



# Medway Local Plan Green Belt Review

June 2025

[Medway.gov.uk/FutureMedway](https://www.medway.gov.uk/FutureMedway)



## Contents

1	Introduction .....	5
1.1	Purpose of Assessment .....	5
1.2	Key objectives.....	5
1.3	Context .....	5
2	Planning Background.....	8
2.1	National Policy.....	8
2.2	Green Belt National Policy.....	8
2.3	Duty to co-operate .....	8
2.4	Introduction .....	9
2.5	Baseline data .....	9
2.6	Land parcel identification .....	9
2.7	Green Belt Policy Criteria.....	12
2.7.1	Green Belt Purposes .....	12
2.8	Parcel Assessment .....	14
2.8.1	Appraisal criteria.....	14
3	Parcel Assessment.....	17
3.1	Land Parcel 1 .....	17
3.1.1	Description .....	17
3.1.2	Assessment.....	17
3.1.3	Results and recommendation .....	19
3.2	Land Parcel 2 .....	20
3.2.1	Description .....	20
3.2.2	Assessment.....	20
3.2.3	Results and recommendation .....	22
3.3	Land Parcel 3 .....	23
3.3.1	Description .....	23
3.3.2	Assessment.....	24
3.3.3	Results and recommendation .....	25
3.4	Land Parcel 4 .....	26
3.4.1	Description .....	26
3.4.2	Assessment.....	26
3.4.3	Results and recommendation .....	28

3.5	Land Parcel 5 .....	29
3.5.1	Description .....	29
3.5.2	Assessment.....	29
3.5.3	Results and recommendation .....	31
3.6	Land parcel 6 .....	32
3.6.1	Description .....	32
3.6.2	Assessment.....	33
3.6.3	Boundary anomalies.....	34
3.6.4	Results and recommendation .....	35
3.7	Parcel 7.....	36
3.7.1	Description .....	37
3.7.2	Assessment.....	37
3.7.3	Boundary anomalies.....	39
3.7.4	Results and recommendation .....	39
3.8	Parcel 8.....	40
3.8.1	Description .....	40
3.8.2	Assessment.....	41
3.8.3	Results and recommendation .....	42
3.9	Parcel 9.....	43
3.9.1	Description .....	43
3.9.2	Assessment.....	43
3.9.3	Results and recommendation .....	45
3.10	Parcel 10.....	46
3.10.1	Description .....	46
3.10.2	Assessment.....	46
3.10.3	Results and recommendation .....	48
3.11	Parcel 11.....	49
3.11.1	Description .....	49
3.11.2	Assessment.....	49
3.11.3	Results and recommendation .....	51
3.12	Parcel 12.....	52
3.12.1	Description .....	52
3.12.2	Assessment.....	52

3.12.3	Results and recommendation .....	54
3.13	Parcel 13.....	55
3.13.1	Description .....	55
3.13.2	Assessment.....	55
3.13.3	Results and recommendation .....	57
3.14	Parcel 14.....	58
3.14.1	Description .....	58
3.14.2	Assessment.....	58
3.14.3	Results and recommendation .....	60
3.15	Parcel 15.....	61
3.15.1	Description .....	61
3.15.2	Assessment.....	61
3.15.3	Results and recommendation .....	63
3.16	Parcel 16.....	64
3.16.1	Description .....	64
3.16.2	Assessment.....	64
3.16.3	Results and recommendation .....	66
3.17	Parcel 17.....	67
3.17.1	Description .....	67
3.17.2	Results and recommendation .....	67
3.18	Parcel 18.....	68
3.18.1	Description .....	68
3.18.2	Results and recommendation .....	68
3.19	Parcel 19.....	69
3.19.1	Description .....	69
3.19.2	Assessment.....	69
3.19.3	Results and recommendation .....	71
3.20	Parcel 20.....	72
3.20.1	Description .....	73
3.20.2	Assessment.....	73
3.20.3	Results and recommendation .....	75
4	Assessment Summary .....	76
4.1	Introduction .....	76



4.2	Site survey work .....	76
4.3	Assessment Results – Summary Table .....	76
5	Boundary anomalies.....	77
5.1	District boundary.....	77
5.2	Parcel 3 – Boundary anomaly .....	79
6	Appendices.....	80

# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 Purpose of Assessment**

This Green Belt Review has been prepared in response to the updated national policy requiring the identification of Grey Belt and to provide an up to date evidence to support the emerging Local Plan for Medway. This review provides an independent and objective appraisal of Metropolitan Green Belt land within Medway.

The first part of the review will focus on reviewing the 2018 Green Belt Review to determine if it remains fit for purpose or if any updates to the national guidance requires a refresh of the assessment before proceeding to the assessment of Green Belt land in the identification of Grey Belt land. Both assessments will draw heavily upon the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

## **1.2 Key objectives**

- Assess 2018 Green Belt Review to determine if fit for purpose against revised NPPF and PPG
- Undertake review of Green Belt land to identify, if any, Grey Belt land
- Assess implications of Medway Green Belt land linked to neighbouring authority Green Belt identified for release

## **1.3 Context**

The extent of Green Belt land within Medway is relatively small (4.98% of land area). The outer ring Metropolitan Green belt largely terminates along the western boundary of the borough, with some limited intrusion inside the borough. The neighbouring boroughs with contiguous Green Belt are Gravesham and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councils. Both these boroughs have more extensive tracts of Green Belt with their boundaries. Gravesham Borough Council will be undertaking a Green/grey belt assessment to inform their emerging Local Plan. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council have consultants reviewing their Green Belt Review against national guidance to enable consultation of their regulation 18 Local Plan in due course.

In the wider metropolitan green belt strategic context, it is important to highlight one significant consideration. The gap between the Medway and Gravesham urban areas is considerably narrowed by the urban extension of Dartford and Gravesham. The narrowness of this gap can be clearly seen on the Metropolitan Green Belt map (see Fig. 1). Relative to the extent of green belt surrounding the rest of London, this is by far the narrowest section of Metropolitan Green Belt.

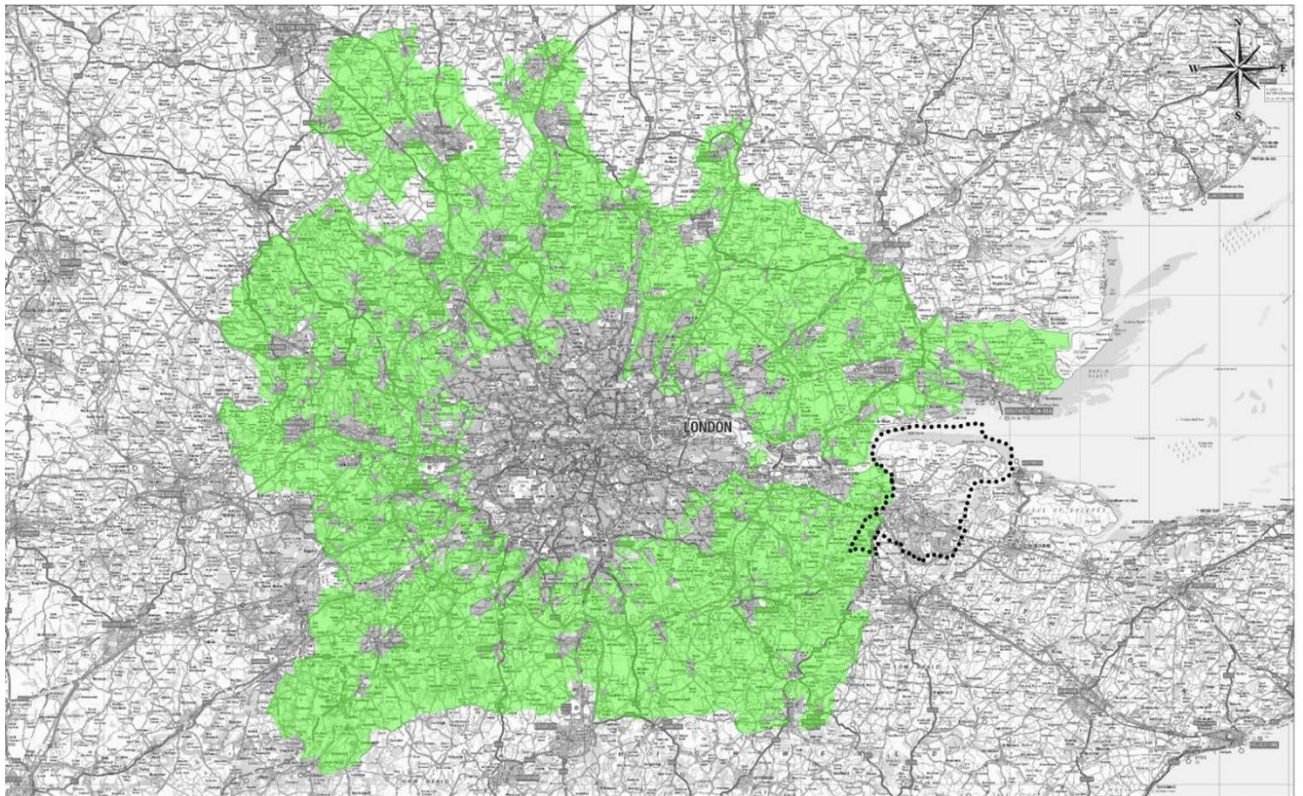


Figure 1: Metropolitan Green Belt

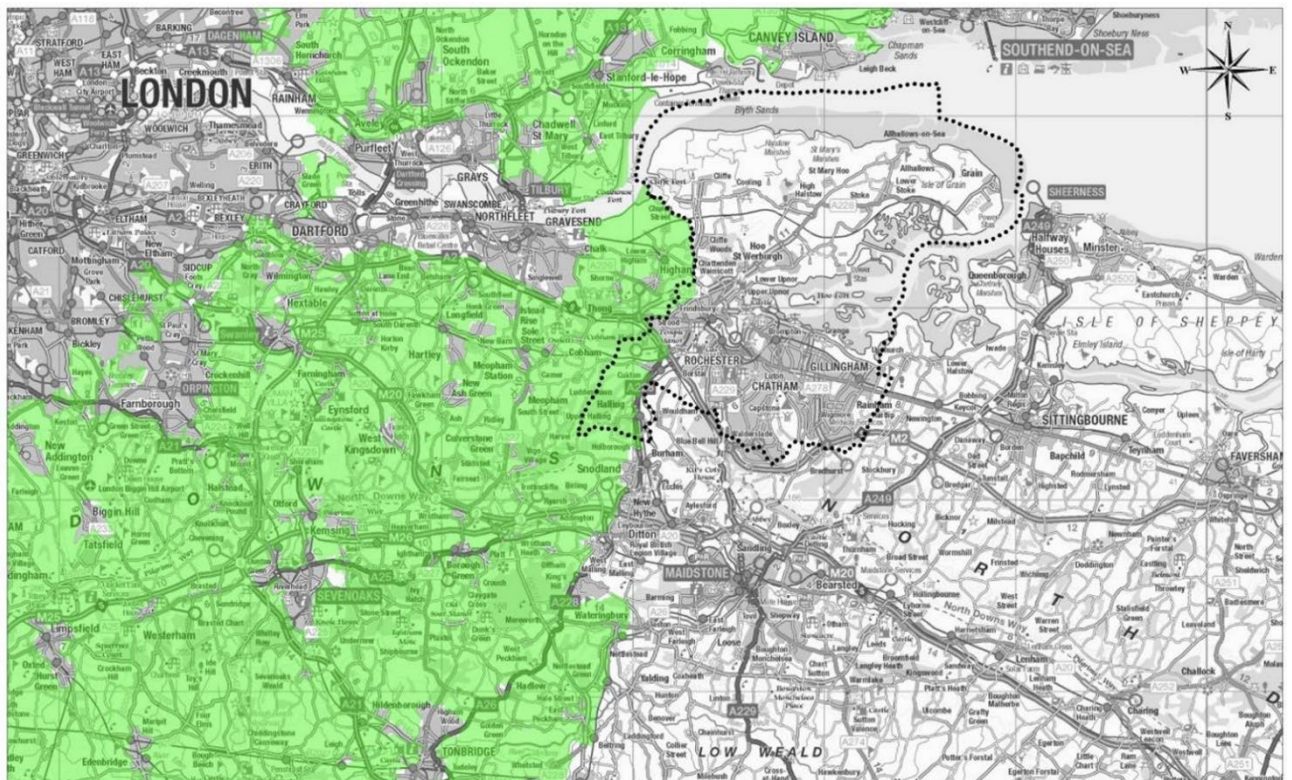


Figure 2: Metropolitan Green Belt – North West Kent



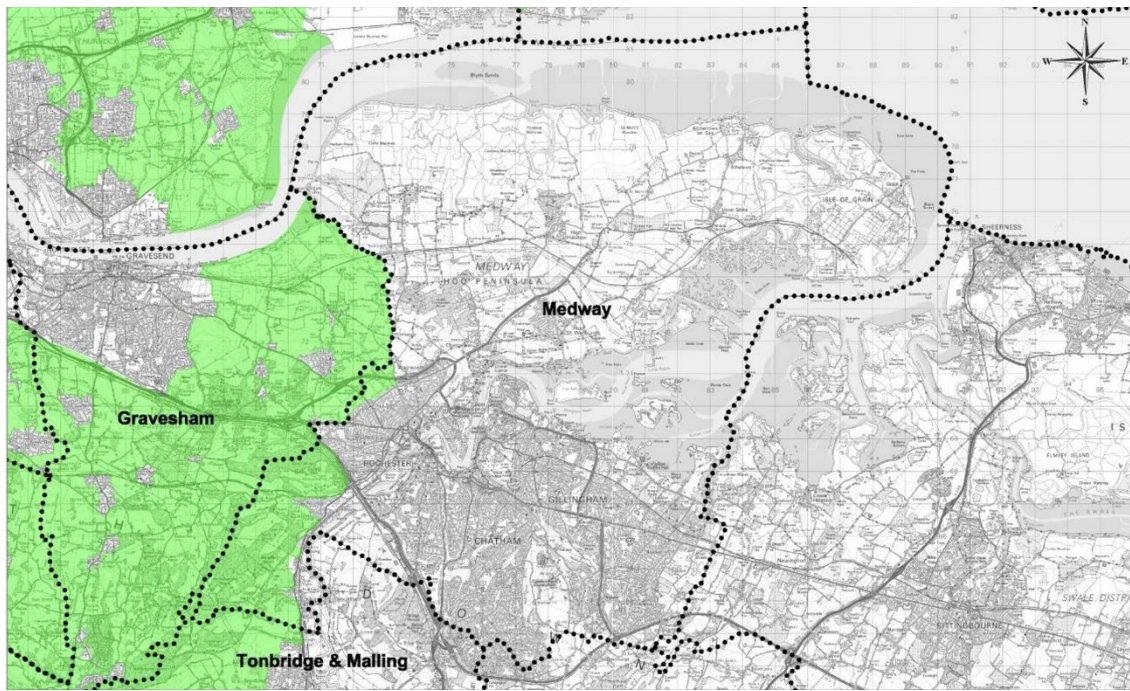


Figure 3: Metropolitan Green Belt - Medway

## **2 Planning Background**

### **2.1 National Policy**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Medway Council, as a local Planning Authority to prepare a Local Plan that is positively prepared with the objective of delivering sustainable development and provides a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.

Local Plans will be examined by an independent Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State to determine if the plan is 'sound'. A 'sound' plan must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

### **2.2 Green Belt National Policy**

Government, through the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), attaches great importance to Green Belts, with the fundamental aim being to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their 'openness' and 'permanence'.

The NPPF sets out the five key purposes which the Green Belt serves:

- 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.

The revised guidance places an emphasis on town centres rather than villages as well and recommends a process and specific criteria to assess parcels. This process has been followed through this assessment.

### **2.3 Duty to co-operate**

Medway has just under 5% of Green Belt in comparison to Gravesham Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. Site promoters have submitted representations to both authorities on cross border sites. Medway Council officers engage in regular duty to cooperate meetings with these neighbouring authorities on strategic matters including Green Belt.

Engagement with Gravesham Borough Council led to the reconsideration of three adjoining Green Belt sites in Medway to the west of Strood, i.e. development on Gravesham land would compromise the ability or the remaining Medway Green Belt to perform its functions effectively. This assessment will assist informing decisions regarding the land west of Strood. Gravesham BC will be commissioning a Green Belt Review to support preparation of their Regulation 19 Local Plan.

Outside of regular duty to cooperate meetings, Medway officers attended a developer arranged site visit with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council regarding a cross border proposal. Further engagement followed thereafter to confirm approaches. Tonbridge and Malling BC are preparing toward their Regulation 18 and progressing evidence gathering and commissioning. A green Belt review is part of this work and will include testing of the proposal site.

## **2.4 Introduction**

## **2.5 Baseline data**

The following mapping provides valuable baseline data to support analysis of existing green belt boundary designation:

- The wider context (figures 1 and 2)
- Medway Green Belt boundary (figure 3)
- Medway Green Belt parcels (figure 4)
- Detailed parcel maps (figs 5-27)
- Environmental constraints (Appendix B)

## **2.6 Land parcel identification**

The 2018 Green Belt Review identified parcels for assessment based on a robust methodology of desktop analysis, site surveys, discussion with neighbouring authorities, and using well defined physical features to help define the extent of the parcels and provide distinct and permanent edges.

This review incorporates national guidance and takes a refreshed approach to identifying land parcels.

The guiding principles for the delineation of land parcels for assessment are as follows:

- The land should be of a similar land use to ensure that the contribution of the parcel as a whole can be assessed without significant differences that could perform functions of the Green Belt differently, i.e. provides robustness and ensures the assessment of performance against Green Belt functions are not generalised
- As far as possible, the parcels should be defined by clearly defined boundaries as per national guidance. Stronger boundaries will ensure permanence of the Green Belt into the future. It is accepted though that weaker boundaries can also provide definition for assessment where stronger boundaries are absent.

Strong boundaries for purposes of this assessment are as follows:

- Topography (natural) – steep hills, ridgelines, valleys
- Vegetation – Environmental designations as per footnote 7 of the NPPF, protected woodland and hedgerows, established and dense tree belts, etc.
- Water bodies – lakes, rivers. etc.

- Man made – railway lines, roads, motorways, major distributor roads, established property boundaries, established building lines, etc.

Other (weaker) Boundaries as defined for this assessment are as follows:

- Vegetation – field boundaries, unprotected hedgerows and woodland, intermittent tree belts, etc.
- Man made – private roads, tracks, fencing, intermittent or unclear settlement boundaries, power lines etc.

