delivering this at Swanley, where there is good access to the M25, and at the Vestry Trading Estate in Sevenoaks. It also notes opportunities for intensification through redevelopment on existing industrial land in Edenbridge. Although not quantified, appropriate opportunities for development in Use Classes E(c), E(g)ii and E(g)iii should also be taken where appropriate.
- 3.6 The Council also commissioned a Town Centres Strategy in 2022 and prepared its own Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027. These, taken with the ENS, have formed the basis for the economic strategy set out within this policy and the supporting policies. Proposals for economic development will be expected to meet the criteria in Strategic Policy EMP1 (Delivering Economic Success) and the supporting policies where relevant to the type and scale of development proposed.

Table 3.1: Employment need over the Plan period

Use	Floorspace need (sqm)	Indicative land need (ha)
General industry Storage and distribution (Use Classes B2/B8)	14,600	3.7 (based on a plot ratio of 0.4)
Office (Use Class E(g)i)	25,800	2.6 (based on a plot ratio of 1)

Policy EMP1

Delivering Economic Success

1. The Council will seek to ensure that proposals for economic development in the District contribute to the delivery of economic success by:
 - a. Contributing to the delivery of a minimum of 40,400 sqm of additional employment floorspace, of which 25,800 sqm should be for office uses (Use Class E(g)i) primarily in town centre locations, and 14,600 sqm for industrial uses (Use Classes B2/B8);
 - b. Meeting the particular demand for storage and distribution floorspace in the north of the District, specifically at Swanley and the Vestry Trading Estate in Sevenoaks;
 - c. Delivering flexible and creative workspace and the co-location of uses where appropriate;
 - d. Delivering windfall employment floorspace where appropriate;
 - e. Safeguarding and optimising existing employment land to meet the needs of a modern economy and increase the attractiveness of Sevenoaks District as a business location;
 - f. Improving digital connectivity;
 - g. Seeking opportunities for emerging technologies and economic sectors currently under-represented in the District;
 - h. Diversifying the rural economy;
 - i. Growing the visitor economy, with a focus on providing more visitor accommodation; and
 - j. Cultivating resilience in town and local centres, strengthening their sense of place and roles as key locations for retail, leisure, employment and a wide range of other services and facilities.

STRATEGIC POLICY

New Employment Land

- 3.7 Using the findings of the Council's Economic Needs Study (ENS) 2022, and its 2025 update, the purpose of Strategic Policy EMP2 is to set out proposed land allocations to help meet the identified need for additional employment land. The market will also bring forward proposals for windfall development on land that has not been specifically allocated through this policy. The Council will support such proposals, in principle, on land within built-up area boundaries or within the Green Belt where they accord with national Green Belt policy. Windfall proposals in the Green Belt may need to comprise grey belt land in sustainable locations where there is a demonstrated need, or a demonstration of very special circumstances. Appropriate land is most likely to be adjacent to the built-up area boundaries of the towns, primary and secondary service settlements and where transport hubs are located (subject to all other material considerations).
- 3.8 Proposals coming forward through Strategic Policy EMP2 will need to demonstrate that they meet a need identified by the ENS (as a starting point) and not result in the unacceptable loss of an existing use. They should enable the regeneration and/or most efficient use of land, minimise the need to travel by private vehicles and seek opportunities to improve access by sustainable and active modes of transport. Proposals must generate economic activity appropriate to the location, taking into account the amenity of surrounding development. There must be no unacceptable impact on highways, including taking into account access and parking arrangements. There must be no unacceptable impacts on the natural and built environments or the landscape and visual amenity, with very careful consideration required in proposals involving heritage assets, National Landscapes or their settings.

Policy EMP2

New Employment Land

1. The following land is proposed for allocation for employment uses, either individually or as part of a mixed-use scheme:

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GF	USE	FLOORSPACE (SQM)	PRIMARY USE CLASS	OTHER USES
SEVENOAKS URBAN AREA - PRINCIPAL TOWN						
SEV25	Bakers Yard, Otford Road	Partial PDL	MX	TBC	TBC	TBC
SEV26	Land at Bartram Farm and adjacent to Vestry Road	PDL	EM	5,000 4,000	B2/B8 E	Nursery
SEV27	Otford Road Depot, Otford Road	PDL	EM	1,181	B8/E	Drive-thru
SEV28	Land at Old Otford Road and Vestry Trading Estate	GF	EM	18,000	B2/B8	N/A
SWANLEY - TOWN						
SWAN10	Swanley Centre, London Road	Urban	MX	TBC	TBC	TBC
SWAN11	Land north and south of Maidstone Road	GF	MX	10,500	B2/B8	TBC
SWAN16	Land at Upper Hockenden Farm, Maidstone Road	PDL	EM	3,900	B2/B8/E	N/A
SWAN17	Petham Court Farm (west of M25)	GF	EM	11,000	B2/B8/E	Stadium Hotel Sport Leisure Medical
EDENBRIDGE - TOWN						
EDEN14	Land at Breezehurst Farm, Crouch House Road	GF	MX	1,400	B2/B8/E	N/A
EDEN16	Land at Swan Lane	GF	MX	TBC	TBC	TBC

Policy EMP2

New Employment Land (Continued)

SITE REF	SITE ADDRESS	URBAN / PDL / GF	USE	FLOORSPACE (SQM)	PRIMARY USE CLASS	OTHER USES
HARTLEY - PRIMARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT						
HART7	Hartley Breakers Yard, Hartley Bottom Road	PDL	EM	1,880	B2/B8/E	N/A
NEW ASH GREEN - PRIMARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT						
NAG3	New Ash Green Village Centre	Urban	MX	TBC	TBC	TBC
WEST KINGSDOWN - SECONDARY SERVICE SETTLEMENT						
WK5	Kings Lodge, London Road	PDL	EM	800	TBC	Retail
VILLAGES						
BRASTED						
B1	The White House, High Street*	Partial PDL	MX	TBC	TBC	TBC
HAMLETS AND CLUSTERS						
PENSHURST						
PEN1	Elliott's Farm, Rogues Hill	Partial PDL	EM	200	B2/B8/E	N/A
BADGERS MOUNT						
BM1	Chelsfield Depot, Shackfields Road	PDL	EM	TBC	B2/B8/E	N/A
ASH						
ASH1	Beechcroft Farm Industries, Chapel Wood Road	Partial PDL	EM	3,720	B2/B8/E	N/A
SWANLEY VILLAGE						
SV2	Lower Daltons Nursery, Swanley Village Road	PDL	EM	650	B8/E	N/A
TOTAL						62,231
POTENTIAL NEW SETTLEMENTS						
PED1	Land at Pedham Place	GF	MX	27,000 22,000	B2/B8 E	N/A
TOTAL						49,000

*This results in a net loss of employment floorspace

Policy EMP2

New Employment Land (Continued)

2. Proposals for economic development on allocated land, land within built-up area boundaries and land within the Green Belt (where they accord with national Green Belt policy) will be permitted where they would:
 - a. Meet a need identified by the Council's most up-to-date Economic Needs Study (as a starting point);
 - b. Not result in the unacceptable loss of an existing use;
 - c. Enable the regeneration and/or most efficient use of land;
 - d. Minimise the need to travel by private vehicles and seek opportunities to enable better access to sustainable and active modes of travel;
 - e. Have no unacceptable impact on highways, including consideration of access and parking;
 - f. Generate activity appropriate to the location, taking into account the amenity of surrounding development;
 - g. Have no unacceptable impact on the natural and built environments (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving heritage assets or their settings); and
 - h. Have no unacceptable impact on the landscape and visual amenity (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving a National Landscape or its setting).

STRATEGIC POLICY



Retaining and Optimising Existing Employment Land

3.9 Taking into account the high level of constrained land in Sevenoaks District limiting the supply of new employment land, it is important that the supply of existing employment land is safeguarded and optimised. The Council's Economic Needs Study 2022 (ENS), and its 2025 update, make recommendations for the release of specific sites but otherwise provide a strong basis for the retention and optimisation of existing employment land. Designated employment land, the most important in the District, is identified on the proposals map and any proposal that would undermine or diminish the role and function of this land will not be permitted.

3.10 Proposals to redevelop, reconfigure, intensify or expand activity on existing employment land will be supported in principle. This may include the limited introduction of other compatible uses where there would be an optimisation of the overall employment capacity of the site, representing the regeneration or most efficient use of the land. Where such land is within the Green Belt, proposals will need to accord with national Green Belt policy.

3.11 It is acknowledged that amendments to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) have expanded the ability for changes of use to take place without the need to apply for planning permission (although subject to prior approval in many cases). However, in accordance with the recommendations of the ENS, the Council will robustly defend the retention of existing uses where an application for planning permission is made to change that use. This is to ensure that an appropriate mixture of economic uses is maintained. The ENS recommends the use of Article 4 Directions in some locations to protect the most important land from permitted

changes of use, and the Council will explore this in the longer term. In the meantime, proposals for the change of use of existing employment land in Use Classes B2, B8, E(c) or E(g), including vacant sites and buildings last in those uses, will only be permitted where at least one of the following criteria is satisfied:

- a. The land has been allocated for an alternative use through this Local Plan;
- b. The ENS recommends the land for release;
- c. The land is demonstrably unsuitable for its existing use, where consideration will be given to:
 - The quality of the land and its impact upon the functioning of the use;
 - The existing use's impact on the surrounding area and amenity of surrounding uses;
 - The potential significant benefits of relocating the existing use;
 - The land being very poorly located for the existing use, either operationally or in terms of sustainability; or
- d. It is demonstrated that the existing use is unlikely to be taken up for its continued use by another owner/occupier and is no longer viable.



3.12 Proposals coming forward under criterion d. must be evidenced by having comprehensively and professionally marketed the land at its existing use or last use at an appropriate price, taking into account existing market conditions and the condition of the land/building(s). Marketing should have been for its existing use or last use, followed by other suitable uses within Use Classes B2, B8, E(c) and E(g). It should have been carried out for a period of 12 continuous months in the case of designated employment land and 6 continuous months in the case of all other employment land, prior to the submission of an application at a time when the site was, or soon will be, available.

3.13 Marketing evidence should include examples of agents used, adverts published, dates when active marketing was carried out and information on any interest received, and why this did not result in a sale or new let. The Council may require a review of the information submitted by an independent consultant, and it is expected that applicants will cover the cost of this. The extent of evidence required may vary on a case-by-case basis, and applicants are encouraged to seek pre-application advice.

Proposals for alternative uses will be considered in the following sequential order:

- a. The use allocated through this Local Plan (where relevant);
- b. Suitable uses within Use Classes B2, B8, E(c) and E(g);
- c. All other employment generating uses;
- d. A mixture of residential and employment generating uses; and
- e. A wholly residential scheme.

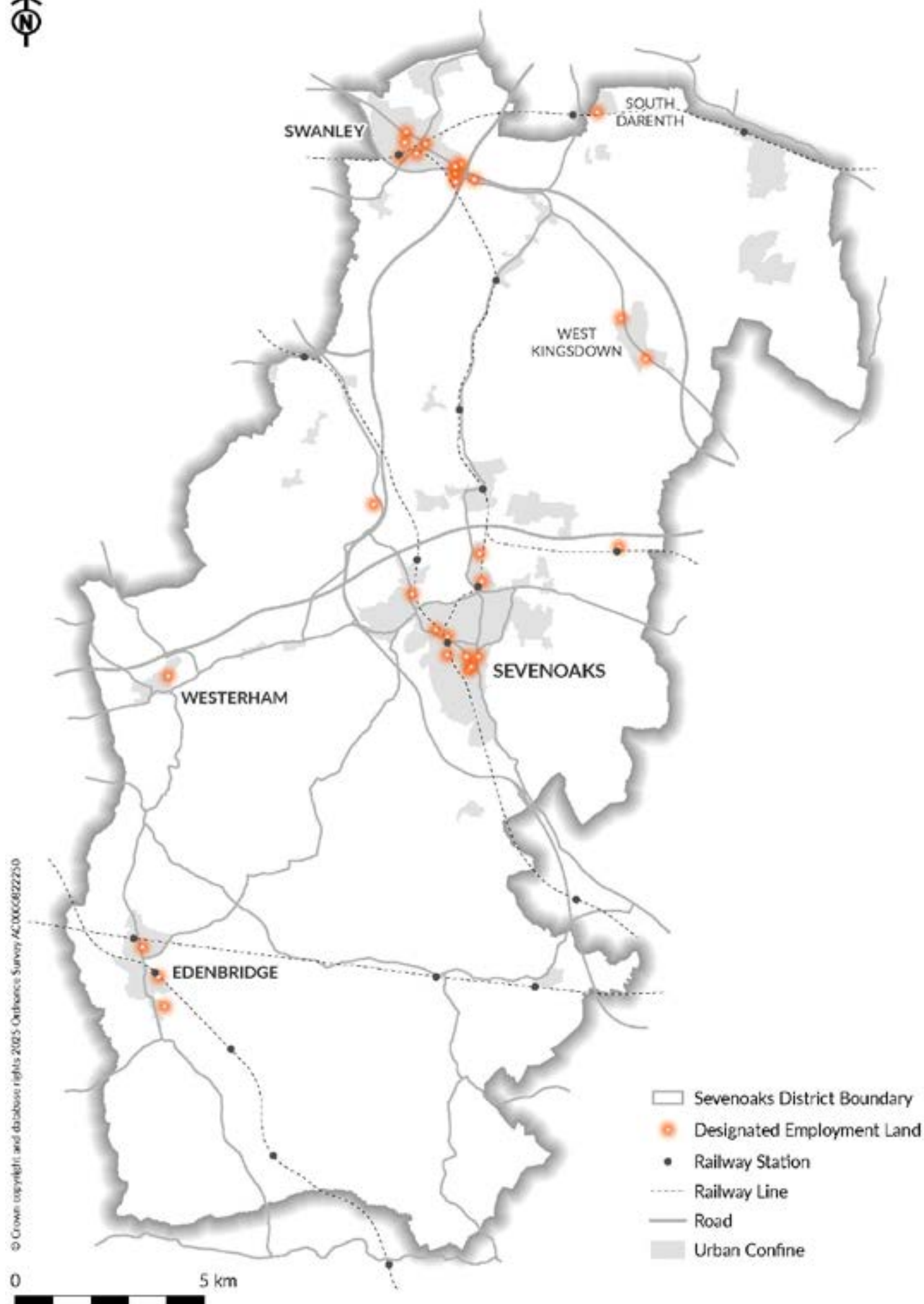


Figure 3.4: Map of Designated Employment Land

Policy EMP3

Retaining and Optimising Existing Employment Land

1. Any proposal that would undermine or diminish the role and function of designated employment land, as shown on the proposals map, will not be permitted.
2. Proposals to redevelop, reconfigure, intensify or expand activity on existing employment land within built-up area boundaries, or within the Green Belt (where they accord with national Green Belt policy) will be permitted where they:
 - a. Optimise the overall employment capacity of the site and represent the regeneration or most efficient use of the land;
 - b. Meet a need identified within the Council's most up-to-date Economic Needs Study (as a starting point);
 - c. Minimise the need to travel by private vehicles and seek opportunities to enable better access to sustainable and active modes of travel;
 - d. Have no unacceptable impact on highways, including consideration of access and parking;
 - e. Generate activity appropriate to the location, taking into account the amenity of surrounding development;
 - f. Have no unacceptable impact on the natural and built environments (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving heritage assets or their settings); and
 - g. Have no unacceptable impact on the landscape and visual amenity (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving a National Landscape or its setting).
3. Proposals to change the use of existing employment land in Use Classes B2, B8, E(c) or E(g) away from those uses, including vacant sites and buildings last in those uses, will only be permitted where:
 - a. The land has been allocated for an alternative use through this Local Plan;
 - b. The Council's most-up-to-date Economic Needs Study recommends the land for release;
 - c. The land is demonstrably unsuitable for its existing or last use (see Paragraph 3.11 for guidance on the implementation of this criterion); or
 - d. The existing or last use is unlikely to be taken up for its continued use and is no longer viable (see Paragraphs 3.12 and 3.13 for guidance on the implementation of this criterion).
4. Where Criterion 3 has been satisfied, proposals for alternative uses will be considered in the following sequential order:
 - a. The use allocated through this Local Plan (where relevant);
 - b. Suitable uses within Use Classes B2, B8, E(c) and E(g);
 - c. All other employment generating uses;
 - d. A mixture of residential and employment generating uses; and
 - e. A wholly residential scheme.



Rural Diversification

- 3.14** Economic growth in rural areas helps those communities to prosper. The rural areas of Sevenoaks District are highly constrained by the Green Belt and two National Landscapes, but the Council wants to see a thriving, diverse and productive countryside. The NPPF is clear that local plans should include policies that allow appropriate rural enterprises to grow and expand whilst protecting the Green Belt from inappropriate development and uses. It recognises that meeting business needs may have to take place adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations not well served by public transport. It is crucial that economic growth, social needs and environmental constraints are not traded off against each other but balanced together for the benefit of all.
- 3.15** Given the rural nature of Sevenoaks District, the rural economy, more so than in other areas of Kent, is integral to the success of the wider economy. It is, however, facing significant challenges. Growing and rearing continues to undergo fundamental change which means that agricultural and other land-based businesses must also change. Farming has become less profitable and in the search for alternative forms of income, new forms of business must be explored. The Council will still support the diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses in principle where they accord with national Green Belt policy.
- 3.16** Proposals must allow for the continued operation of the remaining land holding and must not result in the need for additional buildings for that operation as a result of the reuse of existing buildings for other uses. Where practicable, existing buildings should be reused or replaced in preference to the construction of new buildings. If demonstrated not to be practicable, any new buildings must be well related physically and functionally to existing buildings. Proposals must generate a business, leisure or tourism use which is appropriate to the rural location, taking into account the amenity of surrounding development.
- 3.17** Proposals must minimise the need to travel by private vehicles and seek opportunities to improve access by sustainable and active modes of transport. There must be no unacceptable impacts on highways, including taking into account access and parking arrangements, or Public Rights of Way. There must be no unacceptable harm to the natural or built environments or the landscape and visual amenity. Very careful consideration will need to be given to proposals which may impact heritage assets, a National Landscape, or their settings, in accordance with other relevant policies in this Local Plan.
- 3.18** Applicants are encouraged to engage with the Council's Economic Development team and refer to the Council's Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 and Economic Needs Study 2022, and its 2025 update, when developing proposals.

Policy EMP4

Rural Diversification

1. Proposals for the diversification of agricultural or other land-based businesses, including the conversion of rural buildings, will be permitted where they accord with national Green Belt policy and where they:
 - a. Demonstrate that there would be no severance or disruption to the remaining agricultural or other land-based holding;
 - b. Demonstrate that the development would not necessitate the need for additional buildings to continue the operation of the remaining land as a result of the reuse of existing buildings for other uses;
 - c. Reuse or replace existing buildings where practicable. Where this is not practicable, any new buildings must be well related physically and functionally to existing buildings;
 - d. Generate a business, leisure or tourism use with an identified need and which is appropriate to the rural location, taking into account the amenity of surrounding development;
 - e. Have no unacceptable impact on highways including consideration of access and parking;
 - f. Mitigate any additional pressures on adjacent Public Rights of Way;
 - g. Seek opportunities to enable better access to sustainable and active modes of travel;
 - h. Have no unacceptable impact on the natural and built environments (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving heritage assets or their settings); and
 - i. Have no unacceptable impact on the landscape and visual amenity (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving a National Landscape or its setting).



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The District boasts a number of nationally recognised heritage assets, including Knole House, Chartwell, Hever Castle and Penshurst Place.



Tourism and the Visitor Economy

3.19 Tourism and the visitor economy is a significant contributor to the wider economy of Sevenoaks District. The area benefits from an attractive natural environment, with more than 60% of land being covered by the High Weald and Kent Downs National Landscapes. There are diverse market towns and villages, as well as nationally recognised historic estates and heritage assets including Knole House, Chartwell, Hever Castle and Penshurst Place. In 2023, the sector was valued at over £260 million per annum, supporting over 4,000 jobs equivalent to approximately 8% of all employment in the District.

3.20 However the sector faces challenges, with the Kent Accommodation Study 2020 identifying a lack of accommodation across the District, restricting the ability of existing attractions and facilities to grow, and new ones to establish. The result is that the tourism sector in the District is primarily shaped by the day-trip market, which accounted for over 95% of visits in 2023. The sector was also one of the hardest hit by the Covid-19 restrictions, as identified in the national tourism strategy, the Tourism Recovery Plan 2021. In Kent, an estimated 89% of tourism and hospitality facilities closed either temporarily or indefinitely – more than any other sector, although there was an increase in demand for our outdoor attractions such as Knole Park, National Trust gardens and the extensive Public Right of Way network. As such, the Council's Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 includes a focus on rebuilding a stronger and more diverse tourism offer.



The Retention of Existing Tourist Accommodation

3.21 Existing tourist accommodation will be retained in that use unless at least one of the following criteria is satisfied:

- a. The site is demonstrably unsuitable for its continued use, where consideration will be given to:
 - The quality of the land/building(s) and its impact upon the functioning of the use;
 - The use's impact on the surrounding area and amenity of surrounding uses;
 - The potential significant benefits of relocating the use;
 - The land being very poorly located for the use, either operationally or in terms of sustainability; or
- b. The site is unlikely to be taken up for its continued use and is no longer viable.



3.22 Proposals coming forward under criterion b. must be evidenced by having comprehensively and professionally marketed the land for its existing use at an appropriate price, taking into account existing market conditions and the condition of the land/building(s). Marketing should have been carried out for a period of 12 continuous months prior to the submission of an application at a time when the site was, or soon will be, available. Marketing evidence should include examples of agents used, adverts published, dates when active marketing was carried out and information on any interest received, and why this did not result in a sale or new let. The Council may require a review of the information submitted by an independent consultant, and it is expected that applicants will cover the cost of this. The extent of evidence required may vary on a case-by-case basis, and applicants are encouraged to seek pre-application advice.



New or Upgraded Tourist Attractions and Accommodation

3.23 Proposals to upgrade or provide new tourist attractions and accommodation will be supported in principle within built-up area boundaries or within the Green Belt where they accord with national Green Belt policy. Such proposals may need to comprise either grey belt land in sustainable locations where there is a demonstrated need, or a demonstration of very special circumstances. All proposals must contribute to the diversification of sites in the District, meeting a need with reference to the Kent Accommodation Study 2020 and the Council's Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 (as starting points). This will include consideration of where needs are not being met by existing facilities in the locality and where there are opportunities to expand the offering available to local communities as well as visitors.

3.24 Proposals must minimise the need to travel by private vehicles and seek opportunities to improve access by sustainable and active modes of transport, with particular consideration given to first and last mile connectivity. The type of activity generated must be compatible with the amenity of surrounding development and there must be no unacceptable impacts on highways, including taking into account access and parking arrangements, or Public Rights of Way. There must be no unacceptable harm to the natural or built environments or the landscape and visual amenity. Very careful consideration will need to be given to proposals which may impact heritage assets, a National Landscape, or their settings, in accordance with other relevant policies in this Local Plan.





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Tourism has great potential to have a positive impact on local communities and the economy of Sevenoaks District.

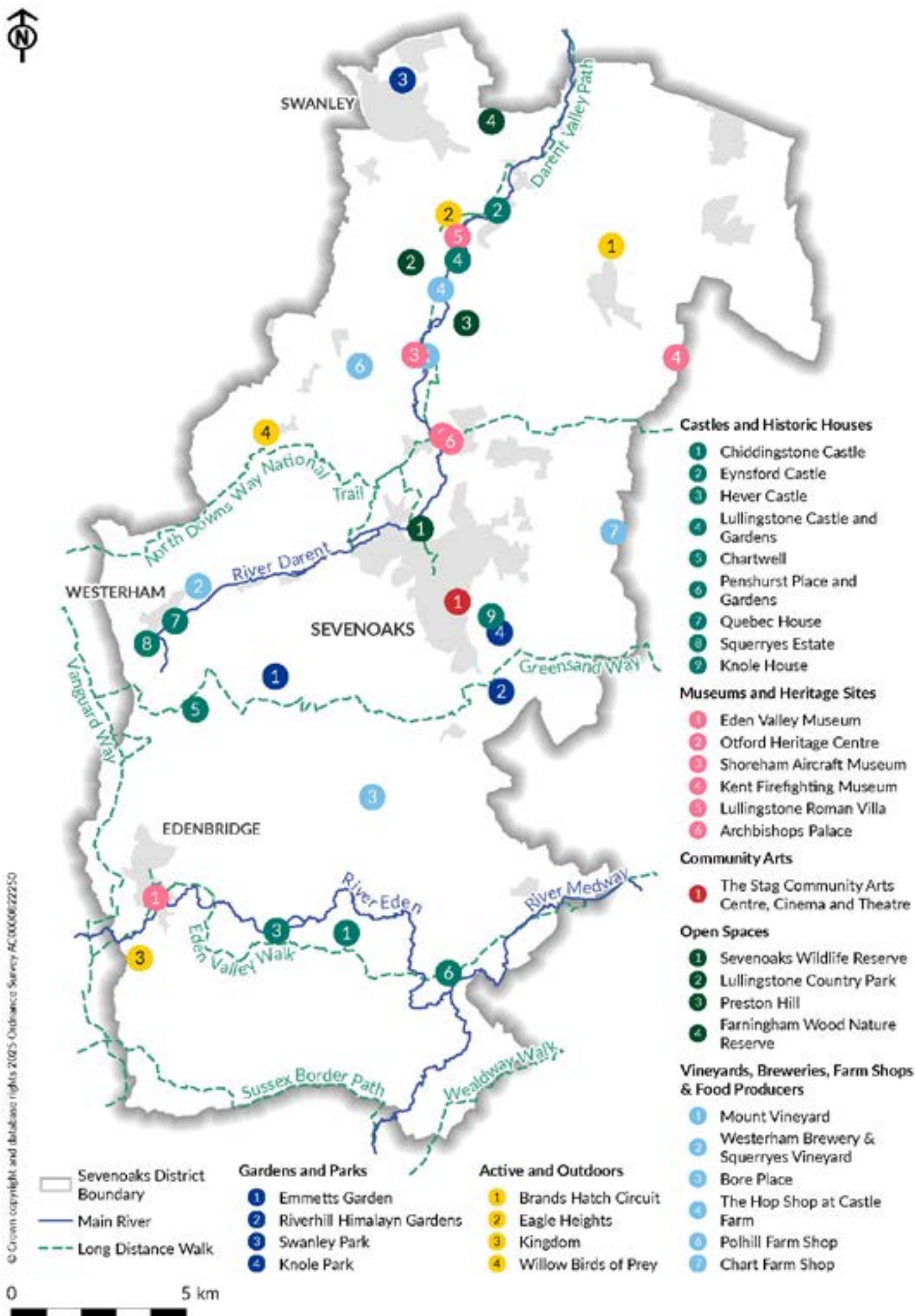


Figure 3.5: Distribution of Tourist Attractions Throughout the District



Policy EMP5

Tourism and the Visitor Economy

1. The change of use of existing tourist accommodation, including vacant sites and buildings last used for tourist accommodation, will only be permitted where:
 - a. The land is demonstrably unsuitable for its continued use (see Paragraph 3.30 for guidance on the implementation of this criterion); or
 - b. The land is unlikely to be taken up for its continued use and is no longer viable (see Paragraph 3.31 for guidance on the implementation of this criterion).
2. Proposals for new or upgraded visitor attractions and accommodation on land within built-up area boundaries and land within the Green Belt (where they accord with national Green Belt policy) will be permitted where they would:
 - a. Contribute to the diversification of facilities in the District and meet an identified need;
 - b. Ensure access to the facilities is available to the widest range of potential users, including local communities as well as visitors;
 - c. Encourage the sustainable enjoyment of the natural, historical or cultural assets of the District;
 - d. Minimise the need to travel by private vehicles and seek opportunities to improve access by sustainable and active modes of transport, with particular consideration given to first and last mile connectivity;
 - e. Mitigate any additional pressures on adjacent Public Rights of Way;
 - f. Have no unacceptable impact on highways, including consideration of access and parking arrangements;
 - g. Generate activity appropriate to the location, taking into account the amenity of surrounding development;
 - h. Have no unacceptable impact on the natural and built environments (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving heritage assets or their settings); and
 - i. Have no unacceptable impact on the landscape and visual amenity (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving a National Landscape or its setting).

Resilient Town and Local Centres

Resilient Town and Local Centres

- 3.25** We want to ensure that the town centres within Sevenoaks District continue to thrive and remain at the heart of our local communities as a place for socialising, shopping, leisure and a wide variety of other activities. Our high streets will support the economic competitiveness of the District, to ensure our places remain vibrant and resilient.
- 3.26** The 'high street' has undergone rapid structural change in recent years, with the continued trend towards online shopping, click and collect and other forms of less place-based retail. However, other trends, including increased 'working from home' and the emergence of more independent retail, have also shaped our high streets. We need to support our high streets by allowing them the flexibility to manage and respond to change, to adapt and diversify and by promoting their individual, unique characters, as places where people continue to desire to visit.
- 3.27** The 2022 Town Centres Strategy recommends planning for stability (rather than expansion or contraction) in terms of the retail floorspace within our centres, supporting and improving the quality of existing retail and town centre offer and environment. Our evidence base assessment shows that there is no overriding need for an increase in either convenience (food) or comparison (non-food) floorspace in the District. It is acknowledged that high streets are changing, and Use Class E (commercial, business and services use) allows for change of use between shops, offices, cafes and restaurants. The uses which attract people to different centres are widening and therefore a flexible approach is supported, to ensure that the high street meets a variety of needs and permits linked trips to a sustainable location.





3.28 There are four defined town centres within the District – Sevenoaks, Swanley, Edenbridge and Westerham. They each have a different role, character and catchment, and therefore have individual policies below, but together they form a network of small-scale centres which provide for the retail, leisure, employment and community needs of the District.

3.29 Within defined local centre boundaries, small-scale town centre uses, which meet the needs of the centre they serve, will be encouraged and should contribute to improving the quality of the local centre environment. A range of shops and facilities will be maintained to meet the day-to-day retail needs of the communities which they serve.



3.30 We are proposing tailored policies for each of our four town centres, and for the local centre in New Ash Green, which remains a focus for regeneration. These policies build on the recommendations from the Town Centres Strategy and Neighbourhood Plans and developers are expected to demonstrate how it has been taken into account in any proposals for these areas. The Town Centre Strategy is also reflected in the activities within our Economic Development strategy.

3.31 Town centre boundaries and primary shopping areas are defined for each town centre. A small-scale boundary change is proposed in Sevenoaks Town – the local centre around the station is to be re-classified as part of the town centre. Both the existing primary and secondary retail frontages become the new 'primary shopping area' and this is extended to incorporate Blighs Meadow. New Local centres boundaries are proposed for South Darenth and Eynsford, to recognise and support the existing retail and service provision.

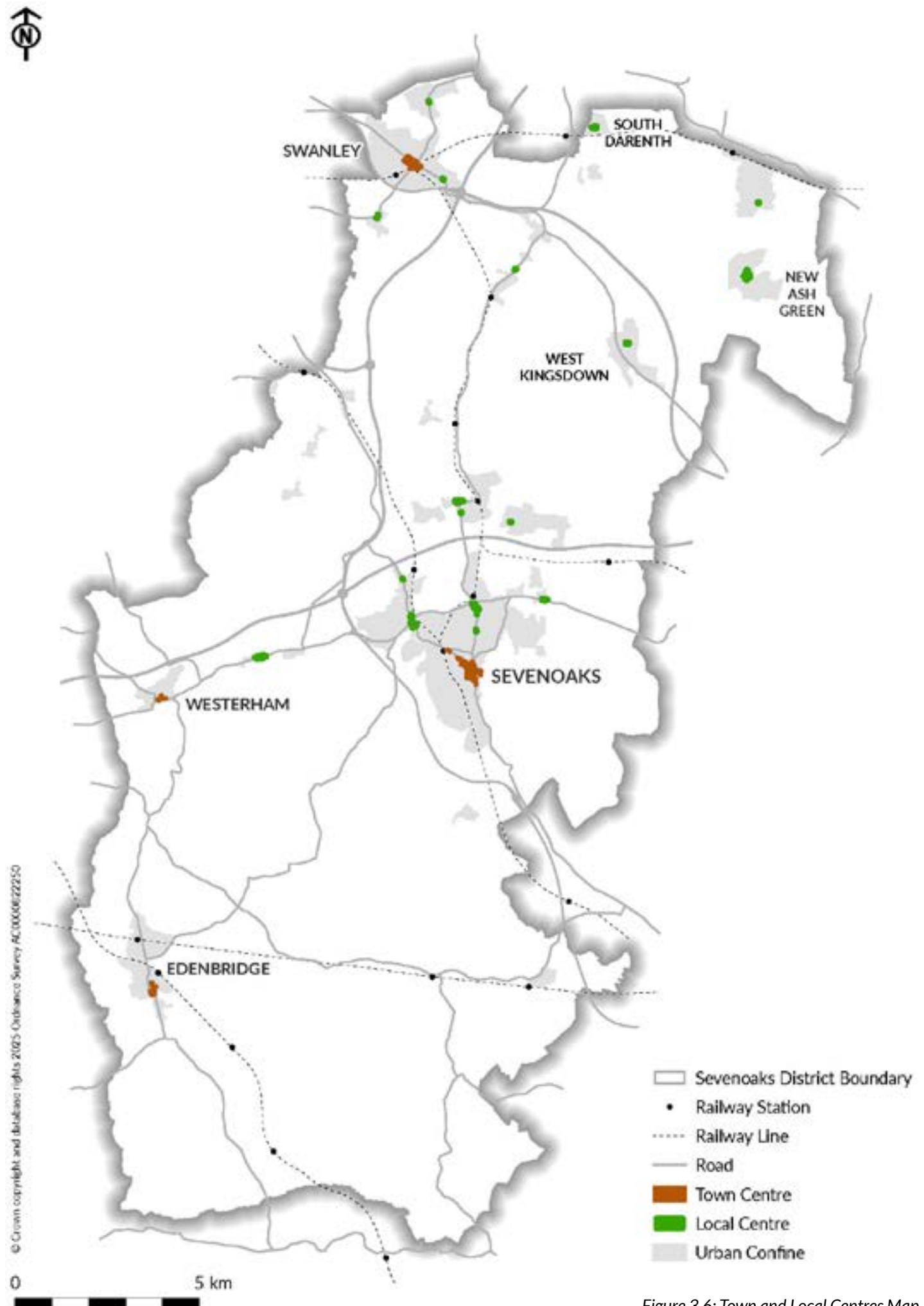


Figure 3.6: Town and Local Centres Map

Table 3.2: Town and Local Centres

Town Centres	Local Centres
Sevenoaks (incl. Tubs Hill and Station Parade)	- Northern St John's - Southern St John's (Hollybush) - London Road, Dunton Green - Riverhead
Swanley	Manse Parade
Edenbridge	
Westerham	- Brasted - High Street and the Green - Crockenhill - Broadway - Eynsford - Hartley - Cherry Trees - Hextable - Upper Main Road - Kemsing - The Parade - New Ash Green Centre - Otford - Bubblestone Parade - Otford - High Street - Seal - High Street - South Darenth - West Kingsdown - Hever Road

3.32 The national default threshold of 2,500 sqm (NPPF Para. 94) for undertaking an impact assessment of any proposed retail and leisure development outside of defined town centre boundaries, is considered too high in the Sevenoaks context. The default position comprises a significant proportion of existing floorspace, and therefore a lower threshold of 500sqm gross is recommended by our Town Centres Strategy evidence base.

