

# **Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 15**

**April 2019**

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## **Acknowledgements**

This document has been developed and produced by Rolvenden Parish Council in close cooperation with local community volunteers on behalf of the Rolvenden community.

The team would like to thank the following in preparation of the documents:

- Tony Fullwood, of Tony Fullwood Associates, Chartered Town Planners, who was our professional planning consultant
- Ashford Borough Council for guidance and support
- Events and exhibitions venues who kindly gave their space
- The community groups, local societies and school in Rolvenden for providing support and comment throughout the process

The Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan team would like to thank the whole community for participating in the process and for coming together and supporting the Neighbourhood Plan over its development.

## Section 1: Introduction

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document produced in Rolvenden. It is part of the Government's new approach to planning which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the Localism Act that came into force in April 2012.

If passed at a local referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted by Ashford Borough Council as the plan which must be used in law to determine planning applications in Rolvenden Parish. It will become part of the Development Plan alongside the Borough Council's Local Plan.

The Plan therefore provides the local community with a powerful tool to guide the long term future of Rolvenden Parish for the period 2013 to 2030. The Plan contains a vision for the future of Rolvenden Parish and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.

In order to develop the Neighbourhood Plan, Rolvenden Parish Council set up a Neighbourhood Plan steering committee team which comprises 3 Parish Councillors supported by a number of local volunteers.

Some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, whilst others are site or area specific and apply only to the relevant areas illustrated on the associated Map. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, the Parish and Borough Council will apply all relevant policies of the Plan. It is therefore assumed that the Plan will be read as a whole and cross-referencing between Plan policies has been minimised.

The Plan should also be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019 (NPPF), Ashford Borough Council's Local Plan, 2030 and the Neighbourhood Plan evidence documents.

## Which Area Does the Neighbourhood Plan Cover?

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan relates to the designated area covered by Rolvenden Parish Council. The neighbourhood plan designation was approved by Ashford Borough Council on 11 July 2013. The area to which the Plan applies is shown on the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Designation Map (Figure 1).

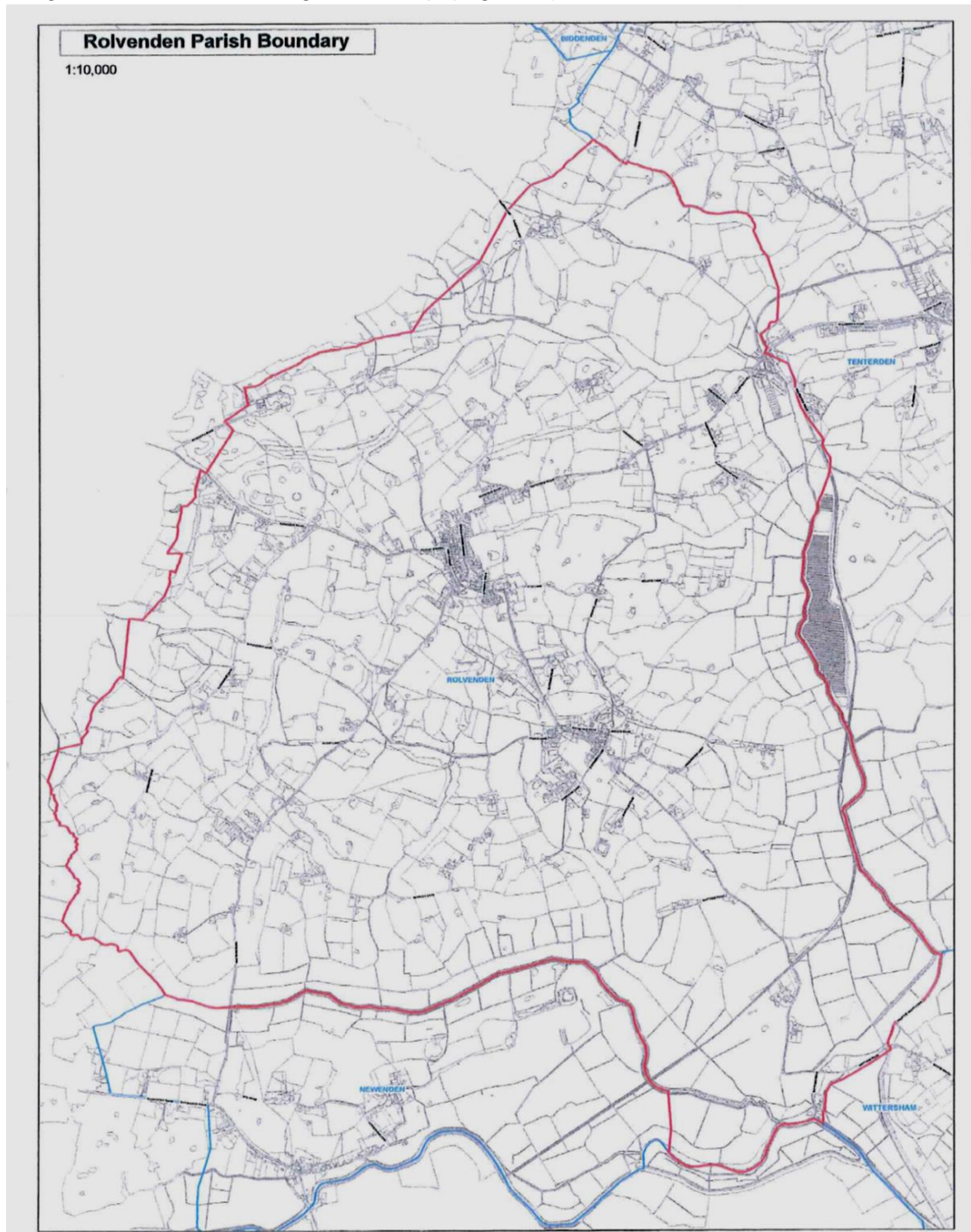


Figure 1 - Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Area

## **Involvement in the Neighbourhood Plan Process**

The Neighbourhood Plan team has followed the necessary legal steps to create the Plan. Importantly the team has ensured engagement with the people of Rolvenden and others with an interest in the area.

Details of the consultation to date have been recorded in the Consultation Statement.

The process is set out in Figure 2 – Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Process with the opportunities for involvement highlighted in dark green.

Figure 2 – Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Process



## **How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the planning system**

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their area, all Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy. This means that, within the constraints imposed by national guidance and local policy, neighbourhoods should develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans - promoting no less development than is required in the Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans must comply with European Regulations on strategic environmental assessments and habitats, take into account the NPPF and generally conform with the strategic policies in the adopted Ashford Local Plan, 2030.

Nevertheless, if passed at a local referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted by Ashford Borough Council as the plan which must be used in law to determine planning applications in Rolvenden Parish.

## **What is in the Neighbourhood Plan?**

The Plan is for Rolvenden Parish as a whole and looks at a wide range of issues, including:

- Protecting the heritage assets; distinctive character of the built-up area and the surrounding countryside (the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and achieving high quality development which fits well with the location;
- Retaining the Local Green Spaces within the built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and important public views;
- Selecting suitable sites for new housing and business floorspace
- Providing smaller homes to meet starter and retirement needs;
- Protecting and enhancing community buildings; and
- Providing supporting local infrastructure.

## **What period does the Neighbourhood Plan cover?**

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan covers the Plan period from 2013 – 2030 and would coincide with the period for the adopted Local Plan.

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required under European legislation for all plans which may have a significant effect on the environment. To determine whether the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan requires an SEA it is necessary to screen the proposals in the plan to determine whether it is likely to result in significant environmental effects. Ashford Borough Council is legally required to determine whether a neighbourhood plan will require SEA. As part of this screening process it is necessary to consult the SEA consultation bodies (Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency) to get their opinion on whether or not the plan is likely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore whether an SEA is required.

The Screening Report for the Regulation 14 Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan found that no significant negative effects will occur as a result of the Plan. The assessment also found that the aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are in conformity with the adopted and the, then, emerging local plan policies which have a full SA/SEA which identified no



significant effects will occur as a result of the implementation of policies contained within them. It is concluded that a full SEA is not required at this time. This has been reiterated for the Regulation 15 Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan.

The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the appropriate assessment required for any plan to assess the potential implications for European wildlife sites. The first stage of the HRA process is a screening exercise undertaken by Ashford Borough Council where the details of nearby internationally designated sites are examined to assess whether there is the potential for the implementation of the Plan to have an impact on the sites. Following such an assessment, it was considered that the Regulation 14 Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan proposals would not adversely affect the integrity of the internationally designated sites, alone or in combination with other projects and plans. It was therefore considered that a full HRA of the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan is not required. This has been confirmed for the Regulation 15 Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan.

## **How this Plan is organised**

The Plan is divided into six sections:

- Section 2: Rolvenden Now:** a brief description of the villages and surrounding countryside today and the key issues that have influenced the Plan
- Section 3: The Vision for Rolvenden:** a long term vision for the Parish up to 2030
- Section 4: Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Strategy:** the broad planning approach for Rolvenden Parish and how this conforms with higher level planning policy
- Section 5: Neighbourhood Plan Policies:** which set out policies to support the overall vision, including site specific allocations for new development. Policies are arranged in the following themes:
- Environment
  - Housing
  - Local Economy
  - Leisure and Wellbeing
  - Local Infrastructure
- Section 6: Monitoring and Review:** which explains how the Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored and the circumstances which may lead to a review of the plan.

## Section 2: Rolvenden Now

A wide range of issues have been considered in producing the Neighbourhood Plan.

These are grouped under five themes:

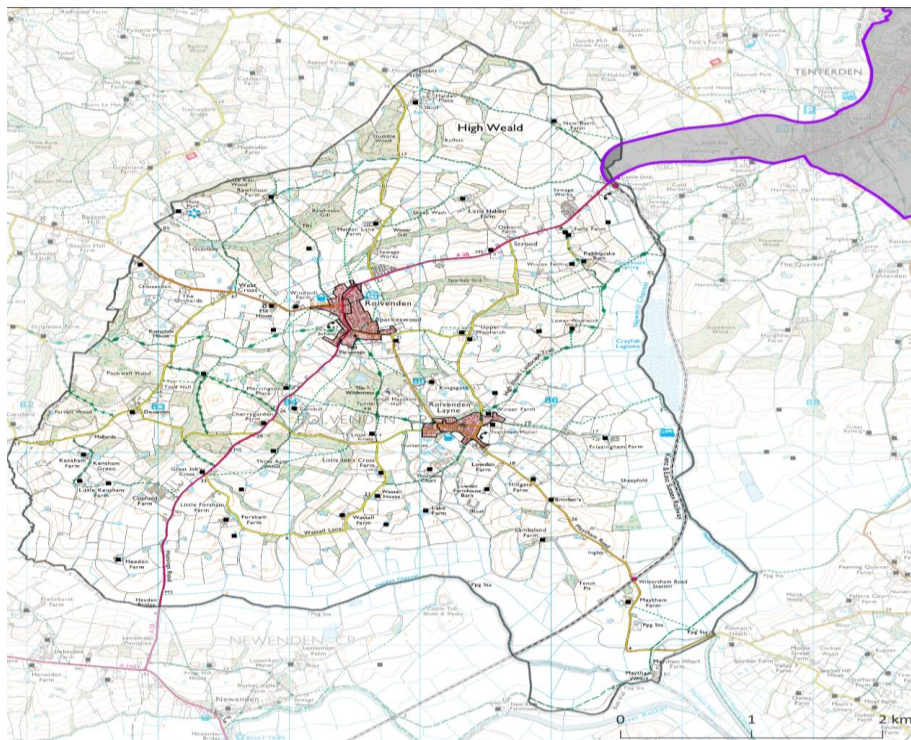
- Environment
- Housing
- The Local Economy
- Leisure and Wellbeing
- Local Infrastructure

The key issues for these six themes are set out below. These have been identified through research along with various consultation events. The background reports used to help prepare the Neighbourhood Plan are referred to in more detail in Section 5.

### Environment

The extensive rural parish of 23.3 km<sup>2</sup> (9 square miles) is made up of

- the older village of Rolvenden (dating from Saxon times and mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086);
- the associated younger hamlet, Rolvenden Layne; and
- a number of dispersed hamlets: farmsteads and isolated buildings originally built around a handful of historical manors



Map 1 – Settlement Pattern of Rolvenden

### High Weald AONB Landscape Character: Historic settlement Rolvenden Parish

Key	
■	Historic farmsteads (S2)
■	Historic settlement extent c. 1860 (S2) (NB: This data is not available for every parish)
■	Area of parish outside the High Weald AONB for which data is not displayed or not available (NB: only applicable where parishes straddle the AONB boundary)
—	High Weald AONB boundary

#### Summary Character Description:

The High Weald AONB is characterised by dispersed historic settlements of farmsteads and hamlets, and late medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries.

#### Management Plan Objectives

**S1 Objective:** To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside.

**S2 Objective:** To protect the historic pattern of settlement.

**S3 Objective:** To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald.

For further info please refer to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, which may be downloaded from our website (see address below).

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The Parish of Rolvenden is situated almost entirely within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – see Map 1 above.

Rolvenden Parish has a rich historic environment with a number of important designated heritage assets including a large number of listed buildings; two Conservation Areas (at Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne); a scheduled monument and a Registered Historic Park and Garden. The area is also contains areas known to be of archaeological interest and areas with archaeological potential.

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies areas of distinctive character within the built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and the associated approaches to the villages.

## **Housing**

The 2011 census recorded 1,414 people in the Parish. The population has an older age profile than the national average. Over 60% of residents in 2011 were aged 45 years and above. The over 65's made up almost half of this group (30%) while the national average for over 65's was only 16.6%.

The census tells us that in 2011 Rolvenden Parish had 699 households. The Rolvenden Housing Needs Survey, 2015 indicates a predominance of family housing with the majority of respondents (almost 45%) living in 3 bedroom homes with just over 30% in houses of 4+ bedrooms and over 25% in 1 or 2 bedroom homes. In common with Ashford Borough and Kent, the majority of houses are owner occupied with a much smaller proportion available for rent.

The NPPF states that neighbourhoods should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, taking into account any specific policies in the Framework which indicate development should be restricted including those relating to the AONB.

The adopted Ashford Local Plan 2030, pursues a more restrained approach to development outside of Ashford and anticipates more limited development at a scale that is consistent with accessibility, infrastructure provision, level of services available, suitability of sites and environmental sensitivity. The adopted plan does not allocate any strategic housing sites within Rolvenden Parish. Where Neighbourhood Plan Areas had been established early on in the preparation of the adopted Local Plan such as at Rolvenden, proposals to allocate sites within these areas fall to the neighbourhood plan, where they are non-strategic in nature. The Local Plan notes that Rolvenden Parish Council is committed to allocating land for 24 dwellings in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Whilst there is no strategic requirement for Rolvenden to accommodate new housing allocations, the Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015 has revealed a local need for a limited number of new market and affordable homes, particularly smaller homes to meet demand especially from new and older downsizing households. It is the intention that the Neighbourhood Plan allocates small sites for a limited number of new smaller dwellings and facilitates further provision of affordable housing.

Residents are keen to ensure that development is absorbed within the environmental constraints identified and can be supported by sufficient infrastructure to ensure the quality of life of existing and future residents. When assessing new development it is important to

understand the characteristics of each area of the villages and designs should respond carefully to the heritage assets and distinctive character of the area in which they are located.

### **The Local Economy**

As of 2011, 61.5% of people of working age (aged 16-74) in Rolvenden and Tenterden West Ward were in employment.

Within the Parish, most local employment is to be found in Rolvenden village centre shops and services, community services (such as the primary school), small scale industry, agriculture, the provision of tourist accommodation as well as those working from home.

Of real importance to the community are the shops and services provided at Rolvenden village centre.

Most businesses have been established in the Parish for several decades. The, principally, small scale businesses generally operate from small premises (in many case these are home based). There are a number of offices and workshops located in the Parish, many within converted rural buildings. The recent introduction of fibre optic broadband has increased business connectivity. A Business Survey identified no significant need for additional premises – though with businesses generally optimistic about the future and some expressing a need to move premises in the next 5 years or so, some flexibility in supply will be advantageous in sustaining local enterprises.

The presence of businesses is important to the sustainability of Rolvenden Parish and a number of businesses have long term associations with the Parish. Businesses provide local employment opportunities; help sustain the social and economic fabric of Rolvenden High Street and Rolvenden Layne and, in relation to farming, help sustain the landscape quality of the countryside.

### **Leisure and Wellbeing**

Rolvenden Parish is blessed by a strong community spirit reflected in the number of groups and activities taking place. These groups need places in which to meet and there are a number of excellent facilities within Rolvenden including the modern Village Hall, the Church and the Village Club. Private parties may hire the Village Hall.

