



# **Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Development Framework**

## **Core Strategy Development Plan Document Adopted June 2010**





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## Chapter 1 Introduction

**1.1** The commencement of the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act](#) in 2004 changed the way in which local planning authorities are required to plan for development in their areas. The Act formalised the concept of 'spatial planning', which extended the remit of planning beyond its traditional focus on land use to include consideration of other plans, programmes and strategies that shape the nature of places and how they function. It aims to create a climate in which a wide range of organisations across all sectors can work together towards a common vision.

**1.2** Within this system, two types of spatial plan will manage future development in Tunbridge Wells Borough: the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East (known as the **South East Plan**), prepared by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA); and the **Local Development Framework (LDF)**, prepared by the Borough Council. Together, the South East Plan and the LDF constitute the Development Plan for the Borough. The Local Development Framework (LDF) must be in general conformity with the South East Plan. It takes the form of a portfolio of planning documents that address different issues and/or relate to different geographical areas.

**1.3** This Core Strategy, which will cover the period to **2026** once adopted, will be the principal document within the Borough Council's LDF.

### The Core Strategy

#### Purpose

**1.4** The Core Strategy is the plan in the LDF that directs development on a particular course during the period it operates. It draws together the objectives of a wide range of plans, programmes and strategies and drives development to achieve those that can be delivered by, or are dependent upon, the appropriate use of land.

**1.5** The Core Strategy provides the overarching principles of the LDF by which the essential development needs of the Borough will be delivered. The key decisions about how much development will happen in the Borough and where and when it will take place, are made in the Core Strategy.

**1.6** Specifically, it provides the following:

- A **spatial vision** of how the Borough should develop
- **Strategic objectives** for development in the Borough, setting out the main issues to be addressed
- A **delivery strategy** setting out how much development will take place and where, when and by what means it will be delivered
- An **implementation and monitoring framework** to ensure the Plan's success

#### Relationship to other planning documents

**1.7** The Core Strategy is one of a number of planning policy documents (not all of which are prepared directly by the Borough Council) that will influence future development in the Borough. The Core Strategy is required to be in general conformity with higher-level policy prepared by both central and regional Government. Central Government prepares Planning Policy Statements (PPS), which set the national agenda in terms of securing the provision of different types of development and of managing its impacts. The [South East Plan](#) (May 2009), prepared by the regional Government, provides a spatial context for development that is specific to the South East region. The South East Plan must also be in general conformity with national policy in PPSs.

**1.8** At the local level, this Core Strategy is the principal plan within a wider LDF to be prepared by the Borough Council and, while it provides the overarching principles by which development will be delivered in the Borough, other documents are needed to provide detailed policies about specific issues. Additional LDF documents may take the form of the following:

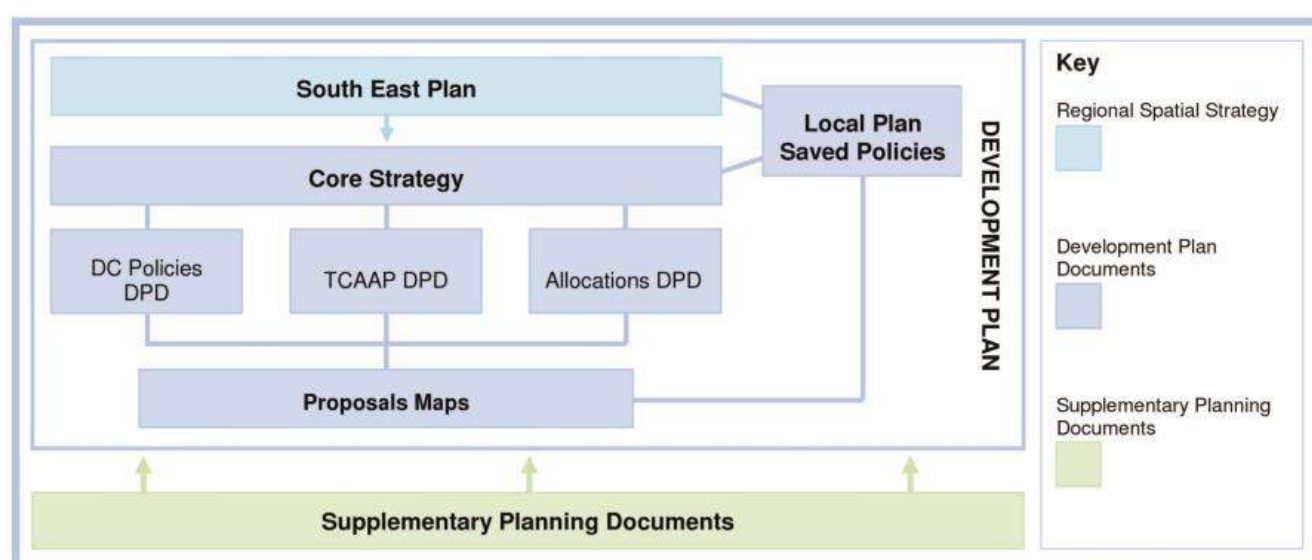
- **Development Plan Documents (DPDs):** policy-*setting* documents (the Core Strategy is a DPD)
- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):** policy-*supporting* documents, providing further detail about how to implement policies in DPDs

**1.9** DPDs and SPDs must be in general conformity with this Core Strategy. More information about the LDF in general and about the specific documents the Borough Council intends to produce, is provided in a separate document: the [Local Development Scheme](#). The Borough Council will prepare the following policy-setting DPDs:

- A **Town Centres Area Action Plan (TCAAP)**, providing site allocations and specific policies for the town centres of Royal Tunbridge Wells; Southborough; Paddock Wood; and Cranbrook
- An **Allocations** DPD, providing site allocations for a range of uses across the Borough
- A **Development Control Policies** DPD, providing detailed criteria for the general management of development

**1.10** Figure 1 below summarises the relationship between the different documents in the LDF and the South East Plan:

**Figure 1 Relationship between Development Plan Documents and the South East Plan**



## Interim Arrangements: Local Plan Saved Policies

**1.11** Prior to the commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, local planning policy prepared by the Borough Council was contained within a single Local Plan. The Borough Council adopted its last [Local Plan](#) in March 2006 and, under the transitional arrangements between the two systems, a number of its policies have been 'saved' until such time as they can be replaced by those prepared through the LDF.

**1.12** The LDF will ultimately replace the Local Plan in its entirety but, given that LDF documents are produced separately and at different times, this will be a gradual process. A list of saved Local Plan policies is provided on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's website at [www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/LocalPlan](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/LocalPlan). Those that are specifically superseded by policies in this Core Strategy are as follows:

**Table 1 Superseded Local Plan Policies**

Policy in Local Plan 2006	Superseded by Core Strategy Policy
EN26: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Core Policy 4
EN27: Special Landscape Areas	Core Policy 4
H3: Affordable Housing within Development Schemes	Core Policy 6
ED4(c): Land West of Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood (in part)	Core Policy 7

## Preparation

**1.13** In preparing this Core Strategy, the Borough Council consulted with a variety of stakeholders on two main occasions: at Issues and Options stage, from 19 February 2007 to 02 April 2007 and at the then statutory Preferred Options stage, from 30 November 2007 to 11 January 2008. In addition, other meetings have taken place with key delivery agencies. The final Core Strategy was published for comment on 29 April 2009 and was submitted for examination by an independent Inspector on 12 August 2009. The Consultation Statement accompanying this document provides full details of the consultation that took place and of how the results are reflected in this final version.

## Format

**1.14** The Core Strategy is structured as follows:

### Chapter 2: Context for Development

**1.15** Chapter 2 provides the backdrop for the approach to development pursued by the Core Strategy. It presents a portrait of the Borough at the beginning of the Core Strategy period and considers the drivers for new development to 2026. It also summarises the key points of the national and regional planning context of which the Core Strategy takes account.

### Chapter 3: Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives

**1.16** Written in the future tense, the Spatial Vision is an expression of what the Borough will be like at the end of the Core Strategy period when development has met the challenges set out in Chapter 2. It represents the aim of the Core Strategy and wider LDF. The specific challenges that development must address in order to realise the Spatial Vision are summarised in seven Strategic Objectives and five key sustainable development objectives. These Objectives provide the link between the overarching Spatial Vision and the detailed strategy for delivering it in Chapters 4 and 5.

## Chapters 4 and 5: Delivery Strategy (including Spatial Strategy and Core Policies)

**1.17** Together, Chapters 4 and 5 constitute a Delivery Strategy for achieving the vision and objectives in Chapter 3. The Delivery Strategy is central to the Core Strategy. Chapter 4 sets out the key decisions that have been taken in terms of how much development is going to happen; and where, when and by what means it will be delivered and summarises them in a tangible **Spatial Strategy**. The main elements of the strategy are represented visually in a **Key Diagram**.

**1.18** Chapter 5 provides **Core Policies**, by topic and by place, which set out the overarching planning principles by which development should be delivered in accordance with the Spatial Strategy. Each topic-based Core Policy is accompanied (at Appendix 1) by an **implementation and monitoring strategy**, which provides information about how development will be delivered in practice under that policy. The place-shaping policies draw together the requirements of each of the topic-based policies by place and therefore they do not require a separate implementation and monitoring strategy.



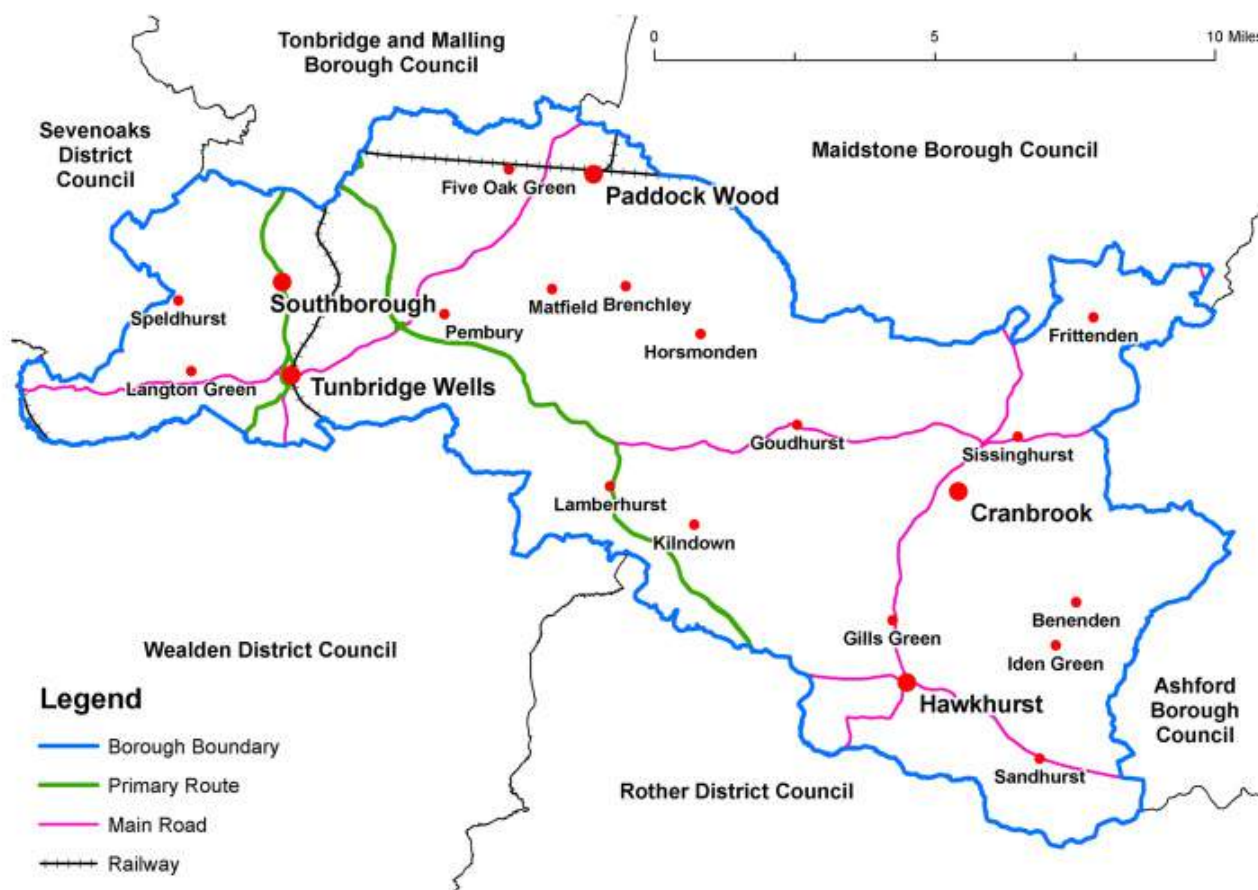
## Chapter 2 Context for Development

### Portrait of the Borough

#### Borough Setting

**2.1** Tunbridge Wells Borough lies in the south west of Kent, bordering East Sussex. It covers an area of 326 square kilometres. The Borough borders the authorities of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone and Ashford in Kent; and Rother and Wealden in East Sussex. The nearby towns of Maidstone and Ashford are respectively identified as a growth point and a growth area in the [South East Plan](#).

**Figure 2 Map of Borough** (© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. (100024298) 2008)



#### Settlements

**2.2** Royal Tunbridge Wells forms the majority of the main urban area and provides a large proportion of the social, cultural and economic opportunities available in the Borough. In addition to being the Borough's principal retail centre, the town provides a wide variety of services, including primary and secondary schools, and sports and community facilities. Historical and architectural features of the town, such as the Pantiles, also provide a high quality environment that attracts a significant amount of tourism to the Borough. The town is subject to considerable constraints, such as its location within the Metropolitan Green Belt and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

**2.3** Southborough lies within the main urban area, but has a separate, smaller town centre providing independent shopping facilities, as well as local services. The town also benefits from a primary school and specialist educational facilities catering for a wide hinterland. Along with Royal Tunbridge Wells, Southborough is constrained by the Metropolitan Green Belt and the High Weald AONB.

**2.4** Paddock Wood benefits from good transport links and higher-order facilities, such as a secondary school and sports centre. There is a large employment area to the north of the railway line, which supports a wide rural hinterland. Apart from the Waitrose supermarket, existing retail is mainly devoted to the provision of local services. In physical landscape terms, Paddock Wood is not as constrained as the other towns in the Borough, but the western edge of the centre abuts the Green Belt and the results of the [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (SFRA) 2007 suggest that many areas, particularly to the north of the town, are at risk of flooding.

**2.5** Cranbrook is an attractive, vibrant rural town located within the High Weald AONB. The weatherboarded houses and features such as the Vestry Hall give it a unique character. Cranbrook also benefits from a range of comparison shopping facilities, a supermarket, secondary schools, a sports centre and the Weald Information Centre.

**2.6** Like Cranbrook, Hawkhurst features the weatherboarded buildings that are distinctive to the area. The town is also located within the High Weald AONB and therefore is considerably constrained. It supports a wide rural hinterland and benefits from a primary school, small independent cinema and a supermarket.

**The Colonnade, Hawkhurst**



**2.7** Tunbridge Wells Borough is also home to 17 villages, each with its own character. Most of the villages are located in the Green Belt and/or the High Weald AONB and all provide some facilities, such as a primary school, shop, public house or church. In addition, there are a number of hamlets and other more remote buildings dispersed across the Borough, many of which are located within the AONB or Green Belt and provide important features of the landscape.

## Drivers for future development

### Demographics

**2.8** In 2001, the population of the Borough was estimated to be 104,000 people. By 2026, the population is forecast to rise to 108,500 and between 2006 and 2026 household formation is forecast to rise by 13.7%; the 65-84 age group is projected to grow by 40.5%; and those of working age (16-64 years) are set to fall by 3.8%.<sup>(1)</sup>

**2.9** Data from the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) (SHMA) 2008 indicates that almost 70% of household moves are made within the Borough and, for the West Kent sub-region as a whole (Tunbridge Wells Borough; Tonbridge & Malling Borough; and Sevenoaks District), 68% of moves are made within the area. The Borough also experiences high in-migration from Greater London and the Wealden District, often drawn by the existence of the highly regarded grammar school system.

**2.10** The rising household numbers, coupled with an ageing population, mean that the Borough will need to provide a mix of housing types and sizes, including specialist forms of housing. If existing migration levels persist, this could put additional pressure on the Borough Council to provide for housing needs.

### Climate Change and Sustainability

**2.11** The Borough has a high quality environment, which could be affected by future climate change. The impacts of climate change may be felt within the Borough by increased frequency and severity of weather events, such as flooding and extreme temperatures. To adapt for, and mitigate against, these impacts it will be important to make the best use of all the Borough's natural resources.

1 KCC Population Projections: South East Plan Strategy-based projections (November 2008)

## Environment

**2.12** Approximately 70% of the Borough is designated as High Weald AONB and 22% as Metropolitan Green Belt. The Borough also has 19 separately identified Landscape Character Areas and is home to a number of other valuable landscapes, including Important Landscape Approaches, Areas of Landscape Importance, Arcadian Areas and Areas of Important Open Space, as well as other aspects of value, such as tree lines, woodlands, hedgerows and rural lanes. The Borough also supports extensive areas of Ancient Woodland and one Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS).

**2.13** The Borough supports a wide network of biodiversity sites, including 10 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 59 Local Wildlife Sites, 17 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Value and four Local Nature Reserves. There are also a number of key species and habitats that require protecting, such as those featured in the Council's own [Biodiversity Action Plan](#).

**2.14** In terms of the Borough's heritage, there are 25 Conservation Areas, approximately 3,000 listed buildings, 10 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 41 Historic Parks and Gardens, as well as many other additional sites that feature on the Kent Historic Environment Record and within Heritage Counts. The Borough also features many distinct archaeological features, such as those within the Urban Archaeological Zones and Sites of Archaeological Interest.

**2.15** The existence of these features acts not only as a constraint on development, but also as an opportunity. A challenge will therefore be the preservation and enhancement of this character and distinctiveness, while balancing the competing pressures for retail, employment and residential.

## Housing

**2.16** The Borough has high house prices and, consequently, problems of affordability, which is demonstrated by the average house price of £308,565 (January to March 2008). The SHMA 2008 found that there is a shortfall in available affordable units and, as a result, many households in need of affordable housing plan to leave the Borough.

**2.17** This presents a challenge for the Core Strategy, as it will need to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing and a range of housing types to meet identified needs, including those of older people, within both the market and affordable sectors, and of gypsies and travellers. The Borough Council will also need to focus on the more local issues arising from the pressure for development, such as recognising threats to local character that may result from the proliferation of garden development. It must also recognise that new development will place additional demands on community, utility and transport infrastructure and therefore will need to maintain an adequate supply of infrastructure and delivery in line with development.

## Employment

**2.18** The Borough is an attractive location for businesses, boosted by the high quality of the built environment. Recently, however, it has suffered from a loss of employment uses, including offices within Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre. Alongside this, there has been a decline in employment within the primary industries, manufacturing, transport and communications, so the majority of jobs are concentrated in the service sector. The high quality open space and historical areas, however, including the Pantiles and the historic gardens and landscape of the rural areas, attract a significant amount of investment and tourism is recognised to be an important employment-generating use. The [Tunbridge Wells Borough Hotel Futures Study](#) 2005-2021 recommends that the Borough Council should maintain and widen the choice of hotel facilities.

**2.19** Adding to the reliance on the service economy, 2001 Census information shows that the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells has high levels of rail commuting almost exclusively towards London. These journeys are generally being carried out by managers and professionals (whereas car journeys are being carried out by those in all occupation types). Relatively recently, however, there have been some signs

that the Borough is branching out into additional sectors, facilitated by the expected completion of the new District General Hospital at Pembury in 2012 and the Centre of Clinical Excellence, located near Knights Park in Royal Tunbridge Wells.

**2.20** Unemployment in the Borough is lower than average, but the Indices of Multiple Deprivation do identify pockets of deprivation across the Borough. The Borough needs to capitalise on the skills of its workforce by providing a range of employment opportunities to meet people's needs. This is especially important outside the service sector, otherwise the current trend of out-commuting to higher value jobs could impact on the vitality and viability of the Borough's centres. The health sector also represents an opportunity for the future and the Borough also needs to build on the strength of tourism, particularly by improving the range of hotel choice.

## Retail and Leisure

**2.21** Royal Tunbridge Wells is an important retail centre and demand for premises from retailers is high. The Borough's other centres also provide some retail provision, from upmarket specialist shops at Cranbrook, to small independent units in Paddock Wood. The North Farm/Longfield Road/High Brooms industrial areas in Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough also serve the Borough by specialising in the retailing of bulky goods. The Borough also has good leisure and cultural facilities, including theatres, an independent cinema and a museum at Royal Tunbridge Wells, an out-of-town cinema multiplex at Knights Park, Royal Tunbridge Wells and a small independent cinema in Hawkhurst.

**2.22** Despite these strengths, Royal Tunbridge Wells has dropped out of the top 50 retail centres since 2004, mainly due to other competing centres strengthening their retail offers, such as the opening of Fremlin Walk in Maidstone. To counteract this trend and to maintain the existing centres, Royal Tunbridge Wells will need to present a sufficiently attractive offer to be able to enhance its comparison shopping function and meet needs identified within the [Retail Study](#) 2006. In addition to this, considering that the North Farm/Longfield Road industrial area has seen pressure for the retailing of comparison goods, the Borough Council will need to avoid any negative impacts this may have on the vitality and viability of the Borough's town, neighbourhood and village centres. Maintaining a critical mass of cultural and leisure facilities in the town will help to support and complement the retail offer.

**Calverley Precinct, Royal Tunbridge Wells**



## Transport

**2.23** The Borough benefits from a good rail service to Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and London, a bus network that covers both the urban and rural areas and good provision of car parking facilities within the town centres, many of which are free in the more rural towns. There are very high levels of car ownership and use within the Borough, with 58% of working residents travelling to work by car (2001 Census).

**2.24** Royal Tunbridge Wells suffers from congestion, particularly on the A21 between Tonbridge and Royal Tunbridge Wells; on the Pembury Road; within the North Farm/Longfield Road industrial area; and on the A26 within the towns of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough, where an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been designated. There are opportunities to increase current low levels of cycling, walking and use of public transport and therefore one of the key challenges is to encourage alternative forms of transport and facilitate a modal shift away from private car use.



## Planning Context

**2.25** The Borough Council and its partners will seek to address the issues highlighted in this chapter through a wide range of plans, programmes and strategies. The role of the Core Strategy and wider LDF is to set out how they may be addressed, either directly or indirectly, through the planning system. LDF policies must, however, take account of a broader legislative and policy context provided at the national and regional levels.

### Legislation

**2.26** The key piece of legislation that governs both development plan preparation and development control is the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as referenced in Chapter 1: Introduction. In addition, a wide range of other legislation will apply to development at different stages during planning and construction and any development proposals will be subject to this legislation, as well as to LDF policies. Other pieces of legislation that are particularly relevant to planning and development are, but are not limited to, the following:

- Planning Act 2008
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Housing Act 2004
- Building Regulations 2000
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

### National and Regional Planning Policy

**2.27** The Core Strategy and wider LDF are required to be in general conformity with higher-level policy prepared by both the central and regional Governments. Central Government prepares Planning Policy Statements (PPS) (which are gradually replacing the previously prepared Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG)). PPSs and PPGs explain the statutory provisions relating to a wide range of planning issues (including housing, environment, employment, flood risk, etc.) and they also explain the relationship between planning policies and other policies that have an important bearing on issues of development and land use.

**2.28** The provisions of national policy are relatively general and apply to all local planning authorities. It is not the role of the Core Strategy to reiterate national policy, but to interpret it at the local level. [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#) (PPS1) 2005, for example, sets out the Government's overarching policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. The World Commission on Environment and Development broadly defined sustainable development in 1987 as "*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*" This definition is still widely used and PPS1 confirms that "*sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning.*" The Core Strategy must therefore be prepared within this context provided by PPS1 and, in principle, the same relationship applies to other PPSs and PPGs.

**2.29** Regional Planning Policy for the South East will be provided by the South East Plan (technically called the Regional Spatial Strategy), prepared by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA). The South East Plan interprets national planning policy for the region exclusively and therefore provides a much more specific spatial context for development in the Borough than does national policy. It has some very important policy implications for the Borough, which must inform the LDF:

- 6,000 additional dwellings must be provided in the Borough from 2006-2026
- Tunbridge Wells, jointly with Tonbridge, is designated as one of a network of 22 *Regional Hubs*. It is connected by *Regional Spokes* to Crawley; Hastings; Ashford; and Sevenoaks

**2.30** The policies of the South East Plan will clearly influence how the Borough Council must plan for development at the local level. The Regional Hub designation is particularly significant for the development of the main urban area of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough. In general, Regional Hubs are intended to be a focus for investment in new transport and other infrastructure; for economic activity and regeneration; for market and affordable housing; and for new major retail and employment development.

**2.31** Policy AOSR8 of the Plan sets out further details about the Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells Hub specifically. It states that full and effective use of development capacity will be pursued within the Regional Hub to provide for a balance of business, commercial and residential development, with particular attention to be paid to meeting locally-based needs for business premises. It requires that, at Tunbridge Wells, priority should be given to the conservation of the urban and natural environment and the setting of the town and that proposals for intensifying or expanding the technology and knowledge sectors at established and suitable locations should be supported.

## Chapter 3 Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives

**3.1** The [Sustainable Community Plan](#), adopted in 2006, set out a simple vision of the future of the Borough, based on the aspirations of its communities and the Borough Council's partners. Its principal aim was to *enhance the quality of life for all* through actions relating to the environment, the economy, leisure, community safety, transport, housing, health and well-being, social inclusion and education and skills. The vision and objectives of the Sustainable Community Plan are provided in full at Appendix 2. The Sustainable Community Plan was developed at a similar time as the [Vision for Kent](#) 2006, which provides the Community Strategy at the county level. It has therefore informed, and been informed by, the wider County agenda and the visions of both Plans are broadly consistent.

**3.2** In October 2008, the Borough Council's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) began a 'visioning' exercise to refresh the 2006 Sustainable Community Plan and to secure the delivery of a focused set of actions. The vision of the LSP was to have:

- A competitive and enterprising **economy** with an educated and skilled workforce
- An inclusive and cohesive **society** where people are healthy and safe and benefit from high quality, affordable homes
- A connected, vibrant and sustainable **environment**

**3.3** This vision will be realised by the actions of many different individuals and organisations working in many different ways. The role of planning, through the Local Development Framework, is to draw out the spatial aspects of the vision and to drive the physical development needed to deliver it. The **Spatial Vision** below sets out what the Borough will be like at the end of the Core Strategy period in 2026 if it is successful in achieving its aims for development.

### The Spatial Vision

**3.4** In 2026, Tunbridge Wells is a Borough of economic and social prosperity founded on seized opportunities for business and enterprise and a respect for the exceptional quality of the environment that makes it unique.

**3.5** While ambition has driven development and service planning across the Borough, so has demographic analysis, enabling traditional structural problems to be overcome and giving individuals and communities confidence that they will benefit from the general climate of success. The provision of a wider range of higher-skilled employment opportunities inside the Borough has seen a reduction in out-commuting and in young people leaving to find work. At the same time, all residents, from older people to newly forming households, are benefiting from new housing development that meets their needs in terms of type, size and cost.

### The Borough's Places

**3.6** Having accommodated the majority of new development in the Borough for a mix of uses, Royal Tunbridge Wells is a centre of strategic importance in the South East: a Regional Hub of economic, social and cultural activity. Infrastructure improvements and increased use of high quality public transport, cycling and walking facilities have significantly reduced traffic congestion in and around the town and an ongoing commitment to manage it into the future has sparked renewed confidence and growth in the business and commercial sectors. Following the completion of a new district general hospital in Pembury and building on its roots as an historic spa town, Royal Tunbridge Wells and its surroundings have become renowned as a centre of excellence for health-related services and facilities.

**3.7** Purpose-built, high quality office premises in the town centre have attracted new companies to the town centre and ensured the retention of key employers, while retail expansion and the provision of leisure and cultural facilities have helped to maintain the competitiveness of the high street. Greater ease of movement between the different parts of the town, and better connectivity with the Pantiles to the south, has supported independent retailers, bringing vitality to previously underused areas and

variety to visitors and customers. Local entrepreneurs are taking advantage of new, flexible accommodation to open and expand small businesses, particularly on the North Farm/Longfield Road industrial estate, which offers an alternative range of employment opportunities to those found in the town centre.

**3.8** At the same time that it is a Regional Hub, drawing people from a wide area, Royal Tunbridge Wells is also a desirable place to live. The high quality of the built and natural environment and generous access to the countryside continue to appeal to residents and, in addition to the wide range of facilities in town, local centres provide essential services and a focus for local communities.

**3.9** Southborough retains a distinctive character. It has benefited from developments at Royal Tunbridge Wells, particularly in terms of accessibility through the centre, but essentially it supports the Regional Hub. The completion of a mixed use development in the centre has significantly enhanced the services and facilities available in Southborough, but small independent traders continue to thrive, contributing to a strong sense of place.

**3.10** Supported by appropriately scaled new development, Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst continue to serve as local hubs for a wider rural hinterland, with vibrant centres that provide a range of high quality local services. Paddock Wood has experienced greater commercial success, driven by enhancements across all sectors. The thriving industrial area to the north of the railway line now offers modern and flexible business premises and high-tech industries, which employ people in high-value jobs. New development in the town centre has improved its retail and leisure offer and its attractive surroundings and sports facilities draw people for a variety of recreational activities, including for the many opportunities for cycling and walking. These enhancements have supported new high-quality housing development in Paddock Wood and both new and existing residents have benefited from the stronger sense of place they have created. Development has both taken account of, and sought to manage, flood risk.

**3.11** Cranbrook and Hawkhurst remain attractive places to live, work and visit, benefiting from the high quality of their natural and built environments. Their character continues to be defined by their setting within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and by their central conservation areas. Sensitive new development for both market and affordable housing, employment and retail has secured their continuing vitality and, in both towns, the need for improved community facilities has been met.

**3.12** Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst are at the heart of a thriving, well-connected network of villages and hamlets in the countryside, which each provide a local focus for their communities. A strong rural economy is founded on activities that respect and make appropriate use of the countryside, including agriculture, recreation and tourism. Care has been taken to conserve and enhance the distinctive features of the Borough's countryside, including its landscape and biodiversity, because businesses, residents and visitors alike value both its intrinsic character and the resources it provides.



## Strategic Objectives and Sustainable Development Objectives

**3.13** To address the issues outlined in Chapter 2 and realise the Spatial Vision above, future development in the Borough will need to focus on meeting a number of specific challenges. The key challenges are summarised in seven Strategic Objectives in Box 1 below:

### Box 1

#### Strategic Objectives

**SO1:** To provide sufficient developable and deliverable land for a mix of uses and meet the Borough's local and strategic requirements for housing; employment; and retail development and for other supporting infrastructure. To locate this development sustainably in and around existing settlements, and to conserve and enhance the Borough's unique high-quality built and natural environment

**SO2:** To focus development at Royal Tunbridge Wells to stimulate and sustain the economic growth and competitiveness of Royal Tunbridge Wells as a Regional Hub in a way that also provides business opportunities for local people. Focusing development at the Regional Hub should not prejudice the need to support the rural economy by protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the Borough's small rural towns; neighbourhood centres; village centres; and wider rural area

**SO3:** To target regeneration efforts where necessary, particularly in the Borough's town centres and least affluent areas, to ensure that all current and future residents of the Borough have the opportunity to access the services and facilities they require to meet their needs for housing; employment; education; health; and leisure inside the Borough

**SO4:** To facilitate the provision of enhanced infrastructure, including green infrastructure, to support new and existing development, particularly where this can reduce the need to travel, and to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport where travel remains necessary

**SO5:** To provide high quality housing to meet the needs of all sectors of the community, both now and in the future, including with affordable housing; homes for young and older people; and for those with special needs

**SO6:** To ensure the provision of high quality and well managed open space; natural open space; sports; play; recreational; community; and cultural facilities that are accessible to all people close to where they live

**SO7:** To promote a safe and healthy community that is inclusive of the needs of the communities that make up the Borough's population

**3.14** The Strategic Objectives above drive the Delivery Strategy in Chapters 4 and 5 that follow. In addition, it is considered that there are some overarching objectives of which development should take particular account in order to achieve the aims of sustainable development and so, while they are not particularly unique to the Borough, they are set out in Box 2 below. The Sustainability Appraisal accompanying this Core Strategy provides a comprehensive assessment of the document against a full range of sustainability objectives.

## Box 2

### Sustainable Development Objectives

**SD1:** To ensure that development takes account of the role and value of biodiversity and geodiversity; and aims to conserve and enhance locally important habitats, wildlife and geology

**SD2:** To maximise the use of previously developed land and of the existing property stock

**SD3:** To ensure that development is consistent with the principle of living within environmental limits by conserving finite non-renewable resources, including land, energy, water, soil and air quality wherever possible and ensuring that any trade-offs are made in an explicit and transparent way

**SD4:** To avoid making adverse contributions to climate change, having regard to the potential impacts of already-unavoidable long-term changes and (where possible) mitigating such impacts

**SD5:** To ensure development gives full consideration to good design principles, including energy efficiency, use of renewable energy technologies and sustainable construction

**3.15** The sets of objectives in Boxes 1 and 2 are of equal importance, and the positions of individual objectives within each set imply no particular order of priority.

## Chapter 4 Delivery Strategy

**4.1** From this point forward, the Core Strategy sets out how development will deliver the vision and objectives for the Borough. This chapter sets out the key decisions that have been taken in terms of **how much** development is going to happen; and **where**, **when** and by **what means** it will be delivered. It summarises them in a tangible Spatial Strategy, which indicates what future development will mean in practice for the different areas in the Borough. The subsequent Core Policies in Chapter 5 provide, by topic and place, the overarching principles with which development will be required to conform.