Policy TLC1

Resilient Town and Local Centres

This policy seeks to support our defined town and local centres to ensure they remain at the heart of our local communities, as a key location for retail, leisure, employment and a wide range of other services and facilities. Town centre boundaries and primary shopping areas are defined on the policies map for each town centre.

1. The unique characteristics of each of the town centres should be promoted to allow them to thrive and form a network of complementary centres, which provide for the needs of the District. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken into account place-making proposals for the relevant centres, as set out in the subsequent policies in this chapter and relevant Neighbourhood Plans.
2. Town centres remain the focus for retail, leisure and other main town centre uses, bringing people together in accessible locations to meet their needs. The Council supports a 'town centres first' approach, to ensure main town centre uses are conveniently clustered together within defined town centre boundaries, and retail provision is maintained within the primary shopping areas. New development for main town centre uses should be located within defined town centre boundaries, and loss of main town centres uses within the primary shopping areas will be resisted where possible.
3. Main town centre uses proposed outside of the defined town centre boundaries, will be subject to the sequential test, to ensure all sequentially preferable locations are assessed in terms of their suitability and availability. An impact assessment will be required for any retail and leisure development with a floorspace of 500 sqm gross or above outside of defined town centre boundaries.
4. Town centre proposals which include a proportion of residential floorspace will be supported, to provide customer footfall within the town centre, provided that the residential element is not at ground floor level within the primary shopping area, other than that which falls under permitted development.
5. Local centres provide for the day-to-day needs of the communities which they serve. The Council will resist the loss of shops and services from defined local centres where they are serving a local need, particularly where they are considered 'key' sustainable services in the Settlement Hierarchy, unless it is thoroughly demonstrated that the use is no longer suitable, in accordance with Policy EMP3.
6. Where strategic sites are proposed (100 units and above), it is expected that new small-scale convenience retail will be included within the site, to promote sustainable services which can be easily accessed on foot or cycle.
7. Town centre development, particularly where it includes work within the public realm, will be expected to meet the following criteria, where appropriate:
 - a. Development should be of the highest quality sustainable design to tackle the challenge of climate change, in accordance with Policy CC2
 - b. Development should be accessible, promoting walking/cycling and public transport use, with adequate parking, EV and cycling infrastructure and car clubs
 - c. Development should promote health and well-being, including community space/green space

Policy SEV1

Sevenoaks Town Centre

The Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in May 2023. It is structured around six key themes and focuses on enhancing gateway points to the town, creating new open spaces and community facilities, promoting active travel and developing a cultural quarter in the town. The Plan offers support and guidance for 13 key sites. Development proposals for Sevenoaks Town will need to demonstrate how they support the delivery of this Plan.

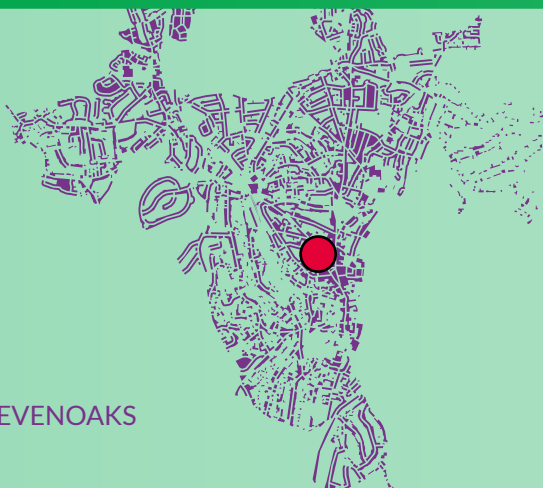
Over the plan period, proposals for Sevenoaks Town Centre should focus on:

1. Raising the profile of its best assets - its historic town centre, array of independent shops and the impressive Knole;
2. Expansion of its cultural scene and diversifying the town's offer to match other prominent towns, including more activities in the evening; and
3. An inclusive town centre - widening the leisure offer and providing new homes that support different income levels and life stages.

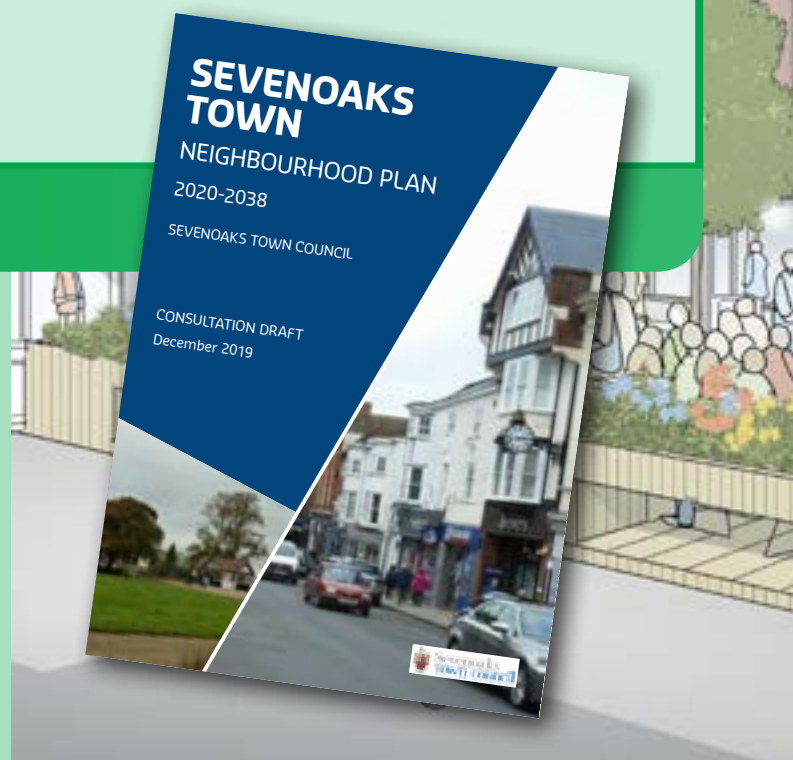
4. The following potential projects and development opportunities have been identified to help realise the future vision for Sevenoaks Town Centre. For further details of each of these projects, including delivery considerations, please see the Town Centres Strategy, Neighbourhood Plan and development briefs for key sites.

- i. Strengthening connections to Knole Park;
- ii. Eastern town centre revitalisation;
- iii. High streets streetscape enhancement;
- iv. Improving station arrival; (see chapter one)

The Town Council is also in the process of developing further Town Centre and St John's Hill Area Masterplans which will help guide future development proposals and drive improvements to the experience and offering of these centres.

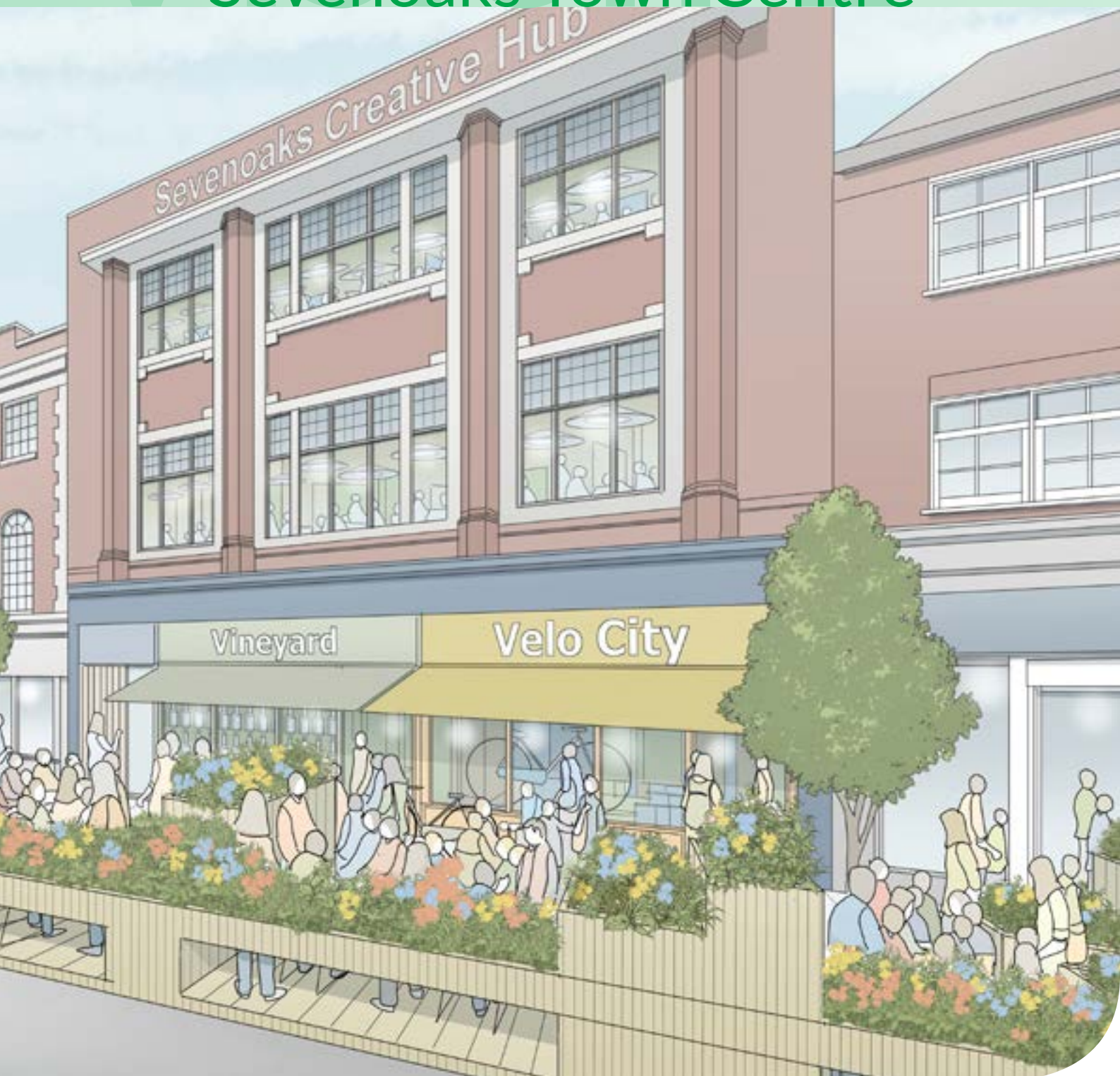


VISION 1: SEVENOAKS



Vision 1

Sevenoaks Town Centre



Policy SWN1

Swanley Town Centre

Swanley Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in July 2024. The plan sets out that change will be accommodated in the town, to retain and improve the environment of the town and benefit the community. It seeks to do so by setting out policies allowing higher densities and guiding proposals for taller buildings, particularly within the Town Centre, and through support for a health and wellbeing centre, employment sites, and active travel measures, whilst including additional design guidance for Swanley Village.

Over the plan period, proposals for Swanley Town Centre should focus on:

1. A sustainable and welcoming market town that draws in residents and people from surrounding areas to come together and spend time;
 2. An expanded retail offer with an emphasis on independents, food and drink, alongside an expanded community, leisure and civic offer;
 3. A space for small businesses and co-working, and new homes of different types and tenures; and
 4. High quality buildings and spaces that embrace and enhance Swanley's character.
5. The following potential projects and development opportunities have been identified to help realise the future vision for Swanley Town Centre. For further details of each of these projects, including delivery considerations, please see the Town Centres Strategy and Swanley Neighbourhood Plan.
 - a. Improving the arrival experience of the Town Centre;
 - b. Transforming town square and Asda Walk;
 - c. Rebalancing space for pedestrians;
 - d. New and enhanced station connections;
 - e. Town Centre redevelopment – gradual; and
 - f. Adjacent civic and community uses opportunity, particularly in relation to health.



VISION 2: SWANLEY



Vision 2

Swanley Town Centre



Policy EDN1

Edenbridge Town Centre

Over the Plan period, proposals for Edenbridge Town Centre should focus on:

1. A flourishing town centre that celebrates its history through investment and renewal of its handsome and historic High Street;
2. A transformed Leathermarket area as a focus for markets and activities in the heart of the town;
3. An aspirational place where people stay when visiting the District's attractions, with a variety of accommodation and a stronger food, drink, cultural, community, education and leisure offer; and
4. Sensitively enhancing seasonal accessibility to the river Eden with new lighting and seating.

The following potential projects and development opportunities have been identified to help realise the future vision for Edenbridge Town Centre. For further details of each of these projects, including delivery considerations, please see the Town Centres Strategy and Edenbridge Strategic Plan.

1. Redevelopment of the Leathermarket site (see development guidance in chapter 2);
2. Shopfront renewal;
3. Sensitively enhanced river accessibility;
4. Improved footpaths and pedestrian crossings, to provide better access through and into the town centre;
5. New and enhanced community and youth/ education facilities (e.g. leisure centre, all-weather pitch, bandstand, skate-park and provision of a secondary school in the town);
6. Access for all to Edenbridge Town station.

These projects will be delivered through partnership working between a number of different organisations, including SDC, ETC, KCC and local businesses, with potential funding from development in the local vicinity.



VISION 3: EDENBRIDGE



Vision 3

Edenbridge Town Centre



Policy WST1

Westerham Town Centre

Over the Plan period, proposals for Westerham Town Centre should focus on:

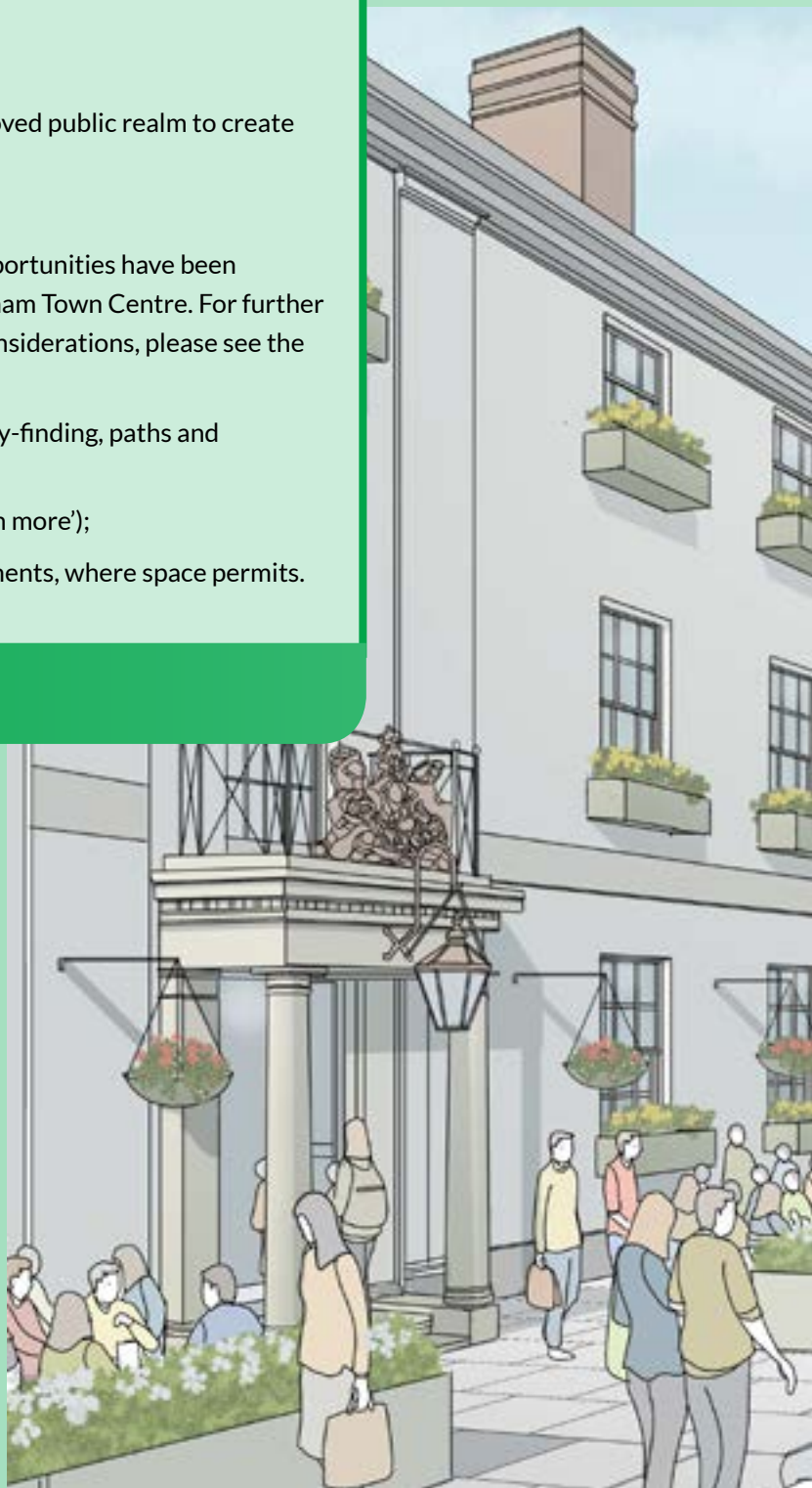
1. Being a charming rural town that celebrates its history and that remains a desirable place to live, work and visit;
2. A broadened offer for all age groups and families;
3. Connections to the wider Darent Valley, and improved public realm to create enjoyable streets and spaces; and
4. Meaningful alternatives to car-based travel.

The following potential projects and development opportunities have been identified to help realise the future vision for Westerham Town Centre. For further details of each of these projects, including delivery considerations, please see the Town Centres Strategy.

- a. Improving connections to the countryside – way-finding, paths and sustainable transport connections; and
- b. A better visitor economy ('Sevenoaks – so much more');
- c. High Street streetscape/public realm improvements, where space permits.



VISION 4: WESTERHAM



Vision 4

Westerham Town Centre



Policy NAG1

New Ash Green Village Centre

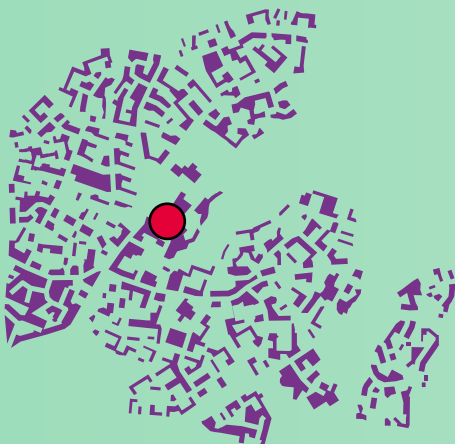
Over the Plan period, proposals for New Ash Green Village Centre should focus on:

1. A vibrant heart to a thriving village community, with shops and businesses supported by a refreshed and well-maintained shopping centre;
2. Flexible space for small and creative businesses bringing more footfall to the centre, as well as new homes of different types, sizes and tenures;
3. A renewed public realm with new focal points for events and pop-up activity;
4. Improving the edges of the shopping centre to open it up and draw people in, including new buildings which turn to face outwards; and
5. Celebrating the centre's one-of-a-kind character and modernist SPAN architectural style.

The following potential projects and development opportunities have been identified to help realise the future vision for New Ash Green Village Centre. For further details of each of these projects, including delivery considerations, please see the Town Centres Strategy.

- a. Shopping centre edges;
- b. Shopping centre public realm;
- c. Upper storey improvements;
- d. Connection to Longfield Station; and
- e. Footpaths and arrival experience.

The projects identified are intended as flexible interventions that allow for further development opportunities to be explored in the future, if desired. This includes better integration with uses just outside of the village centre. Any proposal for the centre should consider its unique history and built character, continuity for existing businesses and the community significance of the local centre.



VISION 5: NEW ASH GREEN



Vision 5

New Ash Green



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Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing society and, as a consequence, is also one of the most important issues that this Local Plan needs to address.



Climate Change

04





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The Local Plan will be a key driver in minimising carbon emissions.

Climate Change

04

Strategic Objectives

- OB3: Ensure that tackling the challenges of climate change strongly influences development taking place in the District.
- OB4: Provide sufficient flexibility in policies to implement changing national standards, best practice and evidence base updates that will inevitably occur over the Local Plan period.
- OB5: Empower residents to make lifestyle choices that positively contribute to minimising carbon emissions.



The policies within this Chapter reflect the need to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and are central to the Spatial Vision.

Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

- 4.1 We are living in a changing climate – the large-scale, long-term change in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures. Throughout history, the climate has continually changed, but human activity is now widely accepted to contribute to this change. The greenhouse effect is crucial to life on Earth, but by burning fossil fuels like gas, oil and coal, we are adding more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and enhancing that effect. As a result, average temperatures are rising, and weather patterns are becoming more extreme and unpredictable; this has been apparent in the District in recent years.



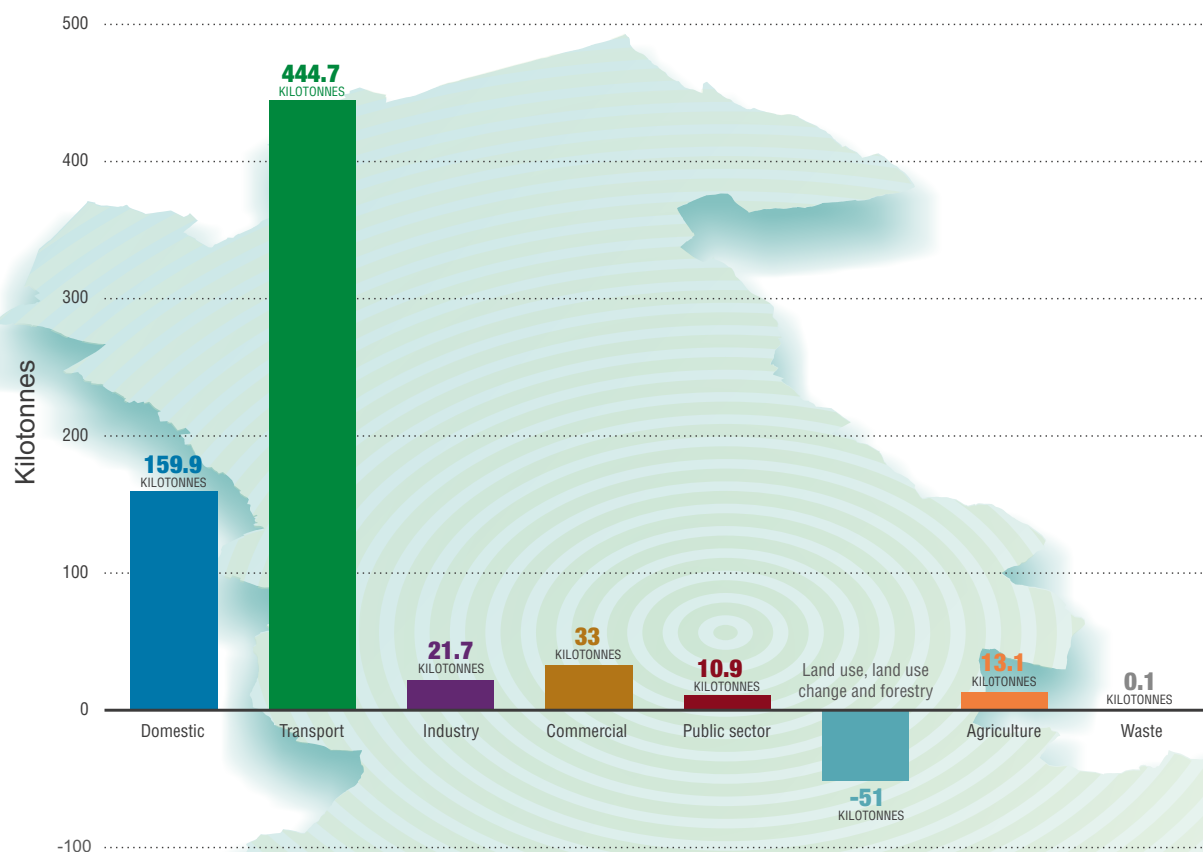
- 4.2 The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 states that increases in temperature will lead to future risks to human health and wellbeing, agricultural productivity, public water supply and natural assets, as well as an intensification of flood events up to 2050 and beyond. The Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment for Kent and Medway 2020 sets out that the greatest potential impacts for Kent are increases in heatwaves, droughts, sea-level rise, heavy rainfall, soil destabilisation and landslides.
- 4.3 Through the Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended), the Government made it a legal requirement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050. Section 19(1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that development plan documents must (taken as a whole) include policies designed to ensure that the development and use of land in a local planning authority's area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. The Council therefore has a legal duty to consider this as part of this Local Plan. Furthermore, the NPPF (2024) states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.





- 4.4 Although not the most potent greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide (CO₂), because of the volume of it that has been added to the atmosphere, contributes some 75% to the man-made enhancement of the greenhouse effect and is a key driver of climate change. In 2023, activity in Sevenoaks District produced a net total of 632.4k tonnes of CO₂. This equated to more than five tonnes per person with most emissions coming from residential uses and the transport sector, as shown in Figure 4.1. The District therefore has an important role to play in tackling the challenges of climate change.
- 4.5 Strategic Policy CC1 (Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change) sets out the overarching strategy for how development in the District should contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. It centres around minimising carbon emissions through location and design, making the most efficient use of resources, supporting renewable and low carbon energy, incorporating blue green infrastructure and ensuring that development is resilient and adaptable.
- 4.6 This policy is supported by a number of development management policies which together establish a comprehensive approach to addressing climate change. Proposals will be expected to meet the criteria in Strategic Policy CC1 (Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change) and subsequent development management policies where relevant and proportionate to the type and scale of development proposed. In general, householder applications, small non-residential extensions (with a footprint of less than 250 sqm) and changes of use will not be expected to meet these requirements, except in cases of flood risk or where explicitly specified in a policy.
- 4.7 It should be noted that this Local Plan is just one of the tools for tackling climate change and the Council will continue to work with partners and organisations, and join with other strategies in a coordinated way to maximise the protection of the District from the impacts of climate change and minimise its contribution to it. Relevant strategies include the Kent County Council Environment Plan 2025, the Kent and Medway Low Emissions Strategy 2020 and the Council's own Climate Change Strategy 2024.

SEVENOAKS CO₂ EMISSIONS



CO₂ EMISSIONS
S E V E N O A K S
D I S T R I C T

**432.4 kilotonnes
CO₂ in total**

Figure 4.1: CO₂ Emissions in Sevenoaks District in 2023
(Source: UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics: 2005 to 2023)

Policy CC1

Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change

1. The Council will seek to ensure that development in the District contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change by:

Mitigation

- a. In accordance with the Development Strategy and national policy, being in sustainable locations which are well supported by, or capable of delivering improved local services and facilities, minimising the need to travel for day-to-day needs;
- b. In accordance with the Movement Hierarchy, maximising opportunities for active and sustainable modes of transport and, where applicable, contributing to the delivery of walking, wheeling and cycling routes;
- c. Delivering sustainable new buildings which adopt a fabric first design approach and minimise energy consumption;
- d. Utilising sustainable construction techniques, making the most efficient use of resources and minimising waste;
- e. Delivering renewable and low carbon energy generation and storage (including opportunities for decentralised energy and heating where appropriate); and
- f. Maximising blue green infrastructure, including protecting existing carbon sinks and seeking nature-based opportunities for carbon sequestration.

Adaption

- g. In accordance with the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding from all sources, both now and in the future, avoiding any increase in risk where development does occur and, where possible, reducing that risk;
 - h. Being resilient and adaptable to the impacts of climate change, ensuring that buildings can be easily modified to meet future needs;
 - i. Minimising mains water consumption, making the most efficient use of water, and protecting water resources from increased pollution; and
 - j. Incorporating multi-functional blue green infrastructure which assists in managing flood risk, enhancing biodiversity and addressing overheating.
2. Compliance with Strategic Policy CC1 (Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change) and its relevant supporting development management policies should be demonstrated through the submission of a proportionate Sustainability Strategy.



Sustainable Design and Construction

- 4.8** In recognition of the way in which an enhanced greenhouse effect impacts the climate, the NPPF (2024) requires local plans to include policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting the delivery of energy efficient buildings which are adaptable to a changing climate. This will help secure the future health and resilience of our communities. As outlined in Strategic Policy CC1 (Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change), CO₂ accounts for the vast majority of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK, and in Sevenoaks District, the majority of this comes from transport, domestic, industrial and commercial uses. The scale of development that will come forward through this Local Plan must respond to this.
- 4.9** In June 2022, the Government introduced changes to the mandatory building regulations in England and Wales. These included a new Regulation Part O addressing overheating and a new Part S requiring all new residential buildings to have preparatory work completed for the future installation of electric vehicle charging points. They also set out reductions required in CO₂ emissions from new residential and non-residential buildings in a new Part L which will significantly reduce baseline emissions from new buildings by 75% from 2025. Part F relates to ventilation and is also relevant to energy efficiency.
- 4.10** The Government is proposing a further uplift in the mandatory building regulations for residential and non-domestic buildings through the Future Homes Standards and Future Buildings Standards, which are anticipated to come into force in 2025. It is expected that their performance requirements will ensure that new homes and non-residential buildings have good fabric standards, use low-carbon heating and are 'zero-carbon ready' (meaning that no further work will be needed for them to have zero carbon emissions once the electricity grid has fully decarbonised). These amendments to the building regulations will represent a significant milestone in ensuring that the development arising from this Local Plan will contribute to the delivery of more sustainable development. The intention of this policy is to complement these standards by requiring proposals to clearly demonstrate the minimisation of emissions, the efficient use of resources and the creation of resilient, healthy development.



Operational Carbon

4.11 Operational carbon refers to the emissions generated through the day-to-day running of buildings, including their heating, cooling, ventilation and use of appliances. To minimise these emissions, new buildings must be energy efficient as a priority. In seeking to achieve this, proposals including the construction of new buildings must follow the energy and cooling hierarchies by adopting a fabric first approach to the design of new buildings. This includes the following key principles:

1. Optimising insulation;
2. Reducing thermal bridging;
3. Optimising airtightness;
4. Using passive design strategies which consider landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to achieve optimal solar gain, natural ventilation and shading; and
5. Balancing ventilation.

4.12 It is not yet clear whether the Future Homes Standard and Future Buildings Standards will explicitly require the installation of onsite renewable and low carbon energy generation and storage. In the meantime, development will be strongly encouraged to do so, and proposals for stand-alone schemes will be supported in accordance with Policy CC3 (Low Carbon and Renewable Energy).

Embodied Carbon

4.13 As the implementation of the relevant policies and national standards reduce the operational emissions from development, embodied carbon will start to make up as much as 50% of total emissions over a building's lifetime. Embodied carbon is associated with building materials and the construction and maintenance of a building throughout its lifetime. It will therefore become increasingly important to minimise emissions from embodied carbon, and it is considered that there is now a consistent level of understanding on how to measure this in the industry. Proposals including the construction of new buildings must demonstrate measures to minimise waste in both the construction and occupation of development, in line with the waste hierarchy, and should favour the use of locally sourced materials which are low in embodied carbon.

4.14 Furthermore, the release of embodied carbon from existing buildings should also be avoided where possible, and proposals that include the demolition of structurally sound buildings should have considered the merits of their reuse, refurbishment and extension in preference to their demolition.

Resilience and Health

4.15 Strategic Policy CC1 (Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change) sets out the overarching strategy to ensure that development is adaptable to the impacts of a changing climate and that its users' health will be safe from issues such as overheating and flooding. This is supported Policies W1 (Flood Risk), W2 (Surface Water Management) and W3 (Water Supply and Quality) which seek to ensure the sustainable management of water (including managing flood risk). Furthermore, Policies BW1 (Safeguarding Places for Wildlife and Nature) and W2 (Surface Water Management) set out the requirements for Blue-Green Infrastructure and this should be used in relevant proposals to create natural cooling measures and reduce the urban heat island effect, with particular regard to road surfacing and pedestrian routes. In addition, and where relevant and proportionate, development must aim to increase the lifespan of new buildings and associated infrastructure, ensuring they can be modified to meet changing societal needs and include future climate adaptation measures as technologies advance.

Sustainable Design Standards

- 4.16** It is recognised that the scale of residential development that will come forward through this Local Plan will be complex to deliver and that the principles set out above could be achieved in different ways. It is not therefore the intention of this policy to impose certified design standards on newly built residential development, and it will be most important to demonstrate compliance with the principles that have been set out above, in combination with all other relevant policies. However, certification schemes are still considered a useful tool to ensure the improved sustainability of non-residential development and residential conversions.
- 4.17** BREEAM is the most common verification and certification scheme intended to improve the sustainability of non-domestic development and residential conversions. In order to help ensure that this policy is driving up standards as expected, major non-domestic proposals must achieve the BREEAM New Construction rating of 'Excellent' (or any subsequent revision). Proposals for the conversion of buildings to 10 or more residential dwellings must achieve a BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment rating of 'Excellent' (or any subsequent revision).
- 4.18** It is acknowledged that not every site or form of development will be able to meet all the criteria in this policy, but such situations will need to be clearly justified. An example might include development involving heritage assets, and proposals should refer to Policy HEN5 (Responding to Climate Change in the Historic Environment) in these cases. There may also be exceptional circumstances where full compliance with this policy would be impracticable or make the development unviable. In these cases, there will need to be proportionate technical or viability assessments justifying a departure from compliance with it.

Policy CC2

Sustainable Design and Construction

Operational Carbon

1. Proposals which include the construction of new buildings must demonstrate that minimising energy consumption has formed part of the design process by adopting a fabric first approach, taking account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping.

