

12 March 2019 at 7.00 pm

Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks
Despatched: 04.03.19



Planning Advisory Committee

Membership:

Chairman, Cllr. Mrs. Hunter; Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Thornton
Cllrs. C. Barnes, Dr. Canet, Clark, Edwards-Winsor, Gaywood, Horwood, McGregor,
Mrs. Morris, Parson and Piper

Agenda

There are no fire drills planned. If the fire alarm is activated, which is a continuous siren with a flashing red light, please leave the building immediately, following the fire exit signs.

	Pages	Contact
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 November 2018, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 6)	
2. Declarations of Interest Any interest not already registered.		
3. Actions from Previous Meetings (if any)		
4. Update from Portfolio Holder		
5. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee (if any)		
6. Adoption of the High Weald AONB management plan 2019-2024	(Pages 7 - 14)	Helen French Tel: 01732 227357
7. Adoption of Westerham and Seal St Lawrence (Seal) Village Design Statements	(Pages 15 - 102)	Naiomi Sargant Tel: 01732 227122
8. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spending Board - review of governance	(Pages 103 - 146)	Claire Pamberi Tel: 01732227178
9. Work Plan	(Pages 147 - 148)	

EXEMPT INFORMATION

At the time of preparing this agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public.

If you wish to obtain further factual information on any of the agenda items listed above, please contact the named officer prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you need this agenda or any of the reports in a different format, or have any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact Democratic Services on 01732 227000 or democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2018 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Hunter (Chairman)

Cllr. Thornton (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. C. Barnes, Dr. Canet, Clark, Edwards-Winsler, Gaywood, Horwood, McGregor, Mrs. Morris, Parson and Piper

Cllrs. Barnes, Clack, Coleman, Esler, Eyre, Grint, Layland, McArthur, McGarvey, Parkin, Purves, Reay, Searles and Williamson were also present.

20. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Advisory Committee held on 2 October 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

21. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mrs Morris advised that she did not have an interest in Agenda Item 6 (Minute 25 below). However, there appeared to be some public perception that she did, so as at the previous meeting she would remove herself from the room during consideration of this item.

22. Actions from Previous Meetings

There were none.

23. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder for Planning pointed out the sheer amount of work illustrated by the 1050 pages of Appendices which were only an edit. He stated that up to now the process had been neutral so as not to appear to favour residents or developers. There had been no predetermination. The recommendations before Members had been evidence led. This was the first time the Green Belt had had to be looked at in 70 years. Brownfield sites had been prioritised. What was before Members met government requirements for 15 years as well as continuing to protect 99.2% of our cherished Green Belt for our children and grandchildren.

24. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

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(Having declared that she would remove herself from the room during consideration of this item, Cllr Mrs Morris left the Chamber and did not take part in the debate or voting thereon.)

25. Local Plan - Results of the Draft Local Plan Consultation, agreement to publish the Regulation 19 proposed submission version and next steps

The Chairman advised that many Members had enjoyed an interesting and informative tour of the sites put forward around the whole district. What was before Members was the culmination of a long process which had been extensively consulted on. She reminded all present that the decision to consult would be made by Cabinet on 6 December 2018 and to submit the draft plan, by Council on 26 February 2019. This Committee would merely be making a recommendation to Cabinet. She urged everyone to respond to the Regulation 19 consultation, stating that all responses would be read and collated for submission to the Inspector. Even if a site was not in the Council's final document anyone could request to make their case to the Planning Inspector and it would be up to the Inspector to decide at that point who they would let speak. She advised that she had decided not to exercise her discretion and allow members of the public to speak, however she would allow local ward councillors who were not members of the committee to address the meeting.

The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out within the agenda papers. The Strategic Planning Manager and Planning Policy Team Leader, gave a [presentation](#) as an introduction to the report which provided a summary of the outcome of the draft Local Plan consultation, undertaken for an eight-week period from Monday 16 July to Monday 10 September 2018. The report set out the key content of the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the Plan and the process for taking it forward to examination. It was also proposed to consult on the Affordable Housing SPD; Development in the Green Belt SPD; and Design Review Panel SPD. The Council had received four additional proposed Greenfield Green Belt sites in response to the Regulation 18 consultation process, and following assessment, those considered as being potentially suitable for inclusion would be consulted on alongside (but not part of) the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan.

The Chief Planning Officer reported that an email had been received the day before the meeting from the promoters of the Broke Hill site who had sought Counsel's opinion which had concluded that to submit the draft Local Plan in its current form would be unlawful. Advice from the Head of Legal & Democratic Services (and Monitoring Officer), was that this opinion did not alter the role of the Planning Advisory Committee, as it was indeed merely an Advisory Committee, and only reinforced the approach already agreed and being taken. In the meantime the Council would seek further legal advice and examine the document submitted.

The Chairman exercised her discretion and allowed local ward Cllrs Grint, McGarvey and Searles to address the Committee with their local concerns. Cllr Grint was pleased that Broke Hill had been removed, and Cllrs McGarvey and Searles expressed concern that Pedham Place had been identified as a broad location for growth due to its potential adverse impact on neighbouring villages

and infrastructure as well as being Green Belt, and wished it to be removed. The process was also criticised as not being as transparent as Councillors and residents would have wished.

Officers advised that Pedham Place had been identified as a broad location for growth. This was because further information was required to either accept or omit the site from future versions of the Plan. Having it identified as a broad location for growth did not remove it from the Green Belt and gave the opportunity to further analyse the site at first plan review stage. To omit it without the necessary justification would treat it differently from all other sites within the process, which otherwise had been fully evidence led.

The Chief Planning Officer stated that a lot of work had been carried out to bring everything to the meeting and make the whole process as transparent as possible including the additional consultation over and above what was required. There was a lot of information, including all the evidence based documents, that were publicly available and accessible. The Chairman also pointed out that more had been done than required and reported that she knew of a neighbouring authority where all discussions had been carried out under exempt information in a small working group so as a Council she believed SDC had done an excellent job and far more than required as the Council had wished to engage with residents and developers.

During debate Members sought further clarification on the difference between a site within the Green Belt being identified as a broad location for growth and those greenfield sites in the green belt to be allocated for development within the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan. Clarification was also sought on the difference between the proposal to have Pedham Place identified as a broad location for growth and the sites that had not be included in the Regulation 19 Plan.

Confirmation was sought and given that all those who had made representations on the draft Local Plan during the two consultation periods would receive a written invitation to respond to the Regulation 19 consultation. There was some concern that the consultation period was during the Christmas holiday period.

Cllr Clark moved that the following words be inserted at recommendation (a) to Cabinet ‘..for a minimum of 8 weeks’, which was duly seconded. During the debate of the amendment it was suggested that an additional three days would compensate for the bank holidays over the Christmas period. The tight turnaround for Officers to fully examine the responses to the consultation before submission to full Council was also discussed and the idea of an extraordinary Council meeting, mooted. Officers advised that should Cabinet agree the recommendations the consultation would go live around 18 December 2018 and therefore run to 29 January 2019. Following this discussion, with the agreement of the seconder to the motion, Cllr Clark altered his motion to extend the consultation by one week. Upon listening to further debate Cllr Clark again altered his motion with the agreement of the seconder to amend recommendation (a) to Cabinet to read

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‘(a) agrees that the following be issued for public consultation for 6 weeks and 5 days (up to Sunday 3 February 2018)’.

The amendment was put to the vote and the amendment was carried.

Members continued to debate the substantive motion.

As the Chairman had not exercised her discretion to allow members of the public to speak, she did not allow a member of the public’s email to be read to the Committee.

Cllr Gaywood was delighted that the development at Hartley and Fawkham had been removed but did not like the idea of a development hanging over the residents of Swanley and neighbouring villages with regards to Pedham Place and moved an amendment to (a) (i) by the insertion of the words ‘..subject to the removal of Pedham Place’ which was duly seconded.

Concerns were raised on the overall adverse impact on the existing neighbouring settlements. That Pedham Place lay within a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and was within the Green Belt. Concerns were also raised that the current infrastructure in the area would not be able to cope with the increase in population, especially as traffic was already at capacity. Along with air quality concerns, a query was also raised with regard to the need for an additional school when the secondary in Hextable had been recently closed. There was some discussion regarding the reasons why Pedham Place had been identified as a broad location for growth whereas areas such as Broke Hill had not been included in the Plan.

The meaning of being identified as a broad location for growth was revisited. It was pointed out that developments could provide Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments which could be applied for and used towards any infrastructure needs identified. It was reaffirmed that there was a need to require the same level of investigation for each site to remain evidence led before including or omitting a site, otherwise the whole plan would run the risk of being declared unsound. Housing numbers were provided by central government and if Districts failed to produce a sound plan, there may be loss of control over the plan making and decision making processes. It was reiterated that the agreed approach had always been to go where the evidence led.

In accordance with the Council’s Constitution, Part 2 paragraph 24.4, five members of the Committee stood and demanded a recorded vote on the amendment.

The amendment was put to the vote.

For	Against	Abstention
Councillor Clare Barnes	Councillor Cameron Clark	

Councillor Dr. Marilyn Canet	Councillor Mrs. Avril Hunter	
Councillor John Edwards-Winser	Councillor Stuart McGregor	
Councillor James Gaywood	Councillor Edward Parson	
Councillor Michael Horwood	Councillor Robert Piper	
	Councillor Julia Thornton	
5	6	0

The amendment was lost.

The substantive motion therefore remained unchanged and was further debated. During the debate the amount of work involved and the dedication of Officers was commented on.

Cllr McGregor moved, it was duly seconded and unanimously

Resolved: That a 'vote of thanks' be recorded for all Officers involved in the preparation and production of the draft Local Plan.

Before putting the substantive motion to the vote, everyone was urged to respond to the Regulation 19 consultation, and the parallel consultation on the additional sites. It was agreed that the results of the consultation on the additional sites could be reported for information at the meeting in March 2019.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and it was

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) the following be issued for public consultation for 6 weeks and 5 days (end date of Sunday 3 February 2019 - based on a consultation start date of 18 December 2018)
 - i) the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan (as detailed within Appendices 5 and 6 to this report);
 - ii) the additional strategic greenbelt greenfield sites received during Draft Local Plan consultation (as detailed within Appendix 4 to this report); and
 - iii) the associated Supplementary Planning Documents (as detailed within Appendix 7 to this report)
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Planning Officer following consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder to finalise any non-policy

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text changes required in the Draft Local Plan prior to Regulation 19 public consultation; and

- c) it be recommended that Full Council agrees to the submission of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan for examination.

26. Work Plan

The work plan was noted, subject to a report on the results of the consultation on the additional sites be submitted to the meeting in March 2019.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.43 PM

CHAIRMAN

ADOPTION OF THE HIGH WEALD AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-2024

Planning Advisory Committee - 12 March 2019

Report of Chief Planning Officer

Status For Decision

Also considered by Cabinet - 4 April 2019

Key Decision Yes

Executive Summary: Sevenoaks District Council is legally required to adopt a management plan for the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The High Weald AONB unit have produced a management plan that was agreed by it's Joint Advisory Committee in November 2018 after public consultation and with input from the Council.

The management plan sets out the key characteristics of the High Weald in terms of natural beauty and is an important guidance document for development within the AONB.

This report supports the Key Aim of ensuring that Sevenoaks District remains a great place to live, work and visit.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Robert Piper

Contact Officer Helen French x7357

Recommendation to the Planning Advisory Committee: That it be recommended to Cabinet to adopt the High Weald AONB Management Plan and to provide a link to this Document on the Council's website.

Recommendation to Cabinet: To adopt the High Weald AONB Management Plan and to provide a link to this Document on the Council's website.

Reason for recommendation: To fulfil the statutory duty arising from the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to prepare a management plan for the High Weald AONB.

Introduction and Background

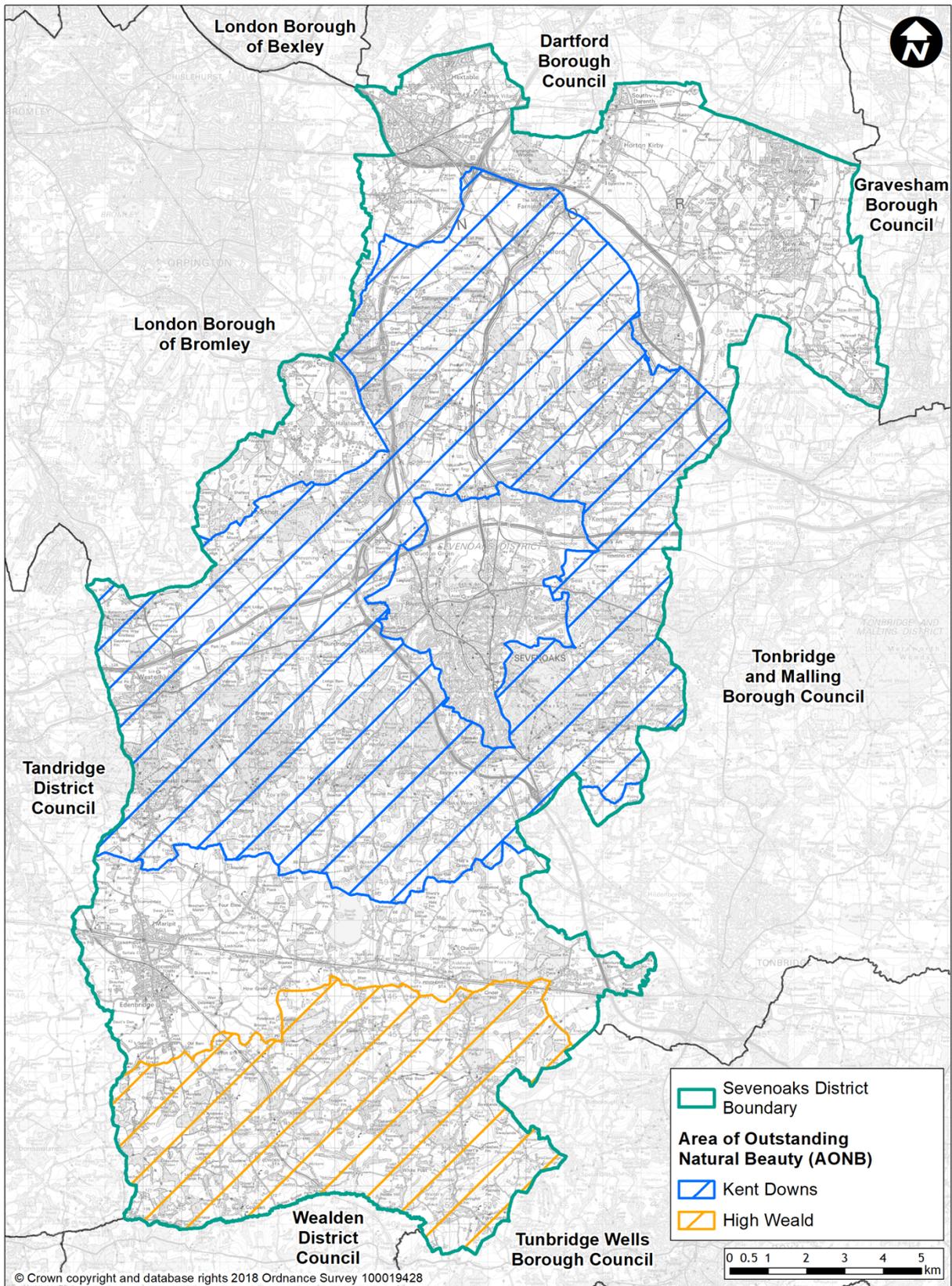
- 1 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, Section 89, local authorities with land in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are legally obliged to prepare and publish an AONB Management Plan which

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'formulates their policy for the management of the area and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it', and to review this Plan every five years. Where an AONB crosses administrative boundaries local authorities are required to act jointly to produce the Plan.

- 2 Sevenoaks District Council has two AONBs as shown in Map 1, which includes the Kent Downs AONB which runs across the centre and north of the District and the High Weald AONB which runs across the southern part of the District. A management plan is required for both; however this report outlines the management plan for the High Weald AONB only, with the Management Plan for the Kent Downs AONB expected shortly and which will be discussed at a later date.
- 3 The partnership of 15 local authorities with land in the High Weald AONB first published a joint management plan for the area in 1994. In 2004 a statutory plan was produced as a rolling 20 year strategy to be reviewed every 5 years. The last Management Plan Review was carried out in 2013 and this was presented to the Local Planning and Environment Advisory Committee in January 2014. The document was adopted by the Council in February 2014. The current review covers the period 2019-2024.
- 4 This High Weald AONB Management Plan (2019-2024) was approved by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) of the AONB unit on 28th November 2018.
- 5 The AONB Management Plans are important guidance documents. They are referenced in the current and emerging Local Plan and have helped to shape the environmental and landscape policies. They are also used in decision making in Development Management. In addition to this they are used as a tool for developers to help them understand what elements of the natural beauty are important to this AONB and what issues any new development should avoid, preventing further harm to the natural beauty of the landscape.
- 6 It should be noted that this is not a consultation document as considerable consultation has already taken place on the proposed Management Plan between 13th June and 25th July 2018. The Council has been involved in the development of the Plan through its membership of the AONB unit and through comments on the draft plans. Any changes requested through the adoption process should be minor in nature and not materially affect the plan.

Map 1: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Sevenoaks District



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Background

- 7 AONBs are national designations carried out by Natural England. The main purpose of an AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape. The legal status and importance of AONBs is on a par with National Parks although they do not have the same administrative arrangements.
- 8 The designation of the High Weald AONB was confirmed in 1983. It is the fourth largest covering areas of Surrey, Kent, East Sussex and West Sussex. Sevenoaks District Council is a member of the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), a partnership of the 4 County and 11 District authorities that cover the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and who each according to their relative interest jointly fund the JAC. Cllr Matthew Dickins currently represents SDC on the JAC and Helen French is the lead officer.
- 9 The CROW Act:
 - places a duty on all public bodies and statutory undertakers to ‘have regard’ to the purposes of AONBs; and
 - reaffirms the original purposes of designation and confirms the powers of local authorities to take appropriate action to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of AONBs.
- 10 The National Planning Policy Framework places great weight on conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs, giving them the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. It also states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, which this document will assist us in.

Links to other Council Policy and Strategy

- 11 The AONB Management Plan has the potential to improve the quality of life for residents of Sevenoaks District living and working in and around the AONBs through the conservation and enhancement of their landscape and supporting the social and economic wellbeing of communities.
- 12 The guidance provided in the AONB Management Plans is supported by the Council’s Core Strategy (2011) under Policy SP1 and in paragraph 2.33 of the Allocations and Development Management Plan. It is also supported in Policy LA1 of the Proposed Submission Version of the Local Plan. More widely, the use of the Management Plans can assist the Council in delivering the greener aims contained within the SDC Community Plan.

The High Weald AONB Management Plan

- 13 The AONB Management Plan sets out the key features of the High Weald and what contributes to the natural beauty and distinctive character of the area. Some of the main visions from the Plan, includes, that it:
- Retains its distinctive landscape character and beauty.
 - Displays a thriving wildlife and improves ecological quality in its highly connected and biodiverse landscape.
 - Engages people with nature and contributes to the health and well being of people within and outside the area.
 - Demonstrates a consistent approach to planning across the AONB, allowing for appropriate housing and economic needs of thriving communities without compromising the historic settlement pattern.
 - Celebrates woodland history and nurtures a woodland economy.
 - Facilitates participation by people, their communities and businesses in conserving the area and managing change.
- 14 The Plan can be used to guide environmental land management and assess the impact of development or other changes on the AONB
- 15 Local Planning Authorities use the document for the following:
- To identify detrimental effects of proposed development on the AONB helping ensure that development is ‘landscape led’ and contributes to conserving and enhancing natural beauty,
 - Use the plan and underpinning data to assist with green infrastructure planning across the AONB and wider South East.
 - Use the Plan as a checklist against which to assess the impact of policies and other activities on AONB purpose to fulfil the requirements of CROW Act 2000 Section 85.
- 16 In particular it sets out key characteristics for each component of natural beauty, which identify what is special about the High Weald Landscape and beauty, and that should be afforded great weight in planning decisions. The plan and the objectives for each component in particular act as a check list or set of criteria against which policy and actions can be assessed.

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- 17 The Natural Beauty of the High Weald has five defining components of character:
- Geology, landform and water systems- as it is a deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clay and sandstone.
 - Settlement - as it consists of a dispersed historic settlement including high densities of isolated farmsteads and late Medieval villages founded on trade and on-agricultural rural industries.
 - Routeways - as it has a dense network of historic routes
 - Woodland - as it consists of an abundance of ancient woodland, highly interconnected and in small holdings.
 - Field and heath - as it consists of small irregular and productive fields, bounded by hedgerows and woods.
- 18 The Management Plan looks at each of these components and identifies key characteristics of each one and how it contributes to the natural beauty of the landscape. It also lists the top five issues under each component that can threaten the natural beauty of the landscape, including development. It also lays out some clear objectives for each one. This helps Local Authorities and also developers to identify what contributes to the natural beauty of the landscape, how development can be in keeping with the existing identified characteristics and also what issues need to be addressed by any new development within it.
- 19 In addition to the above it also considers the land-based economy and related rural life, and how this is bound up with, and how it underpins the observable character of the landscape.
- 20 It also considers other qualities, such as:
- High Weald Charter for Residents and Visitors - how people relate to and connect with the landscape.
 - Locally distinct features such as historic parks and gardens, orchards, biodiversity and locally distinctive historic buildings and how they enrich the character and components of the landscape.

21 The plan is supported by the following documents:

- Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)
- Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Monitoring the Condition of the AONB and Performance of the AONB Management Plan
- Consultation Statement

Summary of main amendments to the current Management Plan.

22 This review does not represent a significant policy shift in the Management Plan, but is generally a light touch review of the existing document. The main changes in this new Plan include:

- Each of the five main components now identifies a number of key characteristics that contribute to the natural beauty of the landscape, which assist in understanding the existing character of the AONB and also how to take development forward.
- Updates to the relevant facts and figures.
- The document now includes a brief history of the High Weald
- An updated vision
- The top 5 issues to each component have been updated but many of the objectives remain the same, with amended indicators for success (rather than targets).

Summary of Review Process

23 The process of reviewing the Management Plan began in March 2017 led by the AONB unit with input from both Officers and Councillors from each local authority.

24 In 2017 a series of technical workshops based around the key components of natural beauty were held and early public engagement was developed through an on-line questionnaire promoted to AONB contacts and via social media. Nearly 400 people completed the questionnaire and analysis of their responses helped shape the Plan.

25 A public consultation on the Plan was held between 13th June and 25th July 2018. This included consultation with all the local authorities, as well as with statutory bodies and was publicised via e-news and social media. 143 responses were received, 115 from individuals and 28 from organisations.

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82% of the respondents 'strongly agreed' with the AONB Vision and 84% of the respondents 'strongly agreed' with the Statement of Significance.

- 26 The High Weald AONB Management Plan review (2019-2024) was approved by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) of the AONB unit on 28th November 2018 and it is recommended that the Council adopt the Plan as it will assist us in understanding the key characteristics of the AONB and therefore developing policies and making development management decisions to protect and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape of the High Weald AONB.