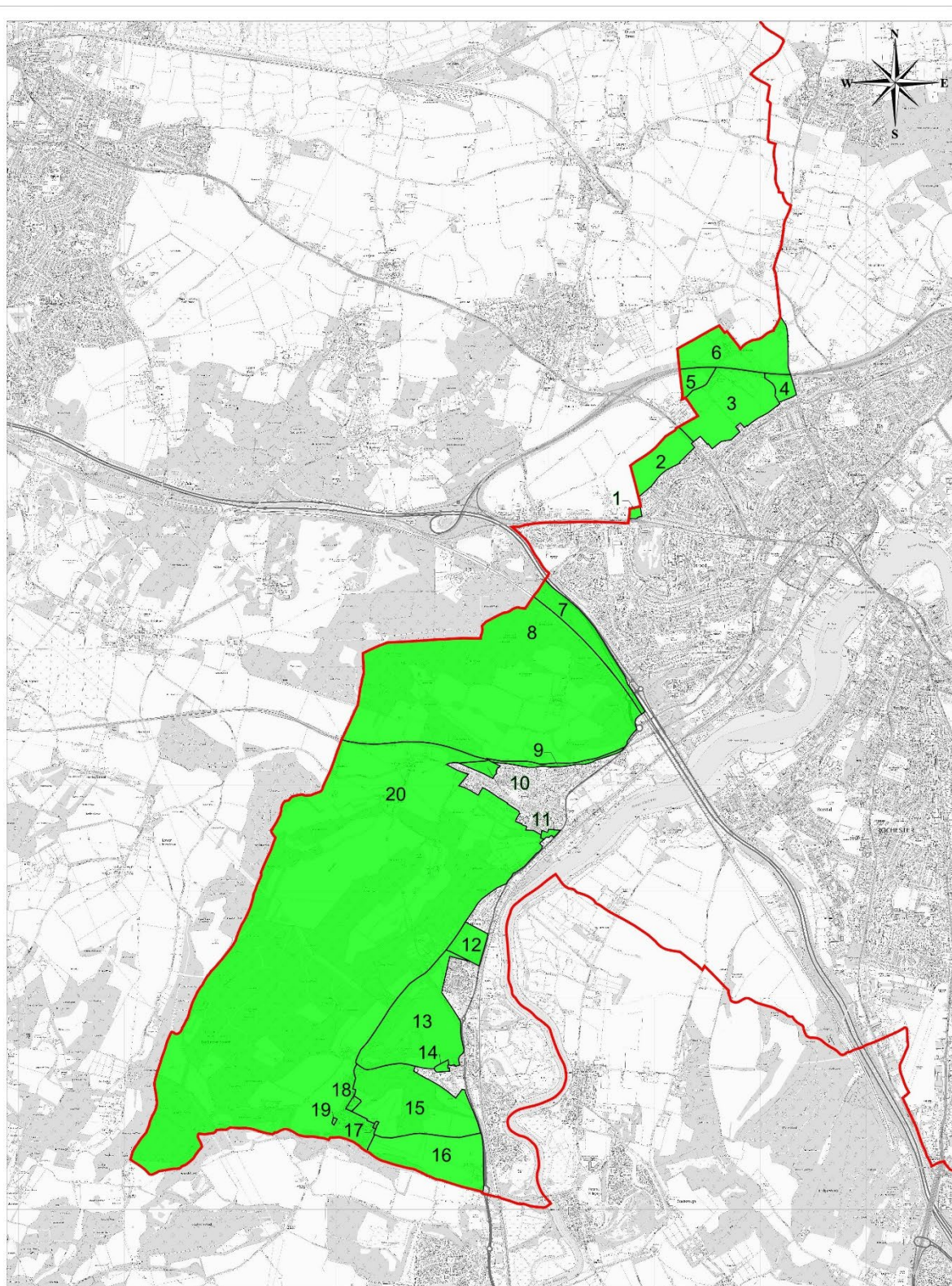
A desk based assessment was first undertaken using ordnance surveys, the previous Green Belt assessment and further information gathering including a review of the Landscape Character Assessment 2011 and 2023. This was then verified by site visits. It is important to note that the definition of parcel boundaries was an iterative process, i.e. that if significant differences in the performance of a part of a parcel were identified, then the parcel was sub-divided, for example the previously defined parcel 2 as per the 2018 Green Belt Review has now been split into 4 based on the land use and character.

The Green Belt land parcels within Medway are confirmed as located in the following areas:

- Land to north west of Strood (north of M2) – extending to district boundary (parcels 1 - 6)
- Land to north west of Cuxton and Halling (south of M2) (parcels 7 - 20)

A total of 20 land parcels have been identified (see figure 4).





## Greenbelt Assessment Areas

© Crown copyright and database rights 2025 Ordnance Survey licence number 100024225.

**Medway**  
COUNCIL

*Serving You*

Scale: 1:50000 18/06/25

© Medway Council, 2025

Figure 4: Medway Green Belt parcels



## 2.7 Green Belt Policy Criteria

### 2.7.1 Green Belt Purposes

The Green Belt serves five purposes (see para 134 of the NPPF). These are considered separately. This review will assess the contribution of identified parcels to the Green Belt purposes in line with the illustrative criteria set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

**Purpose A:** To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas The Medway Green Belt boundary forms the outer edge of the London Metropolitan Green Belt. The purpose as defined in the NPPF refers to 'large built up areas' and in this respect the borough's Green Belt plays a localised role in containing the outward growth of existing urban settlements. Paragraph 5 of the PPG clarifies that villages should not be considered as 'large built up areas'. For the purposes of this study cities, town and district centres are considered 'large built up areas', which by implication determines that Strood District Centre be treated as falling within this category. Smaller village settlements such as Cliffe Woods, Cuxton and Halling are not included within this category.

**Purpose B:** To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another Green Belt plays a strategic role in maintaining separation between main towns. In the case of Medway and Gravesham this applies particularly to the gap between the urban edge of Medway to the west and north west of Strood and the urban edge of Gravesend. Gravesend and Strood are all treated as 'towns/large built up areas' for the purpose of this assessment. As highlighted in section 1.3 (figure 1), this is a particularly narrow gap within the context of the full extent of the Metropolitan Green Belt. This gap also highlights the more local role of Green Belt in preventing incremental coalescence of individual urban settlements.

Snodland (within Tonbridge & Malling borough) lies immediately to the south of the Medway urban area with intervening urbanised settlements at Cuxton and Halling. The Green Belt (alongside other designations) has played a useful historic role in managing expansion of these villages and reducing the risk of incremental coalescence between Strood and Snodland. With the new guidance, these designations still play this role albeit now being focussed on preventing the coalescence between Strood and Snodland, i.e. villages no longer fall within the guidance for this criteria.

**Purpose C:** To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Encroachment is defined as the gradual advancement of urbanising influences; also 'advancement beyond usual or acceptable limits'. Urbanising influences are defined as a combination of both the influences of 'existing development' and 'other urbanising influences'. This includes urbanising development washed over by, inset within or directly adjacent to the outer edges of Green Belts, such as villages and hamlets, industrial, educational and/or retails estates.

Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.

The main consideration should be whether the rural character of the area would be threatened or overwhelmed by urbanising influences.

**Purpose D:** To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns Planning on the Doorstep (PAS 2015) states that Purpose 4 ‘... is generally accepted as relating to very few settlements in practice. In most towns there already are more recent developments between the historic core, and the countryside between the edge of the town.’ The historic cores of the towns of Rochester and Strood are far removed from the Green Belt boundary. However, the PPG refers to the visual, physical and experiential relationship to historic aspects of a historic town, therefore the historic river valley setting of Strood and Rochester could be affected and will be considered with regard to views into and out of these historic cores. Other heritage assets (e.g. Listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments) which often occur randomly, will also be considered appropriately against footnote 7 of the NPPF, i.e. would applying policies of these heritage assets provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development of the assessment area.

**Purpose E:** Purpose E is not relevant to the identification of grey belt and is not referenced in the PPG, but it is one of the five purposes of Green Belt set out in the NPPF.

Most Green Belt studies do not assess individual Green Belt land parcels against Purpose E, and either do not rate them or rate them all equally, on the grounds that outside the definition of PDL, it is difficult to justify why the release and/or development of one area of Green Belt land has a greater impact on encouraging re-use of urban land than another. This is supported by planning inspector’s judgements on the matter, such as the inspector’s report re: the London Borough of Redbridge’s Local Plan (January 2018), which noted that with regards to Purpose E ‘this purpose applies to most land’ but that ‘it does not form a particularly useful means of evaluating sites’

More generally regarding plan-making, paragraph 147 of the NPPF states that ‘before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development [including] a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land and b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport’. In other words, Purpose E must have already been followed before options in the Green Belt are considered further.

Using evidence to inform meaningful judgements on the collective contribution Green Belt land makes to Purpose E is also difficult. In the absence of any clear guidance on what percentage of recorded brownfield land enables a Green Belt to play a stronger or more limited role in encouraging urban regeneration, a uniform level of ‘moderate’ contribution to Purpose E is applied to all areas of Green Belt in the study area.

## **2.8 Parcel Assessment**

### **2.8.1 Appraisal criteria**

For the purposes of this study, it is important to note that the assessment is relevant to the Medway Local Plan area.

The NPPF and PPG propose a new methodology and criteria to determine whether an identified parcel of Green Belt land meets purposes A to E and A, B and D respectively, which are set out in the assessment table at Appendix C. The PPG sets out the process for undertaking a grey belt review as part of a Green Belt review. In doing so, the government's definition of grey belt land 'excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.' The PPG states in such locations, it may be necessary to only 'provisionally identify such land as grey belt in advance of more detailed specific proposals' (PPG Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 64-006-20250225). This assessment identifies land which is subject to Footnote 7 designations. For the purposes of this assessment this is taken to include (please see figure x for mapping of footnote 7 areas):

- Land with the National Landscape (highest status of protection – para 189 of NPPF)
- Land within the setting of the National Landscape – factored into the assessment table
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve

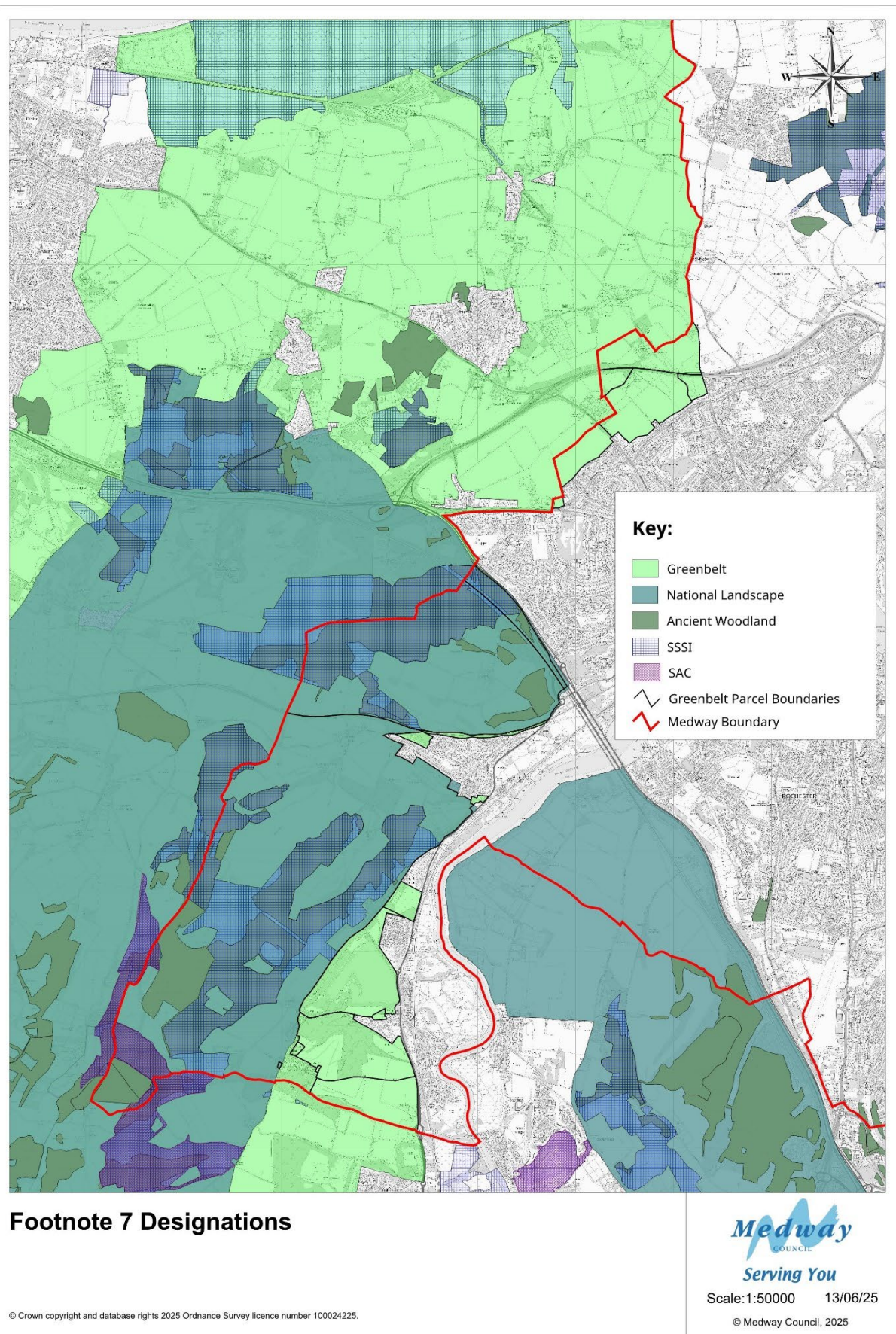


Figure 5: Footnote 7 designations

Also of importance, and included in the assessment table, is assessing if the release or development of the assessment parcel would fundamentally undermine the five Green Belt purposes taken together) of the remaining Green Belt within the Plan area as a whole. The PPG states that this judgement should focus on evaluating the effect of release or development on 'the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way'.

It is important to note that when considering the 'purposes (taken together)', the release or development that fundamentally and meaningfully impacts Green Belt land contributing to one Green Belt purpose would in effect affect its ability to serve the purposes (taken together) in a meaningful way. The determination of whether the release or development of land would have fundamental and meaningful impacts will be in the context of the Medway Green Belt. It should be noted, however, that without a clear understanding of the location of release or development, its scale and land use, including what Green Belt land would remain within the plan area, it will not be possible to make a definitive judgement on fundamental impact at this stage.





<p>This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.</p>	<p>is bound by the football field fence and recreational use. Even if the football field fence were not enough to contain development, beyond this is a residential property. The existing parcel could also be considered as a recreational use as part of the Football club, i.e. contains existing development.</p> <p>In many ways this site is strongly influenced by urbanising influences, i.e. by the built up area of Strood and neighbouring residential and recreational activity. It is therefore partially enclosed by existing development.</p> <p>Development could be self-contained with the potential for some encroachment into Gravesham's Green Belt to the west.</p>
<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>Parcel 1 forms a very small part of a gap between Strood and Gravesend.</p> <p>Due to the recreational activity adjacent and potentially on this parcel, it does not assist in creating visual separation.</p> <p>Development of this parcel would not result in the merging of the towns and does not make a contribution to the visual separation of these towns.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>The parcel is affected by the urbanising influences surrounding it from the east, south and west. It is immediately adjacent to the urban conurbation of Strood and therefore has a very weak relationship with the wider countryside.</p>

<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages.	<b>Weak</b> Parcel 1 is not in close proximity to any historic towns and is too low lying to possibly have any impact on the setting of Strood or Rochester District Centres.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Consideration of footnote 7</b>	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation sits to the west of the parcel. The western part of the site may need to address the setting of the KDNL as per paragraph 189 of the NPPF. A SSSI also sits to the west of the parcel but is also a distance away.
<b>5 purposes of Green Belt altogether</b>	If parcel 1 were developed, it could be self-contained predominantly to the east, north and south. The boundary to the west has the potential for encroachment but would only potentially compromise the rest of the Football club, which is Green Belt land within Gravesham BC.
<b>Result</b>	<b><u>Moderate</u></b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>

### **3.1.3 Results and recommendation**

**Moderate:** This contribution is considered not significant and is therefore grey belt.

**Recommendation: Amend Green Belt boundary/release**



## 3.2 Land Parcel 2

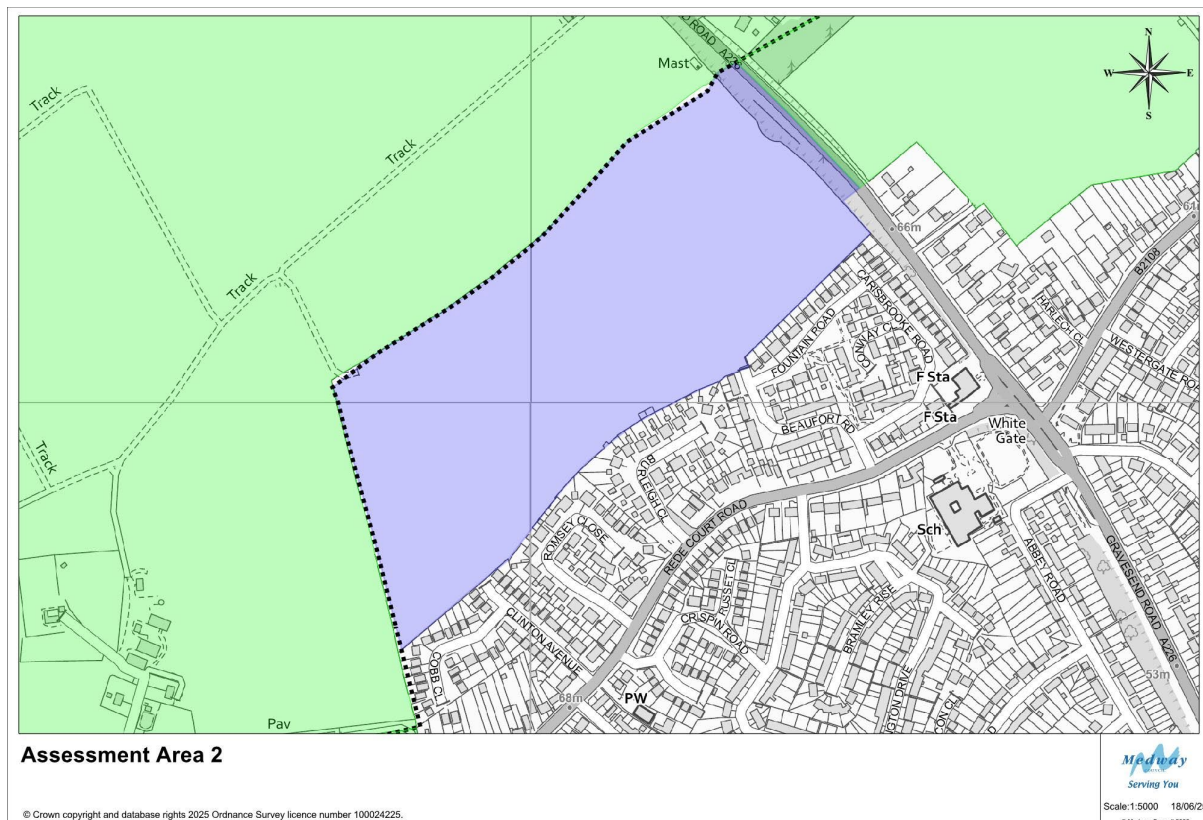


Figure 7: Map of parcel 2

### 3.2.1 Description

This parcel is situated to the south of the A289, west of Gravesend Road and north of existing residential area. The southern edges of this parcel are bordered by the urban fringes of Strood which form Medway's Green Belt boundary within this area. It forms part of a larger tract of Green Belt land which extends beyond the district boundary into Gravesham (to the north and west). The green belt washes over the A226.