Embodied Carbon

2. Proposals which include the construction of new buildings must demonstrate measures to minimise embodied carbon by:
 - a. Minimising waste in both the construction and occupation of new buildings, including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts that provide adequate, well-designed space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting where practicable; and
 - b. Favouring the use of locally sourced materials which are low in embodied carbon.
3. Proposals which include the demolition of structurally sound buildings should consider the merits of their reuse, extension and refurbishment in preference to their demolition.

Resilience and Health

4. Where relevant and proportionate to the type and scale of development proposed, proposals must demonstrate measures to ensure its future resilience and protect the health of its users by:
 - a. Using Blue-Green Infrastructure to create natural cooling measures and reduce the urban heat island effect, with particular regard to road surfacing and pedestrian routes (see Policy BW1 (Safeguarding Places for Wildlife and Nature);
 - b. Aiming to increase the lifespan of new buildings and associated infrastructure, ensuring they can be modified to meet changing societal needs and include future climate adaptation measures as technologies advance; and
 - c. Managing water (including flood risk) sustainably (see Policies W1 (Flood Risk), W2 (Surface Water Management) and W3 (Water Supply and Quality)).

Sustainable Design Standards

5. Proposals for the conversion of existing buildings to 10 dwellings or more must achieve a BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment rating of 'Excellent' (or any subsequent revision) unless demonstrated to be unviable or impracticable.
6. Proposals for major non-residential development must achieve a BREEAM New Construction rating of 'Excellent' (or any subsequent revision) unless demonstrated to be unviable or impracticable.

Low Carbon and Renewable Energy

- 4.19** The heating of and provision of hot water in buildings accounts for 40% of UK energy use and 20% of UK greenhouse gas emissions. Low carbon and renewable energy generation and storage therefore has an important role to play in the transition to net zero, and the NPPF (2024) requires local plans to provide a positive strategy for their delivery while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily. This policy builds upon the measures set out in Strategic Policy CC1 (Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change) and Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) which aim to minimise energy consumption by seeking to increase the amount of energy that is subsequently used being generated from low carbon and renewable sources.
- 4.20** Small scale projects, including the retrofitting of existing development, can cumulatively contribute to minimising greenhouse gas emissions from energy generation. These include technologies such as solar photovoltaic solar panels, ground and air source heat pumps, and residential wind turbines. In many cases, these will amount to permitted development, but where planning permission is required, they will be encouraged and supported subject to the criteria set out in this policy. Where appropriate, all development, including the retrofitting of existing buildings, will be strongly encouraged to incorporate and maximise opportunities for on-site low carbon and renewable energy generation and storage. Furthermore, the Climate Change Committee estimates that decentralised energy could meet 20% of heating and hot water needs by 2030, and the creation of, or connection to existing or networks will be encouraged where appropriate.
- 4.21** In considering larger scale, standalone projects, it is recognised that Sevenoaks District is highly constrained by the Green Belt and National Landscapes. Opportunities for low carbon and renewable energy generation and storage may therefore be more limited than in other areas, particularly in the District's National Landscapes. Nonetheless, some medium and large-scale projects, in appropriate locations, will be necessary for the District to contribute to minimising greenhouse gas emissions from energy generation. Such proposals will be supported where they do not unacceptably harm the natural and built environments, the landscape and visual amenity, the amenity of surrounding development (including public safety), and the local transport network. Very careful consideration will be given to cases involving heritage assets, a National Landscape, and/or their settings. Reference should be made to the High Weald Position Statement on Solar Farms and the High Weald National Landscape (2025) and the Kent Downs National Landscape Renewable Energy Position Statement (2025), or their subsequent updates, where relevant.



- 4.22** This policy does not require preference to be given to the use of previously developed land (PDL) over greenfield land. This is because, in most cases, the Council will likely give preference to the use of PDL for housing, employment and tourism/leisure uses (although this will be considered on a site-by-site basis) where in sustainable locations. However, in recognition of the vast expanse of agricultural land covering the District, proposals will need to demonstrate that areas of poorer quality land have been considered over those of a higher quality, with particular regard to best and most versatile land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a), unless it can be demonstrated that no appropriate land of a lower quality is available and subsequently suitable. Furthermore, in many cases, it will be possible to continue to use the land below and between the infrastructure for agriculture/grazing and/or biodiversity improvements. Proposals will be expected to take opportunities to do so.
- 4.23** Proposals coming forward under Policy CC3 (Low Carbon and Renewable Energy) will be required to submit a statement setting out how they meet the relevant criteria and should be informed by a proportionate landscape and visual impact assessment where appropriate (taking into account the scale of the development proposed). The Council understands that residents will be concerned about the impact of proposals on their amenity, and effective engagement with the local community will be encouraged.
- 4.24** The Council has received an increasing number of planning applications for standalone solar farms, mainly in the Green Belt (but outside of the National Landscapes), in rural locations. Many of these applications may now constitute appropriate development in the Green Belt due to changes to national policy. There are often considerable concerns about technical matters such as large-scale battery storage systems (BESS), fire risk and the pollution of aquifers, in addition to more traditional concerns such as changes to the landscape and agricultural practices. Many sites are being constrained by Ancient Woodland and their buffers, and the developable areas can be convoluted to avoid these constraints.
- 4.25** It has therefore become apparent that this Local Plan would benefit from a more detailed policy that identifies broad locations which are the most suitable for solar development, taking these constraints into account. A piece of evidence to support this has been commissioned and is currently underway. Once completed, this policy will be updated to incorporate the findings and with these broad locations identified, there will be a presumption that proposals outside of these areas will be considered less favourably and will not normally be permitted.

Policy CC3

Low Carbon and Renewable Energy

1. Where appropriate, development will be strongly encouraged to incorporate and maximise opportunities to generate and store low carbon and renewable energy on-site, and to consider opportunities for creating and/or connecting to decentralised energy networks, as a fundamental part of the design process.
2. Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy generation and storage, including the life extension and repowering of existing sites, will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. The development would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts, both individually and cumulatively, that cannot be satisfactorily mitigated on:
 - The natural and built environments (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving heritage assets or their settings);
 - The landscape and visual amenity (with very careful consideration required in proposals involving a National Landscape or its setting);
 - The amenity of surrounding development (such as from safety issues, noise, odour, shadow flicker/glare and visual impacts); and
 - Highways.
 - b. Where significant development of agricultural land is proposed, areas of poorer quality land have been considered in preference to those of a higher quality, with particular regard to best and most versatile land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a), unless it can be demonstrated that no appropriate land of a lower quality is available and subsequently suitable;
 - c. Where practicable, the land below and/or between the infrastructure is maintained in use for agriculture/grazing and/or biodiversity improvements; and
 - d. Provision is made for the decommissioning of the infrastructure once operation has ceased, with the land left in an appropriate condition.

This policy will be updated to identify broad locations which are the most suitable for solar development once the supporting evidence is available.

Tree Planting

4.26 Tree planting is another way to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere through a process known as carbon sequestration. Furthermore, they can contribute to the adaptation to the impacts of climate change by providing habitats for wildlife, providing shade, improving air quality and soils and managing the water environment. They can act as connections for wildlife through the landscape and provide important wildlife corridors in the urban environment. Trees can also contribute to the character and quality of urban environments, making places more attractive, encouraging active travel and contributing to improved health and wellbeing, all themes running throughout this Local Plan.

4.27 The Government identifies the role that trees will play in helping the UK achieve its net zero by 2050. The NPPF (2024) acknowledges this and says that streets should be tree-lined, and that opportunities to incorporate them elsewhere in developments should also be taken. Furthermore, the England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024 set out the Government's long-term vision for the treescape it wants to see in England by 2050 and beyond. Under this Action Plan, approximately 7,000 hectares of woodlands were to be planted per year by the end of May 2024, alongside new initiatives to improve the health of the nation's trees and create more woodlands in towns and cities.

4.28 There is a national target to increase woodland cover to 19% and in 2019, Kent County Council committed to planting one tree for every resident in Kent, which would result in a (then) total of just over 1.5 million new trees, as an important part of the Council's own strategy for reaching net-zero target. This commitment to increase tree cover is part of a wider strategy for the protection, restoration and creation of natural solutions to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.



4.29 To assist in the achievement of these aims, for major residential development, a minimum of two new trees must be planted for every new dwelling (excluding applications for conversions and changes of use). For major non-residential development, a minimum of one new tree must be planted for every 500 square metres of new floorspace. Traditionally, the main focus for tree planting has been to ensure that they are native. This remains an important principle, so that the native flora and fauna can continue to interact within the ecosystems they are naturally accustomed to. However, and as identified in Strategic Policy CC1 (Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change), one of the climate change impacts being felt in Kent is the increase in extended periods without rainfall (with more unpredictable and intense periods of rainfall at other times). It is therefore now the case that the drought tolerance of trees needs to be taken into account, and tree planting schemes should also include drought tolerant trees as part of the overall mix.

4.30 It is recognised that in some cases, there may not be sufficient space to accord with this policy in full. Where this is the case, proposals should demonstrate how they have maximised the number of trees that can be planted on-site, followed by seeking opportunities for off-site planting where possible, before seeking a departure from this policy.

Policy CC4

Tree Planting

1. All major residential development must plant a minimum of two new trees for every new dwelling (excluding proposals for conversions and changes of use), unless it can be demonstrated not to be practicable due to site constraints.
2. All major non-residential development must plant a minimum of one new tree for every 500 square metres of new floorspace, unless it can be demonstrated not to be practicable due to site constraints.
3. New tree planting should be native, drought-tolerant species and of local provenance from a bio-secure source and should be of a standard size specification as a minimum.
4. A detailed landscaping scheme and landscape management plan must be submitted for all major development proposals, including but not limited to, the details of the trees and shrubs to be planted and proposals for how the landscaping scheme will be managed and maintained over the lifetime of the development.



Flood Risk

- 4.31** The main watercourses running through Sevenoaks District are the River Darent and River Eden (which is a major tributary of the River Medway), but there are several connected streams and brooks too. Tributaries to these watercourses primarily include smaller Ordinary Watercourses and unnamed drains. Historically, the main source of flooding in the District has been fluvial, with significant events occurring during Winter 2013/14, in Ightham in June 2016, Swanley and West Kingsdown in June 2019, Westerham in December 2019 and Swanley again in July and October 2021. There are also a number of other potential sources of flooding in the District, including surface water, groundwater, reservoirs and sewers.
- 4.32** In accordance with national policy, the purpose of this policy is to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, from all sources, by directing development away from areas at highest risk in the initial instance and ensuring that where development is justified in such areas, it is made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Climate change is likely to result in more frequent and intense periods of rainfall which will increase these risks, and assessments of risk will need to consider the current and future risk, making allowances for climate change.



- 4.33** The Council's Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) assesses the extent and nature of flood risk from all sources across the District, making allowances for the impacts of climate change in the future. The spatial strategy and policies contained within this Local Plan have been informed by the Level 1 SFRA. Because it has not been possible to meet all the District's development needs in areas at the lowest risk of flooding, the Council's Level 2 SFRA assesses the more detailed nature of flood risk characteristics in those higher risk areas where development has been allocated.

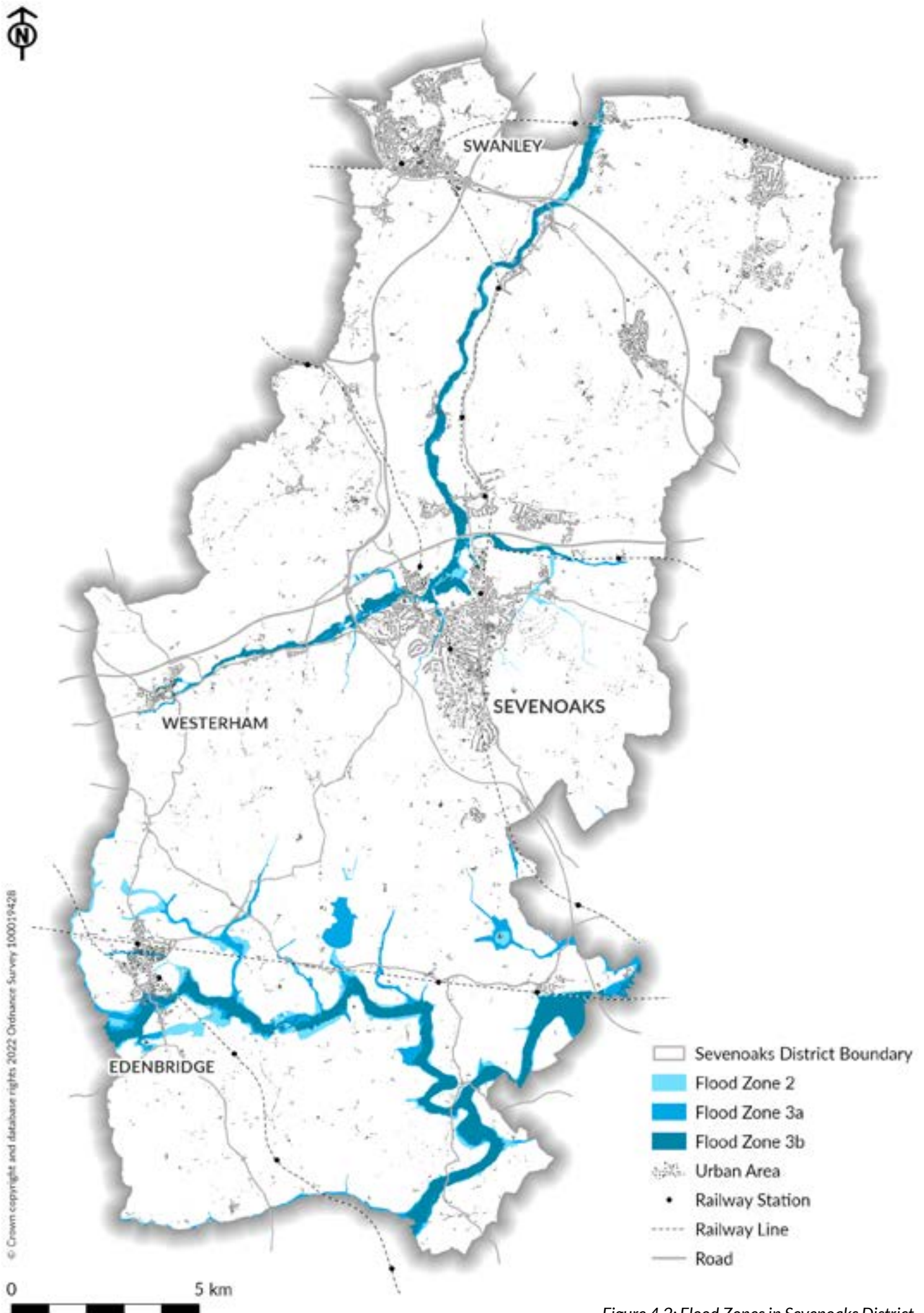


Figure 4.2: Flood Zones in Sevenoaks District



4.34 As set through national policy, proposals in areas at risk from flooding from any source, both now and in the future, will need to apply the sequential test, demonstrating that there are no reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding, unless a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding. The Council's Level 1 SFRA should form the basis for the application of the sequential test.

4.35 In some cases, the exception test will also need to be applied, demonstrating that the proposed development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk, and that it would be safe for its lifetime taking account the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and where possible, would reduce flood risk overall. In determining the need for the exception test, applicants should consider the potential vulnerability of the site and of the development proposed, in line with the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification set out in Annex 3 to the NPPF (2024).

4.36 Where required, development must incorporate flood protection, resilience and mitigation measures appropriate to the nature and scale of the risk. Proposals must be accompanied by sufficient information to allow the Council, in consultation with relevant partners such as the Environment Agency and Kent County Council (as the Lead Local Flood Authority), to assess the flood risk, the application of the relevant tests, and measures proposed to manage that risk. The Council's Level 1 SFRA sets out when a site-specific flood risk assessment will be required and what level of information it should contain.

Policy W1

Flood Risk

1. Where there is a risk of flooding from any source, both now and in the future, development must manage that risk, in strict accordance with national policy, by:
 - a. Applying the sequential test and exception test as required;
 - b. Avoiding uses incompatible with Flood Zone 3a and 3b altogether, in accordance with the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification;
 - c. Incorporating flood protection, resilience and mitigation measures appropriate to the nature and scale of the risk, as set out in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; and
 - d. Avoiding an increase in flood risk, and where possible reducing the overall level of flood risk, both on the site and elsewhere.
2. Site-specific flood risk assessments will be required, in accordance with the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, for proposals:
 - a. In Flood Zones 2 and 3;
 - b. Of 1 hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1;
 - c. In Flood Zone 1 where there is an identified critical drainage problem (as notified by the Environment Agency);
 - d. Which may be subject to sources of flooding other than from rivers, such as surface water (including proposals which could affect or be affected by substantial overland surface water flow routes);
 - e. Where the site may be at risk from the breach of a local defence (even if the site itself is in Flood Zone 1);
 - f. Where there is an intention to discharge water to the catchment or assets of a water management authority;
 - g. Where robust, documented evidence of historical or recent flood events has been provided to the Council; and
 - h. On land in the vicinity of a small watercourse or drainage features that might not have been demarcated as being in a Flood Zone in national mapping.
3. Where required, flood protection, resilience and mitigation measures must:
 - a. Be informed by a site-specific flood risk assessment;
 - b. Feature at an early stage in the design process, take a sequential approach to the location of built structures within the site, make space for water and design buildings to reflect the flood risk;
 - c. Be multi-functional where possible and maximise opportunities for landscape, biodiversity and blue green infrastructure improvements;
 - d. Include agreed arrangements for their long-term retention, maintenance and management; and
 - e. Prevent increased pollution of the natural environment Policy W3 (Water Supply and Quality).

Surface Water Management

- 4.37 As identified in Policy W1 (Flood Risk), surface water is one of the sources of flooding in Sevenoaks District. It typically occurs following an extreme rainfall event where water within a catchment area flows overland and accumulates in excess before it can be dealt with by the surface water drainage network. The frequency and intensity of such events is likely to increase as a result of climate change. Flooding from these events can damage built development and pollute the natural environment. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that where development could affect drainage, it includes adequate drainage provision for the management of surface water, making allowances for climate change, ensuring that flood risk is not increased both onsite and elsewhere, and avoiding adverse impacts on water quality.
- 4.38 Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are the most effective way to manage surface water, and national policy gives priority to their use unless they can be demonstrated to be inappropriate. SuDS are a collection of water management practices that are designed to manage surface water runoff close to where it falls and mimic natural drainage as closely as possible. They can, and should, provide multi-functional benefits by reducing flood risk, removing pollutants from surface water, and combining water management with blue green infrastructure with benefits for the landscape, recreation and biodiversity. SuDS may also enable development in areas where existing drainage systems are close to or at capacity, thereby enabling development in urban areas. Table 4.1 shows examples of SuDS techniques and their potential benefits.
- 4.39 Kent County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, provides technical advice and guidance on proposed surface water drainage strategies, designs and maintenance arrangements. They have prepared a Drainage and Planning Policy Statement (2019) which sets out the flow rates and volumes of runoff that are expected to be achieved on both greenfield and brownfield sites, and contains guidance on how to integrate SuDS into the master planning of both large and small proposals. Applicants should refer to this guidance, and any future updates, when preparing applications incorporating SuDS.
- 4.40 Applicants should also refer to the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and DEFRA's non-statutory 'National standards for sustainable drainage systems 2025' (or subsequent updates) which provides guidance on criteria for prioritising the choice of final runoff destinations and minimum standards for their design, maintenance and operation. There will be instances where consultation with the Environment Agency will also be necessary, such as where there may be a risk of pollution to a Groundwater Source Protection Zone and where surface water is proposed to be discharged into a main river (see Policy W3 (Water Supply and Quality)).



- 4.41 The Council expects SuDS to form an integral part of the design process. This is because successful SuDS require a range of infiltration or discharge techniques that need to be designed in a sequential order. Early consideration of SuDS provides the opportunity to design-in the multi-functional benefits which deliver more sustainable developments. It is acknowledged that SuDS may not be appropriate in some instances, however they can be applied to almost every site, and applicants should refer to the Council’s SFRA for guidance on overcoming common problems.
- 4.42 Where SuDS are used in development, national policy requires applicants to submit a sustainable drainage strategy providing proportionate information having regard to the nature and scale of the development proposed. Where a site-specific flood risk assessment is also required in accordance with Policy W1 (Flood Risk), it may be appropriate to combine them. It is important that adequate drainage provision is in place at an early stage of development, and the Council may use a legal agreement or planning conditions to ensure that it is implemented prior to a development commencing.

Table 4.1: Examples of SuDS techniques and their potential benefits
(Source: Sevenoaks District Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024)

SUDS TECHNIQUE	FLOOD REDUCTION	WATER QUALITY TREATMENT & ENHANCEMENT	LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE BENEFIT
Living roofs	✓	✓	✓
Basins and ponds			
Constructed wetlands			
Balancing ponds	✓	✓	✓
Detention basins			
Retention ponds			
Filter strips and swales	✓	✓	✓
Infiltration devices Soakaways	✓	✓	✓
Permeable surfaces and filter drains			
Gravelled areas	✓	✓	
Solid paving blocks			
Porous pavements			
Tanked systems			
Over-sized pipes/tanks	✓		
Storm cells			

Policy W2

Surface Water Management

1. Development that could affect drainage on or around the site must include adequate drainage provision for the management of surface water runoff, ensuring that flood risk is not increased, both onsite and elsewhere, making allowances for climate change. This should be an integral part of the design process and in the form of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) unless demonstrated to be inappropriate.
2. Drainage solutions must deliver surface water flow rates and volumes of runoff as agreed by the Lead Local Flood Authority, mimic natural drainage flows as closely as possible and ensure that surface water is managed as close to its source as possible using the following hierarchy of drainage options:
 - a. Collection for non-potable use
 - b. Infiltration into the ground
 - c. Discharge into a surface water body
 - d. Discharge into a surface water sewer, or other piped surface water drainage system
 - e. Discharge into a combined sewer.

Discharge into a surface water or combined sewer will only be acceptable if infiltration into the ground or discharge into a surface water body are demonstrated to be inappropriate, an assessment of the capacity of the sewer has been undertaken, and there would be no increase in flood risk both onsite and elsewhere.
3. The discharge of surface water runoff into a foul-only sewer will not be permitted.
4. Where used, SuDS should form an integral part of the development, be multi-functional and follow the principles and standards set out within DEFRA's 'National standards for sustainable drainage systems' so far as possible, including relating to water quality, amenity and biodiversity.
5. Approval of the design, operation and maintenance of SuDS over the lifetime of the development will be required prior to the commencement of development.
6. In Groundwater Source Protection Zones, SuDS may not be appropriate unless it can be demonstrated that there would be no increased pollution of surface and groundwater sources, and appropriate mitigation measures can be implemented in accordance with Policy W3 (Water Supply and Quality).
7. Where SuDs are incorporated into development, compliance with Policy W2 (Surface Water Management) should be demonstrated through the submission of a proportionate surface water drainage strategy.



Water Supply and Quality

4.43 Water is a finite resource essential for human health and wellbeing, the economy and the natural environment, and it needs to be managed carefully. As set out in Strategic Policy CC1 (Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change), climate change is increasing the risk to water sources due to the unpredictability and intensity of drought and extreme rainfall events. This is combined with increasing demand from new housing, employment provision and the associated infrastructure as well as pollution, poor land management and unsustainable abstraction. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that development does not unacceptably impact upon the water environment.



Water Supply

4.44 In 2021, the Environment Agency produced an updated determination of areas of water stress in England (updating a previous 2013 study). The whole of Sevenoaks District, and indeed the whole of Kent, was determined to be seriously water stressed. Serious water stress is defined as where 'the current household demand for water is a high proportion of the current effective rainfall which is available to meet that demand; or, the future household demand for water is likely to be a high proportion of the effective rainfall which is likely to be available to meet that demand'. It is essential therefore that local plans implement water conservation measures so that water sources and their environments are protected, used sustainably and able to meet current and future demand. New buildings will need to minimise the use of mains water and make the most efficient use of water by incorporating measures such as rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling systems.



4.45 In 2015, the Government updated Part G of the Building Regulations, introducing an optional water consumption requirement for residential development of no more than 110 litres per person per day. As a result of the water stress and development pressures identified in the District, the Council will be implementing the optional technical standard for water efficiency, instead of the current mandatory target of 125 litres per person per day. This measure is further supported by the Kent Water for Sustainable Growth Study (2017) which identifies the sustainable measures required to manage water sources in the future.

4.46 Water and wastewater services in the District are mainly supplied by Sutton and East Surry Water, South East Water and Thames Water. Applicants should refer to each company's up to date management plan for information on how water will be managed across the region in the future. These currently comprise the Water Resources Management Plan 2025-2075, the Water Resources Management Plan 2020-2080 and the Water Resources Management Plan 2024 respectively.

4.47 Major development should be directed to locations where adequate water supply and wastewater treatment capacity already exist, or where their new provision can be made in time for the new development, as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan through Policies IN1 (Infrastructure Delivery) and UD1 (Utilities and Digital Infrastructure), without unacceptable adverse impacts on the water environment.



Water Quality

- 4.48** Maintaining and, where possible, improving the quality of both surface and groundwater sources is important not only for the stability of water supplies, but for wildlife species and their habitats and recreational purposes too. New development can adversely impact water quality through the pollutants present in surface water runoff and from the discharge of wastewater.
- 4.49** The Water Framework Directive is a statutory framework for the protection and improvement of groundwater and inland, transitional and coastal surface waters. River Basin Management Plans form the basis for implementing the Water Framework Directive and are prepared and updated by the Environment Agency every six years. They highlight the areas of land and bodies of water that need special protection, including those used for drinking water and that sustain wildlife species and their habitats. They also set legally binding objectives to enhance water quality and prevent the deterioration of water bodies. Sevenoaks District is covered by the Thames River Basin Management Plan, last updated in 2022, and applicants should have regard to this in the preparation of proposals that may have an impact on the water environment.
- 4.50** The protection of groundwater is particularly important in the south-east because the majority of public water supply comes from it. The Environment Agency defines Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) to protect the sources that are used to supply water. The different zones indicate the level of risk to the source from contamination – the closer the activity, the greater the risk. In Sevenoaks District, much of the central, and almost all the northern portions are covered by these zones. Groundwater in SPZ1 is the most vulnerable to pollution given its close proximity to an abstraction point. The Environment Agency's 'Approach to Groundwater Protection 2018' (or as superseded), provides useful information and guidance on the different risks to groundwater quality, including listing the types of high-risk activities and development. Applicants should refer to this when making proposals in these zones which may have an impact on groundwater.
- 4.51** Development that would result in increased contamination to surface or groundwater sources will not be permitted. Where a risk is identified, it must be demonstrated that appropriate measures can be implemented to mitigate that risk, including with reference to SPZs where relevant.

Policy W3

Water Supply and Quality

Water Supply

1. Proposals to increase water supply and wastewater treatment capacity will be supported in principle, subject to compliance with other relevant policies within this Local Plan.
2. Development that results in the construction of new buildings which use mains water and/or generate wastewater must be designed to:
 - a. Minimise the use of mains water; and
 - b. Make the most efficient use of water by incorporating measures such as rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling systems (in both new development and retrofitting existing buildings).
3. Development that results in the creation of one or more new residential dwelling(s), including conversions, changes of use and extensions resulting in a new dwelling unit, must be designed so that water consumption is no greater than 110 litres per person per day.
4. Development that supports the aims of the relevant water service provider's Water Resources Management Plan will be supported in principle, subject to compliance with other relevant policies within this Local Plan.

Water Quality

5. Development will only be permitted where it would not result in the increased pollution of surface and groundwater sources. Where a risk is identified, it must be demonstrated that appropriate measures can be implemented to mitigate that risk. Where relevant, this must include reference to Groundwater Source Protection Zones as defined by the Environment Agency.
6. Development that would maintain or improve the physical state, biodiversity and natural function of surface and groundwater sources will be supported in principle, subject to compliance with other relevant policies within this Local Plan.

“

Design isn't just about how a place looks - it's about how it works and how it feels to be there. Good design can make a real difference to people's lives, supporting their health, wellbeing, and sense of safety and belonging. Fundamentally a well-designed space is key to the successful delivery of the goals of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan.



Design

05





Design

05

Strategic Objectives

- OB6:** Deliver a character-led approach to development that demonstrates the Government's priorities for well-designed places. (National Design Guide, 2021: The Ten Characteristics of Place)
- OB7:** Require the production of design codes for new development that meet the provisions of national planning guidance.



All new development will create well-designed places that promote sustainable and healthy communities.

5.1 The Government has put design at the forefront of national planning policy and our local policies are being updated to reflect this. We will be ambitious in ensuring that all elements of the Local Plan will be successfully achieved through good quality design.

5.2 This over-arching Design chapter sets out how we can ensure that the standards of good design are incorporated into the District's new development.



Engagement in Design

- 5.3 There will be significant new development within the District in the coming years in response to ambitious new Government housing targets. We are committed to delivering good growth that demonstrates design excellence and delivers well-conceived places. We're using multiple tools to support this, including a new Community Review Panel and a Design Advisory Panel.
- 5.4 The applicant will also be expected to utilise the local knowledge and expertise of the District's Town and Parish Councils in the development of proposals and provide easy and meaningful opportunities for engagement with local communities.

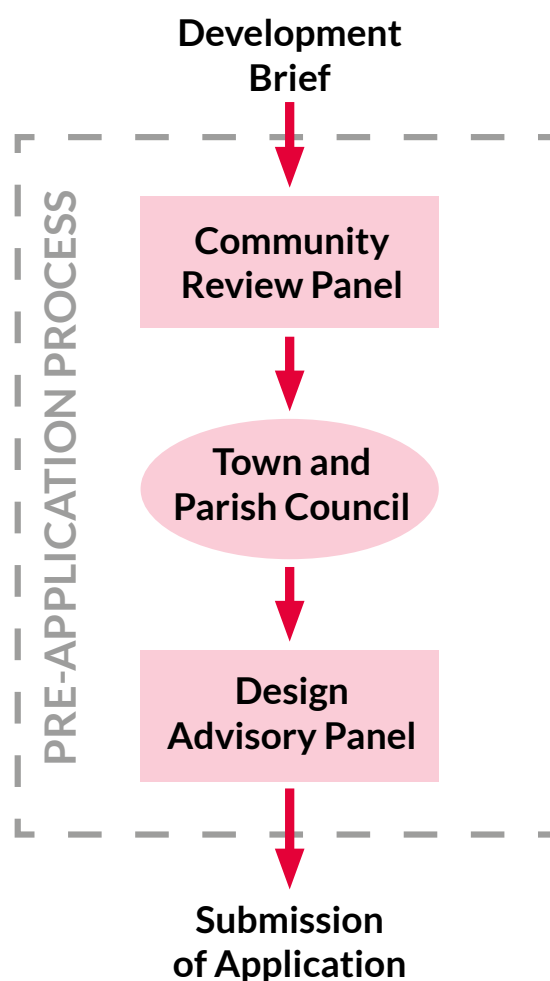


Figure 5.1: Pre-application Process



Community Review Panel

- 5.5 The Community Review Panel (CRP) will help us better understand the needs of the local community and support meaningful engagement with existing communities who will be most affected by new developments. The intention is to make sure we bring local communities along on the journey of increased development so that they have a voice in the process at an early stage.
- 5.6 The Panel will be made up of residents, visitors and those who work here and reflect the demographics of the District. The Panel will not include representatives of other bodies or professionals in this field. The panelists will be selected through a formal application process, where they will be expected to demonstrate their skills, role in the community, and ambition for their local place. The Chair will be a community engagement specialist with a planning background.
- 5.7 The CRP will be an early step in the formal pre-application process with applicants required to engage with the Panel and take account of Panel's input in the final scheme. A report will be produced after the Panel session and will be presented to the Design Advisory Panel as the pre-application process develops. Planning Performance Agreements will accommodate the CRP process within the timeframes
- 5.8 Further guidance on the process will be produced.

Policy DE1

Community Review Panel

Proposals for new development will be required to be presented to the Community Review Panel at an early stage in the pre-application process. The following criteria for presentation will normally be applied;

- Residential developments of more than 100 new dwellings
- Non-residential developments of more than 10,000 sqm of floor space (gross) or mixed-use developments of an equivalent size
- At the discretion of the Council, smaller developments which have significant impact on the surrounding area for example, increase in density and changes in character and scale from the surrounding local character

The report from the CRP will be submitted with the application documents along with a statement demonstrating how the comments have been incorporated into the scheme.

In cases where the applicants have not engaged with the pre-application process and therefore applications have not been seen by the CRP, applicants will be expected to demonstrate they have secured the views of the community and been incorporated into the scheme.

Design Advisory Panel

- 5.9** A Design Advisory Panel (DAP) is a panel of experienced design professionals from a range of disciplines (for example: architecture, transport, landscaping, master-planning, sustainability) who convene to provide specialist design advice on new development proposals at an early stage to support the delivery of improved planning proposals.
- 5.10** They are commonly used by local authorities to provide specific expert input into an application and serve most value as part of the pre-application process.
- 5.11** Applicants should engage in the DAP process as early as possible and ideally within the Pre-application process. Planning Performance Agreements will accommodate the DAP process within the timeframes.
- 5.12** Further supporting guidance will be produced.

Policy DE2

Design Advisory Panel

New development will be required to engage with the Design Advisory Panel. The following criteria for presentation will be applied;

- Residential developments of more than 100 new dwellings
- Non-residential developments of more than 10,000 sqm of floor space (gross) or mixed-use developments of an equivalent size
- At the discretion of the Council, smaller developments which have significant impact on the surrounding area for example, increase in density and changes in character and scale from the surrounding local character

The report from the DAP will be submitted with the application documents along with a statement demonstrating how the comments have been incorporated into the scheme.



