

Section 5 Neighbourhood Plan Policies





Environment

Objectives

- To protect the character of the landscape and conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting
- To protect Local Green Spaces
- To maintain the distinctive locally valued views from the built up area and the visual connectivity of Tenterden with the surrounding countryside
- To conserve and enhance the diversity of wildlife and habitats throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area and seek net biodiversity gains from development
- To ensure development is well designed and takes into account the distinctive character and heritage of the Parish
- To conserve and enhance the distinctive heritage assets of the area

Environment Policies

Countryside outside the Built Up Confines

A large part of the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan area is countryside located outside the defined built up confines of Tenterden. Outside the built up confines of the town the countryside is managed by working farms and estates and provides an attractive landscape, rich habitats and recreation opportunities and is important to residents and visitors alike.

The NPPF states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Ashford Local Plan Policy SP1 – sets out the core principles that planning applications are expected to adhere to including conserving and enhancing the Borough’s natural environment (including designated and undesignated landscapes and biodiversity) and promoting a connected green infrastructure network that plays a role in managing flood risk, delivers net gains in biodiversity and improves access to nature.

Landscape

In order to understand the contribution made by the landscape to the Plan area, [existing evidence has been reviewed](#).

High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Much of the area to the west and south of Tenterden is designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – (see Map 3).

The NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in these areas.

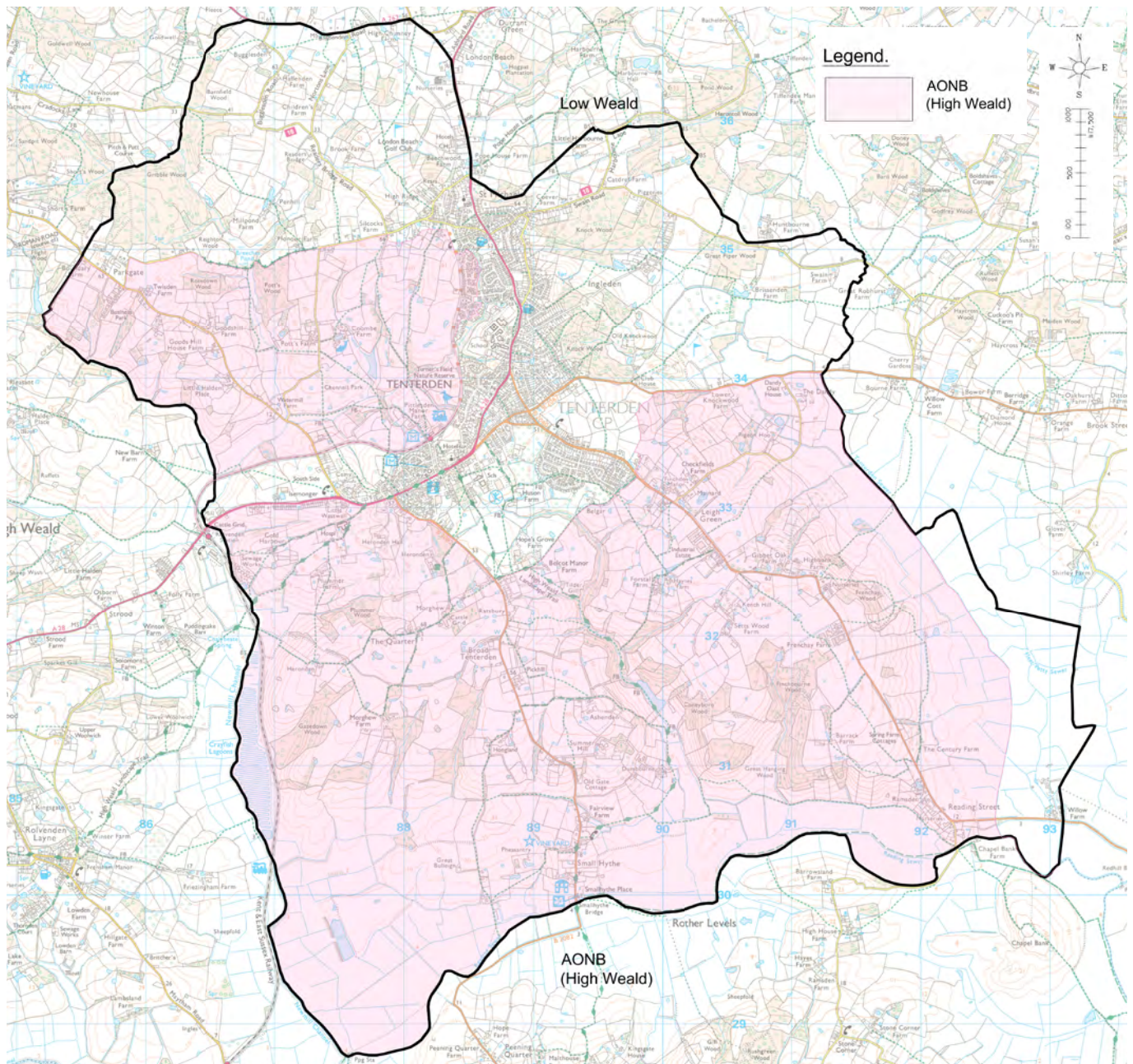
Ashford Local Plan Policy ENV3b states that the Borough Council shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the High Weald AONB.

The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 sets out the five defining components of character that have made the High Weald a recognisably distinct and homogenous area for at least the last 700 years - all of which are present in the Plan area:

1. Geology, landform and water systems – a deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone with numerous gill streams.
2. Settlement – dispersed historic settlement including high densities of isolated farmsteads and late Medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries.
3. Routeways – a dense network of historic routeways (now roads, tracks and paths).
4. Woodland – abundance of ancient woodland, highly interconnected and in smallholdings.
5. Field and Heath – small, irregular and productive fields, bounded by hedgerows and woods, and typically used for livestock grazing; with distinctive zones of lowland heaths, and inland river valleys.

Although the Management Plan does not form part of the statutory development plan, it is a material consideration that should be taken into account when preparing Neighbourhood Plans as well as determining planning applications.

The Management Plan sets a number of objectives in relation to each of the five defining components of character. As recommended by the High Weald AONB Unit, development proposals should be appraised to understand whether they meet these objectives (Appendix 1: High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 Assessment Template) and this practice is supported by the Neighbourhood Plan.



Map 3: Designated High Weald AONB

Landscape outside the High Weald AONB

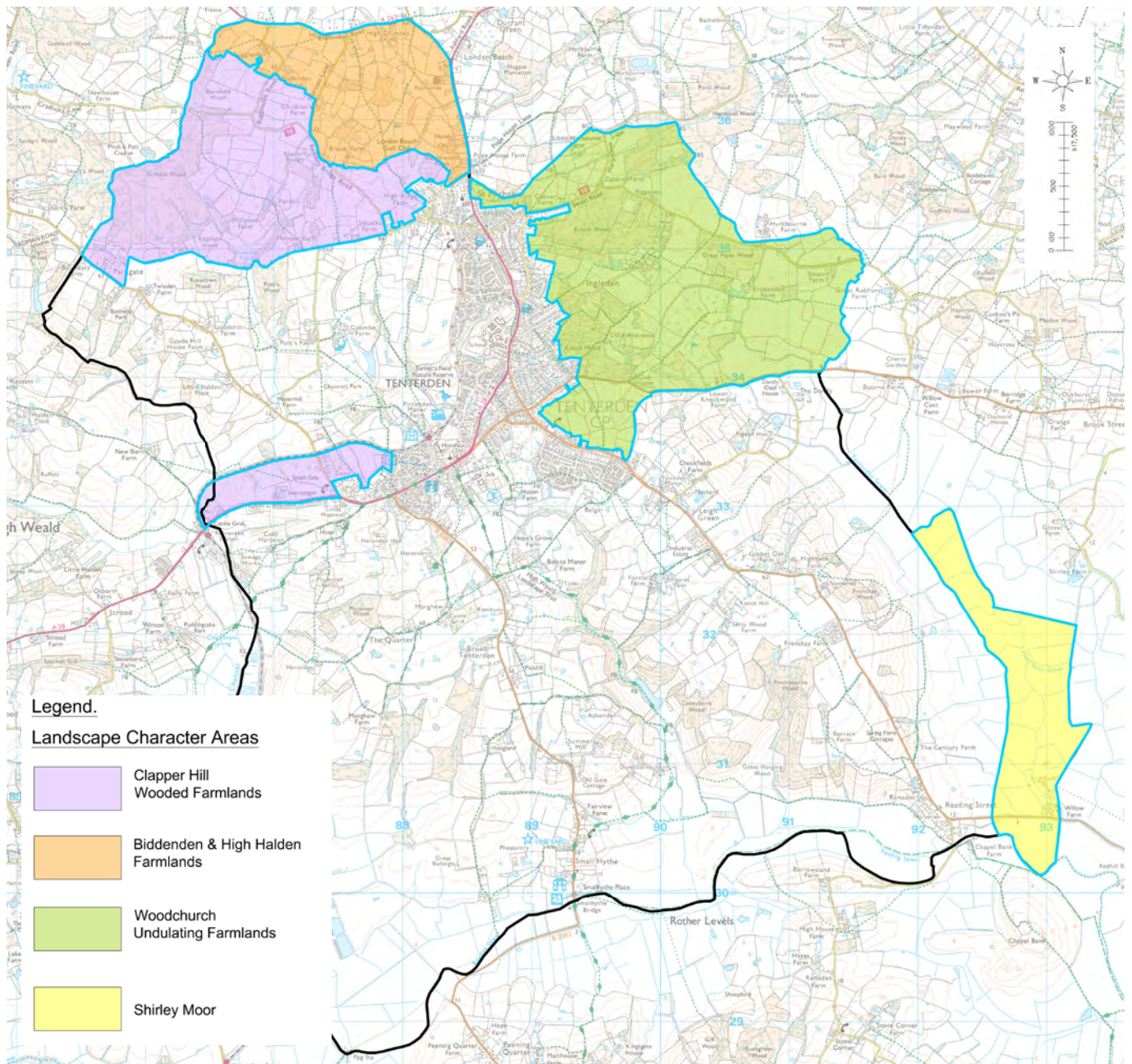
Setting of the High Weald AONB

The setting of the High Weald AONB is broadly speaking the land outside the designated area which is visible from the AONB and from which the AONB can be seen, but may be wider when affected by intrusive features beyond that. The setting is not formally defined or indicated on a map. Proposals which would affect the setting of the AONB are not subject to the same level of constraint as those which would affect the AONB itself. The weight to be afforded to setting will depend on the significance of the impact. Where the qualities of the AONB which were instrumental in reasons for its designation are affected, then the impacts should be given considerable weight in planning decisions.

Landscape Character Areas

The Ashford Landscape Character Assessment, 2009 assesses the landscape outside the AONB. The Assessment identifies 4 Landscape Character Areas outside the AONB within the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan area (see Map 4) although one at the south east edge of the Plan area represents only a small part of a much more extensive area (Shirley Moor Arable Land) which mainly lies in an adjoining Parish and is part of the wider Romney Marsh character area.

The Landscape Character Assessment defines two of the Landscape Character Areas as part of the broader character area of the Low Weald (Character Area 13: Biddenden and High Halden Farmlands and Character Area 23 Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands).



Map 4: Landscape Character Areas outside the High Weald AONB

Character Area 24 (Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands) is broadly classified as part of the High Weald but is not part of the High Weald AONB.

The Landscape Character Areas are cross referenced in the adopted Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD states that there is a need to ensure development proposals demonstrate regard for the area of landscape within which a proposal is located.

*Landscape Character Area 24:
Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands*

The Ashford Landscape Character Assessment, 2009 identifies the key characteristics of the Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands area as:

- Undulating topography
- Drainage ditches and numerous field ponds
- Species rich hedgerows with a large amount of holly
- Extensive tracts of broadleaf and mixed woodland across the slopes
- Pastoral land use
- Vineyards with vines and hops
- Narrow, winding, enclosed lanes
- Scattered traditional buildings and farmsteads

The Assessment concludes that, outside the AONB, Landscape Character Area 24 (Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands) is a landscape in good condition and of high sensitivity and should be conserved. It immediately abuts the High Weald AONB and can be seen to be part of its setting. This landscape is therefore defined in the Neighbourhood Plan as valued landscape outside of the AONB, the character of which it is important to conserve.

This is supported by Ashford Local Plan Policy SP1 - Strategic Objectives which provides the core principles that planning applications are expected to adhere to. Criterion b is:

b) To conserve and enhance the Borough's natural environment including designated and undesignated landscapes.

Ashford Local Plan Policy ENV3a - Landscape Character and Design states that all proposals for development in the borough shall demonstrate particular regard to any relevant guidance given in the Landscape Character SPD and any non-designated, locally-identified, significant landscape features justified in a Parish Plan or equivalent document.

For these reasons, it is appropriate that, in accordance with the NPPF, Policy TEN NP1 seeks only to permit development which would retain the landscape character of, and not have a detrimental impact on, the area of the Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands valued landscape defined on Map 4.

*Landscape Character Area 23:
Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands*

The Ashford Landscape Character Assessment, 2009 identifies the key characteristics of the Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands as:

- Undulating landscape
- Mixed farmland with little intensive land use
- Varied field pattern, with smaller fields adjoining Redbrook Street
- Strong sense of enclosure provided by mixed woodlands and hedgerows
- Broadleaf and coppice woodland with mixed ground flora
- Field ponds and narrow stream corridors
- Traditional converted buildings
- Narrow roads enclosed by woodlands and hedgerows

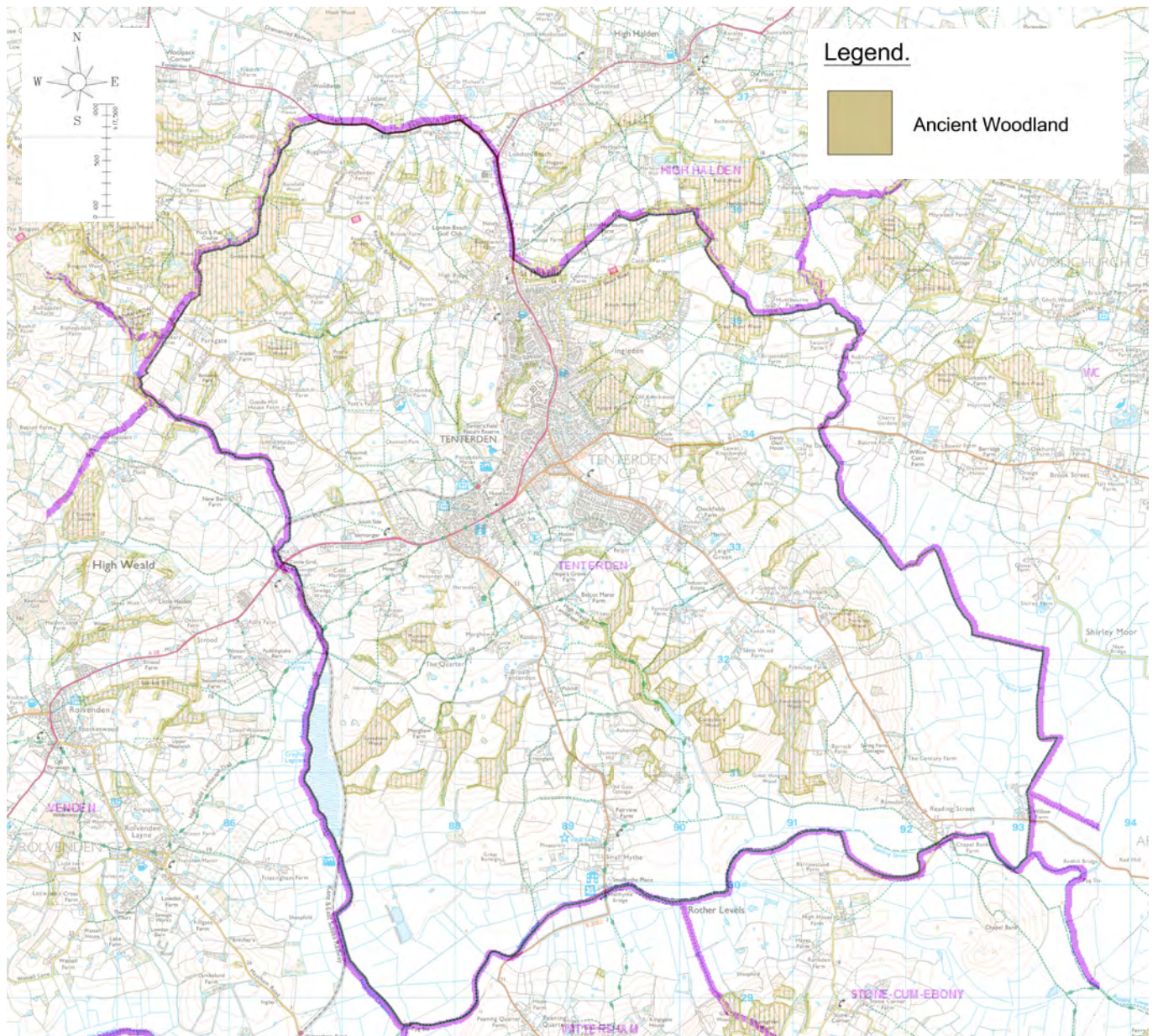
The Assessment concludes that Landscape Character Area 23 (Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands) is in good condition and has moderate sensitivity. The good condition and moderate sensitivity of this landscape results in the overall guideline to conserve and reinforce the rural and enclosed landscape including the intimate small scale field pattern as well as conserving and appropriately managing and reinforcing woodland, the strong matrix of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, field ponds and slow flowing streams. It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to conserve and, where possible, reinforce such features.

*Character Area 13:
Biddenden and High Halden Farmlands*

The Ashford Landscape Character Assessment, 2009 identifies the key characteristics of the Biddenden and High Halden Farmlands as:

- Undulating landscape
- Mixed farmland with agricultural intensification providing loss of hedgerows and small-scale field pattern
- Equestrian land use
- Frequent field ponds, narrow streams and sedges
- Busy A roads with ribbon development provide an urbanising effect
- Frequent scattered farms and manors

The small area of Character Area 13 (Biddenden and High Halden Farmlands) within the Plan area is in moderate condition and has moderate sensitivity which results in the guideline for the area to conserve and improve the landscape including the intimate small scale field pattern, woodland, hedgerows and hedgerow trees, field ponds and slow flowing streams. It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to conserve and, where possible, enhance such features.