### Spatial Strategy

#### How much development will happen?

**4.2** Table 2 below summarises the total quantities of the key types of development that will be delivered in the Borough. The quantities are derived from a combination of strategic national and/or regional policy and local evidence of need. In effect, therefore, they represent relatively fixed parameters for the Core Strategy and LDF. For reference, Table 2 states the primary sources of policy and evidence that have determined the quantities, but details are provided in the reasoned justifications to the Core Policies that follow in Chapter 5.

**Table 2 Total quantities of key types of development that will be delivered in the Borough**

Type of Development	Total Quantity	Timescale	Policy/Evidence
Housing	6,000 net dwellings	2006-2026	South East Plan; Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009 (TWBC)
Employment	Maintain existing floorspace <sup>(1)</sup>	2006-2016	South East Plan; Employment Land Study 2006 (TWBC)
Retail	26,236sqm net Comparison (non-food) floorspace <sup>(2)</sup>	2006-2017	Retail Study 2006 (TWBC); Retail Need Assessment Study 2007 (KCC)

1. Following further information at the regional level in relation to employment land, the Borough Council may be required to review this position and update its Employment Land Study to reflect the period to 2026. See Core Policy 7 for more information.
2. The Borough Council will monitor this position and may review the Retail Study at an appropriate time during the Plan Period. See Core Policy 8 for more information.

**4.3** In addition to those in Table 2, the LDF will seek to facilitate the delivery of other types of built development, including facilities for culture and leisure, transport and infrastructure and those to support energy efficiency. The subsequent Core Policies provide a framework for the delivery of these types of development. They also provide a framework for managing the impact of new development upon the Borough's built and natural environment.

#### Where will development take place?

**4.4** This Core Strategy sets out, in broad terms, how the total quantities of development specified above will be distributed spatially across the Borough. To deliver the Spatial Vision and achieve the Strategic Objectives for the Borough, the Core Strategy and LDF will pursue the following spatial principles:

### Box 3

#### Spatial Strategy

- To pursue an urban focus for development in order to optimise the vitality of the Borough's town centres; to make optimum use of previously developed land; and to protect the distinctive character of the rural environment
- To focus the majority of new development at Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough to support the Regional Hub role with Tonbridge, while improving access to, from and within, it
- To provide sufficient development at Cranbrook, Hawkhurst and Paddock Wood to support and strengthen them as local service centres for the Borough's rural area
- To protect the character of the Borough's villages by limiting new development to be within the existing Limits to Built Development, unless it is specifically required to meet local needs

**4.5** This strategy confers a hierarchy upon the Borough's settlements that will determine how development is quantitatively distributed:

### Box 4

#### Settlement Hierarchy

Hierarchy	Settlement
1. Main Urban Area	Royal Tunbridge Wells; Southborough
2. Small Rural Towns	Cranbrook; Hawkhurst; Paddock Wood
3. Villages	Benenden; Bidborough; Brenchley; Five Oak Green; Frittenden; Goudhurst; The Moor (Hawkhurst); Horsmonden; Iden Green; Kildown; Lamberhurst; Langton Green; Matfield; Pembury; Sandhurst; Sissinghurst; Speldhurst

**4.6** The quantity of development to be delivered at each settlement will reflect its position in the hierarchy, with the majority being focused at the main urban area of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough at the top. Table 3 below sets out how the total quantities of each of the key types of development shown in Table 2 will be divided according to the settlement hierarchy. Quantities for individual settlements are provided in the relevant Core Policies. Table 3a in Appendix 3 draws together the key elements of the distribution strategy, as presented in the Core Policies, for the Settlement Hierarchy. It summarises the broad distribution of the development to take place during the Plan period.

**Table 3 Division of total quantities of key types of development**

	Housing	Employment	Retail
Main Urban Area	75%	Existing employment land will be maintained and the position reviewed in light of the review of the South East Plan through the production of the Single Strategy	90%
Small Rural Towns	19%		10%
Villages and the rural areas	6%		As needed, consistent with development plan policy

**4.7** The Key Diagram at the end of this document provides an indicative visual representation of how the different types of development will be distributed across the Borough. This is set against the context provided by the main constraints on development in the Borough and its existing infrastructure.

**4.8** A number of factors have been taken into account in determining the broad distribution of development across the Borough, the key ones being:

- strategic national and/or regional policy
- the nature of opportunities for, and constraints upon, development in the Borough
- the objectives of sustainable development, through Sustainability Appraisal

#### Strategic Policy

**4.9** The South East Plan determines an overarching spatial strategy for development in the region, with which development in this Borough must generally conform. The context provided by the Plan's spatial strategy and wider policies begins to define distinct roles for the different types of settlements in the Borough, which call for different development responses. Certain key elements of the spatial strategy, as reported below, tend to support the maintenance of the Borough's long-standing settlement hierarchy as set out in Box 4 above:

- ***New development will be focused on the South East's network of regional hubs.*** Policies SP2 and AOSR8 of the South East Plan define the town of Tunbridge Wells as a Regional Hub jointly with Tonbridge, making it a focus for investment in multi-modal transport infrastructure; service infrastructure; economic activity; market and affordable housing; and retail and employment development
- ***A strategy of urban focus and urban renaissance will continue to be pursued.*** Policy SP3 of the South East Plan sets out how this should be achieved, primarily by concentrating development within, or adjacent to, the region's urban areas and by delivering at least 60% of all new development on previously developed land and through the conversion of existing buildings
- ***The vitality and character of the region's rural areas will be supported, while its valuable natural assets will be protected.*** Policies BE4 and BE5 of the South East Plan provide a context for development in small rural towns and villages respectively. Small rural towns, the Plan's broad definition of which describes Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst, are not intended to be a main focus for development but to be local hubs for employment, retailing and services. Limited small-scale development in villages should meet the specific local housing, business and service needs of individual rural settlements or groups of settlements. Chapters 11 and 12 of the Plan provide numerous policies that seek to manage, conserve and enhance both the natural and built environment

#### Opportunities and Constraints

**4.10** To some extent, the various constraints upon development in the Borough do themselves direct it to particular areas and settlements and not to others. Chapter 2 introduced the constraints and they are considered in detail in subsequent Core Policies, particularly in Core Policy 2: Green Belt and Core Policy 4: Environment. Those that have a direct influence on how development is distributed across the Borough can be summarised as follows:

- the location and extent of the Metropolitan Green Belt, which serves to check the outward expansion of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough and of Paddock Wood to the west
- the location and extent of areas of designated landscape importance, particularly the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, within which Cranbrook, Hawkhurst and a significant number of the Borough's villages are located
- the location and extent of the functional floodplain, within which development should not generally take place. Significantly, development in certain parts of Paddock Wood is severely constrained by flood risk

**4.11** While constraints influence the location of development, so do ambitions and opportunities. Concentrating development at Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough in accordance with the South East Plan Regional Hub designation presents a real opportunity to improve and expand the already extensive range of high-quality services and facilities they offer, at the same time as addressing some of the structural problems and constraints they face; severe peak-hour congestion, for example.

**4.12** The benefits of improvements at the Borough's main urban centre are intended to be felt by residents, visitors and businesses across the Borough, although it is recognised that access to and from the rural areas must be improved. Notwithstanding this, the distribution of development set out above is sufficiently broad to enable local objectives to be met directly at the Borough's small rural towns and villages, without being so broad as to threaten the very characteristics that make people wish to live and work in them.

**4.13** Opportunities for development in the Borough are also driven by the very practical matter of securing a supply of suitable land. Before finalising this Core Strategy, the Borough Council conducted a [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment](#) (SHLAA) with a view to confirming that the distribution set out for housing is deliverable. The SHLAA identified sufficient land for housing to support this distribution and also highlighted where opportunities exist to provide other uses. Furthermore, the SHLAA confirmed that the distribution would maximise the Borough's contribution to pursuing an urban focus for new development as set out in the South East Plan by contributing to its target of achieving 60% on previously developed land across the region.

### Sustainability Appraisal

**4.14** The objectives of sustainable development are summarised in Chapter 2, paragraph 2.28. The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal, which is mandatory under [European Directive 2001/42/EC](#) (the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive), is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations when planning for development. At each stage in the preparation of this Core Strategy (Issues and Options, Preferred Options and submission), a Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken to ensure that the intended distribution of development was the most appropriate in respect of balancing the different considerations.

**4.15** With reference to a comprehensive sustainability framework, which took account of the opportunities and constraints in the Borough, each Appraisal has favoured a distribution that focuses the majority of development on the existing main urban area of the Borough. The Sustainability Appraisal accompanying this Core Strategy confirms the merits of this approach and supports the distribution set out in Box 4 above.

### **When, and by what means, will development happen?**

**4.16** To coincide with that of the South East Plan, the Core Strategy covers the period to 2026. It is anticipated that the quantities of development set out in Table 3 above will be delivered by then, but the specific timescales for each type will differ, as will the means of delivery. More topic-specific and place-specific detail is provided by the Core Policies in the following chapter.

### Implementation and Monitoring

**4.17** The Core Policies in Chapter 5 set out the overarching planning principles by which development should be delivered. In some cases it will be necessary to provide more detailed policies to supplement them in subsequent DPDs. In accordance with the purpose of spatial planning, the policies often draw upon the objectives of a wide range of plans, programmes and strategies and therefore it will not be possible for certain elements to be delivered by the Borough Council alone. Instead, the implementation of policies in the Core Strategy and LDF will depend upon the cooperative working of a number of public, private and voluntary bodies. In [Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning](#) (PPS12) 2008, the Government has emphasised the role of the Local Strategic Partnership in providing a forum for such cooperation.



**4.18** To provide clarity for all the parties involved in the delivery of development, Implementation and Monitoring Tables are provided in Appendix 1. They provide a firm basis for monitoring the delivery of essential infrastructure over the Plan period. These provide information about:

Implementation

- the **aim** of the Core Policy
- the intended **outcome** of the Core Policy in terms of delivering the relevant objectives of the Core Strategy, the Sustainable Community Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal
- what **plans, programmes and strategies** are required to implement the Core Policy
- Which **delivery agencies** are involved

Monitoring

- any relevant delivery **targets**
- the national and/or local **indicators** that will be used to measure progress against targets
- any **contingency measures** that would be taken should delivery targets not be met

**4.19** Progress in delivering the targets in column 6 of the Implementation and Monitoring Tables will be reported at the end of each calendar year in the Borough Council's Annual Monitoring Report.

Provision of Infrastructure

**4.20** The Spatial Strategy seeks to focus new development in areas that are already well served with existing infrastructure, but it will remain important to ensure that new and enhanced infrastructure can be provided where an additional need is generated. Where new development creates a need for new or enhanced infrastructure, it will be required either to provide it directly or to contribute towards its provision, depending on the scale of the development and of the infrastructure required. The Core Strategy draws upon the definition of infrastructure given by the South East Plan itself, and by the updated implementation plan, 'Delivering the South East Plan', which accompanies it.

**4.21** The term 'infrastructure' should not be considered to refer only to large-scale built facilities, but also to the range of services and facilities that serve developments or the people that live in or otherwise use them. Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development sets out the types of infrastructure that may need to be provided during the Plan period, based on the broad definition set out in the Implementation Plan which will accompany the South East Plan (see Core Policy 1, paragraph 5.20 for more information). The conclusion of the Borough Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is that the Core Strategy does not place undue reliance on critical elements of infrastructure for which funding is unknown. There is also a reasonable prospect of such critical elements being delivered in the Plan period. The Borough Council has consulted with infrastructure and service providers in preparing this Core Strategy and will continue to do so at the more detailed site allocations stages.

## Chapter 5 Core Policies

### Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development

#### Core Policy 1

##### Delivery of Development

In pursuit of the Spatial Strategy set out in Box 3 (Chapter 4) and to ensure that development is delivered in a managed way, the Borough Council will allocate sufficient sites in the Allocations DPD and Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD to meet the Borough's known development needs as set out in Core Policies 6-14.

1. Priority will be given to the allocation and release of previously developed land within the LBD of settlements. Selected greenfield sites within and/or adjacent to the LBD of settlements in the main urban area and small rural towns will also be allocated and released as appropriate to maintain a sufficient phased supply of deliverable and developable land. Sites adjacent to or outside the LBD of villages will not generally be allocated or released
2. Exceptionally, allocations may be made or sites be released in locations other than as specified in Core Policy 1(1) above where an identified need for any of the following types of uses cannot be met on such sites:
  - affordable housing (for local needs only) at the villages where the need cannot be met on a site within the LBD in accordance with Core Policy 6: Housing Provision
  - employment uses in the rural areas in accordance with Core Policy 14: Development in the Villages and Rural Areas
  - recreational uses in accordance with Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision
3. The Allocations DPD and Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD will establish broad phasing arrangements for the release of allocated sites. Progress on implementation will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report and, if necessary, action may be taken to manage the delivery of housing sites in accordance with the principles set out in PPS3, particularly paragraphs 62-67

##### Development Contributions

4. Developments on all allocated and unallocated sites will be required either to provide, or to contribute towards the provision of, the services, facilities and infrastructure for which they create a need

**5.1** The publication of revised [Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning](#) (PPS12) in June 2008 confirmed the central role of spatial planning in the process of "*place-shaping and delivery*". At the local level, success in both elements will be achieved by the realisation of the Spatial Vision presented in Chapter 3 and of the Spatial Strategy in Chapter 4. This is dependent on a) there being enough available land upon which development can be delivered and b) the available land being used in an appropriate manner, which takes account of all the objectives set out in Chapters 3 and 4.



## Land Availability

**5.2** Core Policy 1 embraces the 'plan, monitor, manage' approach to development. This is embedded most firmly in [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing](#) (PPS3) 2006, but is also applicable to other types of development for which there is an identified quantitative or qualitative need.

**5.3** To fulfil the requirements of PPS3, the Borough Council has undertaken a [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment](#) (SHLAA) 2009, which demonstrated the potential for the Allocations DPD and the Town Centres Area Action DPD to allocate sufficient sites to deliver the Borough's needs for housing during the period to 2026 (see Core Policy 6: Housing Provision for further information). It is anticipated that additional sites for a variety of other uses will be identified during the preparation of the Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD and the Allocations DPD.

**5.4** In practice, the sites assessed in the SHLAA are not equally suitable for development, either in terms of the aims of the Spatial Strategy, or in terms of their individual characteristics. It will therefore be appropriate to carefully assess their relative merits and prioritise their development. Core Policy 1 provides the basis for this in two main ways:

- by seeking the *allocation* of the most appropriate and sustainable sites for development
- by giving guidance on the way in which allocated sites are released over the lifetime of the Plan

## Site Allocation

**5.5** A plan-led approach to development by site allocation has a number of advantages over one driven by planning applications. It allows the Borough Council to test the relative merits of potential sites to ensure that those that are developed are best able to achieve all the objectives of this Plan. At the same time, site allocation provides a greater degree of certainty, both for the Borough Council and for the developer, that the site can and will come forward, because the principle of development is established by its allocation.

**5.6** The Borough Council and, through consultation, stakeholders, will also have a greater opportunity to influence the nature of development on allocated sites. The Borough Council would wish to ensure that optimum use is made of the Borough's development land supply; that the potential impacts of development are carefully managed; and that individual developments work together to enhance their surroundings, rather than take place separately and disjointedly.

**5.7** The Borough Council will allocate appropriate sites in the Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD and the Allocations DPD (both programmed to be adopted in October 2011), or in other appropriate DPDs, should these be required during the Core Strategy period. Site allocations will be made for a range of uses, including (but not limited to) the following:

- housing
- employment
- retail
- transport infrastructure and other infrastructure (e.g. education, health, etc.)
- recreation, leisure and culture
- community facilities

**5.8** Until such time as these DPDs are adopted, the allocation of sites provided by saved Local Plan 2006 policies will continue to apply unless they are directly superseded by a Core Strategy Policy (see Table 1, Chapter 1: Introduction, for a list of superseded Local Plan Policies).

## Types of Sites to be Allocated

**5.9** In accordance with the Spatial Strategy set out in Box 3 (Chapter 4), Core Policy 1 pursues an urban focus for development and prioritises the use of previously developed land. In recent years, the vast majority of the Borough's development needs have been delivered on previously developed land. During the period 2004/05-2007/08, for example, approximately 96% of all housing development, and approximately 49% of employment development, was delivered on previously developed land. In strategic, spatial terms, this has been consistent with the aims of sustainable development and locally it has facilitated the protection of the Borough's high-quality natural environment. The Borough Council will pursue these objectives into the future.

**5.10** Core Policy 1 therefore prioritises the allocation of sites on previously developed land located within the existing Limits to Built Development (LBD). The current extent of the LBDs, as defined by the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006 is shown on the adopted Proposals Map, but the LBDs will be reviewed during preparation of the Allocations DPD. On the basis of currently known land availability (and making no allowance for windfall development - see paragraph 5.18 further) it will also be necessary to allocate greenfield sites and/or sites outside the existing LBD in order to maintain a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable land to accommodate the Borough's identified development needs. Core Policy 1 therefore allows for allocations on both previously developed and greenfield land and it will be necessary for the Allocations and Town Centres Area Action Plan DPDs to consider both sources.

### Greenfield Sites outside the existing Limits to Built Development

**5.11** Where it is necessary to draw on greenfield sites they will only be allocated where they are adjacent to the main urban area or the small rural towns and their allocation is required to meet the Borough's identified needs for development. Such sites will be selected on the basis of their relative sustainability credentials, their comparative public or visual amenity value and the extent of their contribution to the character of the surrounding area. Allocations beyond the LBD of villages will not be made except in accordance with Core Policy 1(2).

**5.12** This approach reflects the respective roles of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough as part of a Regional Hub and the other towns as local hubs, as expanded under Core Policies 9-13.

### Site Size

**5.13** Ideally, the Borough Council would prefer that all significant development took place on allocated sites, but this is unlikely to be possible in practice, particularly owing to the abundance of small sites in the Borough. While the Borough Council will consider allocating sites of any size, it will generally seek to allocate larger sites over which it is important to maintain a greater degree of control.

**5.14** Larger sites are defined as those with an area greater than, or equal to, 0.2ha. This threshold is the same as that used to identify sites for assessment in the SHLAA and represents a reduction from the 0.4ha threshold used to allocate sites in the Local Plan 2006 on the basis that 62% of all housing development completed during the five-year period 2003-2008 was delivered on sites smaller than 0.4ha in area. Larger sites are potentially capable of delivering a significant amount of development for a range of uses and this could have a greater impact on the surrounding environment and on the capacity of existing infrastructure. While development on unallocated sites above 0.2ha in area may be permitted during the Plan period, the Borough Council will have particular regard to how the above issues are addressed.

## Land Release Strategy

**5.15** There are clear advantages in allocating sites for the whole of the Plan period. However, in order to husband scarce land resources in a heavily constrained area and take account of unexpected circumstances, it is also important to manage land release in accordance with the Plan, Monitor, Manage (PMM) approach. The land release strategy given by Core Policy 1 will ensure that development is driven

in accordance with the Spatial Strategy and that the objectives of this Core Strategy are met. The principal phasing for individual sites, or groups of sites, will be set out in the Allocations DPD and Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD. Sites in different settlements may be released simultaneously. This will help to support the roles identified in the Core Strategy for the various settlements. The quantity of land to be released in each settlement will depend, however, upon its position in the Settlement Hierarchy, as set out in Box 4 (Chapter 4).

#### Release of Allocated Sites

**5.16** Core Policy 1(1) prioritises the release of previously developed land within the existing defined LBD of the Borough's settlements, both to facilitate access to services while minimising the need to travel and to protect valuable features of the countryside and open space.

**5.17** There is a good record of development being delivered inside the LBD of the Borough's settlements in recent years. During the period 2003-2008, approximately 93% of all residential development was delivered within the LBD and approximately 96% of that was delivered on previously developed land. It is anticipated that a significant proportion of new development to 2026 will continue to come from this source of sites.

**5.18** Unallocated 'windfall' sites have contributed a very significant amount of development in the Borough in recent years and the great majority of these have been sites on previously developed land within the LBD. The Core Strategy makes no allowance for windfalls in terms of the number of dwellings for which allocations need to be made in the Allocations DPD and Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD. However, such sites will be counted towards the land supply once planning permission for them has been granted.

#### Exceptions Sites

**5.19** Core Policy 1(2) sets out three specific circumstances in which it may be appropriate to consider allocating and releasing sites outside the LBD that are not adjacent to the LBD of the main urban area or the small rural towns. Before any exception is made to the general land release strategy, it must be demonstrated that it is either impossible to provide the use in accordance with it (e.g. in the case of affordable housing in the villages), or that it is inappropriate to do so (e.g. in the case of specific recreational uses). The broad criteria with which such proposals must conform are set out in this Core Strategy as follows:

- affordable housing (for local needs only) in the villages where the need cannot be met on a site within the LBD (see Core Policy 6: Housing Provision)
- employment uses in the rural area (see Core Policy 14: Development in the Villages and Rural Areas)
- recreational uses (see Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision)

#### **Development Contributions**

**5.20** Where new development (on allocated and unallocated sites) creates a need for new or enhanced infrastructure, the scheme will either need to provide it directly, or to contribute financially towards its provision, depending on both the scale of the development and that of the infrastructure required. The purpose of development contributions is to mitigate against the impacts of new development and they will be sought in accordance with national policy guidance as set out in Circular 05/05. The types of infrastructure and services that developments may be required to provide/contribute towards the provision of during the Core Strategy period may include, but are not limited to, those set out in Appendix 4 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). Different types of infrastructure in the following categories are included:

- **Housing**
- **Transport**
- **Education**

- **Health**
- **Social infrastructure**
- **Green infrastructure**
- **Public Services**
- **Utilities Services**
- **Climate change and energy initiatives**

**5.21** The Borough Council will consult with infrastructure providers in preparing its Town Centres Area Action Plan and Allocations DPDs in order to ensure that there is a reasonable prospect that the services and facilities needed to support specific sites will be delivered. Where infrastructure provision/contributions are required for specific schemes, details will be provided with allocations in the Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD or in the Allocations DPD, with general details for all schemes to be provided in the Development Control Policies DPD. The Borough Council will prepare a Supplementary Planning Document to support its Development Control Policies DPD to draw together how the Development Contributions regime will operate. It will include guidance on when contributions will be sought; how they will be prioritised and pooled if necessary; and how the monies will be handled.

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

**5.22** See Appendix 1, Table 11 'Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development'.

## Core Policy 2: Green Belt

### Core Policy 2

#### Green Belt

The boundaries of the Green Belt are defined on the adopted Proposals Map<sup>(2)</sup> and are indicated on the Key Diagram at the end of this document.

1. The general extent of the Green Belt will be maintained for the Plan period
2. A long-term land reserve (designated in this Plan as 'Rural Fringe') will be maintained and a review of land within that category will be conducted in parallel with the preparation of the Allocations Development Plan Document to ensure that Green Belt boundaries will endure thereafter until 2031
3. There will be a general presumption against inappropriate development that would not preserve the openness of the Green Belt, or which would conflict with the purpose of including land within it. Any new development should accord with the national planning provisions of [Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts](#) (PPG2) or its replacement
4. Infill development and redevelopment within the designated 'Major Developed Sites' within the Green Belt will be allowed where it accords with the national planning provisions of PPG2 or its replacement

#### Green Belt

##### The Function of the Green Belt

**5.23** The Green Belt, sometimes referred to as the Metropolitan Green Belt, is a long-standing instrument of national and regional planning policy. The [Planning White Paper](#) (May 2007), which informed the Planning Act 2008, stated that "*the Government is committed to the principles of the Green Belt and will make no fundamental changes to the planning policy as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts 1995 (PPG2).*"

**5.24** The outer boundary of the Green Belt was defined by the Kent Countryside Plan 1983. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 1996 reviewed the Green Belt boundaries of the previous area-based Local Plans for Royal Tunbridge Wells, Southborough and Paddock Wood, which defined the Green Belt boundary adjoining these settlements. The 1996 Local Plan also defined the inner boundaries for the remainder of the settlements within the Plan area covered by the Green Belt.

**5.25** The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and it follows that the most important characteristic of the Green Belt is its openness. Green Belts perform five key functions:

- preventing urban sprawl
- preventing towns from merging into one another
- safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- preserving the setting and character of historic towns
- helping urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of under-used and outworn urban land and buildings

2 Currently the adopted Local Plan 2006 Proposals Map

## Green Belt Boundaries

**5.26** It remains the Borough Council's intention to maintain the general extent (i.e. the broad overall coverage) of the Green Belt in accordance with Government guidance that, once Green Belt boundaries have been established, they should be altered only exceptionally, to ensure that the primary purposes of the Green Belt and its main attribute of openness are retained. Similarly, the South East Plan confirms that there is strong public support for the concept of the Green Belt and that the functions of the Green Belt are entirely consistent with the spatial strategy for the region.

**5.27** However, the South East Plan states, in the supporting text to Policy AOSR8: Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells Hub, that "*there may be a need for small scale Green Belt review at Tunbridge Wells*" in order to be able to accommodate sufficient development here to support its Regional Hub status. This is capable of being an exceptional circumstance for a review of the inner boundaries of the Green Belt (PPG2, paragraphs 2.6-2.7). Any release of land from the Green Belt following a review would be dependent on there being no suitable non-Green Belt sites available to support the requirements of the Regional Hub. The Borough Council would then consider the release of sites within the Green Belt that are adjacent to the Limits to Built Development (LBD) of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough where this would least compromise the purposes of the Green Belt.

**5.28** On the basis of currently known land availability, as set out in the SHLAA 2009, there may be no need to release Green Belt sites for development during the period to 2026. However, in parallel with the preparation of the Allocations DPD a review will be undertaken of the adequacy or otherwise of the stock of safeguarded non-Green Belt land outside the LBD, designated as Rural Fringe in previous Local Plans. This is because compliance with PPG2 requires there to be a sufficient stock of developable Rural Fringe sites to permit housing development to continue in 2026-31 at the same annual rate as in 2006-26 without further review of the Green Belt. This review of Rural Fringe sites will not take place at locations other than Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough.

## Development in the Green Belt

**5.29** Within the Green Belt there will be a presumption against permitting new development, or changes of use of land or buildings, or engineering operations, other than those in accordance with PPG2, the Regional Spatial Strategy and other relevant policies contained within this Core Strategy and wider LDF. Paragraph 3.7 of PPG2 states that "*with suitable safeguards, the re-use of buildings should not prejudice the openness of Green Belts, since the buildings are already there. It can help to secure the continuing stewardship of land, especially by assisting farmers in diversifying their enterprises, and may contribute to the objectives for the use of land in Green Belts.*" Paragraph 3.8 of PPG2 lists criteria identifying when the re-use of buildings inside a Green Belt is not inappropriate development. These criteria do not automatically rule out the re-use of rural buildings for economic development. Furthermore, PPG2 identifies the positive role of the Green Belt in fulfilling a variety of objectives, including the provision of access into the countryside from urban areas, opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation activities and the retention and enhancement of landscapes. The development of green infrastructure networks will facilitate this role (see Core Policy 4: Environment).

**5.30** Annex C of PPG2 makes specific provision for local planning authorities to identify sites of substantial scale as 'Major Developed Sites' within the Green Belt. In the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006, three sites were identified under this category:

- Pembury Hospital, Pembury: a new replacement hospital on the Pembury site is currently under construction with a planned completion date by the end of 2011
- Kent College, Pembury
- Holmewood House School, Langton Green

### Pembury District General Hospital





**5.31** All three sites had an identifiable and substantial core of permanent buildings above 7,500sqm floorspace, a threshold considered by the Local Plan Inspector to appropriately reflect local circumstances. They remain the only three sites of this scale within the Green Belt in the Borough and it is unlikely that new developments of this scale within the Green Belt will be allocated or permitted in the period to 2026. No additions to the Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt are therefore proposed. Within such sites, however, limited infilling or redevelopment may be acceptable, offering the opportunity for environmental improvement without adding to its impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of its designation. Planning proposals for development at these identified Major Developed Sites will be considered on their merits and will be assessed according to the criteria set out in national and local planning policies.

### **Rural Fringe (long-term land reserve)**

**5.32** The Rural Fringe strategy was initially established in the Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough Local Plan 1988, with the purpose of identifying and safeguarding land to meet probable longer-term development needs as required by PPG2. The Local Plan 1988 identified six Rural Fringe sites, which have been carried forward in successive Local Plans to the 2006 Local Plan. They are defined on the Proposals Map.

**5.33** As indicated at paragraphs 5.27-5.28 above, the Borough Council will retain a stock of safeguarded land reserved as Rural Fringe to extend beyond the Plan period to 2031. The existing Rural Fringe sites were not excluded from consideration in the first SHLAA and their relative merits (including their five-year deliverability and 10-year developability) will need to be considered against those of other candidate sites in the process of preparing the Allocations DPD and Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD. In accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development, Rural Fringe sites, like other sites outside the LBD, will not be released unless they are allocated in a DPD.

**5.34** If it is necessary to allocate existing Rural Fringe sites, the SHLAA, together with the Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study 2009, will help to identify suitable areas for designation as replacement Rural Fringe sites through the Allocations DPD.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

**5.35** See Appendix 1, Table 12 'Core Policy 2: Green Belt'.

## Core Policy 3: Transport Infrastructure

### Core Policy 3

#### Transport Infrastructure

To address transport issues and provide necessary infrastructure:

1. Sustainable modes of transport, including cycling, walking and the use of public transport will be encouraged to reduce dependence on private car use. This will be done through working with partners to:
  - encourage improvements in public transport
  - investigate the need for park and ride facilities to serve Royal Tunbridge Wells
  - continue to develop and provide an integrated cycle network and enhance routes for non-motorised users, including pedestrians and equestrians
  - pursue improvements to transport links in the rural areas of the Borough and conserve and enhance the rural lanes network to ensure that they are convenient and safe for users
2. Provision will be made for maintaining and improving transport infrastructure at the strategic and local levels through working with partners, to:
  - improve the strategic rail and highways networks, including the A21, A26 and A228
  - support junction and highway capacity improvements, including those that will benefit all users
3. Development proposals that have significant transport implications will be required to be accompanied by a transport assessment and travel plan showing how car based travel can be minimised

### Context

**5.36** National objectives for transport are established by Central Government. The Government's current thinking around strategic transport is outlined in [Delivering a Sustainable Transport System](#) (DaSTS), published by the Department for Transport in November 2008. It sets transport in the wider social, economic and environmental context and has established five high level objectives:

- *"To support national economic competitiveness and growth, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks*
- *To reduce transports' emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of tackling climate change*
- *To contribute to better safety, security and health and longer life-expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport, and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health*
- *To promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society*
- *To improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a healthy natural environment"*

**5.37** Planning guidance relating to transport is found in [Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport](#) (PPG13) 2001. The objectives of PPG13 are *"to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level and to promote more sustainable transport choices both for carrying people and for moving freight."*



**5.38** The Communications and Transport chapter of the South East Plan forms the Regional Transport Strategy. The Transport Strategy and policies are focused on a set of core principles:

- managing and investing
- the rural dimension
- regional hubs and spokes
- communications technology
- mobility management
- road pricing and charging
- the gateways, airports and port
- freight

**5.39** The South East Plan/Regional Transport Strategy recognises that achieving a more sustainable pattern of development is dependent upon accepting that the transport system within the region is a resource that has a finite capacity at any point in time. While this capacity will increase as a consequence of the investment already programmed, it considers that it is not possible to build our way out of the problem. The [Updated Implementation Plan](#) (October 2006) that was submitted to the Panel contains a definition of infrastructure which, in relation to transport, refers to *"airports, ports, road network, rail network, travel management systems, other public transport improvements"* (Figure 2 on p12).

**5.40** Kent County Council (KCC), as the Local Transport Authority, has established county-wide objectives, which are set out in the County's Transport Strategy, the [Local Transport Plan](#) 2006-2011 (LTP2). The LTP2 sets a vision for transport to 2025, which is *"to provide good, safe accessibility to jobs and services for all sections of the community in Kent, and to improve the environment and health of the community by reducing congestion and pollution widening the choice of transport available, and by developing public transport, walking and cycling"* (para 3.29).

**5.41** To achieve this vision, the LTP is based around 10 strategy objectives (para 3.30):

- Accessibility
- Demand Management
- Environment, Heritage and Communities
- Health
- Integration
- Keep Kent Moving
- Road Safety
- Sustainable Regeneration
- UK Connections
- UK Gateway

**5.42** Under the [Local Transport Act](#) 2008, local transport authorities are still required by legislation to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP). LTPs set out to deliver both national and regional objectives for transport in the local context.

**5.43** KCC is currently producing a county-wide Integrated Transport Strategy. The strategy sets out to create the blueprint for a high quality transport system for Kent, which will act as a catalyst for continued economic growth and provide an improved quality of life for all in a sustainable and socially inclusive way. At this time, the strategy has not established its high level objectives for transport in Kent. It is anticipated, however, that objectives will be in line with DaSTS and will provide the overarching approach to delivering Kent's LTP beyond 2011.

**5.44** Acknowledging the need to address transport issues is particularly important if Royal Tunbridge Wells/Southborough (and Tonbridge) are to capitalise on their Regional Hub status. A significant number of residents of Tunbridge Wells Borough commute out to work in Greater London, whereas a significant

number of people commute in from outside the Borough, principally from East Sussex. Tunbridge Wells' status as a Primary Regional Centre attracts many people into the town for shopping, leisure, healthcare and education.

**5.45** The main source of air pollution in the Borough is road traffic emissions from major roads. An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was declared in November 2005 along the A26 due to road traffic emissions of nitrogen oxides. An [Air Quality Action Plan](#) (March 2010) has been produced, which outlines a number of proposed measures: those directly related to the A26 AQMA; and those more indirect, general measures, which aim to improve air quality throughout the Borough.