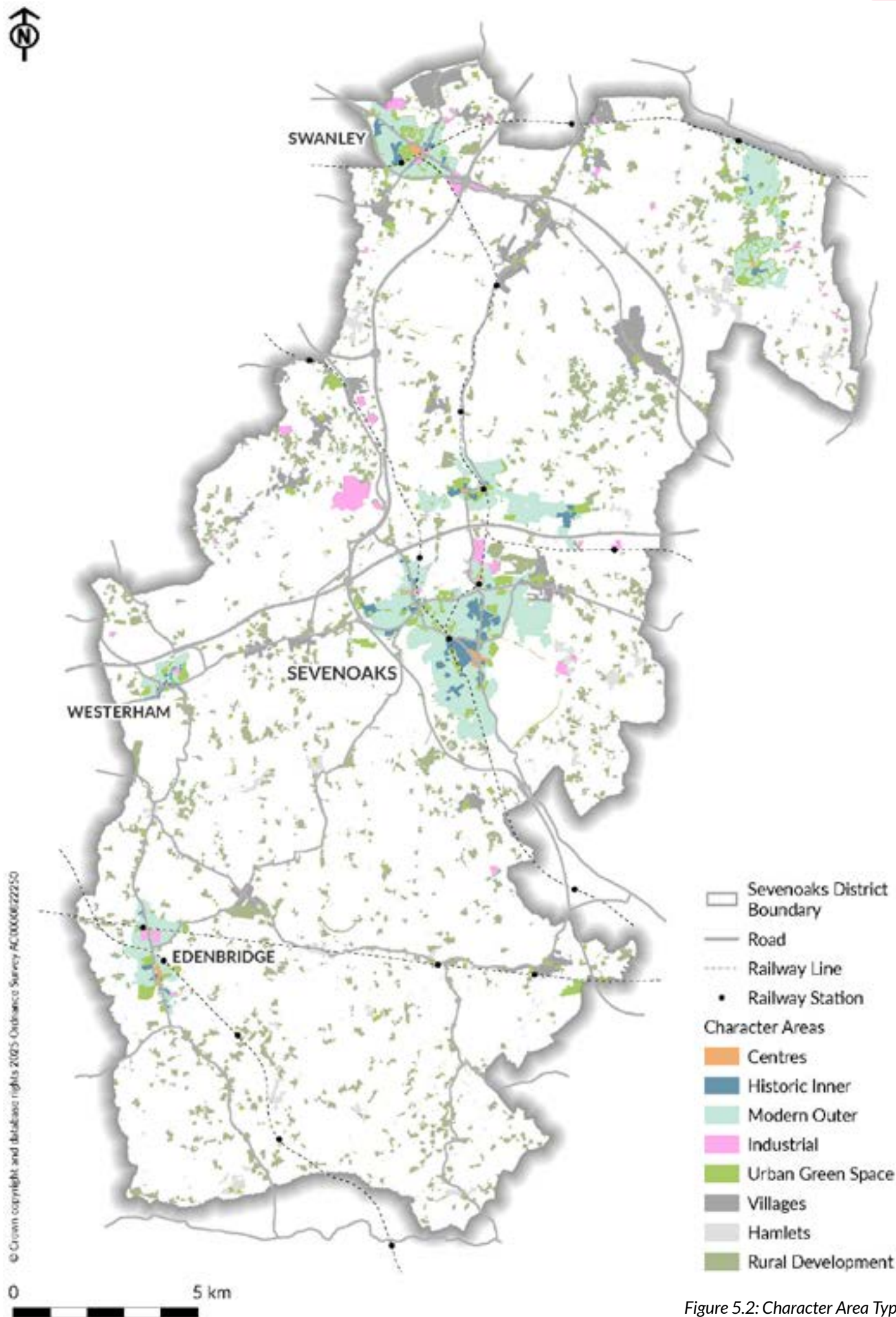


Figure 5.2: Character Area Types -
See the District-Wide Character Study for further information

Ensuring Design Quality

5.13 Government design guidance, the National Design Guide (2021) uses the 10 Characteristics of Well-Designed Places as a framework for assessing development. These are;

1. Context – enhances the surroundings;
2. Identity – attractive and distinctive;
3. Built form – a coherent pattern of development;
4. Movement – accessible and easy to move around;
5. Nature – enhanced and optimised;
6. Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive;
7. Uses – mixed and integrated;
8. Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable;
9. Resources – efficient and resilient; and
10. Lifespan – made to last.

5.14 To support the understanding of the District's character, the Council commissioned a district-wide character study. The Sevenoaks District Character Study (DWCS) 2022 tells the story of the District by exploring its past and how it has evolved into what it is today. It identifies important themes and recent trends that are shaping the District as a whole, including how people live, work and spend time in the District. It identifies the different areas that make up the District and explores what makes each place special.

5.15 Additionally, Development Briefs have been produced for the allocated sites within this plan to reflect our priorities and aspirations and to ensure design excellence.

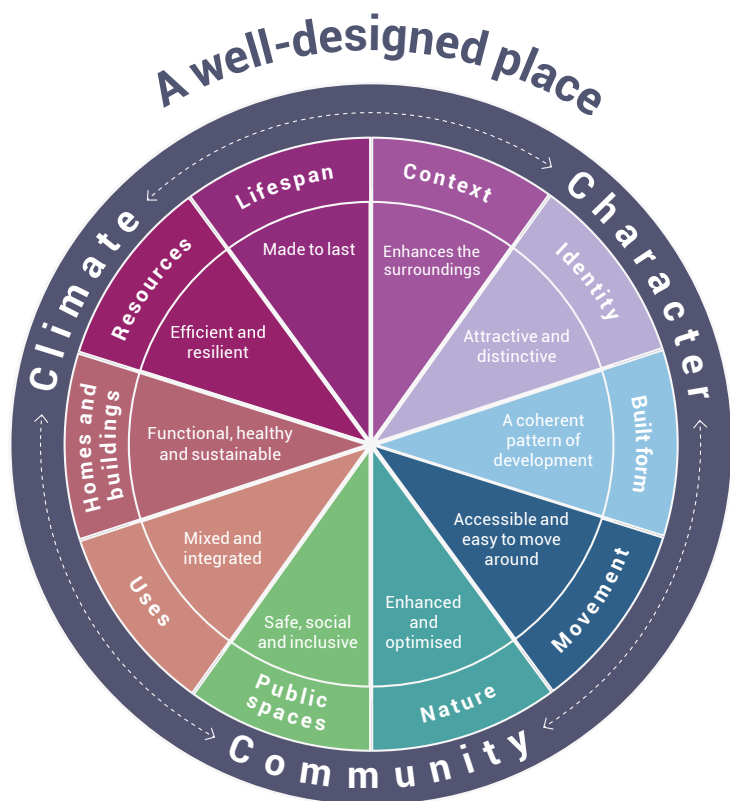


Figure 5.3: National Model Design Code diagram

Policy DE3

Ensuring Design Quality

New development proposals will be expected to demonstrate, via a Design and Access statement, how they meaningfully adhere to the principles of the National Design Guide and the 10 characteristics of place. Development will also reflect local character and distinctiveness considering the following documents:

- Sevenoaks District Character Study (DWCS)
- Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment
- Sevenoaks Historic Environment Review
- The Kent Downs and The High Weald AONB Management Plans, where applicable
- Neighbourhood Plan policies, where applicable
- Kent Design Guide
- Village Design Guides
- Sevenoaks Conservation Area Design Guidance

New Development proposals of 10 or more units will be expected to submit a 3D digital model of the buildings and trees on the site for inclusion in the 3D mapping tool of the District.



Delivering Design Quality

5.16 Schemes must create places where people want to live and will become long term sustainable communities.

To ensure that we are delivering the best possible schemes that reflect national good practice and standards we will produce a 'Design in Sevenoaks' document to clearly articulate the standards of development expected.

5.17 Additionally, each of our larger site allocations within this Plan has a Development Brief where we set out our vision and expectations for the site. This Brief will require all applications to submit a site wide Design Principles document. It is also important that outline planning applications provide our communities with surety about the quality of development coming forward and we will require a Mandatory Design Principles document to be submitted with any outline planning application.

Policy DE4

Delivering Design Quality

New development will be required to demonstrate, via a Design and Access statement, that they have met the standards in the Design in Sevenoaks document.

This document will be expected to include;

- Public Realm standards
- Accessibility - wheelchair users/visually impaired etc
- Private Amenity Space
- Parking Strategies
- Open Space Hierarchy
- Bins and Bike Storage
- Affordable Housing Design Standards
- Daylight and Sunlight

Policy DE5

Outline Planning Applications

Applications for Outline Planning Permission of more than 100 new dwellings must include a Mandatory Design Principles document that commits to the design quality of the development.

This will include strategies and principles for:

- Building types/materials
- Public spaces
- Movement and access
- Landscape and Public Realm



Design Codes

5.18 A design code is a set of simple, concise and illustrated design requirements, that are visual and numerical wherever possible, to provide specific and detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.

Design Codes will be required for the following development:

- Sites that are allocated as part of the Local Plan and where a Design Code is specified in the Development Brief
- Windfall sites of a size appropriate for a Design Code as advised by SDC

Policy DE6

Design Codes

New development of more than 100 new dwellings will be required to produce a Design Code as part of the application process that will deliver a well-designed sustainable place. This will be produced in accordance with the Guidance of the National Model Design Code and developed in partnership with SDC and the local community. Applicants will submit a plan detailing how they will achieve this.

Thematic Design Guidance

- 5.19** We understand the value that clear and accessible Design Guidance has in supporting the delivery of well-designed places and providing surety for applicants and residents in the planning process. We already have Conservation Area Design Guidance and Village Design Statements and we are looking to expand the guidance we produce, initially with Rural Design Guidance.

Rural Development Design Guidance

- 5.20** Sevenoaks District is largely rural, with a rich and varied landscape that includes National Landscapes, ancient woodland, and open countryside. These natural features, alongside traditional buildings such as farmhouses, oast houses, and agricultural structures—many of which are heritage assets—create a distinctive and valued rural character.
- 5.21** Development in these areas is constrained by Green Belt and landscape designations. However, the Council regularly receives proposals for small-scale redevelopment of previously developed land, often driven by changes in rural economies, such as shifts in agriculture and land use. While such development can support rural communities and diversify the local economy, it must be carefully designed to avoid harming the landscape and character of the countryside.
- 5.22** Small developments in open rural settings can have a disproportionate visual and environmental impact. Poor design—such as inappropriate scale, layout, materials, or building character—can erode the qualities that make the area special. Conversely, sensitive redevelopment that removes unsightly buildings and enhances the landscape can bring real benefits.
- 5.23** This design guidance aims to support high-quality, small-scale residential and mixed-use development in rural areas outside urban boundaries. It will address recurring design challenges and promote sustainable living, including considerations for transport and landscaping. The guidance will be structured around the ten characteristics of place from the National Design Guide, and will also signpost relevant existing design resources.



Policy DE7

Design for Rural Development

This Policy will require that small scale rural development sites are designed in accordance with the emerging design guidance.

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The Local Plan promotes the health and wellbeing of residents, workers and visitors to the District, through its role in shaping the built and natural environment.

Through collaboration within partners and the design, construction and management of spaces and places, planning plays a key role in alleviating some of the District's most pressing health challenges.



Health and Wellbeing

06





It is important to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to improve their mental and physical wellbeing.

Health and Wellbeing

06

Strategic Objectives

- OB1:** Recognise the link between the places and spaces that we live in and the quality of residents' mental and physical health.
- OB2:** Work closely with healthcare providers to develop policies that promote good physical and mental health as an outcome.



The quality of the built and natural environment can directly influence healthy behaviours and have positive impacts on reducing health inequalities.

6.1 It is important that provision is made to ensure all residents have the opportunity to improve their wellbeing, reduce social exclusion and isolation, stay physically active and live healthier lives.

6.2 Good quality housing in a sustainable location, with access to green open space, can positively benefit social networks and opportunities for active travel.



Health and Wellbeing

- 6.3 There are areas of affluence in Sevenoaks District, as well as pockets of deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure for small areas in England. According to the IMD, Sevenoaks District is the second least deprived local authority in Kent, although it should be noted that there are areas within the District that fall within the 30% most deprived in the country, namely Swanley St Mary's and Swanley White Oak. Opportunities to improve the wellbeing of the more vulnerable aspects of the community, and reduce social exclusion, will be sought and proposals supported.
- 6.4 2021 census population data shows that 21.5% of the District's population* is aged 65 and over, and this proportion is expected to increase to 25.7% by 2042**. There is an increasing need to identify opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of the older population, through medical infrastructure, social, community and recreational opportunities.
- 6.5 Public safety is of paramount importance and everyone has the right to feel safe in the places they live, work and relax at all times of the day. We will work closely with the Health and Safety Executive, The Environment Agency and Kent Police to establish whether additional measures should be included in the Local Plan to identify hazardous establishments, ensure risks to public safety are minimised and to take reasonable measures to prevent major incidents.
- 6.6 A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a useful tool in determining planning applications where there are expected to be significant or adverse impacts on health and wellbeing. HIAs help to achieve sustainable development by finding ways to create healthy and active communities, which can be shaped by the built environments which we live in.



6.7 The Sevenoaks District Council Health and Wellbeing Action Plan aims to address the health focused priorities and actions outlined within the Sevenoaks District Community Plan (2022-32) and the SDC Local Plan. The Planning Policy team work alongside the Health and Communities team to ensure both documents work concurrently.

6.8 Public health England has identified five aspects of the built and natural environment as the primary characteristics that local planning policy can influence. These five aspects are as follows:

- **Neighbourhood design** – building healthy neighbourhoods by enhancing neighbourhood walkability, street connectivity and encouraging environmentally conscious design choices.
- **Housing** – to focus on improving the quality of housing and increasing the provision of affordable and diverse housing.
- **Food environment** - Healthy, affordable food for the general population and enhanced community food infrastructure. There is emerging evidence showing a positive link between urban agriculture and improved attitudes towards healthier food, opportunity for more physical activity and social connectivity, as well as increased fruit and vegetable intake.
- **Natural and sustainable environments** - Reduce exposure to environmental hazards and access to the natural environment, including adaptation to climate change.
- **Transport** - Provision of active travel infrastructure, provision of public transport, prioritisation of active travel, road safety and mobility for all ages and activities.

* Census 2021, Population by Local Authority Area, ONS

** Population Projections – local authority based by single year of age, ONS

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



Figure 6.1: Determinants of Health

6.9 Many factors combine to affect the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. To a large extent, factors such as where we live, the state of our environment, genetics, our income and education level, and our relationships with friends and family all have considerable impacts on health, whereas the more commonly considered factors such as access and use of health care services often have less of an impact.

6.10 The determinants of health include:

- The social and economic environment;
- The physical environment; and
- The person's individual characteristics and behaviours.

Policy HW1

Health and Wellbeing

1. Proposals which support healthy living opportunities, promote social inclusion and improve community cohesion will be supported where they are in accordance with other relevant policies.
2. To support healthy and safe communities, and reduce health inequalities, new development should:
 - a. Be located within safe, well-lit, and accessible walking distance (1.2km) to services and facilities, where possible;
 - b. Create opportunities for better active travel to including provision for safe cycle and pedestrian routes, as set out in Policy T1 and T2;
 - c. Be designed to minimise threats and improve public safety; and
 - d. Be designed to improve mental health and reduce loneliness and isolation. It is encouraged that schemes incorporate green and community spaces for social prescribing and interaction.
3. A Health Impact Assessment (HIA), setting out the expected impact on health, wellbeing and safety, will be required for the following new developments:
 - a. All major housing developments of 10 units or more; or
 - b. For non-residential developments containing any of the following uses:
 - i. Education facilities;
 - ii. Health facilities;
 - iii. Leisure or community facilities;
 - iv. Publicly accessible open space;
 - v. Betting shops;
 - vi. Hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets;
 - vii. Restaurants; and
 - viii. For any other uses that the Council considers could have a detrimental impact on physical or mental health (e.g. payday loan shops/vapour parlours/nightclubs).
4. Where unavoidable negative impacts on health, wellbeing and safety are identified, mitigation measures must be incorporated into the proposal.
5. The above aspirations should be read together with other relevant policies and the Sport England Active Design guidance, which provides advice for making places for the wellbeing of people and communities.



Hot Food Takeaway and Fast Food, and Evening Economy

- 6.11** To promote health and wellbeing within our District it is proposed to manage planning applications which have an element of fast food. This will promote healthier food environments and control the concentration and clustering of hot food takeaways and fast food in our towns as Sevenoaks, Swanley, and Edenbridge* have the highest concentration of fast food restaurants in the District. Applications for new hot food takeaways should not lead to an overconcentration of hot food takeaway use within any one individual locality by overly dominating the street scene or have an adverse impact on the standard of amenity. It is also appropriate to control the number of outlets where there are concerns regarding levels of obesity or where it exceeds average densities.
- 6.12** Applications for hot food takeaway and fast food should include the provision of a litter strategy for the immediate vicinity to reduce littering in the public realm and consider the control of odour.
- 6.13** It is acknowledged that there is a distinction between different types of hot food takeaway in terms of fast food and healthier/street food options and this can be considered through the development management process.
- 6.14** 1 in 10 reception aged children are now obese** and 1 in 7 children aged between 2 and 15 were obese in 2022***. Healthier food environments should be sought where this may negatively impact children's health otherwise. The NPPF (2024) has included recommendations that hot food takeaways and fast food should be outside of walking distance of schools and where young people congregate. Walking distance is based off the 15 minute neighbourhood concept and considered 1.2km.
- 6.15** Evening economy uses can contribute positively to the vitality and vibrancy of town centres. However, if not properly managed, such uses can result in adverse amenity impacts for local residents and businesses (both individual and cumulative impacts) generated from anti-social behaviour, litter, noise and disturbance. To achieve a balance and protect local amenity, evening economy uses will be directed to town centre locations. Uses will be expected to support the broad objectives of the Council's Town Centre Strategy and Neighbourhood Plans. The evening economy is inherently linked to the Council's Licensing and Environmental Health functions. Applicants are encouraged to liaise with colleagues in these teams prior to the submission of a planning application.

* July 2025 Food Environment Assessment Tool (Feat)

** NHS 2024 National Child Measurement Programme

*** NHS 2024 Health Survey for England 2022

Policy HW2

Hot Food Takeaway and Fast Food, and Evening Economy

1. This Policy aims to ensure town centres and the wide district are healthy and vibrant places to enjoy.
2. Applications for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets:
 - a. Should be refused when they are within walking distance (1.2km) of schools or other places where children and young people congregate, unless the location is within a designated town centre or local centre; or
 - b. Should be refused when they are in locations where there is evidence that a concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health, pollution, or anti-social behaviour;
 - c. should not lead to an overconcentration of these uses within any one individual locality. Planning permission will not normally be granted for hot food takeaway use where the number of approved establishments, within the ward, equals or exceeds the UK national average, per 100,000 population;
 - d. should include the provision of a litter strategy for the immediate vicinity to reduce littering in the public realm.
3. Proposals related to the evening economy should:
 - a. Be consistent with the Council's Town Centre Strategy and Neighbourhood Plan;
 - b. Complement existing uses in the surrounding area and mitigate/prevent any adverse impacts on the amenity and continued operation of these uses;
 - c. Demonstrate there would not be a significant adverse effect on amenity or function, particularly impacts on residential uses;
 - d. Promote access via sustainable modes of transport and avoid reliance on private vehicular transport, including private hire vehicles; and
 - e. Consider the potential for allowing daytime uses to activate the space, including on a meanwhile use basis, where the use is only intended to operate during evening/night-time hours.



Air Quality

- 6.16** Vehicle emissions are the main contributor to poor air quality in the District and there is a high dependency on private vehicles to make journeys to key locations within, and outside of, the District (e.g. stations, shops and community facilities). This has led to a number of hot spots in Sevenoaks, Swanley and other smaller settlements along the A25, where air quality is particularly poor.
- 6.17** The District declared four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in relation to traffic emissions. These have since been revoked, following Member agreement, as they were compliant to the threshold of monitored pollutants for at least five years. The Council will continue to monitor air quality through an Air Quality Strategy.
- 6.18** Should any AQMAs be declared in the future, any developments proposed within the AQMA must submit an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) as part of their application.

- 6.19** Measures to improve air quality include reducing the need to travel, providing electric vehicle charging points and promoting alternative modes of transport, including cycling. Secondary effects of these measures can also improve general health and wellbeing.
- 6.20** Looking forward to 2042, we would hope to see road transport emissions gradually decreasing as the proportion of zero and low emission vehicles increase, driven by current and forthcoming legislation and/or policy changes.
- 6.21** Likewise, emissions from other sources, such as building heating systems, should also decline with wider uptake of zero emission technologies. Nevertheless, local authorities will be expected to work towards reducing other emissions, specifically concentrations of PM_{2.5}, in line with legislation*.
- 6.22** PM_{2.5} is a fine particulate matter of 2.5 micrometres or less, it is a hazardous pollutant that can penetrate the lung barrier and enter the blood stream, causing disease and cancers. By improving air pollution levels, we can reduce disease and both long and short-term illness.

* Current legislation - the Environment Act 2021 and Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023

Policy AQ1

Air Quality

1. New development should result in a positive or neutral impact on air quality for new residents, the existing surrounding area and other areas connected to the development. It is expected that proposals should:
 - a. Ensure that onsite and offsite air quality issues are included when assessing the environmental impact of proposals;
 - b. Ensure that development which may have an adverse impact on air quality will be required to incorporate measures to reduce the impact to an acceptable level;
 - c. Ensure that suitable onsite and offsite mitigation measures are incorporated into the scheme, including a financial contribution to strategic air quality improvement measures, if appropriate, such that future air quality is either improved or sustained at a level that would be achieved without the development; and
 - d. Require design and location of new development to take account of the need to improve air quality in accordance with the District's Air Quality Action Plan, and any further Air Quality strategies.
2. An Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) will be required for the following new developments:
 - a. All major housing developments of 10 units or more; and/or
 - b. All residential and non-residential development proposals, except for minor proposals such as extensions, small-scale internal alterations, or other works that do not materially affect site access, layout, or transport demand, within 50 metres of a Strategic Road network road or heavily trafficked route.
3. Schemes where unacceptable impacts cannot be overcome by mitigation will be refused.



Environmental Nuisance and Pollution

- 6.23** All development should provide an acceptable standard of amenity for its occupants and neighbours and should not result in significant harmful effects to surrounding uses. These harmful effects can include obtrusive light, noise, odour, vibration, and other pollution.
- 6.24** 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.
- 6.25** 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 acoustic assessments by accredited professionals.
- 6.26** Development with artificial light should be appropriate to the development and should not be cause light pollution (obtrusive light) which would be considered a statutory nuisance. Artificial light can be a source of annoyance to people, harmful to wildlife, and undermine enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky — especially in areas with intrinsically dark landscapes.
- 6.27** Applicants should follow the most up-to-date professional guidance from bodies such as the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) in their development application to mitigate harm caused by obtrusive light.

Policy HW3

Environmental Nuisance and Pollution

1. Proposals which would result in, or be subject to unacceptable levels of light pollution, noise, odour, vibration and/or other pollution should:
 - a. Ensure that new development provides adequate residential amenity for existing and future occupiers of the development with regards to light, noise, odour, vibration and/or other pollution;
 - b. Safeguard the quality of amenities of existing and future occupants of nearby properties by ensuring that development does not contribute to and avoids areas where occupiers of the development would be subject to excessive light pollution, noise, odour, vibration and/or other pollution;
 - c. Ensure that development would not result in unacceptable light pollution, noise, odour, vibration and/or other pollution levels from existing sources, which cannot be adequately mitigated; and
 - d. Provide a Noise Impact Assessment, where the Council considers it necessary.

“

Sevenoaks District is home to a wealth of heritage assets, including around 1,700 listed buildings. This rich and diverse built heritage is set within a stunning medieval natural landscape of ancient woodland and farmland. A large proportion of the District lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape (NL) and the southern tip lies within the High Weald NL.



Historic Environment

07



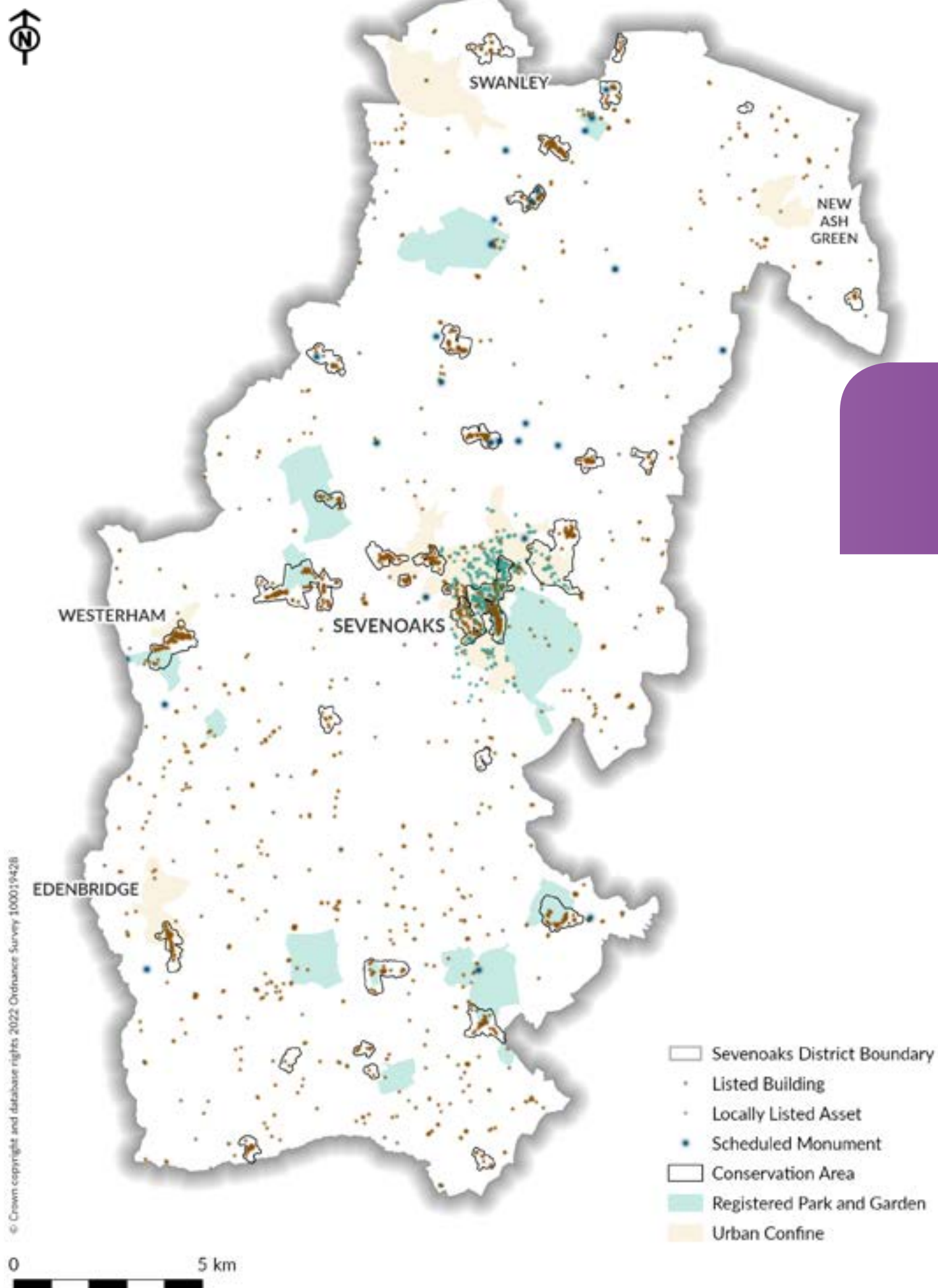


Figure 7.1: Heritage Assets and Conservation Areas

Historic Environment

07

Strategic Objective

OB16: Continue to support development that protects and enhances the District's historic environment and ensures that it can be enjoyed by future generations.



The historic environment is a valuable asset which can contribute to creating a sense of place and the wider strategic objectives of the District.

7.1 Sevenoaks District is home to a wealth of heritage assets, including around 1,700 listed buildings. This rich and diverse built heritage is set within a stunning medieval natural landscape of ancient woodland and farmland. A large proportion of the District lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the southern tip lies within the High Weald National Landscape. Other areas lie within the distinctive historical Low Weald and North Kent Plains that sit within the Green Belt. The myriad of historic parks and gardens encompass aesthetic, botanic, scientific and social heritage and form an important part of the areas landscape heritage character.

7.2 The historic environment is a valuable asset which can contribute to creating a sense of place and the wider strategic objectives of the District. These include economic development, urban regeneration, high quality urban design, place-making and planning, the vitality and viability of our centres and rural economy, tourism, leisure, education, and sustainability.





7.3 It is important that planning decisions consider heritage assets in the District, alongside wider objectives as set out in this Plan. To achieve this, the policies in this Plan will draw together a comprehensive approach to conserving and enhancing the District's historic environment.

7.4 Heritage assets are identified in national planning policy as either designated or non-designated heritage assets.

7.5 Designated heritage assets are those with a statutory designation, such as:

- Listed buildings;
- Scheduled monuments;
- Conservation areas; and
- Registered parks and gardens.

7.6 Non-designated heritage assets do not have a statutory designation but are still of local heritage significance. These include:

- Locally listed buildings, structures and places;
- Buildings and structures identified as making a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area;
- Buildings and structures identified as making a positive contribution to historic landscape character;
- Buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage interest;
- Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens;
- Historic Farmsteads; and
- Assets identified in the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER).



7.7 The Kent Historic Environment Record is a useful source of information on the local historic environment of the District and can also be used when assessing archaeological potential. It can be especially useful in identifying non-designated heritage assets, such as the historic farmsteads identified in the District through the Kent Farmsteads & Landscape Project (2012), which may be considered non-designated heritage assets.

7.8 The Council commissioned a Historic Environment Review (2017) to help us understand the District's historic environment as a whole. It considers the historic environment and designated and non-designated heritage assets, whilst also recognising that the landscape and local character are intrinsically linked to the setting of heritage assets and historic settlements, the pattern of development and land uses. As well as focusing on specific assets, it is important to consider the main themes and characteristics which help to form the District's local distinctiveness and which make a significant contribution to its heritage.



7.9 The historic environment and historic buildings and features it contains is also fundamental to the distinctive character, sense of place and natural beauty of the District's National Landscapes, and the rich built heritage greatly informs their character in terms of settlement pattern, building materials reflecting the underlying geology of the place, and building typologies that reflect locally distinct historic agricultural practices.

7.10 The Council wants to achieve development which is compatible with local character and that protects and positively responds to heritage assets and their setting, as required by national planning policy.

Policy HEN1

Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Development proposals affecting heritage assets will conserve, and where appropriate enhance, the District's historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets, including change within the setting of heritage assets, to ensure they are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. This includes applications affecting:

Designated heritage assets, such as:

- Listed buildings;
- Scheduled monuments;
- Conservation areas; and
- Registered parks and gardens.

Non-designated heritage assets, such as:

- Locally listed buildings, structures and places;
- Buildings and structures identified as making a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area;
- Buildings and structures identified as making a positive contribution to historic landscape character;
- Buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage interest;
- Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens;
- Historic Farmsteads; and
- Assets identified in the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER).

Proposals for development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, and respond sensitively to change within the historic environment, taking into account national planning policy and the following policies and guidance, where applicable:

- a. Local Plan policies relating to design, heritage assets and landscape character;
- b. Relevant research to understand the significance of the historic environment and specific assets it contains, including the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER) as a minimum;
- c. Current best practice guidance produced by Historic England; and
- d. Other principles set out in relevant local policy/guidance, including the Kent Design Guide SPD, Local List SPD, Sevenoaks District Historic Environment Review, Conservation Area Appraisals, the Conservation Area Design Guidance SPD, Neighbourhood Plans, Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment, or any subsequent versions, and any historic environment guidance adopted by the Council.



Sensitively Managing Change in the Historic Environment

7.11 National planning policy requires applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets affected by proposals, including any contribution made by their setting. Understanding the significance of heritage assets, and the contribution of their setting, is fundamental to the positive management and protection of heritage assets and the historic environment in a manner appropriate to their significance.

7.12 All new development should demonstrate how it has understood and responded positively to the historic environment and the heritage assets it contains by making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and, where possible, better revealing and enhancing the heritage significance of the District.

Policy HEN2

Sensitively Managing Change in the Historic Environment

Where heritage assets may be affected by a proposal, Planning Statements, Design and Access Statements and/or Heritage Statements will be expected to demonstrate:

- a. An identification and assessment of heritage assets, including an assessment and description of their significance, and the contribution of their setting;
- b. How this information has been used to inform proposals that sustain and enhance the historic environment and, where relevant, minimise and mitigate harm; and
- c. That new development responds positively to local historic character and conserves, and where appropriate enhances, the significance of heritage assets.



Archaeology

7.13 Most archaeological sites are not scheduled monuments, but nonetheless play an important role in the historic environment. They contribute to a sense of place and provide people with a direct physical link to the past, as well as bringing to life stories and events occurring at an international, national, regional and local level.

7.14 The known sites and areas of archaeological interest within the District are included within the Historic Environment Record as Archaeological Notification Areas (ANA). Kent County Council has defined Archaeological Notification Areas (ANA) to guide when to consult the County Archaeologist on applications that may affect archaeological assets.

Policy HEN3

Archaeology

Where an application is located within an Archaeological Notification Areas or suspected area of archaeological importance and has the potential to affect archaeological assets, an archaeological assessment may be required to understand the potential impact on archaeological remains.

Preservation in situ will be expected unless clear justification is provided to demonstrate that the recording of remains, assessment, analysis report and deposition of archive is appropriate.

Whenever practicable, opportunities should be taken for the enhancement and interpretation of archaeological remains.

Developers will be required to record any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their significance and the potential impact of the proposals, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. This includes the recording of historic buildings where features will be lost through alteration or demolition.



Locally Listed Buildings and Assets

7.15 The Council, working in partnership with key stakeholders, has produced a Local List of buildings and other assets that are of local architectural and historic interest or that made significant contribution to local distinctiveness. The list will be updated and added to with further buildings and assets on an ongoing basis. Heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest. Further information on heritage assets in Sevenoaks can be found in the Sevenoaks Local List SPD. The historic assets on this list are considered non-designated heritage assets. This Policy will be applicable to any future Local List as it is updated and expanded.



Policy HEN4

Locally Listed Buildings and Assets

Development affecting Locally Listed Buildings and Assets should have regard to the impact on the asset's significance and its setting and demonstrate that the significance of the asset and its conservation has informed the design of the proposed development.

Proposals will be supported for developments that secure the preservation, and where appropriate enhancement, of Locally Listed Buildings and Assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Schemes that show a positive commitment to retaining the asset, as an active part of the site will be encouraged. Development that would result in the loss of, or demonstrably harm the significance or setting of a Locally Listed Building or Asset, will be resisted, unless the proposed development has other public benefits that clearly outweigh the loss of, or harm to, the asset.



