

# **Ashford Borough Local Development Scheme**

Fourth Review – July 2014

## Introduction

Ashford Borough Council is required to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS) in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). The Council has therefore prepared a LDS that sets out the geographical area and the timescale for the production of the Local Plan and covers the period 2012 to 2016. The proposed timetable and milestones contained within the LDS are reviewed annually and will be available on the Ashford Borough Council Authority Monitoring Report webpage.

<http://www.ashford.gov.uk/authority-monitoring-reports>

The Council produced its first LDS in March 2005, followed by subsequent schemes in July 2008 and December 2010. This document is the fourth review of the LDS and supersedes the LDS approved in December 2010. In accordance with Regulations, all former LDS timescales can be reviewed at Appendix 4<sup>1</sup>.

## Contents of the Scheme

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 15) sets out the requirements and the main purposes of the Local Development Scheme. The Act states that:

(2)The scheme must specify—

- a) The local development documents which are to be development plan documents;
- b) The subject matter and geographical area to which each development plan document is to relate;
- c) Which development plan documents (if any) are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
- d) Any matter or area in respect of which the authority have agreed (or propose to agree) to the constitution of a joint committee under section 29;
- e) The timetable for the preparation and revision of the development plan documents

*Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 15)*

## The current suite of development plan documents:

Once adopted, the new Local Plan and CIL charging schedule will supersede many of the current suite of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents which make up the statutory development plan.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the scheme and timescales within it have evolved over recent years largely to accommodate the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the move toward a single Local Plan system.

The current adopted statutory development plans for the Borough are the:

- Core Strategy (2008)  
The Core Strategy is the principal development plan document for the Borough and sets out the overall vision and strategic objectives for the delivery of growth in Ashford between 2006 and 2021.
- Town Centre Area Action Plan (2010)  
The Area Action Plan sets out the overall strategy for the future of the Town Centre and makes site specific allocations, it covers the period from 2009 to 2021.
- Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD (2010)  
This development plan document incorporates topic policies and makes site allocations for residential development in Tenterden and other rural settlements. The plan covers the period from 2006 to 2021.
- Urban Sites and Infrastructure DPD (2012)  
Covering the urban area but, excluding the town centre and the proposed urban extensions to the town. This DPD makes site allocations for housing and other uses in addition to including a number of topic policies. The DPD covers the period from 2010 to 2017.
- Chilmington Green Area Action Plan (2013)  
The AAP provides a policy framework to deliver up to 5,750 new homes and 1,000 new jobs over the next 25 years at Chilmington Green. The AAP contains topic policies for community infrastructure, transport improvements, ecology and provides a framework for different character areas.

The current supplementary planning documents for the Borough are:

- Affordable Housing SPD (2009)
- Dark Skies SPD (2014)
- Landscape Character SPD (2011)
- Residential Parking SPD (2010)
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2012)
- Sustainable Drainage SPD (2010)
- Residential Space and Layout SPD (2011)
- Public Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD (2012)

The Council also has a number of adopted 'saved' policies left over from the Borough Local Plan 2000. These still have some weight when determining planning applications but will eventually be either superseded by new policy or supplementary guidance. The full list of 'saved' policies can be viewed via the Council website at:

<http://www.ashford.gov.uk/borough-local-plan-2000>

Similarly, the Council has a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents which supports policies in the Borough Local Plan 2000 and provides more detailed advice on particular topics. SPG is available to view on the Council's website at: <http://www.ashford.gov.uk/borough-local-plan-2000>

Finally, the Council is required to produce a Policies Map which shows the location of proposals in all current, adopted local development documents on an Ordnance Survey

based map. The map is web based and is kept up-to-date and reflects current adopted policies within the Borough. The Policies Map is available to view on the Council's website at: <http://www.ashford.gov.uk/maps>

## Other documents

### **Statement of Community Involvement**

The Ashford Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was adopted in October 2013. The SCI sets out how the planning department intends to achieve community involvement, public participation and cooperation in all planning matters, including the preparation of local development documents, supplementary planning documents and arrangements for consultation on planning applications.

