

Draft Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14

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 and its surrounding countryside 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 (NPPF), Ashford Borough Council's Local Plan 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).

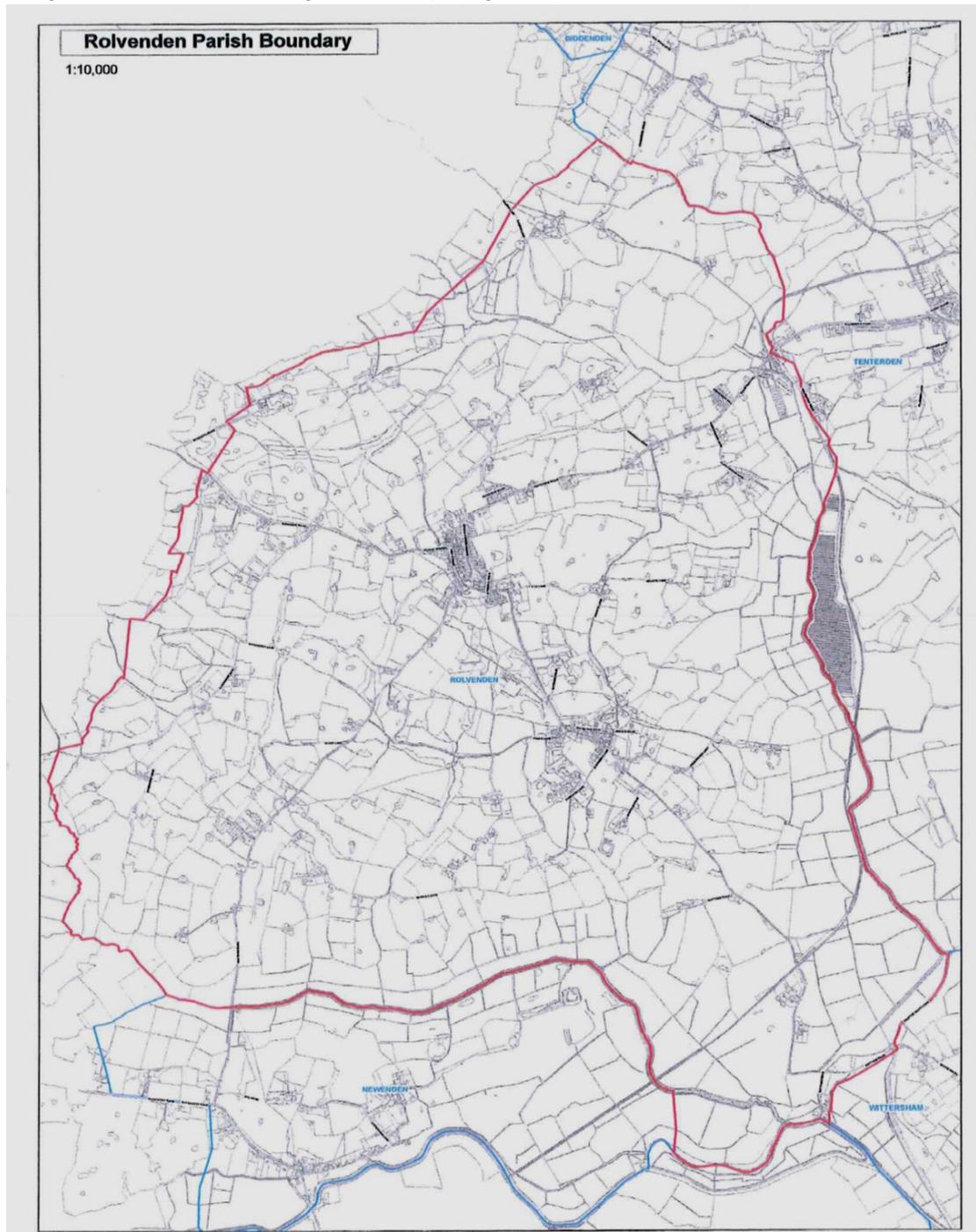


Figure 1 - Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Area

Involvement in the Neighbourhood Plan Process

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

Details of the consultation to date will be recorded in the Consultation Statement.

The Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan consultation arrangements can be found on the Rolvenden Parish Council website. Exhibitions are being held in the following locations:

- Rolvenden Village Hall: 2 and 3 December 2017
- St Mary's Church: 4 December 2017 – 7 January 2018
- The Ewe and Lamb, Rolvenden Layne: 8 – 13 January 2018
- Rolvenden Primary School: 14 – 18 January 2018

Please ensure all responses are returned by 5pm 29 January 2018 at the latest.