The Summer Fete when it is held starts its procession at Rolvenden Layne playing field and heads towards Rolvenden's cricket field for the day's proceedings. This, along with the Flower Festival and Art Exhibition in August, are much anticipated events. The three pubs, The Bull, The Star and The Ewe and Lamb, thrive all year round.

Rolvenden has a long and distinguished sporting history. There is generally good provision of open space serving Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne. Cricket has been played on the green for over 100 years and the highly successful football club and the tennis club are keenly supported. Stool ball is still played on the Rolvenden Layne playing field. Facilities for short mat bowls, New Age Kurling, badminton, table tennis and pool are available in the Village Hall with the nearest sports centre located at Tenterden. The primary school has a swimming pool which is intended to become available to the public.

## **Local Infrastructure**

### *Education*

Rolvenden has a small pre-school and a primary school with adjoining playing field and its own swimming pool. The primary school has 14 places in each year group, giving 98 places overall. In October 2016 the school was at capacity. However, Kent County Council as Education Authority assume that future Year R (reception) pupils from new development in the Parish will access places in Rolvenden Primary School and that those who would apply from further afield will be allocated places nearer to their homes. The nearest secondary school is Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre in Tenterden.

### *Medical Services*

The part time doctor's surgery in the High Street was closed several years ago and the nearest is now in Tenterden.

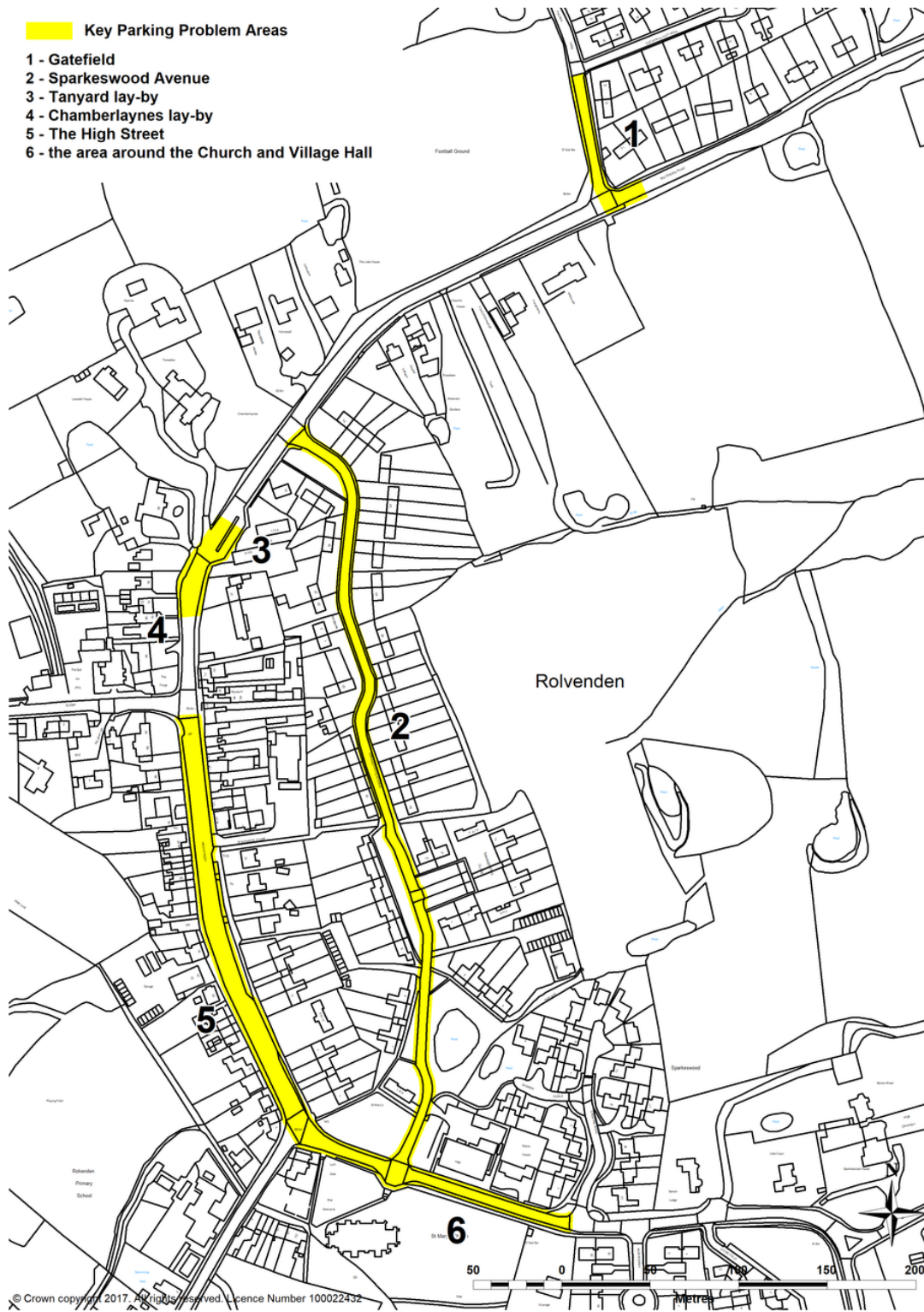
### *Leisure provision*

In order to enhance existing sports provision, the Parish Council and local sports groups are keen to progress the building of a new multi-sports pavilion at Rolvenden to provide up to date changing and showering facilities for the existing outdoor sports pitches.

### *Transport*

The rural location and poor public transport have resulted in high car ownership in Rolvenden. Limited bus services to Ashford, Tunbridge Wells and Hastings run from the High Street but the Rolvenden Layne service to Tenterden is mainly shared with the Homewood School bus. The supermarket in Peasmarsh provides a special service twice a week.

The peak parking times in Rolvenden village centre are mornings and mid-afternoons (during school term time) and evenings. In part this is a reflection of the catchment area for the primary school. The Thursday morning village markets, weddings, funerals and other various social activities in the Village Hall generate a demand for parking greater than the spaces available. In addition, there is limited off street parking to serve the Sparkeswood Avenue and Gatefield estates which results in on street parking along the narrow highway.



Map 2 - Problem Parking Areas

Farms, as well as businesses in converted rural buildings, are located away from the centre and rely on road systems around the Parish which remain practically unchanged since early settlement days. It is important that such enterprises can be safely accessed without the erosion of traditional lanes which are important to the landscape character of the area.

The interlinking network of paths within Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and into the countryside is an important asset for non-car users and for informal leisure.

## **Section 3: The Vision for Rolvenden:**

*Our vision for Rolvenden Parish is to continue to thrive by meeting identified local housing needs, sustaining the local economy and enhancing the strong social fabric whilst preserving the distinctive heritage and village character together with the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape.*

## **Section 4: Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Strategy**

Rolvenden has continued to thrive by adapting and evolving since Saxon times. Necessary development to provide new homes, businesses and community facilities for the Parish will continue to come forward. The Neighbourhood Plan is looking to ensure that development needed to sustain the Parish is of an appropriate scale and is well located and well designed to respond to the distinctive local character.

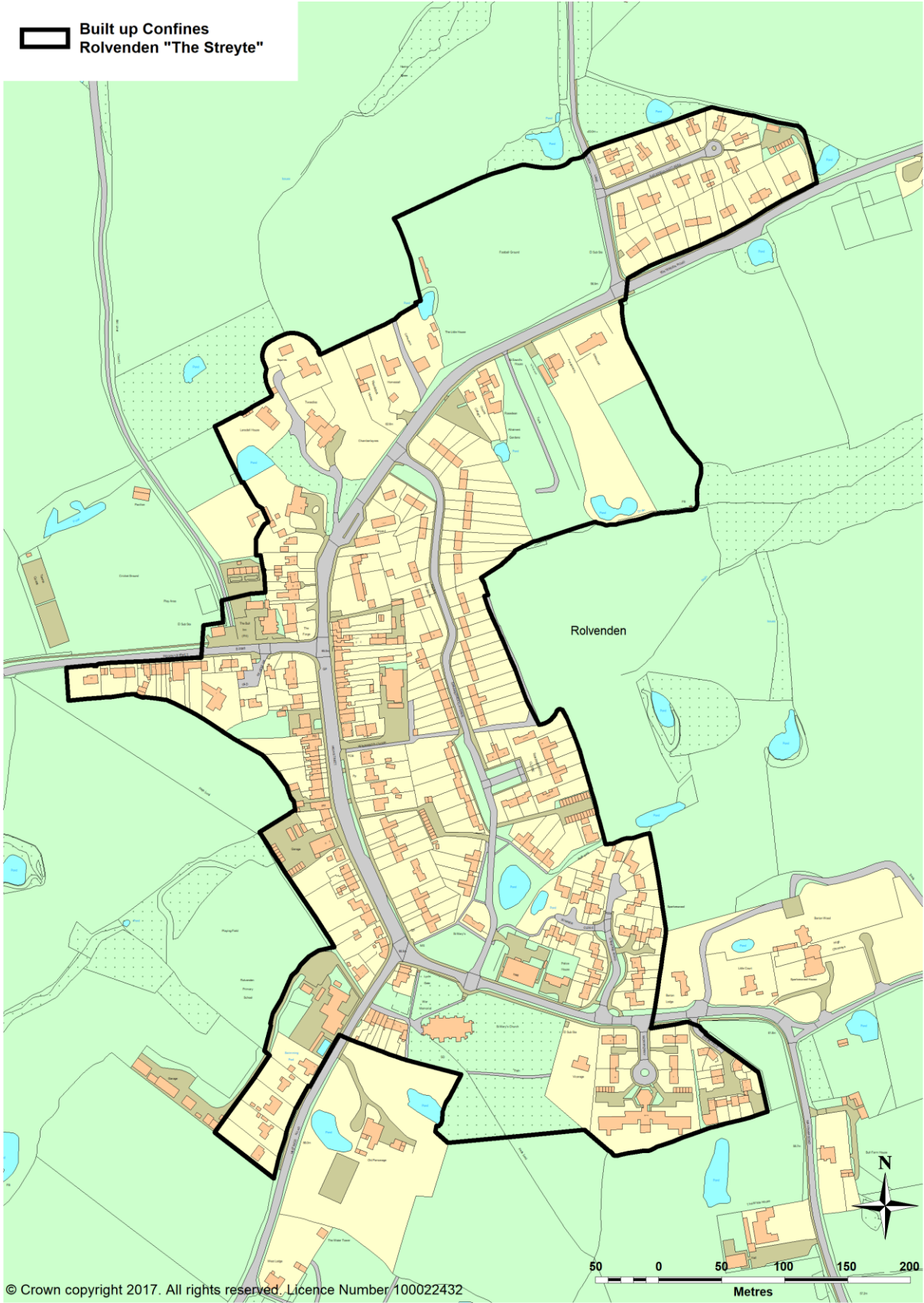
All plans should be based on, and reflect, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and take account of the NPPF with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally. The national planning policy background to each of the Neighbourhood Plan topics is set out in the relevant sections of the Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Ashford Local Plan 2030 which provides a relevant planning context. The Ashford Borough Local Plan 2030 does not allocate strategic sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area but notes that Rolvenden Parish Council is committed to allocating land for 24 dwellings in the Neighbourhood Plan.

National planning policies state that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and protecting and enhancing the rich heritage assets of the Parish and their setting.

Coinciding with the restraint sought by national policies, local surveys have revealed limited local need for additional housing development.

Built-up confines are defined for both Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne using a consistent set of principles (Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne Built-Up Confines, 2018) and are shown on Maps 3 and 4 below.

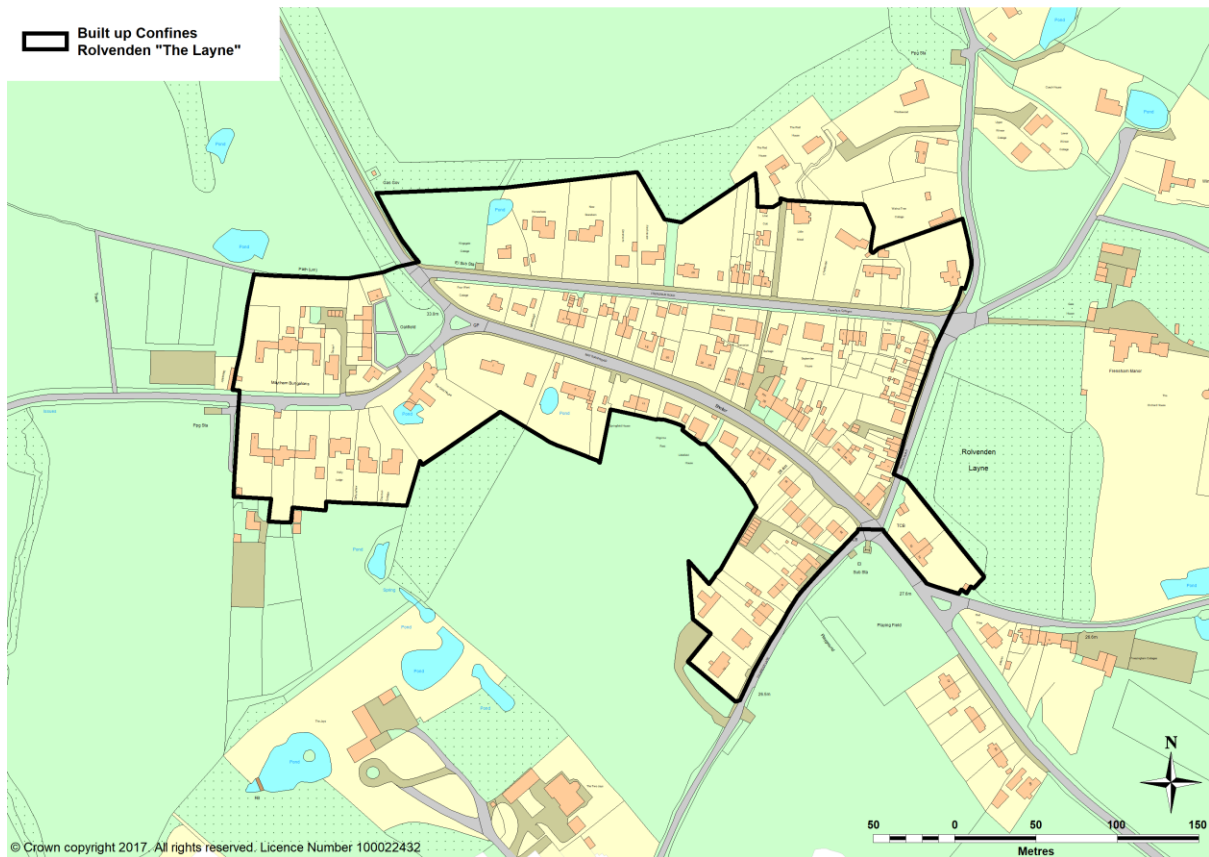
□ Built up Confines  
Rolvenden "The Streyte"



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Map 3 – Rolvenden Built-Up Confines





*Map 4 – Rolvenden Layne Built-Up Confines*

The planning strategy for Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne is to focus well designed development within the defined built-up confines and generally to limit development in the countryside in order to conserve and enhance the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; preserve and enhance the character of the village Conservation Areas and their setting and to protect views from public areas, formal and informal recreational amenities as well as biodiversity.

Rolvenden is served by a number of day to day services such as a primary school; shops; public houses; community buildings and recreation space. Two small scale housing sites are allocated in the village and there may be scope for development at the periphery of the village in line with Policy RNP4 (which aligns with Policy HOU5 of the adopted Local Plan 2030). In judging the suitability of development beyond the built-up confines, great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the tranquillity of the countryside and preserving and enhancing the landscape character of the Conservation Area and its setting.

Other than the recreation ground, Rolvenden Layne has no day to day services. The village is served by poor public transport, is located over 1.5km from facilities at Rolvenden and is connected by a steep road and footpath which restricts pedestrian and cycle links. For these reasons, a single small housing allocation is made in Rolvenden Layne and there is no capacity for further expansion beyond the village boundary other than to provide for affordable housing where justified by local need; rural worker accommodation; use of a heritage asset; re-use of redundant or disused buildings; development that is exceptional quality or innovative design or a replacement dwelling provided certain criteria are met.

Importantly, local housing need is focused on smaller (1 and 2 bedroom) dwellings and affordable housing and the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to enable development which helps meet this need.

The Plan accepts development within the countryside to serve local employment needs by permitting conversions of suitable rural buildings for business or tourist uses and enabling the expansion of existing business premises.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the important community networks in Rolvenden Parish and seeks to protect the social and economic hub of Rolvenden High Street and Regent Street at the village centre together with other community facilities and open spaces which are important to the social fabric of the Parish.

