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# **Medway Council Regulation 18b Consultation Response**

## **Bakers Meadow (Land west of Berwick Way)**

**LAA SITE REF: SR27**

**REGULATION 18a CONSULTATION ID: 1742**

**REGULATION 18b CONSULTATION ID: 2840**

**CLIENT: THE HERITAGE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM LTD**

SEPTEMBER 2024

DHA Ref: OR/TS/34326



# 1 OVERVIEW

## 1.1 SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 This representation has been prepared on behalf of our client, The Heritage Design And Development Team Ltd, in respect of the ongoing Medway Council Regulation 18b Consultation ('Medway Local Plan 2041') and in relation to our clients site 'Bakers Meadow (Land West Of Berwick Way)'.
- 1.1.2 Representations have previously been prepared for the Regulation 18a consultation in 2023, and the earlier call for sites submissions.
- 1.1.3 The Council have identified the site as SR27, while the Regulation 18a consultation response ID was 1742.



FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION PLAN.



FIGURE 2: EXTRACT FROM SITE MASTERPLAN PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED.

- 1.1.4 The current consultation builds on the responses to the consultation 'Setting the Direction for Medway 2040' in Autumn 2023 (i.e. Regulation 18a), in defining the vision and strategic objectives for the new Local Plan. The current consultation (Regulation 18b) provides more information on the proposed policies and options for the development strategy, including the potential sites and broad locations that could form allocations for development in the new Local Plan covering the period up to 2041.
- 1.1.5 This response to the Regulation 18b consultation provides comment of the Councils stated objectives, policies and housing strategy and then seeks to rebut the Council's dismissal of our clients site by the Council. This report is hereafter structured as follows:
- Chapter 2 – Sets out our client's response to the Council's stated objectives, policies and housing strategy for the emerging local.
  - Chapter 3 – Provides site specific comments in relation to the Council's previous assessment of the site in preparation of the regulation 18b consultation documents.

- Chapter 4 – Summary and Conclusion



## 2 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

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- 2.1.1 This section of our consultation response seeks to provide comment on the Councils proposed objectives, policies and housing strategy that will ensure that any new Local Plan is positively prepared and seeks to meet the full housing need. In doing so this highlights that the as currently proposed we do not feel the plan will be positively prepared to meet the housing needs of the Council. Further sustainable sites are going to be required for the Council to meet its housing needs and we believe, as set out in Chapter 3, that our client's site is a sustainable site that can deliverable housing without overriding constraint early in the Councils new plan period. The following sections provide comment of the relevant parts of the Regulation 18b draft Local Plan as they appear in order.

### 2.2 SECTION 2.1 VISION FOR MEDWAY 2041

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- 2.2.1 The vision is contrary to the requirements of the NPPF (para 15), the "Vision" fails to identify the provision of housing as an important component of the Plan as set out in paragraph 2.1.1 of the consultation document. Delivering an authority's housing need is a central component of any Local Plan and a determinative matter for the spatial strategy. In not expressing the amount of development that is to be delivered in relation to housing, the Plan also fails to be positively prepared to provide a suitable framework for addressing housing needs.
- 2.2.2 The "Vision" should be amended to reference housing provision. The Interim Sustainability Appraisal sets out in Table 5.1 the proposed growth options for Medway, of which Strategic Growth Option 3(SGO A3), the Blended Strategy, is the Council's preferred approach which sets out that Medway can deliver up to 23,733 homes across the plan period. This is 4,267 homes fewer than the identified need of around 28,000 homes set out in the executive summary of the regulation 18b consultation document and 4,579 dwellings below the previously anticipated housing need in the previous Regulation 18a consultation document.

### 2.3 SECTION 2.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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#### Prepared for a sustainable and green future

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- 2.3.1 Notably, there is no strategic objective that deals expressly with the quantum of housing that needs to be delivered. In the absence of clearly setting out what the housing requirement is and whether the Plan is looking to meet Medway's needs (which it should), the process of using the currently drafted objectives to inform the Council's assessment of different sites and locations for development cannot

be considered as “Positively Prepared” or “Justified”, contrary to the NPPF (para 35). It is clearly part of preparing a sustainable future that sufficient housing is delivered.

### **Supporting people to lead healthy lives and strengthening our communities**

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- 2.3.2 Whilst it is acknowledged that, in general terms, the objective of “Supporting People to Lead Healthy Lives and Strengthening Our Communities” mentions housing generally, it does not set out how much housing will be provided. This is a determining factor in deciding what the most appropriate spatial strategy is and should inform the basis of future strategic policies, as required by the NPPF (para 20 and 23).
- 2.3.3 We note that the Council should seek to meet their needs in full, and therefore we consider that there should be clarity provided in this strategic objective as to the housing requirement across the plan period and to demonstrate that the plan is positively prepared and justified in accordance with paragraph 35 of the NPPF.

### **Boost pride in Medway through quality and resilient development**

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- 2.3.4 This objective refers to the development of brownfield land as part of the ongoing benefits of Medway’s regeneration to deliver housing and employment growth. This is supported by NPPF (para 123), which states that it is “a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or ‘brownfield’ land”.
- 2.3.5 Whilst this is supported, it is also understood that the objectives do not directly address the need to release brownfield land for urban regeneration as part of a combined strategy for meeting Medway’s housing needs, including suburban expansion, rural development and Green Belt release. We are, therefore, still of the opinion that this objective is misleading, appearing to read that urban regeneration is the only objective rather than part of a wider objective for Medway to meet housing needs through the emerging Local Plan.

## **2.4 SECTION 2.3 SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

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- 2.4.1 Given the nature of the housing need, it is considered that a blended strategy will need to include sites in addition to those indicatively allocated as ‘suburban expansion’ and ‘greenfield sites’ to meet the objectively assessed need in full as set out in the national policy.
- 2.4.2 It is highlighted that ‘suburban expansion’ and ‘greenfield’ sites such as our clients at Bakers Meadow will be available and deliverable in the earlier years of the plan period with brownfield sites generally coming forward in the latter years of the Plan Period as they can have additional constraints affecting deliverability, such as existing uses and remediation.

- 2.4.3 The growing need for both market and affordable housing emphasises the need for the Council to plan to meet its full objectively assessed need, as required by the NPPF (para 11b and para 23), supporting the Government's objectives to significantly boost the supply of homes (NPPF, para 60). The Council will need to be aware of both housing numbers but also delivery. The strategy as drafted is unlikely to meet deliver in the early to middle parts of the plan period.
- 2.4.4 The Council should also work with Gravesham Borough Council to determine if it needs to and/or can accommodate any of its needs (up to 2,000 homes) to ensure the Plan is "Positively Prepared" (NPPF, para 35).

## 2.5 SECTION 3 SPATIAL GROWTH OPTIONS

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### Section 3.2 Preferred Spatial Growth Option

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- 2.5.1 It is considered the SGO1 (Urban Focus) fails to deliver appropriate growth across the district, while SGO2 (Dispersed Growth) clearly fails to make the most appropriate use of existing brownfield sites. SGO 3 (Blended Strategy) is supported in general as the most appropriate strategy, as clearly there is a middle ground between utilising brownfield sites as much as possible, while also ensuring growth can be delivered across the district with urban extensions and greenfield sites.
- 2.5.2 However, this growth option does not deliver the 28,000 homes required to fully meet the district's housing needs. The Council needs to allocate additional sites across the district to deliver the additional 4,267 dwellings across the plan period to fully meet their needs in accordance with para 23 of the NPPF.
- 2.5.3 Therefore, further sites are required in addition to those already indicatively allocated. Sustainable sites such as the Bakers Meadow site would help to meet this need.

## 2.6 POLICY T11: SMALL SITES AND SME HOUSEBUILDERS

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- 2.6.1 Our client welcomes the support offered to smaller sites and SME housebuilders, which provide an integral part of housing delivery. Notably SME housebuilders, who are very often highly localised, deliver higher quality developments which enhance local areas. The policy should make clear that weight will be afforded to the delivery of small sites by SME housebuilders coming forward.
- 2.6.2 The policy does need to make clear the general attributes of these small sites that the Council will consider acceptable.

## 3 SITE SPECIFIC COMMENTS

### 3.1 OVERVIEW

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3.1.1 It is understood that our clients site has not been included as a preferred indicative allocation within this consultation.

3.1.2 SR27 has been discounted in the Council's interim sustainability appraisal for the following reasons:

*"Loss of BMV agricultural land. Potential adverse impact on listed building. Potential adverse impact on Conservation Area. Beyond reasonable walking distance to current public transport services."*

3.1.3 As a general point, our comments within this representation indicate our support for the preferred Strategic Growth Option 3(SGO A3), the Blended Strategy, which sets out that Medway can deliver up to 23,733 homes across the plan period but note that further sites need to be allocated as part of this strategy to meet the shortfall of the full need of 28,000 homes.

3.1.4 We note that the Council have aspirations to promote the Medway City Estate for a comprehensive mixed use residential led development (to provide a significant proportion of the Council's housing need), and we note various residential 'indicative' residential allocations on the Estate. This will be supported by the relocation of existing employment uses to Kingsnorth and the Isle of Grain on the Hoo Peninsula, where "indicative" allocations are shown on the Policies Maps.

3.1.5 This will take a significant period of time to take place and the delivery of housing here likely to take place at the end of the proposed plan period if not beyond.

3.1.6 To meet its objectively assessed need and also its housing delivery tests it is clear that Medway needs a) more sites and b) sites that can be delivered with the earlier first years of the plan period.

3.1.7 Site SR27 lies immediately adjacent to the Medway City Estate and as an undeveloped parcel of land can clearly be delivered without significant delay subject to securing planning consent.

#### Loss of BMV land

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3.1.8 The site has not been used for agriculture for over 20 years as clearly visible from Google maps. The applicant has, until recently leased land adjacent at the Manor Farm Barn site to a local farmer for wheat production (until planning was secured on the site) but the farmer has never been interested in site SR27 due to its poor quality and also limited size that does not make farming it economically viable.

- 3.1.9 Given the relatively small area of the site, it is clearly not viable or logistically possible to use this site agriculturally. The site is not part of an existing agricultural unit.
- 3.1.10 In this reasonably 'urban-land locked' location, it is clear that the site will no longer be farmed. The logistical impracticalities of the site make it clear that the loss of BMV land is not a genuine consideration for this site, as it cannot be farmed.
- 3.1.11 Furthermore, there is no more site specific ALC data available for the site that indicates it is BMV land but evidence from a local farmer suggests it is unlikely to be but moreover that farming it is no feasible in any event.

### **Sustainability**

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- 3.1.12 It is understood that the site has been discounted on its locational sustainability in relation to existing public transport facilities, however this is strongly disputed.
- 3.1.13 There is a bus stop on Anthony's Way roughly 200m from the site which is served by the 170. The 170 travels between Medway Valley Park and Chatham, and currently has 15 services on a weekday. There are 6 services on a Saturday. There are also regular services from the A228 in Wainscott, 400m from the site. Services include the 191, 193, 197, 652, 692, 693 and 694. Regular services include Chatham, Rochester, Lodge Hill, Strood, Lower Upnor, Cliffe, Grain, Hoo St Werburgh, High Halstow.
- 3.1.14 Via Parsonage Lane, residents of the future site would be able to walk or Cycle through on safe and convenient routes to Strood and Frindsbury. Wainscott is also similarly easily accessible via the footpath on Berwick Way. It is highlighted that Parsonage Lane forms part of the National Cycle Network Route 1, further demonstrating the accessibility of cycling in the area with suitable, safe routes.
- 3.1.15 There are a number of footpaths providing various access routes, including RS121, RS328, RR6 and RR9. The Manor Farm Development when built out will further enhance the walking possibilities from the site in a north-western direction with further accessible routes. Additional transport opportunities, primarily bus services, are available in these areas.
- 3.1.16 Strood train station is located approximately 1km from the site, providing routes into various London destinations, Gravesend, Medway Towns, Sittingbourne, the east coast and additional destinations. While a walking distance of 20 minutes to the train station is considered acceptable in the context of a suburban location, it is further highlighted that the 170 bus service travels towards Strood station.
- 3.1.17 It is clear that the site has a number of viable sustainable transport measures available to it.
- 3.1.18 While highlighting the sites accessible position in respect of transport facilities, in terms of local facilities and services, the site is well located such that future

residents will be able to walk or cycle to nearby facilities and not necessarily reliant on public transport.

- 3.1.19 There is a Co-op food store on the opposite side of Anthony's Way. The adjacent approved scheme at Manor Farm when built out will include a secondary school, which will be highly accessible for residents of the site. Further schools within a 2-mile radius of the site also include Hilltop Primary School, Temple School and the Strood Academy.
- 3.1.20 Other nearby facilities include the Pheonix Education Day Nursery, St. Mary's Medical Centre, Tesco Petrol Station, MuscleHut (gym), McDonald's, The Sans Pareil Public House, and the All Saints C of E Church. This is not exhaustive, and further examples include restaurants, garages, open space and sports clubs. These are all easily accessible via either walking or cycling, along established, lit footpaths.
- 3.1.21 Further, given SR27 lies immediately adjacent to the proposed redevelopment of Medway City Estate which is deemed to be sustainable enough to be allocated for residential development and adjacent to the consented residential development at Manor farm, we do not see how Medway Council can substantiate their sustainability position in respect of this site.

#### Listed buildings and Conservation Area

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- 3.1.22 Manor Farm is located to the west of the site, which comprises three listed buildings: Manor Farm Oast (Grade II), The Manor House (Grade II) & Barn 30 yards south west of the Manor House (Grade I). The site is within the Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area.
- 3.1.23 As confirmed in the NPPF (paragraph 213) not every part of a Conservation Area is equally as important as others and moreover the character of the Conservation Area has significantly changed over time not least by the approved development of the Manor Farm site for a secondary school and up to 181 dwellings.
- 3.1.24 The core of the Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area comprises Parsonage Lane, to the west of the SR27, which would have been the key historic routeway that linked both 'Character Areas'. The routeway would have connected The Manor House (NHLE 1085745) and the associated Manor Farm Oast (NHLE 1278058) and Manor Farm Barn (NHLE 1204320), to the Parish Church of All Saints (NHLE 1107886).
- 3.1.25 Residential development within the SR27 would form a new addition within the Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area. However, the historic and spatial layout of the Conservation Area has been significantly altered since the 20th century, with the former agricultural land within SR27 being severely truncated by the development of the large industrial estate to the south and the construction of the A289 to the north and east of the Site. Additionally, the approved planning permission of the Manor Farm site (planning reference no.: MC/21/0302) has



further truncated the rural / agriculture nature of the Conservation Area, with the construction of a three storey school, and the planned construction of 181 residential dwellings and conversion and extension of the Grade I Listed Manor Farm Barn.

- 3.1.26 SR27 comprises the south-western edge of the Conservation Area, which is bound by modern development to the north, east, and south. It is also removed from the Manor Farm site by the surrounding vegetation and tree coverage and is separated by Parsonage Lane.
- 3.1.27 The client has commissioned SLR to undertake an appraisal of the Conservation Area and listed buildings in the context of the proposed residential development of SR27. We have submitted this report with this representation for reference.
- 3.1.28 The SLR appraisal concludes that SR27 could be developed for housing and that subject to appropriate design considerations, retention of boundary vegetation and a sensitive layout, it could be delivered in way that would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area or detract from its purpose. Similarly, a well-designed scheme aided by existing topography, and vegetation would not be detrimental to the setting of the nearby listed building that form the core of the Conservation Area and in particular Grade I listed Manor farm Barn.
- 3.1.29 In conclusion therefore, we do not feel that the Council are correct in their conclusion that the heritage status of SR27 discounts it from accommodating an appropriately sized and sensitively designed residential development. Further, small residential schemes built by SMEs in a heritage context are typically higher quality and more attractive than anything built by the mass housebuilders.

## 4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

### 4.1 OVERVIEW

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- 4.1.1 It is considered that the Council's draft Local Plan, if it were to proceed on the basis as set out at the Regulation 18b stage, does not meet the NPPF requirements of being positive prepared and does not meet the Councils housing needs.
- 4.1.2 It is clear that the Council needs to consider the allocation and identification of further sustainable housing sites that are capable of being delivered early in the new plan period. This will ensure that the quantum of development allocated meets the necessary need but also that delivery is not delayed or relied on at the later stages on the plan period. Medway Council already has a significant legacy of under delivery in respect of housing and we would expect an Inspector to require the Council to make sufficient provision in this regard to ensure it does not continue into the new plan period.
- 4.1.3 Our client's site SR27 was appraised by the Council in their interim Sustainability Appraisal but we consider that the Council has incorrectly appraised and considered the site. This submission has set out the reasons why we believe this to be the case, and we would kindly request that the Council re-consider the site for residential allocation in the emerging Local Plan on this basis.
- 4.1.4 The Council will need to identify further housing sites and S27 offers an obvious opportunity for proportionate high quality sustainable housing.



# Land at Bakers Meadow, Frindsbury, Rochester

## Heritage Appraisal

### The Heritage Design & Development Team Limited

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01	30 August 2024	JE	JT	JT
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## Basis of Report

This document has been prepared by SLR Consulting Limited (SLR) with reasonable skill, care and diligence, and taking account of the timescales and resources devoted to it by agreement with The Heritage Design & Development Team Limited (the Client) as part or all of the services it has been appointed by the Client to carry out. It is subject to the terms and conditions of that appointment.

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## 1.0 Introduction

SLR Consulting Limited (SLR) was commissioned by The Heritage Design & Development Team Limited ('the Client') to prepare a rapid heritage appraisal of constraints for land at Bakers Meadow, Frindsbury, Rochester, Medway, Kent, ME2 4DJ (NGR: TQ 74869 69994) ('the Site') (**Figure 1**) (LAA Site Ref: SR27; Regulation 18a Consultation ID: 1742).

### 1.1 Purpose of Report

This report presents the results of a rapid heritage appraisal of the Site to support the case for land promotion of the Medway Local Plan (Regulation 18b) for the Site, and that the Site can be considered suitable with any perceived harm to heritage potentially outweighed by public benefits or high-quality design measures. The report identifies key potential heritage constraints (and opportunities) pertaining to the Site, sufficient to inform the land promotion process in relation to heritage, including:

- known and potential buried archaeological remains within the Site, such as might be susceptible to physical truncation; and
- heritage assets within the Site and the wider environs, the significance of which might be susceptible to harm as a result of change to setting.

### 1.2 Methodology

The high-level research used to inform this appraisal has comprised the following:

- a review of Historic England's National Heritage List for England (NHLE), to identify designated heritage assets, the significance of which might be affected by change to setting;
- a review of Kent County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER) online data, to identify any known non-designated heritage assets (e.g., archaeological remains) within the Site and its environs;
- a desk-based review of online historic mapping, satellite imagery, aerial photography, and other sources within the public domain, to assist in characterising the Site's historic landscape context and archaeological potential;
- a review of previous archaeological and heritage work within the Site boundary; and
- a review of drone images of the Site taken in 2024 (**Appendix A**).

### 1.3 Standards & Guidance

This appraisal has been undertaken in accordance with the applicable industry guidance documentation, including relevant standards and guidance provided by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), as applicable.

The appraisal has been undertaken, and the report prepared, by James Evans MCIfA, Senior Consultant – Archaeology & Heritage, SLR. The appraisal has been directed and technically reviewed by John Trehay MCIfA, Technical Discipline Manager – Archaeology & Heritage, SLR.

SLR Consulting Limited is a member of the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME).

SLR Consulting Limited is ISO 9001 certified and operates a quality management system to help ensure all projects are managed in a professional and transparent manner.



## 2.0 Archaeological & Heritage Baseline

### 2.1 Landscape Context

The Site comprises a triangular parcel of land that covers c. 2.2ha and is bounded to the north and east by Berwick Way (A298), to the south by a modern industrial estate, and to the west by Parsonage Lane. The Site is bisected by a public footpath that connects Parsonage Lane to Berwick Way (A298). The Site is currently covered by a mixture of vegetation and trees. The topography of the Site is varied, with the land measuring c. 7m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at the southern boundary and rising slightly to c. 12m aOD at the northern boundary.

The British Geological Survey (BGS) records the underlying bedrock of the Site as comprising various chalk formations, overlain by sand, silt, and clay belonging to the Thanet Formation along the northern boundary. The latter is overlain by deposits of Quaternary River Terrace Gravels 2 and 3. Overlying superficial deposits of Head (clay and silt) and River Terrace Gravels lie to the south and east of the Site.<sup>1</sup>

### 2.2 Previous Archaeological Work

No archaeological work appears to have taken place within the Site. However, there have been several phases of archaeological work undertaken on land to the north-west of the Site on land known as Manor Farm. This work has been undertaken as part of an outline planning application (planning reference no.: MC/21/0302) submitted to Medway Council in February 2021, which comprised a:

*“Hybrid application seeking: Full planning permission for the construction of a new three-storey secondary school with sixth form and sports block with vehicular and pedestrian access from Frindsbury Hill, together with associated car parking and drop off area, multi-use games area, sports pitches, landscaping and other associated works. Full planning permission for the part conversion and extension of Grade I Listed Manor Farm Barn and change of use to a wedding venue and conference facility, including conversion and extension of former cattle byres to provide overnight accommodation, construction of single storey detached building for management facilities and construction of a new building to provide additional tourist accommodation with vehicular and pedestrian access from Berwick Way, car parking, landscaping and other associated works. Outline permission (with Frindsbury Hill access detailed as part of the full planning permission for the school element) to be considered in detail and all other matters reserved for future consideration for the construction of up to 181 residential dwellings, together with Parsonage Lane access, parking, landscaping and associated works.”*

The planning application was supported by an Environmental Statement (ES) archaeology and cultural heritage chapter (DHA Planning 2021), which was informed by an archaeological field evaluation (CAT 2020a), a palaeolithic and geoarchaeological investigation (Quest 2020), and a Heritage Statement (CAT 2020b). Planning permission was granted in December 2021, with several planning conditions. Planning conditions 8, 10, 41, 44, 67, 76, and 99 relate to the archaeology and heritage of the Manor Farm site.

### 2.3 Geoarchaeological Context

Archaeological and geoarchaeological work at the Manor Farm site revealed Pleistocene fluvial sands and gravels are overlain by both fine-grained head (Brickearth) and coarser

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/> [accessed August 2024].



gelliflucted head gravels. These fluvial deposits attain a maximum thickness of 4m and rested on a terrace, incised into both the Thanet Formation and the Upper Chalk at around 27m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The base of the channel deposits has been subsequently disturbed through localised solution of the chalk.

Consequently, the fluvial deposits can be seen to deform toward the centre of each solution feature, and to have greater thicknesses of head deposits over the centre of them. These deposits remain preserved across the higher part of the northern boundary of the Manor Farm site but were truncated to the east by later slope processes. They are also locally truncated by the small dry valley which runs broadly east west to south-west. In the south-west of the Manor Farm site, the fluvial deposits were also present, dipping into very large solution features in the chalk which had subsequently filled with fine-grained deposits. These solution features were large and intercutting, forming an extensive area of solution. The largest of the solution features was c. 16m in diameter and c. 7m deep, and completely infilled with Pleistocene deposits. Both the dry valley, and the eastern slopes of the Manor Farm site, preserve varying thicknesses of Holocene colluvium, considered to result from soil erosion (ASE 2024a & Quest 2020).

## 2.4 Designated Heritage Assets

There are no World Heritage Sites (WHS), Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, or Registered Battlefields within the Site, or in proximity to it, such as would be potentially susceptible to development within the Site boundary. Other designated heritage assets are set out below.

### 2.4.1 Conservation Areas

The Site is within the Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area (**Figure 2**). Conservation Areas are protected under statute, specifically Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), which provides that:

*“[...] with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”*

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Chapter 16 (2023) also refers to Conservation Areas, which provides that:

*“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.” (Paragraph 212).*

*“Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.” (Paragraph 213).*

The current Medway Local Plan (2003) also contains policies relating to Conservation Areas, including proposed developments within Conservation Areas; **Policy BNE14: Development in Conservation Areas**:



*“Development within Conservation Areas, or affecting their setting, should achieve a high quality of design which will preserve or enhance the area’s historic or architectural character or appearance. The following criteria will be applied:*

- i. materials, features and details of buildings or structures which contribute to the character or appearance of the area should be retained or reinstated; and*
- ii. traditional street patterns, building lines, open spaces and urban spaces, paving and roadway materials, boundary treatments and street furniture should be retained or reinstated; and*
- iii. the scale, height, mass, roofscape, materials, detailing, fenestration, plot width and depth, and visual appearance of new development should be sympathetic with existing buildings and their settings; and*
- iv. trees, hedgerows and open spaces should be retained and protected; and*
- v. hard and soft landscape elements and traditional materials which enhance the area should be utilised.*

*Proposals should be submitted as full applications when they are within, or would affect, a Conservation Area.”*

The Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area was designated in 1996. Medway Council has not published a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Frindsbury and Manor Farm. However, the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage ES Chapter, written for the neighbouring Manor Farm site, suggests that a draft Conservation Area Appraisal has been drafted (DHA Planning 2021, p. 13). The designation of the Conservation Area appears to be focussed on two ‘Character Areas’; the medieval Manor Farm and its associated agricultural land and the Church of All Saints (**NHLE 1107886**) and associated settlement to the south-west.

The core of Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area comprises Parsonage Lane, to the west of the Site, which would have been the key historic routeway that linked both ‘Character Areas’. The routeway would have connected The Manor House (**NHLE 1085745**) and the associated Manor Farm Oast (**NHLE 1278058**) and Manor Farm Barn (**NHLE 1204320**), to the Parish Church of All Saints (**NHLE 1107886**).

## Historic Background

The Conservation Area appears to have included areas of former agricultural land which surrounded Manor Farm and the Church of All Saints. The Tithe Map (**Plate 1**) and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Ordnance Survey maps (**Plate 2 & 3**) illustrates that this land remained agricultural up to this period. This agricultural land included the land within the Site. Nonetheless, a clay pit is illustrated within the Site in the 1897 / 1898 Ordnance Survey map (**Plate 2**). The pit is labelled as “old” which indicates that it had shut by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century but had been in operation during the post-medieval period. The 1897 / 1898 Ordnance Survey map also shows the beginnings of more widespread industry in the surrounding area.

The mid-late-20<sup>th</sup> century mapping and aerial photography (**Plate 4 – 6**) illustrates the residential development of Frindsbury during this period, particularly along Parsonage Lane, Murray Road, and Frindsbury Road to the west of the Site. During the mid-late-20<sup>th</sup> century large scale industry in the area had further expanded to an area of land within the Manor Farm site, c. 130m west of the Site, where a large quarry was opened (**Plate 5 & 6**). The quarry appears to have closed in the 1980s and satellite imagery from the early 21<sup>st</sup> century show that vegetations had regrown within the former quarry.

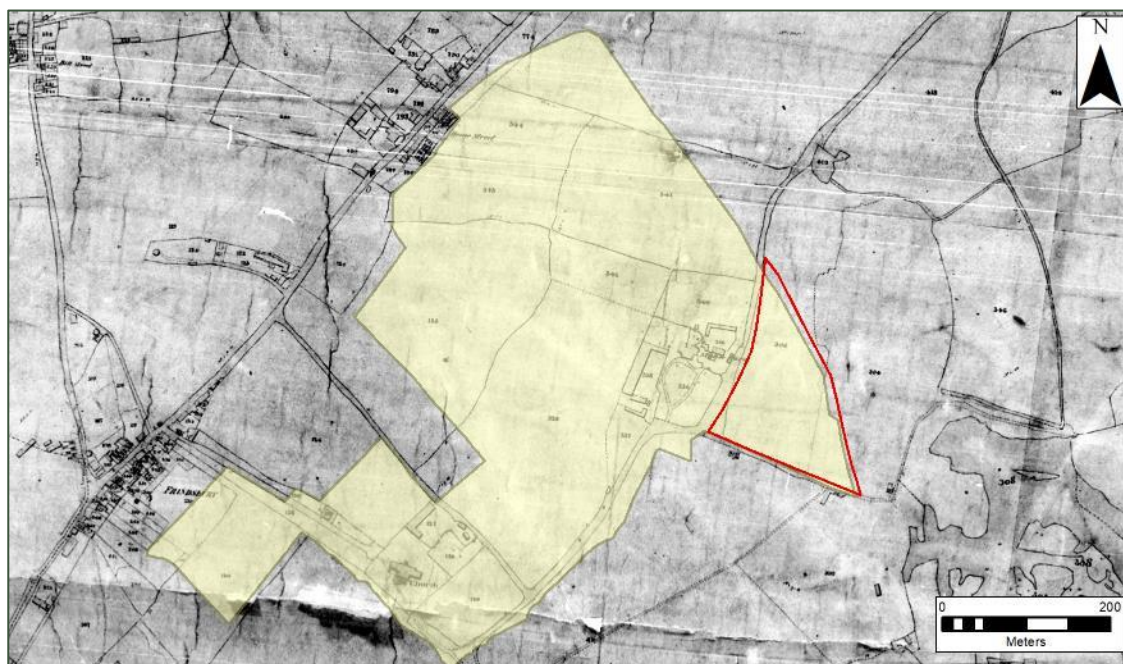
The Site appears to have remained as agricultural until the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, following which the Site appears to have been left to overgrow with vegetation and trees. The 21<sup>st</sup> century satellite imagery illustrates this (**Plate 7 & 8**), and the images also show that the area to the



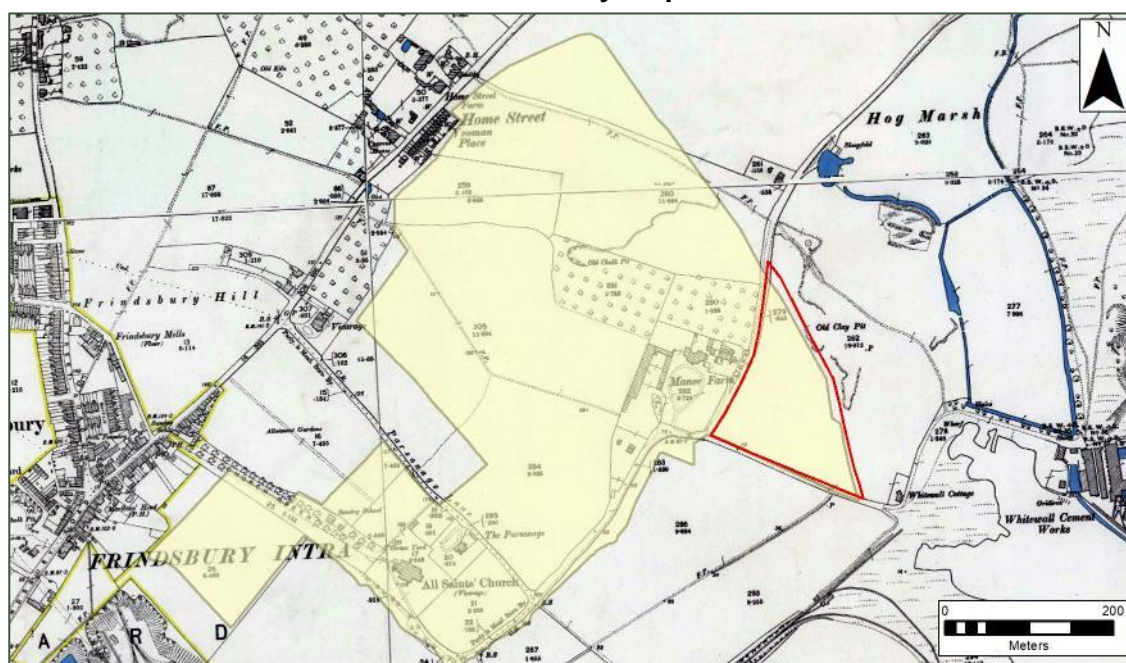


south of the Site has developed into a large industrial estate. Additionally, the satellite imagery also illustrates the construction of the A289 to the north and east of the Site.

**Plate 1: Tithe Map dated 1839**

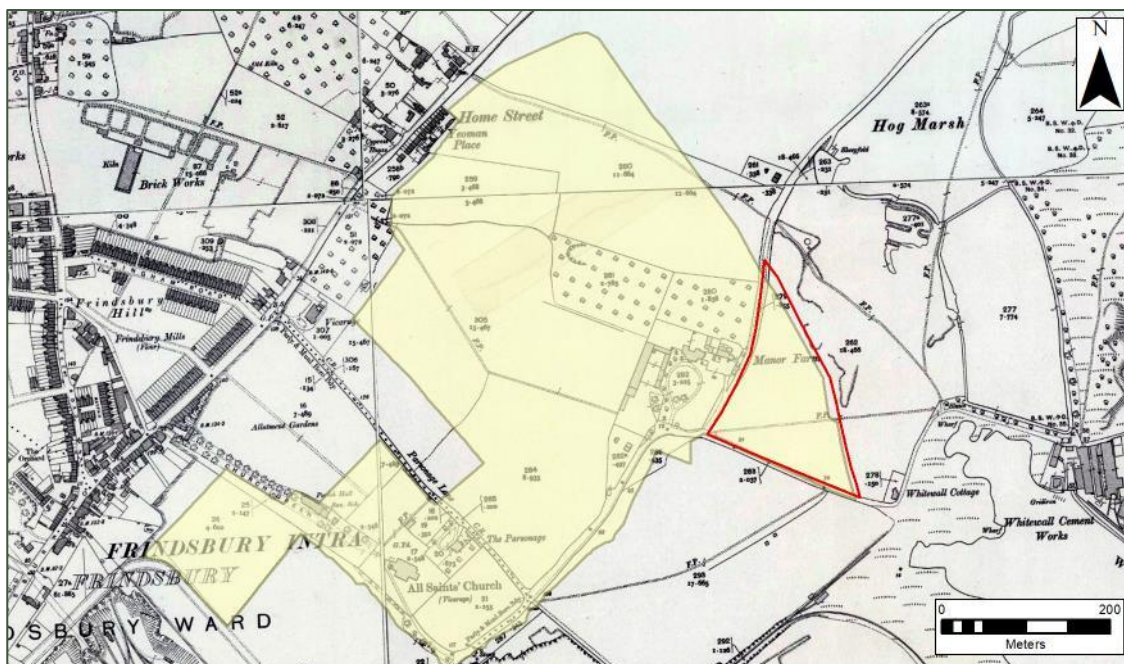


**Plate 2: Ordnance Survey Map dated 1897-98**

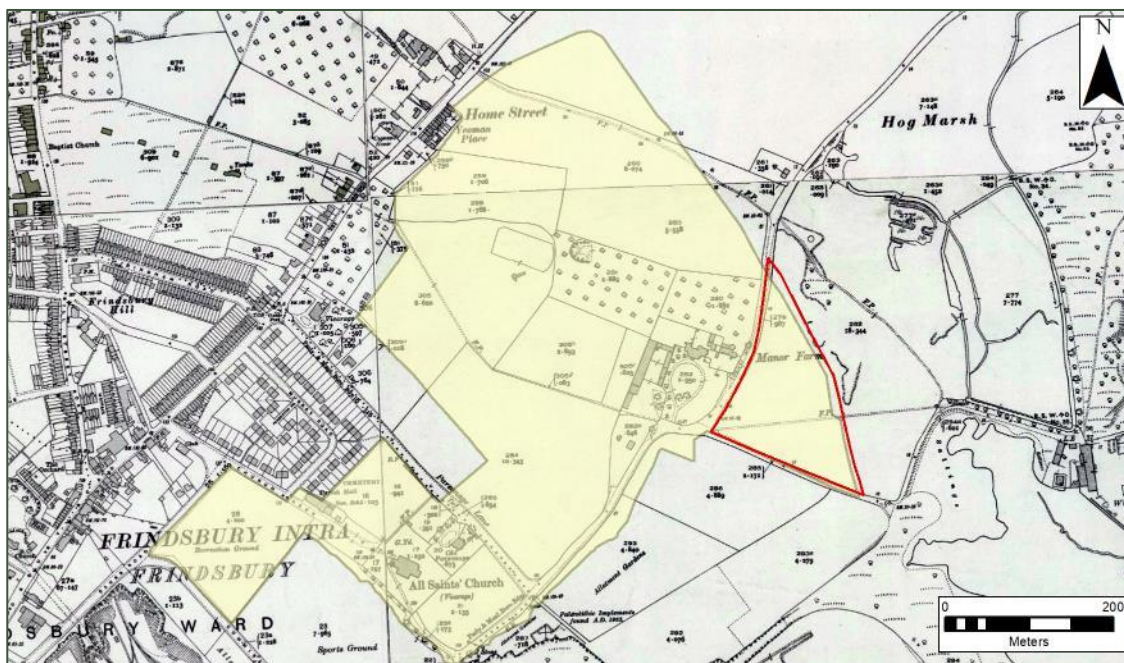




**Plate 3: Ordnance Survey Map dated 1909**



**Plate 4: Ordnance Survey Map dated 1933-35**

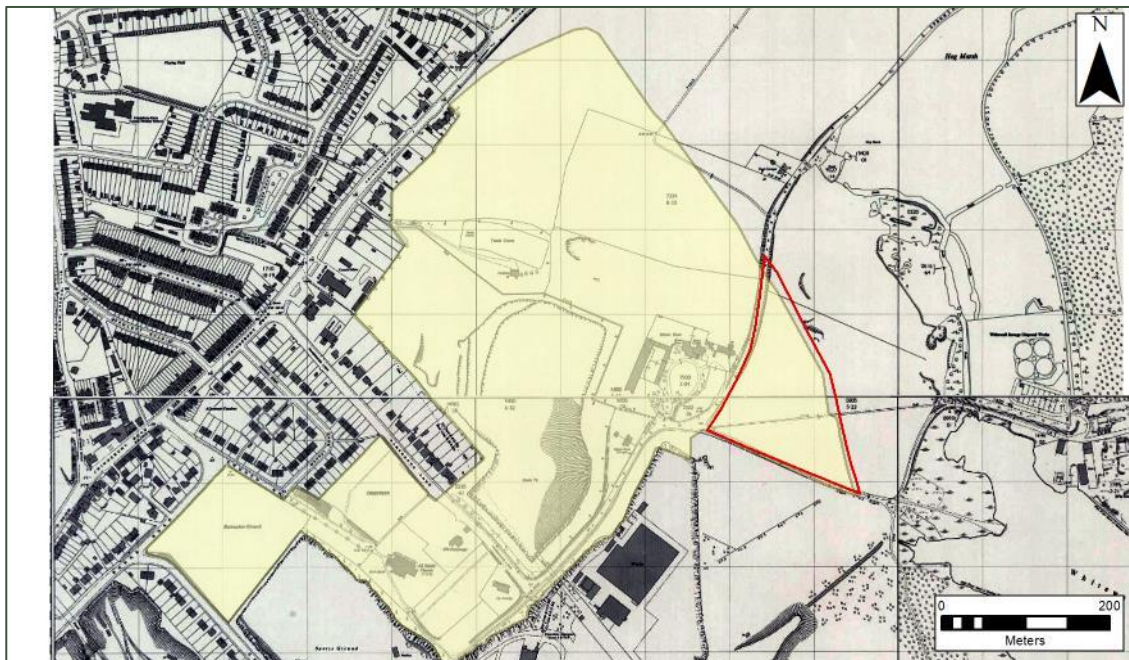




**Plate 5: Aerial Photograph dated 1960**



**Plate 6: Ordnance Survey Map dated 1970**





**Plate 7: Satellite Imagery dated 2006 © Google Earth**



**Plate 8: Satellite Imagery dated 2024 © Google Earth**



The Site has remained undeveloped in recent years; however, activity at the former quarry within the Manor Farm site appears to have begun again in around 2018 where the vegetation had been cleared, with an access road constructed to the north of the quarry and north-west of Manor Farm, and a weighing station built at the head of the quarry. These developments are shown on satellite imagery from 2024 (**Plate 8**). This activity is linked to the infilling of the former quarry which has been captured by recent drone imagery (see **Appendix A**).

The 2024 satellite imagery and drone imagery also illustrate the construction of the Maritime Academy c. 330m north of the Site, along with its associated sports pitches and landscaping. The construction of Maritime Academy has further removed a large part of the intelligibility of



the former agricultural land within the Manor Farm Site and comprises a large area within this Conservation Area. Also, there remains extant consent for residential housing and works / alterations to the Grade I Listed Manor Farm Barn on this site.

Additionally, an outline planning application (planning reference no.: MC/16/4268) has also been submitted, and approved by Medway Council, for the construction of up to 130 residential dwellings on land to the east of the Parish Church of All Saints, c. 435m south-west of the Site. Although outside the Conservation Area, it would further add a residential built form within an open area of land.

## Significance

As a Conservation Area, Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area is a designated historic asset of high significance. Its significance derives from its archaeological and historic interests.

The archaeological and historic interests derive from the development of Frindsbury and Manor Farm from the medieval period through to the post-medieval period. Both the Parish Church of All Saints and Manor Farm have medieval origins and continued to retain its agricultural / rural setting until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As noted above, the area developed in the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century with the introduction of large-scale quarrying within the Conservation Area, residential developments to the north-west and west, the introduction of a large industrial estate to the south, the construction of the A289 to the east, and the construction of Maritime Academy within the Manor Farm site.

## Implications / Principles of Design

Proposed development within the Site boundary would form a new addition within the Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area. However, the historic and spatial layout of the Conservation Area has been significantly altered since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as highlighted above, with the former agricultural land within the Site being severely truncated by the development of the large industrial estate to the south and the construction of the A289 to the north and east of the Site. Additionally, the approved planning permission of the Manor Farm site (planning reference no.: MC/21/0302) has further truncated the rural / agriculture nature of the Conservation Area, with the construction of a three storey school, and the planned construction of 181 residential housing and conversion and extension of the Grade I Listed Manor Farm Barn.

It is also important to note the Historic England comments relating to the Manor Farm site (planning reference no.: MC/21/0302), which stated that the Conservation Area, along with the Manor Farm Barn, *“would be impacted as the application causes a moderate level of harm”*. However, there would be several heritage benefits which would apply to the weighing exercise against the public benefits. This would include an *“enhanced level of public access and opportunities to enjoy and appreciate more of Medway’s exceptional heritage through a new use for Manor Farm Barn.”* Additionally, the proposed *“conversion of the barn to a wedding venue will contribute to creating a thriving place which celebrates Medway’s heritage and its importance as a place in medieval England.”* As such, the Manor Farm development was considered to enhance the ability to appreciate the wider Conservation Area and provide a heritage enhancement.

Therefore, proposed development within the Site would be deemed appropriate with appropriate design considerations incorporated into the proposals. The Site comprises the south-western edge of the Conservation Area, which is bounded by modern development to the north, east, and south. The Site is also removed from the Manor Farm site by the surrounding vegetation and tree coverage and is separated by Parsonage Lane. A sympathetic design, possibly including the retention and enhancement of vegetation and tree coverage along the Site boundary, would not be detrimental to the character and appearance





of the Conservation Area. Any harm to the significance of the Conservation Area would likely be low level, and development within the Site would not result in substantial or significant harm to the Conservation Area.

## 2.4.2 Listed Buildings

There are no Listed Building within the Site, but there are several within the surrounding area, and the locations of the Listed Buildings are illustrated in **Figure 2**.

Listed Buildings and their settings are protected under statute, specifically Section 66(i) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), which provides that:

*“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”*

Listed Buildings are also afforded a high level of policy protection under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023), and specifically Paragraphs 205 – 208. Of relevance, Paragraph 206 distinguishes between the significance of Grade I and II\* Listed buildings, which are defined as being of the ‘highest significance’, and Grade II Listed buildings, which are of less than the highest significance.

The current Medway Local Plan (2003) also contains policies relating to Listed Buildings. This includes **Policy BNE17: Alterations to Listed Buildings** and **Policy BNE18: Setting of Listed Buildings**:

*“Alterations, extensions, conversions or changes of use affecting a Listed Building will not be permitted if they are:*

- i. detrimental to the architectural or historic character of the building; or*
- ii. unsympathetic in design, scale, appearance and use; or*
- iii. do not retain original features and materials.” (Policy BNE17).*

*“Development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will not be permitted.” (Policy BNE18).*

### 2.4.2.1 Listed Buildings associated with Manor Farm

There are three Listed Buildings associated with Manor Farm (**Table 1**).

**Table 1: Listed Buildings at Manor Farm**

Name	Grade	Ref. No.
Manor Farm Barn	I	1204320
The Manor House	II	1085745
Manor Farm Oast	II	1278058

The significance of these Listed Buildings derives from their architectural and historic interest. The architectural interest refers to their fabric and design as examples of surviving elements of agricultural and vernacular architecture, ranging from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century. The historical interest derives from their association with the former historic agricultural landscape and the development of Frindsbury and Manor Farm.