Responding to Climate Change in the Historic Environment

7.16 The retention and reuse of our historic building stock can help reduce climate change by avoiding the higher carbon footprint associated with new construction. The inherent embodied energy of historic buildings means that their retention, reuse and appropriate adaptation is consistent with modern concepts of sustainability and with the ambitions to reduce carbon emissions. Conservation and the sustainable use and reuse of the historic environment is critical to limiting further global warming and the impacts of climate change.

7.17 Heritage assets also need to adapt to meet changing needs by understanding and exploring opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings in a manner appropriate to their significance. Adapting historic buildings appropriately does not just mean employing the most effective means of reducing carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels. It also means doing so in ways that protect historic significance and character.



7.18 Certain energy efficiency or retrofit measures, specifically those for modern construction, are not appropriate for historic buildings. Adopting a 'whole building approach' (as set out in Historic England guidance) to understand the building, its construction, and significance will help to ensure that suitable energy efficiency measures are selected that do not harm the significance of heritage assets.

Policy HEN5

Responding to Climate Change in the Historic Environment

Development should secure the conservation and continued beneficial use of heritage assets through their retention and sensitive adaptation which will avoid harm to their significance.

The conversion and change of use of heritage assets should conserve the significance of heritage assets and without significant alteration or change to character and appearance, or loss of historic fabric.

Development for the change of use or conversion of a heritage asset should demonstrate that the proposed use is considered to be compatible with the fabric, interior and setting of the building, taking into account the optimum viable use that is likely to conserve, or where clearly justified, cause the least harm to, the significance of the asset.

Applications to improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings and mitigate and adapt to climate change will only be supported where they consider a whole building approach, informed by an understanding of the building and how it performs; understanding the building's significance; prioritising interventions that are proportionate, effective and sustainable; and avoiding and minimising harm and the risk of maladaptation.

Proposals will need to demonstrate that they are sensitively designed to avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets and their setting, having regard to other less harmful options that would achieve a similar result. Consideration should be given to the reversibility of any proposals, although reversibility alone will not justify alterations that harm significance.



Shopfronts

- 7.19** Shopfronts and signage form an important element in the street scene, both individually and in terms of the wider street setting. They can not only enhance the vitality of a place, but also contribute to the local distinctiveness and character of the townscape.
- 7.20** Retaining historic shopfronts makes a positive contribution to the historic character of a place and visual amenity. When a replacement shopfront is necessary it can be successfully integrated into their setting through the use of quality materials and by respecting the proportions of the building and character of the street scene.



Policy HEN6

Shopfronts

Historic shopfronts should be retained and restored where they are of historic or architectural merit and contribute to the character and visual amenity of a building or area.

Opportunities should be taken for the enhancement of unsympathetic shopfronts within conservation areas.

Applications for new shopfronts, or alteration to existing shopfronts and other forms of advertisement affecting heritage assets will be supported where the design, detailing, positioning, materials, colour, proportion and illumination respond positively to the character and design of the existing building and surroundings. This is both for the replacement of historic shopfronts and the enhancement of unsympathetic shopfronts and signage where they are to be replaced for historic buildings and areas.



Historic Parks and Gardens

7.21 Historic Parks and Gardens are an important part of the historic and natural environment of the District. Some of these Historic Parks and Gardens are designated, and others are non-designated assets and are identified in the Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens and on the Sevenoaks Local List. There are likely to be others that are yet to be formally identified.

7.22 These contain a variety of features, such as: historic association with places, events and people, the open space itself, views in and out, ancient and veteran trees, planting, water features, built features and archaeological remains. They often also play an important role in the setting of listed buildings and structures and landscape character, to which they are intrinsically linked. There is a need to protect such sites and their settings from new development that may have a detrimental impact on the historic interest. The cumulative impacts of development within Registered Parks and Gardens, especially those in multiple ownership, can be harmful to their significance and should be considered.

Policy HEN7

Historic Parks and Gardens

Proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it:

- a. Conserves, and where applicable enhances, the special interest, significance and settings of Historic Parks or Gardens, both registered or of local importance and historic landscapes; including the restoration of lost features where possible;
- b. Respects the distinctive characteristics and features of existing designed or natural landscapes and would not harm the enjoyment, layout, design, character and appearance; and
- c. Provides clear and convincing justification that any harm can be outweighed by public benefits commensurate to the level of harm arising.
- d. Considers the cumulative impact of development on the significance of the Historic Park or Garden.

“

Sevenoaks District has a high-quality and beautiful natural environment with a predominantly rural character. The sweeping landscape incorporates the chalk hills of the North Downs, stretches of enchanting woodland, historic parkland and areas rich in biodiversity.



The Natural Environment

08





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The natural environment
is a key component of the
character of the District.

The Natural Environment

08

Strategic Objective

OB15: Ensure the District retains a high quality natural environment over the period of the Local Plan including delivering biodiversity net gain on new development.



Sevenoaks District is an attractive place to live, work and visit. The natural environment is a key character component of the District and should be conserved and enhanced for current and future generations.

8.1 More than 60% of the District lies within the Kent Downs or High Weald National Landscapes (NL) and 11% of the District is covered in irreplaceable Ancient Woodland (compared with the UK average of 2%).

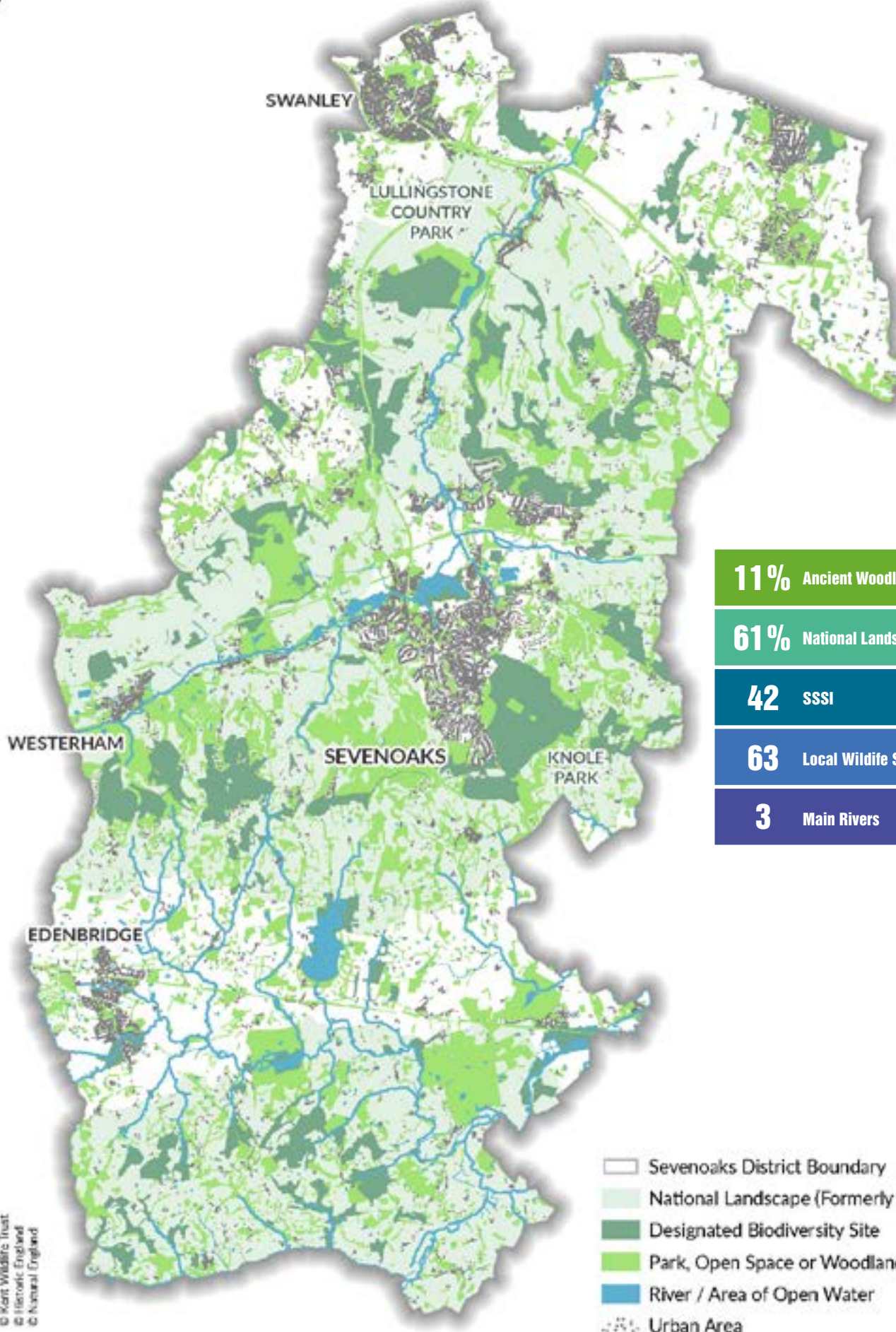
8.2 The District is rich in biodiversity and has a range of habitats varying from chalk grasslands, acid grassland, woodlands, rivers and open water and heathland.

Did you know?

The Kent Downs National Landscape Team is seeking UNESCO Global Geopark status. As part of this, two sites in Sevenoaks have been identified as Geosites.



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 © Historic England
 © Natural England



11%	Ancient Woodland	
61%	National Landscapes	
42	SSSI	
63	Local Wildlife Sites	
3	Main Rivers	

Figure 8.1

Key Natural Environment Features of Sevenoaks District



Landscape

- 8.3** In November 2023, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were re-branded National Landscapes. However, legislation still refers to them as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and in some instances, that terminology may still be used.
- 8.4** All of our landscape is of value for its contribution towards making Sevenoaks an attractive place to live, work and visit. A description of the landscape, its key characteristics and how it has changed can be found at different scales. At a national scale, Sevenoaks sits within 5 defined national character areas: North Kent Plain, North Downs, Wealden Greensand, Low Weald and High Weald (see Figure 8.2: National Character Areas), which each have a profile. Whilst the Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment 2017 provides a more detailed review of the entire District. It identifies what makes a place unique and defines the character of the landscape, identifying 13 landscape character types (areas with broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern), sub-dividing these into 31 landscape character areas (areas which share generic characteristics with other areas of the same type but with their own particular identity) and identifies key characteristics. It also evaluates landscape condition, key sensitivities and valued attributes and provides guidance. It updates and supersedes the Countryside Character Assessment SPD 2011.
- 8.5** Other sources of information may include local landscape character assessments. These are undertaken by local communities to support neighbourhood or parish plans and are at a more detailed level; these should also be used, where they exist and where applicable.
- 8.6** In addition, the Kent Downs and High Weald National Landscapes have their own Management Plans, which are reviewed on a five yearly cycle: The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2021-2026 and the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029. These outline the key components, special characteristics and qualities which together make up their natural beauty.
- 8.7** In the Kent Downs these comprise its dramatic landform and views, biodiversity-rich habitats, farmed landscape, woodland and trees, its historic and cultural heritage, heritage coasts, geology and natural resources and tranquillity and remoteness, including dark skies.
- 8.8** Within the High Weald the core character components comprise its natural systems (geology, soils, water and climate), its settlement pattern, routeways, woodland, fieldscapes and heath, dark night skies, its aesthetic and perceptual qualities and its land-based economy and rural living.
- 8.9** National policy sets out that 'valued landscapes' should be protected and enhanced in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan and that Natural Landscapes have the highest status of protection in relation to conserving and enhancing their landscape and scenic beauty.
- 8.10** In addition the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 sets out a recently strengthened legislative duty requiring public authorities to 'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area.' Guidance on the strengthened duty can be found on the National Landscapes' websites.

8.11 However, the National Landscape designation does not prevent development, rather development is expected to be limited and in line with the NPPF (2024). Proposals should conserve and enhance the landscape and natural beauty of the National Landscapes, and whether within the National Landscape or its setting, should take account of the relevant Management Plan and associated guidance to produce sensitive and carefully designed schemes. In instances where proposals are determined to comprise major development, the NPPF (2024) sets out that it should be refused, other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest.

8.12 In addition, National Landscapes are also a factor in assessing whether areas of the Green Belt can be considered grey belt, a concept introduced in the latest version of the NPPF (2024). Land within a National Landscape is excluded from being considered grey belt where the application of policies relating to its designation as National Landscape would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development. The advice of the Kent Downs National Landscape Team and High Weald National Landscape Unit has been sought on the grey belt and its implications.

8.13 Both the High Weald and Kent Downs National Landscapes have supporting guidance. They can be found on their respective websites and these should be checked as new or updated guidance may become available over the lifetime of this plan. The guidance includes the following:

Kent Downs

- Kent Downs AONB Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development
- Kent Downs AONB Farmsteads Guidance
- Landscape Design Handbook
- Kent Downs AONB Rural Streets and Lanes: a design handbook
- Renewable Energy Position Statement
- Setting Position Statement

High Weald

- High Weald Planning Advice Note
- High Weald Housing Design Guide
- High Weald Dark Skies Planning Advice Note
- High Weald Routeways Guidance
- High Weald Colour Study
- Solar Farms and the High Weald National Landscape Position Statement

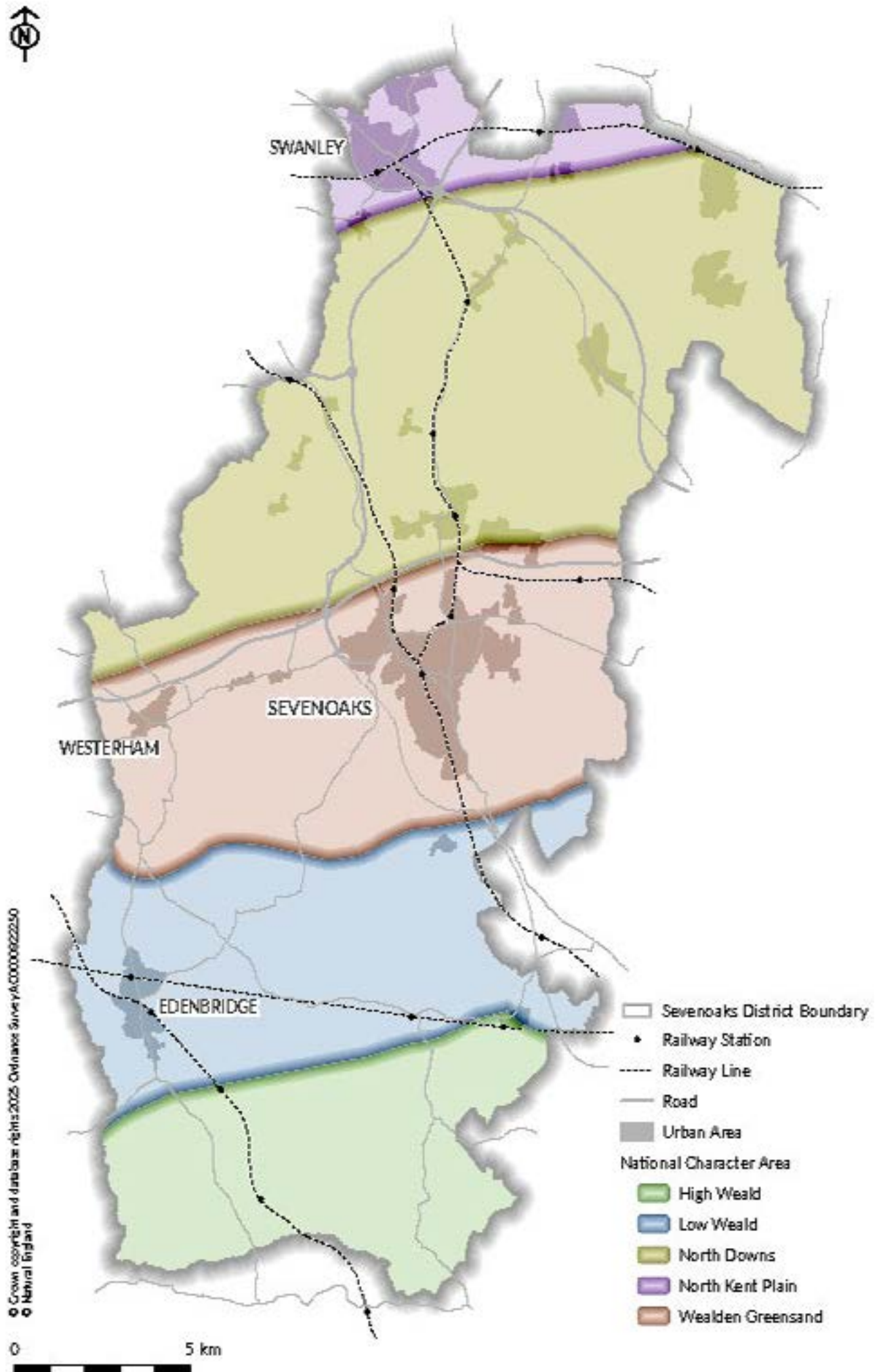


Figure 8.2: National Character Areas

Policy NE1

Landscape and National Landscapes

The landscape character of the District's countryside, outside of the National Landscapes, should be conserved and, where possible, enhanced.

All proposals should have regard to and be informed by the relevant national character area profile, the Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment 2017 and where applicable, any local landscape character assessment and should demonstrate:

1. A clear understanding of which landscape character area they are in;
2. How they will contribute to the vision for the landscape character area;
3. Whether any of the following will be affected and if so, which ones and how:
 - a. key characteristics of the landscape character area
 - b. key sensitivities/valued attributes
 - c. and any conflict with any of the landscape guidance; and
4. How any identified harm to key characteristics, key sensitivities/valued attributes or conflicts with the landscape guidance would be adequately mitigated.

STRATEGIC POLICY

Policy NE1 (continued)

Landscape and National Landscapes

National Landscapes

1. All proposals in the Kent Downs National Landscape and the High Weald National Landscape should conserve and enhance the natural beauty of these nationally designated landscapes.
2. The scale and extent of development within the National Landscapes should be limited. Major development within the National Landscapes will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that it is in the public interest.
3. Development within the National Landscapes will only be supported where the location, form, scale, materials and design of the development would conserve and enhance the components of natural beauty of the relevant National Landscape as defined in the Management Plan, including its distinctive landscape character and features, historic settlement patterns, dark skies and tranquillity. Assessment of such development proposals should have regard to the relevant AONB Management Plan and supporting documents and guidance.
4. Measures to conserve and enhance the National Landscapes should be based on the aims and objectives of the relevant AONB Management Plan.

Setting of the National Landscapes:

5. Development within land that contributes to the setting of the National Landscapes should avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on the natural beauty (including dark skies and tranquillity) of the National Landscapes.
6. Development proposals in the setting of the National Landscapes should be sensitively located and designed, be consistent with National Landscape purposes, and in particular should not adversely affect transitional landscape character in the setting of the National Landscape and views, outlook and aspect, into and out of the National Landscapes by virtue of its location, scale, form or design. Assessment of such development proposals should have regard to the relevant AONB Management Plan and supporting documents.

Biodiversity and Ecosystems



Designated Sites

- 8.14** Sevenoaks District has a wide range of habitats and protected areas. It is home to both nationally and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, whilst beyond the District boundaries are internationally designated sites, such as the Ashdown Forest (see Policy AF1).
- 8.15** Nationally designated sites are sites which Natural England is of the opinion are of special interest by reason of their flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features and which are of national importance; these are known as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Sevenoaks currently contains 42 Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- 8.16** Locally designated sites are sites that have been identified and designated locally by means of a range of mechanisms and bodies and are protected for their biodiversity, ecological and/or geological value through policy. Sevenoaks contains 63 Local Wildlife Sites, 19 nature reserves, comprising Local Nature Reserves, Roadside Nature Reserves and Kent Wildlife Trust Reserves and a Regionally Important Geological site. We will continue to work with the relevant bodies, as appropriate, on reviewing and designating local sites, as they come forward.

Blue-Green Infrastructure

- 8.17** The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) defines green infrastructure as ‘A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity’.
- 8.18** The various ecological and habitat components across the District, including watercourses and open bodies of water, alongside other areas of open space, are collectively known as the blue-green infrastructure (BGI) network. Our blue-green infrastructure network provides multiple benefits. These include its essential role in mitigating and adapting to climate change, ensuring that future generations can enjoy a healthy and thriving environment for years to come. Climate change is one of the biggest environmental concerns of our time and as a Council, through our Climate Change Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan, we have committed to helping the District reduce carbon emissions and become more resilient to climate change.
- 8.19** Our blue-green infrastructure network provides other benefits. It contributes to the character of our District, it provides a network for wildlife, it can help deliver biodiversity net gain and it provides ecosystem services, e.g. the air we breathe. Moreover, access to the natural environment can also have a positive impact on health and wellbeing and can help reduce social and health inequalities.





8.20 The network is shown as an interactive map, aside from RIGs which can be viewed here:

<https://www.geoconservationkent.org.uk/>.

The network consists of the following:

- 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;
- Local Wildlife Sites;
- Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGs);
- Nature Reserves;
- Woodland and Ancient Woodland;
- Country parks;
- Trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders;
- River corridors and open bodies of water;
- Cycle routes;
- Sites identified in the Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens;
- Sites designated as Open Space including:
 - Amenity Greenspace;
 - Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace;
 - Provision for Children and Young People;
 - Outdoor Sports facilities, playing pitches and playing fields;
 - Allotments and community gardens;
 - Green corridors;
 - Cemeteries and Churchyards.

8.21 In order to conserve and enhance our blue-green infrastructure, planning applications should identify existing blue-green infrastructure, both on-site and in close proximity, and should retain, protect, restore and enhance it, maximising opportunities for new provision, where possible. This can be incorporated through the proposed landscaping scheme and other measures and can help deliver biodiversity net gain.

8.22 Natural England's Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Guide sets out the building blocks, a selection of which can be used, as appropriate, to provide BGI. These include features such as sustainable drainage systems, green and blue roofs, green walls, rain gardens, swales, features for species and trees in hard landscapes.

8.23 In planning and designing BGI regard should be had to appropriate and applicable evidence and strategies to ensure it responds to the local character and to locally identified need e.g. landscape character assessments, conservation area appraisals, open space studies and National Landscape Management Plans. For local biodiversity priorities, the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy, once published, will be a key tool, setting out priorities, potential measures and wider measures, as well as identifying the priority species that would benefit from the delivery of its measures. This includes priorities and measures focused on the urban and built environment.

Policy BW1

Safeguarding Places for Wildlife and Nature

Designated Sites

Designated sites of importance for biodiversity will be protected, from direct and indirect adverse impacts, in line with the hierarchy set down in the NPPF.

Locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity will be protected from development which would result in an adverse effect, directly or indirectly, to its nature or geological conservation interest.

Locally designated sites include:

- Local Wildlife Sites
- Nature reserves including Local Nature Reserves, Roadside Nature Reserves and Kent Wildlife Trust Reserve
- Regionally Important Geological Sites

The enhancement of biodiversity through the creation, enhancement, extension and management of locally designated sites will be supported.

Blue-Green Infrastructure

The District's blue-green infrastructure (BGI) network comprises a wide range of elements as detailed in the supporting text.

Proposals which protect, retain, restore and enhance the blue-green infrastructure network will be supported.

Proposals for major development will be expected to identify, as a baseline, existing blue-green infrastructure features and its condition, on-site, off-site and links with the BGI network.

Blue-green infrastructure features include, but are not limited to:

- Open/green space (including parks and burial grounds)
- Private domestic gardens
- Orchards
- Allotments
- Traffic-free routes

- Street furniture and utility structures
- Green and blue roofs
- Green walls
- Trees, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows, including street trees
- Rainwater harvesting and smart controls
- Downpipe disconnection planters
- Rain gardens
- Biofiltration strips, swales, ponds and detention basins
- Vegetated sustainable drainage systems
- Ponds, ditches and watercourses
- Features for species e.g. bird boxes or nests, swift bricks and hedgehog holes

Development proposals on sites containing existing Blue-Green Infrastructure will be expected to retain, protect, where necessary restore, and enhance existing blue-green infrastructure features.

For example, where a site includes a river, that could include river restoration.

All development proposals are expected to maximise opportunities for the provision of new or additional BGI.

Development proposals will be supported where the BGI has been fully considered, has taken account of the existing network, is suitable for the location, addressing local need, and includes new connections to the existing network, where possible and has had regard to and responded to appropriate and applicable strategies and evidence.

Any BGI should be multi-functional and supporting documentation should set out what functions it seeks to provide.

Proposals will be expected to include details demonstrating how it will be maintained and managed, including how it will be funded, for the life of the development.

Schemes and projects which would enhance the blue-green infrastructure network will be supported.



Partnership Working in the Natural Environment

8.24 Projects which provide improvements to the natural environment, strengthen the blue-green infrastructure network, increase and improve public access, understanding and enjoyment, promote climate resilience and provide health benefits will be supported by the Council. Projects to date have included the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme and the Sevenoaks Greensands Commons Project, and at the local scale, comprise woodland management projects, community led habitat management, health walks and wildlife/nature experiences, especially those which encourage children and young people to engage with the natural environment.

8.25 We will continue to work with partners to develop projects. Partners such as:

- The North West Kent Countryside Partnership
- Kent Wildlife Trust
- Kent Downs National Landscape Team and High Weald National Landscape Unit





Ashdown Forest

- 8.26** There are four internationally important sites within 10km of the boundary of the District. These European sites are protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended (known as the Habitat Regulations), which requires the undertaking of a habitat regulations assessment (HRA) to test if the plan or project could significantly harm their designated features.
- 8.27** Of the four European sites, the most significant is Ashdown Forest which lies approximately 6km south of the District boundary. It is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA), due to the presence of breeding Nightjars and Dartford Warblers and as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), primarily due to heathland habitats (its Northern Atlantic wet heaths and European dry heaths) and the presence of Great Crested Newts. These European designations cover around 3,000ha. Ashdown Forest is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- 8.28** The District's nearest settlement to Ashdown Forest is Edenbridge, which is approximately 12km from the site. However, whilst Ashdown Forest lies entirely within Wealden district, development in surrounding authority areas is still capable of having an impact as a result of:
- recreational pressure arising from population growth, which can affect the SPA;
 - increases in vehicle emissions arising from vehicles using roads that run through and adjacent to the forest, which can affect the SAC.
- 8.29** Accordingly, each version of our emerging Local Plan will be tested through habitats regulations assessment as to whether it would be likely to result in a significant effect on the integrity of the European sites, as a result of development provided by the Plan, alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
- 8.30** Evidence in the form of visitor surveys undertaken in 2009 and 2016 have confirmed that the greatest impact arises from within a 7km zone of the forest, commonly referred to as the 'zone of influence'. This zone just reaches into the District (a very small area around Fordcombe and Cowden as shown in figure 8.3). A more recent visitor survey (2021) supports the extent of the 'zone of influence' and indicates that less than 2% of visitors are from Sevenoaks District. Further surveys will be undertaken to understand where visitors to the forest come from, with the next survey due to take place in 2026.



- 8.31** However, despite only a very small portion of our District falling within this zone, no development being proposed within it through the emerging Local Plan and a small percentage of visitors coming from Sevenoaks, we recognise that any windfall development within the zone or larger scale development beyond the zone has the potential to impact on Ashdown Forest. This larger scale development, where there is likely to be a significant effect, will need to be tested through a habitat regulations assessment. As such we continue to work with other impacted authorities through the Ashdown Forest Officer Working Group (SAMMS Partnership) and have signed a Recreational Pressure Statement of Common Ground with 5 other local authorities and Natural England to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to joint-working on this important issue. We will continue to work proactively with Natural England, neighbouring authorities and any other relevant bodies to understand and address the impact of recreational pressure arising from development in Sevenoaks on Ashdown Forest.
- 8.32** Working with these authorities, mitigation measures have been developed to address recreational impacts upon Ashdown Forest. The measures comprise Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). A modest developer contribution is sought in relation to SAMM where there is a net increase in new dwellings within the zone of influence. It is currently set at £1,170 per new residential unit but it is index linked: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/1140/ashdown_forest_special_protection_spa_strategy_tariff_guidance. In relation to SANGs, a number of the affected districts and boroughs have SANGs in place but these have limited capacity, whilst in Sevenoaks, as there are no proposed site allocations within the 7km zone, a strategic Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) is unlikely to be feasible but we will explore options where the need arises.
- 8.33** With regards to emissions, we will be seeking to understand the impact of our emerging Local Plan alone and in combination with other plans and whether or not it would have an adverse impact upon the integrity of the Ashdown Forest SAC. We are a member of the Ashdown Forest Working Group which is focussing on air quality impacts on the SAC and we are signatories of the Statement of Common Ground which seeks to address the strategic cross boundary issue of air quality impacts. This has included securing air quality monitoring and agreeing to a strategic, bespoke transport model. We will continue to work with the Ashdown Forest Working Group to improve understanding and to support strategic work on air quality issues for Ashdown Forest.

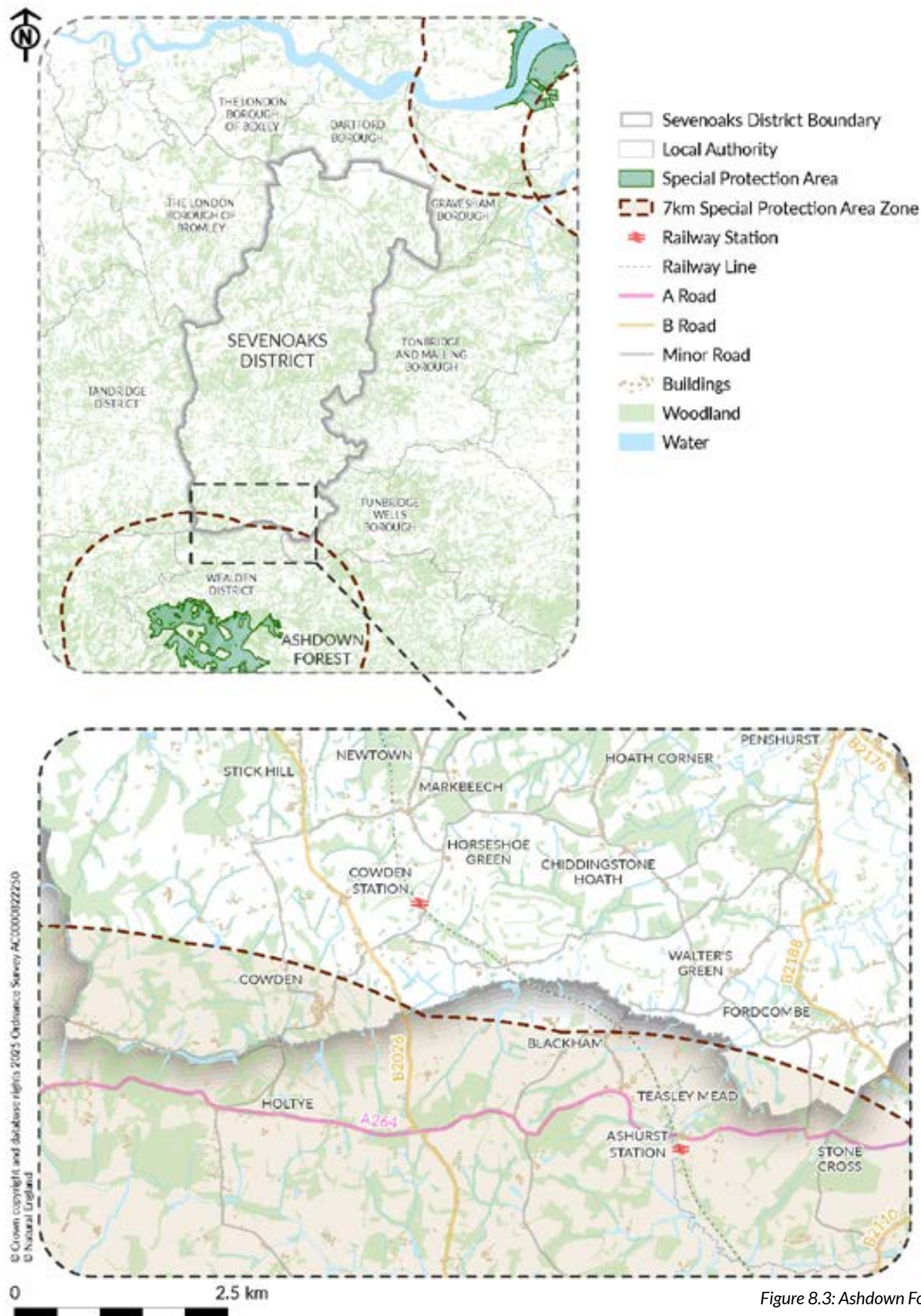


Figure 8.3: Ashdown Forest

Policy AF1

Ashdown Forest

All residential development resulting in a net increase in dwellings within the 7km zone of influence (see figure 8.3) will be required to address visitor impact on Ashdown Forest, in line with the most up-to-date SAMM strategy, by means of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMMs) contribution, and through provision of or contributions towards Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace.

If any major development is adjacent or close to the zone, applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis through a site-specific habitat regulations assessment. If it is concluded that it could give rise to adverse effects to the integrity of the coherence Ashdown Forest's ecological structure and function, appropriate mitigation measures will be considered and secured.

Any proposals considered likely to have a significant adverse effect on the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and/or the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) will not normally be permitted.



Biodiversity in Development

8.34 Biodiversity is found throughout the rural and urban areas of the District. As well as being important in its own right, the natural environment provides a range of services known as ecosystem services e.g. clean air, it can help provide natural solutions to the impact of climate change, including mitigation and adaptation measures, often referred to as nature-based solutions, and it provides health and wellbeing benefits. The wellbeing of our residents is at the heart of everything we do and a healthy and protected environment is key to wellbeing; as such we are seeking to protect our high-quality natural environment, including its biodiversity.

8.35 Legislation plays an important role in protecting biodiversity and is used to designate sites e.g. SSSI or protect specific species, known as Protected Species/ European Protected Species. In addition, legislation sets a requirement for the identification of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the purpose of conservation and enhancing biodiversity, comprising some of our rarest and most threatened species, and often referred to as section 41 or priority habitats and species. Furthermore, local authorities are under a duty to consider what action they can take to further the biodiversity objective which is the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.



8.36 However despite these protections, it is under pressure. The UK-wide State of Nature 2023 report highlights that the abundance and distribution of biodiversity has declined since 1970 and that it has continued to decline. England has experienced a 19% national decline in the average abundance of species between 1970 and 2021, with 16.1% of England's species threatened with extinction. A number of pressures have been identified, amongst which is urbanisation, leading to direct habitat loss and fragmentation. The Government's 25 year Environment Plan (2018) highlighted the scale of human impact including human-induced extinction and set out a number of actions, including embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development in light of the Government's housebuilding ambitions and to initially mainstream the use of biodiversity net gain (BNG). A mandatory BNG requirement was subsequently included in the Environment Act 2021 (Royal Assent received on 09 November 2021), which strengthen the NPPF (2024) requirements and updated Planning Practice Guidance was published.