This Neighbourhood Plan has been discussed with the infrastructure providers to ensure that the proposed development can be supported by sufficient infrastructure to ensure the quality of life of existing and future residents. Any development permitted will be expected to ensure provision of the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development.

## **Section 5: Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

### **Environment**

#### **Objectives**

- To preserve and enhance the heritage of the area.
- To ensure development is well designed and reflects the heritage and distinctive character of the different areas of Rolvenden.
- To protect and enhance the natural beauty of the High Weald landscape and the setting of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne.
- To protect Local Green Spaces within Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne.
- To maintain the distinctive locally valued views and visual connectivity of the villages with the surrounding countryside.

#### **Environment Policies**

##### **High Quality Design**

The NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Sustainable development involves achieving positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including replacing poor design with better design. The NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. The NPPF encourages the development of design policies with local communities so they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. The NPPF states that Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.

##### **Distinctive Character Areas and Approaches**

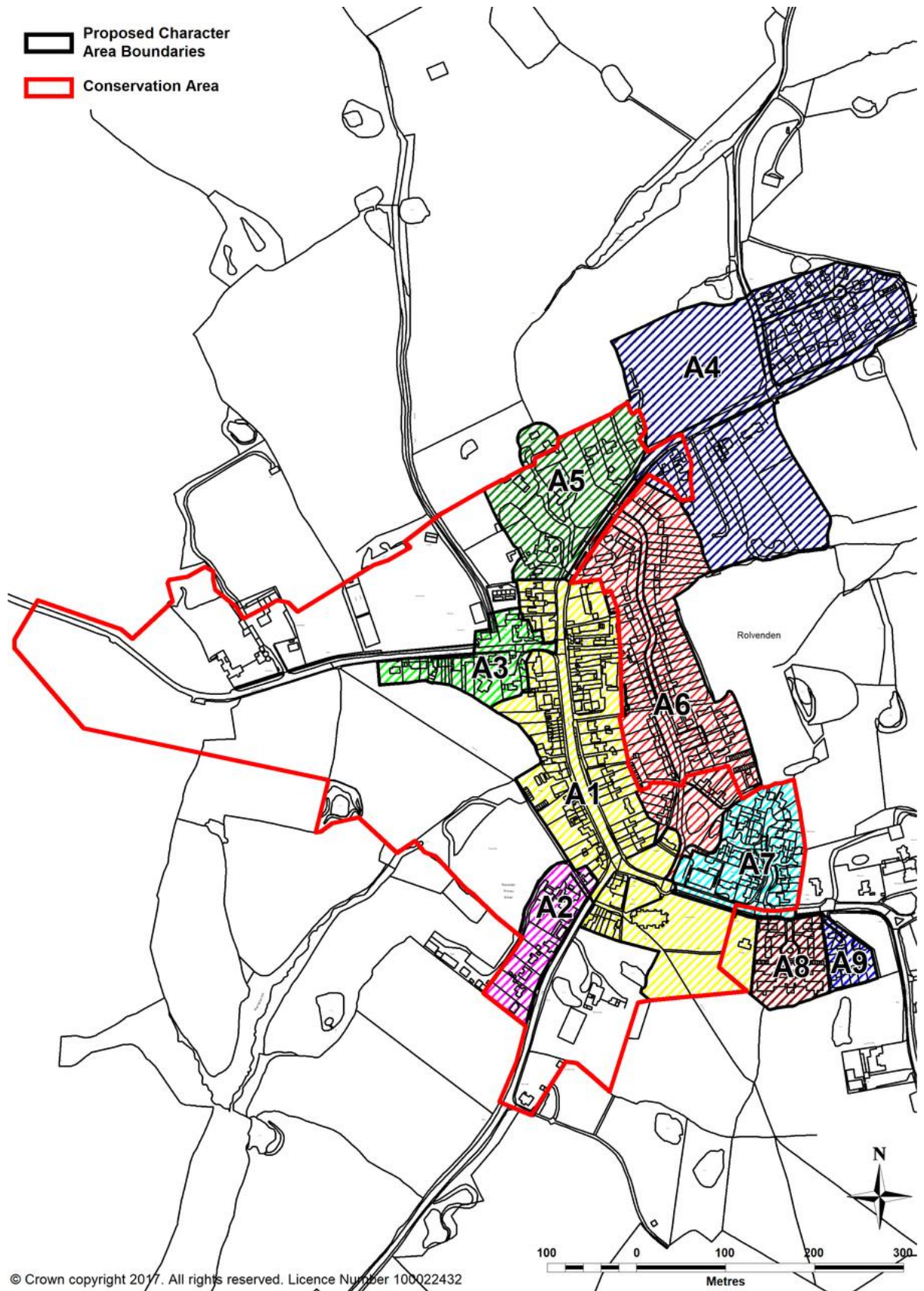
Ashford Borough Council's adopted Local Plan SP6 - Promoting High Quality Design attaches great importance to the quality of design in new development including demonstrating a positive response to design policy, including local design guidance in relevant Neighbourhood Plans.

The 'character of an area' is often mentioned in the context of considering development proposals. What is often missing is a clear identification of, and agreement about, the locally distinctive features of an area that give it character that should be given careful regard in considering proposals for development. The Neighbourhood Plan can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. For this purpose, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies areas of distinctive character within the built-up confines of Rolvenden (see Map 5 below) and Rolvenden Layne (see Map 6 below) and the associated approaches to the villages.

Through evaluation, there is a good understanding of the distinctive characteristics of each of the character areas. Buildings of Note are also identified where the use, mass, scale, design and visual prominence of a building mean that it plays an important role in the character of an area. Whilst some Buildings of Note are listed buildings, others are not, but the Neighbourhood Plan would seek to protect all such buildings.

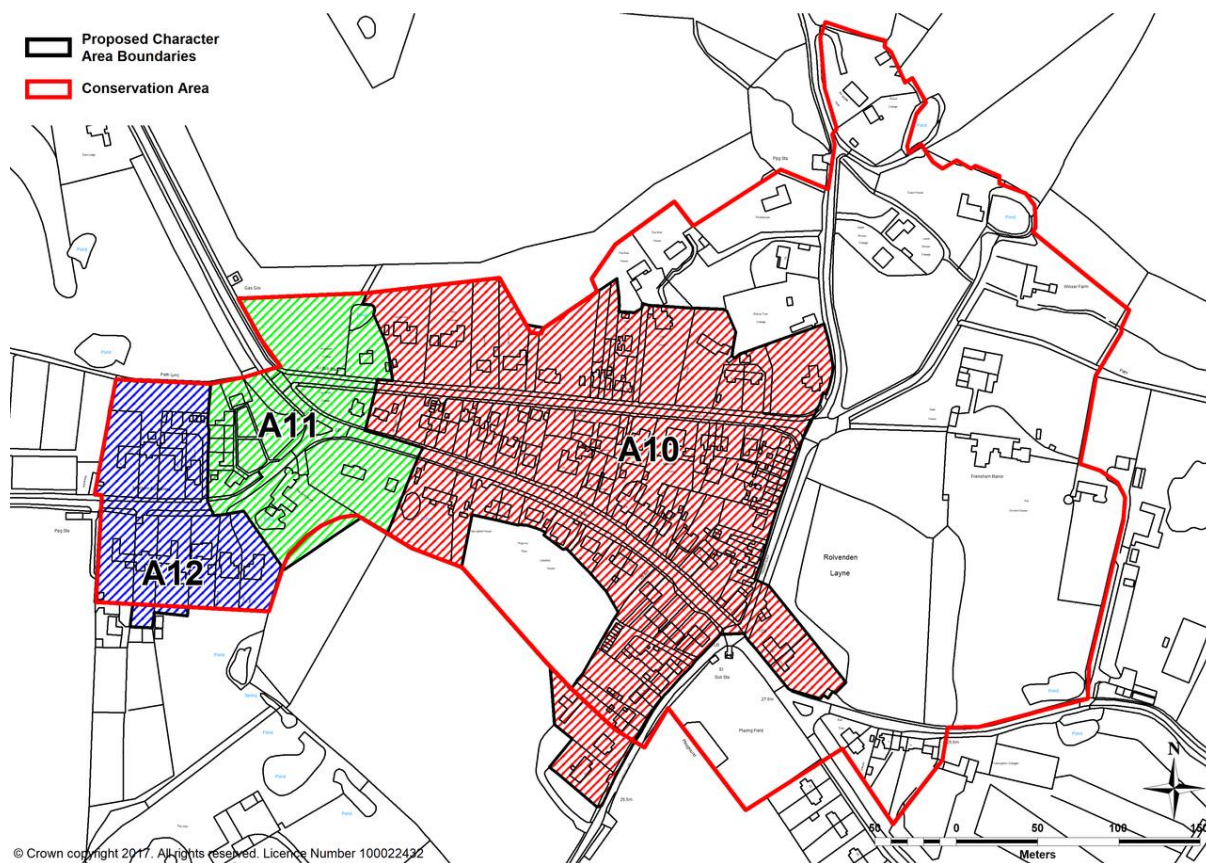
Generally, the Character Areas are in good condition but a limited number of features which detract from the character have been noted. Proposed enhancements are also identified which may be achieved directly, or through contributions from, development. All development will add pressure on the social and economic hub of the High Street and Regent Street Character Areas and it is important that development contributes to environmental mitigation measures. Contributions will be sought from development towards environmental enhancements within these two character areas as set out in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out the distinctive character; Buildings of Note; detractors and proposed enhancements for each separate character area within the villages.



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Map 5 - Rolvenden Character Areas



Map 6 - Rolvenden Layne Character Areas

## Heritage

The historic centres of both Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne are designated as Conservation Areas as shown on Maps 5 and 6 above. Each Conservation Area comprises areas of different character and extends into the surrounding countryside. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 empowers the local authority to pay particular attention to proposed development within, and affecting the setting of, a Conservation Area and gives greater control over such matters as demolition, landscaping and trees, and the display of advertisements. In the absence of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for either of the Conservation Areas, the special character of these designated areas can be derived from Appendix 1.

The NPPF also seeks the protection of the character and setting of listed buildings and Conservation Areas. Historic England's register shows 147 listed buildings (including one grade I and seven grade II\*). There is a high incidence of listed buildings within the Conservation Areas.

The medieval moated site and adjacent hythe, Lowden Farm (off the Wittersham approach south of Rolvenden Layne) is a scheduled monument. The site comprises a regular square moat and island together with an adjoining fishpond, a nearby building platform surviving as an earthwork and a small rectangular harbour or hythe. The latter feature signifies the closeness of the moated site when it was built to the navigable waters of the Rother levels.

The Lutyens-designed garden at Great Maytham to the south of Rolvenden immediately to the east of the approach from Rolvenden Layne is designated by Historic England as a Grade 2 Registered Historic Park and Garden.

In addition, there are areas known to be of archaeological interest and areas with archaeological potential around the parish church; an extensive area to the south of the Rolvenden built-up confines between the Newenden and Layne approaches and immediately to the east of Rolvenden Layne built-up confines around Frensham Manor.

These designated heritage assets provide an important context for new development.

## **Landscape**

The Parish of Rolvenden is situated almost entirely within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – see Map 1 above. The NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection. The AONB Management Plan seeks to ensure that the natural beauty, special character and the vitality of its communities are recognised, maintained and strengthened.

The landscape forms a backdrop which contributes to the attraction of Rolvenden Parish as a place to live and visit and plays a vital role in maintaining the health and wellbeing of the population.

Without careful planning, the distinctive character and sensitive landscape would be under threat from development of an inappropriate scale, location or design. Any development must be well integrated into the landscape for example through the use of existing and new landscape buffers.

### **Policy RNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation**

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

- a) Is designed to a high quality which responds to the heritage and distinctive characteristics of the individual area of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and the associated approaches in which it is located, as defined in Appendix 1 by way of:
  - i. height, form, layout, orientation, materials, fenestration and boundary treatment;
  - ii the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape);
- b) Protects and enhances heritage assets and their setting (including Buildings of Note as set out in Appendix 1) and, where appropriate, contributes to enhancement measures as set out in Appendix 1;
- c) Protects and sensitively incorporates landscape features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site; and
- d) Is well integrated into the landscape.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of applications to which Parish Council have objections to the design of development.	No applications to which Parish Council have objections to the design of development.

## Areas of Local Green Spaces

One of the distinctive features of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne identified in resident surveys undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan and the Character Area Assessments is the importance of open spaces within the built-up confines of the villages.

Local communities are able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them through Neighbourhood Plans. Designating Local Green Spaces in a Neighbourhood Plan rules out new development on these sites other than in very special circumstances.

The Local Green Spaces identified in the Neighbourhood Plan are relatively small but, being within the built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne, all are in close proximity to the community they serve.

The areas are important for a number of sometimes overlapping reasons which are outlined below:

### Open Spaces of Historic Importance

The relationship of buildings and open spaces within Conservation Areas is important in creating their special character and in some cases in contributing to the setting of listed buildings.

### Open Spaces contributing to the character of an area

Open spaces can play an important role in creating the distinctive character of an area which is not designated as a heritage asset.

### Open Space of Local Visual Amenity Value

A number of open spaces within the built-up confines provide important visual amenity.

### Recreational Value

Most open spaces act as informal recreational amenity space to the adjoining residential development. St Mary's Churchyard and the pond area provide more tranquil spaces.

### Wildlife Value

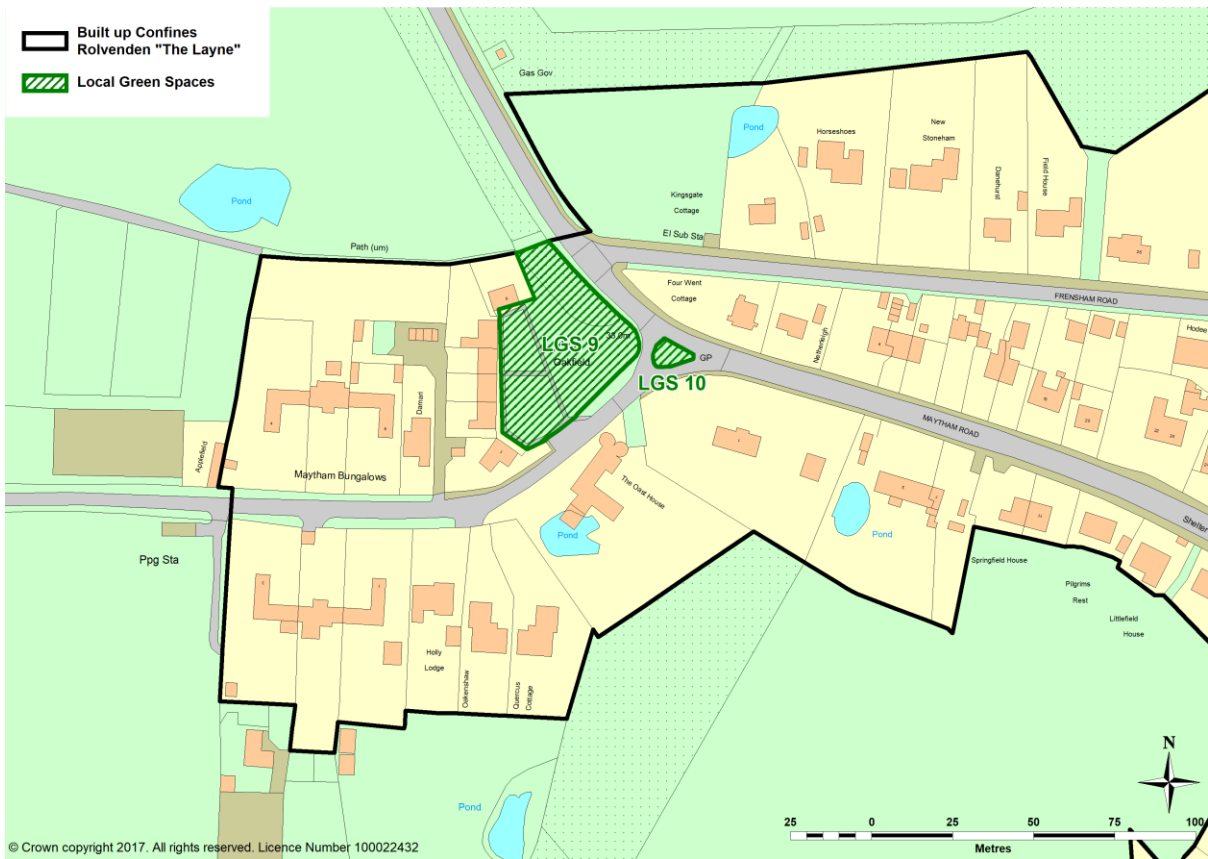
St Mary's Churchyard is a designate Local Wildlife Site.