The land parcel is used as arable farmland and its character is open. The land falls away gently to the west from the steep embankment at Gravesend Road. It is distinctly part of the wider green belt farmland extending towards the A289 and beyond.

### 3.2.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up	<b>Moderate</b> Parcel 2 sits south of the A289, adjacent to Strood and also cuts across the A226 (Gravesend Road). The parcel consists of farming land and remains untouched by development.

<p>areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.</p>	<p>It has a strong eastern boundary facilitated by the A226 (Gravesend Road) coupled with a robust and dense treeline. This treeline continues down the northern boundary, coinciding with a ridgeline, but appears less dense but still substantial and robust. This ridgeline will help to contain development.</p> <p>The density of treelining on the western boundary appears compromised and presents a weakness, i.e. weak intermittent treeline boundary. This treelined boundary is a historic administrative boundary, which will require preservation. Apart from the historic relevance of the boundary, there isn't a robust physical barrier to the western boundary that would prevent sprawl and has a strong potential to encroach into Gravesham's Green Belt thereby compromising its function.</p> <p>The landscape slopes down from the A226 westward. Land outside the site on the western end then starts to rise again, so the parcel is well screened and can be described as almost sitting in a bowl/isolated. Despite the western boundary being weaker, the topography and ridgeline help in screening the parcel and containing development within this 'bowl', i.e. some Green Belt land in Gravesham could be compromised as a result.</p> <p>Parcel 2 has the urbanising influence of the adjacency of Strood and immediate residential properties to the south.</p>
<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>Parcel 2 forms a small part of a gap between Strood and Gravesend.</p> <p>Development of this parcel would not result in the merging of the towns</p> <p>The parcel can be developed without the loss of visual separation between towns. The natural landscape and topography of Shorne Woods Country Park, Shorne Ridgeway and Great Crabbles Wood in close proximity create a natural visual separation between these two towns with limited to no visibility from Gravesend town.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Parcel 2 has the urbanising influence of the adjacency of Strood and immediate residential properties to the south.</p>

separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages.	<b>Weak</b> Parcel 1 is not in close proximity to any historic towns and is too low lying to possibly have any impact on the setting of Strood or Rochester District Centres.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Consideration of footnote 7</b>	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation sits to the west of the parcel. The western part of the site may need to address the setting of the KDNL as per paragraph 189 of the NPPF. A SSSI also sits to the west of the parcel but is also a distance away.
<b>5 purposes of Green Belt altogether</b>	Parcel 2 does not have a strong boundary to restrict and contain development, so it's release would in turn weaken the contribution of land in Gravesham. The urbanising influence of this parcels development could also contribute to this.
<b>Result</b>	<b><u>Moderate</u></b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>

### 3.2.3 Results and recommendation

**Moderate:** This contribution is considered not significant and is therefore grey belt.

**Recommendation: Amend Green Belt boundary/release**

### 3.3 Land Parcel 3

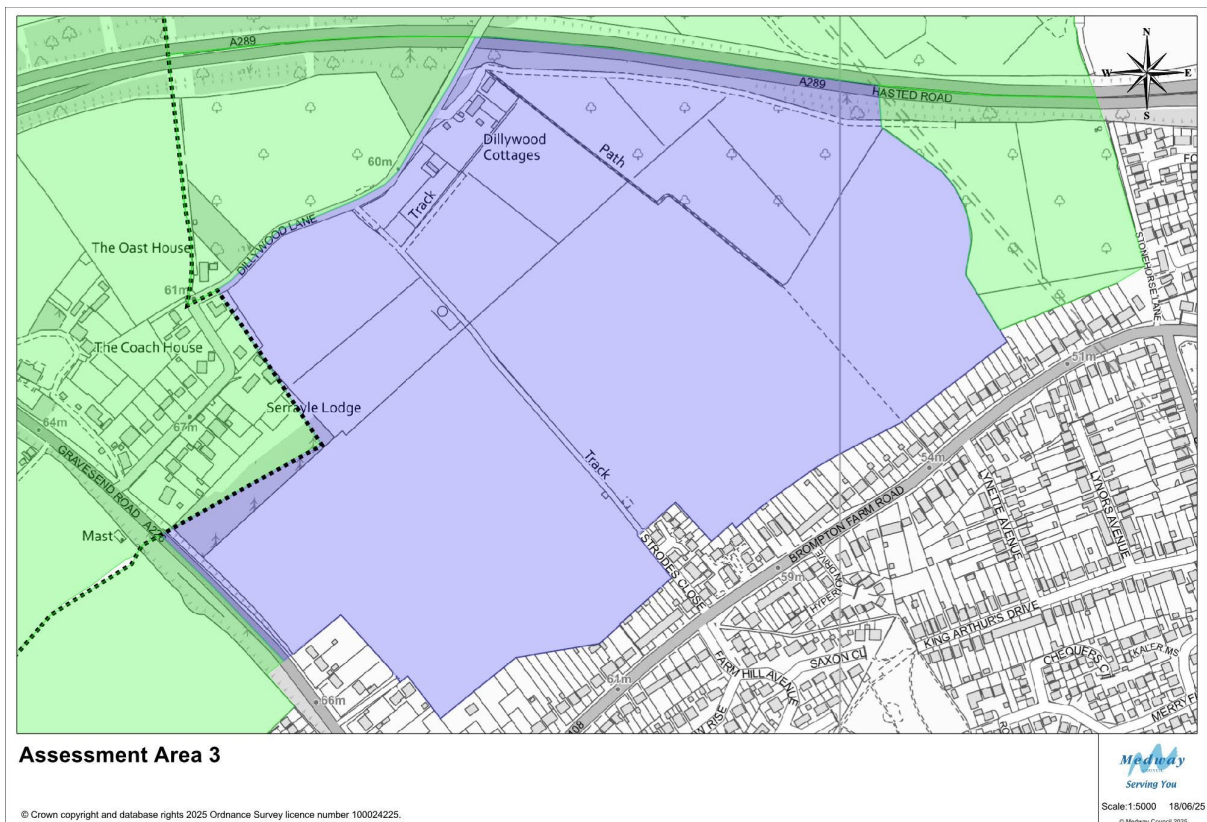


Figure 8: Map of parcel 3

#### 3.3.1 Description

This parcel is situated to the south of the A289 within grade 1 agricultural land and the Dilly Wood Lane Area of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI). This connects with the Gravesham ALLI and helps to prevent a separate identity to Higham, i.e. rural landscape next to an urban area.

The southern edges of this parcel are bordered by the urban fringes of Strood. The green belt washes over the A289 and A226.

Land uses consist of a mixture of arable, horticulture and orchards. The orchard and horticultural uses are focussed to the north with arable farmland to the south. The land falls away gently to the north west. The landscape character changes according to land uses. The area of polytunnels to the south of Dillywood Lane is more enclosed; the arable farmland and orchard areas more open.

### 3.3.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<p><b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Parcel 3 sits south of the A289, adjacent to Strood and also cuts across the A226 (Gravesend Road). The parcel consists of farming land and remains untouched by development. Gravesend Road forms the robust western boundary that would prevent sprawl.</p> <p>From the A226 the land slopes downward in an easterly and north easterly direction, which creates an openness with views across to the Thames Port. To the east the parcel drops down in levels to another parcel of land and does not have any form of boundary. However the change in topography is sufficient to offer containment of development.</p> <p>Parcels further north are separated from parcel 3 by Dillywood lane and a parallel ridgeline, which aids in containing development.</p>
<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>Parcel 3 forms a small part of a gap between Strood and Gravesend.</p> <p>Development of this parcel would not result in the merging of the towns.</p> <p>The natural landscape and topography of Shorne Woods Country Park, Shorne Ridgeway and Great Crabbles Wood in close proximity create a natural visual separation between these two towns with limited to no visibility from Gravesend town.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b></p> <p>Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Parcel 3 has the urbanising influence of the adjacency of Strood and immediate residential properties to the south.</p>

change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages.	<b>Weak</b> Parcel 3 is not in close proximity to any historic towns and is too low lying to possibly have any impact on the setting of Strood or Rochester District Centres.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Consideration of footnote 7</b>	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation sits to the west of the parcel. The western part of the site may need to address the setting of the KDNL as per paragraph 189 of the NPPF. A SSSI also sits to the west of the parcel but is also a distance away.
<b>5 purposes of Green Belt altogether</b>	Parcel 3 could weaken the contribution of land in Gravesham if it were released, due to the urbanising influences of its development.
<b>Result</b>	<b><u>Moderate</u></b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>

### 3.3.3 Results and recommendation

**Moderate:** This contribution is considered not significant and is therefore grey belt.

**Recommendation: Amend Green Belt boundary/release**



### 3.4 Land Parcel 4

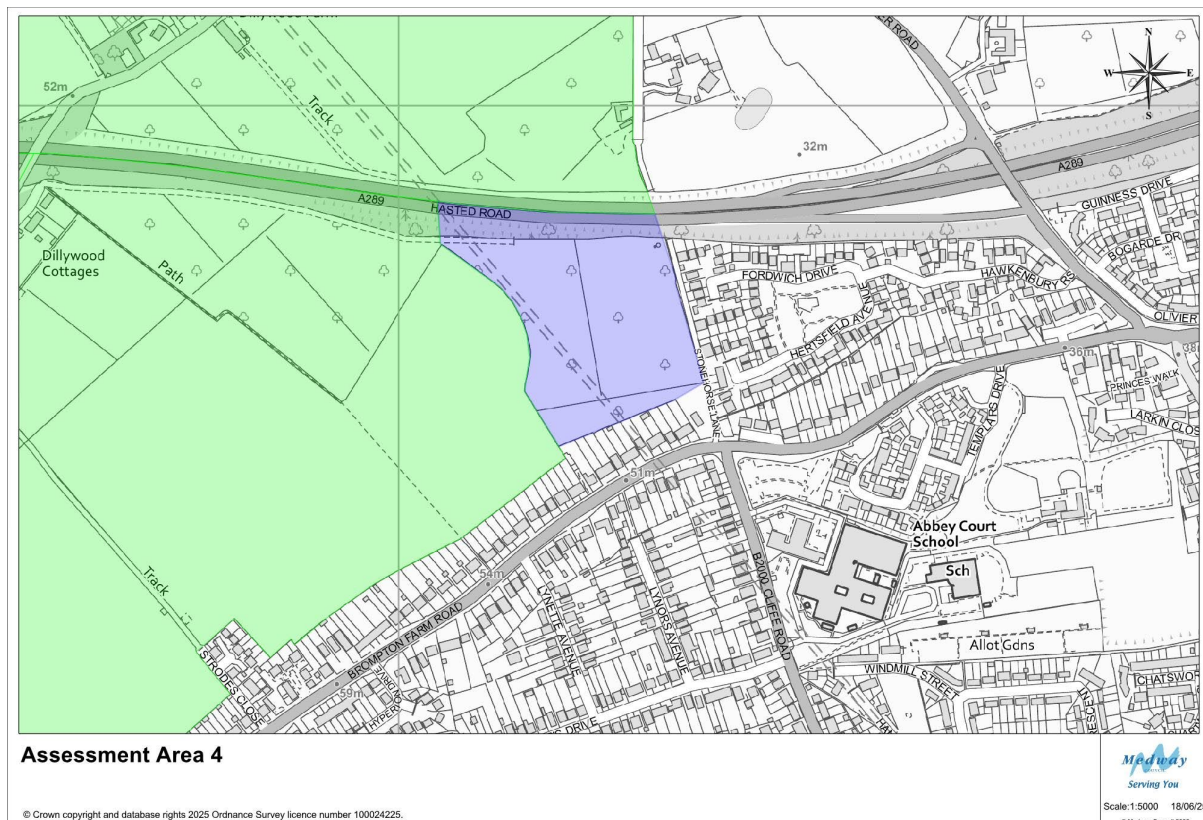


Figure 9: Map of parcel 4

#### 3.4.1 Description

This parcel is situated to the south of the A289 within grade 1 agricultural land and the Dillywood Lane Area of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI). This connects with the Gravesham ALLI and helps to prevent a separate identity to Higham, i.e. rural landscape next to an urban area.

The southern edges of this parcel are bordered by the urban fringes of Strood and was used as an orchard. The parcel has a treeling along its northern and southern boundaries.

#### 3.4.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not	<b>Moderate</b> Parcel 4 sits south of the A289, adjacent to Strood. The parcel consists of farming land and remains untouched by development. There isn't a robust barrier to the western boundary apart from topography changes that could assist in preventing sprawl.

be considered large built up areas.	<p>The parcel sits adjacent to the fringe of Strood to the east and south, subject to urbanising influences. Development can therefore be contained by the A289, the topography change to the west and existing development.</p> <p>The character is slightly different, topography drops dramatically and does not have a substantial barrier to muffle the noise emanating from the A289. It is quite isolated being treelined. Development could be self-contained.</p>
<b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>Parcel 4 forms a small part of a gap between Strood and Gravesend.</p> <p>Development of this parcel would not result in the merging of the towns.</p> <p>The natural landscape and topography of Shorne Woods Country Park, Shorne Ridgeway and Great Crabbles Wood in close proximity create a natural visual separation between these two towns with limited to no visibility from Gravesend town.</p>
<b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Parcel 4 has the urbanising influence of the adjacency of Strood and immediate residential properties to the south.</p>
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>Parcel 3 is not in close proximity to any historic towns and is too low lying to possibly have any impact on the setting of Strood or Rochester District Centres.</p>



This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages.	
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Consideration of footnote 7</b>	<p><b>Within the setting</b></p> <p>The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation sits to the west of the parcel. The western part of the site may need to address the setting of the KDNL as per paragraph 189 of the NPPF.</p> <p>A SSSI also sits to the west of the parcel but is also a distance away.</p>
<b>5 purposes of Green Belt altogether</b>	Parcel 3 could weaken the contribution of land in Gravesham if it were released, due to the urbanising influences of its development.
<b>Result</b>	<b><u>Moderate</u></b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>

### 3.4.3 Results and recommendation

**Moderate:** This contribution is considered not significant and is therefore grey belt.

**Recommendation: Amend Green Belt boundary/release**

## 3.5 Land Parcel 5

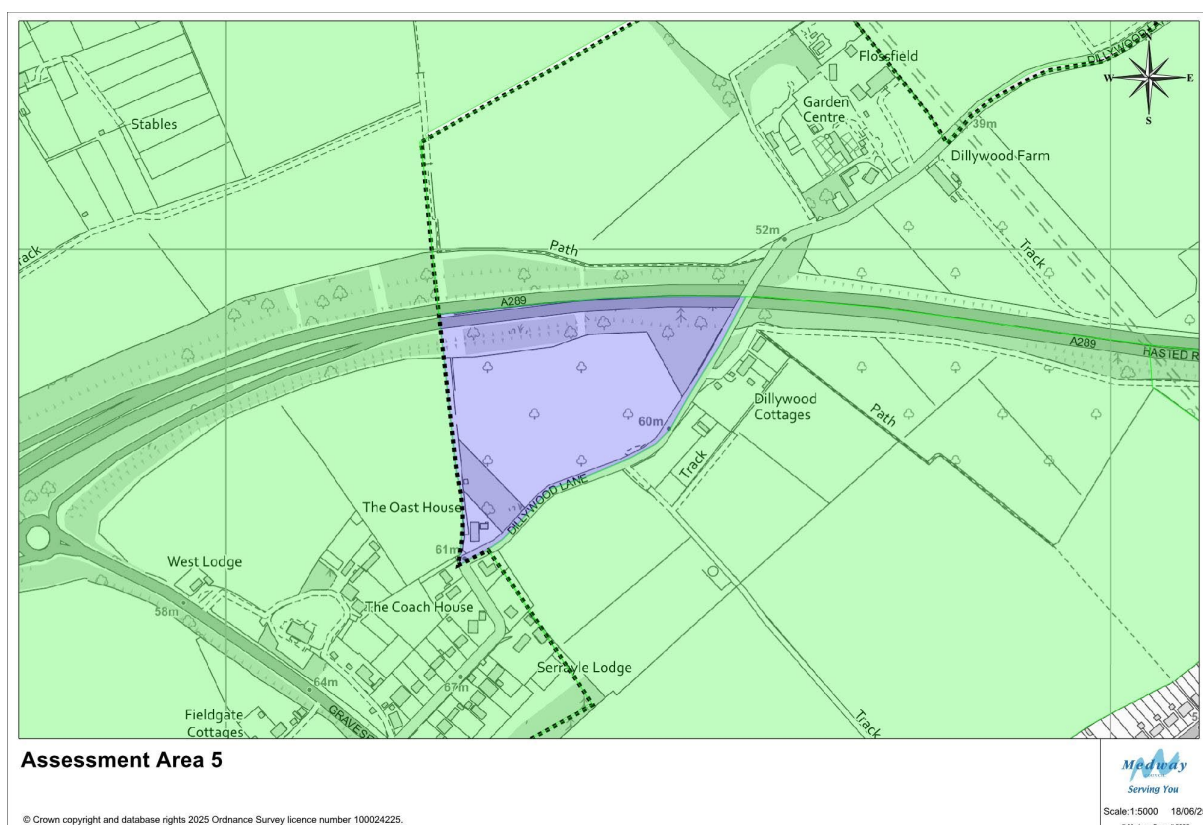


Figure 10: Map of parcel 5

### 3.5.1 Description

This parcel is situated to the south of the A289 within grade 1 agricultural land and the Dilly wood Lane Area of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI). This connects with the Gravesham ALLI and helps to prevent a separate identity to Higham, i.e. rural landscape next to an urban area.

The site is a short distance from the urban area of Strood and

Parcel 5 is used as an orchard and has a very rural character with narrow lanes, limited residential use to the south and the Little Hermitage (historic value) to the west. The parcel therefore sits within a historic and serene setting of landscape value. .

### 3.5.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 5 sits south of the A289 and a short distance from the urban area of Strood. The parcel consists of an orchard, remains untouched by development, appears very rural and secluded and is sensitive in landscape and heritage terms.