- 8.37** Biodiversity net gain is an approach which aims to leave biodiversity in a measurably better state than before. The Government legislated for a 10% increase in biodiversity, measured using a statutory biodiversity metric, on most development but has exempted some types and scales of development through secondary legislation e.g. householder applications and has consulted on further exemptions and amendments.
- 8.38** It became mandatory for major development (schemes of 10 homes and over) on 12 February 2024 and for small sites (1-9 dwellings on sites of less than 1 hectare) on 02 April 2024.
- 8.39** We have considered requiring a higher level (20%) than required statutorily in previous versions of our emerging Local Plan following Kent Nature Partnership's recommendations as set out in their 2020 justification. This highlights Kent's rich and varied biodiversity resource, including globally rare habitats and habitat which supports over 3,400 rare and threatened species, with some only found in Kent. It also highlights specific pressures on Kent, due to its strategic location and from significant and unprecedented levels of growth that has led to a highly fragmented landscape. Major losses in Kent's wildlife were identified in The State of Kent's Wildlife 2011 report, with a number of species becoming extinct or declining over the preceding 100 years. The headlines in the more recent State of Nature in Kent 2021 report, note that of the 3,684 species that have had their threat status assessed, 10% are classified as threatened with extinction.
- 8.40** It was also supported by a Kent wide viability study and our Regulation 18 Stage Local Plan & CIL Viability Assessment; Interim Report (October 2023), which concludes that the cost of moving from 10% to 20% would be minimal. However, guidance from the Government states that, unless justified, a higher percentage should not be sought unless it can be evidenced that there is a local need for a higher percentage, there are local opportunities for a higher percentage and impacts on viability have been taken into account. However, whilst it is considered that local need can be demonstrated and impacts on viability would be minimal, given the still relatively immature market it is considered that it isn't possible to evidence local opportunities and as such we are not currently seeking a higher percentage than the statutorily required 10%. As the market matures and BNG becomes more established, this is something we may re-visit.
- 8.41** The Government has sought to incentivise on-site or local off-site provision through the biodiversity metric. Its spatial risk multiplier penalises proposals where off-site habitat is located at a distance from the site, with the score being lower where it is both outside of the local planning authority's (LPA) administrative area and outside of the national character area (NCA) the planning application site sits within. It gets progressively lower scoring for being in neighbouring LPA or NCA areas, to the lowest where it is beyond these.

- 8.42** However, even with the highest scoring, this could effectively result in the compensation/off-site habitat being outside of Sevenoaks District, provided it sits within the wider NCA. Therefore, where it is not possible to deliver all or any of it on-site, off-site where it is local (within Sevenoaks District) should be prioritised, where feasible and available, and ideally adjacent or close to the site. Where it is not possible to secure biodiversity units within the District, but they would be in the same NCA as the application site, the preference is for those sites to be within adjoining local planning authority boundaries, where feasible and available. A Kent wide register has been developed which should help facilitate the market in biodiversity units. However, it is recognised that until the market becomes established, this will affect where off-site units can be secured. As such, as part of the Biodiversity Gain Plan it should be demonstrated why units cannot be delivered in accordance with the above hierarchy. e.g. no available sites providing the right type of habitat.
- 8.43** A key tool in targeting off-site BNG and for nature recovery more generally will be the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS); a spatial strategy setting out priorities for nature recovery. This will map the most valuable existing areas for nature, known as Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) and Areas that Could become of particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACIB). Where the creation and/or enhancement of biodiversity is proposed which aligns with potential measures set out in the LNRS and which would take place in an APIB or ACIB, they may be classed as strategically significant and as such have a higher value. The LNRS will also identify the priority species which should be prioritised and sets out wider measures which would be beneficial over wider areas.
- 8.44** Kent County Council, as the responsible authority, has led on the preparation of the LNRS for Kent and Medway, which was subject to public consultation in early 2025. Until the LNRS is published, where off-site BNG is required, it should be directed to areas of noted conservation value and/ or existing known areas where there are the greatest opportunities for habitat enhancement, restoration and recreation within the District e.g. Biodiversity Opportunity Areas. Interim Strategic Significance Guidance has been developed to provide guidance until the LNRS has been published (expected in autumn 2025), at which point the LNRS will supersede the interim guidance.
- 8.45** Guidance will be prepared to set out the detailed requirements for biodiversity net gain, including both on-site and off-site net gain provision.



Case Study:

Darent Valley Landscape Recovery

A partnership of landowners in the North Downs working with Kent Wildlife Trust, South East Rivers Trust and others to restore north-west Kent's landscape and wildlife within the river Darent catchment. It is seeking to create and enhance c1,500 ha of biodiverse habitats and restore the natural function of the river Darent, with the aim of creating a large network of high-quality habitats. It is expecting to generate a significant uplift in biodiversity, with potential to provide a large number of biodiversity units and to contribute towards carbon sequestration, from a mixture of woodland, grassland, heathland and freshwater habitats, including both enhancement of existing habitats and creation of high-quality semi-natural habitats from agricultural land. Its initial development phase is being funded by Landscape Recovery, one of the Government's Environment Land Management Schemes (ELMS).

Policy BW2

Biodiversity in Development

The biodiversity of the District will be protected and enhanced.

Proposals should demonstrate how they have:

1. Applied the mitigation hierarchy and minimised their impact on biodiversity;
2. Conserved, restored and/or enhanced priority habitats, where applicable;
3. Conserved, restored and/or enhanced ecological networks, where applicable; and,
4. Protected and supported the recovery of priority and threatened species, including installing appropriate ecological features e.g. swift bricks and porous boundaries.

Proposals should have regard to and be informed by the most up-to-date strategies, including the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy, once published.

Once published, proposals should demonstrate:

1. How they align with the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy's priorities for nature recovery;
2. Where they are in an area identified in the LNRS as one that could become of particular importance for biodiversity, how and which of the mapped potential measures have been incorporated; and,
3. How and which wider measures have been incorporated, where the site is located outside of the areas identified as those which could become of particular importance for biodiversity.

Proposals which result in the loss or damage to irreplaceable habitats (which include Ancient Woodland and Ancient and Veteran Trees) will be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable mitigation strategy exists.

Policy BW2 (continued)

Biodiversity in Development

Biodiversity Net Gain

Proposals for new development which are exempt under the regulations should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity and are encouraged to achieve measurable net gain.

All proposals for new development (qualifying development), which are not exempted through regulations, must provide biodiversity net gain in accordance with the statutory requirement of 10%.

Planning applications which are not exempt from the biodiversity net gain requirement are encouraged to include additional information, over and above the statutory validation requirements, to support the application and to enable consideration of if and how the biodiversity net gain objective could be secured and that the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy has been applied.

Biodiversity net gain should be provided on the application site, wherever possible, and in developing the proposed habitat conservation or enhancement measures to secure the biodiversity gain objective, regard should be had to the published local nature recovery strategy and where it is within a National Landscape, to the applicable management plan.

Where off-site provision is proposed this should, wherever possible and appropriate, align with the following approach:

1. Off-site units should be provided on land with Sevenoaks District;
2. Where 1. is not possible, off-site biodiversity units should be in the same national character area as the application site but within an adjoining local planning authority area; or,
3. Where 2. is not possible, off-site biodiversity units should be in the same national character area as the application site but may be beyond adjoining local planning authority areas.

Where off-site provision is proposed, clearly demonstrate and justify why it is not possible to provide all or even some of the biodiversity net gain on the application site and demonstrate that the above hierarchy has been followed.

Off-site provision within Sevenoaks District should be delivered within or provide connections between areas of noted conservation value such as designated sites, priority habitats, Local Wildlife Sites, Nature Reserves and irreplaceable habitats. Regard should be had to the:

- Interim Strategic Significance guidance (until the LNRS for Kent and Medway is published)
- Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (once published)

An appropriate funding mechanism may need to be secured to include funding for the Council to cover the costs of long-term monitoring, where applicable.

“

Infrastructure underpins the successful operation and connectivity of a place. The existing and future provision of infrastructure is needed in the right place, at the right time, to support the District's growth and development. It is fundamental that places and communities are well connected with each other to access day-to-day services and facilities for future generations.



Infrastructure and Community

09





Infrastructure and Community

09

Strategic Objective

OB10: Co-ordinate the delivery of necessary infrastructure to support planned growth.



The Local Plan supports the delivery of necessary infrastructure to meet the needs arising from new development. The timely provision of suitable and appropriate infrastructure to support growth, alongside the maintenance of existing infrastructure, is crucial to the wellbeing of residents, those who visit, provide services, invest and work in the District.





9.1 In order to successfully deliver the sustainable and balanced growth identified in this Local Plan, significant investment in infrastructure is required to meet the needs of our communities. Suitable provision can include new facilities and services or the upgrading of existing infrastructure. It is fundamental that places and communities are well connected with each other to access day-to-day services and facilities for future generations.

9.2 The definition of infrastructure is wide and includes a range of services and facilities provided by both public and private bodies. This includes:

- **Transport infrastructure:** Local and strategic transport, junctions, sustainable transport, parking;
- **Green and Blue Infrastructure:** Public open space, play space, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), Public Rights of Way (PRoW), protected landscapes;
- **Social infrastructure:** Education, health, sports and leisure facilities, emergency services, libraries and community centres; and
- **Utilities and hard infrastructure:** Electricity, gas, water, sewerage, waste, telecommunications and broadband, flood defences.

9.3 This chapter sets out how the Council will ensure that the infrastructure required to support the growth identified within this Local Plan will be delivered, and should be read in parallel with the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP sets out the specific infrastructure projects needed, the organisation(s) responsible for delivery, the period over which the relevant investment will be required, and the cost and funding arrangements for each item. This will ensure that new development is served by the necessary infrastructure and delivered in a timely manner. It is a live document that is being developed in collaboration with the infrastructure providers and will be updated periodically to ensure that it reflects the most up to date infrastructure requirements.



Infrastructure Delivery

- 9.4 The retention and improvement of existing infrastructure, and the timely provision of new infrastructure to meet the needs of development, is a key objective of this Local Plan.
- 9.5 The extent to which current infrastructure needs are met is variable across the District. Existing settlements are generally better served by public transport and medical and community facilities, although many of these services are operating close to capacity. The rural areas can be more isolated with less access to, and provision of, infrastructure.
- 9.6 In order to deliver the sustainable and balanced growth identified in this Plan, significant investment in infrastructure is required to meet the needs of our communities. The Council has developed an understanding of the infrastructure needed to support growth through the production of the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), drafted with input from our key infrastructure providers. The IDP covers a wide range of infrastructure and its priorities will inform the Council's annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS). This document reports on the Council's infrastructure projects or types of infrastructure to be prioritised for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding in the next financial year.
- 9.7 Successful infrastructure delivery is dependent on partnership working with infrastructure providers, developers and neighbouring authorities, to ensure the services and facilities needed to support development are delivered in a timely manner. The Council will usually expect this to be before any development is operational or occupied, and in some cases this may involve the suitable phasing of development in order to ensure that essential infrastructure is in place when needed.
- 9.8 The site development briefs have been prepared to articulate clear priorities and an ambitious vision for each development site. They incorporate the necessary infrastructure improvements identified through the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). While some improvements are directly linked to individual sites, others apply to the wider settlement due to the cumulative impact of development. Once the IDP reaches an advanced stage at Regulation 19, the development briefs will be further refined to clearly set out each site's expected contribution to the provision and enhancement of infrastructure required to support sustainable growth.
- 9.9 Council currently operates two mechanisms to collect financial contributions from developers towards infrastructure provision in the District. The provision of, or funding towards, site specific infrastructure is sought through the use of Section 106 agreements, and helps to mitigate the impact of development.
- 9.10 In addition, Sevenoaks District Council is also a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging authority, since 2014. This means that in addition to site specific infrastructure secured through Section 106 agreements, developers also pay a standard charge per square metre of qualifying new development, to help pay for wider infrastructure improvements across the District. The Council is responsible for prioritising the spend of CIL. The current CIL Charging Schedule was adopted in 2014 but is in the process of being reviewed to ensure it aligns with this Local Plan.

Policy IN1

Infrastructure Delivery

1. All new development must be served and supported by appropriate on-and off-site infrastructure and services as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) or as indicated by infrastructure providers.
2. Development proposals will be required to take into account the capacity of existing infrastructure and to provide and/or contribute significantly towards the provision of infrastructure made necessary by the development, or where the development would result in a need for additional or improved infrastructure. This also includes retaining land for essential educational, community, health, movement, waste, flood defence and Green and Blue Infrastructure.
3. If the infrastructure contribution required to mitigate the impact of development cannot be delivered in full, the development will only be permitted where:
 - a. The applicant has submitted a viability appraisal that has been produced in accordance with national guidance and has been independently verified by the Council;
 - b. The relevant infrastructure provider has advised the Council on the impact that a reduced contribution would have on existing infrastructure and service provision;
 - c. The value of the planning obligations has been maximised having regard to likely viability;
 - d. Where appropriate, a clawback mechanism has been incorporated into a legal agreement to ensure that additional contributions are required if final development viability is better than anticipated in the viability assessment; and
 - e. Following a viability assessment process the benefits of the development outweigh the lack of full mitigation for its impacts, having regard to other material considerations.
4. Where viability constraints can be demonstrated by evidence, contributions towards the following types of infrastructure will be prioritised in the order listed below, to ensure the most critical needs of the community are addressed:
 - a. Affordable housing
 - b. Education
 - c. Health
 - d. Transport

The Council will work with partners including infrastructure and service providers and stakeholders, including neighbouring authorities, to ensure that the necessary physical, social and environmental infrastructure is provided to support development and help to ensure a high quality of life for residents and communities of all ages.



Open Space

9.11 Open spaces are spaces of value for sport, recreation and visual amenity. They include sports pitches, open areas within development, linear corridors and country parks and are not just restricted to publicly accessible land. They can include areas of woodland and scrubland as well as formal parks and gardens and allotments. Open spaces are an important part of the landscape, local character and the setting of built development. They can provide health, wellbeing and social benefits acting as locations for community and social events. Open spaces can also provide the “green lungs” for settlements and can contribute to the reduction in atmospheric carbon dioxide and improved air quality particularly in areas including trees, woodland and hedges.

9.12 The Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network is extensive across the District and is well used. Projects to improve the network through management, maintenance, opportunities to make the network more disability friendly and providing better access to the network will be supported. Proposals for new recreational cycling routes will also be supported.

9.13 The Open Space Study (2018) provides the key evidence for this policy. The Study assessed both the quantity and quality of the existing open spaces within the District under the following categories:

1. Parks and gardens;
2. Amenity greenspace;
3. Provision for children and young people;
4. Natural and semi-natural greenspace;
5. Allotments; and
6. Cemeteries and churchyards.

9.14 The Study found that although the District has an adequate supply of most types of open space, the quality of the spaces could be improved. We will therefore work with partners to identify opportunities to redevelop areas that are currently not fit for purpose or where improvements can be made.

9.15 The open spaces identified through the Study will be protected against inappropriate development, wherever possible. These spaces can be viewed on the interactive map.

Policy OS1

Open Space and Recreation

1. The District's designated open spaces, as shown on the interactive map, will be retained for their current use and type of open space unless it can be demonstrated that the tests set out in national policy have been met.
2. All other open spaces of value to the local community, either through use or contribution to local character, will also be retained. It is expected that Local Green Spaces, as defined in national policy, will be designated through the Neighbourhood Plan process.
3. Major development proposals will be required to incorporate good quality open space, including natural or wild greenspace. Where an adequate quantity of open space exists in the local area, consideration may be given to improving the quality of the existing open space to benefit new and existing residents, in accordance with the recommendations set out in the Open Space Study, for example improving accessibility or enhancing biodiversity. All new or improved open space must include arrangements for long term maintenance and management.



Children and Young People's Play Space

- 9.16 Play space for children and young people is a necessity in the creation of a new community.
- 9.17 The Open Space Study (2018) provides the key evidence for this policy. It identifies an existing undersupply of children and young people's play areas across the District. Recommended standards for the type and amount of play space that should be provided in new developments, prepared by Fields in Trust, provides a clear benchmark for provision. The Council has adopted these standards as a minimum. Additionally, informal play spaces in developments can provide important spaces for children to be active.



Policy OS2

Children and Young People's Play Space

1. All major residential development proposals, but excluding proposals for older persons accommodation, must include provision for children and young people's play space. Proposals will be expected to apply, as a minimum, the below Fields in Trust requirements for the inclusion of equipped play space, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not feasible or viable, in which case a lower level of provision can be provided as agreed with the Council.

Fields in Trust Children and Play Space Standards				
Size of Development	Informal play space	Local areas of play (LAPs)	Local equipped areas of play (LEAPs)	Neighbourhood equipped areas for play (NEAPs)
10-20 homes	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
21-99 homes	✓	✓	N/A	N/A
100-499 homes	✓	✓	✓	To be considered, where appropriate
500+ homes	✓	✓	✓	✓

2. All new children and young people's play space must be of high quality, include multiple pieces of attractive and engaging equipment including natural play, be accessible and inclusive to all users including those with special educational needs and disabilities, and appropriate to the location and the local community it serves to enable effective use.
3. In cases where it can be demonstrated that it better meets local need, provision may be secured through the improvement and expansion of existing facilities within the local area, rather than new provision. This will be considered on a case by case basis for minor developments only.



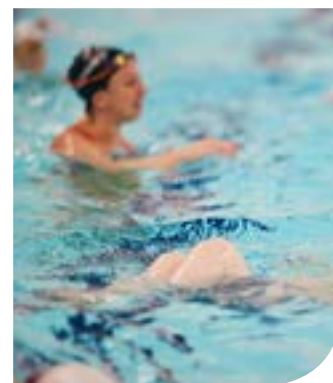
Education

- 9.18** The District's education facilities are vital to the continuing success of our residents and communities. Educational facilities are fundamental to support children and young people gain the necessary work and life skills and improve life opportunities.
- 9.19** We are in regular contact with Kent County Council as the education authority. There are 42 state primary schools in the District but only three secondary schools – Knole Academy and Trinity in Sevenoaks, and Orchards Academy in Swanley (and two grammar satellites). Orchards Academy in Swanley has recently undergone a rebuild, to upgrade the current outdated buildings to provide new modern facilities. Despite this, Kent County Council has advised that the existing three secondary schools are very close to capacity with limited scope to expand.
- 9.20** A need has been identified for a new secondary school in the central/northern part of the District to be delivered within the plan period. Land for this is likely to be identified in conjunction with a strategic development site as the preparation of the Local Plan progresses. There is safeguarded land for a secondary school within Edenbridge up until 2042, subject to a legal agreement and sufficient demand being demonstrated in the local area.
- 9.21** There is also need for additional Special Educational Needs provision in the north of the District. Kent County Council has recently consulted on expanding two special schools in the District (Broomhill Bank and Parkwood Hall) and secured the Department of Education's agreement in principle to provide a new special free school in Swanley, with 250 places for children with profound, severe and complex needs.

Policy ED1

Education

Provision will be made for sufficient school places in the form of existing, expanded or new primary and secondary schools, together with special educational needs, early years and adult education facilities. All relevant development will be expected to contribute to these through developer contributions (via S106 or CIL) and/or the setting aside of land. We will continually work in conjunction with Kent County Council to determine any new provision, particularly in relation to the delivery of new secondary school places.



Sports and Leisure Facilities

9.22 High quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation make a valuable contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities. It is therefore important to safeguard existing sports and recreational buildings and land from development, unless certain policy tests can be met.

9.23 The Sports Facility Strategy (2024) assessed the level of sport and leisure provision within the District. The Study found that the District is generally well served by leisure provision with sufficient indoor sports facilities, affording residents a range of activities including badminton, basketball, swimming and fitness suites. Much of this provision is within local authority owned formal sports centres, informal village halls or within educational establishments and there is a need to maintain and improve the quality and ensure that these facilities remain accessible to the community, of good quality and attractive to users going forward. For provision within schools in particular, the District Council is committed to securing community use agreements to ensure that outside of school hours the sports facilities are made available for the wider community to use.

9.24 The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2024) assessed the quality and quantity of playing pitches across the District. It identifies a net shortfall and recommends all pitches should be protected, their quality enhanced and provision for new facilities sought and supported.

9.25 Looking forward to 2042, the Council has an ambition to create a world class cluster of sporting facilities in the north of the District. Building on the success of Brands Hatch and the London Golf Club, planning permission has recently been granted for Millwall Football Club to build state of the art training facilities in this location. These high quality sporting facilities that are easily accessible cumulatively create a diverse range of local employment opportunities and attract visitors to the area, as well as providing world class and competition standard sporting facilities outside of London. There is significant potential to develop this ambition and for the area to grow into a wider sporting corridor.

Policy SL1

Sports and Leisure Facilities

The Council recognises the important role that high quality sporting facilities play in the District's economy and in attracting visitors to the District.

1. To help achieve the Council's ambition to create a world class cluster of sporting facilities in the north of the District, proposals for new large scale sporting facilities will be supported, where:
 - a. They meet an identified need;
 - b. They are sustainably located with good transport links and access;
 - c. They create new local employment and skills opportunities and contribute to the local economy;
 - d. They make a valuable contribution to the health and wellbeing of the local community; and
 - e. They are in accordance with other relevant Local Plan policies.
2. The existing sport and leisure provision within the District will be retained, unless it can be demonstrated that the tests set out in national policy have been met. Any reprovision of sport and leisure facilities must take account of local needs and quality improvements. These include:
 - a. All indoor sports facilities including swimming pools;
 - b. All sports pitches;
 - c. Golf courses;
 - d. Multi-use games areas;
 - e. Outdoor gyms; and
 - f. Playing fields and sites on educational establishments.
3. Any redevelopment of sports and leisure provision must prioritise other sport and leisure uses in the first instance, followed by other non-residential employment generating uses before a residential use.
4. Proposals to expand and improve the quantity and quality of the District's existing sport and leisure provision including playing pitches, indoor sports provision, as well as informal sports areas to provide facilities and access for all, will be supported. New playing pitches must be appropriately surfaced and capable of competition use unless not technically feasible. Pitch sizes should be informed by the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy and constructed to FA recommended pitch size guidance.
5. Proposals to increase the quantity of 'pay and play' provision and/or community access will be supported.
6. New educational establishments must include facilities for community use and be subject to formal community use agreements.
7. Development to support open space, sport or leisure facilities will be supported where it is ancillary to the overall use of the site and is in accordance with other relevant Local Plan policies.



Community Facilities and Services

9.26 Community facilities and services 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 (and redundant school buildings), surgeries, libraries, churches, community facilities and public transport, help to build sustainable communities by supporting the local economy and providing day-to-day facilities minimising the need to drive.

9.27 This Local Plan seeks to retain local services and facilities in appropriate locations, to maintain the sustainability of our towns, local and neighbourhood centres, and ensures that communities continue to maintain access to day-to-day services and facilities. The Policy should be applied to retail units considered to be addressing a need outside of established town and neighbourhood centres.

9.28 The Community Right to Bid and Assets of Community Value, which were introduced in the Localism Act 2011, give communities powers to help them buy local facilities threatened with closure, which might offer communities an alternative option to retain community facilities.

Policy COM1

Retention of Community Uses

1. Proposals that would result in the loss of local services and facilities that serve a local need will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that:
 - a. Equivalent replacement facilities that are equally accessible to the population they serve are provided;
 - b. The continued operation of the service or facility is no longer needed or financially viable, or
 - c. There are clear operational reasons for closing/moving the service or facility and the wider importance of the service or facility to the community has been taken into account.
2. Where school and community buildings become vacant or redundant and there is no requirement for an alternative educational use or the existing community use, priority will be given to reusing the buildings or site to address an identified local need for community facilities.
3. Proposals for the change of use, or redevelopment for alternative non-community uses, will only be considered if it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that there is no identified community need that can be facilitated on the site, or that the provision of community facilities that meet the identified need are incorporated into a wider mixed use scheme.
4. Proposals for new local services and facilities will be supported subject to design and location, where a need has been identified and is in accordance with other relevant Local Plan policies.



Allocations for Community Use

9.29 This Policy details mixed-use site allocations which include community floorspace as part of their development proposal. For more context on the proposed site allocations, please see Chapter 1 (Development Strategy).



Policy COM2

Allocations for Community Use

1. The following sites are proposed for allocation for community use, as part of mixed-use schemes.

Site Ref	Site Address	Urban / PDL / GF	Use	Floorspace from promoter (sqm)	Use
SEVENOAKS URBAN AREA					
SEV12	Sevenoaks Station and Car Park, Morewood Close	Urban	MX	TBC	Community and Car Park
SEV13	Land east of High Street, Sevenoaks	Urban	MX	4,010	Leisure (F2)
SWANLEY					
SWAN12	Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, Beechenlea Lane	Partial PDL	MX	6,000	Education (SEN School) – F1(a)
SWAN15	Land north of Moultain Hill, Swanley	GF	MX	3,800	Leisure
EDENBRIDGE					
EDEN5	Edenbridge War Memorial Hospital	Urban	MX	TBC	TBC
NEW ASH GREEN					
NAG9	Land south of Redhill Road, New Ash Green	GF	MX	300	E / F2(b)
KEMSING					
KEM5	Land at West End, Kemsing	GF	MX	TBC	TBC
SOUTH DARENTH					
SD8	Land at Horton Road, South Darenth	GF	MX	Up to 5,000	Commercial



Utilities and Digital Infrastructure

- 9.30** The delivery of essential utilities to support new development is a key consideration when planning for future growth. Utilities infrastructure includes water, waste water and sewage treatment, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunications.
- 9.31** The impact of climate change is evident in hotter, drier summers and less predictable rainfall. This and population growth contribute to water stress and shortages. This issue is particularly important as the District falls within an area of serious water stress. There is a pressing need to use water more sustainably and manage its demand. Policy W3 (Water Supply and Quality) sets out how new development can help achieve this.
- 9.32** To ensure new development does not have a negative impact on the water supply and existing households are not negatively affected, we will continue to work and engage with stakeholders to address these issues.
- 9.33** We will continue to work with infrastructure providers to manage the removal of foul water throughout the District. Thames Water have recently consulted on their draft Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan. The Long Reach Catchment Plan proposes a new sewerage treatment works (STW) site in Sevenoaks District to help manage future pressures on the existing STW. This needs further investigation and we will engage with Thames Water and Kent County Council as this develops.
- 9.34** The responsibility to deliver any network reinforcement of the water and wastewater networks lies with the statutory undertakers. However, the time taken to deliver should not be underestimated and any necessary local upgrades can take 18 months to 3 years to deliver from the point of certainty that development will come forward. More strategic upgrades can take three to five years. As such, where upgrades are needed, there may be a requirement for phasing conditions to be applied to planning permissions to require that the relevant phase of development is not occupied until any necessary network reinforcement works have been completed.
- 9.35** High quality digital infrastructure is crucial to the efficient running of the District's economy, particularly in the rural areas, and also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. Access to high quality digital infrastructure can also facilitate social inclusion, enabling everyone (providing they have the necessary skills and equipment) to take up employment, education and social opportunities, as well as access a wide range of services that are increasingly provided online.
- 9.36** As the demand for high-speed internet and reliable mobile coverage continues to grow, particularly in rural and underserved areas, it is essential that new development contributes to the expansion and enhancement of digital networks. While the provision of gigabit-capable broadband in new dwellings is now mandated through Building Regulations, the Local Plan plays a key role in encouraging early engagement with infrastructure providers and ensuring that commercial, community, and mixed-use developments are also digitally future-proofed. Supporting digital infrastructure delivery will help ensure that the District remains resilient, competitive, and well-connected in the years ahead.

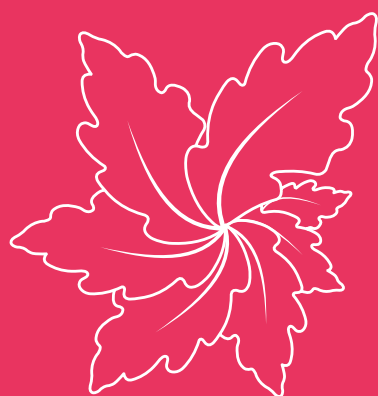
Policy UD1

Utilities and Digital Infrastructure

1. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that there will be sufficient capacity within the utilities infrastructure to meet the needs of the development. Applicants will be expected to engage with the utilities providers to ensure that this is the case, and may be required to undertake assessments to demonstrate sufficient capacity.
2. The Council will need to be satisfied that applicants and utilities providers have worked together to ensure the appropriate provision of required utilities infrastructure at the right time.
3. Large scale developments may need to be phased to ensure that there is sufficient capacity, and that any required upgrades can take place at the right time.
4. Through the use of planning conditions, developers will be required to ensure any necessary water or waste water upgrades are in place before the occupation of a development in order to avoid adverse impacts such as sewer flooding, pollution or issues of low/no water pressure.
5. The expansion and improvement of digital infrastructure across the District is supported, in line with the latest Building Regulations, including the provision of gigabit-capable broadband and enhanced mobile connectivity. All new development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they contribute to the improvement of digital infrastructure, with particular emphasis on addressing gaps in connectivity and supporting underserved areas. Proposals that facilitate the expansion of broadband networks, mobile coverage, and future-proofed digital systems will be supported in principle. Developers are strongly encouraged to engage early with infrastructure providers to ensure the timely and effective installation of digital services as part of the development process.

“

Transport connects people, goods and services between places. It is a necessity to access employment, housing, leisure, education and other elements of daily life. Transport is an integral consideration for the Local Plan’s aspirations for Sevenoaks District to be a place to live, work and thrive.



Transport

10





Figure 10.1: Sevenoaks District Transport Features

Transport

10

Strategic Objectives

- OB8:** Work with stakeholders to address barriers that prevent residents from making sustainable transport choices.
- OB9:** Support equal access to public transport services for all residents.



Residents and visitors need to travel to work, shops, schools and other services across the District. This Plan supports the delivery of sustainable transport choices helping all people to move conveniently and safely.

10.1 Connecting people and places is fundamental to building vibrant, inclusive communities. It enables access to work, school, healthcare, and social opportunities. However, true connectivity goes beyond just movement.

10.2 This Plan embraces a Vision and Validate approach by planning for sustainable, well-designed places where people can live, work, and thrive without solely relying on cars. In transport terms, Vision and Validate begins with a desired outcome, such as reduced car dependency, and then tests how achievable it is. This approach contrasts with traditional approaches that base decisions on

historic travel patterns. Crucially, this approach extends beyond transport. It shapes how we plan for housing, green spaces and infrastructure ensuring all elements are well integrated. Vision and Validate is grounded in robust evidence, community engagement, and ongoing monitoring. This ensures that all policies, including transport, housing, and infrastructure, work together to deliver sustainable, inclusive, and resilient places. This Plan sets out our intention for Vision and Validate for transport to be embedded as the plan progresses. As the evidence base evolves and site selections become clearer, the Vision and Validate approach to transport will be further refined.

10.3 The transport aims for the District will be supported by the finalised Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP is a live document and will continue to develop in conjunction with the emerging Local Plan, as sites are identified, and more site-specific information becomes available. The final version of the IDP will contain a schedule of infrastructure provision, with costs, delivery timescales, and organisations responsible for delivery.



Sustainable Movement Network

10.4 We envision a sustainable movement network that enables people to travel freely, safely, and efficiently across the District, whether by walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport, or car. This network will connect homes, jobs, schools, and essential services within the District, whilst also ensuring strong links to neighbouring areas.

10.5 Wheeling refers to the activity of people moving at a similar speed to walking with the assistance of wheels, for example, manual and powered wheelchairs, on pavement space. However, we also recognise the difficulty of people walking with pushchairs and other similar items and include this when referring to wheeling.

10.6 The Initial Baseline Transport Assessment 2022 determines the baseline transport data identifying any challenges and opportunities. It has identified congestion hot spots shown on Figure 10.2 above, and these centre on M25 junction 3, Swanley Town Centre, Sevenoaks Town Centre, the A25 and the Edenbridge by-pass. A second stage Transport Assessment has been undertaken to determine the transport implications of the proposed site allocations and this will be further updated, including junction assessment and mitigation, to inform the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan.



10.7 While the Plan aims to reduce car dependency and encourage more sustainable travel, it recognises that the District's rural character, dispersed land use patterns, and challenging topography, such as long distances and steep gradients, make private vehicles the most practical option for many journeys. The District has higher than average car ownership in the majority of its wards, particularly in rural areas, indicating reliance on private vehicles. However, this reliance must be balanced with the need to transition to a more sustainable future. The District has consistently ranked among the top areas in Kent for electric vehicle ownership, currently holding the second-highest number of registered electric vehicles (Department for Transport, Licensed Ultra Low Emission Vehicles by Local Authority, June 2025). This sustained uptake reflects strong local demand and reinforces the need for well-integrated electric vehicle infrastructure in new developments.