The reasons that each local open space is special to the local community and is of particular local significance are summarised in the Local Green Space Assessment, 2018. The sites are listed below and their location is identified on Maps 7 and 8 - below.



LGS Ref No.	Local Green Space Description
<b>ROLVENDEN</b>	
1	High Street, east side. Green Verge, containing Village Pump and Telephone box
2	High Street, east side. Wide green in front of Nos. 1-23 running north from c/o Maytham Rd
3	Maytham Road, north side. St Mary's Green running from c/o High St to Sparkeswood Avenue
4	Sparkeswood Avenue, east and west. All green areas on both sides of road, including the Pond
5	High Street, east side. Green outside Tanyard Flats
6	Hastings Road, east side. Green around the War Memorial
7	Maytham Road junction with Sparkeswood, north east corner. Corner seating area adjacent Village Hall
8	St Mary's Churchyard
<b>ROLVENDEN LAYNE</b>	
9	Frogs Lane / Maytham Road junction, west side. Green area in front of Oakfield
10	Frogs Lane / Maytham Road. Triangle of grass at road junction





Map 8 – Local Green Spaces – Rolvenden Layne

### Policy RNP2 – Protection of Local Green Space within the Built-Up Confines

Proposals for development on land designated Local Green Space within the built-up confines, as defined on Maps 7 and 8, will not be permitted except in very special circumstances where it can clearly be demonstrated that the development would not be inappropriate and would not be in conflict with retaining the open green character of the designated space.

#### Monitoring Indicators

#### Targets

Amount of Local Green Space lost.

No Local Green Space lost.

## **Countryside outside the Built-Up Confines**

### **Landscape**

Rolvenden Parish covers an extensive rural area. The landscape forms an intrinsic part of the character and setting of the villages and provides informal and formal recreational opportunities for the community and visitors alike. The immediate landscape setting of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne forms part of the designated Conservation Areas and their setting. In addition, the landscape forms part of the tourism offer in the area which is vital for sustaining current business and economic ventures.

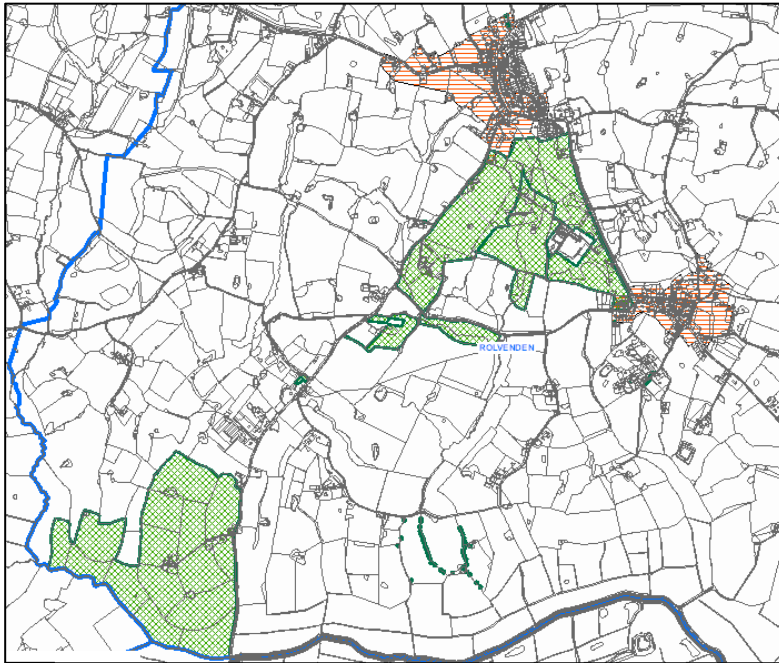
Almost all of the Parish lies within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The area sits within the Cranbrook: Kentish High Weald (Landscape Assessment of Kent, Kent County Council, 2004). The strategic landscape assessment states that Kent is known as the Garden of England and the Kentish High Weald plays an important part in this tradition.

The assessment states that this is a richly textured landscape, where the angular patterns of the orchard and hop garden contrast with smooth sweeps of arable or intensively grazed pasture, set within a framework of dense shaws, thick hedges and stretches of broad-leaved woodland. According to the assessment, the characteristic charm of this area is in the jumble of little lanes and strips of coppice woodland, interspersed with roughly grazed meadows and small orchards. The assessment specifically identifies extensive views south over the Rother valley towards Rolvenden; elegant areas of parkland, such as Hole Park and the skyline dominated by West Cross windmill. Functionally, the area performs relatively well - heritage landscape and built features are widespread and have a positive impact, although woodland and hedgerow are declining as their role in the farmed landscape becomes less important.

### **Ancient Woodland**

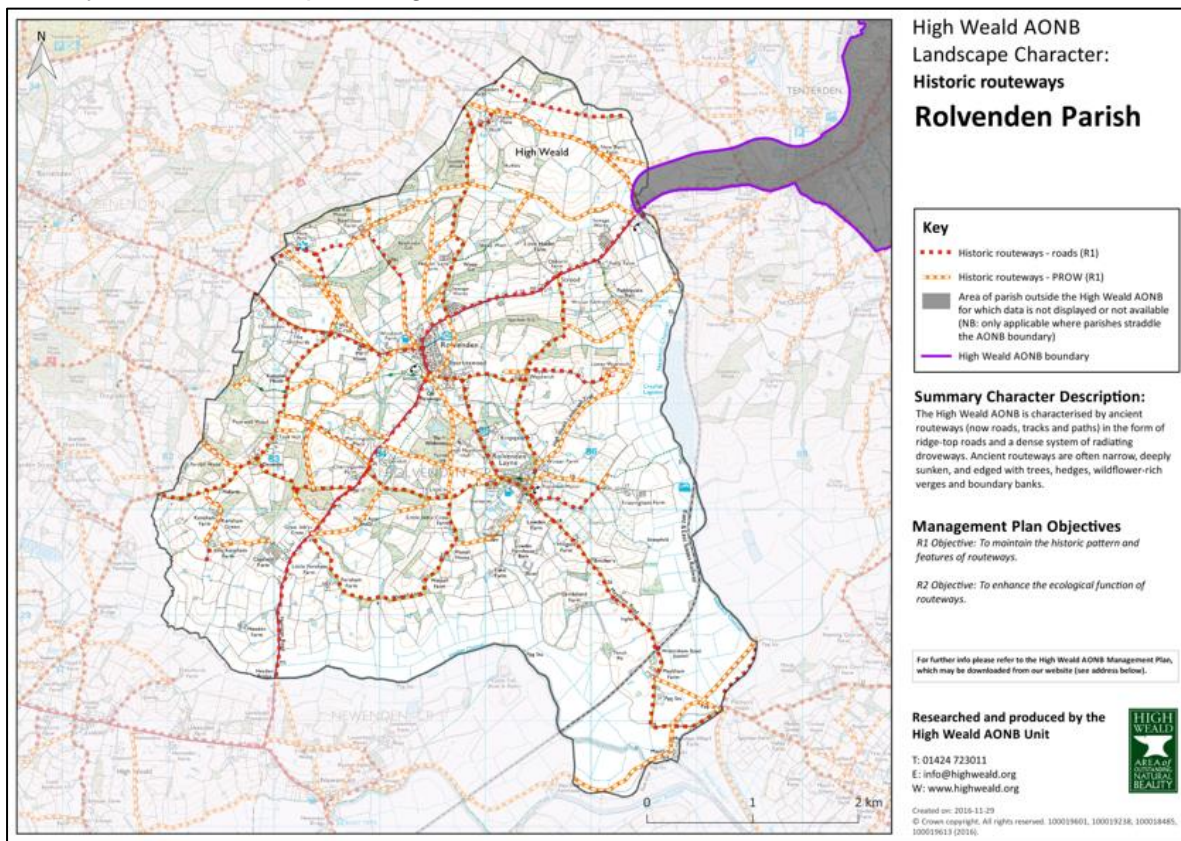
The Parish contains significant blocks of ancient woodland as well as a number of veteran trees which contribute to the character of the countryside and in particular to two of the southern approaches to Rolvenden and the north western approach to Rolvenden Layne - shown shaded green on Map 9 below. The woodland provides part of the setting of the Conservation Areas in each village - shown as red hatched areas on Map 9. The NPPF states that planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland and that these areas should be protected.



Map 9 – Ancient Woodland (green shaded areas)

## Rural Lanes

There has been very little change in the historic routeways within the Parish to those of today (Map 10). The Parish possesses a rich heritage of attractive historic lanes, often enclosed by hedges or trees, which contribute significantly to the distinctive character of the countryside whilst also providing natural habitats.



Map 10 - Historic routeways

## Important Public Views

It is recognised that there are a significant number of views across the beautiful High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which covers most of the parish. It is impossible to list them all. Rather, it is important to protect and enhance the character and natural beauty of the countryside more generally whilst protecting the footpaths which allow access to it. Thus, the focus of the Important Public Views is on those views of, and from, the villages which contribute to local character and amenity.

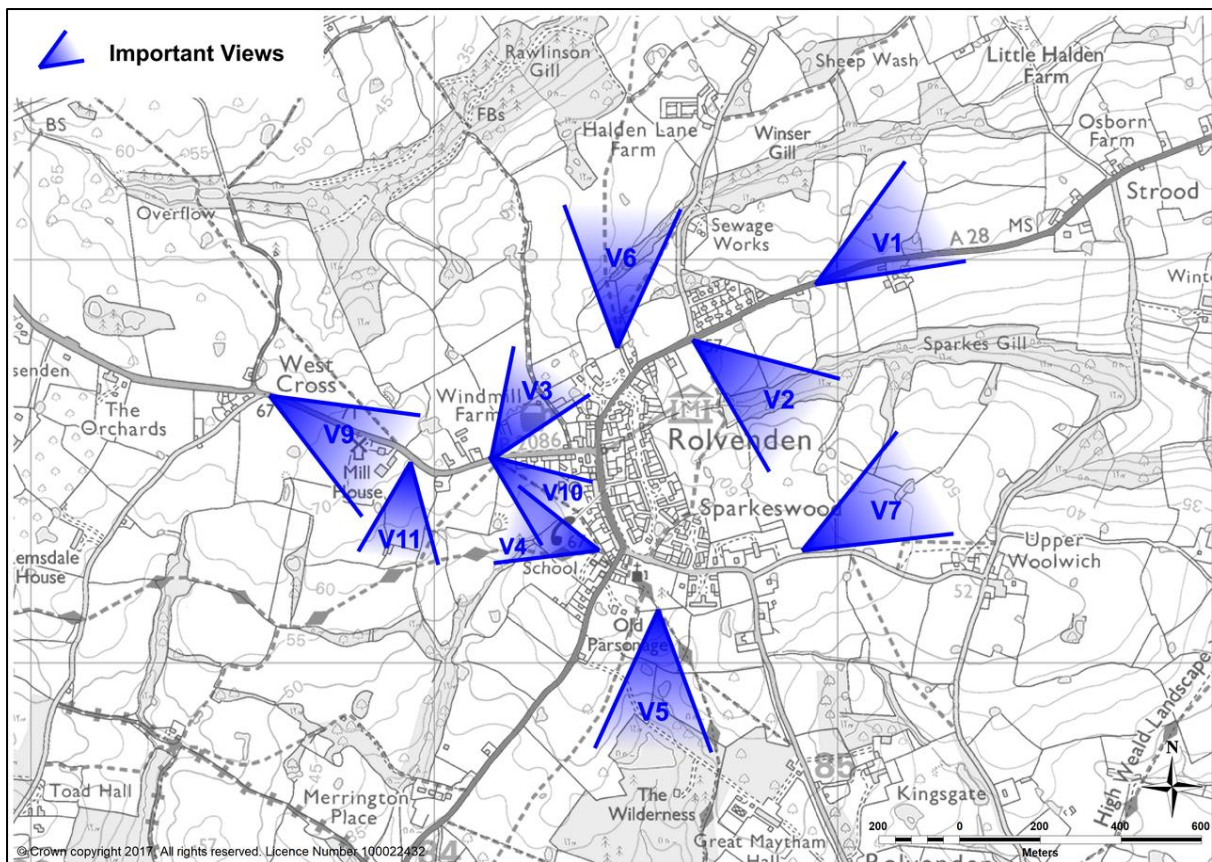
One of the distinctive features of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne is the visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside from public places. These views play an important role in defining the distinctive character of the villages and the designated Conservation Areas. Residents are keen to retain the important views identified in the Rolvenden Important Public Views Assessment. All the views fall into two principal groups:

- Those views looking outwards from the built-up confines which contribute to the distinctive character and/or heritage of the two villages, and
- Those views looking towards the villages at landmark features which contribute to the distinctive character and/or heritage of the village approach and setting

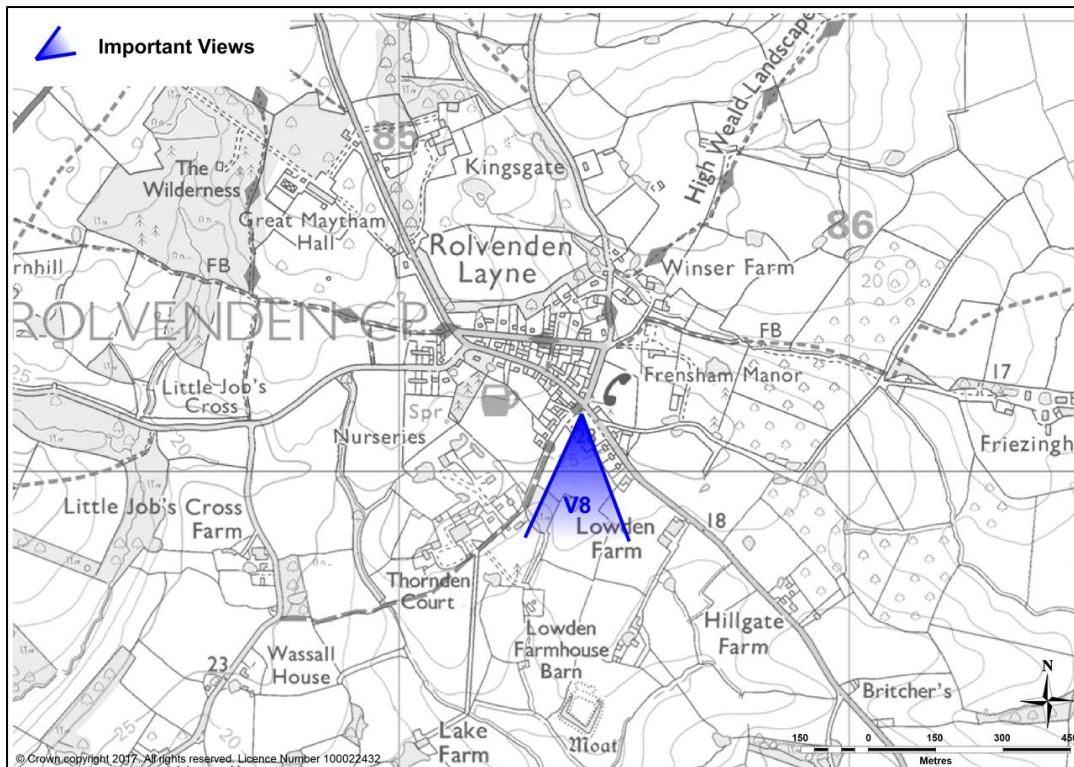
<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Views from Villages towards Countryside - Description</b>
V1	From Gatefield cottages development, A28, looking north-east, view of Tenterden church, St Michaels' church and skyline
V2	From land adjoining Redwood on A28 - looking south-east across the public footpath, view of Sparkeswood Gill (ancient woodland) and open countryside beyond
V3	From Regents St - looking north-east, view across the cricket pitch and open countryside beyond
V4	From the School Field footpath - looking north-west, view of the Windmill
V5	From the footpath gate at SE corner of the Churchyard - looking south, view of and across the Parkland of Gt Maytham Hall
V6	From footpath at rear of Coveney's - looking north, view of open countryside and Winser and Rawlinson Ghylls (both ancient woodland)
V7	From Pix's Lane - looking north-east, view of open countryside and the churches in Tenterden and St. Michaels
V8	From recreation ground, Rolvenden Layne - looking south, view of open countryside and rising ground towards Newenden, Northiam and Fairlight

Ref.	Views from Countryside towards Villages - Description
V9	From Benenden Rd - looking east, view of the listed Windmill
V10	Benenden Rd from <i>Dawsons</i> - looking south-east, view along footpath of St Mary's Church and High Street roovescape
V11	From Benenden Rd - looking south, view of ancient woodland and open views to Newenden Ridge

Maps 11 and 12 (below) show the locations at the edge of the village where there is direct visual connectivity with the countryside



Map 11 – Important Views at Rolvenden



Map 12 - Important View at Rolvenden Layne

## Development in the Countryside

The planning strategy for the Parish is generally to focus development within the defined built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and generally to limit development in the countryside in order to conserve and enhance the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; preserve and enhance the designated Conservation Areas and their setting and protect views from public areas; formal and informal recreational amenities as well as biodiversity. This does not mean that all development within the countryside should be prevented and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan recognise that there may be potential for the following types of development provided certain criteria are met:

- Policy RNP4 - Residential development on the periphery of Rolvenden built-up confines
- Local Needs Affordable Housing adjoining the built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne as 'exceptions' to policies restraining housing development through Policy HOU2 of the adopted Ashford Local Plan, 2030
- Policy RNP10 - Retention, intensification and regeneration of existing business sites
- Policy RNP11 - Conversion of rural buildings to business use; tourist accommodation or tourist attraction
- Policy RNP14 - Multi-Sports Pavilion

Nevertheless, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect the designated countryside from inappropriate development and to ensure that, where development is appropriate, it conserves and enhances the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and distinctive, locally important characteristics.