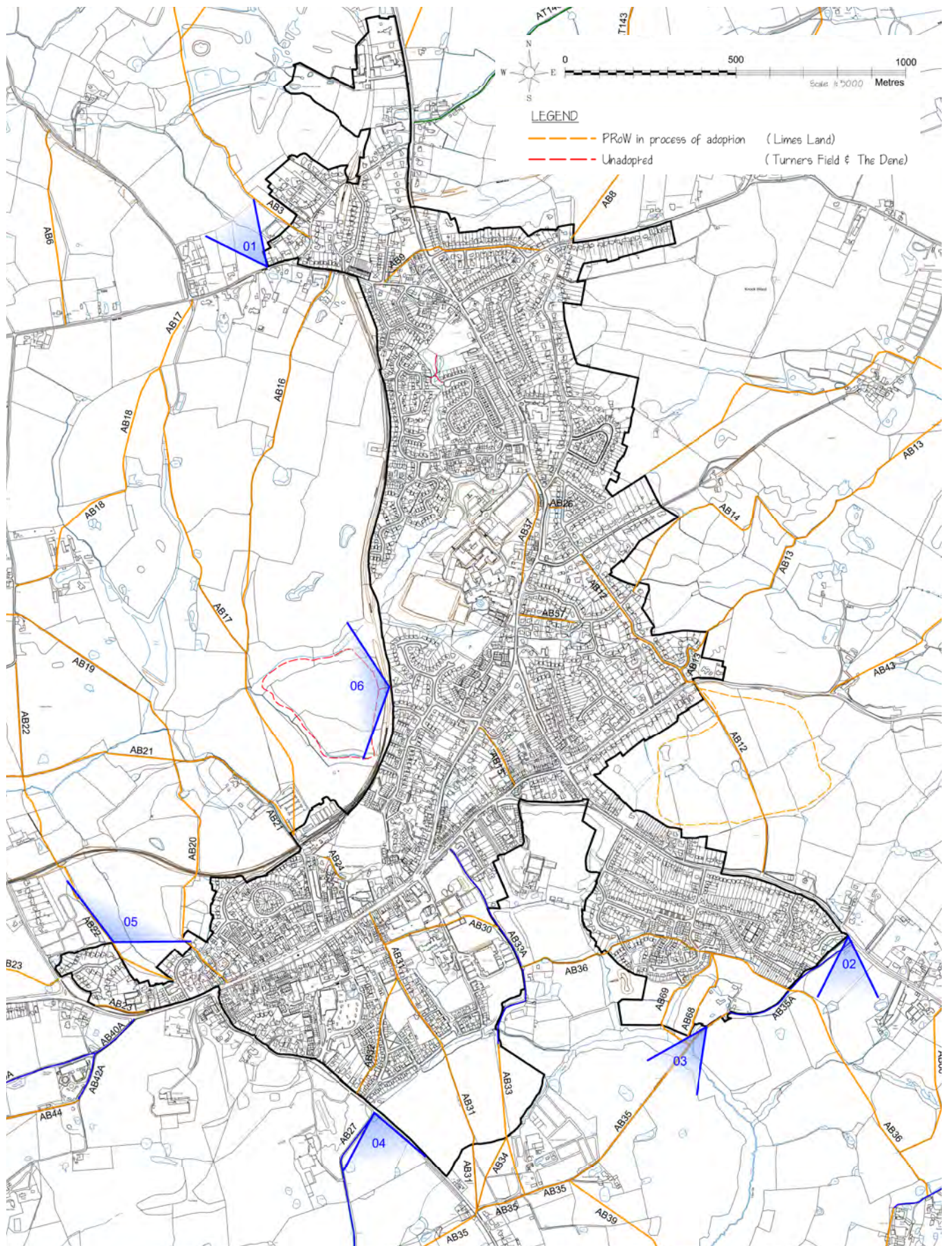
Map 5: Ancient Woodland

Ancient Woodland

The NPPF states that planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland, and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland.

The Parish contains significant blocks of ancient woodland, particularly immediately to the north and north east of Tenterden's built up confines (see Map 5), as well as a number of veteran trees which contribute to the character of the countryside.

In accordance with the Framework, these important areas of ancient woodland and veteran trees are protected in the Neighbourhood Plan.



Important Public Views (from the Urban Confines Boundary)

Section 5 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Important Public Views

It is recognised that there are a significant number of views across the beautiful High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which covers most of the Parish, and within and across the landscape of the Low Weald. It is impossible to list them all. Rather, it is important to protect and enhance the character and natural beauty of the countryside more generally whilst protecting the footpaths which allow access to it.

Nevertheless, one of the distinctive features of Tenterden is the visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside from public places. Thus, the focus of the Important Public Views is on those [views of the countryside from Tenterden which contribute to local character and amenity](#). It is important to distinguish between protecting all views - just because they provide a view of the countryside - and protecting public views which play an important role in relation to the character of the area and local heritage, for example views which are:

- a) Important to the character and/or setting of the Tenterden or St Michaels Conservation Area
- b) Important view of landmark feature such as a listed building; important woodland feature; a traditional orchard or a wide panorama of the AONB
- c) In addition to a) and b), valued by local residents

Such views play an important role in defining the distinctive character of the town and the designated Conservation Areas and residents are keen for them to be retained.

The identified Important Public Views of the countryside from the built up confines of Tenterden are shown in Map 6 and the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maintain these distinctive views.

Dark Skies

Paragraph 125 of the NPPF identifies the importance of minimising the impact of light pollution, stating "by encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation."

Ashford Local Plan Policy ENV4 - Pollution and Promoting Dark Skies states that proposals will be permitted provided that the lighting proposed is the minimum appropriate for its purpose.

The High Weald has some of the darkest skies in the South East. Dark skies at night are one of the special and intrinsic qualities of the rural landscape around Tenterden. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to retain the dark skies and low level of light pollution around Tenterden in order to preserve the characteristic night landscape of the High and Low Wealds.

Tranquillity

The tranquil landscape around Tenterden offers those who live within the town and visitors a peaceful environment away from the bustle of the town and noise-generating features such as roads.

Visit Southeast England describes Tenterden as an 'idea of a typical country town and surrounded by Kent's tranquil countryside'.

The National Character Assessment (NCA) Low Weald and AONB High Weald Management Plan demonstrate the importance of tranquillity and the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maintain the tranquillity of these areas around Tenterden in order to preserve one of the characteristic qualities of the countryside.

Development in the Countryside

The growth of Tenterden will be facilitated by the development of Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B which is allocated in the Ashford Local Plan 2030. The planning strategy is to focus new housing development within this strategic allocation and the defined built up confines of Tenterden. In addition, the Ashford Local Plan, 2030, Policy HOU2 allows for local needs housing on exception sites and Policy HOU5 permits suitable residential development on sites adjoining or close to the existing built up confines of Tenterden. Finally, the NPPF and Local Plan policies allow the following types of development in the countryside.

- rural worker accommodation
- re-use of redundant or disused buildings
- residential development that is of exceptional quality or innovative design
- a replacement dwelling
- use of a heritage asset
- conversion of suitable rural buildings to business or tourist use

The high quality and sensitivity of the landscape around Tenterden and its importance to residents and visitors alike mean that without careful planning, the distinctive landscape character would be under threat from development of an inappropriate scale, location or design. It is important that any development allowed by the NPPF, Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan is carefully controlled to ensure the landscape and its distinctive features are retained and, where possible, enhanced.

Policy TEN NP1 – Protection of Landscape Character

Outside of the built up confines of Tenterden, as defined in Map 2, a proposal for development will only be supported where it would:

- a) conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting and demonstrate a positive contribution to the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan;
- b) retain the landscape character of, and not have a detrimental impact on, the area of Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands valued landscape defined on Map 4;
- c) retain the distinctive landscape features of Biddenden and High Halden Farmlands and, Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands defined on Map 4;
- d) maintain the dark skies and low level of light pollution around Tenterden;
- e) protect and, where possible, enhance ancient woodland as defined on Map 5 and protect aged or veteran trees;
- f) maintain the tranquillity of the area; and
- g) maintain the distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built up confines, in particular those defined on Map 6;

In addition to Policy TEN NP1, development at edge of town locations should also comply with Policy TEN NP4 - Design of New Development and Conservation which requires development to follow the Tenterden Design Code Design Principles.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the tranquillity of the countryside.	No deterioration in the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting or the tranquillity of the countryside through inappropriate development.
Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands landscape shown on Map 4	No deterioration in landscape character of Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands as a result of development.
Biddenden and High Halden Farmlands and, Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands landscape shown on Map 4	No loss of distinctive landscape features of Biddenden and High Halden Farmlands and Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands as a result of development.
Views	No partial or complete loss of identified views as a result of development.
Ancient woodland	No loss of ancient woodland as a result of development.

Local Green Spaces

The NPPF states that the designation of land as Local Green Space through neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services.

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is: a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. Local Green Space designation has the effect of restricting development, potentially beyond the end of the Neighbourhood Plan period of 2030.

Sites within the built up confines, or within 300m of this defined boundary, were considered accessible on foot to the local area and therefore in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve.

Only sites which had public access through one or more Public Rights of Way (PRoW) or permissive landowner agreement were selected.

In judging whether a potential LGS was local in character and not an extensive tract of land, the character of the site was assessed to ensure it was self-contained with clearly defined edges and of an intimate character. No site exceeds 20.26ha.

Sites used for sports and recreation open space such as sports fields and children’s play spaces were excluded as they were covered by Policy TEN NP14 which seeks to retain the open space but allows for some alteration of those spaces if required in line with Local Plan Policy COM2 - Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces.

Similarly open land within the immediate confines of community facilities such as schools, medical centres and hospitals, scout/cadet huts, consecrated cemeteries or places of worship was excluded so as not to compromise any necessary future changes required by those organisations. For the same reasons, residential gardens were excluded.

In order to begin to assess whether green spaces within and around Tenterden were considered demonstrably special to the local community the public were asked to name their favourite green space without prompting at a launch public exhibition in May 2019. 13 of those now proposed for designation were put forward as demonstrably special to the local community at the

launch meeting. The only site not suggested at that time was Bells Lane Allotments.

Fourteen sites are proposed for designation as Local Green Spaces within the Regulation 14

Neighbourhood Plan in order to prompt responses from local residents, stakeholders and landowners alike. The sites are listed below and their location is shown on Map 7.

LGS Ref No.	Local Green Space
A	Coever Orchard
B	The Dene
C	Old Knockwood
D	Limes Land
E	Turners Field
F	Coombes Field
G	East Cross Gardens
H	Coombe Lane Cemetery
I	West Cross Lane Field
J	Westwell Park
K	High Street Lawns
L	Millennium Gardens
M	Bells Lane Allotments
N	Kiln Field

Six smaller sites are located within the town’s built up confines and provide a contrast to the dense development at the centre of the town and a refuge from the bustle of the town.

Tenterden has a largely linear form and an element of its character derives from the proximity of the countryside to the historic core of the town. Eight larger proposed Local

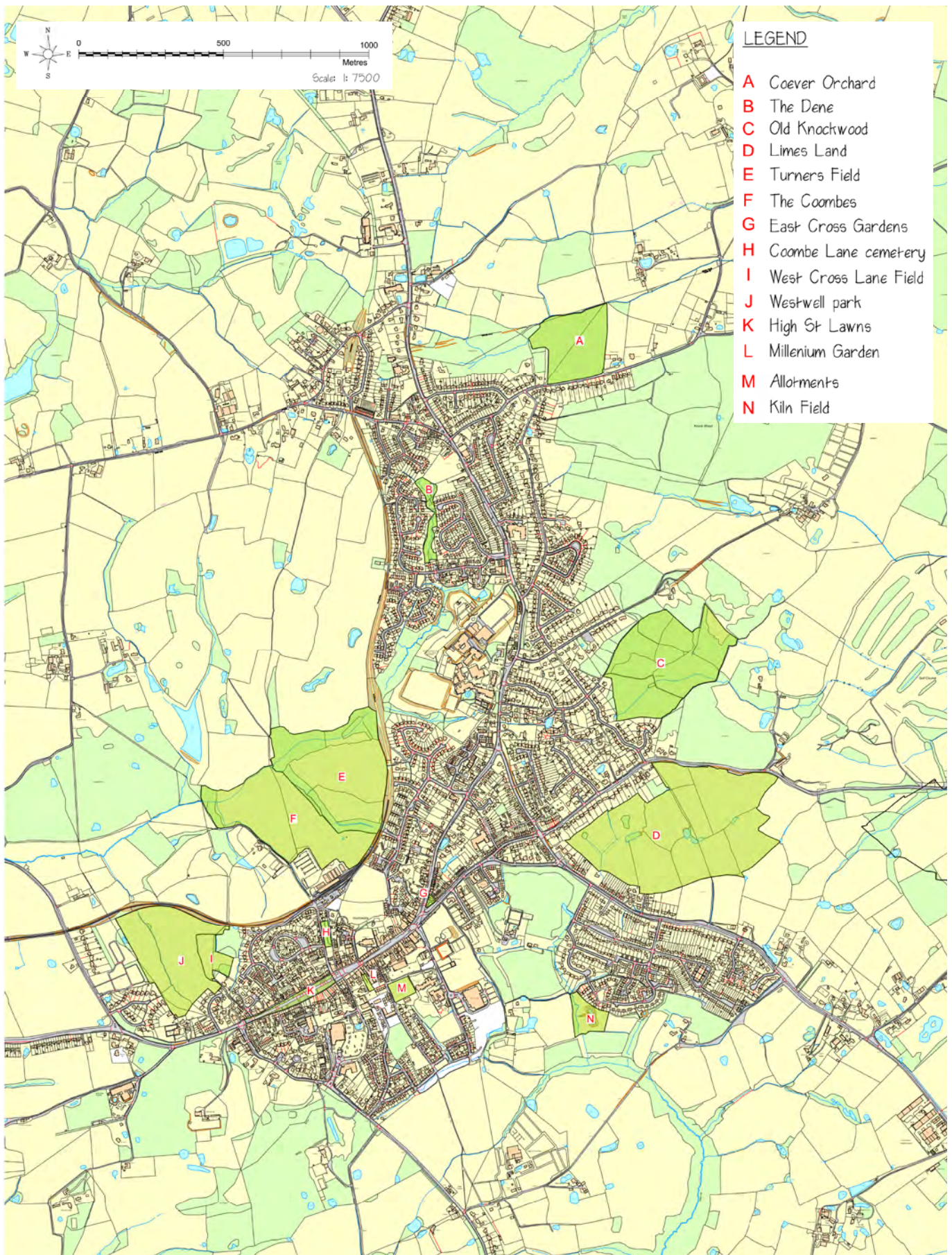
Green Space sites about the built up area of different parts of the town - close to the populations they serve. Two of these sites are designated as Local Wildlife Sites and two as Nature Reserve. One site represents one of the remaining two traditional orchards in the Parish. Two sites are within the High Weald AONB, whilst others contribute to its landscape setting.

Policy TEN NP2 – Protection of Local Green Spaces

Sites are designated as Local Green Spaces as defined on Map 7.

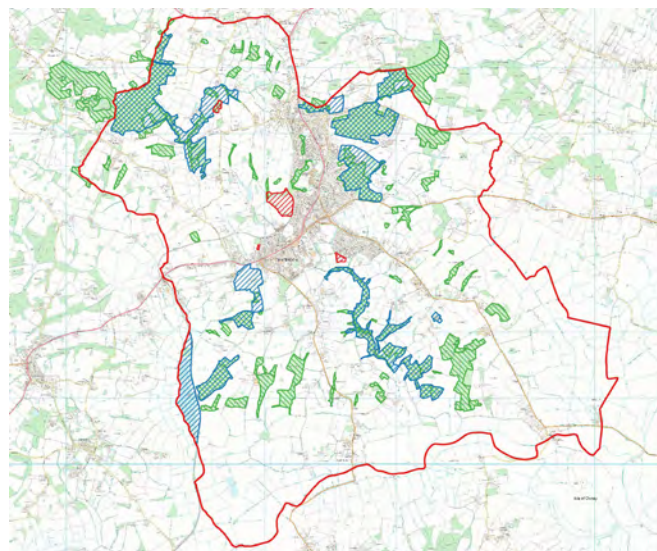
Proposals for development at the sites identified on Map 7 as designated Local Green Spaces will be considered in line with national planning policy on Green Belts.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of Local Green Spaces lost due to development.	No Local Green Space lost.

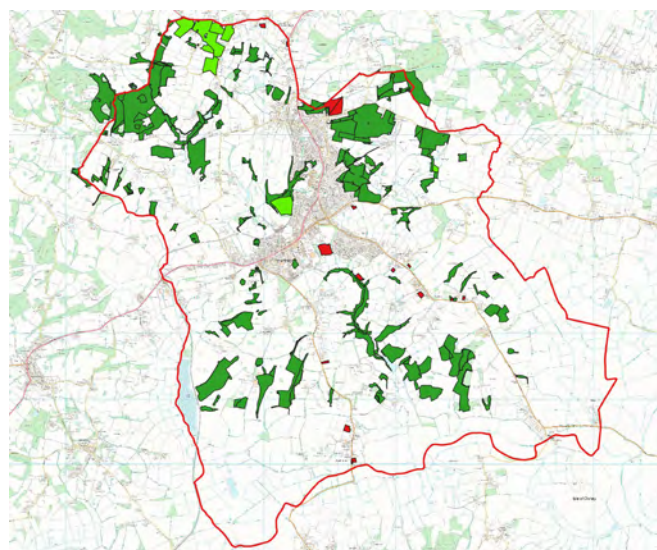


Map 7: Location of Local Green Spaces

Biodiversity



Map 8: Designated sites and ancient woodland



Map 9: Sites identified within the Priority Habitats Inventory (source Natural England)



Para 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that:

To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them, and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and

b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

The Environment Bill, which is likely to become law in 2021, will introduce a mandatory approach to biodiversity net gain which would require developers to ensure habitats for wildlife are enhanced, with a minimum 10% increase in habitat value for wildlife compared with the pre-development baseline. In addition there is expected to be a new statutory requirement for Local Nature Recovery Strategies. These strategies will help to map out important habitats and opportunities for the local environment to be improved.

Ashford Local Plan, 2030 Policy ENV1 states that proposals that conserve or enhance biodiversity will be supported and that proposals for new development should identify and seek opportunities to incorporate and enhance biodiversity. In particular, development should take opportunities to help connect and improve the wider ecological networks. Also that the Local Plan supports the aims and objectives of the Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy 2020-2045 as they relate specifically to the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) of the Borough to ensure that the priority habitats and species of each BOA are conserved and enhanced in new development. Opportunities for the management, restoration and creation of habitats in line with the opportunities identified for the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) and objectives for priority habitats and priority species as set out in the Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy will be supported.

Within the Parish there are 10 Local Wildlife Sites, four Private Nature Reserves and substantial areas of ancient woodland (see Map 8) together with large areas of Priority Habitats of Ancient and Deciduous Woodland, Traditional Orchard and Good Quality Semi-Improved Grassland (see Map 9).