Key Implications

Financial

Any cost will be met out of the existing budget.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The Council has a statutory duty to prepare and review a Management Plan for any areas within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. By not adopting the plan the council is in breach of the CROW Act 2000.

Equality Assessment

The High Weald AONB Management Plan has been subject to an EQIA which found that the plan is unlikely to any significant negative impacts on equality.

Appendices

High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

<http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/joint-advisory-committee-papers/2018-2019.html>

Background documents

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Monitoring the Condition of the AONB and Performance of the AONB Management Plan

Consultation Statement

All available at

<http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/joint-advisory-committee-papers/2018-2019.html>

Richard Morris
Chief Planning Officer

ADOPTION OF WESTERHAM AND ST LAWRENCE (SEAL) VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENTS

Planning Advisory Committee - 12 March 2019

Report of Chief Planning Officer

Status For Decision

Also considered by Cabinet - 4 April 2019

Key Decision No

This report supports the Key Aim of ensuring that Sevenoaks District remains a great place to live, work and visit.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Robert Piper

Contact Officer Naomi Sargant, Ext. 7122

Recommendation to the Planning Advisory Committee: That it be recommended to Cabinet that approval is given for the adoption of the Westerham and Seal St Lawrence Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Recommendation to Cabinet: That approval is given for the adoption of the Westerham and St Lawrence (Seal) Village Design Statements as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Reason for recommendation: To allow the guidance given in these documents to be brought forward by the local community, to be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Introduction and Background

- 1 A Village Design Statement (VDS) is a practical document produced by local people, which forms a material consideration when assessing planning applications and development in their local area.
- 2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not specifically mention VDS's but their use will support the need for good design as covered by chapter 12 of the NPPF.
- 3 Once adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), a VDS can provide a clear statement of the character of a village against which planning applications can be assessed. It can also provide a guide for development and can also assist decision makers in providing guidance about

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how development should be approached and undertaken so as to respect the local identity and also meet the concerns of local residents. Once adopted the SPD's will supplement the Local Plan.

- 4 There are three VDS's adopted as SPD's in the District including Underriver, Seal Village and Otford Village. There is also one Parish Plan for Otford which has been adopted as an SPD.

Proposed Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- 5 The proposed Westerham Design Statement, prepared by Westerham Town Council, looks at different issues affecting the areas of Westerham and Crockham Hill, including landscape character and open spaces, building design and materials, conservation area, housing development, extensions and alterations, property boundaries and street furniture, surrounding land and agriculture and the surrounding natural environment. Under each category some of the issues that the areas face have been laid out; through this discussion a number of design principles have been raised, at the end of each section, that are wished to see followed for development in the area.
- 6 The proposed St Lawrence (Seal) Village Design Statement, prepared by Seal Parish Council, looks at different issues affecting the ward of St Lawrence in Seal, including landscape character and open spaces, building design, conservation area, housing development, extensions and alterations, property boundaries and street furniture, public footpaths and bridleways, surrounding land and agriculture and the surrounding natural environment. Under each category some of the issues that the areas face have been laid out; through this discussion a number of design principles have been raised, at the end of each section, that are wished to see followed for development in the area.
- 7 Westerham Town Council has prepared the VDS for Westerham. It is now proposed that this document be adopted as SPD. As required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) Consultation Statements have been prepared for each document. These are attached in Appendix A.
- 8 Seal Parish Council has prepared the VDS for Seal St Lawrence with input from the residents of Seal through the Seal Parish Plan Questionnaire in 2010. This VDS is an update of the adopted Seal VDS in 2004. This VDS is linked to the Seal and Underriver VDS's adopted in 2012. It is now proposed that the St Lawrence VDS be adopted as an SPD. As required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) Consultation Statements have been prepared for each document. These are attached in Appendix A.
- 9 The statements illustrate that the proper procedures have been followed in the preparation of this document.
- 10 The VDS's have been sent to the Conservation Team and Development Management for comment and have been amended with the authors to

ensure they are in line with the revised National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan. It is therefore recommended that the approval is given for them to be adopted as an SPD.

Key Implications

Financial

Any cost will be met out of the existing budget and MHCLG funding for local planning authorities to support neighbourhood planning will applied.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The SPD and Neighbourhood Plans are prepared under planning legislation. The regulations regarding notification of adoption/approval of these documents will be followed.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Appendices

Appendix A - Westerham Village Design Statement 2019

Appendix B - St Lawrence Village Design Statement 2019

Appendix C - Consultation Statement - Westerham

Appendix D - Consultation Statement - St Lawrence

Background documents

None

Richard Morris

Chief Planning Officer

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Westerham Design Statement

October 2018

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Westerham & Crockham Hill Design Statement

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Purpose of a Village Design Statement (VDS)

Design Statements are a form of planning guidance to identify the important aspects of the design and character of an area, which then assists developers and householders when designing new development to ensure buildings and associated works are in keeping with, and enhance, the existing character. The purpose of the Design Statement is not to determine where development should take place but is intended to influence and guide planning decisions. VDS's influence the way the statutory planning system operates locally. Some will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. This means that it can become a material consideration in the planning system. Therefore a key aspect in the preparation of the statement is its compatibility with the statutory planning process. The design guidelines in the VDS refer to the relevant local plan and planning policies of Sevenoaks District Council Development Plan and aim to complement and provide further local clarification of these policies.

1.2 The Westerham & Crockham Hill Design Statement - What does it say?

The Design Statement will provide a description of the Parish of Westerham and Crockham Hill as it is known, observed, valued and loved by the local population in the year 2017, together with guidelines on how any future development should be managed. It will promote an understanding of the character and qualities of Westerham and Crockham Hill, and to indicate some guidelines for any change or development that may be proposed in coming years. It is not about resisting change - it's about managing change in a sensible and sensitive way.

1.3 Preparation and Consultation

A key aspect of Design Statements is that they are written and researched by local communities, with only advisory input from the District Council, and so represent a community view of how new development should be designed in order to retain a sense of place.

The Design Statement is built up from evidence and insight gathered from both the town of Westerham as well as the rural communities including the village of Crockham Hill.

The outcome of this VDS has been created by the people who live and work in the Parish. A task force of volunteers drawn from individuals, local organisations, schools and the National Trust carried out research, surveys and consultations to build an evidence base upon which the design guidelines proposed within this document are formulated. Their valuable input to this process has been greatly appreciated.

1.4 The way forward & how the VDS will be used

The VDS will be submitted to Sevenoaks District Council for adoption as their Supplementary Planning Document for the next ten years, in support of the new SDC Local Plan (2015-2035) which is currently being drafted and which affects the Parish. It is intended for use by developers, Town Planners and residents in the form of guidance for future developments to the built form of the settlements that are sympathetic to the historic setting of the Parish whilst managing its growth and change in the future. It will be reviewed at the end of that time, even if no changes are needed.

The VDS has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Sevenoaks District Council's adopted Core Strategy 2011 and Allocations and Development Management Plan 2015. In particular, Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy requires that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated.

The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan is also taken into consideration, which can be found at the following link: <https://www.kentdowns.org.uk/landscape-management/management-plan/>

The policy states further that account should be taken of the guidance adopted by the Council, including Village Design Statements.

In accordance with paragraph 28 of the NPPF the VDS is proposed to be used to help applicants make successful applications by providing detailed specific guidance on the design of new development in the following areas;

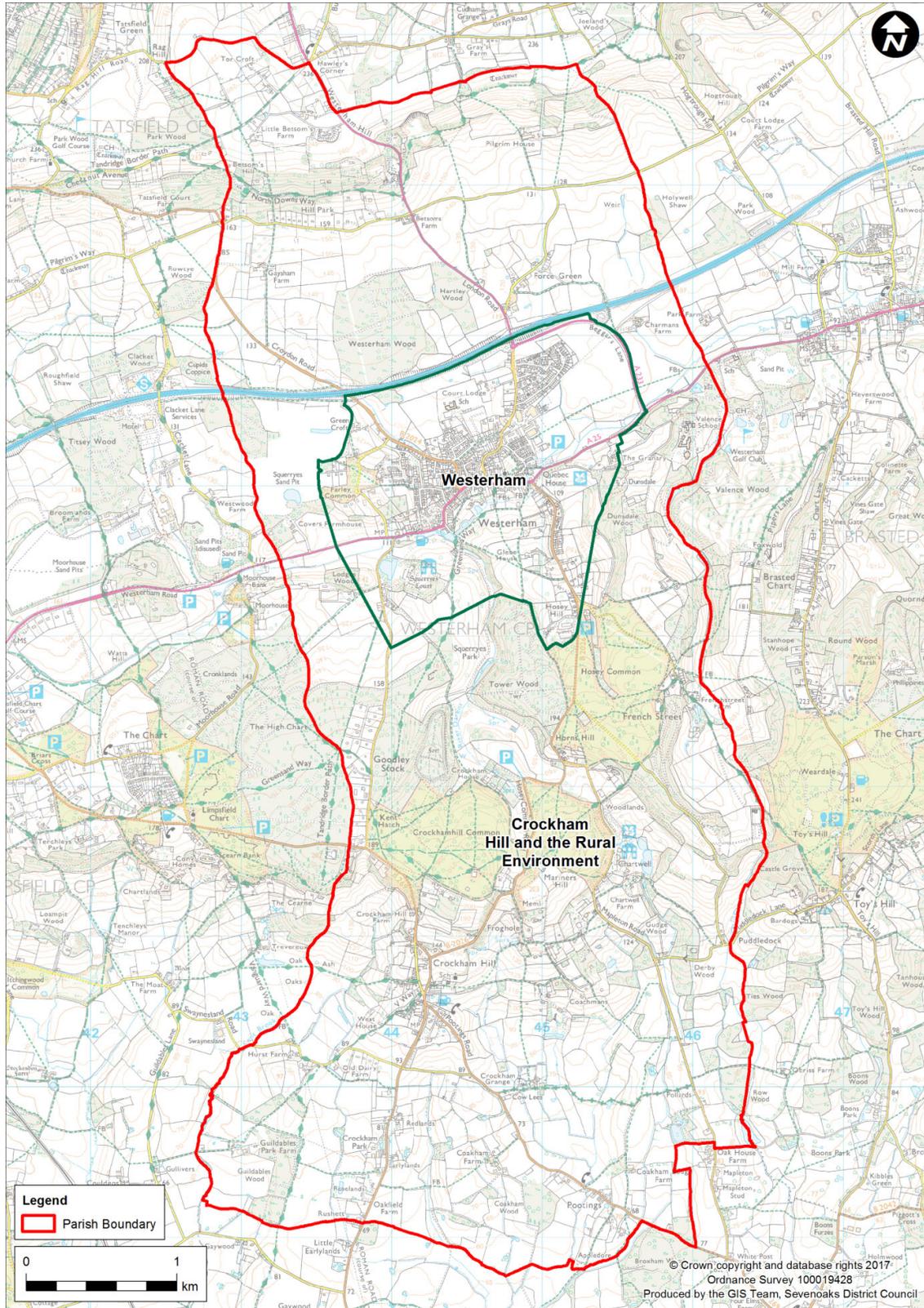
The VDS is split into 2 sections:

- Westerham Town and its environs
- Crockham Hill and the rural environment

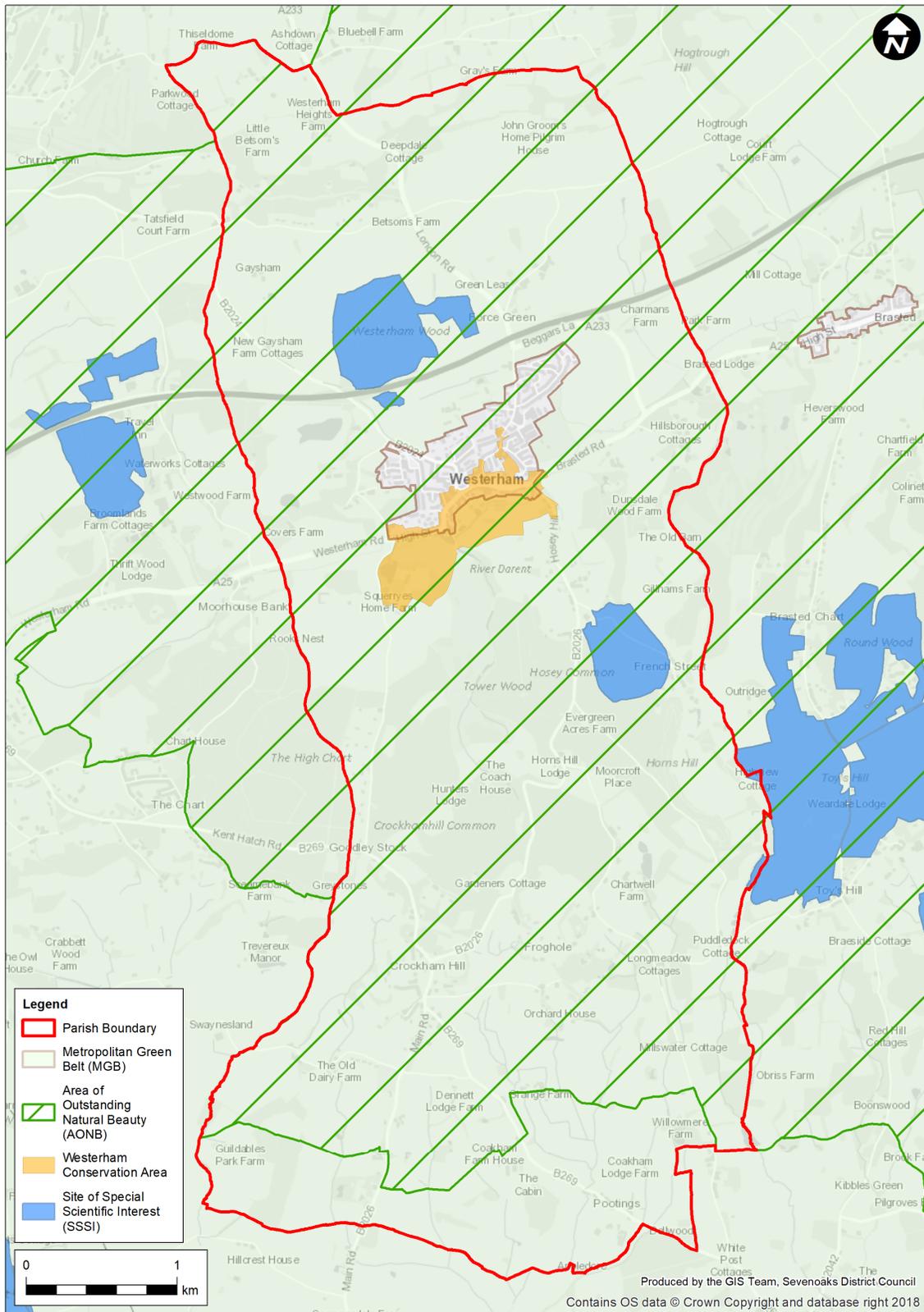
1.5 Setting the Scene - The Parish

The Parish consists of two main settlements, Westerham Town & Crockham Hill including the surrounding rural landscape, which are covered separately for the purposes of the VDS. The VDS covers the Parish defined within the red line area on the map below together with the division of the two sections detailed above.

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Below is a Constraint map showing Green Belt boundary, extent of AONB, Conservation Area boundaries and SSSI in the parish.



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Westerham is the main settlement in the Parish. The Parish as a whole covers slightly over nine square miles, is just 22 miles from central London and is home to approximately 4500 people. The Historic town of Westerham is surrounded by countryside designated as Metropolitan Green Belt and washed over by AONB. Crockham Hill is located within both the Green Belt and given additional protection of a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Local geology provides a rich variety of small hills and valleys, which provide an attractive setting for the Parish between the North Downs and High Chart at the head of the Darent river valley. Owing to the topography the openness of the surrounding countryside is very evident not only with vistas from within the town but across the Parish.

The single feature compromising the landscape is the M25 to the North of Westerham. Whilst initially giving relief to the A25 running through the centre of the town, the increase in traffic generated over the past 30 years means that very often the A25 becomes the motorway relief road clogging the town centre. The result is that pollution levels are recorded above statutory levels at certain points and restricted road width causes traffic queuing and long tailbacks at busy periods. Future development to the north of the town towards the motorway should have regard to air quality regulations.

The town of Westerham is increasingly a destination for tourists, encouraged by the history of the town and the facilities on offer. There are many cafes, pubs, restaurants and independent shops, and the town also has its own brewery and winery.

The location of the town on a main transport route and its accessibility to many larger towns accounts for the constant movement of people. The mix of uses encourages both the tourist industry and the local population to use the town and for it to serve a function as a destination for retail and industry. The location of Westerham with its convenient access to the M25 makes it attractive to businesses and several multi-national companies have chosen Westerham as a base. The retention of a varied mix of facilities to serve the function of the town as a destination for tourists and for businesses is essential to the vitality of the town, whilst also serving its local population.

The area to the north and south of the town is characterised by small hamlets and larger dispersed dwellings linked by country roads and lanes leading through Crockham Hill village towards Edenbridge. Crockham Hill is served by a junior school, local pub, which is a building of community interest as it serves as a focal point at the centre of the village, as well as a modern village hall. As the village is surrounded by Green Belt and is in the AONB new buildings are more limited and existing dwellings have often been developed and enlarged over time.

1.6 History of Westerham & Crockham Hill

Westerham

Westerham settlement dates back to pre-Saxon times and the Town obtained its market charter in 1227. It's most significant residential development took place in the 1970s extending housing along the Croydon Road and Old London Road, north of the A25.

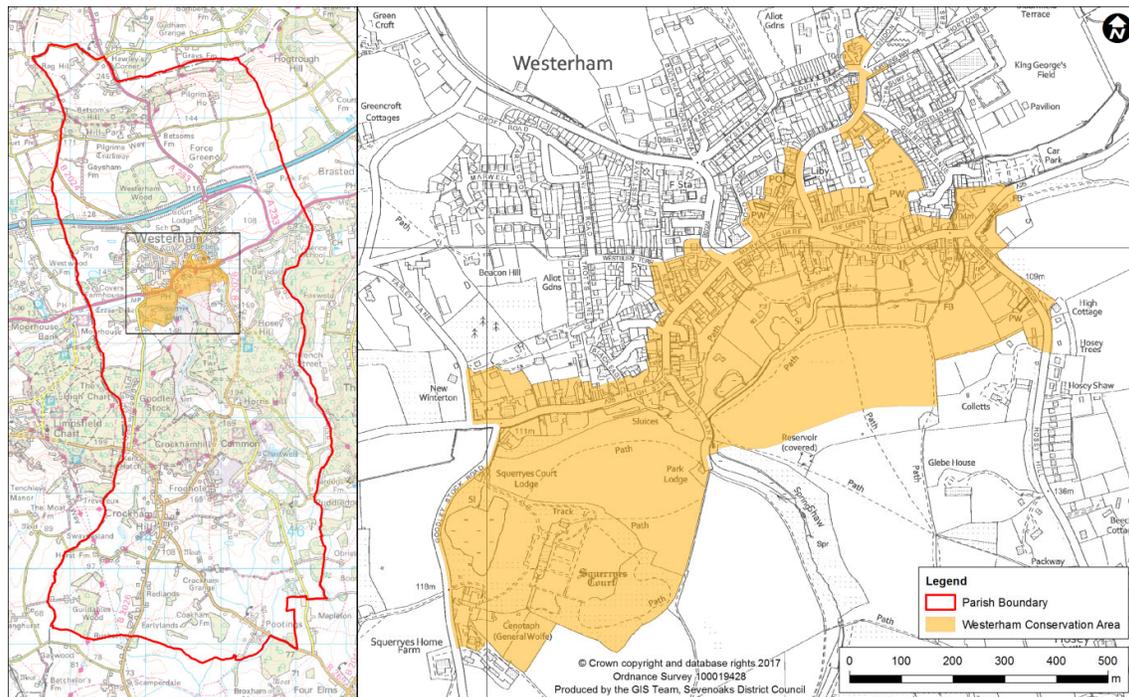
The Town remains centred around the Conservation Area and Green, which was the historic market place. Adjacent to this is the local church, which sits on a high point of the Town and is visible from a wide area as a visual focal point to visitors.

The town has many historic connections to important events and people including General Wolfe and Churchill, whose statues appear on the Green. The National Trust owns two significant historic properties at Quebec House and Chartwell as well as significant land around Crockham Hill. There are approximately 100 listed buildings in the Parish, many of them along the busy A25 that runs through the centre of the Town.

The single largest estate is Squerrys, owned by the Warde family for over three hundred years. It was bought by the first John Warde in 1731 and the Wardes still live there. For many hundreds of years the Squerrys Estate has owned a very large proportion of the land within the Parish boundaries, and has exercised a crucial influence on its development. The Estate continues to influence current and future development within and around the town.

The mix of historical buildings creates an eclectic and unique built area of Westerham representing its history and development over many centuries. The ribbon of small roads and lanes leading off the A25 provide character and visual definition to the town and its immediate countryside, across the valley and to the North Downs and South to the Kent Chart. The buildings beyond the A25 are mostly of two or three storeys and are subservient in character and appearance to the broader landscape beyond into the Green Belt.

The Conservation Area is located in the heart of the town as shown in the map below:



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Crockham Hill

Similarly Crockham Hill village approached from the North from an elevated position gives unrestricted views across the Eden valley, south to the Weald of Kent and even Sussex. The focal point is the Church set on a prominent position in the village surrounded by its historical settlement and the local school. The village itself is washed over by the Green belt and has no defined village boundary. It is within and surrounded by AONB and residential houses are set sparsely along local lanes and roads surrounding the village, and many have been developed into often large and imposing properties set into the hillside. These are often prominent and, if not carefully constructed or landscaped, jar against the AONB when approached from the South and West.

Large estates with extensive parkland historically dominated the Parish and, whilst much of this has changed in the last century, the landscape still reflects this openness mixed with largely arable farming.

2. DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR WESTERHAM

2.1 Landscape & Setting

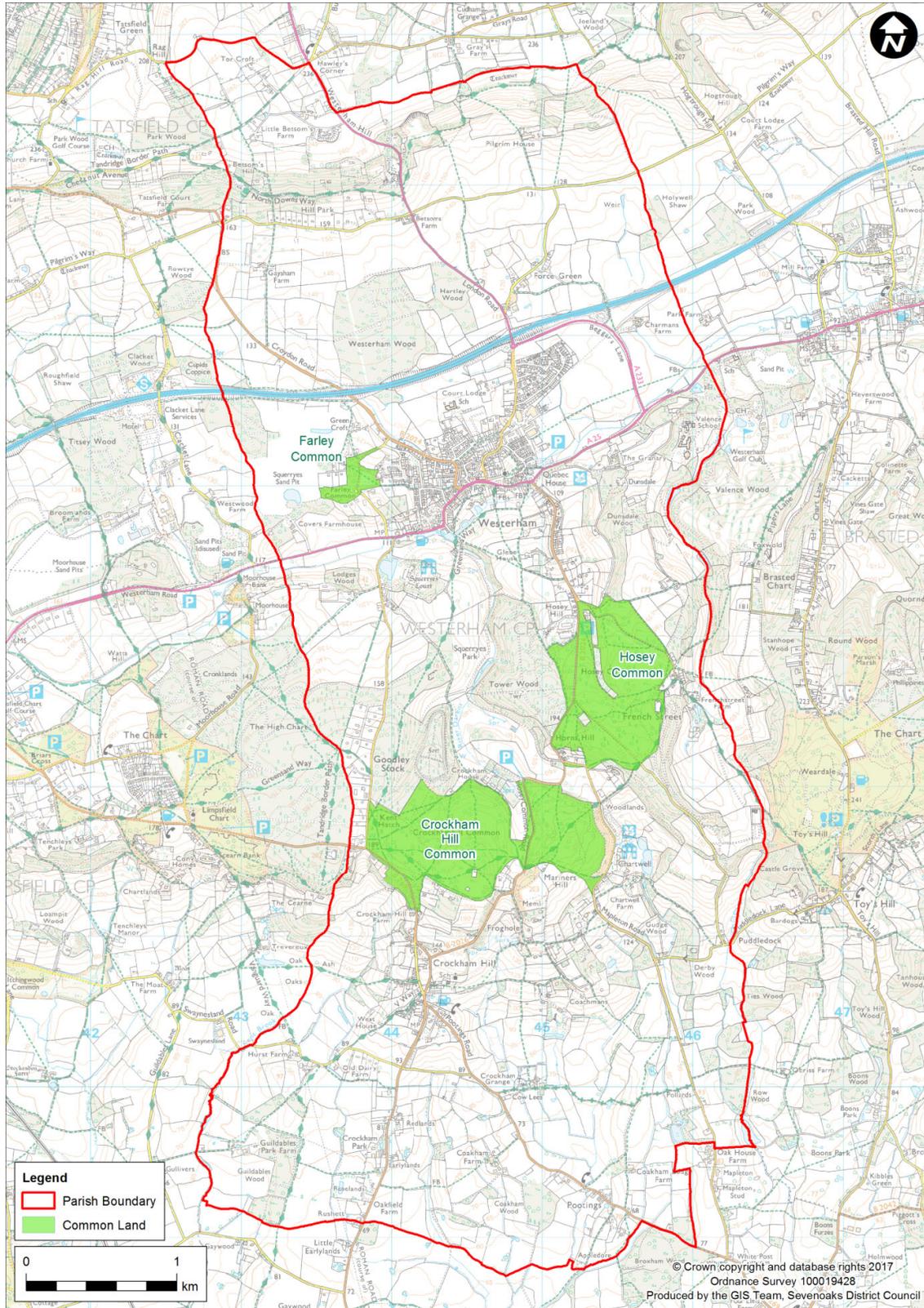
Westerham is set in a broad east-west valley some twenty miles south-east of London, bounded by the North Downs to the north and the Greensand Ridge to the south. The River Darent rises in the Greensand and flows through the town; to the north the countryside is mainly farmland, while the south, except for Squerryes Park, is mostly woodland. Local geology provides a rich variety of small hills and valleys, with a range of soils yielding a profusion of types of trees and plants. The town itself is excluded from the Green Belt, but is washed over by AONB, these constraints help define the green setting for the town. The Conservation Area includes the historic centre of the town and some open parkland to the south, the Squerryes Court Estate and some of its park together with several well-known properties such as Quebec House, Pitts Cottage and the Kings Arms Hotel.

The town has a number of important open spaces that are integral to its character and setting. King George's Field is the largest of the town's open spaces and is used for a number of outdoor recreational uses. Allotments at Bloomfield, Currant Hill and Farley Lane provide visual amenity through their openness however due to changing social patterns and demographics usage has been declining in recent years. Any future development should have a due regard to their amenity value.



There are three historic commons in the parish, Hosey, Farley and Crockham Hill (shown on the map below), whilst much of this area has become wooded in the last century they were originally common grazing land and the chart was an open area on top of higher ground. The areas are very popular with visiting walkers, ramblers and cyclists and protected by both AONB and, in some areas, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) status.

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The Darent valley, in which Westerham sits, is widely regarded as very important in developing the future prosperity of the area through encouraging tourism and leisure pursuits. Protecting the visual integrity of this valley is key to its success. A project is

currently underway to extend the Darent Valley Path along its entire length from Westerham to Dartford; this will allow greater access along the valley not only to ramblers and walkers but safe riding for cyclists away from the busy A roads. Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) refer to the special features of the Darent valley within its Landscape Character Assessment (2017). Key characteristics include the gentle undulating valley where long views can be gained towards the North Downs and Greensand Ridge. Reference is made to the characteristic vernacular architecture and blocks of mixed broadleaf woodlands and shaws. To the south of the town the area falls within the landscape character type referred to as Greensand Parks and Farmlands which extends towards Crockham Hill. Typical characteristics include a rural low density settlement pattern of scattered farms and hamlets with traditional vernacular building styles including Oasts, timber framed barns and properties in rag stone and/or brick, some half tile hung, and with clay tile roofs.

Crockham Hill falls within the landscape character type defined as Cherts and is specifically referred to as a settlement nestled within a wooded scarp where properties have been built to take advantage of extensive views. Key characteristics include the long views over the Weald and narrow tree lined rural lanes.

There are a number of impressive views from Westerham to the countryside beyond. Most notable are those views eastwards from the War Memorial over rooftops to woods and fields beyond. Views of the North Downs can be gained from St Mary's church and throughout the Town are glimpses of long distance views through alleyways and gaps between buildings. These views to the AONB beyond give relief from the built form and offer a reminder of the rural nature of the setting of the Town.



There are areas of Ancient and semi-natural woodland to the south of the town, east of Mill Lane and along Spring Shaw. Westerham Mines SSSI is to the east of Hosey Hill. The wooded nature of land surrounding Westerham is evident from views within the town, particularly from the green looking east as the photograph overleaf demonstrates.

Westerham is an historic market Town with boundaries defined by its previous commercial activities including Breweries, Blacksmith, traditional trades, railway and farming. Its recent

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developments beyond these boundaries have been largely residential estates and individual residences along the major link roads. These can present a hard edge to the landscape with brick walls, high wooden fencing and gates adversely impacting views of the Green Belt and AONB; as well as adversely affecting wildlife. It is important to encourage more natural boundaries and greater thought in landscape design and use, not just to protect views but to encourage biodiversity.

The relationship between properties and their environment creates a characteristic common to a particular area. It is important to understand and protect this. Changes to existing properties or proposed new buildings that do not share common characteristics to the area or enhance the local area would be inappropriate development.

Design guidelines

- LS1** There are a number of important views both into and out of the town. Most notable views are those eastwards from the War Memorial over rooftops to woods and fields beyond. The view of the North Downs from St Marys church is also particularly important. Gaps in development allow views to countryside and open space beyond. These important outlooks should be protected from any form of insensitive development as they form an integral part of the setting of the historic town. All new development should respond to the distinctive local character of Westerham and the views should be protected and enhanced (Core Strategy (CS) policy SP 1).
- LS2** The natural beauty of Westerham shall be conserved and enhanced, ensuring that it is not harmed by inappropriate development including the overdevelopment of existing plots, gardens and the introduction of back land development that is not in keeping with the form of development on the site and within the locality. The density of new development should reflect that of the surrounding locality and include provision for landscaping to protect and enhance street scenes and the local environment.



- LS3** Gaps between buildings should be retained, in particular in a street of traditional detached and semi-detached houses, to avoid a terracing effect and to allow for breathing space between buildings. (Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Residential Extensions)
- LS4** Open spaces that contribute to the identity of the settlement should be retained and enhanced wherever possible. Change of use of designated open spaces will not be acceptable unless it has been demonstrated that the open space is surplus to requirements, the loss will be replaced by an equivalent recreational provision or the development is for alternative sports/recreational uses (Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) Policy GI2).
- LS5** Proposals for new buildings or extensions to buildings should respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of existing development in the area to ensure proposals do not adversely affect the silhouette of the existing town when viewed from the surrounding AONB. (ADMP Policy EN1).
- LS6** Existing trees should be preserved where appropriate and practical. Trees, which form an important part of the setting and character of the area, should be preserved and integrated into the development proposals where possible. Planting as part of any new development should be used to extend existing habitats around site boundaries and of a variety appropriate to the area (ADMP para 6.17 & Policy GI 1)



- LS7** New development should respect the topography and character of the site and surrounding area and landscaping proposals should form an integral part of new development proposals. Excessive hard landscaping of driveways and patios is not supported. Soft landscaping should be indigenous and harmonious to the area. (ADMP Policy EN1)
- LS8** Planning policies to protect Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings should be strictly applied.

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2.2 Settlement Characteristics

Westerham has a strong community built around its historic roots. The nature of the Town has changed with much of the wider Sevenoaks district and now caters for commuters, tourists and leisure interests. Reflecting this, the Town has 17 restaurants, cafes and bars and is busy from early morning until late evening.

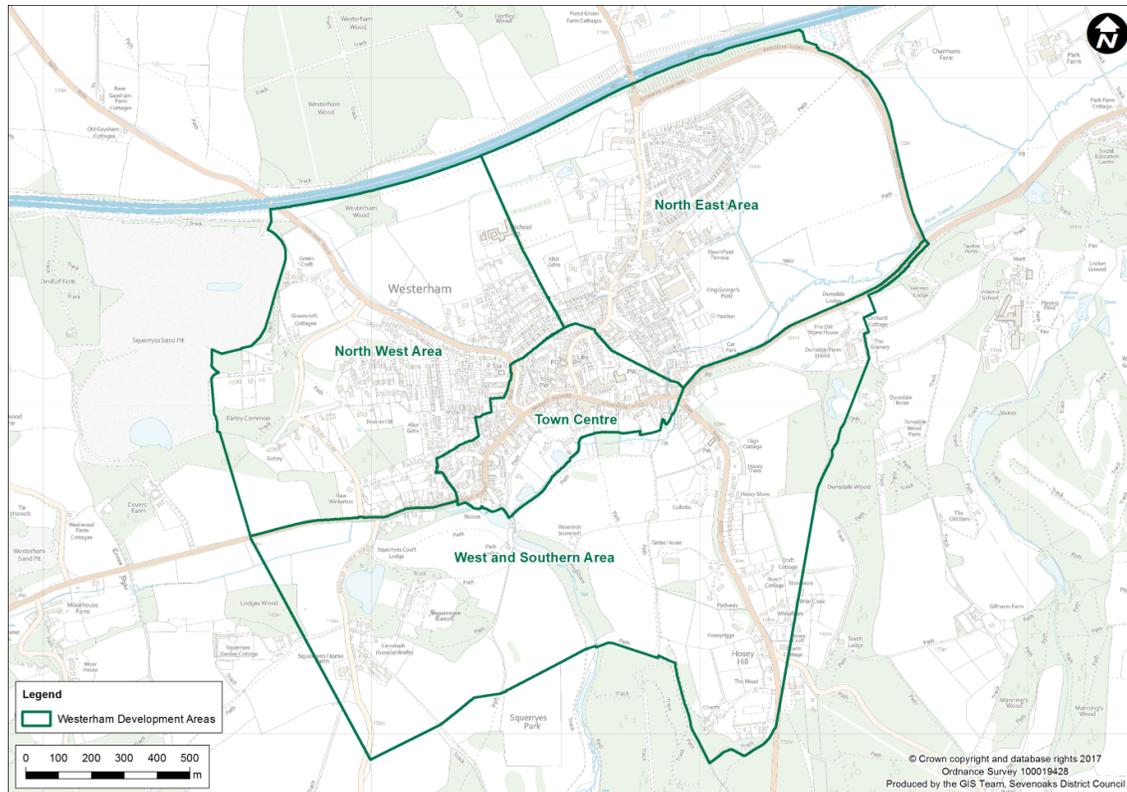


At weekends, football clubs from around the region play on the King George's playing field, which also provides a skate park, tennis courts and a bowls club.

Whilst there is a busy primary school there is no secondary provision and local children are transported to 17 different locations outside the Town, in all directions.

The nearest hospitals are in Bromley, Sevenoaks and Pembury some 11- 20 miles distant. There is one supermarket serving local needs. Whilst there is a regular bus service, 90% of journeys out of town are by car.

Westerham Town falls into four fairly distinct areas of development, shown on the following map and described below:



1) North East - This comprises the mainly residential area including Madan Road, Ash Road and Hartley Road. Part of Madan Road consists of Victorian properties with traditional features; however the main characteristic of this area is the estate style post war housing with generous front gardens, green verges and open spaces. Frontages of properties are generally open providing a spacious feel to the development, enhanced by the use of low hedging as boundary treatments on some properties. Other boundary treatments such as chain link fencing are also present but this detracts from the character of the area. Generous gaps are retained between groups of dwellings and dwellings are well set back from the road. The gaps between dwellings are important in avoiding a terracing effect. The northeast area is historically important in terms of its example of post war town planning and has characteristics that are important to retain, in particular the spacing commonality of style and openness.

2) North West - This comprises the areas of Croft Road, Farley Lane, Granville Road, Trotts Lane and roads bordering these. Characteristics of this area include lower density housing interspersed with the wooded areas. Properties here are more diverse in style and age whilst retaining the same homogenous visual sense of place from high density terraced roads leading to larger more dispersed properties on the outskirts of the town giving way to countryside beyond.

3) Historic Town Centre - The centre of Westerham comprises the main retail high street and the hub for tourists. One of the main characteristics is The Green, with its famous statues of Churchill and General Wolfe. The centre of Westerham is home to many of the town's listed buildings and at its heart is the Conservation Area. The main A25 runs through the centre of

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the town, it runs parallel with the M25 and serves as its relief road in the event of motorway hold-ups.

The approach into the town from the west is characterised by the number of attractive buildings, including many that are listed, on the road frontage. The location of buildings on this frontage limits the width of the road, which is particularly evident on the approach from the southwest as you enter into the town centre.

4) South and West – The area to the south of the Town is dominated by the Squerryes estate with parkland and mixed woodland rising to the Chart. The two roads running south towards Crockham Hill and Edenbridge (Goodley Stock and Hosey Hill) are lined by older detached properties set back from the roads

Commerce

The main industrial area in Westerham lies to the north of the Town Centre and is known as Westerham Trading Centre, forming two parts to the east and west of London Road. The Crown building is on the north side of London Road and comprises a three storey brick office building, which has a overbearing appearance on the street scene. The majority of the industrial area is on the east of London Road comprising a number of low rise purpose built office buildings together with conversion of the old station buildings which are home to smaller workshop/industrial units.



There continues to be a shortage of available supply of office space in Westerham with a healthy demand for space of between 5,000 and 15,000 sq. ft (source: Karrison Property Report, February 2017). There is also a continuous demand for modern office space of between 1,000-3,000 sq. ft. for both freehold and leasehold (source: Karrison Property Report, February 2017). The lack of suitable accommodation to meet the demand is resulting in the town experiencing established businesses moving out or choosing to locate elsewhere. There are plentiful reasons for office occupiers to establish a business location in the town, including its excellent strategic location, although poor public transport and lack of public parking is a disincentive for some businesses. The demand for office space is from those businesses that do not need to access London readily.

Larger warehousing units within the town are occupied and there is demand for these units. High skilled employment units in a mix of sizes to meet demand, in an appropriate location, would be supported.

There are a number of options available to businesses needing to expand in the town. The biggest threat to the vitality and sustainability of the town's role as a location for businesses is the loss of existing office space to residential due to Permitted Development Rights. The town could potentially lose 250 – 350 staff and up to 15 businesses forced to move out of the town. This would be a considerable loss for the town's economy. Furthermore, the knock on effect to the remaining businesses is that rents may increase significantly over a relatively short period of time.

There is a clear need for additional land availability for employment uses in the town. Future development should encourage the provision of a mix of unit size capable of meeting the needs of new technology and relevant space for innovation for both start up and growing business, including live/work space. New development should respond to its setting and adhere to design guidelines in this VDS and in particular.

Loss of any further business/retail space should be critically assessed to avoid the Town becoming less capable of meeting an adequate range of local needs.

Transport

Westerham is situated on the main A25 trunk road running parallel with the M25 and often used as a relief road to traffic in event of congestion on the motorway. This creates serious problems with road width restrictions at two points either side of the Town Centre, slowing and limiting passing of commercial vehicles, which then increases the air quality issues, already rated as very poor. At these points the pathway is also significantly compromised, as commercial vehicles often have to mount the pavements to pass.

Running north are two feeder roads to Croydon and Bromley, and two "B roads" south to Edenbridge through Crockham Hill.

There are numerous small lanes, pathways and side roads linking historic parts of Westerham, and latterly the newer post war developments. These are an important characteristic of the town and provide vistas not familiar to passing traffic but invaluable to the residents and local communities, enabling them to walk and cycle around the town to avoid the A25. Protecting and enhancing these to ensure benefit is essential and future provision from further developments would be required to ensure the safety of residents walking and cycling around the town.

One of the most significant and damaging changes to the town in the last 25 years has been the increase in traffic and need for more parking in and around the town centre. On street parking is increasing, narrowing roads to single track and obstructing other road users as well as blighting neighbourhoods. In addition, front gardens are being lost to parking which has a detrimental impact on the street scene creating an urbanised effect.

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Due to the increase in traffic and the need for parking identified above, the residents of Westerham would wish to see with any further residential development that adequate space should be provided for parking.

Design guidelines

- SC1** Westerham's unique historic setting contributes greatly to its local distinctiveness and will be protected from inappropriate development. Any proposed development shall retain and enhance the distinctive character of the town. (CS Policy SP1)
- SC2** New development proposals should be limited in scale to reflect the existing massing. High rise development will not be acceptable if it does not protect key views both into and out of the town. (ADMP Policy EN1)
- SC3** Any new infill development should be consistent with local character. It should respond to the distinctive characteristics of the locality in which it is situated. (CS Policy LO7)
- SC4** Existing employment uses in Westerham should generally be retained, where possible, and WTC will support regeneration and redevelopment to better meet the needs of, and strengthen, business. Any new buildings within the Westerham Trading Centre should respect the setting of the area and integrate with existing buildings, reflecting heights, scale and building materials used locally. Building heights should be considered carefully where they are close to residential areas to avoid a negative impact on amenity. Particular care should be taken where sites are located in close proximity to residential uses. (CS Policy LO7)
- SC5** Opportunity for landscape buffers and use of planting within employment sites will be welcomed. (ADMP Policy EN1)
- SC6** A range of shops, services and visitor attractions should be maintained in the town centre to ensure the protection and improvement of the vibrancy of the town to both residents and visitors. Changes to existing use classes (not permitted by Permitted Development) should only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that such change would improve the range of services or encourage an increase in activity and visitors.

- SC7** Where a change of use, requiring planning permission, would necessitate additional car parking, evidence should be provided to demonstrate where this could be located. (ADMP Policy LT1)
- SC8** Traditional gardens and urban green space retains the green infrastructure of the town. Where planning permission is required to introduce hardstanding/vehicle parking care should be given to incorporating these qualities.
- SC9** In areas where there are clearly spaces around the buildings, spacing between all built form and the boundary of the property should be maintained at a minimum of 1 metre to avoid terracing and overdevelopment of individual plots thereby avoiding a detrimental impact on special character. (SPD Residential Extensions)
- SC10** Infill residential development should reflect the special character of the area in locality. All new housing will be developed at a density that is consistent with achieving good design and does not compromise the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated. (Core Strategy Policy SP7)
- SC11** All new developments including flats and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) should provide at least minimum vehicle parking in accordance with the current Kent County Council parking standards in order to provide appropriate levels of parking provision specific to local circumstances. Where appropriate this should also apply to situations where additional bedrooms are created. (ADMP policy T2)
- SC12** New development should be designed and sited to ensure that Heritage Assets and their settings are protected and enhanced. (CS Policy SP1)

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2.3 Buildings and Materials

Westerham displays many different settlement characteristics. There are four fairly distinct areas within the town as referred to previously. The VDS provides overarching guidelines for building design and materials for the whole of Westerham.

One of the main aims of the VDS is to ensure that any future construction respects the historical value and interest of the town's character buildings, together with retention of the backdrop of the countryside visible within town from many viewpoints. New development must be designed to respect the setting of its locality, by way of scale, form, design and building materials.

There are many examples of good design within the town and also features that should be avoided. The guidelines aim to influence future development and improve the physical qualities of the town.



Extensions (loft/dormers)

It is accepted that extensions to existing dwellings provide the opportunity to enhance an existing property. There are however many poor examples of extensions within the town that are not in keeping with the scale and design of the existing building. Extensions that dominate the original building and are not subservient have a detrimental impact on the scale and form of the original property are considered to provide poor examples.

Within the Conservation Area policies of restraint apply to ensure the design of an extension must demonstrate that it will preserve or enhance the character of the area. Policies of restraint also apply in green belt areas in terms of size and proportion of extensions to dwellings to ensure the protection of the openness of the Green Belt. Whilst modern design can work in some scenarios, great care must be taken to ensure it is consistent with the form and character of existing buildings and other development in the locality. There are many important gaps in the town that allow views through to the landscape beyond. There is concern that extensions to buildings could result in the reduction of these gaps. There are particularly sensitive areas within the town where larger gaps form an integral part of the character of the area. These have been mentioned previously being the views eastwards from the War Memorial over rooftops to woods and fields beyond. Views of the North Downs from St Mary's church and throughout the Town there are glimpses of long distance views through alleyways and gaps between buildings. Views to the AONB beyond can give relief from the built form and offer a reminder of the rural nature of the setting of the Town.

Extensions to loft space are an increasingly popular option to provide additional accommodation. Whilst this can be carried out sensitively, there are examples where the scale of the roof extension creates a development unsympathetic to the existing building. Loft conversions have the potential to be very prominent and can be very difficult to integrate into an existing building or group of buildings. Due to the potential for unsympathetic designs, particular care should be taken in designing these schemes, in particular where there is a uniform group of buildings forming a characteristic roof profile within the street-scene. Poor examples of loft conversions include those where the extension dominates the roof form of the building, in particular those that span the width of the building and those that are located on the front elevation where there are no other front dormers in the street scene. Roof lights are considered to be much less conspicuous than dormer windows. Corner plots are particularly sensitive as they generally offer a degree of openness between road junctions and a sense of relief between developments.



Landscaping

Quite often new development, such as an extension to an existing property, can significantly reduce the amount of garden space available. The loss of garden areas at the front of a property is becoming more common owing to pressure for off-road parking, particularly in the north-east and north-west areas of the town demonstrated by parking to the front of properties and also on the open green spaces (amenity space) to the front of properties. This has had a harmful effect on the street scene as it has created an environment where streets and open spaces have become dominated by car parking and has resulted in the loss of open space which contributes the character of the street scene. Houses that are set back from the road, such as in the Madan Road, Hartley Road and Ash Road areas offer pleasant green spaces, which contribute to the street scene and soften the impact of the built form on the street scene. Where necessary low wooden bollards have been placed to protect the amenity green space, but these areas which contribute to the street scene should be preserved.

Boundaries

The character of an area can be significantly affected by the boundary treatment used in development. The post war housing in the North-East and North-West area of the town provides examples where boundary treatment defines the open character of the locality. Low rise natural hedging retains a sense of openness and provides a soft edge to the development. Low level fencing of an open nature, such as post and rail, also retains the open character. There are also examples of unsympathetic boundary treatment (such as close boarded fencing) on the frontage of properties that does little to enhance the area. The increased use of unsympathetic boundary treatments has eroded the attractive open spacious nature to some of the estate developments.

