



## AGENDA

### CABINET MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 27 October 2021

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber , Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT\*

Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock (Vice-Chairman), Monique Bonney, Angela Harrison, Ben J Martin, Richard Palmer, Julian Saunders, Roger Truelove (Chairman) and Tim Valentine.

Quorum = 3

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Pages

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting held on 22 September 2021 (Minute Nos. 303 - 316) as a correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary Interests (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the meeting while that item is considered.

**Advice to Members:** If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

## Part B Report for Decision by Cabinet

- |     |  |           |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 4.  | Local Development Scheme   | 5 - 18    |
| 5.  | Issues and Preferred Options Local Plan Review consultation (Regulation 18)          | 19 - 132  |
| 6.  | Queenborough & Rushenden Twyford Pumping Station – HIF Funded Contractor Appointment | 133 - 136 |
| 7.  | Milstead Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan                             | 137 - 222 |
| 8.  | Sittingbourne Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan                        | 223 - 290 |
| 9.  | Reactive and Planned Term Maintenance Contract - Extension of Contract               | 291 - 300 |
| 10. | Recommendations from the Local Plan Panel meeting held on 7 October 2021 - to follow |           |

## Issued on Monday 18 October 2021

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of the Cabinet, please visit [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk)

**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,  
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

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<b>Cabinet Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	27 October 2021
<b>Report Title</b>	Local Development Scheme
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Mike Baldock, Cabinet Member for Planning
<b>SMT Lead</b>	James Freeman, Head of Planning
<b>Head of Service</b>	James Freeman, Head of Planning
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Jill Peet, Planning Policy Manager
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) at Appendix I to this item is adopted as the current programme for the Swale Borough Local Plan Review

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council has been working to the timetable for delivering the Local Plan Review (LPR) that is set out in the Local Development Scheme of 2020. It has recently undertaken Regulation 19 consultation that concluded in the spring.
- 1.2 As promised, the Council reviewed the comments made in response to the Regulation 19 consultation on the draft submission LPR document and has used this as an opportunity to take stock, before deciding whether to submit it to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination.
- 1.3 Whilst there is considerable support for the Local Plan Review (LPR) in its form as presented under Regulation 19, there is criticism from some communities that they have not had an adequate opportunity to participate in the process and a view that some of the information presented to support the plan is not detailed enough. In addition, the government has published a revision to the NPPF, that will need to be taken into account in any plan making.
- 1.4 The Council is committed to preparing a local plan review in as fair and transparent a way as possible. It believes this has been done but it is faced with a choice. On balance, a further Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation could be carried out to take account of the revised NPPF, consider the potential repercussions of the covid pandemic and provide an additional opportunity for participation. This would then need to be followed by a further Regulation 19 stage prior to submission to the Secretary of State. This approach allows the Council to respond proactively to the representations made earlier in the year on the February 2021 version of the LPR and to address other factors that are beyond the control of the Council, that could in themselves cause delay to the plan's progress.

- 1.5 This report sets out a revised programme for the LPR in light of these factors to support the continued preparation of a sound plan.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The Council is required by Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) (as amended) to maintain an up to date Local Development Scheme (LDS). The current LDS was approved in 2020. The revised LDS is attached in appendix I and sets out a new programme for the LPR that now includes a further Regulation 18 Issues & Options consultation in the autumn of 2021 and a further Regulation 19 consultation on the draft submission plan in early 2022.
- 2.2 The programme set out in the 2020 LDS sought for the Council to proceed to submission in August 2021, following the Regulation 19 stage earlier in the year. As part of the discussion that took place around the recent Regulation 19 consultation, it was confirmed a 'take stock' exercise would be undertaken once the representations had been reviewed in the light of what has been said and of any other relevant circumstances that may have arisen in the meantime. The summary of the main issues raised are set out in a separate report to this meeting.
- 2.3 On 20 July 2021, the government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). These revisions apply to the consideration of the LPR. The transitional provisions only enable plans that have already been submitted for examination to continue to proceed without doing so. The new timetable set out in the proposed LDS will allow the opportunity to take into consideration these revised elements of the new NPPF and to ensure the plan is compliant. The changes to the NPPF are largely around design standards and design codes. They also add greater detail regarding how to address the impacts of climate change and a reference to the impacts of flooding from all sources, and the need for further sustainable transport measures aimed at encouraging modal shift to reduce congestion and air pollution.
- 2.4 Of particular concern is the new requirement to look at a longer timescale when new larger-scale developments are being considered. Paragraph 22 of the new NPPF states "*strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure. Where larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timescale for delivery*". The government has now published further planning policy guidance to clarify what they expect from local planning authorities to demonstrate they have undertaken this task. The plan period for the LPR has been looking currently at 2022 to 2038. As a result of this new paragraph in the NPPF, the vision for the LPR will have to be reviewed, as regards larger scale developments, and it will be required to extend to at least 2052.

- 2.5 A developer with an interest in developing a strategic site in the borough has submitted a Judicial Review against the Council concerning the approach set out in the 2020 LDS (Quinn Estate Limited, case ref CO/977/2021). Permission to proceed has been granted by the Planning Court and a hearing date has now been set for the end of November. The Claimant is challenging the decision not to carry out a further round of regulation 18 consultation before proceeding to the regulation 19 stage this year, as well as the quality of some of the evidence published in support of the draft submission plan document. Whilst the Council is confident that it has a strong case to quash the JR, it is sensible to consider the impacts on the LPR programme should that decision not go in our favour. Ultimately, it would result in a greater delay and risk to the LPR programme than proceeding to undertake a Regulation 18 Issues and Options as part of a new programme that can be undertaken now.
- 2.6 The impacts of the coronavirus pandemic are beginning to bed down. There is no doubt it has had a significant impact on town centres and the retail and leisure sectors in particular, as well as certain employment sectors and the office market. A further Regulation 18 consultation would allow the opportunity to present ideas and invite suggestions on how the LPR can respond to these unique challenges.
- 2.7 Members may be interested to note that within the wider Kent context, local plan progress is challenging. Two local plans in west Kent have failed at examination while other plans are facing delay as they grapple with challenges that impact on their timetables. In taking stock of where we are and learning lessons from our neighbours and from local planning authorities further afield, the proposed programme is recommended as a way to reduce risks to the soundness of the LPR and to address concerns raised at the recent consultation without having too significant an impact on the programme.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 The proposed new LDS and the programme to achieve the delivery of the LPR is set out in appendix I. The recommendation to Cabinet is that it be adopted for the purposes of guiding and monitoring progress on the Local Plan Review. The date it becomes effective will be the date of the relevant Cabinet decision and Minute to adopt it.
- 3.2 In addition, the revised LDS includes references to three Supplementary Planning Documents which are intended to support the LPR:
- Sittingbourne Town Centre SPD
  - Sustainable Design and Constructions SPD
  - Housing SPD

As they are SPDs, they are not development plan documents that must be set out as part of the official LDS programme. The indicative programme for the production of these SPDs is included in appendix (ii) of the LDS for information.

## 4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Production and maintenance of an up to date LDS is a statutory requirement and compliance with it is a measure of a local plan's legal compliance and soundness at examination. Without it, the LPR will fail.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Local Plan itself is subject to public engagement or consultation at several points in the process. The LDS programme indicates when these are expected to take place. There is no requirement for the LDS itself to be subject to consultation. However, it is reasonable to take account of the consultation responses that have been received so far, as part of the LPR process to date, as part of the consideration of what the LDS programme should be.
- 5.2 The LDS was discussed by the Local Plan Panel in September and it was agreed that it should be recommended to Cabinet.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	This Local Plan supports the priority of the Council to build the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all.
Financial, Resource and Property	The costs for the production of the Local Plan can be met from existing budgets
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	A Local Development Scheme is required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and a Council minute confirming its adoption will be needed.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environment and Sustainability	The Local Plan will be supported by its own Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment at each key stage in decision making.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage, although the Local Plan Review itself will be subject to equality impact assessments at key stages as advised by the policy team.



Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage
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## **7 Appendices**

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Swale Borough Local Development Scheme September 2021

## **8 Background Papers**

LPP Report: Summary of main issues raised in respect of the Swale Borough Local Plan Review (Regulation 19) Pre-submission Consultation. 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Swale Borough Council is required to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS) in accordance with Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).
- 1.2 This LDS will come into effect upon agreement by the Council's Cabinet on 22 September 2021. As set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 15) the LDS must specify:
- The local development documents which are to be development plan documents;
  - The subject matter and geographical areas to which each development plan document is to relate;
  - Which development plan documents (if any) are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
  - Any matter or area in respect of which the authority has agreed (or propose to agree) the constitution of a joint committee under section 29;
  - The timetable for the preparation and revision of the development plan documents.
- 1.3 The LDS is a project plan which sets out the timetable for the production of new or revised development plan documents which will form the Council's Local Development Plan. This LDS sets out a work programme for the Council's Local Plan Review over the period to Spring 2024 and anticipated adoption of the review. Progress against this LDS will be reviewed annually through the Authority Monitoring Report.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The Council produced its first LDS in 2005, followed by subsequent revisions in 2008, 2010, 2015, and 2016. These related to the former Local Plan (Adopted Feb 2008); and the current adopted Local Plan 'Bearing Fruits' (Adopted July 2017).
- 2.2 Work on the Local Plan Review (LPR) began once Bearing Fruits was adopted and the first LDS was published in 2018. A revised LDS was published in March 2020 to refresh this version and expedite the local plan review process by going straight to Regulation 19 consultation following the conclusion of Regulation 18 consultation "Looking Ahead". The Council undertook that Regulation 19 pre-submission consultation earlier this year. The Council has considered the main issues raised and, as promised, has taken stock of its position in light of those comments and of other relevant circumstances. The government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework on 20 July 2021, after the conclusion of the Regulation 19 consultation. Amongst other matters, it now requires the Council to extend the timeframe of the local plan's vision because "where larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and town form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further

ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timescale for delivery” (paragraph 22).

- 2.3 Whilst the Council remains committed to having an up-to-date local plan and recognises the need to progress with the LPR, these factors, combined with the impacts of Covid mean that, on balance, the most appropriate route forward would be for a further Regulation 18 (Issues & Options with Preferred Option) consultation to allow engagement on how the Council could address these new challenges in the Local Plan Review document. The Council will then take into account these representations in producing the revised submission draft of the Local Plan Review, which will itself need to be the subject of its own public consultation (pursuant to Regulation 19) before it can be submitted for examination. As a result, the LDS has needed to be updated to reflect this approach.
- 2.4 This new LDS reflects the statutory stages of the plan process and the Statutory Regulations and will supersede the LDS (2020) programme for Local Plan Review.

### **3. The current adopted development plan for Swale**

- 3.1 The current statutory adopted elements of the development plan for Swale Borough are:
- Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan (adopted July 2017)
  - Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan (adopted June 2017)
  - Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013 – 2030 (adopted June 2017)

### **4. Current Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

- 4.1 The Local Plan is supported by a number of existing and proposed Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance and Technical Advice Notes which set out the details for implementing local plan policies. All of these documents were subject to public consultation. These can be viewed at [Publications - Planning and Planning Policy \(swale.gov.uk\)](https://www.swale.gov.uk/publications-planning-and-planning-policy)
- 4.2 Currently adopted SPDs for the Borough are:
- Developer Contributions SPD (adopted, November 2009)
  - Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal SPD (2011)
  - Stones Farm Development Brief SPD (May 2011)
  - Queenborough and Rushenden Masterplan SPD (November 2010)
  - Sittingbourne Town Centre and Milton Creek Masterplan SPD (September 2010)
  - Parking Standards SPD (May 2020)
- 4.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents are:
- The Conversion of Buildings into Flats and Houses in Multiple Occupation
  - Listed Buildings – A Guide for Owners and Occupiers
  - The Conservation of Traditional Farm Buildings

## APPENDIX I: Swale Local Development Scheme (September 2021)

- The Design of Shop Fronts, Signs and Advertisements
- Designing an Extension – A Guide for Householders
- Planting on New Developments – A Guide for Developers
- The Erection of Stables and Keeping of Horses
- Conservation Areas
- Lynsted Parish Design Statement
- Abbott Laboratories Ltd. – Development Brief

4.4 Technical Guidance Notes (TGN) documents are:

- Air Quality

4.5 Additionally, part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty falls within Swale and has a management plan that is adopted by all local authorities within their area. This is used as a material consideration for planning applications and can be viewed at [Planning and the Management Plan - Kent Downs](#)

**5. Other Relevant Documents**

**5.1 Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

The Swale Statement of Community Involvement (February 2018) sets out the Council's approach to public and key stakeholder participation in all planning matters, including the preparation of the local plan, supplementary planning documents and arrangements for consultations on planning applications. The Council prepared and agreed an addendum to the SCI in February 2021 to reflect the impacts of the pandemic and lockdowns. This will be kept under review as the situation evolves and the SCI will be updated if necessary.

**5.2 Sustainability Appraisal**

The Council will meet the requirements of sustainability appraisal through the local plan preparation process, which will involve carrying out iterative appraisals of the sustainability of the options, proposals and draft policies in the local plan and prepare reports on the findings. These will be carried out at the key stages of plan preparation and will inform progress on the Plan. The sustainability appraisals carried out at the key stages of plan preparation will also accompany consultation drafts of the plan for public comment.

**5.3 Swale Borough Council Corporate Plan (2020 – 2023)**

The corporate plan sets out the Council's priorities and the local plan is responsible for delivering those of a spatial nature. Priority 1: *to building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all*; Priority 2: *Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges*; and Priority 3: *Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone* must be addressed in the LPR.

**5.4 Authority Monitoring Report**

The Council publishes monitoring information on its website on an annual basis relating to the previous monitoring year (running from 1 April to 31 March). This will provide updates on the status of the LDS timetable; progress on the Local Plan Review; reports on public consultations; duty to co-operate statements; neighbourhood planning and borough wide statistics on planning topics such as housing, employment, environment and transport.

**5.5 Policies Map**

The Council is required to produce a Policies Map which shows the location of development proposals in all current, adopted development plan documents on an ordnance survey base map. For Swale, this is the Proposals Map which accompanies the Bearing Fruits Local Plan (2017). The area annotated as Policy NP1 denotes the area covered by the adopted Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan.

**6. Emerging Development Plans for Swale**

**Swale Borough Local Plan Review 2022 – 2038**

6.1 The Local Plan Review (LPR) will set the framework for the development needs for the whole of the Swale Borough area from 2022 – 2038. This will include addressing revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework and associated Practice Guidance (2021); addressing the future development needs of the Borough including housing needs, the local economy, environmental considerations and community infrastructure needs and transport. The plan will include strategic policies to address these matters and put forward a development strategy for the Borough. It will also include site specific allocations to meet identified need and retain, update or include new detailed topic development management policies to guide determination of planning applications. Where applicable, the policies for any larger scale developments, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, will be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years). This will take into account the likely timescale for their delivery.

6.2 Work began on the LPR as a result of Council Minute 44 (July 2017), with early scoping and evidence gathering, within the context of major review of national planning policy and government policy to significantly boost housing delivery. The key stages of the process are set out at appendix A.

6.3 The Council continues to undertake Duty to Cooperate duties with neighbouring planning authorities and on the London Plan, to identify and discuss potential cross boundary issues (which will result in Statements of Common Ground). No scope or intention for joint plan making has been identified at this point in time.

**6.4 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

CIL is a mechanism introduced under the Planning Act 2008 with the intention of providing a consistent approach to determining financial contributions from new development towards local infrastructure provision. Further revisions to national policy and regulation on CIL in 2018 and the approach to viability assessments affecting plan making, meaning that at this early stage in the LPR process, it is unclear whether implementing a CIL charge would be beneficial to Swale. This issue is further complicated by measures proposed as part of wider planning reforms to replace both CIL and Section 106 planning obligation agreements with a new infrastructure levy. Nevertheless, the Council will review this issue as part of the LPR and, if required, will be included in a future review of this LDS.

**6.5 Neighbourhood Plans**

As at September 2021, the following areas have designated Neighbourhood Plan areas:

- Boughton and Dunkirk (designated in February 2014 and under preparation)

- Minster (designated in 2014)
- Hernhill (designated in 2017 and under preparation)
- Faversham (designated in 2020 and under preparation)
- Borden (designated in 2021 and under preparation)

Neighbourhood plans, once adopted, form part of the development plan but are not programmed by the local planning authority and are therefore, not included within this LDS timetable. They must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted local plan and have regard to any emerging local plans.

More details for Swale neighbourhood plans can be found at [Local Plans - Neighbourhood planning \(swale.gov.uk\)](https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-plans-neighbourhood-planning)

## **6.6 Supplementary Planning Documents**

The Council is intending to prepare the following documents to support the LPR:

- Sittingbourne Town Centre SPD
- Sustainable Design and Constructions SPD
- Housing SPD

As SPDs are not development plan documents (they provide an amplification of development plan policy), they are not required to be part of the official LDS programme. For information, appendix B provides an indicative programme for the production of these SPDs.

## **7. Resources and Project Management**

7.1 Swale Borough Council has a strong corporate commitment to the preparation and adoption of a Local Plan Review. The Swale Local Plan Review will be produced by the Council's Planning Services, and led by the Planning Policy Team. The importance of the work is recognised and supported across the authority with input and expertise from other teams across the Council and the use of outside specialist consultants (where appropriate) along with engagement with stakeholders, organisations and the public to help inform and develop the plan.

7.2 The Council has established management and reporting structure to support delivery of the local plan review. This is primarily the Local Plan Panel cross party Members group that make recommendations to Cabinet for decision. In addition, briefings for senior managers and Members on key pieces of research or new national policy are used.



**Appendix A: Swale Local Plan Review Project Plan and Key Stages**

<b>Document Project Plan</b>	
Subject/Content	<p>Matters to be reviewed include:</p> <p>A vision for the Borough up to 2052</p> <p>A review of development needs for housing, employment and other uses</p> <p>Identification of a development strategy that will meet identified development needs</p> <p>Allocation of land to deliver development needs and maintain supply</p> <p>The need for further sustainable transport measures aimed at encouraging modal shift to reduce congestion and air pollution</p> <p>How great design and good placemaking can be achieved</p> <p>How best to respond to the challenges of the climate and ecological emergency</p>
Status	Local Plan
Coverage	Borough-wide
Conformity with national policy	Central government policy and guidance, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
Conformity with local policy	Regard to the Council's Plans and Strategies, including the corporate Plan, Economic Development Strategy and Housing Strategy. Also have regard to the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. The LPR will need to take into account the policies within neighbourhood plans and have regard to other local strategies such as SELEP and KCC
Policies map	To be amended to reflect the policy content of the Local Plan Review
<b>Timetable</b>	
Local plan review commenced (Council Minute 44)	July 2017
Sustainability Appraisal	Relevant appraisals and assessment will be carried out throughout the review of the Swale Borough Local Plan
Evidence gathering	July 2017 – January 2022
Regulation 18 consultation (Looking Ahead)	27 April – 8 June 2018
Regulation 19 consultation on the LPR	February – 30 April 2021
Publication of further Issues & Options (with Preferred Option) consultation document (Reg 18)	October – November 2021
Local Plan Panel / Full Council cycle agree Publication Version of Local Plan for consultation	January 2022
Publication of submission draft local plan review for public Consultation (Reg 19)	February – April 2022
Submission of Plan for Examination (with results of the public consultation) Reg 22	May 2022
Examination hearing sessions (Reg 24)	August 2022
Main modifications consultation	November 2022

Adoption, full Council (Regulation 26)	February 2023
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**Appendix B: Indicative Supplementary Planning Document Timetables**

**Swale Sustainable Design and construction Supplementary Planning Document**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Initial evidence gathering	Summer 2022
Member workshops	Autumn 2022
Drafting	Autumn/winter 2022
Consultation on Draft SPD	Spring 2023
Finalise Changes and Adopt SPD	Summer 2023

**Swale Housing Supplementary Planning Document**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Initial evidence gathering and Member workshops (subject to appointment of suitable consultants)	Summer 2022
Member workshops	Autumn 2022
Drafting	Autumn/winter 2022
Consultation on Draft SPD	Spring 2023
Finalise Changes and Adopt SPD	Summer 2023

**Sittingbourne Town Centre SPD**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Initial evidence gathering	Completed
Member workshops	Completed
Drafting	Completed
Consultation on Draft SPD	Autumn 2021
Finalise Changes and Adopt SPD	Spring 2023

<b>Cabinet Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	27 October 2021
<b>Report Title</b>	Issues and Preferred Options Reg 18 consultation
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Mike Baldock, Cabinet Member for Planning
<b>SMT Lead</b>	James Freeman, Head of Planning
<b>Head of Service</b>	James Freeman, Head of Planning
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Jill Peet, Planning Policy Manager
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To agree the attached document for consultation purposes and to endorse the consultation arrangements.</li> <li>2. To agree delegated authority to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to make minor amendments to the document prior to consultation is granted.</li> </ol>

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Regulation 18 document, Issues and Preferred Options that is set out in appendix I. This is a formal Regulation 18 consultation that seeks feedback to a series of questions about the issues facing the borough and the options for addressing them, particularly with regards to the pattern and scale of development that could deliver the future development needs of the borough up to 2038 and beyond. This consultation seeks further views on the options for a development strategy in light of the recently revised NPPF, and to set out potential approaches to address the challenges and opportunities that face the borough following the covid pandemic.
- 1.2 The questions contained in the document can be responded to online via the consultation portal, by completing an interactive PDF version of the questionnaire or by completing a hard copy version and returning by post or email. As is always the case, general comments can also be made. The consultation period will start on Friday 29 October and conclude on Monday 29 November 2021. The Council has already notified all those on the consultation database that this consultation is going to happen and will contact them again to provide them with the dates of the consultation and links to the documents. All libraries in the borough will also have hard copies available for inspection.
- 1.3 Town and parish councils have received a separate notification inviting them to engage in pre-consultation events with the option for further arrangements to take place should they be required.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Members will note that a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) was discussed and agreed by the Local Plan Panel in September and discussed earlier at this meeting of Cabinet. In response to the new LDS, this further consultation is scheduled to take place at the end of October. The consultation document is set out in Appendix I and is titled “Swale Borough Local Plan (October, 2021) Issues and Preferred Options (Regulation 18).
- 2.2 In addition to an introductory section, the “Issues and Preferred Options” document is made up of four main chapters that each contain a series of questions. The four main chapters identify:
- What has influenced the development of the local plan;
  - What the characteristics of the borough are and the key challenges to be addressed;
  - What the vision and objectives for the local plan review could be; and
  - The policy issues and preferred options for delivering a spatial strategy, addressing climate change, place shaping and design and protecting and enhancing environment and heritage. Housing needs and the economy and town centres is also covered.
- 2.3 The consultation responses will be summarised. The main issues raised will be reported to a later meeting of the Local Plan Panel with recommendations on how said issues could be addressed in the draft submission plan (Regulation 19) which will seek to include a longer term vision for any strategic sites (as required by the July 2021 version of the NPPF) and include a suite of policies and proposals that seek to address the impacts of covid and on the economy and our town centres. Where other issues are raised, they will also be considered.
- 2.4 As well as the consultation on the “Issues and Preferred Options” document, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) will also be published for consultation. SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of a draft plan, and alternatives, in terms of sustainability issues, with a view to avoiding and mitigating adverse effects and maximising the positives. The aim is to ensure that the Local Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Local Plan preparation and Sustainability Appraisal is an iterative process.
- 2.5 The SA document, that will accompany the Regulation 18 document, looks at the five broad development options contained within the Regulation 18 document and assesses them against a set of sustainability topics and objectives established at the SA Scoping phase and agreed with statutory consultees. These topics represent the core of the SA framework and sit at the forefront of the SA’s assessment of development strategy options. The SA framework is set out here:

Topic	Objectives
Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support the achievement of air quality improvement objectives within the Borough’s 5 designated AQMAs</li><li>• Seek to minimise air pollution more generally, such as through supporting or enabling the use of low emission</li></ul>

	technologies and encouraging sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise, and avoid where possible, impacts to biodiversity, both within and beyond designated and non-designated sites of international, national or local significance</li> <li>• Achieve biodiversity net gain including through the long term enhancement and creation of well-connected, functional habitats</li> </ul>
Climate change mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise per capita greenhouse gas emissions from transport, industry and the built environment</li> <li>• Deliver high standards of energy efficiency and water efficiency in new development.</li> </ul>
Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support good access to existing and planned community infrastructure for new and existing residents.</li> <li>• Promote and support healthy communities, including through increasing access to green infrastructure and open space.</li> </ul>
Economy and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support a strong, diverse and resilient economy that provides opportunities for all.</li> <li>• Support and enhance the vitality of the Borough's town centres including through the identification of further regeneration opportunities where appropriate.</li> <li>• Support provision of further education facilities in the Borough where practicable.</li> </ul>
Flood risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid and mitigate flood risk by directing development away from the areas of the Borough at the highest risk of flooding.</li> <li>• Deliver Sustainable Drainage Systems and other measure with a view to future proofing and building climate change resilience.</li> <li>• Support the priorities identified in the Medway Estuary and Swale Shoreline Management Plan and the Isle of Grain to South Foreland Shoreline Management Plan.</li> </ul>
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance heritage assets and contribute to the maintenance of historic character through design, layout and setting of new development.</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support timely delivery of market housing and affordable housing</li> <li>• Promote an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures</li> <li>• Cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community.</li> </ul>
Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources, including supporting development which avoids the best and most versatile agricultural land.</li> </ul>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance the character and quality of the Borough's landscapes and townscapes through appropriate design and layout of new development.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the Kent Downs AONB where possible</li> <li>• Preserve important open gaps between settlements</li> </ul>

Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote sustainable transport use, including supporting the creation of additional walking and cycling routes, and reduce the need to travel, particularly by private vehicle</li> <li>• Support strategic transport schemes</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote sustainable forms of development which minimise water consumption and wastewater flows</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance the quality of both surface and ground water resources where possible consistent with the aims of the Water Framework Directive</li> <li>• Promote efficient and sustainable use of natural resources</li> </ul>

- 2.6 The SA sets out how each of the 5 development strategy options in the Reg 18 document perform against the objectives in the framework. This information is used to inform decision-making (and consultation response to the Reg 18) on the question of selecting a preferred options which is identified as Option 3.
- 2.7 Development strategy options are assessed on a broad level and the SA does not look at specific sites at this stage. The SA is an iterative process and further refinement of the development strategy that is progressed to Regulation 19 (whether that be the preferred option or another option) will be undertaken. At that stage, the SA will include an assessment of specific sites as well as the alternatives, whilst aiming to ensure that the plan contributes to the delivery of sustainable development. The final draft of the SA Interim Report is contained in appendix II. It is, in essence, an update of previous work SA work, taking into account the representations received at Regulation 19 and any additional relevant information.
- 2.8 In light of the iterative appraisal, the view of Officers is that Option 3 performs well overall, in that it aligns with the range of priority objectives, despite clear tensions and challenges. It not possible to envisage an alternative strategy that performs better overall. In particular, whilst Option 5 performs moderately well in terms of some topics, it would likely involve a higher degree of delivery risk than the preferred option.
- 2.9 As the local plan progresses, the SA will continue to assess the impacts of the emerging plan, and alternatives, whilst aiming is to ensure that the plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. For background information, Members may wish to read the sustainability section of the [Local Plan Review](#) pages of the website.

### 3 Proposals

- 3.1 Subject to Member approval, the document contained in appendix I will be consulted upon as a formal Regulation 18 Issues and Preferred Options document. The comments received as part of this consultation will then be summarised and the main issues reported to the Local Plan Panel with a commentary on how they could be addressed in the forthcoming draft plan (Regulation 19) that will be consulted on in the new year. The SA will also be subject to consultation.

- 3.2 All consultees on the local plan consultation database have already been notified that there will be a further consultation. They will be notified again with links to the documents. Hard copies of the documents will be made available in all libraries in Swale and at Rainham library.
- 3.3 Specific events for town and parish councils have been/ are being arranged. There will be both general sessions and separate area-based sessions. These will not be open to the public but we will try to accommodate all requests for other meetings as best we can.

## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The preparation of an up-to-date local plan is a key function for local councils and a key priority for Swale. It is a document that sets out the policy framework to steer and guide development over the plan period. An up-to-date local plan is one that is no older than five years from its adoption date. Once a plan is older than five years, the weight it is given in planning decisions lessens. The weight is even less if the council does not have a five year supply of housing and leaves the area wide open to speculative planning applications and ‘planning by appeal’.
- 4.2 In terms of alternative options to that proposed, the Council could choose not to progress with a local plan review or to follow an alternative approach or timeline. Local plan preparation by its very nature is a complex process and is often impacted by circumstances beyond the control of the council. As such, there is always a degree of risk involved with the plan-making process. Members may be aware that the recently appointed minister for the government department that covers planning (Dept. for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) has put the introduction of the new planning system on hold. There is uncertainty at this time but the message from government remains the same – that we should continue to progress with our local plans and that they should be reviewed every five years.
- 4.3 The council has already progressed well with preparing evidence and gathering information including previous consultations. There are other options but the one presented represents the most appropriate in the circumstances.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 The Regulation 18 document has been informed by the consultation that took place earlier this year and will be subject to formal consultation as set out above.

## **6 Implications**

Issue	Implications
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Corporate Plan	This Local Plan supports the priority of the Council to build the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all.
Financial, Resource and Property	The costs for the production of the Local Plan can be met from existing budgets
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	A Local Development Scheme is required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and a Council minute confirming its adoption will be needed.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The Local Plan will be supported by its own Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment at each key stage in decision making. It actively seeks to deliver policies and proposals to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage although the Local Plan Review itself will seek to deliver policies and proposals that contribute to corporate objectives for health and wellbeing in the borough.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage, although the Local Plan Review itself will be subject to equality impact assessments at key stages as advised by the policy team.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage

## 7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Swale Borough Local Plan (October 2021) Issues and Preferred Options (Regulation 18)
- Appendix II: Interim Sustainability Appraisal (working draft)

## 8 Background Papers

None





# Swale Borough Local Plan

## October 2021



## Issues and Preferred Options (Regulation 18)



## Swale Borough Local Plan (October 2021). Issues and Preferred Options (Regulation 18)

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## 1 Introduction

**1.0.1** All planning authorities are required to produce Local Plans, that show how their area will develop in the future. The Local Plan should provide a positive vision and framework for the future development of the area, seeking to address needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure as well as safeguarding the environment. It identifies the amount of development that will take place, the areas and sites where development is expected to be accommodated and where it will be restricted. The Local Plan, once adopted, forms part of the Development Plan for the borough and will be the main consideration in deciding planning applications in Swale.

**1.0.2** The current Local Plan, Bearing Fruits, was adopted in July 2017 and covers the period 2014 – 2031. Some of the existing Local Plan policies and unimplemented development allocations that are essential to meet the development needs of the borough may be carried forward into the new Local Plan. The reviewed Local Plan will, once adopted, replace Bearing Fruits.

### 1.1 Why the Local Plan is being reviewed

**1.1.1** The Local Plan is being reviewed so as to:

- fulfil the council's commitment in Bearing Fruits to undertaking an early review of its Local Plan to address local transport issues;
- deliver the spatial priorities and objectives of the Swale Borough Corporate Plan, which reflect the council's declaration of a climate and ecological emergency in June 2019;
- address changes to national planning policy and guidance since the adoption of Bearing Fruits, particularly through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), including the requirement to review local plans at least once every 5 years;
- extend the plan period to ensure that there will be an appropriate time horizon for strategic policies as recommended in the NPPF in order to anticipate and respond to long term requirements and opportunities;
- provide for additional new housing, employment and other development that will be required to meet future needs.

### 1.2 Neighbourhood Plans

**1.2.1** There are several Neighbourhood Plans that have been, or are currently being, produced by local communities in the borough. Neighbourhood Plans guide development at the local level but they must be in conformity with the Local Plan and national planning guidance. Once adopted they also become part of the Development Plan for the area they cover.

**1.2.2** Where a Neighbourhood Plan has been produced, the policies within that plan would take precedence over the non-strategic policies within a Local Plan if the Neighbourhood Plan has been 'made' more recently. This situation also applies in reverse if policies within a Local Plan are the more recently adopted. It is recommended that developing Neighbourhood Plans take account of the Local Plan Review as they are developed to ensure their policies are in conformity with the emerging Local Plan.

### 1.3 Why we are consulting on Issues and Preferred Options

**1.3.1** Between April and June 2018, we undertook a wide ranging consultation '[Looking Ahead](#)'. This introduced the need to produce a new Local Plan and sought views on where new homes and other development could be located. To establish community priorities across a range of planning matters, the consultation also sought feedback on a number of issues ranging from the national and local challenges facing the borough's economy, housing provision, infrastructure, climate change, transport and the

## 1 Introduction

environment and the potential policy approaches to address them<sup>(1)</sup>. In February 2021, we published the [Pre-Submission Local Plan \(Regulation 19\)](#) <sup>(2)</sup>. This was a formal consultation stage and sought views on the soundness of the Local Plan.

**1.3.2** We are now undertaking further consultation (under Regulation 18) through this Issues and Preferred Options stage. A further consultation under Regulation 19 will follow in 2022 (see section on 'What happens next').

**1.3.3** This will enable the implications of the most recent revisions to the NPPF (July 2021) to be considered and, if there are any implications for the Local Plan, what changes to the Local Plan may need to be made. The revisions to the NPPF include updating of national policies related to design quality expectations, the inclusion of greater detail on addressing the impacts of climate change and flooding from all sources and encouraging local authorities, where appropriate, to employ longer term thinking to enable sustainable development. It will also enable us to consider how the Local Plan can contribute to the recovery of the local economy post Covid-19 pandemic.

**1.3.4** Taking this approach will also provide a further opportunity for local communities and stakeholders to comment on and shape the policy direction of the Local Plan Review.

### 1.4 Document structure

**1.4.1** This document provides some background about the key issues and challenges the borough faces that we think the Local Plan should respond to and what it should be aiming to deliver (Section 3). We then set out a draft Local Plan Vision and Strategic Objectives (Section 4) before suggesting ways in which we could address key issues and challenges (Section 5). These are organised under the following policy themes:

- Spatial strategy
- Climate change
- Place shaping/design
- Protecting and enhancing environment and heritage
- Housing needs
- Economy and town centres

**1.4.2** There are questions throughout the document for you to answer and we would like to hear your views.

**1.4.3** The responses to both the 'Looking Ahead' consultation and the Pre-Submission Local Plan, together with the technical evidence base studies undertaken to date have been considered in drafting the options and preferred policy directions.

**1.4.4** Under some themes we have set out our preferred option and policy direction and explain the reasons why this option or direction is preferred. Where alternative options have been considered it also explains why these are not being suggested as preferred options. In the case of other themes, although we believe that the policy approaches we took in the Pre-Submission Local Plan (February 2021) were reasonable, we are seeking views on possible alternative or additional policy approaches which have been suggested to us through the Pre-Submission Local Plan (February 2021) consultation.

**1.4.5** It should be noted that this consultation does not cover every Local Plan policy area or individual policy. This is because there are a number of policies, particularly Development Management policies,

1 A summary of the 'Looking Ahead' consultation responses were reported to the council's Local Plan Panel on the [29 October 2018](#). All the responses to the 'Looking Ahead' document can be viewed on the planning policy consultation portal at: <https://swale-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/event/32636/peoplesubmissions/section/>

2 All the responses can be viewed on our planning policy consultation portal at: <https://swale-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/event/36020/peoplesubmissions/section/>. A summary of the main issues raised was reported to the Local Plan Panel on the [8 September 2021](#)

where the responses to the Pre-Submission Local Plan (February 2021) generally indicated support for these policies. In some cases, responses suggested amendments to the policy wording to improve clarity of the interpretation and purpose of the policy and we will consider and address these suggested amendments in drafting a new version of the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

## 1.5 How to comment

**1.5.1** The consultation document and supporting documents can be found on the council's [website](#)<sup>(3)</sup>. Copies of the Issues and Preferred Options document only are also available to view in local libraries across the borough.

**1.5.2** You are not required to comment on all the questions in the Issues and Preferred Options document and you can complete as many questions as you want to.

**1.5.3** You can respond to this consultation in the following ways:

- by submitting your comments online using the Planning Policy consultation portal: <https://swale-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/>
- by downloading an electronic response form, which can be found on the Issues and Preferred Options consultation page of the council's website and submitting it by email to [Lpcomments@swale.gov.uk](mailto:Lpcomments@swale.gov.uk). This form can also be printed and returned by post to Planning Policy, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT
- if you do not have access to the internet you can request a paper copy of the response form by calling 01795 417014
- by email to [Lpcomments@swale.gov.uk](mailto:Lpcomments@swale.gov.uk) or in writing to Planning Policy, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT. If you prefer to make comments by email or letter, please reference specific questions in your response.

**1.5.4** To submit your comments via the Planning Policy consultation portal you must first log into the system. If you have not used the consultation portal before you will need to register to do this. If you have made comments to any of our previous consultations via the consultation portal you **do not** need to register again, you can submit comments via the consultation portal using your user name and password.

**1.5.5** You only need to register as an 'Agent' if you are a planning agent i.e. a planning professional submitting comments on behalf of a landowner or stakeholder. Agents need to register for each client.

**1.5.6** If you have any questions about using the consultation portal please refer to our Frequently Asked Questions, where you will find answers to some of the most commonly asked questions.

**1.5.7** If you need any assistance with the Issues and Preferred Options consultation document or the Local Plan in general, you can:

## 1 Introduction

- call: 01795 417014
- email: [Lpcomments@swale.gov.uk](mailto:Lpcomments@swale.gov.uk)

**This consultation is open for four weeks from the 29 October 2021.**

**Please submit comments by 5pm on the 29 November 2021.**

### 1.6 What happens next

**1.6.1** All the comments received before the consultation closes will be carefully considered and, along with technical evidence, help inform the next stage of the Local Plan; the drafting of a Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan. It is anticipated we will consult on this next stage of the Local Plan Review in spring 2022.

**1.6.2** The council has published an updated timetable for reviewing the Local Plan, which is outlined below.

Local Plan Timetable	
Issues and Preferred Options (Regulation 18)	October 2021 (current stage)
Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19)	February 2022
Submission to Secretary of State (Regulation 22)	May 2022
Examination and modifications	August 2022
Adoption	February 2023

**1.6.3** Further details of the timetable are set out in the Local Development Scheme which can be viewed at: [www.swale.gov.uk/localplanreview/LDS](http://www.swale.gov.uk/localplanreview/LDS)



## What has influenced the development of the Local Plan 2

## 2 What has influenced the development of the Local Plan

### 2.1 National Planning Policy and Guidance

**2.1.1** The Local Plan must respond to and be consistent with the government's planning policy and legislation. Since the adoption of Bearing Fruits in 2017, the NPPF has been updated three times, most recently in July 2021. The Local Plan review will need to respond to these changes, where appropriate, and will need to take into account the policies set out in the NPPF and the technical guidance on how to apply these found in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

**2.1.2** Of the most recent updates to the NPPF, one of the more fundamental changes to be addressed in plan making is the need, where larger scale developments are proposed such as new settlements or significant extensions to towns and villages, to look further ahead than the plan period to take into account the timescale for delivery. The NPPF indicates that this should be at least 30 years. The NPPF does not define what qualifies as a 'significant extension', leaving it to each local authority to determine based on their specific local context. Further government guidance on the way local authorities should reflect this NPPF change in their Local Plans, and the evidence base required to support a 30 year vision, is awaited through an update to the PPG.

**2.1.3** As set out in the section dealing with the Development Strategy, there will be a need to make new allocations, which could involve some larger scale developments. We have suggested some additional wording to both the Vision and Strategic Objectives to recognise that some of these allocations could be expected to deliver housing and other development beyond the Local Plan period. However, in the absence of clear government guidance, the council are at this stage still considering the implications of this change to the NPPF and what other areas and/or policies of the Local Plan might need to be amended.

#### Question 1

How do you think the Local Plan should be amended to address the NPPF requirement for Local Plans to set larger scale developments within a 30 year vision?

### 2.2 Engagement

**2.2.1** The Local Plan Review must be prepared in accordance with the duty to cooperate, which sets a legal obligation for the council to engage with other authorities and public bodies on an ongoing basis on strategic planning issues which cross administrative boundaries. Strategic issues can include the delivery of housing, employment and infrastructure and the impact of development on areas of environmental importance.

**2.2.2** The NPPF also requires authorities to produce and publish Statements of Common Ground which set out the cross boundary issues that need to be addressed and detail the progress which has been made in dealing with them.

**2.2.3** Since the start of the Local Plan Review, we have been working closely with our neighbouring authorities and others to ensure we have a better understanding of the strategic issues and to ensure they are fully considered in the reviewed Local Plan. We have been working with the neighbouring authorities of Canterbury City Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Medway Council to jointly prepare Statements of Common Ground. These will document the matters on which the councils have engaged and the agreed position on these matters.

**2.2.4** We will continue to prepare and update relevant Statements of Common Ground as the Local Plan Review progresses and publish these on the website when available.

## 2 What has influenced the development of the Local Plan

**2.2.5** The earlier consultation that has taken place with our local communities and various stakeholders (through ‘Looking Ahead’ and the Pre Submission Draft Local Plan) have been considered when preparing this Issues and Preferred Options document. At relevant places in the document we have set out a ‘what you’ve told us so far’ section, which summarises some of the key themes that came through the consultation.

**2.2.6** In addition to this consultation, the council undertook a ‘Call for Sites’ exercise in 2017 and again in 2018. This gave landowners, developers, businesses and other stakeholders the opportunity to submit sites for housing, employment and other types of development for the council to consider. A large number of sites were submitted through this process and assessed in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The sites submitted to and assessed through the SHLAA form the starting point for identifying sites for allocation in the Local Plan.

**2.2.7** In response to the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (February 2021) a number of new sites were promoted. All new sites submitted will be assessed on a comparative basis to previously assessed sites through an updated SHLAA. If you have already submitted a site to us you do not need to submit it again.

### 2.3 Other plans and strategies

**2.3.1** The Local Plan does not sit in isolation and there are a number of other plans and strategies that influence and help inform the Local Plan.

**2.3.2** The council’s Corporate Plan sets out the high level objectives and priorities for the council. The priorities relevant to the Local Plan are:

- Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all;
- Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges; and
- Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone.

**2.3.3** Other strategies related to the economy, housing, transport, heritage and green spaces which are relevant to the Local Plan are shown in the diagram below.



## What has influenced the development of the Local Plan 2

**2.3.4** Like many other local authorities across the UK, the council has declared a climate and ecological emergency and are committed to working towards making the borough as a whole carbon neutral by 2030. The actions to deliver or support this target are contained in the [Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan](#). The Local Plan is required to make sure that development and use of land contributes towards the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change and it will have a key role to play in delivering a number of the actions identified in the Action Plan with mitigation and adaption to the climate and ecological emergency at its heart.

### 2.4 Evidence base

**2.4.1** Local Plans must be informed by evidence and over the past four years we have been preparing a number of technical studies and assessments on a wide range of topics to help us understand what new development we need, how we could plan for it and how it will be delivered.

**2.4.2** As many of the technical studies are interlinked, the evidence base should be read as a whole. Appendix 1 provides details of the evidence base that has been completed to date. The need to undertake further evidence base studies will be kept under review and the council may commission updates to some of the completed studies.

**2.4.3** All the evidence base documents are available on the [website](#)<sup>(4)</sup>. These pages will be updated as new and updated evidence is prepared and published.

### 2.5 Environmental impacts

**2.5.1** The council is required by law to assess the environmental impacts of any plan which it produces and a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA), is an important process when producing a Local Plan. The SA process makes sure that the Local Plan considers improvements in environmental, social and economic matters and minimises any potential negative effects of the Local Plan.

**2.5.2** It is also a requirement that the impacts of the Local Plan on European designated sites including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites, of which there are a number within or close to the borough, are considered through the preparation of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). An HRA was undertaken for the 2021 Pre-Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) and will be undertaken again in preparation for the next stage of the Local Plan Review.

**2.5.3** An interim SA has been undertaken on this Issues and Preferred Options document and, along with the other SA documents prepared to inform the Local Plan Review, is available on the [website](#)<sup>(5)</sup>.

#### Question 2

Do you have any comments on the interim Sustainability Appraisal ? Please explain the reasons for your comments.

Do you think any changes to the interim Sustainability Appraisal is necessary? If so, please set out these changes and the reasons why you think they are needed.

**2.5.4** These processes will continue to be undertaken at each stage of the Local Plan Review and the reports published on the website.

4 <https://swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/local-plans/local-plan-review-evidence#h2>  
5 <https://swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/local-plans/local-plan-review>

### 3 Characteristics of the borough and the key challenges to be addressed


## 3 Characteristics of the borough and the key challenges to be addressed

### 3.1 Key characteristics


**3.1.1** Swale is one of 12 districts (boroughs and cities) which make up the county of Kent. Located on the county’s northern coast, the borough sits between Medway, Maidstone, Ashford and Canterbury, around 60km from central London in one direction and 40km from the Channel tunnel in the other. The borough covers an area of 360sqm, roughly one-tenth of Kent, and is home to just under 150,000 people, approximately one-tenth of the county figure.

**3.1.2** Some of the key characteristics of the borough are illustrated below.


The quality of the landscape is of a particularly high standard with part of the Borough falling within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Swale and Medway Marshes and Estuaries are recognised as Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites and also Marine Conservation Areas. There are also two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) at Queendown Warren and Blean Complex. There are seven Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the District.




The borough has a rich heritage with nearly **2,000** listed buildings, **22** Scheduled Monuments, **50** designated conservation areas, **4** Registered Parks and Gardens and over **4,818** sites on the Kent Historic Environment Record.



There are significant health inequalities depending on where people live within the borough. Life expectancy is about **9** years lower for men and **4** years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Swale than those in the least deprived areas.




The ratio of house prices to earnings is one measure of how affordable it is to buy a property. The affordability ratio in Swale (in 2020) is **9.32** compared to a national figure of **7.8**. This means housing is largely out of reach for local first-time buyers and those on low/moderate incomes.




Swale’s demographic make-up is diverse, including a mix of affluent and less affluent areas. In general the borough is less well-off than is typical for the south-east. There are some concentrated pockets of severe socioeconomic deprivation to be found in locations across the area.



Swale’ population is growing and changing with the number of residents due to increase by **20%** over the next 20 years. The number of residents who are aged over 65 years will also increase significantly.



Swale has a low ratio between jobs and the working age population. Average workplace earnings are below those of both Kent and the south east averages.



**3.1.3** The ‘Looking Ahead’ consultation included an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the borough. Informed by responses to previous consultations, technical studies and other strategies we have reviewed and updated the ‘SWOT’ analysis.

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality environment</li> <li>• Connections to London and Europe (via road, sea, Eurostar and HS1)</li> <li>• Employment opportunities at large distribution centres such as Aldi and Morrisons and at business parks such as Kent Science Park and Eurolink</li> <li>• Horticultural fruit production, processing and storage</li> <li>• Relatively cheap land and house prices</li> <li>• Open and flexible environment for businesses to thrive</li> <li>• Strong creative and cultural activity, particularly in Faversham and rural areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low wage levels compared to the rest of the South East and deprivation within some urban areas</li> <li>• Perceived lack of ‘USP’ for Swale to the outside world</li> <li>• Dwindling employment land supply</li> <li>• Low skills levels and educational attainment in some areas</li> <li>• Poor land values and viability limits potential for high quality development and affordable housing</li> <li>• Poor access to and limited capacity in local community services, particularly health</li> </ul>

## Characteristics of the borough and the key challenges to be addressed

3

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outstanding natural environments and heritage assets</li> <li>An increasingly enterprising, engaged, skilled and volunteering sector of the population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under-performing town centres with poor retail offers, an undeveloped vibrant evening/night time economy and deteriorating streetscapes</li> <li>Increasing congestion and air quality problems, limited provision and low usage of public transport</li> <li>Underdeveloped and under exploited cultural offer</li> <li>Flood risk</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to capture footloose commercial investment</li> <li>J5 improvements, Lower Thames Crossing, increased capacity, access to new markets, shorter journey times</li> <li>Network Rail's long-term proposed direct rail link from Faversham to Ashford</li> <li>Potential for new infrastructure and community facilities with new housing</li> <li>Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration</li> <li>Available land for low-carbon power sources (e.g. solar, wind, battery storage)</li> <li>Special natural and built environments which can support the economy, health and well-being</li> <li>Migration of people from London expanding Swale's skills profile and bringing more economically active people into Swale</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing impacts of Climate Change</li> <li>Air quality impacts of growth</li> <li>Migration of people from London could increase competition for houses and jobs</li> <li>Lower Thames Crossing; potential increased traffic through Swale which could impact on transport capacity and air quality</li> <li>Potential for developers to control development of land in key new locations that could work against the maximisation of land values and therefore, community benefits</li> <li>Poorly managed housing growth leading to transport, social infrastructure and environmental pressures</li> <li>Viability problems in some locations, with a risk of a cycle of deprivation in some areas and a widening gulf of affordability for new housing</li> <li>Increasing automation impacting upon Swale's manufacturing and warehouse sectors</li> <li>Labour supply changes in key Swale sectors following UK departure from the EU</li> <li>Ageing population reducing percentage of local people of working-age, increasing demands on community services</li> </ul>

Table 3.1.1 SWOT Analysis

### 3.2 Key issues and challenges

**3.2.1** From this 'SWOT' analysis we have been able to identify the key challenges and opportunities which we think the Local Plan Review should address. These are listed below and have been used to develop our ideas on what the vision should include, the objectives and the direction for policies.

- Meeting the strategic housing and employment needs of the borough;
- Delivering a carbon zero borough by 2030;
- Providing the right types of homes to ensure housing choice to meet the needs of the community, including the delivery of affordable housing;
- Supporting the needs of the local economy so that it can continue to be competitive, including the creation of quality local jobs and responding to longer term economic impacts brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Delivering the infrastructure requirements needed to support growth and create high quality places;
- Delivering sustainable growth while conserving and enhancing our natural, built and heritage assets;
- Managing changes in our town centres so that they remain vital, competitive and attractive as places to meet, live, work and enjoy;
- Improving health and wellbeing of residents;
- Embedding sustainable and active travel options and behaviour into our existing and new developments to improve air quality, reduce traffic accidents, reduce congestion and improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

## 3 Characteristics of the borough and the key challenges to be addressed

### Question 3

Do you agree with the key issues and challenges that we have identified?

If not, what other issues do you think need to be considered further and addressed by the Local Plan Review.

## 4 Vision and Objectives

**4.0.1** Reviewing the Local Plan provides an opportunity to look afresh at what sort of place we want the borough to be in the future.

**4.0.2** The revised NPPF states that Local Plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area, so the council must ensure that the new vision is in accordance with this.

**4.0.3** The development of the Vision and Objectives:

- has been shaped by our desire to address the challenges we face as a borough: improving the health and wellbeing of our communities, increasing opportunities for homes and jobs, protecting and enhancing our natural and built assets and balancing this against the need to meet our future development needs while responding to climate change;
- responds to previous public consultations;
- takes account of other relevant Swale plans and strategies, including the Corporate Plan;
- reflects the government's principles of sustainable development to ensure development and growth
- helps to maintain the required levels of employment and housing opportunities that support communities whilst ensuring the prudent use of natural resources and protecting and enhancing natural and build environment assets; and
- takes account of the extensive research and technical studies (our evidence base) that has been compiled to help us understand the needs of the area and the opportunities and constraints that exist, including the Sustainability Appraisal.

### What you've told us so far

**4.0.4** A number of comments were supportive of the vision as originally drafted (in Looking Ahead), especially the environmental elements. A wide range of specific issues were suggested that could be added to the Vision. However, as the Vision is intended to be a broad overarching statement it was considered it would be more appropriate for the strategic objectives and policies to address the identified issues.

**4.0.5** The Vision and Objectives in the Pre-Submission Local Plan (February 2021) were refined to more closely reflect local aspirations and there was support for the recognition in the Vision of the significance of the borough's heritage and the commitment to addressing climate change. Some comments felt, however, that the Vision could be even more ambitious, particularly with reference to the environment, health and wellbeing and transport. Some comments expressed a view that the strategic objectives were somewhat generic and repetitive of national policy rather than being specific to Swale. Whilst supportive of the Vision and Objectives, some comments felt that the commitment to deliver it was not reflected in the rest of the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

## 4.1 The Vision for Swale

**4.1.1** The Vision should be unique, aspirational but realistic. The proposed Vision for the Local Plan Review is as follows:

### Draft Vision

Generally, new development will have come forward to meet local needs and contributed to supporting low/zero carbon and renewable energy initiatives, enhanced the natural environment through biodiversity net gain, ensured quality design and place making which has capitalised on the borough's extensive natural heritage assets in a way that supports the health and wellbeing of our communities.

At Sittingbourne, a re-focussed town centre aimed at securing a vital and viable retail heart supported by leisure and dining opportunities, whilst enabling high density residential and community activity

## 4 Vision and Objectives

and recognising its heritage assets. This has been achieved by wider regeneration, public realm improvements, and reconfigured and improved sustainable and active transport connections at and around the town.

At Faversham, a thriving market town and heritage destination that has successfully managed 21st century demands. It has been achieved by enabling sympathetic and symbiotic growth whilst reducing congestion and air quality issues along the A2 over the period to 2038 and beyond.

At Sheerness, Minster and Queenborough, the promotion of coastal and port rejuvenation making most use of its heritage assets whilst supporting the needs of the local communities.

At our rural and maritime communities, enable development to maintain and improve local services to cater for the local daily needs of its residents and to support vibrant and healthy communities whilst maintaining the quality of the local countryside environments in which they are set and protecting their heritage.

### Question 4

Do you agree this is the right Vision for the borough?

If not, please explain what changes you would like to see made to the Vision and why.

## 4.2 Objectives

**4.2.1** The following strategic objectives outline what will need to be achieved to deliver the proposed Vision and address the key issues which have been identified. These objectives underpin the spatial strategy, policies and proposals which will be included in the reviewed Local Plan.

### Draft Objectives

1. To provide for homes and jobs that are best suited to meet identified local needs;
2. To support and sustain communities across the borough, big and small, by planning to meet identified needs, including needs for community facilities and infrastructure;
3. To protect and manage our resources to address climate change through delivering sustainable growth that supports urban and rural economies and makes the best use of infrastructure;
4. To locate development in the least constrained parts of the borough in reasonable proximity to transport hubs;
5. To provide a range of housing developments across the Borough that deliver a range of housing sizes and types to meet the needs of young people, families and older people;
6. To deliver a level of investment and growth at key locations to facilitate significant improvements to support infrastructure e.g. schools, healthcare and highways and sustainable and active travel options for the benefit of local communities;
7. To focus development on the contribution that larger sites can deliver in a proportionate way to meet wider plan objectives and ensure delivery during the plan period and beyond.



**Question 5**

Do the draft Objectives support the Vision and set appropriate goals for the Local Plan?

Please give your reasons, identifying the objectives that you support or objectives that you oppose explaining any changes you would like to see and why.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

### 5 Policy issues and preferred options

#### 5.1 Spatial strategy

##### Housing requirement and supply

**5.1.1** The Local Plan will include a housing requirement figure and a key challenge for the Local Plan is delivering this amount of housing in the most sustainable locations. This is discussed further in the section on the Development Strategy.

**5.1.2** The Government's 'Standard Method' calculates our minimum housing need figure based on population projections and affordability. Using the latest published housing affordability data<sup>(6)</sup> provides a minimum housing need figure of 1,048 dwellings per annum, which is equivalent to 16,768 dwellings over the plan period (to 2038). It should be noted that this figure is not fixed until the Local Plan is submitted for examination and the Local Plan will need to be sufficiently flexible to deal with changing circumstances prior to submission.

**5.1.3** The introduction of a standard method for assessing housing needs for planning purposes was intended to shift time, resources and debate at examination away from the 'numbers' question and towards the 'how' and 'where' of building new homes. It is then for the plan-making process to test whether there are reasons why it may be appropriate to plan for higher levels of housing provision, or that there are significant strategic constraints to development which justify a lower level of provision.

**5.1.4** Councils can only deviate from the 'standard method' for calculating housing need if they can demonstrate there are exceptional circumstances justifying it. As part of the early evidence gathering, the council commissioned specialist consultants to assess whether or not there was a case to justify a deviation from the standard method. The evidence concluded there was no justification for taking a different approach.

**5.1.5** The "exceptional circumstances" test in the NPPF is a relatively high bar and would require the council to demonstrate (based on locally-specific evidence) that there is something wrong or inappropriate with the standard method calculation for the borough – a reason as to why it is necessary to move away from the "standard method" formula; and then to put forward a credible alternative calculation of what its needs would be, which would withstand scrutiny through the examination process.

**5.1.6** If we are unable to justify an alternative approach, then there is a very real risk that the Local Plan would be found unsound at examination if we do not plan for the amount of housing need identified by the standard method approach.

**5.1.7** Another issue is the ability of the borough to deliver the quantum of development needed. The housing need that is identified must be planned for unless there is compelling evidence that sets out why this cannot be done. The evidence could include information and analysis on things like environmental capacity, on market capacity and on infrastructure capacity. Although these are areas of concern for the borough, the evidence does not conclude that the housing needs cannot be met. Nevertheless, the situation could change as evidence is updated and refreshed throughout the local plan preparation process.

**5.1.8** Should the council have a case to support not being able to meet its full need, it would need to negotiate unmet need being delivered in other areas in order to secure a sound local plan.

**5.1.9** Without an up-to-date plan in place and certainty of future housing supply, we would be at serious risk of being inundated by speculative planning applications for housing across the borough. This may lead to a situation where we are 'planning by appeal', this is where applicants appeal against any refusal of planning permission and effectively have their proposals considered by a Planning Inspector. This means we would lose the ability to control and plan positively for the future growth of the borough, development

would be piecemeal and without the coordination of the appropriate level of supporting infrastructure provision and the benefits associated with the Local Plan Review, such as higher environmental standards would not be delivered.

**5.1.10** Planning for a lower amount of housing would also mean that the borough's identified affordable housing need would not be provided for in full.

**5.1.11** If the Inspector did not accept our position on exceptional circumstances and found the Local Plan unsound, then we would still be required to produce a Local Plan using the Standard Method to calculate our housing need.

### Question 6

Do you think that the council should attempt to justify not complying with the Government's Standard Method for calculating the borough's housing need figure (due to the constraints of the Swale, such as the natural environment, flood risk, infrastructure), which means that the council would not fully meet the housing target? Please explain why and say what you believe the "exceptional circumstances" would be for Swale not to meet the figure.

### Question 7

Do you believe that if we do not fully meet our target, we should consider asking our neighbours to provide for our unmet development needs? If so, what reasons would the council give, who would we ask and why would they be well placed to help? Likewise, if asked by a neighbouring council to consider meeting their unmet development needs, what should be our response and why?

**5.1.12** We have considered whether there are any circumstances to justify the Local Plan providing for a higher housing requirement, for example to help deliver affordable homes or to accommodate unmet need from neighbouring authorities. Our evidence has concluded that the identified affordable housing need will be addressed by the dwelling growth identified by the Standard Method and no adjustment is required. Through ongoing engagement with our neighbouring local authorities there is agreement that there is no unmet housing need to be accommodated, with each authority meeting their need within their own area. The housing requirement figure to be provided for through the Local Plan, therefore, is 1,048 dwellings per annum.

**5.1.13** However, it is important to note that we already have commitments (sites with planning permission)<sup>(7)</sup> and these will contribute to meeting the housing requirement particularly in the early years of the plan period. Similarly, there are a number of sites allocated in the current Local Plan which have not yet been developed and are either still in the planning process or are being built out. We have reviewed these allocations and Appendix 2 identifies those allocations that will be rolled forward and contribute to meeting the housing requirement.

### Question 8

Do you agree that the allocations listed in Appendix 2 should be rolled forward into the reviewed Local Plan? If not, please explain why you think this, supporting your response with reference to any evidence.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

### Windfalls

**5.1.14** The NPPF enables local authorities to make an allowance for windfall sites as part of the housing supply where there is compelling evidence they will provide a reliable source of supply, with any allowance being realistic having regard to historic windfall delivery and expected future trends. The Pre-Submission Local Plan (February 2021) included a windfall allowance of 130 dwellings per annum.

**5.1.15** We have recently completed a review of past trends and expected future delivery of windfall sites in the borough. It found that the principle of including a windfall allowance of 250 dwellings per annum could be justified.

### Question 9

Do you agree with the proposed windfall allowance rate of 250 dwellings per annum? If not, what evidence do you have to support a different windfall allowance rate.

### Residual Housing Requirement

**5.1.16** The table below shows both the number of dwellings required and how many dwellings already planned for and committed are expected to be delivered between the start of the plan period and 2038.

Residual Housing Requirement	
Housing requirement (1,048 dwellings per annum)	16,768
Housing supply	
• <i>Commitments (large and small sites with planning permission and yet to start or under construction as at 1 April 2021)</i>	5,087
• <i>Allocations rolled forward from Bearing Fruits</i>	2,968
• <i>Allocations to be made through Neighbourhood Plans<sup>(1)</sup></i>	210
• <i>Windfall allowance (250 dwellings per annum over 11 years)</i>	2,750
Housing supply sub-total	11,015
Residual housing requirement to be found	5,753

1. Faversham Neighbourhood Plan and Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan

**5.1.17** This shows that the Local Plan will need to allocate sufficient sites to deliver at least 5,753 dwellings over the plan period to deliver the housing requirement.

**5.1.18** However, we will also need to provide a buffer to provide choice and flexibility to the market in the event some sites fail to come forward as anticipated or are delivered with reduced yields. We are proposing a buffer of 5%. This would take the total amount of housing to be allocated to **6,100 dwellings**.

### *Settlement Hierarchy*

**5.1.19** Determining the development strategy is helped by our understanding of the roles and functions of the towns and villages in the borough.

**5.1.20** The settlement hierarchy plays an important role in identifying sustainable locations for development and is a way of categorising the settlements in Swale and grouping together those that have similar characteristics.

**5.1.21** At the top of the hierarchy are the larger settlements that have the best infrastructure in terms of facilities and services and are the most accessible by sustainable forms of travel. The smaller settlements with the least facilities, services and accessibility to public transport will be towards the bottom of the hierarchy.

**5.1.22** The settlement hierarchy does not in itself determine the appropriate level of growth a particular settlement can support but does seek to identify the most sustainable places where growth could be directed.

**5.1.23** The [Settlement Hierarchy Study \(August 2020\)](#) reviewed the settlement hierarchy in the adopted Local Plan through an update of the availability of services and facilities and accessibility of the borough's settlements.

**5.1.24** As well as the main towns, Swale has a number of thriving rural settlements with a limited range of facilities or services that could provide small scale growth. Growth at rural settlements would need to be subject to certain criteria taking into consideration the need to balance development impacts with the need to support and sustain these rural villages. Criteria could include reference to scale, environmental impacts and landscaping.

**5.1.25** Parish and town councils could bring forward proposals for development in their areas through a neighbourhood plan or the local plan could allocate small sites in areas close to villages with some services and facilities to support and sustain rural communities.

### **Question 10**

Do you agree that the strategy for allocating future development needs in the borough should include small scale development at thriving villages? If not, please explain why you think this?

### **Development Strategy Options**

**5.1.26** The national agenda is to bring forward a 'step change' in housing growth. There is a wider need to ensure that the houses we provide are high quality and available to everyone.

**5.1.27** Our high-quality environment makes Swale an attractive place to live and work, and is why many people and businesses want to move here. There is, however, a need to continue to protect the character of Swale, which makes the area a desirable place to move to.

**5.1.28** Ongoing population growth is likely to continue to place increasing pressure on local, neighbourhood and strategic level services and facilities, and there is a need to ensure that these can respond to these changing demands.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

**5.1.29** The amount of brownfield land in Swale is relatively limited, but there is still a need to prioritise this land for development where possible.

**5.1.30** When formulating our development options, we have looked at a variety of sources of information. These include responses made to both the previous regulation 18 and 19 consultations, the technical evidence studies that we have undertaken and the national planning policy guidance (NPPF.)

### What you've told us so far

#### Regulation 19 Consultation Responses

**5.1.31** The spatial strategy received many objections, particularly relating to:

1. The comparatively small housing number allocated to Sittingbourne;
2. The small number of large allocations, with more consideration of smaller developments within or on the edges of other (smaller) settlements;
3. Landowners and developers have suggested several alternative sites to help deliver the development target;
4. The general public and statutory consultees are concerned about the amount of development proposed on greenfield land, particularly agricultural land and consider this runs contrary to the plans objectives of using brownfield land first;
5. A wide range of respondents consider that the strategy does not follow the settlement hierarchy and misses an opportunity posed by locations close to transport corridors and higher tier settlements; and
6. In terms of employment responses were mostly focused on the uncertainty around Covid-19 and the impact upon future working patterns and office space requirements and giving more support to expanding existing employment locations.

#### 'Looking Ahead' (Regulation 18) Consultation Responses

1. Responses were more about housing numbers rather than locations of development;
2. General concerns were raised about the potential scale and location of growth and its impact upon a wide range of infrastructure and the environment. These parties believed that growth has gone too far and that the social and environmental implications, particularly for infrastructure/services (especially health and roads) and, notably, food production and wildlife, are unacceptable. If development is to be contemplated, then other parts of the borough are generally suggested from the location of the commentator; and
3. Most respondents felt that Swale's new employment sites should be located in Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheppey, either at existing employment locations or near good transport networks.

#### What the technical evidence tells us in relation to the spatial strategy

Evidence	Key Findings	Implications for the Development Strategy
Employment Land Review	41ha of additional B2/B8  15ha of additional B1 No specific implications for the development strategy as location of new employment land would be met through policy and specific allocations that consider existing employment sites	No specific implications for the development strategy as location of new employment land would be met through policy and specific allocations that consider existing employment sites.

## Policy issues and preferred options

5

Evidence	Key Findings	Implications for the Development Strategy
GTAA	51 additional pitches for Travellers and 1 additional Travelling Show Person plot.	No specific implications for the development strategy as these needs would be met through policy and/or specific allocations regardless of the preferred option.
Local Landscape Designation Review	10 Areas of High Landscape Value recommended	Identifies areas of the borough with high landscape value. Development in these areas will have a greater impact on landscape character than other parts of the borough not covered by this or national level designations.
Landscape Sensitivity Study	Identifies the sites on the periphery of urban centres where harm to the landscape character is most significant. Harm would be most significant to the south east of Sittingbourne, to the south of Sheerness, Minster and Halfway and to the west and north of Faversham	This evidence supports a strategy that would see development allocated to the east and south of Faversham's settlement confines and to the west and east of Sittingbourne.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	There are enough sites to meet the development needs of the borough for the local plan review plan period.	The range and availability of sites is generally sufficient to support any of the five options although some sites that are not 'suitable and deliverable' may need to be considered. This will only be appropriate where constraints can be mitigated against and can be justified and explained through the site selection process.
Local Housing Needs Assessment (standard method)	Local plan review housing number is not 'fixed' until the plan is submitted. For this reason, a range was prepared based on different scenarios. The number is 1,048 per annum but this will need to be updated prior to submission of the local plan review.	Any development strategy must be able to deliver, as a minimum, approximately 10,374 dwellings.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	The tenure split is 72.8% market housing, 18% affordable rent; 4.3% shared ownership; 4.9% help to buy/starter homes.  Size profile: greatest demand in market housing for 3 bed	No specific implications for the development strategy as these needs would be met through policy and/or specific allocations regardless of the preferred option.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

Evidence	Key Findings	Implications for the Development Strategy
	<p>properties, for HtB/Starter Homes the demand is reasonably level with 3 bed and 2 bed properties, then 4+ beds. Affordable rent demand is highest for 3 bed properties, then 1 bed, 4+ be and then 2 bed properties.</p> <p>Specialist dwellings for older persons need is for 516 additional units of sheltered housing required.</p> <p>An additional 305 registered care spaces (nursing and residential care) will be needed.</p>	
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA - Level 1)	Assessment and mapping of all sources of flooding across the borough, including the impact of climate change.	<p>The options have been prepared with this information in mind, in that land at risk of flooding is avoided unless there are over-riding benefits for sustainability and any risks can be mitigated.</p> <p>The SFRA informed the Sequential Test and is the basis for the Level 2 SFRA currently in preparation.</p>
Sequential Test	Assessment of the level of flood risk experienced by the land promoted for consideration as development land.	The options have been prepared with these results in mind, and any land being considered with a higher flood risk is now going through a Level 2 SFRA.
Retail & Leisure Needs Assessment	<p>Sittingbourne: 1,900 sq. m. of convenience goods floorspace; between 12,300 and 22,600 sq. m. comparison goods floorspace.</p> <p>Faversham: 2,700 – 4,700 sq. m. comparison goods floorspace only. Sheerness: 1,200 sq. m. convenience floorspace and between 4,500 and 7,900 sq. m. of comparison goods floorspace.</p> <p>Between 7 and 9 new gyms across the borough.</p>	No specific implications for the development strategy as these needs would be met through policy and/or specific allocations regardless of the preferred option.



## Policy issues and preferred options 5

Evidence	Key Findings	Implications for the Development Strategy
Settlement Hierarchy Study	Reviews the existing settlement hierarchy by auditing the current provision of services and facilities in the borough's settlements and recommending whether hierarchy should be retained or re-structured.	The options have been prepared with this information in mind with the aim of placing larger-scale development at higher tier settlements where possible. Where this has not been possible, consideration is given to making other locations more sustainable.
Transport modelling	No show-stoppers long term but significant mitigation required along with sustainable transport measures (modal shift) to deliver the required development needs.	M2 junction 7 capacity constraints are likely to hinder short term delivery in the east of the borough during the early years of the local plan review regardless of preferred option.
Air Quality modelling	Modelled impact of 776 and 1054 new dwellings per annum to 2037. Neither option would result in exceedances of statutory objectives though in both options there would be a mix of positive and negative impacts. However negative impacts are so small as to be considered insignificant.	No specific implications for the development strategy at this stage. More modelling may be needed going forward.
Assessment of New Settlements submission sites (Strategic Development Option sites)	Each of the four settlements could deliver some of the borough's development needs as part of the strategic options although the site at North Street, Sheldwich would have a significant impact on the setting of the AONB.	No specific implications for the development strategy although one or more of these Strategic proposals would assist with the delivery of the borough's development needs and help to meet the local plan review objectives, delivering significant infrastructure investment.
Open Space Assessment Study	Additional open space should be sought in line with local standards that are derived from the council's Open Space Strategy.	No specific implications for the development strategy as these needs would be met through policy and/or specific allocations regardless of the preferred option.
GBI Strategy	Existing Green and Blue Infrastructure needs to be protected and enhanced and new provision needs to be provided as part of the planning process.	No specific implications for the development strategy as these needs would be met through policy and/or specific allocations regardless of the preferred option.
Biodiversity Baseline Report	Records the borough's biodiversity baseline and sets out how requirements of the Environment Bill could be incorporated into new policy.	The options have been prepared with this information in mind to avoid the most biodiverse locations, or where this has not been possible, to highlight the

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

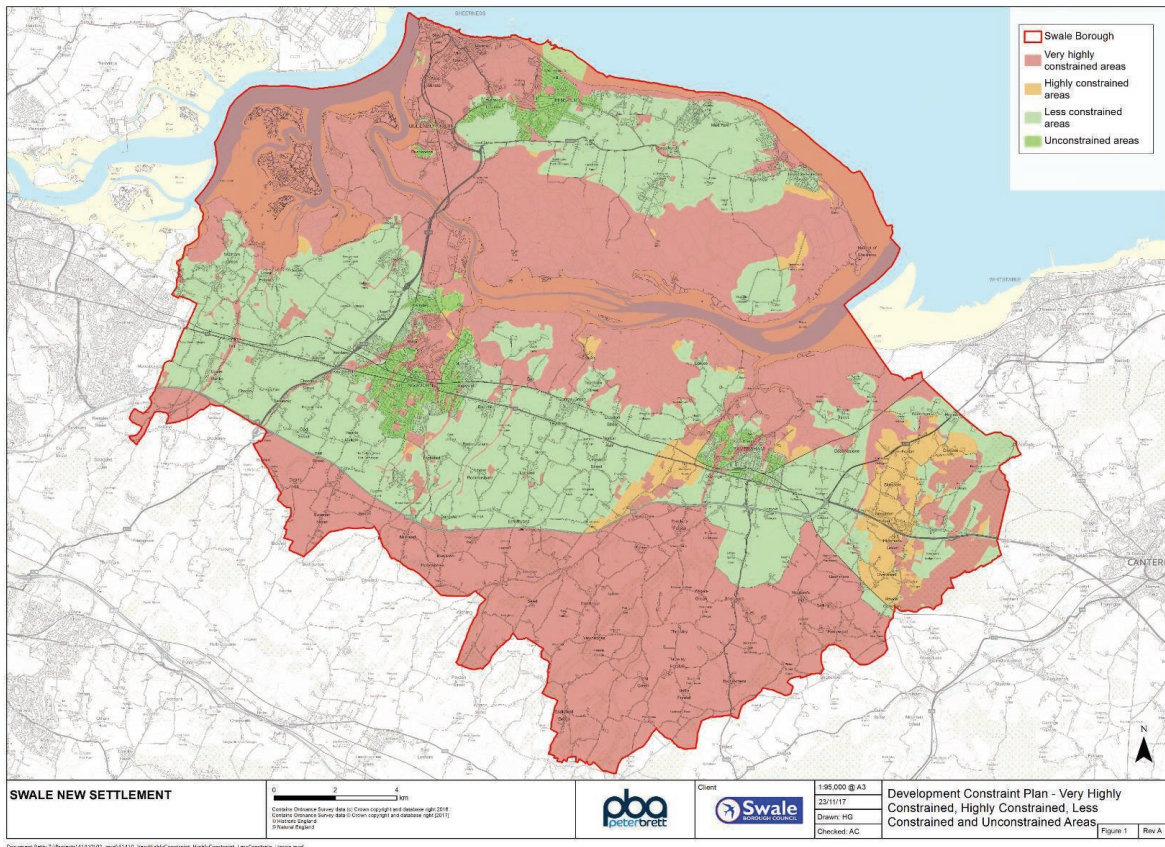
Evidence	Key Findings	Implications for the Development Strategy
		need to consider whether appropriate mitigation can be achieved.
Local Green Space Designations	Review of existing Local Green Space designations and assessment of potential new designations.	The options have been prepared with this information in mind to avoid Local Green Space designations, or provide justification for their removal.
Viability Study	There is viability across all areas of Swale, remaining stronger at Faversham and at the eastern end of the borough.	In terms of viability, the eastern end of the borough is stronger making it a more attractive option for delivery although development in other parts of the borough is also viable.