The full process is set out in Figure 2 – Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Process (below) with the opportunities for local 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. That is, 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, including policies for housing and economic development, and plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area. Neighbourhood Plans must comply with European Regulations on strategic environmental assessments and habitats, the NPPF and generally conform to the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan (currently saved policies from the adopted Ashford Borough Local Plan, 2000, the Core Strategy, 2008 and the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD, 2010). In order to future-proof the Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan team has also ensured through dialogue with the Borough Council that the Plan takes account of up to date evidence of any strategic needs and constraints identified for the area.

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 important open spaces within the village envelopes 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 emerging Local Plan. Adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan in 2018 would allow for a plan period of 12 years.

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation 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 Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan finds no significant negative effects will occur as a result of the Plan. The assessment also finds that the aims and objectives of the NP are in conformity with the adopted and/or 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.

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 is considered that the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan proposals will not adversely affect the integrity of the internationally designated sites, alone or in combination with other projects and plans. It is therefore considered that a full HRA of the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan is not required.

How this Plan is organised

The Plan is divided into six sections:

Section 2: Rolvenden Now: a brief description of the village 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 and how this conforms to 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 2: Rolvenden Now

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

These are grouped under five themes:

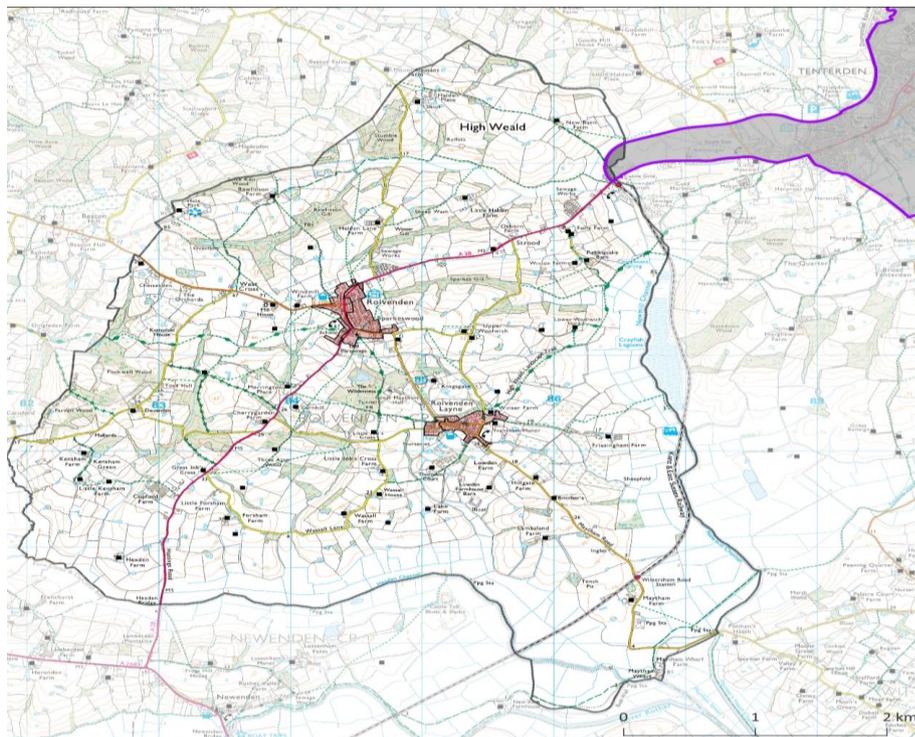
- Environment
- Housing
- The Local Economy
- Leisure and Wellbeing
- Local Infrastructure

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 km² (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).

Researched and produced by the
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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 known to contain areas known to be of archaeological interest and areas with archaeological potential.

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies areas of distinctive character within the village envelopes 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 develop plans that support the strategic housing development needs set out in Local Plans and plan positively to support local development, taking into account any specific policies in the Framework which indicate development should be restricted including those relating to the AONB. The adopted Core Strategy classifies Rolvenden as likely to be a Tier 3 settlement within the settlement hierarchy, subject to confirmation within the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD. The adopted Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD, 2012, confirms Rolvenden as a Tier 3 settlement at which it is intended that only a limited amount of new residential allocations will be made. The adopted Local Plan allocates a single site for up to 40 dwellings at Rolvenden and this has subsequently been granted planning consent and is under construction. The emerging Ashford Local Plan 2030 – Regulation 19 Version, June 2016, continues with the 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. This emerging plan does not allocate sites within Rolvenden Parish.