**5.46** The Accession Mapping Study undertaken to identify accessibility levels to key destinations across the Borough (see Appendix 4 of the Core Strategy: Preferred Options Report) took into consideration public transport accessibility and the proximity of key services and facilities, such as Neighbourhood and Village Centres, retail areas, schools, hospitals and GP surgeries. Accession has informed the Spatial Strategy and the proposed policies by seeking to direct development to the most sustainable locations. Accession highlighted poor public transport accessibility between villages and rural towns in the Borough, with the greatest accessibility within the main urban area of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough and villages in close proximity, such as Pembury and Langton Green. There are, however, gaps in bus coverage and/or limited services, even within the main urban area, which need addressing.

**5.47** The Borough Council has limited scope to maintain and improve transport infrastructure, but will seek to do this in collaboration with stakeholders and partners. Partnership working with respective Highways Agencies, including East Sussex County Council, will be necessary to address highways issues.

## Rail Network

**5.48** Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough are well served by the railway network, having stations at Tunbridge Wells Central and High Brooms, via Tonbridge, on the London to Hastings Line. From Tonbridge, it is possible to get a train to Redhill, but no longer to Gatwick. The Borough Council has contacted the Department for Transport to urge the reinstatement of cross-country services from Tonbridge to Gatwick. Paddock Wood is on the Folkestone to London line, via Ashford, as well as being on the Strood to Paddock Wood line, via Maidstone. Ashurst and Eridge are on the Uckfield to London railway line with links to East Croydon and Clapham Junction. Other stations outside the Borough, such as Staplehurst, are used by rail commuters living or working in the Borough.

**5.49** All of these services are provided by the Southeastern Train Operating Company (TOC) with the exception of the Tonbridge to Redhill service and the Uckfield to London service, which are provided by the Southern TOC.

**5.50** A former railway line between Tunbridge Wells Central and Eridge is used, in part, by the Spa Valley Railway Preservation Society for leisure and seasonal event traffic. The Spa Valley Railway Preservation Society hopes to be able to re-open the line to Eridge. The line from Tunbridge Wells West to Tunbridge Wells Central is protected by Local Plan policy, as the option to fully reinstate the Tunbridge Wells Central to Eridge railway line provides the opportunity to link the London to Uckfield railway line with the London to Hastings railway line. This remains an aspiration of the Borough Council.

**5.51** The National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP) is a programme backed by the Department for Transport to deliver improvement to 150 medium-sized stations in England and Wales, including Paddock Wood and Tunbridge Wells Central stations. Actual work should commence in January 2011. The scheme will address issues and make improvements in areas such as improving seating, toilets and accessibility.

**Paddock Wood railway line**



**5.52** Network Rail is responsible for developing a series of [Route Utilisation Strategies](#) (RUS) as a key element of the Rail Industry planning framework. There are two purposes of RUSs, which are to *“enable Network Rail and persons providing services relating to railways better to plan their businesses, and funders better to plan their activities; and set out feasible options for network capacity, timetable outputs and network capability, and funding implications of those options for persons providing services to railways and funders.”* Work started on the Kent RUS in January 2008 (finalised in January 2010), the scope of which includes the mainline services from Charing Cross and Cannon Street to:

- Hastings (via Tunbridge Wells)
- Ashford (via Maidstone East)
- Strood to Paddock Wood (Kent RUS Scoping Report, para 4.2.2)

**5.53** Cross-route issues between the Kent and Sussex RUSs ARE contained within the RUS most appropriate to the delivery of the overall route utilisation objective. Routes with an interface between Kent and Sussex RUSs include Tonbridge to Redhill (Kent RUS Scoping Report, para 4.2.4). Ashurst station is covered by the South London RUS, which was finalised in March 2008.

**5.54** Tunbridge Wells Borough Council will continue to work with stakeholders and partners to protect rail routes and improve rail services and associated infrastructure.

## Highways Network

**5.55** The Highways Agency is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of the A21, which links *“Hastings/Bexhill and Tunbridge Wells/Tonbridge to the M25 and the trunk road network. Between the M25 and Tonbridge the A21 is a dual 2-lane carriageway standard with grade separated junctions, limited access and no central reserve gaps. South of Tonbridge, with the exception of the Pembury Bypass and the Lamberhurst Bypass, the remainder of the route to Hastings is mainly single carriageway with poor horizontal and vertical alignment”* (Highways Agency).

**5.56** There are two main improvements proposed to the A21 that directly affect the Borough:

- i. A21 Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling
- ii. A21 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst Improvements

**5.57** There is an A21 Reference Group, which consists of MPs and local Council Leaders, including the Leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. This group has lobbied to ensure that the Tonbridge to Pembury dualling begins in 2011/12. This group will continue to lobby to bring forward the A21 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst improvements, which are currently programmed to begin in 2012/13 and also for improvements to the A21 between Flimwell and Lamberhurst.

**5.58** KCC is responsible for roads in the Borough, other than the A21. This includes the A26, which, in conjunction with the A228, links the M20 to the north of the Borough, passes through Tonbridge, Southborough, Royal Tunbridge Wells and Crowborough and then extends southwards to Lewes.

**5.59** A proposal to provide a bypass to Colts Hill has been a long-held aspiration as part of the progressive improvement of the A228. An outline design for the scheme was approved by the County Council following public consultation. Further technical investigation has highlighted complex underground water tables. Discussions with the Environment Agency suggest that the effect on the aquifer is problematic and not realistically capable of mitigation. The vertical alignment would need to be raised to reduce or overcome the problem, which would require reviewing the outline design and further consultation. Although a priority in the County Council's Local Transport Plan, the scheme was not accepted for funding in the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) for 2006-2011 and it is also not in the indicative list of schemes that might be funded in the remaining RFA years of 2009/10 to 2015/16. Nevertheless, the Borough Council will continue to lobby the relevant bodies to try to obtain funding for this scheme.

**5.60** Other classified A roads in the Borough include the A229, which effectively bypasses Cranbrook for through-traffic and also runs through Hawkhurst, which is dominated by the crossroads of the A229 and the A268.

**5.61** KCC is responsible for the maintenance and improvements to junctions and highways, other than for those that are the responsibility of the Highways Authority. The introduction of PIPKIN (Prioritising Investments Programmes for Kent's Integrated Network), which has since been updated to the Scheme Prioritisation System, requires all transport scheme proposals to be subjected to a formal assessment and prioritised in accordance with their likely impact and wider contribution towards Kent's strategic and local transport objectives.

**5.62** [A Study into the Traffic Conditions at the Longfield Road/Great Lodge Retail Park](#) has been carried out by KCC's consultants, Jacobs. The study identified the issues and a list of proposed recommendations to be carried out. The proposed recommendations are designed to help address the junction capacity problems. Subject to land acquisition, this may include significant engineering solutions, including the widening of Longfield Road on the approach from the A21. Any widening improvements will need to be the subject of a Scheme Prioritisation System submission for funding approval.

## Bus

**5.63** The Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) for Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough between Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Kent County Council and Arriva Southern Counties, was signed on 14 May 2008. The aim of the QBP is to develop bus travel and increase the number of passengers using bus services. The local authorities invest in improvements such as bus priorities at traffic lights, bus stop improvement, such as new bus shelters, raised kerbing and traffic restrictions known as bus stop 'clearways'. The bus companies are investing in easy access, low-floor buses and are improving the frequency, punctuality and reliability of their services.

Town centre bus



**5.64** Bus stop improvements and two service corridors had been identified for upgrades and improvements: namely, the 277 Tunbridge Wells to Knights Park and the 281 High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells to Rusthall and, as part of these works, key locations would also be identified for the provision of real time and electronic bus departure information in future financial years.

**5.65** Kent County Council is developing a new real time tracking system to replace and develop the current limited system fitted to some Arriva buses in Tunbridge Wells; the aim would be to integrate with the new smartcard ticket machines being deployed by bus operators, including Arriva.

**5.66** A number of areas had been identified for possible future Local Transport Plan funding in 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11. For 2009/10, the primary bid was for improvements on Pembury Road A264; with North Farm/Knights Park areas, in particular, Longfield Road, Dowding Way and Liptraps Lane. This would be subject to a comprehensive route study to ascertain funding for improvements to vehicular traffic flows, accessibility in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, pedestrian and cycle routes. All would be included in the 2010/11 Scheme Prioritisation System process.

## Transportation Studies

**5.67** Addressing transport issues in the Borough is particularly important given the designation of Tunbridge Wells as a joint Regional Hub with Tonbridge in the South East Plan. Policy CC8b of the South East Plan identifies a specific role for transport improvements in supporting Regional Hubs as 'living centres', both in terms of providing sustainable access to facilities and providing interchanges between sustainable transport modes.



**5.68** The need to provide enhanced infrastructure to support new and existing development is of paramount importance. Journey time reliability is a growing transport issue, with recognised congestion hotspots being formally identified on both the intra- and inter-urban network in both Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge & Malling Boroughs. High traffic flow and localised congestion can also create poor air quality episodes and result in the designation of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), as is the case for the A26 London Road corridor. Improved interchange facilities and the effective coordination of local bus and rail services can provide better accessibility and address rail heading at stations.<sup>(3)</sup>

**5.69** The provision of integrated sustainable transport services and associated infrastructure is widely acknowledged as a key objective of Kent's overarching Transport Strategy, the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP recognises the role that sustainable modes can play in addressing local transport issues. In particular, the provision of high quality public transport services, coupled with effective demand management measures, such as district parking strategies, can deliver a significant change in modal choice and assist in providing greater access to town centres and other key services. To date, the Borough Council has utilised the Vehicle Parking Standards, provided by Kent County Council for the County as a whole. The Borough Council remains supportive of this approach and will work with KCC in preparing appropriate standards for general use during the Plan period. Public transport can also assist in enabling sustainable development in the context of wider regeneration and redevelopment objectives in both Royal Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge.

**5.70** To assist with developing the Transport Strategy for the area, a VISUM model<sup>(4)</sup> needs to be developed. The VISUM model that is to be produced is multi-modal in scope and will be used to assess future transport proposals, as well as informing the LDF. The VISUM multi-modal transport model is to be developed to assess private and public transport in the study area and will focus on the weekday peak periods.

**5.71** Two Park and Ride sites are allocated in the adopted Local Plan 2006; at Home Farm (Knights Park) and Woodsgate Corner (Pembury). It is already a corporate priority to reach a strategic view on the merits of Park and Ride. It is recognised that Park and Ride could bring a number of potential benefits, including a possible reduction in traffic congestion, reduced delays for those travelling to the main urban area and helping to preserve the character of the town.

**5.72** The Borough Council, working with partners, is currently considering this issue. A study is currently being finalised that will identify potential site(s) for a Park and Ride interchange with a general overview of the characteristics and operational merits of each site. This will include investigating the feasibility of implementing bus lanes and bus priority measures along potential routes. The results of this study will inform the Allocations DPD in allocating any necessary sites for Park and Ride facilities.

## Cyclists, Walkers and Equestrians

**5.73** A number of cycle routes do exist, both on and off the carriageway. In the latter case, this is referring to cycle paths away from the roads.

**5.74** KCC is currently producing a cycling strategy for the Borough, which Tunbridge Wells Borough Council will have regard to. As mentioned in Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision, Public Rights of Way and cycle links provide an important recreational facility. They can also provide useful links for non-leisure trips, such as trips to work. Cycle use for journeys can be encouraged by providing safe cycle parking, lockers, showers and changing facilities. Such facilities may be required for new developments.

3 Rail heading is the phenomenon whereby passengers drive to a main station rather than use their local station, because of fares, service level or other journey options.

4 A comprehensive, flexible software system for transportation planning, travel demand modelling and network data management

**5.75** The existing cycle route network is fragmented and it is important that a comprehensive, continuous and integrated network is provided. New and existing cycle route networks and Public Rights of Way (PROWs) can be an important part of a wider green infrastructure network and these will need creating, protecting and enhancing. The needs of all non-motorised users will be considered before new routes are created so that the best choice of status for a new route is made.

**5.76** With regard to walking, Kent County Council's [Walking Strategy](#) acknowledges that "*walking is a neglected form of transport when it comes to official statistics, collection of data and public expenditure*" (page 2). Walking has many benefits, including reducing congestion, pollution and carbon dioxide emissions and health benefits. The Tunbridge Wells Health Walks have tried to encourage walking through putting together ideas of routes where people can do circular walks.

**5.77** People may walk primarily for leisure purposes and/or for short journeys to work or other facilities. Pedestrian routes should be safeguarded, developed and enhanced to maximise safety and the opportunity for walking. As stated in Core Policy 4: Environment and Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision, the Council is pursuing the identification and development of green infrastructure.

**5.78** In many areas of the Borough, equestrians have to use the roads. Although people ride or drive horses primarily for leisure and exercise, they may also ride or drive as part of their work in the industry, or in order to reach services such as farriers, veterinary surgeries and riding schools, to travel to and from school or for weddings and funerals. Equestrian routes will be safeguarded, developed and enhanced to maximise safety and sustainability.

## Rural Areas

**5.79** Transport issues that affect the villages and rural areas are different to those issues that affect the three small rural towns (Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst). Most villages have a much smaller range of services and fewer local employment opportunities, meaning that local residents must often travel much further. In order to reduce the distances that the rural population needs to travel, it is important that villages retain existing services.

**5.80** Many of the villages are located on busy roads, which are often used by large numbers of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). There are currently few restrictions in place on the use that can be made of any roads by HGVs, although there is no formal HGV signing scheme in place. Existing transport coverage assumes that most people have access to a car, but a proportion of the population will not have this access. Existing public transport coverage varies considerably in the Parishes, with Frittenden Parish, for example, not having any public bus service. Public transport services for rural areas are rarely commercially viable. Kent County Council (and other LTAs) have no direct control over bus services that are run on a commercial (for profit basis) but can influence bus companies and support public transport improvements, which can include external funding bids to boost existing bus services in rural as well as urban areas.

**5.81** Although the car will remain the dominant form of transport in such areas, different methods of travel will be supported, such as car sharing schemes. The Borough Council will also seek to lobby transport providers to improve public transport services and associated transport infrastructure.

**5.82** In the rural areas, the extensive network of rural lanes and Public Rights of Way is a key feature, as mentioned in Core Policy 14: Development in the Villages and Rural Areas. Opportunities to protect, maintain and improve such routes will help to encourage non-motorised modes of transport.

## Travel Plans

**5.83** A wide range of plans, programmes and strategies, including the South East Plan, support the effort to manage the way that people travel. The Borough Council will continue to promote integrated travel planning methods. Travel Plans should provide a package of measures, which may include car

sharing schemes, a commitment to improving cycling facilities, provision of a dedicated bus service or of a managed approach to parking. These methods can bring real benefits to individuals, organisations (where relevant) and the community. They may help to relieve local parking or congestion problems, improve public transport connections and assist in the management of rising air pollution levels. KCC has produced guidance on [Transport Assessments and Travel Plans](#) (October 2008), which aims to "*clarify when a Transport Assessment and/or a Travel Plan will need to be submitted alongside a planning application in Kent*" (page 4).

## Implementation and Monitoring

**5.84** See Appendix 1, Table 13 'Core Policy 3: Transport Infrastructure'.

## Core Policy 4: Environment

### Core Policy 4

#### Environment

The Borough's built and natural environments are rich in heritage assets, landscape value and biodiversity, which combine to create a unique and distinctive local character much prized by residents and visitors alike. This locally distinctive sense of place and character will be conserved and enhanced as follows:

1. The Borough's urban and rural landscapes, including the designated High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, will be conserved and enhanced
2. The Borough Landscape Character Area Assessment 2002 will be utilised to manage, conserve and enhance the landscape as a whole
3. A hierarchical approach to nature conservation and the protection of biodiversity and geodiversity will be applied across the sites and habitats of national, regional and local importance within the Borough. The objective will be to avoid net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity across the Borough as a whole
4. Opportunities and locations for biodiversity enhancements will be identified and pursued by the creation, protection, enhancement, extension and management of green corridors and through the development of green infrastructure networks in urban and rural areas to improve connectivity between habitats
5. The Borough's heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, archaeological sites and Historic Parks and Gardens will be conserved and enhanced and special regard will be had to their settings
6. The positive management of heritage assets through partnership approaches and measures will be encouraged, including by the use of Conservation Area Management Plans

**5.85** This Policy seeks to ensure that the delivery of new development (such as for housing, retail and employment) is balanced against the need to conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the Borough's natural and built environment, in terms of the intrinsic character and diversity of the landscape, its biodiversity and geodiversity and its heritage assets.

**5.86** This Policy covers landscape, biodiversity and heritage issues. Other issues relating to the built environment, including design requirements and climate change, are covered by Core Policy 5: Sustainable Design and Construction.

#### Character and Local Distinctiveness

**5.87** The overarching aim of this Policy is to conserve and enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the Borough as a whole. [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#) (PPS1) 2005 advises local planning authorities to have regard to [By Design - urban design in the planning system: towards better practice](#) 2000, which defines character as providing a place with its own identity. A great number of factors can contribute to the distinctive character of an area, including the setting of the settlement within the surrounding landscape, the historic pattern of development, its form, layout and density and even the principal uses within it. New developments will therefore be expected to have particular regard to the character of the area in which they are proposed.

**5.88** Within the Borough's Conservation Areas, guidance is provided by the relevant adopted [Conservation Area Appraisal](#), which describes an area's special architectural and historic character and the key features that contribute to, or detract from, it. Where they are in place, Conservation Area Management Plans provide guidelines for the management of change. Within the urban areas more



generally, the [Typical Urban Character Area Appraisal](#) represents a useful assessment against which to consider the form, layout and density of future development in that area and, within the rural areas, development will be guided by the [Borough Landscape Character Area Assessment](#) 2002 and the [Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study](#) 2009 (or their revisions). In addition, within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), any development will be expected to have particular regard to the key components of natural beauty and the High Weald AONB Management Plan.

**5.89** In recent years, the cumulative effects of windfall housing developments within large residential gardens, particularly in Royal Tunbridge Wells, have been perceived to pose a threat to residential character. The Borough Council will therefore have particular regard to residential amenity in order to protect against the effects of over-development or inconsiderate development. The character features within the town centre also contribute to a thriving and sustainable local economy, which was acknowledged as a particular strength of the Borough in the [Employment Land Study](#) 2006.

## Landscape

**5.90** The High Weald AONB covers approximately 70% of the Borough and has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The Borough Council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the High Weald AONB. The [High Weald AONB Management Plan](#) 2004 (2nd edition adopted March 2009) sets out the following: *"Time depth and objective analysis has defined the High Weald AONB as characterised by dispersed settlement, particularly historic farmsteads, ancient tracks and routeways, an abundance of ancient woodland, wooded heaths and shaws with a heritage of woodland industries and iron working and small, irregularly shaped and productive fields. These are all draped over a deeply incised and ridged landform of clays and sandstones with numerous gill streams, and are closely related to socio-economic characteristics that have roots extending deep into history. The essential character of the High Weald was established by the 14th century and has survived major historical events and social and technological changes. It is considered to be one of the best surviving coherent medieval landscapes in Northern Europe. This fundamental and largely immutable character is the essence of the natural beauty of the AONB."* The High Weald AONB Management Plan is structured around the five key components of this character: geology, landform, water systems and climate; settlements; routeways; woodland; and field and heath and the Borough Council will have particular regard to these in determining development proposals affecting the High Weald.

**5.91** In addition to this, locally recognised assets, including largely unspoilt areas of countryside, Ancient Woodland and the Rural Lanes, will be conserved and enhanced. Within the Limits to Built Development there are locally identified urban landscape designations worthy of conservation and enhancement, such as Important Landscape Approaches, Areas of Landscape Importance, Arcadian Areas and Areas of Important Open Space. Together, they provide important visual amenity value and contribute to local character. They will therefore continue to be conserved and enhanced through the provisions of this Policy.

Views out of Goudhurst



**5.92** The Borough's whole landscape is a result of the traditional interactions of mankind with the natural environment over hundreds of years, resulting in a range of distinctive features, such as field and settlement patterns. In accordance with the European Landscape Convention<sup>(5)</sup>, the Borough Council will view the landscape as a resource that will be protected as a whole, not just the designated sites. This includes urban and rural, degraded or outstanding landscapes, as well as tree lines, woodlands and hedgerows. This is also supported by [Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth](#) (PPS4) 2009, which aims to protect the countryside *"for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty."*

5 The European Landscape Convention was ratified by the Council of Europe on 21 November 2006 and became binding on the UK from 01 March 2007

**5.93** The [Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Area Assessment](#) 2002 identifies 19 separate character areas within the Borough, each with key characteristics and landscape objectives, as well as constraints upon development. The key characteristics of these areas must be conserved, but developments should also have regard to the opportunities for enhancement identified within each character area. The assessment will be used as a key tool to guide decisions in the preparation of all plans and strategies, development control decisions, and other decisions bearing on the management of land.

**5.94** In light of the wider social and economic goals of the Core Strategy, landscape conservation needs to be integrated well with development. The Borough Council has conducted a [Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study](#) 2009 to assess the capacity for change in the landscape around the main settlements, as well as to identify appropriate mitigation measures. The report's recommendations will be used alongside other evidence to guide allocations within the Allocations DPD.

## Biodiversity and Geodiversity

**5.95** Sites of national, county and local biodiversity and geodiversity importance should be protected, conserved and enhanced in line with [Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation](#) (PPS9) 2005 and the [South East Plan](#). PPS9 specifies that internationally designated sites, such as Ramsar sites <sup>(6)</sup>, Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) should be given the highest level of protection. There are none of these designations within the Borough but, in accordance with the [EC Habitats Directive](#) 1992 (92/43/EEC), the Borough Council conducted an [Appropriate Assessment](#), which concluded that, on the basis of this Core Strategy, the Local Development Framework would have no significant adverse effects on designated sites outside the Borough boundary at Dungeness SAC/Dungeness to Pett Level SPA and Hastings Cliffs SAC. However, the Borough Council will monitor progress with the ongoing assessment and recreational management strategies being undertaken in respect of Ashdown Forest by Wealden District Council, and is prepared to participate in any collaborative cross-authority management plan or associated scheme that results from these studies. Any measures that need to be applied by the Borough Council will be incorporated in future DPDs and SPDs. To avoid potential recreational impacts on sites outside the Borough, semi-natural green space should be provided with development. This matter is addressed by Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision.

**5.96** The Borough Council will apply a hierarchical approach to conservation of designated sites within the Borough. Nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) have statutory protection and are therefore given the highest level of protection. These sites are nationally recognised for their flora and fauna, geological or physiographical (landform) features and therefore will be conserved and enhanced.

**5.97** Other areas have been locally designated for their importance to biodiversity and geodiversity. These sites help protect a range of important habitats and contribute to local and national [Biodiversity Action Plan](#) (BAP) targets. Sites of Local Nature Conservation Value (SLNVC) are recognised as having county-wide status and are designated within, or adjacent to, built up areas where there is greatest pressure for development. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are designated by the Kent Biodiversity Partnership and monitored on a county-wide basis by the Kent Wildlife Trust, with the support of the local planning authorities, according to strict criteria to support biodiversity, local distinctiveness and the community. Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are specifically designated by the Council for public access, providing a significant and long-term contribution to nature conservation and opportunities for the community. Table 4 summarises the biodiversity/geodiversity hierarchy and Appendix 5 lists the specific sites in the Borough.

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6 Ramsar sites are wetland areas of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention

**Table 4 Biodiversity and geodiversity designations**

Level	Type	Designation	Number of sites
National	Biodiversity	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	10
Local	Biodiversity	Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	59
		Site of Local Nature Conservation Value (SLNVC)	17
		Local Nature Reserves (LNR)	4
		Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS)	1

**5.98** The Borough Council will encourage and promote the positive management of identified sites or habitats, as well as their conservation and enhancement. It must be recognised, however, that important habitats and protected or notable species are not confined to designated sites, but can be found on almost any site. A number of habitats and species are identified in the national and local Biodiversity Action Plans, including the Council's own [Biodiversity Action Plan](#).

**5.99** The Borough Council will seek to conserve biodiversity, in particular as identified in the BAPs, by adopting a robust policy of no net loss of important habitats or species, either directly or indirectly. It will also encourage proper ecological evaluation of development sites to ensure that development takes full account of biodiversity and will actively support the implementation of the BAPs and the development of green infrastructure. Where loss cannot be avoided, mitigation measures should be applied and, where mitigation cannot address the impacts, compensation will be required.

**5.100** In addition to the conservation of biodiversity, it is also important to explore opportunities for enhancement, particularly in light of how it is anticipated that climate change may impact on habitats and species. In making decisions about the location of new development, the Borough Council will seek to avoid and reduce habitat fragmentation and to initiate the enhancement of biodiversity by identifying how networks of habitats can be created and linked, providing opportunities for increased species permeability, as well as creating valuable links for leisure and recreation. The Borough Council will conduct future studies as part of a Green Infrastructure Framework and will use the results to identify opportunities and broad locations for the enhancement of biodiversity and green corridors. This will be addressed in detail within the Allocations DPD and the Development Control Policies DPD.

## Heritage Assets

**5.101** The importance of preserving the historic environment is recognised in [Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment](#) (PPG15) 1994 and [Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning](#) (PPG16) 1990. These set out the objectives for preserving and enhancing the historic built environment and policy for the treatment of archaeological remains on land. These principles are also reflected in the [Tunbridge Wells Borough Sustainable Community Plan](#) 2006-2011.

**5.102** The Borough has some of the highest numbers of heritage assets in the South East, as summarised in Table 5 below. Together, they provide a resource that contributes to creating a sense of place, which should be passed on to future generations. Conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, such as Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens will therefore be central to the Borough Council's approach to the environment. The Borough Council

**Cranbrook Windmill**

will ensure that proposals in, on, or around these heritage assets have positive regard to their architectural, historic, cultural or artistic value and to their setting. In addition, where proposals affect a Conservation Area, particular regard will be given to the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal.

**Table 5 Heritage designations**

Designation	Number
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	10
Historic Parks and Gardens	41
Listed Buildings	2,982 <sup>(1)</sup>
Conservation Areas	25

1. Approximately 7% of the Borough's listed buildings are listed at higher grades (I or II\*)

**5.103** The Borough Council recognises that statutorily designated sites are a small fraction of the overall heritage resource. It will also therefore conserve and enhance other heritage assets, such as archaeological remains, sites of archaeological interest and sites featured on the [Kent Historic Environment Record](#). The Borough Council will also keep the number of heritage assets under review, recognising that, as new information becomes available, it may be necessary to identify or designate additional features of merit.

**5.104** The value of the heritage assets can also place them under considerable pressure for change, as evidenced in the [Heritage Counts](#). The Borough Council will therefore take a positive approach to their management. This will be achieved through heritage partnership grants, Conservation Area Management Plans and other associated management tools. In addition, the Borough Council will operate positive enforcement action to maintain character and facilitate the maintenance of the assets.

## Implementation and Monitoring

**5.105** See Appendix 1, Table 14 'Core Policy 4: Environment'.

## Core Policy 5: Sustainable Design and Construction

### Core Policy 5

#### Sustainable Design and Construction

The Borough Council will apply and encourage sustainable design and construction principles and best practice in order to combat avoidable causes of climate change and adapt to and/or mitigate already-unavoidable impacts of climate change, while also recognising the aim of Core Policy 4: Environment to conserve and enhance the unique urban and rural heritage characteristics of the Borough. All new developments will be expected to:

1. Make efficient use of water resources and protect water quality
2. Be located in accordance with the PPS25 sequential test, generally outside of the Borough's high risk flood zones; produce no negative effects on existing flood patterns; and, where necessary, apply mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce potential flood risk
3. Have regard to, and implement, South East Plan renewable energy and energy efficiency targets, as well as wider carbon reduction targets
4. Manage, and seek to reduce, air, light, soil and noise pollution levels
5. Be designed to minimise waste creation and disposal throughout the lifetime of the development

Developments will also be of high-quality design, which will:

6. Create safe, accessible, legible<sup>(7)</sup> and adaptable environments
7. Conserve and enhance the public realm

**5.106** Tunbridge Wells Borough is notable for its high environmental quality and this Policy addresses three key issues that will enable this to be sustained into the future: (i) the need to recognise and begin to respond to the potential impacts of climate change; (ii) the need to consider solutions to pollution and waste generation; and (iii) the need to design developments so that their appeal and use will endure for the long term. These issues are cross-cutting and the use of sustainable design and construction practices can have positive impacts in each case.

**5.107** Sustainable design principles make efficient use of resources through location, design, positioning, specification and sourcing of materials, as well as improving the quality of developments and enhancing their environmental performance. The Borough Council will encourage new developments to incorporate current best practice in sustainable design and construction, incorporate mitigation and adaptation measures against the future impacts of climate change and deliver high quality developments. In addition, it will support all measures that address the causes and impacts of climate change within the Borough, which may also include the re-use of buildings and the retro-fitting of existing stock.

### Climate Change

**5.108** The Borough Council signed the [Nottingham Declaration](#)<sup>(8)</sup> in February 2007 and has therefore made a commitment to tackling the causes and effects of a changing climate within its own operations and within the Borough as a whole. This will remain a longstanding and challenging commitment and

7 Legibility relates to the ease with which parts of the urban environment can be recognised and understood.

8 The Nottingham Declaration recognises the role local authorities can play in shaping responses to climate change. By signing the Declaration, the Borough Council has pledged to systematically address the causes of climate change and prepare the community for the impacts.



the Borough Council recognises the limits of setting explicit targets and standards and will apply the most up-to-date regional or national targets as a minimum.<sup>(9)</sup> This will ensure flexibility throughout the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

**5.109** [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#) (PPS1) 2005 and the [Supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change](#) recognise that many of the adverse effects of climate change can be addressed through the spatial planning system, from measures such as energy efficiency and water and waste management, to how developments are designed and constructed. The forthcoming South East Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment will provide a framework for local assessments of vulnerability to climate change and will determine the degree of exposure of the region to climate change events, its sensitivity to the impacts and the time and capacity of the region to react. The Borough Council will need to appropriately reflect these findings in order to be able to adapt to local climate change impacts. This will be achieved through applying this Policy, with detail regarding developer requirements included within the Development Control Policies DPD.

## Water Resources and Flood Risk

**5.110** Development can potentially have a great impact on water resources, from putting additional strain on existing supplies, to affecting flood patterns by increasing the amount of impermeable land. It is therefore essential to conserve and enhance the quality and quantity of ground and surface water, ensure adequate service provision, conserve water supplies and manage flood risk.

**5.111** Water quality standards will be guaranteed by minimising pollution (covered separately within this Policy). In the context of high pressure on water resources in the South East, it is also essential to ensure that new development has an adequate means of water supply and sufficient foul and surface water drainage. In accordance with the approach set out in the South East Plan, the Borough Council will ensure that adequate water infrastructure is delivered alongside new development. Bewl Water Reservoir offers the potential to provide further water resources and therefore any areas for future expansion within the Borough will be safeguarded in the Allocations DPD. Water conservation by the application of sustainable design measures, such as grey water recycling and rainwater harvesting, will be encouraged in new and existing developments.

**New housing in Lamberhurst**



**5.112** [Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk](#) (PPS25) 2006 states that, due to the potential effects of climate change, there is an increasing need for local authorities to appraise, manage and reduce flood risk. The Borough Council's [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (SFRA) 2007 identifies areas within the Borough that are at risk of flooding. A more detailed Level 2 SFRA, which will provide useful evidence to inform the Allocations DPD, is being undertaken for Paddock Wood, which is at particularly high risk. In accordance with the sequential test and principles of PPS25, development will generally be steered away from areas of greatest risk and, where this is not possible, opportunities for mitigation and adaptation should be identified. New developments will need to demonstrate that they have regard to existing and future flood patterns and that the need for effective protection and flood risk management measures, such as sustainable drainage systems and flood storage, have been considered. The results of the SFRA will be further reflected in the Development Control Policies DPD and other DPDs as necessary. Regard will also be had to the Thames River Basin Management Plan produced by the Environment Agency.

9 For example, the Code for Sustainable Homes (which addresses energy and CO<sub>2</sub>, water, surface runoff, materials, waste, pollution, health and well-being, management and ecology) and BREEAM (additionally covering transport, such as the provision of secure facilities for cyclists and the treatment of contaminated land)



## Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

**5.113** The Borough Council is legally bound by the targets and provisions of the [Climate Change Act 2008](#), including its greenhouse gas and carbon dioxide reduction targets, the carbon budgeting scheme and the [Carbon Reduction Commitment \(CRC\)](#). In addition to this statutory requirement, the Borough Council has also signed up to several National Indicators that aim to reduce the Borough's carbon consumption levels.

**5.114** Spatial planning in particular can help achieve these goals by encouraging the use of alternative forms of energy. [Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy](#) (PPS22) 2004 states that Local Development Documents should contain policies promoting and encouraging the development of renewable energy sources. The [South East Plan](#) currently requires a minimum of 10% renewable energy (with the ability to set higher targets) for developments over 10 dwellings and non-residential schemes of over 1,000sqm and the Borough Council has adopted a [Renewable Energy](#) Supplementary Planning Document (2007) to support this.

**5.115** The Government's [Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement](#) 2007 requires that all new housing developments from 2016 should be 'zero carbon'. The Borough Council will encourage all developments to meet these levels and assess energy demands while having regard to Core Policy 4: Environment of the Core Strategy and the [High Weald AONB Management Plan](#) 2004, where applicable. It is also acknowledged that siting, form, density and orientation of buildings can also impact on energy efficiency. Maximising energy efficiency through the design, positioning and layout of developments will therefore be encouraged, the detail of which will be provided in a forthcoming SPD.

**5.116** In order to facilitate the development of efficient renewable energy facilities in the future, the Borough Council commissioned consultants, Delta Energy and Environment, in January 2009, to undertake an assessment of the capacity of different areas of the Borough to accommodate different renewable energy solutions. The results of this assessment will be reflected in the detailed requirements to be set out in future DPDs.