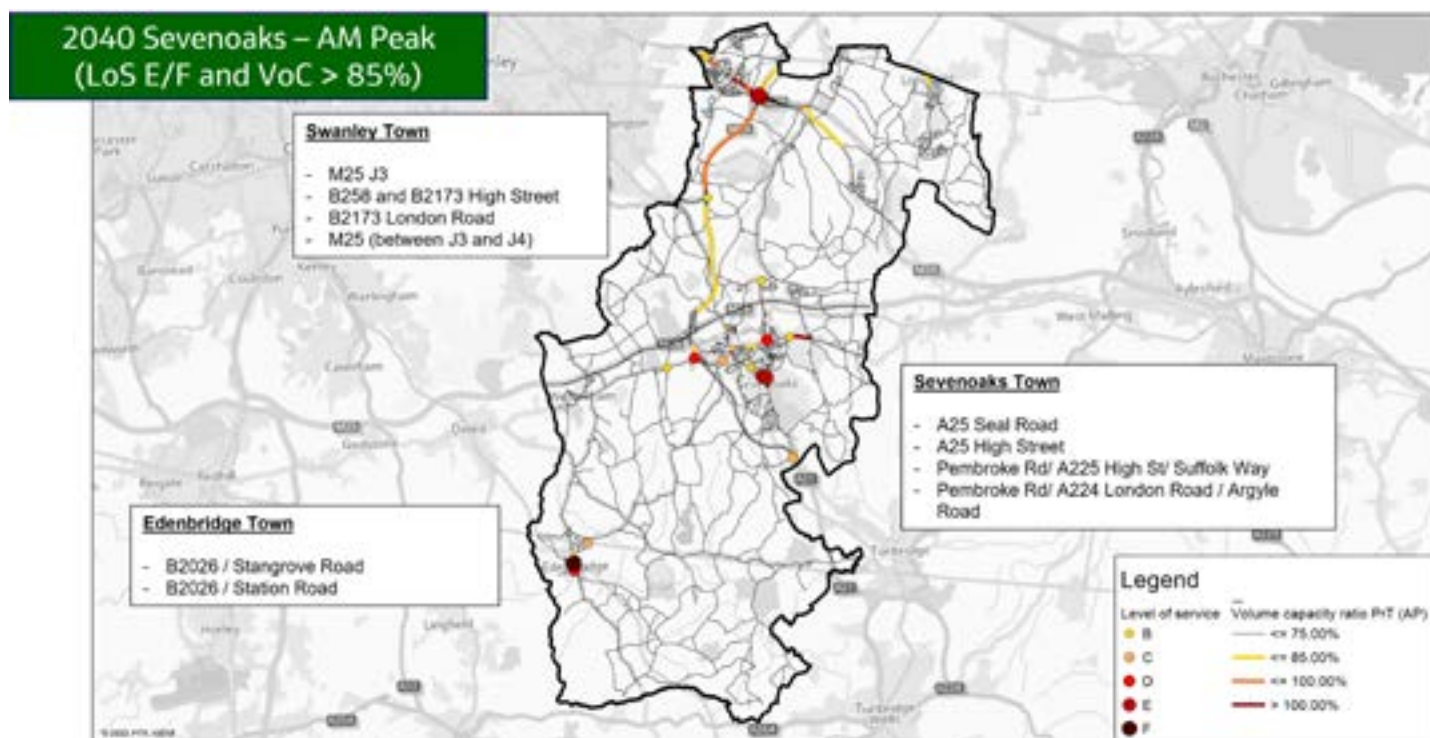


Figure 10.2: Sevenoaks District Congestion Hot Spots

10.8 The Council's Movement Strategy explains our key priorities for sustainable movement and transport within the District. This includes reducing the need to travel, promoting active travel, and improvements to the electric charging point networks and public transport services. It is noted that ultra low emission vehicles have a part to play in reducing carbon emissions, but we cannot rely on this, or any measure, on its own. As such, an integrated approach to a sustainable movement network is suggested to address it from various angles. To facilitate a sustainable movement network across the District, a balance between the desire for convenient, private transport modes and their environmental impact needs to be established. We cannot deliver a sustainable movement network alone and will continue to work with key infrastructure and public transport providers to move this forward.



Policy T1

Sustainable Movement Network

Partnership working is integral to delivering sustainable movement across the District. We will continue to work in partnership with stakeholders, including but not limited to, Kent County Council, National Highways, transport providers and developers, to ensure growth is supported by the necessary transport provisions and a range of movement is available, in a manner proportionate to the scale of development and the site's location. Through partnership working we will:

Strategic Transport Planning and Collaboration

1. Promote and support improvements to the transport network which increase safety, improve air quality and encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport.
2. Support the improvement of public transport services and provisions for journeys around and out of the District.
3. Engage with bordering local authorities to address improvements needed for cross-boundary trips.
4. Encourage partnership working between strategic site developers where sites are located close together to ensure successful delivery of transport provision.

Integrated and Low Emission Transport Networks

5. Create and strengthen interchanges between different transport modes (such as rail, bus, walking, cycling) to improve access and support first and last mile journeys by active travel.
6. Locate new development near public transport infrastructure, services and facilities to enhance sustainable places.
7. Enhance Sevenoaks Railway Station's potential by improving the station's environment, including the public realm, and accessibility by active travel modes and making best use of the surrounding land to create a transport hub and strengthen the location's sustainability.
8. Support the improvement of the public electric vehicle-charging network in accessible and strategic locations.

Active Travel Infrastructure and Connectivity

9. Support the incorporation, enhancement and creation of walking, wheeling and cycling routes and provisions within new development that is connected to the wider transport network.
10. Place accessible, secure and weatherproof cycling parking facilities at transport interchanges, employment and retail areas.
11. Support the implementation of identified routes in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.
12. Enhance the existing cycling and walking routes, including Public Rights of Way (PRoW) routes. This can include, where appropriate, upgrading the status of PRoW footpaths to bridleway to allow lawful use by cyclists.
13. Integrate new pedestrian and cycle routes with the PRoW and wider active travel network.
14. Create new routes to fill existing gaps thereby enhancing PRoW network connectivity.

Sustainable Movement

- 10.9** We aim to facilitate sustainable movement across the District for our residents to help them make healthy journeys and not be reliant on private vehicles. A range of transport choices are needed to suit residents' needs and local circumstances. We will continue to work in partnership with infrastructure providers to ensure transport needs are met.
- 10.10** New developments will be expected to prioritise transport in the following order: walking and wheeling, cycling, public transport, shared transport (for example, car clubs), private vehicle. This is particularly applicable to the urban areas where there is scope for more active, sustainable journeys. It is acknowledged that the rural areas face more transport challenges with a greater reliance on private vehicles and there may not always be an opportunity to prioritise all of these transport modes.
- 10.11** There is potential to encourage modal shift for shorter journeys particularly in the District's towns. We aim to improve the infrastructure and environment to encourage people to walk, wheel and cycle as an alternative to the car where appropriate.



- 10.12** The District's first walking, wheeling, and cycling route is expected to be completed by Autumn 2025, subject to final works. This connects Wildernesse in the east to Riverhead in the west, forming a key link across Sevenoaks Town. We will continue encouraging more attractive, convenient and safe car-free journeys, that which will also help to improve local air quality, positively impact our residents' health, and to tackle the challenge of climate change. A Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) for Sevenoaks Urban Area and Swanley have been completed. These plans propose new walking, wheeling and cycling routes to encourage people to move more sustainably. The Edenbridge LCWIP is progressing and will be completed in time for the next Local Plan consultation.
- 10.13** To assist with tackling the challenge of climate change, we will support electric and low emission vehicles and promote the necessary infrastructure required to support them. The Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Study 2023 identifies future demand for electric vehicles within Sevenoaks District. It then utilises bespoke modelling to predict the future need for public infrastructure geographically and numerically. This study is integral to understanding the charging needs for areas where there is little off-street parking. Changes to Building Regulations (Part S) require the installation of electric vehicle charging points in most new residential and non-residential developments. While these national requirements are mandatory, the findings of the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Study 2023 provide valuable local context and guidance helping to shape provision in line with local needs and aspirations.

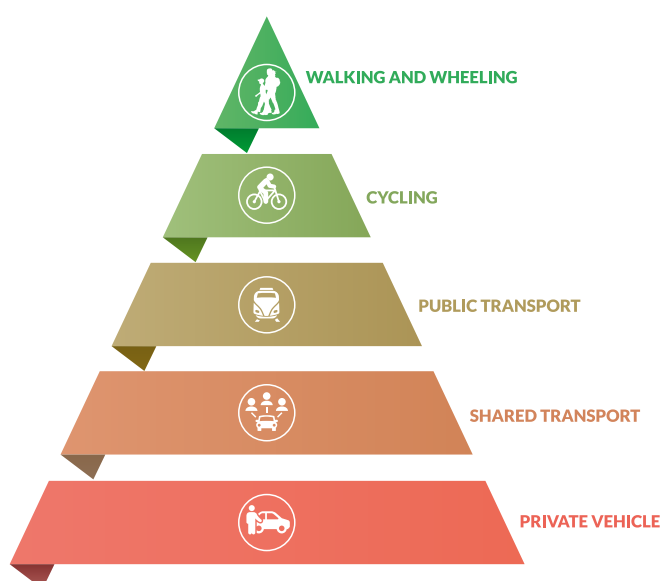


Figure 10.3: Movement Hierarchy

Policy T2

Sustainable Movement

New development proposals, proportionate to their scale, location, type, and local context, including proximity to services, facilities, and transport, will be expected to demonstrate the following principles:

Development Design and Transport Integration

1. Major development proposals must consider the impact on the wider transport network and contribute to meeting the wider transport needs generated by the impact of development in the area. Development should consider the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Local Transport Plan, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, and, where needed and viable, contribute to the delivery of proposals.
2. All residential and non-residential development proposals, except for minor proposals such as extensions, small-scale internal alterations, or other works that do not materially affect site access, layout, or transport demand must:
 - a. Prioritise transport in the following order in the development design: walking and wheeling, cycling, public transport, shared transport, private vehicle unless site-specific constraints clearly justify an alternative approach; and
 - b. Provide maximum flexibility in travel mode choices, ensuring inclusive access for all users and supporting walking, wheeling, cycling, and shared transport options.

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling

3. All residential and non-residential development proposals, except for minor proposals such as extensions, small-scale internal alterations, or other works that do not materially affect site access, layout, or transport demand, should demonstrate how they link to the existing cycling and walking network within the development's vicinity, particularly to nearby services and facilities.
4. Major development proposals should seek to improve the existing cycling and walking network, where feasible and proportionate, to enhance connectivity, safety, and accessibility for active travel.
5. Major developments should take account of, and where possible include direct and convenient connections to, the routes in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, ensuring integration with the wider active travel network through thoughtful site design.
6. Comply with the latest government guidance for any walking, wheeling and cycling routes when new routes are constructed as a part of the development.

Other Transport Modes

7. Major residential and mixed-use development particularly those in more urban locations, should consider providing shared or rental transport schemes - such as car clubs, bicycles, e-bikes, or other similar initiatives.
8. Make suitable provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, including active charging points, passive provision, for example, cabling and electricity capacity, or other emerging technologies, in accordance with national standards.
 - a. For residential development with communal or shared parking, greater provision than the national standards is encouraged to support future demand; or
 - b. For non-residential development, publicly accessible electric vehicle charging is encouraged. Rapid charging provision is encouraged for high-turnover or destination sites, such as supermarkets and leisure centres, to support user convenience and future demand. Greater provision than the national standards is encouraged to support future demand.



Vehicle Parking

- 10.14** Car parking standards are required to ensure new developments provide an adequate level of off-street parking to meet the needs they generate and avoid negative impacts on surrounding areas. New developments will need to provide an appropriate amount of car parking spaces suitable for the location and local circumstances.
- 10.15** Kent County Council (KCC) updated their parking standards in January 2025. These cover residential and non-residential parking for cars, bicycles, motorcycles and other vehicles. The parking standards provide a useful starting point for parking, allowing a pragmatic approach for specific site considerations.
- 10.16** Beyond the number of spaces, the design of parking is a crucial consideration. The updated KCC parking standards provide current guidance on this. Additional guidance will be provided through Kent Design's upcoming publication "Car Parking: What Works Where" which promotes a people-centred approach and efficient land use. This is anticipated to be completed before the Regulation 19 consultation and is expected to inform future policy.
- 10.17** A flexible approach to parking is required to reflect the availability of non-car alternatives and the proximity of key services, shops and jobs. Whilst rural locations are more reliant on private vehicle use and will need to have parking spaces to reflect this, there are opportunities in sustainable locations near transport hubs for some discretion on the amount of parking spaces where suitable and appropriate. The provision of car clubs in new developments can support flexibility in car parking standards. We encourage new major developments in the District's towns to include car club spaces where feasible.



- 10.18** Recognising the diversity of settlement types within our area, the Council has developed residential parking standards that respond to the local context. The residential parking standards apply to development proposals under Use Class C3(a). We have drawn on 2021 and 2011 Census data to understand patterns of car ownership across the District, and considered this alongside the Settlement Hierarchy, which reflects the sustainability of locations based on access to services, facilities, and public transport. Kent County Council's parking standards have also informed our approach and provided a useful reference point. This collective evidence base ensures that the standards are proportionate, context-sensitive, and supportive of more sustainable patterns of development.
- 10.19** Local data indicates that the need for three parking spaces is typically triggered when a house has five or more bedrooms in Town to Cluster settlements, as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy 2025. This consistent pattern, when considered alongside limited public transport accessibility in certain areas, supports a locally responsive variation from KCC's residential parking standards.
- 10.20** Within Sevenoaks Urban Area, the Principal Town, parking standards vary depending on location. Sevenoaks Town Centre is identified separately due to its high accessibility, access to services and facilities and sustainable transport options. The parking standards reflect this local context. The remainder of the Principal Town is categorised separately to reflect its comparatively lower accessibility and different development context.
- 10.21** Our approach draws on KCC's framework, local Census data, and the Settlement Hierarchy to ensure parking provision reflects actual need and reduces the risk of on-street parking stress. In some locations, particularly rural or less accessible areas, higher levels of parking provision may be appropriate to reflect greater reliance on private vehicles. The Council's parking policy allows for such flexibility where justified by local evidence.
- 10.22** The Council has adopted Kent County Council's car parking standards in full for non-residential uses. These standards provide detailed guidance across a wide range of use classes, including Class E (commercial, business, and service uses) and Class F (learning and non-residential institutions).

Policy T3

Vehicle Parking

New development proposals, proportionate to their type, scale and location, will be expected to demonstrate the following principles:

Strategic Principles

1. Compliance with the transport hierarchy set out in Policy T2 (Sustainable Movement) to maximise sustainable transport opportunities and reduce the need for vehicle parking.
2. An appropriate level of vehicle parking, informed by local data, circumstances and proximity to public transport infrastructure and services, to support sustainable travel and ensure responsiveness to local conditions. The car parking standards set out in Annex 1 provide a starting point for determining parking levels for both residential and non-residential developments.
3. Developments in sustainable locations, particularly town centres or transport hubs, should demonstrate a flexible approach to parking provision and lower levels of provision where appropriate will be supported.
4. Developments that are likely to generate additional parking demand that cannot be accommodated on-site will be required to submit a Parking Stress Survey to demonstrate that the development will not have a negative impact on existing parking provision.

Design and Parking Layout

5. Vehicle parking designed to support public safety by enabling natural surveillance from active parts of the development.
6. Sensitive screening and integration of soft landscaping, improving visual amenity in parking areas.
7. Vehicle parking is not overly prominent in the public realm or street scene.
8. Permeable surfaces and other treatments to minimise the negative effects of surface water run-off.

Functionality and Sustainable Transport Infrastructure

9. For residential developments with unallocated parking spaces, sufficient space is provided for electric vehicle charging points.
10. For non-residential developments, sufficient space within the site for parking, unloading, loading of goods and manoeuvring of vehicles delivering and collecting goods.
11. Provision of bicycle parking should be in accordance with the current Kent County Council Parking Standards 2025 (or any subsequent replacement). Facilities must be accessible, secure and weatherproof. Developments are encouraged to exceed these standards where feasible, in order to promote sustainable travel and accommodate future growth in cycling demand.

Policy T3

Vehicle Parking

Car Parking Standards

12. Applicants are expected to demonstrate how their proposals align with the residential parking standards set out in Annex 1, which apply to development proposals falling under Use Class C3(a) (single household dwellings). These standards provide a starting point for determining parking provision and may be flexibly applied where justified by local circumstances. Settlements are aligned with the categories based on the Council's Settlement Hierarchy, as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy 2025 or any superseding document.
13. Applicants are expected to demonstrate how their proposals align with Kent County Council's non-residential parking standards, as set out in Kent County Council Parking Standards 2025 (or any subsequent replacement). A summary of these standards is provided in Annex 1. These standards provide a starting point for determining parking provision and may be flexibly applied where justified by local circumstances.
14. Notwithstanding the parking standards set out in Annex 1, the Council may depart from the established parking provision in order to:
 - a. Consider specific local circumstances including the development'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. Consider the existing parking provision (whether on or off-site) for the building's existing use for redevelopment or change of use proposals and for the use of existing public car parks outside of normal working/trading hours by restaurants and leisure uses; and/or
 - e. Consider a proposal's inventive parking design, the inclusion of complementary measures, such as transport sharing schemes, car clubs, or active travel incentives, or a combination of both, where these justify a provision below the minimum provision.



Transport Statements, Assessments and Plans

10.23 This chapter sets out the intention to embed Vision and Validate into the future Regulation 19 Plan. This approach starts with a clear ambition for sustainable and well-connected places, and then tests how that ambition can be delivered through evidence and policy.

10.24 The use of Transport Assessments, Transport Statements, and Travel Plans helps move us in this direction. These tools provide a structured way to assess the transport implications, and where necessary mitigate, of development and ensure that proposals contribute to a more sustainable and integrated transport network. They also offer a mechanism to validate whether development supports the emerging vision, even as that vision continues to evolve.

10.25 The Planning Practice Guidance outlines a tiered approach to the transport evidence required for planning applications, based on the scale, type and potential impact of the development. Kent County Council has updated their guidance on Transport Statements, Assessments and Plans in 2025. At present, this is informal guidance which will then be refined based on feedback from its users. While not yet formally adopted, it reflects current best practice and signals the direction of travel for the thresholds and scope expected of transport evidence. This plan acknowledges the principles the guidance sets, and we will continue to engage with KCC as the document evolves towards formal adoption.

Policy T4

Transport Statements, Assessments and Plans

1. New development proposals must be accompanied by a Transport Assessment where required, in accordance with the threshold criteria set out in Kent County Council's latest Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, or otherwise justified by site-specific factors such as existing traffic issues or limited transport infrastructure. Where appropriate, a Transport Statement may be submitted instead. All assessments must consider both the individual and cumulative impacts of the development on the transport network.
2. Where thresholds are met - including for major developments, proposals generating significant traffic, or sites with known transport constraints - a Travel Plan must also be provided. This should monitor mode share and include a package of measures to promote sustainable travel and achieve agreed targets.
3. Where Transport Statements, Assessments or Plans identify the need for mitigation measures, these may be secured through planning conditions or legal agreements, including Section 106 obligations.

Glossary

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply:

Affordable Housing	There is no single agreed definition. The most commonly referenced definition is from the National Planning Policy Framework Annex 2 Glossary (NPPF July 2021), however this provides no reference to an occupier's income or their ability to afford their home. Affordable Housing includes Social Rented Housing, Affordable Rented Housing and Intermediate Housing. It is provided to assist those households whose housing needs are not met by the market. If public subsidy is provided to deliver new affordable housing, eg Homes England grant funding, provision is made to ensure the housing remains affordable for future households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for any public subsidy to be recycled and used for alternative affordable housing provision. NB we are unable to require Registered Providers (RPs) who release subsidy within the District to recycle grant funding within the District. Our nomination agreements with partner RPs, eg West Kent Housing Association (WKHA), Moat, etc., ensure we and our Sevenoaks District Housing Register customers retain long term access to affordable housing. Except for restrictions imposed upon WKHA under the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer, an RP is at liberty to sell units of affordable housing without the Council's permission.
Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2011 (SPD)	A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in respect of Affordable Housing, issued in conjunction with the Core Strategy Policy SP3. The SPD has had various policy updates, with the latest being in March 2023. Our intention, depending on proposed planning reforms, is to undertake an update to the SPD alongside the adoption of the new Local Plan 2040.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Affordable Private Rent Housing (local definition)	This is the affordable housing tenure provided on Build to Rent schemes. The affordable housing remains in the single ownership of the Build to Rent provider. The housing is let on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy. Rents are capped at 80% of the Open Market Rent, including any service charges. Homes may be 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation only, unless we agree otherwise. No housing of this tenure has been developed in the District.
Affordable Rented Housing (local definition)	Introduced in 2011. Housing owned by RPs and Quercus Housing. Homes are let on an Assured Tenancy and are allocated to applicants from the Council's Housing Register. Homes are expected to be provided at a rent which does not exceed the relevant Local Housing Allowance, inclusive of service charges. The Government (Homes England) allows rents of up to 80% of the local Open Market Rent. Any RP proposing this level of rent requires the specific approval of the District Council. The concern is, the Local Housing Allowance (housing benefit/Universal Credit) may not cover the cost of a rent set at 80%, meaning the housing would cease to be affordable.
Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	The NPPF defines AQMAs as "Areas designated by Local Authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines". 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 pollution, the Council is required to designate an "Air Quality Management Area".
Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP)	The Allocations and Development Management Plan was adopted in 2015. It is a document that sets out the planning policies which manages development across the District, as well as setting out site allocations for housing, employment and mixed-use developments. This document sits alongside the Core Strategy and covers the plan period up to 2026. The new Local Plan will replace this document and the Core Strategy.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Almshouses (local definition)	A traditional and often ancient form of affordable housing for the “poor and needy”. Within the District, there are currently 84 homes provided by almshouses. An almshouse is a home that belongs to a charity and is provided exclusively to meet the charity’s purpose, such as the relief of financial need or infirmity. They tend to be provided for older people in housing need but, outside of the District, newer almshouses developments are catering for younger people and families. The home is occupied under a licence by a “qualified beneficiary” (eg local person to a parish, etc.) who may be required to contribute a weekly sum towards its maintenance. Vacancies are not required to be advertised through Kent Homechoice. We do not have nomination rights to vacancies arising. Vacancies are often advertised through the local parish council or church. Older persons’ housing may be advertised through the Elderly Accommodation Council. The almshouses may approach our Accommodation Team to advertise vacancies or to provide potential nominees from the Council’s Housing Register.
Ancient Woodland	An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.
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 Natural England.
Article 4 Direction	Direction removing some or all permitted development rights, for example within a conservation area or curtilage of a listed building. Article 4 directions are issued by local planning authorities.
Assets of Community Value	Land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011.
Assured Tenancy	A form of residential tenancy that grants a degree of security of tenure to the tenant (eg this can mean a lifetime tenancy or a fixed term tenancy). The Council’s Tenancy Statement encourages RPs to use fixed term tenancies. This means homes can become available if a tenant’s circumstances improve and they no longer need a social housing tenancy. However many RPs have reverted to lifetime tenancies.
Assured Shorthold Tenancy	A form of Assured Tenancy with limited security of tenure, which was introduced by the Housing Act 1988, eg the tenancy can be terminated after 6 months.
Basins	Basins can be used to store and treat water. ‘Wet’ ponds/basins have a constant body of water and run-off is additional, while ‘dry’ basins/ponds are empty during periods without rainfall. Ponds can be designed to allow infiltration into the ground or to store water for a period of time before discharge.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA)	Regional priority areas of opportunity for restoration and creation of Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) habitats areas of greatest 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.
Bioretention area/ Bioattenuation	A vegetated area with gravel and sand layers below designed to channel, filter and cleanse water vertically. Water can infiltrate into the ground below or drain to a perforated pipe and be conveyed elsewhere. Bioretention systems can be integrated with tree-pits or gardens.
Bird Brick	A brick bird box which can be integrated into an external wall.
Blue Green Infrastructure	Green infrastructure goes beyond traditional site-based landscaping. It requires an assessment of both natural/semi-natural features and biodiversity within the site, and furthers 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; and • The provision of formal and informal recreational spaces (including the provision for children and young people where appropriate). Blue Infrastructure includes blue corridors, or a network of water bodies, are intimately connected with green corridors. The ‘blue’ environment can encompass natural water courses, lakes and ponds as well as man-made water bodies and manufactured drainage features.
Brownfield land	See “Previously developed land”
Bug Hotel/ Bug Box	An insect hotel, also know as a bug hotel or insect house, is a manmade structure to provide shelter for insects.
Building for Life	Building for Life 12 (BfL 12) is the industry standard for the design of new housing developments and has been produced by the Design Council. Developments are assessed against 12 questions using a traffic light system. A well designed scheme should perform well against all 12 of the new questions – the top score being 12 Greens.
Build to Rent	Developments comprising self-contained, private rented homes only, held in single ownership and provided solely for the rental market. There are currently no Build to Rent units in the District. The emerging Local Plan policy suggests this tenure would be focussed around our most sustainable settlements of Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge.
Cellular Storage	Water can be stored in tanks, gravel or plastic crates beneath the ground to provide attenuation.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Change of Use	A change in the way that land or buildings are used (see Use Classes Order). Planning permission is usually necessary in order to change from one 'use class' to another.
Climate Change	A change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels. https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/climate_change
Climate change adaption	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 adaption.
Climate change mitigation	Involves reducing the flow of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, either by reducing sources of these gases (for example, the burning of fossil fuels for electricity, heat or transport) or enhancing the "sinks" that accumulate and store these gases (such as the oceans, forests and soil). https://climate.nasa.gov/solutions/adaptation-mitigation/
Co-housing	A scheme comprising an "intentional community" which is run by its residents. A scheme could comprise, for example, a group of older people from a local area. Each household has a self-contained home as well as shared community space and facilities, eg common garden area, pool car, meeting house, etc.
Co-living/Co-housing	Co-living/Co Housing is a form of communal living that provides private rooms and shared facilities to cook, dine, relax and socialise.
Combined Heat and Power	Combined heat and power (CHP) is the use of a heat engine or power station to generate electricity and useful heat at the same time.
Community Infrastructure Ley (CIL)	A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in the area. A local authority is allowed to set its own rates (£. per m2) on particular qualifying developments. Contributions raised on qualifying developments are then used for infrastructure delivery within the local authority area.
Community Right to Bid	Allows communities and parish councils to nominate buildings or land for listing by the local authority as an asset of community value. If the assets comes up for sale, the community can 'pause' the sale and take up to six months to find the funding required to buy the asset.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Community Land Trusts (CLTs)	CLT's are non-profit community based organisations run by volunteers that develop housing, workspaces, community facilities and other assets that help meet the needs of communities. Sometimes a parish council will decide to form a CLT in order to deliver rural exceptions housing, possibly through the services of an RP. The assets developed by a CLT are owned and controlled by the community and are made available at permanently affordable levels. Sundridge Village CLT was formed in or around 2018 and the CLT planned to deliver various community facilities, including new affordable housing for local people. However the CLT was not taken forward. The first CLT affordable housing scheme in Kent has recently been permitted in Shepherdswell, in Dover DC.
Comparison retail	Retail goods that are typically non-food (e.g. clothing, electrical goods), and bought less frequently.
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.
Convenience retail	Everyday essential shopping goods, which typically relate to food.
Core Strategy 2011	The Core Strategy forms part of the current Local Plan and covers the future development of the District from its adoption in 2011, to 2026. It sets out what development will happen, where it will be located, when it will take place and what requirements it has to meet. It explains what areas will be protected from development and explains how the environment will be safeguarded. Policies SP3 (provision of affordable housing) and SP4 (rural exceptions housing) are the main policies within the Core Strategy used by the Housing Policy team.
Custom Build	Custom build homes are self build homes facilitated in some way by a developer. This still offers the chance to have a unique home that suits your needs, lifestyle and design preferences, but through a more hands off approach than a traditional self build.
Dead Frontage	A façade that is blank (e.g. lacking a window display, entrance and offers no life or activity to the street).
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	A ministerial department that leads on a wide range of issues, including improving and protecting the environment. They aim to grow a green economy and sustain thriving rural communities. They also support our world-leading food, farming and fishing industries.
Density	In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms per hectare or the number of dwellings per hectare.
Designated Heritage Asset	A World heritage Site, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Designated Protected Area (DPA)	Established under the Leasehold Reform Act 1967. If a shared ownership home is located within a DPA, the maximum share that can be purchased is limited to 80%. The RP retains the remaining 20% share. Alternatively a lessee can purchase 100% of their home but the RP has first refusal to buy back the home at point of sale. This means the RP can influence and manage the future occupancy of the home, ensuring it can be used as Affordable Housing, in perpetuity. DPA status is crucial for Rural Exceptions Housing as it means the housing can be secured to meet local needs in perpetuity, which is a requirement of Core Strategy Policy SP4 (rural exceptions housing).
Designated Rural Area (DRA)	These are areas designated under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985. The NPPF allows for a lower site threshold to be applied in a DRA in relation to the provision of affordable housing. In February 2023, Cabinet approved the application of the lower site threshold, and this has been set out in the SPD update.
Design Panel	A panel of independent experts and practitioners who review the design of schemes put forward to the panel. They provide advice and comments in regard to the design of the scheme and suggest improvements where necessary.
Design South East	Design South East is a regional trust which provides impartial design advice and assistance to support Local Authorities, developers and communities. It is an non profit and independent organisation.
Development Plan Document (DPD)	The documents that a local planning authority must prepare (to make up its Local Plan) and which have to be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination. It should contain the following elements: • A spatial strategy for the District; • Site specific allocations of land and development management policies; and • Policies map (with insets, where necessary)
Direct Letting	This is where the Council's Accommodation Team or the RP allocates affordable housing direct instead of using Kent Homechoice.
Discounted Market Housing (DMH) (Local policy)	A form of Intermediate Housing. Homes sold by a housebuilder at first sale at a discount of at least 30% below local Open Market Value. Homes are sold to Eligible Persons. Provisions are in place to ensure the housing remains at a discounted price for future Eligible Persons, i.e. the home is always resold at discount of at least 30%. Full eligibility criteria is set out in the Intermediate Housing Protocol. No Discounted Market Housing has yet been developed in the District.
District Heating	A heating system in which centrally generated heat is distributed via ducts and pipes to multiple buildings or locations.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Duty to cooperate	The duty to cooperate is a legal test that requires cooperation between local planning authorities and other public bodies to maximise the effectiveness of policies for strategic matters in Local Plans. It is separate from but related to the Local Plan test of soundness.
District-wide character study (DWCS)	The District-wide character study aims to understand the key characteristics across the District which, when read alongside other evidence base documents, will inform a context led approach to growth and change.
Dwelling/ Dwellinghouse	A self-contained building or part of a building used as a residential accommodation, and usually housing a single household. A dwelling may be a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette or converted farm building.
Economic Development	Development for employment use, including those within the B Use Classes as well as other employment generating uses (but excluding housing development).
Economic Needs Study (ENS)	A study which is an important component of the evidence base for the development of the new Local Plan by providing an objective assessment of the need for employment land over the emerging plan period to 2033/35. This reflects the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and builds upon previous evidence base studies including the 2015 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).
Eligible Persons	Persons who are unable to afford suitable housing accommodation on the open market (whether by renting or purchasing) within the District and who: a) are on those registers retained or referred to by the Council from time to time in the discharge of the Council's housing function ie applicants will come from the Sevenoaks District Housing Register, or (b) otherwise have proved to the Council that they cannot afford to buy locally at current house prices within the limits of the disposable income available to them, or (c) for Shared Ownership, First Homes and Discounted Market Housing, meet the criteria laid out in the Sevenoaks District Intermediate Housing Protocol.
Fitness Station	Individual apparatus for fitness usually found in a fitness gym but can also include outdoor resistance apparatus.
Fields in Trust	An independent charity with over 90 years' experience protecting parks and green spaces. They work with landowners, community groups and policy makers to champion the value of parks and green spaces to achieve better protection for their future at both local and national level. Fields in Trust's benchmark guidelines are a crucial tool for developers, planners, urban designers and landscape architects in the design of outdoor sport, play and informal open space and are in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
First Homes	A form of Intermediate Housing. First Homes are considered a replacement to Starter Homes. On Section 106 sites, the SPD sets out 25% of Affordable Housing is expected to be provided as First Homes. Homes are sold to Eligible Persons (first time buyers) at a discount of at least 30% below local Open Market Value. The maximum price allowed after discount is £250,000. Provisions are in place to ensure the housing remains at a discounted price for future Eligible Persons, i.e. the home is always resold at discount of at least 30%. Full eligibility criteria is set out in the Intermediate Housing Protocol. As at July 2023, First Homes have been permitted on one site within the District at Broom Hill, Swanley, with further applications in the pipeline.
Flood Zone	Flood zones refer to the probability of river and sea flooding over areas of land. There are varying levels of flood risk which are set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance.
Fluvial flooding	Flooding resulting from water levels exceeding the bank level of a main river.
Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)	Economic analysis is best undertaken at the spatial level at which the relevant economic market operates – or the ‘functional economic market area’
Genuinely Affordable Housing (local definition)	Homes provided as Social Rented or Affordable Rented Housing are considered to be “genuinely affordable”, as rents (including any service charge) are within Local Housing Allowance levels. This means those in receipt of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit, including those in lower paid employment, can “afford” to live in their home, as housing costs are paid met in full.
Granny Pod	A Granny Pod is a tiny home built, or placed, on the same property as the home of someone who will look after the occupant.
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 Corridor	A green corridor is a route by which wildlife can move from one habitat to another such as river banks, railways embankments and roadside verges. They can also include human recreational connections such as public rights of way and cycle routes.
Green Lung	An area of open space within a settlement which contributes to a healthy environment.
Green Roof	A planted soil layer is constructed on the roof of a building to create a living surface. Water is stored in the soil layer and absorbed by vegetation.
Greenfield Land or Site	Land (or a defined site) usually farmland, that has not previously been developed.
Groundwater	An important part of the natural water cycle present underground, within strata known as aquifers.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
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 dependents' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)	Evidence base document to support the Local Plan outlining the District's objectively assessed need for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation.
Habitat Regulation Assessment	Is a recognised step by step process which helps determine likely significant effect of development on a habitat and where appropriate they can be used to assess the adverse impacts on the integrity of a European site. An assessment will examine alternative solutions and provide justification for imperative reasons of over riding public interest for the development (IROPI).
Health Impact Assessment (HIA)	Health Impact Assessment is a tool to identify and optimise the health and wellbeing impacts of planning.
Heritage asset	Heritage Asset – A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage Asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the Local Planning Authority (including Local Listing)
Historic Parks and Gardens	A park or garden of special historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II. All designations are made by Historic England.
Homes England	Homes England is the non-departmental public body that provides grant funding for new affordable housing in England through the Affordable Homes Programme. The body was previously known as the Homes and Communities Agency and the Housing Corporation.
Housing Associations	These are private Registered Providers. SDC's partners include West Kent Housing Association, Moat and English Rural Housing Association.
Housing Market Area (HMA)	Planning for housing takes place on a scale that is larger than most local authorities because market dynamics and population changes do not respect administrative boundaries. They cut across them, operating at different scales. The West Kent Housing Market Area (HMA) includes Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	A Housing Revenue Act (HRA) records expenditure and income on running a Council's own housing stock and closely related services or facilities, which are provided primarily for the benefit of the Council's own tenants. Any Council with more than 200 units of social housing stock is required to have an HRA. T The Council has not had an HRA since it transferred its housing stock.
Index of Multiple Deprivation	The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England.
Infrastructure	Basic services necessary for development to take place (e.g. roads, electricity, water and sewerage, education and health facilities).