Whilst there is no strategic requirement for Rolvenden to accommodate new housing allocations, the Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015 (www.) 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 planning 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, 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 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 and the primary school has a swimming pool which is intended to become available to the public.

The Village Hall provides indoor facilities for short mat bowls, table tennis, pool, badminton and curling, with the nearest sports centre located at Tenterden.

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.

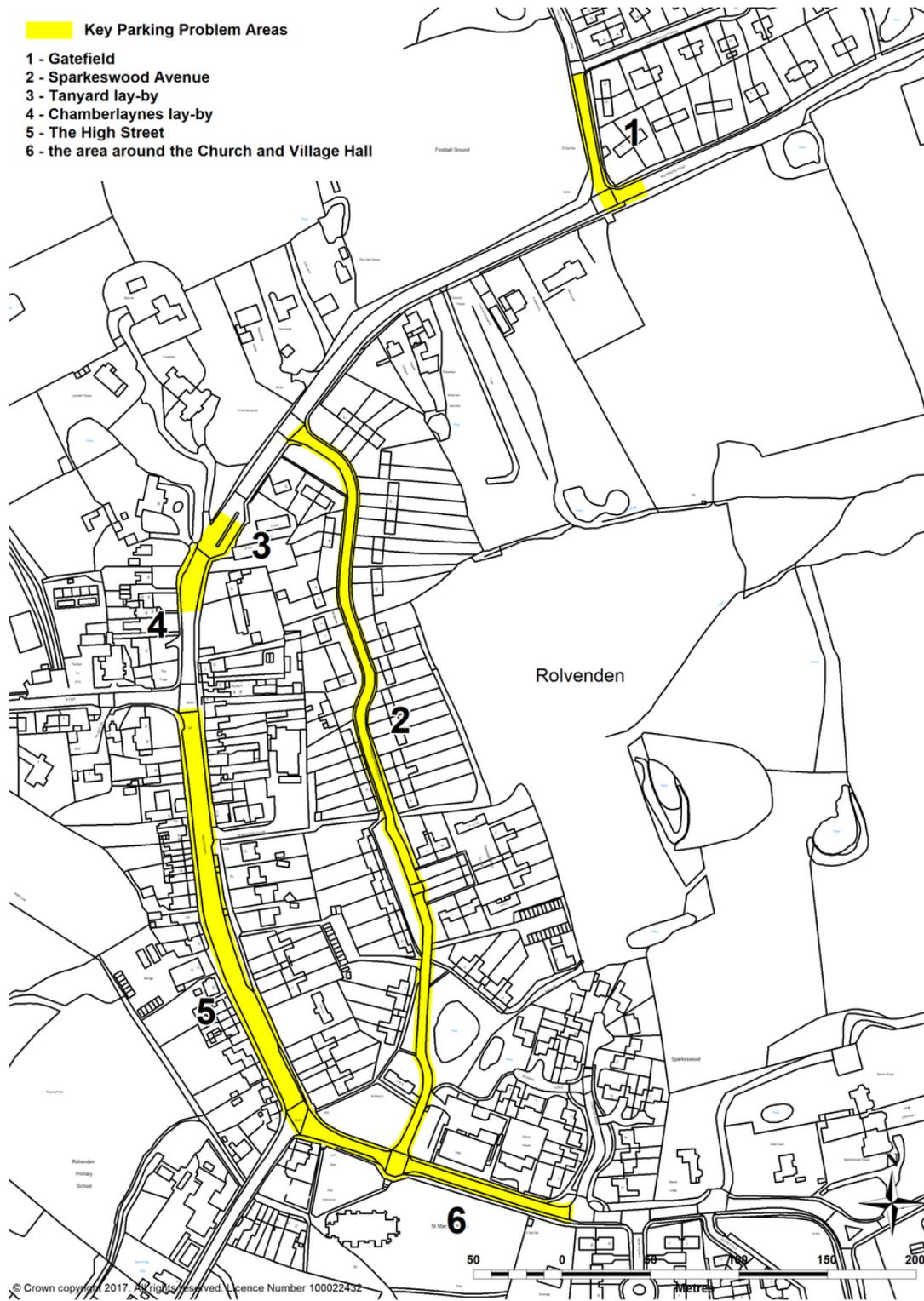
Leisure provision

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 community-owned pavilion at Rolvenden.