### **Policy RNP3 – Conserve and Enhance the Countryside**

Outside of the built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne, as defined in Maps 3 and 4, the countryside will be protected from inappropriate development. A proposal for development will only be permitted where:

- a) It would conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the tranquillity of the countryside, and would have regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan,
- b) It would maintain the distinctive views from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built-up confines, in particular those defined on Maps 11 and 12,
- c) It would protect and, where possible, enhance ancient woodland, and
- d) It would not result in unsympathetic change to the character of a rural lane which is of historic, landscape or nature conservation value.

### **Residential development on the periphery of the built-up confines of Rolvenden**

The adopted Local Plan anticipates Rolvenden playing a minor role in meeting the Borough's housing needs through development of a scale that can be satisfactorily integrated into the existing settlement and non-strategic allocations. In addition, Policy HOU5 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030 sets out the potential for new residential development at the edge of Rolvenden provided certain criteria are met. In considering development on the periphery of villages neighbourhood plans have the role of setting detailed boundaries and defining the policy terminology in a local context.

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the built-up confines for Rolvenden. The village is surrounded by countryside which is designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty. Ashford Local Plan 2030 Policy ENV3b – Landscape Character and Design in the AONB reiterates this policy and only permits development which would enhance the special qualities, distinctive character and tranquillity of the AONB and have regard to the relevant AONB management plan. Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas other than in exceptional circumstances.

In considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of the Rolvenden Conservation Area, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation in accordance with the NPPF. Ashford Local Plan 2030 Policy ENV14 also requires development within Conservation Areas to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting.

There are a number of distinctive views from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built-up confines of Rolvenden, in particular those defined on Map 11, and these should be maintained in accordance with Policy RNP3. Similarly, an extensive area of ancient

woodland extends to the south of Rolvenden and the north west of Rolvenden Layne which should be protected in accordance with Policy RNP3.

Major development would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the on nationally and locally important environmental constraints.

Local Plan Policy HOU5 also states that in determining the acceptability of development at the periphery of a settlement, the scale of the proposal should be proportionate to the size of the settlement and the level, type and quality of day to day service provision currently available and their capacity to absorb development (in addition to any development currently committed). Rolvenden is a relatively small settlement which provides a number of day to day facilities such as convenience shop, post office, primary school and community hall. Nevertheless, the village does not provide a wide range of services, including public transport, and locating large scale development at the fringe of Rolvenden would result in increased car journeys.

In order to be considered sustainable development which is acceptable on the periphery of Rolvenden, any development is likely to be limited in scale given the environmental constraints beyond the built-up confines; the strategic role of Rolvenden in meeting housing needs in the adopted Local Plan; the existing scale of the village and the level of service provision. Development should also be designed to a high quality in compliance with Policy RNP1.

#### **Policy RNP4 – Residential development on the periphery of Rolvenden Built-Up Confines**

In considering proposals for residential development in the countryside on the periphery of Rolvenden outside of the built-up confines, as defined in Map 3, great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and preserving and enhancing the landscape character of the designated Rolvenden Conservation Area and its setting.

A proposal for development will only be permitted where:

- a) It would demonstrate that it is justifiable within the context of the national level of protection, and
- b) It would enhance the distinctive quality of the landscape and would have regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan.

#### **Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside outside the built-up confines of Rolvenden Layne**

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the built-up confines for Rolvenden Layne. Whilst development within the built-up confines of Rolvenden Layne is permitted, the hamlet lacks basic day to day facilities and the Ashford Local Plan 2030 does not enable residential development at the edge of the built up area with the exception of Local Needs housing (Policy HOU2) and rural worker accommodation, use of a heritage asset, re-use of

redundant or disused buildings, development that is exceptional quality or innovative design or a replacement dwelling (Policy HOU7) provided a number of criteria are met.

The countryside surrounding the built up area is entirely within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is either within the Rolvenden Layne Conservation Area or forms part of its setting. Ancient woodland is located to the north west of the hamlet and should be protected. It is also important to retain the recreation ground and the view across it to the south-east of the village (Map 12).

For these reasons, residential proposals outside the defined built up area of Rolvenden Layne would not be considered to represent sustainable development and will not generally be permitted.

**Policy RNP5 – Residential development on the periphery of Rolvenden Layne Built-Up Confines**

Residential development will not generally be permitted on the periphery of Rolvenden Layne outside of the built-up confines, as defined in Map 4.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Views	No loss of identified views as a result of development.
Ancient woodland	No loss of ancient woodland as a result of development.
Rural lanes of historic, landscape or nature conservation importance	No deterioration in a rural lane of historic, landscape or nature conservation importance due to development.
Landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the tranquillity of the countryside.	No deterioration in the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the tranquillity of the countryside through inappropriate development.
Development on the periphery of Rolvenden built-up confines	No development on the periphery of Rolvenden built-up confines which does not conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and preserving and enhancing the landscape character of the designated Rolvenden Conservation Area and its setting.
Development on the periphery of Rolvenden Layne built-up confines	Development on the periphery of Rolvenden Layne built-up confines

# Housing

## Objectives

- To facilitate local people to stay in the Parish by enabling an additional supply and mix of housing which meets the needs of the Parish within the identified environmental constraints.
- To increase the supply of smaller and affordable homes.
- To make the best and effective use of brownfield sites and allocate small scale greenfield sites which are well related to Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and their services and well integrated with the High Weald AONB.

## Housing Policies:

### Rolvenden Housing Stock

Table 1 - Rolvenden housing stock shows a total of 699 dwellings in Rolvenden Parish in 2011. There were 7 completions between 2011 and March 2017, taking the total of households to 706. The majority of households are owner occupied with a sizeable rented sector, mostly from the local authority.

Table 1 - Rolvenden housing stock

Tenure	Number in Parish	Percentage (%)
Owner occupied households	444	68.1
- Owns outright	281	
- Owns with a mortgage or loan	163	
Shared ownership	4	0.6
Rented households	190	29.1
- Rented from a local authority	103	
- Rented from a housing association	10	
- Privately rented	61	
- Other rented	16	
Living rent free	14	2.1

Source: 2011 Census

The Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015 revealed a predominance of family housing with almost 45% households living in 3 bedroom homes and just over 30% in houses of 4+ bedrooms. Over 25% households live in 1 or 2 bedroom homes.

## Housing Requirement

Whilst neighbourhoods should develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in adopted Local Plans in accordance with the NPPF, specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted such as the need to conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The adopted Ashford Local Plan 2030 has no strategic housing requirement for Rolvenden. There is therefore no strategic housing need to be met within the Plan area.

In order to establish whether there is any local need for housing within the Parish, the Parish Council undertook a Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015. Table 2 below illustrates the needs of those who confirmed a need to move to meet housing needs in the next 10-15 years.

Table 2: Households needing to move to meet housing needs in the next 10 -15 yrs

	<b>Affordable Housing</b>	<b>Market Housing</b>	<b>Total Requirement</b>
<b>YES</b>	24	14	38

Source: Rolvenden Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015

The Ashford Borough Council Housing Waiting List, April 2017, comprises 22 households and broadly confirms the need for affordable housing.

Households were also asked whether they *may* need to move to meet their housing need. Whilst a much less accurate prediction of need, this category revealed a potential need from a further 60 households, 8 potentially needing affordable housing and 52 potentially needing market housing.

## **Housing Supply**

### **Housing Completions**

The Neighbourhood Plan period is from 2013 – 2030. There were 5 housing completions in the years 2013/14 to 2017/18 and therefore these form part of the Plan’s housing land supply. The Ashford Local Plan sets a Borough-wide housing target for the period 2011 – 2030. There were 7 housing completions in Rolvenden Parish in the years 2011/12 to 2017/18.

### **Sites with Planning Permission**

Rolvenden Parish had extant planning consents for 42 dwellings at 31 March 2018. This comprised 40 dwellings, including 14 affordable homes, at Halden Fields, Rolvenden allocated in the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD and two further dwellings on small sites.

### **Windfall Sites**

Small scale housing development, such as infilling; redevelopment or conversion, is expected to continue to come forward within the Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne built-up confines subject to meeting the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy RNP4 may also enable windfall development on the periphery of Rolvenden subject to policies in the

Neighbourhood Plan being met. Residential extensions will also come forward during the plan period but will not add to the overall number of dwellings in the Parish.

Such development should be designed to a high quality and respond to the heritage and distinctive characteristics of the individual area of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and the associated approaches in which it is located, as defined in Appendix 1 in accordance with Policy RNP1.

Similarly, development should protect and sensitively incorporate landscape features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site.

Development within the Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne built-up confines should protect Local Green Spaces in accordance with Policy RNP2.

Proposals should maintain the distinctive views from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built-up confines, in particular those defined on Maps 11 and 12 in accordance with Policy RNP3.

Development within the Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne built-up confines should not result in the loss of an existing village shop, public house, business site, recreation and leisure open space or community building in accordance with Policies RNP9; RNP10; RNP12 and RNP13.

**Policy RNP6 – Small scale residential development within the built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne**

Small scale residential development such as infilling; redevelopment, conversion or extension will be permitted within the built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne, as defined in Maps 3 and 4, providing there would be no conflict with Policies RNP1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 12 and 13.

Over the past 13 years, windfall sites have made a contribution towards the housing land supply in the Neighbourhood Plan area. A total of 25 dwellings have been completed over this period at an average of 1.9 dwellings per annum. Since sites below 0.2ha are not allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan, it is reasonable to expect a contribution of windfall sites during the Plan period from 2021/22. Prior to this date there is a risk of double counting the windfall sites with planning permissions and these early years have therefore been excluded. An estimate of 2 dwellings per annum on windfall sites is included for the period 2021/22 – 2029/30 giving a total contribution of 18 dwellings over the Plan period.

**Housing Allocations**

In broad terms, the committed housing supply of 65 dwellings should meet the identified need for 38 additional dwellings. This also provides scope to meet the need of approximately half of those identifying that they may need to move to meet their housing need within the next 10 – 15 years.

In planning positively to help accommodate identified local housing need within the environmental limitations of the Plan area (particularly from younger families and older downsizing households), the Parish Council has agreed to allocate three small scale housing sites.

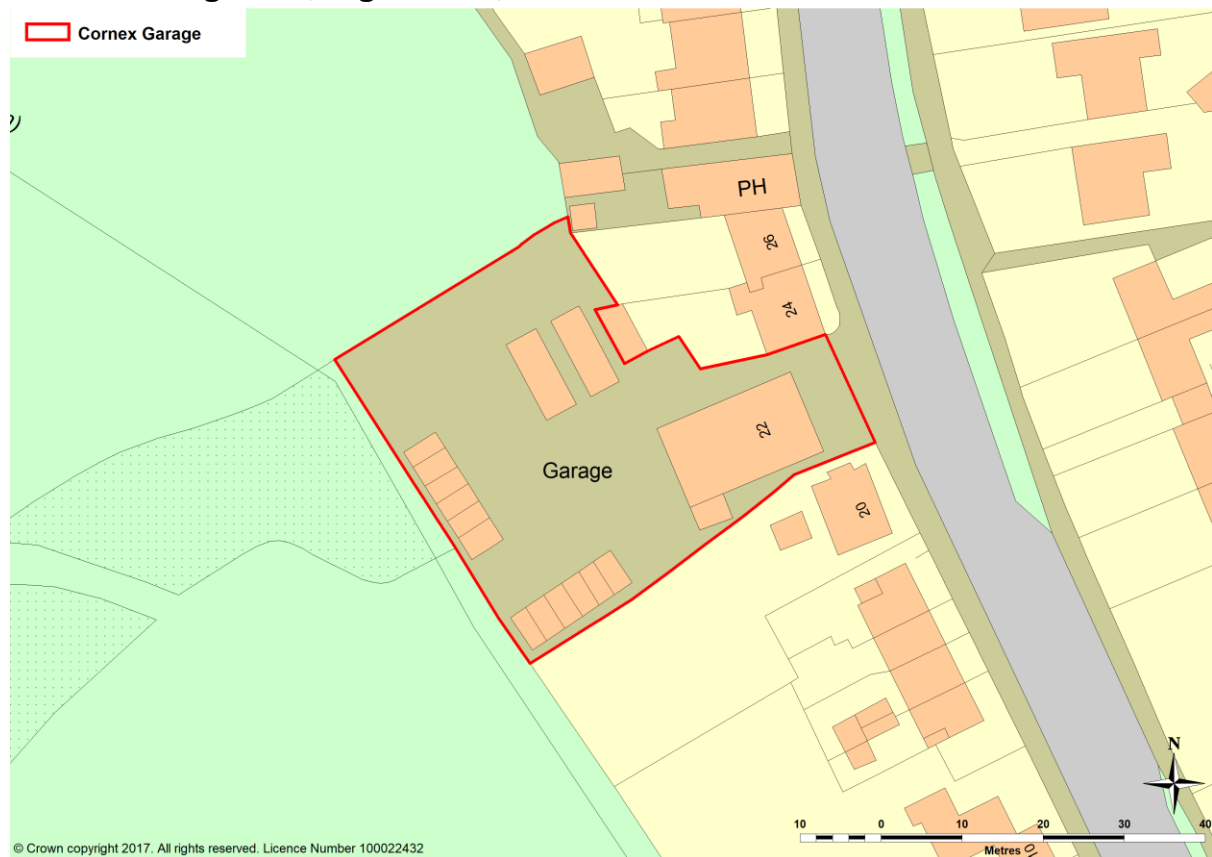
The Rolvenden Potential Housing Development Site Assessment, 2017 appraises a range of sites put forward by landowners for their suitability, availability and achievability. Only sites of at least 0.2 hectares were considered as potential allocations as other smaller sites can come forward as windfall sites in accordance with Policy RNP1 – Design of New Development and Conservation.

Neighbourhood planning groups are urged to consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites suitable for housing in their area. The assessment identifies three small scale sites which are potentially suitable for housing development during the Plan period.

Sites have been carefully assessed against specific policies in the NPPF which indicate development should be restricted. The NPPF encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land). The NPPF also advises neighbourhood plans to consider allocating small and medium-sized sites of no larger than one hectare which are suitable for housing in their area. One small brownfield site at the centre of Rolvenden is suitable for housing development. In addition, one small greenfield site has been identified as an allocation for housing development at the edge of both Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne.

<b>Site</b>	<b>Approximate No. of Dwellings</b>
Cornex Garage Site, High Street, Rolvenden	10
Land to rear of Redwood, Tenterden Road, Rolvenden	10
Kingsgate Corner, Maytham Road / Frensham Road, Rolvenden Layne	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>

## Cornex Garage Site, High Street, Rolvenden



*Map 13 - Cornex Garage Site, High Street, Rolvenden*

The Cornex Garage site comprises a single storey 1960's plain brick building with an asbestos cement roof and cracked concrete forecourt. Behind this, visible from the road, are two curved corrugated iron and cement storage structures along with a block of 1960's standard concrete garages some of which are used for storage and others as garages. The Character Area Assessment notes that the current buildings do not respond well to the context of the Rolvenden Conservation Area or the adjoining listed buildings. Redevelopment of the site brings an opportunity to enhance this part of the Conservation Area and the setting of listed buildings.