Table 5.1.1 Completed Technical Evidence

**5.1.32** The government expects the council to allocate enough land to meet its future development needs for the Local Plan Review period and to think about where development would go beyond that. The Local Plan Review needs to contain an overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development.

**5.1.33** Given the geographical characteristics of the borough and various constraints around infrastructure, difficult choices will need to be made about where development land should be allocated. As stated earlier, around 60% of the borough is covered by high-level constraints. The remaining 40% of the borough includes the fruit belt and land with local landscape designations and some of this land is 'best and most versatile' agricultural land. Additionally, the A2 corridor presents issues around traffic congestion and air quality.

**5.1.34** The map below shows that there are limited opportunities to allocate development on unconstrained land and that some difficult choices will need to be made noting that there are other factors at play such as services, facilities and infrastructure.



Picture 5.1.1

**5.1.35** Any development strategy will need to make sure it can deliver sustainable growth that supports and sustains communities across the borough by planning to meet identified needs, including needs for housing, employment, community facilities and infrastructure.

**5.1.36** The borough's development needs should be met:

1. On brownfield sites in sustainable locations/within settlement confines
2. On land at low risk of flooding within existing settlements; and
3. On land with the least environmental or amenity value.

**5.1.37** The development strategy for the Local Plan Review will achieve a future for the borough where people have a desire and ability to live locally because of the quality of life and opportunities available. It should provide a positive policy response to the evidence that can sustainably meet the plan objectives in a way that is shaped by the underpinning principles set out above.

**5.1.38** In determining what would make a sustainable and deliverable strategy for the Local Plan Review, it is important to consider the mix as well as the location of potential development sites. A strategy dominated by small to medium sized sites may not generate the critical mass required for significant improvements to infrastructure such as schools, health care, highways and sustainable transport measures which could benefit both existing and new residents. A strategy dominated by a few larger sites would bring into question whether the short to medium term housing needs of the borough would be adequately addressed given the long lead in times for significant delivery to come forward, the impact this could have on meeting shorter term five year housing land supply requirements. A supply of small/medium sites would also need to be allocated to maintain the rolling five year housing land supply target and meet the requirement for 10% or more of our housing need to be met from small sites of less than 1ha.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

**5.1.39** Having regard to the issues set out above and taking account of the evidence base to date, the council has considered possible different ways that future development could be delivered. In accordance with the NPPF, the starting point is to meet the identified level of development needs in full, unless there are good planning reasons why this is not sustainable; for example, because of development constraints.

**5.1.40** In the adopted local plan, Bearing Fruits, an existing supply of allocated sites has been confirmed, which will make a contribution to accommodating the level of growth identified. Recognising the increased level of growth, however, the Local Plan Review will need to set out a revised development strategy for the borough and identify sufficient additional land to seek to accommodate the new growth.

**5.1.41** The council will continue to thoroughly examine whether it is able to meet the full level of identified development needs taking account of a range of factors, such as infrastructure availability and capacity and the potential impact on the environment and heritage assets.

**5.1.42** The council has identified five potential development options across a spectrum of opportunities to meet the development needs within Swale. It should be noted that these options are not necessarily distinct from one another and a combination of elements from each of the options can be put together to make an alternative strategy should the council wish to do so. Of course, our final development option could involve a hybrid involving two or more of the five possible development options discussed below. For example, use of the dispersed rural growth element might not be able to deliver adequate numbers of new homes, but could support another alternative to both help certain rural communities and deliver housing more quickly from smaller sites.

**5.1.43** A sustainability appraisal has been carried out for each of the five potential development options and is presented in the Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanies this document.

**5.1.44** The land and sites that would be needed under each of the potential development options has been identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). These sites have not been decided upon at this stage and further detailed assessments of sites drawn to the attention of the council during the recent Reg 19 consultation and any that are submitted through this stage of consultation will take place and will be published in due course as part of updating the SHLAA as the Local Plan Review progresses.

**5.1.45** The development planned over the plan period will require the delivery of infrastructure and services, including education, health and utilities at the right time in order to support that growth. We have been working with infrastructure and service providers to assess the impact on infrastructure from delivering the homes and employment opportunities needed and what new infrastructure will be required to ensure that needs are met. This has indicated that additional infrastructure and services will be needed but the proposed scale of growth is unlikely to result in severe impacts that cannot be mitigated.

**5.1.46** The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will bring together details of the infrastructure needed to support the delivery of the Local Plan. The IDP identifies, where known, how and when this infrastructure might be delivered, who will lead on delivery and a broad indication of timing, costs and funding mechanisms. It is a 'living document' and will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. We published an [IDP](#) to accompany the Pre-Submission Local Plan (February 2021). We will continue to work closely, as the Local Plan Review progresses, with infrastructure and service providers to understand the improvements to existing and new infrastructure that will be required, when it needs to be in place and how it will be funded. This will inform the preparation of an updated IDP to be published alongside the next Pre-Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) in 2022.

**5.1.47** The council has also published an [Infrastructure Funding Statement \(IFS\)](#). This reports on investment in infrastructure across the borough through the use of developer contributions received, both in the preceding financial year and that which is planned to take place in the short term. The IFS is published on an annual basis.

### Local Plan Review Development Options

The council has identified five broad development options. In summary, these are:

1. Business as usual (development focused on extensions to main settlements with a focus on the Thames Gateway area.)
2. More even distribution of the additional development requirements across the borough's main urban centres and rural areas.
3. More even distribution of the final requirements across the main urban centres (when combined with allocations in the current local plan, Bearing Fruits.)
4. More of the overall development requirements at the eastern end of the borough.
5. Focus our development requirements on Strategic Development Sites and/or urban extensions primarily located within existing rural areas.

Although five possible options are presented within this consultation document, it could be that a combination of two or more of the options presented will form the final preferred strategy to meet the identified growth within the new Local Plan.

(Please note that the options are presented in no particular order.)

**5.1.48** The maps on the following pages illustrate the 5 development options and broad locations that the Council could consider for new development, shown with red pins. The maps don't include all of the small potential allocations and the pins do not specify the scale of development which could take place.

#### Option 1: Business as usual - Growth focused on extensions to main settlements with a focus on the Thames Gateway area in the west of the borough

**5.1.49** Historically, new development has been focused at the borough's principal settlement of Sittingbourne as it has the broadest range and quantity of services and facilities. In Bearing Fruits, approximately 40% of housing allocations are in and around Sittingbourne with 15.75% in Faversham and 25% in the West Sheppey Triangle. The remaining 10.75% is distributed across the Rural Service Centres at Boughton, Teynham, Newington, Iwade, Eastchurch and Leysdown.

**5.1.50** SHLAA sites that directly adjoin the built up boundary of Sittingbourne itself fall within the surrounding rural parishes at Borden, Tunstall, Highsted and Rodmersham and at Bapchild and Tonge. There are a significant number of sites to the west of the A249 at Bobbing but this is not considered part of Sittingbourne town given the physical separation of the A249 which acts as a barrier. Specific sites would need to be able to deliver in the region of 3,000 dwellings around Sittingbourne.

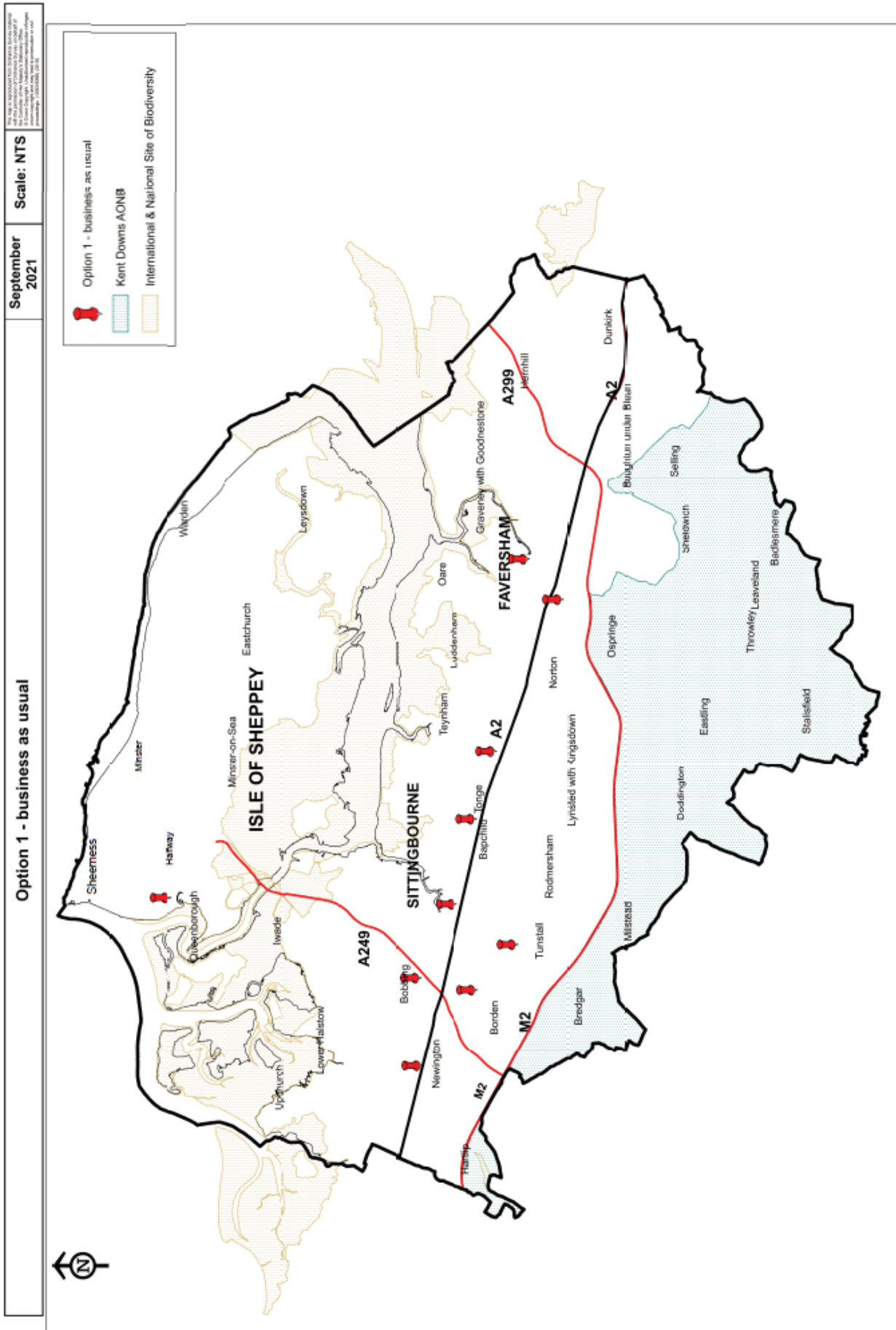
**5.1.51** There is greater abundance of sites available in and around Faversham to the tune of approximately 6,000 dwellings and again they fall within the surrounding rural parishes of Boughton Under Blean, Graveney, Selling, Sheldwich, Ospringe and Oare. There are sufficient sites to allocate additional development in this location in line with a 'business as usual' development strategy. Approximately 1,250 dwellings would need to be allocated at Faversham under this option.

**5.1.52** For the West Sheppey Triangle, the potential is more limited. Of the sites available, a significant number fall within land at high or medium risk of flooding but are also within or adjacent to the built-up boundary. Approximately 1,730 dwellings would need to be allocated in this broad location and identified sites could yield approximately 2,200 dwellings on the basis that the site constraints can be addressed.

**5.1.53** Sites in and around the Village Service Centres (Boughton, Eastchurch, Iwade, Leysdown, Newington and Teynham) can comfortably meet the requirement under this option as up to 1,400 dwellings could be accommodated across these areas.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

**5.1.54** This option could deliver the quantum of development needed using a combination of the broad locations identified by the red pins.



Picture 5.1.2

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

### Question 11

Do you agree that the broad locations shown above will help to deliver this development option? If not, why not?

#### 5.1.55 The potential advantages of this option are:

- It can accommodate the quantum of development required with enough SHLAA sites being available.;
- It enables the spread of development across all of the major urban centres, taking advantage of their existing employment opportunities;
- It would promote sustainable development in the primary settlement where the main services and facilities and sustainable/active transport options are located;
- The solutions to the existing infrastructure issues are now coming forward (M2 junction 5 and capacity issues on the A249) which opens Sittingbourne and the Isle of Sheppey back up for development; and
- This should support local infrastructure investment that will increase capacity for existing communities.

#### 5.1.56 The potential disadvantages of this option are:

- It would be achieved by major further outward urban expansion where existing traffic and air quality problems would need to be mitigated but this would provide opportunities for sustainable/active travel improvements;
- Additionally, it would result in the erosion of open unspoilt countryside through the dilution of the separation, and identity, between Sittingbourne and the surrounding rural settlements.
- This approach would not be the most effective option for securing infrastructure improvements because the quantum of development on the individual sites does not lend itself to a more strategic approach to infrastructure provision. However, this would be true of all of the options other than option 5; and
- There are also concerns about the capacity of the market to support delivery of further significant growth in this area given that several strategic sites are due to start building out now that the M2 J5 improvements have been secured.

### Question 12

Do you agree with the potential advantages and disadvantages listed above for this development option? Can you think of any others that you would add?

**5.1.57** Overall, this is a potentially deliverable option that could provide for the future development needs of the borough, although it could further dilute the housing market particularly within the Sittingbourne area which has recently seen significant housing development with planning permissions coming on stream over the next few years. This option also presents limited opportunities to advantage the wider community through further significant infrastructure investment as these are already in the pipeline (M2 Junction 5 and the A249 improvements.)

#### **Option 2: More even distribution of the additional development requirements across the borough's main urban centres and rural areas**

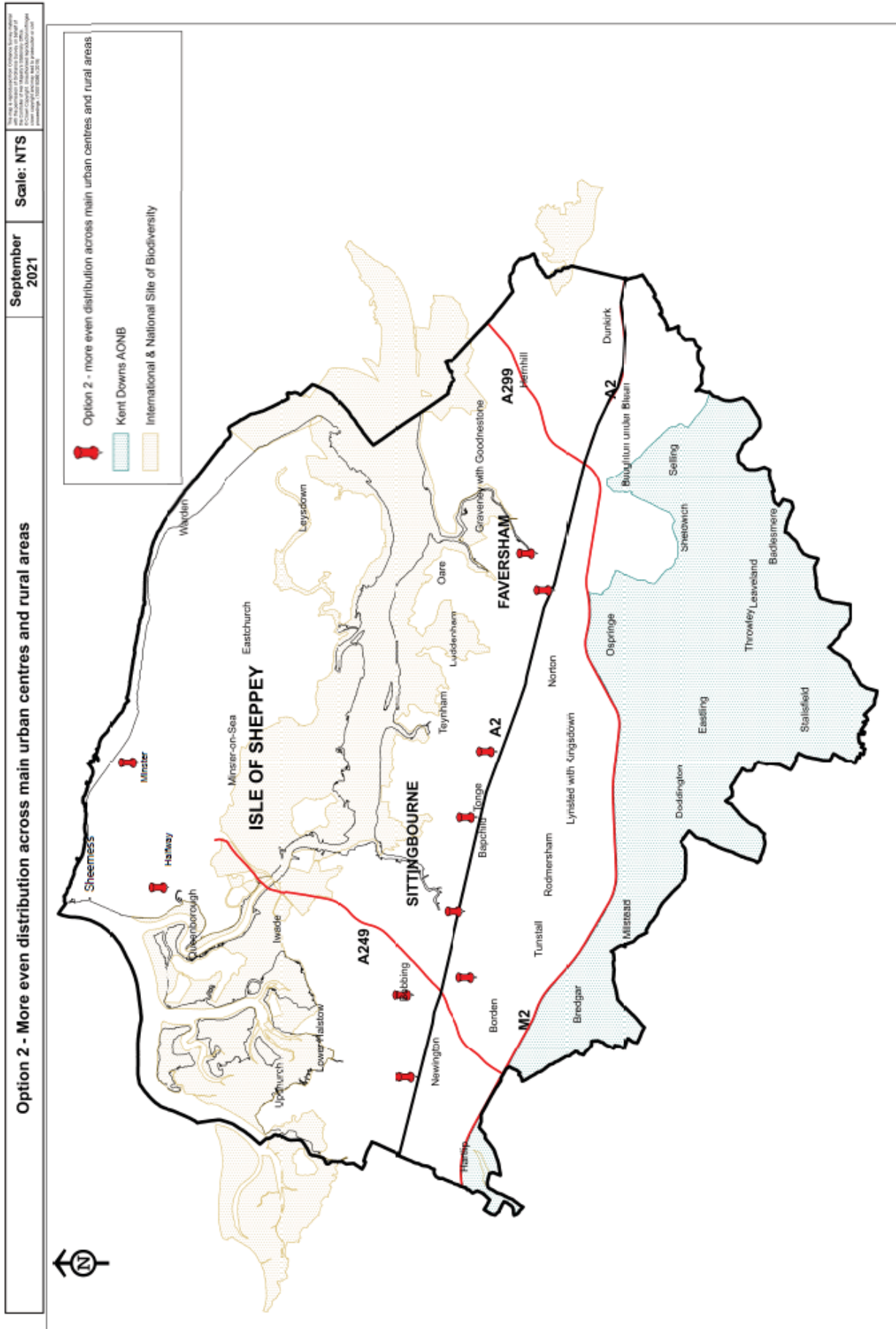
**5.1.58** This development option would see a more even distribution of the additional housing numbers across Sittingbourne, Faversham and the Isle of Sheppey and the rural areas. There are enough available SHLAA sites on Sheppey and in the rural areas to meet the numbers needed under this scenario and there is a reasonable range of sites. Faversham also has the quantum of sites to accommodate the level of development required and provide some choice around the sites that could be allocated without requiring the SE Faversham Duchy of Cornwall proposal, if the majority of sites all around Faversham come forward.



With 850 dwellings expected to come forward through regeneration of Sittingbourne town centre, sites to accommodate circa 1,275 would still need to be identified and could only be done so if sites on the edge of the settlement were included.

**5.1.59** This option could deliver the quantum of development needed using a combination of the broad locations identified by the red pins.

5 Policy issues and preferred options



Picture 5.1.3

**Question 13**

Do you agree that the broad locations shown above will help to deliver this development option? If not, why not?

**5.1.60** The potential advantages of this option are:

- This option can accommodate the quantum of development required;
- Some rebalancing of the distribution of development from that agreed through Bearing Fruits;
- Focusses a higher proportion of development within more viable/affluent areas that should in turn deliver a higher proportion of affordable housing;
- As there is more focus on the more viable, eastern part of the borough, this option would result in greater certainty over the delivery of housing and is more likely to secure a five year rolling supply of housing land; and
- Spreads the majority of development across sustainable settlements which provide services and facilities and focusses on the strategic road network and could be easier to implement sustainable/active transport measures.

**5.1.61** The potential disadvantages of this option are:

- Places more pressure on the services and facilities in Faversham and settlements in the east of the borough;
- Given the more piecemeal approach to site selection implied by this option, it would not provide the focus for significant opportunities to deliver strategic based infrastructure and service improvements and would do nothing to address infrastructure gaps for existing communities;
- It would remain necessary to tackle significant traffic and air quality issues along the whole length of the A2 through Sittingbourne and Faversham, particularly at the Ospringe AQMA and other AQMA areas within the borough;
- It would result in the dilution of the separation of settlements and undermine the individual identity of local communities, particularly surrounding historic Faversham;
- It would result in the erosion of open unspoilt countryside through the dilution of the separation between Sittingbourne and the surrounding rural settlements; and
- There are concerns about the capacity to the market to support delivery of further significant growth at Sittingbourne despite the greater concentration of development at Faversham.

**Question 14**

Do you agree with the potential advantages and disadvantages listed above for this development option? Can you think of any others that you would add?

**5.1.62** Overall, this is a potentially deliverable option that could provide for the future development needs of the borough, although it could further dilute the housing market particularly within the Sittingbourne area which has recently seen significant housing development with planning permissions coming on stream over the next few years. It would spread development across the main settlements but could lack the focus of development to secure the sought after localised strategic infrastructure within the Faversham area e.g. handling transport and highway related improvements on a wider scale and providing for educational needs at primary level and at sub regional level secondary school provision.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

**5.1.63** It also places more pressure on the services and facilities in Faversham and settlements in the east of the borough and given the more piecemeal approach to site selection implied by this option, it would not provide the focus for significant opportunities to deliver strategic based infrastructure and service improvements and would do nothing to address infrastructure gaps for existing communities;

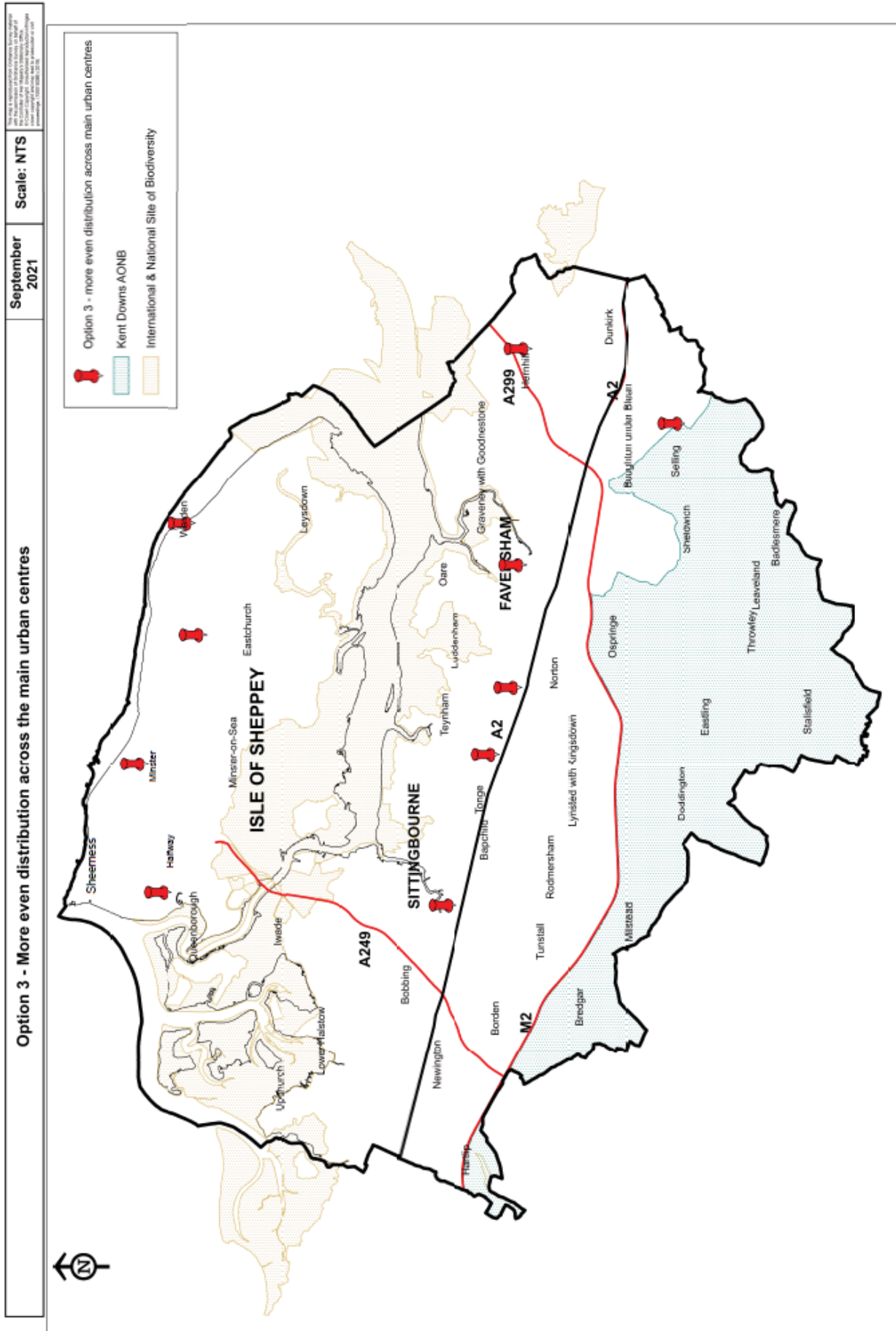
### **Option 3: More even distribution of the final requirements across the main urban centres (when combined with allocations in the current local plan, Bearing Fruit)**

**5.1.64** Similar to option 2, this pattern of development would need to include the East Faversham option as an urban extension of Faversham in order to deliver the borough's strategic objectives as the SHLAA sites on their own for Faversham would not provide the scale and typology of sites needed for this approach.

**5.1.65** Again, windfalls would equate to 30% of the total need over the plan period. The remaining need would be met as follows:

- Sheppey – 14%
- Sittingbourne – 10.5%
- Faversham – 35%
- Rural areas – 10.5%

**5.1.66** This option could deliver the quantum of development needed using a combination of the broad locations identified by the red pins.



Picture 5.1.4

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

### Question 15

Do you agree that the broad locations shown above will help to deliver this development option? If not, why not?

**5.1.67** This option could meet the development needs of the borough and presents significant opportunities for infrastructure investment and for development that supports sustainable transport initiatives although there are highway capacity issues at Brenley Corner that would still need to be addressed. KCC have identified a need for a new secondary school for Faversham and a specific site of approximately 10ha would need to be found.

**5.1.68** The potential advantages of this option are:

- Further rebalancing of the distribution of growth east/west in the borough;
- Focusses development in the more viable eastern half of the borough and in turn is more likely to deliver more affordable homes;
- Supports the range of sites needed to maintain a long term rolling 5 year supply of housing sites;
- Provides opportunities to look at the role of the A2 at Faversham and divert traffic to the M2 allowing greater integration of sites south of the A2;
- Provide the opportunity to secure other strategic based infrastructure improvements at the eastern part of the borough e.g. primary and secondary school provision;
- Enables greater emphasis towards sustainable village development by securing greater viability of shops and services, e.g. locations with existing services, existing employment sites etc.;
- Create opportunities to provide additional housing at rural settlements that already have a range of shops and services that would benefit from a modest increase in population to sustain and improve those facilities.
- New development could assist in enhancing the vitality and viability of Faversham town centre;
- This option would provide an opportunity to create integrated communities that would complement the character and appearance of the historic town.

**5.1.69** The potential disadvantages of this option are:

- Capacity issues at Brenley Corner, junction 7 of the M2
- Extra development could put further pressure on A2 and the AQMA at Ospringe until mitigation was secured;
- Could limit development led infrastructure benefits in other parts of the borough.

### Question 16

Do you agree with the potential advantages and disadvantages listed above for this development option? Can you think of any others that you would add?

**5.1.70** Overall, this is an approach that would deliver a wide range and mix of sites that would meet the development needs of the borough for the plan period and meet the need for smaller/medium sized sites to ensure delivery in the early years of the plan period. The pattern and scale of the development should provide a good range of opportunities to secure new infrastructure that would benefit new and existing communities as well as the opportunity to support smaller, rural communities. Whilst there are some concerns regarding capacity at Brenley Corner, this option also creates opportunities for implementing sustainable transport measures and supporting modal shifts away from the use of the private car and the

need to travel in this way. Developments under this option would create opportunities to provide easily accessible and safe links into the town and rural service centres and to protect and enhance the role of Faversham town centre

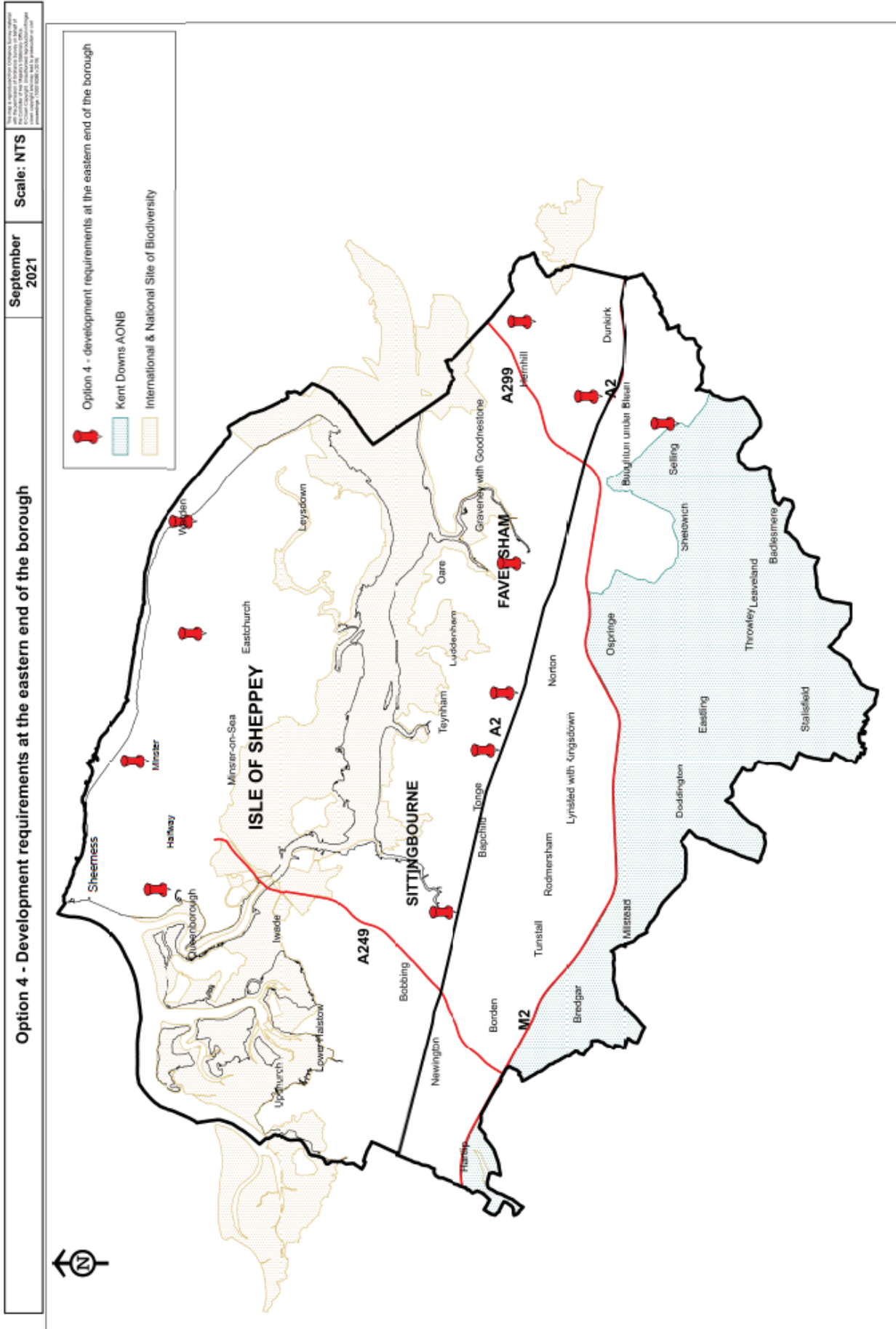
#### **Option 4: More of the overall development requirements at the eastern end of the borough**

**5.1.71** This option seeks to deliver a more even distribution overall when considering the quantum of development required by both the adopted local plan, Bearing Fruits and the Local Plan Review. This approach would see a greater proportion of development in the eastern end of the borough in and around Faversham. Windfalls would again equate to 30% of the total need over the plan period with the remaining need distributed as follows:

- Sheppey – 7%
- Sittingbourne - 7%
- Faversham - 45.5%
- Rural areas 10.5%

**5.1.72** This option could deliver the quantum of development needed using a combination of the broad locations identified by the red pins.

5 Policy issues and preferred options



Picture 5.1.5



**Question 17**

Do you agree that the broad locations shown above will help to deliver this development option? If not, why not?

**5.1.73** Such an approach would consider several SHLAA sites around the periphery of Faversham as well as the strategic development site to the east. The level of development would require significant infrastructure investment that would benefit new and existing communities in this part of the borough but there would be a considerable impact on the character and setting of this historic town and on the character of its rural hinterlands to the south and east in particular.

**5.1.74** The potential advantages of this option are:

- Further rebalancing of the distribution of growth east/west in the borough;
- Focusses development in the more viable eastern half of the borough and in turn is more likely to deliver more affordable homes;
- Supports the range of sites needed to maintain a rolling 5 year supply of housing sites;
- Provides certainty on the location of new development post 2038;
- Provides opportunities to look at the role of the A2 at Faversham; and
- Could result in significant infrastructure investment that would benefit existing and new communities.

**5.1.75** The potential disadvantages of this option are:

- Current capacity issues at Brenley Corner, junction 7 of the M2 would be exacerbated;
- New retail development to accompany the new development could impact on the vitality and viability of Faversham town centre;
- Extra development could put further pressure on A2 and the AQMA at Ospringe until mitigation was secured;
- Significant impacts on the character and setting of the historic Faversham town;
- Significant impacts on the character of the countryside to the east and south of the town, including the AONB; and
- Would limit development led infrastructure benefits in other parts of the borough.

**Question 18**

Do you agree with the potential advantages and disadvantages listed above for this development option? Can you think of any others that you would add?

**5.1.76** This option places a greater proportion of development in the eastern end of the borough in and around Faversham which is more viable and would help to maintain both the 5 year supply of housing and the longer term overall housing target. The impact on Faversham in both landscape, transport and infrastructure and services and facilities will need to be carefully planned and managed.

**Option 5: Focus our development requirements on Strategic Development Sites and/or urban extensions primarily located within existing rural areas**

**5.1.77** Strategic Development Sites have many advantages as they are holistically planned new settlements which enhance the natural environment and offer high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities.

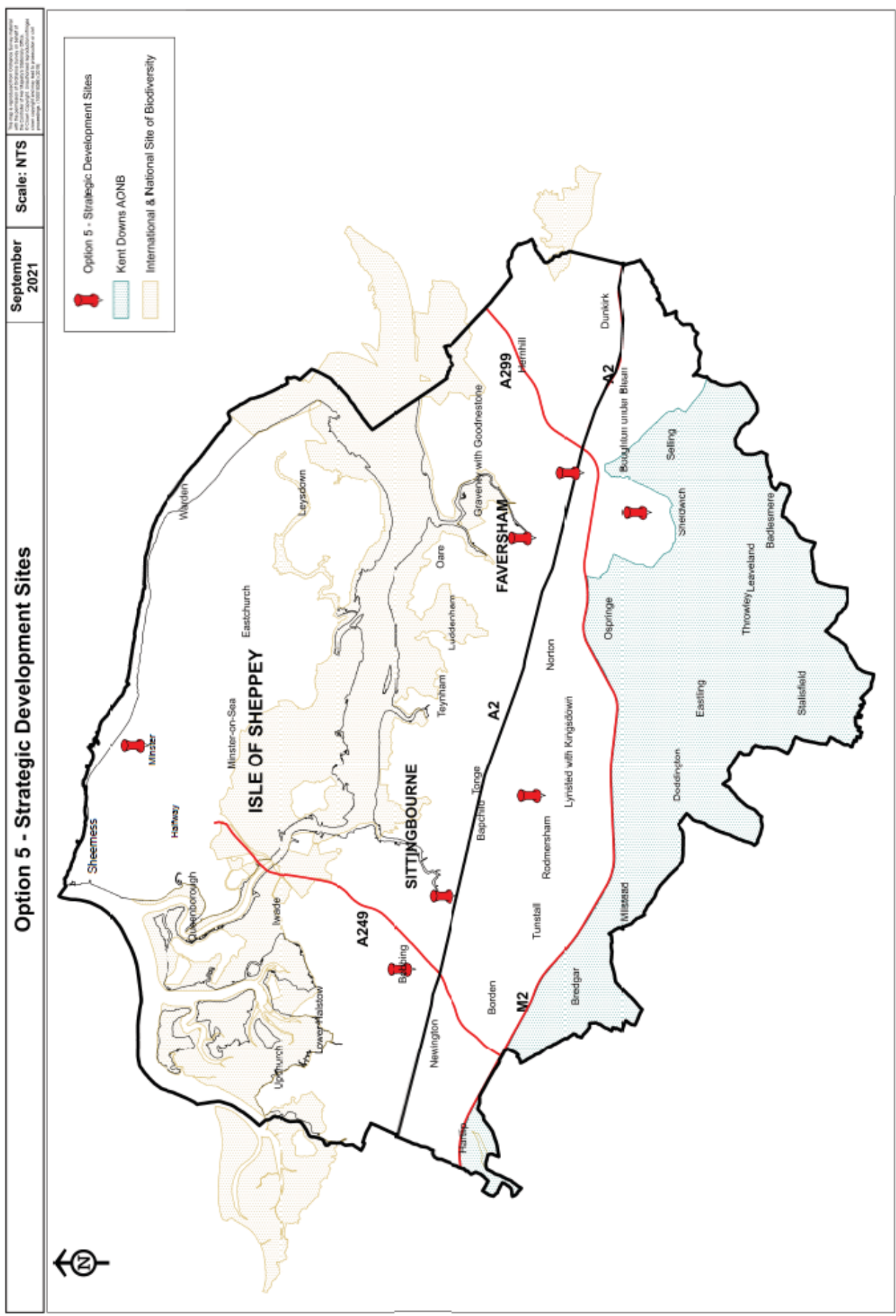
**5.1.78** This option was initially explored at the early stages of the Local Plan Review. A prospectus was prepared and a 'call for potential sites' was undertaken to see what was available.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

**5.1.79** In terms of the percentage distribution, windfalls would equate to 30% of the total need over the plan period, the remaining need distributed as a percentage as follows:

- Sheppey – 3%
- Sittingbourne – 5.5%
- Faversham - 5.5%
- Rural areas – 56%

**5.1.80** This option could deliver the quantum of development needed using a combination of the broad locations identified by the red pins.



Picture 5.1.6

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

### Question 19

Do you agree that the broad locations shown above will help to deliver this development option? If not, why not?

**5.1.81** There is an adequate supply of sites to comfortably deliver this option bearing in mind that the Strategic Development Sites were also assessed in the SHLAA. The preliminary proposals are as follows but are evolving:

- **Bobbing** – circa 3,000 homes (up to 40% affordable housing), 100 ha of open space, community facilities including primary school, health centre, local centre, village hall and sports pitches, employment floorspace (Inc. starter units), re-alignment of Sheppey Way and green infrastructure.
- **South East Sittingbourne (Highsted Park)** - circa 9,250 homes (20% affordable housing), new commercial space, Kent Science Park now within the red line, community uses, local retail space, medical facilities, education (3 x 3FE primary schools, secondary school, Inc. 6th form and further education provision), sport and leisure, green infrastructure and a new motorway junction and M2/A2 link road.
- **North Street, Sheldwich, Faversham** – circa 5,000 homes (a 'strong emphasis' on affordable housing). Employment provision, a High Street for retail/mixed use, primary and secondary school, community uses, allotments, community orchard, playing fields, open space and woodland. Re-alignment of the A251 through the site is indicated, together with improvements at J6 M2.
- **South East Faversham** - Circa 2,500 homes (aim for 40% affordable housing), up to 20,000 sq. m of commercial space. Community uses (local centres, health centre), education (primary schools and potentially a secondary school), sport and leisure (Inc. possible relocation of cricket club and football ground), network of green infrastructure. This proposal would be considered a Faversham development rather than a rural areas development given that it would act as an urban extension.

**5.1.82** The potential advantages of this option are:

- These are self-sustaining developments that provide their own infrastructure, services and facilities and therefore do not add additional pressure elsewhere;
- Due to economies of scale, they provide greater certainty regarding the provision of infrastructure;
- Prevents the piecemeal development pattern Swale is used to of lots of sites at every town/large village;
- Provides far greater possibilities for sustainable/active transport focusing on walking, cycling, public transport and reducing the need to travel by car within their sites and to adjacent areas;
- Ability to comprehensively masterplan the whole of the site;
- Land value capture could be implemented for the benefit of the community;
- Development at this scale makes providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network with net biodiversity gains and implementing zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience easier and more efficient; and
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets would be possible.

**5.1.83** The potential disadvantages are:

- Very little resilience or flexibility should there be issues with the delivery of the site(s) in question;
- Sites of this scale would not deliver much in the way of housing numbers during the early years of the plan meaning that other small/medium sized sites would still need to be allocated to secure a rolling 5 year housing land supply;
- This option only allows for infrastructure provision within a localised area that might not benefit existing communities across the wider borough. (Bearing in mind that S106 can only be used to mitigate new development and not cure existing issues);

- Due to the scale of the development, there could be adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the localised countryside area and the ability to maintain the separate identities of local smaller settlements; and
- The risk that site’s would still not be large enough to be self-sustaining in terms of job creation, and be likely to develop into large dormitory-type developments.

**Question 20**

Do you agree with the potential advantages and disadvantages listed above for this development option? Can you think of any others that you would add?

**5.1.84** Overall, the amount of development that this option could deliver would comfortably meet the required needs, within this plan period and beyond, and yield many significant benefits around the delivery of all types of infrastructure and opportunity to create highly sustainable communities that meet the local plan review objectives. This option would only be an appropriate development strategy if one or two of the sites came forward during the plan period and was married with a deliverable selection of small/medium sites that would come forward during the early years of the local plan to secure a rolling 5 year supply of housing land. It would be a new way of planning for Swale to meet the required housing target.

**5.1.85** Given market conditions, it is likely that at best only two strategic development sites could be delivered, one in the east and one in the west of the borough should the council consider this an appropriate approach to meeting development needs.

**Question 21**

Do you agree that the broad locations shown above will help to deliver this development option? If not, why not?

**Table showing indicative distribution of dwellings across the borough against the 5 different Development Options Needs**

	Bearing Fruits (14,124 dwellings*)					Local Plan Review (10,000)					COMBINED (24,124 dwellings)				
	Sheppey	Sittingbourne	Faversham	Rural Areas	Windfalls	Sheppey	Sittingbourne	Faversham	Rural Areas	Windfalls^	Sheppey	Sittingbourne	Faversham	Rural Area	Windfalls
Option 1	25.0%	40.0%	15.75%	10.75%	8.6%	17.5%	30.5%	12.5%	8.5%	30%	22.5%	36.0%	14.2%	9.7%	17.5%
Option 2						14.0%	21.0%	24.5%	10.5%	30%	20.5%	32.0%	19.5%	10.5%	17.5%
Option 3						14.0%	10.5%	35.0%	10.5%	30%	20.5%	27.75%	23.75%	10.5%	17.5%
Option 4						7.0%	7.0%	45.5%	10.5%	30%	17.5%	26.5%	28.0%	10.5%	17.5%
Option 5						3.0%	5.5%	5.5%	56.0%	30%	16.0%	25.5%	11.5%	29.5%	17.5%

Picture 5.1.7

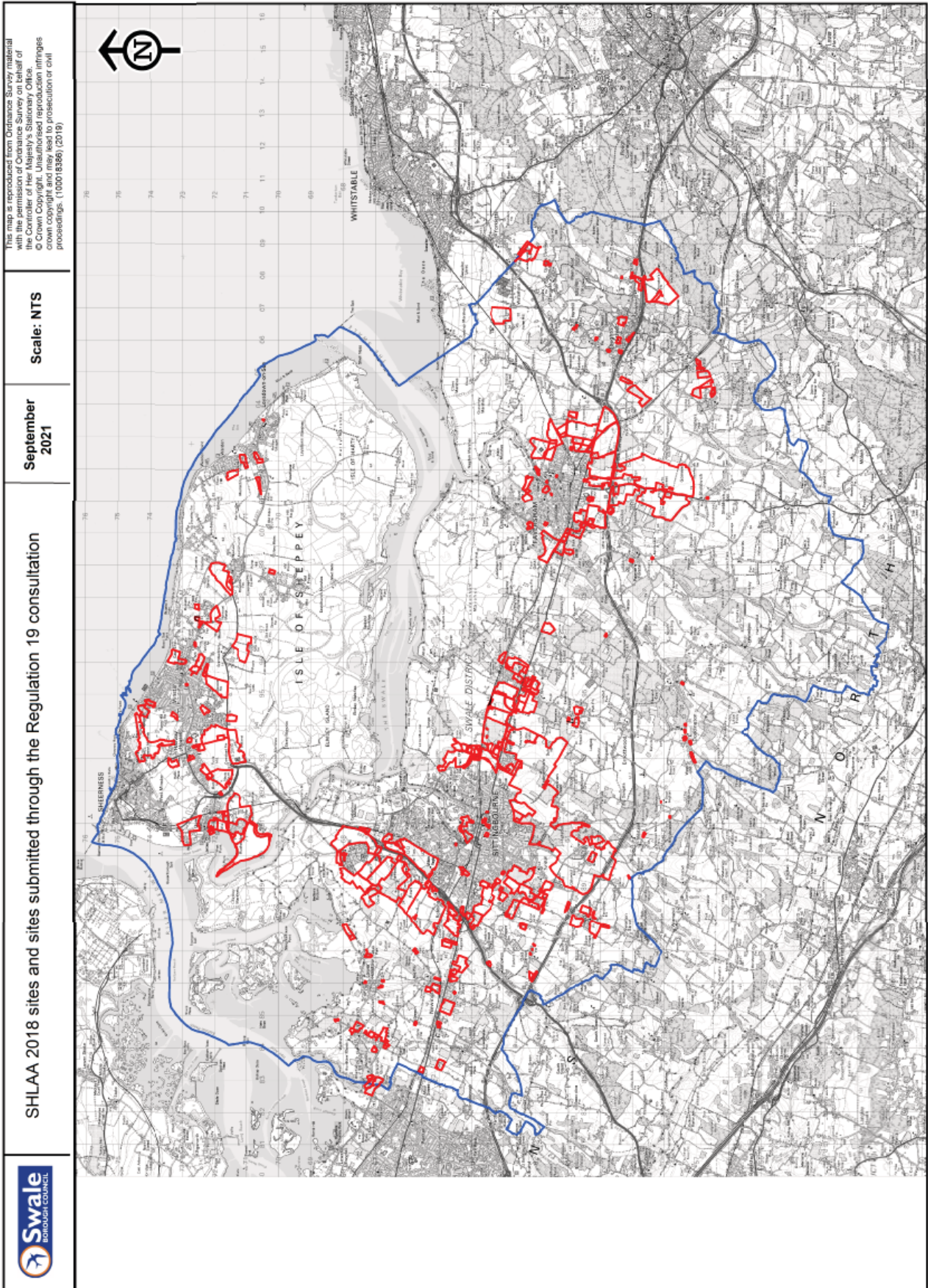
\*Total minimum number of dwellings allocated, see Bearing Fruits Policy ST4

^Based on annual windfall delivery from 2014, averaging circa 250 dwellings per year last 12 years of Local Plan Review plan period (i.e.2026 to 2038)

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

NB Percentage split of total distribution may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**5.1.86** The map below shows all of the housing sites which were submitted to the 2018 SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) and those omission sites which were submitted as part of the 2019 Regulation 19 Local Plan Review consultation.



Picture 5.1.8

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

### Question 22

Do you think that we have considered all of the suitable alternative development options? If no, please explain and set out the details of an alternative option that you feel we have missed. (If you have a single site to submit please do so under the next question.)

### Question 23

Do you have a site that would be suitable for housing development that is not shown on the map above in red (Picture 5.1.8) or on [Swale's Interactive Map](#) (If you submitted/suggested a site through the recent Regulation 19 consultation or to the 2018 SHLAA there is no need to re-submit it.)

If so, please state where they are (and include a location plan if possible) and how many dwellings/quantum of employment floorspace they could provide.

### Summary of the options and key considerations and identification of the Preferred Development Option

**5.1.87** The five main development options have been outlined above along with the potential advantages and disadvantages of each. They have been formed on the basis that they can achieve the local plan objectives. Every local plan must be informed and accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). SA plays a key role throughout the plan making process and an important part in demonstrating that the local plan reflects sustainability objectives as far as possible and has considered reasonable alternatives. The council's Sustainability Appraisal objectives guide the formation of the local plan vision and objectives set out above. The final SA will be published alongside the Reg 18 documents and is also consulted on.

**5.1.88** In sustainability terms, the council is not specifically required to select the 'most sustainable' option but must be able to explain how and why the option that has been selected best meets the needs of the borough.

**5.1.89** In determining which option to support, it is important to consider the points below because the Inspector at the Examination will need to be satisfied that the local plan review fully addresses these:

- If the development strategy can deliver the development needs of the borough over the plan period (to 2038) as a minimum
- If the strategy is appropriate and takes into account the reasonable alternatives and is guided by evidence
- If the development needs are deliverable over the plan period and that cross-boundary strategic matters have been addressed with our neighbouring authorities
- If it is consistent with national policy

**5.1.90** Additionally, consideration should be given to the contribution each of the options make to delivering the local plan review objectives and if a preferred strategy represents a proportionate policy response to meet the assessed needs, would adequately address infrastructure needs and has the least impact on environment/amenity and heritage assets.

**5.1.91** To this end, the council believes that **Option 3** could represent the most proportionate and appropriate approach taking into account the above.

### Why is this the Preferred Development Option?



**5.1.92** Sustainable development is the key principle underpinning the Local Plan Review, and is critical to the delivery of many of the council's and the community's aspirations. It requires social progress which recognises the needs of everyone, effective protection of the environment, prudent use of natural resources and the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

**5.1.93** Swale's future growth will be pursued in the most sustainable way and it is felt that this option is the most appropriate way to achieve this. Particular priorities for sustainable development within Swale are to:

- Increase the supply of homes and affordable housing;
- Improve access to jobs, services and facilities for all groups;
- Achieve a high quality environment; and
- Tackle climate change by reducing the area's carbon footprint, creating resilient and adaptive environments and embracing active travel opportunities.

**5.1.94** Large scale strategic growth at Faversham would provide good potential to successfully masterplan and deliver a new community, or series of new communities, in line with established best practice principles and to ensure that it was planned in a holistic way. It would also deliver a much needed new secondary school.

**5.1.95** This option performs well in terms of air quality because strategic growth to the east and southeast of Faversham gives rise to relatively limited concerns as sustainable and active travel measures are easier to implement at these scales of new development as the critical mass is there. Trip internalisation can be implemented, funds can be directed to walking and cycling infrastructure, masterplanning and design measures can focus on supporting walking and there is some potential to walk/cycle to the town centre

**5.1.96** It also allows for larger scale biodiversity and net gain achievements; again, due to the critical mass.

### Question 24

Do you think the Preferred Development Option (option 3) for meeting our housing target is the most suitable and meets our vision, objectives and the principles of sustainable development? If not please identify how the preferred option could be changed or if you believe one of, or a mixture of the other options, are more suitable, please say why.

**5.1.97** Where development could take place in and around rural service centres, e.g. Teynham, the council could allocate specific sites or alternatively we could identify a wider area to meet the wider aspirations of local residents in line with the development needs of the borough during the mid to late years of the plan period. A wider area, an 'Area of Opportunity' could support more substantial new infrastructure and it would need to be planned comprehensively through a masterplan and with significant input from and engagement with local communities. Whilst this approach would present the opportunity for a more cohesive approach to long term development, in the short term it could result in uncertainty for local communities as the plans and proposals are progressed.

### Question 25

Do you think that any of the areas identified for potential development should be progressed as 'Areas of Opportunity' to enable a more comprehensive approach to master planning for their development and infrastructure needs? If not, please say why.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

### 5.2 Climate change

**5.2.1** The following issues have been identified that will need to be addressed through the policies in Local Plan Review.

#### Climate change issues

- Nationally the UK has committed to becoming net carbon zero by 2050 and Swale Borough Council, who declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019, have goals for carbon emissions from the council's operations to be carbon neutral by 2025 and for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030. The purpose of the declaration was to draw attention to the urgent need to reverse the decline in biodiversity in Swale and to take effective action to reduce carbon emissions in the borough.
- The Local Plan Review's policies, and in particular the choice of sites for allocation and how they are designed, are key tools to enable the Council to mitigate and adapt to the challenges of Climate Change.
- Measures to reduce the demand for private car-based transport should be promoted wherever possible to lessen the impacts of traffic on climate change and air quality. This should be supported by the promotion of quality public transport and active-travel infrastructure integrated into existing and new developments.
- Development needs to be designed to dramatically reduce its own emissions (using high sustainability standards) as well as be adaptable to the impacts of a changing climate, reducing vulnerability to issues such as increased storm frequency and flood risk, drought and changing temperature patterns.
- Green and blue infrastructure across new development serves as an opportunity to make necessary adaptations to climate change, improve the health and well-being of the population and help address the ecological emergency. Local schemes to achieve carbon offsetting through nature-based solutions can contribute to these aspirations.
- Renewable technologies should be encouraged where appropriate and incorporated into new developments, however an increase in pressure for renewable energy infrastructure in certain locations may conflict with landscape and townscape character and needs to be planned in consultation with the community.
- Climate change has the potential to increase land at risk of flooding so development will need to be located away from these areas and should incorporate sustainable drainage measures to avoid increasing the risk of flooding downstream.
- Improving water quality, protecting water resources and preventing pollution generally are a priority and closely linked to the issues of climate change mitigation and adaptation and ecological recovery.
- There is a need to review climate change and other environmental policies in light of the revisions to Building Regulations and the NPPF (2021) and updated Viability evidence.

#### What you've told us so far

In response to the last round of consultation to the Regulation 19 Local Plan (February 2021) many people were very supportive of measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change and support the move to more sustainable and active travel.

- However, many developers argued that Swale's targets were too ambitious, inconsistent with national policy on sustainability standards and may lead to deliverability/viability issues.

**Question 26**

Do you agree with this view? What evidence do you have to support your answer?

- Across the board there was a view that the infrastructure is not in place for sustainable/active travel and it is too expensive to implement.

**Question 27**

Do you think the council should accept this view or seek to be more ambitious and continue to aim to embed sustainable/active travel measures across new developments? What are the reasons for your answer?

**5.3 Place shaping/design**

**5.3.1** The following issues have been identified that will need to be addressed through the policies in the Local Plan Review.

**Place shaping/design issues**

- In order to maintain the borough's quality of life for existing and future residents, development will need to be designed to ensure that it is of a high quality
- High quality and inclusive design for development will be required based on a clear understanding of the local, physical, social, economic and environmental context for development
- The borough's network of towns and villages have distinct identities and character that should be maintained and where possible enhanced

**What you've told us so far**

**5.3.2** In response to the last round of consultation to the Regulation 19 Local Plan (February 2021) people said that:

- Overall they supported the policy approach to the importance of achieving high quality development and good design but some elements of the policies needed to be applied more flexibly

**5.3.3** The most recent update to the NPPF (July 2021) made beauty and placemaking and tree-lined streets strategic national planning policies.

*Design*

**5.3.4** To provide as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable, the updated NPPF requires that local plans set out clear design policies and expectations and links the plan making process to the government's own National Design Guide and National Model Design Code. The emphasis on good design is exemplified by new paragraph 134 which bluntly states that "Development that is not well designed should be refused." There is a new mandatory requirement for local authorities to prepare local design guides or codes, consistent with the principles in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code which provides the baseline standard of quality and practice on design. These could be produced either as part of a plan or as a Supplementary Planning Document.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

**5.3.5** The Government has confirmed that the term ‘beautiful’ should be read as a high-level statement of ambition rather than a policy test and planning authorities, communities and developers are encouraged to work together to decide what beautiful homes, buildings and places should look like in their area. While the word beauty is used frequently what this means locally will be informed by baseline studies and based on the ‘ten characteristics of a well design place’ as set out in the National Design Guide. These bring together a range of established urban design principles such as built form (density, height and layout), movement, identity and public space which are to guide the development of local design criteria.

**5.3.6** In order to ensure that approved designs are not diluted Local Planning Authorities can now insist on obligations to retain particular architects in planning agreements to guard against dilution of architectural quality after grant of permission as well as being encouraged to check design against the approved scheme during the construction process.

### *Trees*

**5.3.7** The updated NPPF had introduced a new policy encouraging planning policies and decisions to “ensure that new streets are tree-lined”. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that not only are new streets tree-lined but also opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), measures are in place for their long-term maintenance and existing trees are retained wherever possible.

**5.3.8** Our proposed policies on design<sup>(8)</sup> and trees<sup>(9)</sup> provide a comprehensive set of principles in order to achieve a high standard of design quality in new development but we will need to consider what changes, if any, are necessary to address the updated NPPF requirements.

### **Question 28**

Do you think the policies on design (as contained in the Pre-Submission Local Plan, February 2021) should be updated to reflect the changes in the NPPF?

If you answered yes, what changes do you think need to be made to the policies?

### **Question 29**

Do you think the policies on trees (as contained in the Pre-Submission Local Plan, February 2021) should be updated to reflect the changes in the NPPF?

If answered yes, what changes do you think need to be made to the policies?

## **5.4 Protecting and enhancing environment and heritage**

**5.4.1** The following issues have been identified that will need to be addressed through the policies in the Local Plan Review.

8 Policies ST6 (Good design) and DM2 (Good design) in the Pre-Submission Local Plan (February 2021)

9 Policy DM29 (Woodland, orchard, trees and hedgerows) in the Pre-Submsion Local Plan (February 2021)

### Protecting and enhancing environment and heritage issues

- Our high-quality environment makes Swale an attractive place to live, work and visit. As well as contributing to our resident's quality of life, it plays an important role in attracting and retaining businesses. It is therefore important to ensure that it is maintained and enhanced.
- There is a continued need to protect and enhance nationally and locally designated landscapes, habitats, species and ancient woodland.
- In addition to protecting designated sites, other habitats and species should be protected and enhanced to maintain a functional ecological network within and beyond Swale's boundaries.
- The population should be given the opportunity to access a high-quality natural environment without damaging it.
- Swale residents value their local green spaces (LGS) and they must continue to be protected, managed and enhanced.
- Swale is keen to be a vanguard for the emerging biodiversity net gain policy in new developments and our evidence shows that we can achieve 20% rather than the 10% in emerging Government guidance.
- Swale's heritage is one of its assets but needs better management and protection.

### What you've told us so far

In response to the last round of consultation to the Regulation 19 Local Plan people said:

- That they were very supportive of the principle of achieving 20% biodiversity net gain. Conversely, landowners and developers were of the view that the 20% principle is too high, unjustified and contrary to the forthcoming Environment Bill.

### Question 30

Do you agree that the council should be ambitious in its requirement for biodiversity net gain on new developments and that 20% is justified even though the emerging Environment Bill 10% is "a minimum"?

## 5.5 New Homes

### Housing needs

**5.5.1** The following issues have been identified that will need to be addressed through the policies in the Local Plan Review.

### Housing needs issues

- There is a need to ensure that everyone can access good quality housing to meet the needs of the population and support the economy
- There will be significant growth in the population of older people, and in particular, the number of people aged 65 or over. There will also be growth in the number of people with long-term health problems or disabilities. There is a need to plan for the specific needs of an increasingly elderly population

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

- There is a need to deliver high quality homes that provides choice to existing and future residents' by responding to evolving lifestyles and meeting their needs over the course of their life-time and changing circumstances
- Between 2015 and 2020 the average house price to earnings ratio rose from 7.11 to 9.32, equivalent to a 31% increase. There is a need to continue to support and maximise the delivery of affordable homes including providing higher levels of social/affordable rented housing whilst looking at measures to ensure that housing is more generally affordable (e.g. to first time buyers) and through other mechanisms including self and custom build.

### What you've told us so far

**5.5.2** In response to the last round of consultation to the Regulation 19 Local Plan (February 2021) people told us:

- The Local Plan should take a more positive approach to meeting the housing needs of specific groups, particularly older people

### Question 31

Do you agree that the Local Plan should be clearer on how the needs of older people will be met?

- In addition to meeting accessibility standards, new housing should also meet the Nationally Described Space Standards

**5.5.3** The Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) deal with the internal space of new dwellings and seek to ensure that they provide a reasonable level of internal space to undertake typical day-to-day activities at a given level of occupancy. The standard reflects what the government considers to be the minimum space required to allow for modern living.

**5.5.4** The NDSS are an optional standard and the government advises that we would need to justify their introduction based on evidence covering need, viability and timing. The Local Plan Viability Study (December 2020) had regard to the NDSS when undertaking the viability testing of the emerging Local Plan.

### Question 32

Do you agree with the view that new dwellings should be built to the Nationally Described Space Standards? What evidence do you have to support your answer?

- There should be greater recognition and more positive encouragement for the role of self build and custom housebuilding in widening housing choice

**5.5.5** Our proposed policy on small and medium sites for housing development<sup>(10)</sup> supports the development of sites for self build but leaves it to the housing market to deliver plots as and when demand arises. Alternative approaches could be to identify and allocate specific sites for self build plots or include a requirement for all housing development sites over a certain size to include a certain proportion of serviced plots as self build plots.

**Question 33**

Do you agree that the current Local Plan approach is the most appropriate or should we have a specific policy for self build homes?

If we were to have a specific policy, should we allocate sites and/or require a percentage of self build plots for people wanting to build their own homes?

If you think we should allocate sites, can you suggest any sites suitable for self build we should consider allocating? If submitting a site, please provide a location plan and brief details about the site.

- That Policy DM15 (Affordable Housing)<sup>(11)</sup> should include a lower site threshold so as to meet the needs for affordable housing in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

**Question 34**

Do you agree with the view that a lower site threshold should apply to sites within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty? What evidence do you have to support your answer?

**Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

**5.5.6** The following issues have been identified that will need to be addressed through the policies in the Local Plan Review.

**Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople issues**

- Swale is home to one of the largest Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople populations in Kent and the wider South East and the accommodation requirements of these communities will need to be met.
- The accommodation will need to be in sustainable locations, providing settled bases which reduce the need to travel long distances for access to services and facilities.
- Due to the nature of their traditional lifestyles, accommodation is often sought in semi-rural or rural locations, but there will be a need to protect and enhance our natural environment too, a key asset for the Borough.
- This will need to be done in a manner which is fair for all, protecting local amenity and promoting community cohesion.

**What you've told us so far**

**5.5.7** In response to the last round of consultation to the Regulation 19 Local Plan (February 2021) people told us:

- That we should consider site allocations to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

**5.5.8** This option was initially explored at the early stages of the Local Plan Review. A "call for sites" exercise was carried out in September/October 2019 and the only land submitted was that relating to existing sites – no additional land was put forward. Furthermore, the council has, in a previous Local Plan,

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

required land to be made available as part of a wider mixed-use/residential allocation. This was unsuccessful and never brought to fruition. We have a track record of granting suitable planning permissions and meeting the accommodation needs this way. As such, the council has been using a criterion-based policy only to deal with the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the adopted Local Plan.

### Question 35

Do you think that the Local Plan should continue to use a criterion-based policy only to deal with the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople?

If not, do you agree with the view that the council should re-consider allocating sites to meet this need? Please say why.

If you answered yes, do you think this should be done via individual site allocations, or by requiring provision to be made within larger mixed use/residential allocations?

### Question 36

Do you have a site that you think would be suitable for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation? If so, please state where it is (and include a site location plan if possible) and how many pitches/plots it could provide.

## 5.6 Economy and town centres

**5.6.1** As well as the need for new housing, the local plan review must identify enough land to accommodate the following employment requirements for Swale:

- **41ha of B2/B8 (manufacturing/warehouse and distribution) land; and**
- **15ha of B1**

**5.6.2** Apart from just being able to find more employment land, for any long term prosperity in Swale to happen and be sustained, we will need to upgrade our image as a place to live and work, as well as making our local economy more fit and flexible to face the rigours of future competition and change, accelerated by recent events. There is a wish to make sure that we are making the most of a broader spectrum of job creating opportunities, to compliment the portfolio of traditional employment land allocations. A flexible approach to secure a diversity of newly built space and the use and reuse of existing built space may be required to meet this challenge.

**5.6.3** We should not forget that housing is a critical part of this picture because a high quality offer is essential if a skilled population is going to be retained and attracted and construction accounts for 3,500 local employee jobs. Many prospective workers balance economic opportunity and lifestyle in selecting a place to live and work and those with higher skill levels generally have a wider choice, picking those locations that are attractive places to live, with the right amenities, as well as work. We need to be one of these places of potential choice and this needs actions across a number of fronts.

**5.6.4** Existing workforce skills are also an important element of employers' willingness to invest and grow in a location. We need to encourage opportunities for our current residents to ensure they have the



right skills, as well as be able to attract new skilled labour. Alongside working with employers and existing providers to address longstanding skills gaps, there remains an ambition for a focused Further Education facility in Sittingbourne providing technical skills to help meet employer needs.

**5.6.5** Our adopted local plan strategy saw some growth in the out of town retail sector and we remain confident over the delivery of emerging retail schemes in central Sittingbourne. Manufacturing has declined, but relative to Kent and the UK, the sector is strong and we feel our strategy should seek to support this sector, facilitate indigenous growth and support the emergence of more niche and advanced manufacturing activities. In recent years, the borough has attracted new distribution and logistics businesses and jobs. We feel that we should continue to promote our strengths in industrial employment, helped by maintaining and enhancing a supply of well-located land and buildings, including those suitable for larger scale distribution.

**5.6.6** However, whilst our land bank has been flexible it has a tightening margin to support growth and grasp unexpected opportunities, such as those that reinforce the borough's role as a recognised distribution hub.

**5.6.7** The needs of the office sector cannot be met easily within the existing land supply. However, we do not yet know what the effects of covid-19 on the office sector will be yet. We believe our strategy for office space should be supportive of its expansion, especially for central Sittingbourne, around the A249 and at Faversham.

**5.6.8** Some 55% of the borough's workforce commute for jobs outside Swale, and while generally the distances travelled are modest and how and where people are working is changing we do feel that we should be encouraging employment sectors attractive to those commuting, including those in key sectors such as finance, information and communications and science based activities to locate in Swale to reduce this commuting.

**5.6.9** The Visitor Economy is a major contributor to the local economy and we are keen to capitalise on the current trends in staycations and reduced foreign travel to bring in greater local spending. We could place an emphasis on proposals that successfully integrate land and natural environment based industries with the borough's heritage offers and the landscapes of the North Kent marshes, the Blean, the Kent Downs and the horticultural belt. Specifically, given its location and proximity to other tourist centres at Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay, Faversham has strong potential to diversify its economy around tourism and leisure, especially its heritage and food and drink based offer. On Sheppey we need to address declines in its traditional seaside tourism offer through modernisation and improvements in quality and diversification.

**5.6.10** Although the number of jobs in agriculture and horticulture is relatively small, we anticipate growth in this sector (once the current consequences of Brexit settle down.). For this and the wider rural economy, we want Swale to be able to respond positively to the new opportunities for diversification and improved resilience for food production, as well as activities in other rural sectors, including growth in community based jobs and services, where these can be successfully integrated within the locality. The recent acceleration in changes in working patterns may also create new possibilities for developing economic opportunities in rural settings.

**5.6.11** We are also keen to continue to grow Swale's underdeveloped creative industry offer, however this is a sector that likes to grow organically and outside of the traditional planning allocations route. There are unlikely to be specific allocations for these uses but the development management policies would give flexibility to allow these businesses to grow and flourish.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

### Question 37

Do you agree that the Local Plan should not allocate specific locations for the creative industries but instead draft the development management policies to provide flexibility to allow these businesses to set up, establish and grow.

**5.6.12** How would this all be visible in terms of physical development? We would be largely maintaining our current portfolio of sites, with the renewal and intensification of existing sites in and around Sittingbourne, in particular, its key economic product – the Eurolink business park. Close to the urban areas, the A249 is also likely to remain the focus for meeting any potential for larger scale distribution or industrial uses. On the Isle of Sheppey, the existing pool of employment sites will be developed for industrial purposes so that the economic benefits of infrastructure investment already made can be accomplished.

**5.6.13** At Faversham, the approach would be to improve the quality and availability of sites on account of the town's good location and the loss of existing sites to other uses. New employment, with a focus on providing flexible space that can accommodate a range of uses, would also be provided to compliment the new housing.

**5.6.14** We also need to decide how to support and/or grow our two major strategic employment locations - the Port of Sheerness and the Kent Science Park. They will need guidance for both their immediate needs for growth, and for the possibility of longer-term aspirations.

### Question 38

Do you agree with our assessment of what we need to provide to ensure that the economy is sustained in Swale and that we can provide the right environment to attract new businesses to Swale and new employees? How else can Swale ensure that its current positive economic forecasts and ambitions come to fruition and are sustained?

#### What you've told us so far

**5.6.15** In response to the last round of consultation to the Regulation 19 Local Plan people said:

- The most significant issue around employment is the uncertainty around Covid-19 and the impact upon future working patterns and office space requirements, and how difficult this is to plan for at this stage.
- The Local Plan Review needs to give more support to expanding existing employment locations, supporting start-ups and entrepreneur and linking green and blue infrastructure to the employment strategy.

**5.6.16** The approach of where to allocate employment across Swale will depend on various factors, including the broad distribution of housing development, the availability of sites, the attractiveness of sites to potential occupiers and many of the same constraints as for housing allocations including landscape designations.

### Question 39

Where should we be locating the next generation of employment sites? For example, as extensions to existing sites? Close to the strategic road network? Adjacent to existing and/or new housing sites?

**Question 40**

Do you have an alternative site that hasn't been considered before that could be suitable for employment use? If so, please provide a site location plan and some key details about the site such as how much and what type of employment it could provide.

**Retail and town centre issues**

The following issues have been identified that will need to be addressed in relation to retail and town centres through the policies in Local Plan Review:

- Social changes such as the internet and out of town shopping and the impact of covid-19 have the potential to change the role of town and village centres.
- Is the role of town centres changing, with a need to broaden their appeal and use to include a broader set of commercial and residential occupier's and more focus on 'experiences' like eating, socialising and leisure rather than shopping?

**5.6.17** Our town centres are also an important area needing investment, to help them change, adapt and improve in the face of considerable challenge. The council's attention has been largely focused on delivery of the major regeneration project in Sittingbourne Town Centre and it is our intention that we now move forward by looking at the wider opportunities that exist. Improving peoples experience and the way in which they relate to and use the town centres will be vital to bringing life back to them. We aim to improve the public realm and look after our heritage through a mix of investment and enforcement. Retail, leisure and other services will all continue to play a vital role, but we also need to diversify and give people a wider set of reasons to come into our town centres. This might include co-working and small studio space for homeworkers and small businesses and encouraging new residential communities into town centres where it makes sense to do so.

**Question 41**

Should there be a more flexible development management approach to building uses at ground and second floor and above in our town centres, to encourage occupation by a range of business types?

**Question 42**

How can we adapt and improve town centre environments to make them more attractive places to dwell and spend time and to encourage greater investment and activity?

**5.6.18 About You**

**5.6.19** We want to make sure that our services and policies are available to everyone in the community and that everyone is treated fairly when they use, or attempt to use, our services.

## 5 Policy issues and preferred options

**5.6.20** We will only use the information collected on this form to help us improve services and policies and to identify gaps or barriers. You do not have to fill in this form and you can answer just some of the questions.

**5.6.21** The answers you provide are anonymous and confidential. You should only provide the equalities information once.

### About you

To ensure that we are reaching a wide range of our residents, please tell us about yourself. (Answers can be submitted online through the Objective Portal, or by using the PDF form provided on our website and in libraries).

## Appendix - Local Plan Review evidence base 6

### 6 Appendix - Local Plan Review evidence base

6.0.1 All evidence base documents are available on the council [website](#)<sup>(12)</sup>.

Evidence Base Study	Purpose of evidence
Employment Land Review (August 2018)	To identify the amount of additional employment land needed during the local plan review period.
Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (November 2018)	To identify the requirement for additional pitches for those who meet the definition of 'Traveller' in government policy and the requirement for additional Travelling Show Person plots.
Local Landscape Designation Review (October 2018)	To review the borough's existing local landscape designations and recommend Areas of High Landscape Value
Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (October 2019)	Assessment of the landscape implications of possible extensions to the borough's main settlements and their sensitivity to change from development.
Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) (May 2020)	To identify land that is suitable, achievable and deliverable to meet the development needs of the borough for the local plan review period.
Local Housing Needs Assessment (June 2020)	To identify the borough's housing need using the government's 'standard method' calculation
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (June 2020)	To identify the housing need for the borough in terms of size, mix, tenure and needs of specific groups e.g. elderly within the overall need figure.
Settlement Hierarchy Study (August 2020)	Reviews the existing settlement hierarchy by auditing the current provision of services and facilities in the borough's settlements and recommending whether hierarchy should be retained or re-structured
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Level 1 (February 2020)	To assess flood risk within the borough from all sources now and into the future as well as assessing the impact that cumulative land use changes and development will have on flood risk. Used to inform the preparation of the Sequential Test. A Level 2 SFRA is currently in preparation.
Sequential Test (May 2020)	To consider the land promoted to meet the development needs of the borough and identify that with the lowest risk of flooding. It also identified land which would require an Exception Test to be carried forward (currently in preparation).
Retail & Leisure Needs Assessment (December 2018)	To identify the future retail and leisure needs of the borough in terms of floorspace and facilities. Also assessed the retail hierarchy and reviewed the vitality and viability of both the town and local centres in the borough.