**Solar Panels at Phillips House,  
Royal Tunbridge Wells**



## Pollution

### Air Pollution

**5.117** [Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control](#) (PPS23) 2004 sets out the need to prevent pollution through the use of measures to prohibit, or limit to the lowest level, the release of substances into the environment from different sources. The [National Air Quality Strategy](#) 2007 places an emphasis on improving air quality levels and the [South East Plan](#) identifies the need for Local Development Documents to seek to achieve improvements in local air quality. This is of particular importance within the Borough's designated [Air Quality Management Area \(AQMA\)](#) and areas recognised as having persistent low air quality. The Borough Council's [Air Quality Action Plan](#) (March 2010) proposes measures to improve air quality within the AQMA, but also to be applied across the Borough as a whole. Within the Borough, many of the areas of poor air quality occur as a result of congestion along major roads. The Borough Council will continue to monitor air quality through the [Kent and Medway Air Quality Monitoring Network](#) and, in accordance with statutory air quality guidance, where air quality objective levels are not being met, extend or designate additional AQMAs.

**5.118** It is recognised that planning decisions can affect local air quality, particularly where the development generates traffic. The Borough Council will encourage the use of Low Emissions Strategies in order to help mitigate the transport impacts of developments, particularly within areas of low air quality.

Where developments have the potential to emit pollution, they should be designed to limit exposure to air pollution by including conditioning, mitigation or off-setting measures, which will be of particular importance within the AQMA, associated areas and areas of lower air quality.

## Contaminated Land

**5.119** PPS23 acknowledges that the presence of contaminated land can be a risk to human health and the environment. At the same time, the Borough Council recognises that development proposals can present an opportunity for the remediation of contaminated land and developments will be expected to conform to the principles and requirements set out in the Borough [Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy](#) 2008. Furthermore, any development on previously developed land, or developments with sensitive end uses, should take potential land contamination into consideration. Further detail will be provided in the Development Control Policies DPD and other DPDs as necessary.

## Light and Noise

**5.120** In some circumstances, light can be a source of pollution that can have an adverse effect on the environment and, in more rural areas, can lead to the loss of dark skies. In accordance with PPS23, light pollution should be limited and reduced, particularly in the High Weald AONB.

**5.121** [Planning Policy Guidance 24: Planning and Noise](#) (PPG24) 1994 recommends that local authorities use their planning powers to minimise the adverse impact of noise, in terms of noise-sensitive developments, such as residential land uses, and for activities that generate noise. For this reason, development will be expected to minimise any noise generated, as well as its impact on residential amenity. In accordance with PPG24, particular attention will be paid where development could affect the quiet enjoyment of the High Weald AONB and other areas of landscape value.

## Waste

**5.122** Kent County Council, as the Waste Planning Authority, is responsible for waste planning issues, including the allocation of waste treatment sites and the determination of planning applications. It has produced the adopted [Waste Local Plan](#) 1998, which sets out policies relating to potential waste treatment sites to be developed up to 2011 and is in the process of developing its replacement, the Waste Development Framework, which will cover the period up to 2026. This Core Strategy does not therefore address specific waste planning issues, but covers more local issues such as recycling and construction waste.

**5.123** [Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management](#) (PPS10) 2005 supports waste reduction and recognises how this can be incorporated into the design of developments. The [South East Plan](#) states that Local Development Documents should require developments to be designed to minimise the production of pre- and post-construction waste. The Borough Council will support these aims by requiring all developments to be designed in order to minimise waste disposal through the provision of adequate space for recycling and composting, as well as encouraging the minimisation of waste creation during the construction process and the re-use of construction and other materials.

## Urban Design

**5.124** Urban design brings together all the elements of building, space and landscape design to create the identity of a place and shape the way it functions. Good design is appropriate to its environment in scale, form, positioning and layout; sensitive to its ecological and landscape surroundings; and creates places suitable for their intended function. To meet these principles, developments will be expected to conform to the principles of the [Kent Design Guide](#) 2005/06 (adopted by the Borough Council as SPD), [By Design](#), CABE guidance on [Design and Access Statements](#) and the [Urban Design Compendium](#).

**5.125** Developments will be expected to contribute to the provision of a safe environment, both in terms of highway safety and personal security, to meet the guidelines set out in the [Safer Places](#) and [Secured By Design](#) documents. For example, opportunities for crime may be reduced by the avoidance of 'dead' spaces, such as enclosed alleyways, by providing well-lit public spaces and pathways, or by avoiding the concentration of particular uses, such as pubs and clubs.

**5.126** Sustainable design should seek to ensure that developments are inclusive, accessible and adaptable in terms of their use by all people, now and in the future. This is particularly important in the context of the Borough's ageing population. The principles set out in [Inclusion By Design](#) 2008 will be applied and the role design plays in including, and also excluding, communities will be acknowledged.

**5.127** The application of good space standards, such as [Lifetime Homes](#) and [Building for Life](#) allow for the adaptation, conversion or extension of buildings in the future. In accordance with the [Housing Strategy](#) 2006-2011, these standards will be promoted ahead of the Government target that all public funded housing should meet these standards by 2011 and all homes should meet them by 2013. This is supported by the [South East Plan](#), which recognises the need for future adaptation of buildings to meet the needs of an ageing population.

**5.128** Developments should contribute to a sense of place and create places that are easy to navigate; through the use of landmark buildings and recognisable routes, for example. The environment should be easy to move within, having clear distinctions between public and private spaces and putting the needs of non-motorised users before motor vehicles.

**5.129** Finally, all design proposals must recognise the importance of the quality of both the indoor and outdoor environment to residential and other amenity and quality of life.

## Public Realm

**5.130** The public realm refers to the parts of settlements that are available to be used by everyone, such as streets, squares, parks and other open spaces. They have a wide range of functions, both for movement and access and as places to work, shop, play, relax and visit. The Borough Council will consider the appearance of the street scene, including surface materials, street furniture and signs, lighting and opportunities for public art and will facilitate the appropriate integration of landscape within external spaces. Developments should integrate positively with the public realm and the Borough Council will seek a partnership approach to its design and management. Guidance, including the [Manual for Streets](#) 2007 and [Streets for All: South East](#) 2005, will be applied to ensure that the quality of the public realm is maintained, improved and, where necessary, created.

## Implementation and Monitoring

**5.131** See Appendix 1, Table 15 'Core Policy 5: Sustainable Design and Construction'.

## Core Policy 6: Housing Provision

### Core Policy 6

#### Housing Provision

##### Housing Land Supply

1. New housing will be delivered on sites to be allocated and released in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development. Sufficient sites will be allocated and released to enable a net increase of 6,000 dwellings to be provided in the Borough in the period 2006 to 2026
2. At least 65% of all housing development in the period 2006-2026 will be delivered on previously developed land
3. Housing will be developed at a density appropriate to the specific character of the locality. It will contribute towards achieving the overall regional target of 40 dwellings per hectare and will not generally be below 30 dwellings per hectare

##### Affordable Housing

4. Affordable housing will be provided as a proportion of the total number of dwellings to be delivered in the Borough and will be required on sites capable of delivering 10 dwellings or more. Where proposals are made for fewer than 10 dwellings, the Borough Council may have regard to whether the size of the site would make it capable of accommodating more than that number
5. Developments on sites providing affordable housing will generally provide 35% of the total number of dwellings as affordable dwellings. Where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Borough Council that any of the following circumstances apply, the Borough Council will negotiate a mutually appropriate proportion:
  - that the local need for affordable housing would no longer justify the provision of 35%
  - that site-specific factors would render the development to be non-viable in terms of cost, were 35% affordable housing to be required. The Development Control Policies DPD will set out how an applicant will be required to demonstrate such circumstances

##### Affordable Housing in the Rural Areas/Villages

6. In the rural parishes, wherever possible, sites will be allocated to accommodate affordable housing to meet local needs in accordance with Core Policy 1(1) in the first instance. If the need cannot be met in accordance with Core Policy 1(1), consideration will be given to the allocation of land in accordance with Core Policy 1(2). Sites must be well related to the Limits to Built Development (LBD) of the village they are intended to serve. Housing development on such sites will:
  - provide affordable housing to meet a local housing need in perpetuity and
  - not prejudice the development strategy for the Borough, as set out in Chapters 4 and 5 of this Core Strategy

##### Dwelling Size and Mix

7. The size and type of both market and affordable dwellings will reflect both current and projected local housing needs to ensure that proposed development contributes towards attaining a sustainable, balanced housing market. Provision will be made in subsequent DPDs for the following:

- achieving a mix of dwelling sizes that continues to meet the identified need for smaller dwellings, while also allowing for sufficient provision of family housing
- achieving a sustainable mix of dwelling types that will meet the needs of all people, including the following groups: older people; people with disabilities; vulnerable people; and minority ethnic communities

### Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

8. Sites will be identified, allocated and safeguarded to accommodate the number of pitches required to address the unmet need as identified in the South East Plan. In identifying and allocating sites and in considering proposals for accommodation, the Borough Council will have regard to the following:

- the provisions of Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development
- the potential to extend existing sites or re-use previously occupied sites
- the suitability of sites with temporary permissions
- that development should not prejudice the development strategy for the Borough, as set out in Chapters 4 and 5 of this Core Strategy

**5.132** The Borough Council's commitment to ensuring that local people have access to high quality housing suitable for their needs is expressed in its Corporate Priorities and evidenced in a wide range of plans, programmes and strategies, including its Corporate Vision, Housing Strategy and Sustainable Community Plan, which has the aim "*to meet the housing and related support needs of local people of all ages.*" It is therefore a priority for this Core Strategy to provide a framework within which the delivery of sufficient and appropriate new housing can be facilitated by the LDF.

**5.133** In quantitative terms, the South East Plan has determined that a total of 6,000 net additional dwellings are needed in the Borough during the period 2006-2026. This equates to an average of 300 dwellings per annum, which is in fact lower than recent delivery rates.<sup>(10)</sup> During the period 2003-2008, an average of approximately 400 dwellings were completed per annum. Core Policy 6: Housing Provision sets out the principles by which the total quantity of housing will be distributed across the Borough and also for how it will be provided, in terms of its affordability, size and type.

## Housing Land Supply

### Housing Trajectory

**5.134** National planning policy for housing provision is set out in [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing](#) (PPS3) 2006. In relation to housing land supply, PPS3 (paragraphs 53-56) requires local planning authorities to do the following:

- identify **specific deliverable**<sup>(11)</sup> sites to deliver housing in the first five years of the Plan (and maintain a rolling five-year supply at any point in time)
- identify **specific developable**<sup>(12)</sup> sites for years 6-10 and, ideally, for years 11-15 of the Plan
- indicate broad locations for growth if it is not possible to identify sites for years 11-15 of the Plan
- not include a windfall projection allowance in the first 10 years of the Plan unless there are justifiable circumstances that prevent specific sites from being identified

10 In the two-year period 01 April 2006 to 31 March 2008, 517 dwellings were completed in each year.

11 To be 'deliverable' sites must be available; suitable; and achievable.

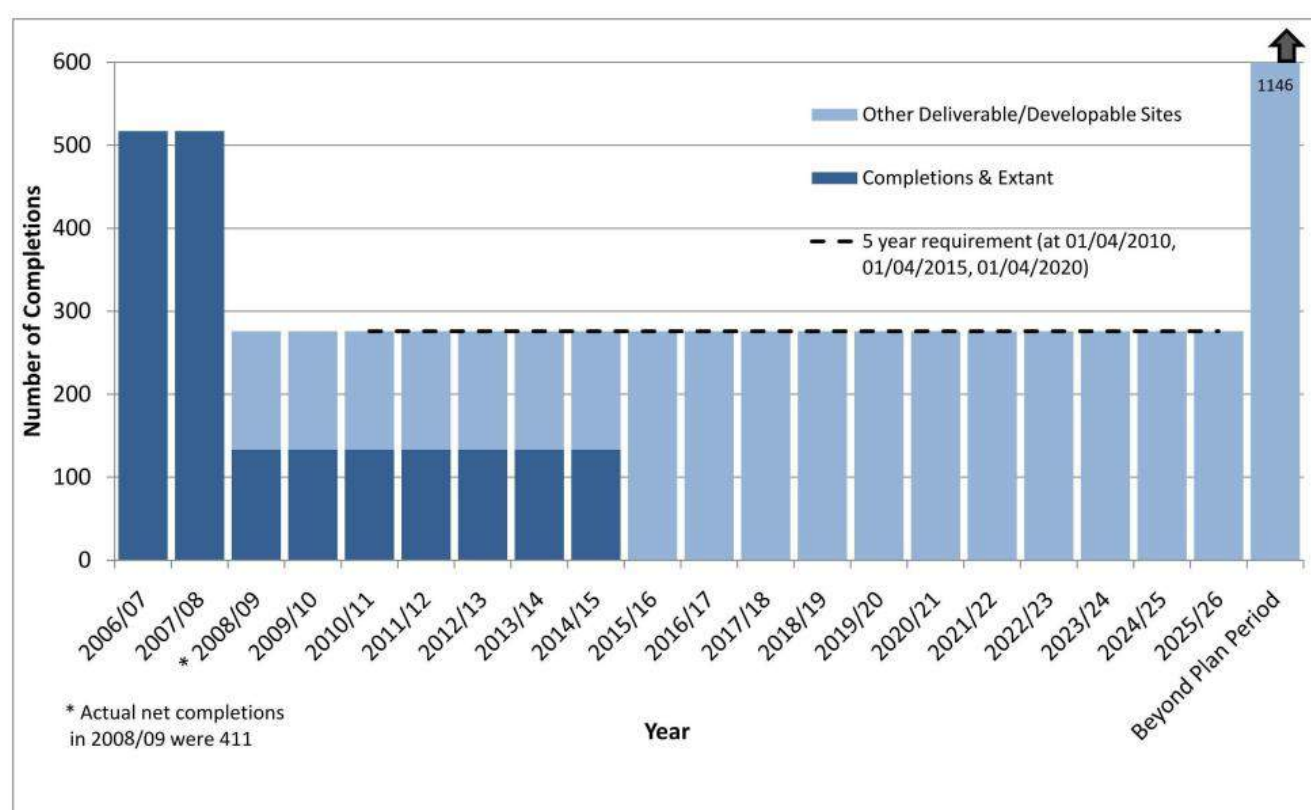
12 To be considered 'developable', sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site will be available for development and could physically be developed, at the point in time envisaged.



**5.135** In 2009, the Borough Council produced its first [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment](#) (SHLAA) with a view to identifying specific sites in accordance with the requirements above. The SHLAA has demonstrated the general potential for the Allocations DPD and TCAAP DPD to identify an adequate number of sites without making an allowance for windfall sites. However, as individual housing growth locations to 2026 are likely to be dispersed and relatively small-scale, it has been unnecessary to identify broad geographical locations in this strategy except at Paddock Wood.

**5.136** Sites will be allocated and phased in the TCAAP and Allocations DPD as necessary to provide housing in sustainable locations and support the Spatial Strategy set out in Box 3, Chapter 4. Until such time as these DPDs are adopted, the allocations provided by the Local Plan 2006 will continue to apply. The indicative housing trajectory to 2026 shown in Figure 3 below, prepared for the Core Strategy period on the basis of the findings of the first SHLAA, demonstrates the way in which the Borough's housing requirement will be met over the Plan period. It includes completions during the period 01 April 2006 to 31 March 2008, extant consents at 01 April 2008 and the extent of the allocations needing to be made in the future DPDs.

**Figure 3 Indicative Housing Trajectory**



**5.137** PPS3 requires local planning authorities to set a target for the delivery of housing on previously developed land, which should contribute to meeting the regional target of 60% set by the South East Plan. Core Policy 1 seeks to prioritise the development of previously developed land within the existing Limits to Built Development (LBD) of the Borough's main urban area and other rural towns. The first SHLAA indicates that development in the Borough should be able to achieve a target of at least 65% on such sites. While this is lower than delivery from this source in the recent past (approximately 96% during the period 01 April 2003-31 March 2008), the position is skewed by (a) the SHLAA's identification of a large number of greenfield sites for consideration in the Allocations DPD and TCAAP and (b) the non-inclusion of a specific allowance for windfall development. Given the likelihood that development on windfall sites will continue, albeit at a reduced rate, it is anticipated that development on previously developed land will exceed the 65% target over the course of the Plan period.



**5.138** The Borough Council will seek to employ the 'plan, monitor, manage' approach to housing delivery, as advocated by PPS3. In addition to the general measures set out in Core Policy 1 (all of which apply to housing development), the SHLAA will be updated regularly in order to identify newly available sites and to review the circumstances relating to those sites that are already allocated. This process, combined with progress monitoring in the Annual Monitoring Report, will enable the Borough Council to be aware of any issues that may threaten future housing delivery and make any necessary and appropriate adjustments to the phasing arrangements in the Allocations DPD and TCAAP DPD in order to more appropriately manage the five- and 10-year supplies of deliverable/developable land. It will also enable the Borough Council to determine whether it will be necessary to make an allowance for windfall development after the first 10 years of the Plan in order to demonstrate a rolling five-year supply of deliverable sites. Chapter 8 of the SHLAA provides information relating to the Borough Council's windfall supply.

## Housing Distribution

**5.139** Identifying and allocating specific housing sites at the outset of the plan-making process provides a much clearer indication of where housing growth is likely to take place over the Plan period. In quantitative terms, housing will be distributed in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out in Box 4, Chapter 4, with the majority being provided in and around the main urban area, as shown in Table 3. Table 6 below sets out the share of the Borough's total housing requirement for 6,000 net additional dwellings that is expected to be provided in each settlement over the Plan period 2006-2026. Recent delivery rates for the period 2003-2008 are provided for comparison:

**Table 6 Past and Future Housing Distribution by Settlement**

Settlement	Expected Share Proportion 2006-2026 (total 6,000)	Actual Share Proportion 2003-2008 (total 1,999)
Royal Tunbridge Wells	4,200 (70%)	1,528 (76%)
Southborough	300 (5%)	
Paddock Wood	600 (10%)	59 (3%)
Cranbrook	300 (5%)	22 (1%)
Hawkhurst	240 (4%)	65 (3%)
Villages and Rural Areas	360 (6%)	325 (17%)

**5.140** The expected shares for the period 2006-2026 take account of the findings of the SHLAA in terms of the location of deliverable/developable sites; of recent delivery rates; and of the intended future role of each settlement in accordance with the Spatial Strategy. The proportions are repeated in Core Policies 9-13 and are illustrated spatially on the Key Diagram. Taking account of completions during the period 01 April 2006 to 31 March 2008 and extant consents at 01 April 2008, Table 7 below shows how much housing remained to be provided at each settlement from 01 April 2008 to meet the South East Plan target by 2026 in accordance with the amounts set out in Table 6 above.

**Table 7 Remaining Housing Requirements**

Settlement	Core Strategy Requirement 2006-2026 (from Table 6)	Completions 2006-2008	Potential from extant consents at 01 April 2008 (including on existing allocations)	New development required 2008-2026 (column 1 minus columns 2 and 3)
<b>Royal Tunbridge Wells</b>	4,200	860	739	<b>2,601</b>
<b>Southborough</b>	300	19	66	<b>215</b>
<b>Paddock Wood</b>	600	21	20	<b>559</b>
<b>Cranbrook</b>	300	7	7	<b>286</b>
<b>Hawkhurst</b>	240	10	38	<b>192</b>
<b>Villages and Rural Areas</b>	360	118	195	<b>47</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>1,035</b>	<b>1,065</b>	<b>3,900</b>

**5.141** Column 4 of Table 7 provides an indication of the outstanding amount of housing for which it will be necessary to allocate sites in the Allocations DPD and Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD. The outstanding amount will change annually as more completions occur and as more planning permissions are granted. Table 7 above will therefore be updated annually as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.

### Housing Density

**5.142** In assessing the capacity of suitable sites, the SHLAA took account of a wide range of factors (as set out in Chapter 5 of the SHLAA Report), including density. In addition to national and regional density targets, the SHLAA also had regard to the [Typical Urban Character Area Appraisal](#) (TUCAA) undertaken by the Borough Council, which identifies areas with a specific, strong character in each of the Borough's settlements with a LBD. The TUCAA provides information about existing densities and about the potential capacity of each Character Area to accommodate further change. The findings of the TUCAA will provide one of the inputs into a detailed density policy, consistent with point 3 of the Policy above, in the Development Control Policies DPD.

### Affordable Housing

**5.143** Tunbridge Wells Borough is a desirable place to live and consequently house prices remain consistently high compared to both the national and county averages.<sup>(13)</sup> While in many ways this is a positive trait, it makes it difficult for those people on relatively low incomes to access housing on the open market and the Borough Council must therefore intervene and enable the provision of affordable housing in order to realise the objectives of the Sustainable Community Plan. For the purposes of this Core Strategy, affordable housing is defined as given by PPS3: *"Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met*

13 The Borough Council's Annual Monitoring Reports provide a range of up to date statistics about the Borough, including house prices.

by the market.”<sup>(14)</sup> The split between social rented and intermediate housing is currently set out in the Borough Council’s [Affordable Housing](#) Supplementary Planning Document (2007). It will be reviewed as part of the Development Control Policies DPD.

**5.144** A number of studies have been undertaken to identify the quantity of affordable housing required to meet the needs of those living in the Borough. The borough-wide [Housing Needs Survey](#) 2005 found that 406 new affordable homes would be needed annually, which was almost eight times higher than delivery levels at the time of the survey. More recent analysis through the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) 2008 (SHMA), undertaken jointly with Sevenoaks District Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council for the West Kent Area, indicates that there is an annual shortfall of 290 affordable units in the Borough after allowing for the turnover of the existing stock.

**Former Coopers BMW Site, St John’s Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells**



**5.145** The level of need for affordable housing, as identified by these studies, is too great to be met within the context of the total quantity of housing to be provided in the Borough, i.e. 6,000 additional homes from 2006-2026 (or 300 dwellings per annum). This total figure is, however, based on a number of factors, including the capacity of the Borough to accommodate new development without detriment to its high quality built and natural environment and the Borough Council will not, therefore, seek to develop housing significantly in excess of this. Following the Housing Needs Survey, a positive decision was taken in the [Borough Housing Strategy](#) 2006-2011 to set a realistic target for delivery: at 100 affordable dwellings per annum, of which at least 20 per annum should be delivered in the rural areas. The Rural HeLP project aims to facilitate the provision of affordable dwellings, specifically for local needs, in the rural areas (see paragraph 5.152 below).

**5.146** Given that this target has not been achieved in recent years and considering the financial climate in which this Core Strategy is written, it would not be appropriate to increase this target at present. It will, however, be kept under review, particularly following the revision of the Housing Strategy in 2011. In the meantime, this Core Policy introduces a number of measures that aim to increase the delivery of affordable housing against this target.

### Thresholds on Market Sites

**5.147** Taking account of actual and projected <sup>(15)</sup> housing completions since 31 March 2006 (including those for affordable housing) and assuming that 20 affordable homes per annum will be developed for 100% affordable homes in the rural areas, just over 1,300 affordable homes remain to be delivered (from a total of just under 3,900 homes) on market sites during the period 01 April 2008 to 31 March 2026 in order to meet the overall target of 100 per annum.

**5.148** In seeking to achieve this, the Borough Council will require market sites capable of providing 10 or more dwellings to provide 35% of the total number of units as affordable homes in line with the indicative regional percentage, as set by the South East Plan. This is an increase from the 30% required by the Local Plan 2006.

14 Annex B of PPS3 defines affordable housing and provides specific definitions of social rented and intermediate housing.

15 Completions are projected on the basis of outstanding planning permissions that are expected to be completed during the Core Strategy period. In accordance with the Borough Council’s adopted SHLAA Methodology, a lapse rate of 10% has been factored in.

**5.149** It should be noted that development for market housing will not generally be permitted outside the LBD of the villages or in the rural areas, but should such development take place, the 10-dwelling thresholds will apply. The Development Control Policies DPD will set out the criteria for determining an appropriate tenure split for the affordable housing provided on market sites, i.e. between social rented and intermediate affordable housing.

**5.150** The 35% requirement will come very close to delivering the amount of affordable housing required to meet the Housing Strategy target, falling just short over the Plan period. On the basis of the [Affordable Housing Viability Assessment](#) carried out by the Council in August 2009, there would be weak justification for lowering the thresholds further.

**Connaught Park (the old gas works), Royal Tunbridge Wells**



## **Affordable Housing in the Rural Areas**

**5.151** In rural communities, the opportunities to deliver affordable housing are often limited due to the overall lower level of housing development. The aim, however, of delivering high quality housing that contributes to the creation and maintenance of sustainable, accessible, healthy and mixed communities remains the same. The Borough Council's [Housing Needs Survey](#) 2005 indicated that some 47% of the affordable housing need within the Borough was in the rural areas, including the small rural towns of Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst. The precise level of need for any individual parish will, however, continue to be established by comprehensive local surveys, as the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Housing Needs Survey 2005 is sample-based and is not statistically significant at this individual parish level.

**5.152** Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development does not preclude allocations for market housing on sites adjacent to the LBDs of the small rural towns of Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst as defined in the Local Plan 2006. This is a change from Local Plan policy and will result in the delivery of more affordable housing from market sites in these areas than has occurred in the recent past. Some of the local need for affordable housing in the rural areas will therefore be met through market developments. The residual amount of affordable housing required to meet the rural target of 20 units per annum will be met by the development of rural exception sites, as set out in paragraph 5.153 below. However, since the majority of the 6% housing target (approximately 360 dwellings) set for the villages and rural areas by the Core Strategy has already been provided, affordable housing on rural exceptions sites will largely be in addition to this 6% provision.

**5.153** PPS3 allows the local planning authority to develop a Rural Exceptions Site policy to enable small sites within, or on the edge of, rural settlements to be developed for 100% affordable housing in perpetuity to meet specific local identified needs. As such sites are subject to restraint policies, planning permission would not normally be granted for other forms of development. Proposed sites for these rural exception schemes should be well related to the village they are intended to serve, have safe pedestrian links to local services and normally not be more than 400m from the edge of the LBD. Approval to develop Rural Exception Sites will only be granted where the Borough Council is satisfied that a particular scheme will meet a local need that has already been demonstrated by a comprehensive local survey.

**5.154** There is some evidence from other local authorities that allocating sites to provide rural exceptions housing may not provide the expected level of housing. It is considered preferable, as far as it is possible, to allocate Rural Exception Sites but, if such sites are not available when required, then other sites that have been identified as suitable for this use within the SHLAA will be considered for development. If this is the case, the allocated sites may be phased back through the phasing policy that will be included within the Allocations DPD and developed for rural exceptions housing at a later date.

## Dwelling Size and Mix

**5.155** The provision of a mix of housing in terms of size and design, within both the market and affordable sectors and embracing a wide range of tenures, is identified in PPS3 as being an important element in supporting sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in urban and rural areas. A variety of differing housing types within an area will create choice and encourage diversity by meeting the demands of different households and social groups. The SHMA, by analysing the findings of the Housing Needs Survey 2005 and South East Plan, identifies in broad terms the relative priority that should be given to the development of different types of dwellings. This analysis took into account that the demand for a particular type and size of dwelling is not necessarily driven by actual need.

**5.156** The SHMA recommends that future development should address the imbalance of stock type and size to create a more sustainable and balanced housing market.

**Table 8 Future Annual Market Delivery by Size: SHMA 2009**

(1)	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four-Bed+
<b>TWBC</b>	20%	40%	30%	10%

1. This Table reflects Table 12-2, page 166 of the SHMA (Tunbridge Wells only)

**5.157** Table 8 above shows that, to meet identified housing need, 60% of new dwellings should have either one or two bedrooms and 40% should have three or more bedrooms. This distribution is largely reflected in the more geographically detailed findings of the Housing Needs Survey 2005 for the main urban areas of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough and small rural towns of Paddock Wood and Hawkhurst. The percentage split in the small rural town of Cranbrook and in the villages/rural areas identified a demand for a higher proportion of "*three-bed plus*" units. The size and type of dwellings within new developments should, therefore, by reflecting these identified local needs, contribute towards attaining a balanced local housing market. Detailed criteria will be provided in the Development Control Policies DPD.

**5.158** The need to address the imbalance in the housing stock should not be at the cost of creating dwellings that meet the particular needs of the intended occupants, in terms of design, internal layout and dimensions. The Urban Design section of Core Policy 5: Sustainable Design and Construction refers to the need for developments to conform with standards and design codes to ensure that buildings are inclusive, accessible and adaptable. The internal room dimensions of dwellings should be able to accommodate the necessary furniture and equipment for that room's specific purpose and the overall design and layout should meet identified standards to ensure that the dwelling is functional and fit for its purpose.

**5.159** The requirement for dwellings to meet Lifetime Homes Standards will also ensure that the designs of dwellings are adequate to meet the long-term needs of their occupants. These standards seek to provide accessible and adaptable accommodation for everyone, from young families to older people and individuals with a temporary or permanent physical impairment. All public sector funded housing in England will be built to the Lifetime Homes Standard from 2011 (it is a requirement now in Wales and Northern Ireland), with a final target date of 2013 for all private sector dwellings. The provision of Lifetime Homes will help to ensure that more older people and people with disabilities can remain independent and in their own homes for longer. It is therefore considered important that Lifetime Home Standards are introduced within the private sector as early as possible and, if feasible, before the target date of 2013.



## Housing for Older People

**5.160** An ageing society poses one of the Borough's major housing challenges. Forecasts indicate that the older population is to increase, with the 65-85 age group in the Borough forecast to rise by 40.5% from 2006-2026 (from 14,800 to 20,800 people) and the 85+ age group to rise during the same period by 100% (2,600 to 5,200 people) (figures supplied by Kent County Council: South East Plan strategy-based forecasts November 2008). The [Tunbridge Wells Borough Sustainable Community Plan 2006-2011](#) recognises that people are living longer and identifies the need for older people to live independently for as long as possible. It is recognised, however, that the incidence of certain debilitating conditions, such as dementia and arthritis, that can preclude independent living, are more prevalent among the 75+ age group.

**5.161** The SHMA identifies a total requirement of 1,060 households requiring sheltered housing (Tables 10-17 of the SHMA). Some of this requirement will be met from existing stock, but there is likely to be a continuing demand for new sheltered housing. The likely need for 'extra care' units for the growing frail older population was also identified. Appendix 12 (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Older Persons' Housing Strategy) of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Housing Strategy 2006-2011 (a document that informed the SHMA) includes details of research-based evidence that identifies a need up to 2011 for 40 extra care sheltered housing units for frail older people.

**5.162** A key recommendation of the SHMA is to address the current and future growth in the numbers of older people and frail older households across all tenures in terms of their related care and support needs. Housing may have to be purpose-built or adapted for households with older residents and the criteria set out by Lifetime Homes Standards (see paragraph 5.159) will facilitate this aim. Housing for older people needs to be integrated within a wider approach to meet the housing needs of all sectors of the community.

**5.163** The Borough Council is at present working with Kent County Council to develop an Affordable Extra Care Housing Scheme for older people in Cranbrook and the surrounding area. This scheme is a form of sheltered housing that has on-site, 24-hour care and support and also has additional communal facilities, such as a restaurant, for residents and the local community. The overall design will enable older people to live safely within their own homes, while knowing that help is available should they need it. The Scheme will meet the needs of older people with a local connection to Cranbrook and surrounding parishes in the eastern part of the Borough.

**5.164** Future DPDs will give consideration to the need for supported accommodation schemes across the Borough. When assessing older persons' housing needs, survey methods will need to recognise the difficulties in engaging older persons. The approach adopted by Housing Needs Surveys will need to be adapted to ensure that as wide a proportion as possible of the population is reached. This will help to ensure that older persons' housing needs are fully recognised when developing housing strategies to meet their needs.

## Housing for Younger People

**5.165** The Young Persons' Housing Needs Review 2005 (Appendix 13 of the Borough Housing Strategy) was set up to examine the suitability of the Borough's provision of housing services for vulnerable young people up to the age of 25 years, to identify gaps in provision and to recommend future activities to meet identified needs. The research found the following key gaps in provision: concern regarding use of bed & breakfast (B&B) as temporary accommodation for young people, as there is no support available within this type of accommodation; and little support to prevent homelessness, especially among 16/17 year olds. This results in young people losing tenancies or temporary accommodation, a lack of life skills training for young people, a lack of suitable, affordable move-on accommodation across private and social tenures and a lack of emergency accommodation to enable an assessment of the options available to the young person. It was also identified that a lack of affordable accommodation in rural areas has resulted in young people leaving the Borough.



**5.166** Within the Borough Housing Strategy 2006-2011 are a number of key proposals to address these issues. These include the need to: identify and introduce additional housing to reduce the use of B&B accommodation for young people when they are made homeless; seek suitable affordable housing in rural areas where a local connection is identified; increase joint working arrangements to support young people and increase their life chances through prevention of homelessness; seek to develop move-on support for young people leaving supported housing accommodation, which will assist in improving life skills, access to employment and maintained tenancies; and to develop the range of housing options for young people to prevent and reduce young people becoming homeless.

### **Housing for People with Disabilities**

**5.167** The Council and its partners are committed to developing housing types that meet the different needs of disabled groups and facilitate them living in the community. The Borough Council administers programmes to ensure that these aims are met, including the provision of adaptations in and around the home to facilitate independent living. The Housing Needs Survey 2005 shows that 8.9% (3,971 in total) of all dwellings in the Borough have been adapted to meet the needs of disabled persons.

**5.168** As discussed above in paragraph 5.158, the requirement to meet Lifetime Home Standards will ensure that accessible and adaptable accommodation is provided for everyone. The main aim for the future will be to ensure that the existing housing stock is adequately upgraded to meet the standards of new build dwellings.