<p>areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.</p>	<p>The land slopes downhill in a northward direction from the Ridgeline parallel to Dillywood Lane.</p> <p>The A289 prevents sprawl moving north beyond this physical boundary. Although the A289 and associated tree cover form a strong boundary feature, the change in landform means that this sloping parcel currently feels quite separate from Strood.</p> <p>The south of the site is bordered by Dillywood Lane (a narrow rural lane) and a parallel ridgeline. The western boundary is treelined, but doesn't appear dense enough to offer containment. Development can therefore be contained from moving north into the wider countryside but release of this parcel could weaken the contribution of land in Gravesham to the west.</p>
<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Parcel 5 forms a small part of a gap between Strood and Gravesend.</p> <p>Development of this parcel would not result in the merging of the towns. However, its development would be part of an expansion of Strood that would include intervening land in Parcel 3</p> <p>The natural landscape and topography of Shorne Woods Country Park, Shorne Ridgeway and Great Crabbles Wood in close proximity create a natural visual separation between these two towns with limited to no visibility from Gravesend town. However, there may be areas of sensitivity that will need to be addressed should this land come forward for development.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>This parcel has a stronger connection with the countryside given the northward sloping topography, i.e. it relates more to the countryside it faces and leans toward rather than Strood.</p> <p>The ridgeline provides the screening that separates it from Strood and any urbanising influences.</p>

and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages.	<b>Weak</b> The historic river valley setting of Strood and Rochester would not be affected by development on this parcel, i.e. it would be suitably screened by a ridgeline, which sits parallel to and south of Dillywood Lane. The lay of the land then falls away toward the A289.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>Consideration of footnote 7</b>	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation sits to the west of the parcel. The western part of the site may need to address the setting of the KDNL as per paragraph 189 of the NPPF. A SSSI also sits to the west of the parcel but is also a distance away.
<b>5 purposes of Green Belt altogether</b>	This parcel does not have strong defensible boundaries to contain development and relates better to the countryside. Release of this parcel could weaken the contribution of land in Gravesham to the west and land in parcel 3.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### 3.5.3 Results and recommendation

**Strong** – This contribution is considered to be significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation** – No change to Green Belt status.

### 3.6 Land parcel 6

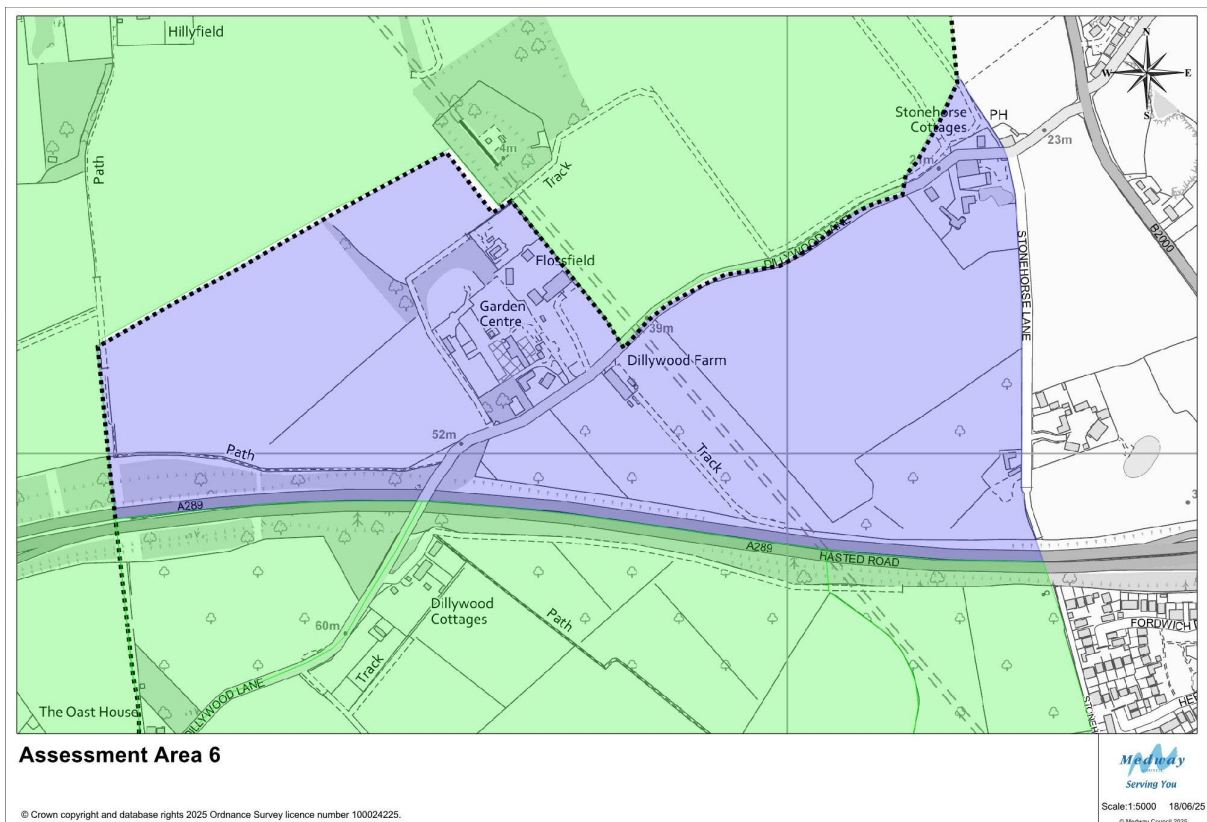


Figure 11: Map of parcel 6

#### 3.6.1 Description

This parcel is situated to the north of the A289. It forms part of a larger tract of Green Belt land which extends beyond the district boundary into Gravesham (to the north and west). The Green Belt boundary to the east is formed by Stonehorse Lane. The green belt washes over the A289 and stretches across into parcels 1 and 5.

Land uses are predominantly agricultural (arable) with a smaller area of orchards. The field pattern is of a medium scale with the largest arable field situated to the east. Fields to the west are generally divided by poplars and shelter belts. There is a strong belt of woodland running along the northern boundary of the A289. Dillywood Garden Centre is situated towards the centre and there is a small hamlet to the east. This includes Stone House Farm, two cottages and a Public House. To the south east lies Gouge Farm and a small modern residential development. Urbanising influence of A289 to south mitigated by cutting and woodland buffer edge. The landform is gently undulating, falling away to the north west and east.

### 3.6.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<p><b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>Whilst not free of development, the existing form is limited and is rural in nature.</p> <p>The site is near to the built up area of Strood and is part of a group of parcels (together with parcels 1-5 and Green Belt in Gravesham) that directly contribute to preventing sprawl further into the Green Belt and across to Gravesham.</p> <p>Parcel 6 is separated from identified parcels south adjacent by a physical man-made feature, i.e. the A289, which provides a strong physical boundary to contain development on one side. There are no strong or physical defensible barriers/boundaries to the north or west that would be able to contain development.</p> <p>If parcel 6 were to be developed, it would result in an incongruous pattern of development into the Green Belt in Gravesham and would not have any physical features to the west that could constrain development.</p>
<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>This parcel is located between Strood and Gravesend centres.</p> <p>It forms just a small part of the gap between these towns. Development of this parcel would not result in the merging of the towns.</p> <p>The natural landscape and topography of Shorne Woods Country Park, Shorne Ridgeway and Great Crabbles Wood in close proximity create a natural visual separation between these two towns with limited to no visibility from Gravesend town. Parcel 6 forms part of this landscape that is visible from Strood in creating that visual separation and is therefore important to keep clear of built form.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b></p> <p>Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>This parcel has a strong relationship with the wider countryside. Parcel 6 together with Gravesham Green Belt north and north west of the A289 strongly assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.</p> <p>The A289 forms a strong barrier preventing any further urbanising influences from advancing into the established Green Belt.</p>

and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	Keeping this parcel clear of development prevents visibility of development from Strood and Rochester and therefore ensures visual separation from Gravesend town.
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages.	<b>Strong</b> The historic river valley setting of Strood and Rochester could be affected by development on this parcel, i.e. it would be visible from Strood and possibly Rochester.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
Consideration of footnote 7	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation sits to the southwest of the parcel but a fair distance away, therefore not within the designation or within its setting. A SSSI also sits to the west of the parcel but is also a distance away.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together including to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.	Development on the parcel of land could be fundamental enough to undermine the purpose of the Green Belt across the plan area, i.e. it has a strong defensible boundary (A289) that would prevent any further encroachment going into the future but if this boundary is undermined. Additionally, apart from the A289, this parcel has no other defensible boundaries, which could lead to sprawl and encroachment into the countryside.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### 3.6.3 Boundary anomalies

There is a boundary anomaly identified at land to north of Stone House Farm where district boundary is not clearly delineated by physical features on ground. There is an opportunity for a proposed changes to enlarge the Green Belt and provide a stronger physical boundary as set out in Figure 27.

#### **3.6.4 Results and recommendation**

**Strong** – This contribution is considered to be significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation** – No change to Green Belt status. Amendment to boundary anomaly.



### 3.7 Parcel 7

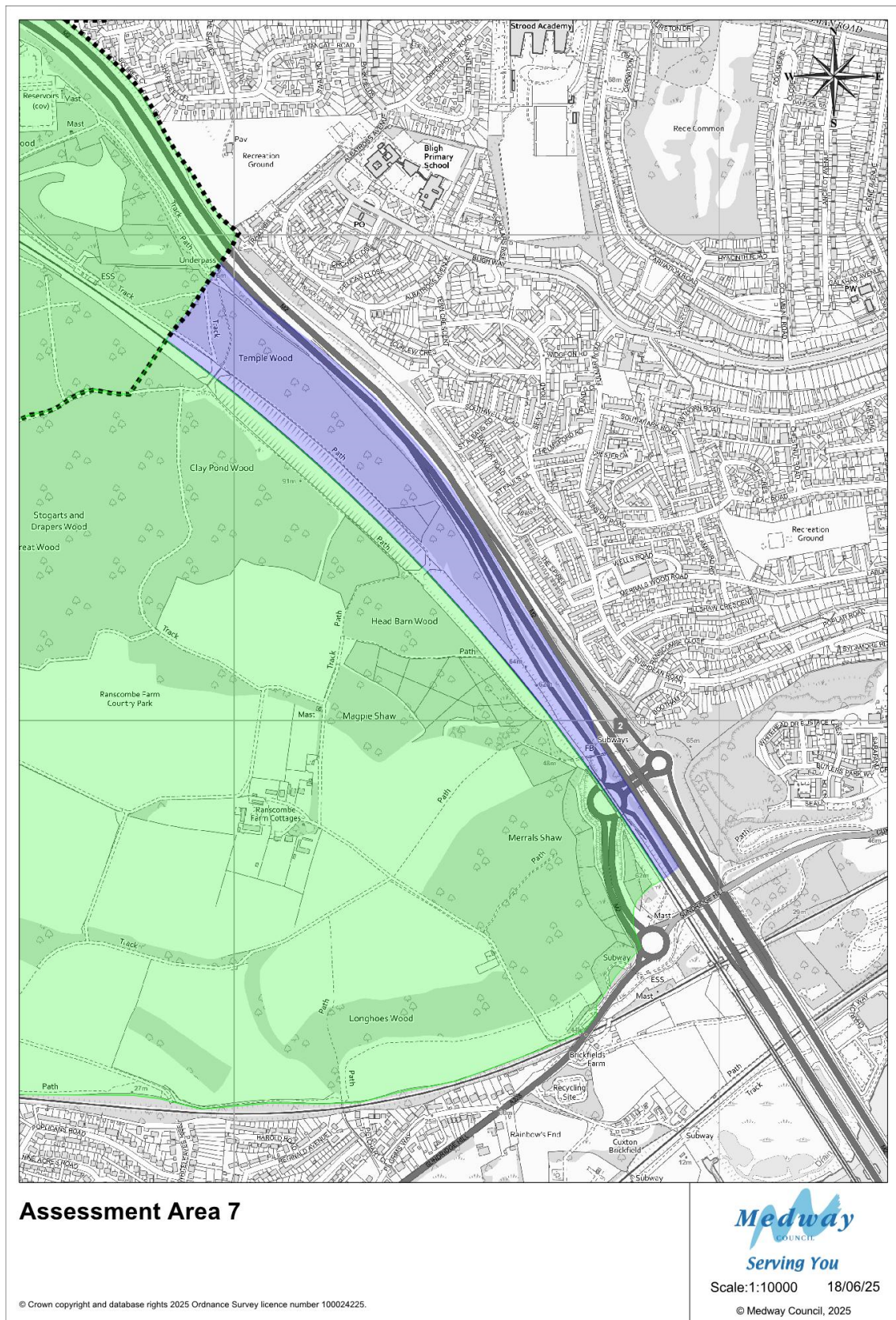


Figure 12: Map of parcel 7

### 3.7.1 Description

This parcel forms a narrow sliver of land bounded by the M2 and CTRL. The north and southeastern edges of this parcel form the outer Metropolitan Green Belt boundary. Land to the southwest conjoins with Parcel 8 and flows into Gravesham to the northwest. Woodland predominates as the land use within this parcel. A motorway underpass provides an important public right of way link from the urban area of Strood to the north into the AONB woodland and chalk downland to the south. There are permissive rights of way running parallel to the motorway and CTRL line. Urbanising influences include the M2, CTRL line and A228. The parcels have common features that extend into the Green Belt in neighbouring boroughs to the west and south.

### 3.7.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> This parcel sits adjacent to Strood, but is separated from the built up area by the M2, i.e. it works with the M2 to provide a strong separation and barrier to development extending beyond Strood. Parcel 7 does sit between the M2 and the railway line, which provide strong barriers to preventing further growth beyond. Whilst the parcels bounds form a distinctive break between the urban area of Strood and the countryside, development on this sliver of land between a motorway and railway line would not provide suitable amenity conditions for residential development.  Together with parcels 4 and 5, parcel 3 performs a wider function. The fact that development here would breach a strong boundary (the M2) would make it incongruous with the urban pattern. The current settlement edge is restricted and contained by the M2, so development crossing this would breach that containment.
<b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.	<b>Weak</b> Parcel 7 forms part of a gap between Snodland and Strood towns, but a small part. The motorway provides a robust separation from Strood. Parcel 3 is totally free of development and is visually contained and would therefore not make a contribution to visual separation.

<b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 7 is subject to the urbanising influences of the M2, CTRL, the A289 and urban area of Strood. However, the M2 forms a strong physical boundary with dense treelining, which contains development to the urban area of Strood and prevents encroachment. The southwestern boundary is defined by the railway line fencing, which provides a strong man made boundary. The northwestern boundary however is weak and is simply the administrative boundary line between Gravesham and Medway. Development on this site could compromise the function of adjacent Green Belt in Gravesham Borough Council.
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages.	<b>Strong</b> The parcel can be viewed from the M2 and forms part of the experience of crossing the historic River Medway which is the setting for Rochester and Strood historic towns.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	
Consideration of footnote 7	Parcel 7 overlaps with the Kent Downs National Landscape designation. Where the overlap does exist with the Kent Down National Landscape (KDNL), footnote 7 will need to be addressed fully (NPPF para 189) demonstrating the sensitive nature of this area. Great weight is attached to the KDNL and will require significant consideration of conservation and enhancements.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together including to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.	In addition, parcel 7 does safeguard the countryside from encroachment when considered together with parcels 8 and 20, i.e. prevents urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and thereby addresses Green Belt policy
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>Grey Belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### **3.7.3 *Boundary anomalies***

A boundary anomaly has been identified along the boundary of the M2 and slip road. See **Section 6.2 (fig. 13)** for detail and explanation of proposed adjustments.

### **3.7.4 *Results and recommendation***

**Strong:** This contribution is considered to be significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to principle of Green Belt status. Make minor adjustments to boundary anomalies.



### 3.8 Parcel 8

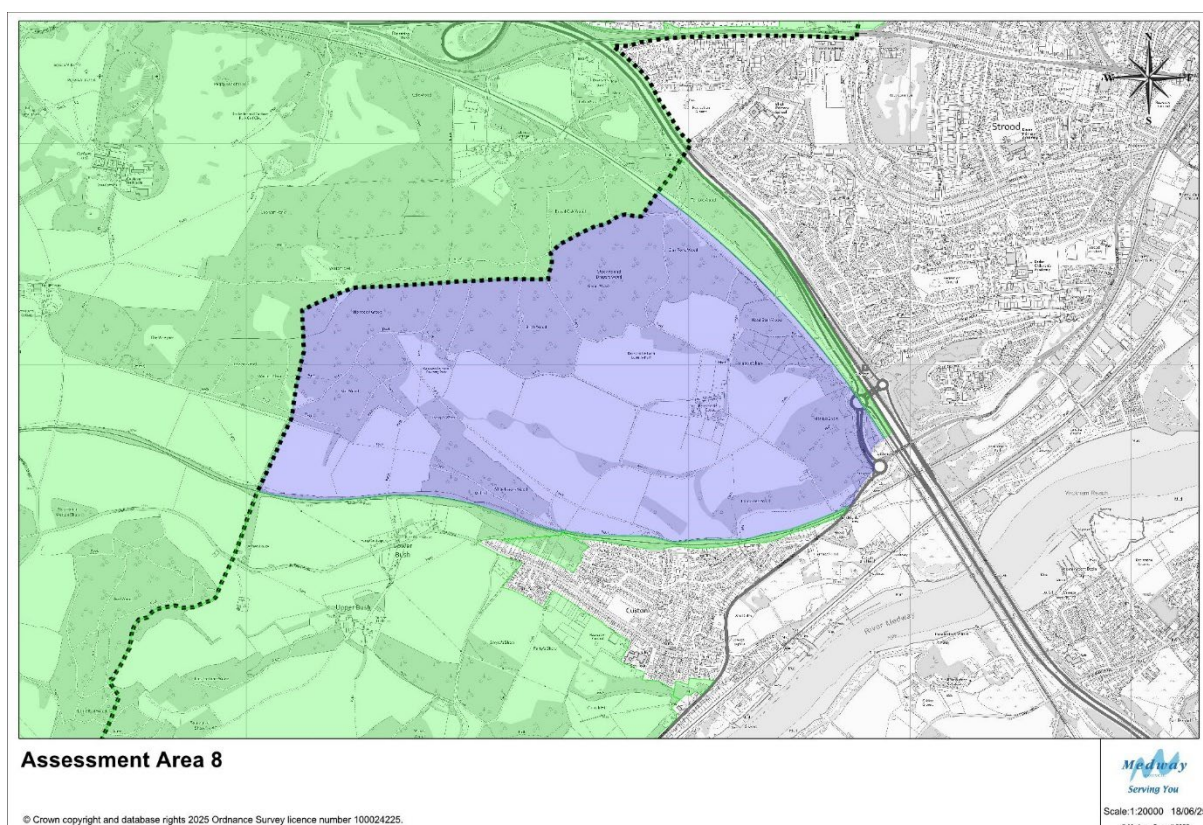


Figure 13: Map of parcel 8

#### 3.8.1 Description

This is an extensive land parcel with Ranscombe Farm Reserve at its heart. The railway line and northern edges of Cuxton define the southern edge of this parcel. The village of Cuxton is inset and forms the outer boundary of the Green Belt.

This parcel is predominantly rural in character. It has characteristic features of North Downs landscape comprising rolling chalk downland, dry valleys and wooded shaws. There is a small farmstead at the heart of the area, recently converted to residential uses. Urbanising influences lie predominantly to the south and east (when considered in conjunction with Parcel 3). These influences include CTRL, Strood railway line, Cuxton urban edge, M2 slip road and A228.