## Implications / Principles of Design

The above Listed Buildings would be partially visible from the Site. However, design considerations could be incorporated into future design principles which would be sympathetic and not detrimental to the architectural and historic interests of the Listed Buildings. This could include the retention / improvement of the Site's boundary that would retain a sense of the former agricultural nature of the area. This would likely include sympathetic landscaping and planting that would mirror the agricultural history of the nearby Listed Buildings.

Such design principles would be in line with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), the NPPF (2023), and policies within the current Medway Local Plan (2003). Additionally, the comments from both Historic England and the Planning Officer should be taken into account, when considering the effects upon the heritage significance of Manor Farm Barn. Historic England stated:

*"[...] both the Barn and Conservation Area are considered to be impacted as the application causes a moderate level of harm. However, against the public benefit (Paragraph 202 of the NPPF) there are several heritage benefits which apply to the weighing exercise:*

*Securing the optimum viable use and thus the long-term sustainable future of the barn as a wedding venue which provides for its ongoing management and maintenance.*

*Providing an enhanced level of public access and opportunities to enjoy and appreciate more of Medway's exceptional heritage through a new use for Manor Farm Barn.*

*Securing an enhanced understanding of the Manor Farm Barn through a programme of building recording. The proposed conversion of the barn to a wedding venue will contribute to creating a thriving place which celebrates Medway's heritage and its importance as a place in medieval England."*

The Planning Officer further stated that:

*"The Impact of the Proposals to the Setting of the Barn Policy BNE18 (Setting of Listed Buildings) of the Local Plan states: Development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will not be permitted. The design of the proposed farmyard buildings draws on agricultural precedents and would be on the site of now lost farmyard buildings. However, their domestic use and associated landscaping and a car park would cause a low level of harm to the setting of the Barn by contributing to the domestication of its setting. The proposed residential development and school would urbanise and erode the Barn's rural setting to a degree by bringing the built line of development closer causing harm to its significance. To minimise the impact of the development proposals on the rural setting of the Barn, the pre-application negotiations focussed on a landscape-led design approach. This coupled with a sensitive approach to the design of new farmyard buildings and landscape proposals for the farmyard, have resulted in the harm to the setting of the Barn being minimised to an acceptable level. The benefit of the proposed residential development is chiefly about securing a very significant capital sum to fund the conversion of the barn to its optimum viable use. Historic England and the Council are satisfied that the heritage benefit is capable of being secured via a S106 agreement and that some heritage benefit can be delivered early in the development of the wider site, thus reducing risk to the barn at an early stage.*

*There are other heritage benefits to account for in the weighing exercise, one of which is providing an increased level of public access to the Barn by opening up an important listed building for the community to engage with and enjoy. The conversion of the Barn could also make a major contribution to place making and thriving*



*communities by celebrating the area's heritage as a focal point for the community. In this regard it is concluded that this development is capable of making a positive contribution to sustainable communities and their economic vitality (Paragraph 197 (b) of the NPPF). The harm to heritage significance has been minimised and it is considered that the remaining harm is justified by the heritage benefits of providing a capital receipt from the residential development to secure the future of the Grade I listed Barn by converting it to a wedding venue".*

These comments emphasised any harm to the heritage significance, as a result of the development at the Manor Farm site, would be justified by the heritage benefits. This includes developments to Manor Farm Barn itself and the immediate surrounding land. Therefore, it is considered that development within the Site would be suitable. Also, it is likely that such a development would be able to offer heritage benefits similar to the Manor Farm site, i.e., development within the Site would allow for a greater appreciation of the surrounding heritage that Medway has to offer.

Additionally, with the Site being slightly more removed from the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings at Manor Farm, the impact of development within the Site would be less and any effects could be mitigated by the implementation of good design practices.

#### 2.4.2.2 Listed Buildings associated with the Parish Church of All Saints

There are six Listed Buildings associated with the Parish Church of All Saints (**Table 2**).

**Table 2: Listed Buildings at Parish Church of All Saints**

Name	Grade	Ref. No.
Parish Church of All Saints	II*	1107886
Old Parsonage	II	1336172
Moulding Tomb	II	1107873
The Boghurst Tomb	II	1086415
Group of 12 Headstones	II	1325194
Miller Monument	II	1336169

The significance of these Listed Buildings derives from their architectural and historic interest. The architectural interest refers to their fabric and design as examples of ecclesiastical architecture dating from the later medieval period, in the case of the Parish Church of All Saints, and later 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century architecture. The historical interest derives from their ability to chart the history and development of Frindsbury.

#### Implications / Principles of Design

Although the Listed Buildings are located in proximity to the Site, they are predominantly screened by extensive tree and vegetation coverage around the boundary and edges of the Site. The only prominent Listed Building within the landscape, and partially visible from within the Site, is the spire of the Parish Church of All Saints. However, these views were taken from drone images (see **Appendix B**) and views from ground level are likely to be limited / not possible.

In the above context, and on balance, the assets should not preclude development within the Site in principle. However, design consideration should be given to views towards the Parish Church of All Saints and the other associate Listed Buildings. This would include the retention of screening at the south-western boundary of the Site which would ensure there would be no changes to the experience / setting of these Listed Buildings.





### 2.4.2.3 Remaining Listed Buildings

There are a further 17 Listed Buildings within the area surrounding the Site, and beyond the boundaries of Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area, these are shown below in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: Listed Buildings outside Conservation Area**

Name	Grade	Ref. No.
Cypress House	II	1085739
3 High Street	II	1085740
Waterhouse Cottage	II	1085741
30-32 High Street	II	1085743
82 and 82a Frindsbury Road	II	1086417
Waterside Cottage	II	1204303
Red House	II	1262809
80 Frindsbury Road	II	1323746
84 Frindsbury Road	II	1336170
Vine Cottage	II	1336489
Castle House and Albermarle Cottage	II	1336490
12-18 High Street	II	1336491
Walsall House	II	1336492
Upnor Castle House	II	1336493
The Tudor Rose Public House	II	1390628
Roman Catholic Church of the English Martyrs	II	1422504
Royal Oak Public House	II	1434926

### Implications

The assets are predominantly located along the main thoroughfares through the historic settlements of Frindsbury and nearby Upnor. These assets are unlikely to be affected by development within the Site. The intervening built environment of the surrounding residential and industrial properties provide screening between the Site and the assets. Additionally, the distance, intervening topography and vegetation provide further screening. Also, the Site is not considered an aspect of the assets' setting that contributes to their significance, neither enhancing nor detracting from their appearance, appreciation, and use.

In the above context, and on balance, these assets should not preclude development within the Site in principle.

## 2.5 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

### 2.5.1 Prehistoric Period (c. 700,000 BCE – 43 CE)

The HER records no prehistoric remains within the Site.

Nonetheless, previous archaeological work undertaken within the Manor Farm site, and to the north-west of the Site, has demonstrated that Pleistocene Fluvial Deposits with Lower Palaeolithic archaeological and geoarchaeological potential are present, albeit within a



restricted area of the northern part of the Manor Farm site. The Palaeolithic remains relate to the development of the River Higham and / or Medway, with a hand axe cleaver recovered during investigation of Third Terrace River gravels (CAT 2020a).

There is also evidence of Palaeolithic activity c. 300m south-west of the Site, which comprised a large assemblage of implements found in a chalk quarry (**Figure 3, TQ76NW431**). The artefacts were generally in good condition with the assemblage dominated by flakes some of which refit. Two hand axes were also recovered and being slightly more abraded are perhaps not associated with the main collection of artefacts. The material was recovered from a substantial deposit of c. 1m thickness with an area of some 3m by 7.5m excavated by hand. The deposit itself lay in a depression within the surface of the chalk bedrock.

### **Roman Period (43 CE – 410 CE)**

The HER records no Roman remains within the Site.

Given its proximity to the town of *Durobrivae* (Rochester), Roman activity, especially burial, seems to have been intense in and around the Frindsbury peninsula, located to the south-west of the site (CAT 2020a, p. 7). The remains of a Roman building and associated finds were recorded c. 610m south of the Site in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (**Figure 3, TQ76NW16**), along with an earthen ware vessel and possible graves (**Figure 3, TQ76NW13**). Further 19<sup>th</sup> century excavations revealed the traces of a possible road surface along with skeletal material c. 715m south-west of the Site (**Figure 3, TQ76NW26**).

The 2020 field evaluation within the Manor Farm site revealed evidence of late Iron Age / Roman activity. The remains predominantly comprised ditches, with occasional pits and post-holes. Late Iron Age to Romano-British pottery was also recorded within the fills of some of these features. The features and finds are indicative of a small rural settlement, which perhaps lay alongside a putative Roman road that is suggested to run through the site. However, no evidence for the road was identified during the evaluation due to extensive later quarrying. More generally the activity would seem to reflect that suggested by the HER, indicating moderately intense activity across the Frindsbury peninsula in this period (CAT 2020a, p. 42).

### **2.5.2 Early Medieval (410 CE – 1066) & Medieval (1066 – 1539) Periods**

The HER records no Anglo-Saxon / early medieval remains within the Site.

Documentary evidence suggests that the area of Frindsbury came into the possession of the Bishop of Rochester in 764 CE when it was granted to him by King Offa, and Domesday indicates that by the late eleventh century Frindsbury had increased three-fold in value from its pre-Conquest existence. The Parish Church of All Saints is likely to have been founded during this period and the present church retains substantial Norman fabric and features (CAT 2020a, p. 8).

There is evidence of medieval remains to the north-west of the Site which comprises the Listed Building of Manor Farm Barn (**NHLE 1204320**). Dendrochronology work on the barn has revealed that the timbers used to construct it were felled between 1392 – 1412, but probably date to c. 1403 (CAT 2020b, p. 7). This suggests that a farm had been present in proximity to the Site, and possibly within its landholdings, since at least the later medieval period, but likely to have extended further back into the earlier medieval period.

### **2.5.3 Post-medieval Period (1539 – 1900) & Modern (1900 – present)**

The HER records no post-medieval remains within the Site.

The HER does, however, record five post-medieval remains within the adjacent Manor Farm site. These remains include the presence of Manor Farm (**Figure 3, MKE83424**), a 19<sup>th</sup> century cowshed (**Figure 3, TQ77SW1064**), and a well (**Figure 3, TQ77SW94**). The other two post-medieval records relate to the former clay pits located within the Manor Farm Site (**Figure**



**3, TQ77SW1145 & TQ77SW1146**), which were noted in the historic mapping sources discussed above (**Plate 2 & 3**).

The Manor House (**NHLE 1085745**) is a late sixteenth-century farmhouse re-fronted in 1753 with a maroon brick front. The Manor Farm Oast (**NHLE 1278058**), which probably dates to the 1860s, is located immediately east of Manor House. At the Dissolution of Monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Frindsbury Manor passed to the Dean and Chapter of Rochester who seem to have continued to lease Manor Farm to lessees, who often, in turn, sub-let to farmers (CAT 2020a, pp. 8 – 9). The tithe map (**Plate 1**) records the position of the main buildings of the farmstead, with the Site itself formed by open farmland. The later 19<sup>th</sup> century Ordnance Survey map (**Plate 2**) shows the general area as unchanged, but with the Site subdivided into slightly smaller fields and the beginnings of industry in the surrounding area.

The majority of the HER records for the area surrounding the Site comprise post-medieval remains, and many of these relate to farmsteads or industrial sites.

The HER records no modern remains within the Site. The Manor Farm site field evaluation confirmed that significant late post-medieval and / or modern quarrying occurred within the area (CAT 2020a, p. 42).

#### **2.5.4 Summary**

As discussed above, the HER records no archaeological remains within the Site. However, several phases of archaeological work at the adjacent Manor Farm site have revealed early prehistoric and later prehistoric / Roman remains. As such, there is potential for further such remains to be present within the Site boundary. Nonetheless, such remains are unlikely to preclude development within the Site. Additionally, should such remains be present within the Site, they could be dealt with via suitable archaeological work / mitigation and be appropriately preserved by record.



### 3.0 Conclusion

This high-level heritage appraisal has provided a desktop review of designated and non-designated heritage assets and has provided an initial assessment of the potential heritage implications of the Site to support the case for land promotion of the Medway Local Plan (Regulation 18b) for the Site. The appraisal has established that the Site can be considered suitable with any harm to the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings likely to be low level, and development would not result in substantial or significant harm. Any low-level harm would be outweighed by public benefits and high-quality design measures.

Development within the Site would form a new addition within the Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area; however, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area has been significantly altered since the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This alteration has included the truncation and removal of former agricultural land within the Conservation Area due to quarrying, construction of a new school, and the construction of the A289 road. As such, appropriate design considerations incorporated into future proposals, could be sympathetic and not detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and therefore deemed acceptable. Future design considerations could include the retention / improvement of the immediate surrounding vegetation and tree coverage along the Site boundary. Such design principles could include sympathetic landscaping and planting that would mirror the agricultural history of the Conservation Area and the surrounding area.

Development within the Site has the potential to affect the setting of nearby Listed Buildings. However, this appraisal has concluded that the setting of the surrounding Listed Buildings would not be impacted. This would be due to the intervening built environment of the surrounding residential and industrial properties, and the intervening topography and vegetation, would provide adequate screening. With regards to the setting of the Listed Buildings at Manor Farm, including The Manor House, Manor Farm Oast, and Manor Farm Barn, design considerations could be incorporated into design principles which would be sympathetic and not detrimental to the architectural and historic interests of the Listed Buildings. This could include the retention / improvement of the immediate surrounding vegetation and tree coverage along the Site boundary. Such design principles could include sympathetic landscaping and planting that would mirror the agricultural history of the Listed Buildings.

The HER records no archaeological remains within the Site. However, several phases of archaeological work at the adjacent Manor Farm site have revealed early prehistoric and later prehistoric / Roman remains. As such, there is potential for further such remains to be present within the Site boundary. Nonetheless, such remains are unlikely to preclude development within the Site. Additionally, should such remains be present within the Site, they could be dealt with via suitable archaeological survey work / mitigation.

Therefore, the Site is considered to be suitable for land promotion for the Medway Local Plan. There would be no substantial or significant harm to the Conservation Area or Listed Buildings. Any low-level harm would be mitigated by the heritage public benefits, along with appropriate design measures, which would ensure that the proposed development is compliant with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023), and the current Medway Local Plan (2003).



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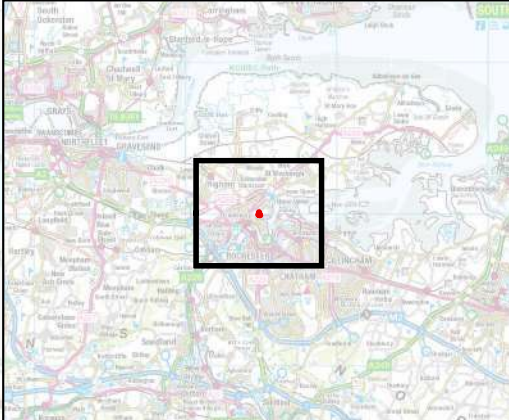





LEGEND



SITE BOUNDARY



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LAND AT BAKERS MEADOW, FRINDSBURY

HERITAGE APPRAISAL

SITE LOCATION

**FIGURE 1**

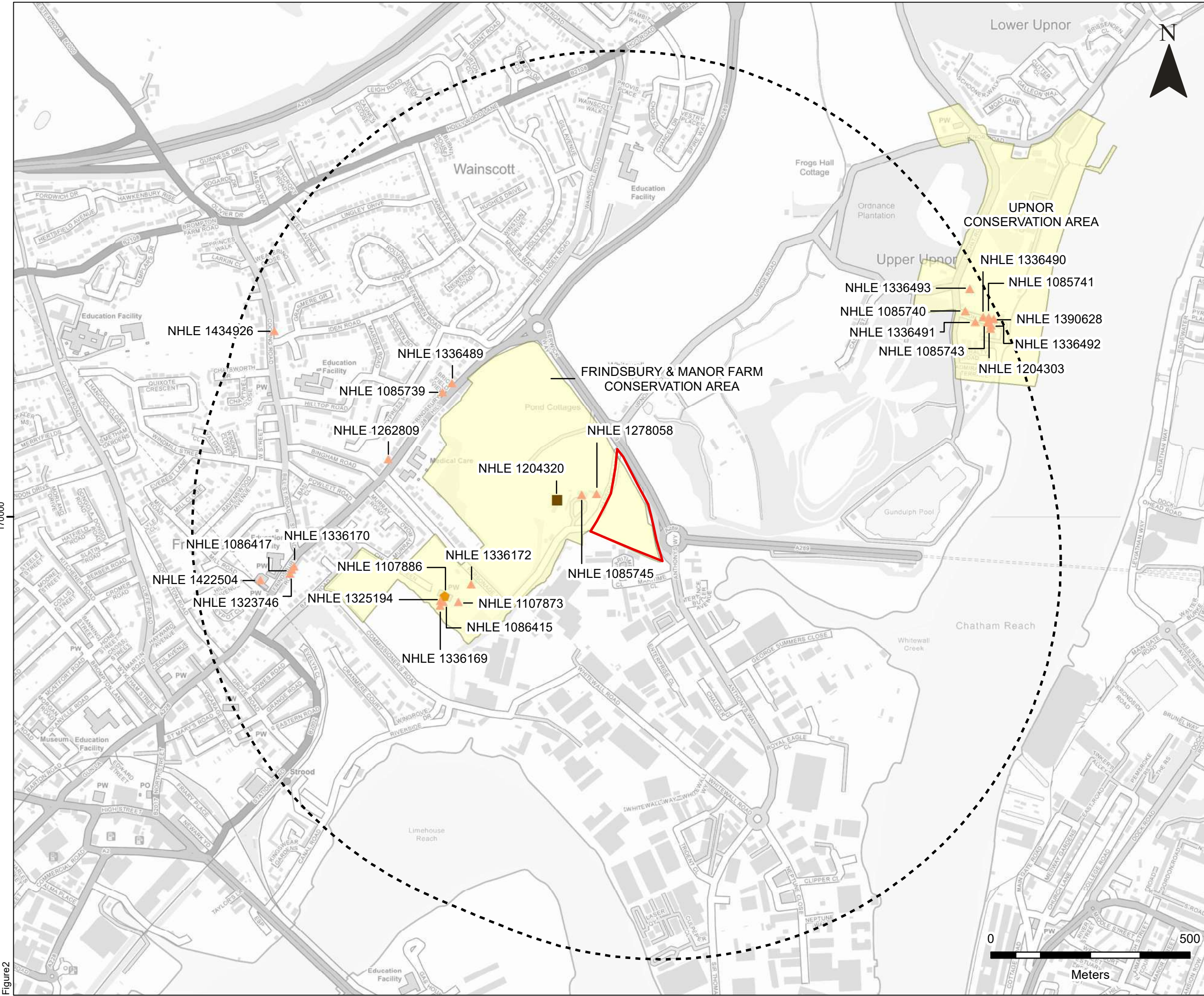
Scale  
1:25,000 @ A3

Date  
AUGUST 2024

170000

Figure 1





NOTES

1. © HISTORIC ENGLAND 2024. © CROWN COPYRIGHT AND DATABASE RIGHT 2024.

LEGEND

- SITE BOUNDARY
- GRADE I LISTED BUILDING
- GRADE II\* LISTED BUILDING
- GRADE II LISTED BUILDING
- CONSERVATION AREA

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HERITAGE APPRAISAL

**DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS**

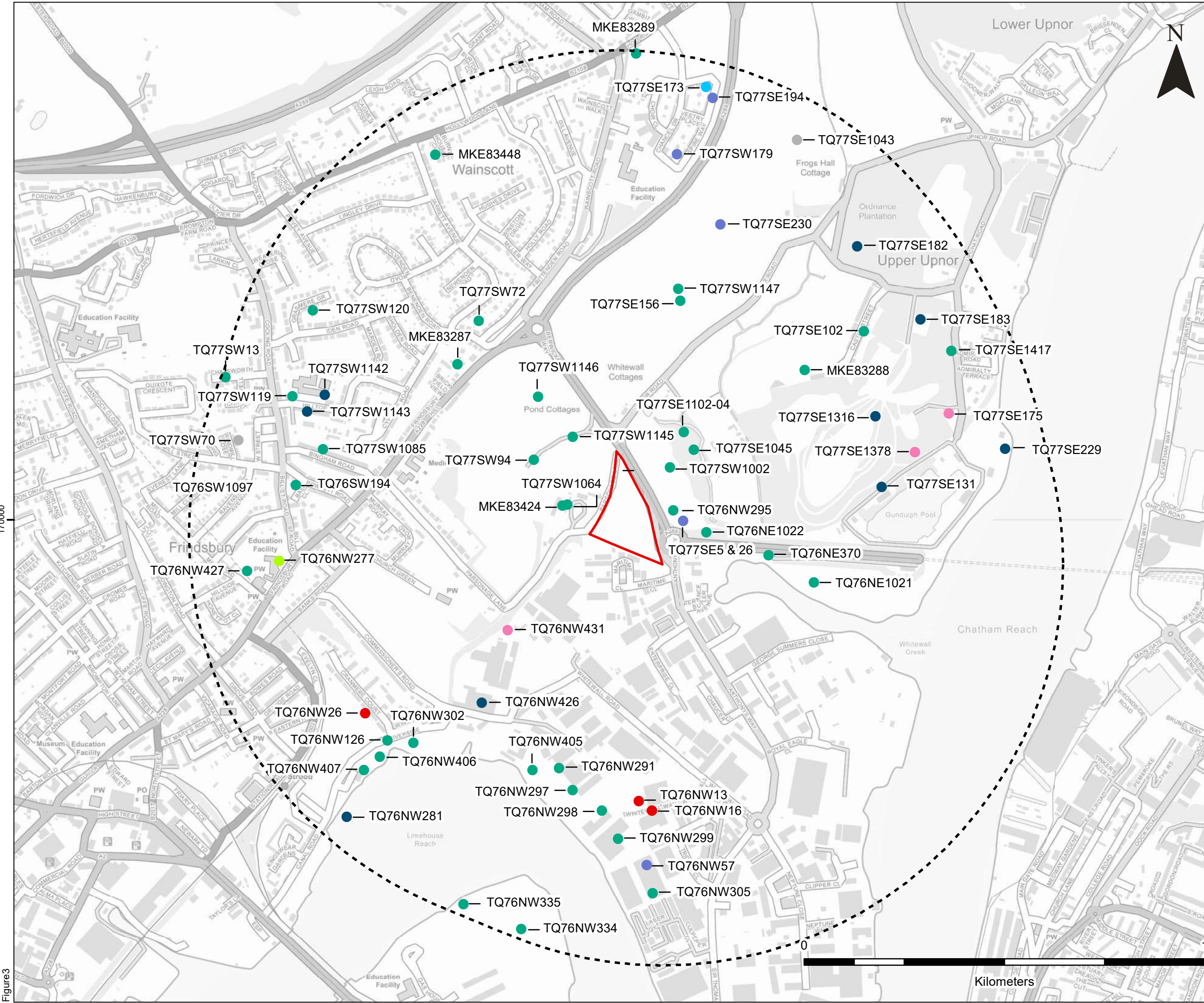
**FIGURE 2**

Scale 1:9,000 @ A3

Date AUGUST 2024

Figure2





NOTES

1. © KENT COUNTY COUNCIL 2024.

LEGEND

SITE BOUNDARY

STUDY AREA (1KM)

EARLY PREHISTORIC

LATER PREHISTORIC

ROMAN

EARLY MEDIEVAL

MEDIEVAL

POST-MEDIEVAL

MODERN

UNKNOWN

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LAND AT BAKERS MEADOW, FRINDSBURY

HERITAGE APPRAISAL

**NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS**

**FIGURE 3**

Scale  
1:9,000 @ A3

Date  
AUGUST 2024

Figure3

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# Appendix A   Drone Images

**Land at Bakers Meadow, Frindsbury, Rochester**

**Heritage Appraisal**

**The Heritage Design & Development Team Limited**

SLR Project No.: 407.064728.00001

6 September 2024



**Photo 1: View of Maritime Academy looking south-west**



**Photo 2: View of Maritime Academy looking north-west**





**Photo 3: View of Maritime Academy and associated landscaping looking north**



**Photo 4: View of landscaping and playing fields looking north-east**





**Photo 5: View of access road off A289 looking south-east**



**Photo 6: View towards The Manor House, Manor Farm Oast & Manor Farm Barn looking west**





**Photo 7: View of Manor Farm Barn & spire of Parish Church of All Saints looking west**



**Photo 8: View of former quarry within Site looking west**





**Photo 9: View towards The Manor House & Manor Farm Barn looking south-west**



**Photo 10: View towards The Manor House, Manor Farm Oast & Manor Farm Barn looking west**





**Photo 11: View towards Maritime Academy looking north from above Manor Farm Barn**



**Photo 12: View towards The Manor House, Manor Farm Oast & Manor Farm Barn looking north-east**





**Photo 13: View above Site looking south-west towards industrial estate**



**Photo 14: Industrial estate to south of Site looking south**



**Photo 15: Site, industrial estate to south of Site & The Manor House & Manor Farm  
Oast looking east**





Making Sustainability Happen



**Medway Council Local Plan 2041**

**Regulation 18b Consultation**

**September 2024**

**Consultation response  
by**



**DEAN LEWIS.**  
ESTATES LIMITED

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 Dean Lewis Estates Limited is a professional strategic land promotion company specialising in the delivery of sustainable residential and mixed-use development.
- 1.1.2 This submission provides Dean Lewis Estates Limited response to and representations in respect of this Regulation 18 consultation into the 'Medway Local Plan 2041'.
- 1.1.3 This submission focuses on the key planning policy considerations for the Medway Local Plan to enable its successful implementation, thereby sustainably meeting the identified full objectively assessed needs for housing (OAN) and enabling the wider regeneration of Medway to continue in concert with economic growth and delivering significant social and environmental net gains throughout the plan area.
- 1.1.4 For completeness, it is also appropriate to state that Dean Lewis Estates Limited is part of a consortium of promoter and developer partners that are working together to promote development at Hoo St Werburgh and on the Hoo Peninsula to enable successful delivery of the planned growth required to meet the needs of Medway up to 2041.
- 1.1.5 The Consortium members comprise:
- Church Commissioners for England
  - Dean Lewis Estates
  - Gladman Developments
  - Homes England
  - Taylor Wimpey
- 1.1.6 The areas of land within the control of Dean Lewis Estates are deliverable in their own right and are not contingent upon any other third-party land ownerships or infrastructure. It should also be noted that the Dean Lewis Estates land has the capability to provide community benefits substantially in excess of that needed to serve the development of solely the Dean Lewis Estates land.

- 1.1.7 These benefits, such as circa 120 acres of community parkland and strategic environmental mitigation will facilitate growth being brought forward by Dean Lewis Estates and the Consortium.
- 1.1.8 Dean Lewis Estates is also promoting land at Stoke Road, Hoo St Werburgh, High Halstow and Cliffe Woods. All the land promoted by DLE can genuinely be regarded as deliverable and sustainable.



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## 2 CONTEXT

### 2.1 Regulation 18b Consultation – Medway Local Plan

- 2.1.1 These representations build on the responses to the consultation 'Setting the Direction for Medway 2040' which was consulted on in Autumn 2023 by Medway Council.
- 2.1.2 The consultation seeks to define the 'Vision and Strategic Objectives' for the new Local Plan. The information provided on proposed policies and options for a development strategy - the potential sites and broad locations that could form allocations for development in the new Local Plan is the subject of responses and representations by Dean Lewis Estates in this document.
- 2.1.3 The consultation considers how the local plan could meet housing needs of around 28,000 new homes over the plan period. This scale of growth will involve significant change across Medway. Three broad options for growth are considered:
- **SGO1** – Urban Focus – this seeks to maximise development and density in urban centres and waterfront sites, with some limited growth adjoining existing towns and villages.
  - **SGO2** – Dispersed Growth – this provides for less urban regeneration and considers development across broader suburban and rural areas; and
  - **SGO3** – Blended Strategy – this promotes a 'brownfield first' approach supporting urban regeneration, complemented by greenfield sites in suburban and rural locations to provide for wider housing choice.
- 2.1.4 The Council has identified **Option SGO3** as its preferred indicative approach at this stage and has set out more details of what this strategy could look like, in a draft policies map.
- 2.1.5 It is also acknowledged that further evidence base reports will be produced for Regulation 19 stage and that these Strategic Options may change, having regard to the evidence base which has yet to be published.
- 2.1.6 The local plan Reg 18 consultation is also published alongside an interim Sustainability Appraisal. Comments of the draft SA are also covered in this consultation response.

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## Preferred spatial growth option

### 2.2 Background

- 2.2.1 It is evident that the three variant Spatial Growth Options are not mutually exclusive. In our view, **Dean Lewis Estates support** the council's preferred **Spatial Growth Strategy (SOG3 – Blended Strategy)**.
- 2.2.2 SGO 3 combines some of the essential elements set out within SGO 1 – Urban Focus and SGO 2 – Dispersed Growth. The blended SGO 3 option achieves the best balance of sustainability considerations by integrating urban regeneration with suburban and rural development, promoting sustainable travel, and addressing the needs of diverse communities. Overall, this option is likely to ensure a diverse range of housing types and tenures can be provided across Medway and economic needs can be met whilst directing the majority of new development to sustainable locations. Strategic growth on the Hoo Peninsula, specifically on land at Cookham Farm, would form an integral component of this sustainable growth option.

### 2.3 Responses to Medway Local plan Reg 18 Consultation Questions:

- 2.3.1 Dean Lewis Estates representations and responses to the Council's key questions below are presented on this basis.

***Question 1: The Council could consider setting local standards for development that go beyond national policy/regulations in addressing climate change. What evidence would justify this approach, and what standards would be appropriate?***

- 2.3.2 Policy S1: '**Planning for Climate Change**' states that "The Council will require new built development to contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation of climate change through:

Effective spatial planning and placemaking

- Directing the spatial strategy for growth to locations that provide better access to services, or which are capable of delivering improved services.

- Reducing the need for travel, through co-location of services and an accessible network of centres.
- Designing for walking and cycling and providing for sustainable transport choice.
- Designing for the wellbeing of people and wildlife, promoting public health and strengthening networks for nature”.

2.3.3 The development of the rural town centred on Hoo St Werburgh and additional growth on the Hoo Peninsula, including land at Cliffe Woods and High Halstow and other outlying settlements will enable the effective spatial planning and placemaking of the Hoo Peninsula to be achieved whilst simultaneously contribute toward the plan objective of Medway becoming carbon net zero by 2050. Development on the Hoo Peninsula at the scale planned for in SOG3 will deliver new and improved essential services and infrastructure which will help to reduce to the need to travel and provide for more self-reliant communities where day to day needs such as schools, employment, health provision, amongst others, can be met locally.

2.3.4 The use of **renewable and low carbon technologies in development** is **supported by DLE**.

2.3.5 However, **DLE Object to the provision of decentralised energy and heating**, as expressed in related draft **Policy T41 Heat Networks. Policy T41 requires modification**.

2.3.6 The intention of this policy is laudable, but its practical application is potentially unviable and unnecessary.

2.3.7 As part of the Future Homes Standard, from 2025 new homes will only be able to install energy efficient heating systems that will produce 31% lower emissions compared to the current levels. This means that the installation of gas boilers will cease at this time. The UK government released its publication for the Heat and Buildings Strategy in October 2021. Low carbon technology such as air source or ground source heat pump heating installations achieve greater efficiencies than the current target of 31% improvement when compared to modern gas boilers.

- 
- 2.3.8 Crucially the installation of air or ground source heat pumps only requires an electricity supply. In contrast, Heat Networks requires the main source, often a power plant, biomass plant or waste disposal plant which all burn fossil fuels. One of the byproducts of these systems is latent heat which is distributed from the central source to consumers through a network of underground pipes that are often laid in roads and communal open space.
- 2.3.9 A simple comparison of viability of the two methods demonstrates that the infrastructure costs associated with Heat Networks is exponentially higher than the comparatively low cost of installing ground or air source heat pumps.
- 2.3.10 The costs associated with the Heat Network are generated by the high cost of laying the underground pipe infrastructure from the source to the consumer. This also involves the costs associated with the acquisition or agreements to cross third party land. The long-term maintenance of the infrastructure is also a cost passed onto the consumer. In contrast, no underground infrastructure is necessary for ground or air source heat pumps.
- 2.3.11 **Policy T41 Heat Networks is unjustified and lacks the necessary supporting evidence** to demonstrate that it is operable or necessary.
- 2.3.12 **The policy requires modification allow for the communal use of Heat Networks provided that they are viable. Crucially the policy should recognise that alternative forms of Heat Infrastructure for domestic heating that complies with the relevant building regulations at the time implementation will also be permitted.**
- 2.3.13 **The restrictive element of the policy that requires consideration of Heat Networks in the first instance and only then alternative forms of heat generation permitted should be removed from the policy.**



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**Question 2: Do you consider that the Council should seek to go beyond the statutory minimum of a 10% increase in BNG? What evidence can you provide to support your view?**

- 2.3.14 **Policy S2: Conservation and Enhancement of the Natural Environment is supported by DLE.** The policy requires development proposals to provide a measurable net gain of 10% in biodiversity in line with the recognised Defra metric. Presently no detailed evidence is available discreet to Medway that would justify departure from the national policy. The Viability Assessment of BNG in Kent in 2022 that assessed the costs of BNG on development concluded that some areas within Kent can achieve higher levels of BNG, however this study does not provide a comprehensive baseline of Medway’s environmental assets, nor does it specifically relate to the prospective development sites within the SHLAA. **Dean Lewis Estates support the policy threshold of the statutory minimum of a 10% increase in BNG in line with government policy.**

**Question 3: Do you agree that the tariff based strategic approach applied to development within 6 km of the designated areas, supporting the delivery of the Bird Wise SAMMS programme represents an effective means of addressing the potential impact of recreational disturbance on the designated SPA and Ramsar habitats of the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries and Marshes.**

- 2.3.15 **DLE support the strategic approach applied to development within 6 km of the designated areas.**

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**Question 4: Do you consider that Medway Council should identify landscapes of local value as an additional designation in the new Local Plan. What should be the criteria for designation? Are there areas that you would identify as justifying a local valued landscape designation – where and why?**

- 2.3.16 **Policy S4: Landscape protection and enhancement** species that development proposals should demonstrate how they respect and respond to the character, key sensitivities, and qualities of the relevant landscape character areas, as detailed in the Medway Landscape Character Assessment. **Dean Lewis Estates support the principle set out within Policy S4** that the **Medway Landscape Character Assessment** should be the reference document used to determine the basis of the landscape character assessment for purpose of decision making. **Additional local value designations out with the Medway Landscape Character Assessment are not supported by Dean Lewis Estates.**

**Question 5: Do you agree that the Council should promote Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework standards in the Medway Local Plan policy?**

**&**

**Question 6: Has the draft Medway Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework identified the correct key issues and assets, and provide effective guidance for strengthening Medway's green infrastructure?**

- 2.3.17 This response constitutes Dean Lewis Estates response to questions 5 & 6.
- 2.3.18 **Dean Lewis Estates conditionally support the principle of reference to Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework standards when assessing major development proposals.** However, it is important that these general standards treated as guidance only as site specific circumstances should be the determining factor as how best to conserve and enhance the network of green and blue infrastructure across rural and urban Medway.

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2.3.19 **Policy S5: Securing Strong Green and Blue Infrastructure** states that major new development proposals will be expected to submit a Green Infrastructure Plan as part of a Design and Access Statement setting out how will meet policy/objectives/GI principles. The proposals at Cockham Farm, Main Road, Hoo St Werburgh will deliver a major area of designated green and blue infrastructure in the form of new Community Parkland and an area of Strategic Environmental Mitigation. **It will be necessary for the Council to secure financial contributions under S106 to enable full implementation of this Strategic Environmental Mitigation that is necessary to serve the growth needs across the whole of the Hoo Peninsula. The proposals at Cockham Farm will make land available and will contribute its share towards the costs of implementation commensurate with the quantum of development at Cockham Farm.** However, the benefits of protecting and enhancing these designated environments is beneficial across the whole of Medway. Therefore, a tariff based S106 policy should apply to developments across the whole of Medway. **Dean Lewis Estates would suggest a two-tier policy where development within the zone of influence pays a higher tariff and development outside pays a lesser contribution.**

**Question 8: Do you consider that exceptional circumstances exist to justify review of the Green Belt boundary?**

2.3.20 **Dean Lewis Estates** consider that **exceptional circumstances do not exist to modify** the green belt boundaries. The proposed minor amendments to take account of boundary anomalies are acceptable and justified. **Release of green belt land within Medway for major development would be unjustified.**

**Question 10: Do you think this policy provides effective guidance on the required housing mix in Medway?**

2.3.21 **Dean Lewis Estates** consider that the **Policy T2: Housing Mix provides appropriate guidance** to developers with regard to Housing



Mix. Given the Local Plan period is up to 2041, **Dean Lewis Estates** also **welcome** the fact that policy builds in **flexibility** and has regard to local requirements, as evidenced through the **Medway LHNA, or updated reports.**

**Question 28: Would provision of a supermarket in Hoo be beneficial to residents to encourage sustainable travel patterns, convenience and sustainable lifestyles?**

2.3.22 **Dean Lewis Estates support Policy S22** when read together with the supporting reasoned justification. It is also noted that Policy S22 should be read in conjunction with **Policy DM12**. It is acknowledged within the supporting text to policy S22 that a main centre that could accommodate a larger convenience retail offer would be best co-located with other community uses to ensure benefits are optimised that best serve new communities. **The Land at Church Farm, Main Road,** offers one such potential location. This development approach will encourage residents to form more sustainable travel patterns.

2.3.23 Chapter 9 of the Regulation 18b Consultation deals with Transport.

2.3.24 Vision for access and movement in Medway states that,

***"The Hoo Peninsula has reduced car dependency and achieved a higher level of self-containment to facilitate local living in an age of increased remote working, while local employment opportunities are available at Kingsnorth and the Isle of Grain. Travel choice to/from the rural area has been improved through planning and investment in public transport".***

2.3.25 **Dean Lewis Estates support this Vision** which will enable new growth on the Hoo Peninsula to deliver a greater level of sustainability for the existing resident community and for the new community by achieving greater self-containment through the provision of new homes, employment and essential community infrastructure. Investment in Public Transport

will be a crucial element of the transport strategy enabling greater internalisation of journeys on the peninsula, utilising public transport rather the private motor vehicle. Journeys further afield beyond the peninsula will also create greater patronage of public transport facilitated with the increase in frequency of public transport.

2.3.26 This investment in public transport improvements will help to bring about a major reduction in carbon emissions from transport early in the plan period.

2.3.27 **Policy DM18: Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans** states that development proposals that will generate a significant amount of movement will be supported by a Transport Assessment, Transport Statement and/or a commitment to provide a Travel Plan. Specifically, Policy DM12 also states that Development proposals on the Hoo Peninsula will adhere to an Area-wide Travel Plan.

2.3.28 The supporting text to **Policy DM12** notes that the Area-wide Travel Plan to cover the Hoo Peninsula will help to:

- reassure local communities in providing for better transport;
- deliver the proposed place-based vision for access and movement;
- satisfy the requirements of the relevant transport authorities;
- provide for a smooth planning process; and
- address air quality and noise impacts.

2.3.29 **Dean Lewis Estates, working with the Hoo consortium, will work positively with Medway Council to develop the Area-wide Travel Plan.** The objectives of which are to create a model shift reducing the reliance on private vehicle journeys and encouraging journeys on public transport, and by cycling and walking. This will be achieved through a combination of measures including land use master planning, financial contributions towards the upgrade and reinforcement of public transport, provision of attractive walking and cycling networks and other incentives to encourage less reliance on private vehicle journeys.

2.3.30 Dean Lewis Estates also agrees with the principle of a vehicle trip credit and believes that a 10% reduction (Policy DM15) in vehicle trip generation is an achievable target for developments on the Hoo Peninsula against current trip levels, if the appropriate levels of mitigations are implemented at both local and strategic levels. Whilst a further reduction in vehicle trips should be targeted, consideration should be given to how the 10% reduction in vehicles is applied to the trip credit as the Vision-led strategy set out within the STA should already minimise vehicle trips on the road network. A Sustainable Transport Strategy for the Hoo Peninsula will help to both achieve and potentially further increase the modal shift away from private car use.

2.3.31 Dean Lewis Estates consider that allocated sites should be prioritised for trip credits ahead of speculative applications and that vehicle trip budgets should not be degraded by developments not accounted for in the Local Plan.

2.3.32 **Health, Communities and Infrastructure**

In addition to the health and wellbeing issues noted, a key component of wider community infrastructure is “education”, both Primary and Secondary provision – which is not specifically identified in the questions below. **The Regulation 19 plan should be site specific** as to where Primary and Secondary education provision will be made to serve the needs of the resident communities on the Hoo Peninsula.



**Medway Council Local Plan 2041**

**Regulation 18b Consultation**

**September 2024**

**Consultation response  
by**

**Site ID: SR16**

**Form submission ID: 231**

**Respondent ID: 359**

**Supplementary information**



**DEAN LEWIS.**  
ESTATES LIMITED

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**1.1 Background .....2**

**1.2 Developing a Spatial Strategy – Rural Development Site .....2**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 Dean Lewis Estates Limited is a professional strategic land promotion company specialising in the delivery of sustainable residential and mixed-use development.
- 1.1.2 This submission provides Dean Lewis Estates Limited response to and representations in respect of this Regulation 18 consultation into the 'Medway Local Plan 2041'.
- 1.1.3 This submission relates specifically to **Rural Growth and Cliffe Woods in particular**. It should be read in conjunction with the submitted Dean Lewis Estates Representations which focus on the key planning policy considerations for the Medway Local Plan to enable its successful implementation, thereby sustainably meeting the identified full objectively assessed needs for housing (OAN) and enabling the wider regeneration of Medway to continue in concert with economic growth and delivering significant social and environmental net gains throughout the plan area.

### **1.2 Developing a Spatial Strategy – Rural Development Site**

- 1.2.1 Dean Lewis Estates fully support the Council's identification of the Hoo Peninsula is a sustainable and strategic location for residential-led growth in its Reg 18 B Plan. Cliffe Woods forms part of this growth strategy.

#### **Land off Merryboys Road, Cliffe Woods East Site ID: SR16**

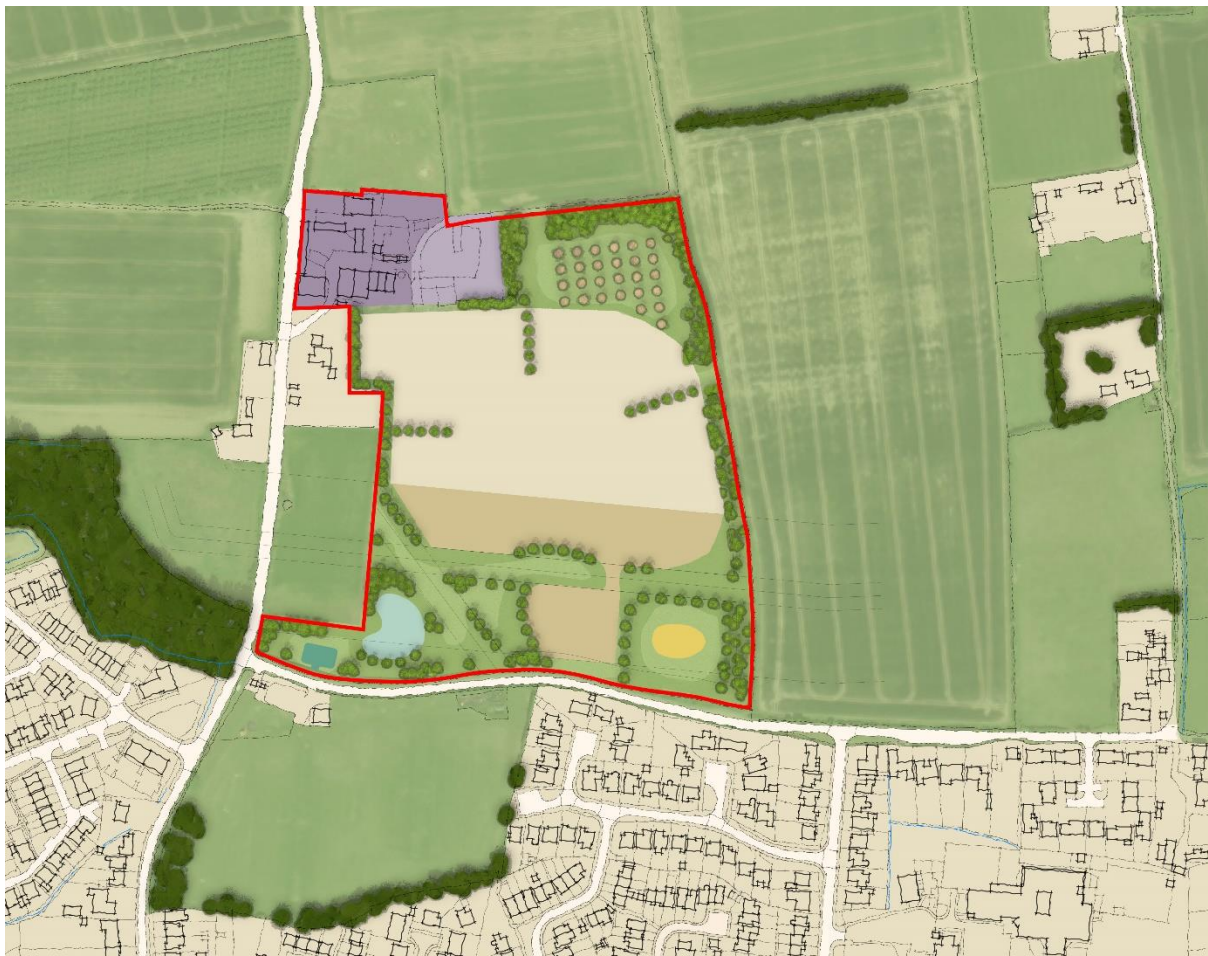
- 1.2.2 Development at Merryboys Road, Cliffe Woods will provide Circa 120 dwellings and an extension of East Croft Business centre which will integrate with and complement the existing settlement. The business centre expansion will provide new high quality employment space (circa 1 acre = 1,850sqm 20,000sqft) aimed at start-up and small-scale local businesses.