### **Housing for Minority Ethnic Communities**

**5.169** The Council and its partners are committed to making sure that local minority ethnic residents and businesses have an equal opportunity to access housing-related services, that they are treated fairly and that services meet their needs. To meet these aims, the Council is currently developing a draft Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy, the main aims being to identify and monitor minority ethnic housing needs, provide housing that is fit for the future and to more generally improve communication, service provision, access and satisfaction.

### **Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

**5.170** [Circular 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites](#) requires local planning authorities to identify specific sites for a given number of pitches to meet a specific need, as set out in Regional Spatial Strategies, i.e. the South East Plan. In the spring of 2009, the Regional Planning Body, the South East England Partnership Board (SEEPB) (formerly the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA)) was in the process of undertaking a single issue review of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs in the region on the basis of sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments, including the one undertaken for the districts of Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone and Ashford during 2005/2006. In addition, Circular 04/2007 requires local authorities to set out criteria for determining the location of sites for travelling showpeople, which will be used to guide the allocation of sites in the relevant DPD. These criteria can also be used to consider planning applications on unallocated sites that may come forward. They must be fair, reasonable, achievable and effective in delivering sites.

**5.171** Upon completion of the partial review by SEEPB, an additional pitch requirement, from a base date of 2006, will be allocated to the Borough in the South East Plan. The Borough Council will then be required to identify sites to accommodate any remaining need that has not been adequately met since 2006. Core Policy 6(8) is not intended to be in conflict with Circular 01/2006, which indicates that gypsy sites can be acceptable in the countryside.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

**5.172** See Appendix 1, Table 16 'Core Policy 6: Housing Provision'.

## Core Policy 7: Employment Provision

### Core Policy 7

#### Employment Provision

Sufficient good quality employment land will be provided for strategic and local requirements, as set out within the South East Plan and the relevant Tunbridge Wells Borough Employment Land Study. The Borough Council will, if necessary, review its Employment Land Study to refine job numbers and identify any further sectoral requirements in light of new information provided at the regional level. Employment provision in the Borough during the Core Strategy period will be achieved by:

1. Maintaining the overall net amount of employment floorspace across the Borough for a range of employment generating uses
2. The retention of existing floorspace and the encouragement of new floorspace in the Key Employment Areas on allocated sites and vacant sites; and through the intensification or redevelopment of existing sites. The Key Employment Areas are defined as follows:

- Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre (boundary to be defined within the TCAAP)
- Royal Tunbridge Wells - North Farm/Longfield Road Industrial area
- Southborough - High Brooms Industrial Park
- Paddock Wood - Eldon Way and west of Maidstone Road
- Paddock Wood - Transfesa Road East and West
- Gills Green - Former Hawkhurst Railway Station and sidings
- Capel - Brook Farm

The specific employment uses appropriate in each Key Employment Area will be set out in an appropriate DPD

3. Safeguarding for employment use areas and buildings in existing employment use across the Borough, if they:
  - are well located to main roads and public transport networks
  - provide, or are physically and viably capable of providing, through redevelopment, good quality modern accommodation attractive to the market
  - are capable of meeting a range of employment uses to support the local economy
4. Permitting employment development on sites not specifically identified for that purpose, or on mixed use sites, in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development and if there is no significant adverse impact on residential amenity, local character or highway capacity and/or safety, contrary to other Development Plan policies
5. The allocation of new employment sites to meet demand during the Core Strategy period if the number of jobs/floorspace required at the regional level cannot be met through the above approach. If more employment land is required, it will be directed to the broad locations, or extensions of the locations, set out in Core Policy 7(2)
6. Strengthening the rural economy through encouraging the re-use of surplus rural buildings for employment use in accordance with the approach set out in Core Policy 14: Development in the Villages and Rural Areas
7. Promoting the development and retention of, and enhancing the quality and attractiveness of, tourism accommodation and attractions across the Borough

## Employment Context

**5.173** The Borough of Tunbridge Wells has a buoyant economy, partly due to its proximity to London. Most of the jobs are concentrated in Royal Tunbridge Wells, Southborough and Paddock Wood, although there is a net loss of workers commuting to other centres, principally London. Unemployment in the Borough remains very low, with 2% unemployment at October 2009 (ONS/Kent County Council). Nevertheless, there are pockets of deprivation, characterised by higher levels of unemployment and skills shortages.

**5.174** Traditionally, employment floorspace has been defined as offices, industrial uses, warehousing and other commercial uses within Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) of the Use Classes Order 2005. However, new [Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth](#) (PPS4) defines economic development (for the purposes of the PPS) to include development within the B Use classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses. It also includes other development which achieves at least one of the following objectives: provision of employment opportunities, generation of wealth or production or generation of an economic output or products. These uses are all considered within this Core Strategy and many are key employers within the Borough.

**5.175** The previous Local Plan (2006) defined Economic Development Areas (EDAs), which are areas comprising the main concentrations of traditional economic development activity in the Borough outside of the town centres. They include the industrial estates on the edge of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Southborough and Paddock Wood and the existing Local Plan allocations where business and industrial development are focused and where the capacity exists for further similar development or redevelopment. The areas covered by the EDAs are defined on the adopted Proposals Map.

**5.176** In recognising the contribution of the wide range of employment generating uses in the Borough, and taking account of the Regional Hub designation, Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre is also included in Core Policy 7(2) as a key location for employment provision. It is indicated on the Key Diagram as a 'Key Employment Area' and, for consistency, the existing EDAs are re-defined as such. The TCAAP and Allocations DPDs will define the exact boundaries of the Key Employment Areas. Guidance on the uses that will be permitted within these areas will be set out within the Development Control Policies DPD and other DPDs as necessary. Until such time as these DPDs are adopted, this information is provided by saved Local Plan 2006 policies.

### Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells Regional Hub

**5.177** As set out in Chapter 2: Context for Development, the South East Plan designates Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells as a joint Regional Hub and, consequently, as a focus for new development for a range of types, including business and commercial. This designation, and the more specific context it provides for Tunbridge Wells, are key factors to be taken into account when planning for future employment needs in the Borough.

**5.178** Locally, the [West Kent Area Investment Framework and Action Plan](#) 2006-2009 seeks to sustain and strengthen the local economy. It suggests that the future competitiveness of Kent is under threat for a number of reasons, including high house prices and the loss of employment land to other uses. The document sets out a number of strategic objectives and priorities for action for the West Kent area, which should be taken forward by the individual Boroughs/Districts. This document is currently being reviewed and will be replaced by the West Kent Investment Strategy in 2010. The West Kent Investment Strategy should provide the basis to move work forward to improve Kent's position relative to the rest of the South East over the next 20 years.

**5.179** The [Tunbridge Wells Economic Strategy](#) 2006-2009, produced by the Borough Council, takes the findings of the West Kent Area Investment Framework forward and addresses the economic issues that affect the residents and businesses of Tunbridge Wells. It sets out three key objectives for the Borough, which include encouraging the continued development of a wide range of business enterprises; enhancing the attractiveness of towns and other centres in the Borough; and supporting the sustainable development of the more rural areas and communities. It also recognised that it is important to the Borough's economy to protect or enhance existing employment land and sites and to allow some new employment development to meet the changing and future needs of businesses. The Borough's Economic Strategy will be reviewed in light of the West Kent Investment Strategy.

**Decimus Park, Royal Tunbridge Wells**



### The Tunbridge Wells Employment Land Study

**5.180** The [Tunbridge Wells Employment Land Study](#) 2006 (ELS) was carried out in accordance with the Government's [Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Note](#) (published December 2004). It provides a qualitative and quantitative assessment of existing employment land in the Borough, current and future employment land needs and advice on mechanisms for the future monitoring of the employment land supply in the Borough.

**5.181** Employment forecasts calculated by Experian Business Strategies set out in Figure 4 of the ELS (see Table 9 below) indicate that employment growth in the Borough is forecast to increase by a total of 3,800 jobs in the period 2006 to 2016. It highlights that future employment growth is likely to continue to be in the service sector, while employment in manufacturing and land-based industries is expected to continue to contract. Other services, the hotels and restaurants sectors and real estate, renting and business activities, are expected to see the strongest growth. Similar figures published by SEEDA in December 2006 (provided by Experian) as part of SEEDA's submission to the South East Plan, indicated that job growth is forecast to be approximately 4,500 jobs between the period 2006-2016.

**5.182** It is accepted that employment forecasts need to be treated with caution due to the many assumptions behind them and uncertainty about future trends, particularly given the economic climate in which this Core Strategy is being written. The numbers produced can be treated as very broad indicators only and need to be interpreted in the light of other factors, including population forecasts and other policies.

**Table 9 Employment Forecasts by Sector 2006-2016**

Tunbridge Wells Borough	2006	2011	2016	2006-16	
Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry and Fishing	1,400	1,100	700	-800	-53%
Manufacturing	3,000	2,700	2,400	-600	-19%
Construction	3,700	3,900	4,400	700	17%
Retail	7,700	7,800	7,900	200	2%
Wholesale	5,000	4,900	4,800	-200	-4%
Hotels and Restaurants	3,500	4,100	4,600	1,000	30%
Transport, Storage and Communication	1,900	2,000	2,100	300	14%
Financial Intermediation	3,700	3,800	3,700	-	<1%

Tunbridge Wells Borough	2006	2011	2016	2006-16	
Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities	10,500	11,000	11,700	1,200	11%
Public Admin and Defence	1,100	1,100	1,100	-	-2%
Education	3,500	3,600	3,900	400	13%
Health and Social Work	9,100	8,900	9,100	-	<1%
Other Services (e.g. personal services, tourism and media)	4,500	5,300	6,100	1,500	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,700</b>	<b>60,100</b>	<b>62,400</b>	<b>3,800</b>	<b>6%</b>

Source: Tunbridge Wells Borough Council ELS 2006 (Experian Business Strategies Limited) Note: numbers may not sum due to rounding

**5.183** The ELS recognises that employment growth since the mid-1990s has been below trend in the Borough compared with regional levels. Forecasts in the ELS suggest that job growth has the potential to be marginally stronger over the next 10 years and will continue to be concentrated in the service sector. It is also recognised that job growth has the potential to be constrained by population decline and the most up to date strategy-based population projections (KCC, November 2008) predict a net loss of people entering the workforce during the period 2006-2026. While the retention of existing employment/employers is therefore a priority in the short term, it will also be important to consider the potential to support a more sustainable pattern of development by reducing out-commuting. Significantly, the ELS considers that economic development is expected to be driven by supporting higher value-added employment (which encourages skilled local people to work locally), rather than by significant job growth. This approach would be in accordance with Policy RE5: Smart Growth, of the South East Plan, which aims to achieve higher prosperity without increasing the ecological footprint.

**5.184** The quantitative analysis set out within the ELS takes account of employment growth forecasts, population trends and past take-up rates of employment land. Employment based growth projections suggest the potential for a small net increase in the total numbers of jobs to be accommodated on employment land in Tunbridge Wells Borough in the period 2006-2016. In floorspace terms, however, none of the quantitative findings of the ELS suggest a need for additional employment land overall in the period 2006-2016 and even the employment based projections indicate the potential for a small overall reduction. The Stage 2 Recommendations Report (October 2006), however, takes account of the designation of Tunbridge Wells in the South East Plan as part of the Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells Regional Hub and recommends Scenario A as the most appropriate policy option, which requires the LDF to maintain the overall level of employment floorspace with no need to identify substantial new sites for employment development. It states that existing provision and sites allocated through the previous Local Plan (2006) are able to meet needs until 2016.

**5.185** While this growth analysis suggests that the current quantity of employment land is adequate to support future employment change, not all of this stock may be suitable for future needs. In addition, current planning policies have resulted in the reduction of floorspace as sites are lost to other uses. It is therefore intended to safeguard, for employment use, Key Employment Areas and areas and buildings in existing employment use, subject to a number of criteria, which will be set out in detail within the Development Control Policies DPD. More specifically, the ELS considers that the Core Strategy should support development and redevelopment that encourages the creation of high-value jobs within the area to retain high-skilled labour within the Borough, focused within the Key Employment Areas, including Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre.



## Employment Land Requirements

**5.186** Policy RE3: Employment and Land Provision of the [South East Plan](#) requires local planning authorities to provide for a range of sites and premises to be available for employment purposes in sustainable locations. Table 6.1 of the South East Plan refers specifically to Interim Job Numbers for the South East Region. Tunbridge Wells Borough falls within the 'Rest of Kent' area (which includes Tonbridge & Malling Borough, Maidstone Borough and residual (mainly rural) areas of Sevenoaks District, Ashford Borough, Dartford Borough, Gravesham Borough and Medway District Council areas), which has been set an interim job number of 15,000 new jobs for the period 2006-2016.

**5.187** The South East Plan states, however, that the evidence currently available is not robust enough to provide anything more than interim job numbers. Since the publication of the South East Plan, SEEPB has produced a consultation document entitled "South East Plan Supplementary Guidance: Employment Land Reviews". This will provide guidance on how to interpret the key elements of the South East Plan in relation to employment, further guidance on how to use the figures/forecasts and a South East Regional approach for conducting future Employment Land Reviews. This document, when in its final form, will need to be taken into account in a future review of the Borough's ELS.

**5.188** At present, therefore, the Borough Council's evidence base provided by the ELS is as robust as it can be and the Borough Council will seek to maintain the existing amount of employment floorspace as stated in paragraph 5.183. The immediate reduction resulting from the need to remove a portion of the existing Local Plan allocation (approximately 3.26ha), 'Land West of Maidstone Road' in Paddock Wood due to flood risk (see Core Policy 11: Development in Paddock Wood for further information), will be compensated for in the TCAAP and/or Allocations DPD if appropriate. The Borough Council will undertake an early review of the ELS during the Core Strategy period in order to establish whether this floorspace is still required for the same uses, or other uses, at Paddock Wood, or whether other uses at the Regional Hub would better serve the needs of those living in the Borough. If it is still required at Paddock Wood, replacement floorspace may be provided by an extension to the existing Key Employment Areas outside the functional flood plain. If it is replaced at the Regional Hub, a number of opportunities exist to accommodate higher-value uses, potentially with less floorspace being required.

**5.189** The review of the ELS will accord with the approach set out by the SEEPB, in their South East Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance: Employment and Economic Land Assessments (February 2010) consultation and any emerging findings of the new Single Strategy in relation to employment provision. Any additional or alternative floorspace requirements will be directed to the key employment areas, or extension of the key employment areas as set out in Core Policy 7.

## The Rural Economy

**5.190** It is a key principle of sustainable development in rural areas that development in the open countryside away from settlements should be strictly controlled. There has been a long-term decline in farming in the rural areas, resulting in a loss of land-based employment. As a consequence, landowners and farmers have looked to diversify their operations and there has been fairly widespread conversion of rural premises to alternative employment use and residential use in the Borough. It is recognised in Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (PPS4) 2009, that diversification into non-agricultural activities is vital to the continuing viability of many farm enterprises.

**5.191** PPS4 supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings and states that re-use for business purposes will usually be preferable to residential. The change of use, or conversion of, an existing building may therefore be permitted if it would provide the best reasonable means of conserving the character, appearance, fabric and setting of a listed building or a building whose loss would be detrimental to the character of the countryside. Core Policy 14: Development in the Villages and Rural Areas sets out in more detail the policy for the villages and rural areas and assesses the appropriateness of new business development or retention of existing rural businesses. The Development Control Policies DPD will set out in further detail the criteria against which development will be assessed when considering the conversion of rural buildings for other employment uses.



**5.192** More specifically, rural areas in the South East can access European Union and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) funds through the new Rural Development Programme for England 'Leader Scheme', which can help to support a wide range of activities undertaken by rural communities and businesses. This funding programme represents a major opportunity for farmers, growers, foresters and rural communities to invest in their future and improve their financial and environmental sustainability. The West Kent Partnership promotes the Leader Scheme and covers the three local authority areas of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells. Local authorities are able to bid for funding through the Leader Scheme in order to provide rural business support and enterprise in line with the objectives of the AIF and the Council's Economic Strategy. The Council leads this process and works closely with the rural community to identify projects and bids for funding.

## Tourism

**5.193** Tourism is generally defined as a visitor experience, including day trips, short breaks and long holidays and visiting for leisure or business, from this country or overseas. Provision for tourism in the Borough includes accommodation and visitor attractions, offering opportunities for leisure, shopping, eating and access to museums, galleries, theatres and historic properties. It will be important to ensure that such facilities are not only conserved and enhanced, but also that they are carefully managed in the future. Tourism makes a vital contribution to the economy of Tunbridge Wells Borough. Figures from Tourism South East show that, in 2006, total direct tourism spend by staying and day visitors in the Borough was over £199 million and it supported approximately 3,900 full time equivalent jobs. There has been a steady and continued growth in the number of jobs in this sector since 1998. Policies TSR4 and TSR5 of the South East Plan deal with Tourism Attractions and Tourist Accommodation respectively.

**The Pantiles, Royal Tunbridge Wells**



### Visitor Accommodation

**5.194** The range of accommodation available within the Plan area includes both serviced and non-serviced accommodation. Serviced accommodation is taken to include hotels, guest houses, motels, inns and bed & breakfast establishments. Non-serviced accommodation is taken to include self-catering accommodation and youth hostels, caravan and camping sites.

**5.195** The [Tunbridge Wells Hotel Futures Study](#) 2005-2021, undertaken by Tourism Solutions, reviews hotel needs and development potential in the Borough.<sup>(16)</sup> It identified a need for approximately 483 new hotel bedrooms by 2021. The study concludes that the priority for hotel development in the Borough should be to maintain and widen the choice of hotels in line with market need and expectations of quality. Specifically, the priorities for the development of the Borough's hotel offer during the period to 2021 will be to retain the existing stock of hotels in Royal Tunbridge Wells, encourage and support the expansion and upgrading of existing hotels, the development of further boutique hotels<sup>(17)</sup> and the development of one, or possibly two, branded budget hotels. More specifically, within the rural areas, the priorities will be to retain the existing inns in the Borough's villages and small towns, the development of further quality hotel rooms onto pubs and the development of country house or niche hotels if suitable properties for conversion become available.

**5.196** The provision of additional self-catering, non-serviced accommodation within the Borough should also be facilitated in order that a comprehensive range of accommodation can be provided and any proposals for such use will be assessed against criteria set out within the Development Control Policies DPD. Additionally, it is important to protect and retain the existing tourist accommodation stock within

16 The Hotel Futures Study will be reviewed as appropriate during the course of the Core Strategy period to update the findings to 2026.

17 The Hotel Needs Study uses the term 'boutique hotels' to describe intimate, usually luxurious or quirky hotel environments providing personalised accommodation services/facilities.

the Borough, including serviced and non-serviced accommodation. The loss of existing tourist accommodation will not be permitted unless the premises are unsuitable for tourist use or the continued use as tourist accommodation is no longer viable. Further detail with respect to the tests of suitability and viability will be set out within the Development Control Policies DPD.

### Visitor Attractions

**5.197** The diversity of the Borough's landscape, heritage and wildlife contributes to the attractiveness of the area and it is a source of tourist interest that can be enjoyed by all. As well as the attractiveness of the built environment and the countryside, the Borough boasts a number of attractions, including the 'Seven Wonders of the Weald', which are all within 10 minutes drive of one another and just eight miles east of Royal Tunbridge Wells. These include Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest; Bewl Water; Finchcocks; Lamberhurst Vineyard; Marle Place Gardens; Scotney Castle Garden and Sissinghurst Castle Garden. Development of tourist facilities in the countryside can allow for greater diversity in the rural economy, but the promotion of tourist enjoyment of the countryside should be primarily aimed at those activities that draw on the character of the countryside itself: its beauty, culture, history and wildlife and should be based around an existing resource. Many of the attractions above focus on the attractive surroundings through cycling, walking, horse riding and sailing and benefit from a number of trails and routes that should be promoted and enhanced by the Council. This approach is in accordance with Policy TSR2: Rural Tourism of the South East Plan.

#### **Bedgebury National Pinetum**



**5.198** Given the general policies of restraint and the likely impact on rural roads and communities, it is not generally appropriate to encourage tourism in rural areas on a large scale. The Development Control Policies DPD will set out the policies against which any development will be assessed, depending on its contribution to diversifying and upgrading tourism attractions in keeping with changing demands. Any such developments should be consistent with environment, transport and Green Belt policies within the Development Control Policies DPD.

## **Monitoring and Implementation**

**5.199** See Appendix 1, Table 17 'Core Policy 7: Employment Provision'.

## Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision

### Core Policy 8

#### Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision

New retail and leisure provision should be provided within the Borough in accordance with the following approach:

##### Retail

1. New retail, leisure and other town centre uses will be directed to the defined centres in the Borough, as set out in Table 10: Definition of Retail Centres, and as illustrated on the Key Diagram
2. Appropriate proposals for new retail development will deliver in the order of 26,500sqm net of comparison floorspace across the Borough to 2017 identified by the Tunbridge Wells Borough Retail Study 2006, unless a different need is identified through a future Retail Study. Development will be directed to the defined town and district centres, where it would contribute to their vitality and viability in line with the tests set out in Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4)
3. Proposals for main town centre uses (as defined in PPS4) on sites not within the defined centres will not be permitted unless it has been demonstrated that (a) there are no sequentially preferable sites and (b) there are no adverse impacts on the defined centres

##### Leisure and Community Facilities

5. A range of formal and informal open space, recreational and cultural facilities will be provided and maintained
6. The capacity, quality and accessibility of open space, recreational, cultural and community facilities will be maintained and, where necessary, improved and all new development that generates an additional need for such facilities will provide for an adequate amount in easily accessible locations
7. The links, including Public Rights of Way and cycle links, between existing and proposed areas of open space, recreational, cultural and community facilities and the communities they serve will be improved, where possible, as part of a multi-functional Green Infrastructure Network
8. The loss of community facilities will be resisted as far as practicable and, where there is a demonstrable continuing need, the provision of additional facilities will be supported where they are deficient, particularly where this will provide a range of facilities on a single site or provide facilities that may be used for a variety of purposes

### Retail

**5.200** There is a wide range of shopping and service facilities in the Borough. Each of the Borough's centres has a different role and capacity to accommodate new development. While a mix of uses is important within each of the centres, the appropriate scale of development and the preferred land use will vary between them, reflecting their relative size, role and environmental capacity to accept development. Further guidance on the appropriate scale of development in relation to the defined hierarchy of centres and the application of the sequential approach to site selection will be set out within the Development Control Policies DPD.

**5.201** National guidance is set out in Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (PPS4) (December 2009). This document states that the Government's key objective is to promote the vitality and viability of centres by planning for the growth and development of existing centres. Also, the promotion and enhancement of existing centres should continue by focusing

development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all. The new PPS4 removes the previous 'Needs Test', which required an applicant to demonstrate the need for retail development outside of a defined centre, although this is replaced by a wider 'Impact Assessment'. Further guidance on this assessment will be set out within the Development Control Policies DPD.

**5.202** Policy TC1 of the South East Plan identifies Royal Tunbridge Wells, together with Tonbridge, as a Primary Regional Centre, which will be the focus for the town centre uses set out in PPS4. Policy TC2 of the South East Plan requires that growth should take place within the regional centre. Local authorities will need to consider the balance of the network of centres to ensure that it is not overly dominated by the largest centre. The Town Centres Area Action Plan (TCAAP) will look specifically at the potential for accommodating new retail development as well as other town centre uses, and other opportunities to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres, identified below in Table 10.

### Hierarchy of Centres

**5.203** Town, district, neighbourhood and village centres are an important focus for communities, as they offer an essential mix of services and facilities, which are often accessible by a variety of different transport means. They will therefore remain the focus for many types of development. The hierarchy of the Borough's settlements is set out in Box 4 in Chapter 4. In terms of the retail hierarchy, for the purposes of applying Core Policy 8, retail centres are defined as follows in Table 10 and these are consistent with the definitions of types of centre set out in Annex B of PPS4.

**Table 10 Definition of Retail Centres**

Type of Centre	Centre
Primary Regional Centre	Tunbridge Wells
Town Centres	Cranbrook, Paddock Wood, Southborough
District Centre	Hawkhurst
Neighbourhood Centres	Broadmeads, Hawkenbury, High Brooms, North Southborough, Rusthall, Sherwood, Showfields, Silverdale, St Barnabas, St John's, St Peter's
Village Centres	Benenden, Bidborough, Brenchley, Five Oak Green, Frittenden, Goudhurst, Hawkhurst (The Moor), Horsmonden, Iden Green, Kilndown, Lamberhurst, Langton Green, Matfield, Pembury, Sandhurst, Sissinghurst, Speldhurst

**5.204** The various categories of retail centres are illustrated spatially on the Key Diagram. The extent of the defined Town Centres and the District Centre and the extent of the neighbourhood and village centres will be identified on the Proposals Maps through the TCAAP and the Allocations DPD. As referred to in paragraph 5.202, each of the centres identified has a different role and capacity to accommodate new development. Development outside of these centres will need to comply with the tests set out in PPS4 and demonstrate that the sequential approach to site selection has been followed.

**5.205** Royal Tunbridge Wells is the principal town centre in the Borough and is a key focus for retailing activity. It is important for the residents, workers, businesses and visitors to the town that the functioning of the centre remains robust and continues to improve its retail offer during the Plan period. The three smaller town centres and the district centre at Hawkhurst serve a variety of functions, not only as shopping centres or places to work, but as places to live and spend leisure time. In addition, they meet the needs

of local communities and visitors, offering a range of facilities in an attractive environment. The smaller neighbourhood and village centres provide a number of small-scale uses that are important in serving the regular needs of local neighbourhoods or villages.

**5.206** The Local Plan 2006 defined the Tunbridge Wells Primary Shopping Area. It lies at the heart of Royal Tunbridge Wells and is predominantly linear in form, extending almost 1.5km from Union Square in the south to Royal Victoria Place in the north. The Primary Shopping Area has been sub-divided into 10 distinct Character Areas, with percentage thresholds for the allowance of non-A1 use. The Use Classes Order defines A1 uses as shop frontages within these areas. Additionally, Primary Shopping Areas and percentage non-A1 thresholds are set for Southborough, Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst. The Primary Shopping Areas and the percentage thresholds will be reviewed through the Development Control Policies DPD and the TCAAP.

**Calverley Precinct, Royal Tunbridge Wells**



### Floorspace Requirements

**5.207** The [Tunbridge Wells Borough Retail Study](#) 2006 identified the retail floorspace requirements for the Borough up to 2017. The study found all the centres to be healthy, with Royal Tunbridge Wells acting as a principal shopping centre for a large part of South West Kent and North East Sussex, and the four smaller centres essentially providing local shopping and other services, including to the surrounding rural areas.

**5.208** The study considers that, in order for Royal Tunbridge Wells to at least maintain its current market position, provision should be made to enhance the comparison shopping function through the development of new floorspace to meet additional quantitative and qualitative need. The study identified a requirement in the order of 26,500sqm net of additional comparison (non-food) floorspace for the Borough over the period to 2017. This is broken down within the Retail Study, which sets a guideline comparison floorspace requirement for each individual centre within the Borough, as set out within the Core Policies for the individual settlements.

**5.209** The study also concluded that there is no quantitative requirement for additional convenience floorspace during the period to 2017, having allowed for the development of a store previously allocated in Southborough within the [Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan](#) 2006, although this does not restrict the development of convenience floorspace provision of an appropriate scale to be located within the centres identified in Table 10 above.

**5.210** The Borough Council will monitor the position on convenience and comparison floorspace, and the Retail Study will be reviewed from time to time as necessary. The first review will be undertaken in time to inform the retail content of the Allocations DPD and Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD. If a proposal is made for additional floorspace outside the Borough's defined centres, any such proposals will be assessed against the tests in Core Policy 9: Development in Royal Tunbridge Wells and other criteria that will be set out within the Development Control Policies DPD.

**5.211** In respect of out-of-town development, while recognising that out-of-town retailing has grown in locations such as Dowding Way/Longfield Road, this has predominantly been for bulky goods retailing. A further increase in out-of-town retail floorspace may potentially undermine the retail strategy and should therefore be resisted to avoid any detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of town, district, neighbourhood and village centres.



## Leisure

**5.212** The provision of facilities for leisure and culture is considered to be a key component in creating healthier, stronger and safer communities and improving people's quality of life. Enabling everyone to take part in and enjoy leisure facilities and promoting health and well-being are among the key themes of the [Tunbridge Wells Borough Sustainable Community Plan](#) 2006-2011. The Borough Council's [Leisure Strategy](#) 2006-2012 responds to the Sustainable Community Plan and sets out priorities and actions to achieve increased participation in leisure and cultural activities.

**5.213** 'Leisure' can mean different things to different people. This Core Strategy takes a broad definition of 'leisure and culture' to cover a range of formal and informal activities, including (but not limited to) theatre and the arts, museums, sports and play, to ensure that a wide range of facilities are available to cater for the greatest possible number of people within the Borough.

## The Location of Development

**5.214** Royal Tunbridge Wells, with its Regional Hub designation and status as a Primary Regional Centre, will be the main focus for retail, leisure and cultural facilities and activities. Having a critical mass of cultural and leisure provision at Royal Tunbridge Wells will be essential in supporting and complementing a robust and attractive retail offer. Having both a strong retail sector and a range of cultural venues, including theatre and museum provision, makes Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre distinctive and will help it to retain a competitive edge over other towns in the South East that also have strong retail sectors. A varied town centre offer also benefits associated businesses, such as restaurants, and supports both the daytime and evening economy. It is important to maintain and improve the critical mass of leisure and cultural facilities in the town centre, particularly in light of its Regional Hub designation. Outside Royal Tunbridge Wells, the maintenance and, where necessary, development of facilities of an appropriate scale, will be supported in the small rural towns, neighbourhood and village centres in order that they continue to provide an important focus for their local communities.

## Accessibility

**5.215** In general, new development for leisure and cultural purposes will be delivered in accordance with the provisions of Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development and will be directed to the centres defined in Table 10 above in the first instance. Core Policy 1 does provide for alternative locations to be considered in the case of recreational facilities for which a town centre location is less appropriate. No specific list of qualifying facilities is provided and proposals will be considered on a case by case basis. Examples could, however, include a sports pitch or a large-scale built facility that would complement existing edge-of-centre uses. Most importantly, all facilities must be conveniently located and safely accessible by a range of transport modes to ensure their optimum use, as both the Leisure Strategy and the [PPG17 Sport, Recreation and Open Space Study](#) 2006 (PPG17 Study) indicate that difficulty of access to facilities is more often a barrier to their use than is a physical lack of provision.



**5.216** Ease of access is not only important in the case of formal built facilities, but also in enabling people to use the wealth of natural and semi-natural open space provided by the Borough's countryside. This provides a key recreational resource to be enjoyed by residents in both the urban and rural areas of the Borough. The South East Plan identifies Green Infrastructure Networks, made up of Green Infrastructure Assets, as being of particular importance within the designated Regional Hubs. The development, maintenance and improvements of connected networks of open spaces, including Public Rights of Way and cycle links, within and around existing and new urban and rural developments, will be treated as an integral part of the development process. A multi-functional approach to delivery that also acknowledges the importance of Green Infrastructure Networks to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity (see Core Policy 4: Environment) will ensure that the development of these networks will facilitate the delivery of many of the Strategic and Sustainability Objectives identified in Chapter 3. Further detail will be provided in the Development Control Policies DPD and other DPDs as necessary.

#### Bedgebury Pinetum



### Providing a Range of High Quality Facilities

**5.217** The PPG17 Study assessed the quantity, quality and accessibility of a wide range of facilities, including parks, natural and semi-natural open space, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, provision for children and young people and allotments. In broad terms, it found that the Borough was well provided with such facilities and that existing provision should be retained, both for its use value and, in many cases, for its contribution to the character of the environment. The Borough Council will seek to retain existing levels of provision through policies in the Development Control Policies DPD and other DPDs as necessary.

**5.218** In relation to natural open space, the PPG17 Study concluded that the Borough has a wealth of such resources and that any issues of provision relate primarily to access and ease of use. Core Policy 4: Environment seeks to conserve and enhance the Borough's natural environmental assets and issues of access are considered above. In terms of more formal built facilities (or those specifically managed for recreational purposes, such as allotments), the PPG17 Study found that, in some cases, provision in terms of either quantity or quality could be improved. For example:

- additional playing pitches are required in some areas and there is a general need to ensure that good quality ancillary facilities, such as changing rooms, are provided and maintained
- the quality of equipped play spaces for children and young people is generally lower in the parished areas of the Borough than in Royal Tunbridge Wells and provision for both toddlers and teenagers is in need of improvement across the Borough
- access to formal facilities (and formally identified facilities, such as parks and recreation grounds) in the rural areas is generally lower than in the urban areas
- allotment sites across the Borough are at capacity

**5.219** In addition to these specific findings of the PPG17 Study, the demand for new or expanded facilities, or for the improvement of existing facilities, will continue to change as a result of new housing development. Furthermore, the Borough Council's Leisure Services regularly receive requests from communities and small organisations for assistance to provide or improve their facilities. The LDF can seek to facilitate this in two main ways: by allocating sites for new or improved facilities in its Allocations DPD (or Town Centres Area Action Plan, if appropriate) where a specific need is identified; and by continuing to seek contributions towards providing or improving facilities from developments that generate additional need.

**5.220** In making allocations, the Borough Council will take account of identified areas of deficiency and of established and recommended provision standards. In relation to contributions (as in the Local Plan 2006), they may be used to facilitate the development of allocated sites or to make on-site provision where the scale of the need generated by the development is sufficient to warrant it.

**5.221** In addition, contributions towards other legitimate projects may also be sought to support their development as need for them arises, which will help to secure the provision of facilities for the lifetime of the Plan. Future revisions of the Borough Council's [Play Strategy](#) and [Leisure Strategy](#) will be strengthened to provide a robust evidence base for this purpose in the form of prioritised project schedules, which are regularly updated in accordance with the principles of the Strategies. The Development Control Policies DPD will make reference to these schedules. Finally, in order to improve access to leisure and recreational facilities in areas where it is limited, it may be appropriate to seek public use of such facilities at certain 'private' establishments, such as educational establishments.