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Care must also be taken over boundary treatments in the rural areas of town, where the openness of the Green Belt is an integral part of the character of the countryside.

Lighting

It is important to ensure that there is no significant nuisance to the amenity of surrounding properties caused by light pollution. Whilst it is appreciated that security lighting is necessary in some situations, this type of lighting can be invasive, particularly in a residential area, and developers should look at ways to reduce light spill in these situations. Restraint of lighting affecting public areas and neighbouring residences should be required as a consideration in any new development.

New development

The variety of ages and styles of buildings can add to the character of an area and tell a story of its evolving history. This is evident in many of the areas of Westerham. The overriding aim for the town is that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area. Whilst there are examples of where old and new can sit comfortably together, new development should respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the immediate surrounding area.

The spacing between buildings offers relief to high-density development and reflects the setting of the town, which is surrounded on all sides by countryside. The topography of the town and its surroundings lends itself to views both into and out of town. This feature must be an important consideration for any new development.



Solar Panels and Wind Turbines

Whilst it is appreciated that small scale renewable energy generation options achieves improved energy efficiency, solar panels and wind turbines have the potential to impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. They can also appear unattractive or prominent in the street-scene and are not commonplace in the town. We would therefore expect the provision of renewable energy, where needed, to be appropriately located and to not be provided in a way that would harm the amenity of surrounding residents. As technology changes, it is expected that so many of the current installations may become obsolete and it is important that these do not remain in place if they are no longer required as they only result in clutter where it is not necessary.

Signage, Street Furniture & Lighting

Signage is necessary for retail and business properties and there are good and poor examples in the town. The quality of detailing in developments can strongly influence the character of the town. Therefore the quality of signage (including road signs) and street furniture should reflect the scale of development and enhance the character of the area.

Car Parking

Parking is a cause for concern in the town. Whilst it is accepted that there is demand for car parking for residential properties, car parking can create a cluttered environment and there are many examples of the loss of front garden areas and open space to parking. Attractive street scenes can be created and retained by careful consideration of parking areas for new development. This can include the integration of landscaping where possible to break up parking areas or by providing parking to the rear of developments keeping the street-scene open in character and less cluttered.

Paving & Driveways

There are many examples of front garden areas replaced with hardstanding, many of which have been constructed with impermeable materials. The use of inappropriate surface materials can have a harmful impact on the character of an area and also can hinder drainage resulting in an increase in flooding and associated water pollution.

Design guidelines

- BM1** New development should respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the immediate locality. Parking and cycle spaces should be provided to the most current County Council standards and particular care should be taken in regard to the design and layout of car parking when the development increases the number of car parking spaces required on the site. Traditional materials should be used where appropriate. (EN1 ADMP)
- BM2** The scale, proportion and height of extensions should respect the character of the existing building. Materials should match the existing building. (SPD Residential extensions)
- BM3** Extensions should be to the rear of existing properties and side extensions avoided where this would create a terracing effect, particularly where an existing gap is an integral part of the street scene. The pattern of gaps in a street scene should be maintained. Front extensions will not normally be encouraged. (SPD residential extensions)
- BM4** Loft extensions should not detract from the roof profile of the existing dwelling and should follow the vertical lines of existing doors and windows. Front facing dormers will not normally be supported. Flat roof dormers should be avoided unless they are a characteristic of the existing dwelling (SPD residential extensions)
- BM5** Flat roof extensions will not usually be supported where they are not sympathetic to the principal building form or would be harmful to the scale and character of the existing property. Pitched roofs should reflect the form, pitch and materials on the main building. (SPD Residential Extensions)

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- BM6** Signs should only be erected where they are essential and they should be carefully designed to ensure their size, style and siting is not unsympathetic to the locality. Visual clutter should be avoided. (Kent Design Guide)
- BM7** Lighting should be designed in relation to the function of the area that is being lit to avoid unnecessary light pollution. There should be no harmful impact on privacy or amenity for nearby residential properties as a result of lighting on developments. (ADMP Policy EN6)
- BM8** Landscaping proposals should be an integral part of any new development and should respect the topography and character of the site. (ADMP Policy EN1)
- BM9** The loss of traditional boundaries (such as hedges) should be avoided. Boundary treatment which is not characteristic of the area will not generally be supported.
- BM10** In the post-war housing areas to the north-east and north-west of the town frontages should not be totally enclosed behind high boundaries (above 1 metre) in order to retain the open character of these areas, unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed boundary treatment would not harm the street scene. (SPD residential extensions)
- BM11** Solar panels should be located on the rear of the property rather than the principle elevation, where practicable. Wind turbines shall be carefully assessed in terms of their impact on amenity and sensitivity of the locality. (SPD residential extensions)
- BM12** Paving and driveways are encouraged to be constructed using permeable non-slip materials, sympathetic to the immediate area. (ADMP Policy EN1)
- BM13** Open green space retains the green infrastructure of the town. Where planning permission is required to introduce hardstanding/vehicle parking care should be given to incorporating these qualities.
- BM14** Parking for new developments is encouraged to be located at the side or rear of a property to protect the street scene. Exceptions to this will only be supported with the provision of acceptable soft landscaping to provide relief from large areas of hard standing to the front of properties or where it can be demonstrated that the provision of parking to the front of the property would not harm the street scene. (SPD Residential Extensions)

3.DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR CROCKHAM HILL AND THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Introduction

Crockham Hill extends over a rural landscape between Westerham on the A25 and Edenbridge to the South. The earliest records document individual houses including those at Pootings Manor and Chartwell from the 14th and 15th Centuries. Crockham Grange was a medieval moated manor and the largest landowner remains the Squerryes Estate. All of the land outside of the village envelope is designated Metropolitan Green Belt and a significant proportion enjoys the additional protection of the AONB designation. Appendix 1 contains a map of the village.

Whilst the last retail shop and post office closed at the turn of the century the village is a thriving community with a locally owned pub, a primary school, church, and well-used community hall.

The whole area is popular with ramblers, hikers, cyclists and tourists with the area criss-crossed with secondary and tertiary roads, footpaths and bridleways.

Employment is scattered with a few light industrial units at Crockham Park, converted farm buildings on National Trust land, and farming as well as the National Trust's most popular national attraction Chartwell House.

A brief history of the village is attached at Appendix 2.



3.2 Landscape and Setting

Crockham Hill lies high on the south facing slopes of the Greensand Ridge, with long distant views over the fields and woodland of the Weald to the south, southeast and southwest. These views, highly valued by residents and tourists, are the most important feature of the

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village.



The landscape adjoining the village is intimate and small scale. Winding lanes, springs, small sloping fields and copses join together to form the wooded tapestry of the Weald.

Farmland, whose use has changed over the years, provides the second most important landscape feature of the village. The fields and woods are valued by all as a green breathing space, establishing the village as an independent entity, separated from the urban areas of Edenbridge and Westerham.

The landscape plays an integral part in the village. It is the result of many centuries of evolution. The pattern of roads, tracks, field boundaries and hedgerows is firmly rooted in the past. These patterns of historic landscape should be maintained.

There has been limited new agricultural building in recent years. Careful location and screening can help reduce any negative visual impact that such buildings might otherwise have. Any new structures such as agricultural buildings, domestic stabling and field shelters should be of a scale sympathetic to other agricultural buildings in the area, except where there may be justification for larger buildings to meet farming requirements.



All the roads and lanes in Crockham Hill have separate individuality, and parts of each differ in character.



Crockham Hill is crisscrossed with footpaths, many following the minor roads and tracks, and giving hikers spectacular views over the Weald. Both footpaths and bridleways are the pedestrian arteries of the community, prized and used daily by the people of Westerham, Crockham Hill and its many visitors.

Two major footpaths – The Vanguard Way and The Greensand Way pass through the village.

The rural area of Crockham Hill provides a distinctive local vernacular and a legible network of public footpaths and bridleways that provide opportunities for long distance views across the Low Weald between woodland.

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Design Guidelines

- CHLS1** All new development should respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the immediate locality in order to protect the distinctive landscape character of the Crockham Hill. The pattern of the historic landscape and the key views should be protected and enhanced. The key views currently identified are looking north from Marlpit Hill towards Crockham Hill and the Chart hillside and south from Hosey hill and Mariners hill across the valley (CS policy SP 1)
- CHLS2** Where planning permission is required, proposals for new agricultural buildings, stabling and field shelters should respond to the scale and height of other agricultural and equestrian buildings in the area and be closely related to existing farm buildings or other groups of buildings that are well screened from public view, unless justification is provided as to its location, scale and design. (Policy LT2 ADMP)
- CHLS3** Proposals for the location of temporary or permanent mobile homes or caravans will not be supported unless they have a proven need for agriculture or forestry and the siting is acceptable in terms of location, access, environmental and local amenity considerations (Policy GB6 ADMP)
- CHLS4** The rural character of the narrow lanes and footpaths, together with the street scene that adjoins them, should be maintained and the opportunity to extend public footpaths would be supported (Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment 2017)

3.3 Settlement Characteristics

Crockham Hill consists a number of roads and lanes, each displaying separate characteristics. The more significant roads/lanes are detailed below. There are a number of listed in the village.

Main Road - The B2026 bisects the village carrying fast flowing traffic between Edenbridge and Oxted; and towards the A25 and M25.

From the north the B269 (Kent Hatch Road) bends sharply and narrows between steep walled banks and there is an outstanding view of the church tower with the village and Weald.

On the east side of the road is a group of stone built terraced cottages and seven brick built, tile hung, sash windowed terraced houses. They are staggered down the hill, and form an attractive entrance to the church, school, and village hall on Church Lane.



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Further down and on the west side, The Royal Oak public house and the row of stone built cottages form an attractive group of buildings. The cottages are of an attractive domestic scale with white windows and doors, and small front gardens. 1-9 Royal Oak Cottages; nos. 10 & 11 Cambridge Cottages and 1-4 Hillside represent the earliest row of terraced houses in the village.

These two groups of terraced houses are very good examples of local materials and architecture; they form distinctive village features of pictorial merit. Opposite the Royal Oak, on a gentle mound, is Willys at Heath; 16th century, stone built, Listed, and an important part of the village street-scene.

Leaving the village heading south, the road levels out with fields and several houses on each side, including the tiny hamlet of Rushetts. The land then rises to Marlpit Hill. Unlike the north, there is no well-defined southern entrance to Crockham Hill.

Goodley Stock comprises a road, running from the Greensand ridge and B269 to Westerham, and two private roads. Most of the houses were built in the early part of the 20th century. They have large wooded gardens from land originally purchased from the Squerryes estate. Goodley Stock faces thick woodland on the Squerryes estate on both sides, and has no views.

Kent Hatch is part of the B269, and runs along the Greensand ridge from the Surrey border as far as Smiths Lane, where it becomes Main Road. The dominant feature is Kent Hatch, a large red brick and tiled Edwardian house now converted into four dwellings. Several houses, including Crockham Hill Farm (Listed), are set in the hillside on the west of Kent Hatch. On the east side a lane leads over the Common, with numerous footpaths, to Larksfeld (Listed), The Warren, and to the imposing 1910 Red House, which has two cottages.



Church Lane is a very busy lane as it leads down to the Village Hall with parking for approximately 60 cars, to Crockham Hill Primary School, and to Holy Trinity Church. It is surrounded by rolling fields and beautiful views, and is also part of a footpath leading across Church Fields to Froghole.

Although all three buildings are in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt, flexibility may be required, to accommodate changing needs of the community.



Hosey Common Road - The B2026 turns north towards Westerham. The road climbs round the historic landscape past Froghole Lane, before winding by one or two houses and thick woodland.

Froghole Lane - Formerly a cart track winding between the steep side of Mariners Hill and the bowl of Froghole, the lane curves between indigenous hedges and steep banks, and crosses Jacobs Ladder – a track which climbs up to National Trust fields, and drops as a stepped footpath to Close Farm Lane. The whole of Froghole Lane is a footpath.

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Froghole Farm and Froghole Oasts consist of quintessentially Kentish materials and design. They are very good examples of local materials and architecture and form a distinctive village feature, which is of pictorial merit.

Smiths Lane runs north from Main Road and the small Village Garden, and sloping steeply, again joins the main road a quarter of a mile highest is central to the village. From the lane you can walk to School, Hall or pub.

Oakdale Lane is part of the Vanguard Way footpath; this popular short lane has extensive views south and west, and forms an eclectic mix of house styles.



The eight houses just inside Oakdale Lane form a blend of differing ages and styles, and are good examples of local materials and architecture; they form distinctive village features.

Pootings Lane - A mile southeast from Crockham Hill, on Wealden clay is the hamlet of Pootings. The character of building is different with small white bungalows, white painted brick, white weatherboard, and grey slate roofs.



The terraced and single weather boarded houses between Meadow Cottage and Willowdene form a homogeneous street-scene of Kentishlocal style. They are good examples of local materials and architecture and they form distinctive village features.



Chartwell is listed for its historical importance as the home of Winston Churchill, as is its forecourt brick and tiled wall. It is a building of significance in the Parish and is a well-visited tourist attraction.

Design Guidelines

- CHSC1** Any proposed development shall retain and should enhance the distinctive character of the village and will be in keeping with the character of the immediate locality. The village will be protected from inappropriate development. (CS Policy SP1)
- CHSC2** Extensions to the rear of existing properties are preferred as they have less of an impact on the street scene. Any extensions to the side and rear of properties are encouraged to be in keeping with the scale and design of the property and not to dominate the existing property or site. Front extensions will only be permitted where they would not have a harmful impact on the existing property or street scene (SPD Residential Extensions)

3.4 Buildings and Materials

Crockham Hill's buildings are very traditional.



Examples of local materials and traditional design features can be seen readily in the village such as the wooden framed windows and use of stone in the images above and below.



The village centre and the few pre-1900 outlying farmhouses are of local golden brown sandstone/ragstone with chip stone pointing, slate or clay tile roofs large brick chimneys and small casement windows.

There have been new buildings or extensions, which follow these examples; their scale is domestic with a maximum of two storeys, small upright windows in proportion to larger wall areas. House roofs are steep-pitched (47-50 degrees) and often tiled with one-third/one-quarter hips at the ridge and tile-hung upper walls. Dormers have been kept small, and where

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renovation or extension has been carried out, brick chimneys have been retained.

New Development

The aim of the VDS is to guide development so that it retains and reinforces the village's special qualities. Crockham Hill is not within a settlement boundary. Green Belt and AONB policies apply throughout the village to new development.

It is important that Crockham Hill retains its distinctive rural character. The majority of homes in the village offer a spacious setting allowing for a soft buffer to the open areas of countryside within which the village sits.

Walls

Brick and local ragstone are the most common building materials in the village. Upper floors often have timber framing with tile hanging matching the roof tiles. White painted rendering is used on the older terraced houses, and white painted weatherboard is prevalent in Pootings. There should be respect for local building materials and colours.





Roofs

Crockham Hill's roofs are mostly covered in Kent peg or nib tiles and slate. Some have the traditional Kentish 'barn hip' and gablet detail at the gable ends. Flat or shallow pitched roofs are not typical in the village and it is considered that they could introduce a discordant look to the village.



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Windows

Traditional windows are the building element that most defines the age and character of a house. Traditionally being of wood, they are most exposed to rotting, and are increasingly being replaced by windows of unsuitable material, design, and detail.

Plastic windows have sections, which are almost twice as thick as wood, and coarsen the appearance whenever they are used. Wood or aluminium are considered to retain the original appearance to a greater degree.

Doors

Poorly maintained timber doors can rot. By replacing those with new doors of poor design and detail, the appearance of the house can be drastically altered. New doors should always match the original dimensions and scale of the door of the house as far as practicable.

Extensions

In general, extensions within the village have been sympathetically carried out. However, one or two recent exceptions now stand as permanent reminders of the attention to detail required. Apparently insignificant or small additions may contribute to the steady erosion of the area as a whole.



Dormer and loft windows

Loft extensions have been a popular development in many older properties with an additional 'spare' room with a small, rear dormer, created within the available loft space. When new dormer windows face the street the appearance may be of a third floor to the property. Front facing dormers are not considered to be typical of the village and could appear out of keeping particularly where there are no existing dormers in the front elevations in the street.



Solar Panels & Wind Turbines

Solar panels and wind turbines have the potential to have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and could also potentially have a harmful effect on a property within a sensitive location. They can also appear unattractive in the street-scene and are not a typical feature in the village.

Car Parking

Small village front gardens are an essential part of the character of a rural village. It is accepted that car ownership is increasing which creates a demand for additional parking. However the loss of front gardens to parking can have a harmful effect on the street-scene.

Boundaries

There is evidence of a historic pattern of field boundaries and hedgerows in the village that have been maintained. Well-maintained mixed and hawthorn hedgerows currently commonly bound the agricultural land bordering the local roads.

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There have been examples in recent years of high close-boarded fencing and electric gates on new homes. These have an urbanising effect on the area, and give the properties an isolated and appearance and alienate the community.

Signage, Street Furniture and Lighting

There is no street lighting in Crockham Hill, which reflects its rural setting. Many properties have their own external lighting, such as security or porch lights, and these can be helpful to visitors. Such lighting should be carefully placed and angled, and not so powerful that they are detrimental to neighbouring properties.

Most aspects of signage, street furniture and lighting are the responsibility of Kent County Council.

There are examples of cluttered street furniture and signs that do not enhance the area.

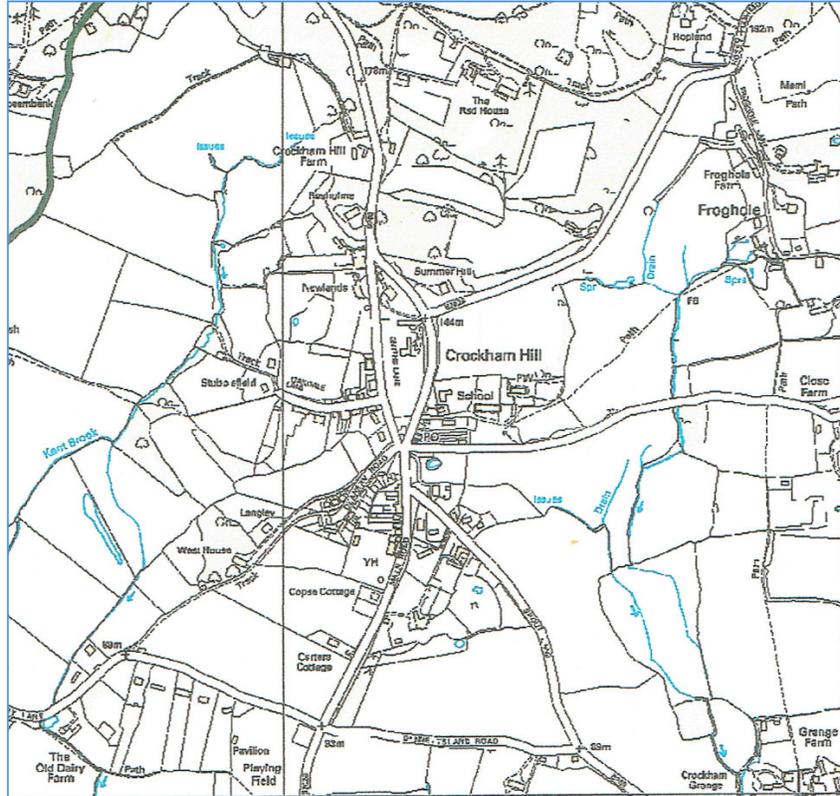


Design Guidelines

- CHBM1** New development should respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the immediate locality. It should also respect the character and distinctiveness of the village. Traditional materials should be used wherever possible. (ADMP EN1)
- CHBM2** The loss of traditional boundaries (such as hedges) should be avoided. Boundary treatment which is not characteristic of the area is not supported.
- CHBM3** Flat roof extensions will not be supported where they are not sympathetic to the principal form or would be harmful to the scale and character of the existing property. Pitched roof extensions should reflect the form, pitch and materials of the existing roof of the property. (SPD Residential Extensions)
- CHBM4** Solar panels should be encouraged to be located on the rear of the property rather than the principle elevation, where practicable, and only where there is no impact on amenity or harm to the AONB. Wind turbines shall be carefully assessed in terms of their impact on amenity and sensitivity of the locality. (SPD Residential Extensions)
- CHBM5** Loft extensions should not detract from the roof profile of the existing dwelling and should follow the vertical lines of existing doors and windows. Front facing dormers, which would be out of keeping with the street scene, will not normally be supported. Flat roof dormers should be avoided unless they are a characteristic of the existing dwelling (SPD residential extensions)
- CHBM6** The doors and windows of extensions should normally match the proportions, design and materials of the original building and follow the main lines of the existing openings. (SPD Residential Extensions)
- CHBM7** All new developments should provide at least minimum vehicle parking in accordance with the current Kent County Council parking standards in order to provide appropriate levels of parking provision specific to local circumstances. (ADMP policy T2)
- CHBM8** Lighting should be designed in relation to the function of the area that is being lit to avoid unnecessary light pollution. Effort should be made to considerably reduce the harmful impact on privacy or amenity for nearby residential properties or on the AONB as a result of lighting on developments. (ADMP Policy EN6)
- Appendix 1** Crockham Hill Village Centre map
- Appendix 2** Brief history of Crockham Hill

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Appendix 1 – Crockham Hill Village Centre Map



Appendix 2 Brief History of Crockham Hill

With good drinking water, firewood, building materials, and a south facing elevated position, Crockham Hill must have been lived in for thousands of years. The earliest record though is the Iron Age Hill Fort east of Goodley Stock. The Roman Road from London to Lewis lies $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the centre of the village, and passes through the centre of Edenbridge.

One of the earliest records is of the 1596 Great Landslide when land to the south of Hosey Common Road subsided to form the bowl of Froghole.

There are documentary records of a number of the first houses – Pootings Manor (c1375), and Chartwell (14th century).

When medieval strip farming was superseded by enclosure in the 16th century, large estates and farms were formed. Old Dairy Farm in 1547; Mariners (1561) owned 430 acres; Close Farm had 196 acres in 1563; Hurst and Moat Farms were formed in the 1600s; Crockham Grange (Spout Farm) was built on a medieval moated site, and Houses like Spark Haw and Wellscoopers (1600), and Buttles Steps were also recorded. The Old House was a hostelry in 1618. The largest estate was Squerryes, still after nearly 300 years owned by the Warde family.

George Warde decided his local farm workers needed a church in Crockham Hill to save the long walk to St Mary's in Westerham. George Horseman cut local Chiddingstone stone at Church Cottages, and built Holy Trinity in 1842. The school followed soon after.



The original stone built houses of the village were clustered round a Toll House next to The Royal Oak, on the west side of the main road. In 1867 the Turnpike act led to the removal of this unpopular tollgate.

Agriculture changed in 1860 with the collapse of corn prices, and farmers started growing hops – and building oast houses. There are at least 14 of these tall circular or square buildings in the village. Wooden Cottages were built along the old drovers track at Pootings.