Crucially it is the only proposed development site at Cliffe Woods that offers mixed use housing and employment development that will serve to enhance the self-reliance of the settlement thereby improving the sustainability of the settlement and providing jobs locally.



1.2.3 The site will provide a community or and/or allotments and electric vehicle charging points will be provided off Merryboys Road that will serve the needs of the community. Presently these are not available in Cliffe Woods nor the surrounding area.

1.2.4 An extract of the Illustrative Framework Plan for the site is shown below.



1.2.5 A summary of the he Site Constraints, Social, Environmental and Economic Considerations are set below

***Constraints***

- Chattenden Woods and Lodge Hill SSSI lie to the southeast of the prospective development site.
- Thames Estuary & Marshes lie to the north of the prospective development site.
- Hoo Stop Line Heritage Asset crosses the site.
- High Pressure gas main crosses the site.
- Minor impact of traffic generation.

***Social Considerations***

- The new residential neighbourhood will meet the critical housing need to provide new market and affordable homes.
- The new neighbourhood will integrate with the existing residential area and with the local employment, recreational and amenity areas.
- The development site is within easy walking distance of the existing commercial centre at Cliffe Woods and is also in easy walking distance of local schools and essential facilities.
- New Employment provision at East Croft Business centre will provide additional Local employment and reinforce the sustainability of the settlement.
- New Community Orchard and or allotments will serve to enhance community cohesion ad improve health and well-being.

***Environmental Considerations***

- Planned growth will provide for sustainable development that addresses climate change in terms of the design of new homes and employment provision.

- 
- The site is host to the 'Hoo Stop line' which is a Heritage Asset. The Stop line will form a green corridor through the site. An interpretive display board will be provided on site to provide the local community with the historic context of the WWII defences.
  - The are of the site which hosts a high-pressure gas main will be restricted the appropriate level of low-density development.
  - The site will be endowed with significant woodland structure planting and community orchard as well as providing areas of informal open space and a children's play area.
  - The surface water drainage attenuation for the site will also be located at the lowest point in the southwestern corner of the site.
  - The site will host a communal electric car charging facility which will serve the resident community and will serve to encourage greater patronage of electric cars.

### ***Economic***

- The additional housing will provide the immediate economic impact of supporting local jobs for local companies and trades people involved in the building of new homes and provision of infrastructure.
- New Employment provision at East Croft Business centre will provide additional Local employment and reinforce the sustainability of the settlement.
- Continuing to the grow the community of Cliffe Woods will provide additional economically active workforce close to the strategic employment at Kingsnorth, Grain and more local employment provision within the existing and proposed new communities on the Hoo Peninsula.
- Access to local employment will help to reduce out commuting and will assist in capturing greater expenditure for local businesses and on the Hoo Peninsula, thereby improving and reinforcing the viability of local businesses.

1.2.6 Dean Lewis Estates confirm that delivery of the above site achievable in the first five years of the plan period.

1.2.7 It will assist Medway Council to meet its housing requirement and ensure that development is focused in sustainable locations. The mixed-use nature of the



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scheme will help to support and enhance the local community and help to improve greater self-reliance pf the settlement.

Planning Policy Regeneration, Community and Culture  
Medway Council  
Gun Wharf  
Dock Road  
Chatham  
Kent  
ME4 4TR

**Date:** 6 September 2024

**Our ref:** 04051/03/NT/TJ/32749322v4

Dear Sir/Madam

## **Medway Local Plan 2041: Regulation 18 Consultation 2024 - Representations on behalf of Haven Leisure Limited**

On behalf of our client, Haven Leisure Limited ("Haven"), this representation responds to Medway Council's second Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation running from July to September 2024. Haven is a subsidiary of Bourne Leisure Limited which submitted a response to the 'Setting the Direction for Medway 2040' Local Plan consultation in October 2023, the 'Call for Sites' consultation in February 2023, and the Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation held in 2018.

By way of background, Haven operates 40 holiday sites in the form of holiday parks and family entertainment resorts in Great Britain and is therefore a significant contributor to the national tourist economy, as well as local visitor economies. Within Medway, Haven operates Kent Coast Holiday Park (formerly known as Allhallows Holiday Park).

For the company to continue to attract customers and to respond to changing market conditions, Haven needs to invest regularly in order to provide new and improved facilities and accommodation. For many of Haven's holiday parks, improvements often necessitate the expansion of sites to improve the quality, type and amount of accommodation, and increase the range of facilities in order to extend the holiday season to provide more of a year-round attraction.

Please see below Haven's response to this Consultation which includes the Council's preferred option for growth, draft detailed policies, and questions. Also enclosed is a Site Concept Plan. This letter focuses on the following topics:

- Vision and Strategic Objectives,
- Spatial Growth Option
- Natural Environment
- Economic Development

## Vision for Medway 2041

Haven endorses the plan's Vision to strengthen Medway's position in the economy. The draft Vision confirms that Medway is a leading economic player in the region, supporting the growth of its business base and attracting new investment. The Vision also states that the contribution of Medway's rich environmental heritage and the economic benefit to the area is valued through eco-tourism.

The Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation in 2018 recognised Kent Coast Holiday Park as a major leisure and tourism destination and the contribution static caravan accommodation makes to Medway's tourism economy in particular. This reflects Paragraphs 88 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) which promotes tourism in rural locations, to support the rural economy.

Within this context, Haven considers that the Vision for 2041 needs to also include the wider role of tourism and not just eco-tourism, specifically to highlight that tourism is a growing activity in Medway that should be supported to continue to make a significant contribution to economic growth. This is recognised in the Strategic Objectives section of the emerging Local Plan and Haven would encourage the Vision to be updated to reflect this.

Haven proposes adding the following wording to the Vision:

*"Medway has optimised the opportunity to support growth in the tourist sector, further contributing to the diversity of the economy in the Borough."*

## Spatial Development Strategy

The draft Local Plan confirms that *"the spatial strategy provides for a range of development needs, Growth (sic) in different parts of the urban, suburban and rural areas will reflect their distinctive character and identity, the potential for a mix of development, and the need for upgrades in infrastructure and services."* It also states that the strategy provides for sustained economic growth and through providing a mixed portfolio of employment sites, supporting business growth and capitalising upon a skilled workforce. This is endorsed by Haven.

The Plan confirms that SG03 'Blended' Strategy is the preferred option for the spatial distribution of growth. This option blends regeneration and greenfield development. There is a 'brownfield first' focus with regeneration in urban centres and waterfront locations, complemented by range of sites in suburban and rural areas.

Including rural sites within the Council's final Spatial Strategy is appropriate for the Local Plan given that the majority of land within the Medway is rural. There is a need for growth in these areas to support the vitality of rural settlements.

The NPPF (2023) promotes a strong rural economy through supporting sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments. Haven is a major employer within the Borough, providing over 160 jobs for local residents. It is considered that employment at Kent Coast Holiday Park can assist in supporting the rural economy and increase local labour opportunities, promoting the diversification of Medway's economic base.

Haven encourages the Council to include rural sites within the final Spatial Strategy and endorse the approach taken by the Church Commissioners for England in the promotion of site AS21 'Land west of

Allhallows' for a residential-led mixed use development including tourism and leisure uses. It is also considered that development at site AS21 can be phased with there being an opportunity for the tourism and leisure uses to come forward at an earlier stage.

## **Natural Environment**

Haven recognises the importance and value of Medway's natural environment which informs draft Policies S2, S3 and S4.

Draft Policy S4 should recognise existing land use and development potential when determining the role of the landscape and the protection and enhancement that is required. For sites such as Kent Coast Holiday Park, which is in an environmentally sensitive location, it is important that Local Plan policies do not preclude appropriate development where commensurate mitigation measures can be implemented to address both direct and indirect impacts.

Accordingly, future decisions should take full account of the specific characteristics of each development proposal and assess whether it makes a positive contribution to protecting or enhancing the environment, when considered on a case by case basis.

Question 2 asks the following *"Do you consider that the Council should seek to go beyond the statutory minimum of a 10% increase in BNG? What evidence can you provide to support your view?"* In response we consider that a blanket approach to exceeding 10% BNG provision for all applicable development is not reasonable and risks making constrained sites unviable. It is better to require 10% provision in accordance with legislation and seek other ecology and landscape benefits on a site by site basis where reasonable, justified and tested.

## **Economic Development**

### **Tourism, culture and visitor accommodation**

Paragraph 7.7.1 notes that the tourism and cultural economy plays an important role in raising Medway's image and profile, and supporting employment, business, creative and leisure opportunities. Tourism, arts and culture, are therefore central to the Council's ambitions for the area and sit at the heart of the Medway Council Plan. This is endorsed by Haven.

Long-established tourism operators such as Haven already employ a significant number of people within the region. It is critically important that Haven's current contribution and future scope for growth are fully recognised and built on, in relation to the approach taken to the role of tourism in the Local Plan, when identifying the key issues for the economy as a whole.

Draft Policy T13 confirms that *"Development that contributes positively to the regeneration of Medway, extends the existing tourism, cultural and visitor economy offer, and enhances the vibrancy and vitality of town centres and waterfront will be welcomed"*. This is endorsed by Haven.

The draft Policy further states that *"the development of rural and marine based tourism opportunities will also be welcomed, where they can demonstrate that negative impacts on the environment can be avoided."* This principle is endorsed, but there should also be the ability to minimise any adverse impacts and if necessary ensure there is a provision to mitigate such impacts to ensure that wider plan



objectives can be realised. On this basis, Haven proposes the following update to Draft Policy T13 (bold):

*“The development of rural and marine based tourism opportunities will also be welcomed, where they can demonstrate that negative impacts on the environment can be avoided **or mitigated**.”*

The enhancement and provision of visitor accommodation is also promoted within Policy T13, and is consistent with NPPF policy and the emerging Vision and strategic objectives. The support in policy for the delivery of new accommodation or the redevelopment or extension of existing sites is paramount. As such, this emerging policy is endorsed by Haven.

With regard to the criteria listed in the draft Policy, as above, any adverse impacts should be avoided or minimised, or be capable of being mitigated. Haven proposes the following update to Criteria 4 (bold):

*“Where the proposal avoids **or mitigates** negative impacts on the environment, is appropriate in scale and nature for its location, sensitively designed, respects local amenity, the characteristics of the built, historic and natural environment, avoids siting in areas of high flood risk and intrusion into the landscapes of open countryside.”*

## **Conclusion**

We trust these representations are clear and will be considered and reflected fully within the drafting of the Medway Local Plan. Lichfields and Haven would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and provide any further information you may require, to assist with the next stage of the Local Plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Helen Ashby-Ridgway should you require any further clarification on any of the points made.

We would also be grateful if you could confirm receipt of these representations and keep us informed in the future of any further consultation stages on the Local Plan and any other emerging local development documents

Yours faithfully

**Hannah Whitney**

Planning Director

BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI





**Key**

- Site Boundary
- Haven Development
- Residential Development
- Public Open Space/  
Landscaping

DRAFT

**LICHFIELDS**

Project	Allhallows
Title	Site Concept Plan
Client	The Church Commissioners for England
Date	06.09.24
Scale	NTS
Drawn by	SG
Drg. No.	IL04051-03-001 RevD





# Medway Council Local Plan 2041

## **Regulation 18 Consultation**

September 2024



[gladman.co.uk](https://www.gladman.co.uk)



01260 288888

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Context

- 1.1.1 I am writing on behalf of Gladman Developments to provide our comments on the Medway Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation. Gladman appreciate the opportunity to comment and request to be kept updated as the Local Plan progresses.
- 1.1.2 As you are aware, Gladman are promoting three sites in Medway: Land off Dux Court Road, Hoo St. Werburgh; land off Ratcliffe Highway, Hoo St. Werburgh; and land north of Chattenden. Full site submissions are included at Section 4. Should the Council wish to discuss the sites in the context of the emerging Local Plan, we would welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Council to determine how the sites could help deliver the Local Plan's aspirations.
- 1.1.3 Gladman specialise in the promotion of strategic land for residential development and associated community infrastructure and have considerable experience in contributing to the Local Plan preparation process, having made representations on numerous planning documents throughout the UK, alongside participating in many Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan examinations. It is based on this experience that this representation is made.
- 1.1.4 The following sections respond to some key issues for the Local Plan that Gladman consider should be addressed to ensure that the policies are robust, and the plan is sound.

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## 2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

### 2.1 Consultation on a revised National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1.1 On 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024, the Government published its proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework for consultation until 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The proposed revisions include reversing some of the changes introduced by the current December 2023 iteration and the inclusion of new policies. Paragraphs 226-233 of the consultation version of the NPPF propose new transitional arrangements for emerging local plans that are currently in preparation.
- 2.1.2 The consultation version of the NPPF makes a number of changes to the December 2023 version and given the current stage of the emerging Medway Local Plan, the Council and many of its neighbours will be required to prepare plans that are consistent with the changes being proposed, should they be adopted.
- 2.1.3 The Government is also consulting on a new standard method for calculating housing need, using a stock-based model to support its target of delivering 1.5 million homes over the next five years. Gladman acknowledge that Medway's local housing needs assessment under the stock based method is broadly in line with the current standard method. However, in the neighbouring authorities of Gravesham and Tonbridge and Malling would see there and increase in their housing needs and the Council will need to work with these authorities to ensure their housing needs are met in full
- 2.1.4 Alongside the proposed changes, a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS)<sup>1</sup> was made by Angela Rayner, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State (SoS) for Housing Communities and Local Government, on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 entitled "Building the homes we need". The clear terms of the WMS are a statement of the Government's policy regarding the use and development of land. The WMS reaffirms that the country is in "the most acute housing crisis in living memory". There is a clear tone in the Government's messaging to improve affordability and a commitment to building the 1.5 million homes it aims to deliver over the next five years.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2024-07-30/hcws48>



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2.1.5 These representations have been drafted with reference to the December 2023 NPPF and the associated updates that were made to the Planning Practice Guidance; however, it is important to acknowledge the wider potential changes to the planning system in the short to medium term.

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### 3 MEDWAY LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18 (2024)

#### 3.1 Plan Period

- 3.1.1 Gladman note that the current Local Development Scheme intends for the Local Plan to be adopted by Autumn 2026. Whilst we support proactive plan making, the plan period should be amended to ensure that it remains in alignment with paragraph 22 of the NPPF.
- 3.1.2 To protect against any slip in the LDS, Gladman respectfully consider that the plan period should run until 2042/2043 to ensure that it has 15 years from adoption on a realistic plan making timescale.

#### 3.2 The Spatial Strategy

- 3.2.1 Gladman supports the Councils current preferred spatial strategy option "SGO3 – Blended Strategy".
- 3.2.2 Gladman welcome the recognition that development in rural areas could have significant capacity for homes. Much of the countryside within Medway is on the Hoo Peninsular and the Council note that the vast majority of sites that have been put forward for potential development beyond the Green Belt are in this location. In general, Gladman support the identification of the Hoo Peninsular as a key location for growth.
- 3.2.3 There is significant potential for the delivery of homes on Hoo. The draft Hoo Development Framework was published for consultation in 2022, and whilst the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) is now absent, the Council must consider how development in this location can be delivered.
- 3.2.4 Despite the absence of HIF, there are significant levels of growth that can be delivered on Hoo, including necessary infrastructure and Gladman supports the acknowledgement of the potential for large scale growth on the Hoo peninsula in paragraph 8.12.1. The Hoo peninsula affords Medway the opportunity for holistic development that can offer a critical mass of development to ensure the plans

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laudable 'sustainable and green future objective' is achieved. Sustainable development on the peninsular has the potential to deliver a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits.

3.2.5 The social benefits arising from residential development are significant; high quality, eco-friendly homes to contribute to the housing needs of the authority and much needed affordable homes. It is well documented that affordable housing is more likely to be delivered on greenfield sites with fewer viability concerns than traditionally experienced on brownfield sites. The urban regeneration strategy may present a range of viability issues typically associated with the complexities of redevelopment that could reduce the level of affordable housing delivered by the schemes. Development on Hoo could ensure the delivery of affordable homes and make a substantial contribution to the affordable housing need of the authority. It is also important to recognise that residential development on Hoo will be delivered beyond the Green Belt, reducing the need to release Green Belt from other areas through the demonstration of exceptional circumstances.

3.2.6 New housing can also deliver upgrades in terms of social infrastructure, provide a new, expansive area of community parkland, employment space, retail facilities, primary and secondary schools, and healthcare facilities. Comprehensive development can provide new and enhanced leisure and recreation facilities for existing Hoo residents can provide betterment to quality of life on Hoo. New highways infrastructure and road network improvements are a significant benefit of comprehensive development on Hoo, more detail on which is provided later in this response.

3.2.7 Residential development will also enhance and support the local economy of Hoo by supporting the large scale employment sites at Grain and Kingsnorth. Given that these locations are providing a significant level of economic growth, it is important that the workforce expected to be employed at these locations have access to suitable and sustainable homes. The new and existing residents will also make significant

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contributions to the economy, supporting local shops and services to ensure their continued viability and vitality.

3.2.8 Well designed, landscape and climate conscious development will ensure that growth on Hoo can be achieved without significant harm to the environment, and numerous ecological and environmental enhancements can be achieved. New areas of open space, comprehensive landscaping plans, eco-friendly homes and bio-diversity net gain can all be readily achieved on Hoo.

3.2.9 Growth in this location could also increase the sustainable travel options in the area, including contributions and support for local services such as a high-quality, high-frequency bus service to support sustainable modes of travel. The delivery of upgrades to service infrastructure such as high-speed broadband and 4G will in turn support businesses and residents in facilitating home-working and reducing commuting. Combined with the delivery of a new local retail centre and improvements to local services, the reliance on the private car could be greatly reduced.

3.2.10 Gladman look forward to working collaboratively with Medway to explore the options for the funding and delivery of infrastructure that can support growth on Hoo and bring forward the significant benefits detailed above and would be keen to see both an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and updated Viability Assessment. We consider that robust versions of both of these documents are essential in order to appropriately consider many of the draft policies in the current Regulation 18 plan.

### 3.3 Affordable Housing

3.3.1 Without having been able to assess either an Infrastructure Delivery Plan or an up-to-date Viability Assessment, it is not possible for Gladman to comment specifically on this matter presently.

3.3.2 Given many of the competing demands and pressures upon the greenfield sites on the Hoo Peninsula, Gladman would likely support the continuation of the present 25% affordable housing requirement which is likely achievable on the Hoo sites. However,



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Gladman believe this this can only be properly assessed when the full suite of evidence base documents is made available.

## 3.4 Other Strategic Matters

- 3.4.1 The Council are yet to publish their Transport Assessment which will be a critical piece of the Local Plans evidence base. Gladman consider that Council must properly assess the highways capacity of the district through modelling, modal shift and discussions with site promoters and key stakeholders to find solutions to these constraints which can be funded through Medway wide developer levies.

## 3.5 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.5.1 Gladman respectfully consider that it is not justified or necessary for the Council to go beyond the 10% minimum Biodiversity Net Gain. Gladman therefore support the delivery of 10%, but not anything in excess of the current statutory percentage.
- 3.5.2 The Planning Practice Guidance was updated in February 2024 to provide greater clarity on BNG; it states:

*"Plan-makers should not seek a higher percentage than the statutory objective of 10% biodiversity net gain, either on an area-wide basis or for specific allocations for development unless justified. To justify such policies they will need to be evidenced including as to local need for a higher percentage, local opportunities for a higher percentage and any impacts on viability for development. Consideration will also need to be given to how the policy will be implemented."*<sup>2</sup>

- 3.5.3 Therefore, any requirements that go beyond 10% BNG need to be clearly justified, and evidence demonstrating the implications of delivering a higher BNG percentage needs to be provided. A higher BNG requirement is likely to require extensive areas of land to be removed from the potential developable area of sites and is not making

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<sup>2</sup> PPG Reference ID: 74-006-20240214

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efficient use of land as a result. Furthermore, the provision of BNG can be incredibly costly and can impact the viability of sites as a result. A 10% BNG ensures that developments leave more biodiversity than was previously the case and is not overly burdensome on developers.

- 3.5.4 Increasing BNG above and beyond the minimum 10% statutory figure could also impact upon the overall viability of each scheme and its ability to deliver the much-needed housing (including affordable housing) and supporting other social/community facilities required.

## 3.6 Green Belt

- 3.6.1 The Hoo Peninsula is relatively unconstrained and offers the Council an exciting opportunity to deliver substantial levels of growth as per their current preferred spatial option without the need to review Green Belt at this moment in time.

## 3.7 Need for a Supermarket on the Hoo Peninsula

- 3.7.1 Gladman support draft Policy S22: Hoo Peninsula not only in the context of the potential for supermarket provision but also in the provision of much wider social and community services and facilities. This will not only provide for the creation of a more sustainable community, but also increased social cohesion and a greater number of internalised trips helping to reduce vehicular trips off the Peninsula. Gladman would be open to further discussions with the Council on potential suitable locations for the supermarket including the site submissions contained in Section 4.

## 4 SITE SUBMISSION PROFILES

4.1.1 Gladman are promoting three sites in Medway, all suitably and sustainably located on the Hoo Peninsular. These have previously been submitted through the Call for Sites process, and Gladman have discussed these sites directly with the Council previously, however, should you wish to discuss these sites further please do not hesitate to contact us.

### 4.2 Land off Chattenden Lane, Chattenden

4.2.1 Land of Chattenden Lane, Chattenden is 35.16 acres and is capable of delivering up to 530 homes alongside land for a primary school, a retail unit, public house, public open space and green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems. The site is adjacent to the existing residential development of Chattenden, to the west of Peninsular Way, south of Deansgate Ridge Golf Course and the decommissioned Chattenden Barracks. The settlement lies approximately 4km to the north of Chatham, and 3km south east of Cliffe Woods. A site location plan is shown in Figure 1 below.

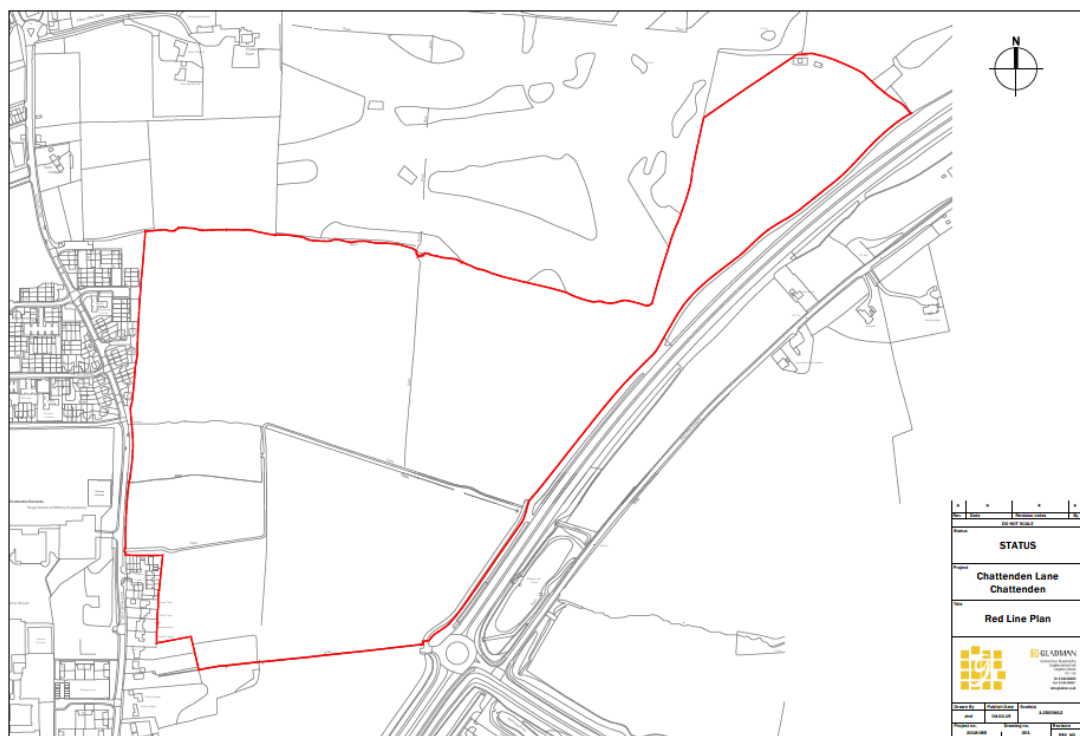


Figure 1: Site Location Plan, Chattenden Road

- 
- 4.2.2 The site is identified on the policies map as HHH6 and one of the current preferred sites for residential development.
- 4.2.3 The site is a suitable and sustainable location for growth, adjacent to the existing urban area of Chattenden and could also deliver a number of benefits. These include but are not limited to investment in the local community, a significant boost to the supply of much needed market and affordable homes, and new social infrastructure such as land for a school and community uses.
- 4.2.4 The site itself is suitable for development, being well located to existing built form with good access to local services and facilities. The site is well contained within the landscape and other landscape features can be retained and enhanced. Development at this location will not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety, nor have a severe impact on the operation of the highway network in terms of capacity. No significant impacts on ecological habitats will arise from the development and the site is within Flood Zone 1, at the lowest risk of flooding. There are no designated heritage assets within or immediately adjacent to the site and development at this location would not affect the setting of any locally listed buildings.



### 4.3 Land off Ratcliffe Highway, Hoo St. Werburgh

- 4.3.1 The site measures circa 12 hectares and is capable of delivering up to 240 homes. It is located adjacent to the existing residential development on the western edge of Hoo St. Werburgh, bound by Ratcliffe Highway to the north and is in an ideal location on the Hoo Peninsular. A site location plan is shown below in Figure 2.

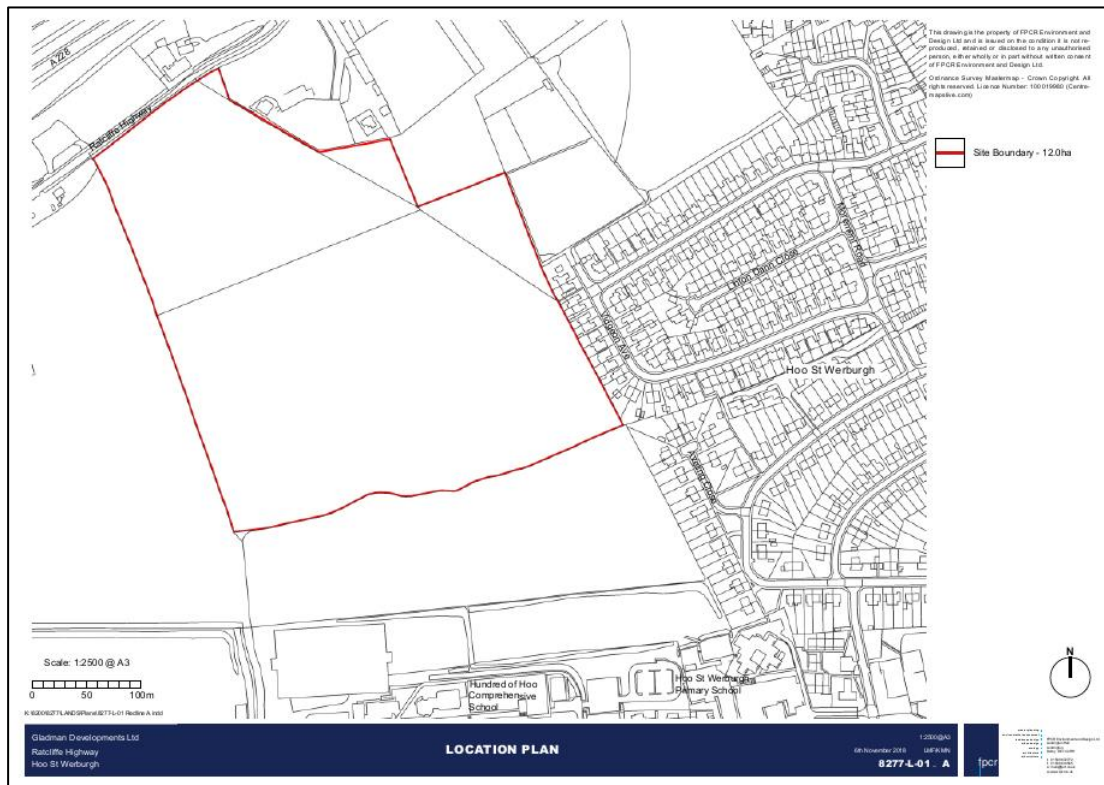


Figure 2: Site Location Plan, Ratcliffe Highway

- 4.3.2 The site is identified on the policies map as HHH11 and one of the current preferred sites for residential development. The site is also subject to a live planning application for 240 residential dwellings including 25% affordable housing (Reference [MC/23/1934](#))
- 4.3.3 The site itself is a suitable and sustainable location for development. The site is not subject to any statutory national, or international designations for landscape or nature conservation. A wide range of services and facilities within close proximity to the site include, but are not limited to a primary school, secondary school, sports and

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leisure facilities, a library, post office, pharmacy, health centre and various eateries. The site is also served by public transport facilities, offering an alternative to the private car. A comprehensive Green Infrastructure framework, public open space and new areas for recreation and play can also be delivered by the site, alongside a sustainable drainage system to cater for the surface water drainage requirements of the development. These areas will also support ecological enhancement and be design features that benefit biodiversity on site. An Indicative Framework Plan is displayed below.

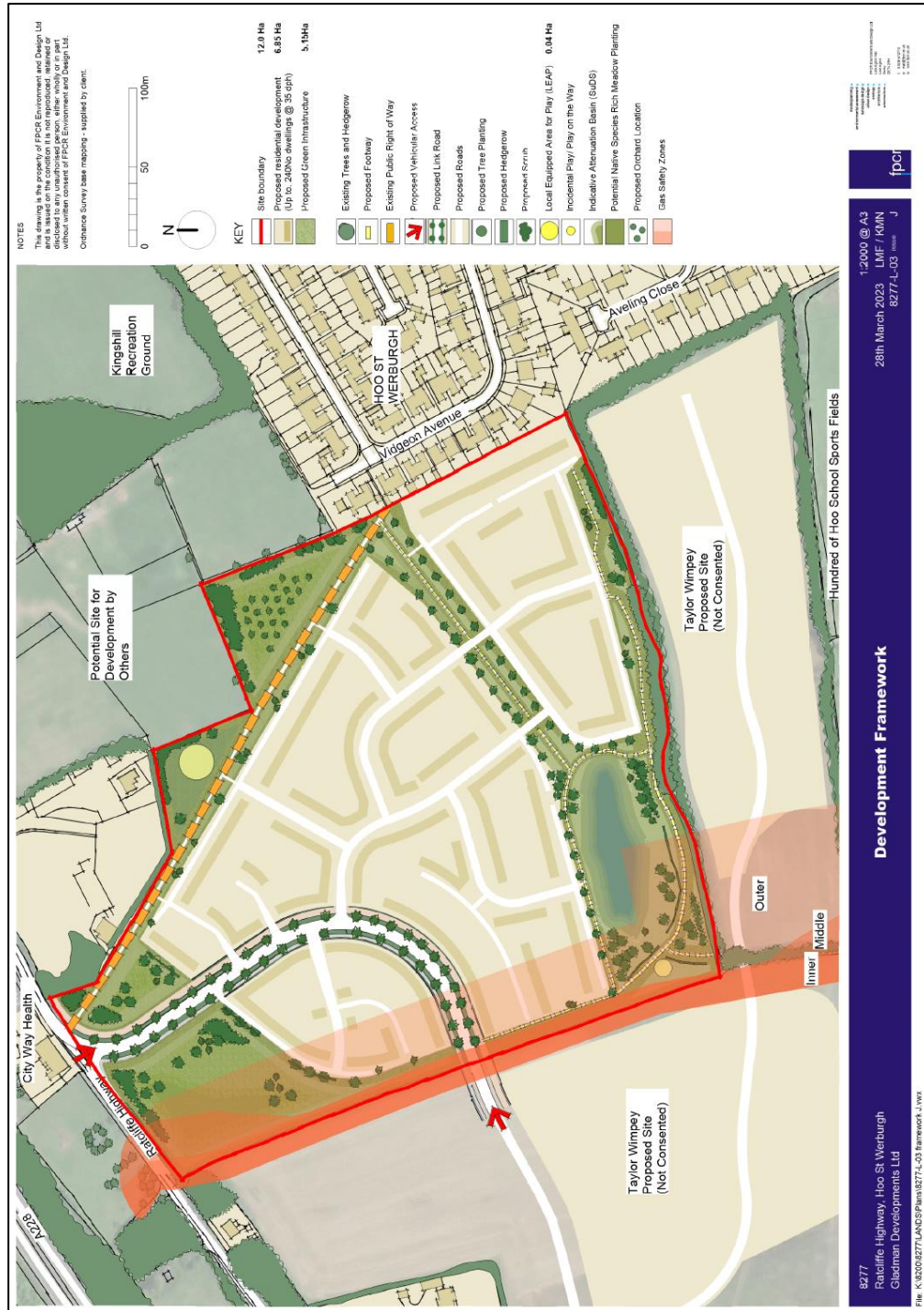


Figure 3: Indicative Framework Plan, Ratcliffe Highways

4.4.1 Land at Dux Court Road measures circa 23 hectares and is a suitable and sustainable location for development. A site location plan is included at Figure 3.



**4.4.2** The site is suitably located near a range of services and facilities, including a primary school, secondary school, medical centre, pharmacy, shops and a post office. There are public transport services available within the vicinity of the site, offering a suitable alternative to the private car. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and there are no known ecological or heritage constraints to development at this location.

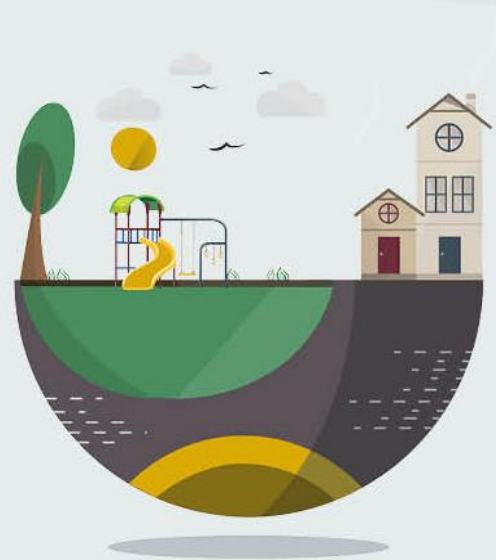


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## 5 CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 Gladman welcomes the opportunity to comment on the issues and options that are currently being explored by the Council. These representations have been drafted with reference to the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) and the associated updates that were made to Planning Practice Guidance.
- 5.1.2 Gladman have provided comments on a number of the issues that have been identified in the Council's consultation material and recommend that the matters raised are carefully explored during the process of undertaking the new Local Plan.
- 5.1.3 We hope you have found these representations informative and useful towards the preparation of the Medway Local Plan.
- 5.1.4 Gladman welcome any future engagement with the Council and if you would like to discuss this representations or other matters, please contact us at [policy@gladman.co.uk](mailto:policy@gladman.co.uk).



planning  
transport  
design  
environment  
infrastructure  
land

# **MEDWAY COUNCIL REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

**Medway Submission ID: 2844**

**Land south of Sundridge Hill, Cuxton, Kent  
ME2 1LF**

CLIENT: Trevor Heathcote LLP



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**Appendix 1** – Title Plan

**Appendix 2** - Proposed Option Plans for Site (Appendix 2a and 2b)



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 CONTEXT

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- 1.1.1 This representation has been prepared on behalf of Trevor Heathcote LLP in response to the Medway Council's ('MC's) Regulation 18b Local Plan consultation ('Medway Local Plan 2041'). The consultation is a statement of Medway Council's commitment to getting a new Local Plan in place for the period 2026-2041 and seeks to provide certainty on the direction of Medway's growth.
- 1.1.2 For the avoidance of doubt, this representation document relates to Medway online submission ID: **'2844'**.

## 1.2 REPRESENTATION SUMMARY

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- 1.2.1 This submission has been prepared in relation to our client's site Land south of Sundridge Hill, Cuxton, Kent ME2 1LF (hereafter referred to as 'land south of Sundridge Hill' or 'the Site') which has been previously promoted within the Regulation 18 consultation in October 2023 and previous Call for Sites exercises.
- 1.2.2 This representation continues to promote the availability of our client's site' for the allocation of either:
- 'Extension of an existing household waste and recycling centre site'*
- or;*
- 'Extension of an existing gypsy & traveller site'*
- 1.2.3 This representation serves to demonstrate that irrespective of the strategic spatial pattern of growth within Medway, the Local Plan will be required to ensure that the delivery of *circa.* 28,500 new homes and 62.3 hectares of employment land over the Plan period is adequately supported by the necessary accompanying infrastructure. In addition to schools, transport and green infrastructure, this must also include household waste and recycling centres.
- 1.2.4 The consultation document in our view rightly identifies that the forecast increase in population over the Local Plan period may require additional capacity to be developed and suggest upgrades to existing facilities may be considered.
- 1.2.5 However, the Waste Needs Assessment 2024 prepared in support of the emerging Local Plan suggests sufficient household waste recycling transfer capacity for the Plan period, although this conclusion assumes all three sites in the Plan area (including Cuxton) will operate at 100% capacity and remain operational throughout the life of the Plan.
- 1.2.6 Given the extent of housing proposed in Medway and the expected increase in recyclable waste from households, we strongly disagree with the conclusion of the

Waste Needs Assessment which would result in Medway being entirely reliant on three sites to operate at maximum capacity, with no flexibility or contingency should one site cease operation or reduce capacity.

- 1.2.7 We support the Council's identification that additional capacity may be required and strongly suggest that to provide greater certainty, policy allocations are used to secure an uplift in waste handling capacity in line with population growth in Medway.
- 1.2.8 Sites such as that of our client's which are capable of increased capacity are promoted for allocated expansion to provide sufficient excess capacity and a contingency given the limited number of operational sites and the context of an increase of nearly 30,000 households in the Plan area.
- 1.2.9 Separately, it is confirmed within the emerging Local Plan Housing Topic Paper that the provision of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation will be included within the district's overall housing need. The Council has commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment to provide an updated evidence base for the new Local Plan, which confirms that there is a gypsy and traveller need for 34 pitches for households meeting the planning definition and up to 19 pitches for undetermined households.
- 1.2.10 In the absence of sufficient pitches, additional or expanded sites are necessary and it is submitted that our client's site represents a logical extension to an established adjacent site at Cuxton.
- 1.2.11 This representation demonstrates how the allocation of our client's site within the emerging Local Plan for either of the above uses, would positively contribute to meeting the draft Plan's strategic objectives and is a necessary component of any of the proposed spatial strategies for growth. For the reasons outlined within this representation, we submit that it is necessary for the spatial strategy for growth to be adequately supported by a robust scheme of supporting infrastructure allocations and gypsy and traveller accommodation sites, if it is to sustainably deliver the identified housing and employment requirements in full.
- 1.2.12 Whilst the consultation document does not expressly invite comment on individual sites, it is highly pertinent to the consideration of the different spatial strategies to consider the suitability and deliverability of individual sites to ensure the Local Plan is deliverable and thus "sound" (National Planning Policy Framework 'NPPF', para 35).
- 1.2.13 For the avoidance of doubt, this representation document is intended to be read alongside the on-line form/platform submission which has been completed separately and refers to this document.

### 1.3 PLAN CONTEXT

---

- 1.3.1 This consultation is MC's second Regulation 18 consultation (known hereafter as the Regulation 18b consultation). The consultation runs from 15 July to 08 September 2024.

- 1.3.2 This consultation builds upon the previous Regulation 18 consultation, which was done at a very high level and did not include any preferred strategy for growth but provided options for growth within the background of an identified housing requirement and a draft "Vision" and "Strategic Objectives".
- 1.3.3 The current consultation provides an updated vision, strategic objectives, and an overview of the Strategic Growth Options available to the council (including their preferred strategic growth option), draft planning policies and policy maps (showing indicative site allocations for residential lead development and employment lead development).
- 1.3.4 The Local Plan consultation document provides a list of 44 questions relating to all 13 chapters of the Regulation 18b consultation.
- 1.3.5 The Council's Local Development Scheme (February 2024) anticipates the Council publishing the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan in January 2025 for comment.
- 1.3.6 This representation submits that the site remains available, deliverable, and achievable within the forthcoming Plan period. There is no evidence-led basis upon which the site cannot be allocated as part of the forthcoming Regulation 19 Local Plan to help meet the household waste recycling needs of Medway.
- 1.3.7 These representations are intended to be read alongside the online form.

#### 1.4 DRAFT NPPF CONSULTATION AND WRITTEN MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

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- 1.4.1 The Government's proposed reforms to the NPPF (amongst other changes to the Planning System) were unveiled on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 with the publishing of the draft NPPF which will be consulted upon until 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024. In light of this, given the Labour Government's manifesto and the Housing Secretary's recent WMS, it seems likely that most of the proposed changes will be published in an updated version of the NPPF shortly after the closure of the consultation.
- 1.4.2 The draft NPPF was accompanied by a WMS titled 'Building the homes we need', which sets out how the Government is seeking to encourage housebuilding. The WMS sits alongside the draft NPPF and provides specific planning mechanisms to encourage housebuilding and removes exceptions to the application of the presumption, including the removal of Paragraph 226 (i.e., the 4 Year Housing Land Supply exception). Under the revised NPPF, the threshold for the application of the presumption will return to the 5 Year HLS requirement (as well as the Housing Delivery Test requirement).
- 1.4.3 Within the WMS, the Housing Secretary is clear that the 'Standard Method' currently utilised is *"insufficient to deliver on our scale of ambition"* and is *"not up to the job"*, therefore the Government have proposed a 'Revised Method' which requires Local Authorities to plan for numbers of homes that are proportionate to the size of existing housing stock. In this regard, MC under the Standard Method are required to deliver 1,658 dwellings per annum, whereas under the Revised Method, they are required to deliver 1,644 dwellings per annum, which stands as a decrease in the requirement by 14 dwellings, which is not considered to be

significant reduction considering the overall total number of dwelling MC require to deliver per annum.

## 1.5 STRUCTURE OF THIS DOCUMENT

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1.5.1 Below is an overview of the structure of the remainder of the consultation response:

- **Section 2** – Provides feedback on the overall vision and strategic objectives of the Local Plan.
- **Section 3** – Provides an overview of the site promoted, setting out the reasons why the site should be considered for an allocation.
- **Section 4** – Provides commentary on the proposed Medway waste strategy with specific regard to household waste transfer facilities and responds to the consultation questions.
- **Section 5** – Provides commentary on the proposed strategy for addressing the need of gypsy, travellers and travelling show people and responds to the consultation questions.