## 6 Appendix - Local Plan Review evidence base

Evidence Base Study	Purpose of evidence
Transport modelling	To assess the capacity of the road network and potential mitigation measures against different development scenarios
Assessment of New Settlements submission sites (Strategic Development Option sites) (March and October 2019)	To assess the risks, opportunities and uncertainties associates with the four submitted garden communities in Swale. The assessments looked at various issues including infrastructure needs, affordable housing provision, viability and landscape impacts.
Open Space Assessment (2017 and February 2019)	To assess the quantum of open space in the borough and to identify the open space needs for the local plan review plan period.
Open Spaces and Play Area Strategy (2018-2022) and Playing Pitch Strategy (2015-2025)	Adopted strategies based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the borough's open space, sport and recreation provision. They both form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan Review with regard to the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities required as a result of new development.
Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (September 2020)	To identify the existing green and blue infrastructure resource across the borough, opportunities for improvements and new provision
Biodiversity Baseline Report (October 2020)	Records the borough's biodiversity baseline and sets out how requirements of the Environment Bill could be incorporated into the LPR
Important Local Countryside Gap Study (January 2021)	Review of land around Faversham and Teynham to assess and make recommendations on the identification of additional Important Local Countryside Gaps
Air Quality Modelling Report (December 2020)	To assess the air quality implications of growth scenarios
Local Plan Viability Study (December 2020)	To test the viability impacts of emerging policy requirements
Sustainable Design and Construction standards (January 2021)	Evidence to support the development of appropriate sustainability standards for the Local Plan Review. Links to Local Plan Viability Study above.
Local Green Space Designations (February 2021)	Review of existing Local Green Space designations and assessment of potential new designations

## Appendix - Housing allocations to be rolled forward 7

### 7 Appendix - Housing allocations to be rolled forward

**7.0.1** The table below lists the 'Bearing Fruits' housing and mixed use allocations, which are proposed to be rolled forward. The progress of these allocations will be kept under review and the list is, therefore, subject to change.

Policy reference	Site Name	Status as at 31 August 2021
A16	Land at Preston Fields, Faversham	Planning application pending consideration (16/508602/OUT).
A17	Iwade expansion	Planning applications pending consideration.
A20.1	Orbital, Staplehurst Road, Sittingbourne	Planning application pending consideration (17/502935/OUT).
A20.2	152 Staplehurst Road, Sittingbourne	No current planning application
A20.4	35 High Street, Milton Regis	No current planning application
A20.6	Bysingwood Primary School, Faversham	No current planning application
A20.7	Faversham Police Station	No current planning application
A20.8	Preston Skreens, Minster Road, Minster	No current planning applications for remainder of site.
A20.9	Halfway Houses Primary School, Halfway	No current planning application but site owners have confirmed wish to retain site as a housing allocation.
A20.10	Manor Road, Queenborough	No current planning application
A20.11	The Foundry, Rushenden Road	No current planning application
A20.12	Former Bus Depot, Shellness Road, Leysdown	No current planning application
A20.13	Iwade Fruit and Produce	No current planning application
A20.14	Iwade Village Centre	No current planning application
A21.1	North of Key Street, Sittingbourne	No current planning application
A21.6	Nil Desperandum, Alsager Avenue, Rushenden	No current planning application
A21.11	Land off Colonel's Lane, Boughton	No current planning application
A21.12	Land south of Colonel's Lane, Boughton	No current planning application
A21.14	Land adj. Mayfield, London Road, Teynham	No current planning application
A21.15	Land at Barrow Green Farm, Lower Road, Teynham	Planning application pending consideration (20/503223/OUT)

## 7 Appendix - Housing allocations to be rolled forward

Policy reference	Site Name	Status as at 31 August 2021
MU2	Land at north-east Sittingbourne	No current planning applications

Table 7.0.1 The table above lists the 'Bearing Fruit' housing and mixed use allocations without planning permission

**7.0.2** The sites listed below are those allocations from the adopted local plan "Bearing Fruits" with planning permission that are not yet started or complete. The progress of these planning permissions is kept under review and the list is, therefore, subject to review.

Policy reference	Site Name	Status as at 31 August 2021
A7	Thistle Hill, Minster	Outline permission granted for 431 dwellings (SW/13/1455). Reserved Matters 19/503120/REM granted for 171 dwellings.
A8	Stones Farm, Canterbury Rd, Sittingbourne	Outline permission granted. Reserved Matters for 310 dwellings approved and site under construction (18/505151). Further applications for RM expected in due course.
A9	Land at Crown Quay Lane, Sittingbourne	Several RM applications permissioned and history of material amendments. Significant number completed/ under construction with further applications expected in due course.
A10	Milton Pipes, Mill Way, Sittingbourne	Site permissioned and under construction but not complete. (15/502912/FULL)
A11	Land at Plover Road, Minster	19/506047/REM reserved matters approved.
A12	Land west of Barton Hill Drive, Minster	Outline permission granted at appeal for up to 700 dwellings. Reserved Matters application for first phase expected in due course.
A13	Land at Belgrave Road, Halfway	Full planning permission granted for 153 dwellings (19/501921/FULL). Site cleared and under construction.
A14	Land at the Western Link, Faversham	Planning permission granted for 250 dwellings. 17/502604/REM granted for 127 dwellings. 74 under construction the rest is complete. Southern phase 18/506283/REM for 123 dwellings. 65 under construction, remainder NS.
A19	Land east of Station Road, Teynham	Approval for 130 dwellings granted (18/503697/FULL). Site partially complete/ under construction.
A21.2	Manor Farm, Sittingbourne	Outline permission granted for up to 50 dwelling approved (17/500727/OUT).
A21.3	Junction of Scocles Road and Elm Lane, Minster (The Slips)	21/501908/REM application for 62 dwellings awaiting decision. Outline permission already granted.
A21.4	Land at Chequers Road, Minster	Planning permission for 9 dwellings granted and under construction (16/505623/FULL)



## Appendix - Housing allocations to be rolled forward 7

Policy reference	Site Name	Status as at 31 August 2021
A21.7	Land at Ham Road, Faversham	Planning permission granted for 35 dwellings and under construction (19/503278/REM)
A21.10	North of High Street, Eastchurch	Planning permission granted for 15 dwellings (19/500887/FULL). Site not started
A21.13	Bull Lane, Boughton	Planning permission granted for 16 dwellings (18/501428/FULL). Site not started.
MU1	Land at north-west Sittingbourne	18/500257/EIFUL approved for 155 dwellings in southwest corner of allocation approved and site under construction. Main land parcel for this allocation for 1,200 dwellings has been approved under 18/502190/EIHYB. 18/502372/EIOUT for 152 dwellings in the north eastern corner pending consideration.
MU3	Land at south-west Sittingbourne	Planning permission granted at appeal for 675 dwellings.
MU4	Land at Frogal Lane, Teynham	16/507689/OUT approved for up to 300 dwellings and commercial premises.
MU5	The Oare gravel workings, Oare Road, Faversham	Phase 1 Oare mineral works 18/505418/REM for 113 dwellings. 68 under construction, the remainder are complete. Outline application 14/0257/OUT for 375 dwellings granted.
MU6	Land at Lady Dane Farm, east of Love Lane, Faversham	14/0045/OUT for 196 dwellings and 18/501048/REM for 196 on same site granted. Site partially complete/under construction. are complete.
MU7	Perry Court Farm, Faversham	15/504264/OUT for up to 313 dwellings. RM 17/506603/REM for 310 dwellings. Site partially complete/ under construction.

Table 7.0.2 The table above lists the 'Bearing Fruit' housing and mixed use allocations with planning permission

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# Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Swale Local Plan

Interim SA Report

October 2021

**Quality information**

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# Non-technical Summary

This report has presents an appraisal of the five broad development options that are a focus of the current Issues and Preferred Options consultation. A summary of the appraisal is presented in the table below. Within the table the performance of each of the broad development options is categorised in terms of significant effects (using **red** / **amber** / **light green** / **green**)<sup>1</sup> and the options are also ranked in order of preference (where “1” is best performing).

## Broad development options – summary appraisal

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
	Rank of preference and categorisation of effects				
Air quality	=	=	=	=	=
Biodiversity	=	=	=	=	=
Climate change mitigation	3	3	★1	3	2
Communities	3	3	2	2	★1
Economy and employment	2	2	2	2	★1
Flood risk	3	3	2	★1	★1
Heritage	2	3	★1	3	★1
Housing	4	3	2	★1	5
Land	★1	★1	2	2	★1
Landscape	4	4	2	3	★1
Transport	?	?	?	?	?
Water	?	?	?	?	?

<sup>1</sup> **Red** indicates a significant negative effect; **amber** a negative effect that is of note but with limited or uncertain significance; **light green** a positive that is of note but with limited or uncertain significance; and **green** a significant positive effect.

### Summary discussion

It is immediately apparent that Option 5 (two strategic growth locations; one in the west of the Borough and the other in the east) performs well in a number of respects, as indicated by the relatively high number of stars and the relatively low number of red scores assigned. However, it does not necessarily follow that Option 5 is best performing overall. This is because the appraisal does not make any assumptions regarding the weight that is attributed to each topic in the decision-making process. For example, the decision-maker might decide to give particular weight to housing objectives, which could mean concluding that Option 5 performs least well overall. Also, in respect of Option 5, it is important to state that the appraisal reflects some very significant assumptions, both in respect of the specific strategic sites that would be allocated, and the potential to deliver a mix of uses, infrastructure upgrades and wider 'planning gain' alongside housing growth.

A second immediate point to note is that both Option 1 (roll forward the Bearing Fruits Strategy) and Option 2 (adjust the Bearing Fruits strategy to a modest extent) are shown to relatively poorly in most respects (it is only under 'heritage' and 'housing' that the appraisal finds there to be a degree of relative merit). This is certainly an indication that these options perform relatively poorly overall; however, it is important to state that a number of the topic-specific conclusions are quite finely balanced, and associated with assumptions and uncertainties.

Having made these opening remarks, the following bullet points summarise the performance of the broad development options in respect of each element of the SA framework in turn:

- **Air quality** – it is not possible to differentiate between the options with any certainty. There are a range of uncertainties, including in respect of the achievability/deliverability and timing of road infrastructure upgrades. With regards to significant effects, it is appropriate to flag a notable degree of risk under all growth scenarios. Air quality is set to improve significantly over the plan period (for example, air pollution in the Ospringe area is set to halve); however, air pollution is currently a priority issue for the Council.
- **Biodiversity** - it is not possible to differentiate between the broad development options with any certainty. With regards to Option 5, whilst strategic growth locations can give rise to particular opportunities in respect of securing biodiversity net gain, there is little confidence that this applies in the case of the sites in question, and one of the sites (SE Sittingbourne) gives rise to notable concerns. With regards to the other options, there are issues with growth at both Sittingbourne and Faversham, and there is a need to factor-in concerns regarding growth at Rushenden South (in particular) and Teynham. With regards to significant effects, on one hand, limited concerns were raised through the consultation in early 2021, either in respect of biodiversity impacts or a risk of opportunities missed; however, on the other hand, on the basis of an initial review of consultation responses reviewed from site promoters, there is a noticeable lack of proactive proposals in respect of responding to biodiversity issues and opportunities, and the number of site promoters arguing against the proposed requirement for 20% biodiversity net gain is noted.
- **Climate change mitigation** – it is inherently challenging to differentiate between the options, including because there can be tensions between objectives around minimising built environment emissions on the one hand and, on the other hand, minimising transport emissions. On balance, it is considered appropriate to highlight: Option 3 as performing best, because there would be a focus of growth at a strategic urban extension that is well-related to a higher order settlement, *albeit* there are issues and uncertainties around both transport and built environment decarbonisation; and Option 5 as second best performing, given the inherent opportunities associated with strategic growth; however, there is a very high degree of uncertainty, including on the basis that the locations in question are not ideal from a transport connectivity perspective, and recognising that scheme promoters have provided limited information to generate confidence that decarbonisation opportunities exist and will be realised in practice. With regards to effect significance, it is considered appropriate to flag a concern with all of the broad growth scenarios. This reflects a view that the 2030 net zero target date is so ambitious that decarbonisation must be a key driving factor influencing spatial strategy, site selection and development of site-specific requirements/proposals.
- **Communities** - it is fair to conclude that Option 5 is preferred on the basis of the potential to deliver new secondary school capacity at both Sittingbourne and Faversham, although there is uncertainty at the current time, particularly in respect of the potential to deliver a new secondary school at Faversham. This is a departure from the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal presented within the SA Report, which was undertaken on the basis of an assumption that a key issue for the Local Plan is to address existing secondary school capacity issues at Faversham. With regards to significant effects, on the basis of the consultation response received from KCC it is certainly appropriate to predict significant negative effects under Options 1 and 2. It is also fair to highlight uncertain positive effects under Options 5.
- **Economy and employment** - there is uncertainty with employment at the current time, recognising that the ELR was completed prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and employment strategy is in a state of flux nationally. Option 5 potentially performs relatively well, but it is not possible to differentiate further between the options. It is appropriate to flag a risk of negative effects under all of the options other than Option 5. Whilst the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) did not respond to the consultation in early 2021, it is fair to

assume that providing for warehousing and distribution needs remains a key issue for the sub-region; and there are also important links to matters relating to transport infrastructure capacity, as discussed below.

- **Flood risk** - it is appropriate to highlight those broad development options involving less growth directed to the Isle of Sheppey as performing well; however, this is highly uncertain, as there is the potential to deliver growth on the island whilst avoiding growth in a flood risk zone, and growth in the flood risk zone on the island is a very specific matter for consideration (as a potential 'exceptional circumstance') given potentially overriding regeneration objectives. Significant negative effects are not predicted, but it is considered appropriate to flag a notable degree of concern associated with Options 1 / 2. **Heritage** - it is appropriate to highlight those options involving a focus on further piecemeal urban extensions as giving rise to a significant degree of concern, and it is appropriate to highlight Options 2 and 4 as performing worst, as Faversham is very sensitive in historic environment terms. It is suggested that negative effects would be notably less significant under Option 3 and Option 5; however, this conclusion is subject to the views of Historic England. The consultation response received from Historic England in early 2021 focused only on the preferred sites, and focused on policy wording more so than site suitability, but this current consultation provides an opportunity for a more strategic discussion. It is also important to highlight uncertainty regarding the implications of the broad development options for growth at Teynham and Newington, both of which have historic cores, a network of surrounding historic farmsteads (towards which development has encroached over recent decades) and a surrounding landscape with a sense of time-depth strongly associated with the area's fruit growing heritage (see aerial imagery from WWII). There is also a need to carefully consider historic environment / heritage issues associated with options for a new road link to the south of Teynham, particularly mindful of the designated conservation area, which is strongly associated with a north-south dry valley.
- **Housing** - Option 5 performs poorly, given delivery risks associated with a strategy that relies on two strategic sites. Option 1 also performs relatively poorly given viability challenges in the west of the Borough; however, there is considerable uncertainty. Option 4 performs most strongly, as there would be: a focus of growth at Faversham, where development viability is highest; a spread of growth between a strategic site (with associated economy of scale benefits and inherently good potential to deliver a good housing mix) and additional smaller urban extensions likely associated with low delivery risk and able to deliver early in the plan period, thereby alleviating concerns around delay to delivering the strategic site leading to a shortfall in housing supply early in the plan period (albeit, as discussed, the NPPF puts in place mechanisms to redress shortfalls against required trajectory); and support for a strategic site (SE Faversham) where the current proposal is to prioritise affordable housing (40% has been suggested; however, this is unconfirmed and the proposed breakdown of affordable housing tenures is not known) although there is uncertainty at the current time, ahead of further detailed work in respect of masterplanning and viability, taking account of local market conditions (there will be a need to deliver housing at a pace that avoids any concerns around saturation of the local housing market) and including detailed work to understand the costs of required infrastructure.
- **Land** – it is likely that any reasonable broad development option, in the Swale context, would lead to significant negative effects, due to significant loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, including grade 1 land that is of the highest quality nationally. It is appropriate to highlight Option 1, 2 and 5 as performing best, given areas of lower quality agricultural land on Sheppey and within the two new settlement options at Sittingbourne; however, this is fairly marginal and uncertain, given a lack of detailed survey work having been completed.
- **Landscape** - it is appropriate to highlight Option 5 as performing well, because there is potentially something of a landscape opportunity to be realised through strategic growth directed to both Bobbing and to the east / south east of Faversham. The potential to comprehensively plan for the very long term future growth of the Borough's two main settlements can be envisaged; however, in neither case are the current proposals considered to respond to the opportunity in full. As for the other broad development options, Option 3 is judged to perform relatively well, given the focus of growth at E/SE of Faversham, whilst those scenarios involving numerous 'piecemeal' urban extensions give rise to a cause for concern, albeit there is thought to be some capacity. Notably negative effects are highlighted for the two worst performing scenarios taking a precautionary approach, and given a general view that this would be a continuation of the spatial growth strategy seen over recent decades, which has arguably led to a significant erosion of landscape character. It is not possible to confidently suggest any risk of significant negative effects to the setting of the AONB.
- **Transport** - at the current time it is not possible to differentiate between the broad development options with any certainty. This is a departure from the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal completed in 2020. With regards to effect significance, on the basis of the representation received from KCC in early 2021, it is fair to conclude that there are significant uncertainties and concerns regarding all of the options.
- **Water** - it is considered appropriate to highlight uncertain negative effects for all scenarios, albeit it is understood that limited concerns were raised through the consultation in early 2021. A particular consideration is wastewater treatment capacity, and whilst the firm proposals for SE Faversham are encouraging, there is less certainty regarding capacity to support growth elsewhere.



Within the consultation document the Council explains that Option 3 is the emerging preferred option, and presents detailed reasons including:

*“Large scale strategic growth at Faversham would provide good potential to successfully masterplan and deliver a new community, or series of new communities, in line with established best practice principles and to ensure that it was planned in a holistic way. It would also deliver a much needed new secondary school.*

*This option performs well in terms of air quality because strategic growth to the east and southeast of Faversham gives rise to relatively limited concerns as sustainable and active travel measures are easier to implement at these scales of new development as the critical mass is there. Trip internalisation can be implemented, funds can be directed to walking and cycling infrastructure, masterplanning and design measures can focus on supporting walking and there is some potential to walk/cycle to the town centre*

*It also allows for larger scale biodiversity and net gain achievements; again, due to the critical mass.”*

This report has also sought to present a brief, informal commentary on select thematic policy areas, with a particular focus on climate change mitigation / decarbonisation, which is seen to be a key issue for the LPR.

#### *Next steps*

The next step, subsequent to the current consultation, will be to revisit the question of reasonable alternative growth scenarios. In practice, this will mean revisiting the process set out in Section 5 of the SA Report, which lead to five mapped growth scenarios for appraisal. Once growth scenarios have been defined they will then be subject to appraisal, in good time to inform plan-making. Consideration will also be given to the possibility of whether there are other aspects of the LPR, aside from spatial strategy / site selection, that warrant being a focus of dedicated work to formally define and appraisal alternatives.

Once work to explore alternatives has been completed, then the Council will be in a position to finalise the LPR, at which point it will be subjected to appraisal 'as a whole', and then the SA Report prepared for publication alongside the Pre-submission LPR, under Regulation 19 of the Local Planning Regulations. Subsequently the intention is to submit the Local Plan and SA Report for Examination in Public.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AECOM is commissioned to undertake Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in support of the emerging Swale Local Plan Review (LPR). Once in place, the LPR will establish a spatial strategy for growth and change - in response to key issues and opportunities - over the period 2022 to 2038. The LPR will build on the adopted Local Plan ('Bearing Fruits'), which covers the period 2014 to 2031. The LPR will allocate sites to deliver the strategy and establish the policies against which planning applications will be determined.
- 1.1.2 SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to minimising adverse effects and maximising the positives. SA is required for Local Plans.<sup>2</sup>

## 1.2 SA explained

- 1.2.1 It is a requirement that SA is undertaken in-line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. In-line with the Regulations, a report (known as **the SA Report**) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that essentially 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be considered, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.2.2 More specifically, the SA Report must answer **three questions** -
- What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?
    - including with regards to consideration of 'reasonable alternatives'
  - What are the SA findings at this stage?
    - i.e. in relation to the draft plan
  - What are next steps?

## 1.3 This Interim SA Report

- 1.3.1 The Council is not consulting on a draft plan at the current time, but rather 'issues and preferred options', having previously consulted on a draft ('pre-submission' version) LPR and SA Report in early 2021.
- 1.3.2 This current consultation reflects a desire to 'take a step back' and reconsider issues, opportunities and options for the LPR, including in light of a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) and emerging understanding of priorities for local economic recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic. This current consultation is held under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations.
- 1.3.3 There is no strict requirement for SA work at the Regulation 18 stage; nonetheless, this 'Interim' SA Report is produced with the intention of informing plan-making and consultation.

### Structure of this report

- 1.3.4 This report is focused on an appraisal of the five broad development options that are the focus of the current consultation. Additionally, a brief commentary covers thematic policy issues and options.
- 1.3.5 This report is structured differently to the SA Report, which was structured in three Parts to reflect the three questions listed above, at paragraph 1.2.2. It is important to be clear that this report is an informal output of the SA process, and does not aim to present the information required of the SA Report.

<sup>2</sup> Since provision was made through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 it has been understood that local planning authorities must carry out a process of Sustainability Appraisal alongside plan-making. The centrality of SA to Local Plan-making is emphasised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 require that an SA Report is published for consultation alongside the 'Proposed Submission' plan document

## 2 Spatial strategy

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The aim here is to present an appraisal of the five broad development options that are a particular focus of the current consultation (Section 5.1 of the consultation document).

### 2.2 Background

- 2.2.1 The SA Report published alongside the Pre-submission Local Plan in February 2021 included a focus on spatial strategy. In particular, Part 1 of the report presented information on defining (Section 5; also a series of appendices and a stand-alone Technical Appendix) and appraising (Section 6 and Appendix VII) a set of 'growth scenarios', essentially in the form of alternative key diagrams. These growth scenarios were presented across a series of maps, which also featured in the SA Report Non-technical Summary.
- 2.2.2 One of the steps in the process of arriving at the reasonable growth scenarios (in 2020) involved appraising five 'broad growth scenarios', as discussed at [paragraph 5.2.30](#) of the SA Report. Summary appraisal findings, in respect of the broad growth scenarios, were presented in Appendix III, and detailed appraisal findings were presented in a stand-alone Technical Appendix.
- 2.2.3 At the current time, the aim is to 'take a step back' and return to the broad growth scenarios previously considered in 2020. The aim is to ensure that the broad growth scenarios – henceforth referred to as broad development options – are brought to the attention of stakeholders and the public, with a view to stimulating discussion and debate, and new evidence to inform plan finalisation.

### 2.3 The broad development options

- 2.3.1 The broad development options are introduced in detail in the Issues and Preferred Options consultation document. In summary, the broad development options are:
1. Business as usual (development focused on extensions to main settlements with a focus on the Thames Gateway area);
  2. More even distribution of the additional development requirements across the borough's main urban centres and rural areas;
  3. More even distribution of the final requirements across the main urban centres (when combined with allocations in the current local plan, Bearing Fruits);
  4. More of the overall development requirements at the eastern end of the borough; and
  5. Focus on Strategic Development Sites and/or urban extensions primarily located within existing rural areas.
- 2.3.2 Further introduction to the broad development options was also presented across [paragraphs 5.2.25 – 2.2.27](#) of the SA Report, with a focus on considering likely implications for site selection. For example, under Option 1 it is fair to assume that a focus of growth at Sittingbourne would reduce the potential to be selective in respect of the sites at Sittingbourne that are allocated (or, in other words, there would be pressure to allocate sites that are sequentially less preferable, from a suitability/sustainability perspective). Conversely, under Option 4 there would be reduced potential to be selective at Faversham.
- 2.3.3 Ultimately, the appraisal must be undertaken with limited assumptions made regarding the specific sites / broad locations (henceforth sites) that would be allocated under each of the options. This is beneficial in the sense that it allows for consideration of wide ranging issues, opportunities and potential significant effects, unencumbered by site-specifics ('seeing the wood for the trees'). However, an inevitable drawback is the limited potential to draw strong conclusions on likely significant effects, both positive and negative. In this light, the appraisal presented below aims to strike a balance, discussing site-specific issues/opportunities/effects whilst at the same time caveating appraisal findings in the knowledge that final decisions on site allocations will be made subsequent to the current consultation.

## 2.4 Appraisal methodology

2.4.1 Appraisal findings are presented below within 12 separate tables, with each table dealing with a specific sustainability topic (see [Section 3](#) of the SA Report). Within each table the performance of each of the broad development options is categorised in terms of significant effects (using **red** / **amber** / **light green** / **green**)<sup>3</sup> and the options are also ranked in order of preference (where “1” is best performing).

2.4.2 Further points on methodology are as follows:

- Site-specific assumptions – the appraisal must be undertaken with limited assumptions made regarding the specific sites / broad locations, as discussed above. However, it would be remiss for the appraisal to be undertaken entirely blind to the sites that are available and potentially suitable for allocation, and the schemes that are being promoted by land-owners and developers (as understood on the basis of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and consultation responses received in early 2021). There is a need to strike a sensible balance, as per the approach taken to the equivalent appraisal in 2020.

N.B. the consultation document is clear that a strategic scheme at SE Faversham would be necessary under Options 3 and 4, and a similar assumption also fed-into the equivalent appraisal in 2020. Another site specific assumption to state upfront is in respect of the ‘North Street, Sheldwich, Faversham’ strategic site option. This option was considered closely over the period 2018-19, but was ultimately identified as poorly performing relative to the three other strategic site options in contention for allocation (see [paragraph 5.3.11](#) of the SA Report), and then no representation was received from the site promoters in early 2021. As such, this site is not a focus of discussion below.

- Evidence – the methodology discussion presented ahead of the equivalent appraisal completed in 2020 (see [Section 2](#) of the SA Report Technical Appendix) explained that a key source of evidence was a host of evidence-base studies completed or commissioned by the Council, including two reports prepared by Stantec in 2019 that examined four key strategic site options in detail.<sup>4</sup> At the current time, new evidence is primarily in the form of consultation responses received in early 2021; however, the great majority of this new evidence is submitted by site promoters, and is often contradictory or, at least, not aligned. It is a major task to review all of the evidence submitted by the various site promoters, and synthesise key messages for this appraisal, with due caution applied, e.g. recognising that site specific proposals are subject to change (for example, the Stantec workstream scrutinised scheme proposals over a period of months, and was focused on just four sites). It has not been possible to review all site specific representations in detail, for the purposes of this appraisal.
- Significant effects – the aim is to identify, describe and evaluate significant effects in respect of each element of the established appraisal framework in turn.<sup>5</sup> A final concluding section considers significant effects ‘in the round’, but does not aim to reach an overall conclusion on the sustainability of each of the broad growth scenarios, or place them in an overall order of preference. Any attempt to do so necessitates assigning weight to each element of the appraisal framework, which is outside of the scope of SA (it is a task for the decision-maker, *informed by* SA findings).
- Methodology – conclusions on significant effects and relative performance are reached on the basis of available evidence and understanding of key issues and opportunities, mindful of the guidance presented within the Schedules 1 and 2 of the SEA Regulations. This is not an exact science, given the nature of the scenarios under consideration, but rather involve making assumptions and applying professional judgement. Appraisal ‘workings out’ are presented only to a limited extent, with a view to ensuring an appraisal narrative that is relatively concise and accessible.
- Consistency with the 2020 appraisal – the appraisal below is an evolution of the appraisal completed in 2020, and presented in the SA Report. Significant changes are highlighted in the appraisal text.

<sup>3</sup> **Red** indicates a significant negative effect; **amber** a negative effect that is of note but with limited or uncertain significance; **light green** a positive that is of note but with limited or uncertain significance; and **green** a significant positive effect.

<sup>4</sup> *Assessment of Submissions* (February 2019) examined four strategic site options and recommended a range of further work;<sup>4</sup> and then *Assessment of Stage 2 Submissions* (September 2019) considered changes made to the four schemes following the earlier assessment, and reached overall conclusions on each of the four schemes.

<sup>5</sup> The appraisal framework was established mindful of the list of topics suggested as potentially appropriate to include within the scope of SA at paragraph 6 of Schedule 2 within the SEA Regulations. In this way paragraph 6 of Schedule 2 has ‘fed in’.

## 2.5 Appraisal findings

2.5.1 The tables below present appraisal findings in relation to five broad development options under each of the thematic policy headings that together comprise the spine of the established SA framework.

### Air quality

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
=	=	=	=	=

#### Discussion

Air quality is a widespread issue along the A2, given the number of homes and other sensitive receptors located in proximity to the road, with AQMAs designated at Rainham (to the west of Swale), Newington, Keycol (declared in December 2020), Sittingbourne, Teynham and Ospringe, and other sensitive locations (typically junctions) highlighted by the Swale Air Quality Modelling Report (2020). Another AQMA is located along the B2006 (St. Pauls Street) in Sittingbourne, where HGV traffic is a particular issue, and the Air Quality Modelling Report (2020) also highlights the A251 (which links to Ashford) as problematic. [Appendix II](#) of the SA Report presented a summary.

Nitrogen dioxide is a key air pollutant at the current time, but emissions are set to decrease rapidly due to the switch-over to lower emissions petrol/diesel and electric vehicles (EVs). Particulate matters (PMs) are the other key air pollutants, and levels are also set to decrease due to the EV switch-over, although issues will remain, given particulates from tyre wear, braking and road dust. The A2 Clean Air Zone Feasibility Study (2020) concluded that: *“Air quality along the A2 is expected to improve significantly... as the vehicle fleet renews... As such by 2022 a standard reference forecast suggests the annual average NO<sub>2</sub> limit values will be achieved. However, there is... a risk of remaining exceedances especially in the St Pauls Street AQMA.”*

It is very difficult to suggest that either Sittingbourne or Faversham is more constrained in respect of air quality, given uncertainty regarding traffic flows between likely or potential growth locations and key destinations - perhaps most notably flows of traffic along the A2 to and from the motorway junctions - and also uncertainty regarding the transport infrastructure upgrades that would be delivered alongside growth, and the timing of upgrades, including major road upgrades (most notably M2 J7, Brenley Corner) and ‘sustainable transport’ measures set out in the Swale Transport Strategy. The equivalent appraisal within the SA Report Technical Appendix suggested that *“... once the location of available development site options is taken into account, there is reason to suggest that higher growth at Sittingbourne [Option 1] is preferable to high growth at Faversham [Option 4]”*; however, it is now judged appropriate to revisit that conclusion.

The SA Report highlighted particular concerns with growth in the Ospringe area, where *“it is difficult to envisage a strategic transport solution that would avoid increased traffic impacting on the AQMA (including because the largest of the Bearing Fruits allocations to the south of Faversham (Land at Perry Court) is now building-out and providing only access roads).”* However, it is now considered important to emphasise that it is not only growth at Ospringe itself that could lead to pressure on the AQMA, but also growth to the west (Teynham) and potentially also to the east (east and southeast of Faversham). It is also noted that a key site option at Ospringe (SLA18/028 West of Brogdale Road) is now proposing measures to respond air quality and other issues (notably, the scheme is now reduced from 600 homes to 450 homes, and land for a primary school is proposed), although concerns raised in the SA Report regarding a new junction onto the A2 in very close (near adjacent) to the Ospringe AQMA remain.

In light of these initial points, the following bullet points consider the options in turn.

- **Option 1** - high growth at Sittingbourne could involve sites that are either in quite close proximity to the railway station or can access M2 J5 without passing through an air quality problem area; however, any further expansion to the east would give rise to a concern, as this area (along with Teynham) is the part of the A2 corridor most distant from an M2 junction. There is also a need to recognise that the potential for growth to impact on the St Pauls Street AQMA, including the option of strategic growth at Bobbing,<sup>6</sup> although equally there might be strategic growth at South East (SE) Sittingbourne, which is supported from an air quality perspective. This is because the proposed scheme would deliver a new motorway junction and relief road,

<sup>6</sup> The SA Report explained the following regarding the option of strategic growth at Bobbing: *“Bobbing gives rise to concerns regarding increased traffic along the problematic B2006, which would be a primary route for accessing Sittingbourne town centre. The AQMA here was recently (December 2020) amended to include particulate matter (PM10) after the monitoring stations registered an increase in pollution levels. Also, there is a need to consider the AQMA at Newington and the recently (December 2020) designated AQMA at Keycol Hill, on the A2. Some traffic from Sittingbourne and Bobbing seeking to access the Medway Towns will take the A2 route, rather than the longer route via the M2.”* The consultation response received from the site promoter in early 2020 did not respond proactively to air quality concerns (but did discuss air quality concerns with growth at Teynham).

reducing HGV traffic through the St. Pauls Street AQMA on route to Eurolink. The consultation response received in early 2021 sets out reasons why the effect of growth could be a 'betterment' of air quality.

- **Option 2** - there would be the potential to avoid the most problematic sites at Sittingbourne; however, higher growth at Faversham (without strategic growth to the south east) could necessitate growth in the Ospringe area.
- **Option 3** – would involve strategic growth at SE Faversham, where there is relatively good potential to deliver growth without increasing traffic through an AQMA, given proximity of two motorway junctions, and also recognising the potential to support a degree of trip internalisation and modal shift away from the private car (also potentially EV charging infrastructure, and other measures in support of future mobility). However, it is recognised that there are uncertainties ahead of transport modelling and further work on infrastructure delivery.
- **Option 4** – could lead to pressure for growth at Ospringe, over-and-above Option 3.

However, conversely, there could potentially be reduced pressure for growth at Teynham, which another air pollution hotspot. Teynham is distant from a motorway junction and, in turn, there is reliance on the A2 for journeys to higher order settlements that will inevitably involve passing through at least one AQMA. The aspiration is for higher growth to support delivery of a village bypass, which is much needed from a perspective of wishing to address traffic and air pollution within the village centre, including within the designated AQMA; however, the potential for growth to 'unlock' land to deliver a bypass is far from clear.

Equally, there could be reduced pressure for growth at Newington, where air quality is also an issue.

- **Option 5** – it is difficult to draw strong conclusions, particularly without knowing whether growth at Sittingbourne would be directed to Bobbing (which gives rise to an air quality concern) or SE Sittingbourne (which potentially represents an opportunity to deliver new road infrastructure to alleviate existing air quality issues).

In **conclusion**, it is not possible to differentiate between the broad development options with any certainty, which is a departure from the equivalent appraisal conclusion presented within the SA Report. There are a range of uncertainties, including in respect of the achievability/deliverability and timing of road infrastructure upgrades.

With regards to significant effects, it is appropriate to flag a notable degree of risk under all growth scenarios (as per the SA Report). The Air Quality Modelling Report explains that air quality is set to improve significantly over the plan period (for example, air pollution in the Ospringe area is set to halve); however, air pollution is currently a priority issue for the Council, with a new AQMA declared at Keycol in December 2020 and the St Paul's Street AQMA amended to include PM10 after the monitoring stations registered an increase in pollution.<sup>7</sup>

## Biodiversity

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
=	=	=	=	=

### Discussion

A primary consideration is the risk of expansion north of Sittingbourne or Faversham impacting on the Swale and Medway SPA/Ramsar sites ("North Kent Estuaries European sites"), including via increased recreational pressure and/or development of land that is functionally linked to the European sites (e.g. fields used for foraging or roosting by significant wildfowl or wading bird populations); however, growth opportunities in these areas are very limited. This contrasts to the adopted Local Plan, which allocated significant growth at Iwade, Northwest Sittingbourne, Northeast Sittingbourne and at Oare Gravel Works. Aside from the internationally designated sites, nationally designated SSSIs are a limited constraint to growth at locations potentially in contention for allocation; however, locally important habitats are a widespread constraint, and there is also a need to recognise landscape-scale constraints and opportunities. The recent Biodiversity Baseline Study (2020) notably identifies a spatial framework of landscape-scale 'Priority Areas', which will be taken forward through a Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Beginning with Sittingbourne (high growth under **Option 1**), there is limited potential for further significant growth in proximity to the SPA. A potential growth location that gives rise to a notable degree of concern is east of Sittingbourne, between the A2 and the railway (this was an option put to the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020 Local Plan Panel); however, the land is subject to wide-ranging constraints/issues (e.g. settlement coalescence; heritage) and, in any case, the land is c.800m from the SPA/Ramsar at its closest point, not well connected by public right of way (PROW), and not particularly well connected by road.<sup>8</sup> It is also noted that the promoters of Land at North East

<sup>7</sup> See <https://swale.gov.uk/news-and-your-council/news-and-campaigns/latest-news/keycol-hill-aqma-approved>

<sup>8</sup> Little Murston Nature Reserve is a short drive from Bapchild, but there does not appear to be any car parking and, whilst there is a public right of way around the perimeter, the site itself is not thought to be publicly accessible, as it is managed for wildfowling.

Sittingbourne, which is an allocation within the adopted Local Plan (Policy MU2), are now proposing a revised scheme involving additional homes and reduced greenspace, which is concerning as the SPA is within 400m.

Another consideration at Sittingbourne, aside from the SPA/Ramsar constraint, is the notable density of distinctive habitat patches to the south of the town (including traditional orchard habitat, which is a priority) that may function as one or more ecological networks. Under Option 1 there could well be pressure for growth in this area; however, it is difficult to suggest that this would necessarily give rise to a significant concern. The largest site being promoted is SLA18/017 Land at Ufton Court, which directly adjoins the south west edge of Sittingbourne, and is currently under cultivation for fruit growing (this is not thought to suggest biodiversity sensitivity). A detailed consultation response received from the site promoters in early 2021, including with explanation that: *“A preliminary biodiversity offsetting exercise has been completed using the DEFRA Metric 2.0 calculation tool (beta test). At this initial stage of the application process, the calculations have only included the creation of new baseline habitats; and have excluded any enhancement measures on existing habitats and also specific planting/habitats within the broader habitat types. The score is currently positive for habitats and hedgerows.”* From this statement it is unclear whether there is a need to offset biodiversity loss onsite through offsite measures, and whether the outcome would be biodiversity net gain (as measured using the Metric).

A final consideration, in respect of Option 1 (also Option 2), is the potential for higher growth on the Isle of Sheppey. It is difficult to confidently discuss spatial implications; however, it is important to point out that the entire western part of the Island, where growth opportunities are focused, is subject to a degree of SPA/Ramsar constraint, and that one of the sites in contention for allocation (SLA18/113; Rushenden South) is flagged by the Biodiversity Baseline Study (2020) as notably constrained. Biodiversity issues associated with growth here were explored in detail in the SA Report published alongside the Local Plan in early 2021, as well as through a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report, and the site promoters responded very proactively through the consultation, presenting detailed evidence in respect of the potential to avoid and mitigate adverse effects and realise opportunities. However, at the current time, and ahead of further detailed work to explore site options, it remains appropriate to conclude that the overriding consideration is that this is a constrained location from a biodiversity perspective, in an absolute sense and relative to other potential growth locations in the Borough. Natural England’s comments on the proposed spatial strategy in early 2021 were mostly limited to the proposed Rushenden South allocation, with the following clear statement made: *“Natural England is very concerned about this allocation”*. It is recognised that further work has been ongoing since the time of the consultation, which will be taken onboard in due course.

Option 1 (also Option 2) could also see a degree of higher growth at Eastchurch and/or Leysdown, with both settlements thought to be relatively unconstrained. The Sheppey Cliffs and Foreshore SSSI is nearby, but is assumed to have limited sensitivity to modest housing growth.

At Faversham, under **Options 2 and 4** there could well be a need to allocate one or two modest urban extensions to the north of the town, which would more-or-less complete the northern expansion of the town as far as the flood risk zone and/or land locally designated for its biodiversity value. This land is well connected to the SPA/Ramsar by PROW, and the fact that adjacent land is either known to be of local importance for biodiversity (Abbey Fields LWS) or managed for biodiversity (Oare Gravel Works) could potentially suggest a likelihood of the land being functionally linked to the SPA/Ramsar. There would be a need for detailed work to understand the issues.<sup>9</sup>

As for strategic growth at SE Faversham (**Options 3 and 4**), this land is notably unconstrained in biodiversity terms, in that there is very limited onsite priority habitat and limited designated land either in close proximity or easily accessible. However, there could well also be strategic growth to the east of Faversham (north of the A2), and if this were to extend north beyond the Graveney Road / as far as the railway line (to Whitstable), then this would give rise to degree of concern. This is because: adjacent land to the north (on the opposite side of the railway, but easily accessible via a public footpath) comprises the Abbey Fields LWS; the SPA would be c.2.25km by public footpath; and there would also be a convenient driving route to the SPA, via Goodnestone.

Under Options 3 and 4 there could also be reduced pressure for strategic growth at Teynham and Newington. Both villages are historically very strongly associated with fruit growing, and there remain remnant patches of traditional orchard priority habitat, most notably at Teynham. However, a strategic approach to growth at Teynham could potentially support a strategic approach to achieving biodiversity net gain at an appropriate landscape scale, whilst key sites previously examined have been found to be relatively unconstrained in biodiversity terms (on an assumption that current use for intensive fruit growing is not a significant biodiversity consideration).

<sup>9</sup> It is noted that a planning application has been submitted for a 180 home scheme at one of the site options in question, to the north of Faversham (Abbey Fields, [20/500015/OUT](#)), with the submitted HRA Report concluding: *“Taking into account the avoidance and mitigation measures... it is considered that the development proposals will avoid any potential significant adverse effects when the project is considered alone or in combination. At worst, the plan / project would give rise to effects which would be classed as de minimis.”*

A further consideration, under Options 3 and 4, is the likelihood of strategic growth east and/or southeast of Faversham leading to a degree of increased recreational pressure on the Blean Woodlands SAC to the east, potentially in combination with growth in Canterbury District; however, the part of the SAC in closest proximity is managed as a National Nature Reserve, and the car park is on the eastern edge, well over 10 km distant.

Finally, as for **Option 5**, there is a need for caution as one of the four sites in contention - SE Sittingbourne - is notably constrained. This is because there would likely be a need for a focus of growth in the Highstead / Rodmersham Green area, where there is a high density of woodland (including ancient woodland) and traditional orchard priority habitat that is shown by the Biodiversity Baseline Study (2020) to comprise a northern promontory of the North Downs Priority Area (also, the study highlights connectivity between traditional orchard habitat patches as a priority). Development is not necessarily precluded within priority areas; however, taking a precautionary approach it is appropriate to flag a risk of development worsening ecological connectivity between habitat patches at the landscape scale (also potentially direct impacts to habitat patches, e.g. from recreational pressure).

There is also a degree of concern associated with strategic growth to the east / southeast of Faversham if it is assumed to be the case that growth would extend north as far as the railway, as discussed above.

The final key strategic site option for consideration here is Bobbing, which is also associated with biodiversity constraint. This is for two reasons. Firstly, the site is slightly closer to the SPA than is the case for SE Sittingbourne, and whilst it is not clear that this is a particularly accessible or sensitive part of the SPA, there is a need to consider in-combination impacts given committed growth at Iwade and North West Sittingbourne (also the potential for the Bobbing scheme to expand in the future). Secondly, the proposal is for development to largely envelop a small ancient woodland (Rook Wood). Whilst the proposal includes large areas of greenspace, within which it will be possible to deliver targeted habitat creation, there is a need to consider the possibility that having to compensate for impacts to Rook Wood could lead to a challenge in respect of achieving an overall (and sufficient) biodiversity net gain. There is a need to consider functional connectivity between Rook Wood and Hawes Wood to the west.

Finally, in respect of the strategic sites, it is important to note that the summary matrix presented at page 63 of the *Stantec Assessment of Stage 2 Submissions* (2019) assigns all four proposed schemes a 'green' score in respect of potential to achieve net gain(s). However, there is a need for caution, looking beyond generic statements to question the extent to which the proposal is to direct scarce funds to biodiversity and other environmental mitigation/enhancement schemes, and also ensure a focus on inherent locational issues and opportunities, i.e. recognise that not all sites are equal in respect of potential to achieve biodiversity net gain.

In **conclusion**, it is not possible to differentiate between the broad development options with any certainty, which is a departure from the equivalent appraisal conclusion presented within the SA Report. With regards to Option 5, whilst strategic growth locations can give rise to particular opportunities in respect of securing biodiversity net gain, there is little confidence that this applies in the case of the sites in question, and one of the sites (SE Sittingbourne) gives rise to notable concerns. With regards to the other options, it is no longer judged appropriate to conclude that higher growth at Sittingbourne is preferable to higher growth at Faversham, from a biodiversity perspective. Furthermore, there is a need to factor-in concerns regarding growth at Rushenden South (in particular) and Teynham (which is strongly associated with a concentration of traditional orchards).

With regards to significant effects, it is appropriate to flag a notable degree of risk under all growth scenarios. On one hand, limited concerns were raised through the consultation in early 2021, either in respect of biodiversity impacts or a risk of opportunities missed.<sup>10</sup> However, on the other hand, on the basis of an initial review of consultation responses reviewed from site promoters, there is a noticeable lack of proactive proposals in respect of responding to biodiversity issues and opportunities, and the number of site promoters arguing against the proposed requirement for 20% biodiversity net gain is noted.

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<sup>10</sup> Natural England was the only organisation with a strategic biodiversity focus to respond, but their comments on spatial strategy were mostly limited to Rushenden South, as discussed above. Comments received from KCC were focused on a small number of site specific and DM policy matters, and did not consider links between spatial strategy and landscape-scale / long term biodiversity objectives, for example relating to the established network of Biodiversity Opportunity Areas. A note on "planning for inter-relating issues and impacts at landscape scale" was presented within [Appendix III](#) of the SA Report.



## Climate change mitigation

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
3	3	1	3	2

### Discussion

Section 9.4 of the SA Report began with a one page discussion of key decarbonisation issues and opportunities for the LPR, and this is considered an important point of reference (although understanding moves on quickly, for example in light of the evolving national context, e.g. the recently published Transport Decarbonisation Plan).

An initial point to note is the need to consider greenhouse emissions from both transport and the built environment (also, in respect of transport, it is important to note inevitable cross-over with discussion under other headings).

With regards to **built environment emissions**, there are strong arguments for supporting a focus of growth at one or two strategic sites and focusing growth where viability is highest, with a view to facilitating:

- low and zero carbon (LZC) infrastructure, including heat networks (which require strategic planning and typically necessitate higher densities and a fine grained mix of uses);
- buildings designed to achieve net zero or otherwise ambitious levels of regulated (operational) emissions;<sup>11</sup>
- an ambitious approach to unregulated emissions, including embodied and other non-operational emissions, including by supporting modern methods of construction (e.g. offsite construction of modular homes); and
- ‘smart energy systems’ – seen as a priority within the Energy South 2 East Local Energy Strategy (2020) and the recent Energy White Paper (2020), which includes a major focus on delivering a ‘Smart Electricity System’.

Another consideration, in respect of built environment emissions, is the need to consider the possibility of locating growth in proximity to strategic heat sources (also locations with strategic heat demand, e.g. leisure centres), with a view to facilitating delivery of heat networks; however, no particular opportunities are known to exist in the Swale context. Higher density development at Sittingbourne town centre could feasibly facilitate a heat network; however, there is little reason to suggest that this would be viable or achievable, with no obvious strategic heat sources to explore (the proximity of Milton Creek and associated industrial areas is a feasibly opportunity to explore).

A further consideration, in respect of built environment emissions, is the possibility of strategic growth locations supporting the use of hydrogen, including potentially for heating. Hydrogen is a major focus of the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (2020) and the Energy White Paper (2020), and the recent Hydrogen Strategy (2021) proposes a new ‘hydrogen town’ by the end of the decade (also, a consultation is due on the case for enabling, or requiring, new natural gas boilers to be easily convertible to use hydrogen (‘hydrogen-ready’) by 2026).

Finally, it is appropriate to briefly review the latest site-specific proposals at the key strategic site options that submitted a consultation response in early 2021:

- Bobbing – the representation does not discuss any site-specific opportunities, or scheme proposals, in respect of built environment decarbonisation. Neither is this a focus of the scheme [website](#).
- SE Sittingbourne – the representation does not discuss any site-specific opportunities, or scheme proposals, in respect of built environment decarbonisation. The scheme website includes a [section](#) on opportunities, setting out that: “By focusing at a strategic level from the outset we can take a holistic approach to the scheme to design for a carbon neutral future.” However, there is a need to recognise that the scheme comprises a series of linked smaller settlements, as opposed to a single nucleated scheme, which could affect opportunities.
- SE Faversham – the representation does not discuss any site-specific opportunities, in respect of built environment decarbonisation, but does include a section commenting on proposed decarbonisation focused borough-wide development management policies. The comments are reasonable, and serve to highlight the importance of clarity on proposals to go beyond the requirements of Building Regulations, and also clarity on approaches to the electrification of heating, including definition of ‘heat networks’. The scheme website includes a helpful [section](#) on opportunities; however, some of the statements require clarification, for example:
  - “100% powered by renewable energy” – this requires clarification. The scheme will presumably not be connected to the gas grid, but will it be connected to the national grid? The possibility of connecting to the proposed Cleve Hill Solar might be explored.

<sup>11</sup> Regulated emissions are those covered by the building regulations. It is common for Local Plan policies to require levels of emissions below the Building Regulations requirement, and potentially even to require net zero regulated emissions for major schemes (which invariably necessitates offsetting).

- “... a level of energy performance in-use in line with national climate change targets” – how could performance against national climate change targets be measured? Also, there is a clear need to recognise the Borough Council’s committed decarbonisation trajectory, which goes well beyond national commitments. The focus, in respect of regulated operational emissions should be on achieving a percentage improvement on the requirements of Building Regulations, and a focus on unregulated operational emissions (e.g. plug in electrical appliances) is also encouraged. The focus on the London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) Climate Emergency Design Guide is supported, but there is a need to recognise the conceptual framework that is at the heart of the LETI guide, and there might also helpfully be a focus on an ‘energy hierarchy’ approach, as set out within the recently adopted London Plan, and its supporting guidance.
- “Follow best practice targets for embodied carbon by responsible sourcing of materials with the ability to be disassembled at end of life” – best practice, in respect of non-operational emissions, goes beyond these two specific matters, e.g. key opportunities are around ‘modern methods of construction’. Good practice is set out within recent Mayor of London guidance on whole-lifecycle emissions and a circular economy.
- Individual household heat pumps versus heat pumps linked as heat networks – there is a need to explore site specific opportunities (and opportunities that reflect scheme masterplanning and design principles) to support a rapid and effective transition to the use of electricity for heating. There is a need to elaborate on the proposal for “systems in each building to connected to shared ground loop array”. It will be important to take account of the context provided by the forthcoming national Heat and Buildings Strategy.
- Key principles – it is noted that none of the key principles to emerge from the Enquiry by Design process are decarbonisation related. There is a need to ensure a scheme that is driven by ‘top down’ strategic priorities as well as, and potentially to the same extent as, ‘bottom up’ community aspirations. The following concern raised within the SA Report potentially still holds true: “[T]here is a concern regarding an early ‘inward’ focus on detailed design to the detriment of effective planning to realise strategic infrastructure, environmental and socio-economic objectives, including at the Faversham scale and wider scales (e.g. landscape scales), and with a long-term perspective... There is a degree of uncertainty regarding the extent to which the masterplanning and design ethos of the scheme is supportive of minimising emissions...”
- Rushenden South – is a smaller strategic site option, but warrants consideration here, on the basis that the scheme promoters submitted a detailed representation in early 2021. The detailed submission is supported in a number of respects; however, there is a lack of focus on built environment decarbonisation, with only a very brief discussion of high-level principles, and a questionable (or, at least, unclear) commitment to “16 – 18% improvement over building regulations for energy efficiency”. Viability is a challenge on the Isle of Sheppey, which is inevitably a barrier to ambitious low carbon interventions. The representation received from the site promoter states: “It is requested that... policy wording is amended to allow for flexibility in meeting the energy and emissions requirements, by allowing a review of site specific circumstances to establish whether there are constraints that might affect the nature and deliverability of low carbon energy technology on a specific site.”
- East of Faversham – whilst the aspiration is for a comprehensive approach to growth to the east and southeast of Faversham, with a view to realising wide ranging growth-related opportunities, including in respect of decarbonisation, it is apparent from consultation responses received in early 2021 that fragmented land ownership is a barrier to a comprehensive scheme. SE Faversham has been discussed above; with regards to land east of Faversham, representations were received from several different land-owners, with the representations discussing little or nothing in the way of built environment decarbonisation opportunities.

With regards to **transport emissions**, place-specific considerations include:

- Sittingbourne - is the Borough’s highest order centre, with a good town centre and retail offer, an extensive employment offer and a very good rail service; however, certain of the available sites to the south of the town are not very well linked by public or active transport, such that it could be difficult to achieve modal shift.
- Faversham – is a second tier settlement, but there is an identified opportunity to enhance the employment offer, and there is good potential to reach Canterbury and other locations in Kent by public transport.

Strategic growth to the east and/or south east is tentatively supported, given the inherent opportunities associated with strategic growth locations, and because land here is well-related to a higher order settlement with a rail station, and noting the commitment to deliver a good mix of uses onsite and ensure a focus on walking/cycling infrastructure. However, concerns and questions remain, e.g. recognising that Faversham is a second tier settlement, proximity to Faversham town centre is not ideal and two motorway junctions will be in close proximity (albeit potentially supportive of rapid bus services to Canterbury, Whitstable/Herne Bay and other locations to the east). Also, as discussed, there is uncertainty regarding potential to deliver growth to the south of the A2 in combination with growth to north, as a combined strategic scheme that leads to additional economies of scale and potential to deliver ‘sustainable transport’ in-line with the Swale Transport Strategy.

- Sheppey – which would likely see highest growth under Options 1 / 2, is less well connected, and so more likely to be associated with entrenched car dependency; however, Queenborough/Rushenden (one of the locations under consideration for growth) benefits from a rail station, and there is also a good cycle route to Sittingbourne (and/or there is good potential for enhancement). Also, Queenborough/Rushenden is an employment growth and regeneration area, such that the potential to reach destinations by walking/cycling is set to improve over time. Minster is a tier 3 settlement (as per Queenborough/Rushenden), and the Thistle Hill development has come forward alongside community infrastructure; however, likely growth options are not very well connected to Minster or other higher order settlements, including noting that there is no footpath or cycle lane along either Scocles Road or Lower Road (which suffers from problematic traffic, likely to discourage cycling). Finally, Eastchurch and Leysdown are associated with low potential to access a higher order centre by bus or cycling.
- Other strategic site options (Option 5) are all less well related to a higher order centre than is the case for land to the east and south east of Faversham. SE Sittingbourne potentially performs relatively well, as residents would be able to walk/cycle to employment at an expanded Kent Science Park; however, on the other hand, there is a concern that an expanded Kent Science Park (in combination with a new motorway junction) could attract long distance commuting by car, given skills levels locally. As for Bobbing, there is a concern regarding connectivity to Sittingbourne town centre (over 2.5km distant, via the problematic B2006), and whilst the Stantec work in 2019 reported a focus “on Newington Station with routes through the site to it and car parking to be provided and a shuttle bus” the proposed scheme is now understood to be focused on connectivity to Sittingbourne. Whilst the possibility of growth at Bobbing and Rushenden (also noting committed growth at Iwade, NW Sittingbourne and SW Sittingbourne) supporting ‘sustainable transport’ interventions along the A249 corridor might be envisaged, no particular opportunities have been highlighted.

In **conclusion**, it is inherently challenging to differentiate the broad development options, including because there can be tensions between objectives around minimising built environment emissions on the one hand and, on the other hand, minimising transport emissions. In the absence of modelling or other detailed analysis, there is a need to weigh-up competing objectives on the basis of professional judgement, in order to arrive at an overall conclusion.

On this basis, and *as per* the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal within the SA Report, it is considered appropriate to highlight:

- **Option 3** as performing best, because there would be a focus of growth at a strategic urban extension that is well-related to a higher order settlement, *albeit* there are issues and uncertainties around both transport and built environment decarbonisation; and
- **Option 5** as second best performing, given the inherent opportunities associated with strategic growth; however, there is a very high degree of uncertainty, including on the basis that the locations in question are not ideal from a transport connectivity perspective, and recognising that scheme promoters have provided limited information to generate confidence that decarbonisation opportunities exist and will be realised in practice.

With regards to effect significance, there is a need to balance an understanding that climate change mitigation is a global consideration, such that local actions can only ever have a limited effect on the baseline, with the fact that there is a highly ambitious local net zero target in place. On balance, it is considered appropriate to flag a concern with all of the broad growth scenarios. This reflects a view that the 2030 net zero target date is so ambitious that decarbonisation must be a key driving factor influencing spatial strategy, site selection and development of site-specific requirements/proposals.

## Communities

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
3	3	2	2	★ 1

### Discussion

Perhaps the key consideration relates to support for growth via strategic sites well suited to delivering new and upgraded community infrastructure, as opposed to growth via more piecemeal urban extensions, where opportunities can be missed and issues can arise, despite mechanisms for gathering and directing funds for infrastructure.<sup>12</sup> In light of the consultation response received from Kent County Council (KCC) in early 2021, it is

<sup>12</sup> All new development is expected to contribute towards the cost of new infrastructure. Infrastructure funding by developers is most often secured through planning obligations (either through a Section 106 agreement or Section 278 Highway agreement with Kent County Council) or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); however, there is no CIL in place for Swale. On-site infrastructure will be secured based on the needs of each proposal and delivered directly by the developer or through financial contributions and/or the provision of land. Off-site infrastructure will be secured through developer contributions.

considered appropriate to particularly focus on the matter of **secondary school provision**. KCC explain that secondary school provision “is a serious concern”, before going on to discuss issues for:

- **Faversham** – “... the planned expansion of Abbey School and potential expansion of Queen Elizabeth’s Grammar School... is to meet the demands arising from current Local Plan developments. A site for a new secondary school to serve Faversham is required, alongside contributions towards site and build costs. Without [this] all proposed developments for Faversham would be considered unsustainable...”
- **Sittingbourne** – “the position... is a serious one. The site for the all-through school to the north of the A249 is still not due to transfer until 2023. Original plans to meet current demand were through the transfer of this site by 2019 allowing the opening of a new school for 2021 or 2022. It is likely that 2025 will be the earliest that this new school will be able to open. By 2023 there will be more students requiring secondary school places than places available in Sittingbourne and Sheppey schools. Temporary measures will have to be put into place until the new school can be brought forward but these put additional pressure on the schools and on the road network around the schools. Current proposals do not enable a re-balance between secondary education provision in Sittingbourne and on the Isle of Sheppey.”
- **Isle of Sheppey** – “there are more secondary age pupils on the Isle than there are... school places, and KCC has more secondary school places in Sittingbourne than resident children. The result of this is that children travel off the Isle and into Sittingbourne in large numbers. A site for a secondary school... would provide the opportunity to re-balance the school travel flows and provide more sustainable... secondary provision.”

In light of these comments, it is difficult to differentiate between the broad development options with any certainty, in respect of realising opportunities to deliver new secondary school capacity to meet existing need. At the time of the Local Plan / SA Report consultation in early 2021 there was understood to be a particular need and growth-related opportunity at Faversham, but it is now less clear that this is the case. Also, through the consultation responses received from the promoters of land to the east and south east of Faversham it is clear that fragmented land ownership is a barrier to securing land for a new secondary school (let alone a contribution to build costs), for example, one site promoter explains: “The Council have encouraged the five primary landowners to meet and agree the principles for the masterplan. To date, three meetings between the parties have taken place and an agreement cannot be reached between the parties. The key matter for agreement is the principle of each landowner agreeing to the principle of contributing towards allocation wide education infrastructure, this includes a contribution to the land acquisition costs by Kent County Council (KCC) for all new education provisions.” It is recognised that the situation may have improved since the time of the consultation, but this is uncertain.

Another important consideration, aside from secondary school provision, is supporting wider regeneration objectives for the Thames Gateway part of the Borough, with particular issues and opportunities at **Queenborough and Rushenden**. In this respect, it is important to note that under Options 1 / 2 there could be an increased likelihood of a strategic scheme at Rushenden South; however, there is a need for more work to confirm the potential regeneration benefits of growth here. The Design Framework submitted by the site promoter in early 2021 begins with a helpful discussion of the “long term vision” for regeneration of Rushenden, and the term ‘regeneration’ appears throughout the document, but there is limited detail in respect of specific opportunities and proposals (other than in respect of green/blue infrastructure, for which proposals are strong), and whilst ‘social value’ is listed as a key principle within the Introduction section, there is no further discussion. However, it is recognised that the associated consultation response explains that a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) would “seek to maintain existing employment activity and contribute towards improved community infrastructure and facilities.” The consultation response also notably explains: “The relocation/consolidation of port related car storage will release existing brownfield for residential use... This mixed use development will... improve linkages between the Port and Sheerness whilst providing for new facilities for the local area.”

There are also other regeneration priority areas within the Thames Gateway part of the Borough (higher growth under Options 1 and 2). For example, at Leysdown there is an argument for housing growth in support of village vitality objectives, e.g. with a view to supporting shops and services outside of the tourism season. The Settlement Hierarchy Study (2020) explains: “Leysdown and the surround have a unique tourism offer but otherwise would benefit from more diverse employment opportunities, public transport improvements and support for local services.”

Finally, as for **Option 5**, as an initial point, it is important to consider the matter of land value capture, which is discussed within the current Issues and Preferred Options consultation document as a potential benefit of Option 5. This could be the case if there is a degree of healthy competition between the three competing strategic site promoters, and given an assumption that there is a likely need to allocate only one of these three sites (and given an assumption that planning permission is unlikely in the absence of a Local Plan allocation). Good progress on comparing and contrasting the ‘offer’ from the competing sites was made in 2019 through the Stantec-led workstreams; however, at the current time there is limited clarity. Having made these initial points, the following bullet points consider the three key strategic site options:

- Bobbing – the consultation response refers to ‘school provision’, with the scheme website clarifying that the proposal is to deliver a three-form-entry primary school (as well as certain other community infrastructure, notably a health centre, village hall and cricket pitch). The consultation response criticises the analysis presented in the SA Report on the basis that *“little/no weight has been afforded to the new secondary provision to be made at Quinton which is a short distance from the site at Bobbing. The fact that new secondary provision on site is not required, as an existing new provision is to come forward, should not result in our score being reduced.”* However, we maintain that there is a need to direct growth to locations where the effect will be to support new or upgraded community infrastructure that serves to address an existing issue / benefit the existing community, as far as possible, and where such issues exist. It appears to be the case that such issues do exist in the Swale context, on the basis of the KCC consultation response, discussed above.
- SE Sittingbourne – conclusions are broadly as per those set out in the SA Report, which recognised the potential for strategic growth here to perform well from a community infrastructure perspective, despite clear competing costs, most notably in respect of transport infrastructure upgrades. The consultation response received in early 2021 committed to: *“high-quality primary, secondary and further education facilities to the benefit of everyone in Swale [and] a sports hub to encourage the health and wellbeing of current and future residents alike, anchored by a new facility for Sittingbourne Football Club.”* However, there is a need to be mindful of the equivalent statement on the scheme website, which could be more up-to-date: *“... we are currently anticipating: Four new primary schools [and a] six form entry secondary school plus sixth form... The proposal also represents a unique opportunity to potentially deliver a Further Education facility, with Sittingbourne currently not benefiting from such a provision. As a whole, this education infrastructure has the ability to transform the opportunities for young people in the Borough. This will in turn further support the employment market in the Borough and ensure resilience... in the long term, making the area more attractive to employers.”*
- East and south east of Faversham – has already been discussed above. Also of note is the representation received from the Faversham Society in early 2021, which included a focus on strategic community infrastructure upgrades that should or could be delivered alongside growth. The response presents a particularly helpful discussion of strategic green infrastructure investment opportunities, including in respect of overcoming the barrier presented by the A299/Thanet Way. Options should be explored further.

Further matters discussed within the SA Report, in respect of the competing strategic site options, related to “impacts to existing communities” (particular concerns relate to Bobbing) and “engagement, joint working and stewardship” – see discussion within [Section 3](#) of the SA Report Technical Appendix.

In **conclusion**, it is fair to conclude that Option 5 is preferred on the basis of the potential to deliver new secondary school capacity at both Sittingbourne and Faversham, although there is uncertainty at the current time, particularly in respect of the potential to deliver a new secondary school at Faversham. This is a departure from the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal presented within the SA Report, which was undertaken on the basis of an assumption that a key issue for the Local Plan is to address existing secondary school capacity issues at Faversham.

With regards to significant effects, on the basis of the consultation response received from KCC it is certainly appropriate to predict significant negative effects under Options 1 and 2. It is also fair to highlight uncertain positive effects under Options 5. With regards to Options 3 and 4, it is difficult to reach a conclusion.

## Economy and employment

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
2	2	2	2	★1

### Discussion

The Employment Land Review (ELR, 2018) sets out the amount of new employment land that must be delivered through allocations in the LPR (having factored-in existing committed supply and likely future losses of existing employment land, e.g. loss to housing), breaks down the overall requirement according to a series of employment land types and indicates where in the Borough delivery of each type of employment land should be focused. The headline recommendation of the ELR is as follows:

*“A) Up to 40ha of new land for industrial uses is allocated. This should be in the West of the Borough (Sittingbourne, Isle of Sheppey) on sites that are market attractive for larger warehouses.*

*B) Up to 15 of new land for offices and light industrial uses is allocated. This should be focused to the east of the Borough in or around Faversham on one or more sites.”*

However, it is important to note that there is a considerable range that underpins recommendation (A). Specifically, the figure decreases if a lower “5-year ‘margin’” is assumed, meaning an assumption that future losses of industrial land will not follow past trends. There is a strong argument for assuming a lower 5-year margin, because past trends (see Table 5.2 of the ELR) are skewed by an abnormally large loss in 2011 (Sittingbourne Paper Mill). Furthermore, the ELR is clear that if the margin does need to be provided for, then it *“does not necessarily need to be provided today because the logic of the margin is that it may only be needed towards the end of the plan period”*. The ELR is also clear that, given that the need is not in the early years of the plan period, the LPR should not rush to allocate sites to meet the need, because the effect could be to allocate sub-optimal sites.

The following bullet points consider each of the broad growth scenarios in turn:

- **Option 1** - it is difficult to envisage any of the available non-strategic sites at Sittingbourne delivering significant new employment land; however, there could also be modestly increased growth on Sheppey under this option (also Option 2), where there is one available site in contention for allocation of a mixed use scheme, namely 18/113 (South of Rushenden), which is well-suited to delivering new strategic employment land at a location fairly well linked to the A249. A detailed consultation response was received from the site promoter in early 2021, setting out the potential to consolidate the employment land offer at the western extent of the Island, and support operations of the Port of Sheerness; however, further detail on the opportunity would be welcomed.

At Faversham there would be low growth under this scenario; however, one or more of the non-strategic allocations could potentially come forward as a mixed use scheme, delivering offices and/or light industrial uses.

- **Option 2** – broadly as per Option 1, although there could be greater potential to bring forward employment land at Faversham at mixed-use sites. It is fair to assume that the Local Plan would be able to provide for new offices and light industrial land in accordance with recommendation (B) of the ELR.
- **Option 3** – there is good potential to bring forward new employment land as part of strategic growth at Faversham. On this basis, ELR recommendations in respect of locally arising demand for offices, light industrial and industrial land could potentially be met, to some extent; however, opportunities to deliver large-scale new industrial land in well-connected locations in the west of the Borough, with a view to providing for the long term needs of footloose strategic warehousing and distribution operators serving London and the South East, could be missed. New industrial land at Faversham (particularly in proximity to M2 J7) could prove attractive to strategic warehousing and distribution uses; however, this is unclear. The ELR explains:

*“Although Faversham is an untested market for larger unit demand (which fuels the need for additional land) such a highly accessible area is likely to be in demand. The part of the area (closest to the motorway junction) would be particularly attractive to strategic warehouse operators (min area 10 ha), because of the excellent access to the M2. But should areas in the west of the Borough come forward these are likely to be preferable given they are closer to the M25 and benefit from better north / south access (A429).”*

However, there is a need to be mindful of consultation responses received from key site promoters at Faversham through the consultation in early 2021, notably:

- SE Faversham – the site promoters raised a concern regarding the proposed Local Plan requirement to provide at least 20 hectares of land for “economic land uses”, stating: *“We are concerned that this appears to reflect an outdated view of land use planning, where, in particular, “housing estates” and “industrial estates” were strictly separated. Modern good town planning practice, as well the needs of the modern economy, both point towards there being a much more sophisticated approach, with emphasis on homeworking, and small/medium sized worker and office spaces integrated with housing areas and local centres.”* The response also went on to request *“insertion of the word “potentially” before “warehouse and distribution uses” in Policy MU1c/2, to reflect the fact that much work has yet to be done to establish what mix of uses is desirable and/or feasible between Brenley Corner and the railway line.”*
- East of Faversham - the promoters of the land directly to the north of the railway line and directly to the east of the existing urban edge, which is allocated primarily for employment land in the adopted Local Plan and earmarked for significant employment within the concept masterplan for land east and south east of Faversham published for consultation in early 2021, are now proposing: *“a smaller area of locally focused employment land... [to] integrate within the surrounding residential and community spaces encouraging placemaking... This area would accommodate smaller forms of employment such as local retail and ‘enterprising units’ offering flexible spaces to be offered as either light industrial or office spaces.”* The representation also suggests that employment uses should be “relocated” to the SE Faversham site.
- **Option 4** – performs broadly as per Option 3, as it is difficult to assume that any of the additional small scale urban extensions to Faversham under this option would deliver significant new employment land.

N.B. there is also one notable site at the far eastern extent of the Borough (adjacent to Canterbury Borough) that is available for development as an employment only scheme, namely 18/154 (Lamberhurst Farm); however, it is difficult to assume that delivery of this site would be more likely under this broad development option.

- **Option 5** (Strategic sites) – the key point to note is that strategic growth at SE Sittingbourne represents a very significant opportunity, from an ‘economy and employment’ perspective, given the potential to: deliver a new motorway junction, which will improve transport connectivity to Eurolink, Kent Science Park and potentially the Port of Sheerness (from the east); support objectives for Kent Science Park (the scheme website suggests: *“With Kent Science Park at the heart of the proposals for Highsted Park – Swale can become a leader for inward investment especially targeting growth sectors”*); and potentially support new warehousing/distribution in a location well-linked to a motorway junction, thereby fully reflecting ELR recommendations, although proposals are less clear in this respect. However, there are additional considerations to factor-in, when considering the merits of strategic growth at SE Sittingbourne from an ‘economy and employment’ perspective, in particular around the possibility of growth here detracting from growth elsewhere in the Borough (Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheppey) and in the neighbouring authorities of Medway and/or Maidstone (e.g. the emerging Maidstone Local Plan proposes a “prestigious business park at Junction 8 of the M20”).

With regards to Bobbing, the SA Report explained *“the proposal includes limited new employment land, and there is also a need to factor in concerns regarding traffic at the A249 junctions with the B2006 and M2, with the concern being that traffic could affect the functioning of existing, committed and potential future employment areas at Sittingbourne (Eurolink HGVs use the B2006 junction) and Sheppey.”* The representation received from the site promoter through the consultation in early 2020 provides no added detail in respect of the employment land proposal, beyond a suggestion that weight should be afforded to *“the likelihood of the employment land actually being delivered, which we considered to be significantly greater here than anywhere else in the Borough. This isn’t a simple matter that quantity trumps quality.”* The SA Report also questioned the possibility of expanding the employment land offer (see [Box 5.1](#)), and comments on this would be welcomed.

In **conclusion**, there is uncertainty with employment at the current time, recognising that the ELR was completed prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and employment strategy is in a state of flux nationally. Option 5 potentially performs relatively well (as per the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal completed in 2020), but it is not possible to differentiate further between the options (this is a departure from the previous appraisal).

It is appropriate to flag a risk of negative effects under all of the options other than Option 5. Whilst the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) did not respond to the consultation in early 2021, it is fair to assume that providing for warehousing and distribution needs remains a key issue for the sub-region; and there are also important links to matters relating to transport infrastructure capacity, as discussed below.

### Flood risk

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
3	3	2	★1	★1

### Discussion

Large parts of the Borough are constrained by flood risk, as set out within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA, 2019); however, there would be potential to select sites outside of flood risk zones under all options.

The main concern relates to the increased emphasis on the Isle of Sheppey under **Options 1 / 2**; however, it is difficult to assume that modestly higher growth would necessitate allocation of one or more sites constrained by flood risk, given available sites on the Island that are unconstrained by flood risk. There are strong arguments for focusing growth at locations within the flood risk zone at Queenborough/Rushenden, in order to support regeneration; however, it is difficult to suggest that there would necessarily be an increased emphasis on growth here under Options 1 / 2. With regards to the option of a strategic scheme at Rushenden South, flood risk associated with the site was explored in detail within the SA Report (Section 9.7), and the representation subsequently received from the site promoter explains: *“The technical appendix and associated reports... address flood risk, and conclude the site is suitable for the development proposals following the incorporation of flood residence measures including the application of minimum floor and access road levels.”* Progress has been made on resolving the issues, which are significant; however, there is a need to explore the matter further in collaboration with the Environment Agency.