## **Community Facilities**

**5.222** It is also important to ensure that the more traditionally 'essential' facilities continue to be available to communities throughout the Borough. For the purposes of this Policy, the term 'community facility' is used to describe a local venue, building or piece of land available for use by, or to serve the needs of, the local community. These could include retail services (such as a post office or shop), educational and healthcare facilities, religious establishments and recreational venues.

**5.223** The retention and, where necessary, development of, new community facilities will be actively pursued in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development. Specific policies will be provided in the Development Control Policies DPD and other DPDs as necessary. The Implementation Table of the IDP identifies projects, plans and strategies that will serve the wide ranging needs of different communities for education, health, social and other public services and facilities. The delivery of such projects will help to reduce inequalities in the Borough where they exist, in accordance with the objectives of the Sustainable Community Plan. An approach that also encourages the development of community facilities within existing and proposed developments could lead to greater community cohesion and to new and improved community networks. The availability of a range of services locally will help to provide a focus for activity and thereby ensure the continued vitality and viability of centres.

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

**5.224** See Appendix 1, Table 18 'Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision'.

## Core Policy 9: Development in Royal Tunbridge Wells

### Core Policy 9

#### Development in Royal Tunbridge Wells

The sensitive regeneration of Royal Tunbridge Wells to provide and maintain a Regional Hub of strategic importance will be achieved by development or redevelopment for a mix of uses, including housing, employment, health, retail, leisure and culture. Development must conserve and enhance the landscape and heritage and biodiversity assets of Royal Tunbridge Wells, including the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to secure its special character in the long term. At Royal Tunbridge Wells:

1. The general extent of the Green Belt will be maintained for the Plan period unless it is necessary to replenish the stock of Rural Fringe sites required to provide a long-term supply of land to meet future growth requirements to 2031. This will be established by the review to be undertaken in accordance with Core Policy 2: Green Belt
2. Approximately 4,200 net additional dwellings will be delivered on sites to be allocated and released in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development
3. Sites accommodating 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide affordable housing in accordance with Core Policy 6(4) and (5)
4. The existing amount of employment floorspace in the Key Employment Areas, including the town centre, will be maintained for the Plan period. Additional floorspace will be provided in appropriate locations in accordance with Core Policy 7: Employment Provision where this is necessary to provide a higher qualitative offer in terms of higher-value jobs
5. Encouragement will be given to increase the proportion of B1 office space provided, principally in the town centre, including by the development or redevelopment of floorspace for purpose-built accommodation. Within the context of the Plan, particular encouragement will be given to businesses that support the Borough's growing health sector
6. In the order of 23,500sqm (net) comparison retail floorspace (to include, but not restricted to, the planned expansion of Royal Victoria Place) will be provided in the town centre by 2017, unless a different need is identified in a future Retail Study
7. Neighbourhood centres will be protected and, where necessary, enhanced, in order to maintain and strengthen their role in providing local services and as a focus for community interaction
8. Development will respect and, where necessary, contribute to, an integrated approach to improve movement into and around the town, including the promotion of public transport use and improved routes and facilities for cycling and walking

**5.225** Royal Tunbridge Wells and the smaller centre of Southborough, which shares its Limits to Built Development (LBD) to the north, make up the main urban area of the Borough. The scale and nature of future development in Royal Tunbridge Wells will be driven by its existing position as the Borough's largest settlement and primary centre for service provision and, significantly, by its strategic designation in the South East Plan as a Regional Hub. This designation, which is joint with Tonbridge, both takes account of, and reinforces, its existing position in the settlement hierarchy. The broad context for the development of Royal Tunbridge Wells as a Regional Hub is set out in Chapter 2. Fundamentally, it should accommodate the majority of the Borough's future development needs for a range of uses and ensure, partly by their concentration, that they are accessible by sustainable means.

**5.226** In the context of the Regional Hub designation, the spatial strategy that makes Royal Tunbridge Wells a focus for development, presents numerous opportunities to enhance the considerable range of services and facilities the town already provides, in terms of both quantity and quality. Through site allocations and the granting of planning permissions, Royal Tunbridge Wells will accommodate new

development for housing, employment, retail, hotels, leisure and culture during the Plan period. The town centre itself will be the subject of an Area Action Plan, to be prepared by the Borough Council as part of its Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD (TCAAP). The TCAAP will provide a policy framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed and will identify the sites where different uses would be appropriate. The TCAAP will also define a formal boundary for the town centre, which, on the basis of the provisions of Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision in relation to town centre uses, will ensure that the uses that contribute to its vitality will continue to be directed to it by preference, thereby securing its viability for the long term. In preparing the Town Centres Area Action Plan and Allocations DPDs, the Borough Council will have regard to the projects, programmes and strategies identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Implementation Table.

**5.227** In accordance with the recommendations of the Borough Council's [Retail Study](#) 2006, the provision of in the order of 23,500sqm (net) of comparison retail floorspace will be sought in Royal Tunbridge Wells up to 2017, to include the planned expansion of Royal Victoria Place, which is allocated in saved policies in the Local Plan 2006. New retail floorspace will generally be directed to the primary shopping areas, the boundaries and composition of which will be reviewed through either the TCAAP or the Development Control Policies DPD. A varied retail offer, comprising both national and independent traders, is favoured and the TCAAP DPD will seek to improve the connectivity between the more commercial shopping area centred around Royal Victoria Place and the other areas of town in order to facilitate this. Food, drink and entertainment venues should continue to complement retail provision and they are of particular importance to sustaining the evening economy. While the Retail Study found no need for additional convenience retail uses within Royal Tunbridge Wells, proposals of an appropriate scale would be acceptable in principle within the town centre and local neighbourhood centres (as defined in Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision). These local centres should be conserved and enhanced where necessary in order to provide a focus for the communities they serve.

**5.228** The [Employment Land Study](#) 2006 recommended that the existing amount of employment floorspace across the Borough should be retained and, in accordance with its findings, the amount of employment floorspace provided in the town centre and in the North Farm/Longfield Road industrial areas will be maintained for the Plan period. Should it be necessary, however, to support the provision of higher-value employment opportunities and to retain key employers, the Borough Council will consider providing additional floorspace, particularly to increase the proportion of B1 office uses in purpose-built accommodation. Following the provision of a new District General Hospital at Pembury and the granting of planning permission for a private Centre of Clinical Excellence at Knights Park, the health sector is recognised to be a growing industry in the Borough, providing a range of employment opportunities, that should be supported.

**Farmers' Market, Civic Way, Royal Tunbridge Wells**



**5.229** In order to support a sustainable settlement and, taking account of the findings of the SHLAA, it is anticipated that approximately 4,200 net additional dwellings will be provided at Royal Tunbridge Wells, which is consistent with recent delivery rates over the period 2003-2008. New development should provide a mix of housing types and sizes, as set out in Core Policy 6: Housing Provision and should seek to address local affordability issues. Sites capable of accommodating 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide 35% of the total number of dwellings as affordable homes.

**5.230** The concentration of development at Royal Tunbridge Wells performs well in terms of fostering sustainable development, as found by the Sustainability Appraisal accompanying this report. It will make optimum use of existing services and infrastructure and allow for efficient and effective use of funding and resources to improve and extend those services that are needed to serve new developments. It also necessitates the resolution of certain deficiencies in its transport infrastructure, which would inhibit its capacity to accept significant growth in the long term. Core Policy 3: Transport Infrastructure sets out the overarching measures that will be employed to achieve this, which include both physical infrastructure



improvements and initiatives to encourage the uptake of non-car modes of transport. The TCAAP DPD and Allocations DPD will take this further by testing potential solutions specific to Royal Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding area.

**5.231** Equally important is the need to provide development in a way that is sensitive to the exceptionally high quality of the town's built environment and of the natural environment that surrounds it. Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre possesses a strong architectural heritage and much of the area is designated as a Conservation Area. All new development should conserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area, but should also contribute to the renewal of outmoded or unsympathetically designed buildings, for which there is significant opportunity. Regeneration of some of the least attractive parts of the town through new, high quality development should make a positive contribution to the character of the town as a whole.

**5.232** New development must have particular regard for the setting of the town within its surrounding landscape, including the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The South East Plan Regional Hub designation specifically refers to the need to give priority to the conservation of the "*urban and natural environment, and the setting of the town*". While the release of greenfield sites outside the existing LBD is likely to be necessary during the Plan period, the Borough Council will afford strong protection to those areas most sensitive to change and has undertaken a [Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study](#) (2009) to strengthen its ability to do this. In accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development, such sites will not be released unless they are allocated, which will allow the Borough Council to formally test their merits against all relevant constraints.

**5.233** It is acknowledged that the South East Plan makes provision for the Borough Council to consider the release of Green Belt sites (which perform a different and specific function, as set out in Core Policy 2: Green Belt), should this be necessary to deliver development at the Regional Hub. As indicated in paragraphs 5.27 and 5.28, a review of the inner boundaries of the Green Belt will be undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the Allocations DPD in order to ensure that the stock of Rural Fringe sites is replenished as necessary to provide a long-term supply of land safeguarded to meet growth requirements to 2031.

**Bath Square, The Pantiles,  
Royal Tunbridge Wells**



## Core Policy 10: Development in Southborough

### Core Policy 10

#### Development in Southborough

Southborough will remain a town centre of distinctive character and development or redevelopment will serve to strengthen the sense of place, independent of Royal Tunbridge Wells. At Southborough:

1. The general extent of the Green Belt will be maintained for the Plan period unless it is necessary to replenish the stock of Rural Fringe sites required to provide a long-term supply of land to meet future growth requirements to 2031. This will be established by the review to be undertaken in accordance with Core Policy 2
2. Approximately 300 net additional dwellings will be delivered on sites to be allocated and released in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development. Residential development should contribute to addressing local affordability issues and provide a greater choice of housing types for local people
3. Sites capable of accommodating 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide affordable housing in accordance with Core Policy 6(4) and (5)
4. The function of Southborough as a town centre will be reinforced by a new mixed use development to provide retail, commercial and community facilities, including a new convenience food store in order for the centre to develop a more specific function and improve the quality of local convenience provision
5. In the order of 500sqm (net) additional comparison floorspace will be delivered by 2017, unless a different need is identified in a future Retail Study, in order to increase the vitality and viability of the centre
6. Existing employment floorspace will be maintained and new or redeveloped employment floorspace will be encouraged within the Key Employment Area and elsewhere in Southborough, as appropriate
7. Infrastructure improvements to encourage the uptake of sustainable transport modes, such as walking, cycling and use of public transport, will be pursued in order to reduce congestion and improve transport links to Royal Tunbridge Wells
8. Measures to improve air quality within the Air Quality Management Area will be investigated and pursued and must be taken into account when considering developments within this area

**5.234** Southborough is located approximately two miles north of Royal Tunbridge Wells, straddling the A26, one of the principal access routes into Royal Tunbridge Wells. Southborough lies within the main urban area, sharing a Limits to Built Development with Royal Tunbridge Wells, but has its own, smaller, town centre. Like Royal Tunbridge Wells, Southborough is surrounded by the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is further constrained by the location of the Green Belt. See paragraphs 5.29 and 5.30 of Core Policy 2: Green Belt for further information. The town centre offers both retail provision and a range of other complementary uses that serve the local community. The Strategy's vision is to add to the heart of the town by making the centre the focus of regeneration. In accordance with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy as outlined in Box 4 (Chapter 4), Southborough, along with Royal Tunbridge Wells, is identified as being within the main urban area and the range of development to be delivered will reflect this position in the hierarchy. While Southborough will provide quantitatively less, its location relative to Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre, the North Farm/High Brooms/Longfield Road industrial area and Tonbridge makes it a key part of the Regional Hub. Development at Southborough must therefore reflect and complement this status.



**5.235** A Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP) will be produced for Southborough, which will provide the framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. This will consider the types of uses that should be directed to the town, including retail, residential, employment, etc. and will identify the sites where such uses would be appropriate.

**5.236** The majority of the Borough's needs for development, including residential, will be met at Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough. There are limited brownfield opportunities remaining for residential development within the town of Southborough and housing delivery will encompass limited market and affordable housing development. Therefore, approximately 5% of the Borough's total housing requirement (or about 300 dwellings) will be delivered at Southborough over the period of the Core Strategy. Site allocations will be addressed through the TCAAP or Allocations DPD.

**5.237** A site for a mixed use allocation to the east of London Road, opposite its junction with Western Road, is allocated in saved policies in the Local Plan 2006. This site still provides the opportunity for a mixed use development of retail, residential and community uses during the Core Strategy period. The development of a mixed use site within the heart of Southborough allows the opportunity to upgrade the quality of the built environment and significantly improve the vitality and viability of the centre. The mix of uses appropriate for the site will include retail development (including a convenience food supermarket), new housing, supported by additional recreation and children's play space, community facilities, appropriate local office provision and associated car parking.

**5.238** The shopping area at Southborough is concentrated in a linear fashion along the western side of London Road, running from the junction with Speldhurst Road to the junction of Springfield Road. This shopping frontage forms the Southborough Primary Shopping Area. The Centre is defined as a 'Town Centre' within the definition of retail centres set out within Table 10 of the Core Strategy. The town centre provides approximately 3,760sqm of gross shopping floorspace (Kent County Council 2006) and the extent of the centre will be identified on the Proposals Map through the TCAAP and development of an appropriate scale will be allowed, subject to the tests that will be set out within the Development Control Policies DPD. While Southborough trades adequately, with a range of convenience and service facilities, opportunities to enhance the vitality and viability of the centre will be sought. Development should be of a high quality and seek to create a greater sense of place and character.

**5.239** The High Brooms Industrial Park falls within Southborough and is defined as one of the Key Employment Areas. The maintenance of existing, and encouragement of new or redeveloped, employment floorspace within this area will be promoted along with the promotion of high-value employment development within this area and elsewhere as appropriate within Southborough.

**5.240** Southborough is a linear settlement and is dissected by the busy A26. It is characterised by fairly heavy traffic flow and therefore the Council should encourage and promote sustainable transport modes, such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

**5.241** Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has declared an air quality management area in Southborough and as a result, an [Air Quality Action Plan](#) was developed. This enables the Borough Council to take forward local policies in future DPDs or SPDs as necessary to work towards achieving good air quality and achieving the objective for nitrogen dioxide.

#### Southborough Common



## Core Policy 11: Development in Paddock Wood

### Core Policy 11

#### Development in Paddock Wood

A locally-distinctive design identity will be defined for the town, particularly the town centre, in partnership with the local community. New development should contribute to the furtherance of that identity as well as paying particular attention to the integration of the townscape and surrounding landscape with a view to enhancing the quality of the local environment. At Paddock Wood:

1. Both the general extent and detailed inner boundaries of the Green Belt around Paddock Wood will be maintained for the Plan period
2. Approximately 600 net additional dwellings will be delivered on sites to be allocated and released in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development. Residential development should contribute to addressing local affordability issues and providing a greater choice of housing types for local people
3. Sites capable of accommodating 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide affordable housing in accordance with Core Policy 6(4) and (5)
4. Development within the town and at the planned urban extension will be located in accordance with the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and PPS25, including the sequential test as appropriate, together with the requirement for site-specific FRAs. Opportunities will be taken to integrate flood risk management with the planning and delivery of new development including, wherever possible, the reduction of existing flood risks in the town
5. Redevelopment for current and future business/employment needs will be promoted within the Key Employment Areas to the north of the railway line
6. The provision of smaller, more flexible and higher quality commercial and industrial units in the defined Key Employment Areas will be encouraged and facilitated
7. In the order of 900sqm (net) additional comparison floorspace will be delivered by 2017, unless a different need is identified in a future Retail Study, in order to increase the vitality and viability of the centre
8. The provision of activities to strengthen the social economy of the town, such as community uses, restaurants and meeting places, will be encouraged
9. A site for a community facility will be allocated and a facility provided during the Core Strategy period
10. The use and accessibility of public transport, particularly for accessing the Key Employment Areas, will be promoted

**5.242** Paddock Wood serves a large rural hinterland and provides a range of retail, community and small- and large-scale business uses. In accordance with the Spatial Strategy (Box 3, Chapter 4) and the settlement hierarchy, as outlined in Box 4 (Chapter 4), Paddock Wood is identified as a small rural town and the objective of the Core Strategy is to provide sufficient development at Paddock Wood to support and strengthen it as a local hub for the Borough's rural area. Any development must be in the context of respecting the Green Belt, which abuts the western boundary of the town, the general extent and inner boundaries of which should be maintained during the Plan period in accordance with Core Policy 2: Green Belt.

**5.243** A Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP) will be produced for Paddock Wood, which will provide the framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. This will define the town centre boundary, consider the types of uses that should be directed to the town centre (including retail, residential and employment) and will identify the sites where such uses would be appropriate. The Plan will define a locally-distinctive design identity for the town centre in partnership with the local

community and give guidance on the ways in which new development in the town centre will be required to contribute to enhancing its sense of place, including the provision of appropriate landmark buildings and the identification, retention and improvement of local heritage elements and other valued features.

**5.244** In physical landscape terms, the town is not considered to be as constrained as the other towns/settlements in the Borough. There are no conservation areas in Paddock Wood and the surrounding area is not subject to any national landscape or biodiversity designations. Certain areas of Paddock Wood are severely constrained by flood risk but nevertheless, opportunities to enhance the quality of the local environment should be sought, particularly through new development opportunities.

**Commercial Road, Paddock Wood**



**5.245** Part of Paddock Wood, primarily to the north of the railway line, lies within the functional floodplain of the River Medway. The [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (SFRA) Level 2 (2009) indicates that land to the north of the railway line is not considered to be suitable for residential development or other vulnerable uses in the short to medium term, which will be a key consideration for the future development of Paddock Wood. The built-up parts of the town, south of the railway, are identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as an 'area of critical drainage', which can suffer flooding from storm-water sewers due to surcharging caused by constricted culverts under the railway. As a result, proportionate flood risk assessments will be required for proposed developments in that area of the town. A Flood Risk Management Strategy will also be developed to identify relatively low cost options to alleviate flooding to existing properties and provide mechanisms for the delivery of such schemes.

**5.246** There are very limited opportunities remaining for residential development on previously developed land within the town of Paddock Wood. Recent residential development has been of a very small scale, or has occurred on greenfield allocations made in former Development Plans. As referred to above, the Green Belt abuts the western boundary of the town and the functional floodplain constrains the northern part of the town. In order to address local housing choice and affordability, therefore, an extension to the east and/or south of the town outside of the area subject to flood risk will be necessary during the course of the Plan period. Since the SFRA indicates that this development may offer opportunities to assist in alleviating the existing flood risks in the town's built-up area, this is another matter that will be taken forward in the context of the Allocations DPD and the Flood Risk Management Strategy referred to above.

**5.247** The Borough Council's first SHLAA identified a number of sites at Paddock Wood that may be appropriate to meet future housing requirements and this will inform site allocations in the TCAAP or Allocations DPD. This would result in the provision of approximately 600 net additional dwellings during the Plan period at Paddock Wood. Additionally, any new residential development directed to Paddock Wood should take account of the findings of the SFRA.

**5.248** The defined Key Employment Areas within Paddock Wood offer the scope to support smaller, higher quality B1 and B2<sup>(18)</sup> employment floorspace, as there is some evidence that both the existing large size and often poor quality of accommodation in Paddock Wood has been a cause of low take-up rates. The [Employment Land Study](#) 2006 recommends that future economic development should be directed to Eldon Way and Transfesa Road East and West (to the north of the railway line), which are considered to offer longer term redevelopment opportunities.

**5.249** As stated above, the land to the north of Paddock Wood lies mainly within the functional floodplain and this includes some of the land to the west of Maidstone Road, which has previously been allocated for employment uses through the 1996 and 2006 Local Plans. The portion of the allocated site which lies within the functional floodplain (amounting to approximately 3.26ha in area) will no longer be allocated for employment purposes or for any other use. It should be maintained as functional floodplain for the

18 The Use Classes Order defines B1 uses as 'businesses'; and B2 uses as 'general industrial'

future. The resultant change to the adopted Proposals Map is shown in Appendix 6. The remaining part of the site will remain allocated for employment uses, although it is likely that a detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required to accompany any proposed development. Subject to demand for further employment uses being identified within Paddock Wood, additional land on an alternative site outside the functional floodplain will be required to be identified through the TCAAP or Allocations DPD to meet this demand. See paragraph 5.188 of Core Policy 7: Employment Provision.

**5.250** Paddock Wood Town Centre is a small-scale centre made up of largely independent retailers occupying small units. It is defined as a 'Town Centre' within the definition of retail centres set out within Table 10 (Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision) of the Core Strategy. The town centre provides approximately 8,431sqm of gross shopping floorspace (Kent County Council 2006). The extent of the Town Centre will be identified on the Proposals Map through the Town Centres Area Action Plan and development of an appropriate scale will be allowed, subject to the tests that will be set out within the Development Control Policies DPD. While Paddock Wood trades adequately, with a range of convenience and service facilities, opportunities to enhance the vitality and viability of the centre will be sought and the [Retail Study](#) 2006 recommends a net increase of in the order of 900sqm of comparison floorspace during the period to 2017. Any new retail development should be of a high quality and seek to create a sense of place and character.

**5.251** During the lifetime of the Core Strategy, as additional housing is developed in Paddock Wood, a site for additional community facilities will be identified and developed in order to support the local community and enable appropriate access to community facilities. Appropriate locations will include those within easy walking distance of public transport, the centre and other community facilities and will be able to provide adequate parking facilities to meet disability needs. In order to meet modern requirements and provide flexible spaces, the Borough Council will also encourage the public use of existing and future community premises for a range of community uses and groups.

**5.252** Paddock Wood has excellent rail links to Tonbridge, London and Ashford and reasonable links to Maidstone/Medway via the Medway Valley line. Currently, there is net out-commuting by the resident workforce, whereas employees for local businesses travel daily into the Borough to access employment opportunities at Paddock Wood, particularly to the Key Employment Areas to the north of the town. While this pattern is unlikely to be reversed, it will be important to continue to ensure that workers have the opportunity to access sustainable modes of travel.



## Core Policy 12: Development in Cranbrook

### Core Policy 12

#### Development in Cranbrook

Development at Cranbrook during the Plan period will support and strengthen its role as a small rural town with its own character. At Cranbrook:

1. All new development will have particular regard to preserving and enhancing the character of the Conservation Area and for the setting of the town within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
2. Approximately 300 net additional dwellings will be delivered on sites to be allocated and released in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development
3. Sites capable of accommodating 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide affordable housing in accordance with Core Policy 6 (4) and (5)
4. In the order of 1,150sqm (net) additional comparison retail floorspace will be delivered by 2017, unless a different need is identified in a future Retail Study, to increase the vitality and viability of the centre
5. A community facility will be provided and, if necessary, a site will be allocated for this purpose

**5.253** Cranbrook is a thriving historic town located within the High Weald AONB. The Borough Council will conserve and enhance the built environment and have high regard to landscape designations, which have particular importance due to the AONB washing over the whole of the settlement. It has a high concentration of listed buildings, particularly in the central area, which means that these buildings play a vital role in the town's character and appeal. The town offers local services and employment to the community, thereby providing the opportunity for people who live and work in rural areas to have reasonable access to a range of services, facilities and employment. Conversely, areas of employment use within the rural areas outside the town could also serve the employment needs of the town's resident population, as set out in Core Policy 14: Development in the Villages and Rural Areas.

**5.254** [Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth](#) (PPS4) 2009 recommends locating development in, or near to, local service centres and, similarly, the South East Plan pursues a strategy that requires such centres to be local hubs for employment, retailing and services. Consistent with this, Cranbrook will not experience significant growth, but new development for small-scale market and affordable housing, retail and community facilities will be sufficient to maintain and enhance its present role and function into the future. A Town Centre Area Action Plan will be produced for Cranbrook, which will provide the planning framework for the areas of the town where significant change or conservation is necessary.

**5.255** Within Cranbrook, housing delivery will encompass small-scale market and affordable housing development that will both encourage the delivery of homes to meet local needs and create mixed and viable communities. Approximately 5% of the Borough's total housing requirement will be delivered at Cranbrook. This rate represents *approximately* 300 dwellings and is higher than in the last five years 2003/08, during which period 1% of the Borough's housing occurred at Cranbrook, representing 22 dwellings in total. Site allocations for housing at Cranbrook will be made in the Allocations DPD and/or Town Centres Area Action Plan, taking account of evidence provided by the SHLAA.

**5.256** The Borough Council works in partnership with the Parish/Town Councils and Action with Communities in Rural Kent in a rolling programme of affordable housing provision called Rural Homes for Local People (HeLP). The [Housing Needs Survey](#) 2005 identified a need for 46 affordable homes within the parish of Cranbrook and it is anticipated that Action with Communities in Rural Kent will conduct a detailed parish survey in 2010/11. To meet these local requirements, affordable housing will be expected



to be delivered on all sites capable of delivering over 10 dwellings, in accordance with Core Policy 6: Housing Provision. In the allocation of affordable units at Cranbrook, priority will be given to meeting local housing needs.

**5.257** In accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development, market housing development may be allocated on sites within and/or adjacent to the LBD of Cranbrook. All developments of 10 or more dwellings will be expected to deliver affordable housing in accordance with Core Policy 6: Housing Provision.

**5.258** The SHMA also identifies that the Borough's ageing population will have an impact on the amount of assisted housing required in the future. Given historical demand for this form of accommodation at Cranbrook, the Borough Council will support future proposals for this use, in accordance with any identified local need or requirement and other relevant planning policies.

**5.259** Retail provision and other services are concentrated in the High Street, Stone Street and Carriers Road and much of the comparison retail consists of independent traders occupying small units. The supermarket attracts many shoppers to the town from a wider area and plays a role in sustaining the vitality and viability of the town as a whole. The approach to retail provision within Cranbrook will be to maintain the role and function of the Primary Shopping Area and allow limited small-scale expansion. The town centre boundary will be defined within the Town Centre Area Action Plan.

**Cranbrook High Street**



**5.260** The Borough Council's [Retail Study](#) 2006 considered the town centre of Cranbrook to be healthy in terms of its vitality and viability. A need for in the order of 1,150sqm (net) of new comparison retail floorspace was, however, identified up to 2017. Proposals for new comparison floorspace to meet this identified need will be supported in principle. This position will be reviewed in the course of the period covered by the Core Strategy and any need identified within a subsequent Retail Study will be provided for.

**5.261** Within the Cranbrook Primary Shopping Area there are currently low vacancy levels and, historically, the uptake of units when they do become vacant has been high. Cranbrook is also notable for its restaurants, public houses and cafés, which contribute towards the night-time economy. In addition, the uptake of boarding facilities at the Cranbrook School and the close proximity of Sissinghurst Castle has meant that the town has become a focus for weekend visits. The Borough Council will therefore protect the vitality and viability of the town against an excess of non-A1 uses, encourage tourism within the town and review the non-A1 thresholds as part of the Development Control Policies DPD.

**5.262** Cranbrook has a historical demand for community facilities and any future housing development at the town may also contribute towards the demand for community facilities. In order to support the local community and enable appropriate access to community facilities, it is currently considered that it will be necessary to provide additional community facilities. Subsequently, during the lifetime of the Core Strategy it may be appropriate to allocate sites for a community facility within Cranbrook. Appropriate locations will include those within easy walking distance of public transport, the town centre and other community facilities and will be able to provide adequate parking facilities to meet disability needs. In order to meet modern requirements and provide flexible spaces, the Borough Council will also encourage the use of existing and future community premises for a range of community uses and groups.

## Core Policy 13: Development in Hawkhurst

### Core Policy 13

#### Development in Hawkhurst

New development will contribute to supporting and strengthening the role of Hawkhurst as a small rural town serving the wider rural area. At Hawkhurst:

1. All new development will have particular regard to conserving and enhancing the character of the Conservation Areas and for the setting of the town within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
2. Approximately 240 net additional dwellings will be delivered on sites to be allocated and released in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development
3. Sites capable of accommodating 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide affordable housing in accordance with Core Policy 6(4) and (5)
4. In the order of 450sqm (net) additional comparison retail floorspace will be delivered by 2017, unless a different need is identified in a future Retail Study, to increase the vitality and viability of the centre
5. A site will be allocated for community facilities to meet identified local community needs

**5.263** The High Weald AONB washes over the whole of Hawkhurst. The town has three Conservation Areas; two at Highgate and one at The Moor and the white weather-boarded properties of the Colonnade and listed buildings give the town a strong local identity. Hawkhurst itself provides local services and offers the opportunity for people who live and work in rural areas to have reasonable access to a range of services, facilities and employment. Conversely, areas of employment use within the rural areas outside the town could also serve the employment needs of the town's resident population, as set out in Core Policy 15: Development in the Rural Areas.

**5.264** Development in Hawkhurst will not result in significant growth, but will support and enhance the current role and function of the centre through the provision of limited market and affordable housing and small-scale retail expansion. This approach is consistent with [Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth](#) (PPS4) 2009 and the South East Plan, which recommend locating development in, or near to, local service centres and the [Rural White Paper](#) 2000, which encourages the provision of services and facilities to meet needs in the rural areas.

**5.265** At Hawkhurst, housing delivery will encompass market and affordable housing in order to meet local needs and create a mixed and viable community. Approximately 4% of the Borough's total housing requirement will be provided in Hawkhurst. This represents *approximately 240* dwellings compared with the last five years 2003/08, during which period 3% of the Borough's housing occurred at Hawkhurst, representing 65 dwellings in total. Site allocations for housing in Hawkhurst will be made in the Allocations DPD, taking account of evidence provided by the SHLAA.

**5.266** The Borough Council works in partnership with the Parish/Town Councils and Action with Communities in Rural Kent in a rolling programme of affordable housing provision called Rural Homes for Local People (HeLP). The [Housing Needs Survey](#) 2005 identified a need for 59 affordable housing units within the parish of Hawkhurst and Action with Communities in Rural Kent conducted a detailed parish survey in 2003, which identified a need for 67 affordable units. Where a need has been identified, affordable housing will be delivered in accordance with Core Policy 6: Housing Provision and this Policy. To meet these local requirements, affordable housing will be expected to be delivered on all sites capable of delivering over 10 dwellings, in accordance with Core Policy 6: Housing Provision. In the allocation of affordable units at Hawkhurst, priority will be given to meeting local housing needs.

**5.267** In accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development, market housing development may be allocated on sites within and/or adjacent to the LBD of Hawkhurst. All developments of 10 or more dwellings will be expected to provide affordable housing in accordance with Core Policy 6: Housing Provision.

**5.268** Retail provision and other services are concentrated around the crossroads of the A229 and the A268 at the centre of Hawkhurst. The opening of a supermarket has increased footfall in the centre, but there are some empty units in prominent positions. The approach to retail provision within Hawkhurst will be to maintain the role and function of the Primary Shopping Area, in particular the Colonnade, and to allow limited small-scale retail expansion. In order to appropriately direct any future development, the Borough Council will define a Town Centre Boundary in the Development Control Policies DPD.

**5.269** The Borough Council's [Retail Study](#) 2006 considered the town centre of Hawkhurst to be healthy in terms of its vitality and viability, although a need for in the order of 450sqm (net) of new comparison retail floorspace up to 2017 was identified. Proposals for new comparison floorspace to meet this identified need will therefore be supported in principle. This position will be reviewed in the course of the life of the Core Strategy and any need identified within subsequent Retail Studies will be provided for. In order to preserve the vitality and viability of the town against an increasing number of non-A1 uses, the Borough Council will protect existing A1 retail floorspace and frontages, encourage A1 uses within the Primary Shopping Area and review the non-A1 thresholds as part of the Development Control Policies DPD.

**5.270** Traffic and congestion is a particular issue within Hawkhurst, particularly around the A229/A268 junction in the town centre. The Borough Council will work with Kent County Council to facilitate any required transport initiatives, which may also include those funded by development.

**5.271** As housing is developed at Hawkhurst, in order to support the local community and enable appropriate access to community facilities, it is currently considered that it will be necessary to provide additional community facilities. During the lifetime of the Core Strategy it may be appropriate to allocate sites for a community facility within Hawkhurst. Appropriate locations will include those within easy walking distance of public transport, the town centre and other community facilities and will be able to provide adequate parking facilities to meet disability needs. In order to meet modern requirements and provide flexible spaces, the Borough Council will also encourage the use of existing and future community premises for a range of community uses and groups.

**The Colonnade, Hawkhurst**



## Core Policy 14: Development in the Villages and Rural Areas

### Core Policy 14

#### Development in the Villages and Rural Areas

Development in the Villages and Rural Areas:

1. Approximately 360 net additional dwellings will be delivered in the villages and rural areas on sites to be allocated and released in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development
2. New development will generally be restricted to sites within the Limits to Built Development (LBD) of the villages in accordance with Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development. Development will be appropriate to the scale and character of the settlement. Sites capable of accommodating 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide affordable housing in accordance with Core Policy 6 (4) and (5)
3. Outside the LBD of the villages, affordable housing to meet an identified local need in perpetuity may be allowed in accordance with Core Policy 1(2)
4. Village centres will be enhanced to provide a focus for communities. The loss of local services will be resisted and the development of facilities, including community facilities, to meet local needs will be encouraged. The rural economy will be strengthened and its long-term sustainability safeguarded by providing opportunities for commercial activities that utilise rural buildings and resources appropriately, including rural buildings that are no longer required or suitable for agricultural use. Employment uses related to the land will be encouraged, including appropriate forms of tourism, agriculture, forestry and equestrian activity
5. Designated buildings and areas of historic or environmental importance will be conserved and enhanced to ensure the special character of the villages is maintained
6. The countryside will be protected for its own sake and a policy of restraint will operate in order to maintain the landscape character and quality of the countryside
7. The interrelationship between the natural and built features of the landscape will be preserved, enhanced and, where necessary, restored, this being the principal determinant of the character of the rural areas. Development will maintain the local distinctiveness of particular localities
8. Non-motorised modes of transport between the rural settlements and within the rural areas will be encouraged by ensuring that the existing network of public footpaths and bridleways are protected, maintained and improved. Opportunities for new green routeways within, and between, settlements, and between settlements and areas of recreation, will be identified and planned for to encourage non-motorised modes of transport and to enhance biodiversity

**5.272** The rural areas are characterised by a thriving network of towns, villages and hamlets. There are 17 villages within the Borough, as listed in Box 4: Settlement Hierarchy (Chapter 4), each with a defined LBD, together with a number of smaller hamlets. The diverse nature of the rural areas is highlighted by the different settlement types it accommodates and their various functions, all being located within a predominantly high quality rural landscape. Future development should aim to strengthen the interrelationship of the rural settlements, both within and outside the Borough boundaries.