Ranscombe Farm Reserve is managed by Plantlife, with the support of Medway Council. The Reserve is predominantly consistent with this Green Belt parcel (with a small extension beyond the district boundary to the north and a small contraction within the district boundary to the west).

Characteristic features of the area include some large blocks of woodland, particularly to the north, as well as areas of grassland and arable farmland. The Reserve is managed primarily for biodiversity conservation and informal public recreation. Active management includes

coppicing and management of woodland open space, grazing and other forms of grassland management, and cultivation to favour the rare cornfield wildflowers for which the site is nationally important. Ten miles of paths and ten different entrance points are maintained and kept safe and passable, with substantial lengths open to horse and cycle use. Commercial arable farming remains a significant use of the site, and some commercial rearing of livestock also occurs, both delivered by a tenant farmer.

### 3.8.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> This parcel sits adjacent to Strood and is separated from the built up area by parcel 7 and the M2. The character of the parcel is homogenous and would have similarities in contribution.  The development of this parcel would result in significant sprawl, extending beyond the M2 and the railway line). Looking to the south, development on this parcel would lead to the expansion of Cuxton and joining of Strood and Cuxton. The expansion of Cuxton would be where development would also be crossing a strong and consistent boundary feature in the form of another railway line. Whilst Cuxton is a village, the significance of this site in the context of sprawl is very important.
<b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.	<b>Moderate</b> Parcel 8 does sit near to Strood and forms a small part of a larger gap between Strood and Snodland. On its own, whether in isolation as an expansion of Cuxton or in combination with release of parcel 7 as an expansion of Strood, it does not prevent the merging of towns
<b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features,	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 8 is bound by railway lines bordering both the eastern and southern boundaries, which form strong boundaries to contain development. The north and northwestern boundaries however are weak, i.e. it is the administrative boundary which is not supported by any strong features manmade or natural. Development of parcel 8 could easily encroach into Gravesham Green Belt land and thereby impact on the ability of the surrounding Green Belt to fully function as it should.



the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages.	<b>Strong</b> The parcel can be viewed from the M2 and forms part of the experience of crossing the historic River Medway which is the setting for Rochester and Strood historic towns. Development would therefore have an impact on the historic setting.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	Moderate
Consideration of footnote 7	Parcel 8 overlaps with the Kent Downs National Landscape designation. Where the overlap does exist with the Kent Down National Landscape (KDNL), footnote 7 will need to be addressed fully (NPPF para 189) demonstrating the sensitive nature of this area. Great weight is attached to the KDNL and will require significant consideration of conservation and enhancements.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together including to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.	In addition, parcel 4 does safeguard the countryside from encroachment when considered together with parcels 3 and 5, i.e. prevents urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and thereby addresses Green Belt policy.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>Grey Belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### 3.8.3 Results and recommendation

**Strong:** The contribution is considered to be significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.

### 3.9 Parcel 9

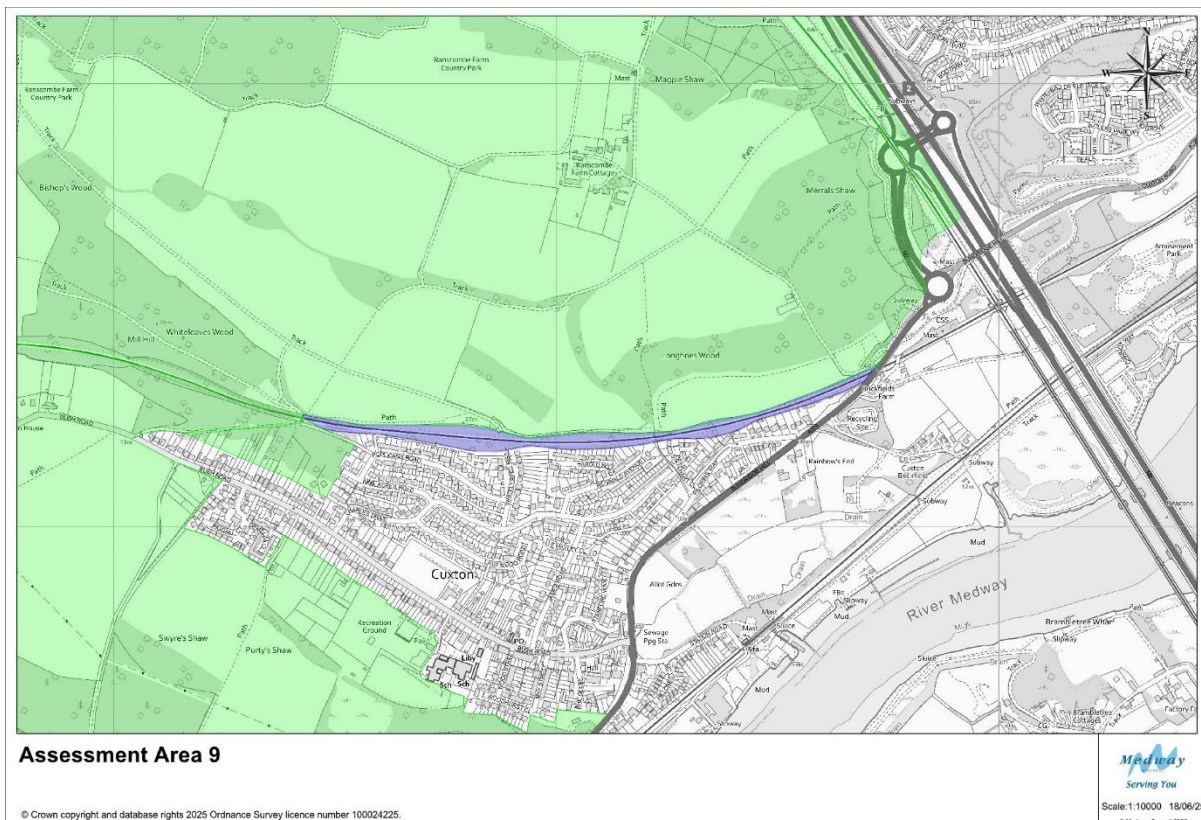


Figure 14: Map of parcel 9

#### 3.9.1 Description

The site has an active railway line between Strood and London. It is set up on a high embankment with mature trees either side camouflaging the line.

To the north of the site are large open agricultural fields used for arable farming. Two storey residential properties site to the south.

#### 3.9.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Moderate</b> Parcel 9 has a railway line barrier, which performs strongly together with a high embankment. South of the parcel is existing residential development. It is therefore impacted by the urbanising influences of the residential and is contained by this and the railway line.
<b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b>	<b>Weak</b>

This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.	Parcel 9 forms a very small part of a gap between Strood and Snodland and does not offer a contribution of visual separation.
<b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	<b>Moderate</b> Strong railway line boundary and embankment prevents encroachment into the countryside.
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.	<b>Weak</b> The parcel has no/limited visual or experiential connection to the River Medway.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
Consideration of footnote 7	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation surrounds (immediately adjacent) the parcel from the north and around the west and to the south, therefore not within the designation but within its setting. A SSSI also sits adjacent to the north of the parcel.

5 purposes of Green Belt all together	Site can be taken out of the GB as it provides a clear defensible boundary and as the site and is previously developed land (PDL).
<b>Result</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>Yes</b>

### **3.9.3 Results and recommendation**

**Moderate:** The contribution is not significant and is therefore grey belt.

**Recommendation:** Remove from Green Belt

### 3.10 Parcel 10

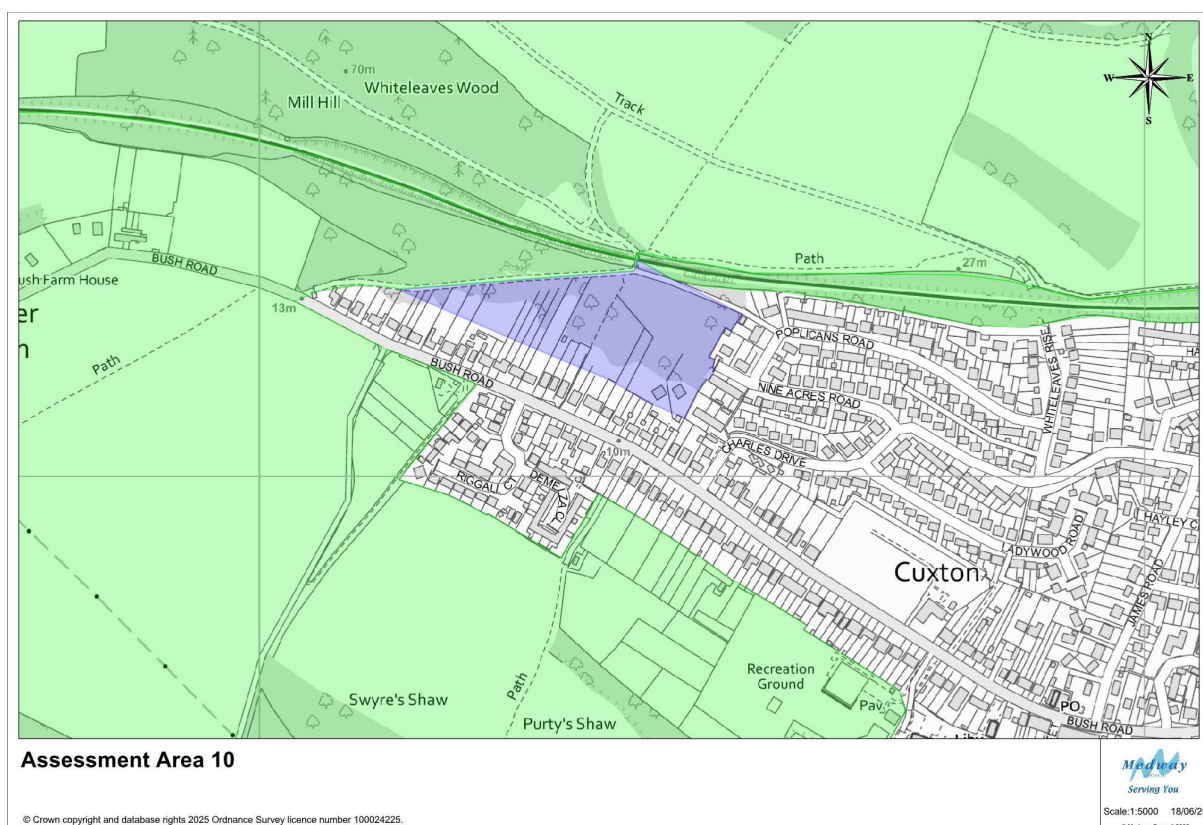


Figure 15: Map of parcel 10

#### 3.10.1 Description

The site is steeply sloping down from the north to south and is currently a mixture of woodland and unregulated rear residential garden plots. To the south and east are two storey detached and semi-detached residential properties with a railway line to the north. Mature woodland is to the west.

#### 3.10.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 10 is free of development, is adjacent to the Cuxton residential area and has a strong boundary to the north facilitated by the railway line. It is therefore subject to the urbanising influences of the existing residential area. However, the western boundary is weak, i.e. there is no defensible boundary so development of this parcel would have consequential impacts on the neighbouring Green Belt land in parcel 2. It could result in an incongruous pattern of development

	into parcel 20, which provides a strategic gap between Snodland and Strood.
<b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.	<b>Weak</b> Parcel 10 forms a very small part of a gap between Strood and Snodland and does not offer a contribution of visual separation.
<b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	<b>Strong</b> Strong railway line boundary and embankment prevents encroachment into the countryside. Parcel 10 has a positive relationship with the countryside and leads into bigger parcel 20 with a less defined and weak western boundary.
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.	<b>Weak</b> The parcel has no/limited visual or experiential connection to the River Medway.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>



Consideration of footnote 7	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation surrounds (immediately adjacent) the parcel from the north and around the west and to the south, therefore not within the designation but within its setting. A SSSI also sits adjacent to the north of the parcel.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together	Parcel 10 has a weak western boundary which could lead to incongruous pattern of development into parcel 20.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### **3.10.3 Results and recommendation**

**Strong:** The contribution is considered significant and is therefore not grey belt

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status

### 3.11 Parcel 11

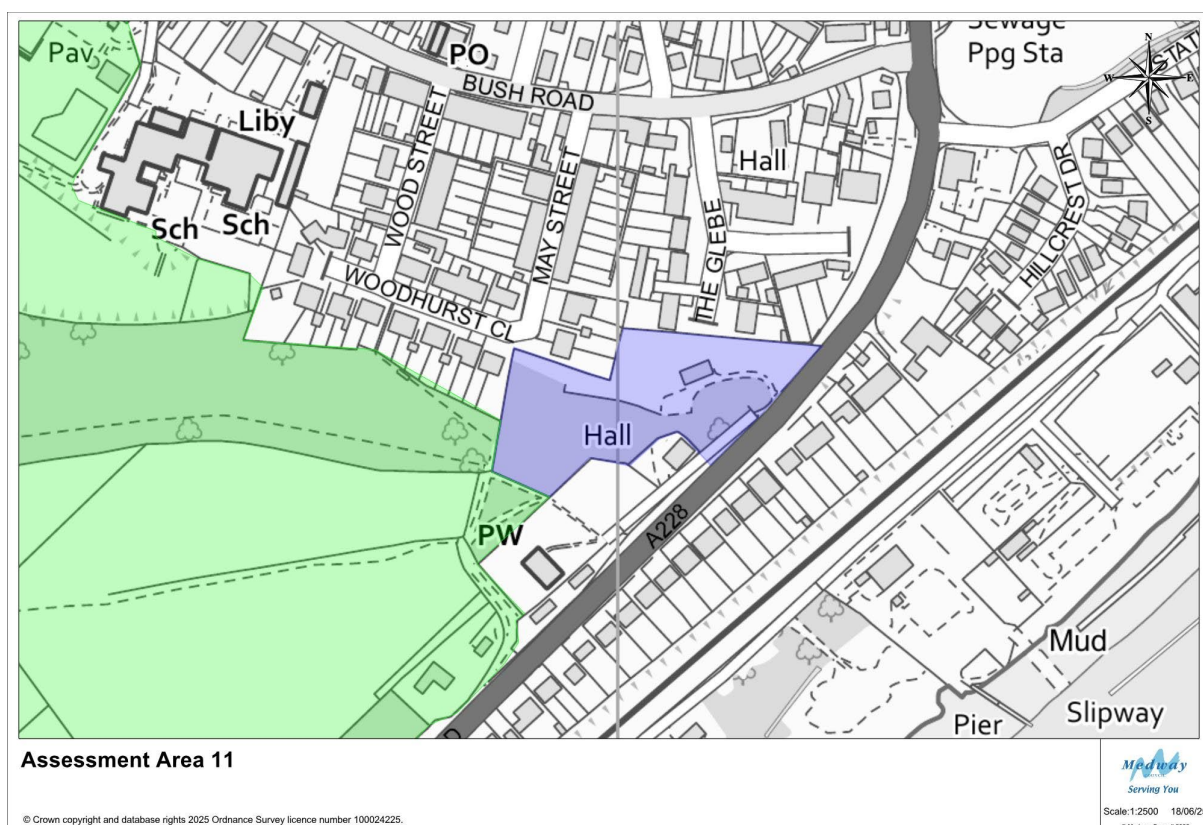


Figure 16: Map of parcel 11

#### 3.11.1 Description

This parcel contains a mature woodland area set on a steep slope that drops down to the urban boundary of Cuxton. It is surrounded by residential properties (mainly single storey bungalows) to the north and a cemetery and church to the east and south. The west is open countryside.

#### 3.11.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 11 is largely untouched by development and is adjacent to Cuxton residential area. There isn't a defensible western boundary that would protect the wider countryside from encroachment should this site come forward for development. It could lead to incongruous pattern of development leading into parcel 20 and the wider countryside.

<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b> Parcel 11 forms a very small part of a gap between Strood and Snodland and does not offer a contribution of visual separation.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b> Parcel 11 has a positive relationship with the countryside and leads into bigger parcel 20 with a less defined and weak western boundary.</p>
<p><b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b> The parcel has no/limited visual or experiential connection to the River Medway in relation to Strood or Rochester being further away from these centres.</p>
<p><b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p>
<p>Consideration of footnote 7</p>	<p><b>Within the setting</b></p>

	The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation surrounds (immediately adjacent) the parcel the south, west and north and therefore is not within the designation but within its setting. A SSSI also sits adjacent to the south west of the parcel.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together	Parcel 11 has a weak western boundary which could lead to incongruous pattern of development into parcel 20.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### ***3.11.3 Results and recommendation***

**Moderate/Strong:** The contribution is considered significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.

### 3.12 Parcel 12

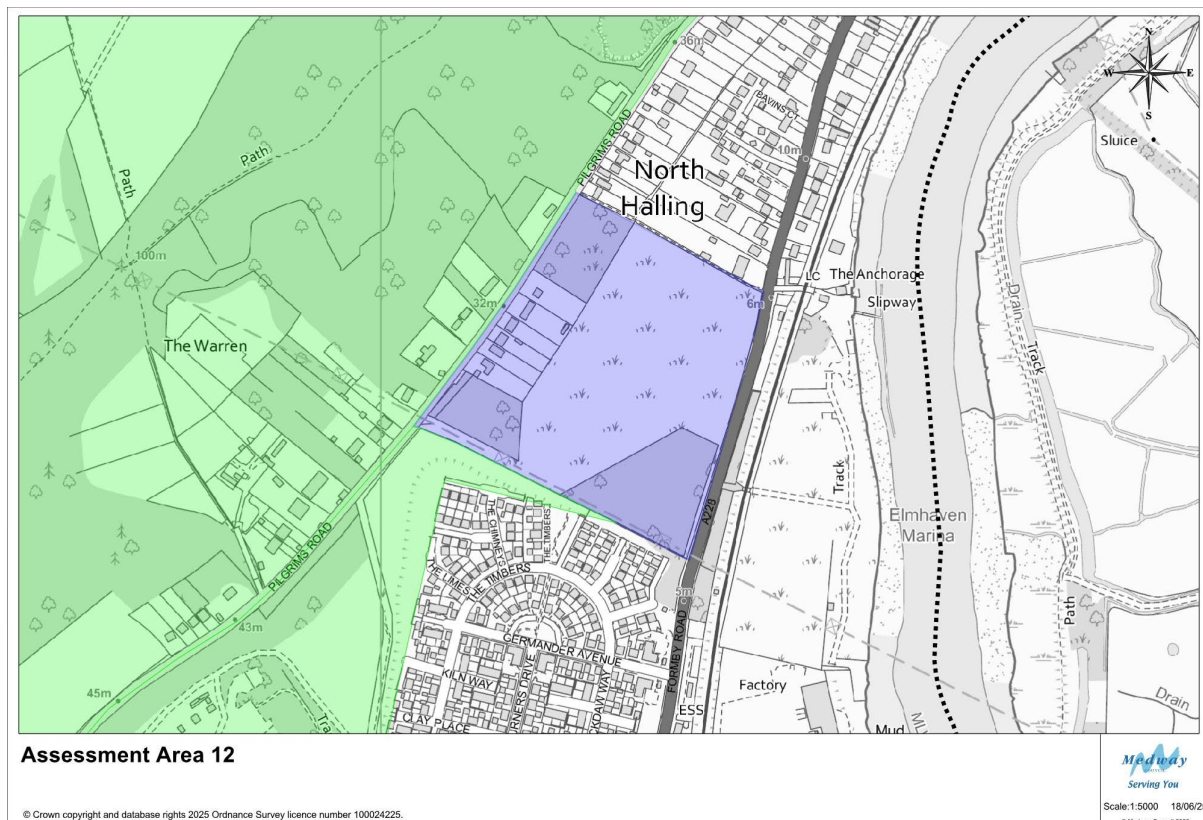


Figure 17: Map of parcel 12

#### 3.12.1 Description

Parcel 12 is a large site formed of an agricultural field, individual detached properties and woodland (south eastern corner). This site is bounded to the north by a PROW running east-west, Pilgrims Way to the west, Rochester Road to the east and overhead electrical pylons to the south.