In addition to the designated wildlife sites and priority habitats, one of the qualifying criteria for Local Green Spaces is the richness of its wildlife. All of the sites proposed to be designated in this Neighbourhood Plan provide wildlife habitats and are separately protected by Policy TEN NP2.

A number of rare and protected species have been identified in the Parish, including 34 birds on the British Trust for Ornithology's Red and Amber lists for highest conservation protection, [26 Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy Priority Species and recent returns to the Parish of nightingales, native polecats, purple emperor butterflies, ravens and red kites.](#)

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Sites of habitat importance and protected species	No loss of Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland, Nature Reserves and sites identified within the Priority Habitats Inventory or of protected species.
Habitats for wildlife on development sites	A minimum 10% increase in biodiversity value for wildlife compared with the pre-development baseline.

Policy TEN NP3 – Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity

Proposal for development will only be supported where they would:

- a) not have a significant impact on, or promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of, local wildlife-rich habitats including Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland, Nature Reserves and sites identified within the Priority Habitats Inventory as defined on Maps 8 and 9, and wider ecological networks which act as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife including water features, ditches, ponds and hedgerows;
- b) avoid an adverse impact on protected species;
- c) enhance habitats for wildlife on site, with a minimum 10% increase in habitat value for wildlife compared with the pre-development baseline;
- d) incorporate and integrate features of biodiversity interest into development proposals and maintain appropriate buffer zones;
- e) retain adequate separation between veteran or ancient trees, groups of trees or hedgerows and the proposed development so as to secure their long-term retention and allow for their growth and development; and
- f) provide new tree planting, Priority Habitats, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (such as mixed native hedges, wildlife ponds, bird nesting and bat roosting features) wherever practicable.

In exceptional circumstances where loss of biodiversity resulting from development is unavoidable and all alternatives have been explored on-site, off-site biodiversity offsetting must ensure that appropriate net gain for biodiversity is achieved, and adequate mitigation and compensation is provided for the benefit of priority habitats and species and local nature recovery initiatives pursued by the community.

High Quality Design

The NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Sustainable development involves achieving positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including replacing poor design with better design. One of the Government's core planning principles is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. The NPPF expects local planning authorities or neighbourhood plans to develop a local design code, taking account of the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code, 2021.

The adopted Ashford Borough Local Plan attaches great importance to the quality of design in new development. Policy SP6 - Promoting High Quality Design seeks high quality designs which demonstrate how they have responded positively to national and local design policy and guidance, including that included within Neighbourhood Plans.

Heritage

Tenterden has a rich and distinctive heritage as one of the historic 'dens' formed along Jutish droveways that opened the area up to farming by the fattening of stock on rich woodland grazings. By the 9th Century Tenterden comprised a series of noble Saxon estates and a church. The town grew significantly as a centre for the wool trade from the 13th to 16th Century benefiting from direct access to the sea from Smallhythe port.

The centre of Tenterden has a special character which is today reflected in the medieval layout, narrow building frontages with deep burgage plots and successive styles of architecture including medieval half-timbered buildings. During the 18th and 19th Centuries Georgian and Victorian houses (faced with brick, tiles or weather-boarding), public houses, churches and shops grew in the centre of town.

St Michaels was known as Boresisle almost certainly back to Saxon times meaning "the hill of the watchman of the borough", along which ran a Roman road linking the ironworks area of the south Weald to the Roman road to Canterbury and Port Lympne. Historically a farming-based community there are still several buildings, notably Briton House and Marshall's Farm, which date back to the 1500's. Houses such as Laurel Cottage and the Old Malt House date from the 1700's and they were joined by properties for the agricultural workers, notably St Michaels Terrace on Grange Road, dating to the 1870's. St Michaels was built in 1863.

There are about 120 Grade 2 listed buildings of historical and architectural importance in the town, many in Tenterden High Street, and these are representative of the style current at the time of construction.

The historic areas of Tenterden, St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street are designated as Conservation Areas for their special architectural and historic character.

The heritage of the designated Conservation Areas provides an important context for new development.

Landscape

Each area outside of the town's built up confines has its own distinct landscape character.

Much of the area to the west and south of Tenterden is designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The AONB has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The AONB Management Plan seeks to ensure that the natural beauty, special character and the vitality of its communities are recognised, maintained and strengthened.

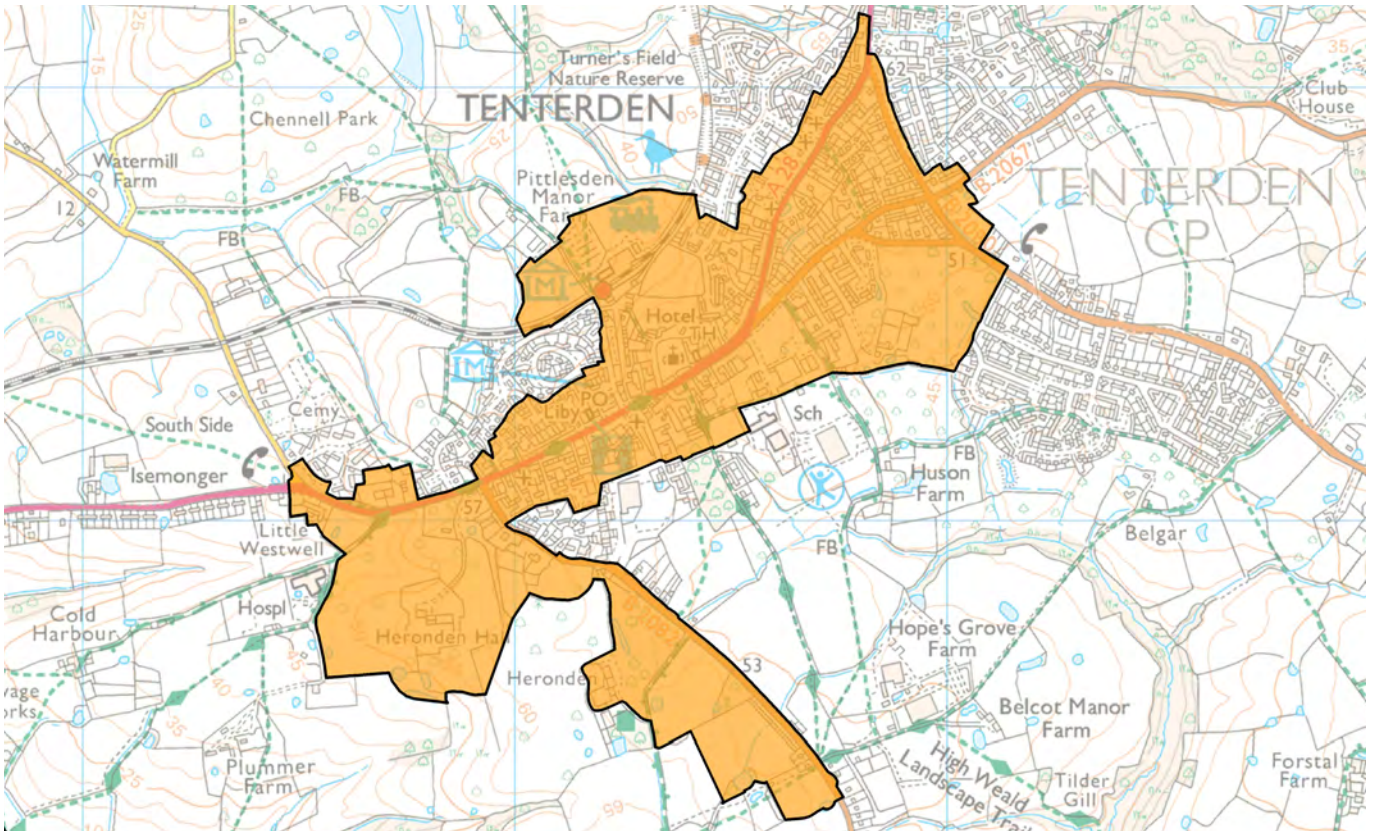
The Ashford Landscape Character Assessment, 2009, assesses the key characteristics, condition and sensitivity of landscape situated outside the AONB and identifies four Landscape Character Areas within the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan contains a specific policy to protect and enhance the character of the Tenterden landscape (Policy TEN NP1).

New development must be well integrated into the existing heritage and landscape through designs sensitive to their context.

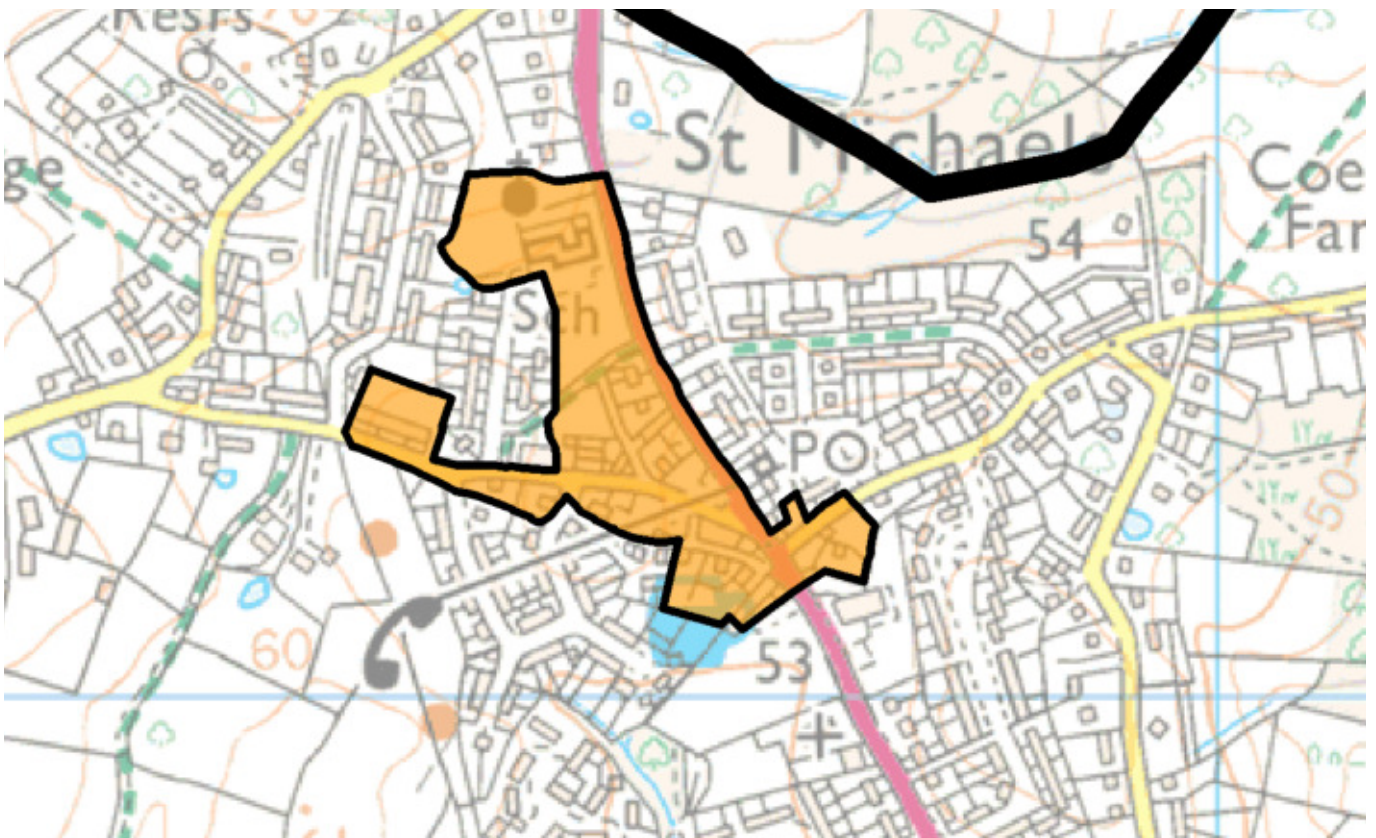
Design of New Development and Conservation

The Neighbourhood Plan attaches great importance to preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the four Conservation Areas, together with other heritage assets, and their setting. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect valued landscapes and successfully integrate any development which is permitted within it.

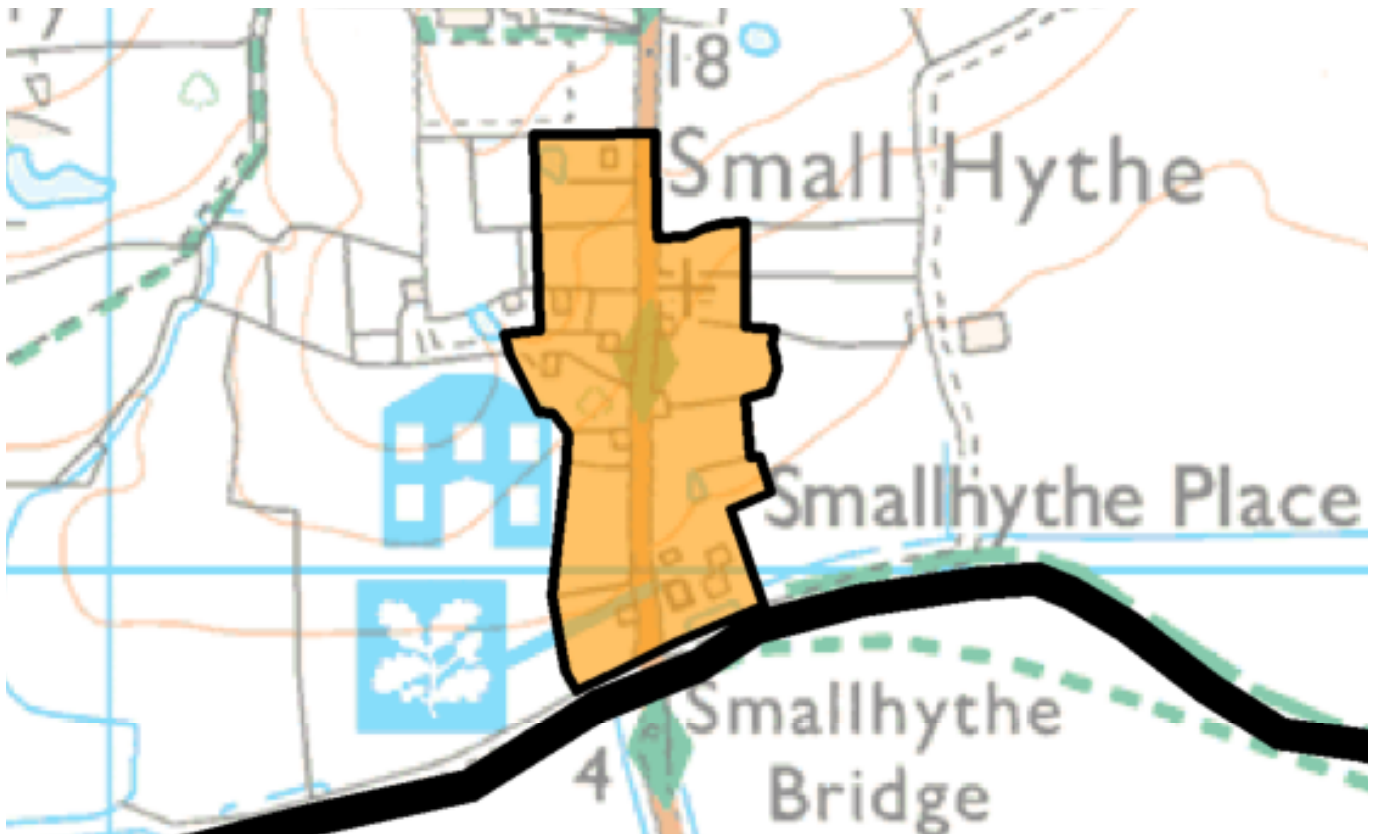
At the edge of town, Tenterden is undergoing a period of expansion to the south: Tenterden Southern Extension Phase A has already been constructed and Phase B with the indicative capacity of 225 dwellings is allocated in the Ashford Local Plan 2030. Other locations may come forward at the edge of town through Ashford Local Plan Policies HOU2 (exception sites for local needs housing) and HOU5 (residential windfall development in the countryside). Finally, longer term allocations through a Local Plan review may also be at the edge of the town but, by definition, the sites are not known at this stage.



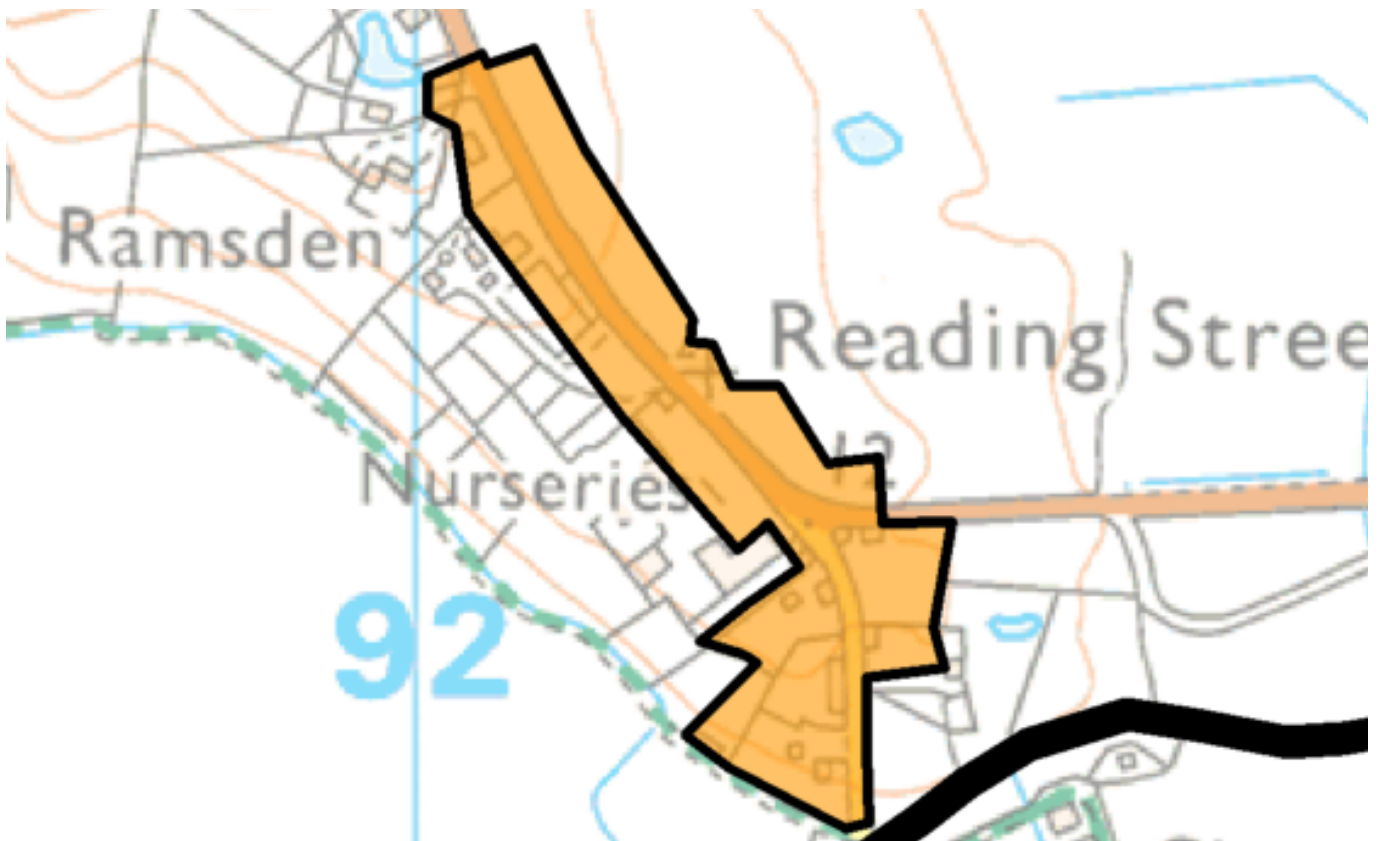
Map 10: Tenterden Conservation Area



Map 11: St Michaels Conservation Area



Map 12: Smallhythe Conservation Area



Map 13: Reading Street Conservation Area

In order to provide a framework for creating distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design in edge of town locations, the Neighbourhood Plan incorporates a Design Code (see Appendix 1). It is intended that the Design Code become an integral part of the Neighbourhood Plan and be given weight in the planning process. The Government intends to make it clear that decisions on design should be made in line with the Design Code.