A second consideration relates to the likelihood of one or two small urban extensions to the north of Faversham under **Options 2 and 4**. The sites in question would encroach very close to the flood risk zone that constrains land

to the north of Faversham (also an area of SPA, wider biodiversity and landscape sensitivity), and there is a need to consider the risk of flood risk zones extending under climate change scenarios; however, there is likely to be the potential for further modest expansion without giving rise to undue flood risk concerns.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, there is a need to consider sites that intersect one of the Surface Water Functional Flood Zones associated with the series of dry valleys that characterise the central and southern parts of the Borough. These flood zones are a notable constraint to strategic growth to the southeast of Sittingbourne; however, the SFRA explains: “*This SFRA introduces the concept of Surface Water Functional Flood Zones within dry valleys where there are significant overland flow paths. For development sites located in Surface Water Functional Flood Zones, all types of development could be compatible, providing the FRA can demonstrate that the proposal will be safe from flooding for its lifetime and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.*”

In **conclusion**, as per the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal within the SA Report, it is appropriate to highlight those broad development options involving less growth directed to the Isle of Sheppey as performing well; however, this is highly uncertain, as there is the potential to deliver growth on the island whilst avoiding growth in a flood risk zone, and growth in the flood risk zone on the island is a very specific matter for consideration (as a potential ‘exceptional circumstance’) given potentially overriding regeneration objectives. Significant negative effects are not predicted, but it is considered appropriate to flag a notable degree of concern associated with Options 1 / 2.

## Heritage

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
2	3	★ 1	3	★ 1

## Discussion

A key consideration is directing growth away from parts of the Borough associated with one or more conservation areas or clusters of listed buildings indicating historic settlement, with a need to take into account the grade of listed buildings and also the extent of their setting, for example parish churches are often in prominent locations, and rural farmsteads can also have an extensive setting. Furthermore, there is a need to consider ways in which designated assets relate to one another as part of historic landscapes.

Other important designated assets include scheduled monuments and registered parks/gardens, and both can be associated with extensive settings or clear positions within historic (or ancient) landscapes; however, these assets tend to be located in parts of the Borough unlikely to come into contention for growth. Another important consideration for planning is the location of non-designated assets and archaeology, as understood from the Kent Historic Environment Record; however, it is difficult to use this dataset for strategic planning, because the dataset shows a very large number of assets and does not categorise assets according to significance.

The following bullet points consider each of the broad growth scenarios in turn:

- **Option 1** – whilst there is little certainty, an increased focus of growth at Sittingbourne under this broad growth scenario could necessitate one or more significant allocations to the south of Sittingbourne which, broadly speaking, is a relatively sensitive area from a heritage perspective. This area comprises five parishes (also accounting for Bredgar Parish, to the south of the M2) historically associated with the fertile soils of a transitional landscape between downland to the south and Sittingbourne / the Swale to the north. Each parish has a grade 1 listed church, and there are seven conservation areas across the area as a whole, as well as several small clusters of listed buildings and historic farmsteads. It is also important to note that the nationally available dataset of priority habitat shows a high density of traditional orchard habitat patches (the great majority of which appear to still be present on the ground, as understood from aerial imagery), with the Kent Historic Environment shows numerous areas with a ‘horticulture’ historic character, and the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) explaining that the ‘time-depth’ of the broad landscape to the south of Sittingbourne “*relates predominantly to the continuity of agriculture and fruit cultivation within the area [and other factors]*”.

The largest site being promoted is SLA18/017 Land at Ufton Court, which directly adjoins the south west edge of Sittingbourne, and is currently under cultivation for fruit growing. The site is in close proximity to the series of conservation areas associated with the parishes of Borden and Tunstall. Also, footpaths surround the site, and the existing urban edge appears suitably ‘soft’, in that it mostly comprises mature back gardens. However,

<sup>13</sup> It is noted that a planning application has been submitted for a 180 home scheme at one of the site options in question, to the north of Faversham (Abbey Fields, [20/500015/OUT](#)), with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment concluding: “*The Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the development is located in Flood Zone 1 which is defined as having a low risk of flooding from rivers and sea. The Flood Risk Assessment also demonstrates that there is a low risk of flooding due to other sources.*”



it could be suggested that the site relates quite well to the existing urban edge in built form terms, and the consultation response received from the site promoter in early 2021 explores heritage issues/impacts. Whilst the SA Report highlighted a particular concern regarding potential site access adjacent to the Tunstall Conservation Area, the current proposal involves access from elsewhere, and the site promoters conclude no concerns regarding the Tunstall Conservation Area “*due to vegetative buffering and long gardens*”.

Another possibility, under Option 1, is increased pressure for further expansion to the east of Sittingbourne, potentially expanding the town as far as Bapchild and Tonge, both historic parishes with a grade 1 listed church, although Bapchild’s character is now dominated by 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing, and only Tonge is associated with a designated conservation area. It is also noted that the promoters of Land at North East Sittingbourne, which is an allocation within the adopted Local Plan (Policy MU2), are now proposing a revised scheme involving additional homes and reduced greenspace, which is concerning given the adjacent grade 1 listed parish church.

Finally, there is a need to consider the implications of modestly increased growth on the Isle of Sheppey under Options 1 / 2. Sheppey is associated with wide ranging heritage constraints and opportunities, as explored in detail within the Swale Heritage Strategy (2020). Most of the potential growth locations are thought to be of relatively limited sensitivity, on the basis that they would comprise further extensions to the extensive 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century development; however, there is a need to consider open views across marshland landscapes and distant views to Minster Abbey on raised land. One of the larger site options in contention for allocation is SLA18/038, which likely contributes to the setting of grade II listed Scoccles Court, which was associated with an extensive rural setting prior to the development of Thistle Hill, over the past decade or so. There is also a need to consider the possibility of long distance of views across this site, across historic landscapes.

With regards to Rushenden South, the site appears to have limited sensitivity (although there are landscape sensitivities), and regeneration of Queenborough/Rushenden is supported from a heritage perspective. The Queenborough Conservation Area is the only conservation area on Sheppey outside of Sheerness, with the Swale Heritage Strategy describing Queenborough as a ‘planned medieval town’ with a castle (the castle mound is a scheduled monument). The Strategy also describes Sheerness and Queenborough as “*beacons of coastal rejuvenation leading the way to success for all communities on the Isle of Sheppey*”.

- **Option 2** – under this broad growth scenario there would be decreased pressure to allocate problematic sites at Sittingbourne, but there would be increased pressure to allocate non-strategic urban extensions to Faversham, which is very highly constrained from a historic environment perspective; indeed, Faversham’s heritage value is of at least regional renown, and maintaining this role is central to the vision for the Borough. In light of these sensitivities, there is a need to consider potential directions of growth in turn:
  - North: the possibility of one or two modest urban extensions, to more-or-less complete the expansion of Faversham as far as the flood risk zone / area of SPA constraint, potentially gives rise to *relatively* limited concerns from a historic environment perspective, with sites abutting the extensive Faversham Conservation Area but likely to have relatively limited visual connectivity. However, sensitivities do exist, particularly given extensive views across flat, marshland-edge landscapes that potentially hold historic environment value, including views from public rights of way. The Swale Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) states the following in respect of one of the locations in question: “*The wider views and visual relationship with the surrounding marshland and tidal creek (including a boat yard) and the local landmark of St. Mary’s Church, Faversham on the skyline provide a relatively strong sense of place. The disused 19th century sewage pumping station and brick works buildings also have some historic and visual interest, the small surviving chimney of which... contributes to the sense of past industry around the tidal creek area.*”
  - East: much of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century expansion of Faversham has been to the east, hence further expansion potentially gives rise to relatively limited concerns, from a historic environment perspective (N.B. see further discussion below regarding landscape concerns, including in respect of ‘urban sprawl’). However, there is a need to consider the rural setting of Faversham, including as experienced by motorists approaching along the A2 from the east, with the Swale Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) explaining: “*The time-depth of the landscape relates predominantly to the continuity of agriculture and fruit cultivation within the area, together with the presence of scattered historic farmsteads, with occasional pasture and traditional orchards. Some areas of orchard have been lost in recent decades, together with field boundaries, resulting in more open, larger arable fields, particularly in the north and east of the area.*” A further consideration is encroachment of the eastern edge of the town towards historic farmsteads,<sup>14</sup> and impacts to views from cycling routes and public footpaths that link Faversham to the Goodnestone Conservation Area and the marshland walking and cycling routes beyond.

<sup>14</sup> One of the farmsteads is associated with a grade 2\* listed building and another associated with two grade 2 listed buildings. The third farmstead is not associated with any listed buildings, but is visible on the pre-1900 OS map.

- South: Faversham historically extended between the marshes and creekside industry in the north and the A2 in the south, with Ospringe and Syndale Park – both designated conservation areas – to the south of the A2; however, the built form of the town is evolving, with the adopted Local Plan allocating two sites to the south of the A2 (either side of the A251) that will together deliver nearly 600 homes plus new employment land. Under this broad development option there would be pressure for further non-strategic expansion to the south of the A2, and this pressure would most likely concentrate on the sector of land falling between Ospringe in the west and the Brogdale Road in the east. This area is clearly constrained by the Ospringe Conservation Area to the west and the Faversham Conservation Area to the north, plus there is a need to consider contribution to a historic landscape strongly associated with fruit cultivation, as well as impacts to important links between Faversham and the rural landscape to the south of the M2, including the Whitehill and Painters Forstall Conservation Areas and the national fruit collection at Brogdale Farm. However, having said this, it is recognised that the site promoters for ‘Land west of Brogdale Road’ set out a proactive response to identified issues and constraints through the consultation in early 2021 and, as part of this, are now proposing a scheme comprising reduced housing and increased greenspace.
- West: there is thought to be limited realistic potential for expansion to the west; however, there could be the possibility of a modest urban extension to the north of the A2, potentially expanding the western edge of the town in this area as far as the B2045 ‘Western Link’. There are no listed buildings in this area; however, this land (in particular the western part) contributes to an attractive rural setting to the western edge of Faversham, in combination with the highly visible landscaped grounds of the Syndale Park Conservation Area to the south of the A2. Furthermore, the Ordnance Survey map indicates the site of a Roman burial ground, and the Kent Historic Environment suggests this as the possible site of the Roman Station (mansio) of Durolevum, noting that the A2 is a Roman road (Watling Street).
- **Option 3** – as noted by the Swale Heritage Strategy (2020): *“It is no coincidence that Faversham has the highest concentration of historic buildings in the area and also the most viable commercial and residential economic markets in the Borough”*. In this context, there is potentially merit to a strategic growth to the east / southeast of the town, from a historic environment perspective, in order to alleviate pressure for growth in sensitive locations elsewhere. This suggestion reflects an understanding that land to the east and southeast of Faversham is relatively unconstrained in historic environment terms, and also an understanding that there would be good potential to avoid and mitigate historic environment impacts by taking a strategic approach to masterplanning, landscaping and design. There could also be good potential to deliver a new community - with associated employment, services, facilities, retail and infrastructure upgrades - that supports Faversham as a thriving market town and visitor/tourist destination. However, there are wide ranging risks and uncertainties, including around traffic (including through the Ospringe Conservation Area),<sup>15</sup> a new retail offer competing with Faversham town centre, impacts to the historic agricultural and horticultural landscape setting of the town and impacts to landscapes that link the town to surrounding historic settlements and landscapes, in particular Goodnestone and the marshes to the northeast. A key consideration is the integrity of the three closely linked historic farmsteads located between the expanding eastern edge of Faversham and Goodnestone.<sup>14</sup>

Historic England’s response to the consultation in early 2021 included a focus on the proposal for strategic growth to the east and south east of Faversham; however, comments were mostly around policy requirements to ensure that impacts can be avoided/mitigated through the development management process. One notable comment was that: *“Ewell Farm is... one of several historic farmsteads surrounding the town of Faversham which illustrate a historic landscape character intimately connected with agriculture.”*

- **Option 4** – it is fair to conclude that this option performs worse than Option 3; however, in practice it could be possible to deliver one or two modest urban extensions with limited historic environment impact.
- **Option 5** – of the other strategic site options (in addition to SE Faversham, which is discussed above), it is SE Sittingbourne that stands-out as most constrained. Unlike the other new settlement options, there is the potential to draw upon a valley topography to frame growth, which arguably leads to benefits in respect of alignment with historic settlement pattern (and landscape containment / lower risk of ‘sprawl’); however, the corollary is growth would be in proximity to existing historic environment assets. The current proposed masterplan seeks to take a ‘landscape led approach’ and avoid impacts as far as possible, including by avoiding development in proximity to the only conservation area in the vicinity (Rodmersham Green); however, tensions remain nonetheless, most notably at the northern extent of area, where a new link road would cut through the Tonge Conservation Area, and in the central area, where development would abut the hamlet of Rodmersham, where there is a cluster of four listed buildings including a grade 1 listed church, which the Swale Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) describes as “an important local landmark and skyline feature”. The further statement made by the Assessment, as part of a discussion of ‘time depth’, is also of note: *“It is evident that*

<sup>15</sup> The representation received from the Faversham Society in early 2021 suggested: *“Heritage at risk’ should include Ospringe, which is potentially to be inundated with traffic.”*

*there have been changes in land cover in recent years, with the conversion of areas of commercial orchards to arable, and vice versa, for example along Church Street and Pitstock Road. However, this does not change the fundamental character of the landscape. The loss of some areas of traditionally managed orchards has adversely affected the historic and scenic character of the landscape, although more intensive commercial orchards remain an important feature which contributes to a distinctive sense of place”.*

With regards to Bobbing, the site is subject to notably lower constraint. The new settlement would envelop the string of ten listed buildings that stretches between Bobbing in the south (where there is a grade 1 listed church) and Howt Green in the north; however, there is no designated conservation area; the historic character of this area is presumably somewhat affected by the nearby A429; and development would deliver a bypass of Bobbing. Development would envelop only one historic farmstead (with one grade II listed building), although the possibility of further expansion (in the future) encroaching upon two further farmsteads can be envisaged.

Finally, it is worth commenting on North Street, to the south of Faversham, although in practice it is not clear that the site is being actively promoted, with no consultation response having been received from the site promoter in early 2021. Growth here would likely envelop grade 1 listed Copton Manor, as well as the cluster of six grade 2 listed buildings, and also encroach upon the historic hamlet of Newhouse Farm / Gosmere (eleven listed buildings) and the Sheldwich Conservation Area to the south, which is associated with raised ground within the Kent Downs AONB. The Swale Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) explains: *“The time-depth of the landscape relates predominantly to the continuity of agriculture, fruit and hop cultivation within the area, together with the presence of many scattered historic houses, farmsteads and associated barns, oasts, stables and granaries in the Kentish vernacular styles (including timber framed, weather boarded and red brick), some with parkland containing notable mature trees, pasture and traditional orchards... Some areas of traditionally managed orchards have been lost in recent years, together with field boundaries, resulting in more open, larger fields.”* It also notes that there is evidence that the very large ‘prairie’ field in the vicinity of Copton has never been enclosed. However, there are also potential benefits from a bypass of North Street.

In **conclusion**, as per the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal within the SA Report, it is appropriate to highlight those options involving a focus on further piecemeal urban extensions as giving rise to a significant degree of concern, and it is appropriate to highlight Options 2 and 4 as performing worst, as Faversham is very sensitive in historic environment terms. It is suggested that negative effects would be notably less significant under Option 3 and Option 5; however, this conclusion is subject to the views of Historic England. The consultation response received from Historic England in early 2021 focused only on the preferred sites, and focused on policy wording more so than site suitability, but this current consultation provides an opportunity for a more strategic discussion.

It is also important to highlight uncertainty regarding the implications of the broad development options for growth at Teynham and Newington, both of which have historic cores, a network of surrounding historic farmsteads (towards which development has encroached over recent decades) and a surrounding landscape with a sense of time-depth strongly associated with the area’s fruit growing heritage (see [aerial imagery](#) from WWII). There is also a need to carefully consider historic environment / heritage issues associated with options for a new road link to the south of Teynham, particularly mindful of the designated conservation area, which is strongly associated with a north-south dry valley.

## Housing

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
4	3	2	1	5

### Discussion

It is assumed that all of the broad development options would deliver the same number of new homes in the plan period, and it is not possible to suggest that housing need is particularly acute in any one part of the Borough (rural housing needs are a specific topic worthy of consideration, but outside the scope of this current appraisal). Option 5 could well involve allocating one or more sites that continue to deliver homes beyond the plan period; however, it is difficult to suggest this is a notable ‘positive’, from a housing perspective, as housing needs beyond the plan period can be met through a future Local Plan Review.

In turn, it is appropriate to focus attention on differentiating the scenarios in respect of the potential to deliver a good **mix of housing types, sizes and tenures**. There are inherent uncertainties, and in many ways this is a detailed consideration for the planning application stage; however, it is a strategic consideration for Swale because housing mix is a factor of development viability, which varies significantly across the Borough.

The headline point to note is that development viability is lower at Sittingbourne and on the Isle of Sheppey than at Faversham. There are also concerns about market saturation affecting viability (and/or deliverability) in the Sittingbourne area, given that several strategic sites are due to start building out now that the M2 J5 improvements have been secured. There is also some finer-grained variation of note (as understood from the house prices 'heat map' presented in Appendix II of the SA Report). In particular, it is notable that the parishes south of Sittingbourne are associated with much higher house prices than Sittingbourne itself, and within Faversham there are areas of notably lower house prices either side of the town centre / conservation area.

These variations in development viability are reflected in Policy DM8 (Affordable Housing) of the adopted Local Plan, which requires 0% affordable housing on Sheppey and 10% affordable housing at Sittingbourne, in comparison to 35% affordable housing at Faversham and 40% affordable housing in the rural area. The Local Plan Review will adjust the affordable housing policy; however, there will still be a need to account for variations in viability, when determining spatial strategy and allocating sites.

As for the three competing strategic site options, two are currently proposing to deliver 40% affordable housing, whilst one – SE Sittingbourne – is proposing to deliver 20% (having previously proposed 10-20%). The proposed approach at SE Sittingbourne reflects an understanding that there will be other funding priorities, in particular major transport upgrades. It is also noted that SE Sittingbourne is the only one of the strategic site options to include a clear commitment to delivering specialist housing (“retirement living and self-build opportunities for local people”), which is assumed to represent a development cost (i.e. these uses are thought to be less viable than market housing with affordable), but this is not entirely clear and, in any case, this proposal could be subject to change.

None of the strategic site promoters have proposed making land available for Gypsy and Traveller pitches (or Travelling Showpeople plots), which is an approach that is quite common nationally, where there is a local need.

Finally, in respect of the strategic site proposals, it is important to recognise that additional development costs could emerge leading to a need to reconsider the mix of housing, including affordable housing, that can be delivered. For example, at Faversham and Bobbing there is uncertainty regarding the extent of transport infrastructure upgrades required to support the scheme.

A further consideration, related to viability, is **delivery risk**. It is difficult to conclude that this is a 'housing' consideration, as the NPPF puts in place mechanisms to redress unanticipated shortfalls in housing delivery (the presumption in favour of sustainable development). Furthermore, there is the potential for the LPR to proactively address delivery risk, under all scenarios, by putting in place a land supply that is perhaps 10%, 15% or 20% above the housing requirement, as a contingency for unanticipated delays to delivery ('supply buffer'). However, delivery risk is considered to be an important issue in the Swale context. As stated within the officer's report to the 28th October 2018 Local Plan Panel: *“Perhaps the single greatest influence on delivery levels will be the settlement strategy and the choice of sites that will be pursued by the next Local Plan. Here, matters such as the viability of specific parts of the Borough and the ability of infrastructure to be in place at the right time will be key considerations.”* Viability need not necessarily constrain delivery if development costs are kept low, but this can lead to tensions with wider objectives, for example affordable housing. Having made these introductory remarks, it is appropriate to comment on variation in delivery risk between the four competing strategic site options. This was a focus of the Stantec work completed in 2019:

- SE Faversham – *“Of the four schemes promoted this is clearly the lowest 'risk'. It is essentially an extension to Faversham and is more developed than the other three schemes, with fewer significant barriers to delivery within a short timetable. It has also been shown to be viable. There has been a commitment to accelerate the delivery rate which means the pace of delivery is more in line with the Council's objectives. However, there remains uncertainty about Junction 7...”*

N.B. uncertainty about Junction 7 remains, and has potentially increased since the time of the Stantec work.

- Bobbing – *“This site is reasonably low risk and is very viable, its landscape impact can be mitigated, and it has the potential to come forward quickly.”*
- North Street (to reiterate, it is not clear that this scheme is still being actively promoted) – *“To address the transport and landscape concerns could result in a very different scale of proposal. This is unlike the other three sites where we think, if taken forward, it is likely that a proposal similar to that proposed today could be taken forward, ie with the scale of homes promoted, the general layout and package of infrastructure.”*
- SE Sittingbourne – *“... remains the highest risk due to the timing, delivery and cost of the new junction 5A which all have implications on the viability and mean it can only delivery 20% affordable housing.”*

N.B. further detailed work has been ongoing since the time of the Stantec work, to the point where a planning application has now been submitted (for a particular scheme, which should not necessarily be assumed to be the scheme that would be supported through the Local Plan, were any scheme to be supported), hence it is fair to assume that delivery risks and uncertainties are lower now, in comparison to the time of the Stantec work.

In **conclusion**, as per the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal within the SA Report:

- Option 5 performs poorly, given delivery risks associated with a strategy that relies on two strategic sites. There would still be a large supply of homes from sites that are already committed (the Borough is in a strong position, with a large number of commitments set to deliver homes in the early part of the LPR plan period) and from windfall sites; however, there would be a delivery risk over the plan period as a whole. In practice there would be good potential to manage this risk by additionally allocating a package of low risk settlement extensions; however the effect would be ‘over-allocation’ against established housing needs, leading to tensions with other sustainability objectives.
- Option 1 also performs relatively poorly given viability challenges in the west of the Borough; however, there is considerable uncertainty. It could well be that schemes are able deliver a good mix of housing, to include a good proportion of affordable housing, if housing objectives are prioritised above other policy requirements, for example in respect of decarbonisation.
- Option 4 performs most strongly, as there would be:
  - a focus of growth at Faversham, where development viability is highest;
  - a spread of growth between a strategic site (with associated economy of scale benefits and inherently good potential to deliver a good housing mix) and additional smaller urban extensions likely associated with low delivery risk and able to deliver early in the plan period, thereby alleviating concerns around delay to delivering the strategic site leading to a shortfall in housing supply early in the plan period (albeit, as discussed, the NPPF puts in place mechanisms to redress shortfalls against required trajectory); and
  - support for a strategic site (SE Faversham) where the current proposal is to prioritise affordable housing (40% has been suggested; however, this is unconfirmed and the proposed breakdown of affordable housing tenures is not known) although there is uncertainty at the current time, ahead of further detailed work in respect of masterplanning and viability, taking account of local market conditions (there will be a need to deliver housing at a pace that avoids any concerns around saturation of the local housing market) and including detailed work to understand the costs of required infrastructure.

In respect of significant effects, the key point to note is that there is confidence in the ability to provide for LHN – which is likely to be set as the housing requirement – at a steady (or otherwise appropriate) rate across the plan period under all of the options bar Option 5. Having said this, there is a need to temper conclusions on significant positive effects ahead of further detailed work to explore site and strategy options, taking particular account of the costs and timing of strategic infrastructure upgrades, particularly transport infrastructure.

## Land

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
★ 1	★ 1	2	2	★ 1

## Discussion

A primary consideration is the need to avoid the loss of best and most versatile (BMV) **agricultural land**, particularly grade 1 land that is of the highest quality nationally. Swale has a very extensive resource of such land.

The belt of grade 1 agricultural land in the Borough – known as the fruit belt – is centred on the **A2 corridor**, hence it is very challenging to identify any realistic broad growth scenario that would direct growth away from the area of agricultural land constraint. **Sheppey** is relatively unconstrained, with low-lying land shown by the nationally available dataset as being non-BMV (grade 4) and higher ground shown as grade 3 (which may or may not be BMV); however, BGS-A would involve only a modestly increased focus of growth at Sheppey, recognising that there are wide ranging barriers to growth on the Island.

As for the **strategic site options**, it appears to be the option of growth to the east and south east of Faversham that is most constrained, with the nationally available dataset showing almost all of the land to be of grade 1 quality, and in the knowledge that land in this part of the Borough has always been intensively farmed for agriculture and fruit cultivation. The ‘Environment’ page of the scheme website for SE Faversham suggests that “a strategy based on healthy soils” is a key principle underpinning the scheme, but it is not clear how this is reflected in the scheme.

SE Sittingbourne is potentially the least constrained, as the nationally available dataset shows the southern part of the site to mostly comprise grade 2 quality land; however, it is important to recall that the dataset is very low resolution (e.g. with Teynham and Newington not recognised as comprising non-agricultural land). Only a small part of the Borough has been surveyed in detail, to establish the grade of agricultural land with certainty, and very


little of the land within the strategic site options (Bobbing is a notable exception, where some of the land has been surveyed in detail and found to comprise a mix of grade 1, 2, 3a and 3b quality land, somewhat contrary to the low resolution national dataset, which suggests grades 1 and 2).

In **conclusion**, it is likely that any reasonable broad development option, in the Swale context, would lead to significant negative effects, due to significant loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, including grade 1 land that is of the highest quality nationally. As per the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal within the SA Report, it is appropriate to highlight Option 1, 2 and 5 as performing best, given areas of lower quality agricultural land on Sheppey and within the two new settlement options at Sittingbourne; however, this is fairly marginal and uncertain, given a lack of detailed survey work having been completed.

N.B. a further consideration is the extent of **minerals safeguarding** areas across the Borough; however, these are very extensive, and cover the majority of land along the A2 corridor that comes into contention for growth (SE Sittingbourne potentially stands-out as being subject to relatively low constraint). As such, it is not considered appropriate to differentiate the option in respect of impacts to minerals safeguarding areas. In practice, the presence of a safeguarding area does not necessarily mean that extraction would be viable, and it can be possible to extract minerals prior to development.<sup>16</sup>

The consultation response received from the SE Sittingbourne site promoters in early 2021 sought to draw attention to the fact that they have undertaken a Minerals Assessment (MA), which highlights an area of “good potential for brick earth of economic value” within the site. The consultation response goes on to explain why there is no potential to extract the brickearth in practice, and suggests that an MA should be undertaken for other proposed allocations. This aligns with statements made within the KCC consultation response. However, it is unclear when, in the site selection process, an MA should be undertaken. For example, should it be undertaken for a shortlist of site options, ahead of proposed allocations being selected; or should an MA be undertaken for the final list of proposed allocations, with the list subsequently adjusted in response to the MA? Clarity is sought on this matter.

## Landscape

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
4	4	2	3	1 

### Discussion

There is a wide range of evidence to take into account, when considering the landscape merits of the broad development options. In addition to avoiding impacts to the Kent Downs AONB and its setting, there is a need to avoid impacts to locally designated landscapes and countryside gaps, as understood from the Landscape Designation Review (2018) and the Important Local Countryside Gaps study (2020). Additionally, the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) examines the sensitivity of all landscape parcels surrounding the main settlements. More broadly, there is a need to consider topography across the Borough, historic landscape character and important views, including from roads and public rights of way. There is also a need to be mindful of wide ranging ecosystem services delivered by landscape units (see discussion in [Appendix III](#) of the SA Report).

Having made these initial points, the following bullet points consider each of the broad growth scenarios in turn:

- **Option 1**– whilst there is little certainty, an increased focus of growth at Sittingbourne under this broad growth scenario could necessitate one or more significant allocations to the south of Sittingbourne. This area (parcel SE4) is judged to have overall **moderate-high** sensitivity, with a key conclusion: *“The landscape has a distinctive dry valley in the east, evidenced by its local landscape designation, and a rolling and undulating landform in the centre and west. There is a strong rural character through much of the area, and a resource of valued natural features and semi-natural habitats. There are high levels of enclosure and a well-defined urban edge to Sittingbourne. It is in close proximity and partially visible from the AONB which lies to the south of the M2.”* However, it could be the case that one or more locations for modest urban extensions can be identified that are subject to relatively little landscape constraint. Specific options were explored in the SA Report.

Another possibility, under this option, is that there could be increased pressure for further expansion to the east of Sittingbourne, likely to the north of the A2, where parcel SE1 is judged to have **moderate** sensitivity. This could involve revisiting the proposals for open space and landscaping set out in the conceptual masterplans for the NE Sittingbourne allocation within the adopted Local Plan (the site promoters proposed increased homes / reduced greenspace through the consultation in early 2021), and there would be wide range constraints and issues to consider (not least Tonge Conservation Area and the grade 1 listed church to the north); however,

<sup>16</sup> See further discussion at: [mineralproducts.org/1999/landscape20.htm](https://mineralproducts.org/1999/landscape20.htm)

from a pure landscape perspective, there could be a degree of opportunity around completing the expansion of the town in this direction, and then maintaining a landscape gap to Teynham (which has recently been identified as warranting designation as an important countryside gap, albeit landscape character is somewhat weak). Having said this, the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) notes: *“The area south of the railway line around Tonge has a higher sensitivity due its smaller scale, higher scenic quality and greater prevalence of valued historic and natural features.”* See further discussion above, under Biodiversity and Heritage.

Also, under this option (also Option 2), there could be moderately increased pressure for growth on the Isle of Sheppey, where all of the landscape parcels that would likely come into contention are judged to have a **moderate-high** sensitivity to housing, bar the two landscape parcels at Leysdown and Warden, which have **low-moderate** sensitivity. There could be the potential for one or more LPR allocations in the Leysdown area; however, any growth would be of a modest scale. A more likely situation is that land in the vicinity of Rushenden comes into contention for growth, given better connectivity and the need for growth to support regeneration objectives. This does give rise to concerns, from a landscape perspective, as land here forms the western extent of the North Swale (Sheppey) Marshes locally designated landscape. Furthermore, there is a likelihood of a mixed use scheme, and the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment identifies this area as having a **high** sensitivity to employment development. Issues were explored in detail in the SA Report, subsequent to which the site promoters submitted a detailed consultation response setting out proactive measures in response to the issues raised. There would clearly be a need to explore matters further ahead of any decision on allocation.

- **Option 2** – there would be decreased pressure to allocate problematic sites at Sittingbourne, but there would be increased pressure to allocate non-strategic urban extensions to Faversham, which, in short, is associated with a high degree of landscape sensitivity, as evidenced by five of the seven landscape parcels surrounding the town having a **high** sensitivity rating. However, under this scenario there could be the potential to direct growth to modest urban extensions with relatively limited landscape sensitivity, in the context of a wider landscape parcel with high (or moderate-high) sensitivity. Also, the bulk of growth would likely be directed to the east of the town, where the landscape has only **moderate** sensitivity, although there are concerns in respect of built form and ‘urban sprawl’.
- **Option 3** – there would be strategic growth to the east of the town, a strategy that is tentatively supported from a landscape perspective, in light of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019), which finds the entire site to fall within a parcel of moderate sensitivity (parcel FM1), which equates to relatively limited sensitivity in the context of the Borough and, in particular, in the context of Faversham. The assessment notes that the *“presence of major road infrastructure and heavy traffic”* has a significant impact on the sense of rurality and tranquillity. However, the assessment also finds that the area *“retains a strongly agricultural character”* and that this character together with the *“visual exposure of the area”* results in a degree of sensitivity.

It is important to recognise that development would breach a longstanding settlement boundary feature to the southeast of the town, namely the A2 which has historically marked the limit of the southern extent of the town (with the town centre focused on the creek, more so than the road and railway); however, existing Local Plan allocations have already breached the boundary of the A2 to the south of the town. Furthermore, expansion to the southeast has the benefit of being able to draw upon the M2 (with the AONB beyond) as a new strong/defensible long-term boundary. Having said this, the current proposal falls short of comprehensively planning for land as far as similarly defensible boundaries to the east (either the A299 or, should employment be a suitable use surrounding the motorway junction, the need to maintain a landscape buffer to Boughton) and the northeast (flood risk and heritage including farmsteads and the Goodnestone Conservation Area).

It is noted that the SE Faversham site promoters suggest the potential for a landscape betterment, including because of the potential for landscaping measures to screen the motorway.

- **Option 4** – this option performs worse than Option 3, due to the need for one or more non-strategic urban extensions in addition to the strategic urban extension assumed under Option 3; however, there could be the potential for one or more modest urban extensions to Faversham that give rise to limited concerns.

Another notable consideration is the potential for lower growth at Teynham under this broad development option. Sensitivities associated with the fruit growing heritage have been discussed; however, the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) serves to indicate that, in the Borough context, there is a degree of relative landscape capacity to the west of the village. Specific considerations include:

- East – land here has higher sensitivity, hence the assumption has been that any further expansion would not break the prominent north/south ridgeline (associated with public footpaths). However, the consultation response received from the main site promoter in early 2021 calls into question this assumption, proposing a scheme that would extend across the valley, as far as White Leaf Bungalow. The associated Landscape Appraisal supports this approach on the basis that it would “prevent any potential landscape impacts on the

valley further east”, and elsewhere describes the Lyn Valley as “further east”, which requires clarification. It is important to carefully consider any expansion in light of topography and landscape character.

- West - there is a need to maintain a settlement gap to Bapchild (this is explored within the Local Countryside Gap study, 2020), and the possibility of delivering the final section of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road is a related consideration; and
- Southwest - there is a degree of sensitivity, given views across this land from footpaths and Claxfield Road, which is designated as a rural lane, and a route to the Lynsted via historic farmsteads. It is noted that the consultation response received from one of the key site promoters (Land at Claxfield Farm) proposes a large scheme that would extend to the south, beyond the suggested extent of the Teynham Opportunity Area shown in the Pre-submission Plan (2021), and which itself might deliver up to 978 homes. The site promoters suggest that this development extent is logical from a landscape perspective given existing field boundaries and the existing built form at Batteries Close.
- **Option 5** – matters are discussed in detail in the SA Report, but key considerations are:

- Bobbing stands-out as least constrained. The site is distant from the AONB and associated with broad landscape units assigned ‘moderate’ and ‘low-moderate’ sensitivity scores by the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. The southern part of the site is more sensitive, given existing narrow settlement gaps; however, the current proposal is for development to extend only as far south as the railway line, meaning that, whilst the Bobbing settlement gap would be eroded or lost, the gap(s) between Sittingbourne and Newington would not be affected. In this respect, it is important to note that an earlier masterplan proposed a large area of parkland to the south of the railway. Finally, it is important to note that the Stantec *Assessment of Stage 2 Submissions* (2019) identifies the potential for the scheme to expand beyond its current ‘red line boundary’ (see page 15 of the report). There is an argument for comprehensive long-term planning for this part of the Borough, rather than piecemeal growth. The possibility of comprehensively planning for the entire area of land between the A249 in the east, the A2 in the south, the Lower Halstow – Iwade Ridge in the west and Iwade in the north might be envisaged, with a view to securing infrastructure, environmental protection/enhancement and employment land.
- SE Sittingbourne was explored in detail in the SA Report Technical Appendix, with issues as follows:

A primary consideration is impacts to the AONB. The latest Stantec report states: “*The AONB Unit consider that their concerns can be mitigated and therefore do not have a strong objection.*” However, the AONB Unit subsequently updated its position, stating: “*... the proposed new motorway junction, located partially within the AONB, represents a major development that would be contrary to planning policy and due to its nature, could not be satisfactorily mitigated in terms of impact on the AONB. Therefore, the Unit continues to object to the proposal.*”<sup>17</sup> No further comments were received through representations in early 2021.

Secondly, there is a need to consider Important Local Countryside Gaps (ILCGs; see the Swale Important Local Countryside Gaps report, 2020), the purpose of which is “*to retain the individual character and setting of settlements*”. In addition to the existing designated gap between Sittingbourne and Bapchild, the report proposes a new ILCG designation “*to avoid the coalescence of Teynham and Bapchild*” and safeguard “*the essential gap south of the A2*”. The site promoter has proposed significant landscape buffering between the areas of new development and the existing settlements to help preserve their identity; however, it is likely that urbanisation of the area would erode the perceived and actual gap between settlements.

Thirdly, the Rodmersham, Milstead and Highstead Dry Valley locally designated landscape constrains the southern half of the site. The Statement of Significance (2019) notes that the area is “*a topographically distinct landscape with a strong sense of place and rural character*”, but that “*the quality has deteriorated notable on the edge of Sittingbourne*”. There could be opportunities to restore this landscape quality where it has deteriorated in order to strengthen the integrity of the landscape as a whole; however, the net effect of strategic growth would likely be a significant erosion of valued landscape character.

Fourthly, the Swale Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) finds that the landscape parcels in question have **moderate-high** and **high** sensitivity, including as much of the landscape has “*a high degree of visual prominence, and provides a rural landscape providing separation between Sittingbourne and Bapchild*”.

The current masterplan proposals are described as ‘landscape led’, and it is recognised that the scheme has evolved considerably and repeatedly over recent years, with the latest Stantec report explaining that efforts have been made to avoid the valley and valley slopes, and that proposals have “*move[d] away from a necklace approach*”. However, there is a need to understand the pros and cons of achieving the required scale of growth whilst containing growth west of a line that runs between Cromer’s wood, Rodmersham

<sup>17</sup> See [swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/local-plans/sd-01109](https://swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/local-plans/sd-01109)



Green, Rodmersham, Bapchild and Tonge Conservation Area / Church, thereby achieving a scheme that is more contained in landscape terms, in that it remains ‘facing’ Sittingbourne. Under the current proposal there could be a concern regarding long term sprawl at the edge of Sittingbourne and also in the Teynham/Lynstead area, which might be argued for as ‘infilling’ or ‘rounding off’.

N.B. it has not been possible to review materials submitted as part of the current planning application)

- North Street also warrants brief discussion, despite an assumption that the site is no longer in realistic contention for allocation (as discussed), due to its significant sensitivity within the landscape, with the site occupying a ‘notch’ into the Kent Downs AONB. This is a relatively low-lying part of the AONB, with high points in the AONB some way distant to the south (this contrasts with the situation south of the M2 at Sittingbourne); however, there is little doubt that the site contributes to the setting of the AONB. For example, the south western boundary of the site is marked by Plumford Road, a rural lane associated with quite expansive countryside views, and it seems quite clear that the landscape north of the road (within the site) is contiguous with the landscape to the south (within the AONB). Similar landscape contiguity is evident either side of Newhouse Lane which marks the south eastern boundary of the site. It is noted that the site promoter’s prospectus response proposes softening the southern boundary via planted screening and by incorporating sports pitches rather than built development at the southern extent. However, this would still represent a substantial departure from the prevailing rural character inherent in the landscape at present.

In **conclusion**, as per the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal in 2020, it is appropriate to highlight Option 5 as performing well, because there is potentially something of a landscape opportunity to be realised through strategic growth directed to both Bobbing and to the east / south east of Faversham. The potential to comprehensively plan for the very long term future growth of the Borough’s two main settlements can be envisaged; however, in neither case are the current proposals considered to respond to the opportunity in full.

As for the other broad development options, Option 3 is judged to perform relatively well, given the focus of growth at E/SE of Faversham, whilst those scenarios involving numerous ‘piecemeal’ urban extensions give rise to a cause for concern, albeit there is thought to be some capacity. Notably negative effects are highlighted for the two worst performing scenarios taking a precautionary approach, and given a general view that this would be a continuation of the spatial growth strategy seen over recent decades, which has arguably led to a significant erosion of landscape character. It is not possible to confidently suggest any risk of significant negative effects to the setting of the AONB, in light of the comments received from the AONB Unit through the consultation in early 2021.

## Transport

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
?	?	?	?	?

## Discussion

Transport connectivity and traffic congestion is a key issue in Swale, given the inherent constraints that exist. The Borough is very well connected by rail; however, main settlements and potential growth locations feed onto a limited number of strategic road corridors, including the A2 which passes through the centre of settlements (the only bypasses are at Sittingbourne town centre and Boughton). Enabling longer distance trips via the M2 rather than the A2 is an important objective, but there are junction constraints, and just three junctions serve the Borough, which contrasts to four serving Medway BC.

Further context, which serves to indicate a significant transport challenge, is set out at paragraph 11.1.4 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP, 2021): *“The Inspector who examined the Bearing Fruits Local Plan was satisfied that the level of growth in the first part of the plan period could be accommodated on the local road network. Beyond this there were implications in delivering the full housing need figure for both the strategic and local road network that would require the implementation of improvement works. At the time of the examination, the nature of improvement works had not been determined, but the Inspector did not consider this to be a showstopper to the Local Plan being adopted. The Inspector, therefore, found the Local Plan sound subject to a commitment to undertake an early review of the Local Plan to address the highway capacity issues.”*

The IDP goes on to explain that initial transport modelling has been completed, but that a final model run needs to be undertaken. The IDP explains (paras 11.1.1.3 / 4) that the further model run will *“identify additional, if any, transport mitigation measures that may be required... A key infrastructure requirement, therefore, will be the junction and corridor improvements identified below and in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule. It is expected that developer contributions will be needed to contribute towards the funding of the majority of these improvements.”*

Transport matters were explored in detail in the SA Report (2021); however, the latest situation is that significant concerns were raised through consultation responses, most notably the response provided by KCC, who stated:

*“The County Council notes that whilst there are a number of welcomed positive policy inclusions with regards to reducing congestion, safety incidents, air quality and promoting sustainable access and development, KCC is concerned that the consultation is missing critical highway evidence to justify the Local Plan strategy and as a consequence the Local Plan is currently supported by an inaccurate evidence base. There are fundamental changes from the modelling used as evidence for the Local Plan and the housing proposals within this regulation 19 consultation. Specifically, the housing numbers are higher in the Teynham area, greater levels of employment land and a reliance on a design solution for Brenley Corner that cannot at this stage be relied upon. The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, requires further supporting transport modelling that accurately reflects the proposed housing and employment strategy as presented before it can make a fully informed comment on the proposals. KCC is seeking to continue working with the Borough Council over the coming months on the provision of accurate modelling and commensurate and viable mitigation such that would move the proposed plan from its currently unjustifiable position.”*

Further detailed work is ongoing at the current time, and so it is difficult to comment further here.

The following bullet points are largely unchanged from the equivalent appraisal undertaken in 2020, as presented in Section 2 of the SA Report Technical Appendix:

- **Option 1** – a key consideration is junction capacity on the strategic road network, and a primary consideration is capacity at M2 J5 (A249), in respect of which the adopted Local Plan (2017) explains: *“The main strategic risk to the plan overall relates to any significant deferral in the improvement to Junction 5 of the M2”*. Additionally, there is a need to consider the three A249 junctions to the west of Sittingbourne. In particular, there are concerns regarding the Bobbing junction.

The situation has been complex; however, at the current time the Issues and Preferred Options consultation document explains: *“The solutions to the existing infrastructure issues are now coming forward (M2 junction 5 and capacity issues on the A249) which opens Sittingbourne and the Isle of Sheppey back up for development”*.

- **Option 2** – as discussed above, under Air Quality, Option 2 could necessitate a focus of growth in the Ospringe area, which gives rise to concerns from a transport perspective, given the likelihood of increased traffic on the A2, including through AQMAs. As discussed, it is difficult to envisage a strategic transport solution that would avoid increased traffic impacting on the Ospringe AQMA and, in any case, concerns would remain regarding westbound traffic towards Sittingbourne impacting on AQMAs. Additionally, there is a concern regarding capacity M2 J7, discussed below.
- **Option 3** – transport issues associated with strategic growth at SE Faversham are discussed in detail in the latest Stantec report (2019). In short, Stantec found that there is merit in the location and the proposed scheme, but there is a concern regarding capacity at M2 J7 and the potential to achieve a link to M2 J6 (through the committed Preston Fields site to the west). These uncertainties currently remain. However, there is increased clarity on the potential to support wider transport infrastructure upgrades, and support modal shift. As set out in the current Issues and Preferred Options consultation document, there is an opportunity *“to look at the role of the A2 at Faversham and divert traffic to the M2 allowing greater integration of sites south of the A2.”*
- **Option 4** – gives rise to significant concerns given that piecemeal growth, in addition to strategic growth to the east / southeast, would give rise to concerns in respect of traffic on the A2 and at M2 J7.
- **Option 5** – the SA Report concluded that *“there is least concern with E/SE Faversham”*; however, there is now greater uncertainty. There is a need to recognise that SE Sittingbourne could potentially deliver transformational transport benefits, and whilst there have been concerns regarding deliverability, these concerns are potentially now reduced. A planning application has been submitted for the scheme, although it has not been possible to review that information for the purposes of this appraisal. There is a need for further work.

In **conclusion**, at the current time it is not possible to differentiate between the broad development options with any certainty. This is a departure from the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal completed in 2020.

With regards to effect significance, on the basis of the representation received from KCC in early 2021, it is fair to conclude that there are significant uncertainties and concerns regarding all of the options.

## Water

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
?	?	?	?	?

### Discussion

An important strategic consideration is waste-water treatment capacity. The latest Stantec report (2019) included a section on utilities capacity, which overall highlighted very limited concerns, concluding: *“There are no significant abnormal issues that have been identified that cannot be overcome. Although there is a capacity issue with Water Treatment works in the area, which applies equally to all proposals and has to be addressed as part of the water companies statutory duty.”* However, there is a need to apply caution, in the sense that there is a need to minimise any residual risk of capacity breaches (in respect of either treated or untreated effluent), with resultant water quality impacts.<sup>18</sup> In turn, there are arguments for directing growth to locations where there is existing capacity at the receiving Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW), as opposed to relying on timely capacity upgrades.

This point is made in the knowledge that pollution of rivers from WwTWs is high on the agenda national at the current time, and recognising that Southern Water recently accepted 51 sewage pollution charges, including permit breaches at Eastchurch, Queenborough, Sittingbourne and Teynham WwTW. The charges cover historic events between 2010 and 2015.<sup>19</sup>

There is some evidence to suggest that capacity at Faversham WwTW is a particular concern. In particular, the Kent Water Sustainable Growth Study (2017) noted that headroom capacity at Faversham WwTW would be exceeded by planned growth to 2031 (as set out in the adopted Local Plan), hence there would be a need for upgrades. However, as part of the assessment of the Southeast Faversham strategic site option, the Stantec *Assessment of Stage 2 Submissions* (2019) explains:

*“The Sewage Treatment Works (STW) in Faversham is currently operating above its allowable discharge. However, there are solutions available to address the absence of capacity in the interim. The sewage discharge from the site can be temporarily pumped, for up to 2 years by the Water company, before the STW has been upgraded to sufficient capacity. We understand that this is an issue but can be managed. Further details of... costs, options and works duration [are being discussed].”*

Also, and importantly, the representation received from the SW Faversham site promoter in 2021 suggests the potential to deliver a new WwTW, and further detail is available here: <https://sefaversham.co.uk/environment/>.

Further considerations are as follows:

- Bobbing - it is unclear whether there is a need for a new pumping station, though the promoter has suggested that costs of any network reinforcement that may be required would not be borne by Southern Water.
- Rushenden – the site in question is near adjacent to the large Queenborough WwTW (although potentially with capacity issues / a need for upgrade ahead of receiving additional wastewater from nearby growth);
- Teynham and Eastchurch have a WwTW, whilst it appears (from the Ordnance Survey map) that Newington and Leysdown do not. In the case of Newington, whilst details of sewage treatment are not known, the location of the village could serve to suggest that wastewater treatment could be a constraint to growth.

In **conclusion**, as per the equivalent appraisal completed in 2020, it is considered appropriate to highlight uncertain negative effects for all scenarios, albeit it is understood that limited concerns were raised through the consultation in early 2021 (it has not been possible to review consultation responses from all relevant consultees in detail). A particular consideration is wastewater treatment capacity, and whilst the firm proposals for SE Faversham are encouraging, there is less certainty regarding capacity to support growth elsewhere.

As for other ‘water’ considerations:

- Pollution to surface water in the vicinity of growth locations – whilst there may be variation in water quality across the Borough’s surface water bodies, it is inherently difficult to differentiate broad growth scenarios, because there is very good potential to deal with water pollution arising from development schemes through

<sup>18</sup> N.B. as discussed within the Swale LPR Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) report, there are relatively limited concerns around sewage effluent impacting the North Kent Estuaries European sites from treated sewage effluent. This is because these estuaries have a high sediment load, low water temperatures and high wave action. As such, smothering macroalgal growth, which has caused issues for European sites on the south coast, is not considered a threat to achievement of conservation objectives for these European sites.

<sup>19</sup> See [kentonline.co.uk/sheerness/news/8-000-sewage-breach-admits-223567/](https://kentonline.co.uk/sheerness/news/8-000-sewage-breach-admits-223567/)

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Water pollution from breaches of capacity at WwTws is considered to be a much more important strategic consideration.

- Pollution to groundwater in the vicinity of growth locations – groundwater source protection zones are associated with the parts of the Borough associated with a chalk geology, with Sheppey, Bobbing, and most land at Faversham (bar land directly to the south) falling outside of a source protection zone. However, it is again the case that there is very good potential to suitably avoid/mitigate impacts through the development management process. Groundwater source protection zones can be a particular constraint for polluting developments (e.g. heavy industry, petrol stations).
- Water resources – water scarcity is an issue that applies across the Borough as a whole.

It is noted that KCC are currently undertaking a Spatial Risk Assessment (SRA), with a focus on climate change resilience, including in respect of the water environment. This study is soon to be published.

## Appraisal summary

The matrix below draws together the conclusions from the preceding twelve topic-specific appraisal tables.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
	Rank of preference and categorisation of effects				
Air quality	=	=	=	=	=
Biodiversity	=	=	=	=	=
Climate change mitigation	3	3	1★	3	2
Communities	3	3	2	2	1★
Economy and employment	2	2	2	2	1★
Flood risk	3	3	2	1★	1★
Heritage	2	3	1★	3	1★
Housing	4	3	2	1★	5
Land	1★	1★	2	2	1★
Landscape	4	4	2	3	1★
Transport	?	?	?	?	?
Water	?	?	?	?	?

### Summary discussion

It is immediately apparent that Option 5 (two strategic growth locations; one in the west of the Borough and the other in the east) performs well in a number of respects, as indicated by the relatively high number of stars and the relatively low number of red scores assigned. However, it does not necessarily follow that Option 5 is best performing overall. This is because the appraisal does not make any assumptions regarding the weight that is attributed to each topic in the decision-making process. For example, the decision-maker might decide to give particular weight to housing objectives, which could mean concluding that Option 5 performs least well overall. Also, in respect of Option 5, it is important to state that the appraisal reflects some very significant assumptions, both in respect of the specific strategic sites that would be allocated, and the potential to deliver a mix of uses, infrastructure upgrades and wider 'planning gain' alongside housing growth.

A second immediate point to note is that both Option 1 (roll forward the Bearing Fruits Strategy) and Option 2 (adjust the Bearing Fruits strategy to a modest extent) are shown to relatively poorly in most respects (it is only under 'heritage' and 'housing' that the appraisal finds there to be a degree of relative merit). This is certainly an indication that these options perform relatively poorly overall; however, it is important to state that a number of the topic-specific conclusions are quite finely balanced, and associated with assumptions and uncertainties.

Having made these opening remarks, the following bullet points summarise the performance of the broad development options in respect of each element of the SA framework in turn:

- **Air quality** – it is not possible to differentiate between the options with any certainty. There are a range of uncertainties, including in respect of the achievability/deliverability and timing of road infrastructure upgrades. With regards to significant effects, it is appropriate to flag a notable degree of risk under all growth scenarios. Air quality is set to improve significantly over the plan period (for example, air pollution in the Ospringe area is set to halve); however, air pollution is currently a priority issue for the Council.
- **Biodiversity** - it is not possible to differentiate between the broad development options with any certainty. With regards to Option 5, whilst strategic growth locations can give rise to particular opportunities in respect of securing biodiversity net gain, there is little confidence that this applies in the case of the sites in question, and one of the sites (SE Sittingbourne) gives rise to notable concerns. With regards to the other options, there are issues with growth at both Sittingbourne and Faversham, and there is a need to factor-in concerns regarding growth at Rushenden South (in particular) and Teynham. With regards to significant effects, on one hand, limited concerns were raised through the consultation in early 2021, either in respect of biodiversity impacts or a risk of opportunities missed; however, on the other hand, on the basis of an initial review of consultation responses reviewed from site promoters, there is a noticeable lack of proactive proposals in respect of responding to biodiversity issues and opportunities, and the number of site promoters arguing against the proposed requirement for 20% biodiversity net gain is noted.
- **Climate change mitigation** – it is inherently challenging to differentiate between the options, including because there can be tensions between objectives around minimising built environment emissions on the one hand and, on the other hand, minimising transport emissions. On balance, it is considered appropriate to highlight: Option 3 as performing best, because there would be a focus of growth at a strategic urban extension that is well-related to a higher order settlement, *albeit* there are issues and uncertainties around both transport and built environment decarbonisation; and Option 5 as second best performing, given the inherent opportunities associated with strategic growth; however, there is a very high degree of uncertainty, including on the basis that the locations in question are not ideal from a transport connectivity perspective, and recognising that scheme promoters have provided limited information to generate confidence that decarbonisation opportunities exist and will be realised in practice. With regards to effect significance, it is considered appropriate to flag a concern with all of the broad growth scenarios. This reflects a view that the 2030 net zero target date is so ambitious that decarbonisation must be a key driving factor influencing spatial strategy, site selection and development of site-specific requirements/proposals.
- **Communities** - it is fair to conclude that Option 5 is preferred on the basis of the potential to deliver new secondary school capacity at both Sittingbourne and Faversham, although there is uncertainty at the current time, particularly in respect of the potential to deliver a new secondary school at Faversham. This is a departure from the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal presented within the SA Report, which was undertaken on the basis of an assumption that a key issue for the Local Plan is to address existing secondary school capacity issues at Faversham. With regards to significant effects, on the basis of the consultation response received from KCC it is certainly appropriate to predict significant negative effects under Options 1 and 2. It is also fair to highlight uncertain positive effects under Options 5.
- **Economy and employment** - there is uncertainty with employment at the current time, recognising that the ELR was completed prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and employment strategy is in a state of flux nationally. Option 5 potentially performs relatively well, but it is not possible to differentiate further between the options. It is appropriate to flag a risk of negative effects under all of the options other than Option 5. Whilst the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) did not respond to the consultation in early 2021, it is fair to

assume that providing for warehousing and distribution needs remains a key issue for the sub-region; and there are also important links to matters relating to transport infrastructure capacity, as discussed below.

- **Flood risk** - it is appropriate to highlight those broad development options involving less growth directed to the Isle of Sheppey as performing well; however, this is highly uncertain, as there is the potential to deliver growth on the island whilst avoiding growth in a flood risk zone, and growth in the flood risk zone on the island is a very specific matter for consideration (as a potential 'exceptional circumstance') given potentially overriding regeneration objectives. Significant negative effects are not predicted, but it is considered appropriate to flag a notable degree of concern associated with Options 1 / 2. **Heritage** - it is appropriate to highlight those options involving a focus on further piecemeal urban extensions as giving rise to a significant degree of concern, and it is appropriate to highlight Options 2 and 4 as performing worst, as Faversham is very sensitive in historic environment terms. It is suggested that negative effects would be notably less significant under Option 3 and Option 5; however, this conclusion is subject to the views of Historic England. The consultation response received from Historic England in early 2021 focused only on the preferred sites, and focused on policy wording more so than site suitability, but this current consultation provides an opportunity for a more strategic discussion. It is also important to highlight uncertainty regarding the implications of the broad development options for growth at Teynham and Newington, both of which have historic cores, a network of surrounding historic farmsteads (towards which development has encroached over recent decades) and a surrounding landscape with a sense of time-depth strongly associated with the area's fruit growing heritage (see aerial imagery from WWII). There is also a need to carefully consider historic environment / heritage issues associated with options for a new road link to the south of Teynham, particularly mindful of the designated conservation area, which is strongly associated with a north-south dry valley.
- **Housing** - Option 5 performs poorly, given delivery risks associated with a strategy that relies on two strategic sites. Option 1 also performs relatively poorly given viability challenges in the west of the Borough; however, there is considerable uncertainty. Option 4 performs most strongly, as there would be: a focus of growth at Faversham, where development viability is highest; a spread of growth between a strategic site (with associated economy of scale benefits and inherently good potential to deliver a good housing mix) and additional smaller urban extensions likely associated with low delivery risk and able to deliver early in the plan period, thereby alleviating concerns around delay to delivering the strategic site leading to a shortfall in housing supply early in the plan period (albeit, as discussed, the NPPF puts in place mechanisms to redress shortfalls against required trajectory); and support for a strategic site (SE Faversham) where the current proposal is to prioritise affordable housing (40% has been suggested; however, this is unconfirmed and the proposed breakdown of affordable housing tenures is not known) although there is uncertainty at the current time, ahead of further detailed work in respect of masterplanning and viability, taking account of local market conditions (there will be a need to deliver housing at a pace that avoids any concerns around saturation of the local housing market) and including detailed work to understand the costs of required infrastructure.
- **Land** – it is likely that any reasonable broad development option, in the Swale context, would lead to significant negative effects, due to significant loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, including grade 1 land that is of the highest quality nationally. It is appropriate to highlight Option 1, 2 and 5 as performing best, given areas of lower quality agricultural land on Sheppey and within the two new settlement options at Sittingbourne; however, this is fairly marginal and uncertain, given a lack of detailed survey work having been completed.
- **Landscape** - it is appropriate to highlight Option 5 as performing well, because there is potentially something of a landscape opportunity to be realised through strategic growth directed to both Bobbing and to the east / south east of Faversham. The potential to comprehensively plan for the very long term future growth of the Borough's two main settlements can be envisaged; however, in neither case are the current proposals considered to respond to the opportunity in full. As for the other broad development options, Option 3 is judged to perform relatively well, given the focus of growth at E/SE of Faversham, whilst those scenarios involving numerous 'piecemeal' urban extensions give rise to a cause for concern, albeit there is thought to be some capacity. Notably negative effects are highlighted for the two worst performing scenarios taking a precautionary approach, and given a general view that this would be a continuation of the spatial growth strategy seen over recent decades, which has arguably led to a significant erosion of landscape character. It is not possible to confidently suggest any risk of significant negative effects to the setting of the AONB.
- **Transport** - at the current time it is not possible to differentiate between the broad development options with any certainty. This is a departure from the conclusion of the equivalent appraisal completed in 2020. With regards to effect significance, on the basis of the representation received from KCC in early 2021, it is fair to conclude that there are significant uncertainties and concerns regarding all of the options.
- **Water** - it is considered appropriate to highlight uncertain negative effects for all scenarios, albeit it is understood that limited concerns were raised through the consultation in early 2021. A particular consideration is wastewater treatment capacity, and whilst the firm proposals for SE Faversham are encouraging, there is less certainty regarding capacity to support growth elsewhere.

## 3 Commentary on thematic policy

### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The aim of this section is to present a brief commentary in respect of the issues and options discussed in Section 5.2 to 5.6 of the Issues and Preferred Options consultation document, which deal with a series of five broad thematic policy areas in turn.
- 3.1.2 Much of the discussion here relates to the scope of the SA (see [Section 3](#) of the SA Report), with a view to encouraging comments and further evidence, which will be taken into account as part of work to update the SA scope subsequent to this current consultation.

### 3.2 Climate change

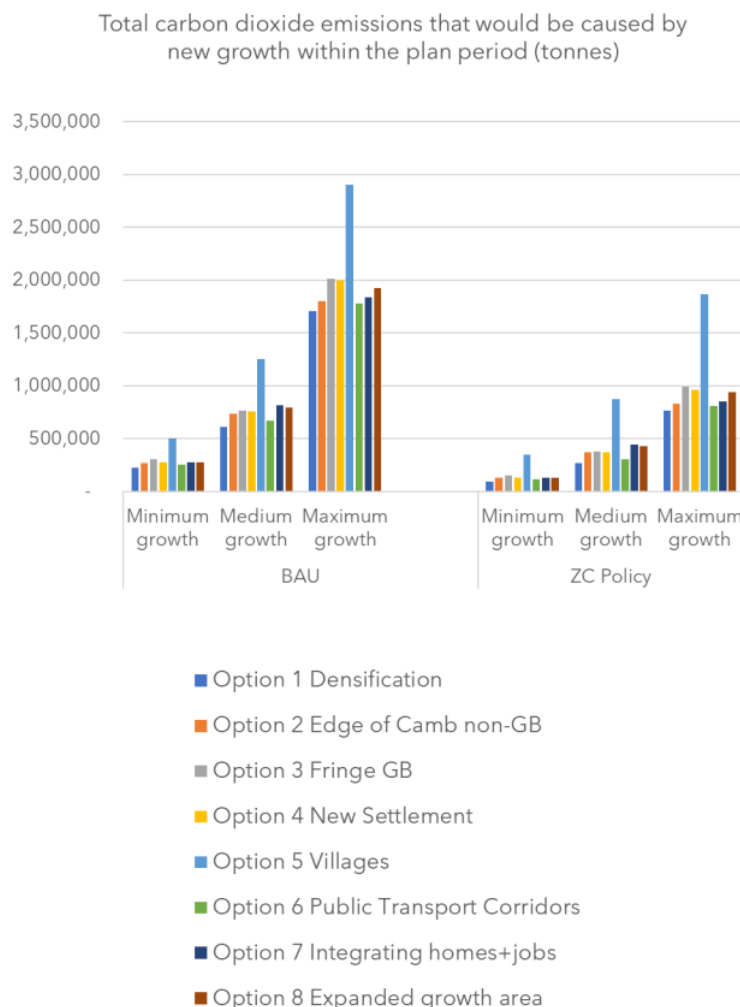
- 3.2.1 The SA Report gave detailed consideration to the effects of broad growth scenarios, strategic site options, mapped growth scenarios and the LPR as a whole in respect of: A) climate change mitigation; and B) flood risk, which is a centrally important climate change adaptation considerations for Local Plans.
- 3.2.2 In respect of (A), a particular focus of discussion under the four 'climate change mitigation' headings was greenhouse gas emissions from the built environment, as transport emissions (or, more specifically, issues relating to minimising the need to travel, supporting modal shift away from the private car and supporting EVs and wider 'future mobility') were a focus of discussion under other SA framework topic headings.
- 3.2.3 In respect of (B), firstly it is important to note that there are other wide-ranging climate change considerations of relevance to the LPR, including in respect of the health and well-being (not least the risk from overheating, with implications for building design and masterplanning), biodiversity and the water environment; however, there is less potential to conclude the likelihood of significant effects (in comparison to flood risk), hence it is considered appropriate to discuss matters under 'other' SA framework headings (e.g. Biodiversity, Communities, Water) as appropriate, rather than presenting stand-alone discussions under 'climate change adaptation / resilience' headings. Comments are welcomed on this approach.
- 3.2.4 Secondly, in respect of (B), it is recognised that a robust legislative and policy framework is in place to avoid undue development in flood risk zones, such that it can be suggested that avoiding flood risk is something of an objective technical exercise more so than a policy objective to be 'weighed in the balance' through Local Plans; however, the reality is that concerns do persist nationally regarding the number of homes coming forward in flood risk zones, hence there is a need for a strategic approach through Local Plans. There can be challenges understanding the nature of flood risk, including because there is a need to consider the degree of risk associated with areas within a flood zone but protected by flood defences (also accounting for plans for the future of the defences), and because there is a need to consider the degree of risk associated with surface water flood zones as opposed to fluvial flood zones; both of these issues are highly relevant to Swale.<sup>20</sup> There can also be challenges demonstrating that a scheme in a flood risk zone is justified on the basis of there being no alternative way of achieving the same socio-economic benefits, because the socio-economic benefits of any given scheme will often be very scheme specific. Comments on the role for the Local Plan and SA process, in respect of flood risk, are welcomed.
- 3.2.5 Having made these initial remarks, the following bullet points consider issues and options for the LPR:
- There is a need to ensure a clear conceptual framework, recognising that planning for climate change is a relatively new and evolving policy area, and is highly cross-cutting. As part of this, there is a need to: clearly differentiate between mitigation / decarbonisation and adaptation / resilience; differentiate between greenhouse gas emissions from the built environment and from transport; differentiate between operational and non-operational built environment emissions (the concept of 'whole lifecycle' built environment emissions is helpful); ensure a clear 'energy hierarchy' approach to minimising operational built environment emissions (i.e. a 'fabric first' approach, with offsetting as a last resort); and prioritise the various climate change adaptation / resilience matters of relevance to the LPR.

<sup>20</sup> The Welsh Government has very recently published new [guidance](#) on planning for flood risk and coastal erosion, including with a focus on the role of strategic planning (i.e. plan-making). There is an associated [on-line mapping](#) resource that helpfully shows not only areas of fluvial flood risk, but also areas at risk but protected by defences and surface water flood risk, with surface water flood risk helpfully divided into two categories (as per fluvial flood risk) and clarified as also relating to small watercourses.

- There is a need to consider if and how the performance of the LPR can be assessed, and evaluated over time, against the benchmark of the committed decarbonisation trajectory necessary to achieve the Borough’s 2030 net zero target, mindful of: the distinction between total borough-wide emissions, which is the focus of the 2030 net zero target, and per capita emissions (mindful that the population of the Borough is set to increase, and it is largely outside the scope of the Local Plan to change this); and the fact that the influence of the LPR is in many ways limited (e.g. retrofitting existing buildings) and indirect. Comments on this matter are encouraged, in the spirit of ensuring a proactive approach.
- Methods for planning for climate change mitigation / decarbonisation through Local Plans are evolving, and are considered to have some way to go prior to reaching ‘maturity’; however, the [work](#) recently undertaken in support of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan should be reviewed as an example of good practice. The study notably presents 48 scenarios for “emissions caused by new growth in the plan period”, where the variables are: 1) growth quantum; 2) spatial strategy; and 3) ‘zero carbon policy’ – see Figure 3.1. A key point to note is that the performance of ‘spatial strategy’ options is highly dependent on emissions from transport (with Option 5 - dispersal to villages - performing very poorly).

Emissions from transport are a very significant consideration for Local Plans; however, there is also a need to recognise the role of spatial strategy in respect of minimising built environment emissions. For example, a spatial strategy option might be seen to perform well where it directs growth to: areas with strong development viability; larger schemes with economies of scale; sites with land-owners willing to accept land value capture for public benefit; sites controlled by developers with a proactive approach to decarbonisation; sites associated with inherent opportunities around sharing waste heat (e.g. a WwTW, industrial operation, leisure centre) or capturing or ambient heat (e.g. a watercourse); sites with inherent opportunities around renewable power (solar, wind, hydro), albeit recognising that major schemes typically feed into the national grid; and schemes where the masterplanning/design concept is supportive of decarbonisation, e.g. with high densities and a use mix supportive of fifth generation heat networks.

Figure 3.1: Emissions scenarios to inform the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (Etude, 2021)





### 3.3 Place shaping/design

- 3.3.1 The matter of place-shaping is highly relevant to the SA process, as key decisions on spatial strategy and site selection through the LPR can clearly have an impact on local character, distinctiveness, sense of place etc. With regards to design, there is clearly a need to consider the effect of thematic policy set through the LPR, and certain sites can be associated with inherent locational constraints and opportunities, but ultimately many of the key decisions will be made through the development management (i.e. planning application) process, rather than through the LPR.
- 3.3.2 Place shaping and design are considered under the Communities and Landscape headings within the SA framework; however, within the SA Report, discussion under the Communities heading does focus primarily on community infrastructure, which is understood to be a key issue for the Local Plan. Under the Landscape heading there is a major focus on place-making, including with a long term perspective, in that there is merit to planning comprehensively for long term growth – and securing associated investment from land owners and developers – rather than risking long-term piecemeal growth (i.e. sprawl; albeit it is recognised that there are also arguments in favour of supporting growth locations that can evolve organically over time, responding to evolving understanding of issues, opportunities etc.).
- 3.3.3 Moving forward, it is recommended that place shaping should be a key concept to guide preparation of the LPR, with a particular focus on ensuring a long-term perspective. This is particularly important for Swale given A) regeneration objectives for the Thames Gateway, and perhaps the Isle of Sheppey most notably; and B) the inherent pressures on the A2 corridor, where the historic settlement pattern will invariably be placed under pressure under coming years and decades. This aligns with one of the main changes recently made to the NPPF, namely new paragraph 22, which identifies that, in some cases, Local Plans must reflect a vision that looks ahead at least 30 years.

### 3.4 Environment and heritage

- 3.4.1 AECOM recently prepared an appraisal of two Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) reasonable alternatives for the purposes of the Guildford Local Plan Development Management Policies (LPDMP) SA Report – see Section 5 of the report [here](#). In some ways the appraisal is specific to the Guildford Borough context, in that biodiversity decline in Surrey is considered to be quite severe in the national context; however, in most respect the appraisal is quite generic, such that appraisal findings would also apply to the Swale context. The appraisal conclusion is as follows:

*“In conclusion, an ambitious approach to BNG is supported in respect of the majority of objectives, although there is an element of risk in respect of housing and employment land objectives. Risks are uncertain as current understanding is that a 20% requirement would not lead to an unacceptable financial burden on the developer. With regards to effect significance, it is possible to predict likely significant positive effects under Option 2 in respect of biodiversity, with other effects much more uncertain and likely to be of lower significance.”*

- 3.4.2 More specifically, one of the arguments for a 20% BNG requirement considered to be of direct relevance to the Swale context is as follows:

“... there are naturally concerns regarding the BNG approach failing to achieve stated biodiversity objectives, and perhaps even resulting in perverse long-term effects that are currently difficult to foresee or fully appreciate, because approaches and methods are in their infancy, and recognising that a focus on BNG will be, to some extent, at the expense of a focus on more traditional approaches to biodiversity conservation and enhancement. The 2020 Interim SA Report discussed a concern that a 10% net gain requirement could be “within the margin of error”, such that it doesn’t deliver “real benefits” in practice.<sup>21</sup> At the current time, the Biodiversity Metric 3.0 is a proactive and positive step, and progress on bringing forward effective LNRs, both nationally and locally, is very encouraging; however, ze Ermgassen et al. (2021) highlight some significant concerns, including around a piecemeal approach whereby the combined effect is less than the sum of its parts. Biodiversity must be considered at landscape scales and with a long-term perspective, hence it is important that BNG approaches lend support to strategic initiatives, and certainly do not distract from or lessen the focus on such initiatives... this lends support for requiring a higher (20% net gain figure).”

<sup>21</sup> See [cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CIEEM-Net-Gain-consultation-response-Feb2019-FINAL.pdf](https://www.cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CIEEM-Net-Gain-consultation-response-Feb2019-FINAL.pdf)

- 3.4.3 With regards to the research by ze Ermgassen et al. (from the University of Kent), the report presents the following summary:

“Research... is emerging on the benefits and risks of BNG strategy. A key study was published in June 2021,<sup>22</sup> setting out a concern around effective use of habitat offsetting / offsite compensation. Whilst the Government had previously anticipated 25% of biodiversity units being achieved offsite, the research found the figure in practice to be much lower, raising “doubts about the size of the biodiversity unit market.” The study authors are concerned about an over reliance on onsite measures as this could lead to opportunities missed in respect of “strategic investments in the local nature recovery networks” and “investments in regional biodiversity priorities that can help restore biodiversity at a landscape scale”. Equally, the authors are concerned about the effectiveness of onsite measures, having identified a prevalence of “small habitat patches” at risk of not developing/maturing as anticipated, and being subject to high levels of human pressure (related to this, a concern is that “49% of the biodiversity units generated within residential developments in our sample come from on-site grasslands and scrub habitats”). The authors recognise that there are strong ‘access to greenspace’ arguments in favour of generating biodiversity units onsite, and that an onsite focus has “broad support from across stakeholders”, but suggest “this urgently deserves further debate” because “this priority risks overwhelming the biodiversity goals of the policy... potential trade-offs should be explicitly discussed.””

- 3.4.4 In conclusion, whilst it is recognised that there are arguments in favour of a standard national approach, at least ahead of guidance in the form of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (likely for Kent), and there is a need to ensure that development management policy requirements do not unduly impact on development viability, there is clear merit to requiring 20% BNG where this is justified in the local context.

## 3.5 New homes

- 3.5.1 Matters relating to housing for older people and space standards are discussed under the Housing heading within Section 9 of the SA Report. Of particular note is paragraph 9.9.11 of the SA Report, which explained:

“Ensuring that new housing is well suited to an ageing population is considered to be a priority issue locally, with the proposal being to deliver the maximum level, hence this policy is proposed despite significant viability implications, as explored through the Viability Study (see Table 8.2 of the study). However, as explained within the supporting text to the policy, there would ideally be “universal” achievement of standard M4(2).”

- 3.5.2 As well as thematic / development management policy, it will also be important to consider the implications of spatial strategy and site options for the achievement of objectives relating to housing for older people. For example, the appraisal of Broad Development Options presented in Section 2 of this report explains:

“As for the three competing strategic site options, two are currently proposing to deliver 40% affordable housing, whilst one – SE Sittingbourne – is proposing to deliver 20% (having previously proposed 10-20%). The proposed approach at SE Sittingbourne reflects an understanding that there will be other funding priorities, in particular major transport upgrades. It is also noted that SE Sittingbourne is the only one of the strategic site options to include a clear commitment to delivering specialist housing (“retirement living and self-build opportunities for local people”), which is assumed to represent a development cost (i.e. these uses are thought to be less viable than market housing with affordable), but this is not entirely clear and, in any case, this proposal could be subject to change.”

- 3.5.3 Equally, there is a need to take a proactive approach to meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers through spatial strategy and site selection. As part of this, consideration can and should be given to the possibility of accommodating needs as part of large strategic mixed-use schemes (which is not to suggest that this is necessarily an ideal way of meeting needs, or should necessarily be progressed as a preferred option). The appraisal in Section 2 of this report explains: “None of the strategic site promoters have proposed making land available for Gypsy and Traveller pitches (or Travelling Showpeople plots), which is an approach that is quite common nationally, where there is a local need.”