**5.273** Many of the issues that affect the rural areas of the Borough are covered elsewhere in the Core Strategy, but there are some particular issues that need specific reference.

#### The Villages

**5.274** The strategy for the villages is to promote a sustainable economy while maintaining and enhancing their distinctive character and environment and also that of the surrounding countryside. All the villages have some general facilities that serve local residents, such as a primary school, shop, public house, doctors surgery and church, together with basic recreational facilities; for example, a village



or community hall, recreation ground and children's play area. Most of the villages are located within the Green Belt and/or the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These rural settlements often lack a variety of local employment sources and suffer from poor public transport provision that at best can be sporadic and costly, leading to social and economic isolation among those sections of the community without regular access to private modes of transport.

**5.275** Key issues for the rural villages, which are highlighted in other chapters in this strategy relating to the rural areas, include:

- meeting local needs for affordable housing
- the loss of local facilities such as schools, village shops, pubs and rural employment opportunities
- a limited supply of employment opportunities
- ongoing decline in agriculture and rural industries
- poor and expensive public transport and isolation for people who do not drive
- growing demands for recreation

### The Rural Areas

**5.276** The Borough contains a significant amount of high quality countryside and it is essential that the Core Strategy seeks to conserve and enhance this resource for existing and future generations, while supporting a thriving rural economy. Core Policies 11: Paddock Wood, 12: Cranbrook and 13: Hawkhurst provide additional principles for development in the rural towns and in the villages. The overall thrust of these policies will be to provide flexibility to enable development to meet the individual needs and support the individual identities of the small rural towns areas, while recognising the overall importance of the landscape quality and character.

**5.277** As identified in Chapter 2: Context for Development, the Borough's rural landscape is of a high quality and a large percentage of the Borough is covered by the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The diverse, locally distinctive and historic landscape has been formed over a long period of time and is identified by a patchwork of agriculture, woodland, heathland and rural settlements intersected by lanes and routeways. This intrinsic character and the attractive appearance of the countryside is one of the Borough's principal assets, making a significant contribution to the special landscape character of the Borough's rural areas and quality of life to those living, working in and visiting the Borough. These assets can also be used to facilitate economic development and tourism.

**5.278** The Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study 2009 will be used to inform possible future expansion around the settlements in the main urban area and small rural towns. The study defines the relative capacity of the landscape to accommodate housing and/or business development around these settlements. The findings of the study will be considered in conjunction with other background evidence and policies to enable the boundaries of any future development to be determined and to identify the landscape infrastructure required to integrate development proposals into the existing landscape character.

**5.279** Within AONBs, it is Government policy to conserve and enhance their natural beauty, while having due regard to social and economic considerations. Restoring and maintaining the interrelationships between the natural, social and built features of the landscape and recognising biodiversity and cultural heritage and the impacts these have had on the development of the rural landscape, plays a significant part in this management. It is vital to identify and encourage these interrelationships in order to maximise the potential of the rural assets in promoting long-term sustainability in the rural areas and to maintain the natural and built features. Major development within the rural areas should not take place except where it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances apply.

**5.280** The extensive network of rural lanes and Public Rights of Way that intersect the rural areas are considered to be one of the most attractive and readily appreciated features of the Borough. The network of routeways, which includes historically important droveways and sunken lanes, is a key component of the High Weald landscape, both reflecting its historical context and being an integral part of its



present-day character. Improving access to, and within, the rural areas by these routes will increase their desirability for tourist and other recreational activities and encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport more generally. It is also important to maintain and enhance their essentially undeveloped character. Core Policy 4: Environment sets out the importance of green links to the enhancement of biodiversity.

**5.281** The landscape of the High Weald is characterised by a dispersed pattern of historic farmsteads, visually distinctive clusters of oasts and Wealden hall houses. It is important that the potential of the historic buildings and the historic and social context that created the settlement patterns are recognised, as they form an intrinsic part of the landscape character that can, in turn, be used as an asset to facilitate rural development.

**5.282** Within the Borough there are a number of Historic Parks and Gardens that are an important part of the national and local heritage. A positive approach to the management and maintenance of these Historic Parks and Gardens is encouraged. The Borough Council is currently working with Kent County Council and the Kent Gardens Trust to update the Kent Gardens Compendium that was originally compiled in 1992 and first updated in 1996. Gaining a wider knowledge and understanding of these heritage assets and making the information available to landowners and the wider public, will help to ensure that the cultural and landscape importance of the Historic Parks and Gardens is recognised and will facilitate a recognition and an understanding of their future management requirements.

### Housing in the Villages and Rural Areas

**5.283** Approximately 6% of the Borough's total housing requirement will be delivered in the rural areas; that is, on sites located outside the urban areas and small rural towns. This rate represents *approximately* 360 dwellings **over a 20-year period**, which is a significantly lower rate than over the last five years (2003/08), during which period 17% of the Borough's housing occurred at the villages and in the rural areas, representing 325 dwellings in total. The justification for this proposed lower level of housing development in these areas is that, within the rural areas and outside of the villages with a defined LBD, development or conversions for new residential development will not generally be allowed. One of the few exceptions to this may be for the development of a permanent dwelling that is required to support an existing agricultural or forestry activity to enable such workers to live at, or very close to, the site of their work. It will be necessary to demonstrate that having a person living within close proximity is essential for the running of the agricultural activity throughout the year.

**5.284** Table 7 in Core Policy 6 indicates that, after taking into account housing completions from 01 April 2006 to 31 March 2008 and the housing potential from extant consents, the majority of the 6% housing required (approximately 360 dwellings) allocated by the Core Strategy to the villages and rural areas has been provided. Within the LBD of the villages, development will be limited to schemes that are considered appropriate to the scale and character of the settlement. Small-scale allocations may be made to accommodate market and/or affordable housing. Outside the LBD of villages, affordable housing to meet local identified housing needs in perpetuity may be allowed in accordance with Policy CP1(2). As stated in paragraph 5.150 (CP6: Housing Provision), the affordable housing delivered from market housing development in the small rural towns of Cranbrook, Hawkhurst and Paddock Wood will absorb some of the local housing needs in the rural areas. Any residual local housing needs within other parts of the Borough will be met through the development of rural exception housing sites.

### Rural Exceptions Housing

**5.285** Paragraph 5.149 of Core Policy 6: Housing Provision gives details of the level of housing need within the rural areas of the Borough. It is recognised both by Central Government (for example, in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing) and by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (for example, in the Borough Housing Strategy 2006-2011) that there is a need for more affordable housing within the rural areas. Such provision will enable local people on modest incomes to remain in, or move back to, the local community in which they already live or work, or with which they have strong local connections.

**5.286** The approach to housing development in rural areas will be one that seeks to sustain rural communities, recognising the need within rural areas for both market and affordable housing and a choice of tenures. The Borough Council has developed the 'Rural HeLP Project' to work in partnership with the Parish/Town Councils and Action with Communities in Rural Kent to address the issue of the lack of affordable homes in the rural areas to meet local needs. This will help the Local Authority to identify small sites for local needs affordable housing where it is required. Such sites may otherwise be subject to policies of restraint (such as Green Belt) and would not be released for market housing. Sites must, however, be contiguous with the LBD of the village they are intended to serve, or be well related to that village. Core Policy 6: Housing Provision sets out the Borough Council's policy for providing such sites.

### **Economic vitality of the villages**

**5.287** While many of the villages still provide a variety of services for their communities, the range in some of the villages is limited. It is important that existing local services are encouraged and supported by policies to ensure that these facilities remain and continue to meet the needs of local communities. Economic development within rural settlements that would assist in creating thriving and sustainable rural communities will be encouraged.

**5.288** The South East Plan recognises the importance that small rural market towns play within the countryside by acting as a focal point for the surrounding rural areas. These settlements have, in recent years, been successful in economic and social terms and their role as local hubs will be supported. The local character and identity of these settlements should be reinforced and enhanced, as it is recognised that their individuality is a key component of their success.

**5.289** Paragraphs 5.221 and 5.222 of Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision sets out how community facilities can be developed to serve a broad range of local needs that may not be met by more formal service providers. In the smaller villages that are less well served, the development of community facilities will ensure a wider service provision, providing an economic and social focus for the village.

### **The wider rural economy**

**5.290** Although agriculture (including hunting, forestry and fishing) only provides 3% of employment within rural Kent as a whole, it remains an important part of the Borough's rural economy and is also instrumental in protecting the character and appearance of the landscape. The rural economy has been changing during the past decades, with a trend towards rural businesses diversifying from traditional rural activities, primarily through the re-use of farm and other rural buildings for commercial, non-agricultural purposes. This has not only helped to retain economic activity within rural areas, but has also enabled some farms to remain operational, as the diversified activities financially support the remaining farming business.

**5.291** The Council's approach towards economic development, including tourism, within the rural areas is set out in Core Policy 7: Employment Provision. The main approach will be to strengthen the rural economy and encourage employment uses related to the land. A balanced approach to farm diversification, including the conversion of redundant rural buildings for business uses, will continue to be taken. As discussed in Core Policy 7: Employment Provision, paragraph 5.196 (Visitor Attractions), the development of tourist and recreational facilities within the rural areas that utilise existing rural resources and attractions will be encouraged.

**5.292** The development of a range of locally-based commercial enterprises will provide a range of employment opportunities and underpin a strong local economy. Within the rural areas, the local settlements are often at the heart of a rural community providing essential services and facilities. The

**Tea Room at Goudhurst**



Tunbridge Wells Economic Strategy 2006-2009 recognises that developing the local economy while maintaining and improving existing local services will encourage sustainable development within the rural areas. Locally-based economic development will help to address pockets of deprivation that exist within the rural areas, while encouraging vibrant rural communities.

**5.293** Agriculture, horticulture and forestry have an important and varied role in the rural economy, including the maintenance and management of the countryside. Land management will need to follow best practice to ensure that the conservation of biodiversity is a priority. Core Policy 4: Environment sets out how biodiversity can be enhanced through policies to ensure that this approach is followed. Within the context of economic development, farmers should be encouraged to be more competitive and more sustainable and, where appropriate, to diversify into new agricultural and commercial ventures, including renewable energy crops, in order to ensure a farm's viability and to maximise opportunities to strengthen the rural economy, while maintaining the character of the rural landscape.

**5.294** Development of sites for commercial uses within the rural areas will need to follow the criteria set out in Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development. Part (2) of Core Policy 1 states that an exception to the Land Release strategy may be considered where a need has been identified that provides employment in the countryside. Such commercial development would be required to demonstrate a direct link to the land and/or utilise rural resources and buildings. The re-use and adaptation of redundant rural buildings that are worthy of retention can be an important resource for meeting the needs of new and expanding rural enterprises, while encouraging farmers to diversify their operations. Consideration will need to be given to the retention of these buildings for future agricultural related development, but, where conversion is appropriate, priority should be given to business use, including tourism, where suitable.

**5.295** Parts of the rural areas of the Borough within, or adjoining, the High Weald AONB are characterised by a distinctive dispersed settlement pattern of historic farmsteads. In recent years, structural changes in the farming industry have meant that there is often no longer a use for these buildings within modern agriculture, or the buildings have been separated from the land and agricultural enterprise that they would traditionally have served. The future of these historic groups of buildings, that both reflect the changes in the rural economy over past centuries and are also considered to be an important component of the High Weald landscape, is largely dependent on a use being found to ensure that it is economically viable to maintain them. In light of the previous paragraph, consideration should primarily be given for their commercial use, including tourism where appropriate.

**5.296** Due to the unavailability of suitable land and to environmental constraints within or adjoining the small rural towns of Cranbrook and Hawkhurst, brownfield land at the former Hawkhurst railway station in Gills Green was allocated in the Local Plan 2006 for Class B1, B2 and B8 use<sup>(19)</sup>, subject to the uses causing no significant harm to the amenities or character of the area. There is still some unused capacity at this site that could provide economic development opportunities for the surrounding area, while utilising previously developed land.

**5.297** Forestry operations mostly lie outside the scope of planning controls, although the planning system is the principal means for regulating the rate at which land is transferred from woodlands to other rural and urban uses. The Government's forestry policy, set out in the England Forestry Strategy 1999 has two main aims: (i) the sustainable management of existing woods and forests; and (ii) a continued steady expansion of woodland area to provide more benefits for society and the environment. Regard will be given to those aims when determining planning proposals.

## **Retail, Leisure, Community Facilities and Tourism**

**5.298** Paragraphs 5.221 and 5.222 of Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision refer to 'Community Facilities', their importance in providing a wide range of facilities for the local community and their role in sustaining the local community, particularly in the smaller, more remote, areas of the Borough that are not otherwise well served. The retention and development of such facilities

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19 The Use Classes Order defines B8 uses as storage and distribution

will be actively encouraged and a policy will be provided in the Development Control Policies DPD. In those rural areas that currently lack local retail facilities, the establishment of social enterprises such as 'community shops' will be encouraged.

**5.299** Tourism and recreation can provide important sources of employment and income to the rural areas, while also contributing to the maintenance and development of existing local services. Appropriate land management will ensure that the high quality rural landscape is maintained and improved, providing an important environmental resource that will also support a wide range of rural-based recreational activities, including walking, fishing, golf and horse riding. It is important to ensure that the level and intensity of such activities does not have a detrimental impact upon the character of the rural areas. In the appropriate circumstances, existing rural buildings worthy of retention and in suitable locations could be converted to provide tourist accommodation.

**5.300** Horse riding and other equestrian activities are popular forms of recreation in the countryside that can fit in well with farming activities and help to diversify rural economies. It is important to ensure that all equestrian development, whether domestic or larger commercial activities, is of an appropriate scale and design to reflect its rural location. Careful attention should be given to siting and landscaping details to ensure that proposals do not detract from the locality's character and appearance. Farm diversification schemes could include schemes for the re-use of rural buildings to accommodate small-scale equestrian development.

## Appendix 1 Implementation and Monitoring

Table 11 Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
To ensure a sufficient supply of land for development  To manage delivery of development in accordance with the Spatial Strategy	<b>Core Strategy</b> SO1; SO2 SD2; SD3	<b>TWBC</b> TCAAP DPD; Allocations DPD; DC Policies DPD, 2011	<b>LSP delivery sub-group</b>  N/A	<b>National Indicators</b>  NI170: PDL that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years	<b>NI170:</b> New indicator. Target to be set, and monitoring arrangements to be established, in AMR	Site search and assessment during preparation of TCAAP and Allocations DPDs
	<b>Sustainable Community Plan</b> 1a-c; 2a-c; 3c; 5a-b; 6a,e	<b>Key Specific Projects</b> None  <b>Other Measures</b> Regular review of site identification; availability; and deliverability	<b>Lead Agencies</b>  TWBC	<b>AMR Core Indicators</b>  None		Monitoring of site availability etc through AMR and reviews of SHLAA  Phasing policy in TCAAP and/or Allocations DPD could bring sites forward/delay their release as necessary
	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b> 6; 7; 12			<b>Local indicators</b> CP1a) % all new development / redevelopment within LBD CP1b) % all new development / redevelopment on PDL	<b>CP1a:</b> 65%  <b>CP1b:</b> 65%	
<b>Superseded Local Plan Policies:</b> None						

'Key Specific Projects' are those identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as being of high or medium risk to the Core Strategy



Table 12 Core Policy 2: Green Belt

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
Maintain the general extent of the Green Belt	<b>Core Strategy</b> SO1; SO6	<b>TWBC</b> TCAAP DPD; Allocations DPD; DC Policies DPD, 2011;	<b>LSP delivery sub-group</b> N/A	<b>National Indicators</b> None		Monitoring of planning consents in accordance with PPG2
Maintain a long term development land reserve	SD2; SD3	Re-use of Rural Buildings SPD, 2010				Continued site search and assessment during preparation of TCAAP and Allocations DPDs and reviews of SHLAA
Continue general presumption against inappropriate development	<b>Sustainable Community Plan</b> 1a; 3c		<b>Lead Agencies</b> TWBC	<b>AMR Core Indicators</b> None		
	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b> 6; 11	<b>Key Specific Projects:</b> None  <b>Other Measures</b> Determination of planning applications		<b>Local indicators</b> CP2a) Retention of Green Belt  CP2b) Maintenance of long-term land reserve	<b>CP2a)</b> No development in Green Belt other than as identified in TCAAP or Allocations DPD, or that which is in accordance with PPG2  <b>CP2b)</b> Developable land identified beyond 2026	Phasing policy in TCAAP and/or Allocations DPD to delay the release of Green Belt sites where possible
<b>Superseded Local Plan Policies:</b> None						

'Key Specific Projects' are those identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as being of high or medium risk to the Core Strategy

Table 13 Core Policy 3: Transport Infrastructure

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2010 - 2026	Contingency Measures
To encourage sustainable modes of transport and to reduce dependence on the private car	<b>Core Strategy</b> SO1; SO3; SO4; SO7	<b>National</b> National Stations Improvement Programme;	<b>LSP delivery sub-group</b> Economy, Skills & Transport	<b>National Indicators</b> None		Review evidence base, including Transport Strategy
	SD4	Route Utilisation Strategy	<b>Lead Agencies</b> Department for Transport	<b>AMR Core Indicators</b> None		
	<b>Sustainable Community Plan</b> 1c; 5a-c	<b>Regional</b> - Chapter 8 of South East Plan	Developers KCC (or other Local Transport Authorities)	<b>Local Indicators</b> CP3a) Completion of infrastructure projects	<b>CP3a:</b> Completion of Key Specific Projects identified in the Plans, Programmes & Strategies column	
	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b> 3; 6; 8; 9; 11; 12	<b>Local</b> <b>TWBC</b> TCAAP DPD; Allocations DPD; DC Policies DPD, 2011 Sustainable Community Plan 2006-2011 (and review) <b>KCC/TWBC</b> Transport Strategy, 2003 (currently under review)	Highways Agency Network Rail Train Operating Companies Bus Operating Companies TWBC	CP3b) Number of Travel Plans approved <b>Contextual Indicators</b>	<b>CP3b:</b> Travel plans will be secured for appropriate development schemes in accordance with PPG13 (2001)	
To make provision for maintaining and improving transport infrastructure at the strategic and local levels						

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2010 - 2026	Contingency Measures
		<p>VISUM modelling, 2009-2011</p> <p><b>KCC</b> Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011</p> <p><b>Key Specific Projects</b> A21 TonbridgeBypass to Pembury Bypass Improvements; Park &amp; Ride sites to serve Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough and expansion of high quality bus routes; VISUM model for Royal Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Southborough and Paddock Wood; junction improvements and traffic management measures across the Borough; Seek to obtain funding for Colts Hill link</p>		<p>TP1: Movement across outer and inner Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough</p> <p>cordons by different modes of transport</p> <p>TP2: Journeys taken from Tunbridge Wells Railway Station</p>		

IMPLEMENTATION					MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2010 - 2026	Contingency Measures	
		<b>Other Measures</b> Determination of planning applications					
<b>Superseded Local Plan Policies: None</b>							

'Key Specific Projects' are those identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as being of high or medium risk to the Core Strategy

Table 14 Core Policy 4: Environment

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
Preserve and enhance the Borough's natural and built environment, biodiversity and heritage assets	<b>Core Strategy</b> SO1 SD1	<b>TWBC</b> TCAAP DPD; Allocations DPD; DC Policies DPD, 2011 Sustainable Community Plan 2006-2011 (and review)	<b>LSP delivery sub-group</b>  Cleaner & Greener	<b>National Indicators</b> NI197: Improved Local Biodiversity	<b>NI197:</b> Year-on-year increase in the number of sites within positive conservation management	Review LBAP CAAs and Management Plans
	<b>Sustainable Community Plan</b> 1a; 1b; 2b	Conservation Area Appraisals (CAA) and Management Plans (and reviews)	<b>Lead Agencies</b>  TWBC	<b>AMR Core Indicators</b> E2: Change in areas of biodiversity importance	<b>E2:</b> Monitoring of priority habitats	Review DPDs (particularly DC Policies) as appropriate
	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b> 10; 11	Environment Strategy, 2005 Draft Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), 2009	KCC  High Weald AONB Unit	<b>Local Indicators</b> CP4a) Implementation of Kent BAP & LBAP	<b>CP4a:</b> as Kent BAP and LBAP targets	
		<b>KCC</b> Kent Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), 2003 (and 2009 review)	Natural England Kent Wildlife Trust Forestry Commission	<b>Contextual Indicators</b> E1: Number of Listed Buildings E2: Number of Conservation Areas		
		<b>High Weald AONB Unit</b> Management Plan, 2004	English Heritage			
<b>Superseded Local Plan Policies:</b> EN26 - High Weald AONB; EN27 - Special Landscape Areas						

'Key Specific Projects' are those identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as being of high or medium risk to the Core Strategy



Table 15 Core Policy 5: Sustainable Design and Construction

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes, & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
To make efficient use of resources by the application of sustainable design principles and to mitigate and adapt to climate change	<b>Core Strategy</b> SD2; SD3; SD4; SD5	<b>Regional</b>  South East Water Management Plan, 2009;	<b>LSP delivery sub-group</b>	<b>National Indicators</b>  NI185: Council CO <sub>2</sub>  NI186: CO <sub>2</sub> emissions  NI188: Climate Change	<b>NI185 &amp; 186:</b> 0.11% reduction by 2011/12  <b>NI188:</b> To reach Level 3 of the Vulnerability Assessment Stages by 2011/12	Review DPDs (particularly DC Policies) and SPDs as appropriate
	<b>Sustainable Community Plan</b>  1c; 2b; 4a; 5a	Water Resources Management Plan, Southern Water, 2009	Cleaner & Greener;  Safer Communities			
	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b>  5; 7; 8; 9; 13; 14	<b>Local</b>  <b>TWBC</b> TCAAP DPD; Allocations DPD; DC Policies DPD, 2011 Air Quality Action Plan, 2009 Contaminated Land Strategy 2008 Future SPDs as required Sustainable Community Plan 2006-2011 (and review)	<b>Lead Agencies</b>  Environment Agency  Southern Water  South East Water	NI189: Flood Risk	<b>NI189:</b> To comply with at least 90% of actions as set by Environment Agency	
		A Low Carbon Strategy for Tunbridge Wells Borough, Delta Energy & Environment (tbc 2009)	KCC  TWBC			
		<b>KCC</b>  Kent Waste Local Plan, 1998;				

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes, & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
		<p>Kent Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (in preparation)</p> <p><b>Key Specific Projects</b></p> <p>Potential Expansion of AQMA</p> <p><b>Other Measures</b></p> <p>Determining planning applications</p> <p>Building Regs (Part L) Code for Sustainable Homes (CfSH)/BREEAM</p> <p>Low Emissions Strategies</p>			<p>Environment Agency (EA) advice or without measures acceptable to the EA to protect it and prevent the increased risk of flooding elsewhere</p> <p><b>E3:</b> As Renewable Energy SPD</p> <p>H6: 30% Good or Very Good Quality, increasing over plan period</p>	
				<p><b>Local Indicators</b></p> <p><b>CP5b)</b> Completion of Infrastructure Projects</p>	<p><b>CP5b)</b> Completion of Key Specific Projects identified in the Plans, Programmes &amp; Strategies column</p>	
				<p><b>Contextual Indicators</b></p> <p>Air quality at monitoring stations</p>	<p><b>Other relevant targets</b></p>	

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes, & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
				Household waste per capita Number of applications with Low Emissions Strategies Number of developments meeting different CfSH/BREEAM levels Energy use per household	CfSH - all new housing to be zero-carbon by 2016  All public sector housing to meet Lifetime Homes standard by 2011, and all private housing by 2013	
<b>Superseded Local Plan Policies: None</b>						

'Key Specific Projects' are those identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as being of high or medium risk to the Core Strategy

Table 16 Core Policy 6: Housing Provision

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
To ensure sufficient land is available to provide for local and strategic housing needs	<b>Core Strategy</b> <b>SO1</b> ; SO3; SO5; SO7 SD2	<b>TWBC</b> TCAAP DPD; Allocations DPD; DC Policies DPD, 2011 Affordable Housing SPD, 2007 (and review) SHLAA, 2009 (and reviews) SHMA, 2009 (and reviews) Sustainable Community Plan 2006-2011 (and review) Housing Needs Study, 2005	<b>LSP delivery sub-group</b>  Borough Housing Partnership  <b>Lead Agencies</b>  TWBC	<b>National Indicators</b>  NI154: Net additional homes provided  NI155: No. of affordable homes delivered  NI159: Supply of ready to develop housing sites	<b>NI154</b> : 4,966  <b>NI155</b> : 1,800 (including rural exceptions sites)  <b>NI159</b> : Maintain rolling five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (100%)	Monitoring of site availability etc through AMR and SHLAA  SHLAA to be updated regularly  Phasing policy in Allocations DPD could bring sites forward/push them back in housing trajectory as necessary
	To address local affordability issues through the provision of affordable housing	<b>Sustainable Community Plan</b> 6a-e; 8c  <b>Sustainability Appraisal</b> 1; 3; 7	KCC  RSLs	<b>AMR Core Indicators</b>  H4: Net additional gypsy and traveller pitches	<b>H4</b> : Target to be set by Partial review of the South East Plan	
	To provide for the housing needs of all people with a range of housing types	Older Persons Strategy, 2006-2011  Housing Strategy, 2006-2011 (and review) Rural HeLP Project, administered by Housing Services		<b>Local Indicators</b>  CP6a) New homes built on previously developed land  CP6b) Completion of Infrastructure Projects	<b>CP6a</b> ) 65%  <b>CP6b</b> ) Completion of Key Specific Projects identified in Plans; Programmes; and Strategies column	
		<b>Key Specific Projects</b>  Provision of Affordable Housing across the Borough		<b>Contextual Indicators</b>  H1: Average house prices by type		

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
		<b>Other Measures</b> Determining planning applications		H2: % homes built of different types and sizes  H3: % homes built at densities lower than 30 dwellings per hectare		
<b>Superseded Local Plan Policies: H3 - Affordable Housing within Development Schemes</b>						

'Key Specific Projects' are those identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as being of high or medium risk to the Core Strategy



Table 17 Core Policy 7: Employment Provision

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes, & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
To provide good quality employment land to contribute to strategic and local requirements as set out within the South East Plan and relevant Tunbridge Wells Employment Land Study	<b>Core Strategy</b> SO1; SO2; SO3 SD2	<b>TWBC</b> TCAAP DPD; Allocations DPD; DC Policies DPD, 2011 Sustainable Community Plan 2006-2011 (and review)	<b>LSP delivery sub-group</b> Economy, Skills and Transport	<b>National Indicators</b>  None		Monitoring of site availability, completed employment floorspace, etc through AMR
	<b>Sustainable Community Plan</b> 2a-c; 5b; 9a-c	Economic Strategy, 2006-2009 (and review by the West Kent Investment Strategy)	<b>Lead Agencies</b>  SEERA SEEDA TWBC	<b>AMR Core Indicators</b>  BD1: Total amount of additional employment floorspace by type	<b>BD1; 3; 4:</b> Meet targets to be set out within the South East Plan. Targets to be confirmed by TCAAP and Allocations DPDs	Review of the Employment Land Study in light of the findings of the Single Strategy
	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b> 4; 6; 7;15; 16	West Kent Area Investment Framework (AIF), 2006-2009 Employment Land Study, 2006 (and review) Hotel Futures Study, 2005-2021 (and review)	Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company (Partnership between TWBC and John Laing)	BD2: Total amount of employment floorspace on previously developed land by type	<b>BD2:</b> 45% - to be reviewed in Allocations DPD	Review of the Hotel Futures study to take study to 2026
	To safeguard employment Sites and strengthen the rural economy	<b>Key Specific Projects</b>  None at present	Tourism South East			Monitoring of tourist accommodation created and lost
To promote the development and retention of tourism accommodation and attractions across the Borough		<b>Other</b> Determination of planning applications		BD3: Employment land available by type  BD4: Total amount of floorspace for 'Town Centre Uses' (i) within town centre areas and (ii) within local authority area		

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes, & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
				<b>Local Indicators</b> CP7a) Net gain/loss of tourist accommodation	<b>CP7a:</b> 483 new hotel bedrooms 2021 (to be reviewed through Allocations DPD)	
				<b>Contextual Indicators</b> ED1: Economic activity rates ED2: Employee jobs within the Borough by sector ED3: Unemployment levels		
<b>Superseded Local Plan Policies:</b> Part of Policy ED4(c) - Land west of Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood						

"Key Specific Projects" are those identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as being of high or medium risk to the Core Strategy

Table 18 Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes, & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
To provide new retail and leisure facilities in accordance with the approach set out	<b>Core Strategy</b> SO1; SO2; SO3; SO4; SO6; SO7	<b>TWBC</b> TCAAP DPD; Allocations DPD; DC Policies DPD, 2011 Sustainable Community Plan 2006-2011 (and review)	<b>LSP delivery sub-group</b>  Economy, Skills and Transport; Stronger Communities; Health and Older People	<b>National Indicators</b>  None		Monitoring of retail completions
	<b>Sustainable Community Plan</b> 2a-c; 3a-c; 5c; 7a; 8a-b; 9c	Borough Retail Study, 2006 (and review) KCC Retail Study, 2007 (and review) Recreation Open Space SPD (and review) Play Strategy 2007-2012 (and review) Leisure Strategy 2006-2011		<b>AMR Core Indicators</b> BD4: Total amount of floorspace for Town Centre uses (i) within town areas and (ii) within local authority area		Review of Borough Retail Study to 2026
To resist any future out of town retailing and convenience retailing not within the defined town centres	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b> 2; 6; 11; 12; 15; 16	<b>KCC</b>  Community Infrastructure (Incorporating Service Provider Statement, 2009 Building Schools for the Future Programme, 2009-2017 <b>Other</b> Strategic Services Development Plan, West Kent Primary Care Trust, March 2008	<b>Lead Agencies</b> West Kent PCT  TWBC  KCC  Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company	<b>Local indicators</b> CP8a) Retention of Community Services  CP8b) Retention/Provision of Recreation Open Space  CP8c) Amount of new retail floorspace provided  CP8d) Completion of Infrastructure Projects	<b>CP8a:</b> No net loss of community facilities in neighbourhood and village centres  <b>CP8b:</b> Retention/provision of adequate recreation open space  <b>CP8c:</b> 26,236sqm of net comparison floorspace by 2017; provision of a convenience supermarket at Southborough  <b>CP8d)</b> Completion of Key Specific Projects identified in Plans; Programmes; and Strategies column	Phasing policy in Allocations DPD could bring forward more central town centre sites before other less central sites  Review of requirements of Play Strategy
To provide, retain and, where necessary, improve a range of leisure, recreational and cultural facilities						
To resist the loss of community facilities and provide additional facilities as necessary						
<b>Contextual Indicators</b>				Eligible Open Spaces Managed to Green Flag Award Standard		

IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING		
Aim of Core Policy	Relevant Objectives	Plans, Programmes, & Strategies	Delivery Agencies	Indicator	Target 2008 - 2026	Contingency Measures
To seek to improve links - public rights of way and cycle links etc		<b>Key Specific Projects</b>				
		District General Hospital at Pembury; Completion of Local Plan allocations for sports pitches and other recreational facilities; Completion of allocations for children's play spaces				
		<b>Other</b> Determination of planning applications				
Superseded Local Plan Policies: None						

'Key Specific Projects' are those identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as being of high or medium risk to the Core Strategy

## Appendix 2 Sustainable Community Plan Vision and Objectives

### Our vision

Our vision for Tunbridge Wells borough is that we should expect to have:

- An environment that is conserved and enhanced, both for ourselves and for the benefit of future generations
- A prosperous local economy
- A wide range of high-quality and enjoyable leisure opportunities
- A reduction in crime and the fear of crime
- Safe, convenient and sustainable travel options to work, school, health, and leisure facilities
- Housing and related support which meets the needs of local people of all ages
- Access to healthy lifestyle choices and the right healthcare facilities to meet the community's needs
- An opportunity for everyone to lead a fulfilling life with equal access to opportunities and services
- Improved educational achievement across the borough and opportunities for everyone to acquire the lifetime skills needed to find and remain in work

Source: [Sustainable Community Plan for Tunbridge Wells Borough 2006-2011](#), page 3.

### Objectives

#### 1 Safeguarding our environment

- a. Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and landscape.
- b. Conserving and improving the built environment, including public spaces and particularly local heritage.
- c. Reducing the local contribution to climate change through the efficient use of resources.

#### 2 Maintaining a thriving local economy

- a. Encouraging the continued development of a wide range of enterprises in the borough.
- b. Enhancing the attractiveness of towns and other centres in the borough as thriving places to visit, shop and do business.
- c. Supporting the sustainable economic development of the more rural areas and communities.

#### 3 Enabling people to take part in and enjoy leisure activities

- a. Focusing on providing activities and facilities for children and young people.
- b. Encouraging people of all ages and abilities to participate in a good variety of leisure opportunities and activities.
- c. Providing appropriate places for people to pursue their leisure interests.