Following an analysis of the town and good practice, those elements of good design which have been successful in edge of town locations are set out clearly within the Design Code as Design Principles which all development in such locations in Tenterden should follow.

The Design Code also focuses on providing further guidance for the Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B in particular. The Neighbourhood Plan contains a specific policy regarding this site (Policy TEN NP8).

This Design Code does not focus on windfall sites elsewhere in the Plan area which will need to carefully respect their setting. This will extend to the immediately adjacent buildings or, in the case of the Tenterden, St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street Conservation Areas, to a wider area. For such sites, reference should be made to relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies, the Kent Design Guide, the High Weald Housing Design Guide, 2019, Ashford Borough Council's Sustainable Design SPD, 2012 and the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans when adopted.

The height, scale, density, layout, orientation, materials and design of buildings should reflect the context of the surrounding area. Development should result in an attractive and safe public realm. Roads and car parking areas should not dominate the area and boundary treatment to properties such as hedges or walls should reflect that used in the surrounding area.

Policy TEN NP4 applies to all types of development within the Neighbourhood Plan area and sets out the quality of development that will be expected for the area.

Policy TEN NP4 - Design of New Development and Conservation

New development in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan will be permitted where it:

- a) Is designed to a high quality which responds to the heritage and distinctive character of the individual area in which it is located by way of:
 - i. height, scale, density, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings,
 - ii. boundary treatment,
 - iii the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape);
- b) At edge of town locations, follows the Tenterden Design Code Design Principles
- c) Protects and enhances designated heritage assets and their setting; and
- d) Protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site;

Monitoring Indicators

Number of objections to the design of development from the Town Council.

Targets

No design objections from the Town Council to proposed developments.

Tenterden, St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street Conservation Areas

None of the Conservation Areas within the Plan area have a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAMP). Ashford Borough Council's Heritage Strategy, 2017 recommends progress with the delivery of new and updated CAMPS for all conservation areas in the borough which the Borough Council state they are taking forward. Such CAMPs would provide robust evidence for the determination of applications affecting the Conservation Areas of the town as well as the consideration of any changes to the public realm. CAMPs would record and define the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas and their setting and thus allow for a consistent assessment of whether development or redevelopment proposals would preserve or enhance this character and appearance as required by Ashford Local Plan Policy ENV14 - Conservation Areas. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks the early completion of these documents so that they may be used to assess development proposals and be cross-referenced in the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan policies. Tenterden Town Council is liaising with Ashford Borough Council to ensure prompt adoption of a CAMP for the Parishes Conservation Areas.

Tenterden Conservation Area

Tenterden Conservation Area comprises a series of connected yet distinctive character areas comprising streets, twittens and open spaces that make up the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area centres around a medieval layout of narrow frontages with deep burgage plots. The High Street is a distinctive, historic linear street. St Mildred's Church is centrally placed yet set slightly back from the current main street and screened by the buildings of the Shambles. This feature evolved from a permanent market area created some time before three temporary shops illicitly encroached on the High Street in 1272. St Mildred's Church is an important landmark building which appears in many vistas from within the Conservation Area as well as views from the surrounding countryside.

The linear plan of the High Street has a number of distinctive character areas. At the centre it narrows to about 15 metres whilst to the west it dramatically widens to around 60 metres at The Lawns with broad grass verges and a fine avenue of trees either side. At this point, the deep front gardens of properties to the south of the High Street accentuate this spacious, verdant character. This widening effect is also apparent to the east of the centre, and opens into East Cross Gardens.

The narrow twittens, such as Eastwell Meadows twitten, Coombe Lane and The Lawns twittens, and yards such as Weavers Yard are important to the character of the

conservation area and form a very distinctive element of the town centre.

In contrast to the tightly developed streets, yards and twittens, a number of open spaces, often with substantial groups of trees such as The Glebe, are very important to the character of the Conservation Area.

The following Local Green Spaces are proposed within the Conservation Area:

- The Lawns
- East Cross Gardens
- Bells Lane Allotments
- Coombe Lane Cemetery
- Millennium Garden

The rural fringes of the Conservation Area around the railway station and along Smallhythe Road together with substantial listed buildings set within large grounds (Hales Place and Heronden Hall) provide areas of further contrast to the built up centre.

Buildings within the Conservation Area are generally 2 storeys high (often with dormer windows), with occasional 3 storeys buildings providing additional scale and variety. The predominant materials are white painted weatherboarding or render alongside red/orange brick or hanging tiles.

St Michaels Conservation Area

St Michaels is centred around The Point, where the Crown, the wheelwrights and the blacksmith's forge were situated at the fork between Ashford Road and Grange Road, stretching up the narrow Pavements to the horse pond, now the site of the Village Hall.

Early houses, such as Laurel Cottage and the Old Malt House, date from the 1700's and were joined by properties for the agricultural workers, notably St Michaels Terrace on Grange Road, dating to the 1870's.

The properties are generally modest two storey buildings reflecting their original function as agricultural workers dwellings. Houses in larger gardens extend along the south side of Grange Road.

St Michaels church (including its spire) is an important landmark building which appears in vistas from within the Conservation Area as well as views from the surrounding countryside.

Smallhythe Conservation Area

St John the Baptist Church (a prominent building in the Conservation Area and the wider landscape), Priest House and Smallhythe Place date from 15th Century whilst other listed buildings on the west of Smallhythe Road date from the 18th Century. The settlement lies in open countryside and is well screened by mature trees and vegetation which line the main road. Gaps between buildings are important in allowing views of open countryside.

Reading Street Conservation Area

St Mary's Church and Ebony Cottage date from the 15th century, with the other listed buildings dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. There has been very little modern development with the exception of a garden centre. The settlement lies in open countryside and is generally loose-knit along Appledore Road, becoming more compact at the junction with, and along, Reading Street. Buildings in Reading Street are well screened with mature trees and hedges.

Overall, the quality of the environment and the importance of the town centre to the whole of Tenterden and its visitors mean that it is vital to preserve and enhance the character of the Tenterden Conservation Area and its setting. Similarly, the character of the historic centres of St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street should be preserved and enhanced. In addition to Policy TEN NP4 - Design of New Development and Conservation, development in the Conservation Areas will be expected to comply with Policy TEN NP5 - Tenterden, St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street Conservation Areas and their setting.

Policy TEN NP5 – Tenterden, St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street Conservation Areas and their setting

Development within the Tenterden and St Michaels Conservation Areas, as defined on Maps 10 - 13, and their setting will be permitted where it:

- a) Is designed to a high quality and preserves and enhances the character of the conservation area and its setting;
- b) Retains those buildings and other features, including trees and hedges, which make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area;
- c) Protects open spaces and vistas important to the character and setting of the area;
- d) Maintains the character and alignment of twittens, yards and The Pavement; and
- e) Where appropriate, makes provision for the enhancement measures.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of objections to the design of development in Tenterden, St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street Conservation Areas from the Town Council.	No design objections from the Town Council to proposed developments in Tenterden, St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street Conservation Areas.

Shop Fronts within Tenterden Conservation Area and its setting

The town's principal shopping streets, High Street and lanes either side, including Sayers Lane leading to Waitrose and Bridewell and Highbury Lanes leading to Tesco, are located within the Tenterden Conservation Area. Today the 'shop front' may provide the entrance to uses other than a shop such as a café, restaurant or bank and the policy applies to all types of premises in the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area contains many fine traditional shop fronts that are an important element in the townscape. The majority of shop fronts within the Conservation Area respect the building in which they are situated and the [character of the Conservation Area in terms of design, colour and signage](#). However, vigilance is needed to protect and enhance the character of the Conservation Area whilst recognising the importance of the continuing commercial role of the town centre.

Within the Conservation Area and its setting, priority will be given to the retention of architecturally or historically interesting traditional shop fronts. Adapting new shop fronts to modern needs can be achieved through sensitive design. Proposals for replacing existing shop fronts will only be allowed where the existing shop front has no particular architectural or historic quality in itself or does not contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. Where replacement is allowed, the design should respect not only the building but also the overall character of that part of the Conservation Area in which it is situated.

Shop fronts form an important element in the street scene, both individually and in terms of their collective impact. All elements of the shop front are important including the pilasters (defining the shop width), the fascia with signage and, potentially, the cornice (defining the top of the shop front) and the stall riser (providing a solid base).

The choice of materials to be used for a shop front should normally reflect the materials of the building in which it is situated. Use of local materials is preferred, including brick, tiles and plaster, with stained or painted wood. Plastic is generally inappropriate.

Mid-18th Century shop fronts were painted in a relatively restricted range of colours, using the pigments then available and such colours remain appropriate in reflecting the historic character. A shop front colour scheme should always be selected to harmonise with the upper floors of the building and the general street scene. A single colour is usually most appropriate but details might be picked out in a contrasting colour.

Shop front window and door patterns should reflect the traditional design of the area. The method of window sub-division should suit the character of the shop front and building. Smaller-paned designs appear in the High Street and are particularly appropriate to 18th and early 19th Century frontages.

Advertising within the Conservation Area is [generally restrained](#). Shop signs appear as painted lettering on fascia boards above the shop windows. Corporate signs are generally adapted to ensure that they are in keeping with the shop front.

Internally illuminated signs above shop fronts are generally out of character in the Conservation Area, or if attached to listed buildings. However, in some cases it may be considered appropriate to illuminate a sign with a small spotlight or some other subtle method of illumination. Painted fascia boards, particularly in wood, are preferred.

There are a limited number of traditional hanging signs above the ground floor. Hanging signs need to be carefully designed, to be correct in scale, with appropriate colours and lettering used, while still being easy to read. They should be safely positioned above the fascia of the shop front.

Excessive advertising defeats its own objective by creating a clutter of signs and destroying the common asset of an attractive, historic environment. However, given the important role of Tenterden town centre it is reasonable to permit some form of advertising, provided this can be incorporated without detriment to the visual amenities and character of the building or the area.

Proposals will be assessed against the criteria of the shop fronts and advertisement policy and also against Policy TEN NP5 – Tenterden, St Michaels, Smallhythe and Reading Street Conservation Areas and their setting.

Policy TEN NP6 - Shop Fronts and Advertisements within Tenterden Conservation Area and its setting

Proposals for new shop fronts, or alterations to existing shop fronts, will be permitted where the following criteria are satisfied:

- (a) The proposal would not result in the loss of a traditional shop front or features and details of architectural or historic interest;
- (b) The proposal would be in sympathy with the architectural style, materials and form of the building(s) of which it would form part and the character of the Conservation Area;
- (c) The shop front would be related to the width of the property or a logical vertical sub-division created by the upper storey; and
- (d) Where a fascia is to be applied, it would be of an appropriate height which would be in scale with the overall height of the shop front and other elements of the building and would not intrude over the first floor level.

An advertisement will be permitted where it would be designed, constructed and sited so as to preserve and enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and would not cause visual clutter in the street scene, or cause significant harm to the appearance of any building on which it would be displayed because of its size, design, construction or materials.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of traditional shop fronts in the Town Centre Conservation Area.	No traditional shop fronts lost in the Town Centre Conservation Area.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

The NPPF defines a heritage asset as: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape defined as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Heritage England advice supports local authorities and communities introducing a local heritage list in their area, and for Tenterden this is being compiled through the neighbourhood planning process.

An assessment of non-designated heritage assets within the Parish has been undertaken drawing on Local Heritage Listing, Historic England Advice Note 7 and based on existing published material. Using the following criteria, [a list of non-designated heritage assets has been identified](#):

- Social and community value
- Archaeological Interest
- Historical Association
- Designed Landscape Interest
- Landmarks
- Group Value
- Age or rarity

This research recognises elements of the historic environment not covered by formal designations, such as unlisted buildings, sites of archaeological or historic interest, and man-made landscape features such as earthworks. In practice the majority of such heritage assets are not designated either because they do not meet the criteria to warrant formal designation or because their value has not been fully assessed or understood.

The Ashford Heritage Strategy groups heritage assets under the following themes relevant to Tenterden Parish:

- Prehistory and Archaeology
- Farming and Farmsteads
- Routeways
- Ecclesiastical Heritage
- Industry and Commerce
- Invasion and Defence
- The Railway

The Neighbourhood Plan evidence has sought to identify and assess non-designated heritage assets within the Parish that are important to local history, identity and distinctiveness and that residents would like to recognise and protect. Appendix 2 contains 48 non-designated heritage assets ranging from the Cranbrook Road Level Crossing and Signal Box to the Royal Observer Corp Underground Monitoring Post in Chennell Park Road; from the Glebe Field to the drove way on Limes Land and from the Hop Gardens, Reader’s Bridge Road to Coever Orchard.

The NPPF recognises local listings as heritage assets which should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. The Framework states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining a planning application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Policy TEN NP7 - Non-designated Heritage Assets

Proposals should take into account the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset identified in Appendix 2 and wherever possible seek to protect the asset.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of non-designated heritage assets	No non-designated heritage asset lost.

Housing

Objectives

- To assimilate development of a scale which meets the environmental objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan
- To ensure that future development at Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B achieves a high quality design and layout and successfully integrates residential development with the character of this part of Tenterden, the features of the site and the wider landscape

Housing Policy

The 2011 Census identified 3,622 dwellings in Tenterden Parish. Since then, a further 334 dwellings have been completed, primarily within Phase A of the Tenterden Southern Extension (as at 31 March 2020 - source Ashford Borough Council) giving a total of 3,956 dwellings.

Further housing development is expected through planning permissions already granted for 172 dwellings at 31 March 2020 (source Ashford Borough Council). In addition, a further 32 dwellings were under construction in Phase A of the Tenterden Southern Extension.

Over the period since 2011, an average of 13 dwellings per annum have been completed in the Plan area on small scale windfall sites not specifically identified in the development plan (such as the conversion of rural buildings, small infill plots and the change of use of non-residential properties). Such opportunities continue to exist and it is reasonable to assume that these historic windfall delivery rates will continue during the Plan period from 2023/24. Prior to 2023/24 date there is a risk of double counting the windfall sites with planning permission and these early years are therefore excluded. Small scale windfall sites are therefore expected to contribute some 90 additional dwellings over the Plan period (13 dwellings x 7 years).

Finally, Ashford Local Plan, 2030 Policy S24 allocates Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B for residential development with an indicative capacity of 225 dwellings.

In summary, it can be seen that Tenterden is expected to grow to approximately 4475 dwellings by the end of the Plan period. This increase of over 500 dwellings will see a rise in population of approximately 1000 people – with consequent impacts on the physical, green and social infrastructure of the town.

Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B

Ashford Local Plan, 2030 Policy S24 allocates a strategic housing site south of the existing southern extension to the town (see Map T4 below) for residential development. The NPPF states that neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic housing sites contained in local plans.

Ashford Local Plan 2030 Policy S24 seeks:

- access from Smallhythe Road with links to the Phase A development
- a substantial woodland (incorporating wetland) belt to the south of the built development area within this site which shall be at least 20m in depth
- retention and, where possible, enhancement of existing hedges and natural watercourses and ponds on the site
- creation of pedestrian and cycleway routes through the site to link with the
- Phase A development, the town centre and existing public rights of way both on and off-site
- retention of views of St Mildred's Church
- creation of public open space that falls within this site's boundary, as part of the linear public open space that will run through the centre of both phases of the development, following the line of the existing stream

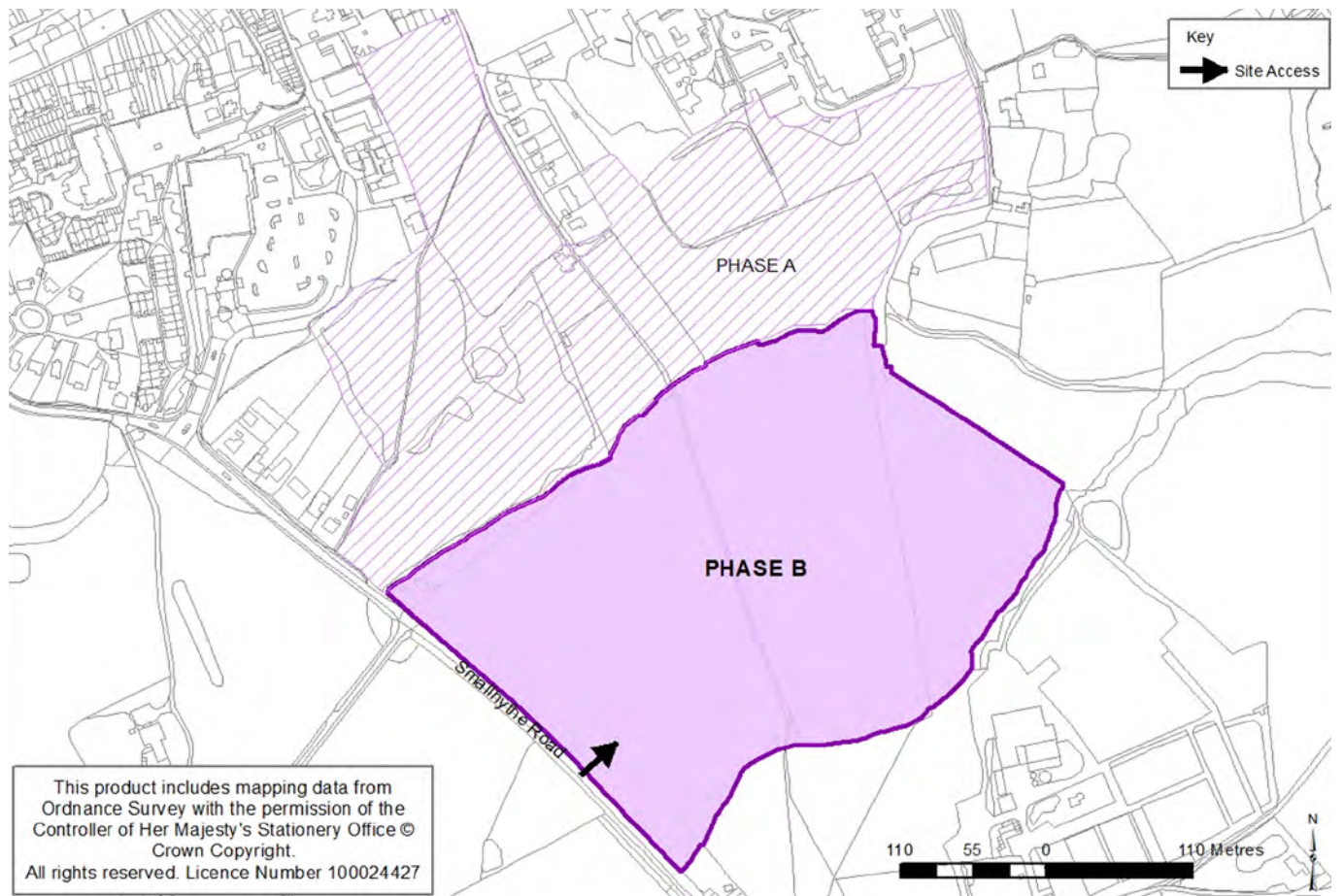
Development of this site shall be in accordance with a masterplan / development brief that has been submitted to and approved by the Borough Council. The masterplan / development brief is also required to define the extent, location and phasing of community infrastructure and employment land to be delivered both on and off-site.