The fully agricultural nature of the village changed dramatically with the advent of the

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railways in Oxted (1845), Sevenoaks (1862), and Westerham in 1882. Larksfield was built in the mid 1850s by Harriet Yorke, the sister of Octavia Hill. By the 1870s larger houses were being built, many of them sited on the Greensand ridge to make the most of the spectacular views. First Oakdale in 1870, Heath House in 1873, Lewins in 1876, Kent Hatch in 1904, and The Red House in 1910.

One of the most important developments for Crockham Hill was the formation of the National Trust. Octavia Hill had known the area for years, and after purchasing part of Toys Hill in 1898, Mariners Hill was bought, preserving wonderful views forever. Further purchases followed. Octavia Hill was buried in Crockham Hill in 1912.

The sale of Mariners with 240 acres in 1902 led to more houses on the ancient cart track round Froghole. High Quarry was built in 1905; Bossets, Acremead, and Little Court in 1910/11. The sale of more estates followed. Gradually houses have been built along a number of existing lanes running east and west off the Main road. Farmhouses and oasts became private dwellings, and pairs of farm cottages single houses.

In the twenties and thirties, individual houses with large gardens were built along Goodley Stock, Close Farm Road and Dairy Lane;

In 1934 the first social housing appeared in the form of brick houses built in five pairs next to the Royal Oak, to give better accommodation to families living in cramped farm cottages. Three more pairs followed after 1945, then flats for older people in the 50s and three pairs of bungalows for the elderly in the 60s.

Piped water was brought to Crockham Hill in the 1920s; gas has never been installed, and much of the outlying parts of the village are without main drainage.

In 1946 cricket and football pitches were formed on the new War Memorial Playing Field. The Village Garden was donated. In 2009 the School playing fields were leased, and fenced.

The 1947 Planning Act established the Green Belts, which have preserved all the countryside around Crockham Hill. The declaration of the whole area as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has further enhanced the protection of local countryside.

By 2000 the last of five or six shops in the centre of the village had been made into a house. The very popular school was expanded three times in the last 25 years; the ex-aircraft hangar, which the WI owned, was removed, and a new Village Hall (on a different site) was built in 1992; and has since been expanded.

ST LAWRENCE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT 2018

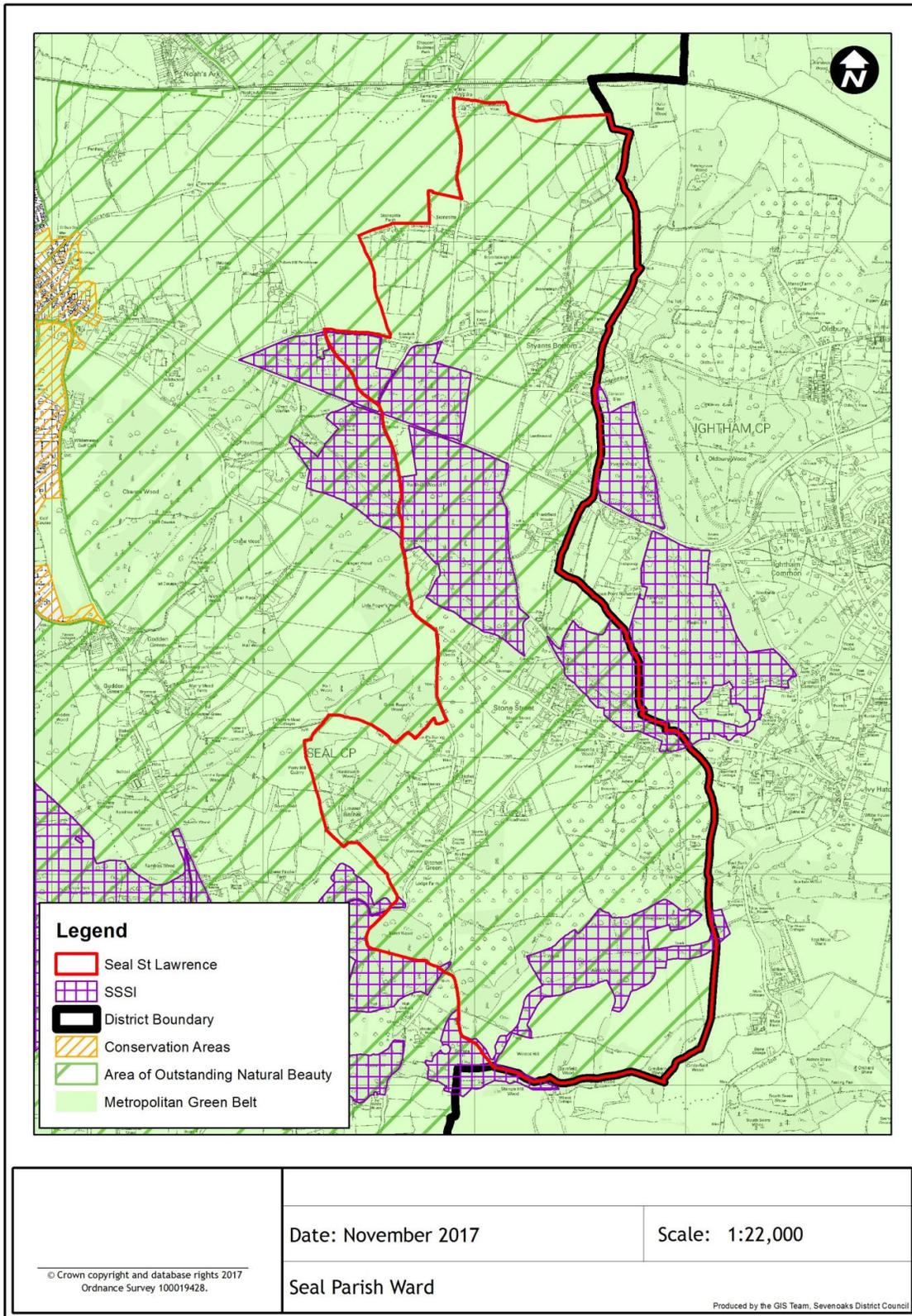
Including Bitchet Green, Stone Street, Seal Chart



ST LAWRENCE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

The Village Design Statement covers the ward of St. Lawrence within the Parish of Seal, and incorporates the hamlets of Bitchet Green, Stone Street and Seal Chart.

2018



An overview of St Lawrence

The Ecclesiastical Parish of St Lawrence (referred to as "The Parish" in this document), and the civil ward of St. Lawrence, lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in recognition of the fact that this is one of Britain's finest landscapes we are therefore privileged to live in an area of beautiful, varied and relatively unspoiled countryside. Residents and planners alike have an obligation to preserve and enhance the natural beauty of the countryside, not just for the sake of the present and future residents, but also for the many walkers, riders and cyclists who visit us from London, the Medway towns and further afield.

Background

In 2004 a committee of local people prepared the Village Design Statement for St Lawrence Parish as Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Sevenoaks District Plan, now superseded by the Core Strategy (2011) and Allocations and Development Management Plan (2015).

This edition has been revised by Seal Parish Council to reflect the views of local people from a study of the Seal Parish Plan Questionnaire 2010, and to permit the design statements' incorporation into the Sevenoaks District Local Plan. It has been subject to a full public consultation process prior to publication.

Sevenoaks District Council provided the Ordnance Survey maps included within this publication, under licence from the Ordnance Survey, in order to fulfil its public function to encourage local involvement. Persons viewing this mapping should contact Ordnance Survey copyright for advice where they wish to licence Ordnance Survey mapping for their own use

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This document has been prepared in conformity with the District Council's Core Strategy. Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy states that:

"All new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated. Account should be taken of guidance adopted by the Council in the form of Kent Design, local Character Area Assessments, Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Village Design Statements and Parish Plans. In rural areas account should be taken of guidance in the Countryside Assessment and guidance produced by the AONBs..."

The delivery mechanisms for the policy include:

"The Council will work with local communities to produce Village Design Statements, Parish Plans and Character Area Assessments to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents to provide detailed locally specific guidance to support the general policy".

Further, policy EN1 of the District Council's Allocations and Development Management Plan provides a detailed framework for assessing planning applications against Core Strategy policy SP1. It gives criteria against which proposals can be assessed so as to deliver high quality design that responds to local character.

This Village Design Statement for St Lawrence is intended to fulfil the roles identified for Village Design Statements in Policy SP1 and EN1 in providing detailed locally specific guidance on the design of new development.

In preparing this document, recognition has been given to the responses by people from the St Lawrence Ward to the Seal Parish Plan Questionnaire 2010, in particular the following:

- 41% of respondents had looked at the Village Design Statement.
- Of those respondents 75% found it to be a useful document.
- 86% of respondents thought the Parish Council should liaise more closely with Sevenoaks District Council in relation to the Village Design Statement being adhered to.
- Given the opportunity to suggest improvements to locality, 9 respondents favoured control of speeding vehicles; 5 suggested more pothole and road repairs while 3 wished to see reduced hedge encroachment.

The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan sets out aims, and policies and actions for the positive management of the Kent Downs AONB and should be taken into consideration.

1. The Purpose of the Village Design Statement

1.1 What is a Village Design Statement?

Village Design Statements are an initiative of Natural England supported by the Government. They are intended to provide local guidance for any proposals for development within the area covered by the Design Statement. They provide a way of ensuring that any new developments are designed and located in a way that reflects local characteristics and the qualities that people value in their village and its surroundings.

The statements are produced by local communities as guidance for use by planners, developers, agents and local Councils. Although the Parish Council is consulted on planning applications, local residents do not get the opportunity to comment or contribute at an early stage to the design of new development: 'how it looks'. Often, they are presented with a completed design and can only comment at that stage, rather than influence. Once a Village Design Statement has been prepared and adopted by the District Council, it can be used in providing guidance to future developments and will also be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

1.2 What is its purpose?



Rural scene

We recognise that changes are inevitable but wish to help manage change in order to preserve and enhance the beauty of our parish. The majority of the Parish is covered by the Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) status, and therefore enjoys a high level of protection. But this should not lull us into a false sense of security. It is often the cumulative effects of relatively small alterations which affect our perception of a place: a plethora of road signs, an ostentatious garden wall or gate, or an ugly extension can introduce a discordant suburban tone in a rural landscape. This Design Statement outlines what residents feel makes St Lawrence parish distinctive,

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highlights some areas of concern and, most importantly, provides guidelines which we hope will help residents, planners, architects and builders to rise to the challenge.

This Design Statement describes St Lawrence Parish as it is today and highlights the qualities that residents value. It is intended to be a practical tool capable of influencing decisions affecting design and development in the parish and assisting Sevenoaks District Council consider planning applications.

Change is not only brought about by new buildings but also by smaller, day-to-day alterations to homes and gardens, the countryside, paths, walls and hedges



which can affect the look and feel of a whole parish. This Design Statement provides guidance for anyone considering development in the area. It will be as valuable to individual householders wishing to build extensions or make minor alterations as it will be to planners, developers and architects considering new buildings

Listed house.

1.3 In summary it is intended for:

- *local householders, businesses and farmers*
- *statutory bodies and providers of services and utilities*
- *Councils- both Sevenoaks District Council and Parish Councils*
- *developers and builders*
- *architects, designers, planners and engineers*

1.4 What does it cover?

This Design Statement contains sections on:

- *the historical and landscape setting of the parish*
- *the pattern of settlements*
- *the form and style of buildings*
- *other important features*

Each section concludes with a number of 'Design Guidelines'. We hope these recommendations will ensure that future developments will preserve the beauty of our countryside

2. LANDSCAPE SETTING OF ST LAWRENCE PARISH

- 2.1 St Lawrence ecclesiastical parish covers an area of approximately 980 acres of quintessential Kentish landscape. It extends 3 miles north to south and one mile east to west. The dominant landscape feature is the Greensand Ridge which straddles the parish from east to west, with Raspit Hill, at a height of just under 200 metres being one of the highest points in Kent. To the north, the ground drops gradually towards the foot of the North Downs. There are extensive woods scattered across the Parish, mainly oak but with impressive stands of beech, many of which are classified as ancient woodland.

There was some quarrying for sand until about 40 years ago; these disused quarries have now returned to nature with oak saplings beginning to replace mature birch. There are several Sites of Special Scientific interest. These are of national importance for their biological or geological interest and include Oldbury and Seal Chart in the north and One Tree Hill and Bitchet Common in the south.

- 2.2 In earliest times the land was mainly used for pastoral farming with enough arable to sustain the scattered farmsteads. The woods have always been of the utmost importance supplying fuel, animal feed, fencing and building materials. They were therefore carefully tended and cropped on a regular basis. These agricultural activities, developed over many generations, make the landscape attractive and distinctive. The patchwork of grazed fields, orchards with their trimmed windbreaks and irregular tracts of coppiced chestnut and extensive oak woodland make the parish a popular venue for walkers and horse riders who use the extensive network of foot and bridle paths. It is these usages which have



determined the appearance of the area. Over the past two centuries the emphasis turned to fruit farming but today this has proved to be non viable and has been replaced with the cultivation of lavender and cob nuts which are used in the preparation of beauty products.

Horse riding

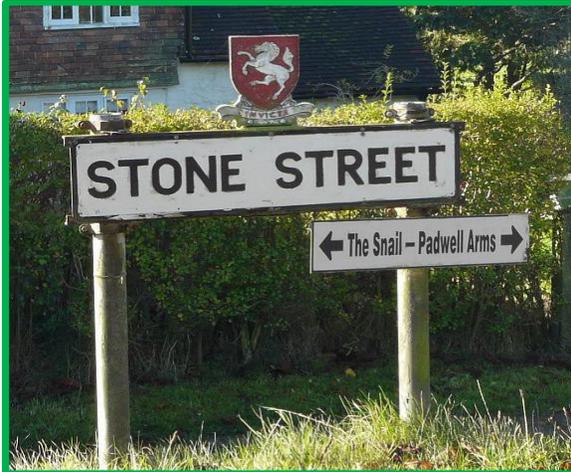
- 2.3 There is surprisingly little change in the extent and distribution of wood and cultivated areas: a visitor from the year 1800 would still find a largely familiar landscape. We are fortunate that much of this beautiful countryside is accessible to the public by a network of foot and bridle paths and winding country lanes through dense woodland, pastures and orchards. Some of these go back to

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earliest times and offer panoramic views to the North Downs, to the wooded slopes of the Greensand Ridge, or over the rolling countryside of the Weald.

3. HISTORY AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

3.1 The parish has been occupied by humans since Palaeolithic times and has at least one Anglo-Saxon driveway crossing it. Over the centuries development has been strongly influenced by very early tracks, some of which later became roads.



3.2 There are three main settlements, the hamlets of Bitchet Green, Stone Street, and Seal Chart as well as many isolated dwellings among the woods and fields. This reflects our history as a farming area from earliest times with settlements originally based around farmsteads. There is a scattering of smaller dwellings; many of which were originally farmworkers' or tradesman's cottages.

Village sign

3.3 The arrival of the railway in Sevenoaks in the 19th century saw city businessmen building or developing substantial properties, especially in positions affording beautiful views. From information obtained from the Register of Electors there are approximately 180



occupied houses and about 360 adult residents, most of them working in London or neighbouring towns, or retired. Large numbers of children live in the parish and many other children visit for walking, riding and cycling or to attend the excellent primary school. The main centres of local activity - church, school, the village hall, and at the time of writing the two pub/restaurants (The Padwell and The Snail), the cricket/ football pitches - are widely separated from each other

but are all in beautiful rural Setting

St Lawrence School

4. HOUSES: BUILDINGS IN A LANDSCAPE

4.1 The impact of buildings on this rolling countryside depends on the topography. Buildings on the slopes of the Greensand Ridge or in open farmland are visible for many miles around. Others are concealed from the road and from their immediate neighbours, yet are clearly visible at a distance from one of the many vantage points. Others are concealed by foliage in summer while forming a prominent feature after leaf fall. To preserve the beauty of the countryside, consideration must be given to not just a building's compatibility with its immediate environment but its potential impact on the wider landscape and views. In a hilly area such as this, there may be cases where immediate neighbours are not affected by a development but it can easily impact views from miles around.

4.2 There is no dominant vernacular style. Most of the listed buildings (Bitchet Farmhouse, Stone Street Farm Cottage, Foxbury Oast, Pond Farmhouse, Chart Cottage, Apple Tree Cottage School, Chart Oast (formerly Crockers), Stonepitts, Bank Top Cottage, Bennetts Cottage, Cheeseman's Cottage) have their origins in medieval farm houses and cottages. There are a few very large houses, such as Stonepitts, Frankfield, Chart Lodge and Flaneswood, but these are generally unobtrusive and have not had a noticeable influence on the architectural style of the area. Most of the Victorian and Edwardian houses are small (mainly terraced and semi-detached), in sheltered locations and are of local materials which have weathered well. Because they are not of major architectural or historic importance, these Victorian and Edwardian buildings are not listed and are therefore vulnerable to



insensitive alterations and expansion. The lesson to be drawn from our older buildings is that our landscape is best suited to buildings of modest size and unobtrusive appearance which blend in with the countryside rather than bold statements which draw the eye.

St. Lawrence Church

charming additions to the landscape.

4.3 St Lawrence Church and School were built in the mid nineteenth century in the Gothic style and provide

4.4 The 20th century's contribution to the beauty of the area was variable. A few houses have been designed with care and are attractive in their own right, blend in well with neighbouring houses and with a rural setting. (Examples are the farm cottages on Church Road.) Their sympathetic designs sit comfortably in the rural landscape and are not overpowering in size or style by using quality materials, clay roof tiles, stock bricks and timber or metal windows

4.5 The Village Hall is an attractive example of early 20th century architecture that does not dominate the site and has recently been renovated with the help of funding from the Millennium Commission and an enthusiastic community effort. The new windows, while

being more thermally efficient and easy to maintain, do not spoil the overall look of the building with a steeply pitched roof and appropriate use of materials.

4.6 Broadhoath, a semicircle of houses built in the early twentieth century by a local benefactor for occupation by locally employed residents, is stylistically quite different from anything else in the parish. In a more prominent location Broadhoath might appear out of keeping but, in its hidden setting, forms a pleasing architectural whole whose integrity is worth preserving.



Barn conversion

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Village Hall

4.7 Residents and visitors have commented that some newer buildings do not blend well into the surrounding countryside in terms of setting, style, proportion and colours. We hope this Village Design Statement can help improve this in the future.

4.8 Green Belt and AONB regulations restrict most new building except for limited extensions, replacement of existing permanent buildings, agricultural buildings that are necessary for the purposes of agriculture, or limited affordable housing within or adjacent to existing settlements that meet an identified local need.

4.9 Any large scale development within the Parish will need to comply with national and local policies for development in the Green Belt and the AONB. The '*Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014 - 2019*' and its policies aim to conserve and enhance the local character, qualities and distinctiveness of the Kent Downs. They are a material consideration in planning matters and should be afforded weight in decisions. However, high property prices and the attractive landscape of the area create a considerable financial incentive, and may increase the risk of developments which seek to exceed the limits on expansion allowed under the Local Plan and other policies.

4.10 Replacing, converting or extending isolated properties in visible locations provides a challenge to architects, planners, developers and house owners to contribute to rather than detract from the beauty of the wider landscape.

Design Guidelines

4.11 We would encourage anyone contemplating any development to consult this Village Design Statement before submitting an application. Particular importance is attached to meeting the requirements of Policies EN1, which looks at different ways to encourage good design, and EN2, which seeks to provide adequate residential amenities for existing and future occupiers. Also the Sevenoaks District Council Allocations and Development Management Plan, which provides further development management guidance:

In particular:

DG - 1 Buildings that make an important aesthetic contribution to the landscape due to their size, scale or prominent location will require especially sensitive treatment to ensure that the scale and design does not make the property more dominant in the landscape or detract from the aesthetic contribution it makes to the landscape, even where the building itself is of no special historic or architectural significance (and is therefore not listed).

DG - 2 In the absence of a dominant architectural style, any new buildings, conversions or extensions will be acceptable provided that they do not have a detrimental impact on the character and residential amenity of the immediate vicinity and also that the works do not result in the increase in their prominence in the landscape.

DG - 3 New buildings that would project above the natural skyline and would appear more prominent would not be supported.

DG 4 - All new buildings, alterations, or extensions visible from the road, footpaths, bridleways or from the main vantage points across the Parish should be of a design and in materials that sympathetic to the character and materials of the area. The Kent Design Guide may help with this.

For example, Suitable materials would not include:

Large areas of glass, whitewash, concrete, or similarly reflective surfaces that will be obtrusive by reflecting the light should be avoided where possible. A type of glass that would reduce light emission would be favourable.

DG 5 - The use of obtrusive artificial lighting to buildings should be avoided, except where it can be shown that it is essential for safety or security in accordance with Policy EN6 of the Allocations and Development Management Plan. Low level discreet lighting to drives may be acceptable if proved to be serving a useful purpose.

DG 6 - Where appropriate, new, converted, or extended houses forming part of a complex, row or group of housing should be compatible with neighboring properties in terms of size, scale, roofline, size of windows and, crucially, materials. The aim should be that after ten years the new construction is only noticeable on close inspection.

DG 7 - All new constructions should employ materials that will mellow with time.

DG 8 - Particular care must be taken in proposals for increasing the height of a building. Adding an additional storey can upset the balance and proportion of the building and cause it to obtrude upon the landscape.

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DG 9 -Chimneys should normally be retained especially where they are a distinctive architectural feature.

DG 10 – In some instances, provided it is of appropriate scale and employs traditional or appropriate new materials, an original design is preferable to a pastiche of traditional style where a few ‘traditional features’ are added to off the peg buildings.

DG 11 - Window and door design should match the existing building (in the case of extensions) or neighbouring buildings (in the case of new builds).

Note - Double glazing may be inappropriate on historic properties and may require planning permission or Listed Building Consent.

DG13 - Consideration should be given to attaching a condition to granted planning decisions prohibiting the removal of trees which can add to the amenity of the area and afford enhanced views to the applicant.

Extensions: Design Guidelines

EXDG 1 - Present guidelines on extensions in National and Local Planning Policy must be implemented firmly and sensibly to prevent small houses being extended in ways which distort the scale and balance of the original building or are out of keeping with their surroundings.

EXGD 2- Extensions should normally blend in with neighbouring properties in terms of size, roofline, size of windows, style of doors and window frames and, crucially, materials. Ideally, after ten years the new construction should only be noticeable on close inspection.

Replacement Buildings

4.12 There is a trend within the rural areas of the ward to demolish existing houses and replace them with new buildings. The new dwellings usually take full advantage of permitted increase in size in conformity with Planning Policy, currently in the region of an increase of 50% of the floor area that existed before 1948 or when the original dwelling was constructed if after 1948. Many of the new houses have basements or subterranean rooms which allows for even larger units without greater impact upon the open



countryside. It can also be beneficial to relocate the dwelling on the site to mitigate the impact of the building on the openness of the Green Belt and the protected landscape. The aim of the document is to ensure that the replacement buildings are not more obtrusive in the landscape and that developers seek to reduce the impact of the replacement buildings to protect the landscape and character of the area.