**Section 7** – Sets out the overall conclusions.



## 2 VISION & STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED VISION

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- 2.1.1 The "Vision" for Medway encompasses broad policy principles for the future emerging Local Plan covering transport, employment, the environment, retail, waste and minerals.
- 2.1.2 The "Vision" seeks to provide more sustainable and resilient development and strengthen and enhance Medway's character, including supporting green infrastructure, creating a healthy place to live and work, and providing decent places to live for all sectors and ages of the community. It further highlights Medway as a leading economic player in the region, where it can support the business space and attract new investment. Alongside development, there should also be improved travel choices and infrastructure.
- 2.1.3 However, the "Vision" is silent on its intention to meet its identified housing need and on its intention to address economic/employment needs. Indeed, the overarching principles for the "Vision" fail to identify housing at all as an important component of the Plan.
- 2.1.4 Whilst the "Vision" talks in general terms about how development is to be provided, central to the "Vision" must be "how much development is provided" as a matter that is fundamental to the framework for growth and spatial strategy as a determinative matter. This is a significant failing, considering the "Context" identifies "the supply of new homes is central to the Local Plan" (para 2.7).
- 2.1.5 NPPF (para 15) states that:

*The planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a **framework for addressing housing needs** and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.*

- 2.1.6 In the absence of the "Vision" setting out its intention of how much development will be delivered, specifically housing development, it does not provide a positive framework for addressing housing need contrary to the NPPF (para 15). This failing is further perpetrated by the "Strategic Objectives" (see Section 3 of this Statement), which also does not address the scale of housing provision that should be delivered, contrary to the NPPF (para 20). This underlines the importance of the "Vision", setting out the intentions for growth.
- 2.1.7 The "Vision" as set out in para 2.1 must be amended as follows (new text in red):

*Medway has conserved and enhanced its intrinsic cultural and natural heritage and landscapes alongside high quality development to strengthen the area's distinctive character. Medway has achieved sustainable growth through the development of housing, transport, environment, retail,*

*employment and waste and minerals sites that have responded positively to tackling climate change, providing for healthier and more sustainable choices of homes, transport and workplaces, and reducing and mitigating the risks of flooding, overheating, drought and soil erosion.*

- 2.1.8 As per our client's previous representation in October 2023, a new paragraph must still be added, or existing paragraphs amended as part of the "Vision" to set out the intention of the Local Plan to meet identified housing and employment needs. The 7<sup>th</sup> paragraph (un-numbered) could be amended as follows:

*The Plan will seek to deliver 27,700 new homes to ensure the needs of all sections and ages of the community can find decent places to live. The quality of new development has enhanced Medway's profile, and driven up environmental standards in construction, and older properties have been retro-fitted to improve sustainability. Custom and self-build housing has provided new living opportunities for residents. Investment in new services and infrastructure, such as transport, schools, healthcare and open spaces, has supported house building to provide a good quality of life for residents.*

- 2.18 The proposed change aligns with the "Development Needs" (set out in the executive summary of the draft Local Plan, which sets out the approximate housing target of 28,000 homes to be delivered across the Plan Period.
- 2.19 The outline changes are essential to ensure the Plan is "Positively Prepared", "Consistent with National Policy", and therefore "Sound" (NPPF, para 35)

## Summary

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- 2.1.9 Contrary to the requirements of the NPPF (para 15), the "Vision" fails to identify the provision of housing as an important component of the Plan and does not set out how much development should be provided for. This is a central component of the plan and a determinative matter for the spatial strategy. In not expressing the amount of development that is to be delivered, the Plan also fails to be positively prepared to provide a suitable framework for addressing housing needs for the delivery of 27,700 new homes.

## 2.2 COMMENTS ON THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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- 2.2.1 The consultation document sets out four strategic objectives to positively plan for the development and infrastructure needs of Medway whilst conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. The objectives are:
- Prepared from sustainable and green future;
  - Supporting people to lead healthy lives and strengthen our communities;
  - Securing jobs and developing skills for competitive economy; and
  - Boost pride Medway through quality and resilient development.

- 2.2.2 The strategic objectives, including their sub-objectives, have not materially changed since the previous Regulation 18 consultation. Therefore, our client's concerns remain the same as those previously submitted and are outlined below.
- 2.2.3 Paragraph 2.2.1 sets out that these objectives "*feed into the wording of policies and how sites and different locations are assessed for potential development*". It is, therefore, notable that there is no strategic objective dealing expressly with the amount of housing that needs to be delivered.
- 2.2.4 Whilst it is acknowledged that, in general terms, the objective of "*Supporting People to Lead Healthy Lives and Strengthening Our Communities*" mentions in general terms the types of housing to be delivered, it does not set out how much. This is a determining factor in deciding what is the most appropriate spatial strategy and should inform the basis of future strategic policies, as required by the NPPF (para 20 and 23). In accordance with the NPPF (para 11), this should also reflect, as a minimum, the objectively assessed need (27,700 new homes or 1,658 homes pa)
- 2.2.5 In the absence of clearly setting out the housing requirement and whether the Plan is looking to meet its need (which it should, the process of using the stated objectives to inform the Council's assessment of different sites and locations for development cannot be considered "Positively Prepared" or "Justified," contrary to the NPPF (para 35).
- 2.2.6 The "Strategic Objectives" must, therefore, be either expanded to include the amount of housing that is to be planned for, which must reflect the objectively assessed need as a minimum (NPPF, para 11b), or a new objective added that identifies this.
- 2.2.7 The general principles are supported for the spatial objectives more generally. However, they further highlight the need for the amount of development to be planned to be expressed as an objective since many of the other objectives are dependent on the delivery of housing, including the ambitions for improved employment floorspace and higher-value employment opportunities, which are also reliant on providing enough housing.
- 2.2.8 More generally, the objectives also only discuss development on brownfield land as part of its regeneration objectives. They do not directly address the need to release greenfield land for development. This is misleading since the release of greenfield sites is essential to meeting the objectives of the Plan and, therefore, must be referenced for clarity.
- 2.2.9 The consultation document (para 5.11) further mentions that "*the Council must consider if there is capacity to provide up to an additional 2,000 homes to help meet Gravesham's housing needs, following a request from the neighbouring authority*". Again, the strategic objectives are silent on this matter, and it must be clarified whether the Council intends the Plan to help address this need, as a matter which is highly formative to the distribution of growth and selection of housing sites.

## Summary

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- 2.2.10 The strategic objectives as currently drafted do not provide a “Sound” basis to inform the development strategy, site selection or future planning policies, where they fail to set out the amount of development that is to be planned for. This is fundamental to informing the spatial strategy and policy making, especially in respect of setting strategic policies (NPPF, para 20). The objectives must therefore either be expanded or a new objective added which sets out that the Plan seeks to deliver its full objectively assessed need as a minimum (NPPF, para 11b).



### 3 PROPOSED SITE FOR ALLOCATION

#### 3.1 OVERVIEW OF ALLOCATION OPPORTUNITY

- 3.1.1 The submission site comprises two parcels of vacant land totalling 1.83ha located south of Sundridge Hill, Cuxton and accessed from the A228 'Sundridge Hill' (please refer to figure 3.1 below and **Appendix 1**).

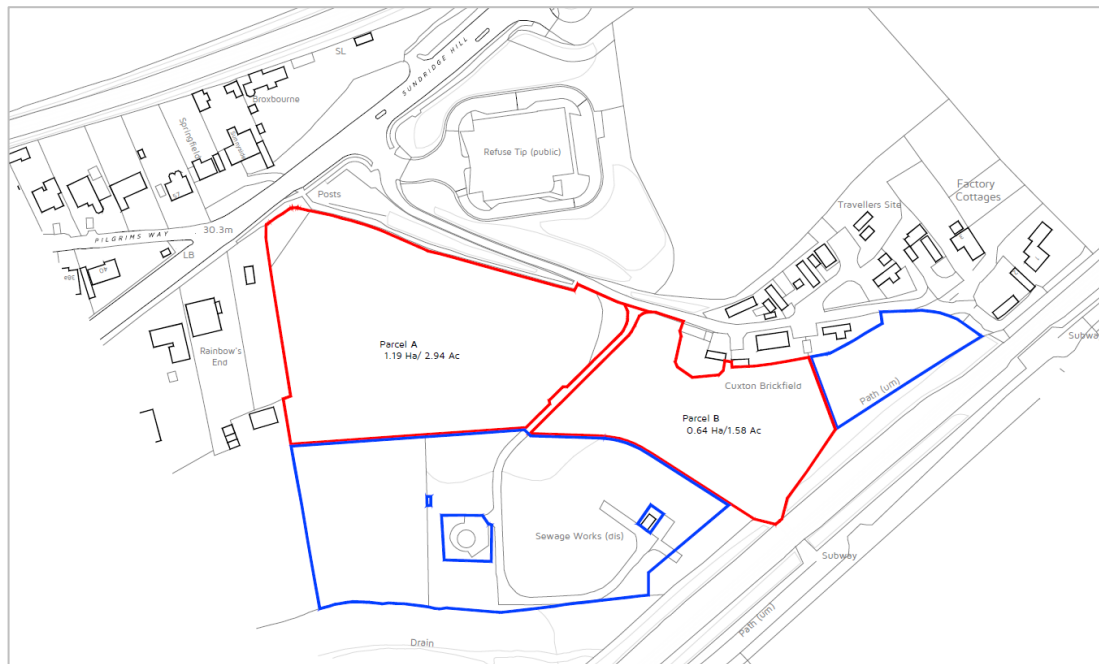


FIGURE 3.1: AERIAL SUBMISSION SITE OVERVIEW (GOOGLE EARTH)

- 3.1.2 The site is bound by the A228 to the north and the River Medway and Medway Valley Railway line to the south. The wider area comprises a varied mix of commercial, industrial and marine uses. To the immediate east of the site lies the Medway Council household waste and recycling centre and further south, a Council operated Gypsy and Traveller site.
- 3.1.3 In terms of wider planning constraints, the site is not subject to any strategic designations and there are not considered to be any absolute constraints to the development uses proposed.
- 3.1.4 The site forms a logically contained development location, suitable for expansion of either of the two proposed uses which already operate on the wider site and which are likely to require expansion.
- 3.1.5 This Local Plan submission seeks to promote the site for the allocation of either infrastructure in the form of an expanded household waste transfer facility or Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople uses as part of any of the proposed growth strategies and will logically expand the existing uses of the wider site to serve the uplift growth strategy of the emerging Local Plan.

## 3.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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- 3.2.1 At this early stage, detailed plans have not yet been prepared and any future scheme would be subject to early and meaningful engagement with the local community and Medway Council.
- 3.2.2 However, it is anticipated that an extension to the existing household waste and recycling centre site can be delivered. Two potential options have been drawn up to show how the existing household waste and recycling centre site could be extended with an additional level platform of 6,000 sq. m.
- 3.2.3 In order to assist the Council, an indicative masterplan has been prepared for the to demonstrate how these options could be taken forward and is provided at **Appendix 2** of this representation.
- 3.2.4 Alternatively, the site is considered suitable to accommodate an expansion of the existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site at Cuxton.

## 3.3 SITE SPECIFIC JUSTIFICATION FOR ALLOCATION

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### Consistency with Spatial Growth Options

- 3.3.1 Development of the submission site would be consistent with any of the proposed Spatial Growth Options and would facilitate the delivery of the Local Plan's residential and employment growth requirements.
- 3.3.2 It is demonstrated that such sites are necessary irrespective of the strategic spatial pattern of growth within Medway. The Local Plan will be required to ensure that the delivery of circa. 28,500 new homes and 62.3 hectares of employment land over the Plan period and that this growth is adequately supported by the necessary accompanying infrastructure. In addition to schools, transport and green infrastructure, this must also include household waste and recycling centres, where the expansion of existing and creation of new sites will inevitably be required in order to serve the quantum of new growth proposed.
- 3.3.3 Separately, the Council's evidence base confirms that the emerging Plan will be required to allocate sites across the district for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople irrespective of the spatial growth option proposed.
- 3.3.4 Given the clear consistency of our client's site with the growth strategies and the established nature of the wider site as a suitable location for either infrastructure or Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site uses, we submit that land south of Sundridge Hill, Cuxton should be allocated for development of either expanded household waste and recycling facilities or Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation within the emerging Local Plan.

### Sustainability

- 3.3.5 Development on this site would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development for the array of reasons set out within this representation and would

facilitate the necessary delivery of supporting infrastructure to serve the growth strategy of the Local Plan.

- 3.3.6 From a wider sustainability perspective, the proposal would not involve the loss of land that is of high agricultural or ecological value and would not comprise development in an area of high flood risk.

#### Ecology

From an ecological perspective, the site is not subject to any specific designations and any future scheme could be developed to provide ecological enhancement.

#### Landscape

- 3.3.7 The site comprises a naturally contained land parcel, characterised by its proximity to adjacent similar uses which typically require an edge-of-settlement location. Any future scheme would be reasonably expected to include additional landscaping and ecological enhancement measures such that it would not result in significant adverse landscape impact.

#### Heritage

- 3.3.8 The site is not located in close proximity to any heritage assets or Conservation Areas, nor is the site identified to be of any particular archaeological importance. There is therefore no basis upon which to resist development in this location from a heritage perspective.

#### Residential Amenity

- 3.3.9 By virtue of the site layout, separation distances and landscaping that could be incorporated, it is unlikely that the scheme would result in any adverse impacts on the amenity of nearby properties.

#### Flood Risk

- 3.3.10 The site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1 with no known risk of flooding. Likewise, the landowner is not aware of any local flood incidents that have impacted this area of Cuxton. There is therefore no basis upon which to resist growth in this location from a flood risk perspective.

#### Access and Highways

- 3.3.11 Access design and improvements if required remain at an early stage and details have not yet been finalised. However, at this early stage no absolute constraints with regards to access are anticipated and it is considered that suitable and safe access to serve the modelled capacity can be achieved.
- 3.3.12 Work by the project team on this site remains ongoing and it is expected that additional information will be provided as the emerging Local Plan progresses.

#### Deliverability

- 3.3.13 For the reasons set out in this representation, the site is considered suitable for two proposed uses comprising expanded infrastructure and Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation. The site is adjacent two existing sites of the same use would form a natural and logical extension of either site and is demonstrated to be necessary in order to serve the substantial increasing growth patterns of the district within the emerging Plan period.
- 3.3.14 Expanded household waste and recycling development would make a significant contribution to the infrastructure delivery for the district, to support the proposed residential and employment growth strategy of the district.
- 3.3.15 Alternatively, the site is suitable to accommodate an expansion of the existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site at Cuxton in line with the recommendations of the Council's updated need assessment.
- 3.3.16 Finally, in respect of suitability there are no physical limitations or problems such as access, infrastructure, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination (please also refer to **Appendix 3**).
- 3.3.17 On behalf of the landowner, we submit that there are no known financial restrictions that would impact upon the viability of a future housing scheme or that would prohibit development coming forward within the early stages of the Plan period in line with the Council's growth trajectory.
- 3.3.18 The site is in single ownership and there are no complicated legal agreements or covenants that would prohibit the ability to bring forward the site early in the Plan period. The site is therefore considered available and achievable for the purposes of the tests of deliverability.

### 3.4 SUMMARY

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- 3.4.1 Our client is promoting two parcels of vacant land totalling 1.83ha located south of Sundridge Hill, Cuxton and accessed from the A228 'Sundridge Hill' for allocation within the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.4.2 This representation seeks to promote the site for the allocation of either infrastructure in the form of an expanded household waste transfer facility or Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople uses as part of any of the proposed growth strategies and will logically expand the existing uses of the wider site to serve the uplift growth strategy of the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.4.3 Development of the site would be consistent with any of the proposed Spatial Growth Options and would facilitate the delivery of the Local Plan's residential and employment growth requirements.
- 3.4.4 It is demonstrated that such sites are necessary irrespective of the strategic spatial pattern of growth within Medway. The Local Plan will be required to ensure that the delivery of circa. 28,500 new homes and 62.3 hectares of employment land over the Plan period and that this growth is adequately supported by the necessary accompanying infrastructure. In addition to schools, transport and green



infrastructure, this must also include household waste and recycling centres, where the expansion of existing and creation of new sites will inevitably be required in order to serve the quantum of new growth proposed.

- 3.4.5 Separately, it is highly likely that the emerging Plan will be required to allocate sites across the district for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople irrespective of the spatial growth option proposed.
- 3.4.6 Given the clear consistency of our client's site with the growth strategies and the established nature of the wider site as a suitable location for either infrastructure or Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site uses, we submit that land south of Sundridge Hill, Cuxton should be allocated for development of either expanded household waste and recycling facilities or Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation within the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.4.7 On behalf of the landowner, we submit that there are no known financial restrictions that would impact upon the viability of a future housing scheme or that would prohibit development coming forward within the early stages of the Plan period in line with the Council's growth trajectory.

## 4 MEDWAY WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

### 4.1 OVERVIEW

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- 4.1.1 It is evident from the above development needs that the spatial strategy contained within the emerging Local Plan will be required to facilitate a substantial quantum, of new residential and employment growth across the plan period.
- 4.1.2 Infrastructure is a vital component of the Local Plan as it is essential for a place to function well. Infrastructure planning is a key requirement of Government planning policy and its economic strategy. It encompasses transport, water supply, wastewater, energy, telecommunications, utilities, waste, health, social care, education, flood risk and coastal change management.
- 4.1.3 It is essential that the substantial growth proposed is adequately supported by the necessary accompanying infrastructure. In addition to flagship schools, transport and green infrastructure, this must also include household waste and recycling centres, where the expansion of existing and creation of new sites will inevitably be required in order to serve the quantum of new growth proposed.
- 4.1.4 Infrastructure capacity is identified as a potential issue and/or constraint in all spatial strategy locations (Urban Regeneration / Suburban Expansion / Rural Development / Green Belt Release). The Council's infrastructure topic paper confirms at paragraph 10.4 that the Council has researched current infrastructure capacity and its ability to meet increased demand in line with the growth proposed in the new Local Plan. The Council has had discussions with infrastructure providers, such as utilities companies and transport bodies, as part of the plan preparation process. This work has shown that there are infrastructure deficiencies in many areas. The Local Plan is identified as a means of securing new and improved infrastructure and services, and policy interventions. Infrastructure provision current and future is additional recognised as core to assessing the suitability of proposed development locations to accommodate growth.
- 4.1.5 On account of all of the above, it is vital that the Local Plan includes a clear strategy for delivering additional and expanded infrastructure capacity in line with anticipated growth across the Plan period. This would be best achieved through the allocation of sites for infrastructure provision within the Plan, to provide greater certainty of their delivery and ensure a genuinely plan-led growth strategy whereby the location of housing and employment growth is clearly supported by a similar spatial strategy for coordinated infrastructure provision.

### 4.2 HOUSEHOLD WASTE NEEDS

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- 4.2.1 Irrespective of the strategic spatial pattern of growth within Medway, the Local Plan will be required to ensure that the delivery of circa. 28,500 new homes and 62.3 hectares of employment land over the Plan period is adequately supported by the necessary accompanying infrastructure. In addition to schools, transport

and green infrastructure, this must also include household waste and recycling centres.

- 4.2.2 The consultation document identifies that the forecast increase in population over the Local Plan period may require additional capacity to be developed and suggest upgrades to existing facilities may be considered, alongside a potential option of creating a single purpose-built facility in an accessible and appropriate location.
- 4.2.3 As drafted, the consultation document neither allocates nor safeguards any sites in Medway for the purpose of waste handling capacity expansion and no site has been identified as capable of providing a single purpose-built facility. With specific regard to household waste we are concerned that as drafted, the Plan does not include a mechanism to increase necessary household waste handling capacity alongside the substantial increased household growth of circa 30,000 to which the Plan intends to facilitate. We identify also that the Council seek to continue to divert the quantum of waste sent to landfill within the Plan period. It can be reasonably expected that part of this diversion will include an increased percentage of waste directed towards recycling centres, further increasing the need for additional household waste recycling transfer capacity.
- 4.2.4 To support the preparation of the emerging Local Plan, the Council has commissioned a Waste Needs Assessment 2024 prepared by BPP consulting in support of the emerging waste strategy. The evidence suggests sufficient household waste recycling transfer capacity for the Plan period, although this conclusion assumes all three sites in the Plan area (including Cuxton) will operate at 100% capacity and remain operational throughout at least the life of the Plan. The raw data does not identify the current operational capacity of either Capstone or Cuxton Household Waste Recycling Centres and it is therefore unclear how the Assessment's conclusion that sufficient capacity exists has been reached and to what degree of certainty.
- 4.2.5 The evidence is reliant on the three sites accommodating broadly a third of the household waste tonnage each and no excess capacity is identified should for any reason this capacity not be met by individual sites, or in the event one site is non-operational either temporarily or permanently.
- 4.2.6 Given the extent of housing proposed in Medway and the expected increase in recyclable waste from households, we strongly disagree with the conclusion of the Waste Needs Assessment, which would result in Medway being entirely reliant on three sites to operate at maximum capacity, with no flexibility or contingency should one site cease operation or reduce capacity. Given the Assessment's uncertain identification of existing capacity at both Capstone and Cuxton, we consider the conclusion of the Assessment to be of insufficient basis and should not be relied upon for the purpose of assessing household waste recycling capacity.
- 4.2.7 To the contrary, we support the Council's own consultation document's identification that additional capacity may be required and strongly suggest that to provide greater certainty, policy allocations are used to secure an uplift in waste handling capacity in line with population growth in Medway.

- 4.2.8 Sites such as that of our client's which are capable of significantly increased capacity are promoted for allocated expansion to provide sufficient excess capacity and a contingency given the limited number of operational sites and the context of an increase of nearly 30,000 households in the Plan area.
- 4.2.9 In the context of the Council's suggest option for a single purpose-built facility to serve Medway, the site at Cuxton is an accessible location outside of the primary urban area and is an appropriate location separated from conflicting uses and with sufficient land area to accommodate the household waste recycling need of a Medway on a single site.

### 4.3 RESPONSE TO QUESTION 44

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*"In light of the geological/spatial constraints in Medway and predicted limited ongoing need, do you agree that it is appropriate for the Council to plan for the management of non-inert waste that may require landfill on the basis that it will be managed at landfill sites located outside Medway?"*

- 4.3.1 As set out in the above section, we consider the predicted decrease in landfill waste tonnage to likely correspond with an increase in household recycling waste, necessitating an increase in household waste recycling facility capacity in addition to the increase of households in Medway.
- 4.3.2 To accommodate this increased need, we strongly suggest that certainty is provided by way of a formal site allocation for the expansion of Cuxton household waste recycling facility to provide sufficient excess capacity and a contingency given the limited number of operational sites and the context of an increase of nearly 30,000 households in the Plan area.

### 4.4 SUMMARY

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- 4.4.1 This representation demonstrates how the allocation of our client's site within the emerging Local Plan for expanded household waste recycling capacity, would positively contribute to meeting the draft Plan's strategic objectives and is a necessary component of any of the proposed spatial strategies for growth. For the reasons outlined within this representation, we submit that it is necessary for the spatial strategy for growth to be adequately supported by a robust scheme of supporting infrastructure allocations if it is to sustainably deliver the identified housing and employment requirements in full.



## 5 GYPSY, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

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- 5.1.1 Medway Council is required to provide for the needs of all its residents including providing housing options for all that require it. Housing provision includes the consideration of the needs of Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople, which is supported by an up-to-date evidence base.

### 5.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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- 5.2.1 It is confirmed within the emerging Local Plan Housing Topic Paper that the provision of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation will be included within the district's overall housing need.
- 5.2.2 In this regard, the Council has commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment to provide an updated evidence base for the new Local Plan, which confirms that there is a gypsy and traveller need for 34 pitches for households meeting the planning definition and up to 19 pitches for undetermined households.
- 5.2.3 As drafted, Regulation 18 stage draft policy T10 'Gypsy, Travellers & Travelling Showpeople' states that to meet the identified need, existing sites will be protected and intensification or expansion sought. New sites will also be permitted where the new site criteria has been met.
- 5.2.4 We consider the policy as drafted which serves only to safeguard existing sites, with no new or expanded site allocation to address the unmet need is insufficient in providing certainty that the needs of all types of residents in Medway will be met.
- 5.2.5 By way of remedy, we strongly suggest that the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople residents are met by way of formal site allocation for either new sites, or expanded existing sites, capable of addressing the projected need for the Plan period.
- 5.2.6 Given the clear consistency of our client's site with the growth strategies and the established nature of the wider site as a suitable location for Gypsy and Traveller site uses, we submit that land south of Sundridge Hill, Cuxton should be allocated for the expansion of existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation within the emerging Local Plan.

## 5.3 SUMMARY

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- 5.3.1 In the absence of sufficient identified pitches, additional or expanded sites are necessary in order for the Council to demonstrate that it has met the needs of all of the Plan area's residents and it is submitted that our client's site represents a logical extension to an established adjacent site at Cuxton to address the current unmet need.

## 6 CONCLUSION

### 6.1 OVERALL SUMMARY

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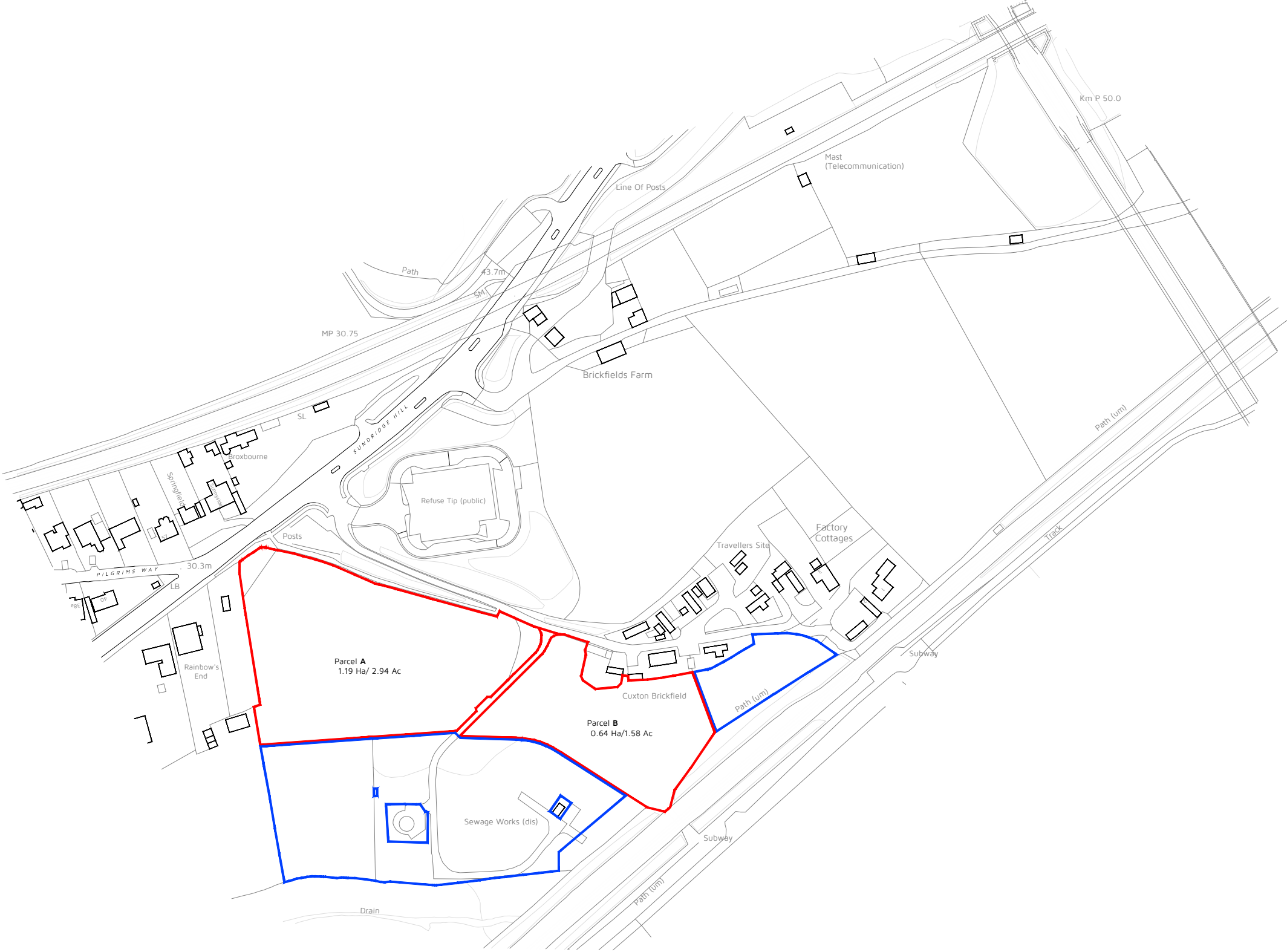
- 6.1.1 This representation has been prepared on behalf of Trevor Heathcote LLP in response to Medway Council's 'Setting the direction for Medway 2040' Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation 2023. The consultation is a statement of the Council's commitment in getting a new Local Plan in place for the period 2022-2040 and seeks to provide certainty in the direction for Medway's growth.
- 6.1.2 Our client controls 'Land south of Sundridge Hill, Cuxton' and is promoting the site for allocation as either an expanded household waste and recycling facility or an expanded site for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople as part of the emerging Local Plan process.
- 6.1.3 Given the clear consistency and necessary role of our client's site as part of any of the growth strategies put forward and the established nature of the wider site as a suitable location for waste and recycling and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, we submit that the land promoted south of Sundridge Hill in Cuxton should be included as either a future infrastructure or Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site allocation and continue to form part of the Council's evidence base used to inform the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.1.4 In addition to being sustainable, the site is deliverable in a single land ownership with no viability issues, legal or third-party constraints present and there are no impediments to the site being allocated for development commencing within the initial 0-5 year phase of the Plan period in line with the Council's wider residential and employment growth trajectory.

# APPENDIX

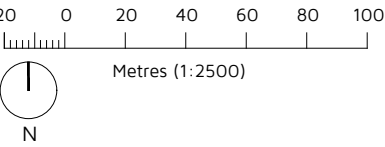
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**Call For Sites Plan**  
1:2500 @ A3



**Site Area:** 1.85 Ha/ 4.57 Ac

-  Site put forward for Call for Sites Process
-  Land also within client ownership

Rev:	Reason:	Date:	Client: FGS AGRI LTD
			Project: LAND SOUTH OF SUNDRIDGE HILL, CUXTON, ROCHESTER, ME2 1LB
			Title: CALL FOR SITES PLAN
Drawing: DHA/30367/01	Rev:	Scale: 1:2500	Date: JAN 2023



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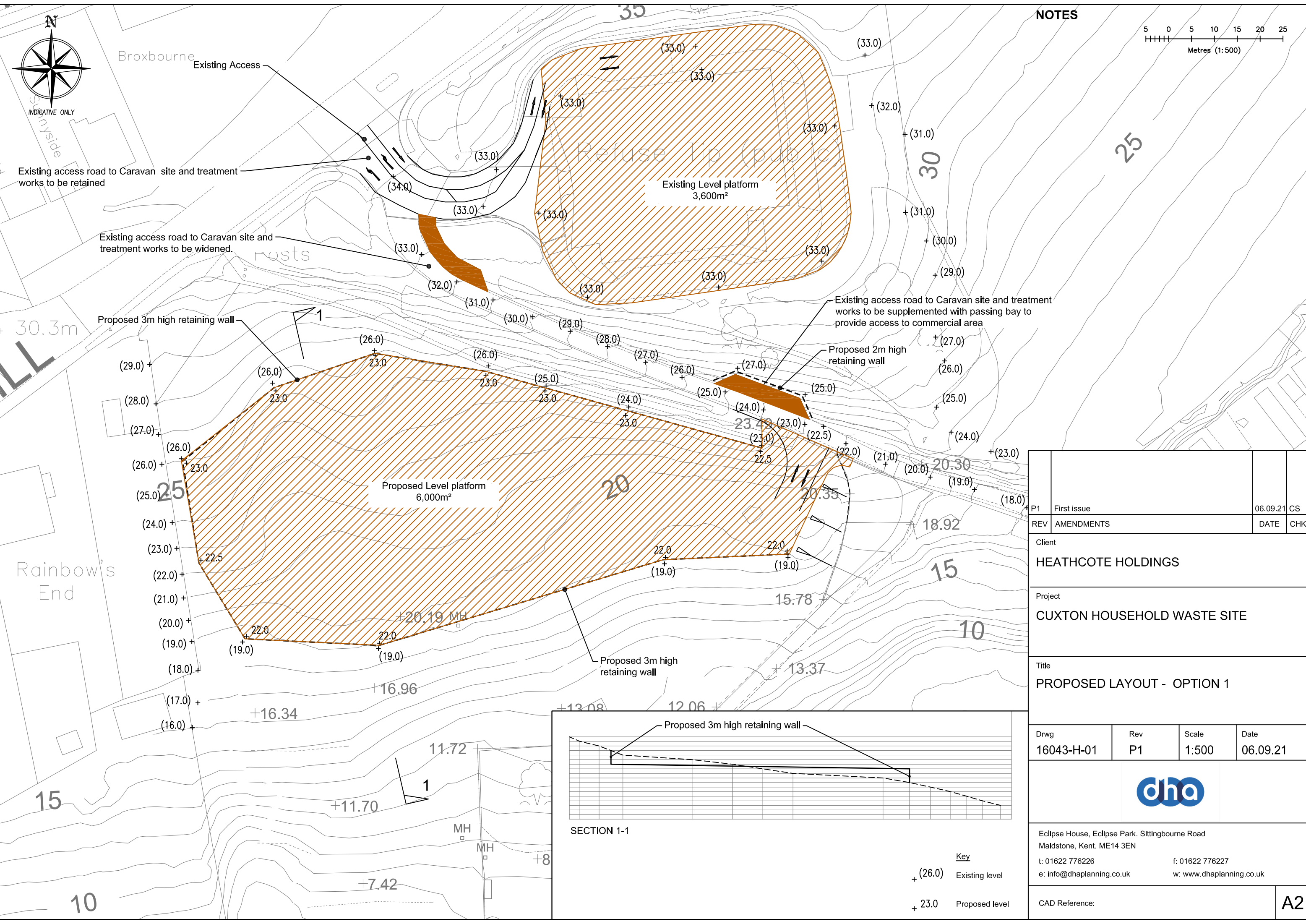
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CAD Reference: DHA\_30367\_LAND S SUNDRIDGE HILL\_MC01 **A3**

# APPENDIX

2





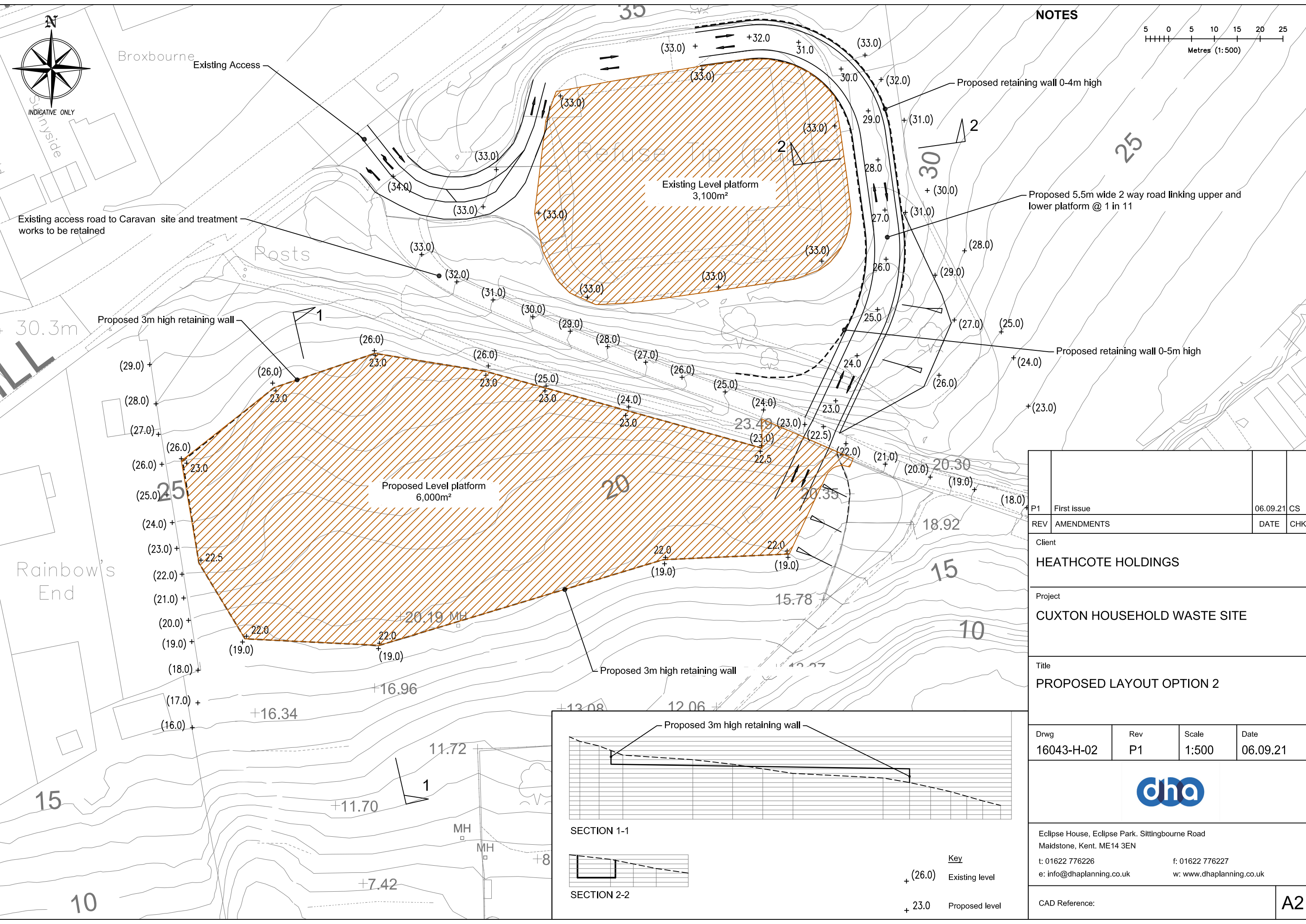
# NOTES


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Metres (1:500)

P1	First issue	06.09.21	CS
REV	AMENDMENTS	DATE	CHK
Client HEATHCOTE HOLDINGS			
Project CUXTON HOUSEHOLD WASTE SITE			
Title PROPOSED LAYOUT - OPTION 1			
Drwg 16043-H-01	Rev P1	Scale 1:500	Date 06.09.21
<div><div>cha</div><div>Eclipse House, Eclipse Park. Sittingbourne Road Maidstone, Kent. ME14 3EN t: 01622 776226 e: info@dhaplanning.co.uk</div><div>f: 01622 776227 w: www.dhaplanning.co.uk</div></div>			
CAD Reference:			A2





P1	First issue	06.09.21	CS
REV	AMENDMENTS	DATE	CHK
Client			
HEATHCOTE HOLDINGS			
Project			
CUXTON HOUSEHOLD WASTE SITE			
Title			
PROPOSED LAYOUT OPTION 2			
Drwg	Rev	Scale	Date
16043-H-02	P1	1:500	06.09.21
			
Eclipse House, Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Road Maidstone, Kent. ME14 3EN			
t: 01622 776226		f: 01622 776227	
e: info@dhaplanning.co.uk		w: www.dhaplanning.co.uk	
CAD Reference:			A2



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6 September 2024

Dear Sir or Madam

## MEDWAY LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION 2024

I am writing on behalf of our client National Grid and these representations are written in the context of their substantial landholding at the Isle of Grain. The site is owned by Thamesport Interchange Limited (TIL), which is a wholly owned and managed by National Grid.

These representations follow our previous submissions to the Council at the Issues and Options stage in February 2016, May 2017, March 2018 and October 2023.

The existing Medway Local Plan (2003) shows that the site is allocated for employment purposes and part of the landholding has an extant planning permission for:

*“the development for up to 464,685 sqm of built employment space for (Use Classes B1(c), B2 and B8 – including open storage), and up to 245 sqm of floorspace for a business park management centre (Class B1(a) and retail unit(s) (Classes A1, A3 and A5), with associated infrastructure, landscaping, car parking and access.”*

In addition, the first phase reserved matters for this site (MC/15/1051) was approved in July 2015.

The site was previously an old oil refinery and this rich industrial heritage has been continued with a number of nationally significant energy users on the site. Two examples include Grain LNG, which has the ability to provide up to 20% of the UK's forecast gas demand and the BritNed interconnector, which operates the electricity link between the UK and the Netherlands.

Our representations below are made with the above context in mind and it should be noted that our representations only address those issues considered relevant to National Grid and its interests at TIL site on the Isle of Grain.

National Grid has discussed the strategic nature of the site with Medway on an ongoing basis and we look forward to continually working closely with officers in order to realise the potential of the site throughout the Local Plan process and beyond.

The remainder of this letter comments on the document “Medway Local Plan 2024”, using some of the headings from the document:

### **Local Plan Proposals Map – Northeast**

It is noted at this stage of the Plan that specific Site Allocations have not yet been progressed within the text of the main document. However, the preferred option for potential future sites are highlighted on the draft proposals map.

National Grid is supportive of the sites shown as ‘Indicative Preferred Sites – Non-Resi’ annotated in orange on the Plan. These areas reflect what is deliverable outside of the agreed ecological mitigation areas on the National Grid Land. These areas include the area adjacent to the existing GLNG tanks to the west of the Grain Road but to the north of the cryogenic pipeline, the whole area to the south of the pipeline including developable area down to the existing jetties and also to the south-east around the BritNed interconnector.

These areas are also considered vital to the strategic importance of the site and should be promoted for development and delivery in the Local Plan.

We note that some areas are listed as minerals safeguarding areas or consultation areas. It is understood from discussions with Medway officers that these are items that need to be potentially considered for future applications, but will not necessarily impact on future deliverability of important schemes in this location in the future.

As a final comment the ‘existing employment areas’ could be extended to cover the whole of the GLNG facility. At present it only covers part of the site in the northwest corner. This is not strictly an employment site, but an area of national significance for energy infrastructure and it is important this is recognised in the Local Plan.

### **Overview**

National Grid is supportive of the comments which are set out in the context section of the document. Important elements of this process are boosting the economy and acknowledging climate change as a global emergency.

Paragraph 1.2.9 is important as it recognises the importance of the diverse portfolio of employment land – which includes the ‘strategic landholdings’ at Grain. We are supportive of this, as this area represents a unique opportunity to help meet local, regional and national energy needs and this should be recognised in the emerging Local Plan.

### **Policy S1: Planning for Climate Change**

It is noted that Medway is looking to deliver on the Council’s commitment to addressing the Climate Emergency and National Grid would support this objective particularly in its support to the transition to ‘zero carbon’.

The reference to securing jobs and developing skills for a competitive economy is also supported in particular the need to build on strengths and expertise, such as engineering, energy and creative industries to attract and develop jobs for the future.

National Grid consider that making best use of brownfield land is vital in terms of delivery of strategically important sites.

### **Securing strong green and blue infrastructure**

Whilst National Grid notes and supports the need for green and blue infrastructure, it is important to note that the Local Plan sites referred to on the Proposals Map are not unduly restricted by some of the Tier 3 references in Figure 2. It is considered the strategic development and this infrastructure can be delivered in tandem with good design.

## **Economic Development**

Paragraph 7.2.5 recognises the regeneration and redevelopment potential of employment sites at the Isle of Grain. National Grid is pleased that this is recognised in the Plan and is fully supportive of this approach.

Policy S.10 recognises the larger scale Net Zero Carbon Energy generating uses and port facilities at Grain and National Grid Strongly supports this. It is also vital to flag the important role that Grain currently plays in ensuring energy security during the transition towards 'net zero'. Recent world events have placed and increasing strain on energy supply and it is important that this security of supply is recognised during the Local Plan period up to 2040.

## **Policy T21: Riverside infrastructure**

National Grid is supportive of retaining existing riverside infrastructure. The safeguarding and future use of the existing network of piers and jetties is important for future strategic uses of these areas.

## **Grain Branch**

It is vitally important that any amendments to the Grain branch facilitate and increase rail freight opportunities on this line. This is set out in the Plan at 9.4.4 and it is important that this link is maintained and improved all the way to the Isle of Grain at the end of the Hoo Peninsula.

## **Policy S25: Energy Supply**

The references to the Grain LNG terminal in this section are supported. It is vital that this facility is recognised as a strategically important site both regionally and nationally.

National Grid fully supports this and we are glad that the Council acknowledges these unique traits of this area and would support its inclusion in the Local Plan going forward. National Grid's facilities, jetties and the LNG pipeline already make significant contributions to the national energy network and the Grain site can further support, expand and add new facilities to these leading to an energy hub of national and regional strategic importance.

It is also worth noting that there is significant power generation already in situ at the Grain Peninsula and there is expected need for associated carbon capture and storage technology to allow this power generation to be sustained into the future to ensure national energy security. Paragraph 13.2.10 is vital as it recognises that the Isle of Grain is a suitable location for renewable and low carbon energy development.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, we are supportive of the approach being taken by the Council in preparing its new Local Plan. It is vital that the Council continues to recognise the strategic importance of the TIL site at the Isle of Grain in the new document. The potential for employment generating, energy related uses and links to the existing port related activities are extremely important to Medway from a strategic perspective and these need to be protected and actively promoted in the new Local Plan to ensure that these opportunities are fully exploited.