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 insufficient 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 Rolvenden 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 well located and 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 Local Plan. The emerging Ashford Borough Plan also provides a relevant planning context. Where neighbourhood planning is undertaken at the time of an emerging Local Plan, collaboration between the community and the Borough Council is critical. In developing the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan, Ashford Borough Council has taken an active role in advising and supporting the local Neighbourhood Plan team, sharing evidence and information and ensuring the Neighbourhood Plan fits with any relevant up-to-date evidence of strategic needs. The emerging Local Plan does not allocate strategic sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

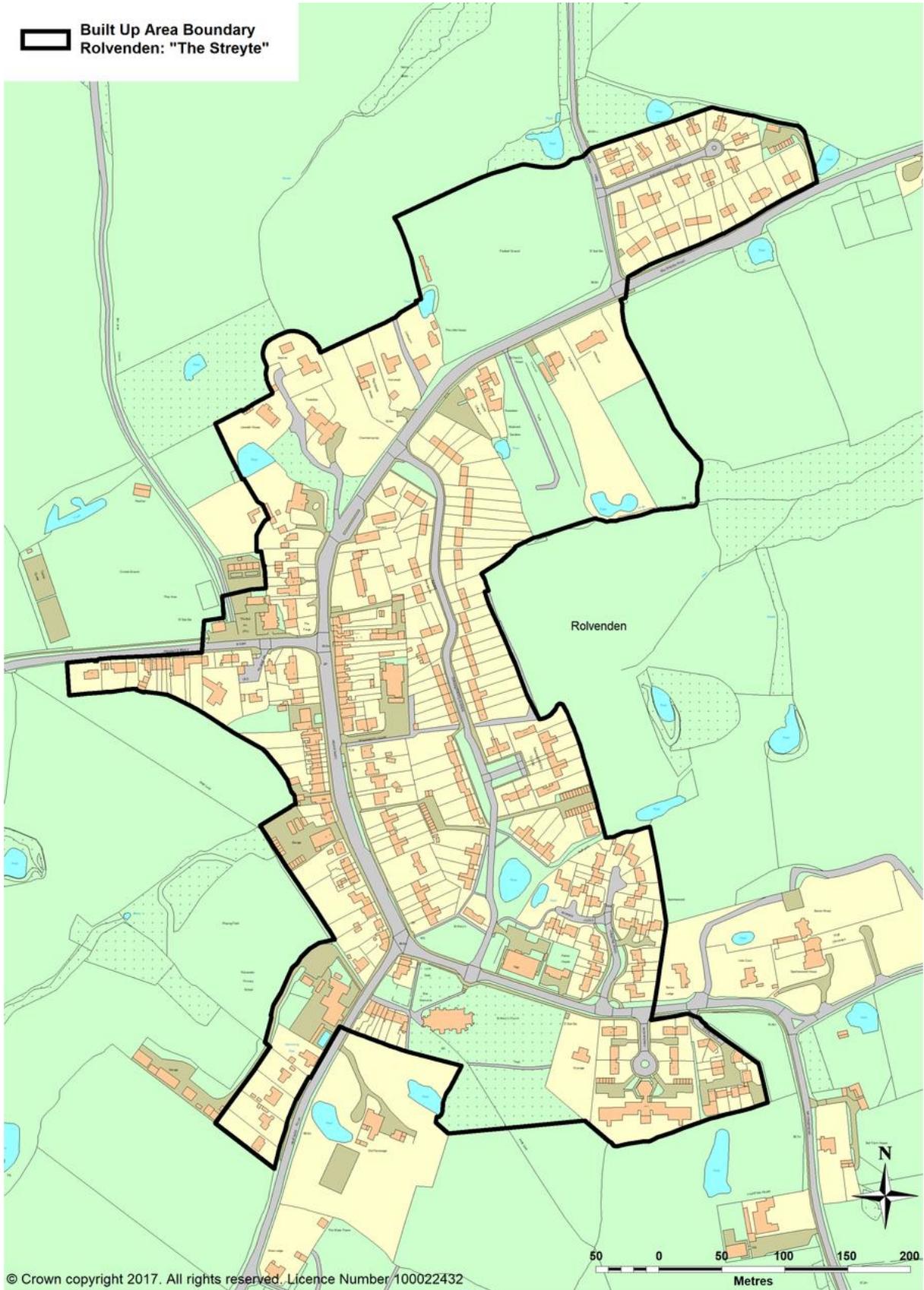
In accordance with the NPPF and the strategic role set for Rolvenden in the adopted Local Plan, priority is given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and protecting and enhancing the rich heritage assets and their setting.