<sup>22</sup> zu Ermgassen et al; see <https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/conl.12820>

## 3.6 Economy and town centres

- 3.6.1 As explained within Section 2 of this report: "...there is uncertainty with employment at the current time, recognising that the ELR [Employment Land Review] was completed prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and employment strategy is in a state of flux nationally. This uncertainty is potentially manifesting itself in something of a lack of strategic direction, e.g. direction from organisations with an interest in meeting economic objectives at the sub-regional, regional and national scales. For example, there is a need for direction on the role of Swale in respect of meeting the needs for freight and logistics employment space, although it is recognised that an important strategy for the South East Region is soon to be published: <https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/our-work/freight-and-logistics/>.
- 3.6.2 Aside from traditional employment land needs, as explored through the ELR, it is recognised that there is a need to consider how matters relating to planning for employment and economic growth have evolved from the experience of the C-19 pandemic and national lockdown. The promoters of the South East Faversham (Duchy of Cornwall) strategic site option made the following comment through the Regulation 19 consultation in early 2021: *"We are concerned that this appears to reflect an outdated view of land use planning, where, in particular, "housing estates" and "industrial estates" were strictly separated. Modern good town planning practice, as well the needs of the modern economy, both point towards there being a much more sophisticated approach, with emphasis on homeworking, and small/medium sized worker and office spaces integrated with housing areas and local centres."* There is clearly a need to strike a balance.

# 4 Conclusions and next steps

## 4.1 Conclusions

- 4.1.1 This report has presented an appraisal of the five broad development options that are a focus of the current Issues and Preferred Options consultation. Within the consultation document the Council explains that Option 3 is the emerging preferred option, and presents detailed reasons including:
- "Large scale strategic growth at Faversham would provide good potential to successfully masterplan and deliver a new community, or series of new communities, in line with established best practice principles and to ensure that it was planned in a holistic way. It would also deliver a much needed new secondary school.*
- This option performs well in terms of air quality because strategic growth to the east and southeast of Faversham gives rise to relatively limited concerns as sustainable and active travel measures are easier to implement at these scales of new development as the critical mass is there. Trip internalisation can be implemented, funds can be directed to walking and cycling infrastructure, masterplanning and design measures can focus on supporting walking and there is some potential to walk/cycle to the town centre*
- It also allows for larger scale biodiversity and net gain achievements; again, due to the critical mass."*
- 4.1.2 The appraisal presented within Section 2 of this report shows Option 3 to be associated with relative merit in a number of respects, but also does serve to highlight that there are equally certain draw-backs relative to other options, most notably Options 4 and 5.
- 4.1.3 This report has also sought to present a brief, informal commentary on select thematic policy areas.

## 4.2 Next steps

- 4.2.1 The next step, subsequent to the current consultation, will be to revisit the question of reasonable alternative growth scenarios. In practice, this will mean revisiting the process set out in Section 5 of the SA Report, which lead to five mapped growth scenarios for appraisal. Once growth scenarios have been defined they will then be subject to appraisal, in good time to inform plan-making. Consideration will also be given to the possibility of whether there are other aspects of the LPR, aside from spatial strategy / site selection, that warrant being a focus of dedicated work to formally define and appraisal alternatives.
- 4.2.2 Once work to explore alternatives has been completed, then the Council will be in a position to finalise the LPR, at which point it will be subjected to appraisal 'as a whole', and then the SA Report prepared for publication alongside the Pre-submission LPR, under Regulation 19 of the Local Planning Regulations. Subsequently the intention is to submit the Local Plan and SA Report for Examination in Public.

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<b>Cabinet Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	27 October 2021
<b>Report Title</b>	Procurement of Queenborough & Rushenden, Twyford Pumping Station Contractor
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr. Monique Bonney, Cabinet Member for Economy and Property
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins
<b>Head of Service</b>	Joanne Johnson
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Debbie Townrow
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Cabinet approves the appointment of Lanes Group plc as Queenborough &amp; Rushenden, Twyford Pumping Station contractor from 18 November 2021 for an initial period of 11 months.</li> <li>2. That the Cabinet approves the waiver of contract standing orders in relation to this appointment due to only one tender submission being received.</li> </ol>

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 As part of the Queenborough & Rushenden Housing Infrastructure Fund works currently being delivered, a contractor is required to provide the new Twyford Pumping Station. The Economic Development team alongside Campbell Reith (the project management company appointed for Queenborough & Rushenden) carried out a one stage tender process based on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) which was evaluated on 60% price and 40% quality. The contractor is to construct a new surface water pumping station on the Twyford Site to enable the facilitation of future residential development, replacing an existing pumping station which is beyond its working life.
- 1.2 This report summarises the procurement process and its results and seeks Cabinet approval of the recommended contractor.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The opportunity was advertised in accordance with current contract standing orders, with interested parties asked to complete an Invitation to Tender. One tenderer replied and scores were allocated according to the criteria explained in the tender document.

- 2.2 The panel consisted of the Economy & Community Services Manager, Project Manager from Campbell Reith and Senior Planning and Enabling Manager from Homes England. Clarification questions were asked of the tenderer and have been evaluated with scores being adjusted where required.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the proposal to enter into a contract with Lanes Group pls for a 11-month Contract with the option to extend the contract for a further 3 months if required. It is expected that the works should be fully delivered within the 11-month timeframe, however the additional 3-month extension option is a contingency to allow for any currently unknown issues. Any extension would require the approval of Homes England in line with the conditions in the HIF Grant Determination Agreement.
- 3.2 Cabinet is requested to approve the waiver of contract standing orders in relation to this appointment due to only one tender submission being received. Despite this being the only submission received, the project team have carried out a full and comprehensive analysis of the submission and are confident it delivers all aspects of the works required and represents good value for money. Critically, it also commits to completing the required works within the tight timescales currently available to the project.

### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 Do nothing. This option is not considered to be a suitable alternative. The construction of the Twyford Pumping Station constitutes a significant element of the HIF funded works and without delivering this, we would not spend our HIF allocation and would also not fully prepare this area of land for residential development.
- 4.2 Re-advertise with the aim of securing additional tenders. This option is not considered to be a suitable alternative. The timing of these works are integral to the delivery of the HIF funded works and need to commence as soon as possible in order to meet the deadlines associated with the HIF spend requirements. Re-tendering the opportunity would delay the works to an unacceptable extent and would result in us not meeting the contractual obligations contained in the HIF Grant Determination Agreement.

### **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 The Queenborough & Rushenden regeneration project has been extensively consulted on with all stages being reviewed and agreed at the appropriate levels. No further consultation on this element of the works is required.

### **6 Implications**

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Queenborough and Rushenden Regeneration scheme is a key element of Delivering Regeneration within the current Corporate Plan and contributes to the delivery of major regeneration projects in the Borough to improve the appearance and facilities of our towns and villages.
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>This contract is fully funded by the Housing Infrastructure Fund being provided by Homes England and so represents a nil financial cost to the council. Failing to deliver these works would mean the site is not prepared for residential development and would therefore not meet the contractual obligations contained with the HIF Grant Determination Agreement.</p> <p>Anticipated annual spend on the Queenborough &amp; Rushenden, Twyford Pumping Station contract is £828,000.</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>The contract will be the standard Council contract and undertaken using the Council's current Terms and Conditions.</p> <p>Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 – the tender submission outlined in extensive detail the organisation's commitment to all elements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, notably prioritising the health, safety and wellbeing of their staff through various mechanisms and initiatives, striving for sustainable employment with their personnel and supply chain appointments and being dedicated to delivering volunteering opportunities.</p>
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The construction of a new surface water pumping station on the Twyford Site represents the facilitation of future residential led development, replacing an existing pumping station which is beyond its working life. The new pumping station will need to be designed and constructed in accordance with the planning permission and as consented by Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board (LMIDB), who will adopt and manage the pumping station in the long-term.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.

Risk Management and Health and Safety	Failing to deliver this grant funding would put the future of the Queenborough and Rushenden Regeneration scheme at risk of failure by not developing the site ready for resident development. There is a comprehensive risk register managed through the HIF funding monitoring process.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	All regulatory and legislative requirements associated with privacy and data protection are accounted for and met by utilising the council's procurement portal, Pro-Contract.

## 8 Background Documents

12<sup>th</sup> December 2018 – Cabinet Report – Queenborough & Rushenden HIF Process

12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 – Cabinet Report – Queenborough & Rushenden HIF Increase



<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>Agenda Item: 7</b>
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<b>Meeting Date</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> October, 2021
<b>Report Title</b>	Milstead Conservation Area Review
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr. Mike Baldock - Cabinet Member for Planning
<b>SMT Lead</b>	James Freeman – Head of Planning Services
<b>Head of Service</b>	James Freeman – Head of Planning Services
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Simon Algar – Conservation & Design Manager
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	Open
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To note the responses received from the public consultation exercise (summarised in the response table at Appendix i).</li> <li>2. To note the content of the conservation area character appraisal and associated management strategy document for the Milstead Conservation Area, as amended in response to the public consultation (set out in Appendix ii).</li> <li>3. In light of 1 and 2 above, to resolve that the Milstead Conservation Area is of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and that as such, that it should be re-designated as a conservation area in accordance with section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.</li> <li>4. In light of 1 and 2 above, to resolve that the boundary to the conservation area be re-drawn as proposed in the amended character appraisal and management plan document, and that this document for the Milstead Conservation Area be formally adopted for development management purposes.</li> </ol>

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make the Cabinet aware of some proposed boundary changes and to confirm that following the recent review work, the conservation area should be formally re-designated under section 69 of the

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The proposals include a detailed character appraisal and associated management strategy in line with current good practice for the management of conservation areas. Officers recommend that the Cabinet agrees the changes to the review document set out in **Appendix i** and as reflected in **Appendix ii**: Public consultation version of the 2021 draft character appraisal and management plan document, showing alterations recommended by officers (as tracked changes), as supported by the Local Plan Panel.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Milstead Conservation Area was first designated in April 1973. The conservation area has, according to the available records, not been subject to any review since that time. Up until now, this conservation area has therefore lacked a detailed appraisal or management strategy to underpin its continued designation. Case law concerning conservation area designation indicates that continued designation could be quashed by a legal challenge on the basis for its original designation not being fully evidenced.
- 2.2 The Council is now in receipt of two linked speculative major development applications (refs. 21/503906/EIOUT and 21/503914/EIOUT) for what amounts in combination, to a new settlement proposal to the east and southeast of Sittingbourne, referenced by the applicants, Quinn Estates Ltd, et al, as 'Highsted Park'. The application for the larger application site area on the south side of the A2 (which also extends south beyond the M2 and includes a new motorway junction) has the potential to impact on a large number of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including to the wider setting of Milstead Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that having a detailed up-to-date character appraisal and management strategy in place for this conservation area should help to ensure that any strategic decisions concerning future development and infrastructure provision in this wider area can be made on a properly informed basis taking into account the need to conserve the setting and special interest of this longstanding conservation area, as far as reasonably possible, as well as the Council's requirement to deliver new homes and support employment opportunities.
- 2.3 This review work is part of a wider range of conservation area review work requested by the Western Area Committee (also including Rodmersham Green Conservation Area and Tunstall Conservation Area). As the existing level of officer resource did not allow for this review work to be carried out in-house, the Western Area Committee agreed to fund the use of an external consultant to carry out the work. The same consultancy practice (Wyvern Heritage and

Landscape) which carried out the Tonge Conservation Area and Borden Parish Conservation Areas last year was re-appointed to undertake the review of the Milstead, Rodmersham Green and Tunstall conservation areas. In the event, Wyvern produced only 1 of the 3 review documents commissioned due to the consultancy practice in effect being a sole practitioner and the individual in question suffering some serious health problems which meant she was unable to continue with the work. This has resulted in a significant delay to the reporting on this review work and the necessary appointment of a replacement consultant to carry out the pressing Rodmersham Green and Tunstall review work (this is now under way).

- 2.4 It is anticipated that the parallel review work on Rodmersham Green and Tunstall conservation areas will be reported to the Local Plan Panel in March 2022 following public consultation running from late October through to early December (6 weeks), and that it will be possible to re-designate those and adopt the appraisal and management plan documents ahead of the Council reaching its decision on the Highsted Park planning applications.

### 3 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is to re-designate and amend the boundaries of the conservation area and to equip it with a detailed character appraisal and a complementary management strategy which will assist with development management and heritage conservation purposes over the next decade or so. It will be a matter for the Cabinet to decide whether to formally adopt the Milstead Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (as recommended with the changes set out in Appendix iii, following consultation feedback, or otherwise), but Local Plan Panel Members are requested to provide feedback as part of the process of reaching a decision in this respect.
- 3.2 Proposed changes to the boundaries of the conservation area are highlighted in Appendix 2 of the public consultation version of the character appraisal and management plan document, which is attached as **Appendix ii** to this report, in a tracked changes format. None of the proposed boundary changes have been challenged/questioned through the public consultation exercise, but there has been a suggestion of one further boundary change to include an additional shaw (i.e. a strip of woodland, typically separating fields or lining a road) on the west side of the proposed boundary C extension to the conservation area. The considerations relating to this have been clearly set out in **Appendix i** to this report.
- 3.3 Officers recommend that the proposed changes to the review document as set out in **Appendix i** and as reflected in **Appendix ii** are agreed by the Cabinet, and

that the amended version of the character appraisal and management plan document set out at **Appendix ii** is formally adopted for development management purposes. It should be noted that the version of the document provided at **Appendix ii** is set out purely to show how the changes to the document (which officers consider should be made) are to be incorporated. Final formatting of the document using professional editing software (which will also eliminate any remaining typos and grammatical errors) will be applied to the PDF version of the document which will form the adoption version, and which will be placed on the Council's website for public viewing.

## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 One option would be to not take this review work any further and effectively abandon it. This is not recommended however because it would risk the justifiable continuation of the designation and/or the appropriately sensitive and positive management of the conservation area and its wider setting moving forward.
- 4.2 A second possible option would be to suspend the work on this review until some point in the future. Whilst this option would not result in wasted consultancy fees and officer time, it could still lead to (a) the designation being challenged, (b) reputational damage to the Council and/or (c) development and associated infrastructure provision decisions being made for the locality without an appropriate understanding and appreciation of the special qualities of the Milstead Conservation Area.
- 4.3 A third possible option would be to ignore some elements, or all of the feedback received, in terms of the suggested boundary change(s) and suggested corrections to factual information (dates and place names, etc). However, whilst it is considered that the appraisal and management plan (to support the redesignation of the conservation area) is essentially sound, the feedback provided from the local community in good faith and in a constructive vein is valuable and to ignore any of this feedback without sound reasons to do so would call the value of the consultation process into question and potentially deliver a reputational blow to the Council.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 As agreed in advance with the relevant Cabinet Member, Councillor Baldock, a 7-week (instead of the normal 6-week) public consultation exercise ran from Monday the 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2021 until Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. This extra

week was provided to take account of the consultation period occurring over the school summer holidays when many people were likely to be off work.

- 5.2 All those parties with property within or overlapping the current conservation area boundary and within or overlapping the proposed extensions to it, were notified in writing of the review and were invited to comment on it, as were key relevant organisations including Kent County Council and Historic England. Milstead Parish Council and the relevant ward councillor (West Downs Ward – Cllr. Bonney) was also consulted.
- 5.3 Restrictions on movement imposed due to the Coronavirus pandemic meant that the normal practice of providing hard copies of the review document at Swale House could not be followed, but the review document was available to view/download on-line via the Council's website for the duration of the 7-week public consultation period. Hard copies of the review document were made available to view at Sittingbourne Library, and at the more local level, on request via the Milstead Parish Council Clerk. In addition, officers designed a public consultation poster, copies of which were placed on the Swale House public notice board, the public notice board at Milstead Village Hall and on the notice board at Sittingbourne Library in order to help further publicise the review work.
- 5.4 A total of 14 consultation responses have been received. Twelve of these have been from local residents, with 10 of the 12 simply stating their support for the proposed changes to the conservation area boundary. Two responses were received from local residents, which whilst supportive of the conclusions from the review work overall, did point out some factual errors in the appraisal document, raised concerns about some of the descriptions in the appraisal section of the document and in one case, has made a suggestion to include one further shaw to the south of the conservation area in a further proposed minor extension to the conservation area boundary. The table at **Appendix ii** includes three late representations of support for the proposed boundary changes (nos. 12 -14 incl.). These were both received after the corresponding report to this one was considered by the Council's Strategic Management Team.
- 5.5 In addition to the 12 local resident consultation responses referred to above, Milstead Parish Council has responded to the consultation advising that it fully supports the recommendations for changes to the conservation area boundary and also that it believes the review document to be accurate and fit for purpose, and it thus hopes to see it adopted at the end of the consultation period. The parish clerk, who is the author of a number of local history books, together with another long-established and knowledgeable local resident have also helpfully provided an altered hard copy of the review document showing some minor corrections and suggested minor changes. These have proved to be very useful,

and as such, are reflected in the tracked changes version of the review document at **Appendix ii**.

- 5.6 Historic England has also responded advising that it has no substantive comments to make. It draws attention to a number of editing errors and also advises that the reference to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will need to be updated as the NPPF has been updated since the public consultation version of the review document was completed. It also draws attention to its Advice Note 1 (2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed.) on Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management. It is confirmed that both the appointed consultant and officers have taken the guidance set out in Advice Note 1 into account, and that furthermore, this advice note is referred to in the review document as one of the key reference documents guiding the review work.
- 5.7 Finally, it should be noted that Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation Team are contracted by the Council to provide archaeological advice on development proposals and in support of area appraisal work, as the Council, in line with most other local planning authorities does not have an in-house specialist in this respect. As such, there is no consultation response from the county's Heritage Conservation Team as the Council's consultant liaised with the county's Principal Archaeologist at the outset of this review exercise, and his input was incorporated into the public consultation document. Kent County Council in its function as the Highway Authority was consulted on the conservation area review but provided no feedback in this respect. No response was received either from the county's Ecology Team (which was also consulted).
- 5.8 A report on the public consultation and same Appendix ii document showing the recommended changes to the character appraisal and management plan (following that consultation) was presented to the Local Plan Panel at its meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> October. The Panel unanimously agreed the officer recommendation that its support for adoption of the character appraisal and management plan in its amended form (taking into account the feedback from the public consultation) be noted by the Cabinet in informing the Cabinet's decision making on this matter. A copy of the minutes from the Local Plan Panel meeting will be available for reference at the Cabinet meeting.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>Priority 2 of the Plan is: 'Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges'. Objectives 2.1, 2.4 and 2.5 of this priority are respectively to:</p> <p>(2.1) 'Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2020, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough'.</p> <p>(2.4) 'Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.'</p> <p>(2.5) 'Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus, and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible'.</p> <p>The character appraisal and management strategy document, once amended as appropriate and subsequently adopted would support all 3 of the above-stated objectives from the Corporate Plan.</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	There are no financial implications for the Council
Legal and Statutory	<p>The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on every local planning authority to "<i>determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance</i>" and, from time to time, to review the functioning existing conservation areas. As such failure to follow through on this review work would mean that the council is failing to meet its statutory duties in relation to the designation and ongoing management of conservation areas.</p>
Crime & Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environmental Sustainability	<p>One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is its environmental role: contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. The other two dimensions are a strong economy and a healthy and socially vibrant community</p>
Health and Wellbeing	<p>The health and wellbeing aspects of interaction with heritage assets and heritage related projects are referenced in the adopted Swale Heritage Strategy which underpins this review work.</p>

Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

## 7 Appendices

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- **Appendix i:** Public consultation – table of representations (in summary form), and the council’s response to them
- **Appendix ii:** Public consultation version of the 2021 draft character appraisal and management plan document, showing alterations recommended by officers (as tracked changes)

## 8 Background Papers

None.



**APPENDIX i: TABLE OF REPRESENTATIONS, AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANY CHANGES TO THE REVIEW DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO THEM – FOR MILSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA**

<b>Rep. No(s).</b>	<b>Representation By</b>	<b>Summary of Representation</b>	<b>Officer Response</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
1	Milstead Parish Council (MPC)	MPC has been involved in the discussions around and production of the conservation area (CA) review document and very much welcomes this update. The proposed conservation area boundary changes are fully supported and the document is considered to be accurate and fit for purpose. MPC hopes to see it adopted.	Noted and welcomed.	No change to review document needed.
2 – 4 & 6 – 9 & 12-14	Local residents	Support the proposed changes to the conservation area boundary (including the proposed extensions)	Noted and welcomed.	No change to review document needed.
5	Local resident	<p>Provision of information re Roman archaeology.</p> <p>Suggested correction re reference to commentator on village.</p> <p>Feedback re traffic levels in village and request for Council to put pressure on the Highway Authority to introduce 20mph speed limits through all Swale villages where it is necessary to walk on the highway (where there are no footways)</p>	<p>Noted and welcomed.</p> <p>Noted and welcomed.</p> <p>It would be appropriate to reference the fact that traffic levels in the village do vary according to the time of day and season (i.e. are not always very low). Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) are needed to alter speed</p>	<p>Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions.</p> <p>Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions.</p> <p>Document to be updated to incorporate this revision. Proposed 20mph speed limit in villages/areas of villages with no separate footways to be raised with the Joint Transportation Board.</p>

MILSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
5 (cont.)	Local resident		limits and KCC as the Highway Authority is unlikely to prioritise such works unless there is an evidenced need for them, and such a move is supported by the relevant parish council(s). Such TRO's seem broadly appropriate however, particularly if it helps to preserve the tranquillity of village conservation areas and their rural character. This is a matter which in the first instance should be raised with the Joint Transportation Board.	(see above)
10	Local resident	<p>7 pages of feedback, including suggested corrections to typos and factual errors (e.g. incorrect place names and dates, etc).</p> <p>Commentary on the contribution that later (C20) buildings makes to the setting of the CA and that creating and maintaining a chocolate box image is not appropriate.</p> <p>Suggestion to include shaw to SW side of Little Danes within proposed boundary extension C.</p>	<p>Noted and welcomed.</p> <p>Some re-writing of the relevant sections is proposed to more fairly reflect the contribution that C20 buildings make to the setting of the CA.</p> <p>Whilst the shaw in question dates from post-war, it has the effect (in parallel with pre-Tithe</p>	<p>Document to be updated to incorporate corrections.</p> <p>Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions, which it is agreed on balance are justifiable.</p> <p>Proposed boundary extension C to the CA to be altered to incorporate the shaw in question.</p>

MILSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
10 (cont.)	Local resident	<p>Provision of additional information concerning significant trees and corrections to labelling around important views.</p>	<p>map shaws) of providing a strong enclosed character to the CA with visually enclosed small parcels of land combining with buildings, gardens and the churchyard to create an intimate landscape character. The inclusion of the shaw in question would only require a modest change to proposed extension C but would ensure that the trees forming this important natural feature are recognised for their visual and ecological benefits and given some protection through the CA designation.</p> <p>The input provided re trees and views is helpful and highly relevant and it is therefore planned to incorporate the feedback provided in this respect.</p>	<p>(see above)</p> <p>Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions.</p>
11	Historic England	<p>No substantive comments to make on either the contents of the review or the extensions to the conservation areas proposed. Attention is drawn to the relevant Historic England guidance document: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and M'gmt.</p>	<p>The referenced document has been appropriately referred to and also referenced in the CA review document.</p>	<p>No change to review document needed.</p>

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# Milstead

## Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan

November 2021  
Adoption Version





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# FOREWORD

“Historic buildings and places add to the quality of people’s lives and help to create a sense of place that we all identify with.

As a community and as a local authority, we have a responsibility to safeguard our historic assets for future generations and to make sure that they are not compromised by unsympathetic alterations or poor quality developments. Conservation area designation and subsequent management is one way in which this can be achieved.

Conservation areas are not intended to halt progress or to prevent change. Rather, they give the local community and the Borough Council the means to positively manage change and to protect what is special about the area from being harmed or lost altogether.

Swale Borough is fortunate in having such a rich and varied mix of built and natural heritage. The Borough Council wants to see it used positively as a catalyst to sustainable, sensitive regeneration and development, and to creating places where people want to live, work, and make the most of their leisure time. To that end, we have reviewed the Milstead Conservation Area and the results of that review are set out in this document, which the Borough Council is now seeking constructive feedback on.

This is one of a series of conservation area reviews which the Borough Council is committed to undertaking, following the adoption of the Swale Heritage Strategy 2020 - 2032.”



Councillor Mike Baldock,  
Cabinet Member for Planning and  
Swale Borough Council Heritage Champion





## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Milstead Conservation Area

**Milstead Conservation Area** was first designated on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 1973. Since this date, it has had no supporting Appraisal and the boundary has not been reviewed until this report.

It lies approximately 5 kilometres (3.5 miles) south of Sittingbourne town centre. The small nucleated village is comprised of a small group of buildings clustered around the Church and manor house.

### 1.2 The Purpose of Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas were first introduced in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. A Conservation Area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (s.69(1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). It is the responsibility of individual Local Planning Authorities to designate and review Conservation Areas using local criteria to determine and assess their special qualities and local distinctiveness.

The aim of Conservation Area designation is to protect historic places and to assist in positively managing change, so that their significance is safeguarded and sustained. Areas may be designated for their architecture, historic layout, use of characteristic or local materials, style, or landscaping. In accordance with the four types of heritage values set out in the core Historic England guidance document (Conservation Principles: Policies & Guidance. Communal values – which are those derived from the meaning of a place for people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory – will be of particular relevance to this Conservation Area given the linkages between place names and remnants of bygone uses in the wider

**Conservation Area status provides extra protection in the following ways:**

- Local planning authorities have control over most demolition of buildings.
- Local authorities have extra control over householder development.
- Special provision is made to protect trees.
- When assessing planning applications, the Local Planning Authority is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting.
- Policies in the Local Development Plan positively encourage development which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

context of historical growth and development. Above all however, Conservation Areas should be cohesive areas in which buildings and spaces create unique environments that are of special architectural or historic interest.

Conservation Areas provide for additional Controls over owners and landowners activities.

### 1.3 The Purpose and Status of this Character Appraisal

A Conservation Area Character Appraisal is a written record and assessment of the special architectural or historic interest which gives rise to the character and appearance of a place. The appraisal is a factual and objective analysis which seeks

to identify the distinctiveness of a place by defining the attributes that contribute to its special character. **It should be noted, however, that the appraisal cannot be all-inclusive, and that the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is not of interest.**

The appraisal is the vehicle for understanding both the significance of an area as a whole and the effect of any impacts which bear negatively on its significance. In some cases, significance may only be fully identified at such time as a feature or a building is subject to the rigorous assessment that an individual planning application necessitates.

Additionally, an appraisal can include management proposals to ensure the preservation or enhancement of an area by means of policies, action points, design guidance and site-specific design statements where appropriate. The objective of this plan would be to reinforce the positive character of a historic area as well as avoiding, minimising, and mitigating negative impacts identified as affecting the area.

An appraisal serves as a basis for both the formulation and evaluation of Development Plan policies, as a material consideration in the making of development management decisions by the Local Planning Authority, and by the Planning Inspectorate in determining planning appeals. It can also heighten awareness of the special character of the place to help inform local Parish Councils in the formulation of Neighbourhood Plans, Village Design Statements, and individuals in design choices.

This Character Appraisal is supplementary to the Swale Borough Local Plan. It has been prepared in the context of the relevant national legislation and national and local planning policy and guidance provided by central government, Historic England, and the Borough Council itself, all of which are set out in Appendix 3 of this document.

The statutory duty of local planning authorities with regards to conservation areas are to provide the necessary background to, and framework for, a review of the Conservation Area boundary in accordance with Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area (Section 72).

In light of the way that the production of Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Strategy documents (such as this one) are developed and prepared in the above stated context and are also subject to public scrutiny via a statutory public consultation period of a minimum of 21 days, following formal adoption by the Local Planning Authority, they then have sufficient weight or gravitas to form a significant material consideration in the development management process.

## 2.0. MILSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA

### 2.1 Summary of Significance and Special Interest

- Roman finds in the vicinity of the church suggests that there is potential for further Roman archaeology
- Archaeological potential for Saxon and Medieval archaeology
- Location of the village on a small ridge of land within an area of fields surrounded by a circle of ancient and semi-natural woodland 1 km in diameter

Page 155  
12th/early 13th century origins to the village with the establishment of a small nucleated village created by the clearance by assarting of ancient woodland

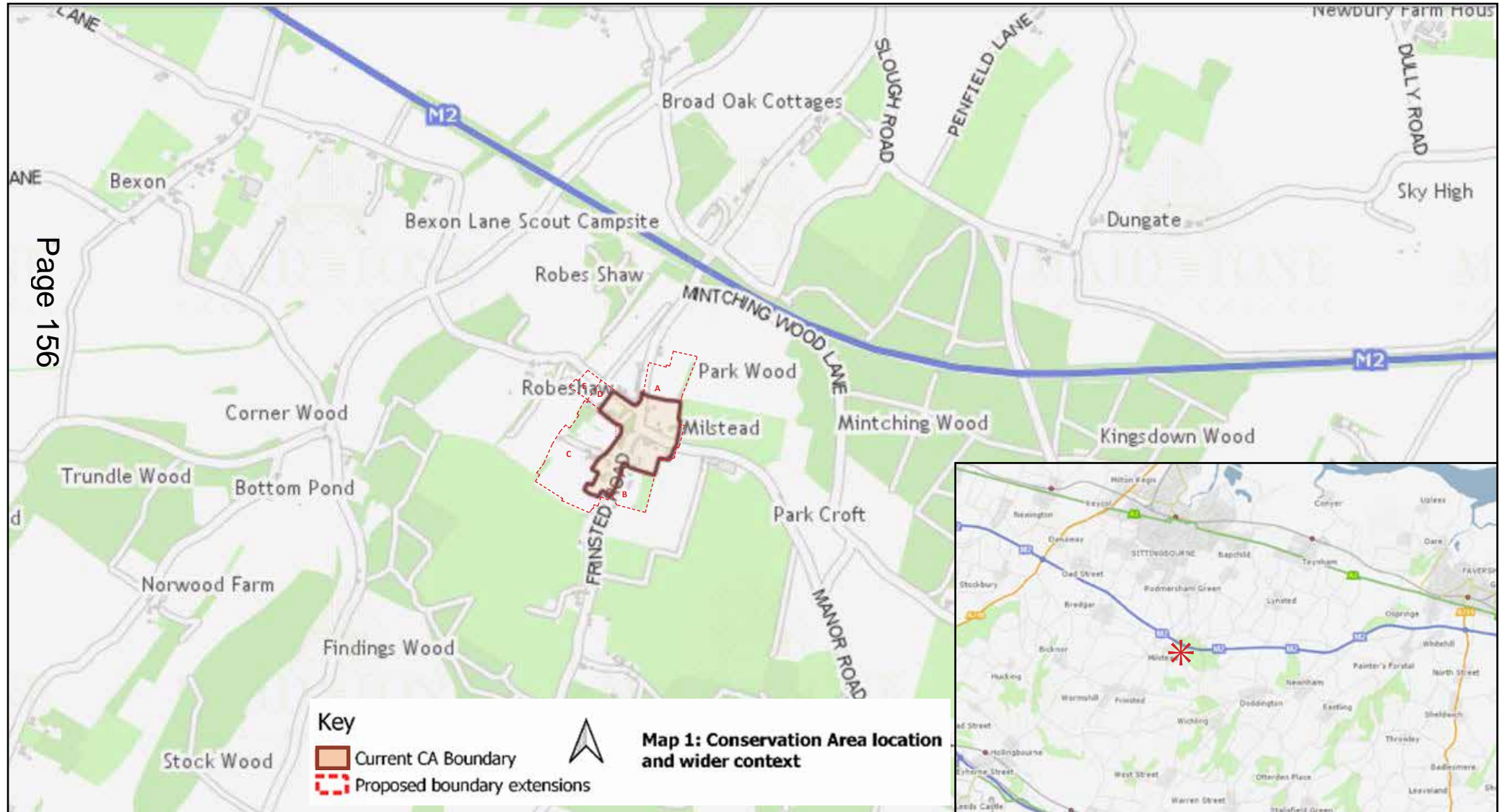
Church with 12th century origins and surviving 12th century and 15th century fabric set within an oval graveyard

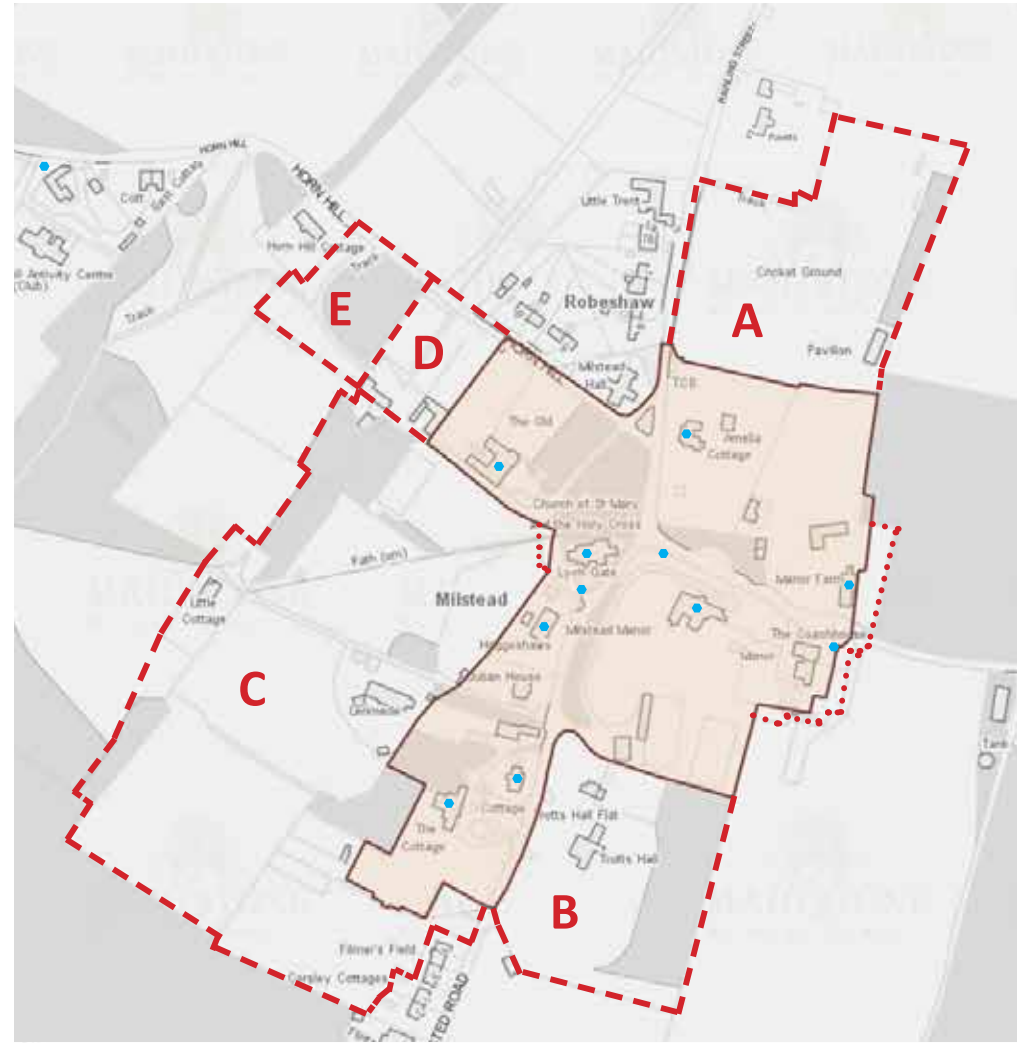
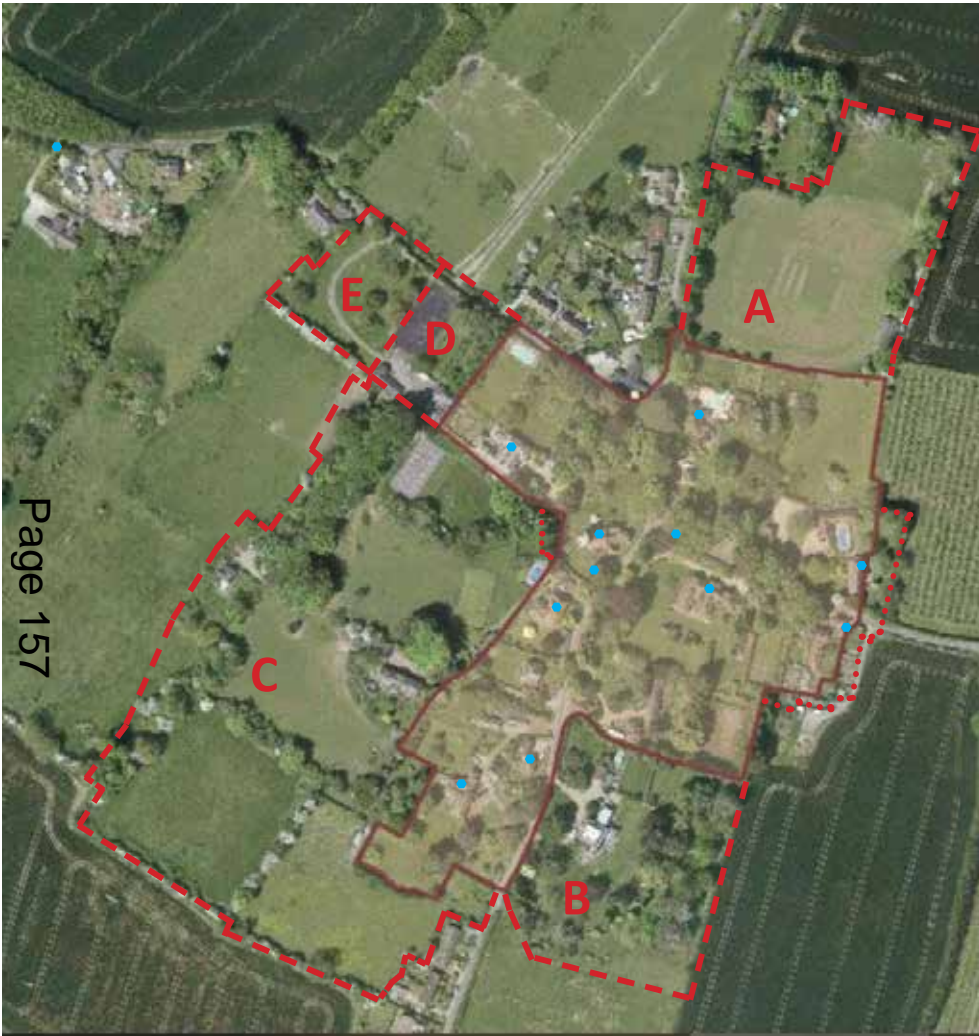
- Manor House with 13th century origins and surviving 16th century fabric
- Hoggeshaws a distinctive Wealden hall house dating to 1450
- Group of nationally important vernacular buildings dating from the 16th to the 17th centuries (Amelia Rose Cottage, Manor Farmhouse, Wisteria Cottage and The Cottage)

- The Old Rectory built 1834 and associated grounds – a fine example of regency style, association with glebe lands to the west
- Locally important buildings Trotts Hall House, The Coachhouse & Manor Cottage, Little Danes and the Cricket Pavilion with score box.
- Locally important built features including the church lychgate and the Bier House (storage building for the parish bier, i.e. corpse transporter - often in wagon form) coffin rest/shelter and walls to the Manor on Frinsted Road
- Shared public realm along lanes/roads with a lack of pavements and modern street infrastructure
- Sense of enclosure with high brick walls, clipped yew hedges, mature trees and planting along Manor Road and southern end of Frinsted Road.
- Milstead Conservation Area is notable partly due to its lack of open space with important exceptions
- Historic fields on west side with pre 1840 mature wooded boundaries and surviving Shaws
- Historic links to the Tylden Family and their relationship with all the key historic buildings
- A long history of cricket since 1857





## 2.2 Geographic character and Historical Development

The Conservation Area lies within the dip slope of the North Downs whose landform forms a gently rolling chalk plateau. This dip slope is interspersed with relatively steep dry valleys mostly running SW-NE.





Key

-  Current CA Boundary
-  Proposed boundary adjustments
-  Proposed boundary extensions
-  Listed Buildings



**Map 2: Conservation Area boundary with proposed alterations (1,2) and proposed extensions (A-E); Listed Buildings (List Entry No.)**

## Prehistoric and Roman Context

Swale as a whole is noted for its concentration of Palaeolithic evidence. The south-east research framework has undertaken an in-depth appraisal of the early Palaeolithic resource (Woban-Smith et al 2010 revised 2019), and Late Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Resource (Pope et.al 2011 last revised 2019).

The resource for the early Palaeolithic is formed of areas where evidence has been recovered from natural geological deposits, most often lithics. These locations can also be sources of related biological and palaeo-environmental information. Some sites may represent single artefacts from a geological deposit that gathered material from a wide area whilst forming; perhaps including derived material from pre-existing older deposits. Others may contain dense accumulations of Palaeolithic material generally buried by steady accumulation of fine sediments, which have remained undisturbed since their burial. Residual Clay-with-flints deposits cap the high ground of the Chalk all around the Wealden Basin; and in some places, particularly north-east Kent, loessic deposits. (generally mapped as ‘brickearth’”) are also present. Northern and southern chalk dip slopes are dissected by numerous dry valleys, filled with varying thicknesses of slope wash, gravel and colluvial brickearth

There are within the North Downs dip slope in the region of Sittingbourne four key types of deposit (Woban Smith et Al 2010 ibid 25):

- Moderately common lower-level post-Anglian fluvial deposits
- Residual deposits of clay-with-flint
- Abundant Coombe/Head deposits
- Head/solifluction gravel

Milstead is associated with residual deposits of clay-with flint. These can contain Early Palaeolithic artefacts but these do not tend to be well stratified.

Regarding the Coombe/Head deposits to the west, north and east of the village. In general, these colluvial deposits occur at the base of slopes, on valley-sides, in dry valleys and in hollows in the landscape. Many outcrops are too minor to be represented in geological mapping, but these unmapped deposits also have great potential for important remains. In the area of Sittingbourne, the Coombe/ Head deposits are associated with Levalloisian material relating to the lower/middle Palaeolithic. The area between Rainham and Sittingbourne is rich in Head/ Gravel outcrops where it is likely that many outcrops remain unrecorded. The same Head deposits in river valley deposits can be resources of Late Pleistocene palaeo-environmental deposits (Pope et.al 2011: 6).

Regarding Mesolithic (c9600 to 4000 Cal BC) evidence, finds of core axes/adzes are common across the Chalk and particularly noticeable in Kent. It has been suggested that these forms were produced from flint ‘quarried’ from the chalk but were not generally carried very far by mobile hunter-gatherer groups (Jacobi 1978). Flint core axes/adzes are generally regarded as occurring in inverse proportion to microlithic forms; however, it must also be borne in mind that most such find spots relate to surface collection, and that microlithic pieces might be better represented within excavated collections, which are few and far between (Jacobi 1978, 18) (ibid.15).” There is therefore continued potential for dense accumulations of Mesolithic flintwork across the Chalk.

There is also a similar potential for Neolithic flint scatters.

The wider landscape was known to be settled by the middle Bronze Age. However evidence for Bronze Age and Iron Age archaeology within Milstead and the surrounding parishes is scarce. There is a smattering of undated ring ditches, enclosures and ditches identified from Aerial Photographs within 3 km of the Conservation Area. There is a general picture of widespread deposition, presumably deriving from human

agricultural activity, by the late Bronze Age, suggesting Bronze Age field systems and related settlement sites would have been present. The evidence for these could survive as cropmarks. In general, evidence for the Bronze Age and earlier Iron Age is lacking in the area.

Milstead is likely to follow the pattern of large-scale landscape colonisation in the late Iron Age as seen in Kent generally (Allen et.al.: 2013 revised 2019).

With the invasion of the Romans after AD43 it is widely accepted that a client kingdom was rapidly established which was probably absorbed into the Roman province by the end of the 1st century AD. The Watling Street, which is 5 km to the north of Milstead, quickly became a focus of Roman activity in the landscape focusing on the creeks and flets which ran northwards down towards the Swale, and agricultural exploitation of the chalk dip slope to the south. Roman activity in the landscape has influenced the present day pattern of settlement and tracks/roads in the parishes.

Roman evidence relates to the discovery of a 2nd century AD cremation site in Milstead churchyard. This consisted of a cinerary urn and glass phial. **More recently, a possible Roman tile and Roman brick fragments were discovered behind a wall monument in the interior of the parish church during repair works.** [Note is the urn still in the church?] **TQ 90375880.** This fits the wider known pattern of Roman settlement and exploitation of the landscape to the south of Watling Street following dry valleys onto the higher chalk downland.

### TIMELINE OF KEY HISTORIC DATES AND EVENTS

(Based on Jordan 2001 Strolling through Milstead)

DATE	EVENT
c.1100	Milstede first known written mention
1278	Reference to 'Milcstede'
c.1280	First mention of Manor House owned by Thomas Abelyn
c.1294	Manor in possession of John Le Suvage
c.1280	Church living (advowson) and manor in same possession by reign of Edward I
c.1302	'Milsted' church mentioned in the Testa de Nevill
1313	Reference to Milnstede- 'a milking place or dairy farm'
1634	Milstead Manor passes into Tylden Family
1857	Milstead Cricket Club Founded in meadow by the school - first game June 22, 1858
1879	Cricket Club moved to Pond Meadow (Camp Meadow)
c.1890	Village Hall established in a beaters hut given to the family by the Tyldens
c.1945	Cricket Club moved to current location
c.1958	M2 motorway dissects village 1958 – the village side road was moved

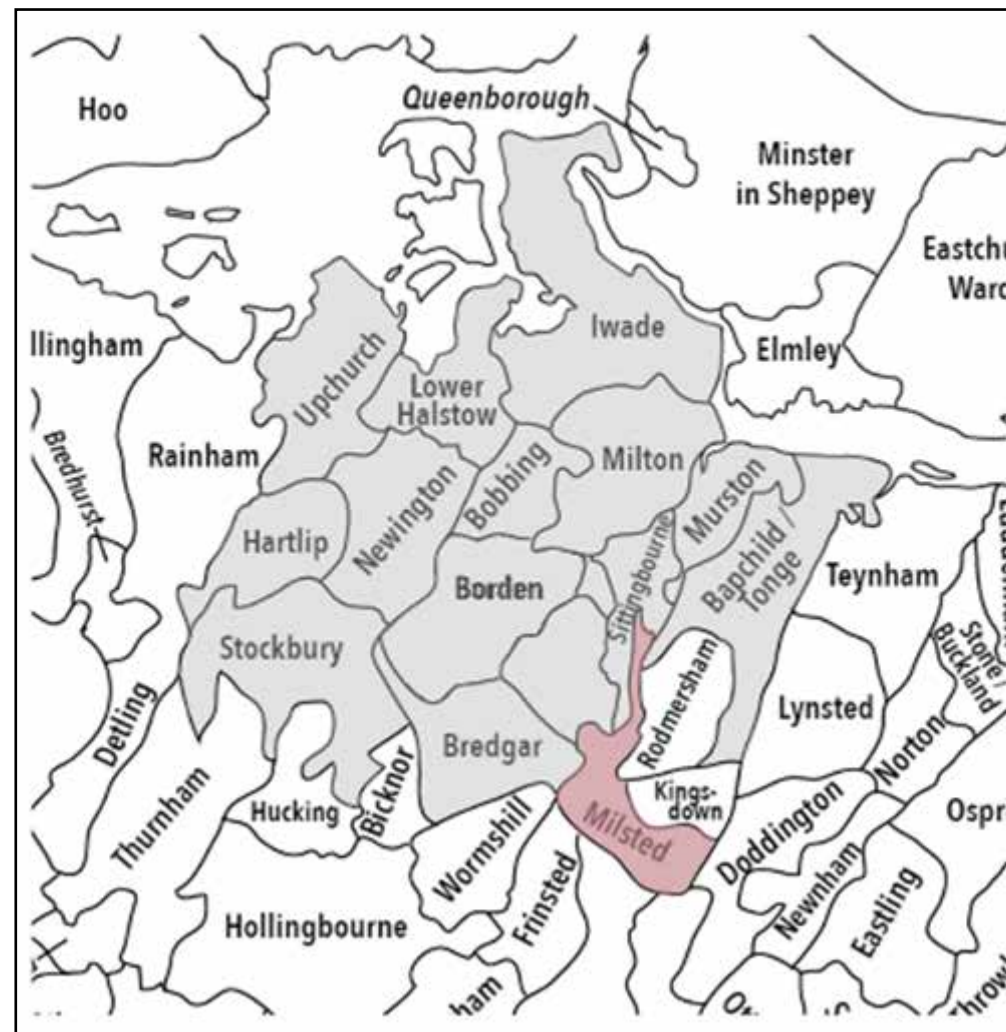
## Brief overview of historic development of the parish from the 5th century to the present day

Most archaeologists would now agree that the distinct cultural transitions witnessed during the 5th century were triggered by a substantial and sustained influx of Germanic migrants.

The parish of Milstead has been identified as being part of a 5th century 'Jutish estate', which had its palace at Milton. It should be noted that notions that these cultural differences relate to monolithic ethnic groups of 'Jutes' and 'Saxons' have been subsequently revised. In Kent, the cultural diversity which comes to define the grave assemblages of the 6th and 7th centuries is already apparent in the first-generation cemeteries of the 5th century. The persistent 'Jutish' strand is but one of a multiplicity of influences (also drawing upon Saxon, Frisian and Frankish impulses). This reflects the fluid cultural geography of the Anglo-Saxon world and the role that sustained contacts with the continental homelands had in shaping an evolving Kentish identity (Thomas 2013 in South East Research Framework).

The Milton estate was a royal vill, an estate centre where the royal fyrd (food-rent) was collected, whose long-term development was intricately linked to the foundation of minster churches. Milton developed into a fully-fledged or incipient urban centre during the Late Anglo-Saxon period. These core Anglo-Saxon lands subsequently passing to the Crown and then William the Conqueror at the Norman Conquest.

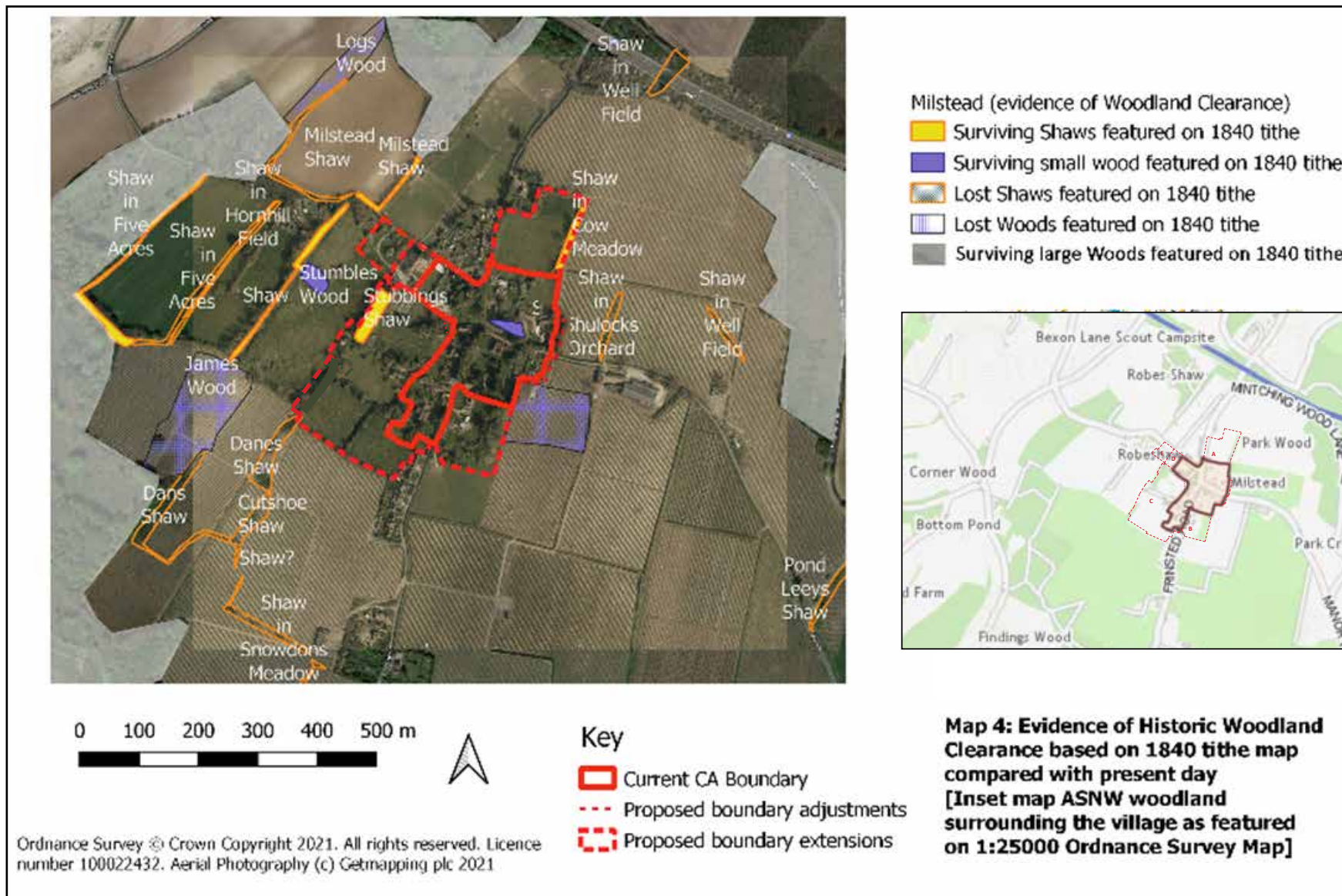
The Anglo-Saxon social system was based on farms and hamlets and became the basis for the Mediaeval pattern of settlement. Milstead parish may have originally been a focus for seasonal pannage, a possible derivation for its name being "middle place", but gradually between the 5th and 10th centuries became more regularly settled with a focus of settlement forming at the slight ridge of land where the village sits today.



Map Three: The 5th Century Anglo-Saxon estate centred on Milton



Milstead is not referenced in Domesday, and the first written record dates to the 1100s. Its written history can be more firmly traced from the second half of the 13th century. Despite this there are hints as to the origins of the village from the surviving landscape seen today and from historic mapping.



The historic mapping shows that the historic settlement of Milstead was created through a process of clearance of ancient woodland known as ‘assarting’

Clearance or assarting considerably changed the woodland patterns of England. In its broadest sense it reflects the expansion of pasture and ploughland at the expense of woodland in the Medieval and early post Medieval period. Assarting took place on many scales and a variety of people were involved from small landholders to nobles and large landowners.

Taylor in his seminal study of English fields described the countryside associated with assarting:

“In spite of much later alteration, the modern pattern of irregularly shapes, fields often bounded by thick and botanically rich hedges perched on large banks, shows how and where medieval farmers encroached on the forests” (1975: 95)

Muir in his discussion on fieldwork in landscape history, describes how the holders of assarts were often required to enclose them as fields; a ditch could mark the property boundary and a hedge would be planted just inside the ditch (2000: 23).

Some of the field- names associated with assarts readily identify the origins of the fields, like ridding, rod or sart. Muir (ibid:24) identifies that a type of landscape commonly associated with woodland clearance is “that characterised by shaws, attenuated belts of deciduous woodland that border many of the fields as seen in upland Sussex and Kent” These Shaws are often as much as two rods (33 feet in width) and include trees along with shrubs like hazel and field maple. Therefore there is good evidence available for the form and characteristics of likely assarts in Kent which is summarised below in Table One.

Historic assarts are therefore a distinctive and significant feature of parts of the Kentish Landscape. They provide a mosaic of distinctive fields with mature woodland boundaries associated with Shaws and woodland belts.

This is very much the pattern of landscape change which can be seen both within the village of Milstead and its conservation area and within its immediate surroundings.

Table One: Evidence for enclosure in former wooded settings: characteristics of assarts in Kent

Evidence	Description
Field Names	<i>Sart, Stocks, stocking, stubbings, bushy, reed, ridding, rode, royd, ridland and ridding.</i>
Field Shapes	<i>Irregular</i>
Field Boundaries	<i>Ditches, and banked often thick hedges</i>
Landscape features commonly associated with woodland assarts	<i>Shaws and other woods bounding fields</i>

The village sits within an open area surrounded by a circle of ancient and semi-natural woodland 1 km in diameter. The woodland includes large areas such as Mintching Wood and Kingsdown Wood to the north east, Hogshaw Wood to the south as well as the smaller ribbon of woodland to the west called Bottom Pond woods. Closer to the village, the 1840s tithe map reveals a pattern of Shaws (or belts of woodland) adjacent to fields indicating the creation over time of a pattern of fields from a former area of larger woodland. On the western side of the village several of these Shaws survive including Horn Mill Hill Shaw, a small area of wood known as Stumbles and Stubbings Shaw. Note the name Stubbings is a characteristic name associated with assarts. **A later (post-war) Shaw serves to divide the fields southwest of the house known as Little Danes.**

**It should be noted that many of the shaw and woodland names referenced above are no longer in use today and are not referenced on modern Ordnance Survey mapping. Continued reference to these old place names is nevertheless useful as an aid to understanding the evolving landscape form of the village and the historic pattern of land ownership.** Historically the settlement of Milstead can be first identified through the history of the church and the Manor House.

Regarding the church it can be traced to the reign of King John (1166 -1216) which fits with the surviving 12th century building fabric. Halsted Hasted gives this information

*The church of Milsted was given by King John to Wydon the clerk, who held it, as appears by the Testa de Nevill, in the next reign of king Henry III. Whether he was lord likewise of Milsted manor I have not found; but from the next reign of King Edward I. to the present time, this church seems to have had the same possessors, and as such, the advowson of it is now the property of Richard Tylden, esq. of Hoggeshaws .<sup>1</sup>*

Appendix 4 contains the full extract from Halsted's 1798 History and Topographical survey.

This manor house was known as early as the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) when it was owned by Thomas Abelyn. It was in the possession of John Le Suvage c. 1294 when he gained a grant of free-warren. During reign of Edward III, it is associated with the family name of Hoggeshaws (which gives it name to the Listed Building known as Hoggeshaw, and at various times in the past to the manor and village as a whole).

[See Map Five: Historical Development] Note Historical Development relates to evidence for past land uses not current land use

It can be deduced therefore that by the 12th/early 13th century we have the establishment of a small, nucleated village created by the clearance by assarting of ancient woodland located on a small spur of land. The earliest built fabric in the parish is associated with the Parish Church in the 12th century.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Hasted, 'Parishes: Milsted', in The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 6 (Canterbury, 1798), pp. 107-112. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-kent/vol6/pp107-112> [accessed 4 February 2021].

### Wealden Style Timber Framed Halls and their significance

The Wealden House is a distinctive medieval structural type, found most commonly in Kent and Sussex, for which the name 'recessed-hall house' is also used. It is characterised by having an open hall flanked by floored, jettied end-bays, all under a single roof. Because the wall plate is aligned with the front walls of the end bays, it 'flies' over the hall, where it is usually braced from the corner posts of the end bays, giving the distinctive 'recessed' hall appearance. The term 'Wealden' apparently came into use among members of the Vernacular Architecture Group in the 1950s, reflecting the concentration of examples in the Kentish Weald. As well as the classic form (illustrated), with a hipped roof and two-bay hall, varieties of Wealden houses exist; these include houses with one-bay halls, and with gabled rather than hipped roofs. Most important are the half-Wealdens, which have only one end bay. Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG) (2012) Wealden Houses Database [data-set]. York: Archaeology Data Service [distributor] <https://doi.org/10.5284/1011977>

This is followed by vernacular buildings from the 15th century onwards with one Wealden style timber framed hall known as Hoggeshaws dating to the 15th century immediately to the west of the church and other examples of 16th and 17th century houses including the 16th century Manor House being built to the south of the church either side of Frinsted Road. There is one small 17th century house known as Rose Cottage, to the north of the church, which acts as an outlier.

The manor is known to have passed into the Tylden family, after the construction of the 16th century manor house, and their descendants retained it until 1949. The manor was a school in the mid-1930s until it returned to private hands in 1949.

The 1840 tithe map for the parish provides a snapshot of the development of the village at this time with the manor house and its associated formal gardens and the church at the centre of the village. The manor house was associated with substantial

yards and productive gardens and orchards on its south and east side.

By this date, the rectory was the other substantial property in the village, to the west of the church built on glebe lands and again associated with formal and productive gardens and yards with cottages to the west. All of the properties in the villages were in the gift of the Tylden family who as well as the manor lands also held the right of Advowson (and could therefore determine who had the living related to the rectory and the associated glebe lands). Indeed, the living was on several occasions kept in the family. The right of Advowson was acquired by the Julian Family from the last surviving Tylden, it is thought in 1924, when the right to sell the advowson for cash was about to be abolished, and many holders of this right therefore sold it on before it became valueless.

Hogeshaws, the building with the surviving fabric in the building, was used by the farm bailiff during the 19th century. Another important historical association is the relationship between The Cottage (a substantial house dating from the 17th century onwards) and the Manor. The Tylden family appears to have fluctuated their main residence between The Cottage and the Manor throughout the 19th century. In 1840 the manor was leased, and they resided in The Cottage but by the 1851 census they were resident back in the Manor and stayed there until at least 1861. In 1881 they were back in The Cottage with the Manor again leased.

Using the 1840 tithe as a guide, this lease of the manor included only the formal gardens immediately surrounding it, and the land on the north side of Manor road including the wood, and orchard adjacent to the Manor Farmhouse. The Tyldens' retaining control of the working areas relating to the Manor House and the revenue which was gained from the surrounding land. The reasons for this pattern may have been personal preference The Cottage may have been easier to maintain in the current style; practical, for example being easier to heat; more tranquil as it was removed from the working yards and farm; and economic as leasing the Manor generated additional income.

#### A Jane Austen connection

It is understood locally that the well-known Late C18/early C19 English novelist Jane Austen regularly stayed at Milstead Parsonage and wrote in her letters "I dined with the Tyldens at Milstead Parsonage".

It seems likely possible that the parsonage mentioned ~~farmhouse~~ **elevated into a cottage where referenced** in her book 'Persuasion', is the house known today as The Cottage (historically Milstead Cottage – built c.1600 **with a Georgian extension**), which she described as "a compact tight parsonage enclosed in its own neat garden with a vine and pear-tree trained round its casements"

In 1891 the Manor was leased by Henrietta Howard, the widow of the Rev. John Howard (formerly Dean of Lichfield), along with her unmarried daughter Emily Georgiana Howard. Both mother and daughter were keen amateur artists. There must have been a long-standing relationship between the Tyldens and Howards as Emily was undertaking sketches in the parish by 1879.



In 1870-72, John Marius Wilson's Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales described Milstead as follows:

MILSTEAD, a village and a parish in Milton district, Kent. The village stands 3½ miles S of Sittingbourne r. station, and has a post office under Sittingbourne. The parish comprises 1,216 acres. Real property, £1,626. Pop., 245. Houses, 43. The property is subdivided. The manor, with the Manor House, belongs to Rev. William Tylden Tylden. The living is a rectory in the diocese of Canterbury. Value, £250. \* Patron, the Rev. H. Hilton. The church is mainly early English, includes transition Norman portions, and is in good condition. Charities, £25<sup>1</sup>.

During the 19th century the population of Milstead parish remained very stable from 189 people in 1801 to 206 in 1901 indeed this pattern continued into the 20th century.

In 1831 there were 214 people living in 30 households. Amongst the 50 men aged 20 or over in occupation there were 5 landowners employing labourers and 30 agricultural labourers. Agricultural labourers therefore made up 60% of the workforce with 74% of working men involved in agriculture in some form.

In 1881, 256 people lived in the parish in 53 households. There were 61 men of working age of whom 50 (81%) worked in agriculture. Women of working age (71) either worked within their own households (63%) or were in domestic service (30%).

The 1881 census tells us that Richard Tylden, principal landowner, directly employed 18 men, 2 boys and their families.

At the turn of the 20th century, the parish and settlements remained rural in nature with activity focusing on arable production, pasture and fruit farming.

<sup>1</sup> GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, History of Milstead, in Swale and Kent | Map and description, A Vision of Britain through Time.  
URL: <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/place/6361>

### A History of Cricket

The village has a proud history of Cricket with the Cricket Club founded in 1857. The club moved to its current ground in c.1945. The photo below shows a match. Manor Farmhouse can be seen in the background



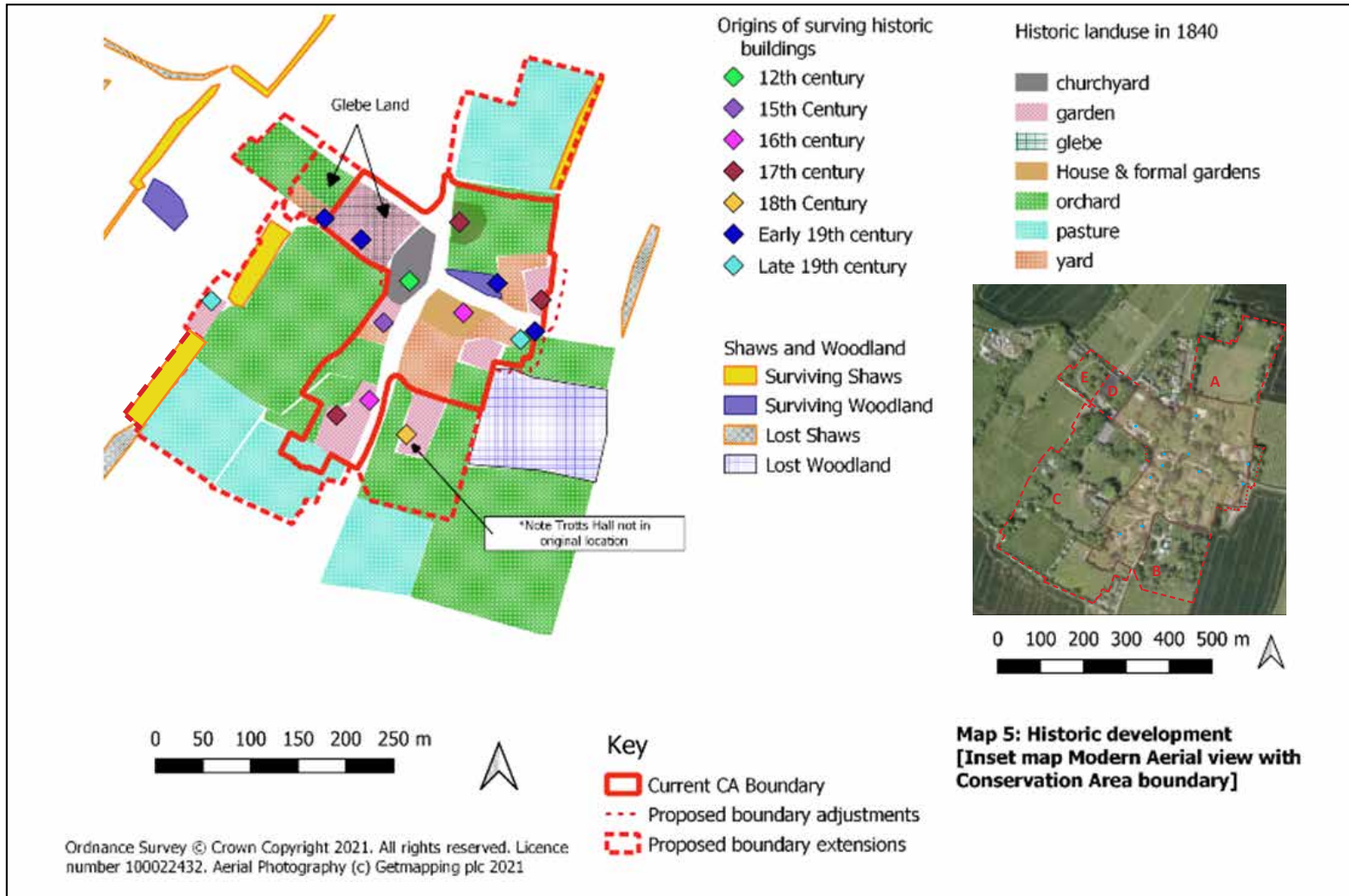
Old time cricket match --this match was actually in July 1951 and was a 19th century style cricket match between Milstead and Valeswood-- a North Kent club, played to celebrate the Festival of Britain and attended by Mr and Mrs William Finlay, President of the M.C.C (Marylebone Cricket Club) who planted a commemorative oak at the village hall (still there) and hoisted the first flag of the cricket club of Milstead (still in use)

Notable developments in the 20th century include the construction of M2 motorway which bisected the village in 1958, effectively divorcing the sub-hamlet focused on the Red Lion pub, Lion Farm and Rawlings Street Farm on Rawlings Street. This also led to the moving of one of the parish side roads.

It was from the 1970s onwards that the agricultural links between the residents and the land surrounding them were finally severed. The parish as a whole has doubled the number of people and households from 179 people in 61 households in 1961

to 283 people in 118 households in 2011. Within Milstead village this has occurred through the construction of small housing developments (typically 6 houses or less) and detached individual dwellings and bungalows.

As of 2011, most inhabitants do not work the land, with only 6% employed in agriculture and forestry. The village pub continues to trade on Rawlings Street, but with the closure of the shop/post office at Milstead in 1997, residents now need to travel to Sittingbourne and elsewhere for many of their requirements.



## 2.3 Topography Geology and Landscape Setting

The local topography matches this general pattern, the village sits on a slight north-south spur of land with the land rising gradually to the north of the village. On the western side the land slopes down to a dry valley which runs SW-NE.



Bedrock Geology at Milstead

The village sits within the Seaford Chalk Formation. This is sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 84 to 90 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period – this bedrock forms a large swathe of land on the lower dip slope of the Kent Downs. Milstead sits near the transition to the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation to the south.

The centre of the village is on a spur of land associated with superficial deposits of clay-with-flints formed up to 23 million years ago. That ridge is surrounded to the north, east and west by head deposits of clay-silt, sand and gravel. The shallow valley to the west has been eroded to reveal the Seaford Chalk below as well as a narrow finger of the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation beneath.



Local topography, bedrock and superficial geology at Milstead. Note the topography is vertically exaggerated by 3x.

### Landscape Setting

Natural England, with assistance from Historic England, has mapped and described the landscape character of England which has been divided into 159 National Character Areas. The Milstead Conservation Area lies within area 119. North Downs.

Further valuable landscape character assessment work has been undertaken at the local level by the Borough Council resulting in the publication of the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (2011)

The Milstead Conservation Areas falls within the overarching Fruit Belt Landscape Character Area. The relevant LCT is Dry Valleys and Downs. Milstead lies on the junction of two local Landscape Character Areas: number 40 Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valleys (to the west) and number 38 Milstead and Kingsdown Mixed Farmlands (to the east).

Below is an extract from the relevant LCT descriptions detailing the most pertinent information. <https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-planning-guidance/>

### Extract from **38. Milstead and Kingsdown Mixed Farmlands**

Key Characteristics [those relevant to the CA are underlined]

- Gently undulating North Downs dip slope
- Soils largely clay-with-flints with small pockets of chalk, head
- Small to large-scale irregularly shape fields, open arable fields, small areas of fruit production with strong network of mature shelterbelts
- Traditional parkland estates
- Large tracts of ancient woodland, containing significant areas of sweet chestnut coppice
- Views enclosed by woodland, shelterbelts and hedgerow
- Narrow lanes, generally enclosed but occasionally open to adjacent arable fields
- Historic villages and country houses, scattered farmsteads and twentieth century cottages. Many vernacular style buildings
- Pugin's St Catherine's Church sits isolated in the open landscape

### Landscape Description

South of the M2, the landscape is nationally designated as the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is an area of gently undulating land located to the south of the M2 approximately midway between Sittingbourne and Faversham.....

A large proportion of the landscape is woodland and much of this is, or was in the past, associated with large parkland estates. Woodlands, some ancient, are well maintained and contain mixed deciduous and coniferous species. Large areas are managed in the traditional Kentish manner for the rotational production of sweet chestnut poles. ....

This is an area of mixed farming, with isolated small-scale orchards, surrounded by well-maintained shelterbelts of poplar and alder. Elsewhere fields have generally been enlarged as a result of agricultural intensification. However, the historic fabric of the landscape, its woodlands and lanes have restricted to some degree field enlargement. As a result, the landscape contains a mixture of small, medium and large-scale irregularly shaped fields. Hedgerows have become fragmented and lost within arable fields. Standard oaks indicate former internal field boundaries and occasionally supplement lane side hedgerows, which in places are more intact. Settlement is limited to large country houses set in private parkland, large country houses without associated parkland, farmsteads, small hamlets and small historic villages. Many traditional buildings of mixed age and in local vernacular style are found here. Timber framed houses and barns; brick and weatherboard as well as flint churches are all present. Twentieth century dwellings are also present, but their extent is limited.

### Condition Moderate

Milstead and Kingsdown Mixed Farmlands are in moderate condition. It is a coherent landscape of mixed land use, with a unique character that has been strongly influenced by the traditional function of large estates. Large tracts of ancient woodland are managed for the purposes for which they were originally established and thus assist in maintaining the fabric of the landscape. Some are



designated for their nature conservation value. ....

The built environment is generally in very good condition but some of the more modern residential properties have detracting features within their external environment, which impacts locally on the rural character. Large agricultural barns stand out in the open arable landscape. The M2 has little visual impact where it is crossed by minor roads and within woodland blocks. ....

#### **Sensitivity Moderate**

This is an area of moderate sensitivity. It is a very distinct landscape with large blocks of woodland and traditional parkland estates as well as small areas of fruit production. The historic villages and hamlets as well as the country houses all add to the unique character. The undulating landscape and enclosure provided by mature vegetation create a moderately visible landscape although there are some long views.