Replacement building

RBDG1 - Consideration should be given to the overall impact of the proposal to replace an existing dwelling on the surrounding area and in particular should seek to prevent:

- Large windows with unacceptable light pollution.***
- A negative impact on the character created by walls, gates and entrance drives***
- Excessive roof areas. Ridge heights should be no more than the demolished unit***
- Poor quality of materials and fenestration. Roof tiles in particular should not produce bland surfaces***
- Excessive lighting. Lighting should be low key and not damage the night sky.***
- Inappropriately located solar panels. Panels should be located very discreetly and not damage views from footpaths, bridleways and roads.***

Whilst we would like developers to take this guidance into account when designing and developing new schemes we do understand that some of the works may fall under permitted development and therefore outside the control of planning policies. We would, however, expect any developer to check with the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the works are permitted before they carry out the works.

Domestic Outbuildings: Design Guidelines

DODG 1 - Garages should ideally appear to be an integral part of the original building to prevent the spread of built form across the site where possible Where this is not practicable, the garage should be in keeping with the style and materials of the main building.

DODG 2 - It is preferable that conservatories are sited with care to prevent large areas of glass being visible from a great distance.

DODG 3 - Many properties in the Parish have large gardens. Permission to build stables, barns and stores and similar structures within domestic curtilages should only be granted on condition that their use remains ancillary to the main dwelling on the site, this will prevent structures from being sold off separately.

5. FARMING, THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT



5.1 Relatively few people are now employed in agriculture, reflecting the decline of the industry and increasing mechanisation. The majority of local residents now work in surrounding towns and villages or in London. However there are still two significant farming enterprises (Foxbury Farm and Lower Fawke Farm) and a number of smaller holdings. Foxbury Farm produces lavender and cobnuts while *Chart Farm Businesses* Fawke Farm produces sheep and arable

crops.

Recommendations and Design Guidelines

FDG1 Farmers and landowners should be encouraged to make full use of all their assets, including appropriate diversification. The maintenance of the wider agricultural economy will help protect and manage the landscape which makes the area appealing.

FDG2 New and existing businesses can contribute to the local economy and social fabric of the area. A balance of business and residential use within the area is to be encouraged. In line with Core Strategy Policy LO8, new business should be encouraged into the Parish, subject to their activities being in keeping with and not harmful to the tranquil rural area and landscape. Technological advances such as the Internet make this increasingly feasible.

Traffic, parking and noise levels will be key factors when considering proposals for new businesses. The conversion of redundant farm buildings for this purpose should be encouraged, provided the conversion is in keeping with the rural setting and that the conversion does not result in the loss of character of the building itself.

FDG3 Proposals for the construction of new agricultural buildings, stables or sheds must be scrutinised very carefully, to ensure that they are of an appropriate size and location and provide for a clear agricultural need.

FDG4 Agricultural buildings, domestic stabling and field shelters should be designed to minimise the impact on the beauty of the countryside by, for example, siting them in natural hollows or behind existing or new natural screening and using subdued colours or timber cladding.



Listed Oast

FDG6 Permission for caravans, mobile homes or other temporary buildings to be used for agricultural, residential or business purposes should be granted, where appropriate, temporary consent to allow the need for the temporary structure to be reviewed to ensure that the permitted need continues to exist.

6. ROADS, LANES AND RIGHTS OF WAY TRAFFIC

6.1 A particularly attractive feature of the parish is the many country lanes winding between banks and high hedges or through dense woodland. The network of rights of way and bridle paths through dense woodland and extensive orchards is treasured by residents and the many walkers, riders and cyclists who visit throughout the year.

6.2 The parish is divided by the busy and dangerous A25 though fortunately this does not greatly affect the beauty or tranquility of the rest of the parish. A far more serious problem is the ever-increasing volume and speed of traffic on our narrow country lanes. The situation is particularly worrying because of the number of children who come to this area for walking, riding and cycling. Residents believe that a fatal accident, especially one involving walkers, cyclists or riders is inevitable unless traffic calming measures are undertaken as a matter of urgency. The situation is exacerbated by the number of motorists using minor roads for the school run particularly in Stone Street.



6.3 Our narrow lanes are unsuited to large lorries which consequently damage verges and hedges as well as posing a threat to other road users. The Parish would support measures to help improve the protection of these verges.

6.4 There is a general perception among residents that some road signs and bollards within the parish are unnecessary, obtrusive, or poorly sited.

6.5 The atmosphere of a country road can too easily be spoiled by inappropriate walls and gates. In most parts of the parish high brick walls, pillars, solid fencing or ostentatious metal gates look out of place among the fields and hedgerows.

6.6 Most aspects of signage, street furniture and roads are the responsibility of Kent County Council and much of this guidance is directed towards them.

Design Guidelines

ROWDG 1 From a design viewpoint, appropriate markings on the road Surfaces, such as roundels or repeater signs, are preferable to multiple signs on posts.

ROWDG 2 Narrow winding lanes with high banks and hedges are one of the most attractive features of the parish and should be protected wherever possible.

ROWDG 3 In most parts of the parish pavements would be unnecessary or impracticable and out of keeping with the rural surroundings. They should therefore be avoided where possible.

ROWDG 4 Road signs and bollards should be kept to the minimum. The local people would wish to see that the number is compatible with safety but does not result in the proliferation of signage.

Note – independently from this Design Statement, the Parish Council are encouraged to examine the positioning of all road signs with a view to making recommendations to the KCC for the removal of unnecessary ones and for re-siting others.

ROWDG 5 Finger posts are appropriate to a rural area and where possible should be used for directional signs on all 'C' class roads. The Kent 'white horse' signs are recognised by local people as being pleasing.

Note - Planning permission may be required for stone and brick walls, pillars and metal gates and property owners should therefore be encouraged to consult the Council before beginning construction.

ROWDG 6 - Where there are existing adjoining walls and gates, care should be taken to ensure that any new ones contribute to a consistent pattern, form and design. Particular care needs to be taken in the case of isolated dwellings. High walls and elaborate gates can create a more urban character to the site, and look out of place among the hedgerows of our country lanes and landscape.

ROWDG 7 New formal access roads or long imposing driveways, especially with all-weather surfaces, look out of place in this protected landscape and will not be encouraged.

ROWGD 8 Mixed hedges of hawthorn, blackthorn, beech, hornbeam and holly blend in well with the countryside and are encouraged in this Parish. Chestnut fencing is a local product and is therefore particularly appropriate. Conifer hedges can look out of place in a rural setting.

ROWDG 9 The proliferation of advertising signage along the A25 verges on Seal Chart is not encouraged. This an area of special advertising control subject to the Local Planning Authority.

7. LIGHT AND NOISE POLLUTION

7.1 Sound can carry over considerable distances, especially in rolling countryside, and disturb people over a large area. Light pollution is also an increasing problem.

Design Guidelines

NLDG 1 Outdoor lighting for recreational purposes, e.g. tennis courts and swimming pools, normally requires planning consent. If it is required, it would be expected that any proposed development is appropriately designed and discreet. Methods are encouraged to be put in place to reduce light spillage.

NLDG 2 Householders should be encouraged to ensure that lights installed for security and other purposes do not cause light pollution and that security lights are on time switches.

NLDG 3 The potential for noise pollution should be crucial in considering planning applications. Noise abatement measures should be strictly enforced to ensure that the development complies with planning policies in regard to noise, and to prevent any development being harmful to the surrounding amenity.

8. WOODLAND, TREES AND GARDENS

9. Large areas of woodland, much of it ancient woodland with many fine oak and beech, are a distinctive feature of the parish. There are also large plantations of coppiced chestnut which in spring are carpeted with wood anemones and bluebells and which provide an ideal habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Our woods are treasured by residents and visitors alike, especially as most are accessible to the public through an extensive network of foot and bridle paths. The many small woods, coppices, and fine individual trees on private land contribute significantly to the beauty and rural nature of the Parish.

8.1 In general terms it would be inappropriate for this Village Design Statement to try to influence garden design. However, the conversion of woodland or agricultural land into gardens with, for example, lawns, prominent built features, and leylandii hedges, can have an extremely damaging effect on a rural landscape. This insidious threat to the rural landscape is growing as more house owners are in a position to purchase substantial areas of agricultural land or woodland. Important individual trees on private land are especially vulnerable since they may be felled or unsuitably pruned before the authorities can impose an appropriate preservation order. The Parish would support Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) where appropriate.

Design Guidelines

WDG1 Ancient Woodland should continue to enjoy a high degree of statutory protection. Residents and the relevant authorities should be vigilant against gradual encroachment and destruction. Applications that encroach and are harmful to these areas would not be supported.

WDG 2 Owners of areas of woodland and agricultural land should not convert these to gardens if they would destroy the character of the land and fail to protect or enhance the natural beauty of the landscape.

Note - Where this has already been done without permission, where appropriate and in line with legislation, they may be required to return the land to its original condition.



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Garden

WDG 3 In order to preserve the openness of the landscape the incorporation of small Parcels of hitherto agricultural land into garden curtilages should be resisted.

10. OVERHEAD WIRES AND COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

9. 1 In an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty notable for its panoramic views, telecommunications masts may be visible and grossly obtrusive over considerable distances. Siting them where they will do least damage requires great sensitivity. Overhead wires are intrusive though to a lesser extent.

Design Guidelines

OWDG 1 AONB/Green Belt planning restrictions on telecommunications equipment (including masts, satellite dishes and other structures) should be strictly enforced. Operators are encouraged not to permit any masts in prominent position and operators are encouraged to remove them when they become redundant.

9.2 The Local People would support and encourage a programme to relocate overhead wires underground.

APPENDIX

Extracts from Sevenoaks District Council's Core Strategy Adopted February 2011

Policy LO8 - The Countryside and the Rural Economy

The extent of the Green Belt will be maintained.

The countryside will be conserved and the distinctive features that contribute to the special character of its landscape and its biodiversity will be protected and enhanced where possible. The distinctive character of the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and their settings will be conserved and enhanced.

Particular regard will be given to the condition and sensitivity of the landscape character and securing the recommended landscape actions in the proposed SPD to ensure that all development conserves and enhances local landscape character and that appropriate mitigation is provided where damage to local character cannot be avoided.

Development that supports the maintenance and diversity of the rural economy including development for agriculture, forestry, small scale business development and rural tourism projects, and the vitality of local communities will be supported provided it is compatible with policies for protecting the Green Belt, the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty conserves and enhances the value and character of the District's woodland and the landscape character of other rural parts of the District and that it takes account of infrastructure requirements.

Policy SP 1 - Design of New Development and Conservation

All new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated. Account should be taken of guidance adopted by the Council in the form of Kent Design, local Character Area Assessments, Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Village Design Statements and Parish Plans. In rural areas account should be taken of guidance in the Countryside Assessment and AONB Management Plans.

In areas where the local environment lacks positive features new development should contribute to an improvement in the quality of the environment.

New development should create safe, inclusive and attractive environments that meet the needs of users, incorporate principles of sustainable development and maintain and enhance biodiversity.

The District's heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, historic buildings, landscapes and outstanding views will be protected and enhanced.

Extracts from Sevenoaks District Council's Allocations and Development Management Plan

Adopted February 2015

Policy EN1 - Design Principles

Proposals which would create high quality design and meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) the form of the proposed development would respond to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the area;
- b) the layout of the proposed development would respect the topography and character of the site and the surrounding area and sensitively incorporate natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site;
- c) the proposal would not result in the loss of buildings, open spaces or green infrastructure that would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area;
- d) the proposal would ensure satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians and provide adequate parking and refuse facilities;
- e) the proposal would incorporate, within the design opportunities for increasing biodiversity potential, where possible, and retaining and enhancing Green Infrastructure features including sustainable drainage systems. Proposals that affect a site's existing biodiversity and Green Infrastructure should be designed in a way that avoids or mitigates any potential harm;
- f) the design of new buildings and the layout of spaces, including footways, car and cycle parking areas, would be permeable and provide connectivity with neighbouring areas;
- g) new development would be inclusive and where appropriate make satisfactory provision for the safe and easy access of those with disabilities; and h) the design of new developments would result in the creation of a safe and secure environment and incorporate adequate security measures and features to deter crime, fear of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.

Where appropriate, new developments should include infrastructure that meets modern communication and technology needs and restricts the need for future retrofitting. Such infrastructure should include Broadband, high speed internet cabling, digital TV cabling and provision of a power supply that would support green technology initiatives such as in home electric car charging points.

Subject to the above considerations development should make efficient use of the land on which it is proposed.

Where appropriate, proposals should include details and strategies for the effective management and maintenance of sites following their completion.

Policy EN2 - Amenity Protection

Proposals will be permitted where they would provide adequate residential amenities for existing and future occupiers of the development and would safeguard the amenities of existing and future occupants of nearby properties by ensuring that development does not result in, and is not located in areas where occupiers of the development would be subject to, excessive noise, vibration, odour, air pollution, activity or vehicle movements, overlooking or visual intrusion and where the built form would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, or light enjoyed by the

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occupiers of nearby properties.

Policy EN6 - Outdoor Lighting

Proposals for lighting that affect the outdoor environment which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

- a) where associated with a wider development, the proposal would be well integrated within the scheme;
- b) any impact on the night sky would be minimised through time-limited and user activated lighting, the alignment of lamps, provision of shielding and selection of appropriate lighting type and intensity;
- c) there would be no harmful impact on privacy or amenity for nearby residential properties;
- d) the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of any Heritage Asset which may be affected;
- e) any potential impacts on wildlife would be avoided or adequately mitigated where avoidance is not possible; and
- f) where proposals affect Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or open countryside, it can be demonstrated that the lighting is essential for safety or security reasons.

Where these criteria are met, proposals incorporating the use of low energy lighting will be encouraged.

Sevenoaks District Council**Westerham Village Design Statement****Consultation Statement****Introduction**

In accordance with the relevant Planning Regulations, before a Local Authority adopts a supplementary planning document;

“It must prepare a statement setting out the persons the local planning authority consulted when preparing the SPD, a summary of the main issues raised by those persons, and how these issues have been addressed in the SPD...”

This paper fulfils this requirement and sets out the public participation in the preparation of the document (Regulation 17 (1) (b)) and then the statutory public consultation undertaken on the draft Supplementary Planning Document (Regulation 18).

Once adopted, Westerham Village Design Statement SPD will form part of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan. It will not form part of the formal development plan for the area but will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Approach to consultation

Sevenoaks District Council considers that when preparing SPDs it is appropriate to inform, consult and seek the participation of organisations and/or individuals in order to ensure that the documents more closely reflect local needs and priorities.

The Council undertook a 10 week formal consultation on the Westerham Design Statement 2 between 20th April 2018 and 29th June 2018.

As part of this consultation, the Council:

- Published the draft Westerham Design Statement on the Sevenoaks District Council website and through the Council’s consultation system;
- Made the draft SPD available for inspection at the Council’s offices and libraries in the Council’s administrative area during normal office hours;
- Invited persons and organisations on the Council’s LDF mailing list and those registered on the Council’s consultation database, to make representations during the consultation period.

Public Participation in the Preparation of the VDS by the Parish Council

The Westerham VDS has been built on evidence gathered over several months from both the town of Westerham and the rural communities, including the village of Crockham Hill.

The VDS has been created by people who live and work in Westerham Parish. A task force of volunteers drawn from individuals, local organisations, schools and the National Trust carried out research, surveys and consultations to build an evidence base upon which the design guidelines proposed within this document are formulated.

Sustainability Appraisal

A Sustainability Appraisal for the Village Design Statement has not been undertaken as Sec.180 (5) (d) Planning Act 2008 removed the compulsory requirement for a Sustainability Appraisal for a Supplementary Planning Document.

Comments

Comments were received from:

Natural England (Amy Kitching)
Historic England (Robert Lloyd-Sweet)
Ten interested parties

Some comments received make reference to the proposed 'Which Way Westerham' development and do not apply to the Westerham VDS.

The responses broadly supported the document and suggested strengthening of reference to the AONB and SSSI.

Summary of Issues Raised and Responses

Name	Response Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary 	Suggested Changes/ actions
Alison Carter	26 Apr 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agrees with the statement 	None
Jenny Smith	30 Apr 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC11 more robust approach needed for parking provision for new builds, more parking should be required than KCC guidance • Parking standards does not account for car requirements for today's households • Parking by residents in centre does not allow for short term parking for people using the shops • Agree with reduction in signage • LS1 suggest additional description; the meadow views as you approach on the A25 from the West and the Squerryes ridge on the South side of the town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially add further description of additional views
Simon McCarthy	21 May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure affordable housing • Issues which need to be addressed include lack of schools, overwhelmed doctors and parking • Too much expansion will lead to loss of character 	None

Jane Cramp	24 May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleased to see Design Statement • Too simplified in places • Appear to treat north east and north west areas as inferior • Supports that development to the north should have regard for air quality • Any relief road would block entry at Town Centre and have negative impact on Town Centre trade • Unclear why Squerryes Estates influences current and future development • Extend Conservation Area • Disagree for need for commercial sites; there is always empty office space • London Road is not suited to large vehicles relating to commercial premises • Given the existing car journeys large development is not a good idea 	None
Jane Sinclair	27 May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccuracies in description of Westerham • Inset boundary should be defined • No mention of the important view from the North Downs towards Westerham • Would support an allotment campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in descriptions that Westerham is covered by AONB • Add a constraint map for Design Statement area which shows green belt boundary, AONB, conservation area, SSSI etc.
Jenny Cowan	30 May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough emphasis on Green belt and AONB; map should be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a constraint map for Design Statement area which shows

		<p>included to show their extents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support measures to retain character and historic nature of the town if sites are allocated in Westerham • Issues on traffic congestion is not accurately covered • Air quality problem is overstated but agree that development to the north should have regard to air quality regulations • No mention of SSSI and Ancient Woodland at Westerham Wood • Agree with LS1 to LS8 with exception of LS4 • LS4 too willing to concede that open space amenities might simply be replaced with other equivalents • King George Playing Fields are a key feature • SC10 Support emphasis on low densities • SC9 1m between properties is too narrow • Does not identify 'right place' for commercial development • frequency of the M25 overspill problem is overstated • Broadly agree with the specifications SC1 to SC8, and SC10 to SC12 • More opportunity of photos of different architecture and materials to guide larger developments • Comments on WWW masterplan • Broadly support BM1 to 	<p>green belt boundary, AONB, conservation area, SSSI etc (as above)</p>
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		BM15	
Randall	30 May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally agree with principles and values • Relationship between Westerham and the Green belt and AONB is not clear • No mention of SSSI and Ancient Woodland at Westerham Wood • Traffic on A25 when M25 is closed is not a frequent occurrence; when it does happen effect is not just in Westerham • Lack of supportive evidence for current poor air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a constraint map for Design Statement area which shows green belt boundary, AONB, conservation area, SSSI etc (as above).
Neil Proudfoot	1 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement does not read well • Omission of references to biodiversity and sustainability • Other local government decisions contradict parking guidance in the statement • Traffic congestion issues are not addressed • Parameters surrounding this consultation bounded as they are by previous SDC decisions and planning practice are too tightly drawn for the process to be meaningful 	
Richard Howard	1 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on Croft Road development • Comments on future development and increase in population • Need for employment 	None

		land is driven by release of land for residential building	
Sandra Johnson	1 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M25 overspill situation is overstated; all road are affected only for a few hours and is infrequent • 1m between properties is too narrow • Comment on WWW masterplan • Importance of Green Belt, AONB and SSSI Westerham Wood should be highlighted more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a constraint map for Design Statement area which shows green belt boundary, AONB, conservation area, SSSI etc. (as above)
Plan Cons Area Team	27 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend that the VDS and design guidelines align with, and make clear reference to, the AONB Management Plan • we refer to the following sentences (p.35): ‘Green Belt and AONB policies apply throughout the village to new development. Notwithstanding these policies this VDS identifies the important characteristics and provides guidelines for new development’. We would recommend removal of the second sentence, to avoid any contradictions between the VDS and overarching Local Plan documents • Design Guidelines within the VDS may complement and support existing policies (such as those within 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make reference to AONB Management Plan (https://www.kentdowns.org.uk/landscape-management/management-plan/) • Remove/ alter sentence ‘Notwithstanding these policies this VDS identifies the important characteristics and provides guidelines for new development.’ on pg 35

		<p>the AONB management plan) but should not be intended to replace existing (overarching) policies</p>	
<p>Historic England (Robert Lloyd-Sweet) (Robert Lloyd-Sweet)</p>	<p>29 June 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well researched and take a pragmatic approach given the different scale and complexity of the areas addressed • May be helpful to include a list of existing policies in Local Plan • Highlight document should not introduce policies but are supplementary to policies 	<p>None</p>

Sevenoaks District Council**St Lawrence (Seal) Village Design Statement****Consultation Statement****Introduction**

In accordance with the relevant Planning Regulations, before a Local Authority adopts a supplementary planning document;

“It must prepare a statement setting out the persons the local planning authority consulted when preparing the SPD, a summary of the main issues raised by those persons, and how these issues have been addressed in the SPD...”

This paper fulfils this requirement and sets out the public participation in the preparation of the document (Regulation 17 (1) (b)) and then the statutory public consultation undertaken on the draft Supplementary Planning Document (Regulation 18).

Once adopted, St Lawrence Village Design Statement SPD will form part of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan. It will not form part of the formal development plan for the area but will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Approach to consultation

Sevenoaks District Council considers that when preparing SPDs it is appropriate to inform, consult and seek the participation of organisations and/or individuals in order to ensure that the documents more closely reflect local needs and priorities.

The Council undertook a 10 week formal consultation on the St Lawrence Village Design Statement between 20th April 2018 and 29th June 2018.

As part of this consultation, the Council:

- Published the draft St Lawrence Village Design Statement on the Sevenoaks District Council website and through the Council’s consultation system;
- Made the draft SPD available for inspection at the Council’s offices and libraries in the Council’s administrative area during normal office hours;
- Invited persons and organisations on the Council’s LDF mailing list and those registered on the Council’s consultation database, to make representations during the consultation period.

Public Participation in the Preparation of the VDS by the Parish Council

Following on from the previous Village Design Statement, the Seal St Lawrence VDS has been revised by Seal Parish Council to reflect the views of the local people from a study of the Seal Parish Plan Questionnaire in 2010.

Sustainability Appraisal

A Sustainability Appraisal for the Village Design Statement has not been undertaken as Sec.180 (5)(d) Planning Act 2008 removed the compulsory requirement for a Sustainability Appraisal for a Supplementary Planning Document.

Comments

Comments were received from:

- Natural England (Amy Kitching)
- Historic England (Robert Lloyd-Sweet)

The representations received are broadly supportive.

Summary of Issues Raised and Responses

Name	Response Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary 	Actions/ changes
Historic England (Robert Lloyd-Sweet) (Robert Lloyd-Sweet)	29 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the whole, well researched and pragmatic approach • Highlight that documents should not introduce policy but are supplementary to policy • List of existing policies is a helpful addition • Appreciate consideration of relationship between villages and their setting 	

Appendix D

<p>AONB Unit - Plan Cons Area Team</p>	<p>27 June 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • welcome recognition of the parish's location in relation to AONB • Kent Downs AONB Management Plan should be referred to in paragraph 4.9 	<p>Kent Downs AONB Management Plan should be referred to</p>
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COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) SPENDING BOARD - REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE

Planning Advisory Committee - 12 March 2019

Report of Chief Planning Officer

Status For consideration

Key Decision No

Executive Summary: There have been a number of reports, written over the years as Sevenoaks District Council looked to become a CIL Charging Authority. These were as a result of a number of discussions and working parties with Members which considered the Governance arrangements for how the Council would allocate contributions from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). These reports and discussions resulted in an agreed recommendation to set up a CIL Spending Board on 5 March 2015.