#### 3.12.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Moderate</b> Parcel 12 is subject to the urbanising feature/physical feature of the A228. The A228 does restrict development on this part of the site. Residential development surrounds the rest of the site, which provides a means of containing development and would not result in an incongruous pattern of development. However, housing along the north western border (along Pilgrims Road) is limited and appears in a linear format nestled within woodland and abutting against the Kent Downs National Landscape. The residential

	use along Pilgrims Road, does not in itself provide a means to restrict growth, but Pilgrims Way offers a man made boundary. The presence of the Kent Downs National Landscape also offers a barrier.
<b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b> This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.	<b>Weak</b> Whilst the site sits between Snodland and Strood, it forms a very small part of this big gap and it's contribution to visual separation would be minor as a result.
<b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	<b>Moderate</b> Parcel 12 has a positive relationship with the countryside and leads into bigger parcel 20. It is influenced by the urbanising features of the existing residential use and the A228.
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.	<b>Moderate</b> Views into the parcel notes the relationship of the openness of the site in relation to the residential areas adjacent. The character of housing in this area and its surrounds to the east is that of linear form. Parts of the site most sensitive due to its openness are at the top (higher levels). Openness of parts of the site are important in relation to the river Medway. The parcel has the potential to impact on the visual and experiential connection to the River Medway in relation to Strood or Rochester.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling</b>	<b>Moderate</b>



of derelict and other urban land	
Consideration of footnote 7	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation surrounds (immediately adjacent) the parcel to the west therefore not within the designation but within its setting. A SSSI also sits adjacent to the west of the parcel.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together including to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.	The parcel is sufficiently bounded by existing development, the A228 and Pilgrims way.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>Yes</b>

### **3.12.3 Results and recommendation**

**Moderate:** this contribution is considered not significant and is therefore grey belt.

**Recommendation:** Remove from Green Belt/identified as grey belt.

### 3.13 Parcel 13

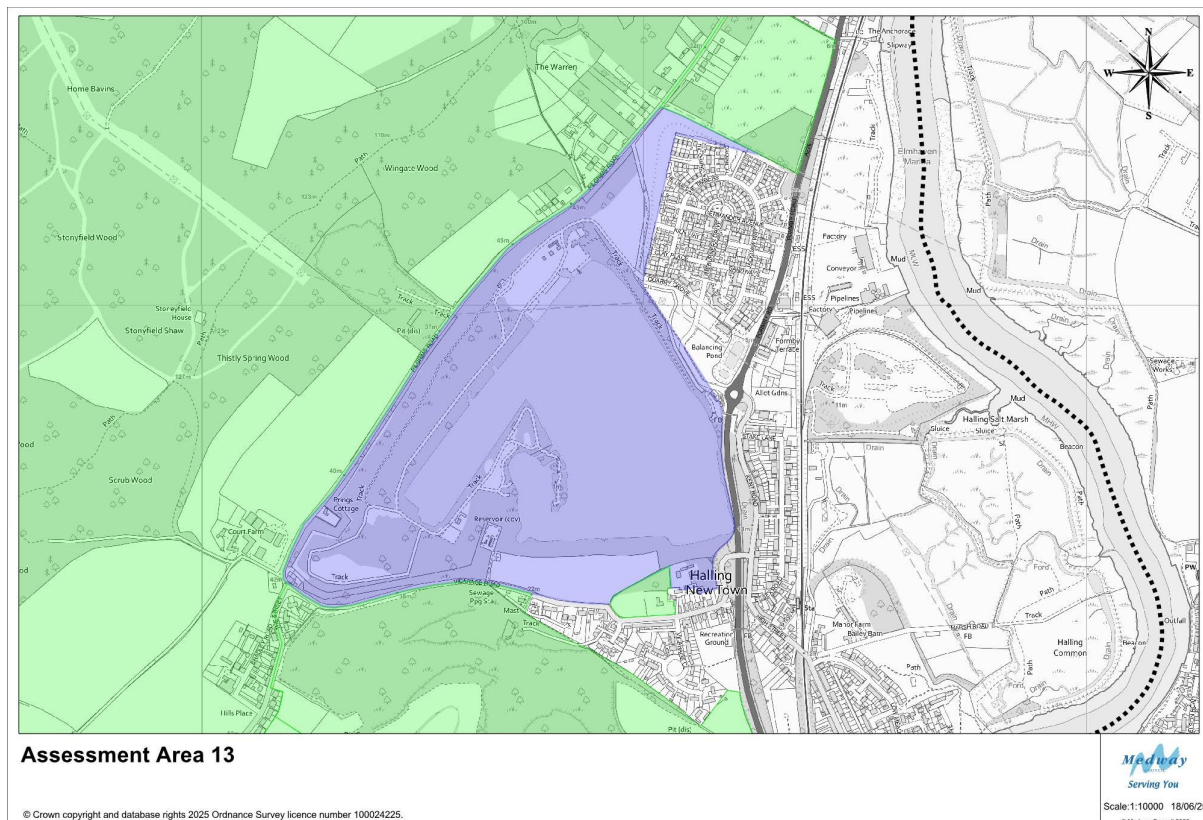


Figure 18: Map of parcel 13

#### 3.13.1 Description

Parcel 13 is part of an old quarry site, which has been filled in with water to form a lake. The boundary follows the steep topography up to a reasonable boundary provided by Pilgrims Way. This land forms part of a bigger land parcel, part of which has been developed for housing, i.e. St Andrews Lake housing estate.

The south of the site includes an embankment of green space, which provides a context for the lake and its existing use of sports and leisure. Given it's current use is compliant with Green Belt policy, an assessment will not be done in the same way as other sites. It is proposed that this remains within the Green Belt as it's use prevents further encroachment into the Green Belt.

#### 3.13.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b>	<b>Moderate</b> Parcel 13 includes the old quarry and therefore has steep topography around most of the site. To the north is the existing residential area, which confines development.

<p>This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.</p>	<p>Whilst the parcel is developed it is a leisure use that is compliant with Green Belt policy.</p> <p>The boundary to the south is facilitated by Vicarage Road, which provides a man made feature/barrier.</p> <p>If developed, it is unlikely that it would encroach into parcel 20 due to the steep topography and Vicarage Road. There is though the potential to encroach into parcel 14.</p> <p>It's existing use is in compliance with Green Belt policy and will prevent any further encroachment to the south and into the rest of parcel 20.</p>
<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Parcel 13 is located within the gap of Strood and Snodland, but a small gap. It's current use, would provide that visual break and keeps the Green Belt open.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b></p> <p>Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>It's existing use is in compliance with Green Belt policy and will prevent any further encroachment.</p> <p>It has urbanising influence from residential development to the south and Vicarage Road.</p>
<p><b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>The parcel has no/limited visual or experiential connection to the River Medway in relation to Strood or Rochester.</p>

provide detailed assessments against this purpose.	
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
Consideration of footnote 7	<b>Within the setting</b> The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation surrounds (immediately adjacent) the parcel to the west therefore not within the designation but within its setting. A SSSI also sits adjacent to the west of the parcel.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together	It's existing use is in compliance with Green Belt policy and will prevent any further encroachment to the south and into the rest of parcel 20.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>Yes</b>

### **3.13.3 Results and recommendation**

**Moderate:** The contribution is considered not significant. However, the existing use helps to protect the countryside. So will not be classed as grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.

### 3.14 Parcel 14

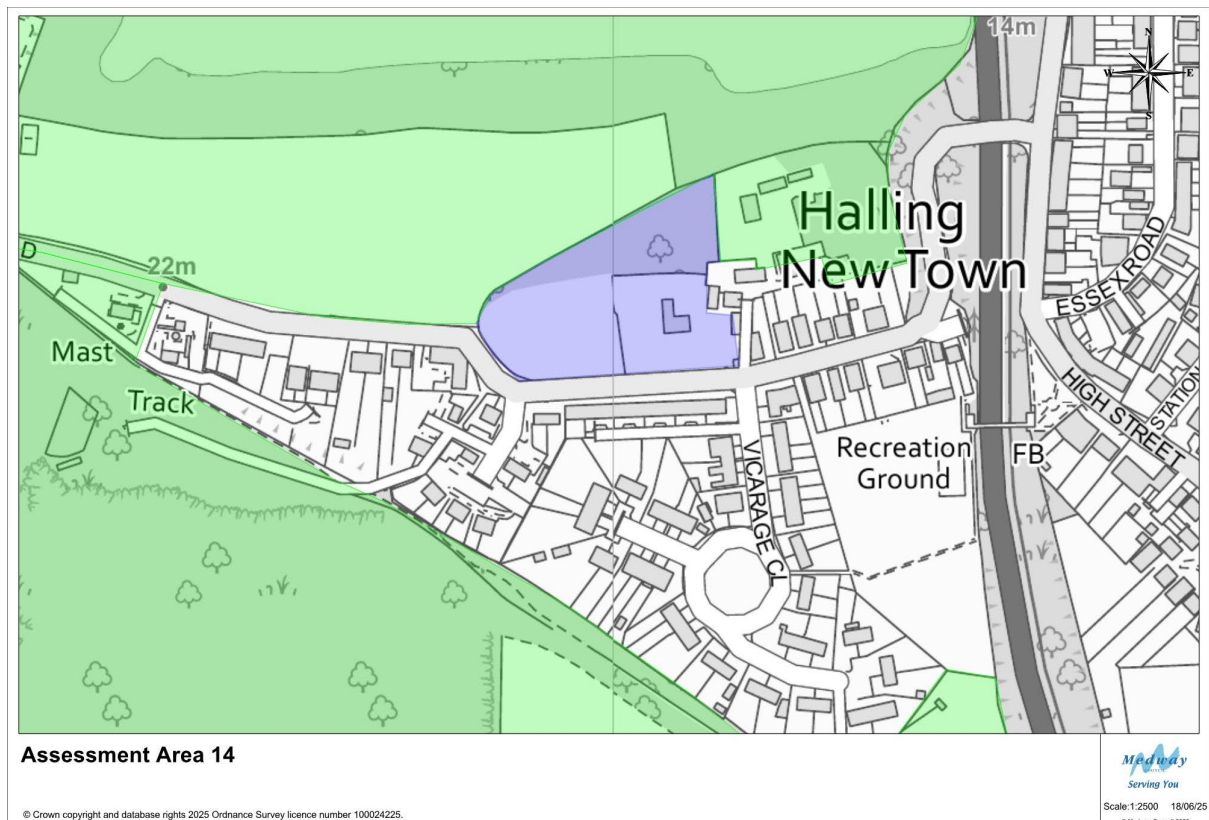


Figure 19: Map of parcel 14

#### 3.14.1 Description

This parcel is self-contained and bound by trees on all sides. Vicarage Road is on the southern boundary of the site. The residential properties surrounding the site are two storey, detached and semi-detached properties.

#### 3.14.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> The parcel has no defensible boundary and is separate from the surrounding area both rural and urban. It is adjacent to an existing residential area. If developed, it would result in the encroachment into parcel 13 and then into parcel 20.

<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>The parcel forms a very small gap between Strood and Snodland and does not make a contribution to visual separation.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b></p> <p>Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>The parcel has no defensible boundary and is separate from the surrounding area both rural and urban. It is adjacent to an existing residential area. If developed, it would result in the encroachment into parcel 13 and then into parcel 20.</p>
<p><b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>The parcel has no/limited visual or experiential connection to the River Medway in relation to Strood or Rochester.</p>
<p><b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p>
<p>Consideration of footnote 7</p>	<p><b>Within the setting</b></p>



	The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation surrounds (immediately adjacent) the parcel to the west therefore not within the designation but within its setting. A SSSI also sits adjacent to the west of the parcel.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together	Could lead to encroachment of the countryside.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### **3.14.3 Results and recommendation**

**Strong:** The contribution is considered significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.

### 3.15 Parcel 15

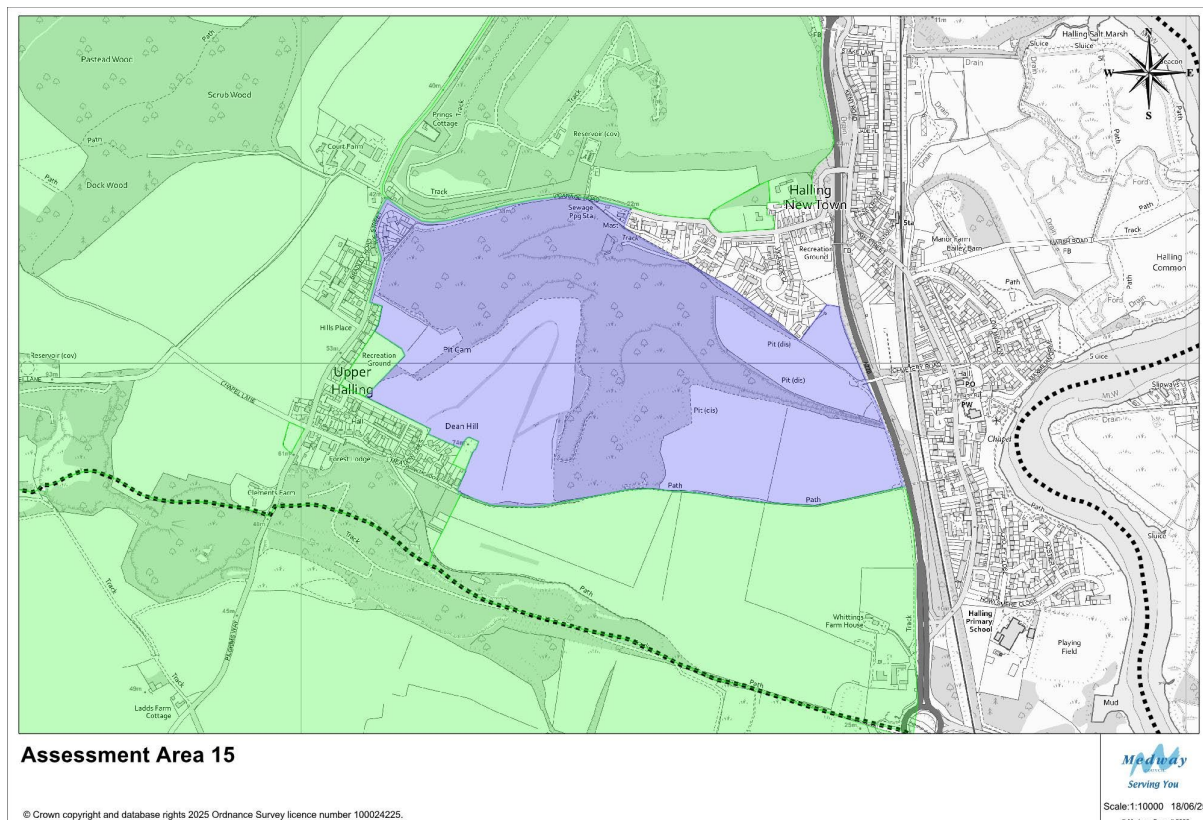


Figure 20: Map of parcel 15

#### 3.15.1 Description

The site is formed of undulating agricultural land and former quarries between Halling and Upper Halling. The quarries are now heavily wooded and the agricultural land is arable.

#### 3.15.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 15 has a lack of defensible boundary to the south and a significant encroachment into the countryside would result if this parcel were developed, i.e. would compromise the ability of the Green Belt to the south to function effectively. If developed, this would result in an incongruous pattern of development, much like an extended “finger” of development into the Green Belt.

<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>This parcel forms a small part of the gap between Snodland and Strood. It could be developed without the loss of visual separation between the towns. The steep embankments around the quarry would preserve visual separation.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b></p> <p>Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>The parcel is minimally influenced by the A228 and the existing washed over residential area to the west and north east. The lack of a defensible boundary to the south however, would result in encroachment into the countryside and into parcel 16.</p>
<p><b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>This parcel could have an impact on the river Medway, which influences the historic setting of Rochester and Strood.</p>
<p><b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p>
<p>Consideration of footnote 7</p>	<p><b>Within the setting</b></p>

	Part of the site sits within the Kent Downs and National Landscape designation and part sits in its setting. A SSSI also sits adjacent to the west of the parcel.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together	If developed this parcel could result in encroachment into the countryside due to the lack of defensible boundaries.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### **3.15.3 Results and recommendation**

**Moderate/Strong:** The contribution is considered significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.

### 3.16 Parcel 16

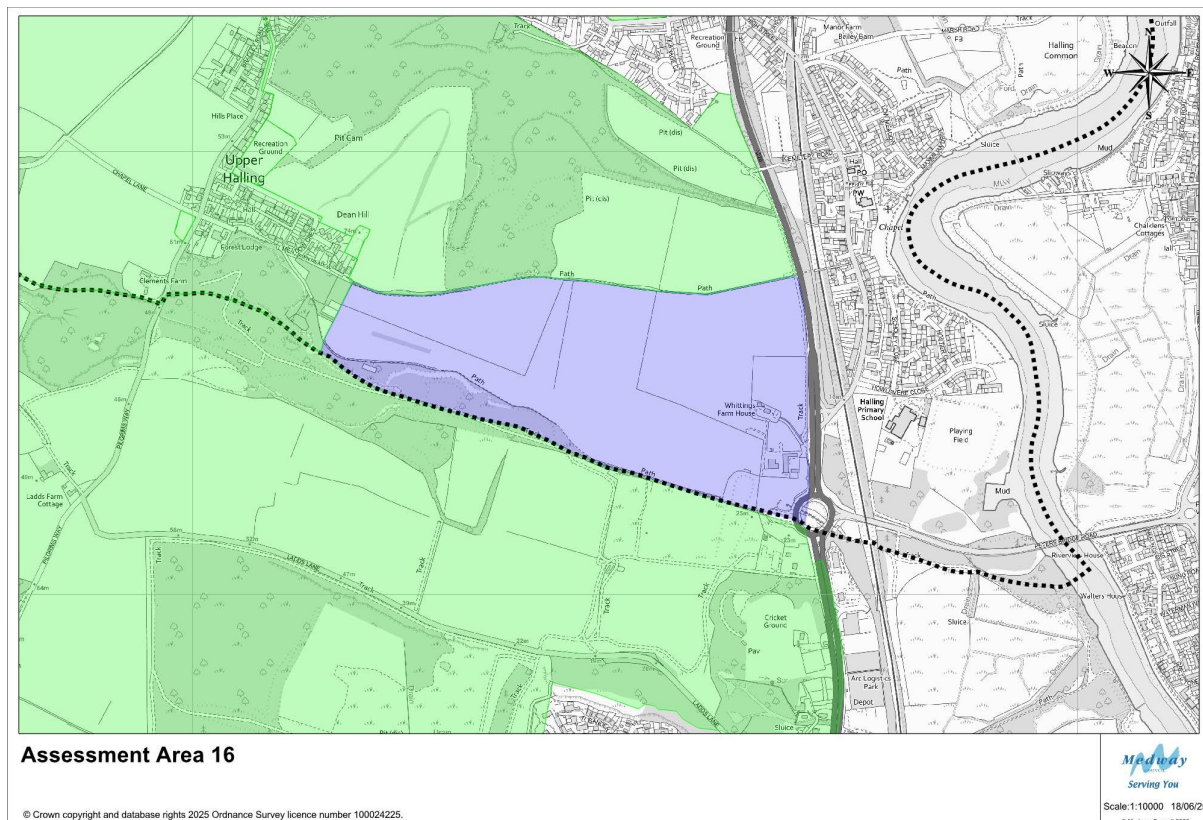


Figure 21: Map of parcel 16

#### 3.16.1 Description

Parcel 16 is on the edge of Upper Halling (to the west) and is defined by a PROW to the north, A229 to the east and Holder Quarry to the south. The residential properties to the west are a mixture of two storey detached/semi-detached properties.