Extract from **40. Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley**

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Dry chalk valley, sloping steeply on either side to adjacent ridges
- Mixed geology of chalk overlain by drift deposits and clay-with-flints on the North Downs dip slope
- Many narrow lanes traverse the valley. The M2 motorway that divides the area north-south is generally well screened despite its elevated position

- Enlarged arable fields are enclosed by numerous small to medium scale woodlands, some used for the production of coppiced timber
- Occasional isolated areas of well managed orchard
- Several small villages with historic buildings at the centre and enclosed by 20th century infill
- An enclosed landscape with isolated long views from strategic high points
- Strong sense of remoteness in some areas, particularly given the close proximity to the urban boundary

#### **Landscape Description**

South of the M2, the landscape is nationally designated as the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is an area of dramatically sloping topography. It is essentially a dry chalk valley with slopes rising steeply on either side to form rounded ridgelines. Within the valley bottom chalk and head deposits extend along the valley floor. Overlying the chalk are the rich soils of the Bagshot, Thanet and Woolwich bed drift deposits. Further south the higher ground of the North Downs dip slope is typically clay-with-flints. Access is good, with the narrow lanes, cutting along the valley floor and ridges, and a network of more meandering lanes traversing the valley slopes. The M2 also cuts across the valley and its elevated position divides this character area north-south. Whilst the motorway is generally well screened by mature tree planting it is visually prominent where it straddles the valley bottom as a high bridge. Throughout the valley blocks of small to medium-scale woodland are found scattered across the slopes and valley floor. .... As a result, the scale of fields in the valley has generally been enlarged, despite the obvious topographic constraints. Internal field boundaries have been lost or hedgerows have become fragmented and over-

mature, but a sense of enclosure is maintained by the small blocks of woodland, that surround these arable fields. Along the lanes many mature hedgerows still enclose views. These hedgerows tend to be mature, intact and well managed or over-mature and unclipped. Settlement is generally small-scale with strong historic vernacular building styles to the core. These include occasional timber framed properties, flint churches, whitewashed weatherboard and brick built houses. However, whilst a number of cottages date from the mid-1800s, most development has taken place during the twentieth century in 'ribbon' form. Buildings are therefore mixed in style and size. Around these settlements, fields have become fragmented into smaller units to allow for horse grazing. The landscape is largely enclosed by topography and vegetation. ....

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#### Condition Moderate

The landscape is generally in moderate condition. Whilst some parts are apparently intact, numerous elements have had a degrading effect creating areas that are locally poor. Many hedgerows are in good condition and well managed, but where fragmented, they have been supplemented or replaced with chestnut pale or post and wire fencing.

The M2 motorway bridge is an unsympathetic feature within this otherwise rural landscape, which attracts fly tipping. ..integrity of the area is coherent. Woodland blocks, species rich hedgerows and orchards all provide habitats that are distinct and diverse. These have been fragmented and some areas lost as a result of agricultural intensification. However, the topography and location of woodland blocks means that many small isolated fields, which are valuable for biodiversity, remain. Settlements are in good condition and modern housing has had a moderate impact on the traditional character of the area, since properties tend to be set back from the road and are generally well screened.

#### Sensitivity Moderate

Overall, this is an area with moderate sensitivity overall, although there are localised parts with an exceptionally strong sense of remoteness given the proximity to the urban boundary. It is an enclosed landscape with isolated woodlands, fragmented hedgerows and traditional orchards. The rolling topography and vegetation retain the distinctiveness of the area and create a moderately visible landscape, more so at its exposed northern end following the loss of orchards

Finally, the Kent Downs AONB completed its own Landscape Character Assessment in 1995, This is currently in the process of being updated. However, based on the existing assessment, Milstead lies in LCA 1B Mid Kent Downs.

The summary characteristics of which are described below.

#### Kent Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment Update

##### Mid Kent Downs Landscape Character Area 1B

- Underlying geology of Cretaceous upper chalk, with occasional exposures of middle chalk in valleys. Above the chalk is a thin sticky clay soil derived from weathered chalk, which contains many flints.
- Landform of gently rolling chalk plateaux forming dip slope. Interspersed with relatively steep dry valleys mostly running SW-NE. Surface water mostly confined to dew ponds, but important aquifers held within chalk.
- Large blocks of woodland, particularly on higher land and ridge tops.

Mostly deciduous (including extensive areas of chestnut coppice) plus some conifer planting.

- Land uses are predominantly arable farmland and woodland, with significant pockets of parkland and orchards.
- Fields are often large, reflecting late enclosure and historic use for sheepwalks. Smaller enclosure pattern around settlements, and a distinctive regular pattern with high hedges in orchard areas.
- Semi-natural habitats include woodland, shaws and chalk grassland.
- Landscape features including lanes, tracks, churches, villages and farms date back to the medieval period or earlier. Place names and road names tell part of the landscape story.

Relatively sparsely settled, with a scattering of villages and hamlets, and isolated farms. Brick and flint buildings are common.

A network of enclosed narrow lanes, often following dry valleys, with occasional main roads. M2 follows northern edge.

- A relatively large-scale landscape, with a sense of openness, particularly on the plateaux and ridge tops. In orchard areas the landscape has a clear, regular patchwork pattern, and seasonal changes in vegetation are very apparent.
- Despite its proximity to urban areas, much of the LCA has a strongly rural and peaceful feel, and a sense of isolation from the settlements nearby.
- The wooded slopes and summit of Perry Wood form a local landmark. From the edges of the area there are long views over the surrounding landscapes: the river valleys, the Medway/Swale Estuary, and the chalk scarp and vale.

## 2.4 Character Appraisal

### Summary

*“one of the loveliest villages in Kent, unsophisticated, compact and leafy, a little-known show piece clustering around its church set on a bank beneath a vast yew”* from ‘Strolling through Milstead’ by L. Jordan.

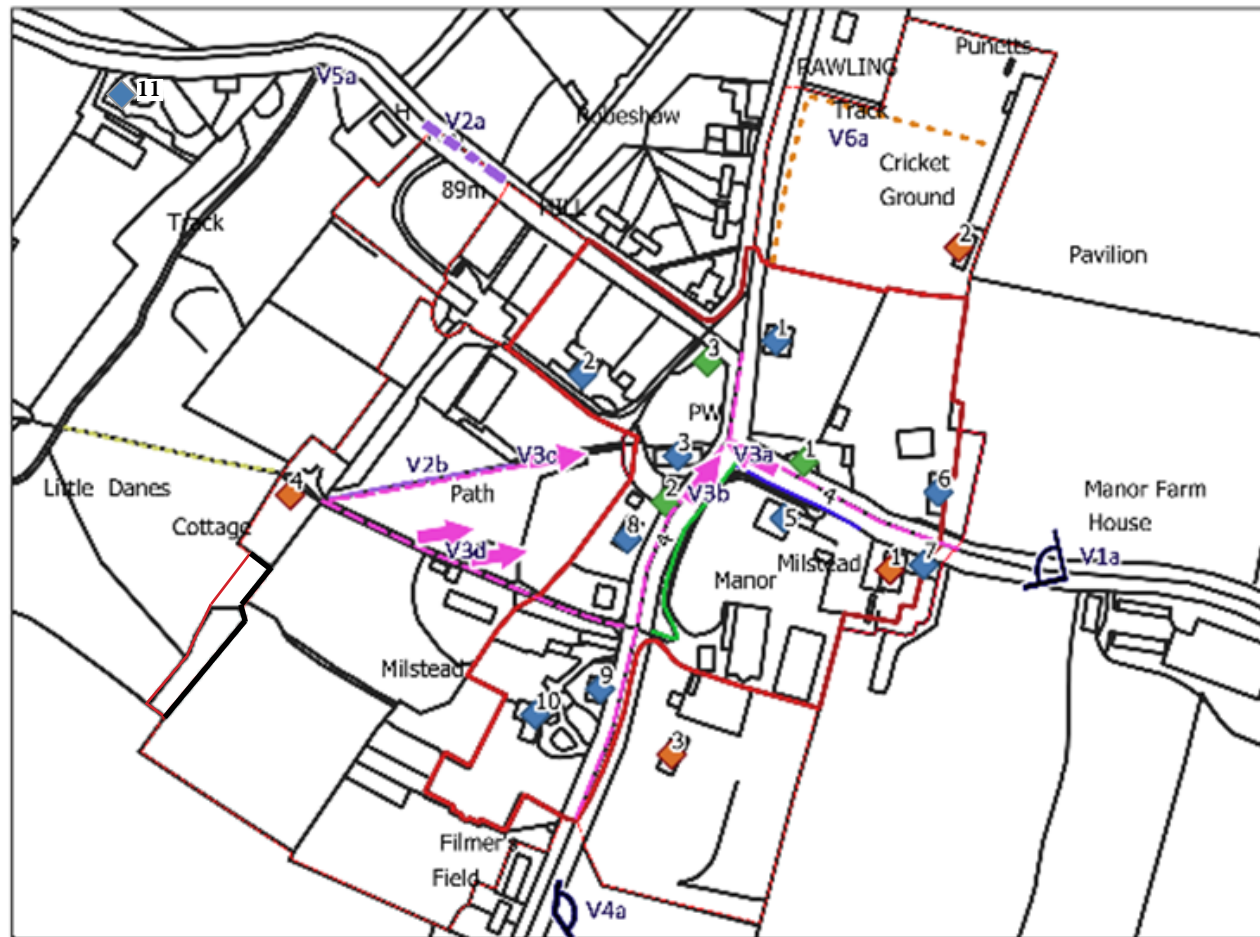
This conservation area contains the key elements of the traditional village scene: an historic church, an old ‘manor house’ behind, a staggered junction with a large Cedar Tree, picturesque timber-framed buildings and other cottages grouped along the village streets, a cricket pitch, and associated small historic fields. Each one of these elements makes an important contribution to the character of Milstead.

It has a rural countryside setting on all sides with many features of historic and architectural interest which relate to the significance of the Conservation Area. The dry valley to the west is a particularly important.

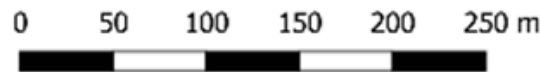
It has areas of notable archaeological potential relating to the Roman Period and the Saxon/Medieval period.

### Key Positive Characteristics

- Landmark Deodar Cedar tree (over 200 years old) at junction of Rawling Street and Horn Hill, and other notable individual trees
- Church of St Mary and the Holy Cross (Grade II\*) sitting on a bank with locally important built features including Lychgate and Bier House Coffin rest/shelter. The churchyard is an important open space in its own right
- 16th century Manor House (Grade II\*) enclosed behind high brick walls (separately listed Grade II)
- Hoggeshaws - a 15th century timber framed hall
- Locally important carriage drive/pull in opposite entrance to the Manor House
- Locally important 19th century buildings known as The Coachhouse and Manor Cottage with listed 19th century Dovecot form ‘focal’ features on approach to the eastern side of the Conservation Area
- Views of the church and Hoggeshaws from Frinsted Road
- 17th century Grade II Listed houses – Rose Cottage, The Cottage, Manor Farmhouse and Wisteria Cottage
- Locally important 18th century Trotts Hall with its history of being moved from Sittingbourne in the 1970s.
- Locally important Late 19th century cottage of Little Danes on eastern side of Conservation Area
- Older properties surrounded by plantings of trees and shrubs
- Old Rectory associated grounds and outbuildings and historic glebe lands to the west
- a mosaic of distinctive historic fields on the western side of the Conservation Area with surviving 1840s wooded boundaries, and surviving Shaws and woodland belts. Associated with evolving local dynamic views with Hoggeshaws and the Church acting as focal points
- Cricket field with distinctive thatched pavilion and scoreboard with dynamic local panoramic views
- Views in and out of the Conservation Area to the west from within the dry valley which forms an important component of its setting



- Conservation Area boundary
- Proposed boundary extensions
- Proposed boundary adjustments
- Historic Buildings**
- ◆ Listed Building
- ◆ Locally important building
- ◆ Built features of local importance
- historic buildings**
- Listed Building
- Built Features of local importance
- Views**
- 1 Fixed Views
- - - 2 Dynamic views
- - - 3 Dynamic views with focal point
- 4 Panoramas
- 5 Panoramas focal point
- 6 Dynamic panorama
- 7 Dynamic panorama with focal point (See page 45)



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**Map 7a: Key Characteristics - Historic Features and Views**

**Listed Buildings**

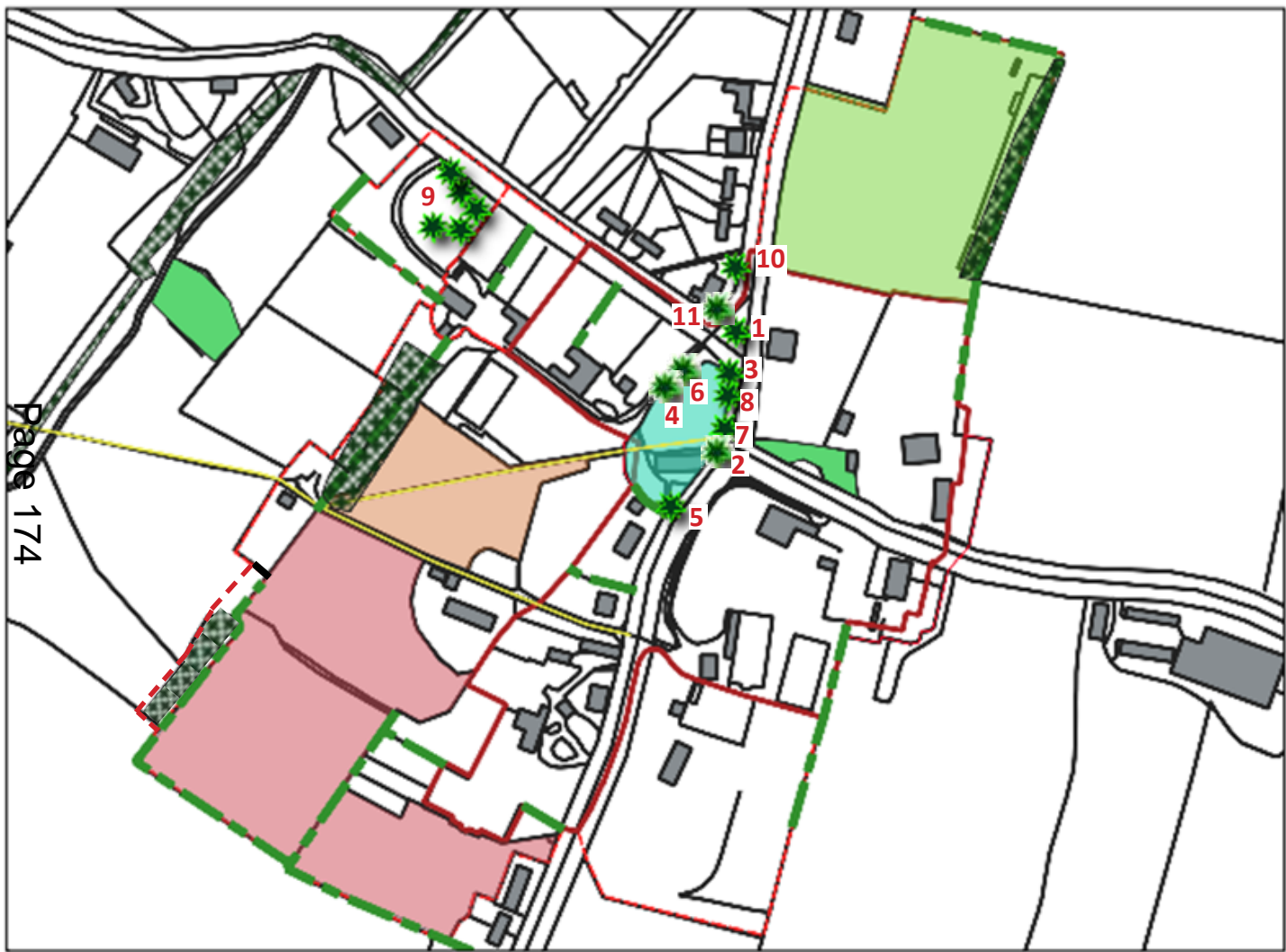
1. Rose Cottage 2. The Old Rectory 3. The Church 4. Manor Walls and Gates 5. The Manor 6. Manor Farmhouse 7. Dovecot  
8. Hoggeshaws 9. Wisteria Cottage 10. The Cottage 11. Monument to 3rd Battalion (See Appendix 1 for list description)

**Locally Important Buildings**

1. The Coachhouse & Manor Cottage 2. Cricket Pavilion and Scorebox 3. Trots Hall 4. Little Danes (See page 43)

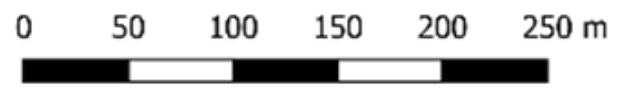
**Built Features of local Importance**

1. Carriage pull in 2. Lychgate 3. Bier House 4. Manor Walls and Gates on Frinsted Road (See page 44)



- Conservation Area Boundary
- Proposed boundary adjustments
- Proposed boundary extensions
- Pre 1840 surviving boundaries within Conservation Area
- ★ Significant trees  
See page 39 for details of these significant trees
- Shaws and Woodland**
- Surviving shaws
- Surviving small woods
- Public Rights of Way**
- Footpath
- Important open spaces within Conservation Area**
- Cricket Pitch
- Open fields (accessible via footpath)
- Open fields (private)
- Churchyard

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**Map 7b: Key Characteristics - Historic boundaries, significant trees, shaws and small woods, public rights of way and**

## Spatial analysis – Archaeological Interest

Milstead village and the surrounding parish have been subject to limited archaeological investigation, partly due to the lack of modern development in the parish. This means that any assessment of the archaeological resource can only draw on a limited amount of information. It is important to note therefore, that a lack of information for any given archaeological period should not be taken to mean a lack of potential.

Roman finds in the vicinity of the church suggests that there is potential for further Roman archaeology,

Spatial Analysis: Historic, Artistic and Architectural interest

[Map 7a Key Characteristics – Built Heritage and Views]

[Map 7b Key Characteristics – Open Space and Trees]

### **Cricket Field** *[Note this element is Proposed Extension A to the CA boundary]*

The northern part of the Conservation Area is approached from the north along Rawling Street. The first area within the Conservation Area is a large Cricket Ground on the eastern side of the road. Cricket has a long history in Milstead, and the cricket pitch was moved here c.1945. The pavilion and score box are attractive features on the eastern side of the pitch and are locally important features. The cricket pitch is an important open space within a village which in general feels enclosed. There

are, however, attractive views across the pitch looking south towards the grounds of Manor Farmhouse and Rose Cottage. The eastern boundary of the cricket pitch is bounded by scrubby woodland marking the line of a surviving Shaw. Historically the cricket field was a meadow belonging to the Manor House and leased with it when it was rented out during the 19th century. Its northern boundary therefore forms the edge of the small patchwork of fields which were associated with the properties within the village.



## Junction of Rawling Street with Horn Hill



The three-sided junction between Rawling Street (running north/south) and Horn Hill (running away from Rawling Street at a 30-degree angle to the northeast) consists of a small triangular parcel of grass verge around a huge Deodar Cedar tree. The junction here is open and there is a feeling of space which then funnels in the more enclosed parts of the village to the west and south.

The cedar tree dominates the junction and is enclosed by a circular-form wooden slat bench, which commemorates 50th anniversary of V.E. Day.

The eastern side of the junction is bounded by Rose Cottage (Grade II Listed) a pleasantly proportioned and attractive 17th century white plastered house which sits within its own neat open square garden bounded by an unpainted wicket fence abutting directly onto the road.

The modern village hall sits on the northwest side of the crossroads outside the Conservation Area (see setting section below)

The southwest side of the crossroads comprises the wrought iron gated driveway leading to Old Rectory and the road is bounded by a 9-course high brick wall topped by wrought iron railings which again abuts directly onto the road. Mature trees are planted along the edge effectively screening the house and the grounds of the rectory from the road.





### The Rectory and glebe lands [north west along Horn Hill]

The Old Rectory dates to 1834 and is a large house featuring an attractive veranda and traceries (Grade II) which you can only get glimpsed views of from the road.



The original building with its symmetrical double fronted appearance is a fine example of a regency style. The rear of the building has been subject to greater alteration. The house sits to the rear (west side) of its plot in substantial attractive gardens with mature trees including copper beeches, oaks and a coronation maple.

At the front of the house is a formal garden with a smaller parterre garden on the western side. On the north western side is a formal lawn and modern swimming pool. Here the wrought iron fencing to the road becomes a high brick wall screening the whole western side of the property from view.

[Text below relates to Area D proposed Extension to CA Boundary]

Immediately to the west of the Rectory [see red square on maps on following pages] beyond the parterre is another set of buildings, the two parts of the property being separated by a wall running north south. The land within this western area was formerly a working yard related to the rectory but today this land has again become formal gardens. There is a building on the eastern side of the former yard (blue square on the map) which was formerly the office and domestic servant accommodation to the rectory and is shown on the 1840 tithe and referenced in the 19th century censuses. In addition, a second property [green square] lies on the footprint of an outbuilding on the westside of the former yard which appears on historic maps between 1840 and 1880. It is known as Glebe Cottage on the 1880s census and was built as additional accommodation for domestic servants serving the rectory. This was formerly adjacent to a pond, which may since have been filled in. These buildings and the associated land are not publicly accessible, so it was not possible to assess the age or appearance of the buildings present on the site today. Although one of the outbuildings, on the footprint of Glebe Cottage, can be seen beyond the paddock in the photo below.

The whole of the western side of the property is screened from the road by a high hedge and bank as the road slopes downwards into the small valley bottom.

[Text below relates to Area E proposed extension to CA boundary]

Further west adjacent to Horn Hill is a large open paddock with fruit trees with a drive providing access to the road. The paddock forms the western edge of the Conservation Area. This attractive area of land was historically an orchard, part of the Glebe land belonging to the rectory and remains part of the property today. There are views from the entrance gate to the rectory and its associated outbuildings.



### Junction of Manor Road, Frinsted Road and Rawling Street

This forms the centre of the village with the junction of Rawling Street and Horn Hill. As elsewhere there are no pavements at the junction and the high brick walls, and mature trees create a sense of enclosure in the centre of the village which contrasts with the more open junction to the south.



### Manor Road

Milstead Manor lies to the south of Manor Road, occupying a corner plot with Frinsted Road. The manor house is largely hidden behind the brick wall and high yew hedge which runs along Manor Road.

The high (individually listed) walls and gates to the Manor mean that only glimpses of this striking early Elizabethan Manor House are visible, which is exacerbated by the fact the front wrought iron gates to the manor are now infilled behind with a studded blank wood screen, the central clock tower and gables now being the only parts of the building readily visible.

Opposite the gates on the north side of Manor Road is a pull in featured on the 1840



tithe map and probably representing a 18th century/early 19th century pull in for carriages dropping family and visitors to the main entrance to the house. It consists of an area of gravel bounded by a curving low brick wall of mixed red and yellow brick with a brick arch featuring a stone relief of a lion's head with screening yews behind.



Behind this is an area of scrubby woodland identified on the 1840s census as a shrubbery and wood associated with the manor house.

Returning to the south side of Manor Road. The grounds of the manor feature spacious sweeping lawns and mature trees. The manor house is associated with outbuildings which are present on the 1840 title and 1880s map to the immediate south which could not be appraised for historic interest.

At the eastern end of the village on Manor Road the manor walls are lower and a pair of attractive locally important semi-detached brick-built cottages, known as The Coach House and Manor Cottage, stand which date to between 1840 and 1880. They are built of yellow stock brick with decorative red brick courses, sash windows and **plain tiled** roofs. These are set back from their plots and were formerly and dairy dwellings to the Manor. They are bounded by low brick walls, low hedges and unpainted wooden gates.

Standing within their front gardens marking the far eastern edge of the village is a Grade II Listed pigeon house or dove cot dating to 1823 and bearing the initials R.T. which stands for Richard **Tylden** Tyney. This is built of chequered red and blue brick with a plain tiled roof.

On the north side of Manor Road opposite The Coachhouse is Manor Farmhouse. This is an oak timbered frame house dating from the 16th century, set within sweeping lawns and gardens with at least two outbuildings converted to accommodation, one of which is on the footprint of a 19th century building, the original farmyards having gone. This is described in the local history book 'Strolling through Milstead' as making "an almost perfect picture in this quiet corner of Milstead." The farmhouse is screened entirely from the road by high evergreen hedges and only the driveway and one of the outbuildings is visible from the road.



The roof of the farmhouse and its more open southern grounds are visible from the cricket pitch from the north.

## The Church of St Mary and the Holy Cross

On a bank on the westside of the junction between Frinsted Road and Manor Road lies the Grade II\* Church of St Mary and the Holy Cross. This church has a 12th to 13th century chancel with a 15th century nave and west tower. ~~The north side Higham chapel was pulled down 1672 then rebuilt in 1873 and an attractive watercolour shows the church in 1807 before the chapel was restored.~~ **The South Side Higham Chapel was demolished in 1672 and then rebuilt in 1873 (see image on back cover), at which point the north side Tylden Chapel was extended eastwards to provide a vestry. The Church** is constructed of flint and plaster with plain tiled roofs. It is an obvious focal point in the village.

**The historic watercolour image opposite shows the north side of the church following the construction of the 1873 extension to the Tylden Chapel.**

The church is set in the southern part of the churchyard which wraps round the church and extends in an oval shape to the junction between Rawling Street and Horn Hill. The edge of the churchyard bank above the road is bounded by a low wooden unpainted fence and there are large mature chestnut trees all along its boundary and a significant sized yew. There are two tulip trees one of which was planted to commemorate Queen Victoria's jubilee in 1887.

The church is reached through an attractive Lych gate dated to 1902 and there is a coffin rest/shelter **Bier House (see image opposite)** on the northern edge of the graveyards both of which are important local features. There is a War memorial adjacent to eastern front of the church **(see front cover image)**. The earliest known tombstone dates to 1666. Hasted refers to an ancient tomb stone in the churchyard, near the south porch, having on it a cross botony, fuchee, carved in relief. **A little tomb stone featuring an angel provides a delightful surprise partially hidden in the longer grass in the northern part of the churchyard (see back cover).**

Local Kent resident, Mike Hinton, who has written an article entitled 'Some musings on the Tyldens of Milstead' has stated that 'The church of St Mary and the Holy Cross has a remarkable collection of memorials to members of the Tylden family that span four centuries from Richard Tylden of Hogshaws, who died in 1659, to Captain James Richard Tylden, the "last of his long line at Milstead Manor" who died in 1949. The



Tylden Vault is a notable feature of the peaceful, leafy churchyard, and the names of those buried within are important to an understanding of the social history of the village.





John Piper's photograph of Hoggeshaws

Opposite the church on the east side of the road the walls of the Manor house continue although these are only c5 foot c.5 feet high, constructed initially in brick and then of flint with brick capping. Above this is an unattractive modern garden fence and large leylandii which even now they have been capped are unattractive and out of scale.

Next to the church is the oldest domestic building in the village called Hoggeshaws. This was photographed by the artist John Piper.

It was built in 1450 and retains a crown post. Once it was a single storey building with one open chimney known as a hall house or sometimes a Wealden Hall. This would have a simple arched entrance and jettied wings –which have subsequently been enclosed in the 16th century. Hoggeshaws was not modernised until 1700 when a brick chimney was added which allowed the subdivision of the upper floor.

It is, with the church, featured in early 'picturesque' postcards of Milstead and as can be seen this view is little changed today.

Hoggeshaws was the farm bailiff's residence during the 19th century latterly becoming the shop and post office at the end of that century.



Walking in **Strolling through** Milstead describes the property as “ideally situated next to the quiet church and opposite the close-studded Elizabethan Manor gives this magnificent Wealden hall house called Hoggeshaws an air of tranquillity and beauty”

It sits back from the road surrounded by lawns on a slight bank edged with flint and enclosed with a unpainted **picket fence** ~~wicket flint~~. It has recently been renovated extremely sympathetically and is one of the finest buildings in Milstead.

Next door to Hoggeshaws is Julian House, a modern detached house built in 1958 and formerly the shop and post office which closed in 1997. **Although of relatively modern construction, the use of traditional roof forms and construction materials combined with a leafy green frontage means that this modern infill development sits comfortably within the historic street scene.**



There is then a track which leads **to Little Danes**. ~~up to the modern house known as Lerrimede.~~

Opposite the track on the west side of Frinsted Road is a brick walled driveway which leads to the rear of the manor house and includes buildings, which were in the 19th century within the yard to the rear of the Manor House. This includes a separate brick-built house/cottage. The entrance rises to high brick walls with brick gate piers to the drive which have stone ball finials which match that at the formal entrance on Manor Road.

On the west side of Frinsted Road south of the track which leads to **Little Danes** ~~Lerrimede~~ is Wisteria Cottage a Grade II 17th century cottage.



It is set back from the road behind a hedge and mature trees, but its distinctive sloping roof and brick chimney can be appreciated.



Below - The Cottage c.1920

The next house is the Grade II Listed house known as **T**he Cottage built in 1600 – with up to 15 separate additions. It includes a room which was the original kitchen with an in-situ 17th century brick chimney and a former dairy now kitchen, with loft now a bedroom. As described in the historical background, The Cottage had a long association with the Tylden family and the Manor House and has a possible association with Jane Austen. Its extensive grounds sweep round behind the gardens to Wisteria Cottage. It can be viewed from the road beyond a white wooden gate but its boundary onto Frinsted Road is bounded by high hedges.





[Text below relates to Area B proposed extension to CA boundary- - see Map 2, page 9]

Opposite The Cottage and Wisteria Cottage is the formal grand 18th century house known as Trotts Hall. It has an impressive sweeping brick wall entrance way with brick piers and wrought iron gates and its formal frontage faces on to Frinsted Road.



The house has a curious history as it was built in 1740 by a **wooden timber** merchant who imported the **wood timber** to build the house from Scandinavia. The house was originally built in Bell Road Sittingbourne. In the 1970s it was due to be demolished in 1973 and Mr Rex Boucher, who was the owner of Milstead Manor, requested it be moved to Milstead brick by brick. it was dismantled and then rebuilt on the new site starting in 1976 after the original designation of the Conservation Area. The rear of the house was built up from old bricks acquired specifically for that purpose. After 40 years in this location the grounds are mature that a casual observer would assume the house has always been in this location and it lends an attractive element to the southern side of the Conservation Area. The building itself was formerly listed

Grade II when in Sittingbourne and the building externally at least has not lost any of its architectural integrity or importance. It is a building of local importance within Milstead.



Trotts **Hall** House – during reconstruction (circa 1978). Built in 1740 by **wood timber** merchant Mr Trott with **wood timber** from Scandinavia in Bell Road. Land sold to Sainsbury supermarket in 1976, Mr Boucher from Milstead brought the house and moved it brick by brick on to his fruit orchard with help from Sir Edward Casson finishing it in 1978 (It took a year to get permission to move it from Swale Council !!)

**Land to the west of Frinsted Road**

(Text below relates to Area C proposed extension to CA boundary- see Map 2, page 9)

The land to the west of ~~T~~the Cottage, Hoggeshaws and the Church and to the south of the Rectory consists of a series of small, enclosed fields which were former historic orchards and meadows relating to these properties, and are still used as grazed fields. Several of the pre 1840 historic hedged boundaries survive intact.

Field to the northwest of the church looking north ~~T~~the Shaw is the group of tall trees



to the left of the image. ~~on the far right boundary looking north east~~

The western most boundary forms the western boundary of the Conservation Area and incorporates a surviving Shaw formerly known as Stubbings Shaw. This is surviving evidence of Medieval and Post Medieval assarting. It also forms demarcates a break in the topography on the small ridge of land on which Milstead sits the land sloping beyond the boundary downwards to the west into a shallow dry valley.

At the southern end of the surviving shaw the boundary kinks round the grounds of a cottage known as Little Danes. This locally important buildings is built of brick with a slate roof in late 1800s to replace a thatched cottage which was present on the 1840s Tithe Map.

This area of land is split in half by the east west track which runs from Frinsted Road to ~~Leimede~~ and which continues as a footpath to Little Danes. This track footpath is of particular importance as it affords views of the rear of Hoggeshaws across the church looking north and as you continue westwards along the path north east. There is also a footpath which runs from the church to the southwest corner of the field at Little Danes with views into the rear of Hoggeshaw and the churchyard.



Field to the northwest of the church looking from the southwest corner northeast towards the Church and Hoggeshaws.

## Boundary Treatment

The conservation area is notable for a lack of pavements, with the boundaries of historic properties leading directly onto the carriageway. Manor Road and the northern part of Frinsted Road are notable for their sense of enclosure and high boundaries.



Field to the northwest of the church looking from the southwest corner northeast towards the Church and Hoggeshaws.

Boundaries of significance include:

- High brick walls surrounding the manor
- Brick walls with cast iron railings
- Cast iron gates with decorative features
- Mature clipped yew hedges
- Banks with flint nodule edging
- Unpainted picket fences and gates

## Trees

All the older properties are surrounded by plantings of trees and shrubs.

Notable individual trees include:

1. Large Deodar Cedar Tree at centre of the crossroads
2. One Sweet Tree Chestnut Trees associated with Church road boundary and churchyard
- 3 & 4. Two Tulip Trees in churchyard (~~where are these on map~~)
5. Yew Tree in the Churchyard adjacent to the Lychgate
6. One sweet Gum Tree in the Churchyard
- 7 & 8. Two Sycamore Trees in the Churchyard
9. Surviving orchard trees in the paddock to the west of the Old Rectory
10. Memorial Oak Tree immediately north of village hall (planted to mark the village's celebration of the 1951 Festival of Britain)
11. Memorial Maple Tree adj. SE corner of village hall (planted by the children of Milstead in 1981 to commemorate the marriage of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales with Lady Diana Spencer)

Note: Except for trees 10 and 11, all of the above stated trees already do , or will benefit from Conservation Area protections/controls and their location can be seen on map 7b (page 26). Trees 10 and 11 could appropriately be made the subject of individual Tree Preservation Orders.

## Surviving Shaws and Woods

They have important archaeological interest relating to the former Medieval exploitation of the landscape in the form of their morphology, land use and boundaries. They also have historical interest in the way their visible features can be

used to communicate and explain their history. This is in particular the case where they survive with other Medieval land uses including ancient woodland, pre 1700 settlement and farms and grazed common land. They then provide a visible and tangible surviving historic landscape dating to the Medieval period which also has important aesthetic value in its appearance. This is what Rackham refers to as Ancient Countryside (1994). Surviving shaws in the Conservation Area includes

- on the eastern boundary of the cricket field
- on the western boundary of the Conservation Area to the northeast and southwest of Little Danes.

A surviving small area of shrubbery/woodland can be found on the north side of Manor Road adjacent to the carriage pull in.

### Public Realm

Views and glimpsed views of the main heritage assets are afforded from the four main country roads/lanes which meet at a staggered crossroads in the village. The sense of enclosure caused by high brick walls, yew hedges, mature boundary planting means that some areas of historic interest are neither publicly accessible or publicly viewable. This includes large parts of Manor Farmhouse, the Manor and The Old Rectory. The historic interest on the northern side of the Conservation Area, and the western side of Frinsted Road can be much more easily appreciated from the public realm. Historic interest can also be appreciated to the rear of the properties on the west side of Frinsted Road along the footpath which leads south west from the church and from trackway between Frinsted Road and Little Danes

### Traffic and Movement

Except during the school run times and at certain times during the fruit harvesting period, traffic is notably absent from the village with pedestrians and cyclists having to share the carriageway with cars due to a lack of pavements. There are a public footpaths from the Church to Little Danes and along the track from Frinsted Road to Little Danes both leading to countryside to the west.

### Open spaces

Milstead Conservation Area is notable partly due to its lack of open space. The exception is the Cricket Field on the north side of the Conservation Area [proposed extension A], the field to the southeast of the church [Proposed extension C] and the churchyard.

### Buildings and Building Materials; Features; Structures

#### Nationally Designated Heritage Summary (see appendix A for full details)

Rose Cottage Grade II (List No. 1119628) 17th century timber framed house faced with plaster with a plain tiled roof. (Check with LJ but sign on cottage says Ameila Cottage? — which aligns with the name shown on the OS mapping)



Old Rectory Grade II (List No. 1325210) dated 1834 with painted brick walls with slate roof and wooden sash windows. It has a regency ironwork.



The Old Rectory (mid 1950s)

Manor House Grade II\* (List No. 1343916) dating from the 16th to 18 century. Timber framed and close-studded on flint plinth. The central portion is underbuilt with red brick. It consists of two storeys with gables.



Garden wall and gateways to north of Milstead Manor Grade II (List No. 1069283) 17th and 18th century red brick wall with wrought iron gate with gate piers featuring stone ball-finials.

Dovecote 50 Yards East of Milstead Manor Grade II (list no. 1325223) Dated 1823 chequered red and blue brick and plain tiled roof.



Manor Farmhouse Grade II (list No. 1325217) – oak timbered frame house dating from the 17th century built of beams lath and plaster with a thatched roof.



Church of St Mary and the Holy Cross Grade II\* (List no 1069286)- parish church with c12-c13 chancel and a c15 nave and west tower. Restored and enlarged in 1872 by William Butterfield. Constructed of flint and plaster with plain tiled roofs

Hoggeshaws Grade II (List No. 1069285) Wealden Hall House 15th century timber framed on flint plinth and exposed with plaster infill some red brick infilling. Four framed bays, originally with 2 bay hall, the screens passage in the left end ½ bay, with later stack backing on to it. Aedicule on chimney dated 1700.

Wisteria Cottage Grade II (List No. 1107847) 17th century Timber framed and clad with painted brick and rough cast with plain tiled roof.

The Cottage Grade II (List No. 1343917) House dating from 17th century to early 19th century. Chequered red and blue brick and white brick with plain tiled roof

### Locally important buildings

- Pair of mid-19th century Cottages at eastern end of village on south side of Manor road adjacent to listed Dovecot



- Cricket Pavilion started in 1948 timber and brickwork with reed- thatched roof and score box



- Trotts Hall – 18th century house with two storeys in red brick with an upped tiled roof and parapet. ~~The original listing building prior to the building being removed can be found at Appendix x.~~ This former grade II listed house was moved brick-by-brick from its former location at Bell Road in Sittingbourne.
- Little Danes – Late 19th century cottage built in yellow stock brick with slate roof. Sashed windows with brick arches.



### General building material discussion

#### Building material, building forms and boundary treatments

15th to 17th centuries Vernacular Buildings

- Timber framed buildings with plaster infill or close studded on flint plinths
- Later brick cladding and chimneys
- Gables
- Plain Tiled roofs

19th century vernacular buildings

- Brick (red and yellow London stock) – chequered or linear patterns; some with white rendering.
- Sash windows
- French traceries and verandas
- Clay tile roofs

Boundaries

- High Brick and low red and yellow brick walls in brown/yellow; flint nodule walls with brick caps

**Built Features of Local Importance**

- Carriage drive/pull in opposite entrance to Manor House on Manor Road (featured on 1840 Tithe Map)



- 1904 Lychgate to church



- Bier House Coffin Rest/shelter at northern boundary of the churchyard





**Views**

The assessment of views was divided into three concentric zones:

- long distance: views from beyond the area
- middle distant to and from the immediate setting
- historic (local) core: views from within the Conservation Area.

The views have been categorised accordingly:

1. views, often framed vistas, from fixed positions to focal points (such as churches)

**View 1a** – Local view from outside of the Conservation Area on Manor Road looking down hill westwards towards the edge of the settlement boundary. The Listed Dovecot with 19th century cottages behind provides a focal point to the approach.



2. Dynamic views (experienced and evolving along a route, such as a street)

**View 2a** – Local view from the edge of the Conservation Area looking south east from the valley below **Trotts Horn** Hill looking up to the ridge on which Milstead village sits. The paddock to the south of the Rectory is in view along with the buildings on the west side of the Rectory all of which were historically part of the village Glebe lands.



**View 2b** – Evolving local view within the Conservation Area along the footpath looking southwest from the church with views towards the ridge line and the surviving Shaw which runs along it travelling in the direction of Little Danes.



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### 3. Dynamic views with a focal point

**View 3a** – Enclosed local dynamic view travelling westwards along Manor Road. The high brick wall and mature trees funnel focus towards the churchyard with the Old Rectory framed behind. Glimpsed views are also afforded of the roof and gables of the Manor House on the southern side. Note travel in the other direction eastwards also has an enclosed character but views are not focused towards an end point.



**View 3b** – Local dynamic view along Frinsted Road travelling northward. Hoggeshaws and the Church act as focal points in the views and slowly reveal the classic picturesque view of Hoggeshaws with the Church which was featured on old postcards and has undergone remarkably little change.



**View 3c** – Evolving local dynamic view within the Conservation Area along the footpath looking northeast with the church and Hoggeshaws providing focal points.



**View 3d** – Evolving local dynamic views travelling both east and west along the footpath track which links Frinsted Road to Little Danes across the historic fields with the Church and Hoggeshaws providing focal points



4. Panoramas

**View 4a** – Long distant panoramic views looking eastwards across the southern setting of the Conservation Area and including into the grounds off Trots Hall to the north. These views are located 60 metres south of the Conservation Area on Frinsted Road opposite the small modern development. Note expansive long distant views are not a typical feature of the Conservation Area



**View 4b** – 180 degree middle distant views looking westwards from Little Danes out of the Conservation Area across and along the dry valley immediately to its west. This is a significant component of the setting of the Conservation Area as discussed in section on setting below.



Above 4b looking north and below looking south



5. **Panoramas featuring a focal point or points**

**View 5a** – View from Trott's Horn Hill just south of East Cottage and West below Trott's Hill Cottage looking south along the dry valley to the immediate west of the Conservation Area. The shaw along the skyline demarcates the boundary of the Conservation Area and Little Danes acts as a focal point.



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6. Dynamic panoramas

**View 6a** – The Cricket pitch on the north side of the Conservation Area affords dynamic local view looking southwards towards the grounds and roofs of the listed buildings of Rose Cottage and Manor Farmhouse as well as the cricket pavilion and scoreboard with Shaw behind



7. Dynamic panoramas featuring a focal point or points

**View 7a** - middle distance views from outside of the Conservation Area looking eastwards along the public footpath which climbs the dry valley side and enters the Conservation Area adjacent to Little Danes. This property also acts a focal point and 'gateway' into the Conservation Area



## Setting

This description identifies the main attributes of the setting of the Conservation Area and then identifies which of these components contributes to the significance and special interest of the Conservation Area.

### The Immediate north of the Conservation Area forming the triangle of land between Rawling Street and Horns Hill, and area to the north of the cricket field

Village Hall based on original beaters hut but reclad and much extended. The Wooden Sign mounted on the hall dating to 1993 representing the village interests, the history of the hall and the Oak tree planted for Festival of Britain 1951 adjacent to the village hall.

Behind the village hall are eight houses built in 1950 with prefabricated slab walls and tiled roofs, called **Robeshaw (nos. 1-8)**. These were reclad in brick in 1988. Adjacent to these are two small **semi-detached** retirement bungalows built in 1978, and a larger, slightly earlier **detached bungalow**. As a group they **currently contribute little to the character and appearance of the immediate setting to conservation area, but they nevertheless provide a good standard of residential amenity. Additional frontage hedge and tree planting in some cases, would enable these mid C20 properties to contribute more positively to the setting.** ~~do not form the most sympathetic design for the edge of the Conservation Area and could perhaps benefit by softening by additional planting,~~

There is a modern detached house to the immediate north of the cricket field whose well treed gardens does not detract from the Conservation Area. The land to the north and west of the Cricket Field remains as fields including arable and commercial orchard production. Beyond this to the north is the M2.

### Rawling Street gateway to the village

The set of historic buildings on Rawling Street are now divorced from the village by the M2 but still retain important historic links and interest even if they are now physically separated. Features of interest include Rawling Street Farmhouse rebuilt c1950

present in 18th century, The Red Lion and the Listed building at Lion Farm House which is a significant Wealden hall house originally thatched now with traditional kent peg tiled roof.

### Horns Hill west of the Conservation Area

The first feature encountered on leaving the village within the hollow of the dry valley is **Winkers Horn Hill Cottage** - a wooden flat pack bungalow bought at the Ideal Home Show Exhibition in the mid -1920s. This **bungalow was re-clad in brick c 1960**, lies on the edge of the Conservation Area and is a neutral feature in the landscape.

More significant components of the setting include:

- ~~At the bottom of Horn Hill a stone saying limit of Glebe 1832 [where is this?]~~
- The shallow valley to the west of the Conservation Area which has a park like quality with clumps and shelter belts of trees set in meadows including surviving historic Shaws and small woodlands. This is an essential component of the setting of the Conservation Area
- Up Horn Hill there are two semi-detached houses built in 1913, and called **East Cottage and West Cottage**. These are attractive buildings which add to the character of the area.
- Just beyond these on the roadside is a simple red brick monument to the 3rd Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment 1916-1917-1918, purportedly built of bricks taken from the left hand wing of the Manor House (Grade II Listed). It is listed for its historic interest and design. Behind this to the south is **Camp Horn Hill Field**. This was the where the 3rd battalion **was** ~~were~~ camped in World War **One**. ~~one~~   
 [3rd battalion page 29]

Adjacent to the field is a Girl Guide centre completed in May 1991

### East of the Conservation Area along Manor Road and up Milstead Hill

There are a group of modern farm buildings which are rented. ~~The low, dark-clad Dutch barn type buildings, rural in their character, sit comfortably in the landscape with their set back, lawned frontage and mix of tree and hedgerow helping them to assimilate into the wider landscape setting to the conservation area reasonably well. The later, larger buildings at the same site are however more industrial in character and their impact on the character of the rural lane is exacerbated by the wide concrete frontage apron with inadequate tree and/or hedgerow planting to mitigate. to small businesses currently they detract from the eastern approach to the Conservation Area and could be subject to sympathetic renewal/renovation.~~

### Land to the east of the Conservation Area

The fields to the east of the Conservation Area consists of medium to large sized fields with some pasture but most in commercial orchard production.

### South of the Conservation Area along Frinsted Road

Immediately to the south of the Conservation Area on the westside of the Conservation Area is a small ribbon development of 1950s and 1960s houses which as with the post war development to the north of the Conservation Area, ~~currently contribute little to the setting, although again providing good standards of residential amenity. are not particularly sympathetically designed.~~ However, on the southern end of the row are a pair of semi-detached cottages called Fairview built by J. Tylden in 1911 for farm workers which are attractive in their own right ~~(the symmetrical, Tudor style frontage dominated by tall brick chimney to a steep, half-hipped roof rendering them particularly distinctive. They and have a direct historic link to the manor and manor lands within the Conservation Area. Again, some of these mid C20 properties sit quite comfortably in the wider landscape with their simple low-key green frontages, but a few would benefit from changes rendering the frontages less suburban in nature.~~

500 metres south of the Conservation Area are a group of attractive historic properties forming an historic outlier to the main village on or near to the Frinsted

parish boundary. These include on the west side of Frinsted Road:

- Finches Farm - a Grade II 16th century timber framed farmhouse, restored in 1955 when lath and paster was removed from the beam structure and replaced with red brick.

On the east side of Frinsted Road:

- Orchard Cottage – a 17th century timber frame cottage clad in red brick on ground floor and plastered above.
- Frinsted and Milstead Church of England Primary School – built in 1848 of brick and local flint with red tiled roof. Originally the school and semi-detached head teachers house, now all part of school. On the parish boundary
- Clare House which is listed for its 18th century fabric but may have earlier 16th and 17th century features

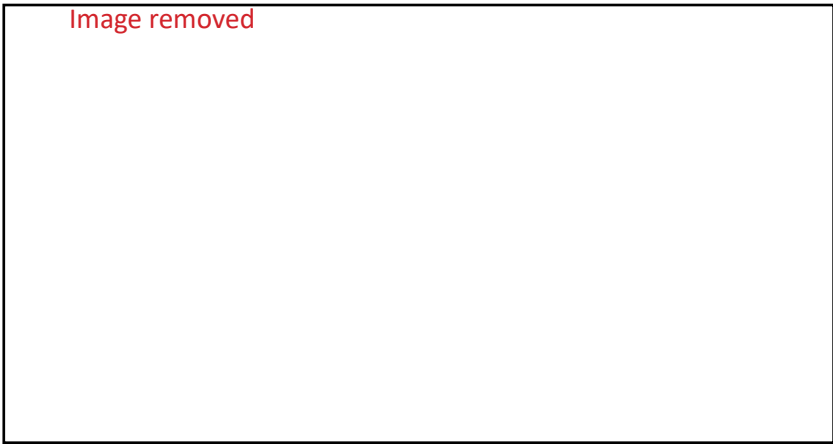
### Land to the southwest of the Conservation Area

Here, historic fields have been amalgamated in the 20th century and there is large scale commercial orchard production.

**Assessment of Condition and Identification of Negative key characteristics**

Key Negative Characteristics

- Frontages and design of post war houses to the immediate north and south side of the Conservation Area detract from its setting
- Group of modern farm buildings adjacent to the Conservation Area on Milstead Hill. Their raised position means that they are more prominent than might otherwise be the case.
- Western boundary to the manor with wooden fence panels and large overgrown Leylandi



Frontages of houses within the setting of the Conservation Area on Horn Hill



Modern farm buildings just beyond the eastern edge of the Conservation Area



Western boundary to the manor

### 3.0. CONSERVATION AREAS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Conservation Area designation is not an end in itself. It is a way of recognising the special architectural or historic interest of an area with a view to putting in place a framework to sustain its character for this and future generations.

Conservation is not about preventing change; the Milstead Conservation Area is part of a living community and change is needed to sustain and meet their future needs. It is about positively managing change so that what we cherish today can be properly looked after and passed on to future generations in good condition. Conservation Area designation brings with it certain statutory controls and restrictions which are described below. It also affords the opportunity for others, such as the Parish Council, local amenity groups, Kent County Council, Kent Highways, individual householders, and local businesses to take part in positively managing the area.

It also can help identify opportunities where conservation can help to deliver wider social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits and where there may be opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

This strategy is intended to encourage active involvement in the future management of the Conservation Areas.

#### 3.1. Planning Policy and Guidance

See further Detail in Appendix 3 4.

#### Current Statutes and National Planning Policies

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and Section 66 in relation to Historic Buildings

#### National Planning Policy Framework and supporting guidance

##### Historic England Guidance

Historic England produce Good Practice Advice (GPA) and Advice Notes (HEAN).

#### Swale Borough Council Development Plan - Local Plan Policies - Bearing Fruits 2031

**Core Objective 4.** Conserve and enhance our historic and natural assets as the means to drive regeneration, tourism, and environmental quality and to reverse declines in their condition.

##### *PolicyCP8: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*

To support the Borough's heritage assets, the Council will prepare a Heritage Strategy. Development will sustain and enhance the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets to sustain the historic environment whilst creating for all areas a sense of place and special identity. Development proposals will, as appropriate:

1. Accord with national planning policy in respect of heritage matters, together with any heritage strategy adopted by the Council;
2. Sustain and enhance the significance of Swale's designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance and, where appropriate, in accordance with Policies DM 32-DM 36;
3. Respond to the integrity, form and character of settlements and historic landscapes;
4. Bring heritage assets into sensitive and sustainable use within allocations, neighbourhood plans, regeneration areas and town centres, especially for assets identified as being at risk on national or local registers;
5. Respond positively to the conservation area appraisals and management



strategies prepared by the Council;

6. Respect the integrity of heritage assets, whilst meeting the challenges of a low carbon future;

and 7. Promote the enjoyment of heritage assets through education, accessibility, interpretation and improved access.

Other relevant policies include:

- ST1 Delivering sustainable development in Swale
- CP4: Requiring good design
- CP7: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- DM14: General development criteria
- DM16: Alterations and extensions
- DM32: Development involving listed buildings
- DM33: Development affecting a Conservation Area
- DM34: Development affecting scheduled monuments and archaeological sites

Note the next Local Plan will cover the period 2022-2038

### Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance

The following Planning Guidance has been adopted by Swale Borough Council supplementary to the Swale Borough Local Plan, 2008:

- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings
- Kent Design

### Swale Heritage Strategy 2020 -2032

This strategy provides a framework for the designation, conservation, management and physical and economic regeneration of Swale's Historic Buildings and Areas, including designated historic parks and gardens. From analysis of evidence on Swale's heritage and some early engagement with local stakeholders, a high level vision and set of five associated priorities have been identified.

#### 3.2. Buildings at Risk

There are no designated heritage assets within the Milstead Conservation Area on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register or on the Swale Heritage at Risk Register.

No local heritage assets and features at risk have been identified in the management and action plan for the conservation area (section 6.5). However if any of the identified locally significant features or buildings become at risk in the future these may be added to the local Heritage at Risk Registers if their significance is threatened by their condition. In such instances, the Council will notify respective owners and where possible, work with them to investigate opportunities for external funding to support efforts to conserve heritage assets included on the respective registers.

#### 3.3. Condition and Forces for Change

Milstead Conservation Area is in very good condition.

#### Forces for Change

- Potential future pressure from increased traffic and large vehicles
- Changes to land use surrounding the Conservation Area

### 3.4. Management Objectives and Approach

#### Householder Alterations

Many minor householder alterations to unlisted buildings can be undertaken without the need for planning permission but the cumulative impact of ill-considered change to historic and/or traditional properties can have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Opportunities to reinstate missing architectural features (such as sash windows, panelled doors, or roof coverings) and traditional boundary treatments will be encouraged by the Council and may be requested in relation to planning applications for extensions and/or alterations, where appropriate.

The Council will seek to ensure that householder alterations which require planning permission positively enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

#### Public Realm/Street Management

The public realm makes a positive contribution to the character of Milstead Conservation Areas. However, in rural conservation areas it is especially necessary

to guard against standard highway ‘improvements’ which do not respect the special character of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is notable for its shared road space and lack of pavements and this needs to be safeguarded.

Trees, orchards, and green space are all significant features of the Conservation Area. Positive management of highway trees and highway hedgerows will be an important aspect of maintaining the special character of the Conservation Area.

Highway maintenance and improvements will be carried out in accordance with Kent County Highways ‘Highway Works and Heritage Assets: The Kent Protocol for Highway Works in Relation to Designated Heritage Assets’ second edition, 2011, which contains specific provision for works in Conservation Areas.

The Borough Council and County Council will seek to ensure that the public realm of this Conservation Area is sensitively managed.

#### New Development Opportunities

Any new buildings or renewal of existing sites need to consider the management priorities set out below. Development or alterations within the settings of the Conservation Area should conserve the historic character of the village. New development opportunities or renewal of existing agricultural buildings are more likely to be seen outside of the Conservation Area and these should likewise be handled with reference to the special interest of the area.

### 3.5. Conservation Area Objectives and Priorities for Management and Action

**Overarching Objectives: The Council will seek to ensure that the significance of Milstead Conservation Area is sustained and enhanced through:**

1. The preservation and enhancement of the area's special interest, character, or appearance
2. The preservation or enhancement of the setting of the conservation area and other designated heritage assets.
3. The safeguarding and better revealing the significance of any buried or largely hidden heritage.
4. Protection and enhancement of landmarks, views, and vistas within and without the conservation area.
5. Protection of the landscape around the Conservation Area and the important role this plays in providing it with an attractive and contextually appropriate rural setting, which focuses on the heritage interest which informs the significance of the Conservation Area.
6. Safeguarding non-designated heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the significance of the area.
7. Safeguarding the network of public rights of way.
8. Safeguarding significant spaces.
9. Safeguarding significant trees, orchards, and woods.
10. Promotion of high quality design in new development which responds positively to context and the distinct characteristics of the conservation area.

Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC), Negative Characteristics (NC), Archaeological Potential/Significance (A) and Forces for Change (FC)	Objectives	Specific Management Guidelines	Other Actions
Roman finds in the vicinity of the church suggests that there is potential for further Roman archaeology (A)	Ob1 Ob3	Conserve and recognise archaeological sensitive/potential	
Archaeological potential for Saxon and Medieval archaeology (A)	Ob1 Ob3	Conserve and recognise archaeological sensitive/potential	
Location of the village on a small ridge of land within an area of fields surrounded by a circle of ancient and semi-natural woodland 1 km in diameter (PC)	Ob1 Ob5		Celebrate the link between the village and its wider landscape through the development of a self-guided walking trail(s)
10 <sup>th</sup> /early 13 <sup>th</sup> century origins to the village with the establishment of a small nucleated village created by the clearance by assarting of ancient woodland(PC)	Ob1		Celebrate the link between the village and its wider landscape through the development of a self-guided walking trail(s)
Church with 12 <sup>th</sup> century origins and surviving 12 <sup>th</sup> century and 15 <sup>th</sup> century fabric set within an oval graveyard sitting on a bank with locally important built features including Lychgate and Coffin rest/shelter. The churchyard is an important open space in its own right(PC)	Ob1 Ob 6 Ob 8	maintenance of churchyard as important open space	Potential candidates for local listing
Hoggeshaws a distinctive 15 <sup>th</sup> century Wealden hall house (PC)	Ob1		
Views of the church and Hoggeshaws from Frinsted Road (PC)	Ob1 Ob4	Ensure the classic picture postcard view is maintained	

Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC)
  Negative Characteristics (NC)
  Archaeological Potential/Significance (A)
  Forces for Change (FC)

Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC), Negative Characteristics (NC), Archaeological Potential/Significance (A) and Forces for Change (FC)	Objectives	Specific Management Guidelines	Other Actions
Manor House with 13 <sup>th</sup> century origins and surviving 16 <sup>th</sup> century fabric Grade II* enclosed behind high brick walls (Grade II) (PC)			
Locally important carriage drive/pull in opposite entrance to Manor House (PC)	Ob1 Ob 6		Potential candidates for local listing Article 4 directions
Locally important built features and walls to Manor on Frinsted Road. (PC)	Ob1 Ob 6		Potential candidates for local listing Article 4 directions
Western boundary to the manor with wooden fence panels and large overgrown Leylandii (NC)			Encourage replacement of wooden fence and leylandii with clipped yew hedge as on Manor Road.
Locally important 19 <sup>th</sup> century buildings known as The Coachhouse and Manor Cottage with Listed 19 <sup>th</sup> century Dovecot form 'focal' features on approach to eastern side of the Conservation Area (PC)	Ob1 Ob 6		Potential candidates for local listing Article 4 directions
Group of nationally important vernacular buildings dating from the 16 <sup>th</sup> to the 17 <sup>th</sup> centuries (Rose Cottage, Manor Farmhouse, Wisteria Cottage and The Cottage). (PC)	Ob1		

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Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC)
  Negative Characteristics (NC)
  Archaeological Potential/Significance (A)
  Forces for Change (FC)

Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC), Negative Characteristics (NC), Archaeological Potential/Significance (A) and Forces for Change (FC)	Objectives	Specific Management Guidelines	Other Actions
The Old Rectory built 1834 and associated grounds – a fine example of regency style, associated grounds and buildings and historic glebe lands to the west (PC)	Ob1	Conserve character of paddock to the west hand side and fruit trees	
Locally important 18 <sup>th</sup> century Trotts Hall and its history of being moved from Sittingbourne in the 1970s. (PC)	Ob1 Ob 6		Potential candidates for local listing or even re listing as a nationally designated heritage asset Article 4 directions
Other properties surrounded by plantings of trees and shrubs(PC) Notable individual Trees (PC)	Ob1 Ob 9	Encourage householders to maintain and plant appropriate trees and shrubs	<b>Protect notable individual trees with TPOs</b>
Shared public realm along lanes/roads with a lack of pavements and modern street infrastructure (PC)	Ob1 Ob7	Ensure a shared street space is maintained for all users, which limits the use of modern street furniture	
Potential future pressure from increased traffic and large vehicles (FC)			
Cedar tree and junction of Rawling Street and Horn Hill (PC)	Ob1 Ob 9	<b>Maintain this junction, in it's simple non-highway engineered form.</b>	TPO for Cedar Tree

Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC)
  Negative Characteritics (NC)
  Archaeological Potential/Significance (A)
  Forces for Change (FC)

Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC), Negative Characteristics (NC), Archaeological Potential/Significance (A) and Forces for Change (FC)	Objectives	Specific Management Guidelines	Other Actions
<p>Sense of enclosure with high brick walls, clipped yew hedges, mature trees and planting along Manor Road and southern end of Frinsted Road. (PC)</p> <p>Milstead Conservation Area is notable partly due to its lack of open space with important exceptions(PC)</p>		<p>Maintain this sense of enclosure through appropriate planting</p>	
<p>A mosaic of distinctive historic fields on the western side of the Conservation Area with surviving pre 1840s wooded hedgerow boundaries, and surviving Shaws and woodland belts. Important open spaces both private and publically accessible. Associated with evolving local dynamic views with Hoggeshaws and the Church acting as focal points. (PC)</p>	<p>Ob1 Ob4 Ob7 Ob 8</p>	<p>Maintain Shaw on western edge of Conservation Area, ensure all 1840s</p> <p>Maintain surviving pre 1840s hedgerows Protect open spaced and the local dynamic views</p>	
<p>A long history of cricket since 1857(PC)</p> <p>Cricket field with distinctive thatched pavilion and scoreboard, surviving Shaw with dynamic local panoramic views. (PC)</p>	<p>Ob1 Ob4 Ob 8</p>	<p>Maintain Shaw on eastern edge of Cricket Field as wooded belt</p>	<p>Potential candidates for local listing</p>
<p>Views in an out of the Conservation Area to the west from within the dry valley which forms an important component of its setting (PC)</p>	<p>Ob1 Ob2 Ob4 Ob5</p>	<p>Preserve these views and protect the distinctive character of the valley</p>	

Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC)    Negative Characteristics (NC)    Archaeological Potential/Significance (A)    Forces for Change (FC)



Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC), Negative Characteristics (NC), Archaeological Potential/Significance (A) and Forces for Change (FC)	Objectives	Specific Management Guidelines	Other Actions
Historic links to the Tylden Family and their relationship with all the key historic buildings (PC)	Ob1		Celebrate the link between the buildings through development of a self-guided walking trail
Changes to land use surrounding the Conservation Area (FC)	Ob 2 Ob 9	Maintain Shaws and small woods in the wider landscape and surviving pre 1880s hedgerows	
<del>Frontages and design of post war houses to the immediate north and south side of the Conservation Area detract from its setting (NC)</del>	<del>Ob 2 Ob 9</del>	<del></del>	<del>Seek opportunities to soften discordant existing frontages with appropriate planting and more traditional boundaries</del>
Group of modern farm buildings adjacent to the Conservation Area on Milstead Hill. Their raised position means that they are more prominent than might otherwise be the case. (NC)	Ob 2 Ob 10	Ensure any future development and change at this location is in scale and keeping with the Conservation Area	

This row to be removed

Special Interest & Positive Characteristics (PC)



Negative Characteristics (NC)



Archaeological Potential/Significance (A)



Forces for Change (FC)





# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Extracts from the National Heritage List for England (the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest)

The statutory list is compiled and published by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport and is altered and amended from time to time. The list descriptions below were current in March 2016 but for more up to date information please visit the National Heritage List for England at [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/thelist](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/thelist). The omission of a building from this list should not necessarily be taken to indicate that it is not listed.

Features which are not specifically mentioned in the list description are not exempt from statutory protection which extends to the building, to any object or structure fixed to the building and to any structure within the curtilage of the building pre-dating the 1st July 1948.

**NOTE: The number in bracket correspondes to Map 7a on page25**

### Church of St Mary and the Holy Cross (3)

Grade: II\*      List Entry Number: 1069286      Date first listed: 24-Jan-1967

Statutory Address: Church of St Mary and the Holy Cross, Frinsted Road, Milstead

GV II\* Parish church. C12-C13 chancel, C15 nave and west tower. Restored and enlarged 1872 by William Butterfield. Flint and plaster with plain tiled roofs. West tower, aisleless nave, chancel with south and north chapels, south porch.

Two stage tower with string course and cornice to battlements and north-west octagonal vice. Double chamfered west doorway, with two light C15 Perpendicular windows and belfry lights. Nave on plinth with two light Perpendicular windows north and south. C19 half-timber and weatherboard south porch, with C15 double hinged door (i.e. half-leaf or entire door opens) in double hollow chamfered surround. Three eastern chapels all C11 exterior though lancers in chancel are original.

Interior: short nave with hollow chamfered tower arch surround with attached shafts and octagonal capitals, with chamfered arch. Roof of three crown posts the easternmost shortened to raise over chancel arch, on flat, heavily moulded ties. Chancel arch with double hollow chamfer on octagonal responds with corbels on inner face (for a lost rood screen probably). Chancel, originally two bays, with chapels added to north and south c.1200. Two bay arcade to north, with round pier, square moulded abacus chamfered at the corners, with debased upright acanthus leaves in pairs, fillet rolls on arches, and corbel tables on responds. This is all identical to and by the same hand as work in Bapchild, Doddington, Frinsted and Murston (see Bapchild: Church of St Lawrence).

Chancel extended eastwards two bays in later C13 - the original quoins visible internally. Paired lancets north and south, the reveals of the two westerly taken down to floor level, with drip moulds. Renewed windows, C19 wagon roof. Mutilated capitals to south arch with the paired upright leaf motif and nook shafts all that survives of pre-Butterfield date in south chapel. The north chapel is also entirely Butterfield (Newman (1976) suggests R.C. Hussey c.1855).

Fittings: sedile and piscina ensuite in chancel with double chamfered surround. Painted tryptych reredos, altar rails, glass add date from 1870s, as do two wrought iron lamp stands, 7 feet high with gilded details. In the nave, the pulpit, lectern, benches, wrought iron screen to tower and octagonal font are all likewise presumably by Butterfield.

Monuments: marble and cast iron wall plaques to various C19 members to the Tylden family in the north chapel, two of note, Elizabeth Tylden d.1839, tablet with bust; William and Richard Tylden d.1854 and 1855, by R.C. Hussey. Two tabernacles crocketed with attached marble shafts, integrated with double lancet windows with moulded surrounds and attached shafts above the monument. Smaller, plainer copy to left to Charlotte Tylden d.1858.

### Old Rectory (2)

Grade: II List Entry Number: 1325210 Date first listed: 21-Mar-1985

Statutory Address: OLD RECTORY, RAWLING STREET

House. 1834. Painted brick and slate roof. Two storeys and hipped roof, with projecting hipped wings, and 3 stacks to rear. Four glazing bar sashes on first floor with shutters, 1 each on ground floor of wings with gauged heads and blind hoods. Two traceried French doors to centre, under a wrought iron veranda on 4 trellised piers with pierced floriate frieze. Later C19 service wing to rear.

### Milstead Manor (5)

Grade: II\* List Entry Number: 1343916 Date first listed: 27-Aug-1952

Statutory Address: MILSTEAD MANOR, MANOR ROAD

Manor house. C16 to C18. Timber framed and close-studded on flint plinth, the central portion underbuilt with red brick, the left end bay entirely faced with red brick in header bond; plain tiled roof. Two storeys, with gables at ends to left and right, that to right jettied that to left underbuilt with brick, and central 2 storey brick and timber framed gabled porch, all with moulded bargeboards and pendants. Stack to left, and clock turret to right with ogee-cap. Irregular fenestration of segmental oriels on brackets on first floor in left and right gables with wood case-ments in central porch, and blocked mullion window to right. Segmental bay window to end left, and 3 wood casements on ground floor. Plank and stud door in moulded surround in porch, with chamfered round-headed brick outer doorway. Right return front continuous jettied. Three timber- framed return wings to rear. Interior: now with (incorrect) open hall. C17 panelling in Dining Room, and 2-stage wood panelled fire surround with baluster-columns with bead ornament.

### Garden wall and gateways to north of Milstead Manor (4)

Grade: II List Entry Number: 1069283 Date first listed: 24-Jan-1967

Statutory Address: GARDEN WALL AND GATEWAYS TO NORTH OF MILSTEAD MANOR, MANOR ROAD

Wall. C17 and C18. Red brick. Extends from east end of Manor Road approximately 35 yards to east at circa 3 foot height, swept up to gate piers with stone ball-finials and wrought iron gate with ornamental overthrow; then extends 40 yards east at circa 7 foot height with dentil cornice and tiled coping, including another simple wrought iron gate to the Manor gardens.

### Hoggeshaws (8)

Grade: II List Entry Number: 1069285 Date first listed: 27-Aug-1952

Date of most recent amendment: 21-Mar-1985

Statutory Address: HOGGESHAWS, RAWLING STREET

Wealden hall house, now house. C15 and 1700. Timber framed on flint plinth and exposed with plaster infill, the end left and end right bays underbuilt with red brick on red brick plinth, with plain tiled roof. Four framed bays, originally with 2 bay hall, the screens passage in the left end ½ bay, with later stack backing on to it. Two storeys, recessed central 2 bays with flying wall plate carried on-curved braces, and hipped roof with gablets and stack to centre left. Four wood case-ments on first floor, 3 on ground floor with central board door under eaves dropping. Arched doorway to screens passage survives to left. Left return front of brick, with plinth and plat band and 4 windows originally brick mullioned. Aedicule on chimney dated 1700.

### Rose Cottage (1)

Grade:II List Entry Number:1119628 Date first listed:21-Mar-1985

Statutory Address:ROSE COTTAGE

House. C17. Timber framed and faced with plaster with plain tiled roof. Two storeys and hipped roof with gablets and central stack. Two wood casements on each floor and central boarded door with gabled hood. Catslide outshot, and 1 storeyed hipped extension to rear left.

### Dovecote 50 Yards East of Milstead Manor (7)

Grade:II List Entry Number:1325223 Date first listed:21-Mar-1985

Statutory Address:DOVECOTE 50 YARDS EAST OF MILSTEAD MANOR, MANOR ROAD

Dovecot. Dated 1823. Chequered red and blue brick and plain tiled roof. Square plan. One storey, hipped roof with lantern, with painted board doors in east and west fronts. Stone plaque over west door with inscription: R.T. 1823

### Manor Farmhouse (6)

Grade:II List Entry Number:1325217 Date first listed:24-Jan-1967

Statutory Address:MANOR FARMHOUSE, MANOR ROAD

Farmhouse. C17. Timber framed and exposed with plaster infill and part underbuilt with red brick to left, with thatched roof. Lobby entry plan. Two storeys on brick plinth and hipped roof with stacks to end left and to centre; the roof steps down to right with stack to rear right. Four windows on each floor, C20 wood oriels on brackets, and central plank and stud door with hipped hood.

### Wisteria Cottage (9)

Grade:II List Entry Number:1107847 Date first listed:21-Mar-1985

Statutory Address:WISTERIA COTTAGE, RAWLING STREET

House. C1?. Timber framed and clad with painted brick and rough cast with plain tiled roof. Two storeys and hipped roof with central stack. Two wood casements to each floor and central plank and stud door in gabled porch. Catslide outshot to right.

### The Cottage (10)

Grade:II List Entry Number:1343917 Date first listed:24-Jan-1967

Date of most recent amendment:21-Mar-1985

Statutory Address:THE COTTAGE, RAWLING STREET

House. C17 to early C19. Chequered red and blue brick and white brick with plain tiled roof. Lobby entry plan. Two storeys on plinth and roof hipped to right, gabled to left, with 2 hipped dormers and stacks to end left and centre right. C19 addition to left of 2 glazing bar sashes on each floor to original building of 5 wood casements on first floor and four on ground floor, all with leaded lights. C20 door of 6 raised and fielded panels to centre right (centre of C17 building) with rectangular fanlight and gabled porch. C20 extension to right of red brick and tile hanging; 2 storeys with irregular fenestration.

### War Memorial to the Third Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment (11)

Grade: II List Entry Number: 1468921 Date first listed: 24-Jun-2020

Statutory Address: Horn Hill, Milstead, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 OSD

A First World War memorial to the Third Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment.

## Appendix 2: Proposed amendments to Milstead Conservation Area boundary

As part of the review of Milstead Conservation Area, consideration has been given to whether the current boundaries accurately reflect the area which is considered to have special architectural or historic interest.

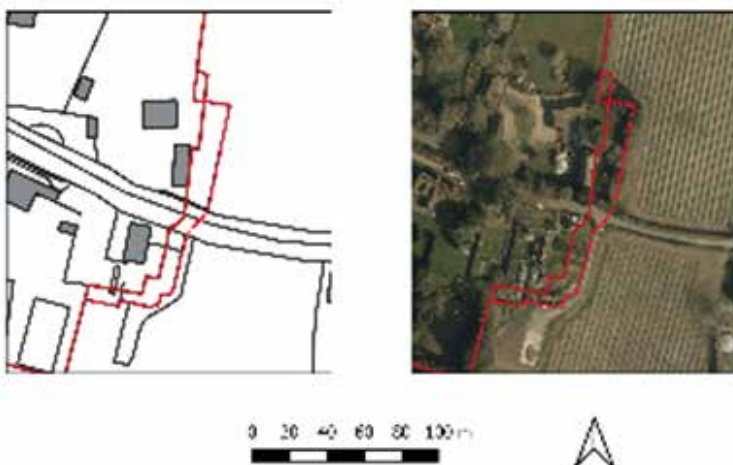
In large part, the area covered by the Conservation Area is considered to be appropriate in that it still possesses special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

### Boundary Adjustments

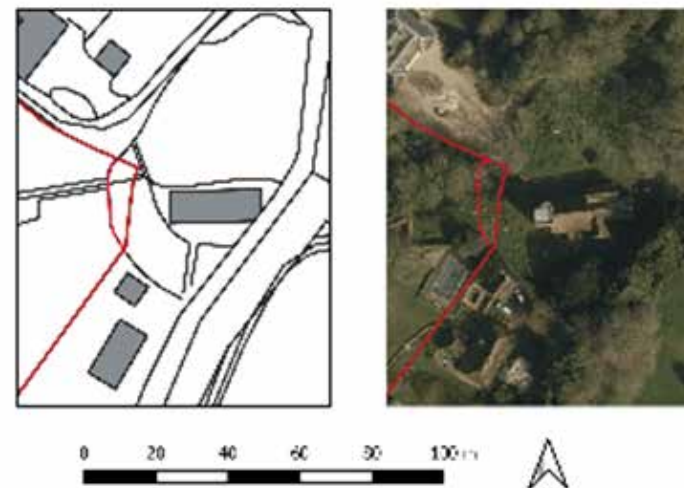
Even if the proposed boundary extensions are not adopted it is highly recommended that two slight adjustments to the boundary are undertaken

#### Adjustment 1 – Land to the east of the Coachhouse and Manor Cottage

The boundaries of the gardens have changed since the original designation and the Conservation Area boundary



Adjustment 2 – Inclusion of small extension to the Churchyard. Since the original designation the footprint of the churchyard has been slightly extended to the west and a new boundary planted. Note if Extension C is adopted then this adjustment would become unnecessary.