### **Authority Monitoring Report**

The Council publishes up-to-date authority monitoring information on its website. Not only does this information provide updates on the status of the LDS, it also sets out the progress of the Local Plan 2030, reports on public consultations and duty-to-cooperate consultations, provides an update on neighbourhood planning within the Borough and provides borough-wide statistics on planning topic areas such as housing, employment, population, community, health, education, environment and transport. The Authority Monitoring Report webpage can be viewed at:

<http://www.ashford.gov.uk/authority-monitoring-reports>

## The emerging development plan

Preparation has already begun on a new Local Plan that will cover the period to 2030. The Local Plan will set out an overall vision for the development of the Borough and a framework for delivering future sustainable development to meet objectively assessed needs and national priorities. The area covered by the Local Plan is set out in Appendix 1.

The Local Plan will address housing, employment, retail, leisure, transport, community infrastructure and environmental issues such as adapting to climate change and ensuring high quality design. The Local Plan will be an important document that will make site allocations for different development uses and will set out criteria-based policies to provide the basis for decisions on planning applications.

In parallel with the new Local Plan, a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule will also be produced. The CIL is a new mechanism introduced under the Planning Act 2008 which aims to provide a more consistent approach to determining financial contributions from new development towards local infrastructure provision. The existing process of securing 'Section 106' contributions will be scaled back but will remain for 'on-site' infrastructure provision and affordable housing. The Council will progress the CIL Charging schedule alongside the development of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to support the Local Plan 2030.

## Preparing the emerging Local Plan

There are several key stages in the preparation of the Local Plan, each will be subject to the SEA Directive and will be incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal. The timetable that forms part of this Scheme uses the following four milestones:

- **Pre-publication stage (Regulation 18)**  
This initial stage involves extensive evidence gathering, engaging with the local community, businesses and stakeholders on emerging issues and options, consulting with statutory environmental consultees on the scope of the sustainability appraisal.
- **Publication of Submission Draft Local Plan stage (Regulation 19)**  
At this stage, the Council will publish a draft version of the Local Plan it proposes to submit to the Secretary of State and invite representations in accordance with Regulation 19. This will allow the Council to make any amendments in response to representations received on the draft before proceeding to submission stage.
- **Submission and Examination of the Local Plan (Regulation 22)**  
The next stage is for the Council to formally submit the draft Local Plan and evidence base to the Planning Inspectorate for examination on behalf of the Secretary of State. An Independent Planning Inspector will assess the Plan against the tests of soundness contained in the NPPF, taking account of any representations received.
- **Adoption**  
If the Plan is found to be 'sound', the Council may adopt the Plan as soon as practicable following receipt of the Inspector's report unless the Secretary of State intervenes. Once adopted, the Local Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.

The timetable for the creation of the Local Plan can be found at Appendix 3.

## Joint working

The Council is increasingly liaising with neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders under the requirements of the Duty-to-Cooperate introduced by the NPPF in 2012. There are some long standing groups that the Council uses to share best practice and help deliver cross-district issues such as the Ashford Water Group, and the Kent Planning Officers Group.

In particular, the Council is working with neighbouring districts in East Kent on identifying shared issues and aspirations looking ahead based on the successful partnership model of the East Kent Regeneration Board.

The Council is also represented on other strategic Duty to Cooperate bodies such as the Local Nature Partnership.

The Council has also jointly commissioned a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Maidstone Borough Council to help establish a consistent basis for this important part of a Local Plan's evidence base across district boundaries. The Ashford SHMA was published on the ABC website in February 2014. The Council is also working alongside Wye with Hinxhill Parish Council on a Rural Business Assessment that will support the Local Plan evidence base as well as the evidence base of the emerging Wye Neighbourhood Plan.