I trust you find the above comments to be helpful at this stage. We would be delighted to continue to liaise with Medway directly as the new Local Plan evolves, so please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss further.

In the meantime, I would be grateful if you could continue to keep the National Grid team informed of progress on the Local Plan.

Yours faithfully



**Alister Henderson**  
Partner

[Redacted line]

[Redacted line]

M:



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Medway Council  
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**BY EMAIL ONLY: [planning.policy@medway.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@medway.gov.uk)**

6 September 2024

Dear Planning Policy Team,

Our Ref: HLM088/AO/ru

**RE: CONSULTATION RESPONSE FOR THE 'MEDWAY LOCAL  
PLAN REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION'**

This cover letter and enclosed representations are submitted by David Lock Associates ('DLA') on behalf of Hallam Land in partnership with Tarmac and Aggregate Industries (as 'the Landowners') and in response to the emerging Medway Local Plan 2041 (Regulation 18b) consultation.

**Context**

Hallam Land is the strategic land and planning promotion arm of the Henry Boot Group of Companies. Hallam Land's role is to promote and develop land opportunities and the company has a substantial track record in bringing forward land for a variety of developments and working in partnership with local planning authorities and other stakeholders.

Hallam Land is working in partnership with the landowners on this once in a generation opportunity to repurpose Holborough Quarry as a highly sustainable new community providing a range of social, environmental and economic benefits for existing and new residents.

The part of the Holborough Quarry site that lies within Medway was submitted to the Call for Sites in 2022. However, Holborough Quarry presents a significant opportunity to deliver a sustainable, cross-boundary, new community to meet identified needs in both Medway and neighbouring Tonbridge and Malling. Land within Tonbridge and Malling has also been promoted via their Local Plan process.

Hallam Land commends the Council's preparation of a new Local Plan, which sets out Medway's ambitious vision for growth and seeks to guide development over the 15-year local plan period. Hallam Land provides its formal representations through Medway's online portal (and also enclosed to this cover letter) and welcomes further opportunities for positive engagement with the Council as the emerging Local Plan progresses through to adoption.

This cover letter provides additional context on the opportunity and does not seek to restate Hallam Land's formal representations. Therefore, it should be read in conjunction with our submitted representations.

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## **Medway's Vision**

Hallam Land supports the Council's ambitious vision for Medway. Through its "people-first" approach, the Council aims to meet Medway's identified local needs in full. This is a strong starting point that sets the tone for protecting people's needs through the local plan period.

There are significant concerns, however, that the Council's vision is not fully captured through the underlying Spatial Development Strategy and Spatial Growth Options. For example, the preferred Spatial Growth Option (SGO3) relies heavily on urban regeneration sites which can be particularly challenging to deliver. The Council may therefore be exposed to the risk of low delivery rates in the first half of the local plan period, affecting its performance on the Housing Delivery Test and ability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.

The inconsistencies within the Sustainability Assessment (SA) further undermine the Local Plan strategy. For example, the preferred Spatial Growth Option (SGO3) includes sites in unsustainable locations, including at the Hoo Peninsula, that perform poorly against the assessed SA objectives. This is a fundamental flaw that contradicts the findings of the supporting SA.

Hallam Land is also concerned that the emerging Local Plan does not go far enough in exploring cross-boundary opportunities. While Gravesham's potential unmet needs are identified, they are not factored into the quantum of development set out in the spatial strategy. It is also unclear whether any engagement has been undertaken with other neighbouring authorities, especially those that share a Housing Market Area (HMA) with Medway. This is inconsistent with current national policy and, even more so with the focus on partnership working in the Government's emerging reforms to the NPPF.

There are complex interrelationships between Medway Council and the other local authorities in the HMA, such as Tonbridge and Malling ('TMC') to the south. It is particularly worth highlighting that TMC is heavily constrained by local and national designations (including the Green Belt, National Landscape and Special Areas of Conservation), making it difficult to meet its own identified needs. This is likely to be exacerbated by the emerging new Standard Method which will impose Local Housing Needs that are triple its current Local Plan requirement and 29% higher than the current Standard Method.

The SDS should maintain flexibility for these discussions, demonstrate joint working with other authorities and satisfy the duty to cooperate to ensure that the housing needs of the HMA are delivered in the most sustainable manner. We therefore recommend that further engagement with neighbouring TMC is undertaken ahead of the Regulation 19 Local Plan publication.

Overall, Hallam Land is concerned that there are flaws and gaps in the Council's strategy which fundamentally undermine its ability to meet its vision. This affects the soundness of the Local Plan and could mean that the Council falls short of delivering its commendable "people-first" approach. It is therefore crucial that the Council explores further opportunities to ensure that the Local Plan vision is achievable.

## **Holborough Quarry**

As previously stated, the part of Holborough Quarry that lies within Medway has been promoted through the Medway Local Plan process since 2022. We have had ongoing positive engagement with the Council and support the inclusion of the part of the site that falls within Medway in SGO2.

However, it is noted that SGO2 is not considered a preferred option as it *"raises issues of sustainability (including) higher reliance on car-based transport, a greater loss of good quality farmland and wider environmental impacts"*. Holborough Quarry is not constrained by these challenges and indeed performs significantly better than some of the sites included in preferred option SGO3.

### **A sustainable location for development**

The land at Holborough Quarry is in a highly sustainable location for development. It is primarily in Flood Zone 1 (a preferred location for development) and there are no environmental constraints that would preclude development at the site. In addition, the

Council's SA concludes that development on this site would predominantly result in positive or minor negative impacts when assessed against the sustainability objectives.

#### Transport Connectivity

The site benefits from excellent strategic transport connections. Halling station is approximately 1km away (12min walk) and provides services between Strood to the north and Maidstone West, Paddock Wood, and Tonbridge to the south. Further south (approximately 2km away), Snodland station provides additional connectivity with two peak hour HS1 services travelling in each direction between London St Pancras and Maidstone West – the only station between Maidstone and Strood which is served by HS1.

In addition to this, the primary highway access infrastructure has already been delivered through the existing cement works planning permission. Therefore, there is no requirement to secure third-party infrastructure funding or deliver a new access, both of which could lead to extensive delays to implementation.

To support our representations, we have provided a Transport Technical Note (DHA, September 2024) which concludes that land at Holborough Quarry has the potential to become an exemplar mixed-use site in transport planning terms. The scale and nature of the site provides great potential to maximise the internationalisation of everyday journeys. There are significant opportunities to explore higher level of modal shift that elsewhere in the district where development impact on the local road network is likely to be more severe.

Furthermore, recent upgrades to the local highway network have reduced pressure on the M2 and M20 and enhanced sustainable transport infrastructure. Land at Holborough Quarry is therefore already well-connected compared to other strategic sites which are relatively peripheral from key services and facilities.

#### Limited contribution to the Green Belt and Grey Belt

The land at Holborough Quarry makes a limited contribution to the five purposes of the Green Belt in both Medway and in Tonbridge and Malling. Our representations are supported by a Green Belt Review (David Jarvis Associates, September 2024) which concludes that the site provides an overall Moderate-Low contribution to the Green Belt. It scores predominantly 'low' against the purposes of the Green Belt and does not harm the aims of the Green Belt. Indeed, new permanent boundaries can be appropriately established through the masterplanning process.

As strongly recommended in our representations, the emerging Local Plan should be supported by a Green Belt Review and that exceptional circumstances exist to release the site from the Green Belt and allocate for a residential led mixed use development.

Furthermore, up to 50% of the wider Holborough Quarry site has been worked since 1840 with not all land subject to restoration requirements. A report setting out the extensive historic workings across the site will be provided in October 2024. There is also an existing (and implemented) planning permission for cement works and chalk quarrying on a substantial part of the Holborough Quarry site. The site is therefore already considered suitable for development and has an extensive history of being worked. Hallam Land therefore considers that Holborough Quarry, or certainly large parts of it, are likely to be deemed "Grey Belt" land and would therefore be considered favourably should the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework be enacted.

#### Additional benefits

The land at Holborough Quarry presents a unique opportunity to continue the proud tradition of repurposing quarries for local benefit in the Medway Valley. It forms part of a wider vision to deliver a sustainable, new, balanced community to meet identified needs in Halling and Snodland. It would make a significant contribution to Medway's identified needs and that of the wider HMA. This is likely to bring forward additional direct and indirect benefits to the local economy, enhanced green and blue infrastructure, opportunities for positive cultural and industrial heritage and the delivery of and/or contributions to education and health facilities to mitigate and potentially improve local capacity.

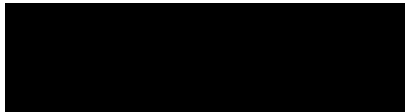
Overall, the land at Holborough Quarry is available, deliverable, and achievable. It also aligns with the Council's sustainability and development objectives and should be considered in the context of its strategic benefits. Hallam Land therefore considers that Holborough Quarry should form part of any preferred SGO, whether this is an amended SGO3, to ensure strategic growth is located to the most sustainable locations, or a new growth option SGO4 that explicitly realises the cross-boundary opportunity at Halling / Holborough.

### **Future Engagement**

As previously stated, Hallam Land welcomes the opportunity for further engagement with the Council. It is anticipated that a landscape appraisal, transport appraisal, historic workings and revised masterplan refresh taking account the additional work undertaken to date will be provided in October 2024 to support the Council's consideration of the site that will inform the Regulation 19.

Hallam Land would be pleased to arrange a site visit at that stage to discuss the site and the findings of the technical reports.

Yours faithfully



ARWEL OWEN  
PARTNER



cc: Hallam Land  
Tarmac Cement Limited  
Aggregate Industries UK Limited

Encl: Regulation 18 Representations  
Transport Technical Note (DHA, September 2024)  
Green Belt Review (David Jarvis Associates, September 2024)



# **Medway Local Plan (Regulation 18 consultation) September 2024**

Representations on behalf of Hallam Land and  
the Landowners

## INTRODUCTION

These representations are made on behalf of Hallam Land in partnership with Tarmac and Aggregate Industries (as 'the Landowners') in response to the emerging Medway Local Plan 2041 (Regulation 18b) consultation. Medway Council ('MC') requires responses to be submitted online using a specific format. Therefore, Hallam Land's comments below will also be uploaded to MC's online consultation portal.

The representations focus on:

- Vision
- Spatial Development Strategy
- Spatial Growth Options
- Policy S1: Planning for Climate Change
- Policy S4: Landscape Protection and Enhancement
- Policy S5: Securing Strong Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Policy S6: Kent Downs AONB
- Policy S7: Green Belt

## VISION

### SUPPORT / COMMENT

Hallam Land, working in partnership with Tarmac and Aggregate Industries ('the Landowners'), support the Council's ambitious vision for Medway. The emerging Local Plan takes a "people-first" approach with a clear focus towards ensuring that people have "*decent places to live*" and a "*thriving economy where residents enjoy a good quality of life*".

The Council recognises the significant pressures on local housing and the compelling need to improve the choice and mix of good quality housing. The Government's emerging policy direction since the 2024 General Election indicates this to be a national priority. Paragraph 1.2.8 of the draft Local Plan highlights the substandard nature of some existing stock and the unaffordability of higher quality homes. The latest data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2023) empirically supports that, confirming that full-time employees in Medway can expect to spend around 8.6 times their annual earnings when buying a home, an affordability gap much higher than that required by most mortgage lenders (4 times annual earnings). Hallam Land therefore welcomes the Council's drive to tackle the local affordability crisis, inequality, and pockets of deprivation through the supply of new housing.

By the end of the Local Plan period, the vision is for Medway to have delivered sustainable growth through development that provides suitable and affordable homes; strengthens the economy; addresses climate change; protects the historic and natural environment; improves travel choices; and enhances the health and wellbeing of residents. This aligns with the three overarching objectives (economic, social, and environmental) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for achieving sustainable development.

Emerging Government policy places great emphasis on the need to meet national housing need and for local authorities to act positively and proactively to address that. We know that Medway Council accepts that challenge and is acting positively and proactively to ensure that Medway's housing needs are met. We commend the Council and support that positive ambition. It is imperative that those ambitions are supported by a deliverable spatial strategy which offers certainty about delivery and about the merits of development, including the delivery of infrastructure to support sustainable growth.

In preparing the vision, it is crucial that the Local Plan period is accurately defined. The Council's Local Development Scheme ('LDS') indicates that the emerging Local Plan will not be adopted prior to Autumn 2026. Therefore, the end of the local plan period as currently defined (2041) is shorter than 15 years. It

is therefore important to extend the Local Plan period to 2042 to ensure that emerging Plan is looking ahead for 15 years from the point of adoption.

Notwithstanding Hallam Land's comments above, the Council's vision as set out in the emerging Local Plan is not fully captured through the underlying Spatial Development Strategy and Spatial Growth Options. There are significant opportunities that are either omitted or not fully explored which could fundamentally affect the Council's ability to deliver its vision by the end of the Local Plan period. Therefore, as the emerging Plan progresses to the next stage of the process, there are additional considerations that would strengthen and future-proof the Local Plan. It is in this context that Hallam and its partners provide detailed comments in the relevant sections of these representations.

*Summary: Hallam Land support the Council's ambitious vision for Medway. However, the Council's vision as set out in the emerging Local Plan is not fully captured through the underlying Spatial Development Strategy and Spatial Growth Options. There are significant opportunities that are either omitted or not fully explored which could fundamentally affect the Council's ability to deliver its vision by the end of the Local Plan period, and these are detailed in the relevant sections of these representations. The Local Plan period should also extend to 2042 to ensure that the Plan looks ahead 15 years from adoption.*

## **SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

### **OBJECT**

The Spatial Development Strategy ('SDS') sets out the overall strategy for meeting future growth in a local area. Once finalised, the SDS should outline the quantum of growth needed and how this growth will be distributed to meet Medway's vision and strategic objectives.

### **Quantum**

The supporting interim Sustainability Assessment ('SA') assesses two growth options to establish the overall quantum of development to be accommodated across the local plan period.

Option 1 seeks to meet Medway's Local Housing Need ('LHN') of approximately 22,643 homes (note the discrepancy between the LHN figures referenced in Table 3.1 and Paragraph 3.1.2). Given the LHN is based on the current Standard Methodology, Hallam Land acknowledges that the quoted figure may be refined through the next stage of the local plan process, specifically in light of the Government's proposed changes to the Standard Methodology.

Option 2 seeks to meet Medway's LHN together with the unmet housing need of the neighbouring authority of Gravesham (potentially 2,000 homes). This aligns with the duty to cooperate under the NPPF where local planning authorities are required to maintain effective and ongoing joint working to "determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere" (NPPF December 2023, Paragraph 25).

Notwithstanding the above, the SA concludes that "Option 2 cannot be justified" (paragraph 3.4.2) because (1) further information has been requested from Gravesham Borough Council to demonstrate the unmet housing need and (2) Option 1 performs better than option 2 in the SA assessment. The decision to discount Option 2 at this stage is premature and inconsistent with the NPPF.

First, Hallam Land acknowledges that there is currently no certainty on the extent of unmet need to be accommodated within Medway. However, there is an opportunity to retain flexibility for this eventuality, especially as initial engagement between the two authorities has identified this potential need. This approach would minimise the risk of delay should the request for unmet need be formalised ahead of

examination. As Planning Practice Guidance states, compliance with the duty to cooperate will be assessed at examination stage and *"if the Inspector finds that the duty has not been complied with, they will recommend that the local plan is not adopted"* (PPG Plan Making, Paragraph: 031, Reference ID: 61-031-20190315).

Second, the SA's approach must now be reconsidered against the context of the Government's consultation on the proposed reforms to the NPPF. There is strong emphasis on partnership with proposals to introduce new mechanisms for cross-boundary strategic planning to *"ensure that the right engagement is occurring on the sharing of unmet housing need and other strategic issues where plans are being progressed"* (Chapter 3, paragraph 27). It is therefore imperative for the Council to demonstrate effective joint-working and work towards meeting unmet needs where this is assessed to be achievable.

It is unclear whether any engagement has been undertaken with other neighbouring authorities. The latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Medway (November 2015) highlights that Medway Council's Housing Market Area (HMA) is cross-boundary and includes Medway, Gravesham, Swale, Maidstone, and Tonbridge and Malling. There are complex interrelationships between the local authorities in the HMA. However, while there are ongoing discussions with Gravesham on potential unmet needs, the substance of engagement that has been undertaken with other authorities in the HMA is unclear.

Tonbridge and Malling, for example, is heavily constrained by the Green Belt (approximately 70% of the borough); National Landscape (Kent Downs and High Weald); Special Areas of Conservation (North Downs Woodland and Peter's Pit); Ancient Woodland; Conservation Areas; and a range of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and SSSIs. In addition to this, the Government's emerging Standard Method almost triples Tonbridge and Malling's housing need when compared to the current Local Plan requirement (or a 29% increase when compared against the current Standard Method). It is therefore possible that Tonbridge and Malling will face challenges in meeting its identified need within the borough. The SDS should maintain flexibility for these discussions, demonstrate joint working with other authorities and satisfy the duty to cooperate to ensure that the housing needs of the HMA are delivered in the most sustainable manner. This approach should either be included in Growth Option 2 or form a new Growth Option 3.

In terms of the SA's assessment of the two growth options against the sustainability objectives, Hallam Land suggests that the benefit of meeting Gravesham's unmet needs (and indeed that of other neighbouring authorities) is further reviewed by Medway with precautionary provision made in the Plan.

Third, the SA concludes that Option 1 performs better than Option 2 against the majority of SA objectives (e.g. landscape, biodiversity and natural resources). In contrast, Option 2 only performs better than Option 1 against Objective 7 (Housing). We disagree. The higher population generated from Option 2 is likely to result in an increase in direct and indirect spending within the local area, boosting economic activity and strengthening the local economy in line with the Council's vision. The additional workforce could also attract economic investment and new businesses to the local area which could help alleviate the pressures associated with out-commuting. Therefore, it is considered that Option 2 performs better than Option 1 against Objective 12 (Economy and Employment).

In addition, the SA indicates that social and physical infrastructure will face increased pressure as a result of additional development. Based on this, Option 1 is assessed to perform better than Option 2 against Objectives 8 (Health and Wellbeing), 10 (Transport and Accessibility) and 11 (Education). However, additional growth which is well planned and for which infrastructure is effectively coordinated will attract additional investment in transport infrastructure, schools, and health facilities. This could increase local capacity, especially where the additional development is of a scale to deliver additional services. Hallam Land suggests that this benefit is recognised in all three objectives.

Overall, Hallam Land acknowledges that further work is required to confirm the quantum of development to be delivered through the new Local Plan and that this relies on adjoining authorities. It is crucial that any quantum is determined in line with the objectives and requirements of the NPPF especially as it relates to partnership working. Where neighbouring unmet needs are not satisfied, the unaccommodated growth could create additional pressures on housing for all relevant local authorities. Therefore, there is benefit in exploring how additional growth could be accommodated to support the overall vision of providing residents with suitable, sustainable, and affordable homes.

### ***Focus of Development***

The SDS “prioritises regeneration, making the best use of previously developed land and directing investment to urban waterfront and centre opportunity areas.” While supports the principle of the brownfield-first approach (which aligns with Section 11 of the NPPF), given Medway’s particular circumstances a careful and considered approach is necessary if the Local Plan is to be effective and deliverable.

The SDS focuses development at Chatham Docks, Medway City Estate, and the urban areas of Chatham, Strood, Rochester and Gillingham. Based on Table 4.1 of the SA, this cumulatively accounts for over half of Medway’s LHN (up to 13,044 homes), with or without Gravesham’s unmet housing needs.

Brownfield sites can be particularly challenging to deliver. Complex matters relating to remediation, land reclamation, demolition and contamination may result in significant delays in delivery. Viability is also particularly sensitive for brownfield sites, and this could necessitate multiple design changes, protracted s106 negotiations and reduced scale of planning contributions. Research undertaken by Lichfields (Start to Finish 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, March 2024) indicates that strategic brownfield sites generally deliver 34% slower than their greenfield counterparts and are more susceptible to economic downturns. Whilst Medway has a good record of identifying and bringing forward previously developed land, the timescales in bringing forward those sites suggests that careful phasing of development is needed if the Plan is to meet its objectives.

Therefore, while brownfield sites make a positive contribution to sustainable growth, it is crucial for the Council to balance this approach with deliverability. With a significant scale of future growth tied to urban regeneration, the Council may be exposed to the risk of low delivery rates in the first half of the local plan period. This could affect the Council’s ability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and its performance on the Housing Delivery Test (which Government is proposing local authorities should be under renewed scrutiny against).

In addition to urban regeneration, the SDS explores the expansion of some suburban areas “where the principles of sustainable development can be met.” Based on the Council’s preferred spatial growth strategy, development is also directed towards Hoo Peninsula and Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. We note inconsistencies between the SA and the proposed distribution which could undermine the overall spatial strategy. These concerns are address further in our response to Chapter 3 (Spatial Growth Options) of the draft Local Plan.

According to the SDS, “the function and extent of the metropolitan Green Belt in Medway will be retained.” However, this position has been arrived at without any review of the Green Belt and assessment as to whether parts of the existing Green Belt contribute positively to its five functions, and then consideration as to whether exceptional circumstances exist to release land from it for development. The previous Regulation 18 consultation recognised the potential role of promoted sites within the Green Belt, but none are carried forward despite an absence of an assessment of their role in the Green Belt, or of the potential for exceptional circumstances to exist to require Green Belt releases. We further note that Green Belt factors appear to influence the findings of the SA, again, despite no Green Belt assessment having been undertaken. A Green Belt Review and subsequent consideration as to whether exceptional



circumstances exist is therefore essential, and must take into account a number of other factors (meeting housing need, certainty of delivery, ensuring growth is directed to the most sustainable locations, etc.). That review must inform the Regulation 19 draft Local Plan to facilitate the delivery of sustainable growth in line with the Council's vision to meet Medway's development needs. The Government's proposed policy direction in relation to Green Belt (including the proposals as they relate to 'Grey Belt') further mandates the need for a Green Belt review and consideration of exceptional circumstances.

Finally, the SDS offers limited consideration of cross-boundary opportunities. As previously stated, the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Medway (November 2015) highlights that Medway Council's Housing Market Area (HMA) is cross-boundary and includes Medway, Gravesham, Swale, Maidstone, and Tonbridge and Malling. While there are ongoing discussions with Gravesham on potential unmet needs, it is unclear whether any engagement has been undertaken with other authorities in the HMA. The SDS should demonstrate joint working with other authorities to ensure that the housing needs of the HMA are delivered in the most sustainable manner.

In the context of the above, Hallam Land strongly objects to the rejection of CHR4, which is the part of the Holborough Quarry new community that is located within Medway, as a suitable location for development. Detailed commentary will be provided in Hallam Land's response to Chapter 3 (Spatial Growth Options), but the omission of this site from the SDS is inconsistent with the overall vision of the Local Plan, the detailed findings of the SA, and the objectives of the NPPF (extant, and particularly as emerging).

First, Holborough Quarry presents a significant opportunity to deliver a cross-boundary new community to meet the needs of Medway and the wider HMA, including Tonbridge and Malling. From a holistic perspective, the majority of development would be delivered in neighbouring Tonbridge and Malling, with a smaller proportion of up to 1,100 new homes and employment provision delivered in Medway. It is important to recognise the totality of the scheme and the benefits that the overall scale of development offers, and that assessment of those benefits is unfettered by administrative boundaries. A cross-boundary strategic scheme accords with the partnership working principles required by the current NPPF and as strongly supported by the Government's proposed reforms. The consultation specifically states that the Government "*want to ensure that in the short term we are making the most of opportunities for greater collaboration between authorities.*" (Chapter 3, paragraph 27). This indicates the direction of travel for future plan-making and expectations around the examination process, but existing opportunities must not be discounted in the meantime.

Second, Hallam Land acknowledges that Holborough Quarry is in the Green Belt. However, up to 50% of the wider site has been worked since 1840. There is also an extant planning permission for cement works and chalk extraction on a substantial part of the wider site. Holborough Quarry cannot therefore be viewed as greenfield in the typical sense, and the re-use of land for a residential led mixed use scheme that can secure a host of social, economic and environmental benefits, especially in comparison to the cement works and chalk quarrying, must be assessed as offering an effective use of land.

In addition, the proposed reforms to the NPPF support the release of "*poor quality grey belt land from the Green Belt through both plan-making and decision-making to meet local needs.*" 'Grey Belt' is defined as "*land in the Green Belt comprising Previously Developed Land and any other parcels and/or areas of Green Belt land that make a limited contribution to the five Green Belt purposes.*" Holborough Quarry makes a limited contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt as set out in the Holborough Quarry Green Belt Review (DJA, September 2024) submitted in support of these representations. Given this context, Holborough Quarry benefits from the definition of 'Grey-Belt' under the Government's proposed reforms to the NPPF. As stated above, it is important that Medway Council undertake a Green Belt review as part of the emerging Local Plan process. This will help release poor-performing Green Belt land for necessary development. It is also worth highlighting that neighbouring Tonbridge and Malling Council has concluded through its Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment (July 2022) that there are exceptional circumstances which justify alterations of the Green Belt boundaries to help meet development needs.

The land at Holborough Quarry is predominantly in Flood Zone 1, a sustainable and preferred location for new development. It also benefits from good existing transport connectivity. Halling station is approximately 1km away (12min walk) and provides services between Strood to the north and Maidstone West, Paddock Wood, and Tonbridge to the south. Further south (approximately 2km away), Snodland station provides additional connectivity with two peak hour HS1 services travelling in each direction between London St Pancras and Maidstone West – the only station served by HS1 between Maidstone and Strood.

In terms of existing facilities, future residents would be able to reach day-to-day facilities without using their car. Local facilities and services already exist at Halling, including a primary school, community centre, post office, medical services and other retail and leisure provision. Additional transport, education, health, and employment facilities will be provided through the proposed new community. Any development at the site would mitigate its impact, ensure that residents have suitable access to services, and provide sustainable transport choices.

The Transport Technical Note (DHA, September 2024) submitted as part of these representations concludes that land at Holborough Quarry has the potential to become an exemplar mixed-use site in transport planning terms. The scale and nature of the site provides great potential to maximise the internationalisation of everyday journeys. Recent upgrades to the local highway network have reduced pressure on the M2 and M20 and enhanced sustainable transport infrastructure. Land at Holborough Quarry is therefore already well-connected compared to other strategic sites which are relatively peripheral from key services and facilities.

Holborough Quarry is not subject to some of the constraints and challenges often associated with brownfield regeneration. It is in dual ownership with both owners contractually bound, supportive of alternative development options and keen to deliver sustainable growth to meet local needs. Their commitment is demonstrable by their engagement of Hallam Land as an established and experienced delivery partner. There are no impediments relating to assembly thereby facilitating quick delivery. Holborough Quarry also benefits from existing implemented access which offers immediate highway and public transport capacity. Where some strategic sites are impeded by a requirement to secure third-party infrastructure funding, the delivery of Holborough Quarry can progress without the need for enabling funding. Hallam Land is therefore confident that the site can deliver first completions within five years, in both Medway and Tonbridge and Malling areas, thus contributing to the Council's five-year housing land supply.

Based on this, Hallam Land strongly suggests that the SDS reflects this opportunity for delivering a sustainable, cross-boundary new community that aligns with Medway's overall vision. The Development Strategy, as currently drafted, does not recognise this unique opportunity for delivering strategic growth.

*Summary: Hallam Land objects to the spatial development strategy as it is not consistent with national policy and does not align with the Council's vision. Firstly, there is limited engagement with neighbouring authorities to identify unmet needs in the HMA. This falls short of the duty to cooperate. Secondly, the overreliance on brownfield land undermines the deliverability of the Local Plan. It is also crucial to undertake a Green Belt review to ensure that poor-performing GB land is released for development. Holborough Quarry is a sustainable location for development with limited constraints/challenges and should be assessed in this context.*

## **SPATIAL GROWTH OPTIONS**

### **OBJECT**

Section 4 of the supporting SA identifies 12 Spatial Delivery Options ('SDOs') for delivering Medway's needs. SDOs are broad locations for new development sites and are assessed against the sustainability criteria.

Section 5 of the SA then combines a number of SDOs (and the potential quantum of growth for each SDO) to generate three Spatial Growth Options ('SGOs'). SDOs and SGOs are therefore intrinsically linked and together shape the spatial distribution of Medway's future growth.

### ***SGO2 – Dispersed Growth***

The SA considers 3 SGOs; Urban Focus (SGO1), Dispersed Growth (SGO2) and Blended Strategy (SGO3). SGO2, which involves the release of Green Belt and greenfield sites, identifies Holborough Quarry as a potential location for development. Hallam Land supports this inclusion. SGO2 is not considered as a preferred option as it *"raises issues of sustainability (including) higher reliance on car-based transport, a greater loss of good quality farmland and wider environmental impacts"*. Hallam Land will demonstrate in this section that Holborough Quarry is a sustainable location for development, makes limited contribution to the Green Belt and is capable of mitigating its impact.

### ***SGO3 – The Indicative Preferred Option***

The Council identifies SGO3 (Blended Strategy) as the indicative preferred option as it is deemed to provide the best balance between sustainability considerations and addressing the diverse needs of the community.

First, Hallam Land has strong concerns regarding the view that SGO3 represents the most appropriate strategy. Not only is it unclear how sites have been selected but despite the relationship between SDOs and SGOs as described above, there are significant inconsistencies in the conclusions drawn from each assessment. The site selection process appears fundamentally flawed, with an inconsistent approach taken as to how the evidence base and SA have been used, which will ultimately have the effect of undermining the SDS' ability to achieve the Vision. Further, with no Green Belt Review, the evidence base is incomplete (and, insofar as Green Belt is used within the SA as an assessment factor, is not justified). Ultimately, Hallam Land do not consider that the most sustainable locations outside of settlement boundaries have been selected in SGO3.

There are several fundamental inconsistencies between the assessment of SDOs and SGOs. For example, Table 4.14 of the SA indicates that the Hoo Peninsula SDO creates the highest instances of Major Negative Impact against the sustainability objectives. Paragraph 4.3.5 also summarises that Hoo Peninsula is the *"worst performing SDO,"* ranking the lowest in against several objectives and generating a *"range of potential adverse effects."*

Despite this, the indicative preferred option (SGO3) includes 5 strategic residential-led sites within the Hoo Peninsula SDO, totalling up to 5,160 homes and equating to almost a quarter of the total LHN. This does not include the additional 1,409 homes that could come forward from selected non-strategic sites. The decision to include over 6,000 homes in a broad location that performs the worst out of the 12 assessed SDOs is therefore inconsistent. This directly conflicts with the assessed sustainability objectives and undermines the validity of the SA and the decision to identify SGO3, based on the potential site allocations included within it, as the preferred option.

The Strategic Transport Assessment published alongside the Plan indicates that there are considerable and adverse network implications which arise from the distribution of development under SGO3. These will require substantial infrastructure investment to address, with no certainty that such solutions can be physically achieved or are viable without public funding.

Second, and in contrast with the above, SGO3 fails to recognise better performing SDOs such as Medway Valley. Based on Table 4.14, Medway Valley has fewer instances of “Major Negative Impact” against the sustainability objectives than other sites. As an SDO, Medway Valley brings significant benefit in housing and employment with limited negative impact on climate change and cultural heritage. The site benefits from existing social and physical infrastructure and does not rely upon public funding to deliver additional infrastructure.

As previously highlighted, cross-boundary opportunities are not considered through the SA. Given Medway Valley is adjacent to neighbouring Tonbridge and Malling, this SDO provides the best opportunity to deliver sustainable growth within the HMA. Despite this, SGO3 does not include any strategic sites in Medway Valley. The only potential strategic site (CHR4 - which is the part of the Holborough Quarry new community within Medway) is rejected at site selection stage despite being one of the best performing sites assessed in the SA (further commentary in the section below).

Finally, the Council has not yet undertaken a review of the existing Green Belt boundary or consideration as to whether exceptional circumstances existing to release land from the Green Belt for development. In addition, the proposed reforms to the NPPF support the release of *“poor quality grey belt land from the Green Belt through both plan-making and decision-making to meet local needs.”* Grey belt is defined as *“land in the Green Belt comprising Previously Developed Land and any other parcels and/or areas of Green Belt land that make a limited contribution to the five Green Belt purposes.”* This approach is consistent with the Government’s commitment to *“ensure enough land is made available for new homes.”*

Medway’s calculated LHN is approximately 22,643 homes. This increases to approximately 24,643 homes when Gravesham’s unmet housing needs are accounted for and could increase further when the needs of other neighbouring authorities have been considered. The emerging Local Plan should also include a 10-20% buffer (instead of the 5% applied) to allow for flexibility against non- or under-delivery of sites – this would increase the LHN by approx. 1,300 homes. Finally, given the emerging Local Plan is not expected to be adopted until 2026 (as per the latest LDS), the plan period should extend to 2042 and the appropriate number of homes (approx. 1,500) for that year should be considered.

Notwithstanding the inconsistencies with the approach to distribution (where poorly performing SDOs are taken forward into the SGOs), Table 5.1 of the SA suggests that SGO3 could accommodate up to 23,733 homes. Therefore, there is a gap of over 2,500 homes between Growth Option 2 (meeting the LHN plus Gravesham’s unmet needs but not including other neighbouring authorities) and the capacity of SGO3. This gap has the potential to increase when concerns around the performances, in terms of delivery, of components of the SDO is taken into account. Exceptional circumstances clearly exist to justify a Green Belt review, notwithstanding the proposed mandatory review proposed by Government.

In short, if the Council decide to progress SGO3 or a variation of it then the land at Holborough Quarry within Medway should be included within it ahead of other less sustainable locations in order to ensure that the SDS can successfully achieve the Vision. It will also ensure that any inconsistencies as to how the evidence base and SA have informed the site selection process are avoided.

***New Growth Option – Urban Focus and Strategic Growth in Sustainable Locations, including a Cross Boundary New Community with Tonbridge and Malling (SGO4)***

The emerging Local Plan only considers three growth options. This fails to consider wider strategic opportunities that could deliver enhanced benefits to Medway and the surrounding areas, including on a cross-boundary basis.

We refer to this new Spatial Growth Option 4 as *Urban Focus and Strategic Growth in Sustainable Locations, including a Cross Boundary New Community with Tonbridge and Malling (SGO4)*. This SGO recognises the importance of focusing growth in urban areas and then to the most sustainable locations outside of settlement boundaries, something we do not consider SGO 3 currently achieves. Whilst a new community at Holborough Quarry would align with the focus on directing strategic growth to the most sustainable locations, we consider the importance of the cross-boundary opportunity is recognised in its own right.

#### ***Land at Holborough Quarry (CHR4)***

CHR4, which is the part of the Holborough Quarry new community within Medway, has been promoted through the Medway Local Plan process following a submission to the Call for Sites in 2022. Holborough Quarry would deliver a sustainable, cross-boundary, new community to meet identified needs within both authorities and the wider HMA. This presents a significant opportunity that is supported by the NPPF, aligns with the proposed reforms of the NPPF and positively contributes to the emerging Local Plan vision and strategic objectives.

The land at Holborough Quarry was rejected in the site selection process based on four reasons. Table 8.14 of the SA states the following reasons for rejection:

*Loss of BMV agricultural land. Within the Green Belt. The development could lead to coalescence between settlements. Potential adverse impact on listed building.*

Hallam strongly objects to the rejection of the land at Holborough Quarry within Medway. This is wholly inconsistent with the findings of the SA and subsequently, the Council's vision and strategic objectives for Medway. We note specifically that Green Belt is used to reject the site, despite no Green belt Assessment having been made to inform the Plan or its SA. The key matters of contention are detailed further below.

#### **SA Assessment**

First, the land at Holborough Quarry has been assessed as one of the best performing strategic sites out of the 24 considered. Table 8.12 of the SA demonstrates that the strategic site could deliver Major Positive Impact against three sustainability objectives (Housing, Transport and Accessibility, and Economy and Employment). Only four other strategic sites provide these many instances of Major Positive Impact.

While this is not recognised in the SA, the opportunity to deliver a cross-boundary scheme further bolsters the positive impacts of the scheme. Development at Holborough Quarry within Medway could deliver up to 1,100 new homes to address identified needs in the HMA; provide local employment opportunities to support the local and wider economy; provide new strategic infrastructure and improvements to existing transport accessibility. This is a unique opportunity that other strategic sites cannot offer.

Secondly, the SA indicates that the land at Holborough Quarry could deliver Minor Positive Impact against the Climate Change objective. The assessment suggests that there would be a Negligible Impact on Education and Minor Negative Impact on Health and Wellbeing. Hallam Land disagrees with this post-mitigation assessment, specifically because planning policy requirements for the scale of development proposed would likely result in delivery of and/or contributions to education and health facilities. This would result in the scheme either mitigating its impact or potentially increasing capacity to leave a Minor Positive Impact.

The land at Holborough Quarry is considered to have a Negligible impact on Cultural Heritage and a Minor Negative Impact on Landscape and Townscape. Hallam Land acknowledges that the nature of the



assessment means that the potential for sensitive design to mitigate impact on the landscape cannot be considered. All other strategic sites have also been assessed to have either a Minor or Major Negative Impact on Landscape and Townscape. However, the unique opportunity that Holborough Quarry presents to deliver new and positive cultural and industrial heritage interpretation has not been considered by the SA. The Council's Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework (consultation draft) recognises this opportunity in identifying the priorities for Area 5 (Cuxton and Halling) which include cultural projects to celebrate the heritage and natural heritage of the area, and building on the work of the 'Valley of Visions' Landscape Partnership Scheme (a scheme in which Tarmac was a key partner), as well as developing the cultural and biodiversity importance of former industrial heritage, for example the former quarries.

Finally, as with most of the other strategic sites, Holborough Quarry is assessed to have a Major Negative Impact on Natural Resources. However, the historic context of Holborough Quarry has not been considered through the SA. It has an extensive history of working as well and benefits from planning permissions granted for further working, which means that up to 50% of the wider site has been worked since 1840. There is also an existing and implemented planning permission for cement works on a substantial part of Holborough Quarry - whilst this is located within the Tonbridge and Malling part of the site, it directly abuts the area within Medway. Therefore, Holborough Quarry has limited greenfield value and constitutes effective use of land and should be assessed in this context. There is also a precedent of residential development on former quarry sites across the Medway Valley where such sites have delivered significant growth and reduced pressures on the release of undeveloped land. This includes Peter's Village to the east – a strategic site that delivered approximately 1,000 new homes, Holborough Lakes (which was constructed on parts of Holborough Quarry) and regeneration at Knights Templar Way and other sites at Cuxton.

Overall, the SA demonstrates that the land at Holborough Quarry within Medway performs strongly against majority of the sustainability objectives, and also when compared to the other strategic sites assessed. This justifies the inclusion of the Holborough Quarry as a delivery option within the growth strategy.

Impact Matrix for Land at Holborough Quarry against SA Sustainability Objectives (post-mitigation)

Ref	Sustainability Objectives	Medway Assessment	Hallam Assessment
1	Climate change mitigation	+/-	+/-
2	Climate change adaptation	+	+
3	Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-
4	Landscape and townscape	-	-
5	Pollution and waste	--	--
6	Natural resources	--	-
7	Housing	++	++
8	Health and wellbeing	-	+
9	Cultural heritage	0	+
10	Transport and accessibility	++	++
11	Education	0	+
12	Economy and employment	++	++
13	Cross Boundary Opportunity	Not Considered	++

The specific issues that have been raised in Table 8.14 of Appendix 3a to the SA, as set out below, can be addressed on the basis of a more detailed appraisal.

- **Loss of BMV agricultural land:** on the basis of Natural England's Provisional Agricultural Land Classification (accessed via the Magic Map application, Holborough Quarry incorporates Grades 2

and 3 soils. However, much of Holborough Quarry is subject to disturbance through quarrying or implementation of the cement works permission and therefore cannot be assumed to accord with Natural England's broad-scale assessments. In any event, this ALC classification is comparable with other parts of Medway and is of a lower grading than other areas. Other sites which are indicated to have a higher ALC have not been rejected on these grounds. We are therefore concerned that there appears to be some inconsistency in the approach to the ALC and site selection process.

- **Within the Green Belt:** No Green Belt assessment has been undertaken to inform the Plan meaning that the site's contribution to the Green Belt has not been appraised and no assessment of whether exceptional circumstances exist for the release of Green Belt land has been undertaken. This is inconsistent with the previous Regulation 18 Plan which identified the Green Belt as a significant potential source of capacity. It is therefore inappropriate to reject sites on the basis of an untested policy assumption. The proposed reforms to the NPPF support the release "*poor quality grey belt land from the Green Belt through both plan-making and decision-making to meet local needs.*" Grey belt is defined as "*land in the Green Belt comprising Previously Developed Land and any other parcels and/or areas of Green Belt land that make a limited contribution to the five Green Belt purposes.*" Given the site's history as having been extensively worked for chalk, and subject to an extant permission for a cement works, as well as the limited contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt as set out in the Holborough Quarry Green Belt Review (September 2024) the site benefits from the definition of "Grey-Belt" under the Government's proposed reforms to the NPPF.
- **The development could lead to coalescence between settlements:** The detailed analysis in paragraphs D.5.8.1 to D.5.7.4 offers no description of the impacts of the land at Holborough Quarry and the associated tabulated results indicate that it scores no worse than others. Detailed master planning, allied to appraisal and mitigation of landscape and townscape impacts would allow potential concerns regarding coalescence to be addressed. We consider it inconsistent that Holborough Quarry is rejected on this ground, whilst others (which score equally) are not. Again, there is a clear inconsistency as how the evidence base is being used to inform the site selection process.
- **Potential adverse impact on listed building:** The Grade II listed Clement's Farm House lies on the western extent of the site boundary some 20m above an existing quarry which is not proposed to accommodate built development. We do not consider there to be any basis for assuming adverse impacts on the listed building given that context, and do not consider rejection on this ground to be justified.

### Benefits

As highlighted through the SA, the land at Holborough Quarry is in a highly sustainable location for development. It is primarily in Flood Zone 1 (a preferred location for development) and there are no environmental constraints that would preclude development at the site. As stated above, the SA concludes that development on this site would predominantly result in positive or minor negative impacts when assessed against the sustainability objectives.

Development of the land at Holborough Quarry for a new community constitutes effective use of land. Historically, much of the wider site was used as a quarry and there is an existing planning permission for cement works that covers a large part. Therefore, while located within the Green Belt, the land at Holborough Quarry has limited greenfield value and falls within the definition of "Grey Belt" as set out in the proposed reforms to the NPPF.

The physical constraints of the land at Holborough Quarry can be assessed and sufficiently mitigated through the design and implementation of a scheme. The Kent Downs National Landscape ('KDNL'), which defines the landscape edge of development, will be protected and any scheme will respond positively and sensitively to its setting. There are also opportunities for positive interpretation of the landscape and visitor management.

Any planning consent will secure the delivery of and/or contributions to education and health facilities, enhanced green and blue infrastructure and opportunities for positive cultural and industrial heritage.

The part of the Holborough Quarry new community within Medway should be considered in its strategic context. It forms part of a wider vision to deliver a sustainable, new, balanced community to meet identified needs in Halling and Snodland. The majority of development would fall within neighbouring Tonbridge & Malling, with up to 1,100 located within Medway. This reinforces the vision for strategic thinking and cross-boundary collaboration to deliver the sustainable growth required in the area.

The site benefits from excellent strategic transport connections. Halling station is approximately 1km away (12min walk) and provides services between Strood to the north and Maidstone West, Paddock Wood, and Tonbridge to the south. Further south (approximately 2km away), Snodland station provides additional connectivity with two peak hour HS1 services travelling in each direction between London St Pancras and Maidstone West.

In addition to this, the primary highway access infrastructure has already been delivered through the existing cement works planning permission. Therefore, there is no requirement to secure third-party infrastructure funding or deliver a new access, both of which could lead to extensive delays to implementation.

The Holborough Quarry new community lends itself to simultaneous build-out phases, with development on multiple fronts helping to boost annual delivery rates. In addition, large strategic sites typically deliver a variety of housing choices. One of the key findings of the Letwin Review is the positive correlation between the diversity of dwellings on a site and higher build out rates. Generally, a variety of housing is likely to appeal to a wider market, which subsequently results in a greater absorption rate. In terms of housing delivery, this indicates that the cross-boundary opportunity could deliver first completions within five years and maintain high annual delivery rates throughout the build-out period.