### Boundary Extensions

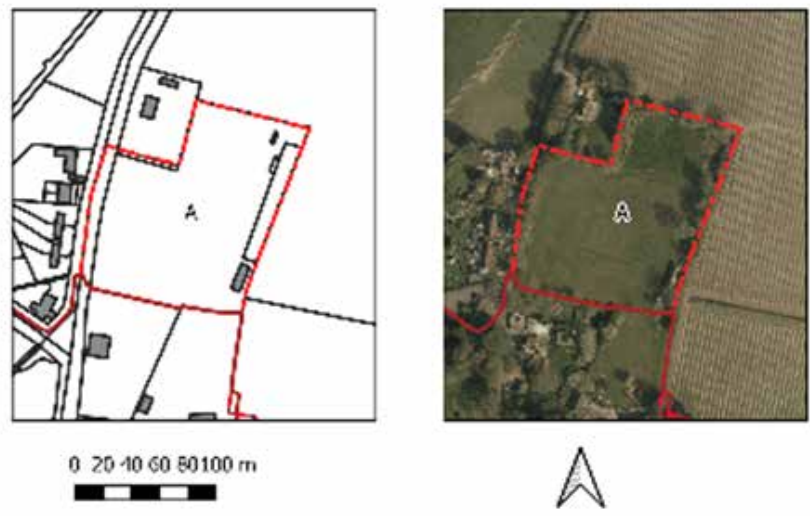
There are five areas where it is proposed to extend the boundary of the Conservation Area to incorporate new areas. Maps for each area are provided and the rationale for each extension given.

#### Area A Cricket pitch on the northern side of the boundary

The proposal is to move the current Conservation Area boundary north to include the Cricket Pitch and semi-wooded bank to the east. The rationale for this inclusion is as follows:

- Cricket has a long history in Milstead, and the cricket pitch was moved here c.1945. The Club was founded in 1857

- The pavilion and score box are locally important features.
- The cricket pitch is an important open space within a village which in general feels enclosed.
- Views across the pitch looking towards the grounds of Manor Farmhouse and Rose Cottage. The eastern boundary of the cricket pitch is bounded by scrubby woodland marking the line of a surviving Shaw.
- Historically the cricket field was a meadow belonging to the Manor House and leased with it when it was rented out during the 19th century. There is therefore an historical association between the field and the Manor.



**Area B Land to the south surrounding Trotts Hall**

Opposite The Cottage and Wisteria Cottage is the formal grand 18th century house known as Trotts Hall. It has an impressive sweeping brick wall entrance way with brick piers and wrought iron gates and its formal frontage faces on to Frinsted Road

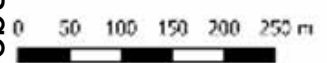
The house has a curious history as it was built in 1740 Bell Road Sittingbourne. In the 1970s it was due to be demolished in 1973 and it was dismantled and then rebuilt on the new site starting in 1976. The rear of the house was built up from old bricks acquired specifically for that purpose. The rationale for inclusion is that

- After 40 years in this location the grounds are mature that a casual observer would assume the house has always been in this location and it lends an attractive element to the southern side of the Conservation Area.
- The building itself was formerly listed Grade II when in Sittingbourne and the building externally at least has not lost any of its architectural integrity or importance.
- It is a building of local importance within Milstead.

**Area C**

The land to the west of The Cottage, Hoggeshaws and the Church and to the south of the Rectory consists of a series of small, enclosed fields which were former historic orchards and meadows relating to these properties, and are still used as grazed fields. The rationale for inclusion is that:

- Several of the pre 1840 historic hedged boundaries survive intact.
- The westernmost boundary incorporates a surviving historic Shaw formerly known as Stubbings Shaw, as well as a later, post-war Shaw.
- The new western boundary demarcates a break in the topography on the small ridge of land on which Milstead sits.
- Incorporates the late 19th century cottage known as Little Danes is a locally important building.
- Incorporation of local panoramic views of the rear of Hoggeshaw, the churchyard and the church.



Page 215  
Area D

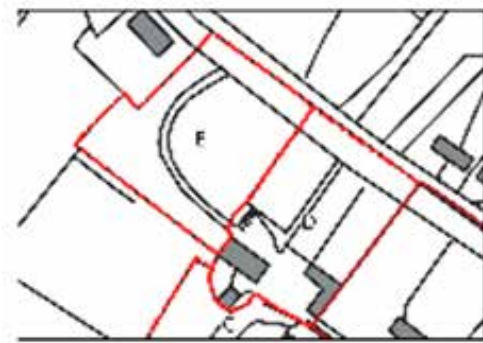
Immediately to the west of the Rectory the land within this western area was formerly a working yard related to the rectory but today this land has again become formal gardens. The rationale for its inclusion:

- Historically part of the property belonging to the Rectory and associated Glebe Land
- building on the eastern side of the former yard which was formerly the office and domestic servant accommodation to the rectory and is shown on the 1840 tithe and referenced in the 19th century censuses.
- a second property lies on the footprint of an outbuilding on the westside of the former yard The whole of the western side of the property is screened from the road by a high hedge and bank as the road slopes downwards into the small valley bottom.

**Area E**

Further west adjacent to Horns Hill is a large open paddock with fruit trees with a drive providing access to the road. The rationale for inclusion is:

- this attractive area of land was historically an orchard, part of the Glebe land belonging to the rectory and remains part of the property today.
- There are views from the road to the rectory?and its associated outbuildings and surviving Orchard Trees.



### Appendix 3: Relevant legislation, national and local policy & strategies

#### Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

- Section 66 General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.

(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

- Section 69 Designation of conservation areas.

(1) Every local planning authority—

(a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and

(b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

(2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.

(3) The Secretary of State may from time to time determine that any part of a local planning authority's area which is not for the time being designated as a conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance; and, if he so determines, he may designate that part as a conservation area.(4)The designation of any area as a conservation area shall be a local land charge.

- Section 71 Formulation and publication of proposals for preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

(1) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.

(2) Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.

(3) The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting.

- Section 72 General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.

(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.



## National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies, and how they are expected to be applied. **This was last updated in July 2021.**

The NPPF covers the historic environment primarily in paragraphs **189- 208** ~~184-202~~ (Chapter 16).

## National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

The NPPG includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Historic Environment.

## Guidance and Advice from Historic England

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/planning-system/>

- Historic England Good Practice Advice in **Planning** Notes (GPAs).

These provide supporting information on good practice, particularly looking at the principles of how national policy and guidance can be applied.

- GPA1 - ~~Local Plan Making~~ **The Historic Environment in Local Plans**
- GPA2 - Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment
- GPA3 - ~~The Setting and Views of~~ **Heritage Assets**

- **Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs)**

**These** include detailed, practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance.

- Historic England Advice Note 1(2nd. Ed.) - Conservation Areas **Appraisal, Designation and Management**
- Historic England Advice Note 2 - Making Changes to Heritage Assets
- ~~Historic England Advice Note 4 - Tall Buildings~~
- Historic England Advice Note 9 - The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings
- Historic England Advice Note 10 - Listed Buildings and Curtilage
- Historic England Advice Note 12 - Statements of Heritage Significance

## Swale Borough Council Heritage Strategy 2020

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/swale-heritage-strategy/>

The Council has developed a borough-wide heritage strategy to help it, along with key stakeholders and other interested parties, to protect and manage the historic environment in Swale in a positive and sustainable way, on a suitably informed basis.

A key element of the strategy is the setting out of the Council's overall vision and set of priorities, which it is hoped will align with the vision and priorities of local communities and local amenity societies as far as possible, in order that the strategy can be widely supported.

The strategy sets out a series of proposals in the associated initial 3-year action plan which are aimed at enabling the positive and sustainable management of different

elements of the borough's historic environment for the foreseeable future. Priority is given to those parts of the borough's historic environment which are already suffering from, and at risk from negative change, and/or which face significant development pressure, threatening their special character. The proposed set of actions will involve joint project working with amenity societies and/or volunteers from the community wherever this is possible.

#### **Adopted Local Plan Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017)**

<http://services.swale.gov.uk/media/files/localplan/adoptedlocalplanfinalwebversion.pdf>

Relevant objectives and policies within the local plan include:

- **Policy ST 1 Delivering sustainable development in Swale**

To deliver sustainable development in Swale, all development proposals will, as appropriate:.....

8. Achieve good design through reflecting the best of an area's defining characteristics;
9. Promote healthy communities through:..... e. maintaining the individual character, integrity, identities and settings of settlements;
12. Conserve and enhance the historic environment by applying national and local planning policy through the identification, assessment and integration of development with the importance, form and character of heritage assets (inc. historic landscapes).

- **Policy CP 4 Requiring good design**

All development proposals will be of a high quality design that is appropriate to its surroundings. Development proposals will, as appropriate:...

2. Enrich the qualities of the existing environment by promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and strengthening sense of place;
5. Retain and enhance features which contribute to local character and distinctiveness;.....
8. Be appropriate to the context in respect of materials, scale, height and massing;
9. Make best use of texture, colour, pattern, and durability of materials;
10. Use densities determined by the context and the defining characteristics of the area;
11. Ensure the long-term maintenance and management of buildings, spaces, features and social infrastructure;.....

- **Policy DM 32 Development involving listed buildings**

Development proposals, including any change of use, affecting a listed building, and/or its setting, will be permitted provided that:

1. The building's special architectural or historic interest, and its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, are preserved, paying special attention to the: a. design, including scale, materials, situation and detailing; b. appropriateness of the proposed use of the building; and c. desirability of removing unsightly or negative features or restoring or reinstating historic features.
2. The total or part demolition of a listed building is wholly exceptional, and will only be permitted provided convincing evidence has been submitted showing that: a. All reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or viable new uses and have failed; b. Preservation in charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable; and c. The cost of maintaining and repairing the building outweighs its importance and the value derived from its continued use.

3. If as a last resort, the Borough Council is prepared to consider the grant of a listed building consent for demolition, it may, in appropriate circumstances, consider whether the building could be re-erected elsewhere to an appropriate location. When re-location is not possible and demolition is permitted, arrangements will be required to allow access to the building prior to demolition to make a record of it and to allow for the salvaging of materials and features.

- **Policy DM 33 Development affecting a conservation area**

Development (including changes of use and the demolition of unlisted buildings or other structures) within, affecting the setting of, or views into and out of a conservation area, will preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's special character or appearance. The Borough Council expects development proposals to:

1. Respond positively to its conservation area appraisals where these have been prepared;
2. Retain the layout, form of streets, spaces, means of enclosure and buildings, and pay special attention to the use of detail and materials, surfaces, landform, vegetation and land use;
3. Remove features that detract from the character of the area and reinstate those that would enhance it; and
4. Retain unlisted buildings or other structures that make, or could make, a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

- **Policy DM 34 Scheduled Monuments and archaeological sites**

1. Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect a Scheduled Monument, and/or its setting, as shown on the Proposals Map, or subsequently

designated, or any other monument or archaeological site demonstrated as being of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments. Development that may affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset of less than national significance will require a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

2. Whether they are currently known, or discovered during the Plan period, there will be a preference to preserve important archaeological sites in-situ and to protect their settings. Development that does not achieve acceptable mitigation of adverse archaeological effects will not be permitted.

3. Where development is permitted and preservation in-situ is not justified, the applicant will be required to ensure that provision will be made for archaeological excavation and recording, in advance of and/or during development, including the necessary post-excavation study and assessment along with the appropriate deposition of any artefacts in an archaeological archive or museum to be approved by the Borough Council.

#### Swale Borough Council Supplementary Planning Guidance

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-planning-guidance/>

- Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 2: Listed Buildings – A Guide for Owners and Occupiers
- Swale Borough Council No 3: The Conservation of Traditional Farm Buildings.
- Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 8: Conservation Areas

#### Appendix 4: Select Bibliography and Document Extracts

Muir R. 2000 The NEW Reading the Landscape. Fieldwork in Landscape History

The Southeast Archaeological Research Framework can be accessed at <https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/history-and-heritage/south-east-research-framework>

Jordan, L (2006), *Milstead Cricket Club. Milstead: Milstead C.C.*

Jordan, L (2001), *Strolling Through Milstead. Sittingbourne: Regent Printing*

#### Appendix 5: Acknowledgements

Thanks go in particular to Simon Mason and his colleagues from the Heritage Conservation Team at Kent County Council for their assistance. The online version of the Kent Historic Environment Record can be accessed at <https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/Default.aspx>

Thanks go to Alison Black, to Parish Councillor Victoria Berkeley and Parish Council Clerk Lena Jordan in particular for passing on their extensive local knowledge of the area, which has helped hugely in the drafting of this document.

Thanks go to the Conservation & Design and Planning Policy teams at Swale Borough Council for providing baseline data, checking, editing and formatting this public consultation document, and putting having put in place the public consultation arrangements to take this important the review work to the next stage and through to adoption.

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was prepared by Emma Rouse, Wyvern Heritage and Landscape, on behalf of Swale Borough Council.

[www.wyvernheritage.co.uk](http://www.wyvernheritage.co.uk)



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Swale Borough Council Planning Services – 01795 417850

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/heritage-and-landscape/>

Swale Borough Council: 2021  
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT AUGUST**  
**ADOPTION VERSION NOVEMBER 2021**

Prepared by Wyvern Heritage and Landscape



Wyvern Heritage  
and Landscape

[www.wyvernheritage.co.uk](http://www.wyvernheritage.co.uk)

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# Agenda Item 8

<b>Cabinet Meeting</b>		<b>Agenda Item: 8</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> October, 2021	
<b>Report Title</b>	Sittingbourne Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Mike Baldock - Cabinet Member for Planning	
<b>SMT Lead</b>	James Freeman – Head of Planning Services	
<b>Head of Service</b>	James Freeman – Head of Planning Services	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Jhilmil Kishore – Senior Conservation & Design Officer (Projects)	
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes	
<b>Classification</b>	Open	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To note the responses received from the public consultation exercise (summarised in the response table at Appendix i and set out in full at Appendix iii).</li><li>2. To note the content of the conservation area character appraisal and associated management strategy document for the Sittingbourne Conservation Area, as amended (set out in Appendix ii).</li><li>3. In light of 1 and 2 above, to resolve that the Sittingbourne Conservation Area is of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and that as such, that it should be re-designated as a conservation area in accordance with section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.</li><li>4. In light of 1 and 2 above, to resolve that the boundary to the conservation area be re-drawn as proposed on Map 1 and the related series of maps in the character appraisal and management plan document for the Sittingbourne Conservation Area to be formally adopted for development management purposes.</li></ol>	

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make the Cabinet aware of some proposed boundary changes and to confirm that following the recent review work, the conservation area should be formally re-designated under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The proposals include a detailed character appraisal and associated management strategy in line

with current good practice for the management of conservation areas. Following the close of the public consultation exercise, officers recommend that the Cabinet approves the minor changes to the review document set out in **Appendix ii**, as supported by the Local Plan Panel.

## **2 Background**

2.1 Sittingbourne Conservation Area was first designated in December 1969. The boundary of Sittingbourne Conservation Area has not been amended since. A conservation area appraisal and management strategy for Sittingbourne Conservation Area was adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the Development Plan in March 2011. There is a formal requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for Conservation Areas to be reviewed from 'time to time'.

2.2 The Swale Heritage Strategy, adopted in March 2020, has resulted in a stronger commitment by the Council to ensure its conservation areas are reviewed more regularly and possible new conservation areas also given consideration. The review of Sittingbourne Conservation Area is part of the work programme of the initial 3-year action plan forming part of the adopted Swale Heritage Strategy 2020 – 2032. This is the third one being undertaken, Tonge and Borden being recently completed. The focus on conservation areas in the initial action plan has given priority to those conservation areas in the Borough classified locally and nationally as 'at risk' – of which there are 8 – Sittingbourne Conservation Area is one of them.

## **3 Proposal**

3.1 The proposal is to re-designate and amend the boundary of the conservation area and to equip it with a detailed character appraisal and a complementary management strategy which will assist with development management and heritage conservation purposes over the next decade or so. The re-designation is proposed to include amendments to the conservation area boundary to include additional areas that contribute to its special interest.

3.2 The proposed boundary change has been challenged/questioned through the public consultation exercise, but there has been a suggestion of one further boundary change to include east street up to the junction of Gaze Hill Avenue on the east side of the proposed boundary extension to the conservation area. The considerations relating to these have been clearly set out in **Appendix i** to this report.

3.3 Officers recommend that the Cabinet approves the proposed changes to the review document as set out in **Appendix ii**: Public consultation version of the 2021 draft character appraisal and management plans document. This includes a correction to the proposed extension of the conservation area boundary into East Street, and



left out The Chestnuts Surgery at 70 East Street, which was, and remains intended to be included within the proposed extension of the conservation area.

- 3.4 Due to the short turnaround time between the Local Plan Panel meeting which took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> October, and the reporting deadline for the Cabinet meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> October, it has not been possible to incorporate the missing alleyway information at Appendix 3 of the review document nor to check whether the photo of the shopfront on page 21 of the document does in fact illustrate the latest position in terms of alteration to that particular property on the High Street. The missing information will be provided however prior to the adoption version of the document being published online, and if necessary, an updated photo will be provided in relation to the featured shopfront.

#### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 One option would be to not take this review work any further and effectively abandon it. This is not recommended however because it would risk the justifiable continuation of the designation and/or the appropriately sensitive and positive management of the conservation area and its wider setting moving forward.
- 4.2 A second possible option would be to suspend the work on this review until some point in the future. Whilst this option would not result in wasted officer time, it could still lead to (a) the designation being challenged, (b) reputational damage to the Council and/or (c) development and associated infrastructure provision decisions being made for the locality without an appropriate understanding and appreciation of the special qualities of the Sittingbourne Conservation Area.
- 4.3 A third possible option would be to ignore some elements, or all of the feedback received, in terms of the suggested boundary change(s). However, whilst it is considered that the appraisal and management plan (to support the redesignation of the conservation area) is essentially sound, the feedback provided from the local community in good faith and in a constructive vein is valuable and to ignore any of this feedback without sound reasons to do so would call the value of the consultation process into question and potentially deliver a reputational blow to the Council.

#### **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 As agreed in advance with the relevant Cabinet Member, Councillor Baldock, a 7 week (instead of normal 6-week) public consultation ran from Monday the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021 until Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021. This extra week was provided to take account of the consultation period occurring over the school summer holidays when many people were likely to be off work.

- 5.2 All those parties with property within or overlapping the current conservation area boundary were notified in writing of the review and were invited to comment on it, as were key relevant organisations including Kent County Council and Historic England.
- 5.3 Restrictions on movement imposed due to the Coronavirus pandemic meant that the normal practice of providing hard copies of the review document at Swale House could not be followed, but the review document was available to view/download on-line via the Council's website for the duration of the 7-week public consultation period. Hard copies of the review document were made available to view at Sittingbourne Library. In addition, officers designed a public consultation poster, copies of which were placed on the Swale House public notice board, and on the notice board at Sittingbourne Library in order to help further publicise the review work.
- 5.4 A total of 3 consultation responses have been received. One from the Sittingbourne Society, one from a local resident of East Street and one from Historic England. These responses are attached in full at appendix iii and the officer's response to these responses (as summarised) is attached as appendix i.
- 5.5 Historic England has responded advising that it has no substantive comments to make. It advises that the reference to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will need to be updated as the NPPF has been updated since the public consultation version of the review document was completed. It also draws attention to its Advice Note 1 (2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed.) on Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management. It is confirmed that the officers have taken the guidance set out in Advice Note 1 into account, and that furthermore, this note is referred to in the review document as the key reference document guiding the review work.
- 5.6 Kent County Council in its function as the Highway Authority was consulted on the conservation area review but provided no feedback in this respect.
- 5.7 The Local Plan Panel considered this matter at its meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 where it was unanimously agreed by members of the panel to recommend to the Cabinet that the proposed changes to the conservation area review document recommended by officers, in light of public consultation feedback, should be approved. For the avoidance of any doubt, the recommendations for changes to the review document by officers do not materially alter the content of the character appraisal or management plan parts of the document. Nor do they propose any change to the conservation area boundary alterations proposed by officers. The recommended changes seek solely to correct some minor factual errors and close some small gaps in information. A copy of the minutes from the Local Plan Panel meeting will be available for reference at the Cabinet meeting.
- 5.8 Due to the drafting error for the proposed extension of the conservation area boundary into East Street, The Chestnuts Surgery at 70 East Street was not

notified of the conservation area review as should have been the case. Officers have apologized to the practice for this error and the practice has been invited to submit any comments on the review document. Any feedback provided will be reported verbally at the Cabinet meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>Priority 2 of the Plan is: 'Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges'. Objectives 2.1, 2.4 and 2.5 of this priority are respectively to:</p> <p>(2.1) 'Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2020, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough'.</p> <p>(2.4) 'Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.'</p> <p>(2.5) 'Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible'.</p> <p>The character appraisal and management strategy document, once amended as appropriate and subsequently adopted would support all 3 of the above-stated objectives from the Corporate Plan.</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	There are no financial implications for the Council
Legal and Statutory	<p>The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on every local planning authority to "<i>determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance</i>" and, from time to time, to review the functioning existing conservation areas. As such failure to follow through on this review work would mean that the council is failing to meet its statutory duties in relation to the designation and ongoing management of conservation areas.</p>
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environmental Sustainability	<p>One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is its environmental role: contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. The other two dimensions are a strong economy and a healthy and socially vibrant community</p>

Health and Wellbeing	The health and wellbeing aspects of interaction with heritage assets and heritage related projects are referenced in the adopted Heritage Strategy which underpins this review work.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

## 7 Appendices

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

- **Appendix i:** Public consultation – table of representations (in summary form), and the council’s response to them
- **Appendix ii:** Public consultation version of the 2021 draft character appraisal and management plan document, showing alterations recommended by officers (as tracked changes).
- **Appendix iii:** Full copies of the public consultation responses as received.

## 8 Background Papers

None.

**APPENDIX i: TABLE OF REPRESENTATIONS, AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANY CHANGES TO THE REVIEW DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO THEM – FOR SITTINGBOURNE CONSERVATION AREA**

<b>Rep. No(s).</b>	<b>Representation By</b>	<b>Summary of Representation</b>	<b>Officer Response</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
1	The Sittingbourne Society	Support the proposed changes to the Conservation Area boundary, have recommended extending it to include Area east of South Avenue to the Gaze Hill Avenue Junction. They have welcomed the recognition of two prominent unlisted Art Deco buildings - Burtons and the New Century Cinema and welcomed the proposed management plan.	Noted and welcomed.  The CA Boundary could potentially be extended as suggested. However, there is very little of significance left on the street, barring the two listed buildings.	No change to review document needed.
2	Local resident of East Street	Do not support the proposed changes to the conservation area boundary and have further queried exclusion of certain plots/ properties on East Street from the proposed conservation boundary extension.	The Conservation Area Boundary extension has been proposed after thorough review of the area, and it is considered that the area will benefit with this extension. Sittingbourne CA represents the historic core of the town and is under tremendous development pressure. Extending it to include East Street will ensure that significance of the historic 'suburb' of the high street is maintained.	No change to review document needed
3	Historic England	No substantive comments to make on either the contents of the review or the extensions to the conservation areas proposed. Attention is drawn to the relevant Historic England guidance document: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and M'gmt.	The referenced document has been appropriately referred to and also referenced in the CA review document.	No change to review document needed.

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# Sittingbourne Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan

~~August 2021~~

**November 2021**

~~DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION~~

**ADOPTION VERSION**





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# FOREWORD

“Historic buildings and places add to the quality of people’s lives and help to create a sense of place that we all identify with.

As a community and as a local authority, we have a responsibility to safeguard our historic assets for future generations and to make sure that they are not compromised by unsympathetic alterations or poor quality developments. Conservation area designation and subsequent management is one way in which this can be achieved.

Conservation areas are not intended to halt progress or to prevent change. Rather, they give the local community and the Borough Council the means to positively manage change and to protect what is special about the area from being harmed or lost altogether.

Swale Borough is fortunate in having such a rich and varied mix of built and natural heritage. The Borough Council wants to see it used positively as a catalyst to sustainable, sensitive regeneration and development, and to creating places where people want to live, work, and make the most of their leisure time. To that end, we have reviewed the Sittingbourne High Street Conservation Area and the results of that review are set out in this document, which the Borough Council is now seeking constructive feedback on.

This is one of a series of conservation area reviews which the Borough Council is committed to undertaking, following the adoption of the Swale Heritage Strategy 2020 - 2032, early last year.”

*Mike Baldock*

Councillor Mike Baldock,  
Cabinet Member for Planning and  
Swale Borough Council Heritage Champion



# Summary of Significance

The significance and special interest of Sittingbourne Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- Roman Watling Street
- A linear High Street which follows the alignment of an early important Medieval route which later became known as Watling Street from the Roman period
- Important 18th century coaching stop enroute between London and Canterbury and the coast, the survival of coaching inns is of particular significance.
- Distinctive long and narrow burgage plots with some earlier buildings surviving - many behind later facades.
- A predominance of 18th and early 19th century development remaining, punctuated by two notable 20th century Art-Deco influenced buildings providing a strong and largely cohesive townscape
- 14th - 15th century St. Michael's Church, set within open grassed churchyard, is a local landmark to the east.
- Surviving historic alleyways from coaching inn days on both sides of the high street



# 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The **Sittingbourne Conservation Area** was first designated on 12 December 1969 by Kent County Council. The boundary of the conservation area has not been amended since. However the local authority previously adopted a conservation area appraisal and management strategy for Sittingbourne Conservation Area as supplementary planning guidance to the Development Plan in March 2011.

## 1.2 The Purpose of Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas were first introduced in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. A Conservation Area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (s.69(1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

It is the responsibility of individual Local Planning Authorities to designate and review Conservation Areas using local criteria to determine and assess their special qualities and local distinctiveness.

The aim of Conservation Area designation is to protect historic places and to assist in positively managing change, so that their significance is safeguarded and sustained. Areas may be designated for their architecture, historic layout, use of characteristic or local materials, style or landscaping. In accordance with the four types of heritage values set out in the core Historic England guidance document (Conservation Principles: Policies & Guidance), communal values – which are those derived from the meaning of a place for people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory – will be of particular relevance to this Conservation Area given the linkages between

place names and remnants of bygone uses in the wider context of historical growth and development. Above all however, Conservation Areas should be cohesive areas in which buildings and spaces create unique environments that are of special architectural or historic interest.

Conservation Areas provide for additional Controls over owners and landowners activities.

## 1.3 The Purpose and Status of this Character Appraisal

Conservation Areas status provides extra protection in the following ways:

- Local planning authorities have control over most demolition of buildings.
- Local authorities have extra control over householder development.
- Special provision is made to protect trees.
- When assessing planning applications, the Local Planning Authority is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting.
- The Local authority can include policies in the Local Plan or Local Development Framework to help preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of conservation areas.
- Policies in the Local Development Plan positively encourage development which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

A Conservation Area Character Appraisal is a written record and assessment of the special architectural or historic interest which gives rise to the character and appearance of a place. The appraisal is a factual and objective analysis which seeks to identify the distinctiveness of a place by defining the attributes that contribute to its special character. **It should be noted, however, that the appraisal cannot be all-inclusive, and that the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is not of interest.**

The appraisal is the vehicle for understanding both the significance of an area as a whole and the effect of any impacts which bear negatively on its significance. In some cases, significance may only be fully identified at such time as a feature or a building is subject to the rigorous assessment that an individual planning application necessitates.

Additionally, an appraisal can include management proposals to ensure the preservation or enhancement of an area by means of policies, action points, design guidance and site-specific design statements where appropriate. The objective of this plan would be to reinforce the positive character of a historic area as well as avoiding, minimising and mitigating negative impacts identified as affecting the area.

An appraisal serves as a basis for both the formulation and evaluation of Development Plan policies, as a material consideration in the making of development management decisions by the Local Planning Authority, and by the Planning Inspectorate in determining planning appeals. It can also heighten awareness of the special character of the place to help inform relevant

stakeholders and individuals in design choices.

This Character Appraisal is supplementary to the Swale Borough Local Plan. It has been prepared in the context of the relevant national legislation and national and local planning policy and guidance provided by central government, Historic England and the Borough Council itself, all of which are set out in Section 2 of this document.

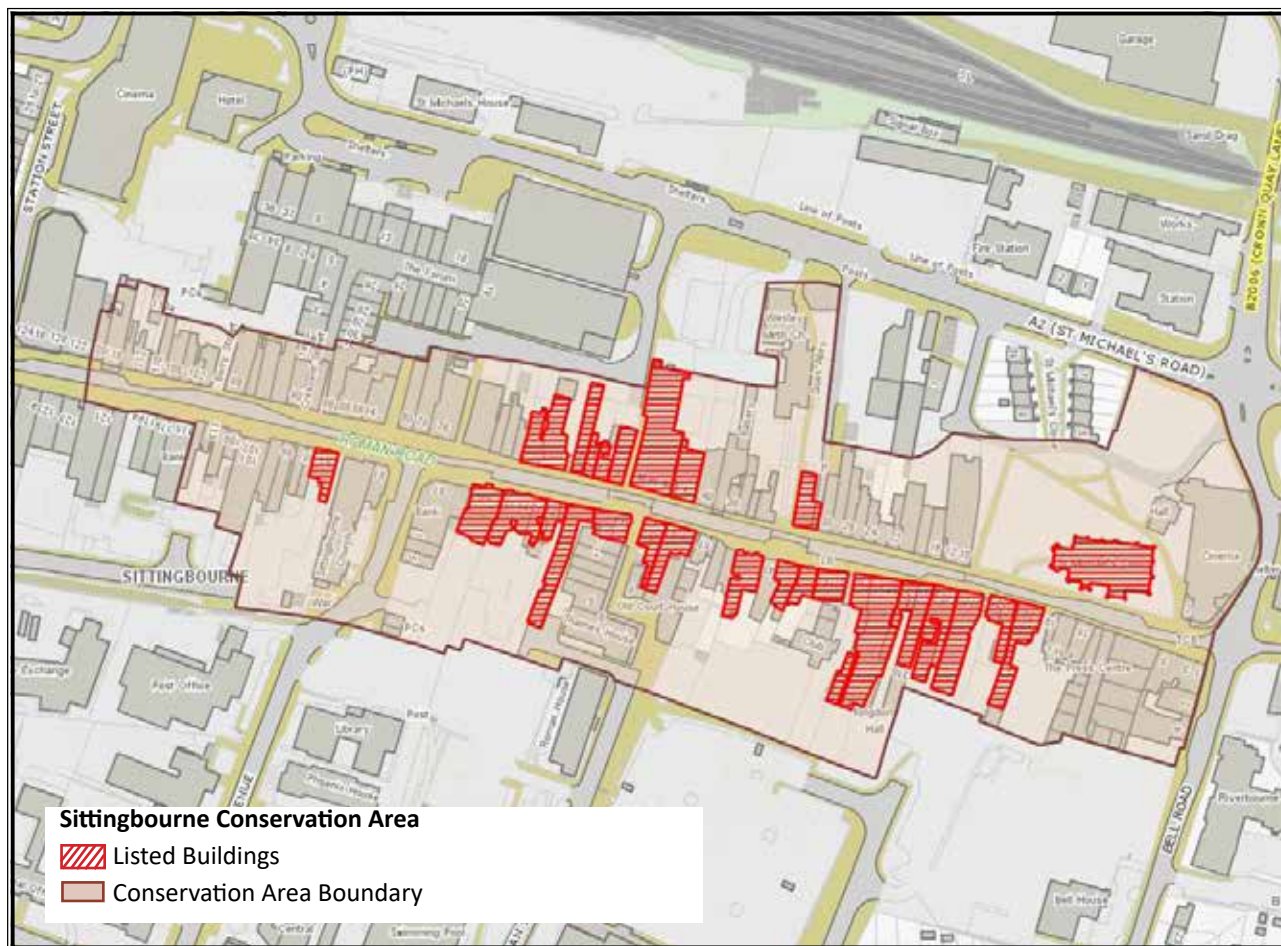
The statutory duty of local planning authorities with regards to conservation areas is to provide the necessary background to, and framework for, a review of the Conservation Area boundary in accordance with Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area (Section 72).

In light of the way that the production of Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Strategy documents (such as this one) are developed and prepared in the above stated context and are also subject to public scrutiny via a statutory public consultation period of a minimum of 21 days, following formal adoption by the Local Planning Authority, they then have sufficient weight or gravitas to form a significant material consideration in the development management process.

This Character Appraisal is supplementary to the current adopted Swale Borough Local Plan (Bearing Fruits 2031). It has been prepared in the context of the relevant national legislation and national and local planning policy and guidance provided by central government, Historic England and the Borough Council itself, all of which are set out in Chapter 2 of this

document, concerning the matter of Conservation Area management. In light of the way that the production of Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan documents (such as this one) are developed and prepared in the above stated context and are also subject to public consultation, following formal adoption by the local planning authority, they then have sufficient weight or gravitas to form a significant material consideration in the development management process. The contents of this appraisal are intended to highlight significant features

but it should not be regarded as fully comprehensive and the omission of, or lack of reference to a particular building or feature should not be taken to imply that it is of no significance. This significance may only be fully identified at such time as a feature or building is subject to the rigorous assessment that an individual planning application necessitates. Similarly, the control's that apply to elements vary and in some instances the items that have been identified as significant features cannot be fully protected by planning legislation.



# 2.0 Planning Policy Context

## Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

- **Section 66** General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.
  - (1) In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- **Section 69** Designation of conservation areas.
  - (1) Every local planning authority—
    - (a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and
    - (b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.
  - (2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.
  - (3) The Secretary of State may from time to time determine that any part of a local planning authority's area which is not for the time being designated as a conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance; and, if he so determines, he may designate that part as a

conservation area.(4)The designation of any area as a conservation area shall be a local land charge.

- **Section 71** Formulation and publication of proposals for preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.
  - (1)It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.
  - (2)Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.
  - (3)The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting.

- **Section 72** General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
  - (1)In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies, and how they are expected to be applied. **This was last updated in July 2021.**

The NPPF covers the historic environment primarily in

paragraphs 189-208 184–202 (Chapter 16).

**National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

The NPPG includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Historic Environment.

**Guidance and Advice from Historic England**  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/planning-system/>

- **Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPAs).**

These provide supporting information on good practice, particularly looking at the principles of how national policy and guidance can be applied.

- GPA1 - **The Historic Environment in Local Plans**
  - GPA2 - **Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment**
  - GPA3 - **The Setting of Heritage Assets. and Views**
  - Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs)
- These** include detailed, practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance.
- Historic England Advice Note 1 (2nd. Ed.)- **Conservation Areas—Appraisal, Designation and Management**
  - Historic England Advice Note 2 - **Making Changes to Heritage Assets**
  - ~~Historic England Advice Note 4 – Tall Buildings~~

- Historic England Advice Note 10 - Listed Buildings and Curtilage
- Historic England Advice Note 12 - Statements of Heritage Significance

### Swale Borough Council Heritage Strategy 2020

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/swale-heritage-strategy/>

The Council has developed a borough-wide heritage strategy to help it, along with key stakeholders and other interested parties, to protect and manage the historic environment in Swale in a positive and sustainable way, on a suitably informed basis.

A key element of the strategy is the setting out of the Council's overall vision and set of priorities, which it is hoped will align with the vision and priorities of local communities and local amenity societies as far as possible, in order that the strategy can be widely supported.

The strategy sets out a series of proposals in the associated initial 3 year action plan which are aimed at enabling the positive and sustainable management of different elements of the borough's historic environment for the foreseeable future. Priority is given to those parts of the borough's historic environment which are already suffering from, and at risk from negative change, and/or which face significant development pressure, threatening their special character. The proposed set of actions will involve joint project working with amenity societies and/or volunteers from the community wherever this is possible.

### Adopted Local plan Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017)

<http://services.swale.gov.uk/media/files/localplan/adoptedlocalplanfinalwebversion.pdf>

Relevant objectives and policies within the local plan include:

#### Policy ST 1 Delivering sustainable development in Swale

To deliver sustainable development in Swale, all development proposals will, as appropriate:

1. Achieve good design through reflecting the best of an area's defining characteristics;
2. Promote healthy communities through: e. maintaining the individual character, integrity, identities and settings of settlements;
12. Conserve and enhance the historic environment by applying national and local planning policy through the identification, assessment, and integration of development with the importance, form, and character of heritage assets (inc. historic landscapes).

- **Policy CP 4 Requiring good design**

All development proposals will be of a high quality design that is appropriate to its surroundings. Development proposals will, as appropriate:

2. Enrich the qualities of the existing environment by promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and strengthening sense of place;
5. Retain and enhance features which contribute to local character and distinctiveness;
8. Be appropriate to the context in respect of materials, scale, height and massing;
9. Make best use of texture, colour, pattern, and durability of materials;

10. Use densities determined by the context and the defining characteristics of the area;

11. Ensure the long-term maintenance and management of buildings, spaces, features and social infrastructure;

- **Policy DM 32 Development involving listed buildings**

Development proposals, including any change of use, affecting a listed building, and/or its setting, will be permitted provided that:

1. The building's special architectural or historic interest, and its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, are preserved, paying special attention to the: a. design, including scale, materials, situation and detailing; b. appropriateness of the proposed use of the building; and c. desirability of removing unsightly or negative features or restoring or reinstating historic features.
2. The total or part demolition of a listed building is wholly exceptional, and will only be permitted provided convincing evidence has been submitted showing that: a. All reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or viable new uses and have failed; b. Preservation in charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable; and c. The cost of maintaining and repairing the building outweighs its importance and the value derived from its continued use.
3. If as a last resort, the Borough Council is prepared to consider the grant of a listed building consent for demolition, it may, in appropriate circumstances, consider whether the building could be re-erected elsewhere to an appropriate location. When re-location is not possible and demolition is permitted, arrangements will be required to allow access to the

building prior to demolition to make a record of it and to allow for the salvaging of materials and features.

• **Policy DM 33 Development affecting a conservation area**

Development (including changes of use and the demolition of unlisted buildings or other structures) within, affecting the setting of, or views into and out of a conservation area, will preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's special character or appearance. The Borough Council expects development proposals to:

1. Respond positively to its conservation area appraisals where these have been prepared;
2. Retain the layout, form of streets, spaces, means of enclosure and buildings, and pay special attention to the use of detail and materials, surfaces, landform, vegetation and land use;
3. Remove features that detract from the character of the area and reinstate those that would enhance it; and
4. Retain unlisted buildings or other structures that make, or could make, a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

• **Policy DM 34 Scheduled Monuments and archaeological sites**

1. Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect a Scheduled Monument, and/or its setting, as shown on the Proposals Map, or subsequently designated, or any other monument or archaeological site demonstrated as being of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments. Development that may affect the significance of a non-designated

heritage asset of less than national significance will require a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

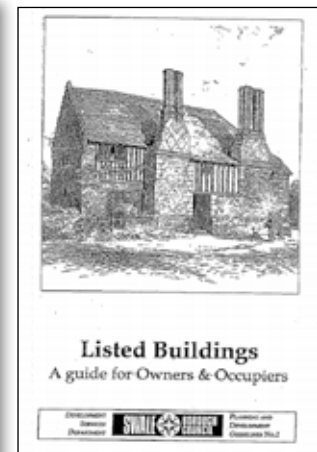
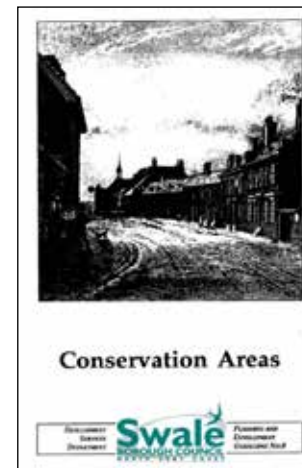
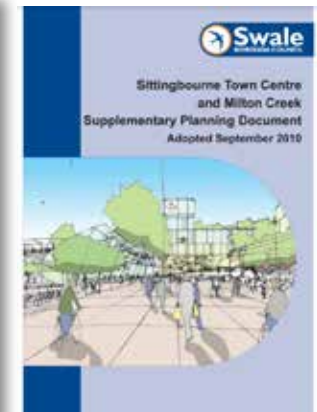
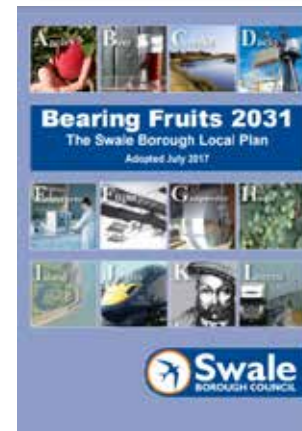
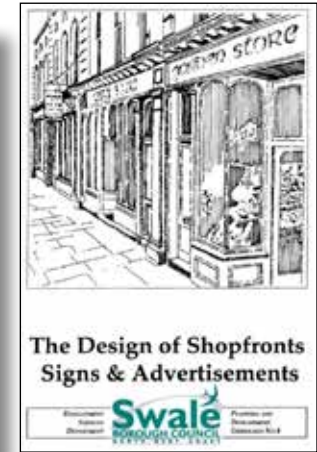
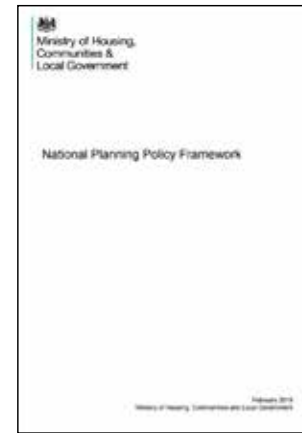
2. Whether they are currently known, or discovered during the Plan period, there will be a preference to preserve important archaeological sites in-situ and to protect their settings. Development that does not achieve acceptable mitigation of adverse archaeological effects will not be permitted.

3. Where development is permitted and preservation in-situ is not justified, the applicant will be required to ensure that provision will be made for archaeological excavation and recording, in advance of and/or during development, including the necessary post-excavation study and assessment along with the appropriate deposition of any artefacts in an archaeological archive or museum to be approved by the Borough Council.

**Swale Borough Council Supplementary Planning Guidance**

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-planning-guidance/>

- Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 2: Listed Buildings – A Guide for Owners and Occupiers
- Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 4: The Design of Shopfronts, Signs and Advertisements
- Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 8: Conservation Areas





## 3.0 Location and Setting

3.1 Sittingbourne lies some 17 miles from Canterbury and 45 miles east of London at the eastern end of the Thames Gateway growth area, to the south of The Swale, a tidal channel separating the Isle of Sheppey from mainland Kent. The town became prominent after the death of Thomas Becket in 1170, since it provided a convenient resting point on the road from London to Canterbury and Dover.

3.2 It is a town of some 62,500 people today and incorporates the historic and formerly more important town of Milton Regis which lies at the southern end of Milton Creek, and was a centre for fishing and wharfs. Today, the Milton Creek area provides a direct route from the town to the surrounding countryside and coast.

3.3 The railway arrived in 1858 providing good links to both London and the coast, with Sittingbourne train station situated north of the High Street. This enabled the growth of industry in the area at that time and led to the town growing to provide commuter homes in the 20th century.

3.4 The M2, built to the south of the town, was completed by 1965 and took through traffic from the town. The M20, further south again, connects Folkestone and London and was complete in 1991.

3.5 The High Street remains the retail heart of the town and social and civic infrastructure centre of the borough.



### Topography, geology and townscape setting

3.6 Sittingbourne lies within a belt of rich loamy soil of about 35 miles running from Rainham in the west to Thanet in the east. It is an area of mixed agriculture supporting cereal crops, hops, orchards, market gardens, pasture and wood and. Aluvial clay deposits in the marshes to the north preceded a belt of brick earth and London clay.

3.7 The landscape character of the area surrounding the town is of and in agricultural uses with marshes following the creek to the north. There is a direct route north through the Milton Creek area to the countryside and the coast beyond. Whilst historically dominated by manufacturing industries the area has been a subject of a number of masterplans in the past. The emerging towncenter SPD is proposed as a spatial plan for Sittingbourne.

3.8 The conservation area today sits within the urban centre and is surrounded on all sides by development. The High Street continues on either end as east street and west street and remains the focus of the town. Beyond is largely late 19th and 20th century residential development and the industrial area focused around the Milton Creek to the north. The land runs down the hill towards the east, with views out from the High Street emphasizing the relative elevated position of the town.

# 4.0 Historic Development and Archaeology

## The origins and historic development of the area

4.1 Sittingbourne is a town with a long and rich history, principally associated with its location on an important historic route through Kent.

4.2 The historic development and archaeology of the town has been described in detail in the Sittingbourne Town Centre Character Area Appraisal (2008), published by Purcel Miller Tritton for Tweeds, the Kent Historic Towns Survey for Sittingbourne (2004), published by Kent County Council with English Heritage, and the Sittingbourne and Milton Regis Conservation Study, written by W D Deakin for Kent County Council in 1974. A brief overview of the historical significance of the Sittingbourne Conservation Area is set out below.

4.3 The route of the High Street through the town is key to understanding the origins and historical development of Sittingbourne. Sittingbourne grew up as a small market town beside the Roman military road of Watling Street; which ran from the Kent Coast to Canterbury on to London and then northwest through the Midlands.

4.4 The earliest records of a settlement on the Roman Road at Sittingbourne date back to the 11th century; then part of the parish of Milton. The neighbouring settlement of Milton Regis (now consumed within modern day Sittingbourne) has its origins in the earlier Saxon period as the centre of a royal estate.

4.5 Sittingbourne became established as an important resting point on the route to Canterbury for pilgrims travelling to the shrine of Thomas Becket following his martyrdom in 1170 and until the

Reformation. Geoffrey Chaucer mentions the town by name in his 'Canterbury Tales', written in the 14th century.

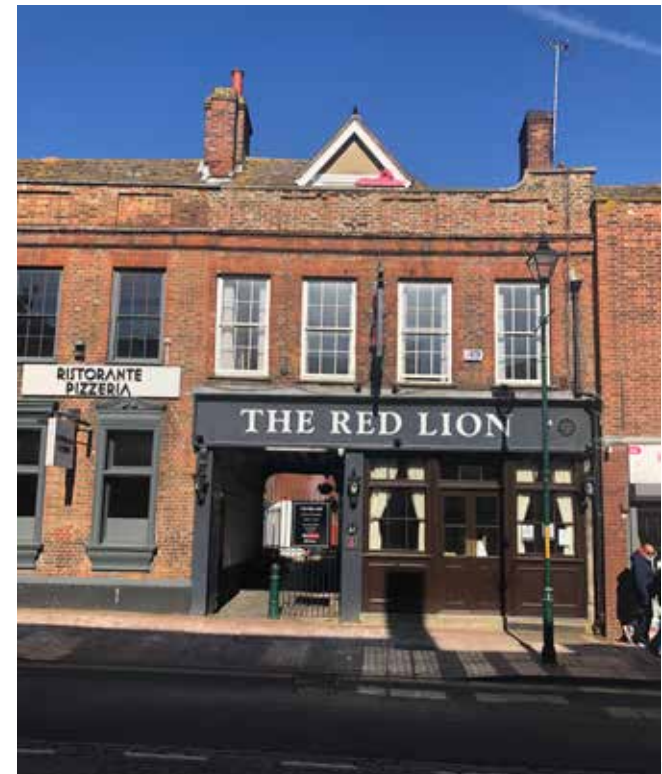
4.6 The Church of St Michael, the widening of the High Street nearby (suggesting use as a marketplace), and the distinctive pattern of long and narrow burgage plots within the historic core of Sittingbourne, provide clear physical evidence of its Medieval origins.

4.7 The Parish Church is the only visible building which dates in part from the Medieval period. Notably the west tower retains 13th and 15th century fabric. The church was rebuilt in 1762 following a fire and later 'restored' in the Gothic style in the late 19th century. Late Medieval fabric is also concealed behind some later facades.

4.8 In the Medieval period the key industry here was cloth making, together with other agricultural services and crafts. It was then subservient to the earlier established market at nearby Milton and working wharves at Milton Creek. Elizabeth I granted two charters to Sittingbourne; in 1573 granting the town its incorporation and in 1599 the right to hold a weekly market and two fairs. The market was squeezed out by competition from Milton after a short period, but the fairs continued through the 18th century.

4.9 Sittingbourne became increasingly important as a stopping place on the key coaching route between London and Canterbury. Indeed the second market charter of 1599 obliged the town to provide horses and stabling for coaches.

4.10 Notably, a large number of coaching inns were established and developed from the late Medieval period until the early 19th century. The Red Lion and The George are two of the earliest inns which still survive, at-least



The Red Lion former coaching inn



An example of timber framed building to the rear of the High Street frontages

in part, in public house use. Both buildings were re-fronted in the 18th century, but importantly retain earlier timber-framed fabric to the rear. It is recorded that Henry V in 1415 and Henry VIII in 1532 both stayed at the Red Lion.

4.11 The heyday of Sittingbourne as a coaching town was in the prosperous 18th century. At this time the state of the highways had much improved and traffic increased significantly. Evidence of this is provided by the number of inns established on the High Street in this period and the re-fronting of older buildings. The 18th century Bull (Hotel) survives and elements of the original Rose Inn (founded in 1708) remain, albeit largely rebuilt in replica in the early 20th century and now in other retail uses. Famously the Duchess of Kent and young princess Victoria stayed at the Rose Inn in 1820 subsequently renamed the Royal Victoria Hotel.

4.12 A number of substantial elegant urban townhouses also survive on the High Street, as evidence of the prosperity of the town in this period, including no. 51 which is a Regency re-fronting of an earlier 18th century building and Brenchley House (no. 75- 77) built at the turn of the 19th century.

4.13 The arrival of the London Chatham & Dover Railway in 1858 essentially signalled the end of Sittingbourne's role as a coaching town and resulted in the closure or conversion of many coaching inns. Sittingbourne Station (outside the conservation area) opened in 1860 and in the same year the line was extended to Canterbury.

4.14 The railway did, however, better connect the town to domestic markets and encouraged the

development of new manufacturing industries, most notably paper and brick making. These new industries were predominantly established in the area of Milton Creek (outside the conservation area).

4.15 The High Street retained its historic role, and much of its former character, servicing the town which grew quite rapidly in size during the late 19th and 20th centuries. The High Street was extended along its length in this period and there is also evidence of limited replacement development or rebuilding of individual plots within the historic core. As it expanded Sittingbourne was amalgamated with Milton Regis with the creation of Sittingbourne and Milton Urban District Council in 1929.

4.16 The Sittingbourne Conservation Area was designated in 1969. In the following year St Michael's

Road was built as a bypass to divert what had become increasingly congested traffic along the High Street.

### Archaeology

4.17 Sittingbourne High Street lies within an area of archaeological potential. The Kent Historic Towns Survey: Sittingbourne (2004) identifies that there has been little significant archaeological investigation of the town, with only two excavations having taken place within the settlement. A number of sites of interest have been identified within the wider settlement area of Sittingbourne (outside the conservation area) on the Kent Historic Environment Record, including prehistoric, Iron Age/Romano-British, Saxon and Medieval finds or features.



Ordnance Surveyor's field drawing for 1st Edition OS map c.1800 (Ordnance Survey)

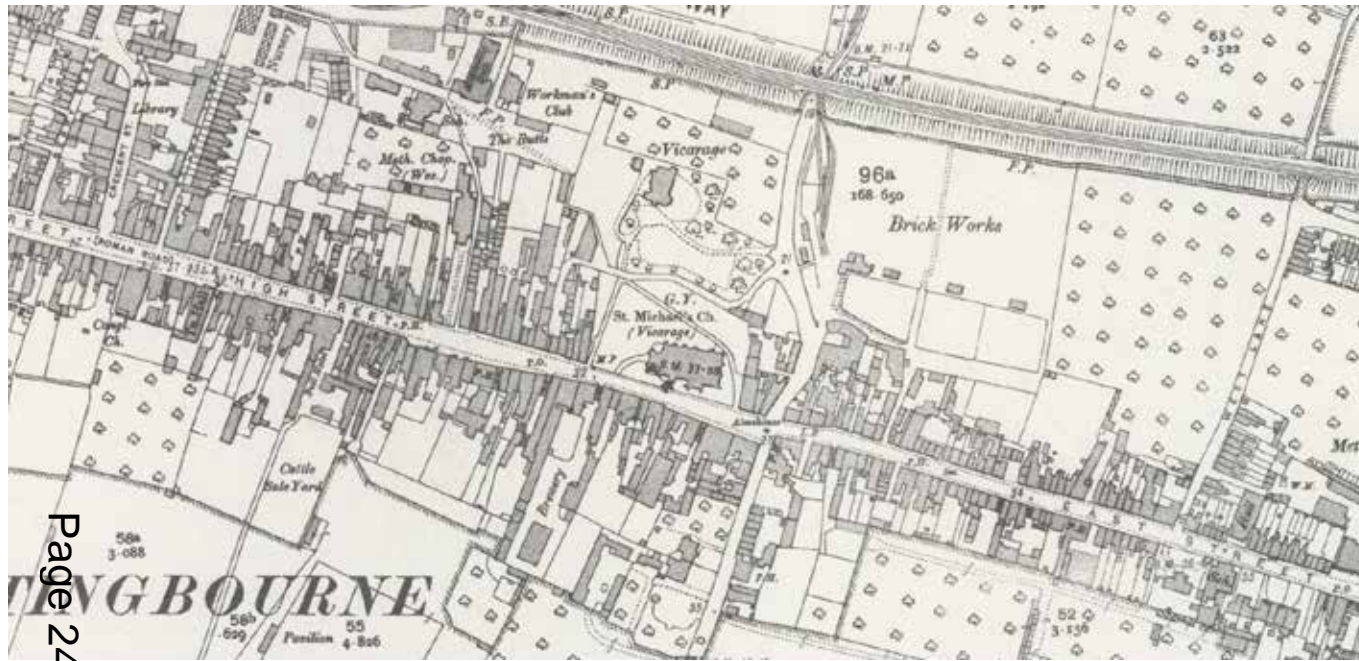


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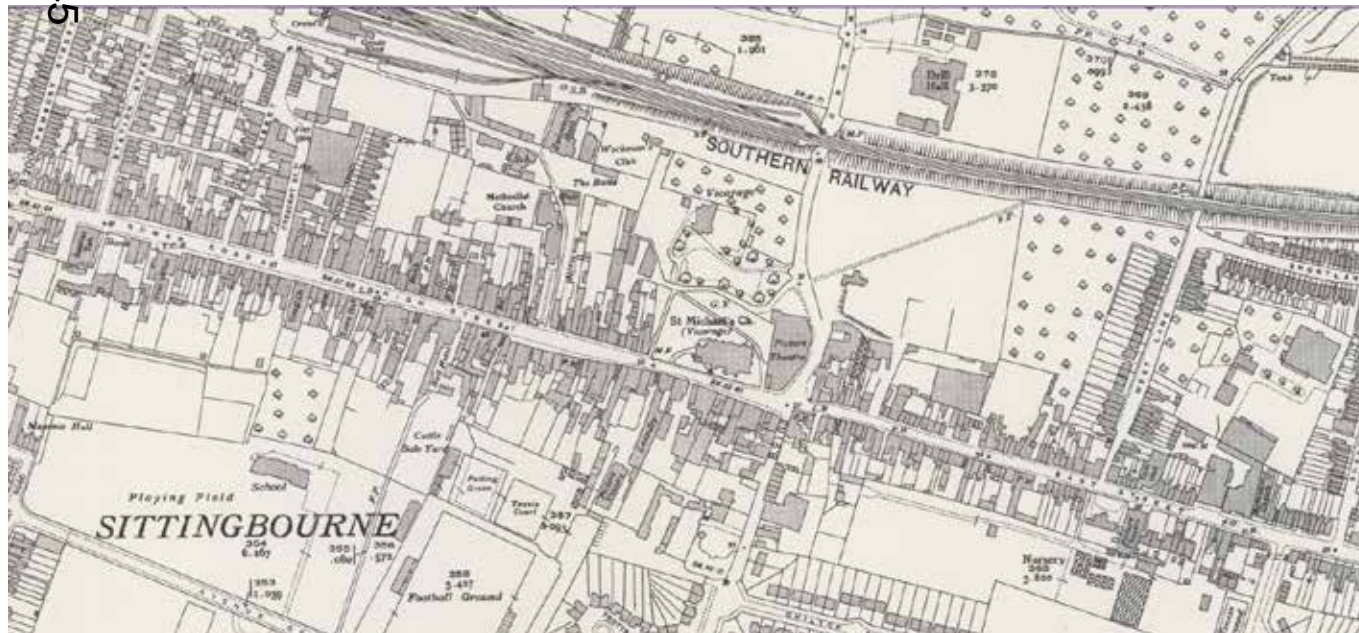
Extract from Kent XXXIII (includes: Bapchild; Lynsted; Rodmersham; Teynham; Surveyed: 1865 to 1866, Published: 1872



Extract from Kent XXXIII.1 (Sittingbourne and Milton) Revised: 1896, Published: 1897



Extract from Kent XXXIII.1 (Sittingbourne and Milton)  
Revised: 1906, Published: 1908



Extract from Kent XXXIII.1 (Sittingbourne and Milton)  
Revised: 1938 to 1939, Published: 1946

# 5.0 Spatial Analysis

5.1 The conservation area is focused upon the linear route of the High Street comprising the earliest development in the town and provides the origins of the town's historic character. Modern interventions have occurred but the prevailing character remains that of a historic high street rich in 18th and early 19th century buildings.

5.2 The High Street retains a strong sense of enclosure derived from the continuity and quality of the buildings and the large number of historic buildings that have survived, many of which are listed. The hard edge of the built form provides an enclosed space which serves to emphasise the linear nature of the street.

5.3 This is relieved to some degree by views east and west but also by the local views along and through alleys which run north and south. Some are framed by former carriageway arches to buildings and others by narrow gaps in the built frontage and add depth and interest to the townscape. Many of these are publicly accessible and important survivals of the medieval street pattern. They provide important connections to the numerous car parks in the back and areas and make a distinct contribution to the character of the place. Some, such as Does Alley, are defined by historic boundary walls.

5.4 Narrow burgage plots of Medieval origins remain legible and provide a fine grain and richness to the built form which is evident both in the High Street frontages and in numerous views of the back and areas. Good examples include the narrow timber frame buildings running to the rear of the Red Lion (no.58) and nos.31-33. The continuity of historic plot



Does Alley linking through to the High Street



View looking east along the High Street from St Michael's Church

boundaries, highlighting the historic origins of the town, is of importance in defining the significance of the conservation area.

5.5 The road network within the town centre has changed considerably over the last 50 years to the benefit of the High Street: Eurolink Way, north of the High Street, providing relief from through traffic. Whilst the back end areas to both the north and south remain subservient in character, the impact of modern development, highway interventions and vacant or under-used sites is evident and cumulatively detract from the immediate setting of the conservation area.

5.6 The two exceptions to the prevailing urban grain are St Michael's Church and the Wesley Methodist Chapel. The latter is set back from the street edge and reached along a footway through a well planted garden area along the width of a former burgage plot. St Michael's Church is the principal landmark in the conservation area and provides visual relief to built edges of the High Street. The knapped flint boundary wall, however, continues to provide enclosure to the street edge.

5.7 Immediately to the east of St Michael's Church, is the 1937 former Odeon Cinema which has a strong presence in the street scene and forms part of the town's rich history. The decorative principal facade, with stone decoration, is in a distinctive Art-Deco style and is a positive element in the townscape. The blank brickwork facades to the bulk of the building to the rear are, however, of limited visual interest and provide a strong, clean edge to the churchyard, Bell Road and St Michael's Road.

**Key views and vistas**

5.8 The principal views are those east and west along the High Street, generally enclosed by the continuous built edge (described above). The stone spire of the United Reformed Church is a landmark and principal feature in the view west.

5.9 The land runs down-hill towards the east, with views out from the High Street emphasizing the relative elevated position of the town. This view of the surrounding landscape contrasts with the enclosed urban nature of the High Street with St Michael's Church tower and weathervane an important feature in the foreground (albeit lower due to the drop in the land).

5.10 Views along alleys and through archways from the High Street highlight the early origins of the town with buildings clearly reflecting the narrow burgage plots. These local glimpsed views contribute to the significance of the conservation area and to the richness and depth of the townscape.

5.11 In some instances, however, poor quality modern extensions and clutter associated with modern retail use and their associated servicing areas provide poor quality views of the rear of properties. Much of the setting of the conservation area is dominated by expanses of surface car parks of a generally poor environmental quality.

5.12 There are, however, good views towards the tower of St Michael's Church from the south over nos. 23-25 High Street, and north from the Crown Quay Lane car park and The Butts.



View across Bell Centre car park towards the tower of St Michael's Church



View west along the High Street towards the spire of United Reformed Church



View of the United Reformed Church along the High Street looking east

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# 6.0 Character Analysis

## Activity and Use

6.1 The conservation area, typical of some historic high streets across the country, is predominantly in retail and commercial use and this is key in defining its character. The town grew in importance due to the many coaching inns, many of which remain today, and are either now public houses or have been converted to retail use.

6.2 St Michael's Church, the United Reform Church, and the Wesley Methodist Church are principal community uses which complement the High Street retail uses.

## Buildings and their contribution to the area

6.3 Buildings in the conservation area (with some exceptions noted below) contribute to its significance in a number of ways. Historic buildings, their plot layouts and architectural qualities serve to emphasise the history of the town and provide richness in the street scene. The construction of buildings along both sides of the High Street encloses the public realm, whilst their stepping-down the hill provides interest to the roofscape and skyline.

6.4 Importantly, many examples of early buildings remain as do many 18th and early 19th century buildings of note. The latter are often of a larger scale and include former Georgian coaching inns and town houses. The former Red Lion Inn (nos. 58-62), for example, presents a broad, uniform facade, to the High Street comprising numerous burgage plots which are more legible to the rear.

6.5 There are a number of key buildings on the



The Burton and Odeon Cinema on the High Street, two elegant Art Deco buildings in need of sensitive refurbishment



High Street (many of which are statutorily listed) which contribute positively to its historic significance and distinctive character. Listed buildings of note that provide townscape 'highlights' along the built frontages include:

- St Michael's Church
- Brenchley House, Nos. 75 & 77, with three storey canted bay windows, porch and venetian window
- No. 51, this rendered house has two-storey bowed bays with tripartite sash windows.

## Building materials and local details

6.6 Red brick is the most evident building material today and much of it dates from the rebuilding that took place in the 18th and early 19th century. It provides richness to the grain of the buildings derived from the respective bonding and detail such as the use of red rubbers for features such as window arches. Further articulation is provided by the white painted timber joinery which creates a characteristic rhythm to the fenestration and distinctive features to the facades.

6.7 Render is also evident, although to a lesser degree, and generally found on the more historic properties, predating the grander buildings of the Georgian period (No 51 being the exception).

6.8 The Odeon opened in January 1937 and sits at the eastern edge of the conservation area, defining the historic junction at Crown Quay Lane. Whilst the High Street frontage of the building is of architectural interest and acts as a focal gateway into the High Street and the Conservation area, the rear of the building is



utilitarian in appearance and tends to dominate and obscure the setting of St Michael’s Church. There may be opportunities for redevelopment of the surrounding area. In these circumstances, any development proposals would need to demonstrate how the setting and views of St Michael’s Church will be enhanced and, if possible, how the existing art deco building can be retained.

6.9 The roofscape is of interest as a result of the varied height of the different 2 and 3-storey properties and the different details in the roof forms. Pitched roofs dominate, but there is variety in their form with some hipped and others set behind brick parapets. Small dormers are evident but a ways remain subservient to the overall roof form. Brick chimney stacks can be seen throughout and are important features in defining the silhouette of the roofscape. Kent peg tiles dominate, though slate is evident on later 19th and 20th century buildings.

6.10 The vast majority of buildings have commercial frontages at ground floor level today, and these define a distinctive edge to the street comprising a variety of shopfronts in terms of age and quality, as well as numerous public house frontages reminiscent of the importance of Sittingbourne as a coaching stop.

**Unlisted buildings**

6.11 Many of the buildings within the conservation area make positive contributions to the overall significance of the place. These include buildings which have been statutorily listed in recognition of their special architectural or historic interest in the national context.

6.12 These also include a number of unlisted buildings which are of local architectural and historic interest. These buildings are identified as “unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area” and are listed in groups below:

Later development of contextual design and of interest include:

- No. 17 - polite early 20th century buildings with a traditional pattern to the upper floors (9 has an inappropriate modern shopfront)
- Nos. 53-55 - modest turn of the 20th century buildings.
- No. 40 - 19th century with rebuilt facade. This is a dominant building in local views due to the topography of the High Street and its 3 storeys plus full mansard roof

Unlisted buildings that characterize the historic development of the High Street include:

- No. 24 - turn of the 19th century
- No. 26 - largely modern (on earlier structure)
- Nos. 28 & 28a - 18th/early 19th century origins
- No. 30 - 18th century with small carriage arch to ground floor.
- Nos. 34 - 38a - early 19th century
- No. 57 early 19th century
- Nos. 64 & 66 18th/early 19th century origins
- Nos. 68/70 19th century much altered
- Nos. 72-74 - originally 19th century but altered

(whilst some have been altered or have more modern facades, historic fabric is likely to remain behind)



## Negative Features

6.13 Buildings or frontages on the High Street that detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area include:

- No. 5 - large, full width modern fenestration to all floors detracting from the grain and rhythm of the historic properties
- The derelict site of the former Bell Centre (outside but immediately adjacent to the conservation area).
- Thames House and the associated modern retail development - whilst continuing an active retail ground floor frontage it is not a contextually driven design and fails to reflect the qualities of the conservation area.
- No. 47 - a modern single storey infill development of poor design quality.
- Nos. 10-12 - a modern retail development. Whilst it is only two storeys high it presents a expansive blank facade to the churchyard and has an inappropriate modern shop front and fascia.
- Nos. 16-20 - a modern retail development. The fenestration to the upper floor does not follow the regular pattern seen in traditional properties and the shopfronts are generally of a poor quality design.

6.14 In addition, a number of other buildings on the High Street are considered to have inappropriate or poor quality design shopfronts.

## Open spaces and biodiversity

6.15 St Michael's churchyard provides the principal and only publicly accessible green open space in the conservation area and is a valuable resource as a place for people to relax and reflect away from the activity of the High Street itself. Historic tombstones remain and the space as a whole is important to the setting of the listed church and is an important ecological resource for the area. It provides an important contrast with the built edge of the High Street.

6.16 The churchyard is the principal location for significant trees within the conservation area. A mature Yew tree provides an impressive feature within the High Street and as the churchyard is approached views of the other trees open up. To the north, trees provide a mature green edge to the surface car park.

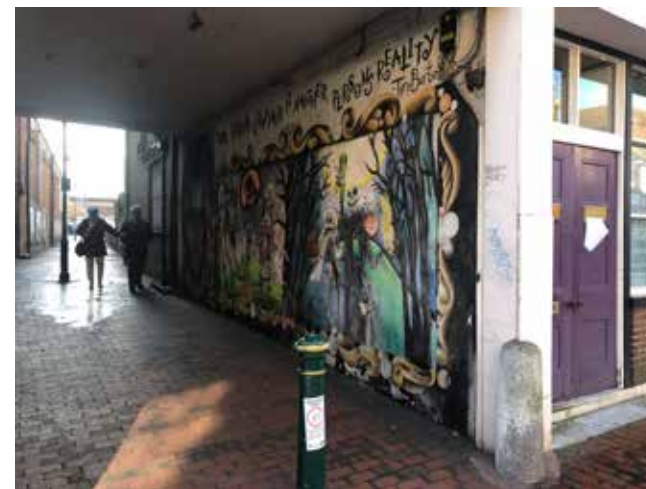
6.17 The planted area to the front of the Wesley Methodist Church contrasts with the hard urban nature of the High Street and provides a pleasant route to the church and areas beyond. The trees along Does Alley and the grassed area next to the Wesley Methodist Church are also features of visual interest in the townscape.

6.18 Other trees run along the rear boundaries of properties and whilst not of specific merit as specimens in their own right, they nevertheless provide some welcome visual relief to utilitarian servicing yards.

## Public realm

6.19 The public realm comprises the east-west aligned High Street itself and the network of routes running off to the north and south. Principal open spaces are Roman Square, Does Alley, Grafton Road and Banks Yard.

6.20 There have been a number of improvements made to the public realm over the recent years, and are governed and managed by the Town Centre SPD which is being reviewed in 2021.



One of the historic alleys leading off the High Street

# 7.0 Audit of Heritage Assets

## Problems, pressures and capacity for change (negative factors)

7.1 There are a number of areas or features within the conservation area that do not make a positive contribution to its overall significance and character or appearance:

7.2 Negative areas or features include:

- Poor quality signage and shopfronts to some properties - these are particularly incongruous where they have been added to listed and other historic buildings. Replacement fenestration to upper floors in non-traditional materials.
- Development from the 20th century where there are opportunities for improvement through redevelopment taking better account of the special qualities of the conservation area.
- Unightly appearance of the rear of some properties - particularly at ground floor level with service areas, plant, typically scruffy areas of surface car parking, and poorly maintained, sometimes blocked alleyways.

## MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

### Shopfronts and advertisements

7.3 Within the conservation area there are a number of commercial frontages, including shopfronts and public houses, which make positive contributions to the significance of the conservation area. It is important that these historic features are retained and maintained.

7.4 The Council encourages high quality design

and use of traditional materials for new or replacement shopfronts to ensure that they are appropriate to the character and appearance of the host building and the area as a whole. The Council discourages inappropriate siting, scale materials and clutter of advertisements within the conservation area. There are opportunities to enhance the appearance of shop-frontages and the Council will support such initiatives.

7.5 There are opportunities within the conservation area to improve the quality and condition of floorscape materials, street furniture and signage. Only small elements of traditional Yorkstone paving and granite kerbstones exist on the High Street and in some of the other alleyways and lanes. For the most part there is a mixture of floorscape materials comprising brick paving, concrete and tarmac with a mix of street lighting, highway signage and other street furniture.

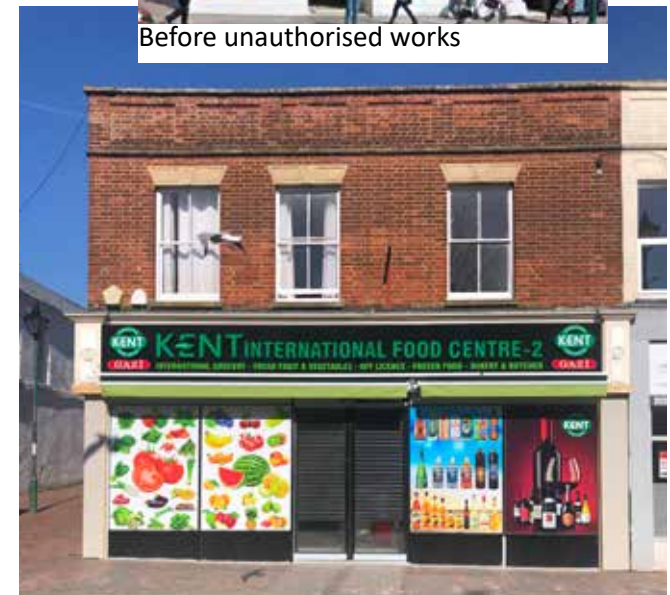
7.6 Trees and open green space make important contributions to the street-scene but there is a need to ensure that planting and trees are maintained and managed. Highway maintenance and improvements are expected to be carried out in accordance with Kent County Council's Highway Operational Reference Manual which contains specific provision for works in conservation-sensitive locations.

7.7 Conservation and enhancement opportunities include:

### Traffic management

7.8 Traffic currently has a limited direct impact on the conservation area due to traffic calming and one-way routing measures in the High Street.

7.9 Positive heritage management and heritage enhancement should be key considerations and drivers in any regeneration schemes for the area. The Council will pursue opportunities for Area Enhancement Schemes where possible. This would complement other potential initiatives in relation to shopfront and street-scene enhancements.