The purpose of the Board is to make recommendations to Cabinet on whether local or strategic infrastructure projects should receive CIL funding. Following this original decision to set up the Board, membership was agreed in May 2015. It was also decided that the Council's CIL governance arrangements would be reviewed annually by the Planning Advisory Committee to ensure that they are relevant and fit for purpose. This paper is therefore part of this review.

In July 2017, as the Council got closer to allocating CIL funds, the governance was reviewed and a change in the structure of the CIL Spending Board agreed. At this stage the criteria for assessing any bids made for the CIL monies. Since this new structure was agreed, the CIL Spending Board has met twice, in May 2018, and December 2018. It was recommended at these two meetings that over £3 million be allocated across 13 local and strategic infrastructure projects. The recommendations to fund all 13 projects were ratified by Cabinet in June 2018 and January 2019.

It has been over 18 months since the last CIL governance arrangements were agreed. This report looks at the current arrangements and proposes changes, following feedback from Members and Officers.

This report supports the Key Aim of ensuring that Sevenoaks District remains a great place to live, work and visit and that development is supported by the relevant infrastructure

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Robert Piper

Contact Officers Simon Taylor, Ext. 7134, Claire Pamberi Ext. 7221

Recommendation to Planning Advisory Committee: Members are

- a) asked to note the report updating them on progress made; and
- b) invited to make any further comments and agree the proposed way forward.

Reason for recommendation: To ensure that the Council is able to make decisions on how CIL is prioritised in an open, transparent, appropriate, fair manner and to ensure consistency.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Council has been charging the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) since August 2014. From August 2014 to March 2018, the Council has collected over £6.5 million of CIL contributions, with over £1.8 million passed to relevant town and parish councils to help fund local infrastructure improvements. The remaining contributions collected (approximately £2 million) remain with the District Council to allocate and spend on local and strategic infrastructure projects.
- 2 In May 2017, Members of the Planning Advisory Committee were presented with a report to consider proposals for amending the Council's governance procedures for CIL. Members also considered proposals to create a CIL Spending Board, with a fixed membership, to allocate CIL funding to local and strategic infrastructure projects. These recommendations were approved by Cabinet in July 2017.
- 3 The last two Spending Boards have followed the guidance laid out in the agreed Governance and whilst both Spending Boards have run smoothly and CIL money has been allocated to worthy projects. It is considered that there are a few areas of clarification and a few changes in the guidance and procedures that are required to enable the Governance of CIL to remain open, transparent, appropriate, fair manner and to ensure consistency.

Current CIL Governance Arrangements

- 4 As part of the current CIL Governance arrangements, it was agreed that the process of allocating CIL money would be reviewed on an annual basis. This is to ensure that the Council's processes and procedures remain relevant and fit for purpose. Whilst this review is slightly delayed it was considered appropriate to wait for 2 Spending Boards to meet to allow a full assessment of this process to take place.
- 5 Whilst it is noted that some Members are keen for another CIL Spending Board to meet as soon as possible. It is important to ensure that any amended governance arrangements are fit for purpose, in place and that further training takes place to ensure that members are aware of all the new proposed changes. It is therefore likely that the Board will not meet until July/August, later this year.

- 6 The current arrangements and procedures for the CIL Spending Board are set out in the Council's Constitution Appendix X1 (Appendix A).
- 7 These arrangements and procedures are summarised below:
 - Membership of the Spending Board (15 members)
 - Role of members of the Board and Members conduct.
 - Board Structure, procedures and speaking protocol.
 - The types of recommendations the CIL Spending Board could make.
 - The pro-forma that is required to be submitted as part of a bid.
 - Criteria for the Council's assessment of the bids.
 - Details of the two stage validation process.
 - It also confirmed that Cabinet will ratify any recommendation from the CIL Board.
- 8 A summary of this process and timings are provided in a flow chart in Appendix B.

Feedback from Members and Officers

- 9 Since the new governance procedures were agreed in 2017, Members and Officers have provided feedback on the governance arrangements and the operation of the CIL Spending Board. Whilst Members and officers agree that the meetings have been successful, a number of constructive comments were raised as to how the governance for the next CIL Spending Board could be improved or processes clarified.
- 10 The feedback received from officers and Members covers all stages of the CIL spending process as follows:
 - Overall Governance of CIL - This looks at the key issues and those which cover more than one stage of the overall process.
 - The Bidding Process - This looks at the information requested through the pro-forma, the timings of the process and also the advice given to people making the bids.
 - Validation Process - This looks at issues raised over how we assess the bids and the reasons why a bid would be considered invalid.
 - The Spending Board - This includes considering the format of the report, the structure of the Board, the Key Considerations and the recommendations of the Board.
 - Contracts for the monitoring and spending of CIL Spending.
- 11 Please see Appendix C for a summary of the proposed changes to the CIL Governance Procedures many of which need further legal consideration before being finalised. This lists all the comments made in relation to the governance of CIL. It highlights the key issues, indicates where changes are proposed and where no changes are proposed.

Proposed Changes to the CIL Governance Arrangements

- 12 Following an appraisal of all the feedback summarised in Appendix C, officers consider that there are a number of changes that need to be made to the governance of CIL however many of them require more legal research. Most of these are small changes to the existing system and it is clear the current processes and format of the CIL Spending Board does not need to be considerably changed.
- 13 Through discussions with Members, the following proposed changes were identified as the most important to be addressed:

Definition of “Top Up”:

- 14 Looking through the CIL Legislation, the phrase ‘Top up’ is not used at all. The Legislation also does not define the percentage or amount of CIL that can be given towards any infrastructure project. Therefore, provided that the CIL money is spent on infrastructure to support development in the District, the Legislation does not provide strict rules on the amount of money that can be spent.
- 15 It is considered important that when providing information in regard to CIL, through our Infrastructure Delivery Plan and through the CIL Spending Board that it is made clear that CIL cannot provide for all infrastructure requirements rising from developments. Rather than define a top up or limit the amount of spending on each project it is recommended that the Council needs robust criteria and requirements to ensure that all applicants have maximised other sources of funding.
- 16 Whether an applicant has maximised that funding may also need to be considered as part of the individual project itself and also in the context of connected infrastructure projects. This is because CIL could be required to pay the full amount on one specific project, which forms part of a wider infrastructure project, already funded in the surrounding area.
- 17 In light of the above it is therefore suggested that no amount should be set and that it is left to the assessment of the bids and the discretion of the CIL Spending Board as to whether the bid is successful. This approach would therefore continue to allow flexibility to the CIL Board to be able to allocate funding to whatever project they considered submitted an appropriate and supported bid or prioritise where they thought there was a specific need.

Whether Planning Permission should be in place:

- 18 It is also considered important to clarify how officers and the CIL Spending Board, considers bids which do not yet have planning permission in place.
- 19 The criterion currently advises that having planning permission in place is more of a “pre-requisite” to the bid application. However, when considering large schemes supported locally, with a clear plan in place it appears that this should be more “advisory”.

- 20 Whilst it is important to recognise that in some projects planning permission is a clear indication that the project is deliverable, in other cases the other benefits of scheme may indicate that it is worth considering the application without planning permission in place.
- 21 This is because some projects which are supported by a number of neighbourhood, local and business plans are unlikely to have all their paperwork and funding in place. But the security of CIL funding could ensure the project has more certainty. It is therefore considered that the CIL Spending Board should have more flexibility in these cases to weigh up the benefits against the lack of planning permission for a project. The way to assess this needs more legal investigation.
- 22 It is recommended that the following changes are made:
- Change criteria for assessing bids.
 - Change recommendations to allow the CIL Spending Board to be able to set aside funds for such a project subject to planning permission being in place.
 - Ensuring that any monies are not paid over until the scheme is finally deliverable.

Other Proposed Changes

- 23 Here is a summary of the all the other proposed changes identified so far by officers in Appendix C:

24 Changes to the pro-forma

- To include point of contact for project, legal issues and finance.
- Request further information as to whether the project has received any source of funding from the Council including CIL.
- To request whether CIL funding had been received from Parish and Town Councils.
- To request information as to the status of all existing and proposed funding.
- That a guidance note is provided to assist any applicant in submitting a bid.

25 Changes to the officers assessment criteria

- To ensure they compliment the CIL Board Key Considerations.
- To make it clear what the environmental benefits of a scheme will be expected to be. This will suggest that schemes that provide wider ecological and landscape benefits will be looked upon more favourably.
- Additional advice as to how to assess bids where planning permission is not in place.
- To consider how through the assessment we encourage applicants to maximise other sources of funding.
- That the criterion for assessing bids is made more publically available.

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- Clearer guidance as to how to consider bids were the Parish and Town Councils have also contributed CIL towards the project, to ensure that this is encouraged.

This requires further work with Legal to ensure that this document is worded correctly. We therefore suggest the Chief Planning Officer continue to work with Legal to continue to consider this issue and draft a document to achieve the above aims.

26 Changes to CIL Spending Board Key Considerations

- To ensure they match officers assessment criteria
- Change the requirement for Local Member support, so whilst it is encouraged it would not invalidate a bid.

27 Changes to CIL Board Recommendations:

- The Board will be reminded of their role and the procedure at the beginning of the meeting.
- Additional options should be provided to the recommendations to make them more flexible, allowing the Board to delay payments, set aside funding for particular projects, set aside funding until planning permission or other sources of funding are in place or defer an application for example.

28 Changes to the CIL Spending Board Report:

- Officers will look to include the percentage of CIL requested compared to the overall cost of the project.

29 The CIL Spending Board:

- More detailed guidance notes and clarification regarding the format of the CIL Spending Board.
- Make clear in the constitution the amount of visual aids a speaker can use.
- Amend the Constitution to clarify that the amount of money requested cannot be changed at the CIL Spending Board by Members or applicants. This includes the need to alter recommendations to allow the Board to defer applications.
- A bid can still be considered if there is no speaker.

30 Formation of a Legal Contract

- That the Chief Planning Officer continue to work with legal to draft and secure two separate legal contracts, one for those already covered by CIL Legislation and one for those private organisations and businesses that are not.

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

- 31 Members could decide not to agree the proposed changes to the current governance arrangements. However, the proposed changes seek to build on the existing arrangements to make the process more consistent, manageable and robust to ensure that future funding allocated by the CIL Spending Board is appropriately spent.
- 32 In addition, any further identified weaknesses in the system can be addressed through the annual review process.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications regarding this report.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal implications regarding this report.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

It is clear that there is still a significant amount of work that Officers need to do to ensure that the details and wording of some of the suggested changes are robust and appropriate.

It is therefore asked that Members agree that Officers continue to work on the proposed changes and submit a final report for recommendation to Cabinet in due course in order to ensure the bidding process and the CIL Spending Board runs more smoothly and that all parties are more informed of the process.

Appendices

Appendix A - Appendix X1 of the Council's Constitution - CIL Spending Board Terms of Reference

Appendix B - CIL Spending Board Process Flowchart

Appendix C - Summary of Suggested Changes to the CIL Governance Procedures

Background Papers

Governance of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (Planning Advisory Committee - 16 May 2017)

Governance of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (Cabinet - 15 June 2017)

Referral from Cabinet - Further Advice to PAC re Governance of the Community Infrastructure Levy (22 June 2017)

Planning Advisory Committee response to referral - Community Infrastructure Levy (Cabinet - 13 July 2017)

Richard Morris

Chief Planning Officer

APPENDIX X1: Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Board

1. Terms of Reference of the Board

- 1.1. The Board shall consider bids for CIL funding (in accordance with Appendices 1 and 2), and submit recommendations to Cabinet for ratification. If Cabinet chooses not to ratify a particular recommendation, then it shall provide an explanation setting out its concerns and request that the Board reconsiders the issue.

2. Membership of the Board

- 2.1. The Board will comprise of 15 Members of the Council to be chosen according to political proportionality rules, none of whom may be members of the Cabinet. The membership of the Board can be found at Appendix H - Membership of Council Committees, Cabinet and Advisory Committees and Boards.
- 2.2. When appointing the membership, Cabinet will appoint the Chairman and Vice Chairman, who will form part of the 15 members.
- 2.3. Membership to be agreed annually.

3. Role of members of the Board and members conduct

- 3.1 It is incumbent that Members of the Spending Board ensure that they remain impartial and receptive to all points of debate before reaching a decision on how to vote on a Bid.
- 3.2 Members of the Board should remain at meetings of the Board until the end of the meeting unless they have a compelling reason not to do so.
- 3.3 Members of the Board are not present for consideration of all Bids, or who are not present during the whole of the discussion, should not vote on any Bid as they will not have heard all the arguments for and against the proposals.
- 3.4 Members of the Board should be informed when a Bid is submitted by the Council or involves the provision of infrastructure on Council land.
- 3.5 Members of the Board can vote on all Bids but must make declarations of interest, Lobbying and Pre-determination before any Bids are debated.
- 3.6 Members of the Board should contact Legal and Democratic Services before a meeting if they have any doubt in their minds regarding a potential Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI).
- 3.7 All members of the Board must avoid reaching a judgement before all relevant evidence is presented to the Board. All sitting Board members must

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ensure that they never give the impression of closing their minds to information relevant to the Bid.

4. Quorum

4.1 The quorum shall be 5 members.

5. Board structure, procedures and speaking protocol

(“Local Member” means a member of the District Council whose ward, in the opinion of the Chairman, is affected by a bid which is to be included on an agenda for consideration by the CIL Spending Board.)

5.1 Officers will be invited to introduce a summary of CIL at the beginning of the meeting to include;

- Summary of CIL Legislation
- Amount of funding available
- Where CIL receipts have come from

5.2 Each bid will then be discussed individually.

5.3 Bids will only be debated at the discretion of the Chairman, if it is requested for debate by a Local Member or if there are registered speakers and this must be agreed prior to the meeting.

5.4 Those wishing to speak must contact the District Council before 5pm on the day of the Spending Board at the latest. However at the Chairman’s discretion, late registration maybe accepted until the start of the meeting. Only one public speaker supporting the application and one against will be permitted.

5.5 The company/person/body submitting the Bid will be expected to present their Bid to the Spending Board. Visual aids are allowed by speakers.

5.6 At the beginning of the meeting the Chairman will indicate the Bids on which Local Members, the Town or Parish Council, applicants or members of the public have asked to speak, which shall automatically be reserved for debate.

5.7 The Chairman will read out the project title.

5.8 The officer will introduce the item and lay out the key considerations and summarise the recommendation.

5.9 Speakers who have previously registered will be invited to do so by the Chairman in the following order for a maximum of 3 minutes (Local Members will have 4 minutes):

- company/person/body responsible for the Bid
- A member of the public wishing to speak for the Bid.

- A member of the public wishing to speak against the Bid
- The Local Council representative.
- The Local Member

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Chairman retains discretion to allow additional speakers as he sees fit.

- 5.10 Speakers will then be asked questions of clarification.
- 5.11 Members of the Spending Board will then have an opportunity to ask questions of the officers present.
- 5.12 Discussion of each Bid will then take place.
- 5.13 A decision on each Bid will only be made at the end of the meeting after all the Bids are discussed.
- 5.14 A vote will then be taken on each bid after a motion has been moved (and seconded if necessary). Any motion put forward ~~can only~~ should usually be for one of the following recommendations:
 - Funding for the scheme is recommended for approval
 - Partial funding for the scheme is recommended for approval
 - Funding for the scheme is not recommended for approval on the basis that the other proposed schemes have been given greater priority
 - Funding for the scheme is not recommended for approval on the basis that insufficient evidence has been provided to justify it.
 - Funding for the scheme is not recommended for approval on the basis that the scheme is not considered appropriate for the use of CIL.
- 5.15 A vote will take place and the Chairman will advise the meeting of the result.
- 5.16 Board meetings to be held at the Chairman's discretion taking into account the level of CIL income.
- 5.17 The above arrangements shall be reviewed after 12 months.

Sevenoaks District Council

Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Board

Bid for Funding Pro-forma

Infrastructure Only

Scheme name:	
Description of Scheme:	
Is this scheme promoted by your organisation in partnership with another organisation (s)?	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>Who is involved in the Partnership. Organisation Name (s):</p> <p>Responsible individuals (s):</p> <p>Signature (s) on behalf of other supporting organisations (s):</p> <p>Please provide details of the Agreements you have in place with your partners. Including the % of money guaranteed for the scheme from each organisation.</p>
Is planning permission required for the scheme?	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If yes, has it been applied for?</p> <p>If no - please explain why?</p>
Details of any other consent required (if appropriate (e.g. conservation, Listed Buildings, other Govt Bodies):	<p>Consent required:</p> <p>Date applied for / granted:</p>
<u>Need for the Scheme</u>	

<p>List of projects or development that result in the need for this scheme:</p>	
<p>How is the scheme related to these developments (additional information, such as usage forecasts and existing and alternative capacity assessments, can be attached as an appendix):</p>	

Please provide an explanation of the ‘public benefit’ of the scheme proposed for residents in Sevenoaks District:

<p>Economic</p>	
<p>Social</p>	
<p>Environmental</p>	
<p>Is the need for the scheme identified in any adopted strategy/plan? E.g. Neighbourhood Plan, Work programme of a Statutory Body, Infrastructure Plan (Reg 1,2,3 list). If so, which?</p>	

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Funding	
Total project cost:	£
Funding required from CIL:	£
Identify other funding sources for this project, what contribution they are making and why these can not be used to fund the scheme in its entirety	1)
	2)
	3)
	4)
	5)
	6)
Is this bid for staged payments?	Yes/No
Will staged payments be accepted?	Yes/No

	Details of anticipated funding requirements and timetable:
Has a bid(s) for CIL funding been made to relevant town and parish councils?	<p>Bid made: Yes / No</p> <p>Details of bid:</p> <p>Decision made: Yes / No</p> <p>Details of decision:</p>
Would the scheme be fully funded if the CIL contribution is agreed:	Yes / No
Has this scheme benefited from CIL funding previously:	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If Yes; Please provide further justification as to why further CIL funding is required for this project.</p>
<u>Deliverability</u>	
Does your organisation have the legal right to carry out the proposed scheme?	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If not, you must attach documentation showing that the statutory provider of this service supports this scheme.</p>
Anticipated start date for delivery of the scheme:	
Anticipated finish date for the delivery of the scheme:	
Anticipated date when CIL funding will need to be made available:	
Does land need to be purchased to facilitate the scheme:	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>Details:</p>
Please provide a consultation plan to let SDC know when they can expect	

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progress reports on the project.	
Please provide details of the management and timescales of the project.	
Has consultation been carried out on the scheme or is any planned?	Carried out / Planned / No Consultation planned Details: (Note: Results can be attached separately if necessary.)
Is a relevant SDC ward member(s) supportive of the scheme?	Yes / No Signature of at least one SDC ward member: Note - An e-mail from them to cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk would also be sufficient.
Is the relevant town/parish council supportive of the scheme?	Yes / No Signature of at town/parish council chairman, clerk or chief executive: Note - An e-mail from them to cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk would also be sufficient.
<u>Maintenance</u>	
Which organisation will be responsible for ongoing maintenance:	
Are funding arrangements in place for maintenance:	Yes / No Details:
Any further comments:	

<u>Declaration</u>	
<p>I am authorised to submit this bid for funding on behalf of the organisation that I represent. At the time of writing, the information contained in this submission (including appendices) is correct and true to the best of my knowledge. If CIL funding is committed and circumstances change prior to the completion of the scheme, the organisation that I represent will notify Sevenoaks District Council. The Council will reserve the right to reconsider the allocation of funding. If CIL funding is committed to the above project then the organisation that I represent commits to providing Sevenoaks District Council with sufficient information to enable it to undertake its reporting requirements under the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended), or any subsequent relevant regulations.</p>	
Signature	
Name	
Position	
Organisation	
Name, role and contact details of the person that will be attending SDC's CIL Spending Board to support this bid:	

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Sevenoaks District Council

Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Board

Decision Making Process

Lead Officer's initial validation of bids

The lead officer will undertake an initial validation of bids. The following will not be put to the spending board for consideration:

- Those schemes for which a pro-forma has not been completed.
- Those schemes where the bidding organisation does not have the legal right to carry out the proposed scheme or the support from the statutory provider of that service.
- Those schemes that could clearly not be defined as infrastructure to support development.

The lead officer's validation of bids will be agreed by the chairman of the CIL Spending Board in advance of papers being published for the spending board meeting.

A written response will be provided to the bidder to explain this decision. This may suggest that a revised submission is considered at a future meeting.

Second stage of Validation Process

The Lead Officer will carry out a second stage in the validation of bids, which will assess the proposed bids against the following criteria in order to make recommendations on the bids submitted:

- The need for the scheme.
- Whether the scheme supports Key Infrastructure projects
- Whether the applicant working in partnership to implement the scheme.
- Is the bid part of an existing Strategy or Plan?
- Is there a significant public benefit to the scheme?
- Is there match funding for the scheme?
- Is there clear project management
- Is planning permission in place (if required)?
- Does the Bid have local support?
- What is the Cost benefit to the scheme?

It has been agreed that the consideration of the bids is assessed using a similar method to the Sevenoaks Big Community fund, in that each Bid will be scored against how they perform against each category. The lead officer's assessment and recommendations will be agreed by the Chairman of the CIL Spending Board in advance of the papers being published for the Spending Board Meeting.

The above criteria will be refined and agreed at the initial meeting of the Spending Board.

CIL Spending Board's consideration

The CIL spending board's key considerations will be whether there is a public benefit of the proposed scheme for residents in Sevenoaks District and whether the scheme constitutes value for money. In determining this, the spending board will consider the following issues in making its recommendation.

- Whether sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate a strong social, environmental or economic justification for the scheme.
- Whether sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate a strong link between new development and the scheme.
- Whether the scheme forms part of a planned strategy to address the need for infrastructure.
- Whether the CIL contribution will be matched by funding from other sources.
- Whether the use of other funding sources has been maximised.
- Whether there is sufficient certainty that the scheme will be delivered.
- Whether the scheme is supported by at least one of the relevant SDC ward members (note: this will be a prerequisite of a successful funding bid).
- Whether the scheme is supported by the relevant town/parish council.
- Whether evidence has been provided to demonstrate that there are sufficient maintenance arrangements in place.

The board may also take into account other factors that it considers relevant.

Limited CIL funding is available and it is unlikely that it will fund all of the infrastructure schemes that are considered necessary to support development. Where it is necessary to choose between schemes that could both be appropriate uses of CIL (i.e. they satisfy all of the considerations set out above), the board will give particular consideration to the public benefit of the schemes for residents in Sevenoaks District and the link between development and the scheme.

Types of recommendation

The board may make the following recommendations to Cabinet for it to ratify:

- Funding for the scheme is approved.
- Funding for the scheme is not approved on the basis that other proposed schemes have been given greater priority.
- Funding for the scheme is not approved on the basis that insufficient evidence has been provided to justify it.