Overall, the land at Holborough Quarry is available, deliverable, and achievable. It also aligns with the Council's sustainability and development objectives and should be considered in the context of its strategic benefits. Hallam Land therefore considers that Holborough Quarry should form part of any preferred SGO, whether this is an amended SGO3, to ensure strategic growth is located to the most sustainable locations, or a new growth option SGO4 that explicitly realises the cross-boundary opportunity at Halling / Holborough.

*Summary: Hallam Land and its partners object to the view that SGO3, in its current form, represents the most appropriate strategy. There are significant inconsistencies within the SA and between the SDOs and SGOS, despite the relationship between the two. The SA proposes the allocation of poor-performing sites located in poor-performing SDOs. Holborough Quarry performs strongly against sustainability objectives but has been excluded in SGO3. The site is in a sustainable location with limited constraints. The reasons for refusal are inconsistent with the approach to other sites and are disputed. It is strongly recommended that a new growth option (SGO4) which considers cross-border opportunities is considered.*

## **POLICY S1: PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **SUPPORT / COMMENT**

Hallam Land supports the Council's commitment to achieving net zero by 2050. In the context of a climate emergency, it is critical that all development in the local area seeks to mitigate its impact and positively address the impacts of climate change.

The land at Holborough Quarry is predominantly in Flood Zone 1, a sustainable and preferred location for new development. It also benefits from good existing transport connectivity.

The site performs strongly against Policy S1 and subsequently aligns with one of the fundamental strategic objectives of the draft Local Plan.

## **POLICY S4: LANDSCAPE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT**

### **SUPPORT / COMMENT**

Hallam Land supports the protection afforded to Medway's landscape character and local distinctiveness. This reflects the approach taken by the NPPF.

As with any development, the physical constraints of the land at Holborough Quarry can be assessed and sufficiently mitigated through the design and implementation of a scheme. In addition, the design concept for the new community provides an opportunity for positive landscape and heritage interpretation taking forward the Valley of Visions.

We note that the Consultation Draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy notes opportunities for positive interpretation of the landscape – for example in relation to former industrial heritage within the Cuxton and Halling Character Area. Policy S4 should recognise that such opportunities can form part of overarching proposals for development, and that the consideration of development proposals under Policy S4 should give positive weight to such elements.

## **POLICY S5: KENT DOWNS AONB NATIONAL LANDSCAPE**

### **OBJECT**

We note that Policy S5 attaches policy weight to the Green and Blue Corridors identified in Figure 2. That Figure appears to derive from Plans 1 to 5 which culminate in Plan 6 of the Consultation Draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework. Hallam Land is concerned, however, that Plan 6 of the Framework includes light blue tinted areas which are unkeyed and for which Plans 1 to 5 offer no explanation. If those blue tinted areas are to be subject to protection under Policy S5, their derivation must be clear and justified by evidence.

## **POLICY S6: KENT DOWNS AONB NATIONAL LANDSCAPE**

### **SUPPORT / COMMENT**

Hallam Land supports the protection afforded to designated landscapes, including the Kent Downs National Landscape (KDNL). This reflects the approach taken by the NPPF and national legislation.

The Kent Downs National Landscape (KDNL), which defines the landscape edge of the land at Holborough Quarry, will be protected and any scheme will respond positively and sensitively to its setting. As with

any development, the physical constraints of the site can be assessed and sufficiently mitigated through the design and implementation of a scheme.

## **POLICY S7: GREEN BELT**

### **Q8: Do you consider that exceptional circumstances exist to justify review of the Green Belt boundary?**

Hallam Land considers that exceptional circumstances exist, both at a district level and site level, to release land at Holborough Quarry from the Green Belt and allocate for residential development. As set out previously, a Green Belt Review is necessary and will be one of several evidence base documents which will need to be considered in arriving at a judgement on exceptional circumstances.

#### ***District level***

First, Medway's calculated LHN is at least around 22,643 homes, with additions necessary to provide a buffer to delivery and to account for the potential for a 2042 plan period which we believe is required. This increases to approximately 24,643 homes when Gravesham's unmet housing needs are accounted for, with the further potential for unmet need to arise from Tonbridge and Malling. The base housing requirement is, in itself, substantial but becomes significant when other factors are included. Notwithstanding our concerns with the approach to distribution (e.g. unjustified concentration of homes in the worst performing SDO), Table 5.1 of the SA suggests that SGO3 could accommodate up to 23,733 homes. Therefore, there is a gap of 910 homes between Growth Option 2 (meeting the LHN plus Gravesham's unmet needs) and the Council's assumed capacity of SGO3. Against an increased housing need (when a buffer, Plan Period and TMBC potential unmet need are factored-in), an increased shortfall arises giving rise to a need to review the Green Belt.

Second, it must be recognised that the SA's findings indicate reliance on sites which perform less well in sustainability terms, at both a Strategic Delivery Option and site level. This challenges the assumed capacity of SGO3 and further increases the shortfall between need and potential provision.

Third, the SDS prioritises the use of brownfield land. Based on Table 4.1 of the SA, this cumulatively accounts for over half of Medway's LHN (up to 13,044 homes), with or without Gravesham's unmet housing needs, and without the additional housing we consider necessary to meet an extended Plan period and to provide a buffer. This is an already high concentration of homes on sites that can be particularly challenging to deliver. A critical review of the deliverability of brownfield sites would recognise that they may not immediately deliver homes and that a need exists to allocate sites capable of early and certain delivery.

Fourth, there is evidence that SGO3 itself gives rise to significant potential impacts which will require significant investment in infrastructure to ameliorate – this is evident in relation to highways capacity as set out by the Council's Strategic Transport Assessment. This casts further doubt on the deliverability of sites upon which the Council places reliance.

Individually and collectively, the above signifies that there is a need to release land from the Green Belt in Medway, which would be suitable for development and capable of contributing to the Council's Vision.

#### ***Site level***

##### ***Limited contribution to the Green Belt and Grey Belt***

The land at Holborough Quarry makes a limited contribution to the five purposes of the Green Belt in both Medway and in Tonbridge and Malling. Applying Medway Council's previous (2018) methodology at an appropriate site-level and as relates to the Medway administrative area, the submitted



Holborough Quarry Green Belt Review concludes that the site provides an overall Moderate-Low contribution to the Green Belt. It scores predominantly 'low' against the purposes of the Green Belt and does not harm the aims of the Green Belt. New permanent boundaries can be appropriately established. The site must therefore be assessed by means of a Green Belt Review, which we believe would conclude that the site is suitable for removal from the Green Belt.

Up to 50% of the wider site has been worked since 1840 with not all land subject to restoration requirements. There is also an existing (and implemented) planning permission for cement works and chalk quarrying on a substantial part of the Holborough Quarry site. The site is therefore already considered suitable for development and has an extensive history of being worked. Hallam Land consider that Holborough Quarry, or certainly large parts of it, are likely to be deemed "Grey Belt" land and would therefore be considered favourably should the proposed changes to the Framework be enacted.

#### *Sustainable location*

The site is in a highly sustainable location in transport terms given the proximity to the rail stations and public transport services, which will be connected to and enhanced where possible, and where there is scope to explore ambitious aspirations around modal shift and minimising vehicular trips. It also performs well under the Sustainability Appraisal as set out in the comments to the SDS and SG03.

#### *Local and sub-regional benefits*

The benefits of the scheme to existing and new residents would be substantial and long-lasting. The emerging concept plan shows that the scheme can provide a strong Green Belt boundary whilst securing enhancements to land that would remain in the Green Belt. This would include public access to a new country park in an area that is currently inaccessible. A substantial amount of new housing, including affordable housing, would be provided helping to meet the LHN. The development would include sustainable and supporting infrastructure such as a school and new neighbourhood centres as well as facilities for recreation for use by existing and new residents. The development of Holborough Quarry would have a positive impact on the local economy by creating jobs and economic productivity both during construction but through potential employment areas.

HLM088/RU/AO

# TRANSPORT TECHNICAL NOTE

JOB REF. **PL/LS/33865** CLIENT **Hallam Land**

SITE  
**Holborough Quarry**

JOB NAME  
**Review of Regulation 18 Medway Local Plan**

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Hallam Land act as Tarmac's the development partner for the promotion of land at Holborough Quarry, which falls within the Local Planning Authority areas of Medway and Tonbridge and Malling. The proposals for this land comprise the development of up to 4,500 dwellings, together with supporting physical, social and environmental infrastructure and services.
- 1.1.2 This Transport Technical Note (TN01) contains a review of the Regulation 18 Medway Local Plan transport policies and technical evidence, which includes the Strategic Transport Assessment and the Interim Sustainability Appraisal and supports Hallam Land's formal representations to Medway Council.

## 1.2 STRATEGIC TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT

- 1.2.1 The technical transport evidence base for the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation is documented in the following Strategic Transport Assessment reports:
- Data Collection Report;
  - Local Model Validation Report;
  - Forecasting Methodology Report; and
  - Forecasting Report.
- 1.2.2 The Forecasting Report contains analysis of future year scenarios that include different demand growth and associated infrastructure; namely the Reference Case (RC) and the Do Something (DS). Of the different spatial growth options outlined in the Regulation 18 Local Plan; Option 1 – 'Urban Focus', Option 2 – 'Dispersed Growth', and Option 3 – 'Blended Strategy'; it is Option 3 – the Council's

currently preferred option – that has formed the basis for the modelling of these scenarios.

1.2.3 The RC and DS scenarios are defined in the Forecasting Report as:

- **Reference Case (RC)** – includes completions and consented development and infrastructure planned for the 2019-2041 growth period within Medway; outside of the Area of Detailed Modelling, 'near certain' developments were modelled in adjoining authorities (Gravesham, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone and Swale) and background car traffic growth came from TEMPro<sup>1</sup> v8 (using the 'alternative assumptions' tool for adjoining authorities to ensure no double counting of these developments). Goods vehicle growth across the model will be provided by the Road Traffic Forecasts (RTF).
- **Do Something (DS)** – the only difference between the RC and the DS is the demand arising from trips generated from the proposed allocations and infrastructure associated with Spatial Growth Option 3 in the draft Local Plan.

1.2.4 It is worth noting that within Medway's modelling work, scenarios that include the potential Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) scheme were developed for both the RC and DS networks. However, it is deemed within the report that the results do not differ that significantly in the comparisons with and without LTC, and therefore this review focuses on those without the scheme included due to its ongoing uncertainty.

1.2.5 It should further be noted that the RC and DS scenario are 'interim' in nature, in that they do not consider potential mitigation measures for the identified impacts.

1.2.6 This review has focused on the results presented in the Forecasting Report; highlighting the key impacts on the highway network for the 2041 RC and 2041 DS scenarios tested. All figures included in this TN have been taken directly from the Forecasting Report<sup>2</sup> unless stated otherwise.

### **2019 Base vs 2041 Reference Case**

#### *Traffic Volume*

1.2.7 In terms of traffic flow increases in the 2041 RC, these can be observed largely on the main Strategic Road Network (SRN) corridors in the region in both the AM and PM peaks (i.e. the M2, M20, A2, A229 and A249).

---

<sup>1</sup> The DfT's Trip End Model Presentation Program (TEMPro), is a modelling tool designed to allow users to look at the growth in trip ends, using actual and forecast data from the National Trip End Model (NTEM) regional datasets

<sup>2</sup> Medway Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation, Strategic Transport Assessment – Forecast Report

### *Junction Level of Service*

- 1.2.8 Level of Service (LOS) is a qualitative measure of the present traffic situation at a given junction from the driver's perspective. This is a function that is contained within the VISUM modelling software that has been used to host the Kent Traffic Model used for this evidence base.
- 1.2.9 The LOS ranges from A (best) to F (worst), and within the 2041 RC there are no junctions identified in either modelled peak with an E or F rating.

### *Queuing*

- 1.2.10 The main part of the highway network that is forecast to experience significant queueing in the 2041 RC is the Four Elms Roundabout junction in Wainscott, as shown in Figure 1.

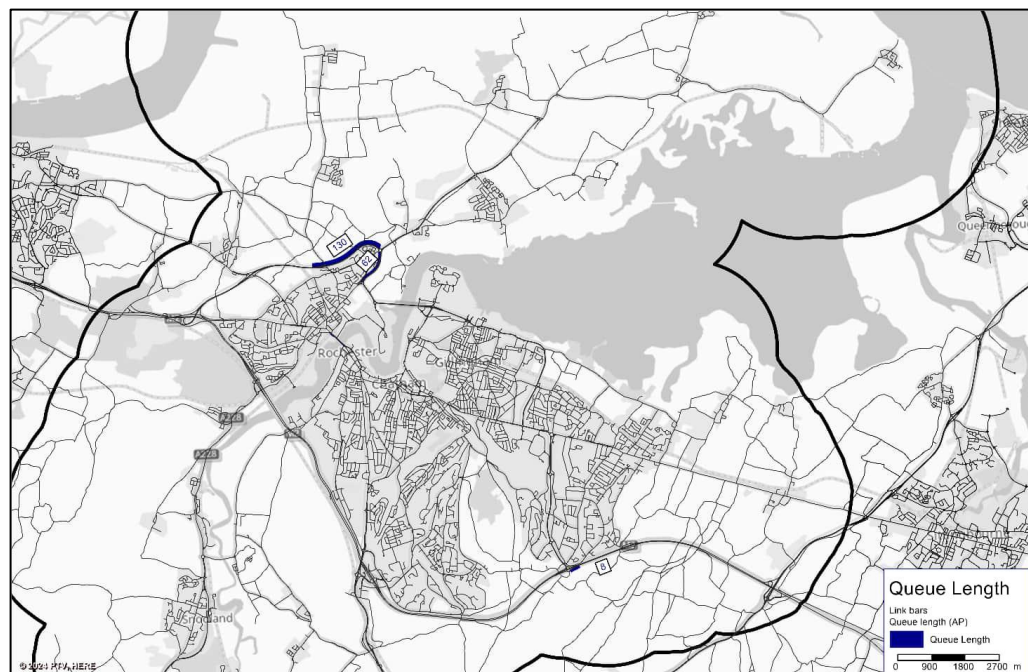


FIGURE 1 – 2041 RC, QUEUE LENGTH, AM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)

### *Volume over Capacity*

- 1.2.11 The Volume over Capacity (VOC) analysis shows how well a junction or link is operating with respect to its design capacity. Those areas that are operating close to capacity (85-100%) are shown in orange, and those that are over capacity (>100%) are shown in red.

1.2.12 The analysis for the 2041 RC VOC shows that there are numerous parts of the highway network that are forecast to be approaching or over capacity (see Figure 2 and Figure 3 that represent the AM and PM peaks, respectively). These links are:

- M2 Junction 4 to Junction 5 (AM), Junction 5 to Junction 4 (PM);
- A2, west of M2 Junction 1;
- A228 at Snodland and Halling – SB (AM), NB (PM);
- A229 Blue Bell Hill;
- A289/B2000 junction in Wainscott; and
- A249 at Danaway SB (AM), NB (PM).

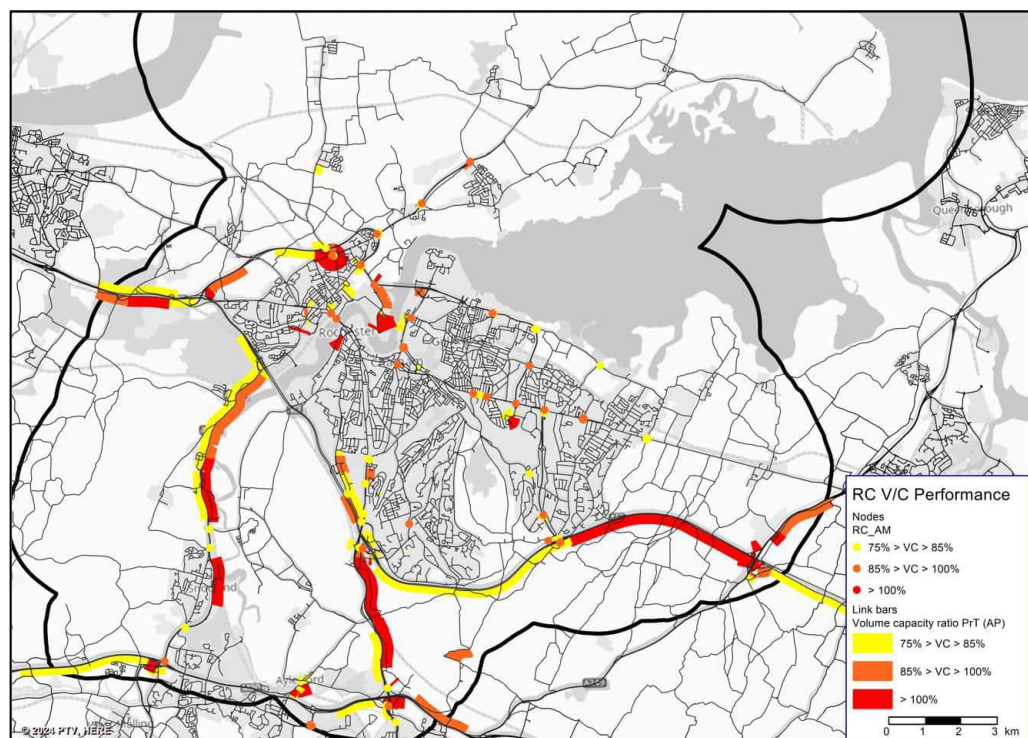


FIGURE 2 – 2041 RC, VOC, AM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)



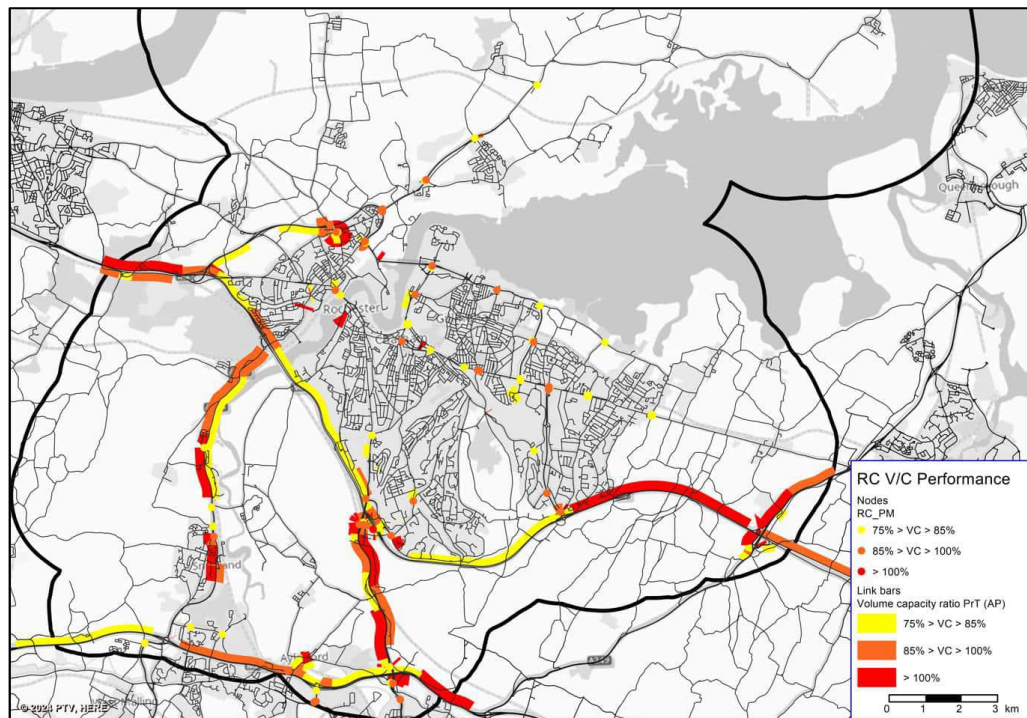


FIGURE 3 – 2041 RC, VOC, PM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)

### 2041 Reference Case vs 2041 Do Something

- 1.2.13 Medway Council's preferred site allocations for the Regulation 18 consultation are the only housing and employment growth allowed for between the RC and DS scenarios (see Figure 4, taken from the Local Plan Consultation Summary). The proposed residential-led sites are shown as blue-filled circles, with the proposed employment sites shown as orange circles.
- 1.2.14 This preferred option, as stated in the Local Plan Consultation Summary, is a 'blended strategy' with *"...a brownfield first focus with regeneration in urban centres and waterfront locations, complemented by a range of sites in suburban and rural areas"*, referenced as Scenario SGO3
- 1.2.15 The DS scenario consists of all potential site allocations within the SGO3 development scenario, and which is stated in the Forecasting Report as providing a 'worst-case' scenario in terms of demand on the highway network.

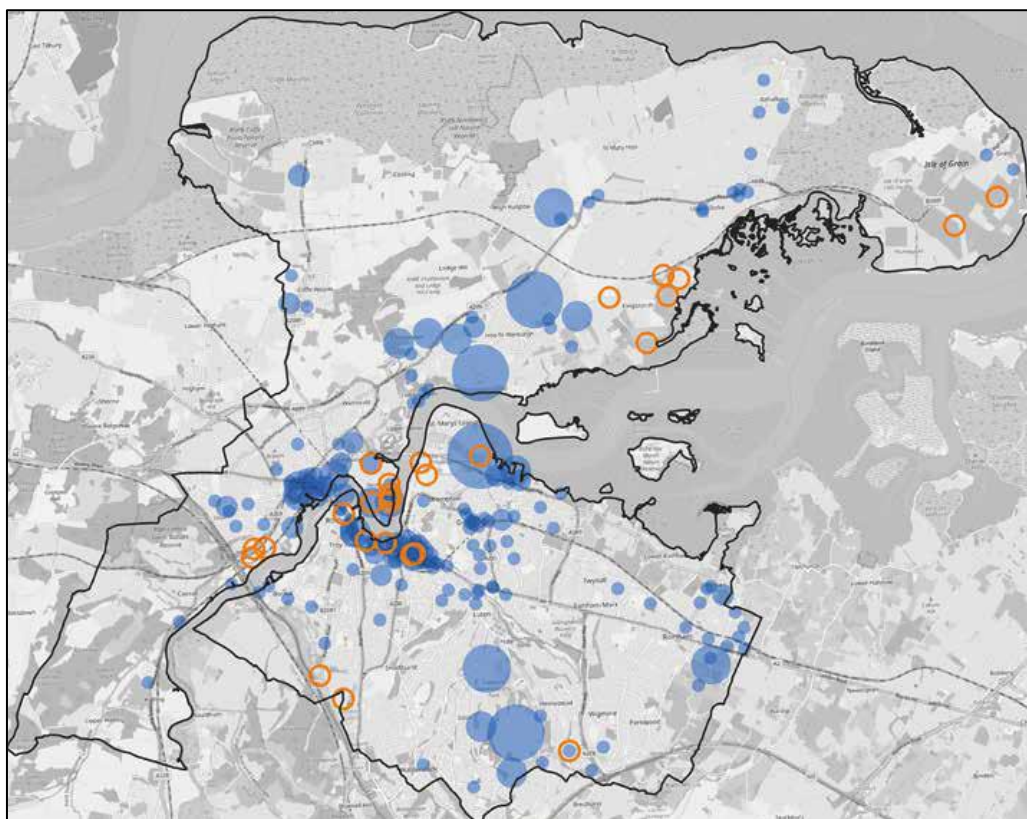


FIGURE 4 – MEDWAY COUNCIL PREFERRED GROWTH OPTION (OPTION 3 – BLENDED STRATEGY)

### Traffic Volume

- 1.2.16 The largest traffic flow increases can be seen through the Hoo Peninsula and on the M2 between Junctions 1 and 4 in both peak periods. This correlates to the pattern of new demand entering the highway network in the Do Something scenario, particularly residential sites located between Hoo and Chattenden near the A228, and Lidsing near the M2, and employment sites located just off M2 Junction 2.

<sup>3</sup> Medway Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation, LP Consultation Summary



FIGURE 5 – ACTUAL FLOW DIFFERENCE, 2041 DS VS RC, AM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)



FIGURE 6 – ACTUAL FLOW DIFFERENCE, 2041 DS VS RC, PM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)

### *Junction Level of Service*

- 1.2.17 Unlike the 2041 RC, the 2041 DS shows junctions whose LOS has deteriorated to ratings of Level E, which "...represents unstable traffic flows, operating at capacity.



*Driver's level of comfort becomes poor", and Level F, which "...represents the worst traffic quality with forced or breakdown traffic flows. Travel time cannot be predicted, with generally more demand than capacity".*

- 1.2.18 In the AM peak, the A228 Peninsular Way roundabout in Chattenden is rated as Level F, with the following four junctions rated as Level E – A2 High Street / Mierscourt Road signal junction, A2 Chatham Hill / Rock Avenue signal junction, B2004 Lower Rainham Road / Pump Lane priority junction, and Main Road Chattenden / Main Road Hoo roundabout.
- 1.2.19 In the PM peak, the A228 Peninsular Way roundabout is rated as Level F, plus the Capstone Road / Ash Tree Lane roundabout in Darland. The following four junctions have been rated as Level E – A2 Best Street / Clover Street junction, A2 High Street / Mierscourt Road signal junction, A2 Chatham Hill / Rock Avenue signal junction, and A229 City Way / A229 Roman Road eastbound junction.
- 1.2.20 These junctions can be seen in Figure 7 and Figure 8 for the AM and PM peaks, respectively.



FIGURE 7 – 2041 DS, JUNCTION LEVEL OF SERVICE, AM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)



FIGURE 8 – 2041 DS, JUNCTION LEVEL OF SERVICE, PM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)

### *Queuing*

- 1.2.21 In the 2041 DS, the queueing issues in the 2041 RC worsen at the Four Elms Roundabout junction, with problems extending further back on the A289 and into Hoo (AM and PM). There are also issues seen on the westbound approach to M2 Junction 4 (AM only). These are depicted in Figure 9 for the AM peak.





FIGURE 9 – QUEUE LENGTH DIFFERENCE, 2041 DS VS RC, AM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)

### *Volume over Capacity*

- 1.2.22 In the DS, the previous RC issue on the A228 at Snodland is shown to move northwards towards Halling and the M2. The other VOC problems remain at the A289/B2000 junction in Wainscott and those in Hoo. These can be seen for both the AM and PM peaks in Figure 10 and Figure 11, respectively.

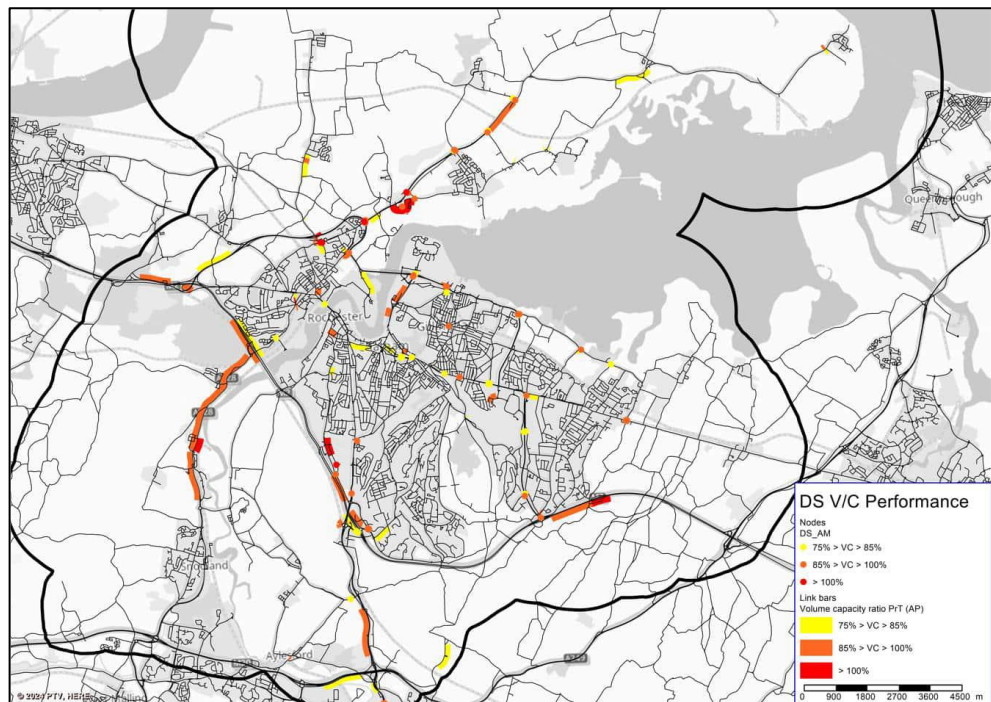


FIGURE 10 – 2041 DS, LINK AND TURN V/C, AM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)

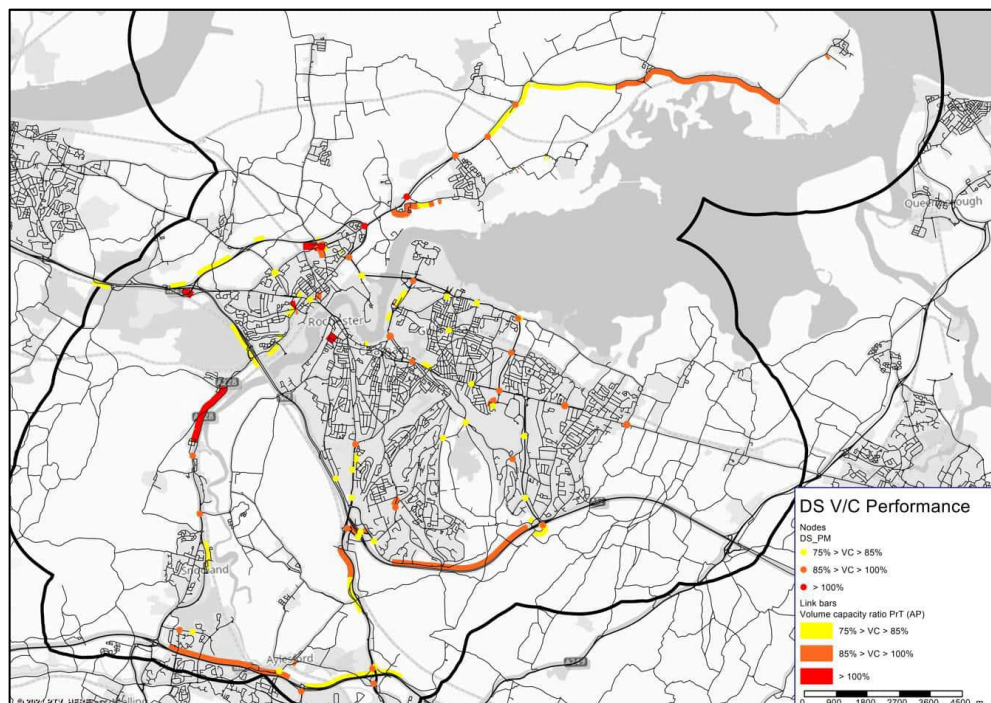


FIGURE 11 – 2041 DS, LINK AND TURN V/C, PM PEAK (COURTESY OF JACOBS)

### 1.3 INTERIM SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

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- 1.3.1 Medway Council's Local Plan Summary has a strong focus on sustainability. It states:-

*"It's important to remember that the new plan isn't just about new homes and businesses: Our Local Plan is about helping Medway to grow sustainably. This includes finding a balance between the need for development of homes and jobs and protecting the environment."*

- 1.3.2 It also sets out what the Council is seeking to achieve through the new Local Plan, which includes:-

- A sustainable and green future;
- Supporting people to lead healthy lives and strengthening our communities;
- Secure jobs and develop skills for a competitive economy; and
- Boost pride in Medway through quality development.

- 1.3.3 Within the Interim Sustainability Appraisal undertaken for the Regulation 18 Consultation, Appendix D contains an assessment of Reasonable Alternative Strategic Sites.

- 1.3.4 The land at Holborough Quarry within Medway (CHR4) was one of 24 sites included in this assessment (see Figure 12), based on a 63.12ha Net Area and a 1,100 Housing Capacity ('Strategic residential-led sites' are considered to be those which comprise at least 10ha and could deliver at least 500 new homes, as set out in the assessment report).

- 1.3.5 Please note that all figures contained in this section are taken from this document unless stated otherwise.



FIGURE 12 – REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIC SITES IDENTIFIED IN MEDWAY

- 1.3.6 The assessment considers 12 categories in total, but for the purpose of this review only those that have a bearing on transport, accessibility and sustainability have been included. For each category, the assessment rating and a brief description of the site's performance is summarised below.

#### ***Climate Change Mitigation***

CHR4	Residential led (mixed-use)	+/-
------	-----------------------------	-----

- 1.3.7 All sites were scored equally due to limited carbon footprint data.

#### ***Pollution and Waste***

CHR4	Residential led (mixed-use)	-	-	0	+/-	-	--	+/-
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- 1.3.8 The proximity to Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) results in a slight negative rating for the site.
- 1.3.9 The site performs comparably for the remaining categories (main road, railway line, watercourse, increase in air pollution, waste).

### **Housing**

CHR4	Residential led (mixed-use)	++
------	-----------------------------	----

- 1.3.10 The site **scores highly for housing**, as do 18 other sites.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

CHR4	Residential led (mixed-use)	-	-	+	+	0	+
------	-----------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---

- 1.3.11 The site scores an average rating, with all categories considered comparable to the other sites.
- 1.3.12 The site scores positively for leisure facilities, access to green space, and access to PRoW and/or cycle networks.

### **Transport and Accessibility**

CHR4	Residential led (mixed-use)	+	+	+	+	++
------	-----------------------------	---	---	---	---	----

- 1.3.13 The site is the **joint-best** performing site alongside four other sites when considering all the sub-categories.
- 1.3.14 It is **rated highly** (++) for public transport accessibility.

### **Education**

CHR4	Residential led (mixed-use)	++	+	0
------	-----------------------------	----	---	---

- 1.3.15 The site performs **best overall**, with the only 'major' (++) rating for primary schools. Particular note is made to the three new primary schools and the provision of sustainable transport that form part of the proposal.

### **Economy and Employment**

CHR4	Residential led (mixed-use)	++	+
------	-----------------------------	----	---

- 1.3.16 The site has the **joint-best** scores for both categories (employment floorspace and access to primary employment location).



## 1.4 REGULATION 18 LOCAL PLAN TRANSPORT POLICY AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

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- 1.4.1 The Regulation 18 Local Plan<sup>4</sup> sets out its vision, ambitions and policies for future transport in Medway, with the following excerpts provided to demonstrate how Holborough Quarry aligns with these core principles, and a move away from the traditional 'predict and provide' approach to the latest best practice 'vision and validate' approach:

### Vision for Access and Movement in Medway

*"... By 2041, Medway is an accessible place where people can meet most of their daily needs in their local area, such as schools, grocery shopping and places to socialise and exercise."*

*"... Space for home working has been provided in every new home, while co-working spaces have reduced the need to travel for people who are more likely to be able to work remotely... A growing network for active travel converges on urban centres following the successful implementation of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)."*

*"... Urban centres will be characterised by design interventions to create a healthier, safer and more equitable environment for people."*

*"... Car clubs, demand responsive transport and e-scooters provide other credible transport choices."*

### User Hierarchy and Street Design

*"... Development proposals should adhere to the prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to public transport. Streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places."*

*"... The multiple benefits of walking and cycling for individuals and the community are well documented and promoted, for example through the Living Streets campaign, not least in terms of addressing public health, environmental and economic issues as a result of traffic congestion. Research suggests the lack of attractive routes and perceptions of crime are factors that deter walking and cycling. This is especially pertinent to Medway, where some areas are car dependent."*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://medway.oc2.uk/document/18/766#d766>

### Accessibility Standards

*"... The '15-minute neighbourhood' concept enables people to 'live local'. This means people can meet most of their everyday needs within a 15-minute walk or cycle from their home, such as schools, grocery shopping and places to socialise and exercise."*

*"... Providing access to affordable, integrated public transport and new forms of shared mobility such as e-bikes, e-scooters and electric vehicle car clubs is vital. This would help to ensure such means of transport are credible for the medium and longer distance journeys that are responsible for most surface transport emissions."*

## **1.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

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- 1.5.1 The Strategic Transport Assessment forecasts a worsening picture for the highway network in and around Medway based on the Council's currently preferred spatial development strategy in the Regulation 18 Local Plan. It is noteworthy however that only one strategy – Option 3 'Blended Strategy' – has been included in this assessment, with Options 1 'Urban Focus' and Option 2 'Dispersed Growth' remaining untested at this point. This means that no meaningful comparison can be made between the performance of the three options in transport terms.
- 1.5.2 The Strategic Transport Assessment has analysed the impact of the identified spatial strategy in the 2041 Do Something scenario without mitigation. To address the detrimental impacts forecast within Medway, a package of schemes and policies would need to be developed to support this growth. However, the peripheral locations of some of the selected strategic sites and the most impacted parts of the highway network will mean that some of these measures are likely to be limited in their scope. The availability for land take and issues surrounding environmental and highway constraints will limit the opportunity for major infrastructure improvements, and the remote locations of some of these sites in relation to key service centres and public transport hubs will make mode shift to more sustainable transport much more difficult.
- 1.5.3 Given the stated vision and aims for transport in the Local Plan to achieve sustainable growth, and the strong performance of the land at Holborough Quarry in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Reasonable Alternative Strategic Sites, there is a strong case for its inclusion. In transport terms alone, it would afford future residents, employees and visitors with ready accessibility to – and augment – the existing services and public transport nodes in Snodland and Halling, which include High Speed train connections to and from London during the weekday peak periods.
- 1.5.4 The emerging concept plan for the land at Holborough Quarry allows for upgrades to the existing A228 for primary road access into the development, allowing for

connections to the existing settlements to be restricted to active and sustainable transport modes only.

- 1.5.5 The scale and nature of the site provides great potential to maximise the internationalisation of everyday journeys. Through the incorporation of various non-residential uses, which would complement those already available in Snodland, Holborough and Halling, and adherence to garden village and 15-minute neighbourhood design principles – together with the ongoing changes to working, shopping and travelling behaviours – there is significant scope to minimise the external vehicular trip generation of the site.
- 1.5.6 Recent upgrades to the local highway network in the area have delivered much-needed east-west connectivity across the River Medway and reduced pressure on the M2 and M20. They have also incorporated new and enhanced active and sustainable transport infrastructure, which has opened a raft of new walking and cycling connections along the Medway valley from Halling through Holborough and Snodland to the major employment and leisure centres of New Hythe, Aylesford and Maidstone. These, combined with further committed and proposed route enhancements in the area (including those within the emerging Tonbridge and Malling Active Travel Strategy) – which could potentially be further facilitated by the extension of KCC’s Mobility as a Service (MaaS) trial to the Medway Valley – will further enable many everyday journeys to places of education, employment, retail and leisure to be undertaken by non-car modes.
- 1.5.7 For these reasons, there is clear potential for this site to become an exemplar mixed-use development in transport planning terms.

**HALLAM LAND**

**HOLBOROUGH QUARRY**

**GREEN BELT REVIEW**

**ISSUE: Friday, 06 September 2024**

**CLIENT** Hallam Land

**PROJECT** Holborough Quarry

**REPORT TITLE** Green Belt Review

**DJA Reference:** 2874-4-1-TD-0001-S5-P3 Holborough Quarry Green Belt Review 060924

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## REPORT REVISIONS

Revision	Date	Description	Prepared	Approved
P1	30/08/2024	Draft	PG	PG
P2	04/09/2024	Second draft	PG	PG
P3	06/09/2024	Issue	PG	PG



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1. TMBC Green Belt Study 2016 – Snodland Assessment (Extract)

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this document is to review current and emerging Green Belt policy and to review the Green Belt assessments produced by Medway Council (MC) and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) in the area of Holborough Quarry, Kent. This review is provided to assist both Councils in undertaking their respective Green Belt reviews, ensuring a consistency in approach in how Holborough Quarry is assessed.

The areas of the site that fall within each LPA area have been assessed against the respective methodologies used.

The consideration of cross boundary development must be addressed to avoid an artificial parcel boundary or district boundary becoming a determining factor in revisions to the GB boundary, when the considerations of landscape are far wider reaching. Please can we look at how we are responding to this.

A summary table of the results can be found below.

Despite the variation in terminology used it is clear that overall, the site makes a **moderate to low / limited contribution** to the purposes of the Green Belt.

### Summary

Purpose	Performance of the areas of the site within Medway	Performance of the areas of the site within TMBC
Purpose (a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Moderate	Performs Moderately
Purpose (b) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	Moderate - Low	Performs Moderately
Purpose (c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Moderate	Performs Moderately
Purpose (d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Not considered in GBR	Limited or no contribution
Purpose (e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	Not considered in GBR	Not considered in GBR

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 David Jarvis Associates Limited (DJA) is instructed by Hallam Land (in partnership with Tarmac and Aggregate Industries) to provide advice on Green Belt matters relating to land at Holborough Quarry, Kent (the Site). The Site location is illustrated on **Figure 1** and lies within the administrative areas of both Medway Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.
- 1.2 DJA is a firm of Chartered Landscape Architects and Town Planning consultants established in 1982 and has extensive experience in planning, assessment, design and implementation development proposals.
- 1.3 The firm is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute.

### Scope

- 1.4 The purpose of this document is to review current and emerging Green Belt policy and to review the Green Belt assessments produced by Medway Council (MC) and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) in the area of Holborough Quarry, Kent. Whilst the Councils should undertake their own Green Belt Reviews, the methodologies and approaches to assessment should be aligned and cognicent of each other to ensure a robust and consistent approach when looking at land that extends across both authorities, as at Holborough Quarry.
- 1.5 Hallam Land's Green Belt Review is provided to assist the Councils in this undertaking by providing comments on the methodologies and assessments relevant to the land at Holborough Quarry in their respective Green Belt reviews. It also provides the following assessments to demonstrate how the parts of Holborough Quarry within the respective authority areas perform:
- The part of Site within Medway's contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt using the methodology in MC's 2018 Green Belt Review
  - The part of Site within TMBC's contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt using the methodology in TMBC's 2016 Green Belt Review
- 1.6 We have reviewed the LPA methodologies and have used the methodology relevant to each LPA in consideration of the effect on Green Belt.
- 1.7 It should be noted that the areas of the site are geographically smaller than the parcels assessed by the relevant LPA.
- 1.8 Hallam Land's Green Belt Review should also inform MC's preparation of their Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 and TMBC's preparation of their Draft Local Plan Regulation 18.

### Holborough Quarry

- 1.9 The site in question lies to the north west of Snodland and west of Halling and North Halling, Kent approximately 30km from central London.
- 1.10 The site covers an area of approximately 371ha. The part of the site within Medway is not within the KDNL, but the part of the site within Tonbridge and Malling does include a small area at the west that lies within KDNL. Importantly, no built development would be located here and this area would form part of wider strategic green infrastructure corridor to ensure the integrity of the KDNL is fully maintained.

- 1.11 The area consists mainly of woodland, agricultural and arable land with extensive areas of former quarry workings. A proportion of the land benefits from a cement works mineral permission<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.12 The small settlement of Upper Halling is located north of the site, with some dwellings located sparsely within the site.

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<sup>1</sup> Planning application reference TM/98/785

## 2. GREEN BELT POLICY

### National Green Belt Policy

2.1 Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>2</sup> ('the Framework') states that:

*'the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence'.*

2.2 The purposes of including land within the Green Belt are set out at paragraph 143 of the Framework:

*(a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*

*(b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*

*(c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*

*(d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*

*(e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

2.3 Planning Practice Guidance (Green Belt - GOV.UK<sup>3</sup> (www.gov.uk) states that:

*"...openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;*

*Assessing the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, where it is relevant to do so, requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case. By way of example, the courts have identified a number of matters which may need to be taken into account in making this assessment. These include, but are not limited to:*

- openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;*
- the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and*
- the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation."*

### Consultation draft of NPPF

2.4 The new Government released a consultation draft of the NPPF in July 2024.

2.5 Paragraph 144 reads:

*"Where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to previously-developed land in sustainable locations, then consider grey belt land in sustainable locations which is not already previously-developed, and only then consider other sustainable Green Belt locations."*

2.6 Previously developed land is defined in Annex 2 as, with my underlining:

*"Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and*

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<sup>2</sup> 20 December 2023

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 64-001-20190722



*any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.*

- 2.7 Much of the site was developed for mineral extraction, with extensive areas subject to quarrying, although provision for restoration is not provided for some areas of the site through the development management processes.