Example of a poor shopfront design, unauthorised work



Example of poorly altered shopfront in garish colour scheme

7.10 The Council will seek to ensure that the significance of the Sittingbourne Conservation Area is sustained and enhanced, through the preparation of specific development briefs to guide redevelopment of the following sites:

- St. Michael's Car park site to former Odeon Cinema including all open areas to the rear of the high street are suitable for enhanced mixed use.
- Redevelopment of the bell centre site.
- Thames House/Roman Square.
- Preservation or enhancement of the special interest and character or appearance of the conservation area.
- Preservation or enhancement of the setting of the conservation area.
- Safeguarding and better revealing the significance of archaeology within the conservation area.
- Safeguarding of non-designated assets which make positive contributions to significance from harm.
- Safeguarding alleyways and lanes, including seeking to realize opportunities for new or enhanced pedestrian linkages as part of new development.
- Safeguarding of open spaces, including public green space and trees.
- Promotion of high quality design which responds positively to context and the distinctive character of Sittingbourne in a new development.
- Protection or enhancement of landmarks and views and vistas within and around the edge of the conservation area.

- Potential to address shopfronts and associated signage considered to be negative features within the conservation area through establishing an Area of Advertisement Control.
- The potential to establish an area-based improvement scheme for shopfront replacement supported by design guidance, funded through Historic England/Heritage Lottery Fund, and local S.106 contributions.
- The preservation of surviving and traditional paving and kerbstones.
- Refurbishment of the historic public alleyways that characterize the area to enhance the north-south pedestrian links into and from the High Street.



Some better examples of shopfronts and signage

# 8.0 Conservation Area Management Plan

## Introduction

8.1 Historic England's Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas advises that following an appraisal of the Conservation Area, a strategy for its management in the mid to long term should be developed to address issues identified through the appraisal. This conservation area review identifies the key management issues for Sittingbourne Conservation Area based on the recent appraisal of its character and appearance.

8.2 The Character Appraisal and this associated Management Plan seeks to provide a clear basis for the assessment of proposals and identify an approach to addressing issues that have the potential to impact on the special interest of Sittingbourne and its environs.

8.3 The aims of the Management Plan are to:

- i) inform interested parties of how the Council intends to secure the preservation or enhancement of the Conservation Area;
- ii) set out an approach to consultation on the management of the Conservation Area;
- iii) confirm how issues identified through the character appraisal will be tackled;
- iv) identify specific policy or design guidance that is relevant to Conservation Area to support the development management function and those preparing applications for planning permission and listed building consent;
- v) identify areas where the overview provided by the Conservation Area Appraisal suggests that site-specific

Development Brief would assist the management of the conservation area and decision-making processes;

vi) identify areas that may benefit from specific enhancement proposals should funding become available; and,

vii) identify the management tools available to the Council through legislation.

## Monitoring and Review

### Monitoring

8.4 The Council will continue to monitor condition of the Conservation Area, to remove it from Heritage at Risk register and determine any further actions necessary to safeguard its historic significance.

### Review

8.5 The Council is required to undertake periodic review of the Conservation Area to ensure that the special interest is being maintained and protected, to re-evaluate boundaries and see whether there are areas which justify inclusion or whether there are areas which have deteriorated to such an extent that their special interest has been lost.

8.6 As part of the review process the Council will:

- undertake a visual appraisal;
- maintain a photographic record of listed buildings within the area on the Council website, ensuring that this is updated as new buildings are added;
- record the character of streets and areas;
- maintain and update a record of other aspects of interest

within the Conservation Area including shopfronts of merit and the historic fabric of the public realm; and,

- consider current issues impacting on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

8.7 As part of the most recent character area appraisal (2011), the following has been reviewed: current issues, conservation area boundaries, positive contributors to the Conservation Area, negative elements, shopfronts of merit and elements of street-scape interest.

## Maintaining Character

### General Approach

8.8 The following approach to maintaining the special interest of Sittingbourne Conservation Area will be adopted as part of the strategy for its effective management:

- i. the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will be periodically reviewed to ensure that this documents will remain sufficiently up-to-date to enable its effective management, and to help inform decision-making on new development within the area;
- ii. the list of buildings and other features which, in addition to those already included on the statutory list, positively contribute to the character or appearance of Sittingbourne High Street Conservation Area, will be kept under review to aid decision-making and the preparation of proposals;
- iii. applications for development will be determined having regard to the special interest of the Conservation Area and the specialist advice of Conservation & Design Team;

iv. in accordance with the relevant legislation, most applications for development within the Conservation Area are required to include a Design and Access Statement. Such statements will be required to explain the design approach and context of the proposals and be accompanied by sufficient, accurate drawings of the existing site and its wider context, as well as the proposed development;

v. where relevant and possible, supplementary planning documents including design guidance and planning briefs will be produced;

vi. in undertaking its development control function, the Council will ensure that the historic details which are an essential part of the special architectural character of the Sittingbourne Conservation Area are preserved, repaired and reinstated where appropriate;

vii. the Council will seek to ensure that the organisations and relevant teams therein responsible for the environment (highways/landscape/planning/conservation and urban design) work in an effective, coordinated and consultative manner to ensure that historic interest within the public realm is maintained and enhanced where appropriate; and,

viii. the Council will continue to consult the relevant Consultees and local amenity societies on applications which may impact on the character and appearances of the Sittingbourne Conservation Area and seek their inputs in relation to ongoing management issues.

## Policy and Legislation

8.9 The current Statutes and National Planning Policies are:

- **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and Section 66 in relation to Historic Buildings**

- **National Planning Policy Framework and supporting guidance**

### HISTORIC ENGLAND GUIDANCE

Historic England publishes Good Practice Advice in Planning (its GPA series guidance) and Historic Environment Advice Notes (its HEAN series guidance). Of these, HEAN 1 (2nd. Ed.) on 'Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management' is especially relevant.

### SWALE BOROUGH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan (adopted July 2017)

**Core Objective 4.** Conserve and enhance our historic and natural assets as the means to drive regeneration, tourism, and environmental quality and to reverse decline in their condition.

**Policy CP8: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

*To support the Borough's heritage assets, the Council will prepare a Heritage Strategy. Development will sustain and enhance the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets to sustain the historic environment whilst creating for all areas a sense of place and special identity. Development proposals will, as appropriate:*

1. *Accord with national planning policy in respect of heritage matters, together with any heritage strategy adopted by the Council;*

2. *Sustain and enhance the significance of Swale's designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance and, where appropriate, in accordance with Policies DM 32-DM 36;*

3. *Respond to the integrity, form and character of settlements and historic landscapes;*

4. *Bring heritage assets into sensitive and sustainable use within allocations, neighbourhood plans, regeneration areas and town centres, especially for assets identified as being at risk on national or local registers;*

5. *Respond positively to the conservation area appraisals and management strategies prepared by the Council;*

6. *Respect the integrity of heritage assets, whilst meeting the challenges of a low carbon future; and*

7. *Promote the enjoyment of heritage assets through education, accessibility, interpretation and improved access.*

Other relevant policies include:

- ST1 Delivering sustainable development in Swale
- CP4: Requiring good design
- CP7: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- DM14: General development criteria
- DM16: Alterations and extensions

- DM32: Development involving listed buildings
- DM33: Development affecting a Conservation Area
- DM34: Development affecting scheduled monuments and archaeological sites

Note the next Local Plan will cover the period 2022-2038

### Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance

The following Planning Guidance has been adopted by Swale Borough Council supplementary to the Swale Borough Local Plan, 2008:

- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings
- Design of Advertisements & Shopfronts
- Kent Design

Swale Heritage Strategy 2020 -2032

This strategy provides a framework for the designation, conservation, management and physical and economic regeneration of Swale's Historic Buildings and Areas, including designated historic parks and gardens. From analysis of evidence on Swale's heritage and some early engagement with local stakeholders, a high level vision and set of five associated priorities have been identified.

### Boundary Changes Considered

8.10 The boundary of the Conservation Area has been reviewed as part of this study. Two aspects of the

boundary have been reviewed: first whether the current boundaries are logical; and second, whether there are any areas that should be added into the Conservation Area.

Extension to Sittingbourne Conservation Area

i) Inclusion of Parts of East Street within Sittingbourne Conservation Area

Images of these areas and a plan showing their location and extent are contained in Appendix 2.

This area has been reviewed as part of the Conservation Area appraisal for Sittingbourne. Historic buildings lining the north & south side of East Street. Part of the Roman Watling street, traditionally East Street functioned as a suburb to the High street. It has retained majority of its 18th and 19th century buildings relating to its evolution as an area adjoining the high street. Parts of East Street have given in to development pressures and it will not be long before the remaining surviving historic fabric is lost. Since the properties have common characteristics with neighbouring buildings in Sittingbourne Conservation Area, it is proposed that they should become part of this designation.

### Management of Change

Current Issues

8.11 Sittingbourne Conservation Area is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register.

*The pressures that face conservation areas come from many different sources. Sometimes they reflect the general economic weakness of the neighbourhood, but in other situations it has been the demands of prosperity that have caused the problems. Across the country, the most*

*significant threat to the character of conservation areas comes from the simple loss of historic building details such as traditional windows and doors, boundary walls and roof coverings. Commercial properties may have unattractive shopfronts and signs or the area may suffer from vacant and derelict buildings'*

Extract from Historic Englands' Leaflet on Heritage At Risk- Conservation Areas

This includes proposals for new development, alterations and extensions to existing buildings and changes of use. Developments over the recent decades have influenced the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Other factors that have influenced the character and appearance of the area include the cumulative impact of insensitive shopfronts, advertisements and signage.

### New Development

Where new development has not been successful in terms of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, this has generally been due to one of the following:

- The use of inappropriate materials or detailing
- Inappropriate scale, bulk, height and massing
- Inappropriate relationship to the street and neighbouring properties

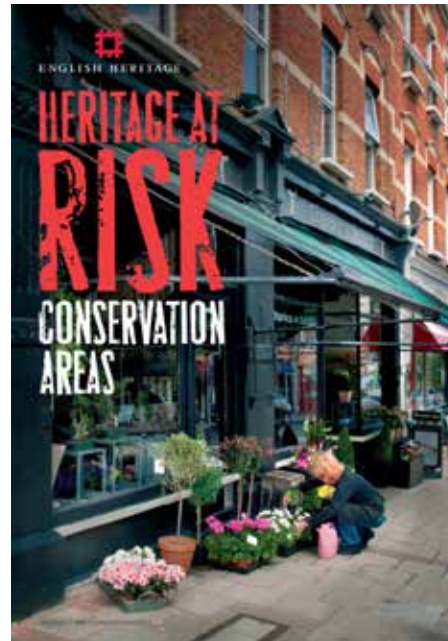
### Alterations to Existing Buildings

Alterations and extensions can have a detrimental impact either cumulatively or individually on the character and appearance of the area. Examples within the area include:

- Inappropriate external painting, cleaning and pointing of brickwork.
- The use of inappropriate materials/ inappropriately detailed doors and windows.
- Insensitively sited Satellite dishes and aerials
- Inappropriately proportioned replacement shopfront elements that are unsympathetic to the proportions and scale of the building or street into which they have been added.
- Loss of original details such as traditional shopfront elements, frontage railings and balconies, corncicing at parapet level, chimneys and chimney stacks.
- Inappropriate signage and excessive signage, including large scale hoardings and A boards
- Installation of externally mounted and solid roller shutters.

7.12 Building frontages, roads, pavements and the squares are all important elements of the public realm and the cumulative impact of small scale additions can have an overall detrimental impact on the character of the area. Such additions can include:

- Loss of original/interesting street-scape elements
- Unsympathetic surfacing materials
- Clutter of street furniture
- Visual clutter from excessive signage and flags
- Refuse and recycling storage.



This plan is intended to provide a focused and structured approach for the future and management of Sittingbourne Conservation Area. The plan will build upon and develop the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities identified by the appraisal process and create a coordinated framework for future development. The Plan will rationalise the statutory and policy requirements with the aspirations of local residents. A thoroughly debated plan will provide a point of reference with agreed and consistent aims for all those concerned with the future of Sittingbourne Conservation Area.

Conservation Area designation is not an end in itself. It is a way of recognising the special architectural or historic interest of an area with a view to putting in place a framework to sustain its character for this and future generations.

Conservation is not about preventing change; the Sittingbourne Conservation Area is historic core of a living community and change is needed to sustain and meet its future needs. It is about positively managing change so that what we cherish today can be properly looked after and passed on to future generations in good condition. Conservation Area designation brings with it certain statutory controls and restrictions which are described below. It also affords the opportunity for others, such as the local amenity groups, Kent County Council, individual householders and local businesses to take part in positively managing the area.

It also can help identify opportunities where conservation can help to deliver wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits and where there may be opportunities to draw on the contribution



made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

This strategy is intended to encourage active involvement in the future management of the Conservation Area, by the following means:

1. According with national planning policy in respect of heritage matters, together with the heritage strategy adopted by the Council;
2. Sustaining and enhance the significance of Swale's designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance and, where appropriate, in accordance with Policies DM 32 to DM 36;
3. Responding to the integrity, form and character of historic settlement;
4. Bringing heritage assets into sensitive and sustainable use within allocations, neighbourhood plans, regeneration areas and town centres, especially for assets identified as being at risk on national or local registers;
5. Responding positively to the conservation area appraisals and management strategies prepared by the Council;
6. Respecting the integrity of heritage assets, whilst meeting the challenges of a low carbon future; and
7. Promoting the enjoyment of heritage assets through education, accessibility, interpretation, and improved access.

## 8.12 Management Objectives and Approach

### Article 4 Directions

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal has identified some alterations which have involved the removal of historic features such as sash windows, doors, roof coverings and demolition of chimney stacks. These alterations are harmful to character but particularly so when they affect a symmetrical pair, or a terrace, where the impact of ill-considered alterations can be more obvious.

Many minor alterations to unlisted buildings can be undertaken without the need for planning permission but the cumulative impact of ill-considered change to historic and/or traditional properties can have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

In light of the above, buildings where Article 4 Directions may be appropriate are identified in the management and action plan for each conservation area (section 6.5). This will allow some householder alterations (which are currently classed as permitted development) to be brought under planning control to ensure that alterations are positively managed.

Opportunities to reinstate missing architectural features (such as sash windows, panelled doors or roof coverings) and traditional boundary treatments will be encouraged by the Council and may be requested in relation to planning applications for extensions and/or alterations, where appropriate.

The Council will seek to ensure that alterations which require planning permission positively enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## New Development Opportunities

- There is little Potential for new development within Sittingbourne Conservation Area as infilling within boundary has already used up any vacant plots. Therefore, any new buildings or renewal of existing sites need to consider the management priorities set out below.
- Development within the setting of the Conservation Area should conserve the historic grain of the High Street.

## 8.13 Conservation Area Objectives and Priorities for Management and Action

**Overarching Objectives:** The Council will seek to ensure that the significance of Sittingbourne Conservation Area is sustained and enhanced through:

1. The preservation and enhancement of the area's special interest, character or appearance
2. The preservation or enhancement of the setting of the conservation area and other designated heritage assets.
3. The safeguarding and better revealing the significance of any archaeology.
4. Protection and enhancement of landmarks, views and vistas within and without the conservation area.
5. Safeguarding non-designated heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the significance of the area.
6. Safeguarding the network of public rights of way.

7. Safeguarding significant spaces.
8. Promotion of high quality design in new development which responds positively to context and the distinct characteristics of the conservation area.

**Maintaining Sittingbourne Conservation Area's Townscape and Built Character**

To ensure that the character of the conservation area, and its setting, is both preserved and where possible enhanced, all new development should:

- a) Respect the existing layout and historic form of the townscape and street scene, especially its building lines and heights, and not diminish the gap between buildings.
- b) Complement existing buildings in terms of bulk, design, siting, detailing, scale, materials and use. Any extensions will be encouraged to be at the property's rear and subservient in scale to the original property, as well as match the existing house in design and materials.
- c) Respect and harmonise with existing buildings in terms of design, siting, detailing, scale and materials.
- d) Retain original design features (as identified within the character appraisal, such as cornices, string-courses, timber windows, canopies, entablature, stall risers, transom lights, pediments, fanlights, doors, false timbering, dentil courses, and where replacement is necessary, the architectural detailing should closely match that of the original in traditional materials.
- e) Not involve the painting of unpainted brick surfaces.
- f) Ensure material alterations to buildings protect

the appearance of elevations that face onto a highway, including alterations to shopfronts and rooflines. Discourage additional new dormers and rooflights on visible roof slopes.

- g) Not entail the positioning of satellite dishes and aerials in prominent positions.



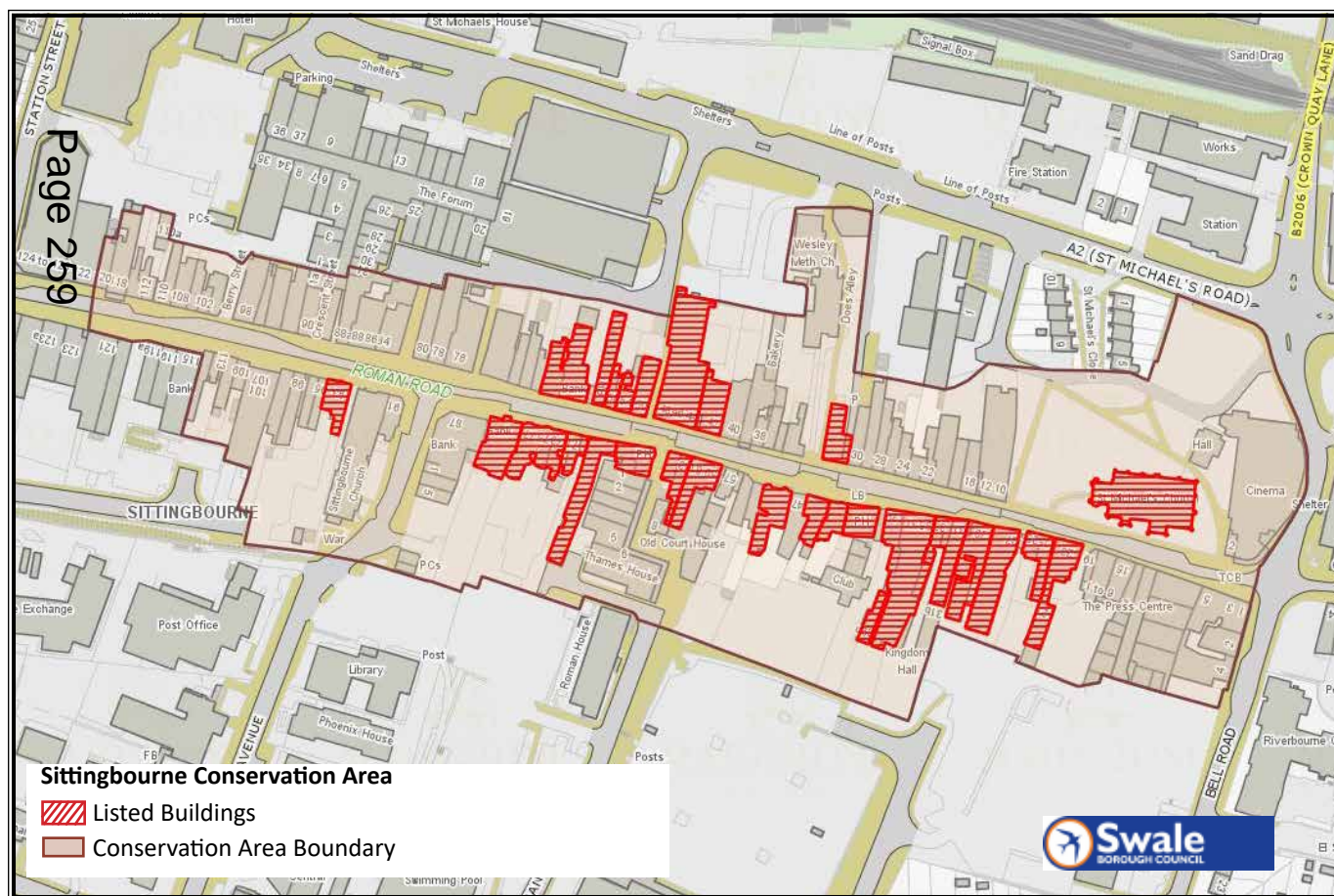
# APPENDIX 1:

Extracts from the National Heritage List for England (the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest)

The statutory list is compiled and published by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and is altered and amended from time to time. The Statutory list can be viewed at [www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/thelist](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/thelist). The omission of a building from this list should not necessarily be taken to indicate that it is not listed.

Features which are not specifically mentioned in the list description are not exempt from statutory protection which extends to the building, to any object or structure fixed to the building and to any structure within the curtilage of the building pre-dating the 1st July 1948.

Sittingbourne Conservation Area has 27 Statutory Listed Entries.



## STATUTORY LISTED BUILDINGS

### Sittingbourne High Street

#### South side

- No. 23 - grade II GV
- No. 25 - grade II GV
- Nos. 27 & 27A - grade II GV
- Nos. 29 & 29A - grade II GV
- Nos. 31-33 - grade II GV
- Nos. 35-39 - grade II GV
- No. 41 (The George Hotel) - grade II GV
- No. 43 - grade II GV
- No. 45 - grade II GV
- Nos. 49-51 - grade II\* GV
- Nos. 59-61 - grade II GV
- Nos. 63-65 - grade II GV
- No. 67 (The Bull Hotel) - grade II GV
- No. 69 - grade II GV
- Nos. 71-73 - grade II GV
- Nos. 75-77 (Brenchley House) - grade II GV
- Nos. 79-81 - grade II GV
- Nos. 93 - grade II

#### North side

- Church of St Michael - grade II\*
- No. 32 - grade II GV
- Nos. 42, 44 & 44A - grade II GV
- Nos. 46-48 - grade II GV
- No. 50 (The Rose Inn) - grade II GV
- Nos. 52-54 - grade II GV
- No. 56 - grade II GV
- No. 58 (The Red Lion) - grade II GV
- Nos. 60-62 - grade II GV

## CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL

Grade: II\*

List Entry Number: 1061030

Date first listed: 10-Sep-1951

Statutory Address: CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ 90934 63615

### Details

695/2/1 HIGH STREET 10-SEP-1951 SITTINGBOURNE (North side) CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL

Church of C11 origins with a major building campaign in the C13, and C14. Further works, including the completion of the west tower, in the C15. Subsequent alterations and additions, principally the restoration by George Dance Senior after a serious fire in 1762 and Victorian restorations by Slater and Carpenter between 1859 and 1887.

**MATERIALS:** Principally Kentish ragstone and knapped flint with pitched tiled roofs.

**PLAN:** Aisled nave with south transept; west tower; south porch; chancel built over a crypt with a north chapel/ vestry and south chapel.

**EXTERIOR:** Principal elevation to the south onto the High Street: Handsome west tower begun in the late C13 and completed in the C15. A robust structure of four storeys, stepped angle-buttresses, external semi-circular stair tower to the south rising to a polygonal turret above the roof parapet. South aisle also with a parapet and stepped angled and intermediate buttresses, of late C13 or early C14 date. Main entrance through south porch: flat roof with parapet, diagonal buttresses, vaulted roof to interior and anthropomorphic stops to arched entrance. Transept has very large Perpendicular south window. Flint work here is of a different form being large, roughly knapped flints. South chapel is of circa 1300 with Perpendicular alterations. Canopied niche on the south-east buttress is recorded as housing a statue of St Mary (no longer in situ). Large east windows to south chapel and chancel. Window tracery in the main reinstated during Victorian restorations.

**INTERIOR:** East half of the chancel appears the oldest fabric: two blind lancets (originally external) in north wall set under two large blank arches. Two similar but wider C13 arches on the south side, later pierced to provide access to the south chapel and restored in C19. Western arches on north side of chancel are late C13. Crypt beneath chancel with quadripartite rib-vault with chamfered ribs. West wall blocking prevents access to remainder. South chapel and its original south window date it to circa 1300. Impressive Perpendicular window to transept. Nave arcades of three wide arches on alternating octagonal and round piers. Corbels with a mixture of finely carved heads and cruder



St. Michael's Church, Sittingbourne. Circa 1910



examples of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic forms at the junction of the nave and the south transept/aisle. Barrel vaulted nave roof divided into panels by exposed ribs. Boarded aisle roofs divided into panels by ribs; also exposed timbers in chancel roof. Nave, chancel and aisle roofs were all constructed in late C18 restoration after fire destroyed the medieval roofs but have undoubtedly been restored since. West tower has ringing and bell chambers.

**FIXTURES AND FITTINGS:** Reredos of 1860 by Slater with central panel decorated with an embossed Greek cross flanked by paired stone recesses with slender columns and trefoil heads framing images of angels on a gilded ground. Good east window of 1860 by Clayton & Bell depicting the Last Supper. Organ by William Hill & Son, London, installed in 1881 in north of chancel and reconstructed and enlarged in 1928. Replaced an organ of 1822 in the west gallery (which no longer survives). Monument in north aisle of reclining shrouded female with swaddled baby under a segmental recess, much worn but appears early or mid C15. Good quality octagonal font, probably early C15, decorated with coats of arms. Other glass: one north window designed by Kent ecclesiologist, Dr Grayling, incorporating old glass. South aisle west window of 1844 by Willement. Other glass by Clayton and Bell and Willement. First World War and Second World War Memorial Windows and window commemorating the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in south transept. Peal of eight bells: six dating to 1687, a further late C17 bell was recast in the late C19 and remainder are late C19.

**ANCILLARY FEATURES:** Churchyard wall and gate piers, also in knapped flint with stone dressings. Gate piers rise from plinths, are square in section and have pyramidal caps with gables on each face.

**HISTORY:** There was a church on this site from the C11 but there is no architectural evidence which can be confidently ascribed to this date although it is clear that elements of the chancel exhibit the earliest surviving fabric. It is in the C13 that the present St Michael's truly begins to take form and was largely complete by the late C14 with the completion of the tower attributable to the C15. The building was gutted by fire in July 1762, caused during repairs to the lead roof which was destroyed leaving only the bare walls of the church although the tower escaped the destruction. The restoration was overseen by the architect George Dacre Senior (who took out most of the tracery) and was completed in 1767. The south transept and Lady Chapel were used as a school in the early C19 and were partitioned off from the main church with access through the now blocked round-headed door in the west wall. The church was also subject to Victorian restoration by Slater and Carpenter between 1859 and 1887. The bells were re-hung in a new frame in 1896. C20 alterations include the addition of a First World War memorial window in the south transept in 1920. The building was extensively restored in the 1960s. St Michael's is a sister church to St Mary's Sittingbourne which is of early C20 date.

**SOURCES:** Newman, J, The Buildings of England: North East and East Kent, pp. 461-2 (1969) The Organ. The Parish Church of St Michael the Archangel, Sittingbourne. Church leaflet St Michael. The Parish Church of Sittingbourne for



St Michael's Church, Sittingbourne. Circa July 1896

nearly 1000 years. Draft church guide, 2003. Church website at <http://www.saintsinsittingbourne.org.uk/index.php>

**REASON FOR DESIGNATION DECISION** St Michael's Church Sittingbourne is listed at Grade II\* for the following principal reasons: \* The significant extent of surviving medieval fabric \* Architectural details of interest including: carved stone heads to the exterior and interior, a C15 font and tomb, and good stained glass (particularly the Victorian east window of the Last Supper and a memorial window to the First World War in the south transept).

### 23, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061019

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 23, HIGH STREET

List Entry NGR: TQ9090363592

Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 23 TQ 9063 NE 2/138 II GV 2. Late C18 to early C19. 2 storeys red brick. Steeply pitched tiled roof. Stone coping. 3 sashes with glazing bars intact set in arcading.

[Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.]

### 25, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061020

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 25, HIGH STREET

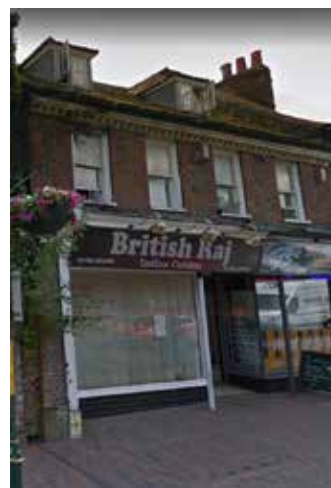
National Grid Reference: TQ 90889 63596

Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 25 TQ 9063 NE 2/9 II GV 2. C18. 2 storeys and attics grey headers with red brick window dressings and quoins. Modern tiled roof and wooden modillion eaves cornice. 4



23, High Street



25, High Street

sashes with glazing bars missing. Late C19 shop front. Grade II for group value.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.

### 27 AND 27A, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061021

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 27 AND 27A, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9088163594

Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 27 and 27A TQ 9063 NE 2/10 II GV 2. A probable timber-framed building refronted in the C18. 2 storeys built of alternate strips of red and grey brick. Hipped modern tiled roof. 5 sashes with glazing bars intact. 2 modern shop fronts and left side carriage entrance. Grade II for group value.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.

### 29 AND 29A, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061022

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 29 AND 29A, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9086663600

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 29 and 29A TQ 9063 NE 2/11 II GV 2. Early C19. 2 storeys stuccoed. Parapet and modillion cornice. 5 sashes with some glazing bars intact. Modern shop front. Grade II for group value.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.



27 & 27A, High Street



29 & 29A, High Street

### 31 AND 33, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061023

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 31 AND 33, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9085963600

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 31 and 33 TQ 9063 NE 2/12 II GV 2. Formerly part of the George Inn. A timber-framed building refronted with red brick about 1730. 2 storeys. Hipped tiled roof. 6 sashes and 1 window space with some glazing bars intact on the 1st floor. Modern shop fronts with a carriage archway between them. The timber framing of the building is visible there and at the back of the building of which part of the 1st floor is jettied.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.

### 35-39, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061024

Date first listed: 10-Sep-1951

Statutory Address: 35-39, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9084363602

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 35 to 39 (odd) TQ 9063 NE 2/13 10.9.51. II GV 2. Formerly part of the George Inn. A tall timber-framed building refronted with red brick in the early C18. 3 storeys red brick and grey headers alternately. Hipped tiled roof with wooden modillion eaves cornice. Brick stringcourse above 1st floor. 9 sashes with glazing bars intact above ground floor. Modern shop fronts but that to No 39 incorporates 3 older engaged Ionic columns. Carriage archway at the west end with ceiling beams visible overhead.



31 & 33, High Street



35 - 39, High Street



## THE GEORGE HOTEL

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061025

Date first listed: 10-Sep-1951

Statutory Address: THE GEORGE HOTEL, 41, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9081863605

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 41 (The George Hotel) TQ 9063 NE 2/14 10.9.51. II GV 2. The George Inn was a flourishing concern by 1562. This part is a timber-framed building, refaced with stucco about 1786 and then made into the taproom of the George Hotel. 2 storeys and attics, Steeply pitched tiled roof having 3 gabled dormers. Cornice above ground floor concealing original bressumer. 5 sashes with glazing bars intact on the 1st floor only. The ground floor has 3 C19 3-light sashes without glazing bars and 2 simple doorcases with rectangular fanlights.

## 43, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1031922

Date first listed: 10-Sep-1951

Statutory Address: 43, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9081063607

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 43 TQ 9063 NE 2/15 10.9.51 II GV 2. C18. 3 storeys red brick. Parapet with stone coping and moulded wooden cornice with enriched frieze below. 3 sashes with glazing bars intact. Curved 3-light window on ground floor. Doorcase with engaged Ionic columns, open pediment, semi-circular fanlight, panelled reveals and 6 panelled door.



The George Hotel



43, High Street

## 45, HIGH STREET

Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1061026  
Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974  
Statutory Address: 45, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9080463610

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 45 TQ 9063 NE 2/16 II GV 2. C18. 3 storeys red brick. Parapet. 3 sashes with glazing bars intact above the ground floor. Modern shop front. Round-headed doorcase with semi-circular fanlight and door of 6 fielded panels.

## 49 AND 51, HIGH STREET

Grade: II\*  
List Entry Number: 1352683  
Date first listed: 10-Sep-1951  
Statutory Address: 49 AND 51, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9078463614

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 49 and 51 TQ 9063 NE 2/17 10.9.51.

II\* GV 2. One building. No 49 has cellars beneath the house. A Regency front to a probable C18 house. 2 storeys and attics stuccoed. Tiled roof with parapet. 2 hipped dormers. 3 sashes with glazing bars intact. 2 of these are elliptical bows through both floors with tripartite windows and elliptical tympana over them containing fan Ornamentation. Porch at the head of 5 steps having fluted Doric columns and enriched frieze supporting 1st floor cast iron balcony. Left side doorcase having 6 fielded panels up 7 steps with a handrail.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81,(odd) form a group.



45, High Street

45 & 51, High Street



## 59 AND 61, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061027

Date first listed: 10-Sep-1951

Statutory Address: 59 AND 61, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9075463624

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 59 and 61. TQ 9063 NE 2/18 10.9.51

II GV 2. One large C18 house. 3 storeys red brick. Brick parapet and moulded wooden cornice. 5 sashes. The centre window bay projects slightly and contains a tripartite window with an elliptical tympanum containing fan ornamentation on the 1st floor. The whole of the ground floor has been altered to form a modern shop front.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81, (odd) form a group.

## 63 AND 65, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1344241

Date first listed: 10-Sep-1973

Statutory Address: 63 AND 65, HIGH STREET

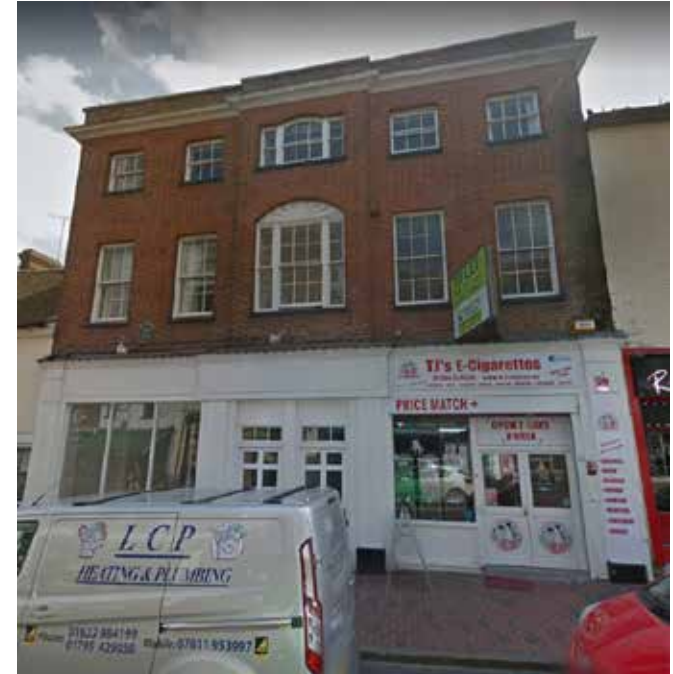
Listing NGR: TQ9074863627

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 63 and 65 TQ 9063 NE 2/141 10.9.73. II GV 2.

Mid C19 built in the Georgian idiom. 3 storeys red brick. No 63 has been painted. 3 sashes in all with most glazing bars intact. Modern shop fronts. Grade II for group value.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.



59 & 61, High Street

63 & 65, High Street



### 32, HIGH STREET

Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1344243  
Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974  
Statutory Address: 32, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9081163633

#### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (North Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 32 TQ 9063 NE 2/3 II GV 2. C18. 2 storeys and attics. Grey headers and red brick in vertical strips. Hipped tiled roof and parapet. 3 windows and 1 gabled dormer facing the south. 4 windows facing west. Glazing bars missing. Modern shop front. The side elevation has a weatherboarded 1/2 hipped gable and 1 cambered casement and a sliding sash.

### 42, 44 AND 44A, HIGH STREET

Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1031821  
Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974  
Statutory Address: 42, 44 AND 44A, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9076063645

#### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (North Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 42 and 44 No 44A TQ 9063 NE 2/4 II GV 2. This block was built in 1708 by Robert Jeffs and originally called Rose Place. Later in the century it became the Rose Inn which was called in Hasted's "History of Kent" "the most superb of any [inn] throughout the kingdom and the entertainment afforded in it equally so". The Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria stayed there in 1825, after which it was renamed the Royal Victoria Hotel. It ceased to be a hotel after the railway had undermined the importance of Sittingbourne as a coaching station on the Dover Road. 3 storeys brown brick with red brick window dressings. Tiled roof and wooden modillion cornice with consoles below some of the modillions, 6 sashes with most glazing bars intact above the ground floor. Stone plaque between the 1st and 2nd floor with the model of a red rose and the letters "RI". and the date 1708. Modern shop fronts.

Nos 30 to 62 (even) form a group.

42, 44 & 44A, High Street



32, High Street



## THE BULL HOTEL

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1352688

Date first listed: 14-Sep-1970

Statutory Address: THE BULL HOTEL, 67, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9072363634

### Details

1, 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 67 (The Bull Hotel) TQ 9063 NE 2/19 14.9.70. II GV 2. In course of restoration at time of survey. C18. 2 storeys painted brick. Eaves cornice. 5 sashes and 2 window spaces with glazing bars intact. C19 hood over the doorway.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.

## 69, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061028

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 69, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9071363634

### Details

1, 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 69 TQ 9063 NE 2/20 II GV 2. Late C18 to early C19. 2 storeys and attics. Faced with red brick and grey headers with long and short painted quoins and a wooden modillion eaves cornice. 2 hipped dormers. 3 sashes. Glazing bars intact. Modern shop front.

Nos 23 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.



The Bull Hotel

69, High Street



## 71 AND 73, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1344242

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 71 AND 73, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9070363630

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 71 and 73 TQ 9063 NE 2/142 II GV 2. Late C18 to early C19. 2 storeys and attics. No 71 is stuccoed. No 73 is faced with painted brick on the ground floor and is stuccoed above with the trace of a bressumer of a timber-framed building between. 3 sashes in all, 1 of which is 3-light. Round-headed doorcase with semi-circular fanlight and door of 6 fielded panels. No 71 has a modern shop front. No 73 has a right side round-headed doorcase with semi-circular fanlight having glazing bars intact and a 6 fielded panelled door.

Nos 25 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81 (odd) form a group.

## BRENCHLEY HOUSE

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1031810

Date first listed: 10-Sep-1951

Statutory Address: BRENCHLEY HOUSE, 75 AND 77, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9068863638

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 75 and 77 (Brenchley House) TQ 9063 NE 2/21 I0.9.51. II GV 2. One house built by Edward Brenchley about 1800. 3 storeys and basement red brick. Wooden modillion eaves cornice. 3 windows, consisting of 2 flattened bays through all floors with a Venetian window between these on the 1st floor. Glazing bars intact. Good porch with fluted Ionic columns, open pediment, semi-circular fanlight, panelled reveals and door of 6 fielded panels.



71 & 73, High Street

Brenchley House



## 79 AND 81, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061029

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 79 AND 81, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9067663639

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (South Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 79 and 81 TQ 9063 NE 2/22 II GV 2. One building. Early C19. 3 storeys red brick. Slate roof with eaves cornice. 5 sashes with most glazing bars intact above ground floor. Porch with 2 fluted Doric columns and 2 pilasters, rectangular fanlight and double doors of 6 moulded panels. No 79 has a modern shop front to the east of the doorway.

Nos 73 to 45 (odd) and 49 to 81,(odd) form a group.

## 93, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1031815

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 93, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9060663653

### Details

TQ 9063 NE 2/23 HIGH STREET (South side) SITTINGBOURNE No Q5 No 93

II Early C19, two storeys painted brick. Parapet, two sashes with glazing bars intact on first floor. One bay on ground floor. No. 91 now has a plain doorcase with rectangular fanlight. No. 93 has a doorcase with columns, pediment, semi-circular fanlight and door of six moulded panels.



79 & 81, High Street

93, High Street



## 60 AND 62, HIGH STREET

Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1061033  
Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974  
Statutory Address: 60 AND 62, HIGH STREET, SITTINGBOURNE

Listing NGR: TQ9070563660

### Details

GV II This is a continuation of the facade of No. 58 which was originally part of the Red Lion Inn. It was converted into houses about 1835. C18. Two storeys and attics, red brick. Tiled roof. Cornice and panelled parapet. Eight sashes with glazing bars missing. No. 60 has a modern bank front and No. 62 has a modern shop front.

Nos 60 to 62 (even) form a group.

## 58, HIGH STREET

Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1031800  
Date first listed: 10-Sep-1951  
Statutory Address: 58, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9071763656

SITTINGBOURNE HIGH STREET (North Side) No 58

10.9.51 GV II This building, with Nos 60 and 62 adjoining, formed the front of the Red Lion Inn which was originally the principal hotel of Sittingbourne until it was superseded by the Rose Inn. The front dates from the C18. 2 storeys and attics red brick. Tiled roof and 1 C19 gabled dormer. Cornice and panelled parapet on which there is a plaster figure of a couchant lion. 4 sashes with glazing bars missing. Modern public house front on the ground floor and carriage arch through the building to the west of it. Behind the street front and at right angles to it is a long low timber-framed building. The ground floor has been rebuilt in painted brick. The 1st floor is plastered and overhangs on a bressumer. Tiled roof. Sash windows, some with glazing bars intact, including a curved bay of 3 round-headed windows at the south end of the ground floor with cornice over. 2 storeys, 6 windows facing west. There has been



60 & 62, High Street

58, High Street





an inn on this site for 500 years. In 1415, Henry V was entertained here on his return from Agincourt. Other famous customers include Cardinal Wolsey and Henry V.

Nos 30 to 62 (even) form a group.

### 56, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1061032

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 56, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9072163655

Details

1. 5682 HIGH STREET (North Side) SITTOINGBOURNE No 56 TQ 9063 NE 2/152 II GV 2. Early C19. 3 storeys red brick. Old tiled roof. Parapet, 3. Altered window and later shop front.

Nos 30 to 62 (even) form a group.

### 52 AND 54, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1344244

Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974

Statutory Address: 52 AND 54, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9072463654

Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (North Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 52 and 54 TQ 9063 NE 2/151 II GV 2. Early C19. 3 storeys red brick. Tiled roof. Parapet with stone coping. 2 sashes in all with cambered wooden architrave. Later shop front. Grade II for group value.

56, 52 & 54, High Street



## THE ROSE INN

Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1031795  
Date first listed: 12-Oct-1973  
Statutory Address: THE ROSE INN, 50, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9073263652

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (North Side) SITTINGBOURNE No 50 (The Rose Inn) TQ 9063 NE 2/150 12,10.73. II GV 2. Early C19. 3 storeys red brick. Old tiled roof. 2 sashes set in moulded architraves with verticals only. C19 pub front with 4 pilasters, 2 doorcases with rectangular fanlights and windows with Ipswich glazing. Grade II for group value.

## 46 AND 48, HIGH STREET

Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1061031  
Date first listed: 13-Dec-1974  
Statutory Address: 46 AND 48, HIGH STREET

Listing NGR: TQ9074563649

### Details

1. 5282 HIGH STREET (North Side) SITTINGBOURNE Nos 46 and 48 TQ 9063 NE 2/149 II GV 2. A modern replica of part of the Rose Inn and listed for group value only. Early C20. 3 storeys brown brick with red brick dressings. Tiled roof with wooden modillion eaves cornice with console brackets. 4 sashes with glazing bars. Modern shop front.



The Rose Inn



46 & 48, High Street

## APPENDIX 2: Proposed amendments to Sittingbourne Conservation Area boundary

As part of the review of Sittingbourne Conservation Area, consideration has been given to whether the current boundaries accurately reflect the area which is considered to have special architectural or historic interest.

In large part, the area covered by the Conservation Area is considered to be appropriate in that it still possesses special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. However, there is one adjacent area which it is proposed to include within an extension to the boundary of the current Conservation Area.

Area CA1 East Street

The proposal is to move the current Conservation Area boundary out to include south side and parts of north side of East Street upto its junction with South Avenue at the other end to include the properties facing East Street.

This small extension will ensure this important historical context is included within the Conservation Area.

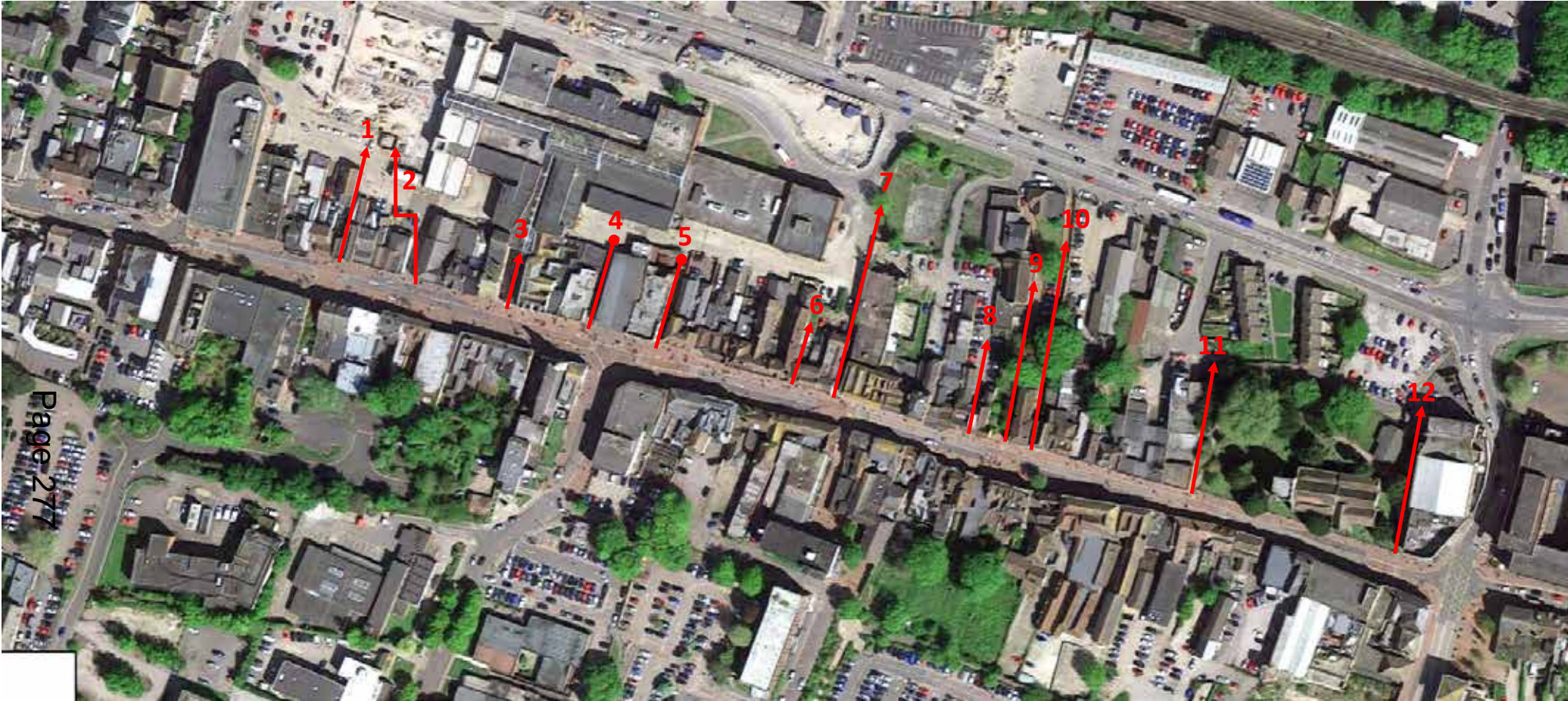




View of East Street from eastern edge of existing Sittingbourne Conservation Area boundary



# APPENDIX 3: Surviving Historic Alleyways on Sittingbourne High Street



Sittingbourne town centre north alleys

Names and details of all the alleyways to be identified

Page 277



Berry Street



Names and details of all the alleyways to be identified



7  
Page 279



8



9



10

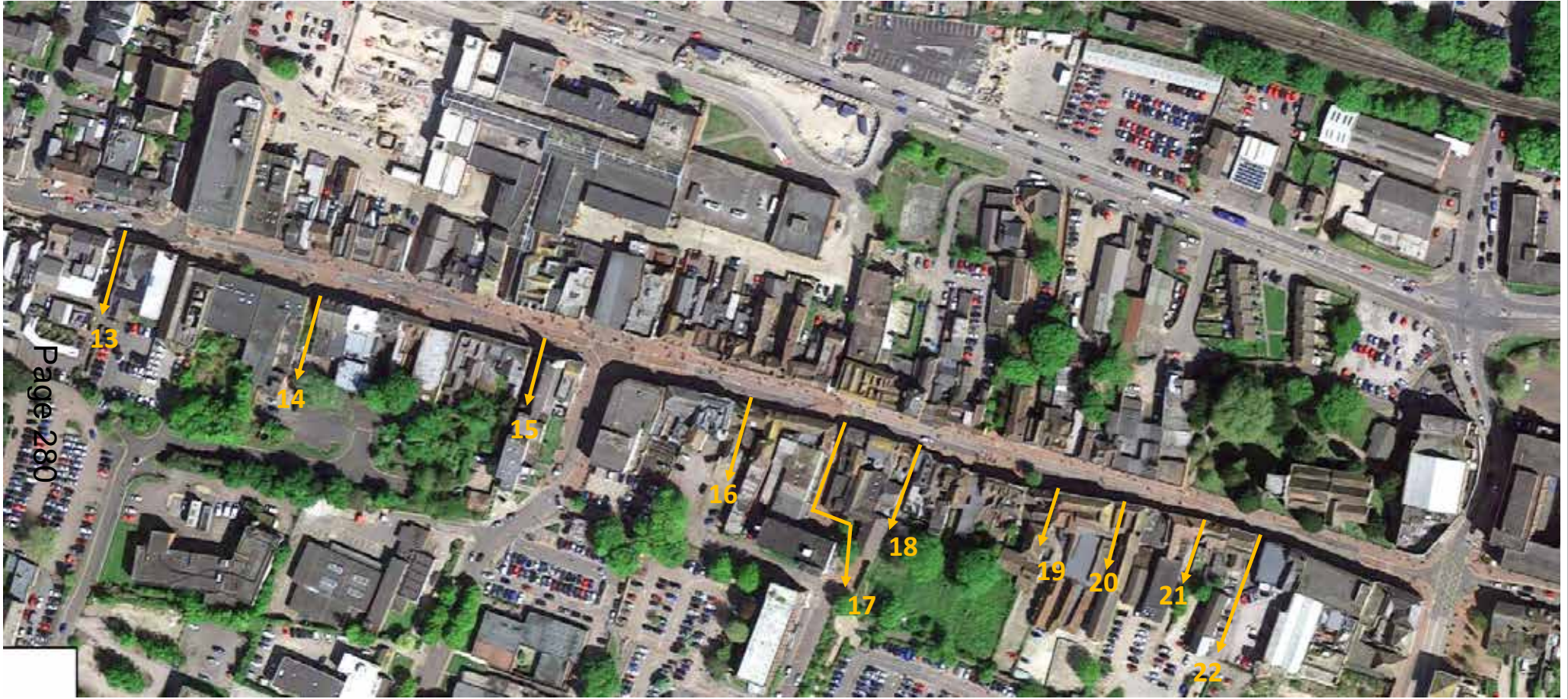


11



12

Names and details of all the alleyways to be identified



Sittingbourne town centre south alleys

Names and details of all the alleyways to be identified





14

Names and details of all the alleyways to be identified



15

16

17



Names and details of all the alleyways to be identified

# APPENDIX 4: Existing Condition of Buildings on The High Street

In March 2021, a condition survey of the High Street was undertaken.

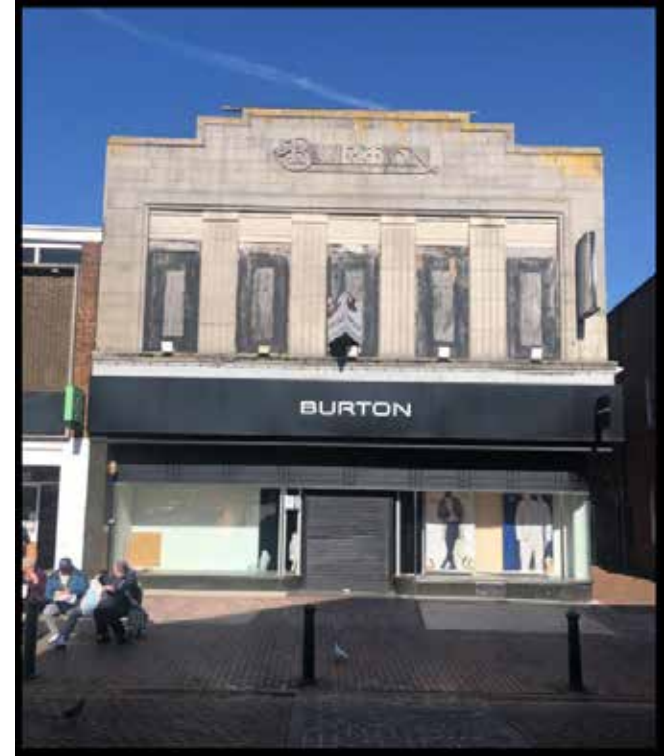
Most common problems observed were:

1. Vegetation growth
2. Different types of fenestrations at upper floor levels/  
blocked windows – not in keeping with the Conservation Area
3. Very few shopfronts have historic features – alterations over the years
4. Quality of signage
5. Visible wiring/ electricals
6. Clutter- satellite dishes, TV antenna, timber battens left behind from old estate agent boards
7. Water damage at parapet level

This section is a photo documentation of the most severe problems

Property Condition Survey - SITTINGBOURNE CONSERVATION AREA			
Name/ Number of the Building and Street Name			
IDENTIFICATION	Approx. period of building:		Current Use
	Land use Class	FF	
	GF	SF	
	Vacant	Y/N	
	Photo ref. nos.		
	Designation (locally listed, listed grade etc)		
Roof (if visible) Description & Issues -			
	Vegetation		Guttering
	Visible Damp		Chimney
	Missing /broken tiles		Ridge Beam/Eaves
	Dormers		Satellite Dishes
External Façade -Description & Issues			
Element	Description	Issues	
Parapet	Cornice		
Fenestration type			
Surface Condition: Rainwater Goods Existing Signage		Surface Dirt Organic Growth Graffiti Delamination Powdering/Spalling Eroded	
Material			
Ground Floor Description (if not shopfront)		Issues	
Shopfront : Historic features Quality of signage Condition of: Timberwork/paintwork Condition & type of shutter Visible wiring Clutter etc.		Description & Issues	
Other factors (eg vandalism etc)			

Survey form used to record each building's condition





Traditional shopfront largely intact ; Fenestrations at first floor have been altered and not in keeping with the Conservation Area; visual clutter of satellite dishes and HVAC units.

#### Key Objectives

1. To remove the Conservation Area from Heritage at Risk register
2. Enhance the existing character and appearance of Conservation Area
3. Introduce appropriate and suitable management systems to address points 1 and 2.

#### Way Forward

1. Raise awareness amongst the stakeholders (Landowners, retailers, tenants)
2. Identify Plan of action



Vegetation growth and water ingress

## APPENDIX 5: Select Bibliography

Sittingbourne High Street - A Historical Insight  
Volume 1 - The South Side Published by Sittingbourne Heritage Museum

Sittingbourne High Street - A Historical Insight  
Volume 2 - The North Side Published by Sittingbourne Heritage Museum

East Street Sittingbourne - A Historical Insight  
Published by Sittingbourne Heritage Museum

The Inns, Taverns & Public Houses of Sittingbourne and District  
Published by Sittingbourne Heritage Museum

Kent: North East and East- Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England  
John Newman

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Planning Services – 01795 417850

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/heritage-and-landscape/>

Swale Borough Council: 2021  
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT

~~PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT AUGUST 2021~~  
**ADOPTION VERSION NOVEMBER 2021**

Prepared by Conservation & Design Team, Swale Borough Council





Ms Jhilmil Kishore

Direct Dial: 0207 973 3637

Swale Borough Council

Swale House

Our ref: PL00753742

East Street

Sittingbourne

Kent

ME10 3HT

17 September 2021

Dear Ms Kishore

Thank you for consulting us on the review to the Sittingbourne Conservation Area Appraisal, which includes boundary changes.

Appraisals are documents which inform understanding and significance of the area. Coupled with a management plan, they are a vehicle to reinforce the positive character of the area, as well as avoiding and minimising negative impacts to the area.

We are pleased that you are undertaking your statutory requirement to review your conservation areas. We do not wish to provide substantive comments on either the contents of the review or the extensions to the conservation areas proposed on this occasion. We draw your attention to our publication which is of relevance here: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/heag-268-conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management/>). We also note that the NPPF paragraphs referenced within the document will need to be updated following the latest changes on 20 July 2021.



4TH FLOOR, CANNON BRIDGE HOUSE, 25 DOWGATE HILL, LONDON EC4R 2YA

Telephone 020 7973 3700  
HistoricEngland.org.uk





Historic England

It is not necessary for us to be consulted on this conservation area review unless there are changes. However, if you would like detailed advice from us, please contact us to explain your request.

Yours sincerely,

Isabelle Ryan  
Assistant Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas  
[isabelle.ryan@historicengland.org.uk](mailto:isabelle.ryan@historicengland.org.uk)

cc:



4TH FLOOR, CANNON BRIDGE HOUSE, 25 DOWGATE HILL, LONDON EC4R 2YA

Telephone 020 7973 3700  
[HistoricEngland.org.uk](http://HistoricEngland.org.uk)



*Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.*



# The Sittingbourne Society



17th August 2021

Ms. Jhilmil Kishore,  
Senior Conservation and Design Officer (Projects).  
Swale Borough Council,  
Swale House,  
East Street,  
Sittingbourne, Kent.

Dear Madam,

## **Public Consultation: Sittingbourne Conservation Area Review**

Thank you for your letter which I received on 30<sup>th</sup> July.

The Society welcomes your proposal to extend the Sittingbourne Conservation Area into East Street but we wonder if it would be worth extending the Area east of South Avenue to the Gaze Hill Avenue junction. There are some worthwhile buildings in this stretch of East Street which would benefit from the protection the Conservation Area status would give. We also welcome the commitment to enhancing the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area through Area Enhancement Schemes and the preparation of specific development briefs. Such initiatives will assist the Council in controlling any future redevelopments or alterations to properties. We are pleased to note the recognition of two prominent unlisted Art Deco buildings - Burtons and the New Century Cinema.

>

We welcome the encouragement of high quality design and the use of traditional materials for new or replacement shopfronts. It is also pleasing to learn that unsightly hoardings and signage will be discouraged while sympathetic colour schemes will be sought. We therefore support suggestions to raise awareness with landowners, retailers and tenants of the importance of the preservation, repair and reinstatement of historic and architectural features of buildings. The reference to the proper co-ordination and good management of the planting and maintenance of trees within the Conservation Area is also to be welcomed

Yours faithfully,

Malcolm Moore  
Vice- Chairman,

## **Vice -Chairman:**

Malcolm Moore,  
4 Stanhope Avenue,  
Sittingbourne,  
Kent ME10 4TU.

Tel: 01795 473807

e-mail:

malcmoore128@gmail.com

## Jhilmil Kishore

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 19 September 2021 17:17  
**To:** Conservation (SBC)  
**Subject:** Sittingbourne CA Review feedback

Dear Ms Kishore

We are emailing regarding the Sittingbourne Conservation Area Review. We have lived in East Street for nearly years and have seen many changes some for the better others not so. We understand the review is to consider special architectural and historic interest in the street over the years a lot of the buildings on the even side of the road have been demolished and replaced with new builds such as Ronald Court, The Plough, Headley Court and even Plaza Court which we noticed isn't included in this consultation. Many of the other buildings have had major alterations and no longer reflect what the builds originally looked like and any historic interest has already been lost. For this reason we feel that it is pointless to make East Street a conservation area.

We are also curious as to why some parts of East Street are excluded from the proposal for example Swale House, the council car park, Aldi, Chestnut Doctors Surgery, Plaza Court, and 76 East Street surely if the idea is to make East Street a conservation area for the reasons you set out in the review all of these buildings should be included to adhere to the new regulations that would apply in a conservation area otherwise it may result in a mismatch of designs, which surely isn't the purpose of this review. The only reason we can surmise is that it is because you want to build on these locations and don't want to be governed by the conservation rules that the other parts of East Street may have to.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our comments.

Kind regards

~~Mr and [REDACTED] Langley~~

Sent from my iPhone

<b>Cabinet Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
<b>Report Title</b>	Reactive and Planned Term Maintenance Contract – Extension of contract
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Monique Bonney, Cabinet Member for Property and Economy
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
<b>Head of Service</b>	Joanne Johnson, Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Jeremy Pilgrim, Property Services Manager / Debbie Hardy, Buildings Manager
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	That Cabinet approves to extend the current contract for Planned and Reactive Term Maintenance for a term of 18 months from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022 subject to the appointed Contractor's agreement, encouraging them to employ local workforce, sub-contractors and services where practical and cost efficient.  The Property Services Manager and Buildings Manager to evaluate and provide resource to monitor and approve the standard of work undertaken for Reactive works.

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet's approval to extend the current contract for Planned and Reactive Term Maintenance for a further 18 months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. This will allow the existing contract to continue when the three-and-a-half-year term ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. It is anticipated that the contract value will exceed the £100,000 threshold for officer decision.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The current contract for Planned and Reactive Term Maintenance commenced on 1 October 2018. It had an initial period of three years with an option to extend for a further two years. Cabinet asked officers to investigate and present to members an appraisal of the options for the delivery of alternative planned and reactive maintenance service. Whilst reviewing this, it was requested and approved by Cabinet for an extension of the current contract for 6 months, meaning contract end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

- 2.2.1 On 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 a cabinet decision was made to modify the term contract to ensure local labour, materials and where possible specialist subcontractors are sourced locally.

### 3 Proposals

- 3.1 Upon actioning the Cabinet's decision, the current contract has been reviewed, and an agreement sought from Kirman & Jourdain to guarantee employment of local workforce including specialised skilled works and materials, where possible. ***Evidence of this will be collected and monitored through monthly contract meetings.***
- 3.2 It is proposed that the council continues to use the incumbent contractor for a further 18 months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and actively encourages and monitors a local workforce agreement. Whilst the head office address is given in Essex, Kirkman & Jourdain already use local workforce and local subcontractors, and it is expected such agreement will be guaranteed.
- 3.3 A concern was raised by Cabinet of the quality of workmanship. Upon reviewing works of specific projects highlighted, it has been identified that quality of actual works were undertaken to specific specification and economic fixed price, in relation to reactive and essential repair works and this has been identified as the principal issue in the quality of standard of finish. It is agreed with the contractor that in respect to future reactive work the standard of finish will be prior agreed. Clearly price will be a factor in agreeing such works and each contract will be individually assessed against a set of criteria including emergency repairs, general maintenance and life expectation.
- 3.4 Actions of outcome from the review – A process and resources will be put in place to inspect works upon completion to ensure such works are completed in a timely and satisfactory condition.

### 4 Alternative Options

The alternative option would be to complete a new tender process. This is not recommended as, in the case of a 3+2 year contract, it is generally accepted that the contract will be extended unless there are performance issues with the contractor which means that procuring a new contract is likely to result in a better outcome. Property Officers do not believe that procuring a new contractor would provide a marked improvement to services and current there is no programmed resource to undertake such exercise.

- 4.1 Due to the pandemic and the current economic conditions it would be difficult to secure an alternative contractor without additional cost.
- 4.2 The monitoring process proposed can be regularly reviewed and considered as a basis of competitive tendering process when the extended contract expires.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Commissioning team and the Legal Department have been consulted.
- 5.2 A copy of the report has been sent to the Procurement Board.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Appointing a contractor that meets a good quality standard and provides good value for money, whilst employing local workforce contributes towards all the corporate priorities as it ensures that the maintenance of the Council's assets is optimised.
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>Anticipated annual spend on the reactive maintenance contract is £100,000. The total value for the further 18 months is therefore estimated as £150,000.</p> <p>The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 as amended ("TUPE") apply to this contract and the implications of this were addressed in the procurement process.</p>
Legal and Statutory	<p>The contract is the standard JCT Measured Term Contract 2016, which is typically used as an industry standard for term contracts. The JCT contract is subject to a schedule of amendments and includes the Council's required contract terms, e.g. Freedom of Information.</p> <p>References to local workforce and material requirements must use language such as 'encourage' rather than give an outright instruction to the contractor as such instruction cannot be explicit.</p>
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environmental Sustainability	The evaluation of the original tender included social value, of which environmental sustainability forms a part.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The evaluation of the original tender included the contractors' approach to risk management and health and safety.

Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage

## **7 Appendices**

Cabinet report dated 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## **8 Background Papers**

None

<b>Cabinet Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	14 July 2021
<b>Report Title</b>	Options for the delivery of property maintenance
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Monique Bonney, Cabinet Member for Property and Economy
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
<b>Head of Service</b>	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Debbie Hardy, Buildings Manager
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendation</b>	Cabinet is recommended to proceed with Option 3 as set out in the report which is a modified term contract for the delivery of property maintenance from 1 April 2022.

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present members with a detailed appraisal of the options for the delivery of reactive and planned property maintenance and to recommend the most favourable option.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 In March of this year, Cabinet took the decision to extend the existing three-year contract for planned and reactive term maintenance by six months rather than the full two years permitted under the contract.
- 2.2 This was on the basis that officers would present a more detailed options appraisal of the alternative options to a term maintenance contract.
- 2.3 The current contract runs until 31 March 2022 and its annual value is approximately £150,000 - £200,000.

## 3 Proposals

- 3.1 The following options have been explored in detail and the findings are reported here:

*Option 1:* Retain the status quo, ie. a single term contract,

*Option 2:* Create a framework contract along the lines of the Staying Put framework,

## APPENDIX I

*Option 3:* Modify the current term contract to encourage all labour and materials to be locally based/procured.

### ***Option 1 (Retain the status quo)***

- 3.2 The current arrangement of a three or five year term contract has been in place since 2009 when a joint procurement was carried out with Ashford Borough Council as part of the Swale Ashford Property Partnership. Since the partnership ended, SBC has continued to procure a new contract every three or five years with the current contractor being the fourth company to carry out this work.
- 3.3 The contract operates on a “time and materials” basis. This means that tenders are evaluated based on the hourly rates submitted for each trade and the percentage uplift on the price of materials, plant and specialist subcontractors. Cost control is achieved through the use of signed job sheets verifying the time spent on site and the submission of invoices for materials, plant and specialist subcontractors. Quality is achieved through the use of key performance indicators (KPIs) and post completion inspections.
- 3.4 Jobs are categorised as either emergency, urgent, routine or planned and the required response times are fixed based on the category. One of the KPIs measures the contractor’s ability to meet the response times.
- 3.5 As part of the contract, the contractor is also required to provide diagnostic advice in the event that the cause of a defect and the remedial works required is complex or requires access equipment to investigate. This is provided at no extra cost on the contract.
- 3.6 Payments are made monthly following submission and agreement of a monthly valuation detailing the works carried out in the previous month. A meeting is held between the Buildings Manager and the contractor to discuss any queries.
- 3.7 The term contract is not necessarily used for all planned maintenance projects. It may be more appropriate to carry out a separate procurement exercise for larger projects to ensure that value for money is verified. The term contractor would be eligible to tender for the project.

### ***Option 2 (Framework contract similar to Staying Put)***

- 3.8 This arrangement would involve a procurement process based on “lots” in which contractors could submit bids for all or any of the lots. A framework would then be created that listed the contractors that had been successful in tendering for each lot. The number of lots would require further consideration but could include general building contractors, roofing contractors, stonemasons, groundwork contractors and electrical contractors.
- 3.9 The framework could also be extended to include maintenance work to car parks, parks and open spaces which is currently carried out by Leisure Services. This would involve the further trades of, for example, road marking, fencing and gates, hard landscaping,



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playground equipment and safety surfaces, bins and street furniture and removal of fly-tipping.

- 3.10 There are a number of options around the pricing of the framework contract. This could be by using a schedule of rates (either priced or unpriced) or on a time and materials basis. It is likely that a different pricing mechanism could be used for different lots.
- 3.11 The current Staying Put framework uses a priced schedule of rates and contractors have quoted a percentage uplift (or reduction) on the prices in the schedule. The nature of the work relates mainly to disabled adaptations in domestic properties which allows the schedule to be relatively short and simple. Any work not covered by the schedule is procured by seeking a quotation from one of the contractors on the framework. Scheduled work is awarded on a rota basis, allowing each contractor to obtain a share of the work throughout the duration of the framework.
- 3.12 The Staying Put framework is administered by two technical officers who carry out pre and post completion inspections for all projects except the very small ones such as grabrails, bannisters and key safes. They also meet the contractor on site to discuss the work if there are “add-ons” to the scheduled work. Quality is controlled using a “low score” system whereby if a contractor is given three low scores they are removed from the framework.
- 3.13 The procurement process for the framework contract could be carried out in such a way as to encourage local tenderers to bid. The definition of “local” may have to be varied for each lot depending on the supply of suitable local contractors. For example, a lack of stonemasons based in Swale may require the definition to include the whole of Kent for that lot.
- 3.14 The administrative cost of this option will be considerably higher than options 1 or 3 due to the additional work involved. With no contractor diagnosis service available, many jobs will require inspecting prior to raising an order so that the correct trade is instructed to carry out the work. Dealing with multiple contractors will also increase the amount of administrative work as instead of a single monthly invoice being agreed and processed, there are likely to be multiple invoices from a range of different contractors. It has been estimated that the additional cost will be in the region of £25,000 per annum which equates to 50% of a scale 7 post.

### ***Option 3 (Modified term contract)***

- 3.15 Since the current term contract document was written, the importance of environmental considerations and the commitment to the climate emergency have become higher priorities for the Council. A further option is therefore to modify the current contract to encourage all labour, materials and specialist subcontractors to be sourced locally.
- 3.16 As for option 2, the definition of “local” will need to be carefully considered to ensure that there is an adequate pool of labour available and a sufficient number of subcontractors that are eligible to carry out any specialist work.

### ***TUPE implications***

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3.17 Assuming there is a change of contractor then, in respect of all three options, the issue will be whether the change in service provision will constitute a relevant transfer under the TUPE regulations. If so, the new contractor (or contractors in the case of option 2) may seek an indemnity from us in relation to the transferring employees' employment. In principle a relevant transfer occurs when the property maintenance ceases to be carried out by the incumbent contractor and is carried by a subsequent contractor. It is understood that two employees of the current contractor are almost wholly occupied in providing the property maintenance services to us. That suggests that the organised grouping requirement under the regulations will be satisfied and a relevant transfer will take place under options 1 and 3. Under option 2 it may be more difficult to determine whether a relevant transfer will take place because the organised grouping requirement of the regulations has not been met and/or the maintenance services are too fragmented. Whether this is the case will require specialist legal advice.

### ***Options Appraisal***

<b>Option</b>	<b>Financial implications</b>	<b>Staffing implications</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Term contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be small labour price increase from current contract if re-tendered.</li> <li>• Material price increases will affect all options to the same degree.</li> </ul>	Currently administered by the Buildings Manager with support from the Facilities Assistant. This takes up approximately 10% of the BM's time and 20% of the FA's time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic advice included in contract.</li> <li>• Single monthly invoice.</li> <li>• Good cost and quality control.</li> <li>• Contractor is guaranteed of work based on annual maintenance budget.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No requirement to use local labour or locally sourced materials.</li> <li>• Contractor's on-cost is applied to specialist subcontractors.</li> </ul>
Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional staff resource approximately £25K (50% of a scale 7 post).</li> <li>• Less cost control could result in higher prices.</li> </ul>	Estimated to require approximately 50% of a new Building Surveyor post.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No main contractor on-cost for specialist trades.</li> <li>• Framework could be written to encourage local companies.</li> <li>• Potentially provides opportunities to greater number of local companies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further legal advice on TUPE implications will be required.</li> <li>• Diagnostic advice would be at an additional cost.</li> <li>• Multiple invoices to be processed each month.</li> <li>• No guarantee of work for any contractor on the framework.</li> </ul>
Modified term contract	As Option 1	As Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As Option 1</li> <li>• Opportunity to encourage local labour or locally sourced materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be small cost increase compared to Option 1 as less competition.</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor's on-cost is applied to specialist subcontractors.</li> </ul>
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## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 Three options are set out in the body of the report.
- 4.2 A further option that is not set out above would be to have no formal arrangements in place for reactive maintenance. This would be a return to the arrangements that were in place prior to 2009. Orders would be raised for each job to any contractor that was willing and available to carry out the work. This is not recommended for two reasons: (1) the lack of cost and quality control and the high staff resource required in administering the process, and (2) it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to ensure compliance with Contract Standing Orders as it would not be possible to obtain a quotation in advance for many of the emergency and urgent jobs.
- 4.3 Another option would be to extend the current contract by a further 18 months so that it continues for the full five-year term. This would avoid the need for a procurement exercise and ensure that any labour price rises are kept within the terms of contract.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 An informal consultation exercise has been carried out with other Kent authorities to find out how non-housing property maintenance is administered elsewhere. Three authorities reported that they had no formal arrangements in place and issued work to contractors as required. The others that responded have a term contract in place.

## **6 Implications**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Corporate Plan	Keeping the Council assets in good condition and ensuring that the work is procured and managed effectively meets a number of the corporate priorities including investing in the environment, supporting local heritage and making the Council fit for the future.
Financial, Resource and Property	The financial and staff resource implications are set out in the body of the report.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Any decision reached must be in line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the SBC Contract Standing Orders and any guidance in PPNs.

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Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The environmental implications of the options are set out in the report.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	All contractors, regardless of which option is chosen, are required to comply with our safeguarding policy.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	<p>The main risk associated with options 1 and 3 are that, despite a rigorous procurement process, the contractor could consistently underperform. This increases the staff resource required to manage the contractor's performance or in extreme cases could lead to an early termination of the contract. Health and safety compliance is addressed as part of the procurement process and managed throughout the contract.</p> <p>The main risk associated with option 2 is that by dealing with multiple contractors for different types of repairs, quality control and the management of health and safety is more difficult to control leading to a greater risk of non-compliance, particularly from the smaller companies that may not have the resources to deal proactively with health and safety issues.</p>
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

## 7 Appendices

7.1 None.

## 8 Background Papers

None