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)	A document which shows the amount of infrastructure required to facilitate development
Intermediate housing	This means all Affordable Housing which is not Social Housing.
Intermediate Housing Protocol	The local policy applying to the Intermediate Housing tenures of First Homes, Shared Ownership and Discounted Market Housing.
Intermediate Rented Housing	A form of Intermediate Housing. It is rented housing provided on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy, whereby rents do not exceed 80% of the local Open Market Rent (including any service charge, where applicable) and let to Eligible Persons. WKHA have a handful of homes in this tenure. Quercus Housing have 20 homes in this tenure, located at Gladedale House, Westerham and 11/13 and 25/27 High Street, Swanley. The London Living Rent is an example of this tenure operated in London.
Investment Partner	To receive grant funding from Homes England under the Affordable Homes Programme, an organisation must qualify for Investment Partner status. To receive grant funding to provide Affordable Rented Housing or Social Rented Housing, an Investment Partner must also be an RP.
Urban Intensification	Urban intensification optimises the use of previously developed land, reduces travel demand and revitalises and repopulates cities.
Kent Homechoice	The choice based lettings system operated throughout Kent on behalf of the subscribing local authorities, including the Council, and Registered Providers. Kent Homechoice advertises and directs the allocation of vacant units of affordable housing. This includes Social Rented and Affordable Rented housing, as well as vacant pitches on the Council's Hever Road site. If vacancies are not taken through Kent Homechoice, they are allocated by Direct Letting.
Kent Nature Partnership	The Kent Nature Partnership was awarded Local Nature Partnership (LNP) status by the government in July 2012 to drive positive change in the local natural environment. The Partnership takes a strategic view of the challenges and opportunities involved in managing the natural environment as a system benefiting biodiversity, people and the local economy.
Kent Wildlife Trust Reserves	Nature reserves managed by Kent Wildlife Trust (a nationally recognised registered charity).
Key Worker	A Government scheme running since 2004 helping key workers in London, the South East and East of England to buy a home, upgrade to a family home or rent a home at an affordable price.
Landscape Character	The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT)	A voluntary transfer of the Council housing stock to an RP following a ballot of residents. The Sevenoaks Council stock was transferred to WKHA in 1989.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Lead Local Flood Authority	Unitary authorities or County Councils that are responsible for developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management in their areas and for maintaining a register of flood risk assets. They also have lead responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.
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 of permanent structures (e.g. wells with its curtilage). Designations are made by Historic England
Living roofs and walls	Roofs and walls that are partial or completely covered with vegetation and a growing medium, planted over a waterproofing membrane. It may also include additional layers such as a root barrier and drainage and irrigation system.
Local Centre	Locally significant areas of retail to which protection policies apply, in accordance with the NPPF. Local centres have been divided into neighbourhood and village centres in the Local Plan.
Local essential worker	A 'Local Essential Worker' is someone employed in the District and in one of the following occupations, as defined in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan as: • Public sector employees providing frontline services in areas including health, education and community safety and can include NHS staff, teachers and school support staff, police, firefighters, military personnel, social care and childcare workers (as per NPPF definition); • Council employees who provide frontline services (including County, District or Town/Parish); • Private sector employees and the self-employed providing frontline services in care and includes teachers and school support staff, health care, social care and childcare workers; • Private sector employees and the self-employed who provide frontline services in amenities and includes cleaners, kitchen/catering staff, shop workers, hairdressers, local transport and agriculture; and • Any other frontline occupational group experiencing recruitment or retention issues - such issues being first evidenced to the satisfaction of the District Council and inclusion as a local essential worker is at the sole discretion of the District Council
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	The allowance (Housing Benefit and Universal Credit) paid to claimants, set by the Valuation Office Agency, which takes into account the size and make up of a claimant's household and the location of the home.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Local Housing Need	Affordable rural housing (or Local Needs Housing) is housing that: • Is developed and managed by a Housing Association and made available for rent or shared ownership. • Is exclusively for people who have strong connections to a village. • Remains affordable for local people in perpetuity. • Is a small development, sensitively designed to be in keeping with the character of the village. • Can help a community remain thriving and sustainable. • Enables families to remain living in close proximity and provide support to each other. • Including local needs market housing and affordable housing
Local Lettings Plan	A plan setting out how homes will be allocated. Often used for new developments to ensure that a sustainable community is achieved. May be used to achieve Local Needs Housing.
Local List	A range of buildings and structures that together make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the District. The Local List (which currently covers Sevenoaks Town only) does not provide any additional planning controls but buildings on the list have the status of heritage assets and their conservation is an objective of the NPPF. The inclusion of a building or structure on the list will be a material consideration that we will take into account when considering planning applications.
Local Nature Reserves	Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.
Local Needs Housing	Affordable housing schemes where priority is given to those with a local connection to a parish, irrespective of the Council's Housing Register banding. Normally such housing is provided on Rural Exceptions Housing Sites. Local housing need is identified through a Parish Housing Needs Survey, which is undertaken by the independent Rural and Community Enabling service (RACE). Parish Housing Needs Surveys have a recognised shelf life of 5 years.
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.
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.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Micro House	A Micro House is a small house that is often energy-efficient and designed strategically to maximise usable space while minimizing the home's footprint.
Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)	An enclosed area, using a synthetic grass or hard surface for playing sports, for example five-a-side football or netball.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Introduced in 2012, this sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The most recent iteration is July 2021.
Neighbourhood Plans	A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
Nomination Rights	RPs provide the Council with nominations to their vacant housing stock to help the Council meet our housing needs (ie to rehouse those in priority need on the Housing Register). New developments will have specified nomination rights set out in the planning agreement (Section 106 Agreement). For our largest RP partners WKHA and Moat, there are have generic agreements in place, whereby we have 100% nomination rights at first letting and 75% thereafter. For Rural Exceptions Housing, we have 100% nomination rights in perpetuity.
Non-designated heritage assets	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified by the Local Planning Authority as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It can include assets identified by the Local Planning Authority (including Local listing) but does not include any asset formally designated under the relevant legislation i.e. Conservation area, Listed Building or scheduled ancient monument.
Objectively Assessed Need (OAN)	An unconstrained figure based on the latest Government population and household projections, but is not considered as the District's housing target. This evidence is used against other evidence bases gathered to determine the District's housing target.
Office for National Statistics (ONS)	Independent producer of official statistics and the recognised national statistical institute of the UK
Older People	People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.
Open Market Rent	A term that indicates the amount of money that a given property would command, if it were available for rent at the moment.
Open Market Value	A term that indicates the amount of money that a given property would command, if it were available for sale at the moment.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Original Building	A Building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.
Outdoor Accommodation	Glamping, camping, caravanning, free sleeping.
Permeable Paving	A range of sustainable materials and techniques for permeable pavements with a base and subbase that allow the movement of stormwater through the surface. In addition to reducing runoff, this effectively traps suspended solids and filters pollutants from the water.
Pitch for Gypsy and Traveller	There is no set definition of what should be contained within a pitch, but it is generally accepted that an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating a large trailer and touring caravan, an amenity building, parking space and a small garden area.
Playing Pitch Strategy	A document outlining the needs and supply of playing pitches within a local authority area. The document is prepared in partnership with Sport National Governing Bodies and endorsed by Sport England.
Previously Developed Land (PDL)	Previously developed land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.
Primary Shopping Area	Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods.
Provider	Organisations who own and/or manage affordable housing but who are not Registered Providers. These organisations include Quercus Housing, Almshouses and local landowners.
Public Right of Way (PRoW)	An adopted right of way available for public use defined on the Definitive Map.
Rain Gardens	A rain garden is a planted depression or a hole that allows rainwater runoff from impervious urban areas, like roofs, driveways, walkways, parking lots, and compacted lawn areas, the opportunity to absorb.
Rainfall Event	A storm with a specific intensity and duration
Rapid Electric Vehicle Points	Rapid charge points can charge an electric vehicle battery in around 30 minutes. They allow high mileage users, such as electric taxi and private hire drivers and freight and fleet operators, to quickly charge their vehicle.
Registered Parks and Gardens	A park or garden of special historic interest. They are graded I (highest quality), II* or II. All designations are made by Historic England.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Registered Provider (RP)	A Registered Provider (RP) of Social Housing can refer to both Local Authorities who have a social housing stock (whether within or outside of a Housing Revenue Account) and RPs. They are subject to regulation by the Regulator of Social Housing. The Council is not an RP. The Council retain a list of RPs who are our preferred delivery partners of new affordable housing on Section 106 sites. Any RP, who is not already our partner, must meet adopted eligibility criteria before being approved, locally, as an affordable housing provider. Cabinet report approved in September 2022 setting out the eligibility criteria that the RP are required to meet to deliver affordable housing in the District.
Rent to Buy	New homes to rent by eligible households for a specified rental period (minimum of 5 years) which may be renewed, with the option for the sitting tenant to buy the property (or a share of it) at the end of the rental period. During the rental period, the rent is set at up to 80% of the Open Market Rent, inclusive of any service charges. We do not currently have any homes in this tenure.
Return Period	The probability of a rainfall event occurring over a set period of time
Right to Acquire	Introduced by the Housing Act 1996, this is a statutory scheme that enables eligible RP tenants whose homes have been built or acquired since March 1997, with the input of public subsidy, to purchase their home with a discount of up to £16,000. Under the Act, certain geographical locations are exempt, which means the Right to Acquire does not arise. This means the RP can influence and manage the future occupancy of the home, ensuring it can be used as Affordable Housing in perpetuity. These exempted areas are the same as DPA's. Exemption is crucial for Rural Exceptions Housing as it means the housing can be secured to meet local needs in perpetuity – a requirement of Core Strategy Policy SP4. This is a critical consideration when deciding on where new Rural Exceptions Housing can be located.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Right to Buy	Introduced by the Housing Act 1980, this is a statutory scheme that enables eligible council housing tenants to purchase their current home with a discount of up to £82,800. If someone was a secure housing tenant of the Council when its housing stock was transferred to WKHA in 1989 and they are still a tenant of WKHA within the District, they may have a preserved form of the Right to Buy. In this case, the tenant can buy their home under the scheme in the same way as if they were still a Council tenant. Due to the elapse of time, this Right applies to a diminishing number of tenants and homes in the District. If a home is purchased, WKHA retain the sales receipt.
River Basin Management Plan (RBMPs)	These Management Plans set out how organisations, stakeholders and communities will work together to protect and improve the quality of our water environment. These plans were updated in 2015 and set out how the minimum of 680 (14%) of waters will improve over the next 6 years from around £3 billion investment.
Roadside Nature Reserves	Areas adjacent to road which have been identified, protected, and managed by the Kent and Medway Road Verge Project. These areas provide vital wildlife corridors for many species and include a number of scarce and threatened habitats.
Rural Exception Site	Rural exception site policy allows local planning authorities to grant planning permission for affordable housing on land that would not normally be used for housing because, for example, it is subject to policies of restraint. Hence an exception is made to normal planning policy to address proven local housing need. However, other planning issues such as site suitability, scale, design, etc. must still be addressed.
Rural Exceptions Housing Sites	Usually small sites, which are developed under Core Strategy Policy SP4 to provide affordable housing in response to an independently assessed evidenced need (i.e. Parish Needs Survey undertaken by the Rural Housing Enabler). A Section 106 will set out the local connection criteria applying in perpetuity (i.e. there is no opportunity to purchase the home outright). Rural Exceptions Housing is developed in locations where planning constraints (e.g. Green Belt, AONB) mean development would not normally be permitted. NPPF allows some open market housing on Rural Exceptions Housing Sites in certain circumstances.
Rural Housing Enabler	The Rural Housing Enabler helps communities identify suitable sites for the development of local needs housing.
Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMMs)	A project overseen by Natural England that implements monitoring, warden arrangements and public education messages.
Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace' (SANGS) is the name given to the green space that is of a quality and type suitable to be used as mitigation in the context of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Schedule Monument	Section 61(12) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 defines an ancient monument as “ <i>any scheduled monument</i> ” and “ <i>any other monument which in the opinion of the Secretary of State is of the public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest attaching to it</i> ”.
Section 106	Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner as part of the granting of planning permission. Core Strategy Policy SP3 sets out the planning obligation requirement for affordable housing provision. The Council has developed a template Section 106 agreement which we expect to be used in all cases.
Secured by Design	Secured by Design (SBD) is a police initiative to guide and encourage those engaged within the specification, design and building of new homes to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of their schemes.
Self Build	The building of homes by their owners.
Self Build Register	Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.
Self-commissioned housing	As set out in the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016), self-commissioned housing includes: • Self-build – Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing; • Custom Build – self build homes facilitated in some way by a developer. This still offers the individual the chance to have a unique home that suits their needs, lifestyle and design preferences, but through a more hands off approach than a traditional self-build; • Community-led housing, such as co-housing and CLTs. The Council (Strategic Planning Team) maintains a Self-Build Register which shows the demand for self and custom build plots arising in each base period (runs October-October). The Council are expected to demonstrate that this demand has been satisfied by the granting of permissions.
Sevenoaks District Housing Register	The Housing Register for applicants who are eligible under the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Scheme and who wish to apply for Social Rented and Affordable Rented housing in the Sevenoaks District. Vacancies are advertised through Kent Homechoice or are allocated by Direct Letting.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Scheme.	A scheme by which we determine which applicants (Eligible Persons) may be placed on the Council's Housing Register, their priority need for housing (Banding), and the process by which applicants are allocated a Social Housing tenancy for homes to which we have Nomination Rights.
Sevenoaks District Intermediate Housing Protocol	A protocol which sets out our local policy in relation to the allocation of certain tenures of Intermediate Housing.
Shared Equity Units	A form of Intermediate Housing. Purchasers buy a share of a home with the remaining share held by the RP. Generally the initial share purchased is 75% - 80% of the Open Market Value. There is no rent charged on the unowned share held by the RP. The purchaser has sole residency, ie the home is not "shared" with another household.
Shared Ownership Housing	Shared Ownership Housing known as "part rent/part buy" housing. Purchasers buy a share of a home of between 10% and 75% of the Open Market Value, but the average is 50%. A discounted rent is paid on the remaining share held by the RP. An owner has sole residency, ie the home is not "shared" with another household. Purchasers do not have to be first time buyers. Full eligibility criteria is set out in the Intermediate Housing Protocol. Owners can generally "staircase" to 100% ownership unless the home is located on a Rural Exceptions Housing site or is in a Designated Protected Area. Unless and until an owner staircases to 100% ownership, they are known as "lessees". The advent of First Homes means capacity to deliver Shared Ownership Housing on Section 106 sites is expected to be adversely affected. This is because the level of shared ownership housing sought may not be attractive to our RP partners. The SPD March 2023 update sets out just 7% of Affordable Housing is expected to be delivered as Shared Ownership Housing.
Shepherd Hut	A small home on wheels.
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 reasons of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (e.g. plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structures).
Soakaway	A pit typically filled with hard core, into which waste water is piped so that it drains slowly out into surrounding soil.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Social Housing	Subsidised housing which can be owned by local Councils and private Registered Providers. The term is defined in Section 68 - 71 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. Homes must be let to those whose needs are not adequately met by the open market. It encompasses Social Rented and Affordable Rented housing. Vacant homes are let to applicants from the Sevenoaks District Housing Register or via Direct Letting in accordance with the Nominations Agreement . On Section 106 sites, the SPD sets out 65% of Affordable Housing is expected to be delivered as Social Housing.
Social Prescribing	Social prescribing connects people to practical and emotional community support, through social prescribing link workers, who are based in GP practices and take referrals from all local agencies. It helps people get more control over their healthcare, to manage their needs and in a way that suits them. It can especially help people who: • have one or more long-term condition • need support with their mental health • are lonely or isolated • have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.
Social Rented Housing	Housing owned by RPs (and stock holding local authorities), for which rents are determined through the National Rent formula. This is usually equivalent to 50-60% of Open Market Rents. The formula takes account of values of properties and local earnings relative to national earnings, with a “bedroom weighting” factor. Homes are let on an Assured Tenancy and are allocated to applicants from the Sevenoaks District Housing Register or via Direct Letting. Most of our affordable housing stock is comprised of Social Rented Housing.
Source Protection Zones (SPZ)	Source Protection Zones are defined as zones which show the level of risk to the source from contamination. This could be from any activity that might cause pollution in the area. For example, storing pollutants like petrol underground, soakaways from septic tanks to the ground. The closer the activity, the greater the risk.
Starter Homes	Referenced in the NPPF as a form of Affordable Housing. Provision will be as First Homes.
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.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)	A Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment should: • identify sites and broad locations with potential for development; • assess their development potential; and • assess their suitability for development, and the likelihood of development coming forward (the availability and achievability). This approach ensures that all land is assessed together as part of plan preparation to identify which sites or broad locations are the most suitable and deliverable for a particular use. The assessment is an important evidence base to inform plan making. However, it does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for development. This is because not all sites considered in the assessment will be suitable for development (e.g. because of policy constraints or if they are unviable). It is the role of the assessment to provide information on the range of sites which are available to meet need, but it is for the development plan itself to determine which of those sites are the most suitable to meet those needs.
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 the future demographic trends and identify the accommodation requirements of specific groups such as homeless households, Black and Minority Ethnic groups, first time buyers, disabled groups, older people, Gypsies and Travellers, and occupational groups such as key workers, student and operational defence personnel.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	A guide detailing how developments will be expected to meet national and local air quality policies.
Surface water flooding	Flooding as a result of surface water runoff because of high intensity rainfall when water is ponding or flowing over the ground surface before it enters the underground drainage network or watercourse, or cannot enter it because the network is full to capacity, thus causing what is known as pluvial flooding.
Sustainability Appraisal	Assessment of the social, economic and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the new Local Plan including how the plan meets the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Sustainable development	There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life including (but not limited to): • Making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages; • Moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature; • Replacing poor design with better design; • Improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and widening the choice of high quality homes.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)	An alternative approach from the traditional ways to manage 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.
Swales	Swales are vegetated shallow depressions designed to convey and filter water. These can be 'wet' where water gathers above the surface, or 'dry' where water gathers in a gravel layer beneath. Can be lined or unlined to allow infiltration.
Tenancy Statement	The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to develop a strategy to guide RPs in their area in developing tenancy policies for their own stock. It requires RPs to have regard to the strategy, it is not binding. The Council adopted its Tenancy Statement in July 2020.
The Councils Net Zero 2030 commitment	The Council has made a commitment to work towards achieving net zero carbon emissions to the Council and its assets by 2030 (Council Emissions). This is alongside an ambition to assist the District in becoming net zero, by working closely with local communities (District emissions) and to improve the resilience of the District to a changing climate (Climate resilience). This is collectively known as the Net Zero 2030 commitment. More information can be found at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/netzero .
Town Centre	A defined area, including the primary shopping area and areas predominately occupied by main town centre uses.
Transport hub	A place where passengers and cargo are exchanged between vehicles or between transport modes. Public transport hubs include train and bus stations and airports.

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Targeted review of local housing needs 2022 (TRLHN)	A series of documents that have been prepared to provide an evidence base to the Local Plan. These reflect the requirements of the 2021 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), they include: • Housing and economic needs assessment • Housing needs of different groups • Housing for older and disabled people • Housing: optional technical standards • First Homes
Use Classes	A list that categorises types of development.
Village Design Statements (VDS)	Documents prepared by local people to guide new development in their villages. They are used when assessing planning applications for development and other changes within these villages.
Visitor Attraction	A visitor attraction is a place of interest where tourists visit, typically for its inherent or exhibited natural or cultural value, historical significance natural or built beauty, offering leisure and amusement.
Voluntary Right to Buy	A voluntary scheme agreed between the Government and the National Housing Federation (the national body for RPs) in 2015. Certain, eligible, RP tenants will have the right to buy their home at a discount of up to £82,800. The scheme was trialled by Government in a pilot in the Midlands and has yet to be rolled out nationwide. Homes built on Rural Exception sites by RPs will be exempt from the Voluntary Right to Buy, as RPs are not required to sell certain homes (subject to a decision of their Board) and this includes local needs homes. A tenant will instead be offered a 'portable discount' to enable them to purchase an alternative home from non-exempted stock that is owned by a RP.
Wildlife Corridor	Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations

Annex

Annex 1 – Car Parking Standards

1. Residential Car Parking Standards (C3a)

A. Towns

	Sevenoaks Town Centre	Sevenoaks Urban Area (excluding Sevenoaks Town Centre)	Swanley	Edenbridge	Westerham
On-Street Controls	On-street controls preventing all (or all long stay) parking	On-street controls, residents' scheme and/or existing saturation	On-street controls, residents' scheme and/or existing saturation	No, or very limited, on-street controls	No, or very limited, on-street controls
1 & 2 Bed Houses					
Provision	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Form	Controlled ¹	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation possible
3 Bed Houses					
Provision	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit
Form	Controlled ¹	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible
4 Bed Houses					
Provision	1 space per unit	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit ⁵	2 spaces per unit ⁵
Form	Controlled ¹	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of both spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of both spaces possible ⁴
5+ Bed Houses					
Provision	1 space per unit	2 spaces per unit	3 spaces per unit	3 spaces per unit ⁵	3 spaces per unit ⁵
Form	Controlled ¹	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of all spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of all spaces possible ⁴
1 & 2 Bed Flats					
Provision	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Form	Controlled ¹	Unallocated	Unallocated	Unallocated	Unallocated
Are Garages Acceptable?²	Yes, but with areas of communal space for washing etc.	Yes, but not as a significant proportion of overall provision	Yes, but not as a significant proportion of overall provision	Additional to amount given above only	Additional to amount given above only
Visitor Parking Provision³	None	Communal areas 0.2 per unit	Communal areas 0.2 per unit	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit

B. Settlement Types

	Primary Service Settlements	Secondary Service Settlements	Villages	Hamlets	Clusters
On-Street Controls	No, or very limited, on-street controls	No, or very limited, on-street controls	No, or very limited, on-street controls	No, or very limited, on-street controls	No, or very limited, on-street controls
1 & 2 Bed Houses					
Provision	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Form	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation possible
3 Bed Houses					
Provision	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit
Form	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible
4 Bed Houses					
Provision	2 spaces per unit ⁵	2 spaces per unit ⁵	2 spaces per unit ⁵	2 spaces per unit ⁵	2 spaces per unit ⁵
Form	Allocation of both spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of both spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of both spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of both spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of both spaces possible ⁴
5+ Bed Houses					
Provision	3 spaces per unit ⁵	3 spaces per unit ⁵	3 spaces per unit ⁵	3 spaces per unit ⁵	3 spaces per unit ⁵
Form	Allocation of all spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of all spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of all spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of all spaces possible ⁴	Allocation of all spaces possible ⁴
1 & 2 Bed Flats					
Provision	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Form	Unallocated	Unallocated	Unallocated	Unallocated	Unallocated
Are Garages Acceptable?²	Additional to amount given above only	Additional to amount given above only	Additional to amount given above only	Additional to amount given above only	Additional to amount given above only
Visitor Parking Provision³	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit

The Settlement Hierarchy 2025, or any superseding document, sets out the District's settlement categories.

Notes:

11. Parking or garage courts may be appropriate in certain developments, particularly higher-density schemes, and should be designed to ensure safe and secure access – including controlled entry where necessary.
 12. Open car ports or car barns acceptable at all locations, subject to good design.
 13. Provision may be reduced where parking is unallocated and evidence supports lower demand, in accordance with national guidance
 14. Best provided side by side, or in another independently accessible form. Tandem parking arrangement are often under-utilised.
 15. In certain cases, additional off-plot parking may be considered where justified by site layout, property size, and local network capacity.
- These car parking standards are for guidance purposes and evidence will be required from local surveys, car parking stress surveys, or from similar sites to support the level of parking provision being sought.
 - Developments in sustainable locations, particularly town centres or transport hubs, should demonstrate a flexible approach to parking provision and lower levels of provision where appropriate will be supported.
 - Lower parking provision may also be supported in other locations where effective measures are in place or proposed – such as car clubs, travel plans, controlled parking zones, or access to sustainable transport modes.
 - Parking provision should be proportionate to the development scale and site context. In exceptional cases, higher provision may be justified by local car ownership data or parking stress evidence.
 - The use of triple tandem parking is not an acceptable design solution as this fails to provide adequate and independently accessible parking spaces for future occupants. This approach introduces significant challenges for residents, due to the impracticalities associated with constant vehicle shuffling.

2. Non-Residential Car Parking Standards

Class B

General Industrial – B2		
	Car Parking	Goods Vehicles
Up to 200m ²	3 spaces	See Note 1
Over 200m ²	1 space per 50m ²	1 space for 200 m ²

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvres clear of the public highway.
2. For large developments the provision for goods vehicles only applies up to a maximum of 6 spaces. For sites where more provision is required, a minimum of 6 spaces should be provided with the actual number being determined by consideration of the operational requirements and demonstrated through a Transport Assessment.

Storage or Distribution – B8		
	Car Parking	Goods Vehicles
Storage & Distribution	1 space per 110m ²	1 space per 300m ²
Wholesale Trade Distribution	1 space per 35m ²	1 space per 300m ²

Notes:

1. Parking provision for associated office space to be determined using the standards set out under Use Class E(g).

Class C

Hotels – C1			
	Car Parking Staff	Car Parking Guests	Goods Vehicles and Coach Parking
Hotels, boarding and guest houses (excluding hostels)	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per bedroom	See Notes 1 and 2

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway.
2. For developments exceeding 20 bedrooms, suitable provision should be made for coaches. This should take the form of either:
 - a. Facilities to drop-off and pick-up guests which may consist of a lay-by adjacent to the public highway or utilisation of the car parking area (exact details to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority), or
 - b. Coach parking provision of 1 space per 20 bedrooms contained within the allocated space for car parking.
3. An additional provision should be made where bars and restaurant facilities are open to the general public of one third of the appropriate standard contained under Class E (b). For bars this equates to 1 space per 12m². for restaurants this would be 1 space per 15m².

Residential Institutions – C2			
	Car Parking Staff	Car Parking Guests	Goods Vehicles and Coach Parking
Nursing / Residential Care Homes	1 space per resident staff + 1 space per 2 other staff	1 space per 6 beds or residents	Minimum of 1 space for an Ambulance (see Note 1)
Hospitals & Hospices	1 space per 2 staff	2 spaces per 3 beds	See Notes 1 & 2
Residential Schools or Colleges, Training Centres	1 space per resident staff + 1 space per 2 other staff	1 space per 15 students	See Note 1 & 3

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway.
2. Sufficient ambulance bays and/or parking should be provided to meet the operational needs of the development. Exact details should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.
3. At special schools there is a need to include appropriate additional spaces for ambulances, taxis and coaches.

Secure Residential Institution – C2A	
Including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks.	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.

Dwellinghouses – C3	
C3(a)	See 1. Residential Car Parking Standards (C3a)
C3(b) Sheltered Accommodation (up to six people living together as a single household and receiving care).	1 space per resident warden and 1 space per 2 units
C3(c) Up to six people living together as a single household, including groups that do not fall within Class C4.	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.
Houses in Multiple Occupation – C4	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.

Class E

Shops, excluding sale of hot food – E(a)		
	Car Parking	Goods Vehicles
Food Retail up to 1,000m²	1 space per 18m ²	1 space per 500m ²
Food Retail over 1,000m²	1 space per 14m ²	1 space per 500m ²
Non-Food Retail	1 space per 25m ²	1 space per 500m ²

Notes:

1. Car parking provision includes spaces for staff.
2. Garden Centre greenhouses that are used predominantly for growing and are not open to members of the public should not be included as part of the gross floor space for determining the level of car parking provision. Up to 50% of the car parking spaces required can be provided as overflow car parks.
3. For all large retail establishments, the provision for goods vehicles only applies up to a maximum of 6 spaces. For sites where more provision is required, a minimum of 6 spaces should be provided with the actual number being determined by consideration of the operational requirements and demonstrated through a Transport Assessment, which includes examination of the scope for a Freight Quality Partnership.

Food and Drink, for consumption (mostly) on the premises – E(b).			
See Sui Generis uses for drinking establishments and hot food takeaways.			
	Car Parking Staff	Car Parking Customers	Goods Vehicles
Restaurants and Cafes²	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 6m ²	See Note 1
Transport Cafes³	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 15m ²	1 lorry space per 5m ²

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway.
2. Includes roadside restaurants.
3. Car parking provision for customers should be contained within the allocated space for lorry parking.

Financial and Professional Services, including other appropriate services in a commercial, business or service locality – E(c)

	Car Parking
All Developments – E(c)(i), E(c)(ii) and E(c)(iii)	1 space per 20m ² – covering space for staff and visitors/customers.

Indoor sport, recreation or fitness – E(d)

(not involving motorised vehicles, firearms, or use as a swimming pool or skating rink)

	Car Parking
Multi-Activity Sports & Leisure Centres, Health & Fitness Centres, Gymnasias, Social Clubs, Discotheques, Dance Halls, Ballrooms.	1 space per 22m ² + 1 space per 15 seats where appropriate

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway.
2. Provision should also be made for coach parking with a maximum standard of 1 coach space per 300 seats. Such provision is to be provided as an alternative to car parking provision.
3. Where provisions are made within the development to accommodate spectators then an additional parking provision of 1 space per 15 seats should be provided.
4. Provision should also be made for coach parking with a maximum standard of 1 coach space per 5,000 visitors per annum.

Medical or health services – E(e)

	Car Parking Staff	Car Parking Visitors	Goods Vehicles
Medical Centres/Clinics/ Surgeries (including veterinary surgeries)	1 space per 2 staff	4 spaces per consulting/ treatment room	See Notes 1 and 2

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway.
2. Provision should be made to accommodate ambulances where appropriate.

Creche, day nursery or day centre – E(f)

(not including residential use)

	Car Parking Staff	Car Parking Pupils/Visitors	Goods Vehicles
Nurseries/Crèches/ Pre Schools	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 4 children	See Notes 1 and 2
Day Care Centres	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 4 attendees	See Notes 1 and 3

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway.
2. Appropriate provision should be made for the setting down and picking up of children in a safe environment and in a manner that does not unduly interfere with the operation and use of the public highway. Exact details should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Creche, day nursery or day centre (not including residential use) – E(f).
3. Provision within the overall allocation for car parking should be made for mini-buses where these are used to transport people to and from the day care centres.

Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity – E(g)

		Car Parking
Offices for operation or administrative functions – E(g)(i)	Offices up to 500m ²	1 space per 20m ²
	Offices between 500 - 2,500m ²	1 space per 25m ²
	Offices over 2,500m ²	1 space per 30m ²
Research and development of products or processes – E(g)(ii) and Industrial processes – E(g)(iii)	Hi-tech / Research / Light Industrial	1 space per 35m ²

Notes:

1. Provision for goods vehicles may be required.

Class F

Learning and non-residential institutions – F1				
		Car Parking Staff	Car Parking Visitors/Pupils/Clients	Goods Vehicles
Provision of Education – F1(a)	Primary and Secondary Schools	1 space per staff + 10%		See Notes 1, 2, 3 and 4
	Further and Higher Education	1 space per 1 staff	1 space per 7 students	See Notes 1, 2 and 3
Display of works of art – F1(b)		1 space per 60m ²		See Note 1
Museums – F1(c)		1 space per 60m ²		See Note 1
Public libraries or public reading rooms – F1(d)		1 space per 60m ²		See Note 1
Public halls or exhibition halls – F1(e)		1 space per 60m ²		See Note 1
Public worship or religious instruction (or in connection with such use) – F1(f)		1 space per 5 seats		See Note 1
Law courts – F1(g)		1 space per 2 staff	6 spaces per courtroom	See Note 1

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway.
2. Provision should be made to accommodate school/Public transport vehicles dropping off and picking up children.
3. Appropriate provision should be made for the setting down and picking up of children in a safe environment and in a manner that does not unduly interfere with the operation and use of the public highway.
4. At specialist schools there is a need to include appropriate additional spaces for ambulances, taxis and coaches.

Local Community – F2	
	Car Parking
Shops (mostly) selling essentials goods, including food, where the premises do not exceed 280m ² and there is no other such facility within 1000m – F2(a)	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.
Areas or places for outdoor sport or recreation (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms) – F2(c)	1 space per 2 participants + 1 space per 15 spectators
Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or skating rinks – F2(d)	1 space per 22m ² + 1 space per 15 seats where appropriate

Sui Generis

Sui Generis		
	Employees	Visitors/Customers
Large Houses in Multiple Occupation (over six unrelated individuals)	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Theatres, cinemas, concert halls, conferences centres and bingo halls	1 space per 5 seats	
Amusement Arcade/centre or funfair	1 space per 22m ²	
Launderettes	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Fuel stations	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	4 spaces per service bay
Selling and/or displaying motor vehicles	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 50m ²
Vehicle servicing and repair	1 space per 2 staff	4 spaces per service bay
Taxi and vehicle hire. Coach and bus depots	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 4 registered vehicles
Open commercial use (e.g. scrap yards, recycling centres)	1 space per 2 staff	To be assessed individually
Hostels (providing no significant element of care)	1 space per resident staff + 1 space per 2 other staff	1 space per 6 residents
Waste disposal installations for the incineration, chemical treatment or landfill of hazardous waste	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Retail warehouse clubs	1 space per 25m ²	
Nightclubs	1 space per 22m ²	
Casinos	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Betting offices/shops	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Pay day loan shops	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Public houses, licensed bars/drinking establishments and banqueting halls (Includes bars open to non-residents in hotels and non-diners in restaurants)	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 10m ²
Drinking establishments with expanded food provision	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Hot food takeaways, including drive-thru restaurants	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 50m ²
Dance halls	To be determined	
Historic Houses and Gardens, Country Parks	1 space per 400 visitors per annum. See Note 4	
Theme parks, leisure parks	1 space per 200 visitors per annum. See Note 4	

Sui Generis		
	Employees	Visitors/Customers
Golf Courses and Driving Ranges	3 spaces per hole/bay	
Bowling green/Centres/Alleys, snooker halls, tennis/squash/badminton clubs	3 spaces per lane/court/table. See Note 3	
Equestrian Centres, Riding Stables	1 space per stable	
Marinas and other boating facilities	1 space per mooring or berth	
Stadia	1 space per 15 seats. See Note 2	
Other Uses	1 space per 22m ²	

Notes:

1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway.
2. Provision should also be made for coach parking with a maximum standard of 1 coach space per 300 seats. Such provision is to be provided as an alternative to car parking provision.
3. Where provisions are made within the development to accommodate spectators then an additional parking provision of 1 space per 15 seats should be provided.
4. Provision should also be made for coach parking with a maximum standard of 1 coach space per 5,000 visitors per annum.

Taken from Kent County Council's Parking Standards, 2025.



SEVENOAKS DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

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w www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/emerginglocalplan

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