#### 3.16.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 16 has a lack of defensible boundaries and a significant encroachment into the countryside would result if this parcel were developed, i.e. the northern and western boundaries are weak and would compromise the ability of the Green Belt to the west and north to function effectively. If developed, this would result in an incongruous pattern of development, much like an extended “finger” of development into the Green Belt.

<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>This parcel forms a small part of the gap between Snodland and Strood. It could be developed without the loss of visual separation between the towns. A further quarry site to the north provides a landscape features that would preserve visual separation.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b></p> <p>Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>The parcel is minimally influenced by the A228 and the existing washed over residential area to the west. The lack of a defensible boundary to the north and west however, would result in encroachment into the countryside and into parcel 20.</p>
<p><b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>This parcel could have an impact on the river Medway, which influences the historic setting of Rochester and Strood.</p>
<p><b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p>
<p>Consideration of footnote 7</p>	<p><b>Within the setting</b></p>



	The Kent Downs and National Landscape designation surrounds (immediately adjacent) the parcel to the west therefore not within the designation but within its setting. A SSSI also sits adjacent to the west of the parcel.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together	If developed this parcel could result in encroachment into the countryside due to the lack of defensible boundaries.
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### **3.16.3 Results and recommendation**

**Moderate/Strong:** The contribution is considered significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.

### 3.17 Parcel 17



Figure 22: Map of parcel 17

#### 3.17.1 Description

The site is a former reservoir located to the north of the existing residential properties and surrounded by agricultural land. The site is heavily vegetated. The site is considered previously developed land and can therefore be removed from the Green Belt. An assessment is not required.

#### 3.17.2 Results and recommendation

**Result:** The parcel is previously developed land and is grey belt.

**Recommendation:** Remove from Green Belt

### 3.18 Parcel 18

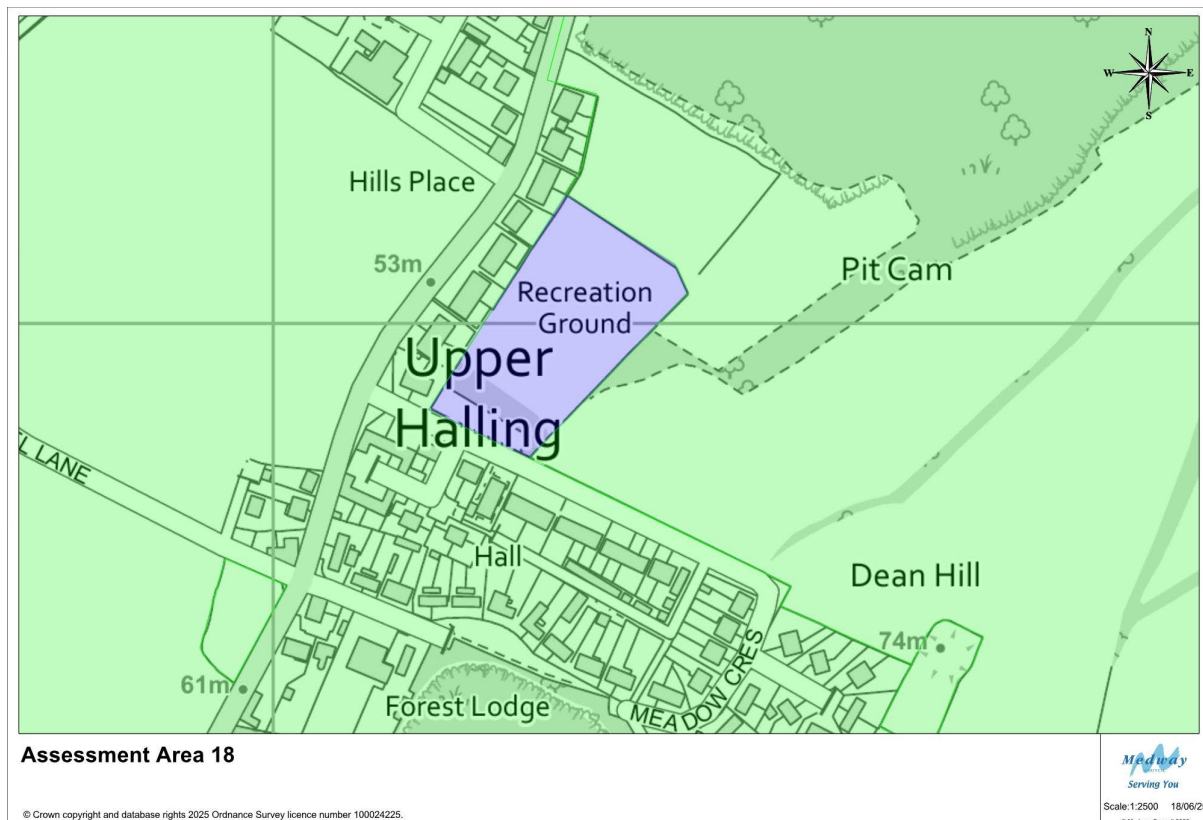


Figure 23: Map of parcel 18

#### 3.18.1 Description

This parcel is a recreational ground as part of washed over settlement of Upper Halling. It is different in character to the bigger parcel 20, which required it's separation and consideration.

An assessment will therefore not be carried out in the same way as the Council consider this a necessary part of the settlement in supporting sustainable development and the provision of open space and recreational grounds.

#### 3.18.2 Results and recommendation

**Result:** Retain as part of washed over inset settlement area of Upper Halling.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.

### 3.19 Parcel 19



Figure 24: Map of parcel 19

#### 3.19.1 Description

Parcel 19 is open agricultural land bounded by hedges on all sides. There are two lanes adjacent to the site (pilgrims Way – east and Chapel Lane – north). There are older residential properties to the east formed of a converted two storey public house and cottages to the north.

#### 3.19.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 19 relates better to the countryside rather than the residential area to the east of it. Whilst bound by these two roads on the east and north, the south and west parts of the site do not have defensible boundaries. This could result in encroachment into the countryside if developed.

<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>This parcel forms a very small part of the gap between Strood and Snodland and would not make a contribution to visual separation.</p>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b></p> <p>Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>It is minimally affected by urbanising influences (residential development to the east) but has no defensible boundary to the west. If developed, the lack of a boundary to the west would result in encroachment into the countryside.</p>
<p><b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.</p>	<p><b>Weak</b></p> <p>The parcel does not form part of the setting of a historic town and nor does it have a visual, physical or experiential connection to the historic aspects of Strood or Rochester.</p>
<p><b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b></p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p>
<p>Consideration of footnote 7</p>	<p><b>Within the designations</b></p>

	The parcel sits in the Kent Downs and National Landscape designation and the SSSI.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together	<b>Meets the purposes of the Green Belt and if developed, could result in the encroachment of the countryside.</b>
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### **3.19.3 Results and recommendation**

**Strong:** The contribution is considered significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.



### 3.20 Parcel 20

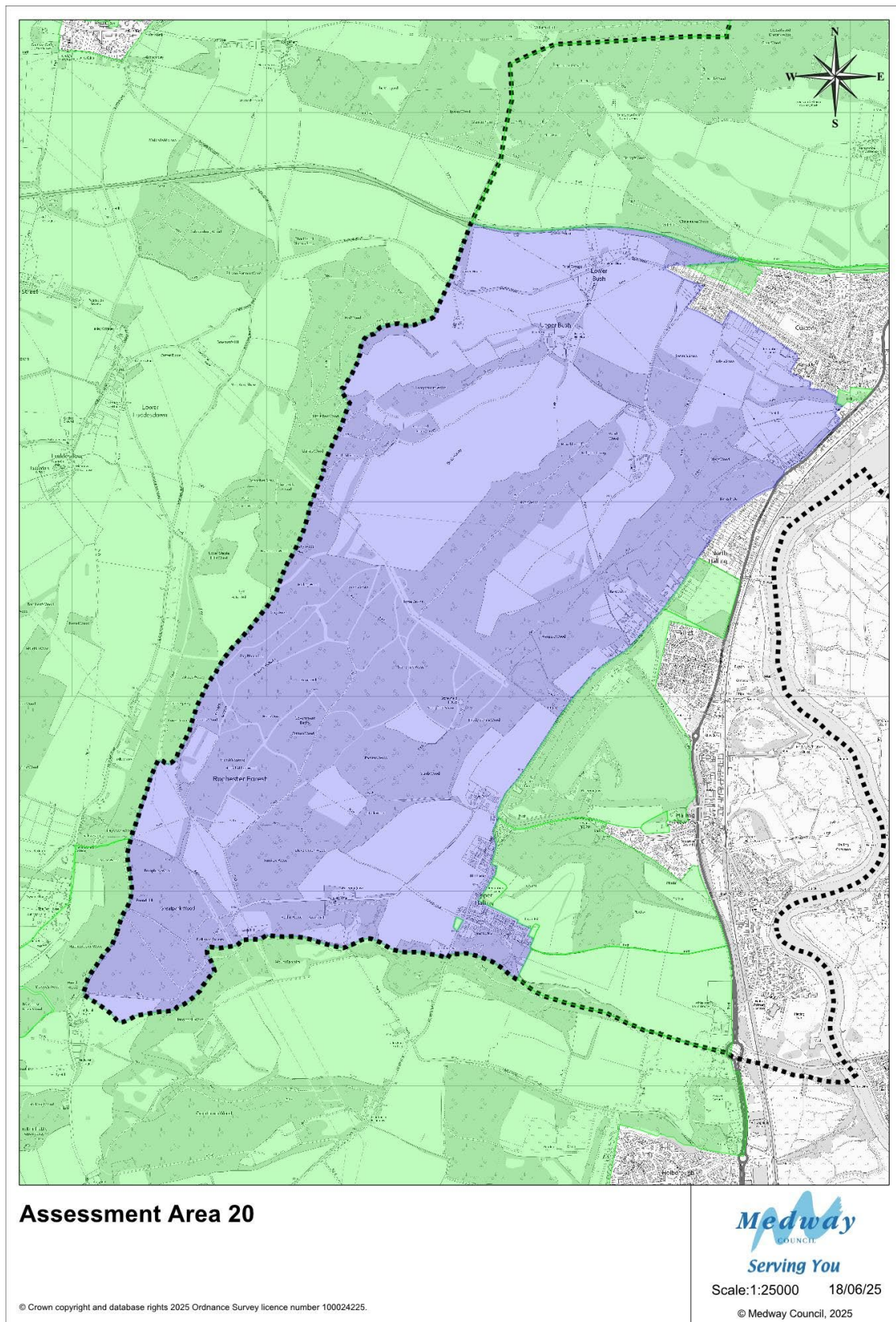


Figure 25: Map of parcel 20

### 3.20.1 Description

This is the largest of all land parcels as it performs the function of a strategic gap as well. The eastern edges of this parcel bound numerous other parcels and Pilgrims Way, the urban edges of Cuxton and Halling and form the outer Metropolitan Green Belt boundary. Green Belt land to the south flows into Tonbridge and Malling and to the west into Gravesham.

This is a large land parcel, characterised by steep wooded scarp slope; arable fields enclosed by strong woodland blocks and wooded shaws; steep rolling dry valleys set within dip slope of North Downs. Other features include Pilgrims way which rises from the A228 at North Halling (where it is fringed with ribbon development) and travels in south westerly direction. Former cement works at North Halling now modern residential development. This is inset from the Green Belt but lake to south and large field to the north are 'washed over'. Large disused and fenced off quarry situated immediately to south of Lower Halling. Another disused quarry (Houlder) located to south of Upper Halling on district boundary with Tonbridge and Malling. Both quarries and the small hamlet of Upper Bush 'washed over' by Green Belt. Urbanising influences predominate to east along Green Belt boundary at Cuxton and Halling.

### 3.20.2 Assessment

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.	<b>Strong</b> Whilst not totally free of development, the existing built form is limited and is rural in nature, i.e. Upper Bush and Upper Halling. The Green Belt is overlapped significantly by the Kent Downs National Landscape designation making this area very sensitive to development. The western boundary is less defined and therefore parcel 20 lacks a defensible boundary, which if development came forward could have significant impacts and encroach upon Green Belt land in Gravesham BC.  The site is near to the built up area of Snodland and if developed alongside parcels 8 and 7 would lead to significant sprawl and merging of Snodland and Strood.  If parcel 20 were to be developed, it would result in an incongruous pattern of development into the Green Belt in Gravesham and Tonbridge & Malling. The nature of the area and its sensitivity remains a key consideration.
<b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b>	<b>Strong</b> Parcel 20 on its own forms a significant part of gap between Snodland and Strood. This parcel therefore performs a

This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.	strong role is ensuring neighbouring towns are separated physically and visually.
<b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.	<b>Strong</b> Some common boundaries with parcels 15, and 16 don't function as defensible boundaries. Additionally, the western boundary adjoining Gravesham BC and the southern boundary joining Tonbridge and Maling BC are also weak. Development of this parcel of land would lead to encroachment of the countryside and Green Belt in neighbourhood authorities from performing their functions.
<b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.	<b>Weak</b> The parcel does not form part of the setting of a historic town and nor does it have a visual, physical or experiential connection to the historic aspects of Strood or Rochester.
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
Consideration of footnote 7	<b>Within the designations</b> The parcel sits in the Kent Downs and National Landscape designation and the SSSI.
5 purposes of Green Belt all together including to	In addition, parcel 20 does safeguard the countryside from encroachment.

prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.	
<b>Result</b>	<b>Strong</b>
<b>grey belt</b>	<b>No</b>

### **3.20.3 Results and recommendation**

**Strong:** The contribution is considered significant and is therefore not grey belt.

**Recommendation:** No change to Green Belt status.

## 4 Assessment Summary

### 4.1 Introduction

Twenty different parcels were identified and assessed. Parcels were defined as per the criteria set out at the beginning of the report.

### 4.2 Site survey work

Assessment work began in December 2024 alongside site visits. In total three site visits were undertaken and attended by the Council's landscape and planning policy officers.

The review of Medway Green Belt land was guided by the methodology described in this report.

All site visits included discussion of green belt related issues and the completion of the purpose and aims pro formas for each land parcel.

### 4.3 Assessment Results – Summary Table

Parcel	A	B	C	D	E	Result	Grey belt
1	M	W	W	W	M	M	Y
2	M	W	M	W	M	M	Y
3	M	W	M	W	M	M	Y
4	M	W	M	W	M	M	Y
5	S	M	S	W	M	S	N
6	S	M	S	S	M	S	N
7	S	W	S	S	M	S	N
8	S	M	S	S	M	S	N
9	M	W	M	W	M	M	Y
10	S	W	S	W	M	S	N
11	S	W	S	W	M	S	N
12	M	W	M	M	M	M	Y
13	M	M	W	W	M	M	Y
14	S	W	S	W	M	S	N
15	S	M	S	M	M	S	N
16	S	M	S	M	M	S	N
17							Y
18							N
19	S	W	S	W	M	S	N
20	S	S	S	W	M	S	N



## 5 Boundary anomalies

### 5.1 District boundary

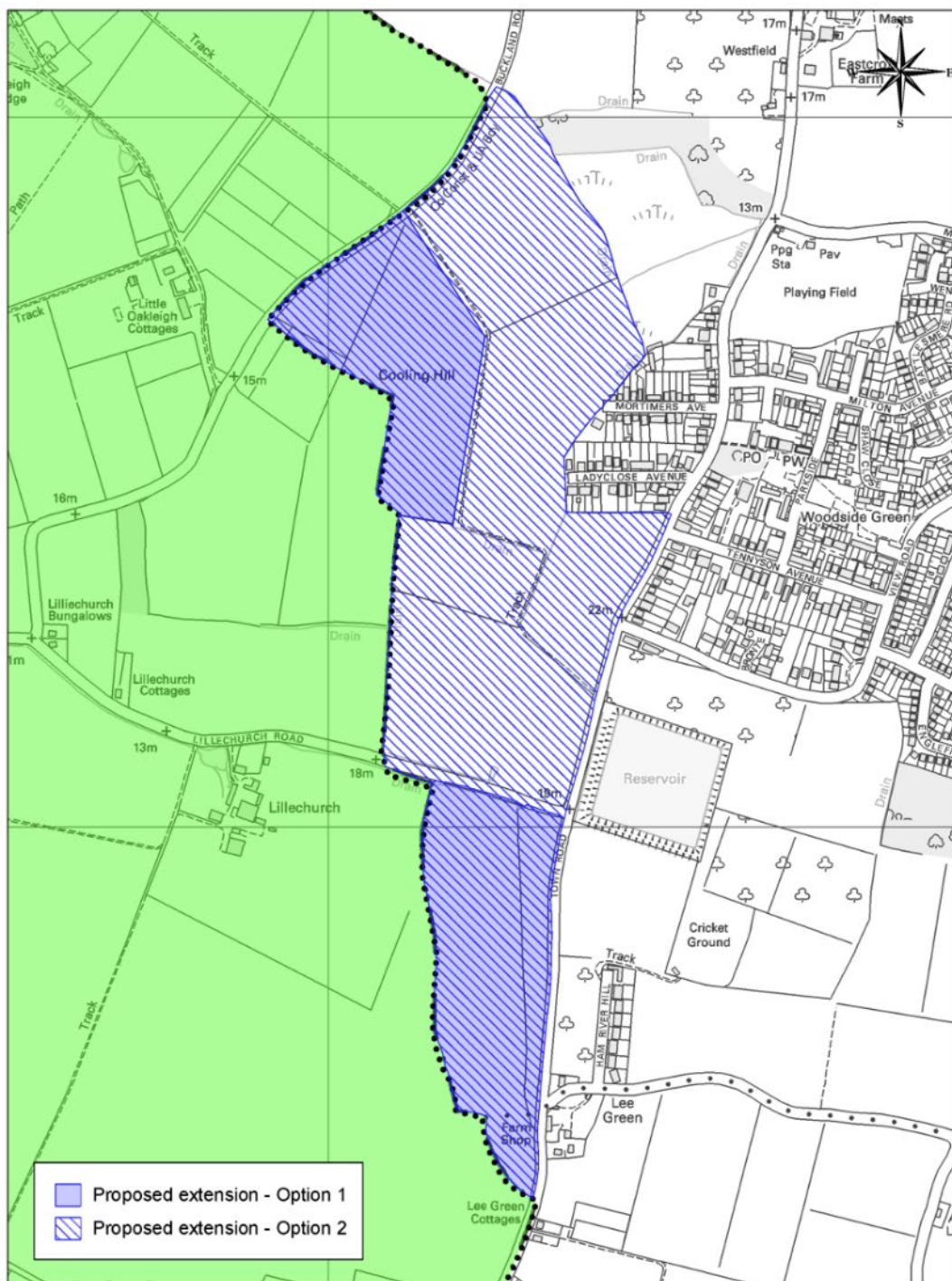


Figure 25: Land to west of Cliffe Woods.