In order to provide a framework for creating distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design in edge of town locations such as this strategic housing allocation, the Neighbourhood Plan incorporates a Design Code (see Appendix 1).

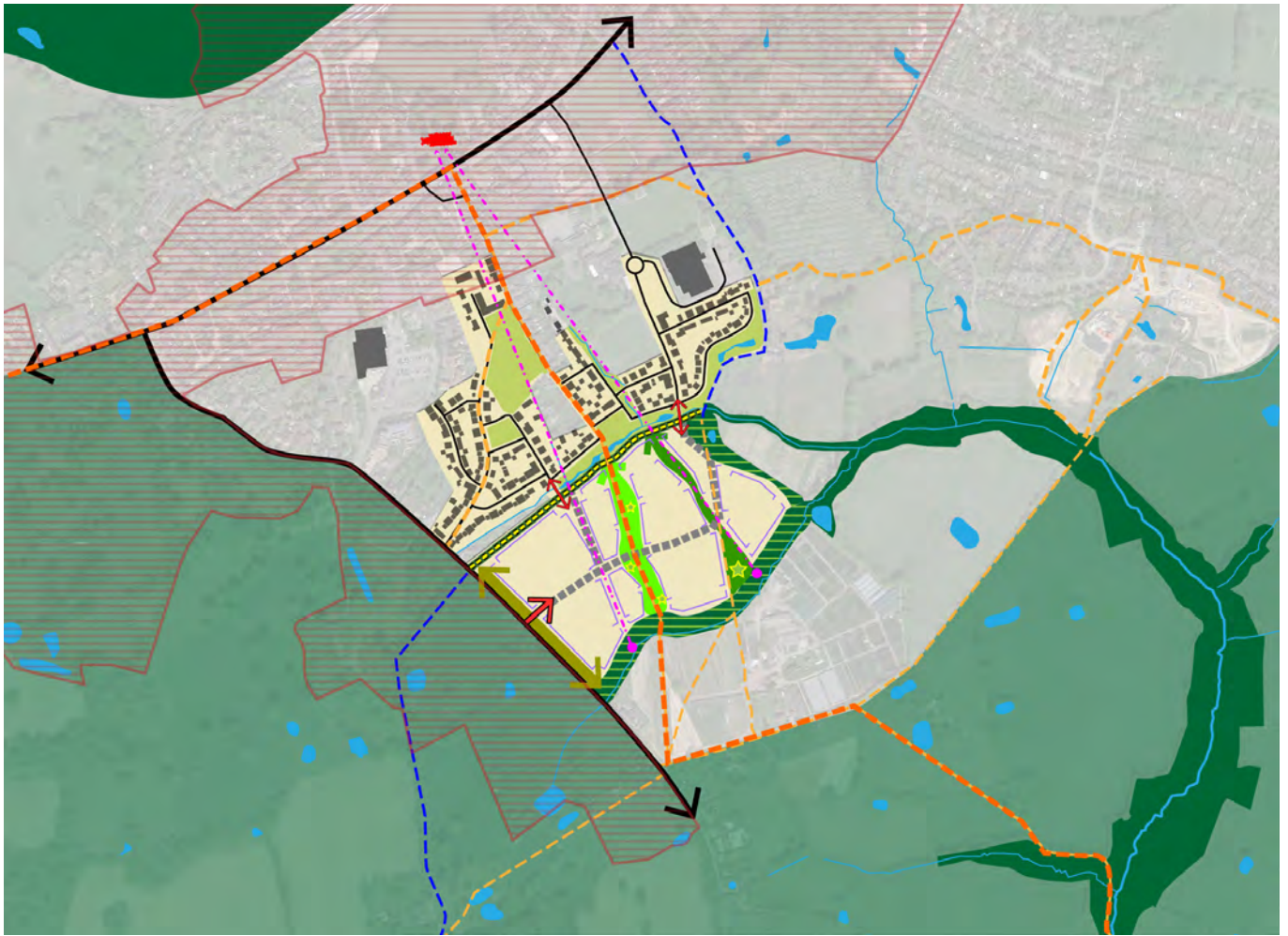
An analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B allocation site has been undertaken.

Hedgerows run along Smallhythe Road and the line of footpath AB31 and mature oak trees, hedgerow and stream form the south eastern boundary edge of the site and contribute to its character and biodiversity. Existing hedgerows and trees should be enhanced and integrated into proposed open spaces and the footpath network of the new development. A substantial woodland (incorporating wetland) belt should be planted along the south eastern boundary edge to enhance the existing natural features and habitats and conserve and enhance the setting of the High Weald AONB.






















Section 5 Neighbourhood Plan Policies



Map 14 - Policy S24: Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B site allocation - extract from Ashford Local Plan, 2030



Map 15 – Masterplan Framework for Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B

- KEY**
-  High Weald AONB
 -  Conservation Area
 -  Woodland
 -  Water
 -  Landmark
 -  Road network
 -  Public Footpath
 -  Byway
 -  High Weald Landscape Trail
 -  Key view lines to landmark
 -  Phase A green spaces
 -  Proposed Phase B principal sustainable routeway
 -  Proposed secondary green corridor
 -  Proposed woodland
 -  Proposed Phase B vehicular connection
 -  Proposed Phase B linear green space
 -  Proposed footpath connecting Byways AB33A and AB27
 -  Proposed Phase B building setback areas with planted hedge boundaries and trees and pedestrian link
 -  Proposed frontages
 -  Proposed main access
 -  Proposed dual access
 -  Key open spaces

Two public footpaths cross the site. Footpath AB31 links the site to the High Street to the north and the countryside to the south, forming part of the High Weald Landscape Trail. In addition, footpath AB33 heads north through Phase A becoming a restricted byway (Sandy Lane) and providing a link to Oaks Road. Policy TEN NP17 seeks to retain the provision, character and biodiversity of public rights of way through new development such as Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B and it is important to retain both these links to provide attractive sustainable routeways. The development of Phase B offers the opportunity to integrate footpath AB31 into a strategic green corridor linking the countryside through the site, connecting pedestrians and cyclists to the town centre as well as enhancing the biodiversity value of the routeway.

Direct access from the highway can be gained from Smallhythe Road. Phase A has reserved two vehicular and pedestrian access points along the northern boundary of the site and Phase B should link to these connection points to ensure permeability into the town centre.

The linear open space along the south edge of the Phase A is an important focal point for both Phases A and B. Phase B development should supplement and enhance this central green space of both phases.

The design of Phase A has ensured view corridors towards St Mildred’s Church are maintained and these views should be continued in Phase B to help create a sense of place and local character.

Ashford Local Plan Policy S24 already sets out a number of requirements for the Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B site allocation. In addition, the local site analysis and the application of the design principles from the Tenterden Design Code have been used to produce a number of Masterplan Principles (see Design Code Appendix 1) and Masterplan Framework for the site (see Map 13).

The Town Council will be closely involved in the masterplanning exercise for the allocated site in order to achieve a high quality development on the site which follows the Tenterden Design Code Design Principles and takes into account the masterplan framework.

Policy TEN NP8 - Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B

The Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B proposed masterplan for the overall development and any subsequent planning applications should take account of the Masterplan Principles and Framework from the Design Code, as illustrated on Map 15.

Additionally, development proposals should ensure that they follow the Design Principles from the Design Code in accordance with Policy TEN NP 4.

The Town Council will participate in the masterplanning work for the Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B site as set out in Policy S24 of the adopted Ashford Local Plan 2030.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B Development	Design principles met by new development

St. Michaels - Beechwood Farm

Ashford Local Plan, 2030 Policy S42 also allocates land at Beechwood Farm, St. Michaels for residential development of up to three dwellings provided certain criteria are met.

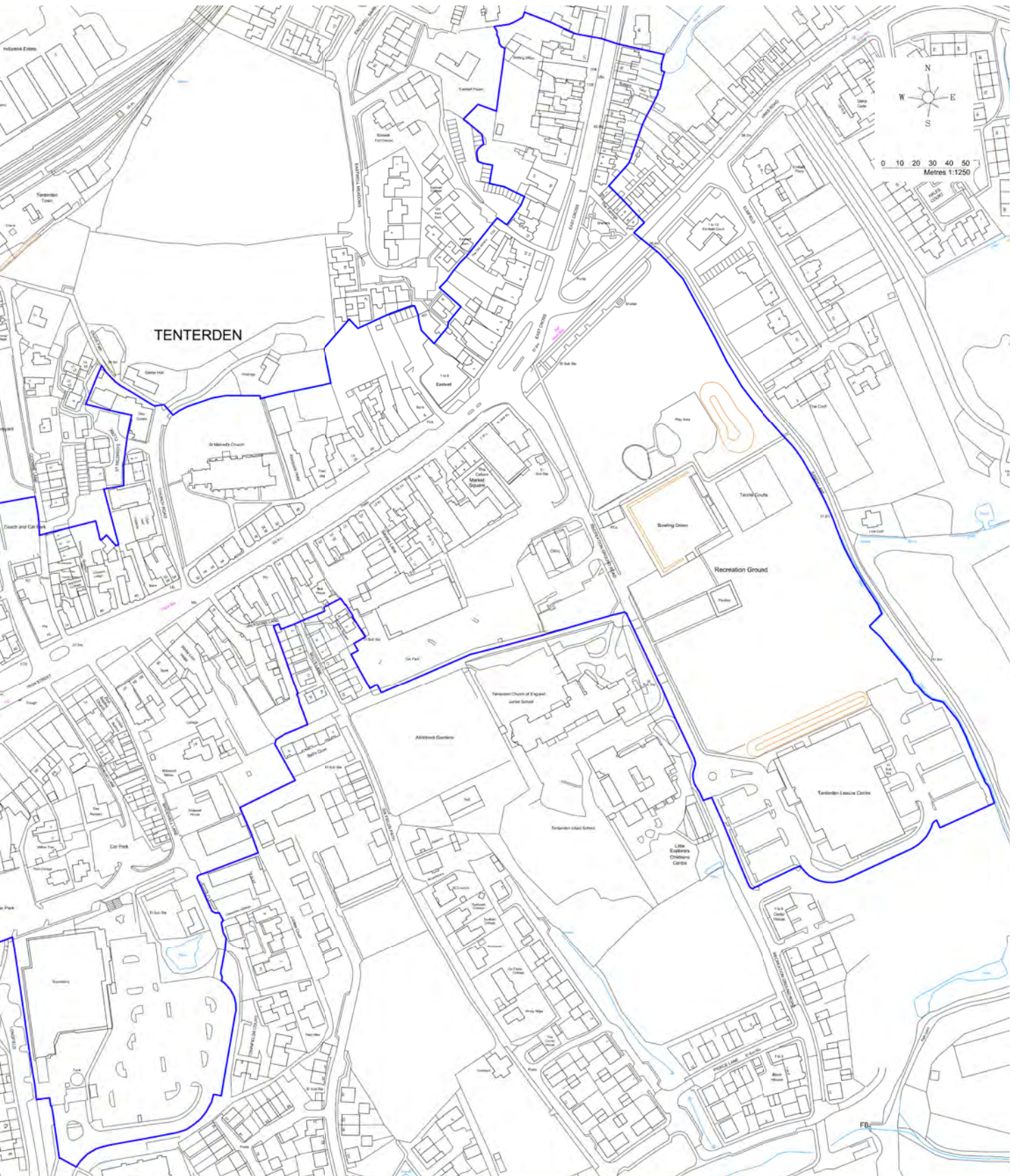
Affordable Housing

Within Tenterden Parish, 74% of households live in owner occupied properties, whilst 13% live in socially rented accommodation (source 2011 Census).

Ashford Local Plan, 2030 Policy HOU1 requires affordable housing to be provided within the residential development at Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B. The policy seeks 40% of all dwellings as subsidised affordable housing provision on-site. Subject to the final number of dwellings provided at this site, this could provide some 70 additional affordable homes within the Parish. The policy applies to any development of 10 dwellings or more (and on sites of 0.5 hectares or more).

Local Plan Policy HOU2 enables local needs housing as 'exceptions' to policies restraining housing development around Tenterden, subject to there being clear evidence of local need and a number of other criteria regarding scale, design and residential amenity being met. It is expected that all local needs/ specialist housing schemes will be delivered without the need to introduce private sector housing to cross-subsidise the affordable units.

The Local Plan policies will be applied in the Neighbourhood Plan area to add to the affordable housing stock over the Plan period.



Section 5 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The retail core is focused along the High Street and lanes either side, including Sayers Lane leading to Waitrose and Bridewell and Highbury Lanes leading to Tesco. There is a range of independent stores that were, until recently, complemented by a wide range of national fashion retailers. The frontages of properties within the central core of the High Street are designated as Primary Shopping Frontages in the Ashford Local Plan, 2030.

In common with other towns, the number of restaurants and cafés within the town centre has increased over recent years. The White Lion, Woolpack, William Caxton and Vine inns are located along the High Street and, together with restaurants, extend the vitality of the centre into the evening.

The historic centre attracts many visitors and The White Lion, Woolpack, William Caxton together provide 22 rooms for overnight accommodation.

Tenterden has a long tradition of markets which are part of the origins and character of the historic town centre. They add to the economic vitality of the centre with potential additional social and environmental benefits. The general market now comprises four or five stalls outside the Town Hall with a new privately-owned covered [Friday market in 'Market Square' south of the High Street typically comprising five food stalls](#).

Tenterden's centrally located recreation ground and adjoining Leisure Centre contribute to the vitality of the town centre and more detail of existing and proposed facilities is included within the Leisure, Health and Wellbeing section of the Plan.

The off street car parks play an important role in ensuring access to the centre from the rural catchment area on which the town centre draws.

The town centre boundary has been defined in the Neighbourhood Plan around this [range of principal facilities](#) and is shown in Map 16.

The Ashford Borough Retail Needs and Leisure Assessment, June 2015, concludes that Tenterden town centre performs strongly in its role as a rural market town. Its relative isolation from Ashford town centre allows the centre to maintain a strong local catchment, particularly for convenience shopping. The focus on niche retail and the visitor/tourist market also helps to support the centre and maintain its attractiveness as a place to visit and shop.

The needs assessment calculated that Tenterden town centre had a forecast capacity for new comparison goods floorspace (eg clothes and furniture) of 1,122m² net by 2030 and no capacity for convenience goods floorspace (eg food) over the Plan period.

Since this report, challenges to traditional retail high streets have grown significantly. The 2020 pandemic has accelerated a shift to on-line shopping, leading to the loss of a number of the national chains as well as independent stores and a vacancy rate in excess of

10% including in prime locations. There are a number of new retailers establishing in the town centre which is a positive development but a number of retail buildings away from the prime locations towards West Cross are to be converted to residential use. It is likely that the projected need for comparison goods floorspace will be absorbed by increased on-line shopping. Overall, it is unlikely that there will be a requirement for any significant additional retail floorspace to serve the town during the Plan period.

It is expected that the historic town centre will remain an attractive location for some financial and professional offices as well as a number of cafés and restaurants as the town centre adapts to changing demands and trends. It is anticipated that increased overnight accommodation will be required and the conversion of buildings within the town centre which may otherwise be redundant or under-used into visitor accommodation, including a hotel, should be encouraged.

The ability to use a property for a range of uses without the need for planning permission has increased. Following the introduction of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020, most of the uses within the town centre including shops, cafés and restaurants, financial and professional services and the leisure centre fall within Use Class E. This allows flexibility for premises within this use class to pass from one use to another without the need for planning permission. As the majority of premises within the town centre fall within the designated Tenterden Conservation Area and many are listed buildings, the usual provision for shops, financial and professional services and offices to convert to dwellings without the need for planning permission does not apply.

The vibrancy of the town centre comes from the cluster of commercial uses within the High Street. Such ground floor commercial uses are also important to the historic and architectural interest of the town centre Conservation Area, and the listed buildings which they occupy. Local Plan Policy EMP8 does not permit a change of use to residential development on the ground floor of any unit within the Primary Shopping Frontage and the Neighbourhood Plan supports this approach in order to retain the vitality, viability and historic character of the town centre.

In order to help retain and enhance the centre of the attractive historic market town as the economic and social hub of Tenterden, the Neighbourhood Plan enables the expansion of existing uses within the town centre. Given the challenges to the traditional centre it also looks to guide any new town centre uses such as shops, cafés or a hotel into the town centre. Applicants should demonstrate flexibility on the format and scale of their proposal, so that suitable town centre opportunities are fully explored. Only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should sites or buildings beyond the town centre be considered. All new development will need to be well designed to a high quality in accordance with Policies TEN NP4 and TEN NP5.