#### 4 Increasing community safety and reducing the fear of crime

- a. Reducing crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

#### 5 Transport – getting around the borough

- a. Reducing traffic congestion and pollution by increasing responsible travel options and enhancing accessibility to key destinations.
- b. Pursuing improvements to key transport routes and public transport to promote the role of the Tunbridge Wells/Tonbridge Regional Hub, as defined in the South East Plan.
- c. Improving travel safety for all – in towns, villages and rural areas.



## **6 Meeting the need for housing**

- a. Providing affordable homes (including social rented homes, low cost home ownership and housing for key workers).
- b. Supporting independence for all vulnerable people (including older people, young people and those with disabilities).
- c. Preventing homelessness.
- d. Improving the quality of existing homes and housing-related services.
- e. Promoting safe, sustainable communities through housing-related initiatives.

## **7 Promoting health and improving well-being**

- a. Promoting healthy lifestyles.
- b. Improving access to health services.
- c. Improving hospital cleanliness and performance.

## **8 Encouraging social inclusion by supporting independence**

- a. Encouraging volunteering and empowering local communities to participate in decision-making and delivery of service.
- b. Promoting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of children and young people.
- c. Engaging with, helping to realise the potential of, and meeting the diverse needs of older people, people with disabilities and Black and Minority Ethnic groups.

## **9 Learning for all**

- a. Improving literacy, numeracy, behaviour and school attendance in early years, primary and secondary education, and ensuring that collaboration between agencies continues to improve services for those with additional education and welfare needs.
- b. Increasing the number of students leaving schools and colleges that have skills, and academic and vocational qualifications which meet business needs.
- c. Further developing the wider role of schools and colleges within their community, and increasing their focus on community and adult learning.

Source: [\*Sustainable Community Plan for Tunbridge Wells Borough\*](#) 2006-2011, pages 1-2.

## Appendix 3 Summary of Distribution of Development

Table 3(a) Summary of Distribution of Development in Core Strategy

	Royal Tunbridge Wells	Southborough	Paddock Wood	Cranbrook	Hawkhurst	The Villages	The Rural Areas
HOUSING	6000 net additional dwellings will be delivered in the Borough during the period 2006-2026 = 100%						
% / no. of total net dwellings	70% / 4,200	5% / 300	10% / 600	5% / 300	4% / 240	3% / 180	3% / 180
Location of new provision	Sites will be allocated within and contiguous with the LBD; previously developed sites within the LBD will be released first					Sites will be allocated within the LBD; sites contiguous with, or within 400m of the LBD may be allocated for local needs affordable housing	Sites contiguous with or within 400m of the villages may be allocated for local needs affordable housing. It is anticipated that some rural housing will come forward from other sources e.g. conversions
EMPLOYMENT	The existing level of employment floorspace in the Borough will be maintained during the period 2006-2016						
Location of existing and proposed Key Employment Areas (KEA)	Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre (boundary to be defined)  North Farm / Longfield Road Industrial Area	High Brooms Industrial Park	Eldon Way & west of Maidstone Road  Transfesa Road (east & west)	Former Hawkhurst Railway Station  Brook Farm (at Capel)			
Location of new provision	New floorspace will be encouraged within the KEAs on allocated or vacant sites or through the intensification or redevelopment of existing sites. If a need for additional employment land is identified through a review of the Employment Land Study, it will be directed to the KEAs or to extensions of them. Employment uses related to the land which utilise rural buildings appropriately may be permitted.						

	Royal Tunbridge Wells	Southborough	Paddock Wood	Cranbrook	Hawkhurst	The Villages	The Rural Areas
<b>RETAIL</b>	<b>26,236sqm net comparison floorspace will be delivered during the period 2006-2017</b>						
<b>sqm. net of total floorspace</b>	23,403	422	882	1,118	411	As needed	n/a
<b>Location of new provision</b>	Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre	Southborough Town Centre	Paddock Wood Town Centre	Cranbrook Town Centre	Hawkhurst District Centre	Village Centres	n/a
	Neighbourhood Centres						
	Town Centres to be defined in the Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD Neighbourhood Centres are defined on the Proposals Map and will be reviewed through the Development Control Policies DPD				District Centre to be defined in the Allocations DPD	Defined by the LBD	

## Appendix 4 Definition of Infrastructure

### Definition of Infrastructure

Housing	Transport	Education	Health	Social Infrastructure	Green Infrastructure	Public Services	Utilities Services	Climate Change and Energy Initiatives
Affordable Housing	Rail network	Nursery and primary	Acute care; general; mental	Supported accommodation	Public open space	Libraries	Water (supply/ reservoirs)	Flood defences (Fluvial)
Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople	Road network	Secondary; Higher/ Further Education; Lifelong Learning	Health centre/ primary care trusts and GPs	Social and community facilities	Nature conservation and wildlife mitigation measures	Cemeteries	Water treatment	Renewable energy
	Travel Management Systems			Sports centres	Green infrastructure	Emergency services (ambulance; police and fire)	Energy (generation and supply of gas/ electricity and heat)	Air quality
	Bus			Open spaces; parks; play space		Waste management (including waste disposal and recycling)	Tele-communications	
	Park and Ride			Youth Services		Minerals		
	Cycling infrastructure					Places of worship		
	Walking infrastructure					Prisons; drug treatment centres		

## Appendix 5 Biodiversity/Geodiversity Sites in the Borough

Designation	Area	Name, location
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Royal Tunbridge Wells	Rusthall Common
		High Rocks
	Southborough	Southborough Pit
		Robins Wood
	Benenden	Sissinghurst Park Wood
		Parsonage Wood
	Goudhurst	Combwell Wood
		Scotney Castle
	Lamberhurst	Brookland Wood
		Pembury Cutting & Pit
Local Wildlife Sites	Pembury	
	Royal Tunbridge Wells	Benhall Mill Road/Forest Road Pasture, woodland and Hawkenbury Bog TW22
		Friezland Wood TW23
		Gregg's Wood TW45
		High Wood, Hawkenbury TW21
		Broomhill and Reynolds Lane Pastures and Hurst Wood TW46
		Rusthall Common, including St Paul's Churchyard, and Tunbridge Wells Common TW24
	Southborough	Brokes and Barnetts Wood TW25
		Southborough Common TW27
		Southborough Cemetery TW28
		Vauxhall Lane Woods TW50
	Cranbrook	Roundshill Park Wood, Sissinghurst TW3
		Angley Wood TW4
		Bedgebury Forest TW8
		Benenden Churchyard TW29
	Benenden	Benenden Wood TW38
		Beston Farm Pasture & Orchard TW41
		Hemsted Forest TW1
		Moor Wood, Iden Green TW31
		Nine Acre Wood & Gill TW33
		Sandpit Wood, Clapper Hill TW2
		White Chimney Wood TW13
		Ashour Wood TW37
	Bidborough	Bidborough Woods & Pasture TW26
		St Lawrence's Churchyard TW43
	Brenchley	All Saints' Churchyard TW39

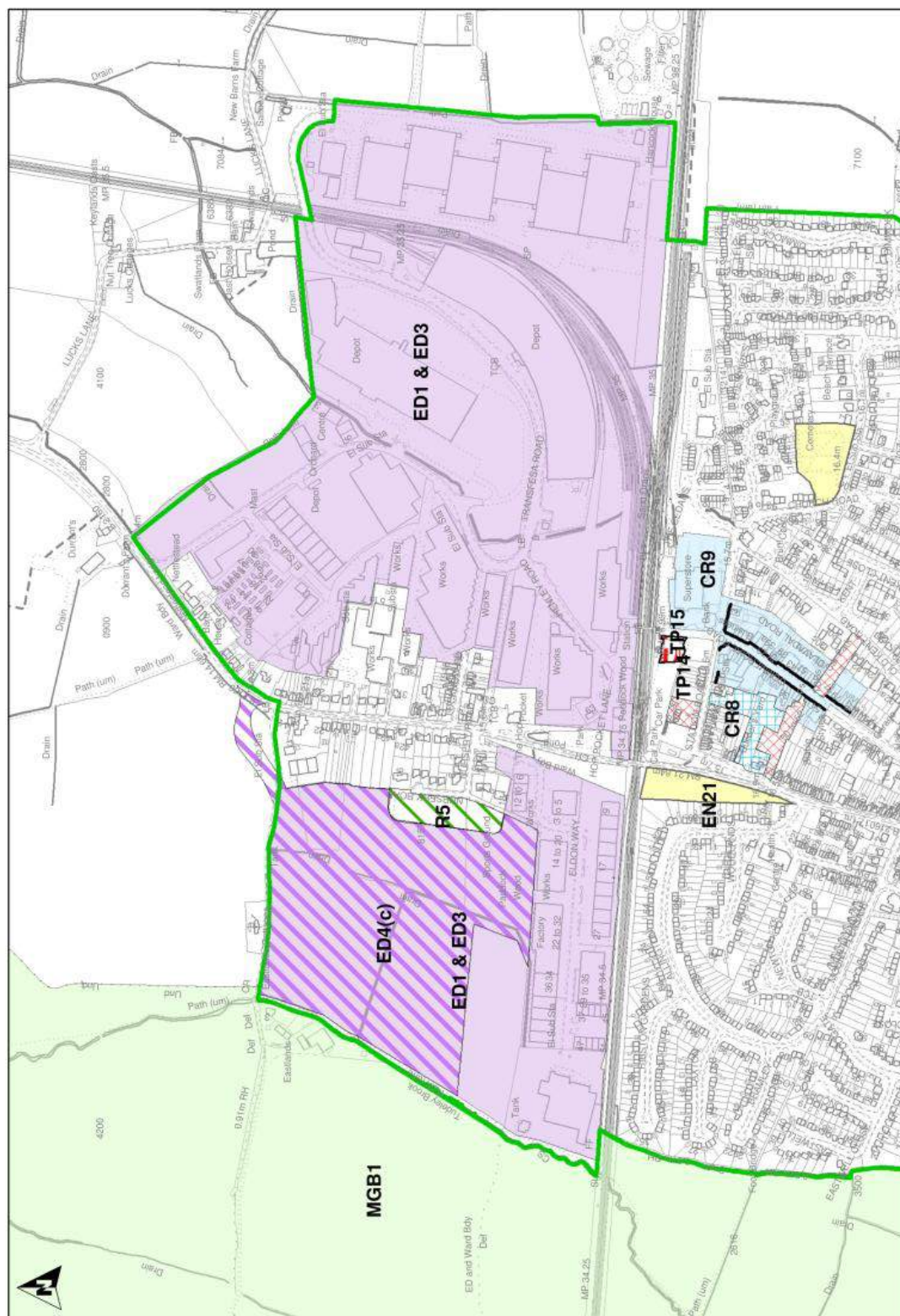


Designation	Area	Name, location
		Brenchley Wood TW16
		Castle Hill Wood and Pasture TW15
		Shirrenden Woods Park and Pond TW34
		Petteridge grassland & ponds TW52
	Capel	East Tonbridge copses & dykes TW20
		Somerhill Park TW19
		Tudeley Woods TW18
	Frittenden	Brick Pit Wood TW40
		The Cemetery TW53
		Leggs Wood TW55
	Goudhurst	Bedgebury Forest TW8
		Bedgebury Park School TW7
		Chingley Wood TW10
		Goudhurst Pasture TW6
		Old Park Wood, Iden Green TW5
	Hawkhurst	Bedgebury Forest TW8
		Bokes Farm TW54
		Collingwood, The Moor TW42
		St Laurence's Churchyard TW35
		White Chimney Wood TW13
	Horsmonden	Horsmonden Churchyard TW14
		Shirrenden Wood & Pond TW34
	Lamberhurst	Bayham Woods TW48
		Old Swan Farm, Lamberhurst Quarter TW11
		Woods, River Teise TW12
	Pembury	Bayham Woods TW48
		Brenchley Wood TW16
		Pembury Walks TW17
		St Peter's old churchyard TW51
	Sandhurst	Downgate Wood, Four Throws TW30
		St Nicholas's Churchyard TW49
	Speldhurst	Avery's Wood, Bullingstone TW36
		Priest Wood, Langton Green TW32
		St Mary's Churchyard TW44
Sites of Local Nature Conservation Value	Royal Tunbridge Wells	Calverley Park
		Great Culverden Park

Designation	Area	Name, location
		Hurst Wood
		Nellington Wood, Rusthall
		Ram Wood
		Reynolds Lane Woodland
		Woodbury Park Cemetery
	Southborough	Barnetts Wood, High Brooms
	Paddock Wood	Church Road (woodland)
	Cranbrook	Crane Valley Recreation Ground
	Frittenden	Churchyard
	Goudhurst	Kilndown Churchyard
		Kilndown Pond and surrounds
	Hawkhurst	All Saints Pond
		St Laurence's Churchyard
	Lamberhurst	Lamberhurst Down
	Sandhurst	Sandhurst Pond
Local Nature Reserves	Royal Tunbridge Wells	Barnetts Wood, High Brooms
		Hilbert Woods
	Paddock Wood	Foal Hurst Wood
		Crane Valley, Cranbrook
Regionally Important Geological Site	Lamberhurst	Scotney Castle Quarry

## Appendix 6 Changes to Proposals Map

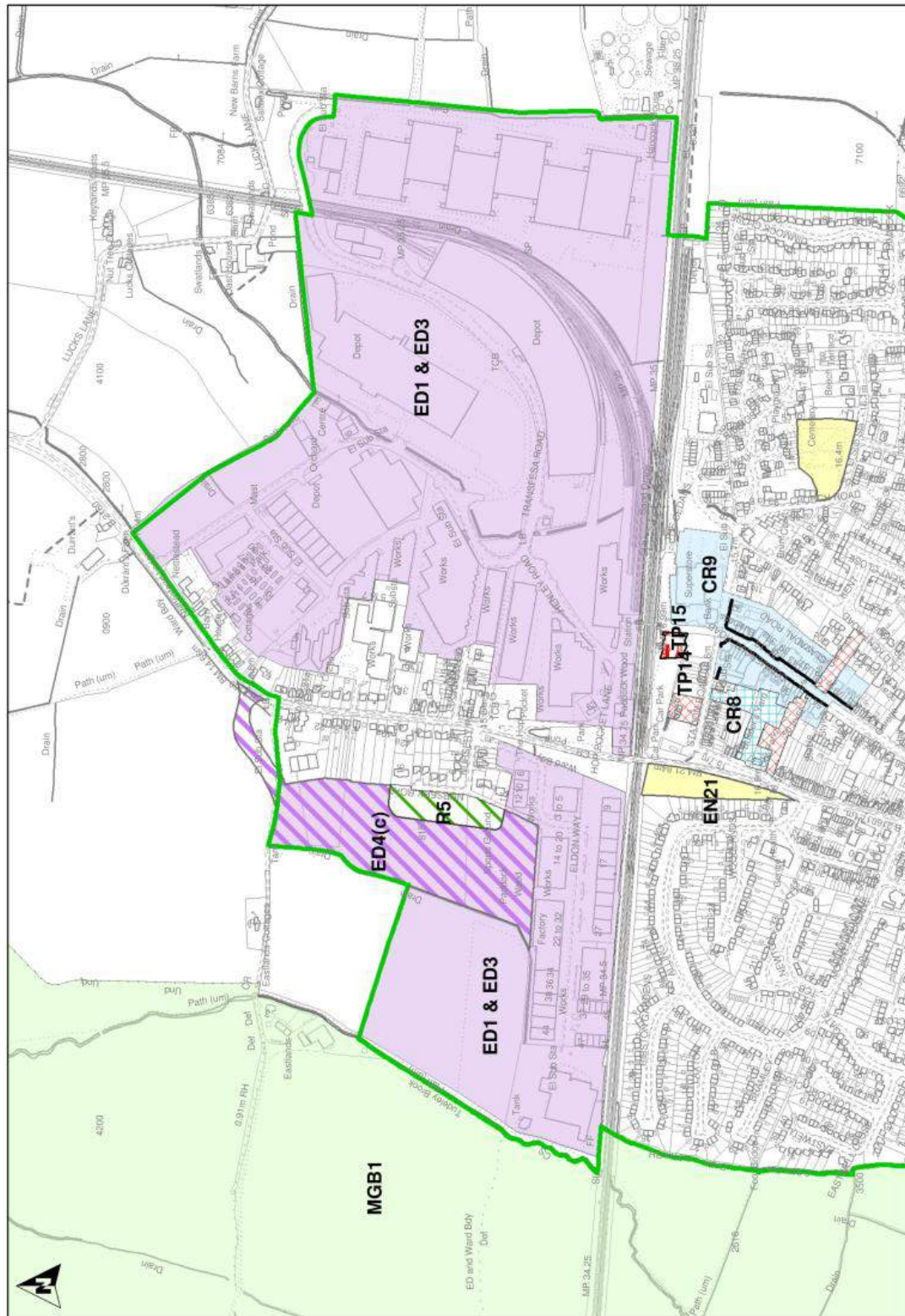
### Existing Local Plan (2006) Proposals Map: Policy ED4(c)



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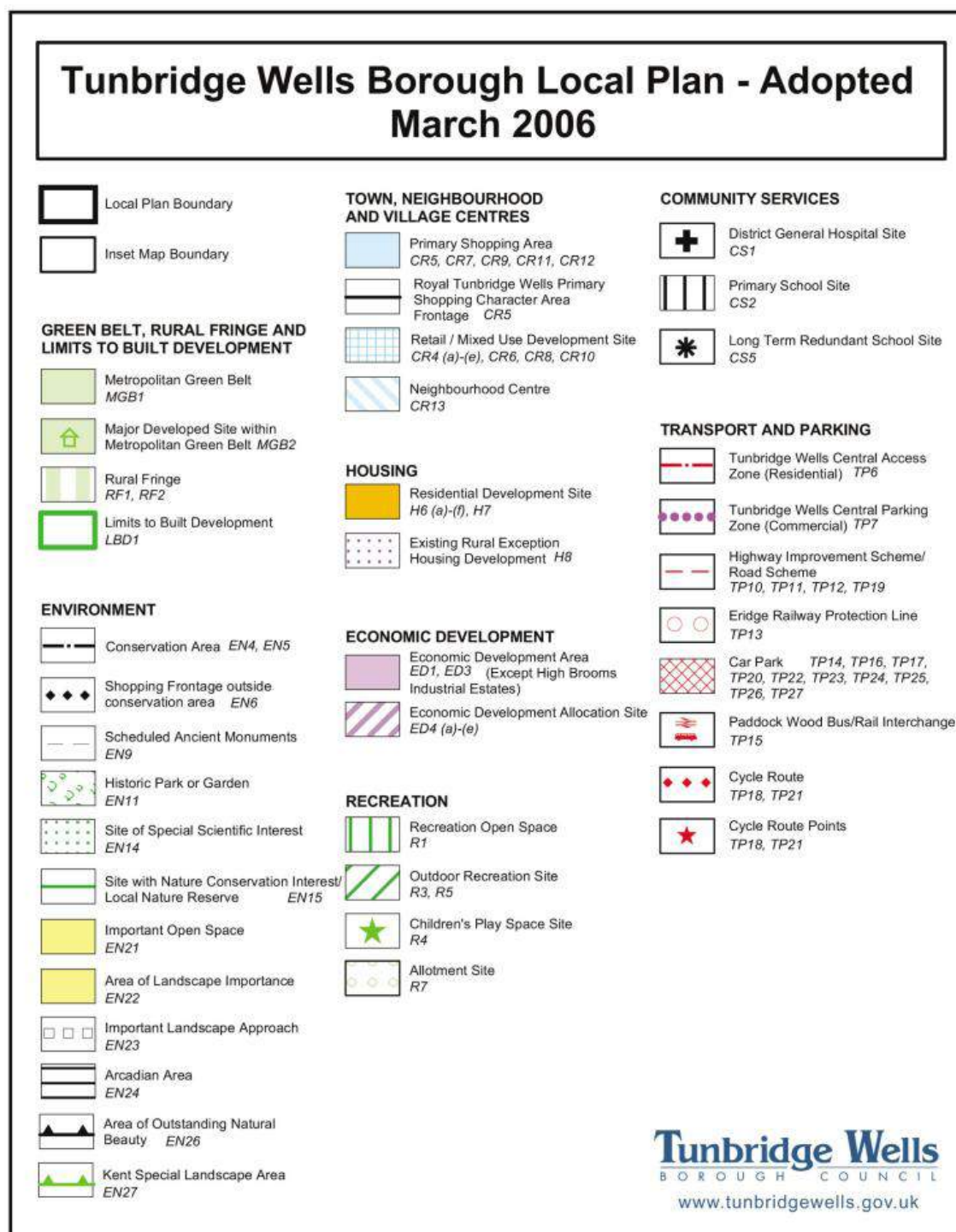


# Amended Proposals Map: Policy ED4(c)



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# Proposals Map Key



## Appendix 7 Bibliography

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Building for Life	-	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and Home Builders Federation (HBF)	<a href="http://www.buildingforlife.org/">http://www.buildingforlife.org/</a>
Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement	2007	Communities and Local Government (CLG)	<a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/building-a-greener">http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/building-a-greener</a>
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Conservation Area Appraisals		TWBC	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/section.asp?catid=1315">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/section.asp?catid=1315</a>
Employment Land Study	2006	TWBC	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2158">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2158</a>
Hotel Futures Study 2005-2021	2005	Tourism Solutions & ACK Tourism	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/pdf/PP_EVBA_Hotel_Futures.pdf">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/pdf/PP_EVBA_Hotel_Futures.pdf</a>
Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study	2009	TWBC	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2158">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2158</a>
Retail Study 2006	2006	Colliers CRE	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/PDF/PP_EVBA_Retail_Study_Volume1.pdf">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/PDF/PP_EVBA_Retail_Study_Volume1.pdf</a>

Name of Document	Year of Publication	Author/ Publisher	Source
Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough Local Plan	1988	TWBC	Historic Information
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - Level 1	2007	Scott Wilson	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/PDF/PP_EVBA_SFRA.pdf">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/PDF/PP_EVBA_SFRA.pdf</a>
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	2009	TWBC	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2159">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2159</a>
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	2009	David Couttie Associates (DCA)	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2237">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2237</a>
Sustainable Community Plan 2006- 2011	2006	TWBC	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/14/community_planlow_res.pdf">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/14/community_planlow_res.pdf</a>
Sustainability Appraisal	2009	Waterman Environmental	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=3181">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=3181</a>
Tunbridge Wells Borough Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy Update and Review	2008	TWBC	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/pdf/contaminated%20land%20inspection%20strategy%20update%20and%20review.pdf">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/pdf/contaminated%20land%20inspection%20strategy%20update%20and%20review.pdf</a>
Tunbridge Wells Borough Economic Strategy	2006	TWBC	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/14/economic_strategy_dec_2006.pdf">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/14/economic_strategy_dec_2006.pdf</a>
Tunbridge Wells Borough Housing Needs Survey	2005	TWBC	<a href="http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/8/Housing_Needs_Survey_2005.pdf">http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/8/Housing_Needs_Survey_2005.pdf</a>
Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 1996	1996	TWBC	Historic Information
Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006	2006	TWBC	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2030">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=2030</a>
'All to Play For' A Play Strategy for the Borough of Tunbridge Wells 2007-2012	2007	TWBC	<a href="http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/pdf/PlayStrategyforTunbridgeWells12.pdf">http://www2.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/pdf/PlayStrategyforTunbridgeWells12.pdf</a>



## Appendix 8 Glossary and Abbreviations

For the purpose of this report the following terms and definitions apply:

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) and, along with National Parks, they represent the finest examples of countryside in England and Wales
Adopted	There are many stages in the preparation of planning policy documents such as the South East Plan and Core Strategy. 'Adoption' represents the final confirmation of development plan or Local Development Document status by the local planning authority.
Affordable Housing	Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market
Agricultural Diversification	Activities involving a change of use of land or buildings; or new development not falling within the definition of agriculture
Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	A designation made by a local authority where an assessment of air quality results in the need to devise an action plan to improve the quality of air
Air Quality Management Order	Imposed in areas where there is a likelihood that the air quality objectives set out in the Air Quality Regulations 2000 will not be met
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	A report submitted to the government by local planning authorities or regional planning bodies assessing progress with and the effectiveness of a Local Development Framework.
Arcadian Areas	Landscaping is the dominant visual element; building coverage is low and accesses to properties are narrow to not expose views of the principal building
Area Action Plan	A type of Development Plan Document focused upon a specific location or an area subject to conservation or significant change
Biodiversity	The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.
Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity
Brownfield Land	Previously developed land which is, or was, occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. Also see 'Previously Developed Land'

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Comparison retail	Retail items not bought on a frequent basis, for example televisions and clothing (i.e. not food)
Conservation Area	An area designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of special architectural or historic interest, the character and interest of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance
Convenience retail	Everyday essential items, such as food
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)	<p>The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 aims to prevent discrimination to disabled people. This Act has been significantly extended, including by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. It now gives disabled people rights in the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment</li> <li>• education</li> <li>• access to goods, facilities and services, including larger private clubs and land-based transport services</li> <li>• buying or renting land or property, including making it easier for disabled people to rent property and for tenants to make disability-related adaptations</li> <li>• functions of public bodies, for example issuing of licences</li> </ul> <p>The Act requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. It also allows the government to set minimum standards so that disabled people can use public transport easily</p>
Department for Transport (DfT)	National Government department responsible for transport
Development Plan Document (DPD)	A policy-setting Local Development Document that forms part of the statutory development plan, including the Core Strategy, Proposals Map and Area Action Plans
Examination in Public (EIP)	A term given to the examination of Development Plans
Green Belt	Green Belt is open, largely undeveloped land that has been specifically designated for long-term protection. Green Belt land exists to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land free from development
Greenfield Land	Land (which can be a defined site) that has not been previously developed
Key Employment Areas	Areas comprising the main concentrations of economic development activity in the Borough outside of the town centres. They include the industrial estates on the edge of Tunbridge Wells, Southborough and Paddock Wood and the existing Local Plan allocations where business and industrial development are focused and where the capacity exists for further development or redevelopment
Local Development Document (LDD)	These include statutory Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and non-statutory Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), which together deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local authority area

Glossary and Abbreviations	
Local Development Framework (LDF)	The portfolio or folder of Local Development Documents that sets out the planning policy framework for the district. The Core Strategy is a Local Development Document
Listed Building	A building included on a list of buildings of architectural or historic interest, compiled by the Secretary of State, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	A habitat of local or regional significance that makes a useful contribution both to nature conservation and to the opportunities for the community to see, learn about and enjoy wildlife
Local Transport Authority (LTA)	Local Transport Authorities (County Councils, Unitary Authorities and partnerships in metropolitan areas) in England (not London) are required to produce and maintain a Local Transport Plan
Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	Local Wildlife Sites (formerly SNCIs) are identified by Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT) and, while not of national status, have a county-wide significance. Each site identified provides a high-grade habitat for a diverse range of flora and fauna meriting careful conservation. Sites are evaluated according to criteria, including: diversity of species; features of wildlife importance; rarity of habitat and species in local and county context; management and current use; public access and linkages with other sites and areas
National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP)	The National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP) is a programme backed by the Department for Transport to deliver improvements to railway stations
Previously Developed Land (PDL)	Previously Developed Land (or brownfield land): land that is, or has been, occupied by a permanent structure and associated fixed surface infrastructure. Agricultural and forestry buildings are excluded
Prioritising Investments Programmes for Kent's Integrated Network (PIPKIN)	This requires all transport scheme proposals to be subjected to a formal assessment and prioritised in accordance with their likely impact and wider contribution towards Kent's strategic and local transport objectives
Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) & Planning Policy Statements (PPS)	Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and their replacements Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) are prepared by the government to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities and others on national planning policy and the operation of the planning system. They also explain the relationship between planning policies and other policies which have an important bearing on issues of development and land use.
Quality Bus Partnership (QBP)	This is an agreement between the main bus company, the County Council and the Borough Council to develop all aspects of bus travel and increase the number of passengers using bus services

## Glossary and Abbreviations

Ramsar Sites	Ramsar sites are wetland areas of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention
Regional Funding Allocation (RFA)	The RFA process was launched in July 2005 as part of the Government's efforts to integrate transport, economic and spatial development strategies in each region. Each region has to submit advice on their priorities, to which Government responds. The advice is then used to inform specific spending decisions that impact the region
Rural Exception Site	Small sites to be used specifically for affordable housing in rural communities that would not normally be used for housing because they are subject to policies of restraint. Rural exception sites should only be used for affordable housing in perpetuity (PPS3)
Rural Fringe	Land between built up areas and the Green Belt that has been reserved to meet longer-term development needs
Route Utilisation Strategies (RUS)	Route Utilisation Strategies are the responsibility of Network Rail. They take a strategic look at the rail network and its usage and capability in relation to current and future demand
Saved	Certain documents, such as the Kent and Medway Structure Plan, are 'saved' for the time being. This means that the policies in that document have to be taken into consideration
South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA)	The regional planning body for the South East of England
South East Plan	This is the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East Region. The Core Strategy must be in general conformity with it
Spatial Planning	System to integrate land use planning policies with the policies of other plans, programmes and strategies, which also influence the nature of places and how they function
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	A Local Development Document that is part of the Local Development Framework but does not form part of the statutory development plan. SPDs provide guidance on how to implement policies and proposals in a Development Plan Document or 'saved' policies and include development briefs and guidance documents
Special Landscape Area (SLA)	Strategically important landscape character areas identified at the County level. Designated for their high scenic quality and distinctive local character
Site of Local Conservation Value (SLNCV)	Sites designated high-grade habitat value within, or adjacent to, built up areas where the greatest development pressure exists

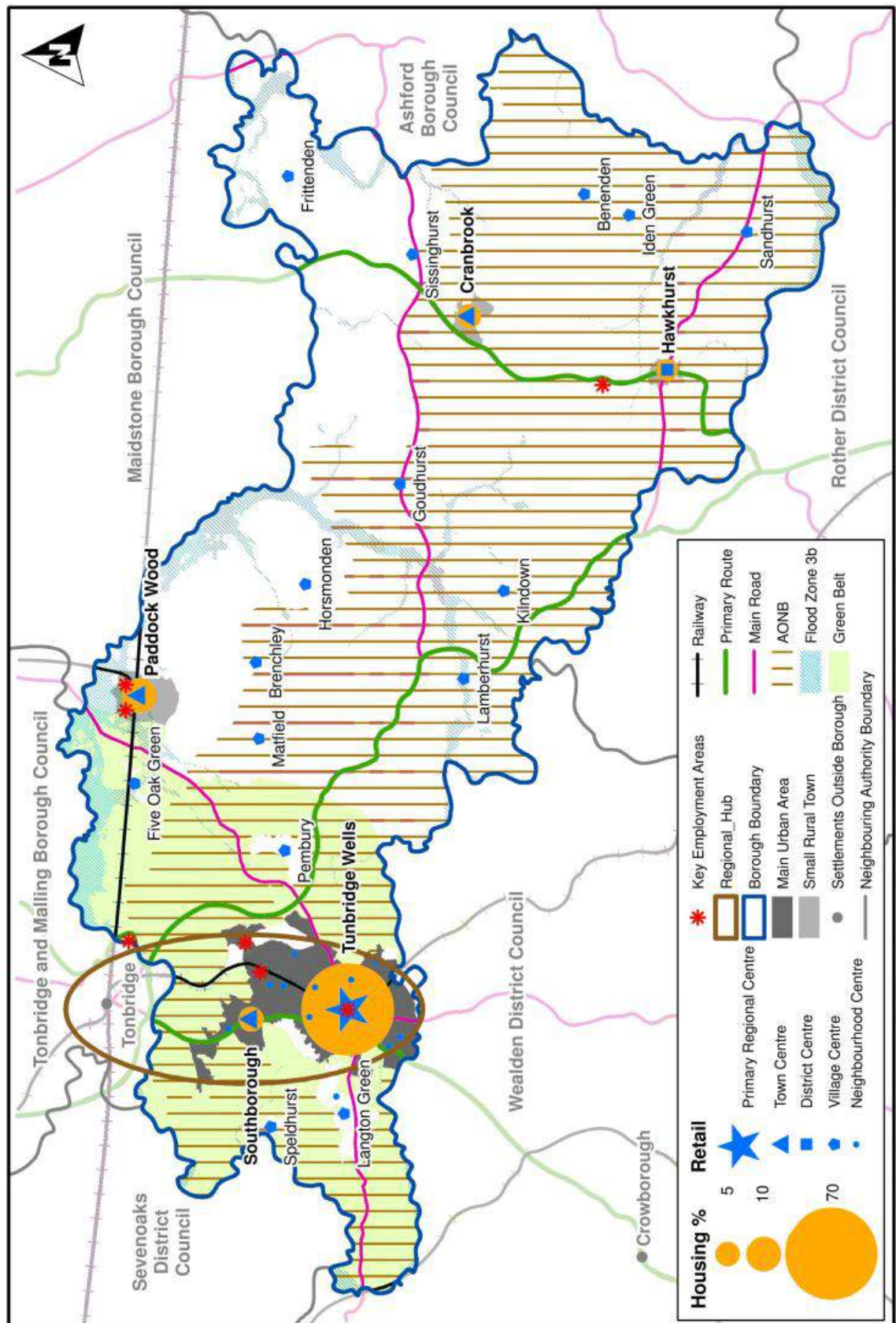
**Glossary and Abbreviations**

Sustainable development	Development that simultaneously ensures social progress that recognises the needs of everyone; protects the environment; makes prudent use of natural resources and maintains high and stable levels of economic growth and employment
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	The best sites for wildlife and geological features in England, as designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Train Operating Company (TOC)	There are a number of Train Operating Companies, each franchised for a defined term by Central Government, which operate passenger trains on the main rail network in Great Britain
Windfall Sites	Sites that have not been specifically identified as available through the planning process but have unexpectedly become available during the lifetime of the Plan





## Key Diagram



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