In accordance with Policy RNP1, new development should respond to the heritage assets and the distinctive characteristics of the High Street Character Area. In particular, within the tight grain of the surrounding built form, small scale dwellings of generally two storeys in height using traditional materials (including white weatherboarding) would be suitable. Development should follow the regular frontage building line set on, or close to, the back edge of pavement. In order to make effective use of this brownfield site, development would also be appropriate to the rear of the site. Given the limited parking available in the High Street, well-screened off street parking should be provided within the development. In accordance with Policy RNP15, the redevelopment of the site should not result in an overall loss of residential garages or parking spaces. The central location and scale of development make this an ideal site for small dwellings suitable for younger families and older downsizing households. The site is located amongst village facilities and a café or shop use, for which



there is local support, within the ground floor of one of the buildings is encouraged. The site would have capacity for approximately 10 small dwellings.

### **Land to rear of Redwood, Tenterden Road, Rolvenden**



*Map 14 - Land to rear of Redwood, Tenterden Road, Rolvenden*

Land to the rear of Redwood comprises a small scale greenfield site to the rear of a modern detached dwelling and garden. The site is screened from the road by the existing dwelling (Redwood) and from the west and south by a strong landscape belt.

In accordance with Policy RNP1, new development should respond to the distinctive characteristics of the Gatefield Character Area and should protect and enhance the existing natural features including the mature treed boundaries. Development at this edge of Rolvenden must be well integrated into the landscape through sensitive designs and by creating new landscape buffers of appropriate semi-natural habitat between the development and the Sparkeswood Gill ancient woodland and to form a strong natural eastern boundary to the site. Access would be provided from Tenterden Road. The public footpath to the east of the site should be retained in accordance with Policy RNP12. The site is reasonably accessible to village facilities and would be suited to small dwellings suitable for younger families and older downsizing households. The site has capacity for approximately 10 dwellings but could also incorporate the modern detached dwelling, Redwood, and garden.

## Kingsgate Corner, Maytham Road / Frensham Road, Rolvenden Layne



*Map 15 - Kingsgate Corner, Maytham Road / Frensham Road, Rolvenden Layne*

The Kingsgate Corner site is a small enclosed greenfield site bordered by two roads and abutting development to the east and south. Kingsgate Cottage (a Grade 2 listed building) is located to the east of the site and Oakfield cottages and associated trees and green lie to the south. The site lies within the Rolvenden Layne Conservation Area.

In accordance with Policy RNP1, new development should respond to the heritage assets and the distinctive characteristics of the Four Wents Character Area. Limited, small scale development would need to respond well to the context of the Rolvenden Conservation Area and the adjoining listed buildings and retain the existing natural site boundaries and an open character to the corner site. In particular, a limited number of small scale dwellings using traditional materials (such as brick and tile hanging) should face, but be set well back from the road. The dwellings could be arranged in a layout which replicates Oakfield Cottages at this entrance to Rolvenden Layne, or as detached/ semi-detached properties. A single access should be taken from Frensham Road to allow maximum visibility to the west. The site should incorporate adequate parking provision in order to avoid on street parking on, or close to, the Maytham Road / Frensham Road junction. Once again, the small dwellings would suit the identified local need for small dwellings suitable for younger families and older downsizing households. The site would have capacity for approximately 4 small dwellings.

## Conclusion

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates these sites for housing development

### **Policy RNP7 – Housing Site Allocations**

The following sites, as defined on Maps 13 - 15, are identified as potential housing sites suitable for development provided the following development guidance is met:

#### **Policy RNP7 a) Cornex Garage Site, High Street, Rolvenden:**

Site Area: 0.2ha. Approximate capacity: 10 dwellings

#### ***Development Guidance:***

##### *Design and Layout*

There is a significant opportunity to enhance the appearance of this site. New development should respond to the heritage assets and the distinctive characteristics of the High Street Character Area as set out in Appendix 1. Development should comprise small scale dwellings of generally two storeys in height using traditional materials (including white weatherboarding). A ground floor café or shop use within one of the buildings is encouraged. Frontage development should enclose the street and follow the regular building line set on, or close to, the back edge of pavement. Access from the High Street to the rear of the site should allow for further small dwellings and well screened parking.

##### *Landscape and Open Space*

The landscape boundary to the north should be retained. A habitat survey should be undertaken and satisfactory mitigation incorporated within any proposal.

##### *Access*

Vehicular and pedestrian access should be taken from the High Street.

The site should incorporate adequate parking provision in order to avoid on street parking on the High Street.

#### **Policy RNP7 b) Land to rear of Redwood, Tenterden Road, Rolvenden**

Site Area: 0.48ha. Approximate capacity: 10 dwellings

#### ***Development Guidance:***

##### *Design and Layout*

New development should respond to the distinctive characteristics of the Gatefield Character Area as set out in Appendix 1. Development should comprise small scale dwellings of generally two storeys in height.

##### *Landscape and Open Space*

The existing natural features including the mature treed boundaries to the west and south should be protected and enhanced. A new landscape buffer of appropriate semi-natural habitat should be created between the development and the Sparkeswood Gill ancient woodland and to form a strong natural eastern boundary to the site.

#### *Access*

Vehicular and pedestrian access should be taken from Tenterden Road.

The site should incorporate adequate parking provision.

The public footpath to the east of the site should be retained in accordance with Policy RNP12.

### **Policy RNP7 c) Kingsgate Corner, Maytham Road / Frensham Road, Rolvenden Layne**

Site Area: 0.26ha. Approximate capacity: 4 dwellings

#### ***Development Guidance:***

##### *Design and Layout*

New development should respond to the heritage assets and the distinctive characteristics of the Four Wents Character Area as set out in Appendix 1. Limited, small scale development would need to respond well to the context of the Rolvenden Layne Conservation Area and the adjoining listed buildings Dwellings using traditional materials (such as brick and tile hanging) should face, but be set well back from, the road. The dwellings could be arranged in a layout which replicated Oakfield Cottages, or as detached/ semi-detached properties.

##### *Landscape and Open Space*

The treed and hedged site boundaries should be retained. Open space should be retained on the site frontage to protect the open character at this entrance to the village.

#### *Access*

A single vehicular access should be taken from Frensham Road to allow maximum visibility to the west. Pedestrian access could be taken from Maytham Road or Frensham Road.

The site should incorporate adequate parking provision.

## **Affordable Housing**

Most of the identified need for additional affordable housing within 5 years identified in the Rolvenden Housing Needs Survey, 2015, will be met by the current commitment of 14 affordable dwellings at Halden Fields. Further supply is likely to be required to serve the Parish in the medium to longer term.

The adopted Local Plan 2030, Policy HOU1 - Affordable Housing sets the threshold at 10 dwellings or more (and on sites of 0.5 hectares or more) at which affordable housing will be required. Two of the Neighbourhood Plan site allocations would yield affordable housing in accordance with this policy.

It is intended that the supply of affordable housing will be further increased by turnover of the existing social housing stock (113 dwellings at 2011).

In addition, Policy HOU2 of the adopted Ashford Local Plan, 2030 permits local needs housing adjoining rural Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne as ‘exceptions’ to policies restraining housing development provided that a number of criteria are met including clear evidence which justifies the local need. A small development of 12 affordable homes was built in 2010 by the English Rural Housing Association on such a site at Glebe Field, Rolvenden and, provided there was clear evidence to justify further affordable provision, a similar site could come forward under such an enabling policy in the future. This would clearly add to the existing commitments to the housing land supply set out below.

## Summary of Housing Land Supply

Table 3 - Additional dwellings for the Plan period (2013 – 30)

Source	Affordable	Market	Total
Completions 2013 - 2016	0	5	5
Planning consents	14	28	42
Neighbourhood Plan Housing Allocations:			
Cornex Garage, High Street	4	6	10
Land to rear of Redwood, Tenterden Road	4	6	10
Kingsgate Corner, Maytham Road / Frensham Road	0	4	4
Windfall sites	0	18	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>89</b>

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan aims to deliver approximately 89 additional dwellings for the Plan period (2013 – 30) as set out above. In addition, a further exception site is feasible where there is evidence to justify local need.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of new dwellings delivered within the Neighbourhood Plan area during the Plan period (net)	89 new dwellings (net) over the plan period.
Number of new dwellings delivered on housing sites allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan within the Plan period (net)	At least 24 new dwellings on allocated housing sites.

## Dwelling Size

The NPPF states that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. Table 4 (below) illustrates the strong need for 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings of those who stated YES they will need to move in the next 10 – 15 years.

Table 4: Size of New Homes needed

No of Beds	Affordable (%*)	Market (%*)	Total (%*)
1	7 (29%)	3 (21%)	10 (26%)
2	9 (38%)	8 (58%)	17 (45%)
3	5 (21%)	3 (21%)	8 (21%)
No preference	3 (12%)	-	3 (8%)
<b>Total No. units</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>38</b>

\* as a percentage of total number of units needed in each tenure.

Source: Rolvenden Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015

In terms of bedroom numbers needed for those seeking affordable housing, the emphasis on 1 - 2 bedroom dwellings correlates with the figures in Table 5 (below) obtained from Ashford Borough Council's Housing Waiting List.

Table 5: Bedroom Requirements

	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	5 Bedroom	6 Bedroom	Total
Rolvenden	12 (55%)	4 (18%)	6 (27%)	0	0	0	<b>22</b>

Source: Ashford Borough Council Housing Waiting List, April 2017

There is remarkable symmetry between the needs of those needing affordable housing and those seeking market housing. The vast majority of need (approximately 70%) is for 1 and 2 bedroom homes in both sectors. This is likely to particularly reflect the needs to set up independently within the affordable housing sector and the downsizing requirements of the aging population within the market sector. The housing site allocations are specifically included to help increase the supply of smaller 1 – 2 bedroom dwellings. The majority of dwellings proposed on allocated sites (ie greater than 50%) should comprise 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings. The allocations are specifically not aimed at larger houses which already comprise the majority of the housing stock and outstanding planning consents in the Parish. Around 25% of households recorded a need for 3 bedroom properties in both sectors and there is virtually no local need identified for new properties with 4 or more bedrooms.

### Policy RNP8 – Dwelling Size

Proposals for 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings will be encouraged on residential development including infill sites at Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne where they would fit well with the character of the area.

Proposals for residential development on Housing Site Allocations identified in Policy RNP7; windfall sites resulting from Policy RNP4 or an 'exception site' for local needs affordable housing will be permitted if they incorporate a majority of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings.

### Monitoring Indicators

### Targets

Number of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings built within the Plan area.

15 new 1 or 2 bed dwellings built on allocated sites.

## Local Economy

### Objectives

- To seek to retain the economic and social hub of Rolvenden village centre and enhance its appearance.
- To seek to retain the public house in Rolvenden Layne.
- To retain and enable the regeneration of well located existing business sites and promote those with planning permission.
- To support new business floorspace, tourist accommodation and tourist attractions, in existing buildings which are well integrated with the High Weald AONB

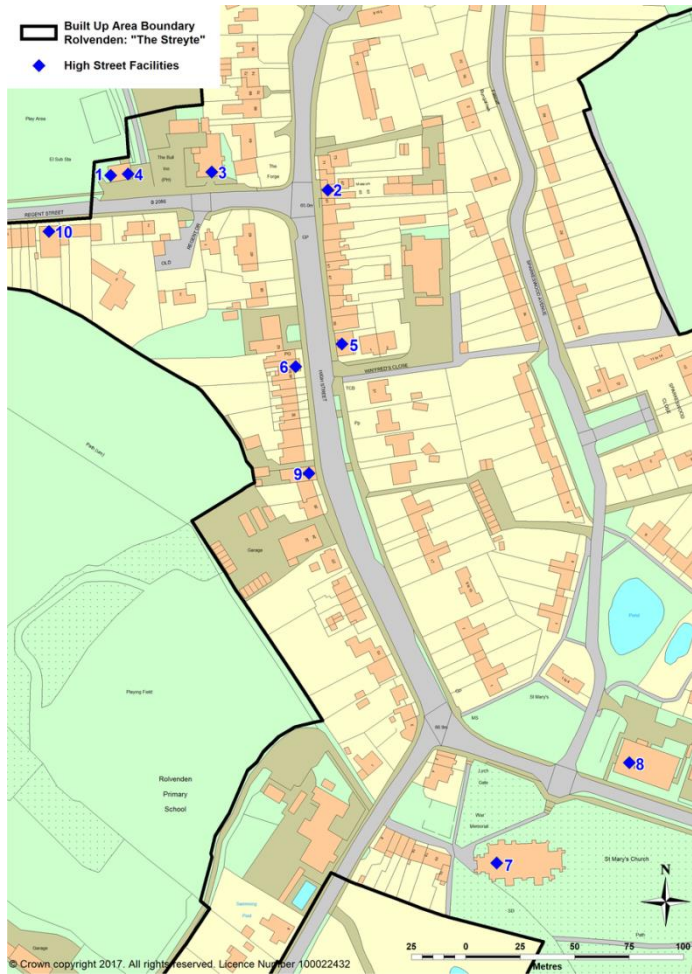
### Local Economy Policies

#### Village Shops and Public Houses

To promote a prosperous rural economy, the NPPF states that Neighbourhood Plans should promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. Policy EMP10 of the adopted Local Plan 2030 resists the loss of shops and services in village centres in certain circumstances and the Neighbourhood Plan identifies the local premises which it seeks to protect in Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne.

Given the size of the settlements and the proximity of the town of Tenterden, Rolvenden has a range of shops (Use Class A1) which serve the day to day needs of the local community and three public houses (Use Class A4). Together with the Thursday markets, they also serve as attractions to visitors. These businesses are conveniently clustered in Rolvenden High Street and Regent Street at the centre of Rolvenden and are located along the A28 and B2086 where they can also attract passing trade (see Map 16 below). In some cases the shops and public houses occupy listed buildings and more generally contribute significantly to the character of the Conservation Areas. Change of use from small shops (up to 150sqm) to residential use is not permitted development within Conservation Areas.

1. The Barn Hair Studio
2. The CM Booth Motor Museum and Falstaff Antiques
3. The Bull Inn – Public House
4. Cindy’s Antiques
5. Handmade Frames – picture framers
6. KM Linklaters, Grocery and Convenience Store and Post Office
7. Rolvenden Farmer’s Market (NOT PERMANENT)
8. Rolvenden Village Market (NOT PERMANENT)
9. The Star - Public House
10. JD and RM Walters Antiques and Restoration

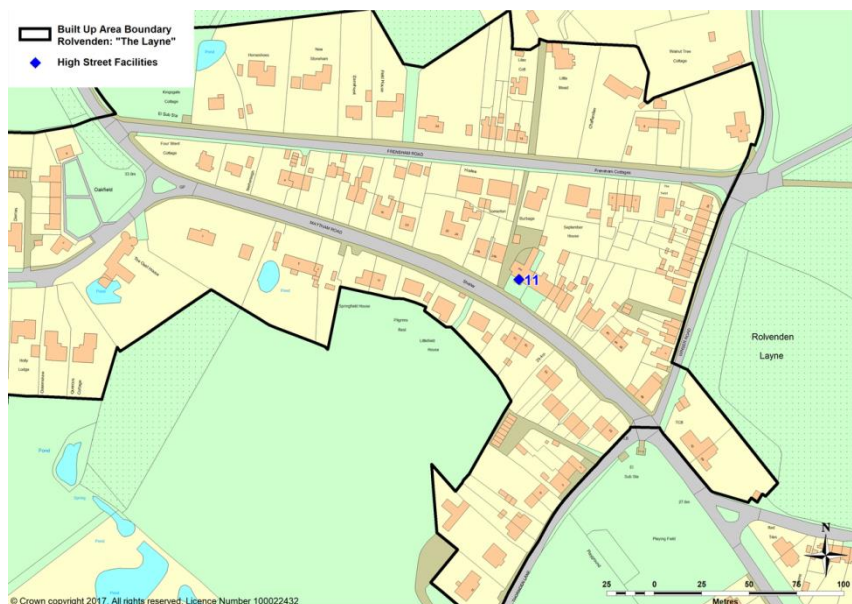


Map 16 – location of the shops and public houses in Rolvenden High Street/ Regent Street

There is potential for enhancement of the public realm to complement the village shops and public houses at the centre of Rolvenden and opportunities for funding should be sought in connection with residential development in the Parish.

The Ewe and Lamb public house is the only remaining shop or public house in Rolvenden Layne (see Map 17 below).

This public house is an important asset at the heart of the local community and contributes significantly to the character of the Conservation Area.