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- Funding for the scheme is not approved on the basis that the scheme is not considered to be an appropriate use of CIL.

These recommendations should give bidders an indication of whether they should consider bidding for this scheme again and what additional information, if anything, should be provided with any resubmission.

Criteria Number	Criteria Description	Detail
1	The need for the scheme	Here we would expect the applicant to explain the need for and the benefits of the scheme. We have asked for the applicant to respond specifically in regard to the Economic, Social and Environmental needs of the District and its residents. So will award points under each section: Economic - are there benefits to the economy? Social - what is the benefit to the local community or wider community. Environmental - Are there clear benefits to the environment by implementing this scheme.
2	Is the scheme proposed for Infrastructure?	Schemes should provide for key infrastructure projects likely to have a greater impact i.e medical, schools, highways, flooding will receive higher scores. Those identified in the Council's Infrastructure Plan (reg 1,2,3 List) and the Strategic Infrastructure List will receive a higher score.
3	Working in partnership	Has the applicant provided evidence that they are working in partnership with one or more organisation. We will look at the type of partners involved, how formal the Partnership is and the amount of involvement from all partners. Please note; we will take into account those infrastructure/statutory providers that do not need to work in partnership.
4	Is the Bid scheme part of an existing Strategy/Plan	We would expect the scheme to be put forward as part of an existing Strategy or Plan. This could include Neighbourhood or Parish plans. It could also include regional strategies, Work Programmes by statutory bodies or if it has been identified as a project.
5	Public Benefit	It is likely that bids are looking to provide the greatest public benefit will be looked upon more favourably than those that do not bring a greater benefit to the wider community. Definition: We are therefore looking for schemes that will provide something that is advantageous or good; that will relate to, or affecting a population or a community as a whole.
6	Match Funding	CIL is clearly meant as a 'Top up' and should not be used to fund entire projects. Please note: Schemes that will be relying totally on CIL will not be considered. Schemes that already have a large amount/majority of funding in place will receive a higher score.
7	Clear Project Management	Though their bid we would expect the applicant to show evidence that the project is well managed. Have they provided for example: - clear dates for start and finish of the project. -details of the management of the project and timescales -details of when they will provide updates to SDC -is other consent required/granted?
8	Planning Permission in place	Has planning permission been granted or sought for the development? This also includes considering if the works don't require PP and whether the proposal is permitted development and also to ensure that the applicant has checked this issue.
9	Does the Bid have local support?	In particular, does the Bid have the support of a local member and/or the Parish and Town Council?
10	Has the project already had CIL funding?	A lower score will be given for those projects which have already received CIL funding. Unless a strong justification can be provided as to why further funding is required.
11	Cost Benefit	Higher scores will be given to those projects which require the smallest % of the overall project cost or provide evidence of a clear public benefit or need. Projects where the CIL money would complete the scheme will also be scored highly.
Total points allocated		
Amount applied for		

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**COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) SPENDING BOARD
PROCESS FLOWCHART**

**BIDDING
PROCESS
(6 WEEKS)**

BIDDING PROCESS OPENS
TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS, INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDERS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES ARE INVITED TO BID FOR CIL FUNDING. APPLICATION FORMS ARE MADE AVAILABLE ON SDC'S WEBSITE ALONG WITH FAQ'S AND GUIDANCE. ALL COMPLETED BIDS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE CIL INBOX (CIL@SEVENOAKS.GOV.UK)

**ASSESSMENT OF
BIDS
(2 WEEKS)**

DOES THE BID FALL INTO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?
A. A COMPLETED BIDDING PROFORMA HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED
B. THE APPLICANT DOES NOT HAVE THE LEGAL RIGHT TO CARRY OUT THE PROPOSED SCHEME OR DOES NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT FROM THE STATUTORY AUTHORITY / PROVIDER
C. SCHEMES THAT COULD CLEARLY NOT BE DEFINED AS INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT

NO
THE PROPOSAL IS CONSIDERED AGAINST THE CRITERIA THAT MEMBERS AGREED. A SCORE IS ASSIGNED TO EACH CRITERIA AND A TOTAL SCORE IS GENERATED. APPLICATIONS ARE RANKED AND A SHORTLIST IS CREATED.

YES
THE PROPOSAL IS REMOVED FROM THE PROCESS AND THE APPLICANT IS NOTIFIED OF THE DECISION

MEETING WITH THE CHAIR, VICE CHAIR OF THE CIL BOARD AND THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER IS ARRANGED TO AGREE THE SCORING AND SHORTLIST OF BIDS FOR THE CIL BOARD TO CONSIDER

BACKGROUND REPORT, INCLUDING CURRENT AMOUNT OF CIL FUNDS AVAILABLE AND THE SCORING CRITERIA / PROCESS
A REPORT FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL APPLICATION THAT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED
FINAL APPENDIX WITH ALL RECOMMENDATIONS LISTED

REPORT TO BE AGREED BY THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER, LEGAL, DEPT, FINANCE DEPT. AND THE CHAIR OF THE CIL BOARD, REPORTS SENT TO PLANNING P/H FOR INFORMATION

CIL BOARD

CIL BOARD MEETS AND MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

CABINET

CABINET MEETS TO RATIFY RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY CIL BOARD—WAS THE RECOMMENDATION ACCEPTED AND RATIFIED?

YES
APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION IS ACCEPTED.
A CONTRACT* IS THEN DRAWN UP WITH INDIVIDUALS OR PRIVATE COMPANIES TO ENSURE THAT MONEY IS SPENT APPROPRIATELY IF CONTRACT AGREED
FINANCE IS NOTIFIED ON HOW MUCH IS REQUIRED TO PAY OUT TO PROJECTS
ONCE ALL CRITERIA ABOVE IS SATISFIED , PAYMENT IS MADE TO SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATIONS
IF CONTRACT OR OTHER PRE CONDITIONS ARE NOT SATISFIED THE APPLICATION IS REFUSED

NO
APPLICATION IS RETURNED THE REGULAR CIL BOARD FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

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Appendix C - Proposed Changes to CIL Spending Board Governance Arrangements

The following tables detail the proposed changes and issues raised regarding the current CIL Governance arrangements, following feedback received from Members and Officers.

These have been broken down into different areas to make the changes clearer:

- Governance of CIL.
- The Bidding Process (timings and the advice given to people making the bids).
- Validation Process (How we assess the bids).
- The CIL Spending Board (inc. the format of the meeting and the report and what the Board should consider)
- Contracts for and Monitoring of CIL Spending.

Each section will look at the issues raised, the proposed change to address issues (if any are required) and a justification as to the recommendations proposed by officers.

Governance of CIL

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
1	<p>The original intention of CIL was for it to be used as a ‘top up’ to assist in funding infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Members have raised a concern that the term “top-up funding” is not clearly defined, and they consider that a definition is needed to help them determine the suitability of bids.</p>	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u> The Council needs robust criteria and requirements to ensure that all applicants have maximised other sources of funding.</p> <p>Whether an applicant has maximised that funding may need to be considered as part of the individual project itself and also in the context of connected infrastructure projects.</p> <p>It is suggested that no amount should be set and that it is left to the assessment of the bids and the discretion of the CIL Spending Board as to whether the bid is successful.</p>	<p>The phrase ‘Top up’ is not used in the CIL Legislation.</p> <p>The CIL Legislation also does not define the percentage or amount of CIL that can be given towards any infrastructure project.</p> <p>In addition the Council and applicants should all be clear that CIL cannot provide for all infrastructure requirements rising from developments.</p>

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
2	It is also considered important to clarify how officers and the CIL Spending Board consider bids which do not have planning permission in place.	<p><u>Change Proposed:</u></p> <p>Change criteria for assessing bids. Change recommendations to allow the CIL Spending Board to be able to set aside funds for such a project subject to planning permission being in place. Ensuring that any monies are not paid over until the scheme is finally deliverable.</p>	<p>The criterion currently advises that having planning permission in place is more of a “pre-requisite” to the bid application. However when considering large schemes supported locally, with a clear plan in place it appeared that this was more “advisory”.</p> <p>Whilst it is important to recognise that in some projects planning permission is a clear indication that the project is deliverable. However, In some cases the other benefits of scheme may indicate that it is worth considering the application without planning permission in place.</p> <p>This is because some projects which are supported by a number of neighbourhood, local and business plans are unlikely to have all their paperwork and funding in place. But the security of CIL funding could ensure the project has more certainty. It is therefore considered that the Spending Board should have more flexibility in these cases to weigh up the benefits against the lack of planning permission for a project.</p>

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
3	Concerns were raised that some applications asked for a majority of funding for their infrastructure project and whether that is an appropriate use of CIL.	<p><u>Change Proposed:</u></p> <p>It has already been agreed that all applicants will be expected to maximise other sources of funding.</p> <p>We propose to make it clear to the CIL Spending Board the percentage to the overall cost of the project that CIL will contribute to. It is then the decision of the Spending Board to consider whether this is an appropriate amount.</p>	See comments above (1)
4	The lead in time to administer the CIL Board by validating bids/applications	<p><u>No Change:</u></p> <p>Please see attached document (Appendix B) which makes the time table for the Spending Board clear.</p>	The timetable for the CIL Spending Board is not proposed to change. The flow chart makes the process clear to members and applicants and also highlights what needs to happen at every stage of the process. No complaints have been received as to the timings of the process.

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
5	Whether members happy with the current level of delegation	<u>No Change.</u>	Members are already involved in the setting up of the Board and the Governance of CIL. They have agreed the criteria by which the bids should be validated and assessed. The chair and the vice chair meet with officers to review a summary of the bids and discuss the assessments. All the decisions of the board are made by Members. Due to the clear amount of member's involvement and management of the process, it is considered that the amount of delegation should remain the same.

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
6	<p>Currently all the money given through the CIL Spending Board has resulted in a majority of smaller projects receiving funding. There is concern that in the future, some of the larger infrastructure projects may need larger amounts of CIL set aside to ensure that it will come forward.</p>	<p><u>No immediate change.</u> After the adoption of the new Local Plan and Infrastructure Development Plan, members may choose to change the current Governance of CIL to allow a certain percentage of the CIL income to be set aside to support some of the ‘major’ infrastructure projects, with the remaining amount to be spent through the CIL Spending Board.</p>	<p>The Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP), is an evidence base document which supports the Local Plan. It highlights the priorities and deficiencies of infrastructure in the District which are required to bring forward the Local Plan. It is suggested that we wait for the adoption of the new Local Plan before changing the allocation of CIL funds.</p> <p>Members should note that the IDP is a live document and will be reviewed frequently to ensure that the priorities of infrastructure are up to date.</p> <p>This may however change with the introduction of Infrastructure Funding Statements.</p>
7	<p>Requests have been made by Legal and Finance that more details of the person /organisation who will be legally responsible for the delivery of the scheme.</p>	<p><u>Change Proposed:</u> It is proposed to change the pro forma to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who will be the point of contact for the bid, • who will be the relevant person to contact when drawing up the legal contract, • who will be legally responsible for receiving the money. Giving full company/charity name and registered no. 	<p>This makes the process quicker when needing to contact the person legally and financially responsible for the CIL project.</p>

The Bidding Process

No.	Issues Raised	Decision	Justification
8	<p>A number of queries were received from organisations on how much information to submit as part of the bid. Some organisations submitted detailed applications including drawings, fully costed budgets, project management timetables etc. Other applications submitted the minimum amount of information required.</p>	<p><u>Change Proposed:</u> We will assess each bid under the criteria for assessing bids as part of the validation process. The CIL Spending Board also have a clear Key Considerations to assess each bid by. This ensures consistency.</p> <p>It is proposed that we provide a more detail guidance note for organisations submitting bids to help them understand what is required.</p>	<p>Processes are already in place to ensure consistency when considering bids.</p> <p>Officers are happy to provide more advice, where possible to assist individuals, parish and town councils, charity groups and other organisations to help them submit their bids</p>
9	<p>Currently local Member support is a requirement for a successful bid</p>	<p><u>Change proposed.</u> Whilst member/local support is desirable, it should not invalidate a Bid. It is therefore no longer a necessity to get a local Member to support a bid in order for it to be successful.</p>	<p>As laid out in the currently, if a bid does not have member support it will not get through the validation process. As some wards only have one Member and as other local Members may not support a specific scheme, this should not prevent a bid coming forward and being able to be assessed against all the other criteria.</p>

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
10	It needs to be made clear if the applicant has previously received money from CIL or any other source of funding from the Council regarding the project or site.	<p><u>Change proposed.</u></p> <p>The information needs to be requested through the pro-forma. The pro-forma will therefore need to be amended to include this. Officers will make this information clear in the CIL Spending Board Report.</p>	<p>This will ensure that Members of the CIL Spending Board are aware of whether the applicant has received any other forms of funding from the Council towards the project or existing infrastructure to support the project as this could influence the suitability of a Bid.</p> <p>For example: Community Fund, Section 106 etc</p>
11	The applicant needs to make it clear the monies that they have secured for the project, the funding they are waiting for and the funding they have not yet secured.	<p><u>Change proposed:</u></p> <p>The pro- forma should be amended to request this information in regard to the status of the funding. Officers must consider the security of the funding when assessing the bids to be able to advise the Board. Therefore the Criteria for assessing bids will be amended to include this. Further recommendations should be proposed for the CIL Spending Board. This will allow flexibility to allow them to set aside funding or defer making a decision if the all funding is not secure.</p>	<p>There have been a few occasions where funding has been applied for from other sources that had not yet been received, or where funding was likely and had not yet been confirmed.</p> <p>It is considered important to allow the CIL Spending Board to be flexible with its recommendations.</p>

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
12	It is considered that in order to properly assess bids, SDC need to make it clear what we consider an environmental benefit to be.	<p><u>Change proposed:</u> This will be made clearer in the criteria for assessing bids.</p>	When assessing the bids the officers and Members will consider the Social, Economic and Environmental benefits of the scheme. Most of the bids submitted considered environmental benefits by looking at the small scale benefits i.e. that it would make the immediate environment more attractive if a new building was replaced or that the building was more energy efficient. It is considered that this approach does not fully understand or take into account the wider environmental benefits a scheme could provide for example landscape enhancements or creation of habitats etc.

Validation Process/Assessment of Bids

No.	Issues Raised	Decision	Justification
13	Clearer guidance for the two-part validation process and how each criterion is scored.	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u> The pro forma and guide for assessing bids is proposed to be amended to reflect other concerns in this report.</p> <p>It is proposed that these documents are made publically available for Members and the public to fully understand how we assess CIL bids.</p> <p>There is no proposed change to the 2 stage validation process.</p>	<p>The criteria laid for the initial validation of the bids is laid out in Appendix X1 of the Constitution this ensures that a pro-forma has been completed, that the organisation making the bid has the legal right to carry out the project and that the project is providing infrastructure. If these are not in place the bid cannot be carried forward and is therefore considered to be invalid. As these are essential elements to the project it is considered that this is the correct approach.</p> <p>The second validation process looks more at a set of criteria to help officers assesses the benefits of the bid. Again this is a consistent and fair approach as every bid is assessed under the same criteria.</p>

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
14	Should Parish and Town Councils be encouraged to spend their own money and contribute to the Bids.	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u> There is a need to make it clear where the CIL money came from. The pro forma will be amended to reflect this. It will also be clarified in the criteria for assessing bids, which will ensure that it will assist a bid if PC/TCs contributed some of their CIL funds.</p> <p>If the PC/TC do not provide their CIL money the other benefits to the scheme will still be considered in the same way and this would not prevent a bid from not being considered.</p>	<p>At the current time, the way the Governance and assessment is written, it is not clear that if a Parish or Town Council give their own CIL money towards a project, whether it would help or hinder the assessment of the bid.</p> <p>It is important to clarify this and make it clear that the inclusion of PC/TC CIL monies would impact positively on the assessment of the bid. It is recommended that if no donation is made it should not prevent a bid from being considered. This can be discussed at the meeting.</p>
15	There is a need to review and clarify the criteria against which bids are assessed and ensure that these are followed through into the Key Considerations for the CIL Spending Board.	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u> It is recommended that all the criteria laid out in the assessment of Bids should also be included in the CIL Spending Boards key considerations.</p>	The Assessment of Bids considers the Benefits of an application. To be consistent this criterion will also need to be reflected in the CIL Spending Boards Key Considerations.

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
16	Need to provide further clarification as to what Match Funding is considered to be.	This has already been addressed in (3) above.	
17	Do we need to provide a more robust assessment to consider whether the scheme would provide value for money	<u>No Change</u>	This questions whether Members would require a more robust assessment as to whether a scheme is value for money. As the criteria for assessing the bids already includes an overall cost benefit assessment and the Key Recommendations of the CIL Spending Board are proposed to be amended to include that overall consideration of the benefits of a scheme compared to the cost. It is considered that a balanced overall assessment of the costs compared to the benefits of a scheme is sufficient.

The CIL Spending Board

No.	Issues Raised	Decision	Justification
18	Format of the CIL Spending Board as laid out in Appendix X1 of the Constitution needs to be made clear.	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u> Officers intend to draft amendments to the terms of reference to ensure that they reflect best and current practice.</p>	Members were unsure of the process that should be followed when considering and debating all the bids to ensure consistency of their recommendations. So clear guidance of the process is required to assist the Board.
19	Too many applications to consider in one meeting g (7 applications presented at the first CIL Board).	<p><u>No immediate Change:</u></p>	<p>To limit the number of applications to be discussed to a shortlist of five/six applications. Officers are aware of members concerns on this issue, however officers are having to explore whether this is achievable without unfairly prejudicing applicants.</p>

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
20	There was no speaker(s) for some applications.	<u>No Change</u>	<p>During the bidding process, officers, in the pro-forma and also in the covering letter encourage applicants to appear at the Board to support their bids.</p> <p>An application is not invalid and cannot be prevented from going in front of the Board should a speaker not be present. Therefore a bid cannot be refused solely on this Ground. However if the Board consider that further evidence is required and they cannot question the applicant at the Board directly to gain that information, they have the option under the constitution to either defer the bid or recommend that funding is not approved on the basis that insufficient evidence is provided. If relevant this will be made clear to the Board at the beginning of the meeting.</p>

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
21	Is it acceptable for the CIL Spending Board to alter the amount of CIL given under each bid.	<p><u>Proposed Change</u> Amend Appendix 1 of the Constitution to clarify that the amount of money requested cannot be changed at the CIL Spending Board by Members or applicants.</p> <p>Amend the recommendations to allow the Board to defer applications.</p>	<p>If the CIL Spending Board consider that the applicant is applying for too much CIL, it should not be possible for them to change the amount of CIL funding on the night as any alteration could make the project unviable.</p> <p>It is recommended that if the Board have concerns with the amount of CIL asked for, that the project be deferred to allow the applicant to demonstrate whether the project could still be carried out with the lesser amount. Or whether the project could be altered to take into account the lesser amount. This could mean that the impact of the project is reduced.</p> <p>Officers assess and make recommendations on the exact information provided in each bid. If the project or amount of money changes, for consistency, the project will again need to be assessed through the validation process again. This will be made clear to the Board at the beginning of the meeting.</p>

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
22	Is there a need to re-consider the recommendations that the CIL Spending Board can make	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u> It is suggested that Members be given more options in their recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be able to defer bid applications. • To be able to delay payments - therefore the money is set aside but not paid immediately. • That the money is agreed to be given subject to other funding being agreed for example. 	The current list of recommendations was considered to be too restrictive and did not provide enough options to allow the CIL spending Board to defer or alter considerations.
23	Consider the layout of the report	<u>No Change</u>	The report covers all the areas required and provides a useful summary for Members.
24	Do we need a standard reason for refusal	<u>No Change</u>	Options are already available for Members to not approve funding. Providing a variety of options allows the CIL Spending Board to make decisions on a case by case basis. It is also helpful to have a number of reasons for refusing to approve funding as it allows the applicant to be informed as to the exact reason why.
25	Consider whether the CIL Spending Board should have priorities for spending	<u>No Immediate Change</u>	Once the Infrastructure Development Plan is in place this may provide more of a steer as to what our priorities are.

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
26	Presentations and visual aids for speakers presenting to the CIL Board are very helpful to set the context of the project	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u> It is suggested that Appendix X1 of the Constitution makes it clear the amount of visual aids that a speaker can use and the deadline for submission.</p>	It is agreed that presentations and visual aids are helpful for the Board to understand the project. Appendix X1 of the Constitution does already allow for visual aids. It maybe useful to clarify exacting what they can provide i.e. no more than 5 slides etc.
27	A day meeting (similar to a Licencing hearing) could address the time issues presented from an evening meeting.	<p><u>No proposed change</u></p>	There was no strong desire or justification to change the time of the CIL Spending Board. Members found it easier to attend evening meetings.

Contracts for and the monitoring of CIL Spending

No.	Issues Raised	Recommendation	Justification
28	Contracts need to be drawn up to ensure that the CIL monies are spent appropriately and that the Council is kept informed of the progress of the projects.	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u></p> <p>All contracts should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority for officers of the Council to enter land. • Ensuring that the money is spent in line of the details laid out in the bid. • Formally notifying us of the start and finish of the project. • Confirmation of what the money has been spent on. • An up-date report should be provided to inform the Council on the progress of the project. • Before and after photographs of the project. • If any projects are promoted, the successful bid applicant should show on any advertisement for the project that Sevenoaks District Council provided money to fund the scheme. This should be provided for at least 12 months following the completion of the project. <p>All contracts to private companies should also include:</p>	<p>A number of requirements for the spending of CIL are already secured for Local Authorities and Parish and Town Councils through the CIL Legislation.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed to put in place two separate contracts, one for those covered by CIL Legislation and one for those private organisations and businesses that are not.</p> <p>It is likely that Planning Enforcement Team will monitor whether the applicant has complied with the contract.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making it clear that if they spend any of the money on anything that is not Infrastructure they need to pay the money back. • If they no longer decide to carry out the work the money should be paid back. • If the money is not spent within 5 years it needs to be returned. 	
<p>29</p>	<p>How do we want to be informed of the progress of each infrastructure project, just written update or do we want it to include architects forms or completion certificates etc.</p>	<p><u>Proposed Change:</u> This will be incorporated as part of the terms of the contract.</p>	<p>It is important that as a Local Authority we are kept updated on the progress of each bid. It is important that officers request an update based on the size and length of the project.</p> <p>It would be helpful for the Council to receive evidence of the process of the Project i.e. through pictures, or through Completion certificates etc. However, it is considered that this is not essential.</p> <p>It is likely that Planning Enforcement Team will monitor whether the updates are provided and appropriate.</p>

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Planning Advisory Committee Work Plan 2017/18 (as at 15/01/18)

12 March 2019	25 June 2019	15 October 2019	17 December 2019	10 March 2020
<p>Conservation Area Appraisals - consultation responses</p> <p>Draft Local Plan - with update on consultation responses to added sites</p> <p>CIL Spending Board - review of governance</p> <p>Village Design Statements - Westerham and Seal St Lawrence</p> <p>Adoption of the High Weald AONB management plan 2019-2024</p>		<p>Budget: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)</p>		

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