- 2.8 “Grey belt land” is defined in Annex 2 as:

*“land in the green belt comprising Previously Developed Land and any other parcels and/or areas of Green Belt land that make a limited contribution to the five Green Belt purposes (as defined in para 140 of this Framework), but excluding those areas or assets of particular importance listed in footnote 7 of this Framework (other than land designated as Green Belt).”*

- 2.9 Paragraph 152 reads:

*“In addition to the above, housing, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should not be regarded as inappropriate where:*

*a. The development would utilise grey belt land in sustainable locations, the contributions set out in paragraph 155 below are provided, and the development would not fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the plan as a whole; and*

*b. The local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 76) or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years; or there is a demonstrable need for land to be released for development of local, regional or national importance.*

*c. Development is able to meet the planning policy requirements set out in paragraph 155.”*

- 2.10 If the above criteria are met, a proposed development should not be regarded as inappropriate subject to the provisions of paragraph 155 being met.

- 2.11 Paragraph 155 reads:

*“Where major development takes place on land which has been released from the Green Belt through plan preparation or review, or on sites in the Green Belt permitted through development management, the following contributions should be made:*

*a. In the case of schemes involving the provision of housing, at least 50% affordable housing [with an appropriate proportion being Social Rent], subject to viability;*

*b. Necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure; and*

*c. The provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. Where residential development is involved, the objective should be for new residents to be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through onsite provision or through access to offsite spaces.”*

- 2.12 If the developed part of the site is considered to be grey belt land in a sustainable location, and that the development of the site would not fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt

across the area of the plan as a whole, and that with the requirements of §155 being met, then the proposed development on that part of the site should not be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt.

### 3. MEDWAY COUNCIL GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 The Site lies entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt but is not subject to any other landscape quality designations. This appraisal is made for the current Regulation 18 Consultation, including the latest Green Belt Review (MGBR), published in December 2018, for the Medway Draft Local Plan 2040 (the LPA). It is not clear if the current consultation draft local plan has had any regard to the 2018 GBR.

#### Scope

- 3.2 These representations focus on the last published Medway Green Belt Review (MGBR), published in December 2018, and in particular the assessment of the parcel in which the part of the Site within Medway is located, this being land parcel no. 5. It will address the following:

- Review the methodology used in the MGBR;
- Identify any issues with the methodology;
- Identify the positives raised by the current GB Review with regard to the Site;
- Address the limited impact of the Site on the Green Belt.

- 3.3 These representations should be read in conjunction with the following figures included in this report:

**Figure 2:** Site Location

**Figure 3:** Green Belt Land Parcels

**Figure 4:** Topographical Relief

**Figure 5:** Land Uses

**Figure 6:** Designations

#### Consideration of Medway Green Belt Review

- 3.4 The MGBR was published in December 2018, to inform the then emerging Local Plan, and is nearing five years old. Consequently, it does not include references to updated PPG guidance published in 2019, in relation to visual openness, which now forms part of Green Belt considerations.
- 3.5 The MGBR undertakes assessment of five land parcels, all located on part of the western and south-western part of the Medway Council boundary where it overlaps with the outer extent of the Metropolitan Green Belt. Parcel 5, in which the part of Holborough Quarry within Medway is wholly located, and the adjacent parcel 4 are shown on **Figure 3**.
- 3.6 The MGBR comprises a definition of Green Belt boundaries, identifies washed over and inset settlements, a review of policy and an assessment of identified study area parcels based on a process of selection.

#### Review of MGBR Methodology

##### Definition of Green Belt Boundaries

- 3.7 The MGBR rightly recognises that the defined parcels are strategic in nature and go only as far as informing site allocations, rather than stipulating them outright. The identification of permanent boundaries follows NPPF policy.

- 3.8 The land parcel sizes do however vary considerably and should not be weighed against one another on that basis. It is not clear why, for example, parcel 5 – which is considerably larger than the other four parcels - cannot be reduced in size using the woodland blocks, quarries and lakes as clearly defined permanent boundaries.

#### Green Belt Policy Criteria

- 3.9 MGBR helpfully clarifies some definitions of Green Belt policy terms which are contextually relevant:
- Purpose (a): ‘large built up areas’ are the urban extremities of Strood; Halling is not included;
  - Purpose (b): ‘towns’ are listed as Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham, relating to the Local Plan;
  - Purpose (c): “*the main consideration should be whether the rural character of the area would be threatened or overwhelmed by urbanising influences*”; and
  - Purposes (d), and (e) of the NPPF Green Belt tests have been discounted by Medway.
- 3.10 We support the specific definitions of ‘large built up areas’ and ‘towns’ used for Purposes (a) and (b) as set out by the Council and recommend that it is consistently used in future assessments.

#### Parcel Assessment

- 3.11 The MGBR provides pro-forma templates, ‘C’ which should be used alongside terminology in template ‘A’ to assist in describing each parcel. The templates are useful because they break down the Green Belt tests using clear criteria. The pro-forma templates include requirements to provide an assessment of the appraisal considerations, additional comments and a contribution to each criteria, as well as an overall contribution to each test. There are ten criteria spread across the three tests.
- 3.12 However, there is no reference in the MGBR to a presentation of these findings against the pro-forma templates for each parcel. The descriptions for each land parcel consequently read like a summary and do not address each of the criteria in detail; they do not provide ten clear responses, ten criteria contributions or overall contributions individually to each test.
- 3.13 The descriptions also do not provide an overall balance of these contributions in a way that clearly informs the final reasoning on the overall contribution the parcel makes to the purpose and aims of Green Belt.
- 3.14 The MGBR rightly recognises that assessment of Green Belt is not an assessment of landscape quality, but that landscape assessment can be used to identify features that could form boundary amendments or differentiating between unspoilt countryside or semi-rural areas. This approach however doesn’t comment on ‘character’ in relation to adopted landscape character assessments. It is therefore just a simplified differentiation between landscape features, and not a recognition that they form part of a specific pattern of key characteristics within the landscape.
- 3.15 We recommend that future assessments make full use of the pro-forma approach allowing an analysis of the assessments being made.

#### Boundary Anomalies

- 3.16 No anomalies apply along the Site’s boundaries with the Green Belt.

- 3.17 Should Green Belt boundaries be amended, then the opportunity to remove the Site from the Green Belt can be undertaken by following the edges of the disused quarries. The quarries are permanent, highly legible features within the landscape. The ability to create strong defensible boundaries in the future as part of good development and green infrastructure planning should not be overlooked.

#### Washed Over and Inset Status of Settlements

- 3.18 In similar fashion to the other parts of the assessment, the pro-forma template for assessing washed over and inset settlements is only summarised in the MGBR. It would be helpful to have a deeper understanding of how the criteria has been applied.

#### Other Planning Considerations

- 3.19 The MGBR provides no reasoning for why cited relevant planning decisions are relevant for each parcel. The number of relevant planning considerations are also heavily influenced by the size of the land parcel e.g. it is unsurprising that land parcel 5 had, at the time of the assessment, seven planning applications; whereas parcel 1 had just one, and parcel 3 – being a sliver of land between two main roads – had none.
- 3.20 The MGBR states that the washed over settlements Upper Halling and Upper Bush are assessed as part of the review, to inform a boundary review or preparation of policies to protect the villages. Upper Halling is situated on the north-western boundary of the Site.
- 3.21 We recommend that greater rigour is applied to the analysis of planning decisions, though we in any case challenge the merits of the approach.

#### Summary of Review

- 3.22 This review has identified a significant lack of evidence demonstrating how individual land parcels contribute to each purpose of the Green Belt. This is principally related to the absence in the MGBR of a detailed assessment of the parcels in relation to its own pro-forma. The following section provides a review of the part of the Site within Medway using the pro-forma provided by the MGBR.

### **The Impact of the Release of the Site from the Green Belt**

#### Review of Land Parcel no. 5

- 3.23 The part of the Site within Medway is located in the southern portion of land parcel no. 5, as defined in the MGBR. The assessment results for parcel no. 5 are presented in **Table 3.1** below:

Purpose (a)	Purpose (b)	Purpose (c)	Aims	Summary
M	M	H	H	M/H

**Table 3.1:** MGBR Summary of Assessment Results for land parcel 5

- 3.24 Parcel 5 describes several features that do not correspond with the part of the Site within Medway. These are:
- Large land parcel;
  - Characterised by steep wooded scarp slope, steep rolling dry valleys, woodland blocks and woodland shaws (**Figure 4** illustrates that the steeper ground lies to the west of the Site);
  - Boundary with Cuxton;



- Former cement works at North Halling, now residential development.

3.25 The description is limited to references to the part of the Site within Medway where it identifies:

- Large, disused and fenced off quarry situated immediately south of the Lower Halling;
- Disused quarry (Houlder) located to the south of Upper Halling on district boundary with Tonbridge and Malling;
- Both quarries washed over by Green Belt.

3.26 The MGBR make the following judgements on the contribution of the parcel to the Green Belt:

- High contribution to the Purpose and Aims of Green Belt;
- Moderate / High contribution when taking into account ten designations and seven planning applications;
- Significant contribution.

3.27 The geographic scale of the part of the Site within Medway compared to the land parcel is notable:

- Land parcel 5 covers an area of 919 hectares and is partly within the Kent Downs National Landscape, as illustrated by **Figure 6**;
- The part of the Site within Medway covers an area of just 63.5 hectares of this parcel, it shares an outer boundary with the Green Belt boundary and lies entirely outside of the National Landscape.

3.28 The part of the Site within Medway is therefore considerably smaller than the land parcel and is not comparable with the range of landscape features, or as sensitive in terms of designations and planning applications. This justifies the need to undertake a proportional assessment, to better inform the site allocation process. The results are presented overleaf, using the pro-forma supplied by the MGBR, preceded by a detailed site description to inform the assessment.

### **Review of the Holborough Quarry Site (part within Medway)**

#### Site Description

3.29 The Site is situated to the west of the A228, bounds Halling to the north and Upper Halling to the north-west; straddles the local road named Pilgrims Way and occupies land to the west and flows into a disused quarry and countryside to the south. Between Halling and Upper Halling, the Site boundary is alongside several fields and a disused quarry. Neither Halling nor Upper Halling are defined as 'towns' under Medway Council's MGBR definitions.

3.30 Excluding the quarries, which reflect man-made changes to topography, much of the Site has a sloping easterly aspect with a slight fall to the south-east. The topography is illustrated by **Figure 4**, showing that the steep sided escarpment and dry valleys cited for land parcel 5, are located outside of the Site. The slope exhibited within the Site is comparatively more gentle and thus less sensitive in that regard.

3.31 Land uses and landscape features which contribute to landscape character, as illustrated by **Figure 5**, comprise agricultural (arable/pasture), within a pattern of irregular shaped large fields within the central and eastern parts. A disused quarry is situated in the far western part of the Site, straddling a short section of Pilgrims Way. Internal hedgerow field boundaries vary in condition and continuity,

with several within the central eastern area being barely legible or completely disconnected from a recognisable pattern.

- 3.32 The southern and western areas are strongly wooded within the fenced off, disused quarries. With regard to the description of land parcel 5, this is not representative of the defined woodland blocks and interlinking shaws found further north in the parcel or in the National Landscape.
- 3.33 Whittings Farm is situated in the far eastern part of the Site, accessed off the A228, very close to a roundabout that links with Peters Bridge. The farm has been diversified with several business occupancies with associated signage displayed at the farm entrance, as well as vehicular storage and a loose cluster of small barns and sheds. Urbanising influences predominate to the east along the Green Belt / Site boundary due to the A228 and associated traffic, and by tall street lighting on the approach to and around the roundabout.

#### Medway Council Green Belt Study

- 3.34 Note: the MGBR pro-forma refers to 'parcel', but for the purposes of using the same methodology, 'parcel' in these tables refers to the part of the Site within Medway. The definitions used by Medway Council for 'large urban area' and for 'towns' have been applied consistently in our assessment.

#### **Other Factors**

##### Boundary anomalies

- 3.35 None.

##### Washed over and inset areas

- 3.36 Upper Halling, on the Site's northern boundary, is washed over by the Green Belt.

##### Other planning considerations

##### Local Plan Policy Designations

- 3.37 The site is considerably smaller than the MGBR land parcel 5 and therefore not subject to the same high number of designations, and is not the subject of any other live applications. The distribution of designations is illustrated on **Figure 6** and illustrates that.
- western portion of the Site, beyond Pilgrims Way, and situated within a disused quarry, lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape and a Local Wildlife Site.
  - Remaining area of the Site east of Pilgrim's Way is not constrained by relevant designations.

##### Relevant Planning Decisions

- 3.38 There are no additional planning applications within the Site.

Purpose (a)	Appraisal Considerations	Assessment	Additional Comments	Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Is the parcel* at the edge of one or more large built up areas?	No	The nearest large settlement is Strood, located approximately 3km to the north-east.	Low
	Does the parcel prevent the outward sprawl of a large built up area into open land?	No	Interlinked with the criteria above, the Site does not lie on the edge of a large built up area.	Low
	Is the parcel part of a wider group of parcels that directly act to prevent urban sprawl?	Yes	<p>The part of the Site within Medway shares the southern boundary with the Snodland study area defined as an urban area in the Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study.</p> <p>However, it would require both parcels within Medway and Tonbridge and Malling to be entirely redeveloped, to result in a merging. Given the physical separation formed by the Site's quarries and southern boundary, and that masterplanning would follow good practice, including the provision of extensive areas of green infrastructure providing clearly defined gaps between areas of development, this would not occur.</p>	Moderate
	Do the Green Belt boundary edges of the parcel form a distinctive break between urban areas and countryside? Include description of existing built development, urbanising or fringe uses.	Partial	The majority of the boundaries delineating the part of the Site within Medway are drawn through open countryside alongside clear, strong landscape features such as quarries, woodland and thick hedgerows. The exception lies along a very short boundary within the northern triangle between Halling and the A228.	Moderate - Low
			<b>Overall Contribution</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
Purpose (b)	Appraisal Considerations	Assessment	Additional Comments	Contribution

To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	Does the parcel lie directly between two towns and form all or part of a gap between them?	No	The part of the Site within Medway is situated at a considerable distance from the Medway towns and does not lie within a recognisably sensitive or designated gap.	Low
	Would development in the parcel result in the merging of towns?	No	Development of part of the Site within Medway would leave considerable areas of open countryside between the towns.	Low
	Is the parcel part of a wider group of parcels that directly act to prevent the merging of neighbouring towns?	Partial	The part of the Site within Medway is located adjacent to the Tonbridge and Malling Snodland study area and within parcel 5. But it is separate from Snodland and not located in proximity to any of the five towns in Medway. Therefore redevelopment of it would not result in merging of these towns.	Moderate
<b>Overall Contribution:</b>				<b>Moderate - Low</b>
<b>Purpose (c)</b>	<b>Appraisal Considerations</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Does the parcel assist in safeguarding 'the countryside' from 'encroachment' – terms as defined in Appendix A.	Partial	The part of the Site within Medway partly comprises arable land and quarries, which are characteristic of the landscape. Arable land is not rare or unique and the overall form of quarries can be protected so they retain their defining characteristics.	Moderate
	Are there clear, strong and robust boundaries (e.g. river, road, railway, urban edge) to contain development and prevent encroachment in the long term?	Yes	The robust boundaries that are currently present would contain the land in question, this leads to the parcel itself making a relatively low contribution to this purpose. The part of the Site within Medway can incorporate robust planting between the quarries and the boundaries in a manner which is consistent with the recommended guidelines of the adopted landscape character assessments.	Moderate - Low

	Describe the character of the countryside within the parcel. Include description of land uses, built development, topography, urbanising or fringe uses.	Partial	With reference to the detailed site description, the part of the Site within Medway is predominantly arable/pasture; woodland is related to the quarries and not the more sensitive woodland blocks and shaws found elsewhere in the parcel and more sensitive National Landscape; a small area of built form is situated within the parcel, this being within a corridor of urbanising influence formed by the A228 and street lighting;	Moderate
	<b>Overall Contribution</b>			<b>Moderate</b>



## Results / Analysis

- 3.39 The result of the analysis of land parcel 5 undertaken in the MGBR, was Moderate/High, and this was considered to be significant. It placed it in the same category as Parcel 1, which was also the smallest parcel in the review.
- 3.40 The analysis of the much smaller part of the Site within Medway, using the Council's own methodology, has demonstrated the following:
- **Overall Contribution:** Moderate - Low. The contribution is not significant.
  - **Purposes:** Out of ten criteria, the part of the Site within Medway makes a Moderate score against one criteria for Purpose (b) and 3; a Moderate – Low score against one criteria for Purposes 1 and 3, and scores 'Low' against the remaining six criteria spread across the three Purposes. This informs the reasoning for shifting the balance of the overall contribution to Moderate-Low.
  - **Aims:** If the part of the Site within Medway is to be inset, the remaining land parcel 5 within the Green Belt will still be able to perform its wider function of remaining permanently open. Neither the main towns or large settlement areas within Medway or cross-border with Snodland in Tonbridge and Malling will merge.
  - **Permanent Boundaries:** The disused quarries around the northern boundary of the part of the Site within Medway provide a permanent, recognisable landscape feature along which to re-draw Green Belt boundaries, and to tie in with existing field boundary boundaries. The field boundaries can be reinforced in a manner that is consistent with recommended landscape character assessments.

## Conclusion

- 3.41 This appraisal is made on the Medway Green Belt Review, published in December 2018 for Medway Borough Council. Matters addressed include the Review's methodology, findings, limitations and further detailed analysis of the part of the Site within Medway.
- 3.42 The Medway Green Belt Review, 2018 (MGBR), has been considered in terms of its robustness and contribution to providing a meaningful evidence base to inform the draft local plan. The MGBR has identified and tested five land parcels against the purposes of Green Belt. The part of the Site within Medway is situated within the considerably larger land parcel no. 5.
- 3.43 It is helpful that the MGBR is recognised as a strategic document used to inform site allocations, but not to stipulate what these are. However, a substantial lack of detail and absence of testing land against its own pro-forma templates has meant that the assessment is no more than a summary, and no meaningful evidence has been provided to justify how land parcel no. 5 makes a Moderate / High contribution to the Green Belt.
- 3.44 Using the same pro-forma templates and with application of the same definitions, it has been demonstrated that the part of the Site within Medway would score a Moderate - Low contribution to the Green Belt. The disused quarries within the Site are legible, permanent landscape features along which to re-draw Green Belt boundaries and reinforcement of existing field boundaries can be achieved in accordance with the adopted landscape character assessment.
- 3.45 Allowing for the Green Belt boundaries to be re-drawn to inset the part of the Site within Medway from the designation, the permanence and openness of the Green Belt can be assured.

**Table 3.2 Summary**

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Performance of the site</b>
Purpose (a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Moderate
Purpose (b) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	Moderate - Low
Purpose (c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Moderate
Purpose (d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Not considered in GBR
Purpose (e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	Not considered in GBR

#### **4. TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The Site lies entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt. This appraisal is made for latest Green Belt Study, published in September 2016, for the Tonbridge and Malling Regulation 18 Local Plan September 2022 (the LPA).

##### **Purpose of Representations**

- 4.2 These representations focus on the current Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study, published in September 2016, and in particular the assessment of the area in which the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling is located, as illustrated by **Figure 7**. It will address the following:

- Review the methodology;
- Identify any issues with the methodology;
- Identify the positives raised by the current Green Belt studies with regard to the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling;
- Address the limited impact of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling on the Green Belt.

- 4.3 The LPA has published two additional documents relating to Green Belt matters, which will also be considered as part of this appraisal:

- Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment Exceptional Circumstances (Strategic) Note, 27 July 2022;
- Green Belt Study: Stage Two Report, August 2018.

- 4.4 These representations should be read in conjunction with the following figures included in this report:

**Figure 7:** Proposed Site Location

**Figure 8:** Green Belt Land Parcels

**Figure 9:** Topographical Relief

**Figure 10:** Landscape Features

**Figure 11:** Designations

##### **Consideration of Green Belt Evidence Base**

- 4.5 This section provides a review and consideration of the three identified documents in the LPA's evidence base relating to Green Belt matters.

##### **Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study September 2016**

- 4.6 The Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study undertakes assessment of the Green Belt within the authority, as well as to review the clarity of the current Green Belt boundaries. The location of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling, relative to the Green Belt and the nearest adjoining study area, being Birling to the south, is shown on **Figure 8**. The Metropolitan Green Belt washes over several authorities, including Medway Council, which adjoins the northern boundary of Tonbridge and Malling.
- 4.7 The study was published in September 2016, to inform the then emerging Local Plan, and is now over seven years old. Consequently, it does not include references to updated PPG guidance published in

2019, in relation to additional considerations which can inform the extent to which land meets the purposes of the Green Belt.

### Review of Methodology

#### *Definition of Study Areas*

- 4.8 The study has defined smaller parcels around Tonbridge, but to the west of Snodland, it has defined considerably larger study areas using parish boundaries, which is the case for Snodland and Birling. The study states that this is due to its “wider/general” scale, and “not on a plot by plot basis”. As such, the study distances itself from being used to determine where there is variability in the performance of more discrete parcels of land. Consequently, there is no way of identifying granularity in the performance of land the further it lies from the settlement and built-up areas.

#### *Green Belt Policy Criteria*

- 4.9 The study helpfully clarifies some definitions of Green Belt policy terms which are contextually relevant:
- Purpose (a): built up areas are ‘a clear concentration or mass of housing or other buildings for example, including villages and towns’;
  - Purpose (b): neighbouring towns meaning identified Urban Areas, Rural Service Centres, Rural Settlements and other smaller areas as defined by the Core Strategy and listed in the study. The nearest urban area to the site is Snodland; the nearest rural service centre is Birling and there are no defined smaller areas in proximity;
  - Purpose (e) – no assessment is made by TMBC.

#### *Study Assessment*

- 4.10 The study uses a pro-forma template with criteria that has been informed by a review of other similar studies. The template is useful because it breaks down the Green Belt tests using clear criteria, however the range of criteria is relatively limited compared to the Medway pro-forma templates. This adds to the issue that there is limited opportunity to identify variations in which study areas perform against the Green Belt purposes.
- 4.11 The study does not provide a final balancing of these tests. Instead, it invites further study options, including detailed studies of land that has a limited contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. To advance that decision making process, an assessment of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling against the pro-forma has been provided below.

### **Green Belt Study: Stage Two Report, August 2018**

- 4.12 The purpose of the Stage Two report is to ‘establish the exceptional circumstances for amending the Green Belt boundary in Tonbridge and Malling’, informed by and to complement the Stage 1 report, published in September 2016. It notes that there are ‘no genuine options’ for sustainable development to take place ‘that do not involve the release of some sites from the Green Belt’ (para. 3.17). It may be that this is a consequence of the Stage 1 report being too rigid in its outcome.
- 4.13 The report considers three options for justifying release of Green Belt: 1, Employment land; 2, Need for housing, which in turn would deliver affordable housing; and 3, Delivery of infrastructure.

- 4.14 In relation to housing delivery, the report concludes both that the release of sites from the Green Belt should be 'where they are needed in a sustainable pattern' (para. 3.22) and that the 'significant issue of housing affordability' justifies that exceptional circumstances exist (para. 3.24).
- 4.15 In relation to delivery of improved infrastructure, the report lists several locations where improvements could be delivered. These are described as already allocated or due to be allocated, which suggests that this Stage 2 report is in part a post-rationalisation for the Local Plan. For example, a strategic allocation is described in south-west Tonbridge, but if two areas of the land are not released, there would be insufficient land to generate a new school (para. 3.31).
- 4.16 The Stage Two report wields considerable influence through being able to recommend Green Belt boundary deletions. The report provides high-level evidence in relation to the borough as a whole. But it would be reasonable to expect that to justify an exceptional case, a considerable evidence base should be presented for each site. However, the report does not do this. Instead, it presents a very light summary description, vaguely relating to some areas but providing no detailed evidence for each site. Furthermore, contrary to NPPF para.143, it does not identify how the revised boundaries will be readily recognisable and permanent.
- 4.17 The Stage Two report concludes that approximately 200 hectares of Green Belt land derived from 12 sites could be released. As there is a significant need for affordable housing and significant infrastructure improvements, it seems unclear how these shortfalls could be addressed through the piece-meal release of sites scattered across the borough presented in the report. The scattered locations and their small scale do not indicate a strong pattern of sustainable development.

#### **Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment Exceptional Circumstances (Strategic) Note, 27 July 2022**

- 4.18 The note allows the LPA to look beyond their previous Green Belt studies in order to understand how exceptional circumstances could apply. It is not an assessment of the suitability of land against the purposes of the Green Belt, and it does not identify areas of land for removal.
- 4.19 The test for Exceptional Circumstances is underpinned by the requirement to address three strategic functions across the LPA: need, availability of land, and alternatives. The note is helpful in providing further guiding parameters for justifying where exceptional circumstances exist.
- 4.20 The note recognises that there should be a case for release of particular areas from the Green Belt, and, that this should be site-specific. This is also helpful, as it supports the need for individual representations to be made for sites coming forward, such as the Proposed Site.

#### **The Impact Of The Release of the Site from the Green Belt**

- 4.21 Having undertaken a review of the LPA's evidence base relating to Green Belt, this section focuses on the approach taken in the Stage 1 2016 report, and how this can be applied to part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling.

#### **Review of Snodland and Birling Study Areas**

- 4.22 The Snodland and Birling study areas were assessed in the LPA's Stage 1 study against four of the five NPPF Green Belt tests, the results of which are provided below, with full detailed provided in Appendix 1.



Green Belt Purpose	Snodland	Birling
Purpose (a) - Check unrestricted sprawl	Performs well	Performs well
Purpose (b) - Prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	Performs moderately	Performs moderately
Purpose (c) - Assist in safeguarding countryside from encroachment	Performs well	Performs well
Purpose (d) - Preserve setting and special character of historic towns	Limited or no contribution	Performs moderately

**Table 4.1:** Summary of Assessment Results for the Snodland and Birling study areas

4.23 The geographic scale of the Proposed Site compared to the Snodland study area is notable:

- Snodland study area covers an area of 919 hectares and much of this is within the Kent Downs National Landscape, as illustrated by **Figure 11**;
- Birling covers an area of 680 hectares, similarly with a high level of coverage by the Kent Downs National Landscape;
- Together they constitute an area of 1,559 hectares.
- However the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling only covers an area of around 308 hectares and shares its eastern outer boundary with the Green Belt boundary and the majority of it lies outside of the National Landscape.

4.24 The considerable difference in areas highlights the ineffectiveness of the study as a means by which to recognise where variation in performance against the Green Belt tests can occur. The smaller defined part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling enables a more geographically representative analysis to be carried out.

#### **Review of the Holborough Quarry Site (part within Tonbridge and Malling) Site Description**

4.25 The Proposed Site is situated to the west of the A228 and bounds Snodland and Holborough along much of its eastern boundary. The northern boundary is defined partly by a disused quarry which adjoins with defined field boundaries, as illustrated by the landscape features on **Figure 10**. The western boundary is defined partly by the local road named Pilgrim's Way, as well as woodland and steeper sloping ground. The southern western and southern areas are defined by defined field boundaries, large-scaled high voltage energy infrastructure, Snodland Road, Birling Hill (road), and Stangate Road. Ladds Lane is a local road extending through the northern portion of the Proposed Site, and it connects with Pilgrims Way to the west, and Holborough and the A228 to the east.

4.26 A cluster of farm buildings straddles Paddlesworth Road, close to the western boundary of the Proposed Site. The road extends eastwards through the Proposed Site and connects with Snodland and extends westwards into the wider countryside.

4.27 Several footpaths and bridleways extend across the Proposed Site, generally around the edges of large fields and on the land rising up into the North Downs and the National Landscape to the west. The topography is illustrated by **Figure 9**. From these higher elevations, far-reaching views can be experienced eastwards to the low-lying urban areas within the broad River Medway valley. Within the interior of the Proposed Site there are several disused quarries which have benefited from

conversion into woodland areas, lakes or have been left to self-seed as grassland or scrub. However, these are not publicly accessible.

- 4.28 Fields are generally large and irregular in shape, with a few small pockets of pasture near field corners, or on the edges of the quarries, as illustrated by **Figure 10**. Field boundaries are generally well defined by hedgerows, but these are typically narrow and have not been allowed to develop a truly bushy form due to over-management.
- 4.29 Designations are presented on **Figure 11**. As aforementioned, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty partly covers the western portion of the Proposed Site. Much of this area also contains the high energy infrastructure which reduces the susceptibility of this part of the National Landscape. A local wildlife site is located near to the north-eastern portion; one Conservation Area is located near the western boundary where it relates to the cluster of farm buildings on Paddlesworth Road. Several listed buildings are also found along Paddlesworth Road and towards the east of the Proposed Site. These are relatively small designations that can be accommodated within the Proposed Site and emerging design proposals.
- 4.30 The performance of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling against the purposes of the Green Belt, as defined by the criteria used in the study, is presented in the tables overleaf.

Purpose (a)	Key Questions	Assessment Criteria	Assessment – Proposed site	Contribution
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	<i>Does the land have a role to play in containing development?</i>	<i>Area context – containment provided by adjoining areas</i>	The study areas contain development across the entire parish boundary beyond Snodland. However, the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling could be removed from the Green Belt, and there would still be a considerable area of land to contain development and maintain wider openness across the Green Belt.	Performs Moderately
	<i>Are there any other features/designations that provide this function?</i>	<i>Any permanent and recognisable physical boundaries and features such as roads, topography, woodland, lakes, watercourses etc</i>	Much of the western portion of the study areas are also constrained by the National Landscape. A small Local Wildlife Proposed Site can be buffered but doesn't offer a strategic role.  Permanent boundaries exist along much of the western boundary of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling, including mature woodland and Pilgrim's Way road; a quarry edge along the northern boundary; high voltage energy infrastructure. These would allow the Green Belt boundaries would endure	
Purpose (b)	Key Questions	Assessment Criteria	Assessment – Proposed site	Contribution
To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	<i>What is the surrounding context and proximity to nearby settlements and built-up areas?</i>	<i>The significance of the Green Belt in a wider, strategic sense</i>	Open rural farmland and areas of woodland exist between the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling and Birling, these would prevent merging.	Performs Moderately
	<i>Has the presence of the Green Belt designation in itself protected against merging historically and presently?</i>	<i>Whether there is potential for development to result in a merger of built-up areas and/or neighbouring authorities</i>	The Snodland study area works in conjunction with the Medway Green Belt to prevent merging with Halling to the north. The nearest large built-up area in Medway, being Strood, is geographically remote from Snodland and so merging would not occur.  Permanent boundaries include woodland, quarries, roads and prominent energy infrastructure.	

		<i>Any permanent and recognisable physical boundaries such as roads, woodland, lakes, watercourses etc</i>		
<b>Purpose (c)</b>	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	<b>Assessment – Proposed site</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	<i><b>What is the surrounding context and character and might this change?</b></i>	<i><b>The character and context of the surrounding land, and whether it is open countryside, urban or rural/semi-rural</b></i>  <i><b>The definition of the existing Green Belt boundaries</b></i>  <i><b>Any permanent and recognisable physical boundaries such as roads, woodland, lakes, watercourses etc</b></i>	<p>The part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling comprises very large, irregular sized fields, but the immediate context extending along the full extent of the eastern boundary, is with the urban edge of Snodland and Holborough and the A228. The south-western portion is influenced by the high voltage energy infrastructure.</p> <p>By comparison, the remaining portions of Snodland and Birling are wholly open countryside, rural or semi-rural around the edges of small rural centres and the majority of these areas are covered by the National Landscape.</p>	Performs Moderately
	<i><b>Are there any other designations in place such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (National Landscape)?</b></i>			

Purpose (d)	Key Questions	Assessment Criteria	Assessment – Proposed site	Contribution
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	<i>What is the relationship between the land and historic towns/places/areas and other heritage assets?</i>	<i>The proximity of the Green Belt to historic towns, villages, places, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens, Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings etc and its role and relationship with these features</i>	The part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling is physically and visually buffered from the Snodland historic core. It washes over the Paddlesworth Conservation Area and Local Wildlife Site at Holborough.	Limited or no contribution.
	<i>Are there views, or other special qualities? Does the area provide a buffer? Are there other designations or features that provide this function?</i>		The emerging masterplan for the Site avoids built development in the National Landscape and provides a substantial buffer to the Paddlesworth Conservation Area, as well as being sensitive to the settings to listed buildings.	



## Other Factors

### Surrounding Constraints/Other Designations

- 4.31 In contrast to the Snodland area, only the far western portion of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling lies within the National Landscape; there is no Special Area of Conservation.

### Boundaries

- 4.32 The part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling aligns tightly to the existing edge of Snodland and has permanent boundaries and/or features that can be reinforced. This includes disused quarries, roads and woodland. This will ensure that the Green Belt boundaries continue to be recognisable and permanent.

### Openness

- 4.33 The proximity of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling to the urban edge of Snodland, combined with the high voltage energy infrastructure to the south and west reduces openness compared to the more rural western and central areas of the Snodland and Birling study areas.

### Future Commitments/Key Extant Planning Permissions

- 4.34 Ham Hill is described as a 'protected site' relating to the Snodland study area as well as works at Holborough Lakes. With regard to Ham Hill, this is geographically separated from the Proposed Site, which lies further to the north. Within the area of separation is a large distribution building, fields and a quarry. Holborough Lakes does not lie within the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling, and masterplanning can provide a soft and expansive buffer to this.

## Results / Analysis

- 4.35 According to the LPA's Stage 1 study, Snodland study area 'Performed Well' against Purpose (a) and 3, 'Performed Moderately' against Purpose (b), and made a 'Limited or No Contribution' to Purpose (d). Birling performed the same against Purpose (a) – 3 and Performed Well against Purpose (d).
- 4.36 By comparison, having tested the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling against the same methodology and pro-forma, it 'Performed Moderately' against Purpose (a), 2 and 3 and made the same 'Limited or No Contribution' to Purpose (d).
- 4.37 The reason for differences against Purpose (a) relate primarily to the extent of National Landscape coverage that remains where it washes over the Snodland and Birling study areas. It also differs due to the larger geographic extent of Green Belt coverage that remains, to contain development.
- 4.38 For Purpose (c), the primary influence of the urban edge of Snodland combined with the high voltage energy infrastructure, reduces the performance of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling.
- 4.39 The analysis of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling area has demonstrated the following:
- **Inset from Green Belt:** If the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling is to be inset, the remaining Snodland study area within the Green Belt will still be able to perform its wider function of remaining permanently open. There would be no merging between Snodland and Birling, or between Snodland and Strood in the Medway section.
  - **Permanent Boundaries:** The disused quarries, prominent energy infrastructure, roads and woodland readily provide permanent, recognisable landscape features along which to re-draw

Green Belt boundaries. These can be tied in with existing field boundary boundaries and other landscape features in a manner that is consistent with recommended landscape character assessments and their defining qualities. The ability to create strong defensible boundaries in the future as part of good development and green infrastructure planning should not be overlooked.

### Conclusion

- 4.40 This appraisal is made on the Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study Stage 1, published in January 2016. Matters addressed include the study's methodology, findings, limitations and further detailed analysis of the Proposed Site. This has found that the scale of the study lacks variability to allow for a meaningful understanding of the performance of the Green Belt close to the built-up area of Snodland, compared to the more rural, open countryside in the wider area. The study recognises that the scale of it should prompt further detailed studies, which this Green Belt Review seeks to achieve for a smaller, well defined Proposed Site.
- 4.41 The lack of granularity in the methodology and definition of smaller study areas has resulted in an outcome that has, unsurprisingly, left the LPA with very limited opportunities to identify strategic areas to be inset from the Green Belt. Two further studies in the LPA's evidence base indicate that the LPA has sought to use Exceptional Circumstances to justify release of Green Belt land. However, neither of these studies identify land that is of a scale to contribute to a recognisable pattern of sustainable development.
- 4.42 The part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling is situated within the considerably larger Snodland study area and a very small area of the Birling study area.
- 4.43 The analysis of the part of the Site within Tonbridge and Malling has demonstrated that it performs less strongly than the wider Green Belt, is considerably less constrained by the National Landscape and other environmental designations, and is located where recognisable, permanent boundaries can be redrawn using criteria set out in the LPA's own pro-forma.
- 4.44 Overall, removal of the Proposed Site would not harm the wider function of the Green Belt and would maintain overall openness.

**Table 4.2 Summary**

Purpose	Performance of the site
Purpose (a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Performs Moderately
Purpose (b) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	Performs Moderately
Purpose (c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Performs Moderately
Purpose (d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Limited or no contribution
Purpose (e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	Not considered in GBR

## 5. SUMMARY

- 5.1 David Jarvis Associates Limited (DJA) is instructed by Hallam Land to provide advice on Green Belt relating to land at Holborough Quarry, Kent (the Site). The Site location is illustrated on Figure 1 and lies within the administrative areas of both Medway Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.
- 5.2 The purpose of this document is to review current and emerging Green Belt policy and to review the Green Belt assessments produced by Medway Council (MC) and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) in the area of Holborough Quarry, Kent. This review is provided to assist both Councils in undertaking their respective Green Belt reviews, ensuring a consistency in approach in how Holborough Quarry is assessed.
- 5.3 The areas of the site that fall within each LPA area have been assessed against the respective methodologies used.
- 5.4 The consideration of cross boundary development must be addressed to avoid an artificial parcel boundary or district boundary becoming a determining factor in revisions to the GB boundary, when the considerations of landscape are far wider reaching. Please can we look at how we are responding to this.
- 5.5 A summary table of the results can be found below at **Table 5.1**.
- 5.6 Despite the variation in terminology used it is clear that overall, the site makes a moderate to low / limited contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt.

**Table 5.1 Summary**

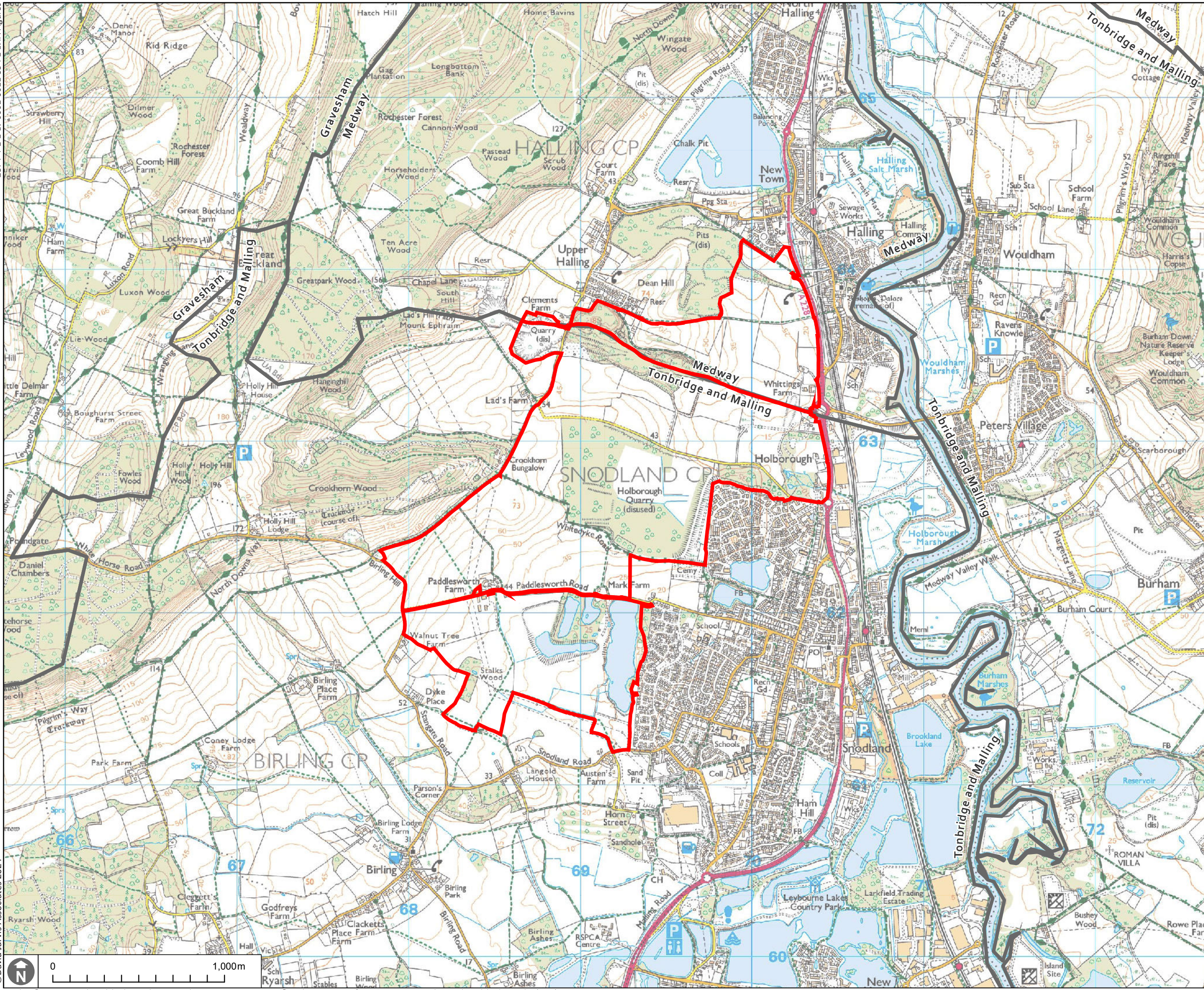
Purpose	Performance of the areas of the site within Medway	Performance of the areas of the site within TMBC
Purpose (a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Moderate	Performs Moderately
Purpose (b) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	Moderate - Low	Performs Moderately
Purpose (c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Moderate	Performs Moderately
Purpose (d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Not considered in GBR	Limited or no contribution
Purpose (e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	Not considered in GBR	Not considered in GBR

### Appendix 1



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KEY

Application Boundary

District Boundary

Status

PLANNING

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Client

HALLAM LAND

Project

HOLBOROUGH QUARRY

Drawing Title

FIGURE 1 - SITE LOCATION PLAN

Scale

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Sheet Size

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Date

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Client Ref.

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Drawing Ref.

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Drawing No.