The district boundary offers poor physical definition at Cooling Hill and land to south of Lillechurch Road and west of Town Road. Recommendation: Fig 11 describes two options. Option 1 involves minor adjustments to provide stronger physical edges. Option 2 includes Option 1 but proposes a more significant adjustment, extending the green belt to follow a



very strong existing field boundary and then heading south, following the developed edge of Cliffe Woods and strong physical edge of Town Road.

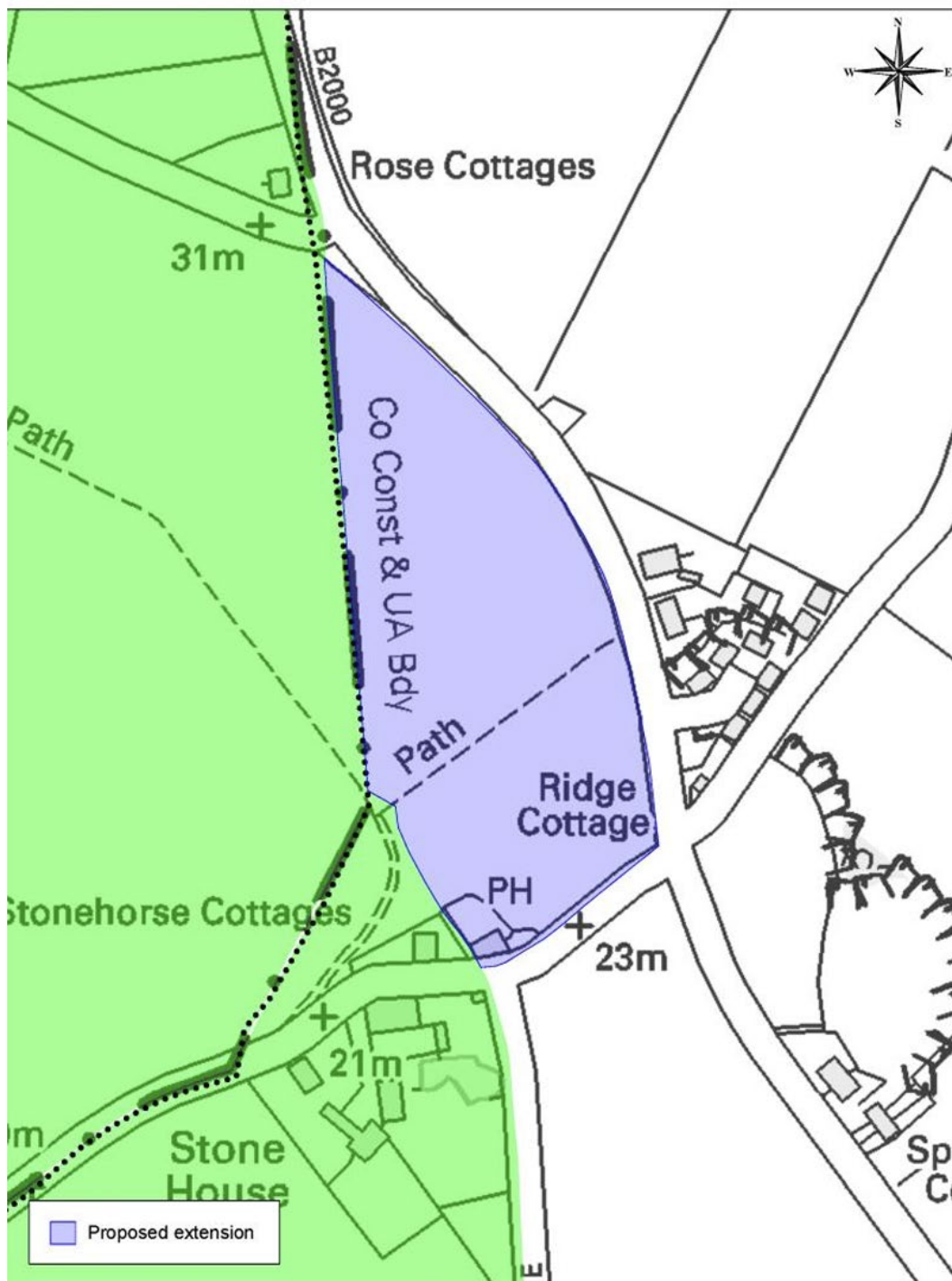


Fig 26: Land to north east of Stone House Farm.

The district boundary along this edge does not coincide with any clear physical boundary (i.e.. it runs across a field). Recommendation: Extend Green Belt to follow Dillywood Lane and B2000

## 5.2 Parcel 3 – Boundary anomaly

See Section 4.3 for contextual detail relating to this land parcel

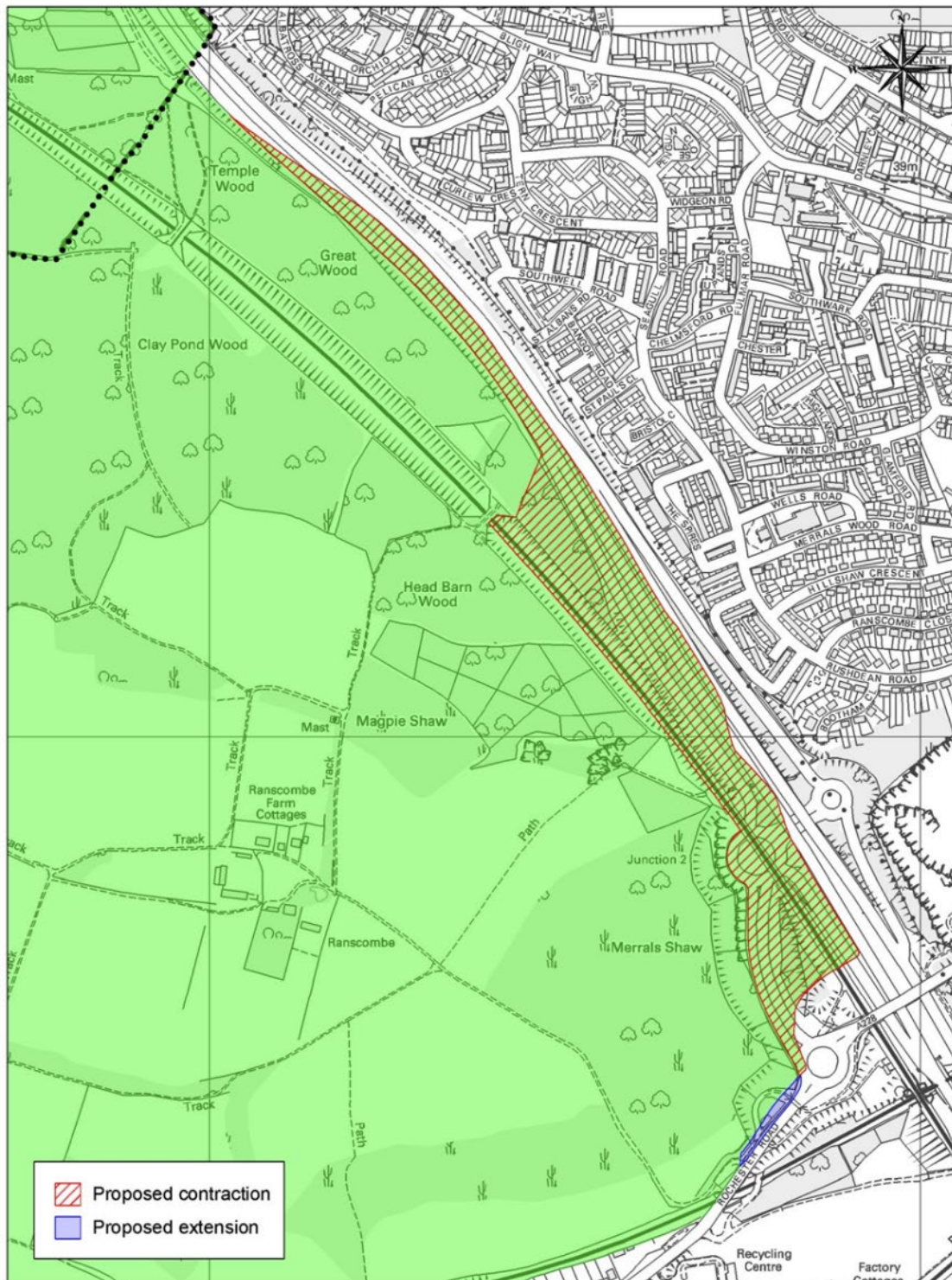


Fig 27: Land to west of M2.

There are inconsistencies in the Green belt boundary mapping along the eastern edge of this parcel. The Green Belt overlaps the M2 and some of the slip road. Recommendation: Adjust Green Belt boundary to clearer physical boundaries as indicated on fig 13 proposals.

## 6 Appendices

### Appendix A

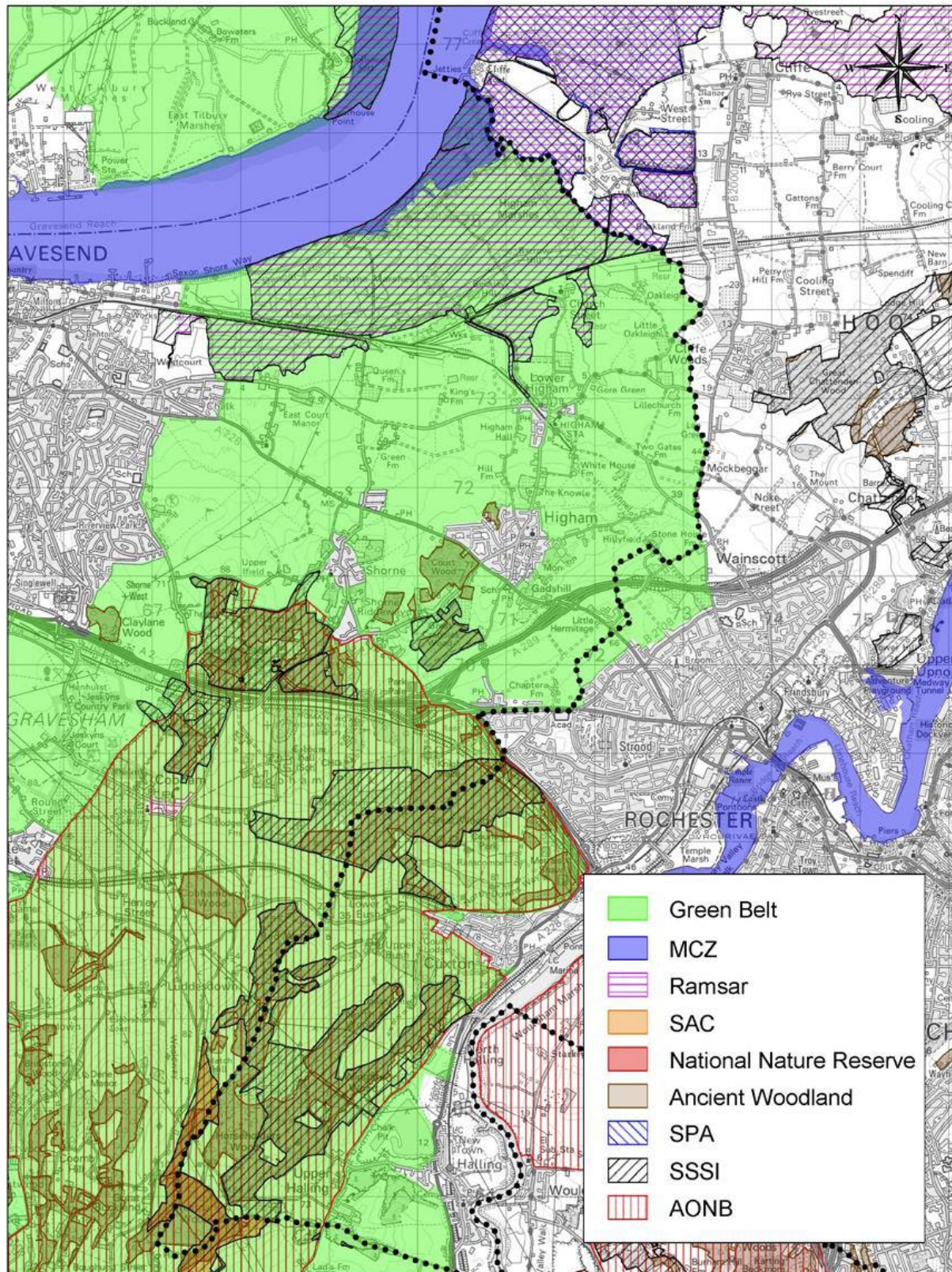
#### Definitions of terms

Term	Definition
Sprawl	The outward spread of a built up area at its periphery in an untidy, sporadic, dispersed or irregular way
Large Built-up areas	In the context of this study this refers to Greater London. The Metropolitan Green Belt was designated with the primary purpose of the containment of London. It also refers to major settlement areas within Medway and neighbouring local authorities as identified within their Local Plans as towns including Strood and Snodland.
Neighbouring Towns	The larger settlements in the borough – i.e.. the five Medway Towns of Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham, as defined in the Local Plan
Historic Towns	There is no dictionary or Historic England definition of ‘Historic Towns’. A town is defined by the OED as ‘A built-up area with a name, defined boundaries, and local government, that is larger than a village and generally smaller than a city.’ The definition of historic town within Medway has been taken to apply to the historic cores of Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham.
Merging	‘Combine or cause to combine to form a single entity; to blend or cause to blend gradually into something else so as to become indistinguishable from it’ – Oxford Online Dictionary (OD). This can be by way of ‘sprawl’ or ‘ribbon development’.
Countryside	Those parts of the borough lying outside the confines of the urban areas, rural service centres and other rural settlements as defined in the Local Plan; pastoral and agricultural land uses likely to dominate although there may be urban influences
Encroachment	A gradual advancement of urbanising influences through physical development or land use change. See also Oxford Online Dictionary ‘Advance gradually beyond usual or acceptable limits’
Openness	Land that is open and largely uninterrupted by any significant built development. Views and visibility may be a factor in forming an assessment.
Permanence	‘The state or quality of lasting or remaining unchanged indefinitely’ – Oxford Online Dictionary



## Appendix B

### Environmental Designations



## Appendix C

### Assessment template

Purpose	Assessment considerations
<p><b>Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built up areas. Villages should not be considered large built up areas.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely to be free of existing development, and lack physical feature(s) in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development.</p> <p>They are also likely to include all of the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be adjacent or near to a large built up area</li> <li>- if developed, result in an incongruous pattern of development (such as an extended “finger” of development into the Green Belt)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that contribute moderately are likely to be adjacent or near to a large built up area, but include one or more features that weaken the land’s contribution to this purpose a, such as (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- having physical feature(s) in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development</li> <li>- be partially enclosed by existing development, such that new development would not result in an incongruous pattern of development</li> <li>- contain existing development</li> <li>- being subject to other urbanising influences</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Weak or None</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that make only a weak or no contribution are likely to include those that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are not adjacent to or near to a large built up area</li> <li>- are adjacent to or near to a large built up area, but containing or being largely enclosed by significant existing development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to the merging of towns, not villages.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely to be free of existing development and include all of the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- forming a substantial part of a gap between towns</li> <li>- the development of which would be likely to result in the loss of visual separation of towns</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that contribute moderately are likely to be located in a gap between towns, but include one or more features that weaken their contribution to this</p>

	<p>purpose, such as (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- forming a small part of the gap between towns</li> <li>- being able to be developed without the loss of visual separation between towns. This could be (but is not limited to) due to the presence or the close proximity of structures, natural landscape elements or topography that preserve visual separation</li> </ul> <p><b>Weak or None</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that contribute weakly are likely to include those that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- do not form part of a gap between towns, or</li> <li>- form part of a gap between towns, but only a very small part of this gap, without making a contribution to visual separation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Purpose C – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b></p> <p>Relevant factors influencing the significance of urbanising influence include separating/screening physical boundary features, the scale/visibility of urbanising development and associated land uses and activity, landform change, distance from the urban areas, and the strength of relationship with the wider countryside.</p>	
<p><b>Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b></p> <p>This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.</p>	<p><b>Strong</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely be free of existing development and to include all of the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- form part of the setting of the historic town</li> <li>- make a considerable contribution to the special character of a historic town. This could be (but is not limited to) as a result of being within, adjacent to, or of significant visual importance to the historic aspects of the town</li> </ul>



	<p><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that perform moderately are likely to form part of the setting and/or contribute to the special character of a historic town but include one or more features that weaken their contribution to this purpose, such as (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- being separated to some extent from historic aspects of the town by existing development or topography</li> <li>- containing existing development</li> <li>- not having an important visual, physical, or experiential relationship to historic aspects of the town</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Weak or None</b></p> <p>Assessment areas that make no or only a weak contribution are likely to include those that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- do not form part of the setting of a historic town</li> <li>- have no visual, physical, or experiential connection to the historic aspects of the town</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose E – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	Moderate
Consideration of footnote 7	
5 purposes of Green Belt all together	
Result	
grey belt	



[Medway.gov.uk/FutureMedway](https://www.Medway.gov.uk/FutureMedway)

**MEDWAY**

*Medway*  
COUNCIL  
*Serving You*