Coinciding with the restraint sought by national policies, local surveys have revealed limited local need for additional housing development. Importantly, this need is focused on specific needs for smaller (1 and 2 bedroom) dwellings and affordable housing and the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to enable development which helps meet this need.

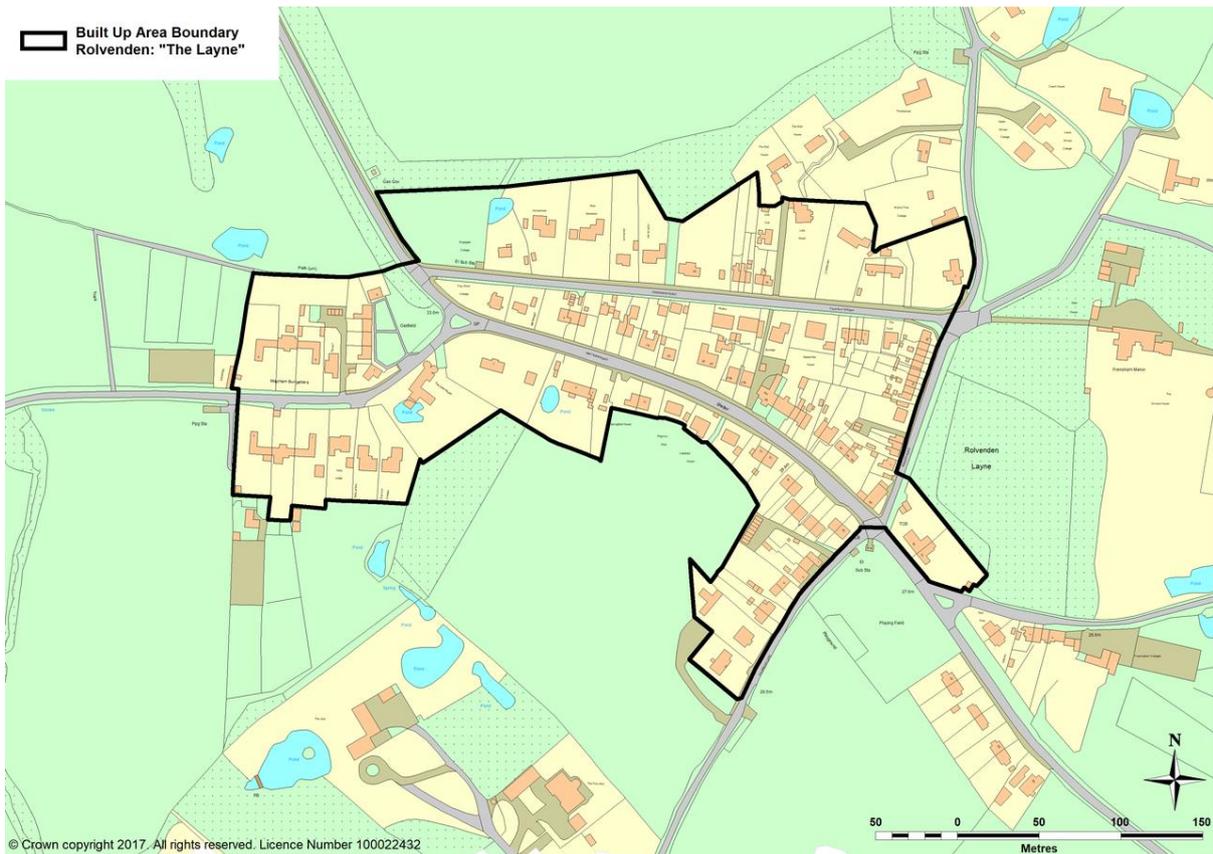
A built-up area boundary is defined for both Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne (Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne Village Envelopes, 2017 [www.](http://www.rolvendenparish.org.uk)) which seek to enable well designed development to meet identified needs within the village envelopes whilst protecting the

natural beauty of its rural setting and the surrounding countryside from inappropriate development. The Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne Village Envelopes are shown on Maps 3 and 4 below.

Built Up Area Boundary
Rolvenden: "The Streyte"



Map 3 – Rolvenden Village Envelope



Map 4 – Rolvenden Layne Village Envelope

The Plan seeks to allow limited development within the countryside by allowing suitable conversions for business or tourist uses; enabling the expansion of existing business premises and, if justified by local need, an ‘exception site’ for local needs housing adjoining the village envelope of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne. Nevertheless, any development beyond the village envelope should conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the tranquillity of the countryside; protect the setting of the villages and maintain the associated views.