Map 17 – location of the public house in Rolvenden Layne (11)



The contribution made to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the villages by the group of existing shops and public houses is recognised. The number of A1 premises enables a range of shops to contribute to the economic viability of the village centre and the tourist offer, whilst helping to sustain the character of listed buildings and the Conservation Area as a whole. Wherever possible, existing shops and public houses should be retained subject to their viability and a genuine and sustained attempt to market the premises on reasonable terms. What constitutes a 'genuine and sustained attempt to market' and 'reasonable terms' will depend on prevailing market conditions but this should not be less than six months and the terms on offer should compare with other similar premises and locations being let or sold for that purpose. The extent of marketing carried out will be an important factor.

If there is demand, the existing uses should be allowed to extend. If viable, small additional units such as a café should be located close to existing shops and public houses in the High Street/ Regent Street, Rolvenden in order to retain the convenience of the existing cluster of premises; provide the opportunity for linked trips and to increase the time people spend within the centre of Rolvenden. All extensions and alterations and new uses such as a café will be subject to a careful assessment of their impact on the Conservation Area and, where applicable, listed buildings in accordance with Policy RNP1 - Design and Conservation as well as the residential amenity of adjoining residents.

**Policy RNP9 – Village Shops and Public Houses**

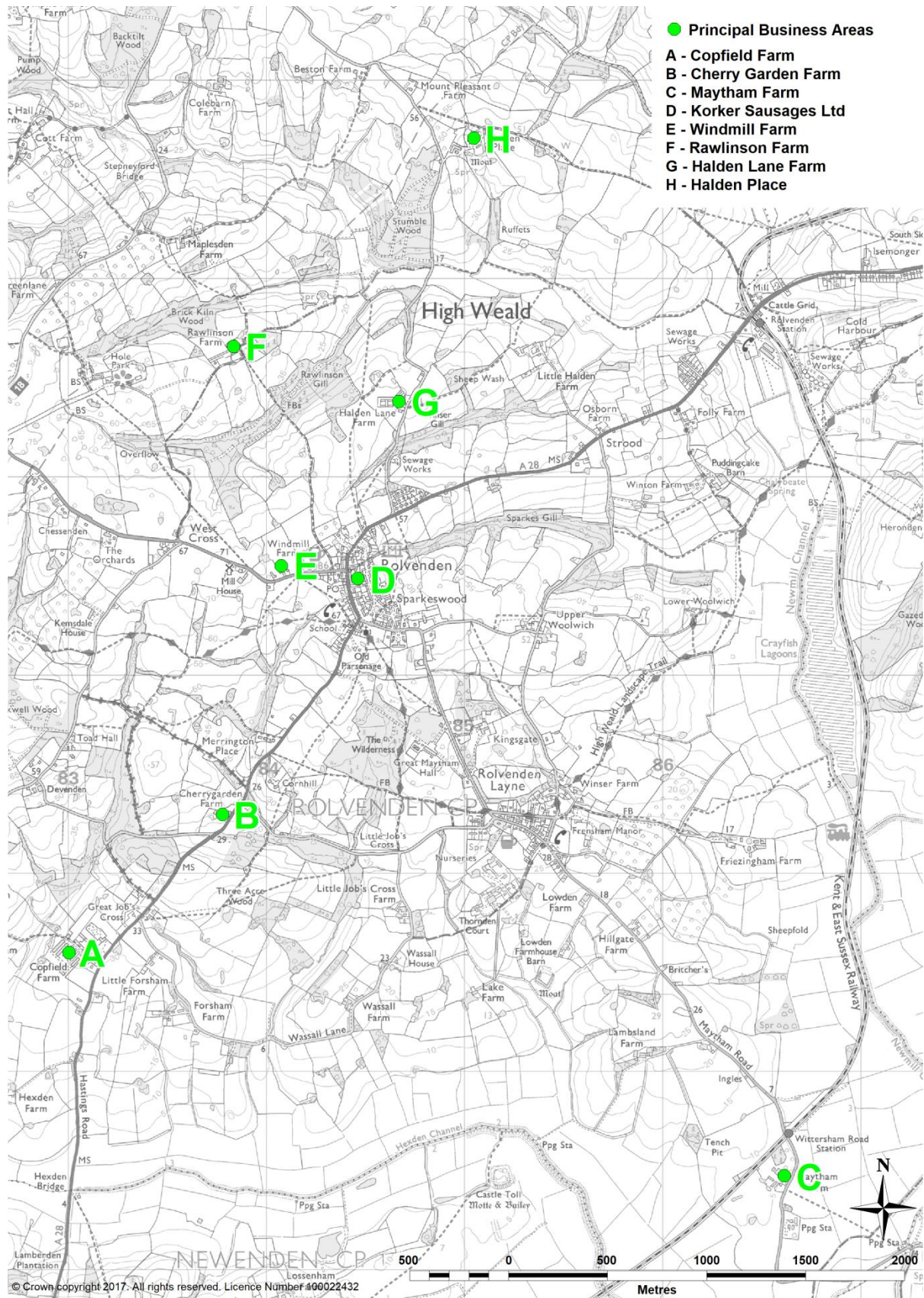
- a) The loss of existing village shops (Use Class A1) and public houses (Use Class A4) will be resisted unless sufficient evidence is provided to the Council to demonstrate that the operation of the shop or public house is no longer financially viable despite a genuine and sustained attempt to market it on reasonable terms and where there are no other realistic proposals for retail or public house uses on the site.
- b) Extensions to existing shops and public houses will be permitted.
- c) Proposals for the change of use of premises to shop (A1) or restaurant/ café (A3) will be permitted within Rolvenden High Street and Regent Street, Rolvenden.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of shops (A1) and public houses (A3) premises in Rolvenden High Street and Regent Street in 2018.	No loss of existing shops or public houses within in Rolvenden High Street and Regent Street.
Public house in Rolvenden Layne.	No loss of public house in Rolvenden Layne.

**Existing Business Sites**

There are a number of offices and workshops located in the Parish, many within converted rural buildings. These provide the opportunity for local employment within the Parish. The Rolvenden Business Survey, 2015 revealed two larger employers with a staff role of over 20 although most businesses were small and, with the two largest employers discounted, the

average staff number was 3. Map 18 (below) identifies the location of local business sites which provide the principal business floorspace within the Parish.



Map 18 - Location of principal business sites

The Borough Council's Employment Land Review (2008) advised that Local Plan policies should continue to resist the loss of existing employment sites. The Ashford Rural Economic Assessment, 2014 indicates that the overall rural business space requirement to 2030 related to a number of growth scenarios ranged from 54,240sq.m to 81,800sq.m. The majority of this spatial requirement relates to industrial (B1c/B2/B8) uses, although office uses are expected to continue to represent a key driver of demand in the rural part of the Borough. The majority of identified supply is concentrated on a small number of sites in and around the settlements of Rolvenden and Wye (accounting for 67% of all B class permissions between them). These requirements assume that the existing share of rural employment space in Ashford remains unchanged over the plan period.

Ashford Local Plan 2030 Policy EMP2 - Loss or redevelopment of Employment Sites and Premises seeks to prevent the loss of existing employment sites or premises within or adjoining/close to Rolvenden. The presence of businesses is important to the sustainability of Rolvenden Parish and a number of businesses have long term associations with the Parish. Policy RNP10 seeks to retain the supply of local business premises.

The existing business sites may also be suitable for further intensification and regeneration for business uses subject to meeting certain criteria. Given the location of most of the sites within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, any proposal will need to conserve and enhance the landscape and the tranquillity of the countryside in accordance with Policy RNP3 - Protect and Enhance the Countryside. Sites within the countryside are served by the rural road network which should be able to safely accommodate the type and/or amount of additional traffic that would be generated without any unsympathetic change to the character of a rural lane, in accordance with Policy RNP3. Similarly, because of the width of the roads, sufficient additional parking should be provided on site without the need to spill out onto the rural lane. The location of the site within the High Street, Rolvenden will mean that any proposals will be subject to a careful assessment of their impact on the Conservation Area and listed buildings in accordance with Policy RNP1 - Design and Conservation as well as the residential amenity of adjoining residents.

#### **Policy RNP10 – Retention, intensification and regeneration of existing business sites**

The following existing business sites, as identified on Map 18, will be retained in business use unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for business purposes during the Neighbourhood Plan period:

Copfield Farm

Cherry Garden Farm

The Granary, Halden Lane Farm

Halden Place (comprising Halden Place Oast; Halden Place Calf Pens and Halden Place Great Barn)

Korkers Factory, High Street

Maytham Farm

Rawlinson Farm

Windmill Farm

Regeneration and intensification will be permitted at these sites for business uses provided:

- a) the amenities of any neighbouring residential occupiers or the tranquillity of the countryside would not be significantly adversely affected;
- b) the rural road network serving the proposal would be able to accommodate the type and/or amount of traffic that would be generated; and
- c) sufficient on site parking would be provided for visitors, staff and delivery vehicles

## **New Business Floorspace**

As well as the regeneration and intensification of existing sites, a number of unused and redundant buildings remain within the Parish and, subject to safeguards in relation to traffic generation and amenity, can provide suitable locations for new businesses. The Rolvenden Business Survey, 2015 revealed no significant identified need for additional premises – though with businesses generally optimistic about the future and some expressing a need to move premises in the next 5 years or so, some flexibility in supply will be advantageous in sustaining local enterprises. Commercial agents active in the area indicate reasonable demand for small industrial units in the rural areas along with quite modest demand for small offices with broadband connections.

Ashford Local Plan 2030 Policy EMP4 allows the conversion of rural buildings to employment uses subject to meeting a number of criteria.

Planning permission was granted for the change of use of 5030sqm of the 8120sqm to B2 and B8 Uses at Copfield poultry farm and this provides a suitable opportunity for additional business floorspace in the Plan area.

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Number of designated business sites.	All designated business sites remain in business use (B1; B2 and B8)

## **Tourism**

According to the Tourism Study, 2017, people visit Rolvenden for a variety of reasons and the surrounding tourist attractions present opportunities for the village. Its position along the main A28 thoroughfare, the attractive countryside designated for its outstanding natural beauty and the much photographed white ‘weather boarded’ houses along the High Street mean that people are attracted to the area.

The area is crossed by a number of public footpaths and the High Weald Landscape Trail long distance footpath passes through both Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne whilst National Cycle Route 18, which runs from Canterbury to Tunbridge Wells, also passes through the Neighbourhood Plan area bringing tourists to the area.

Tourism helps support local shops, public houses and holiday attractions. Attractions in and around Rolvenden include Sissinghurst Castle Gardens; Great Dixter Gardens; Hole Park Garden; Smallhythe Place; Kent and East Sussex Steam Railway which runs from Tenterden to Rolvenden in Kent to Northiam and Bodiam in East Sussex; Bodiam Castle; Rolvenden motor museum; historic churches.

The character, beauty and heritage of the Parish attracts visitors all year round, particularly in the summer and has led to the rise of ancillary accommodation in the form of holiday lets (chalets and cottages), private holiday homes, B&B's and both a glamping and a yurt campsite.

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

The Ashford Local Plan 2030, Policy EMP4 - Conversions of rural buildings to non-residential uses allows proposals to convert rural buildings to business uses and 'non-residential tourism' subject to meeting a number of criteria. The Neighbourhood Plan extends this provision to residential tourist accommodation such as Bed and Breakfast and hotel use.

#### **Policy RNP11 - Conversion of rural buildings to business use; tourist accommodation or tourist attraction**

Proposals to convert rural buildings to business use and tourist accommodation or attractions will be permitted provided:

- a) the building does not require complete or substantial reconstruction;
- b) the building is of a permanent and substantial construction;
- c) the amenities of any neighbouring residential occupiers or the tranquillity of the countryside would not be significantly adversely affected;
- d) the rural road network serving the proposal would be able to accommodate the type and/or amount of traffic that would be generated; and
- e) sufficient on site parking would be provided for visitors, staff and delivery vehicles

### **Home Working**

Of the businesses surveyed for the Business Needs Survey, 2015, by far the largest category of businesses were situated in a home office (38%). It is accepted that people work from home and the recent introduction of fibre optic broadband has increased business possibilities for professionals, service providers and craft workers. Small scale businesses which are incidental to the enjoyment of the home do not require planning permission and this form of employment opportunity will continue to be available over the Plan period.

# Leisure and Wellbeing

## Objectives

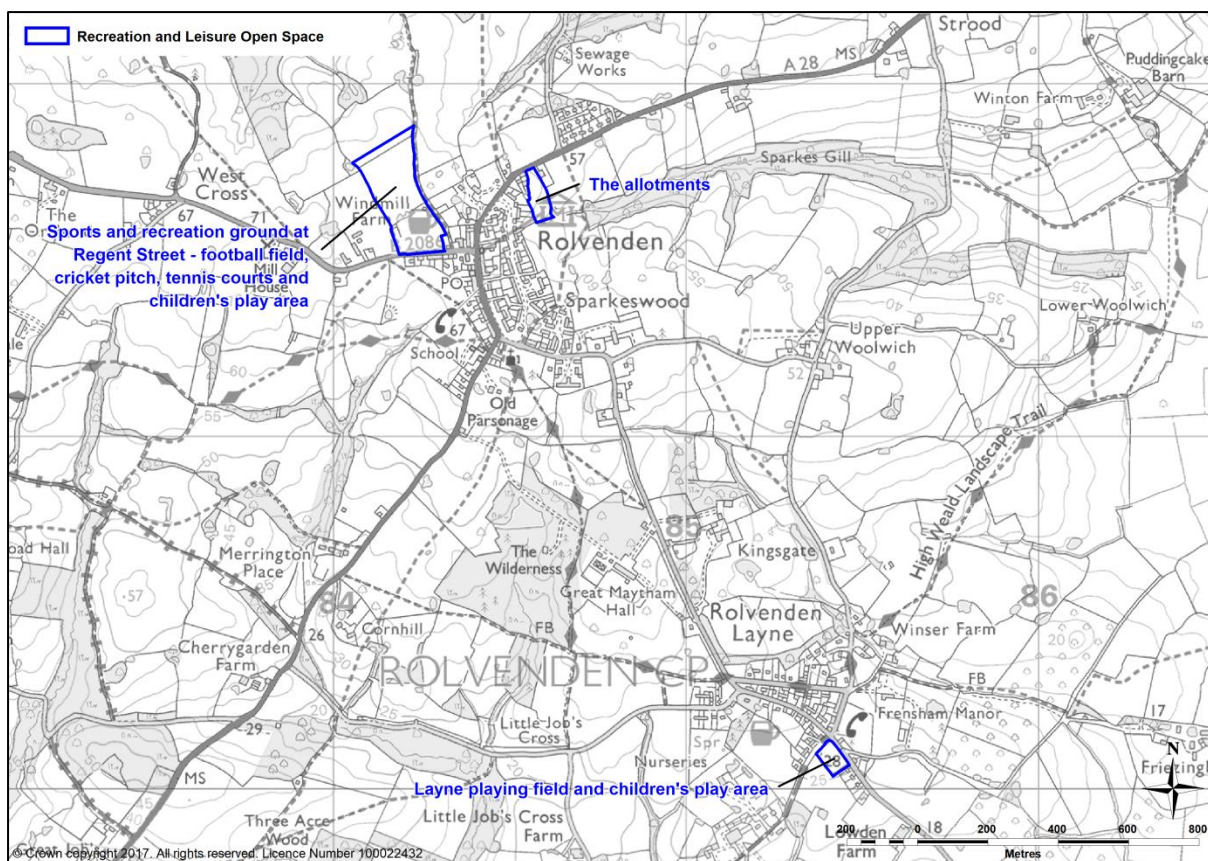
1. To ensure that sufficient community and leisure facilities are maintained to serve the Parish including new provision in association with new development.
- To protect and enhance open spaces used for recreational purposes, including provision of a new multi-sport pavilion at the Rolvenden sports and recreation ground.
  - To protect the extensive network of footpaths serving the Parish.

## Leisure and Wellbeing Policies

### Recreation and Leisure Open Space and Public Rights of Way

The NPPF stresses the need to ensure effective planning for open spaces, sport and recreation provision based on robust assessments of the existing and future needs of communities and the retention of accessible open space. In addition, the NPPF states that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Ashford Local Plan Policy COM2 - Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces seeks the retention of existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land unless certain criteria are met.

There is strong support for, and local participation in, the local sports clubs. There is an extended sports field off Regent Street, Rolvenden which hosts an active tennis club, a highly successful football club and a cricket club which boasts over 100 years of history in Rolvenden. Stool ball is still played by the youth of the Parish every Thursday during the summer on the Rolvenden Layne playing field.



Map 19 – Recreation and Leisure Open Space

There is one children’s play area in each settlement – situated next to the Cricket Field in Rolvenden and on Rolvenden Layne playing field.