LV-0001

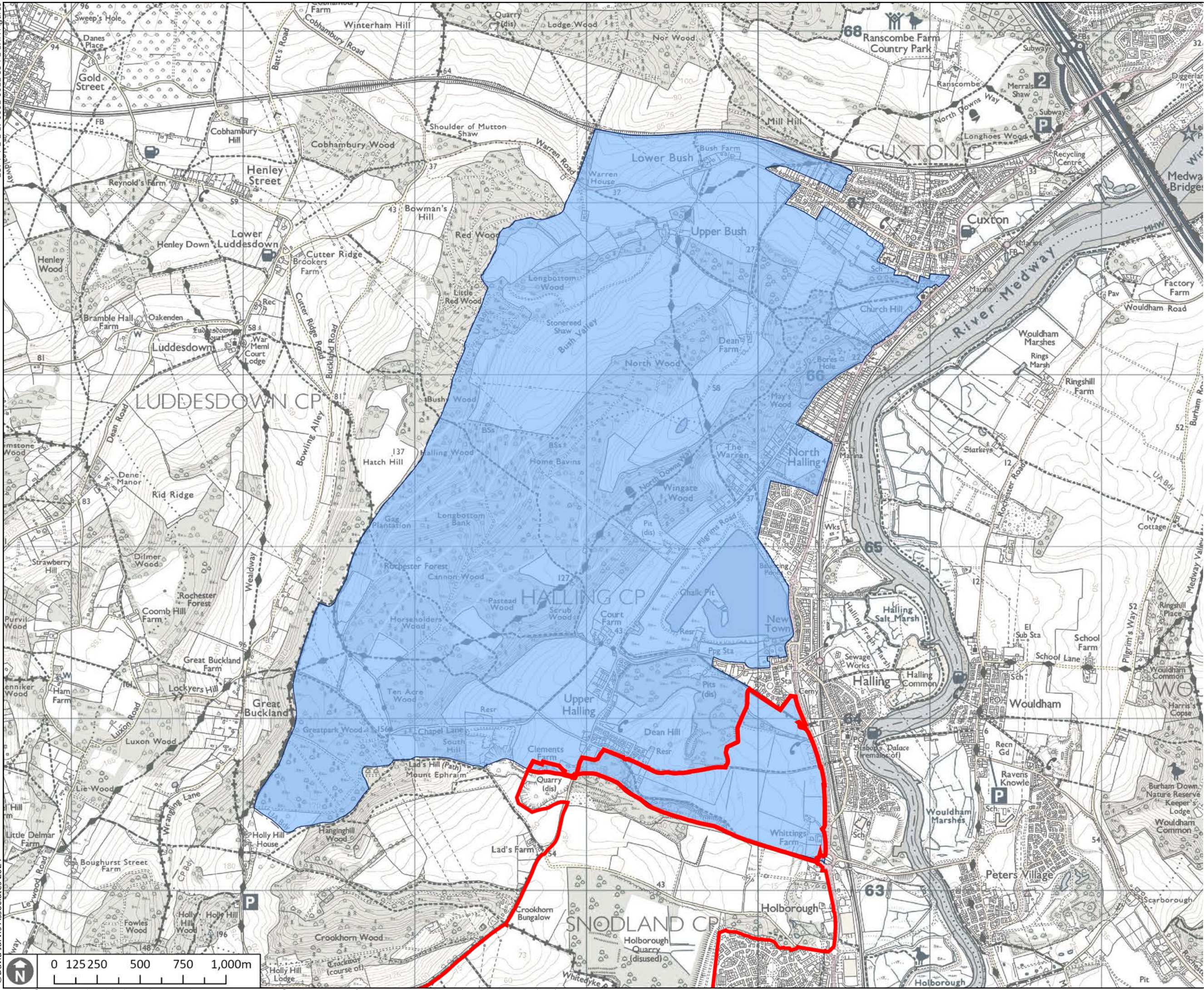
Version

S5-P1



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KEY

Application Boundary

Land Parcel 5

Status

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**HOLBOROUGH QUARRY**

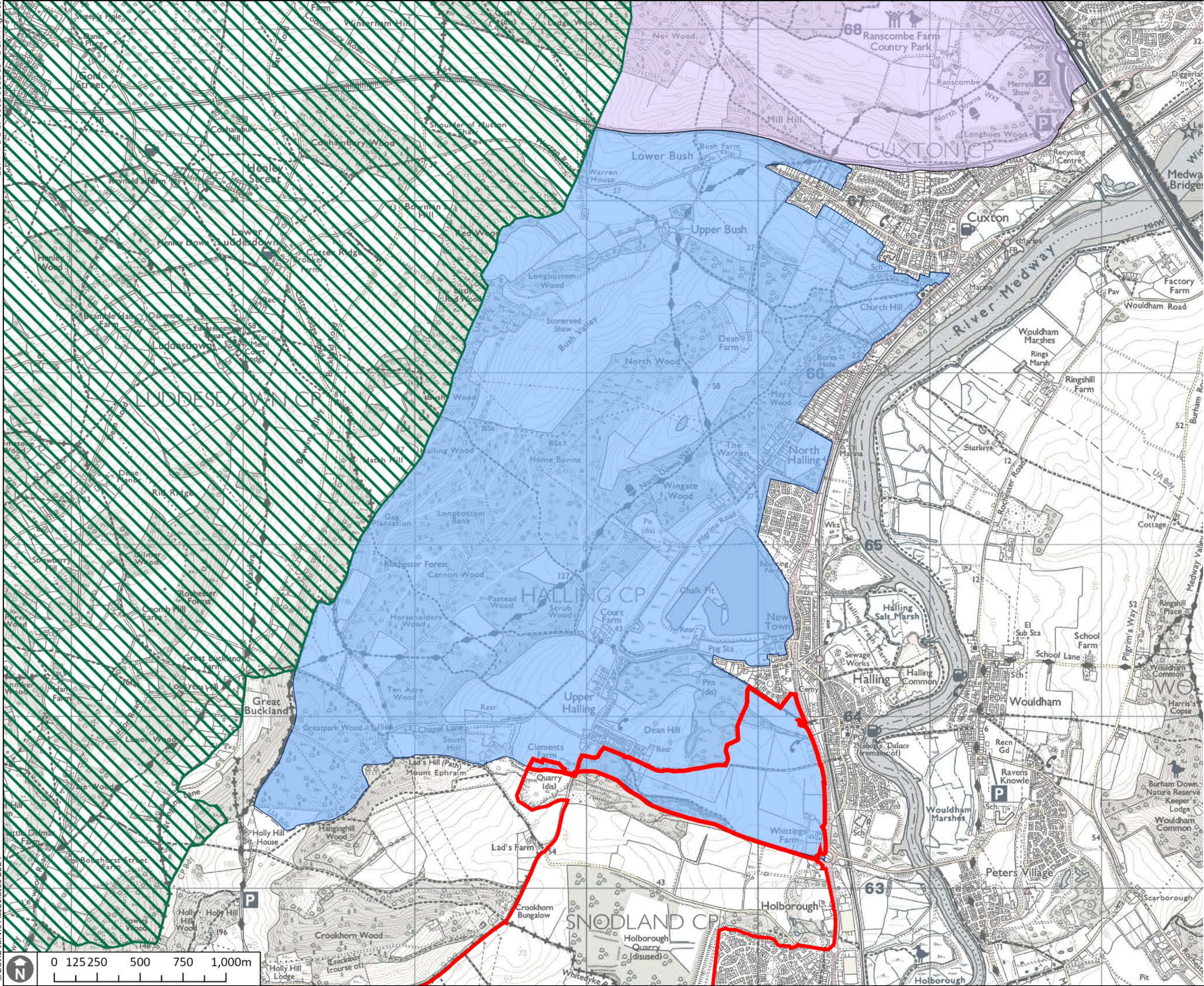
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**FIGURE 2 - SITE LOCATION PLAN (MEDWAY)**

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KEY

Application Boundary

Green Belt - Gravesham

Medway Green Belt Review 2018

Land Parcel 5

Land Parcel 4

Status

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Drawing Title

FIGURE 3 - GREENBELT PARCELS (MEDWAY)

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Date

SEP 2024

Client Ref.

Drawing Ref.

Drawing No.

Version

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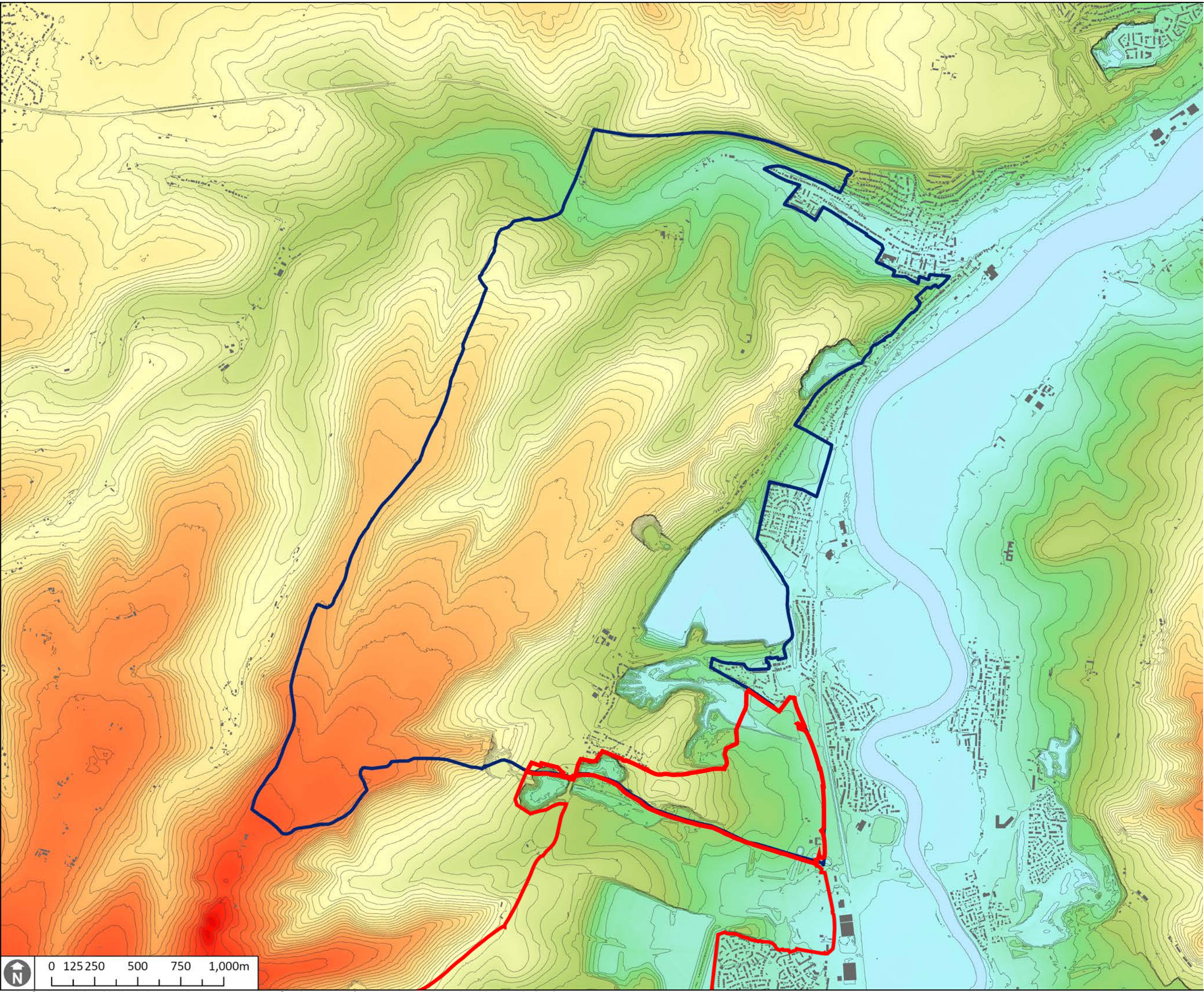
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KEY

Application Boundary

Land Parcel 5

196m AOD

-3 AOD

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FIGURE 4 - TOPOGRAPHICAL RELIEF (MEDWAY)

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Sheet Size

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Date

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Client Ref.

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Drawing Ref.

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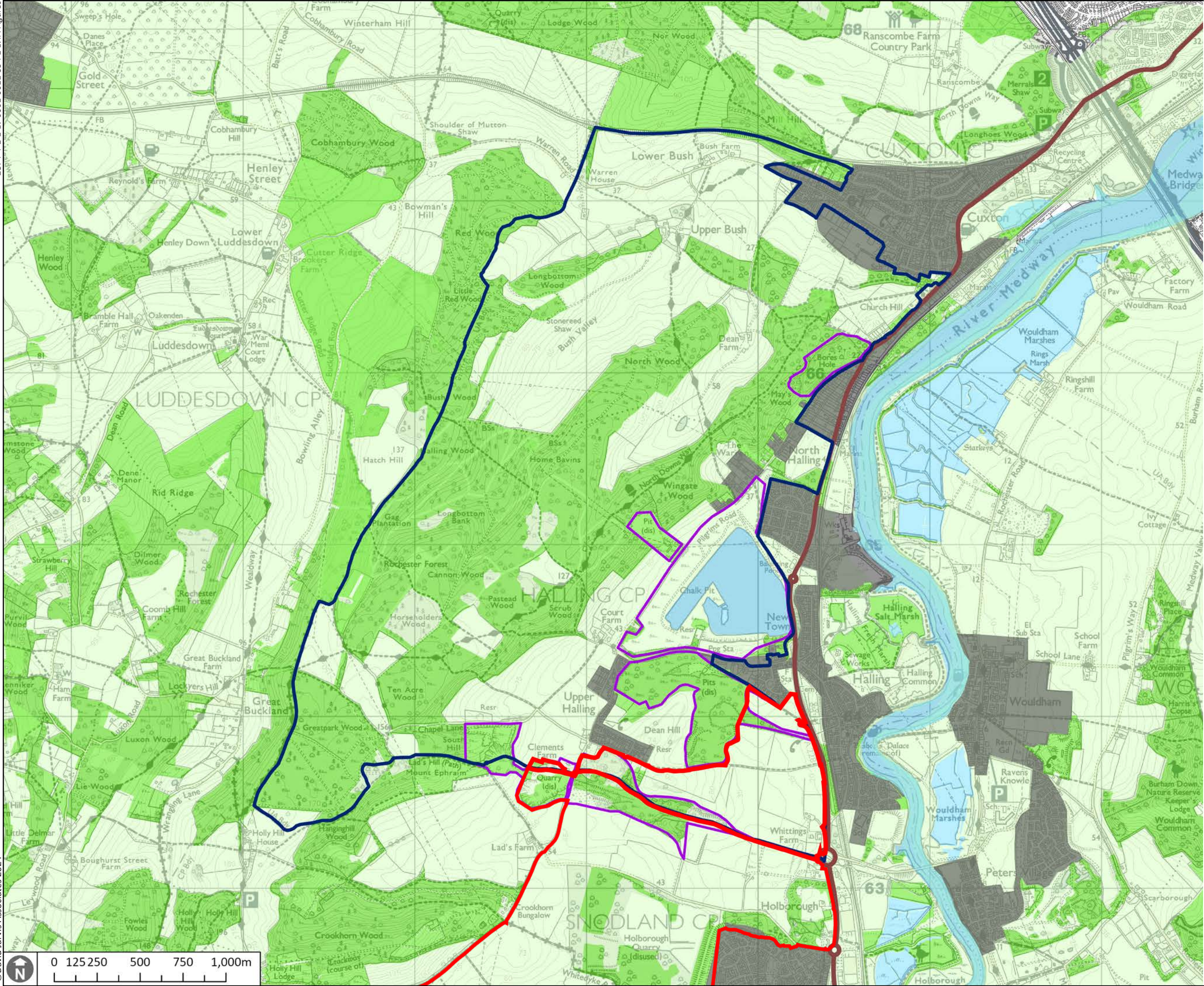
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Version

S5-P1





KEY

- Application Boundary
- Land Parcel 5
- Previously Quarried Land
- Rivers & waterbodies
- Woodland
- Agricultural land
- Urban

Status

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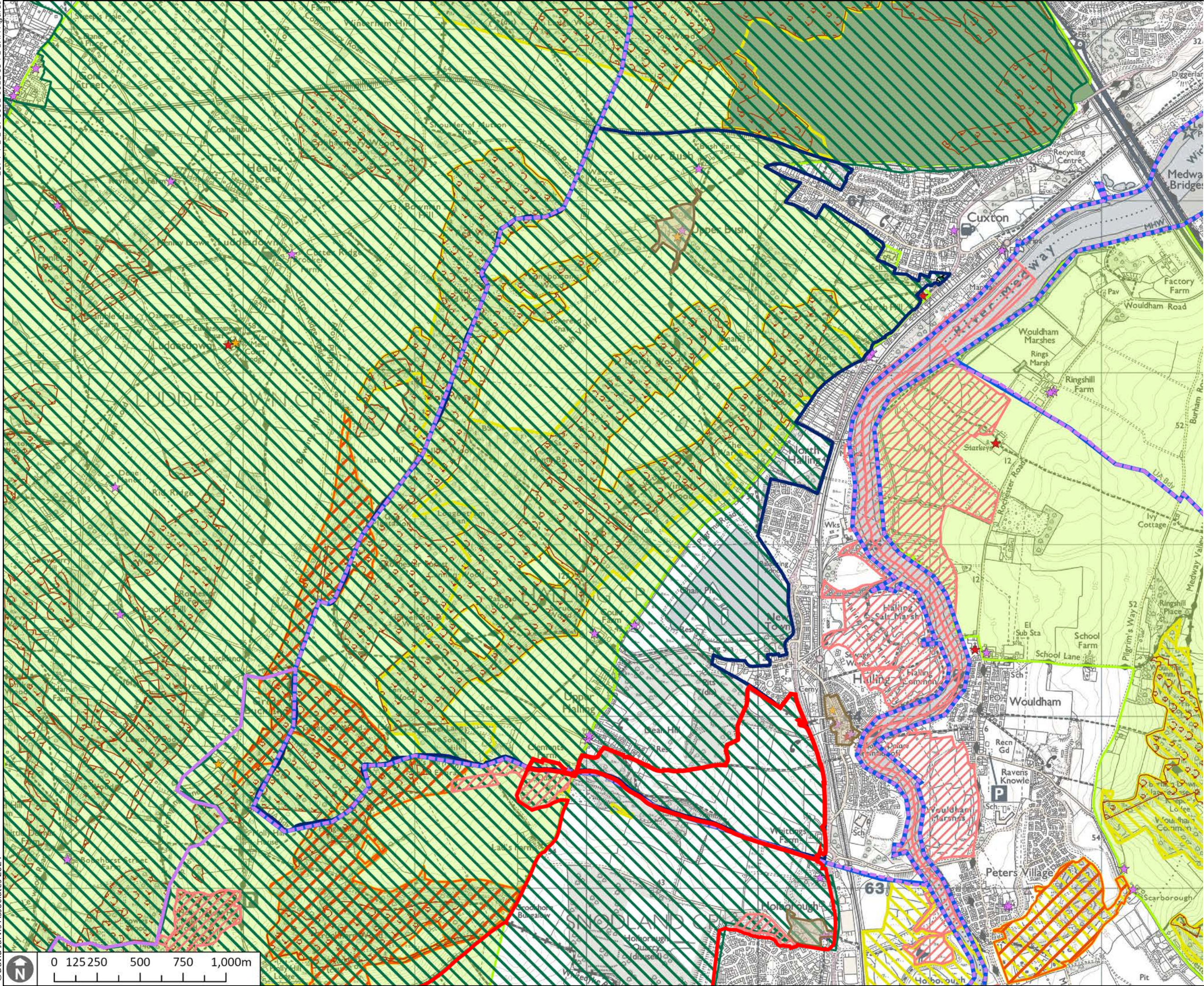
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**FIGURE 5 - LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS (MEDWAY)**

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Client Ref.	Drawing Ref.	Drawing No.	Version
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KEY

Application Boundary

Land Parcel 5

County Boundary

Medway District BoroughBoundary

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Listed Buildings

Grade I

Grade II\*

Grade II

Scheduled Ancient Monument

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Landscape Designations

Greenbelt Boundaries

Ancient Woodland

Ancient Replanted Woodland

Special Areas of Conservation

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Country Parks

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Local Authority Designations

Conservation Areas

Local Wildlife Sites

Status

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FIGURE 6 - LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS (MEDWAY)

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LV-0006

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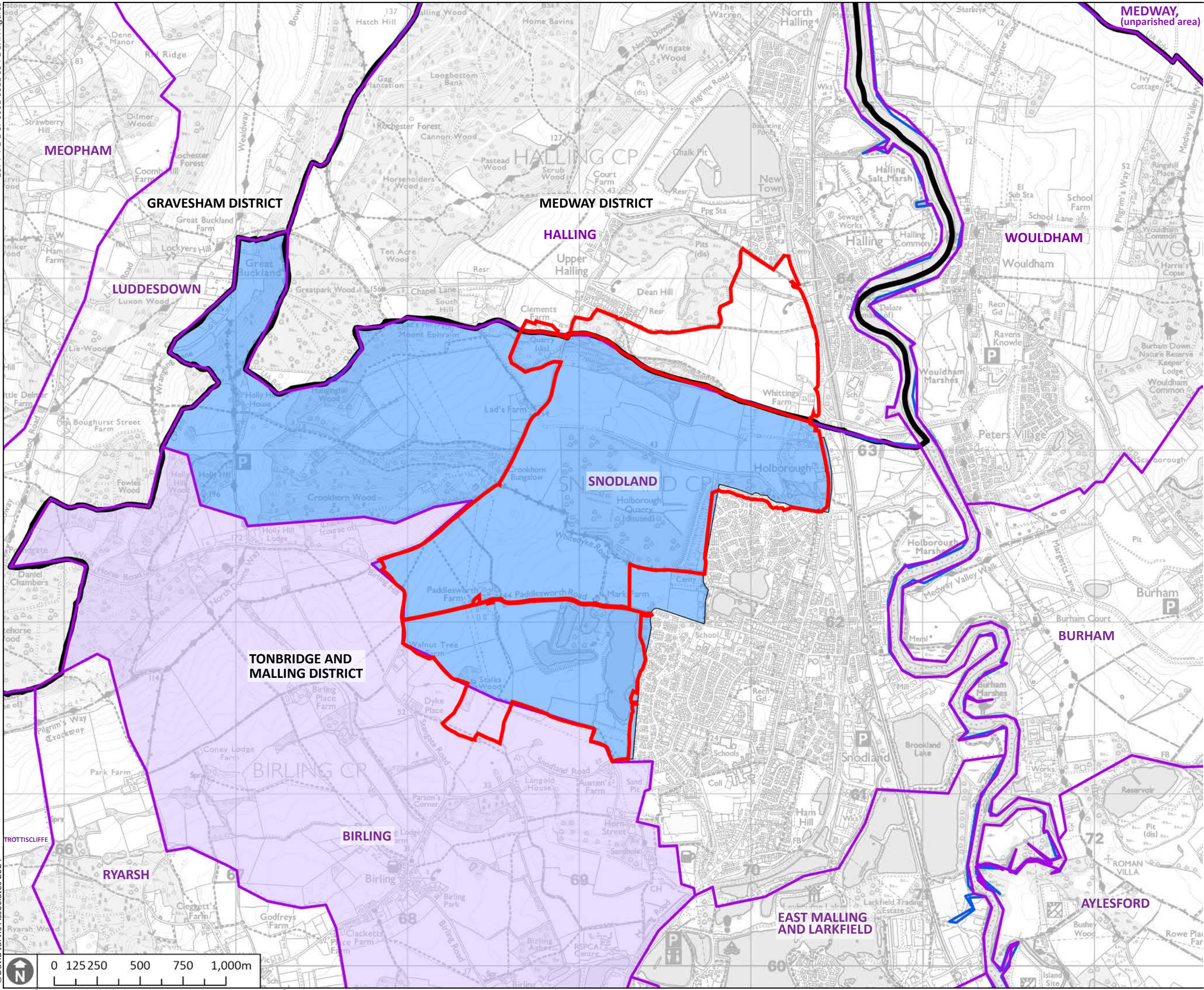
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KEY

- Application Boundary
- County Boundary
- Parish Boundary
- District / Borough Boundary

Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study (Sept. 2016)

- Snodland Study Area
- Birling Study Area

Status

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Drawing Title

**FIGURE 7 - SITE LOCATION PLAN (TMBC)**

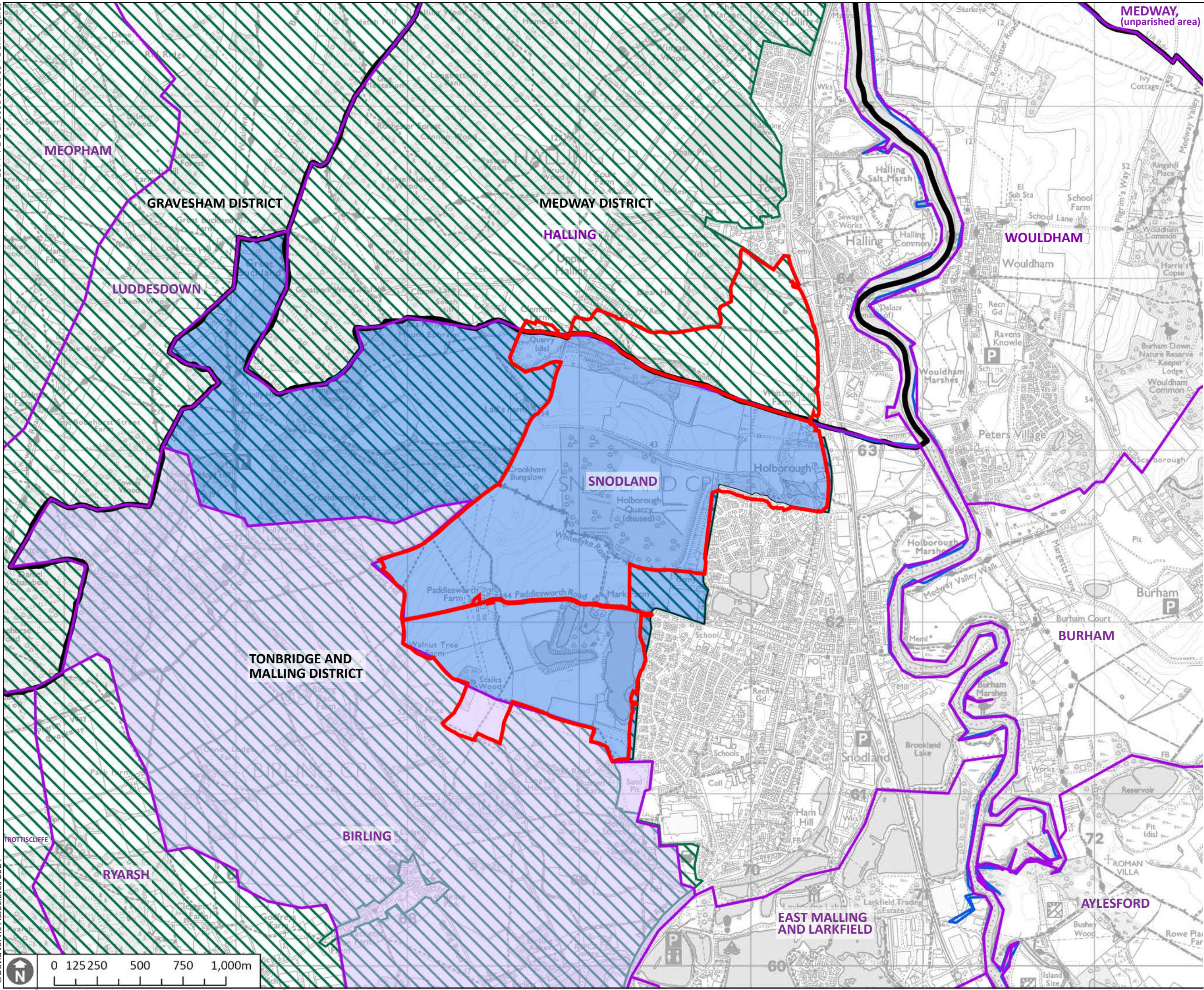
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KEY

- Application Boundary
- County Boundary
- Parish Boundary
- District / Borough Boundary
- Adjoining Green Belt

Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study (Sept. 2016)

- Snodland Study Area
- Birling Study Area

Status

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Project

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Drawing Title

**FIGURE 8 - GREENBELT PARCELS (TMBC)**

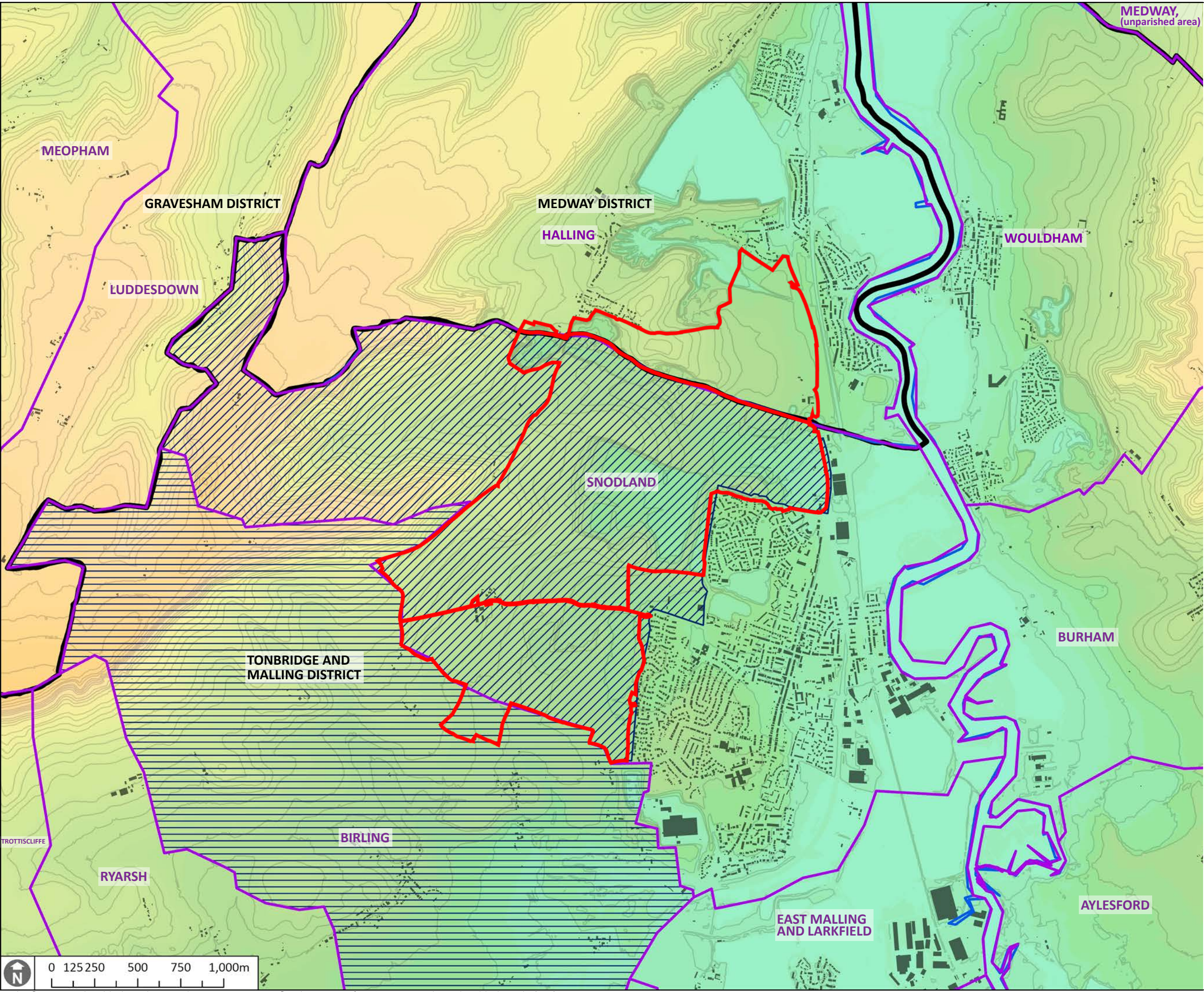
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KEY

- Application Boundary
- County Boundary
- Parish Boundary
- District / Borough Boundary

Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study (Sept. 2016)

- Snodland Study Area
- Birling Study Area

196m AOD

-3 AOD

Status

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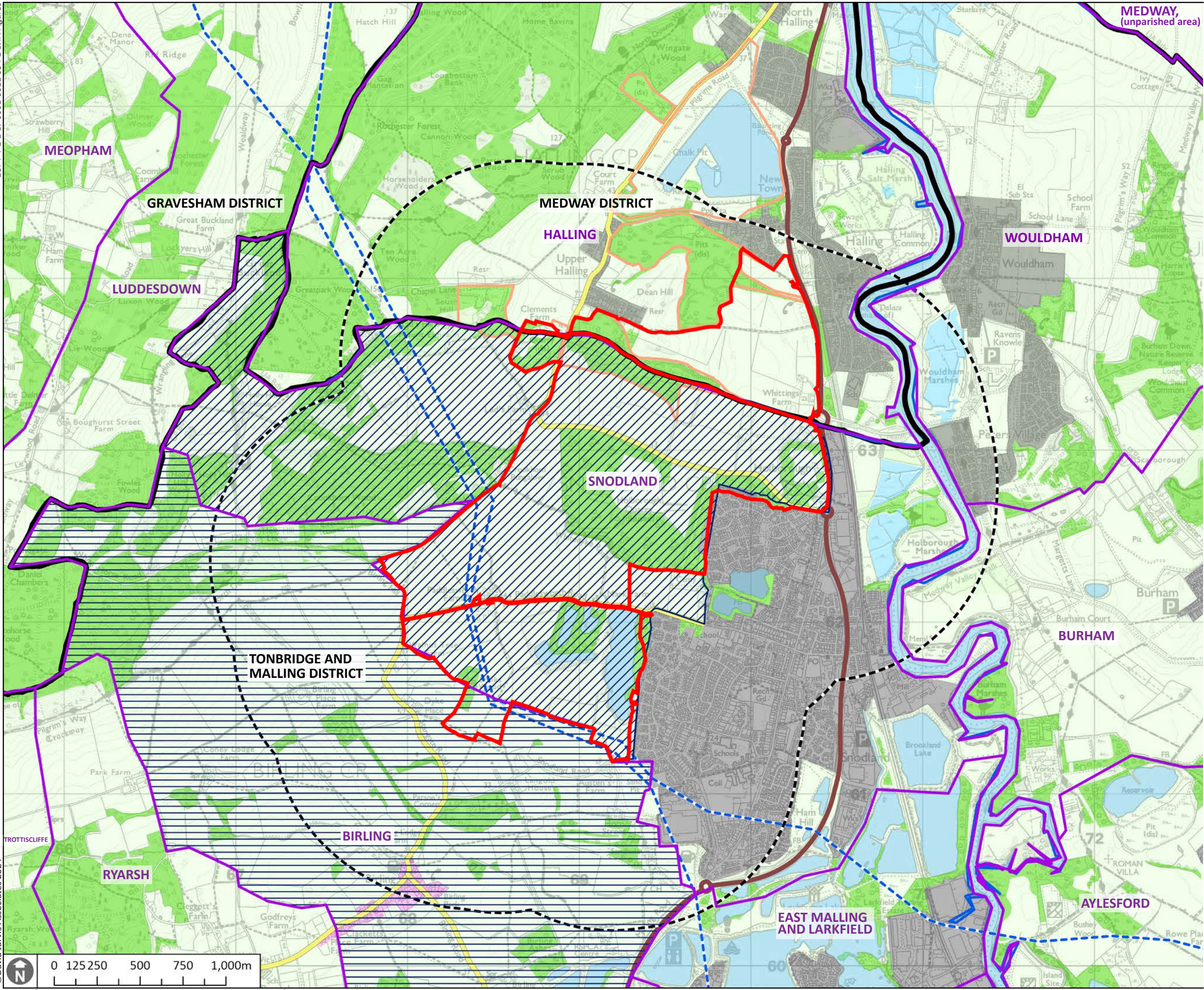
**FIGURE 9 - TOPOGRAPHICAL RELIEF (TMBC)**

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KEY

- Application Boundary
- County Boundary
- Parish Boundary
- District / Borough Boundary
- Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study (Sept. 2016)
- Snodland Study Area
- Birling Study Area
- 1km Distance Range Ring
- Previously Quarried Land
- Minor Roads
- High Voltage Lines and Carriers
- Rivers & Waterbodies
- Woodland
- Agricultural Land
- Urban
- Rural Settlement – Birling

Status

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Project

**HOLBOROUGH QUARRY**

Drawing Title

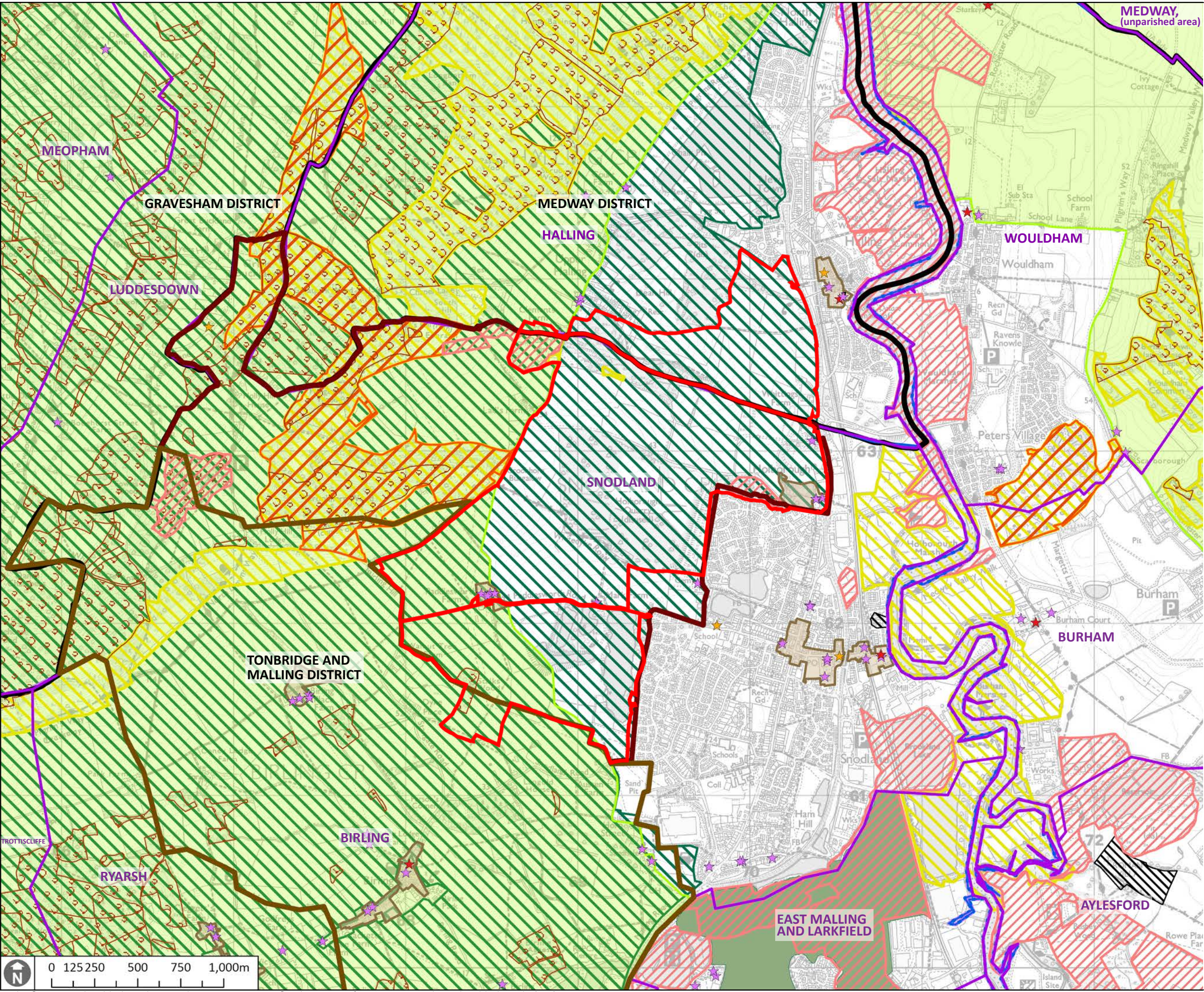
**FIGURE 10 - LANDSCAPE FEATURES (TMBC)**

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		Version
		S5-P1



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KEY

Application Boundary

County Boundary

Parish Boundary

District / Borough Boundary

Tonbridge and Malling Green Belt Study (Sept. 2016)

Snodland Study Area

Birling Study Area

Landscape Designations  
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Listed Buildings

Grade I

Grade II\*

Grade II

Scheduled Ancient Monument

Landscape Designations  
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Ancient Woodland

Ancient Replanted Woodland

Special Areas of Conservation

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Country Parks

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Local Authority Designations

Conservation Areas

Local Wildlife Sites

Green Belt Boundaries

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FIGURE 11 - LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS (TMBC)

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Client Ref.

Drawing Ref.

Drawing No.

Version

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## TMBC Green Belt Study 2016 – Snodland Assessment (Extract)

Snodland (Appendix D)

Parcel/Area	Overview	Assessment
Snodland	<u>Check unrestricted sprawl:</u> The Green Belt does provide a clear boundary to the western side of the town that may otherwise perhaps be vulnerable.	<i>Performs well</i>
	<u>Prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another:</u> The Green Belt has generally provided a clear edge to the settlement to the west. To the south and east (the latter of which is away from the Green Belt), other features including the A228 road network and Leybourne Lakes help prevent merging. The area is somewhat mixed therefore and thus has been categorised as performing moderately.	<i>Performs moderately</i>
	<u>Assist in safeguarding countryside from encroachment:</u> There has only been sporadic and mostly historic and/or farm based building in the Green Belt in this location such that the land generally retains a sense of openness.	<i>Performs well</i>
	<u>Preserve setting and special character of historic towns:</u> The historic core of Snodland and its Conservation Area is removed from the Green Belt designation and buffered by existing buildings. Views of the town's Conservation Area from within the Green Belt are restricted by other built form and the topography. Within the Green Belt smaller Conservation Areas can be found (Paddlesworth and Holborough Mill) where the setting is assisted by other	<i>Limited or no contribution</i>



## Green Belt Study 2016

	designations including AONB and a Local Wildlife Site.	
	<p><b>Other Factors</b></p> <p><u>Surrounding Constraints/Other Designations:</u> Areas of AONB are found within the Green Belt to the west, alongside other landscape considerations including a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).</p> <p><u>Boundaries:</u> The Green Belt boundary is generally tight to the existing built-up area and road network. A small portion of Green Belt is located to the south of the Tesco depot which is removed somewhat from the wider expanse of Green Belt to the north-west.</p> <p><u>Openness:</u> Generally an open landscape but with sporadic existing buildings, waterbodies and tree belts/woodlands. Worked landscape evident.</p> <p><u>Future Commitments/Key Extant Planning Permissions:</u> Work to the north at Holborough Lakes is ongoing. To the south-west there is a protected site (Ham Hill).</p>	

Birling (Appendix K)

Parcel/Area	Overview	Assessment
Birling	<u>Check unrestricted sprawl:</u> The Green Belt boundary follows the built-up area, and this is clearly shown on the Development Plan Proposals Map. The Green Belt does therefore help contain the developed area and separate it from the open countryside. The AONB washes over the settlement.	<i>Performs well</i>
	<u>Prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another:</u> Other settlements are some distance away with only sporadic development within the Green Belt.	<i>Performs moderately</i>
	<u>Assist in safeguarding countryside from encroachment:</u> The area retains a very rural feel with open fields; the Green Belt does form a connection to the wider countryside.	<i>Performs well</i>
	<u>Preserve setting and special character of historic towns:</u> Much of the settlement is designated as a Conservation Area. The Green Belt does play a role in providing a setting for this area, particularly given the smaller nature of the settlement and the fact the Conservation Area extends	<i>Performs moderately</i>

---

*Green Belt Study 2016*

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	<p>into the Green Belt and there are views from footpaths. However the AONB also serves this function.</p>	
	<p><b>Other Factors</b></p> <p><u>Surrounding Constraints/Other Designations:</u> The area is also designated as AONB, and the village has a large Conservation Area.</p> <p><u>Boundaries:</u> The Green Belt boundary is considered to be clearly shown on the Development Plan Proposals Map and generally tightly drawn around the developed area.</p> <p><u>Openness:</u> A generally open landscape with open fields and a lack of urbanising features – a typical rural and Kentish landscape.</p> <p><u>Future Commitments/Key Extant Planning Permissions:</u> None identified.</p>	

## **REPRESENTATION - REGULATION 18B CONSULTATION**

**ID: 2868**

### **National Policy and Guidance**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in December 2023.

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF explains that:

*"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."*

Paragraph 8 goes on to state that:

*"Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives): ... b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and..."*

Section 5 relates to Delivering a sufficient supply of homes. Specifically relevant to this policy are:

Paragraph 62, which states *"...the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes)."*

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first introduced in 2014 and offers 'live' government guidance. The PPG provides guidance to help in the implementation of policy in the NPPF.

One of the categories within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is '*Housing needs of different groups*'. This section of the PPG when read as a whole sets out how housing needs of different groups are to be assessed and planned for.

### **Local Policy**

The adopted Local Plan does not include a specific policy in relation to houseboat moorings.

### **Context and Evidence**



The Medway local housing needs assessment 2021 didn't consider the need for houseboat moorings. Therefore, it is submitted that a consultation with all houseboat owners in Medway must be undertaken in order to ascertain whether the existing provision is adequate for mooring.

It is important to note that unlike owners of houses or apartments, houseboat owners have no security of tenure: although they pay council tax, energy, water and insurance bills, they do not have the same statutory rights as other tenants. It is in mind of this that we deem it critical that an assessment of current mooring provision in Medway is undertaken.

In an administrative area such as Medway, where there are two major rivers and a lengthy estuary and coastline with a large houseboat population, this is an area of housing provision that should not be ignored.

### **Regulation 18 Consultation**

The Draft Local Plan proposes to include specific policies in relation to Houseboats (T17) and Marinas and Moorings (T22).

Draft Policy T17: 'Houseboats' outlines the proposed principles that the Council will apply when managing provision for houseboats, while Draft Policy T22 sets out the approach that will be taken when considering planning proposals for upgraded or new marina facilities and amenities.

Policy T17, as drafted, doesn't offer adequate protection for houseboats, with the Policy outlining that if moorings impact upon marine based wildlife and habitat, the further growth of houseboats, or the replacement of existing ones will not be permitted. Likewise, Policy T22, as drafted, doesn't provide a suitable level of protection for marinas and moorings, with the Policy outlining a stringent list of criteria that must be met before existing marinas/moorings can be upgraded or before new ones are developed.

### **Proposed Approach**

As aforementioned, we submit that an assessment and consultation should be undertaken to determine whether the current mooring provision in Medway is adequate. This is imperative given that the Medway local housing needs assessment 2021 didn't consider the need for houseboat moorings and in mind of Draft Policies 'T17' and 'T22', which as drafted, do not offer a level of protection that other housing needs groups are afforded. Clearly, this is at odds with the NPPF which outlines that *'the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes'*.

In mind of the above, a full assessment of the level of need for houseboats in Medway must be undertaken, and ultimately, draft policies T17 and T22 must be amended to align with the level of support that National Policy provides all housing needs, not just a select few.

**END**