Policy TEN NP9 – Tenterden Town Centre

1 Within Tenterden Town Centre, as defined on Map 16:

(a) Extensions to existing shops, cafés and restaurants, public houses, financial and professional services, offices and the leisure centre will be supported,

(b) Change of use to residential on the ground floor of any unit within the Primary Shopping Frontage or the loss of tourist accommodation within the town centre will not be permitted unless sufficient evidence is provided to the Council to demonstrate that the operation of the shop or tourist accommodation is no longer financially viable despite a genuine and sustained attempt to market it on reasonable terms and where there are no other realistic proposals for such use on the site,

(c) Existing markets should be retained and enhanced.

2 New town centre uses such as a shop, office (including for financial and professional services); cafés and restaurants or hotel should locate within the Town Centre, as defined on Map 16, unless suitable sites are not available or expected to become available within a reasonable period.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Ground floor uses within the Primary Shopping Frontage	No loss of ground floor units to residential within the Primary Shopping Frontage
Town Centre Markets	No loss of markets within the town centre
Tourist accommodation	No loss of tourist accommodation within Town Centre

St Michaels Local Centre

The NPPF states that planning policies should ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.

Local Plan Policy EMP10 seeks to retain shops and services within local centres. In order to demonstrate that a facility is not viable the Local Plan states that it must be demonstrated that it has remained vacant for a substantial period of time, despite genuine and sustained attempts to occupy it on reasonable terms. What constitutes a 'substantial period of time' and 'reasonable terms' will depend on prevailing market conditions, but as a guide less than six months is likely to be inappropriate and the terms on offer should compare with other similar premises and locations being let or sold for that purpose. The extent of marketing carried out will be an important factor.

The St Michaels area is located over 1km to the north of Tenterden town centre and has its own cluster of local convenience shops, hot food take aways, public house, petrol station and community uses (including the primary school, two places of worship and the village hall). Shop units are located along the A28 where they can also attract passing trade but two of the shop units are currently vacant.

A key characteristic of St Michaels Local Centre is that facilities are within convenient walking distance of one another. In addition, St Michaels Recreation Ground is well related to the facilities and is also regarded as part of the hub of the neighbourhood. Neighbourhood Plan Policy TEN NP14 seeks to protect this recreation open space. This cluster of facilities ensures that St Michaels Local Centre provides a local focus for the area and the opportunity for sustainable pedestrian and cycle access and linked trips.

The St Michaels local centre boundary has been defined in the Neighbourhood Plan around [this range of principal facilities](#) and is shown in Map 17.

The distance of St Michaels Local Centre from the town centre means that local convenience shops, together with other community services, are important to the sustainability of the St Michaels area which they serve.

As with the town centre, the ability to use a property for a range of uses without the need for planning permission has increased. However, most of the St Michaels Local Centre lies within the St Michaels Conservation Area. Indeed some of the buildings and uses contribute to the distinctive character of the Conservation Area. Within the Conservation Area the usual provision for shops to convert to dwellings without the need for planning permission does not apply. The value of the local centre derives from the cluster of commercial and community uses. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to support and retain the function, convenience and historic character of the Local Centre.

Policy TEN NP10 - St Michaels Local Centre

Within St Michaels Local Centre, as defined on Map 17,

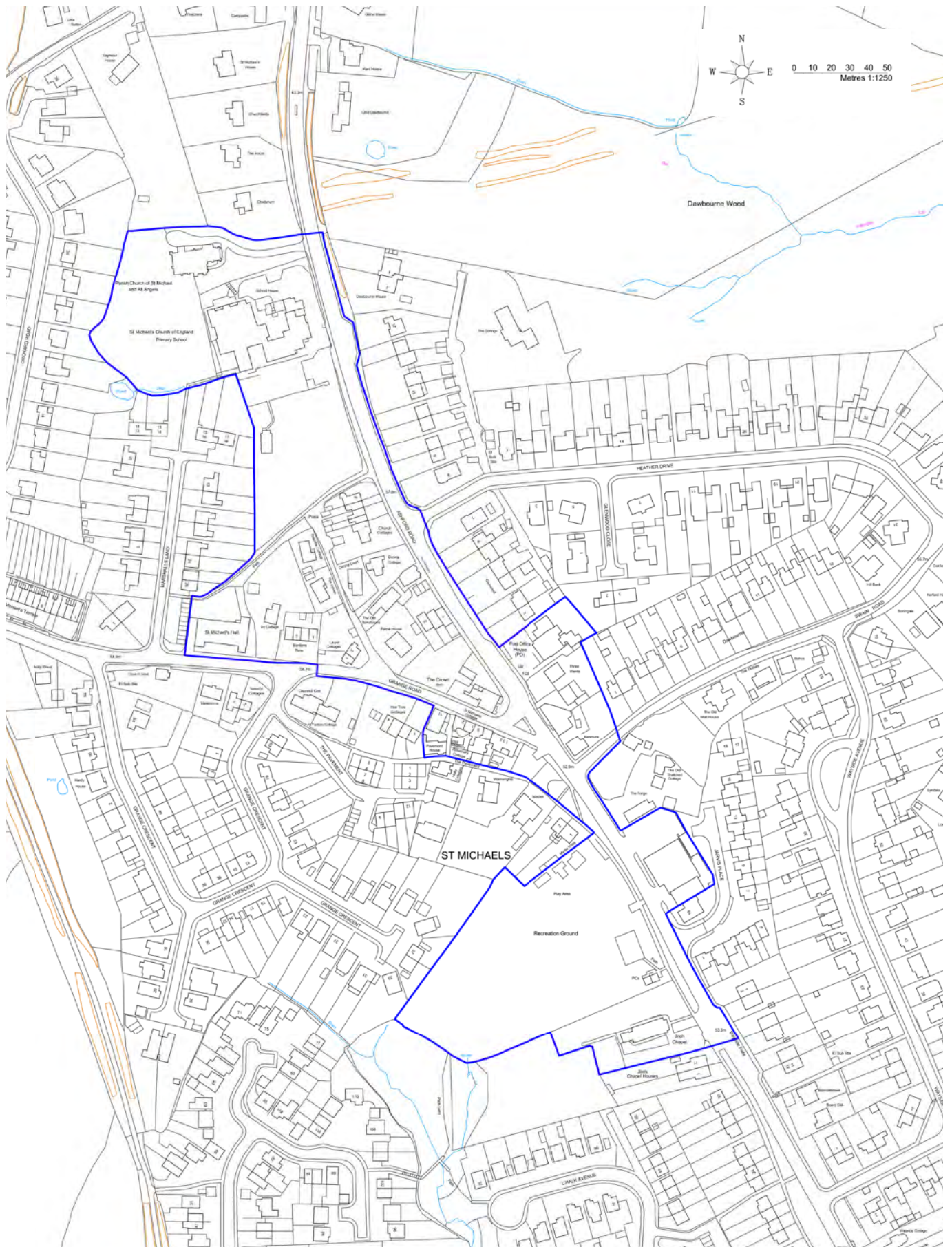
Extensions to shopping and service provision will be permitted, subject to the scale being suited to the Local Centre

Proposals that result in the loss of shops and services will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

a) There is alternative provision for a similar use within the Local Centre or,

b) The unit is no longer viable for that purpose, or an alternative local service, and that it has remained vacant for a substantial period of time, despite genuine and sustained attempts to let it on reasonable terms.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of shops and services St Michaels Local Centre	No loss of shops and services within St Michaels Local Centre.



Map 17: St Michaels Local Centre

Existing Business Sites

The NPPF states that planning policies should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of business in rural areas. Policies should recognise that sites to meet local business needs may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport.

Ashford Local Plan 2030 Policy S25 allocates a site of 0.35ha for the expansion of Pickhill Business Centre, Smallhythe Road subject to meeting a number of criteria. The expansion site would be suitable for the development of small start-up units to meet an identified local demand and the establishment and early development of small businesses. Local Plan Policy EMP2 seeks to prevent the loss of existing employment sites or premises within or adjoining/close to Tenterden.

Although there is office space within the Parish which in terms of providing a range of local employment opportunities it may be desirable to protect, changes to planning controls mean it is now less feasible for the Neighbourhood Plan to prevent changes to other uses.

Light industrial units may move to residential use without the need for planning permission, with a number of exclusions. However, sites of this kind in the Parish are unlikely to provide a desirable location for individual dwelling houses or lend themselves to conversion to residential use. There is, therefore, merit in the Neighbourhood Plan identifying business sites suitable for intensification, regeneration and, in the case of the Ashford Local Plan allocation at Pickhill Business Village, expansion.

Four business sites which comprise primarily light industry or storage/ warehousing [have been identified in the Parish](#) (see Map 18).

- Parkgate Centre
- Pickhill Business Village (Pickhill Business Centre)
- Leigh Green Industrial Estate
- Station Road Business Centre

The premises and sites are generally in good condition; have low vacancy rates and are in demand. It is likely that they will remain in such uses through the Plan period. They may be used as a flexible resource that can be adapted, through intensification or redevelopment, or change to a range of different types of business use, including new and expanding sectors of the local economy.

It is recognised that all of these sites are located outside the built up confines of Tenterden but their designation as business sites gives support to the principle of intensification and regeneration to better meet modern business needs. Given the location of the sites within the High Weald AONB, any proposal will need to conserve and enhance the landscape and the tranquillity of the countryside in accordance with Policy TEN NP1. It is also important to ensure that

proposals do not have an unacceptable impact on residential amenities or local roads. The absence of off street parking and the width of the roads serving the sites means that sufficient additional car and cycle parking should be provided on site without the need to spill out onto the road.

Policy TEN NP1 1 – Intensification, regeneration and expansion of existing business sites

1 Regeneration and intensification for business uses will be permitted at the following sites, as defined on Map 18:

- Parkgate Centre
- Pickhill Business Village (Pickhill Business Centre) and Local Plan allocation
- Leigh Green Industrial Estate
- Station Road Business Centre

All proposals should meet the following criteria:

(a) Development would be integrated sensitively into its context respecting the landscape character of the area and, where applicable, the AONB Management Plan objectives and, where applicable, the character and heritage of any existing building

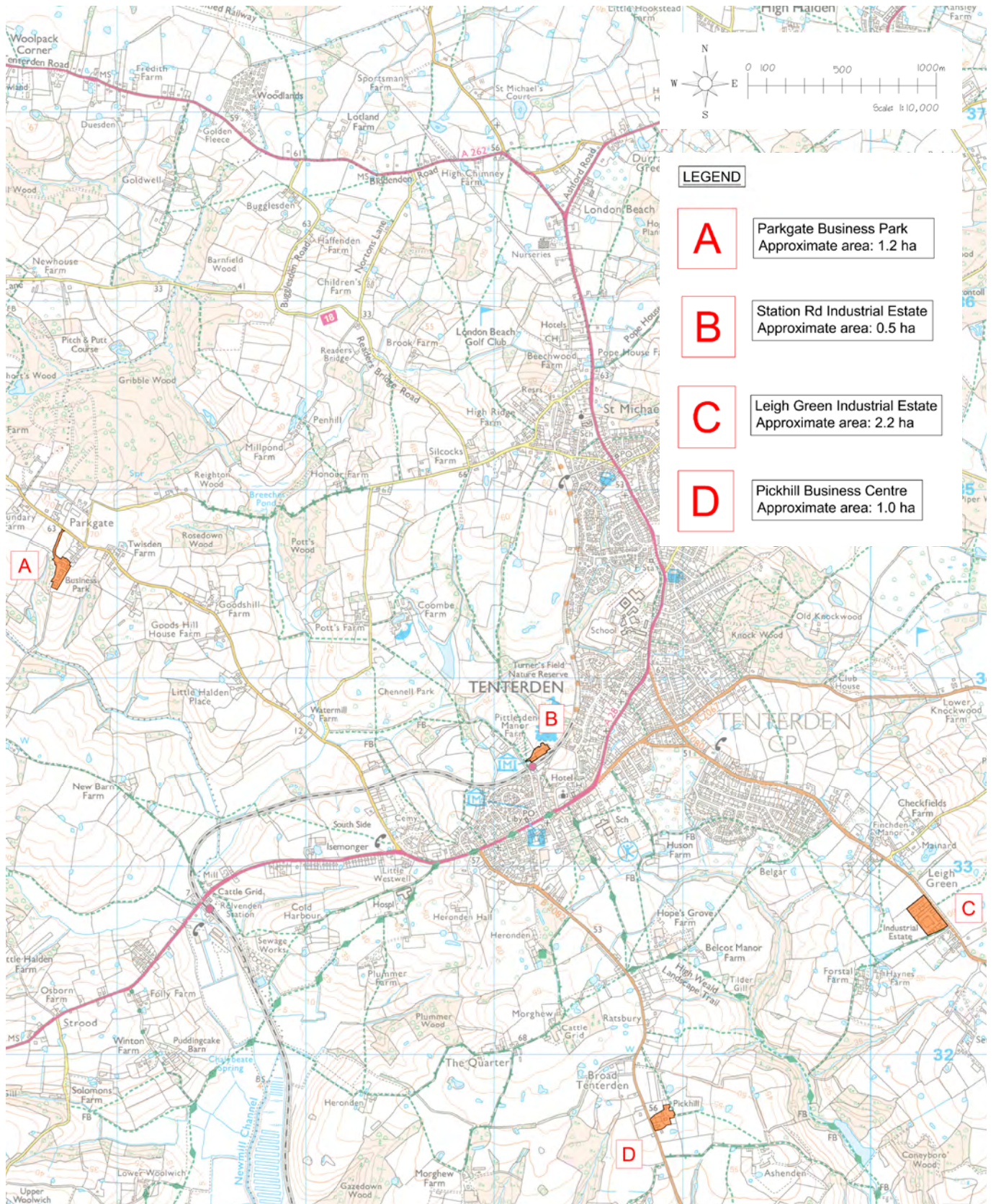
(b) The amenities of any neighbouring residential occupiers or the tranquillity of the countryside would not be significantly adversely affected;

(c) Development would not generate a type or amount of traffic that would be inappropriate to the rural road network that serves it; and

(d) Sufficient on-site parking would be provided for visitors, staff and delivery vehicles

2 Proposals for start-up units are encouraged at Pickhill Business Village expansion site.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Four business sites as defined on Map 18	No loss of business sites as defined on Map 18



Map 18: Location of principal business sites

New business premises outside the built-up confines

The NPPF states that planning policies should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. The Framework recognises that although business development may be proposed outside the built up confines, it will be important to ensure that proposals are sensitive to the surroundings and would not have an unacceptable impact on local roads.

Ashford Local Plan Policy EMP4 allows the conversion of rural buildings to employment, non-residential tourism or leisure uses subject to meeting a number of criteria. Local Plan Policy EMP5 does not permit new employment premises in the countryside unless it is essential to be located in the countryside and meets other landscape, amenity and traffic tests.

The Plan area contains a number of diversified or specialist agricultural units (including viticulture). Outside the built confines, the Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure a prosperous rural economy through the development of new business premises through the conversion of suitable existing buildings and, where justified, well-designed new buildings. In accordance with Ashford Local Plan Policy EMP4, buildings for conversion should not require complete or substantial reconstruction and should be converted in a way that preserves their integrity and character.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote the economic viability of the Parish and support will be given to proposals for farming and forestry operations and their diversification, in accordance with the AONB Management Plan objectives, to maintain the significant contribution these bring to the local economy. New buildings will only be allowed where no existing building suitable, or potentially suitable for the purpose, or suitable building that could be converted, would be available in the near vicinity.

Policy TEN NP12 – New business premises outside the built up confines

Outside the built up confines, as defined in Map 2, new business premises will be permitted through the conversion of a suitable rural building or in new premises where it is essential for the business to be located in the countryside or represents the sustainable development of an established rural business where no existing building suitable or potentially suitable for the purpose, or suitable building that could be converted, would be available within the curtilage.

All proposals should meet the following criteria:

- (a) Development would be integrated sensitively into its context respecting the landscape character of the area and, where applicable, the AONB Management Plan objectives and, where applicable, the character and heritage of any existing building;
- (b) The amenities of any neighbouring residential occupiers or the tranquillity of the countryside would not be significantly adversely affected;
- (c) Development would not generate a type or amount of traffic that would be inappropriate to the rural road network that serves it; and
- (d) Sufficient on-site parking would be provided for visitors, staff and delivery vehicles

Tourism

According to the Tourist Attractions and Accommodation Tourism Study, 2020, people visit Tenterden for a variety of reasons and the surrounding tourist attractions present opportunities for the town. Known as 'The Jewel of the Weald', Tenterden's position along the main A28 thoroughfare, the surrounding countryside mostly designated for its outstanding natural beauty and the much photographed historic High Street mean that people are attracted to the area.

Aside from the High Street and St Mildred's Church, Trip Advisor 2020 Travellers' Choice awards recognise the top attractions in the Parish as the [Kent & East Sussex Railway](#), [Chapel Down Winery](#), [Smallhythe Place](#) and [Old Dairy Brewery](#).

The area is crossed by a number of public footpaths and the High Weald Landscape Trail long distance footpath and National Cycle Route 18 bring tourists right through the centre of town.

Tourism helps support the town's shops, public houses and holiday accommodation.

Two hotels (Little Silver Country Hotel and London Beach Country Hotel) with a total capacity of 40 bedrooms are located in the St Michaels area whilst the town centre inns provide a further capacity of 22 rooms. A number of smaller holiday rental and bed and breakfast properties supplement the tourist accommodation [within the Parish](#).

Strengthening, diversifying and consolidating local attractions and the provision of tourist accommodation will encourage visitors to stay, patronise local businesses and create local jobs.

The Ashford Local Plan 2030, Policy EMP4 - Conversions of rural buildings to non-residential uses allows proposals to convert suitable rural buildings to business uses and 'non-residential tourism' subject to meeting a number of criteria. The Neighbourhood Plan supports this approach and extends this provision to residential tourist accommodation. In accordance with Local Plan Policy EMP4, the building to be converted must be of a permanent and substantial construction and be capable of being converted in a way that preserves its integrity and character. It will be important to ensure that a proposal is sensitive to its surroundings and would not have an unacceptable impact on residential amenities, the tranquillity of the countryside or local roads.

In accordance with Policy TEN NP9, proposals for a hotel should locate within Tenterden Town Centre unless suitable sites are not available or expected to become available within a reasonable period.

Policy TEN NP13 – Tourist Accommodation and Attractions

1 Within the built confines, as defined in Map 2, proposals for new tourist accommodation and attractions will be permitted.

2 Outside the built confines, as defined in Map 2

(i) Proposals to convert suitable rural buildings to tourist accommodation or attractions will be permitted.