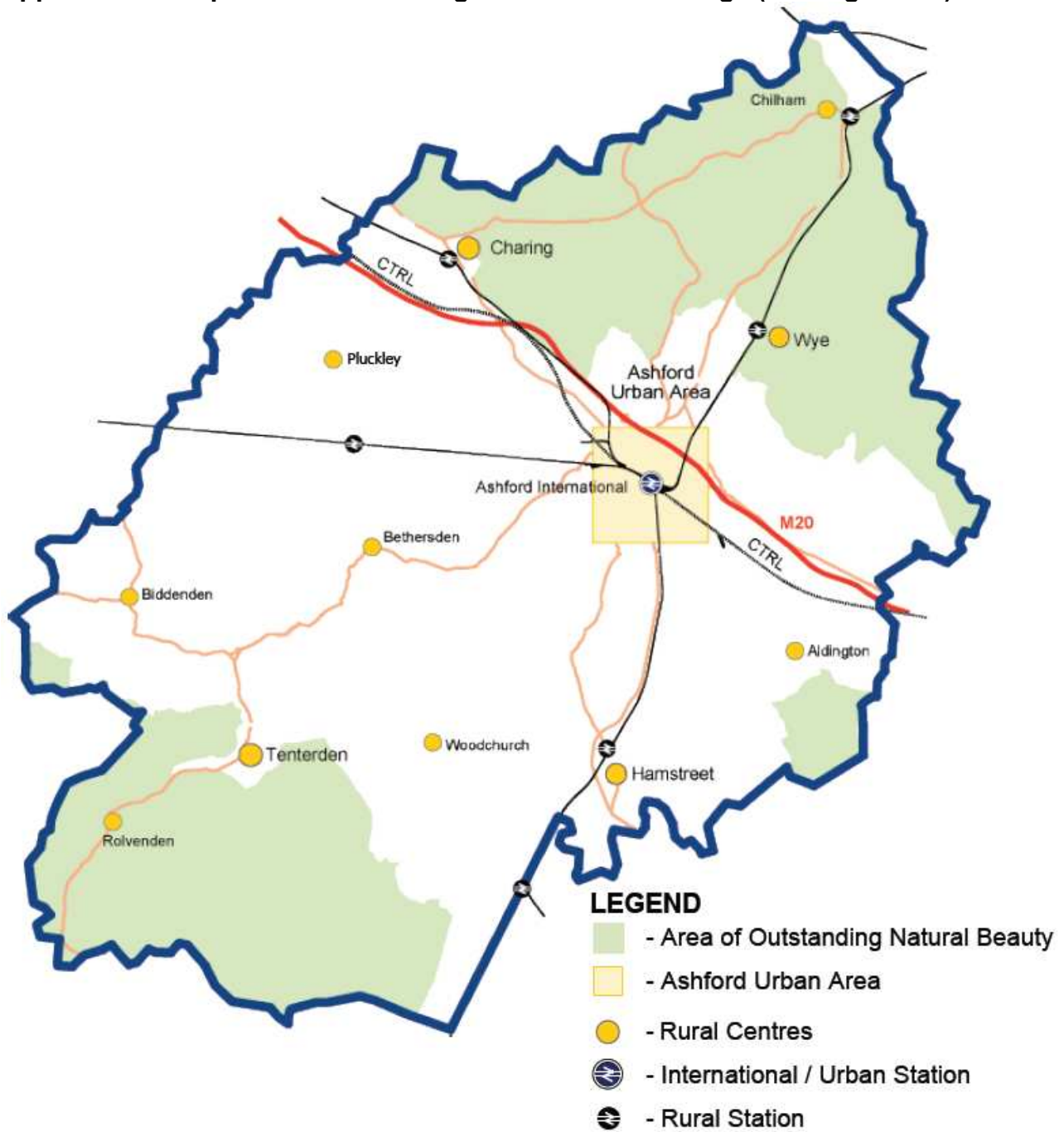
## **Neighbourhood Plans**

Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011, and enables local communities to shape development and growth in their area through the production of a neighbourhood development plan, a neighbourhood development order or a community right to build order.

A Neighbourhood Plan covers a geographic area and can be taken forward by town and parish councils or 'neighbourhood forums'. A Neighbourhood Plan, if approved, becomes part of the statutory development plan for that area and will be used in determining planning applications.