Privately owned allotments are situated along Tenterden Road, Rolvenden and are well used. The Parish Council is expecting to use contributions from the Halden Field development to improve them by laying on a water supply, soil improvements and better linking pathways.

Local areas of amenity open space serve adjoining development, particularly in the High Street and Sparkeswood, Rolvenden and add to the character of these areas. These Local Green Spaces are protected by Policy RNP2.

The Parish has an extensive footpath and bridleway network and the High Weald Landscape Trail long distance footpath passes through both Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne.

It is important for the health and wellbeing of the local community that that these well used recreation and leisure open spaces and rights of way are protected.

**Policy RNP12 - Recreation and Leisure Open Space and Public Rights of Way**

Recreation and Leisure Open Space, as defined on Map 19, will be retained and, where appropriate, enhanced. Development may exceptionally be allowed where replacement provision is made of at least equivalent value to the local community in terms of quantity, quality and location.

Existing public rights of way will be protected and enhanced.

## Monitoring Indicators

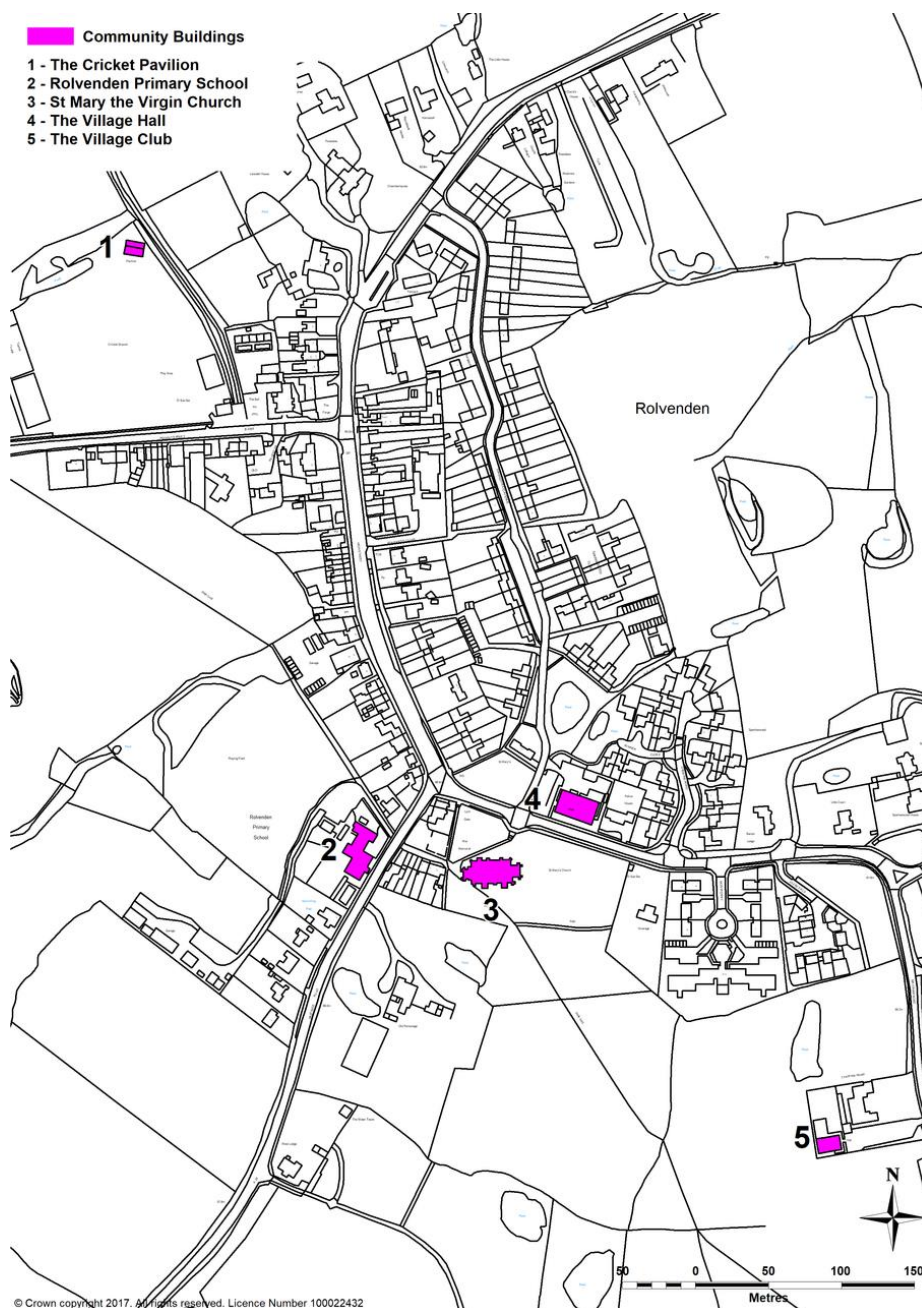
Amount of Recreation and Leisure Open Space within the Parish at the start of the Plan period.

## Targets

No net loss of Recreation and Leisure Open Space within the Parish

## Community Buildings

Rolvenden has a number of excellent facilities within the village for groups needing places to meet (see Map 20 below). Community buildings in the village include the modern village hall which serves a range of groups and accommodates indoor sports; the church; the primary school; the pavilion and the village club which may all be hired for community activities.



Map 20 – Community Buildings



Ashford Local Plan, 2030, Policy COM1 seeks to resist the loss of community infrastructure. To maintain the social fabric of the Parish and provide for demand coming from new development, the range of existing well used facilities needs to be maintained and enhanced.

**Policy RNP13 - Retention of Community Buildings**

The loss of existing community buildings, as defined on Map 20, will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or that suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.

**Multi-Sports Pavilion**

The Parish Council and local sports groups are keen to progress the building of a new multi-sports pavilion together with an area for outdoor adult gym equipment and associated parking within the sports and recreation grounds at Regent Street (see Map 19). The building would be able to provide up to date changing and showering facilities for the existing outdoor sports pitches at Regent Street. The site would be able to serve the existing outdoor sports pitches at Rolvenden whilst being close to the centre of Rolvenden.

Existing financial contributions from development are currently available for recreation facilities and these would require further contributions from the proposed housing development together with other local and national grant schemes.

Development would not affect existing sports pitches or tennis courts and would be required to be sited away from Regent Street to protect the open character and views noted in the Regent Street Character Area (Appendix 1). Development should be designed to fit with the distinctive characteristics of the Regent Street Character Area, as defined in Appendix 1.

**Policy RNP14 - Multi-Sports Pavilion**

A Multi-Sports Pavilion with an area for outdoor adult gym equipment and associated parking is proposed within the sports and recreation grounds at Regent Street, Rolvenden as defined on Map 19.

Development should not adversely affect existing sports pitches or tennis courts and should protect the open character and views noted in the Regent Street Character Area, as defined in Appendix 1).

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of community buildings within the Parish at the start of the Plan period	No loss of community buildings within the Parish during the Plan period.

# Local Infrastructure

## Objectives

- To ensure that new development is well connected to village facilities by a range of transport modes, including walking and cycling and, where appropriate, makes suitable provision towards new sustainable transport infrastructure.
- To ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity in relation to the primary school, community buildings and parking is provided in a timely manner, appropriate to the scale of new development.

## Local Infrastructure Policies

### Schools

Rolvenden has a small pre-school within the village hall and a primary school with its own swimming pool. Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre is nearby in Tenterden and most of Rolvenden lies within the Cranbrook School Catchment Area.

Rolvenden Primary School has 14 places in each year group, giving 98 places overall.

Whilst the Primary School is at capacity, there are four primary schools in the Tenterden Planning area who take Year R (reception) pupils (Rolvenden PS; Tenterden Infant School; Wittersham CE PS and St. Michael's CE PS). There is an estimated 38% surplus of Year R places in 2017-18 across the four schools.

The 40 dwellings in Tenterden Road are expected to produce 11 primary pupils spread out across the 7 year groups. On average this will be between 1-2 pupils in each year group. It was therefore accepted that there were sufficient primary places to accommodate the impact of the development. A request was made for a financial contribution to enable secondary school expansion.

Presently 54 pupils on the roll of Rolvenden PS (55%) live within two miles of the School, a further 12 pupils live between 2-3 miles of the School. This means that 33 pupils (33%) of the present roll are traveling more than 3 miles to Rolvenden PS. Kent County Council as Education Authority assume that future reception pupils from the Tenterden Road and other proposed development will access places in Rolvenden PS and that those who would apply from further afield will be allocated places nearer to their homes. There is therefore currently no need to expand Rolvenden Primary School to accommodate the growth proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Health facilities

There are no doctors, dentists, opticians or pharmacies in Rolvenden. The part time doctor's surgery in the High Street was closed several years ago and the nearest is now in Tenterden. There are concerns that the new housing development at Tenterden will put a strain on the facilities at Ivy Court surgery, Tenterden although it is clearly not within the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan to control development beyond the Parish.

## **Multi-Sports Pavilion**

The Parish Council and local sports groups are keen to progress the building of a new multi-sports pavilion together with an area for outdoor adult gym equipment and associated parking within the Sports and Recreation Ground, Regent Street as set out in RNP14. New development within the Parish should make a financial contribution to this project.

## **Off Street Car Parking**

The convenience of parking close to Rolvenden's village High Street amenities is one of the assets offered by the village to residents and visitors alike.

It is important that new development does not exacerbate existing parking problems in Rolvenden High Street and the Sparkeswood Avenue and Gatefield estates. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure new development is accompanied by sufficient off street parking and to resist the loss of residential garages or parking spaces in these areas.

For this reason, parking restrictions and traffic calming measures in the High Street which would restrict parking availability further are not considered feasible options. The number of cars parking in the High Street has the beneficial effect of slowing down traffic contributing to the safety of pedestrians. Parking on green areas or Local Green Spaces in the High Street and on St Mary's Green is not welcomed and the Parish Council have recently installed wooden posts to restrict vehicular access from the road onto the grass verges and greens.

In accordance with Policy RNP1, applications for additional off street residential parking facilities should not adversely affect the character and appearance of an area.

### **Policy RNP15 - Off Street Parking**

Within areas identified as having insufficient on-street parking facilities, as defined on Map 2, proposals for new development should:

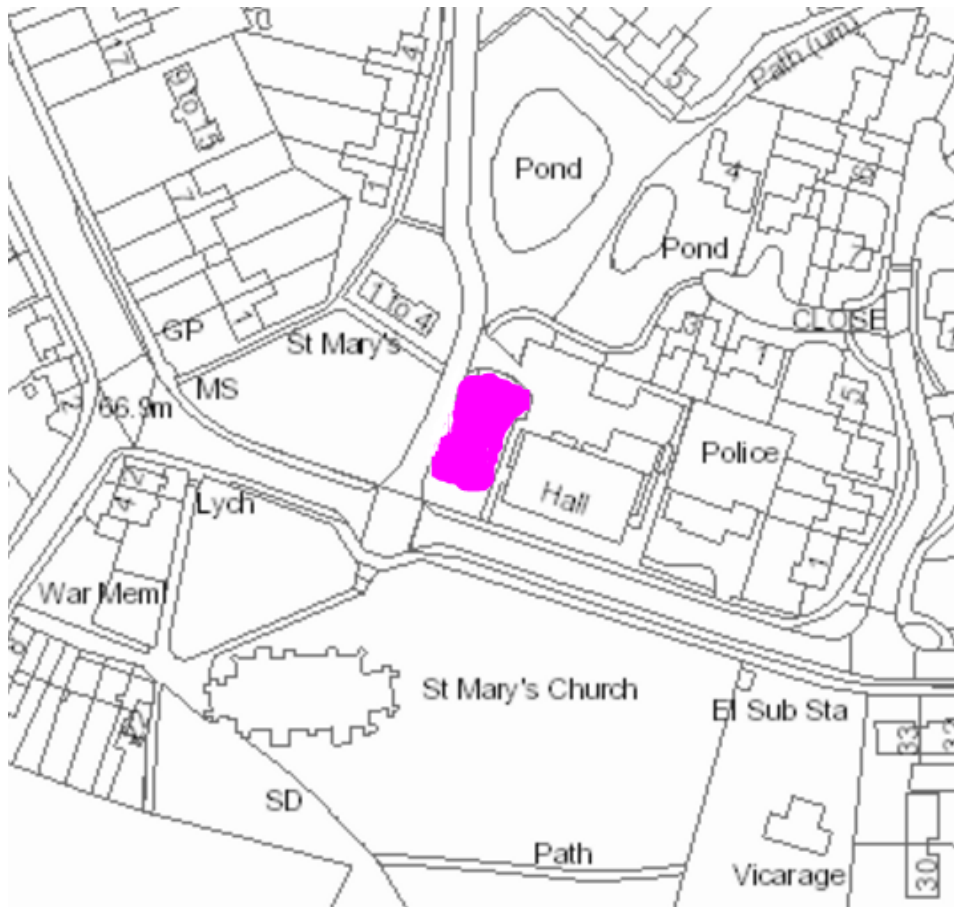
- a) provide at least the latest adopted parking standards;
- b) not result in the loss of residential garages or parking spaces; and
- c) not result in the loss of on-road public parking space through the need for a cross over and/or visibility splay.

## **Extension to Village Hall Car Park**

The Thursday morning village markets, weddings, funerals and other various social activities in the Village Hall generate a demand for parking greater than the spaces available. Adjoining land opportunities to increase parking provision are limited.

The grassed area to the west of the Village Hall, bordering Sparkeswood Avenue (Map 21) has been identified as a location for additional spaces. The proposal may require removal / replacement of part of the mostly beech hedge and removal of at least one non-native tree. Nevertheless, the advantages of further parking in this location are considered to outweigh this impact. The land is owned by Ashford Borough Council and relevant agreements would

need to be reached and finances for the work secured. New development within the Parish should make a financial contribution to this project.



**Map 21 – Location of Village Hall Car Park Extension**

**Policy RNP16 - Extension to Village Hall Car Park**

Land adjoining the Village Hall to the east of Sparkeswood Avenue, as defined in Map 21, is allocated for an extension to village hall car park.

**Environmental Enhancements**

As environmental enhancement measures are not a land use matter, specific proposals cannot lawfully be proposed in a Neighbourhood Plan. Nevertheless, all development will add pressure on the social and economic hub of the High Street and Regent Street Character Areas (the historic core of Rolvenden Conservation Area) and it is important that development contributes to environmental mitigation measures. Contributions will be sought from development towards environmental enhancements within these two character areas (High Street Character Area (A1) and Regent Street Character Area (A3)) as set out in Appendix 1.

**Infrastructure Contributions**

The development of sustainable communities requires the provision of a wide range of local facilities and services.

The Neighbourhood Plan has identified infrastructure requirements needed to support new development and developer contributions will be sought towards the following:

- Sustainable transport measures from new development which assist walking and cycling including improved, sympathetically designed signage to link up the network of footpaths and other green spaces
- Multi-Sports Pavilion
- Extension to the Village Hall Car Park
- Conservation Area environmental enhancement measures within the High Street and Regent Street Character Areas as set out in the Character Area Assessment (Appendix 1)

**Policy RNP17- Securing Infrastructure**

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

- Sustainable transport measures from new development which assist walking and cycling including improved, sympathetically designed signage to link up the network of footpaths and other green spaces;
- Multi-Sports Pavilion;
- Extension to the Village Hall Car Park; and
- Conservation Area environmental enhancement measures within the High Street and Regent Street Character Areas as set out in the Character Area Assessment (Appendix 1)

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Infrastructure delivered through developer contributions, including S106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy.	Infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan to be delivered by the end of the Plan period.

## **Section 6: Monitoring and Review**

Effective monitoring is an essential component in achieving sustainable development and sustainable communities. Monitoring provides crucial information to establish what is happening now and whether policies are working.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out the long-term spatial vision for Rolvenden Parish with agreed objectives and policies to deliver the vision in the period up to 2030. Where relevant, targets are set in the Plan against which the delivery of the policy will be measured. Monitoring will evaluate the progress being made towards delivering the spatial vision and assess the extent to which the policies are being implemented.

Where monitoring shows that progress towards targets is unsatisfactory the Parish Council will review the situation and, where necessary, take remedial action. This may include proactive measures to bring forward sites for development or action to secure the timely provision of infrastructure.

The adopted Ashford Local Plan, 2030 has recently been adopted but may be reviewed during the Neighbourhood Plan period. A decision whether to revise the Local Plan will be taken no later than five years from its adoption in 2019. It is intended that any revised Local Plan will be adopted by the end of 2025 at the latest. This may have consequences for this Neighbourhood Plan and if necessary it will be formally reviewed.

## **Appendix 1**

### **THE CHARACTER AREAS ASSESSMENTS AND VILLAGE APPROACHES**