(ii) New premises will only be permitted for a tourist attraction where it is essential for the sustainable development of an established tourist attraction where no existing building suitable or potentially suitable for the purpose, or suitable building that could be converted, would be available within the curtilage.

All proposals should meet the following criteria:

(a) Development would be integrated sensitively into its context respecting the landscape character of the area and, where applicable, the AONB Management Plan objectives and, where applicable, the character and heritage assets of the area;

(b) The amenities of any neighbouring residential occupiers or the tranquillity of the countryside would not be significantly adversely affected;

(c) Development would not generate a type or amount of traffic that would be inappropriate to the road network that serves it; and

(d) Sufficient on-site parking would be provided for visitors, staff and delivery vehicles

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Tourist accommodation listed in Tourism evidence base	Increase in tourist accommodation listed in Tourism evidence base.

Home Working

Working from home for professionals, service providers and craft workers is becoming increasingly common and the Neighbourhood Plan is supportive of the provision of facilities to enable sustainable homeworking which will improve locally based employment, support local services, and reduce traffic movements. Small scale businesses which are incidental to the enjoyment of the home do not require planning permission and this form of employment opportunity will continue to be available over the Plan period.

Leisure, Health and Wellbeing and Infrastructure

Objectives

- To protect and enhance open spaces used for sport and recreational purposes
- To protect and enhance the extensive network of historic routeways and Public Rights of Way serving the Parish
- To promote health and wellbeing through greater use of sustainable transport routes
- To ensure that sufficient open space and appropriately designed routeways are provided and well integrated with new development

Leisure, Health and Wellbeing and Infrastructure Policies

Public Open Space

Existing Provision

The NPPF stresses the need to ensure effective planning for open spaces, sport and recreation provision based on robust assessments of the existing and future needs of communities and the retention of accessible open space.

Ashford Local Plan Policy COM2 - Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces seeks the retention of existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land unless certain criteria are met.

Sport and Recreation Grounds

There is strong support for, and local participation in, the local sports clubs. Sports pitches are currently provided on four sites in the Parish. In addition, St Michaels Recreation Ground is a well-used recreation ground which provides informal recreation open space as well as [specifically for younger age groups](#).

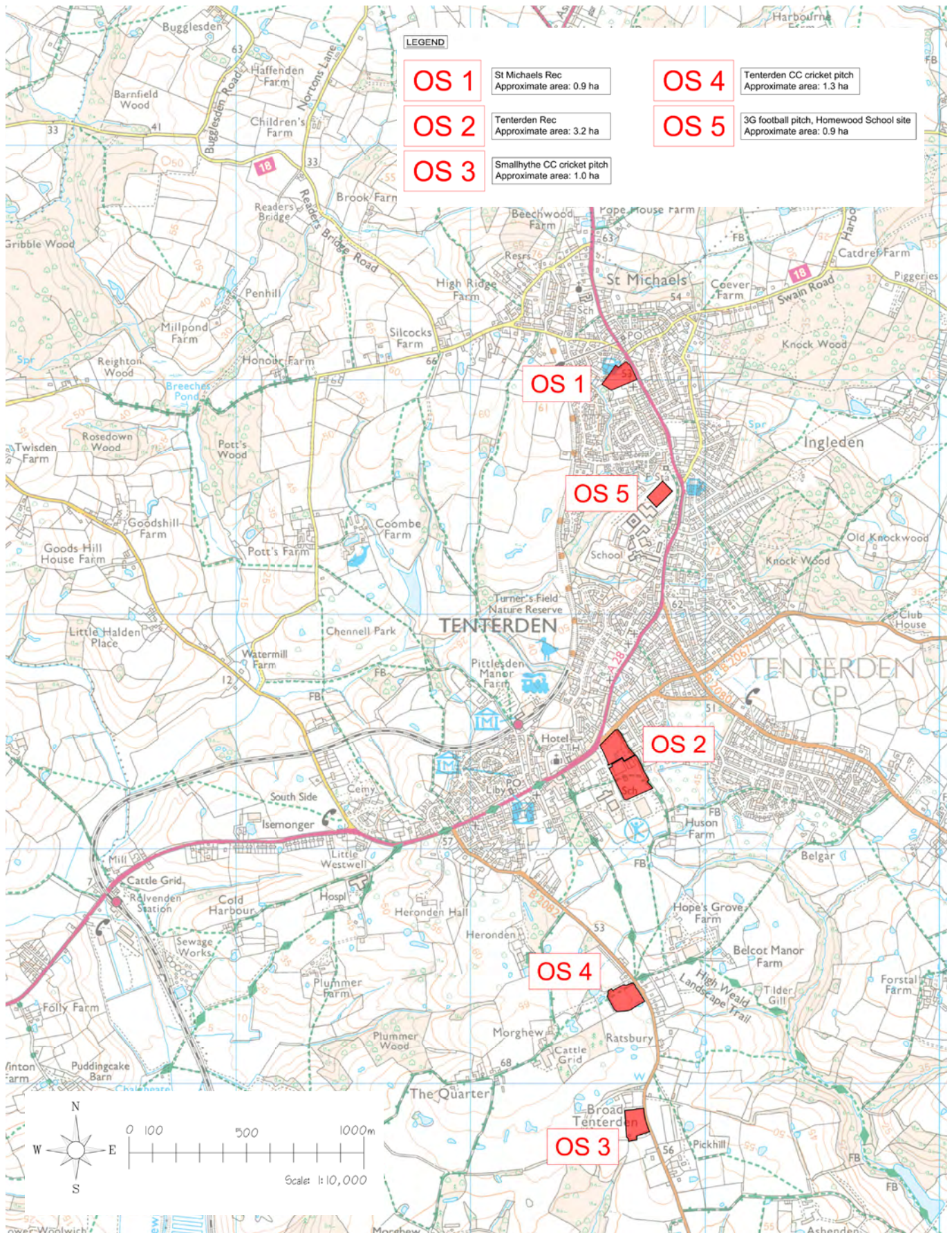
Name	Map reference	Description
St Michaels Recreation Ground	OS 1	Well used recreation ground which provides informal recreation open space and includes a children's playground and a skate ramp.
Tenterden Recreation Ground	OS 2	Very well-used public space which provides a full-sized football pitch, two hard-surface tennis courts and a children's playground. The privately run Tenterden Bowls Club is located within an enclosed section of the Rec and provides one green.
Smallhythe Cricket Club pitch, Smallhythe Road	OS 3	The ground provides one cricket square. SCC is a small club based at the Pickhill pitch on Smallhythe Road. Well-used during cricket season.
Tenterden Cricket Club pitch, Smallhythe Road	OS 4	The ground provides one cricket square. TCC has members of all ages and runs a number of junior and senior teams. The pitch is well-used during cricket season. PRoW AB35 runs along one side.
Homewood School Tenterden (School Site)	OS 5	3G rubber crumb full size football pitch with floodlights which is used by local teams outside school hours

The centrally located Tenterden Recreation Ground is well placed to provide a range of accessible recreation facilities to the town. The area is situated within the defined town centre and provides an attractive space for informal use whilst visiting the shops, cafés and other services.

The recreation and sports grounds are generally well distributed around the town and provide accessible spaces for all ages (see Map 19).

The NPPF states that planning policies should take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community. Ashford Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2017- 2030, May 2017 assesses existing sports pitch provision and future needs and states that the following sites should be protected as playing field sites:

- Tenterden Recreation Ground
- Homewood School Tenterden (School Site)
- Tenterden Cricket Club
- Smallhythe Cricket Club



Map 19: Sports and Recreation Grounds

The Strategy also proposes that the Homewood School Playing Fields (Appledore Road), although not currently available for public use, should be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan. The Strategy concludes that these sites are required to satisfy existing and future demands for sports pitches in the Parish during the Plan period. It is important for the health and wellbeing of the local community that these well used sport and recreation open spaces are protected.

In addition, the Strategy notes that St Michaels Recreation Ground provides a children’s playground and a skate ramp for use by young people living in this part of the town as well as a grassed area for informal play.

Only the Tenterden and St Michaels Recreation Grounds are specifically shown on the Policies Map of the Ashford Local Plan. However, all of the above sites identified for protection in the Playing Pitch Strategy are included for retention in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy TEN NP14 - Protection of Sports and Recreation Grounds

The following sports and recreation grounds, as defined on Map 19, will be retained and, where appropriate, enhanced:

- Tenterden Recreation Ground
- St Michaels Recreation Ground
- Tenterden Cricket Club Ground
- Smallhythe Road Cricket Ground

Development on these sites may exceptionally be supported where replacement provision is made of at least equivalent value to the local community in terms of quantity, quality and location.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of sports pitches	No net loss of sports pitches

Amenity Open Space

More locally, there are a number of small areas of amenity open space which serve adjoining residential development including within the Shrubcote estate, Springfield Avenue, Pittlesden, Colonel Stephens Way, Three Fields Road and along the Ashford Road.

Within or abutting the town centre there are a number of informal amenity open spaces which are important in providing resting places in contrast to the bustling town centre. East Cross Gardens, Ashford Road/Oaks Road, Coombe Lane Cemetery, the Millennium Garden and the Lawns, High Street are all designated as Local Green Spaces by Policy TEN NP2.

Allotments

The only allotments in the town are situated on Bells Lane and owned by the William Judge Trust. This centrally located site is well used and currently divided into 29 plots of various sizes. The site is protected as a Local Green Space by Policy TEN NP2. There are currently (April 2021) 46 people on the allotment waiting list, the longest having been on the list since 2018.

Informal/ Natural Green Space

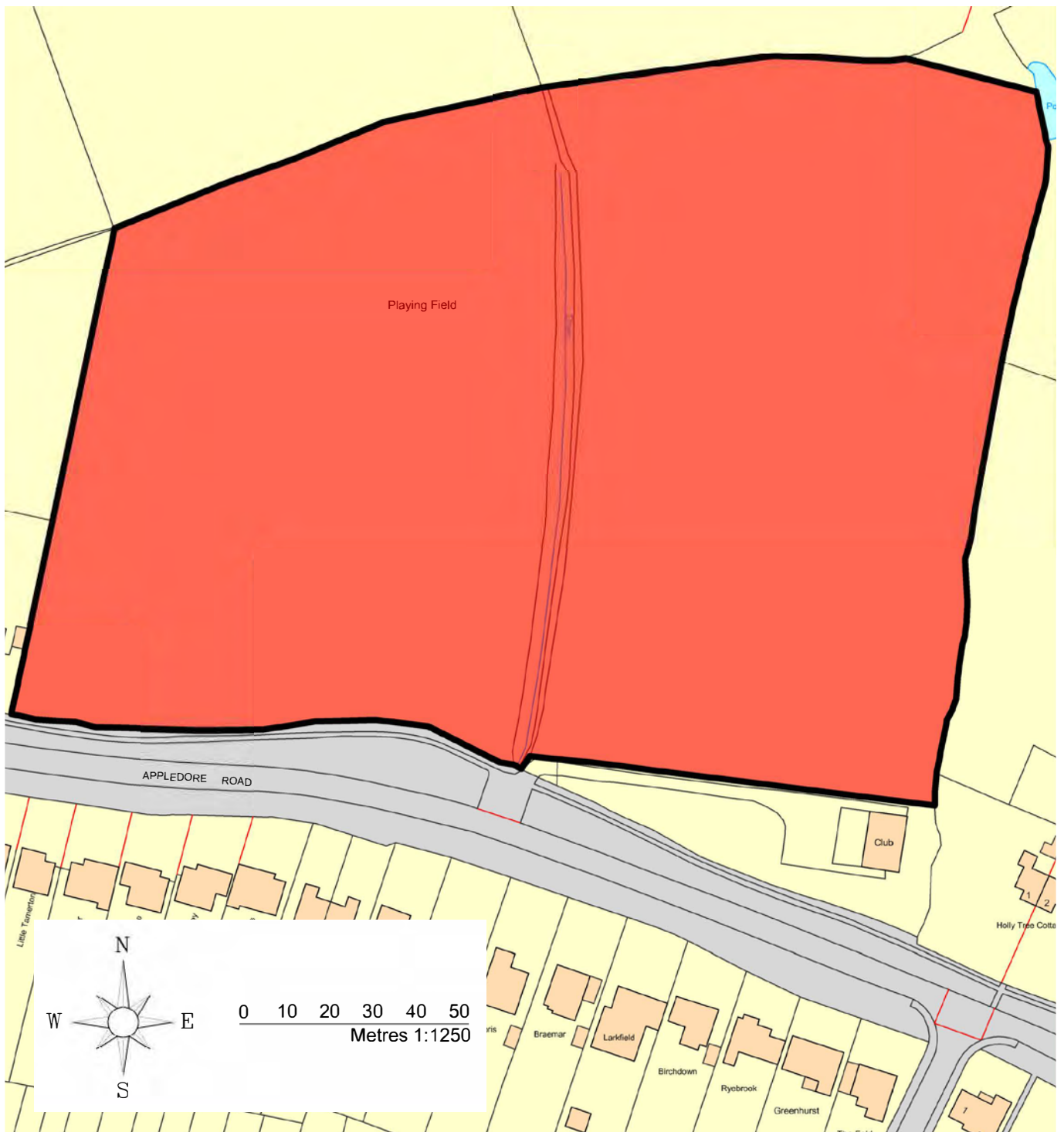
Within the town, the long, narrow wooded gill between the modern housing estates of Henley Meadows and Chalk Avenue known as The Dene provides informal natural green space and is designated as a Local Green Space by Policy TEN NP2.

Future Provision

Sport and Recreation Grounds

Ashford Local Plan Policy COM2 states that development proposals shall meet the need for recreation, sport, play and open spaces it generates through the delivery of either new facilities or the enhancement of existing facilities that improve their quality, availability and/or accessibility. In the case of outdoor playing pitches new provision in Tenterden is expected to be delivered through off-site financial contributions secured via Section 106 Agreements towards maintaining, enhancing and expanding existing facilities.

Given its central location, the Town Council is keen to broaden the purpose of the Recreation Ground to allow improved facilities for a wide range of users including the provision of improved children’s and adults’ play and exercise areas, a skate park with youth hub attached, tennis/netball courts and new footpath network. Whilst this would result in the need to relocate the only existing adult grass football pitch, the more intensive recreational use of the area is considered to make more efficient use of this centrally located site.



Map 20: Sports and Recreation Open Space, Appledore Road

In accordance with Policy TEN NP14, an alternative pitch of at least equivalent value to the local community in terms of quantity, quality and location is required to be provided. A town centre location is not considered necessary for a football pitch.

Since the Sports Pitch Strategy was approved, the provision of a 3G rubber crumb full size football pitch with floodlights has been installed at Homewood School but this does not satisfy the need for a replacement senior grass football pitch which meets the requirements of the local leagues.

In addition, the Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B housing allocation for 225 dwellings in the Ashford Local Plan would generate the need for approximately 0.9ha of outdoor sports pitches. Further windfall housing development will generate the need for additional sport and recreation open space.

The Ashford Playing Pitch Strategy also identifies a need to provide further junior grass pitches at Tenterden.

The Sports Strategy identifies Homewood School (Appledore Road) Playing Fields for protection but these are not formally available for public use. Nevertheless the site of the former football and cricket pitch serving Homewood School on Appledore Road (Map 20 below) is proposed as a suitable site for replacement and new pitches for community football clubs and junior football teams.

The flat site will accommodate a single senior football pitch, a junior 9-a-side pitch and three mini soccer pitches. The site is close to the town and is a suitable use outside the built up confines. Nevertheless, the location close to the High Weald AONB to the east means that new changing and club house facilities will need to be sensitively located and designed. Permanent floodlights would not be suitable in this location due to the location of the pitches in relation to the wider countryside, the Local Green Space and the adjoining residential properties. The site abuts, and provides the entrance to, the Limes Local Green Space to the north and is bisected by public footpath AB12 which is lined by a row of mature oak trees. New ancillary buildings along with associated parking should be located and designed to ensure they do not:

- significantly interrupt views of, or visually enclose, the Local Green Space to the north,
- result in the loss of the row of lime trees or the character of public footpath AB12,
- have an adverse impact on the setting of the High Weald AONB, or
- have significant adverse impact on residential amenity.

Any housing development permitted within the Parish will be expected to contribute towards this provision. Contributions should also include arrangements for maintenance of the open space.

Policy TEN NP15 – Site for Recreation Open Space

Land at Appledore Road, as defined on Map 20, is allocated for additional sports pitches to serve the needs of the town.

New changing and club house facilities along with associated parking should be located and designed to ensure proposals do not:

- significantly interrupt views of, or visually enclose, the Local Green Space to the north,
- result in the loss of the row of lime trees or the character of public footpath AB12 in accordance with Policy TEN NP17,
- have an adverse impact on the setting of the High Weald AONB in accordance with Policy TEN NP1, or
- have significant adverse impact on residential amenity.

Permanent floodlights should not be erected at this site.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of sports pitches	Delivery of identified Sports Pitches in the Plan period

The need for improvements to the square and outfield and a new pavilion roof at Smallhythe Cricket Club is identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

Allotments

Allotments have a wide catchment area – approximately 15 minute walking distance - and therefore would not be provided on individual housing sites in Tenterden. Instead developer contributions will be sought for a new allotment site. The currently shortfall of allotments demonstrated by the waiting list will be exacerbated by the need for an additional 0.2 hectares generated by new developments, giving a total need for a well located site to serve the town of between 0.5 – 1 hectare. It has not been possible to allocate a suitable site in the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan. This consultation is being used as a ‘call for sites’ for allotment land. If a deliverable site can be identified, this will be allocated in the Regulation 15 Neighbourhood Plan.

Informal/ Natural Green Space

In accordance with the Borough Council's Public Green Spaces & Water Environment Supplementary Planning Document, housing sites of 50 dwellings or more should normally provide informal/natural green space within the site, where possible making use of existing natural features such as trees, hedgerows or water bodies. Such informal/natural green space should be provided within the Local Plan housing allocation at Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan Design Code (Policy TEN NP4).

Provision of natural/ semi-natural open space may also be provided on smaller sites where the new informal/ natural space would link to other informal/ natural green space and help improve wildlife value and/or sustainable transport routes and, when combined with the adjoining area, would meet a minimum size of at least 0.25ha.

Children's Play Space

The Ashford Public Green Spaces & Water Environment Supplementary Planning Document does not envisage on site children's play space for the scale of housing sites allocated in the Local Plan for Tenterden. In this case contributions will be required towards improvement of such facilities at Tenterden Recreation Ground and other suitable locations. In addition, consideration should be given to incorporating features within smaller developments which will allow children opportunities for non-equipped play. Features within areas of informal/ natural green space such as mounding or natural elements such as tree trunks and an open, level area of open space will provide opportunities for local play. Traffic calming measures to minimise vehicle speeds will also help make streets safer in these areas and encourage use.