At present there are four parishes that have been designated as Neighbourhood Areas within the Borough; Bethersden, Boughton Aluph & Eastwell, Rolvenden and Wye with Hinxhill. The Council is supporting the neighbourhood planning groups with preparation of their neighbourhood plans, in line with the emerging Local Plan 2030. However, these groups will manage their own timetables and therefore are not included within the LDS.

## Appendix 1 – Map of Ashford Borough Local Plan coverage (Borough-wide)



## Appendix 2 – Schedule of Proposed Local Development Documents

Local Plan 2030	
Purpose of Document	<p>The Local Plan 2030 will set the vision and framework for future development of the whole of the Ashford Borough to 2030. This will include addressing local housing need, the economy, environmental considerations, community infrastructure as well as strategic infrastructure needs.</p> <p>The plan will make site specific allocations to meet identified need, and provide detailed topic policies to guide future planning applications.</p>
Justification	The Local Plan will replace the Borough Local Plan 2000 'saved' policies, policies currently contained within the Core Strategy, Town Centre AAP, Urban Sites DPD and Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD. With the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy, local authorities are required to plan for meeting their own objectively assessed housing needs looking 15 years ahead.
Geographical coverage	Whole authority area
Status	Development Plan Document
Chain of Conformity	Consistent with NPPF

Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule	
Purpose of Document	The Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule will set out what financial contributions will be expected from developers to cover the delivery of new strategic infrastructure.
Justification	The change to the Section 106 regulations comes into force in April 2015 and will limit the scope of Section 106 contributions towards strategic infrastructure. The levy will provide a more transparent process to developer contributions than the current S.106 process alone and should provide certainty and clarity as to how much developers will need to pay for infrastructure.
Geographical coverage	Whole authority area
Status	n/a
Chain of Conformity	Consistent with NPPF / national guidance





# Appendix 4 – Previous Local Development Scheme Timetables

## First (Original) LDS Timetable March 2005

Table 1: Timetable for the Preparation of the Ashford Local Development Framework - 2005 - 2008

PO = Preferred Options S = Submission Document E = Examination IR = Inspector's Report A = Adoption R = Review DPD = Development Plan Document SPD = Supplementary Planning Document SEA = Strategic Environmental Appraisal SA = Sustainability Appraisal

LDF Document	2005												2006												2007												2008													
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D		
Local Development Scheme			S										R												R													R												
Statement of Community Involvement				S					E		A																																							
Core Strategy DPD																																																		
SEA / SA																																																		
Design Codes SPD																																																		
Ashford Town Centre AAP - DPD																																																		
SEA / SA																																																		
Town Centre Design Guide SPD																																																		
Phase 1 Urban Development sites and infrastructure DPD																																																		
SEA / SA																																																		
Phase II - Ashford Growth Area Action Plans																																																		
SEA / SA																																																		
Phase III - site allocation (rural sites) and Tenterden DPD																																																		
SEA / SA																																																		
Phase IV - site allocation DPD																																																		
SEA / SA																																																		
Generic DC policy DPD																																																		
SEA / SA																																																		
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D		
	2005												2006												2007												2008													



### Third LDS Review Timetable December 2010

Table 2 Production Programme

LDF Document	2010												2011												2012												2013																																					
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D																										
Ashford Town Centre AAP		A																																																																								
Urban Sites and Infrastructure DPD											27							30	PH	H		R	A																																																			
Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD		30	PH	H							R	A																																																														
Chilmington Green / Discovery Park AAP																		27		30	PH	H		R	A																																																	
Cheesemans Green / Waterbrook AAP																																		27		30	PH	H				R	A																															
Development Management DPD																		25																27		30	PH	H			R	A																																
Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople DPD			25																															27		30	PH	H			R	A																																
Core Strategy (First Review) DPD																																		25																				27		30	PH	H			R	A												

#### Production Programme Key

	Plan preparation stages; 25 = Regulation 25 - Public Consultation on Issues and Options Report
	Regulation 27 - Publication/consultation on Development Plan Document
	Regulation 30 - Submission of document to Secretary of State; PH = Pre-Hearing Meeting; H = Examination Hearing; R = Inspector's Final Report
	Adoption of Development Plan Document; A = adoption