Tenterden Leisure Centre

Tenterden Leisure Centre makes an important contribution the leisure provision serving the town and surrounding rural parishes with sports hall, fitness facilities and a six lane swimming pool. The Borough Council's Indoor Sports Facility Strategy and Action Plan concludes that there remains capacity at the centre to cater for the additional demand from the anticipated dwellings within the Plan period.

Routeways

The NPPF is clear that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users and to promote sustainable transport such as high quality walking and cycling networks.

Ashford Local Plan Policy TRA5 requires development proposals to demonstrate how safe and accessible pedestrian movement routes will be delivered and how they will connect to the wider movement network. Opportunities should be taken to connect with and enhance Public Rights of Way (PRoW) wherever possible to encourage journeys on foot. Local Plan Policy ENV5 seeks to protect and, where possible, enhance rural lanes which have a landscape, nature conservation or historic importance and public rights of way. Local Plan Policy TRA6 specifically seeks to improve conditions for cyclists through the following measures:

- Promoting and developing a network of cycle routes
- Including cycle routes within new developments
- Providing cycle parking facilities in town centres and at public buildings
- Encouraging journeys by bicycle

The Borough Council's Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019 - 2029 encourages inclusive walking and cycling as a choice for journeys.

Historic routeways

Tenterden Parish is crossed by many historic routeways with many of today's roads [present by the 14th Century](#). The ridge-roads of the High St, Grange Road and Chennell Park Road are the oldest roads and pre-date the 9th century settlement of the town. The Hastings to Dover Roman Road runs through St Michaels along Millpond Lane, just north of Grange Road, and into Dawbourne Wood. A spur of the Roman Road runs down Chennell Park Road and along PRoW AB22 until it meets PRoW AB21 at the site of the Roman Harbour. The earliest transportation routes included drovers' routes for the transportation of cattle and waterways reaching into Tenterden and Smallhythe. The Ashford Heritage Strategy describes the drover's route from Tenterden to Newenden as one of the Borough's principal heritage assets. Map 21 illustrates the historic routeways of the Parish.

The High Weald AONB Management Plan identifies historic routeways (now roads) as one of the key landscape characteristics, the oldest being the ridge top roads and a dense system of radiating droveways. The Management Plan, 2019-2024 seeks to maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways and enhance their ecological function.

As Map 21 illustrates, these historic routes extend beyond the designated AONB. Outside the town, these include narrow, sunken holloways, edged with trees (some veteran), hedges (some ancient or layered), wildflower-rich verges and boundary banks. The narrow lanes are being damaged by vehicles which erode banks, sensitive verges and ditches that provide effective drainage for excess water and support biodiversity.

The historic routeways penetrate and cross the town as roads along the routes that connect the centre of Tenterden to the farms that were the source of its original prosperity, and recall the historic nature of the Lawns and Tenterden Recreation Ground as the sites of regular livestock markets. In the centre of town some of the routeways are now narrow twittens between buildings.

The most frequently used routeway is the historic linear street of the High Street with its distinctive character areas which at the centre narrows to about 15 metres, whilst to the west it dramatically widens to around 60 metres at The Lawns with broad grass verges and a fine avenue of trees either side, all of which is designated as a Local Green Space. This widening effect is also apparent to the east of the centre, and opens into East Cross Gardens, which is also proposed as a Local Green Space.

Railway

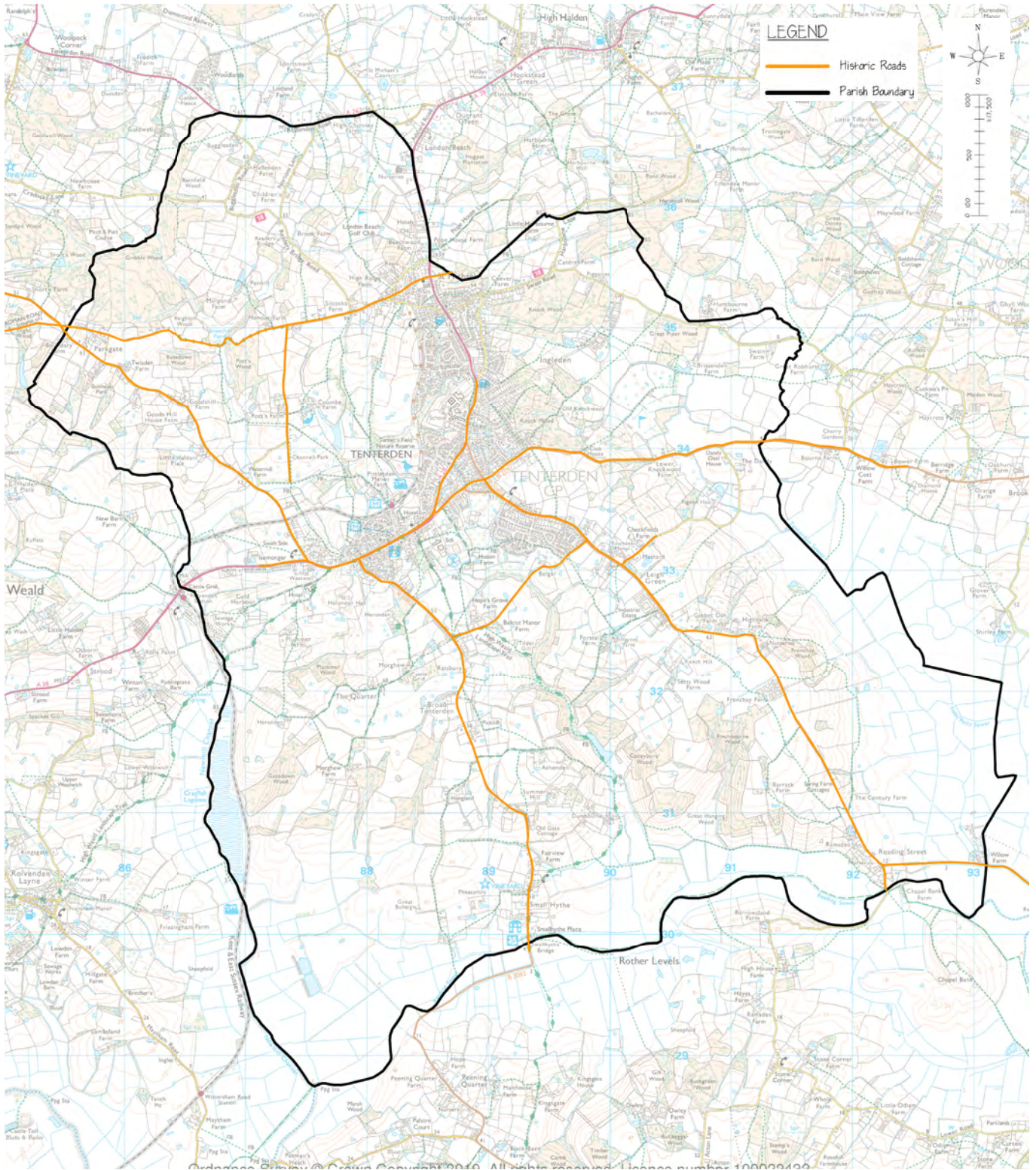
Tenterden Town Station was built in 1903 and the line was extended to Headcorn in 1905. The line closed to passengers in 1954, and was reopened in 1974 by volunteers as a tourist attraction. Part of the disused railway track to the north of the station is now Colonel Stephen's Greenway. This forms a primary north-south traffic free green routeway between St Michaels and Tenterden, linking to Henley Meadows, Colonel Stephens Way, and then on to Turner's Field and Drury Road. The initial 600m from St Michaels is lit and has a bound surface. The remaining 640m is unlit and uneven.

Policy TEN NP16 – Historic Routeways

The alignment of historic routeways within Tenterden Parish should be maintained.

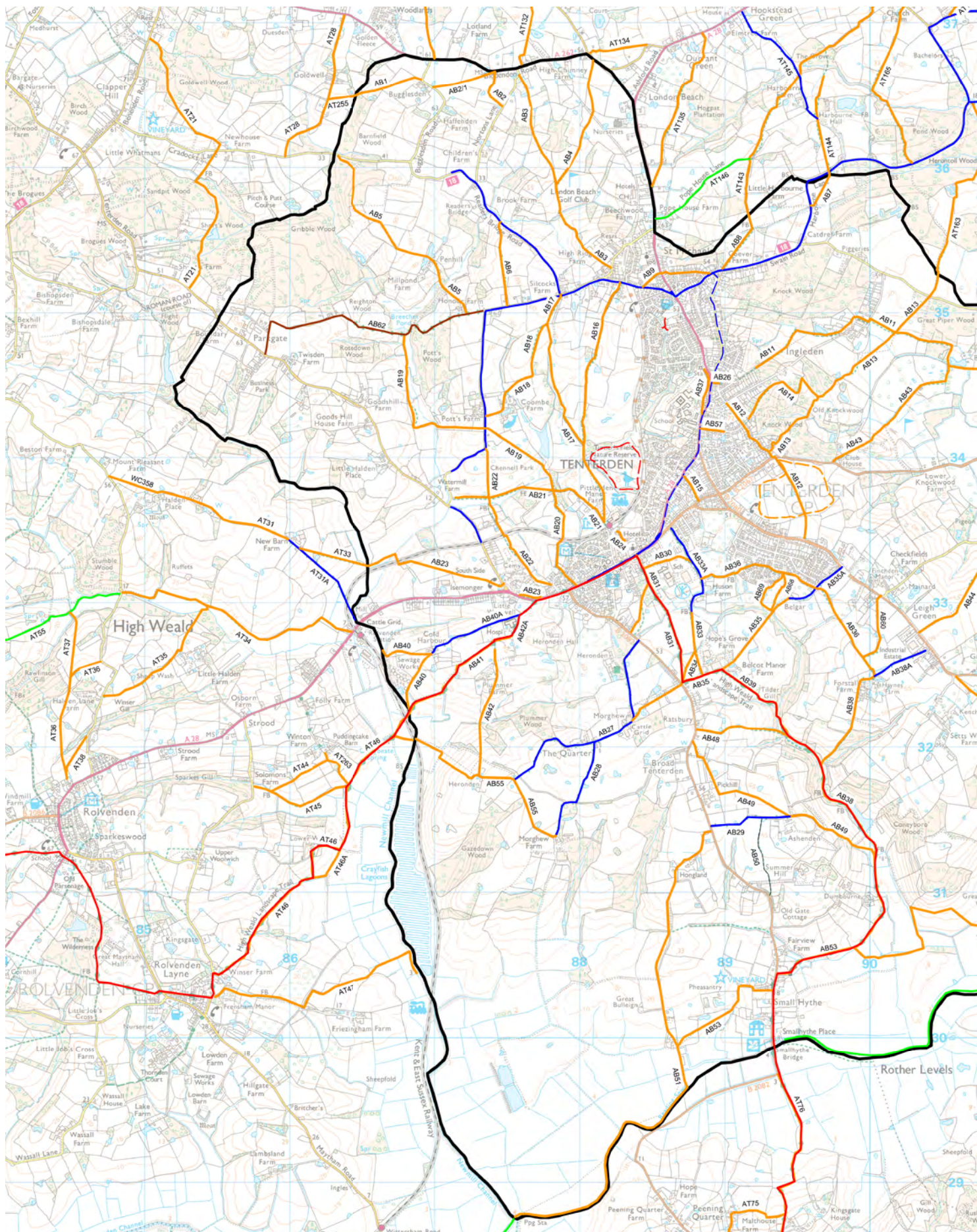
Proposals should not result in an unsympathetic change to the character of a historic routeway.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Routeways of historic value.	No deterioration in an historic routeway due to development.



Map 21: Historic routeways

Section 5 Neighbourhood Plan Policies



Public Rights of Way and long-distance routes

There is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way across Tenterden Parish though their use as footpaths can be limited by difficult to cross styles, waterlogged areas and poor signposting.

The 145km long High Weald Landscape Trail between Horsham and Rye runs through Tenterden connecting to Rolvenden and Smallhythe.

National Cycle Route 18 from Canterbury to Royal Tunbridge Wells passes through St Michaels and along Reader's Bridge Road.

Despite the protection afforded to PRowS, Tenterden has been losing its distinct country footpaths to development, which has changed the character of the routes (often through narrowing and the introduction of urbanising features including unsympathetic surface materials) as well as leading to diversions to the route and blockages. This has led to a loss of permeability and a reduction in the perception of the rural character of the countryside penetrating, and being integrated with, the town.

Policy TEN NP17 – Public Rights of Way

The provision, character and biodiversity of existing public rights of way, as shown on Map 22, will be protected and enhanced, including within new development in accordance with Policy TEN NP4.

Monitoring Indicators

Length, character and biodiversity of Public Rights of Way at the start of the Plan period.

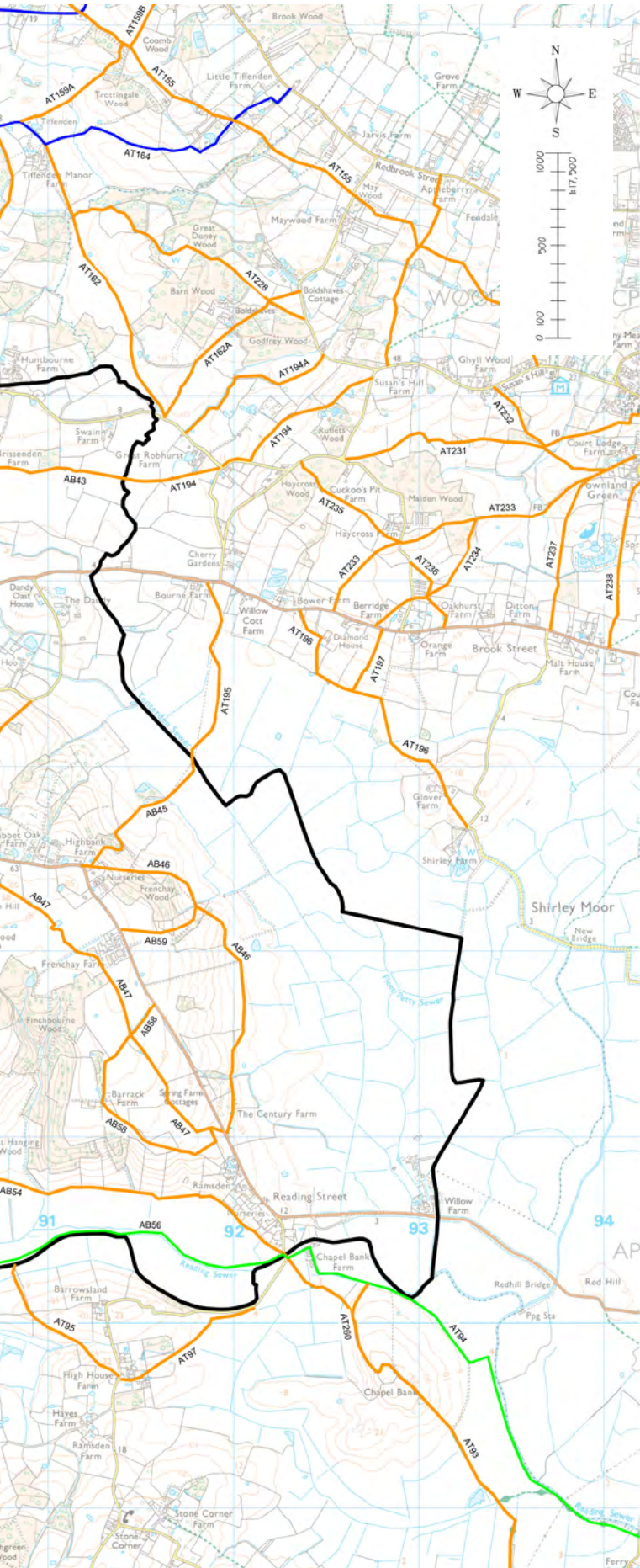
Targets

No net loss of length, character and biodiversity of Public Rights of Way.

LEGEND

- PRow in process of adoption (Limes Land)
- Unadopted (Turners Field & The Dene)
- Public Footpath
- Restricted Byway
- Public Bridleway
- Byway open to all traffic
- On-road route on the National Cycle Route 18
- - - On-road route not on the National Cycle Network
- High Weald Landscape Trail
- Parish Boundary

Map 22: Public Rights of Way, the High Weald Landscape Trail and Route 18



Infrastructure

The strategic Tenterden Southern Extension housing site of 225 dwellings and other windfall development is expected to increase the Parish population by some 1000 people, with consequences for local facilities, services and the transport network. It is important that all new development provides, or contributes towards, on- and off-site infrastructure in relation to transport, primary and secondary education facilities, open space and sports facilities.

Green Infrastructure Provision

Using Ashford Borough Council’s adopted open space standards, an additional population of 1000 residents over the plan period would generate the need for:

- Outdoor Sports Pitches: 1.6 hectares
- Informal/Natural green space: 2.0 hectares
- Children’s and young people’s play space: 0.5 hectares
- Allotments: 0.2 hectares
- Strategic Parks: 0.3 hectares
- Cemeteries: 0.6 hectares

The NPPF seeks planning policies that promote opportunities to improve the local open space network.

Within the Tenterden Southern Extension Phase B, it would be expected that informal/natural green space will be provided on-site as set out in Local Plan Policies S24 COM2 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy TEN NP8.

The remaining open space requirements should be delivered by enhancing and expanding off site facilities at Tenterden. Contributions will be sought for the proposed Outdoor Sports Pitches and facilities allocated in Policy TEN NP15, the upgrade and provision of children’s and young people’s play facilities at Tenterden Recreation Ground and elsewhere and the upgrade and enhancement of Millennium Garden and Coombe Lane Cemetery Parks.

Other Facilities

A purpose of this draft consultation Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure any new development is supported by adequate infrastructure development such as the primary and secondary schools, GP services and transport infrastructure. This draft Plan will be discussed with the infrastructure providers to test how proposed development can be supported by sufficient infrastructure to ensure the quality of life of existing and future residents.

At this stage, the Neighbourhood Plan includes a list of potential projects (Appendix 3) which will be discussed with infrastructure providers to establish which may attract funding from development, where justified.

Policy TEN NP18 - Securing Infrastructure

Any development permitted will be expected to ensure provision of the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development, and where relevant the infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan below through developer contributions, in a timely manner subject to an appropriate assessment of viability:

- Sustainable transport measures serving new development which assist walking and cycling; and
- Outdoor Sports Pitches and facilities allocated in Policy TEN NP15, the upgrade and provision of children’s and young people’s play facilities at Tenterden Recreation Ground and elsewhere and the upgrade and enhancement of Millennium Garden and Coombe Lane Cemetery.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Infrastructure delivered through developer contributions, including S106 contributions.	Infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan to be delivered by the end of the Plan period.