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 draft Plan will be discussed with the infrastructure providers to test whether 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 important open 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. 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.

Distinctive Character Areas and Approaches

Ashford Borough Council's adopted Core Strategy Policy CS9 – Design Quality attaches great importance to the quality of design in new development including demonstrating a positive response to character, distinctiveness and sense of place.

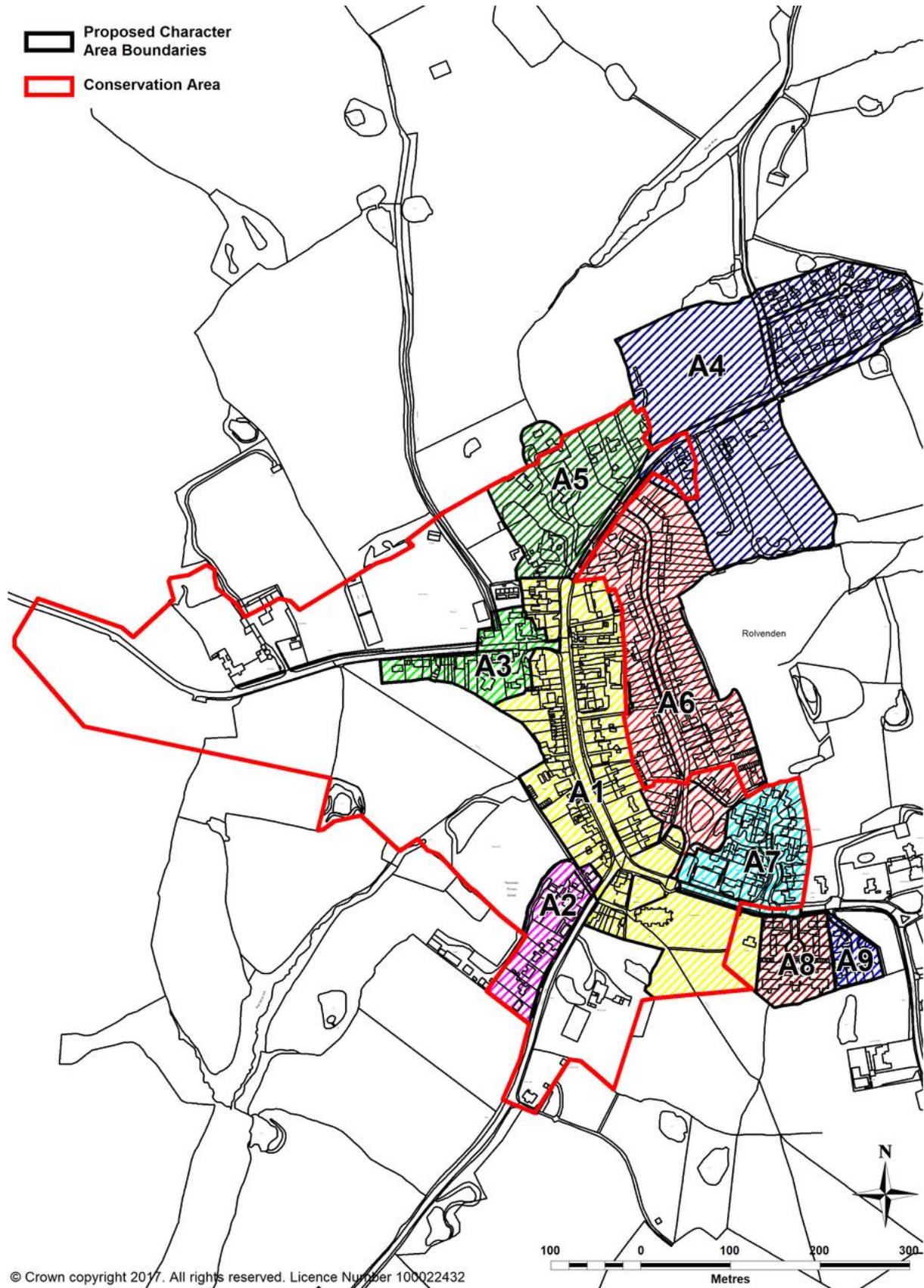
The 'character of an area' is often mentioned in the context of considering development proposals. What is often missing is a clear identification of, and agreement about, the locally distinctive features of an area that give it character that should be given careful regard in considering proposals for development. For this purpose, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies

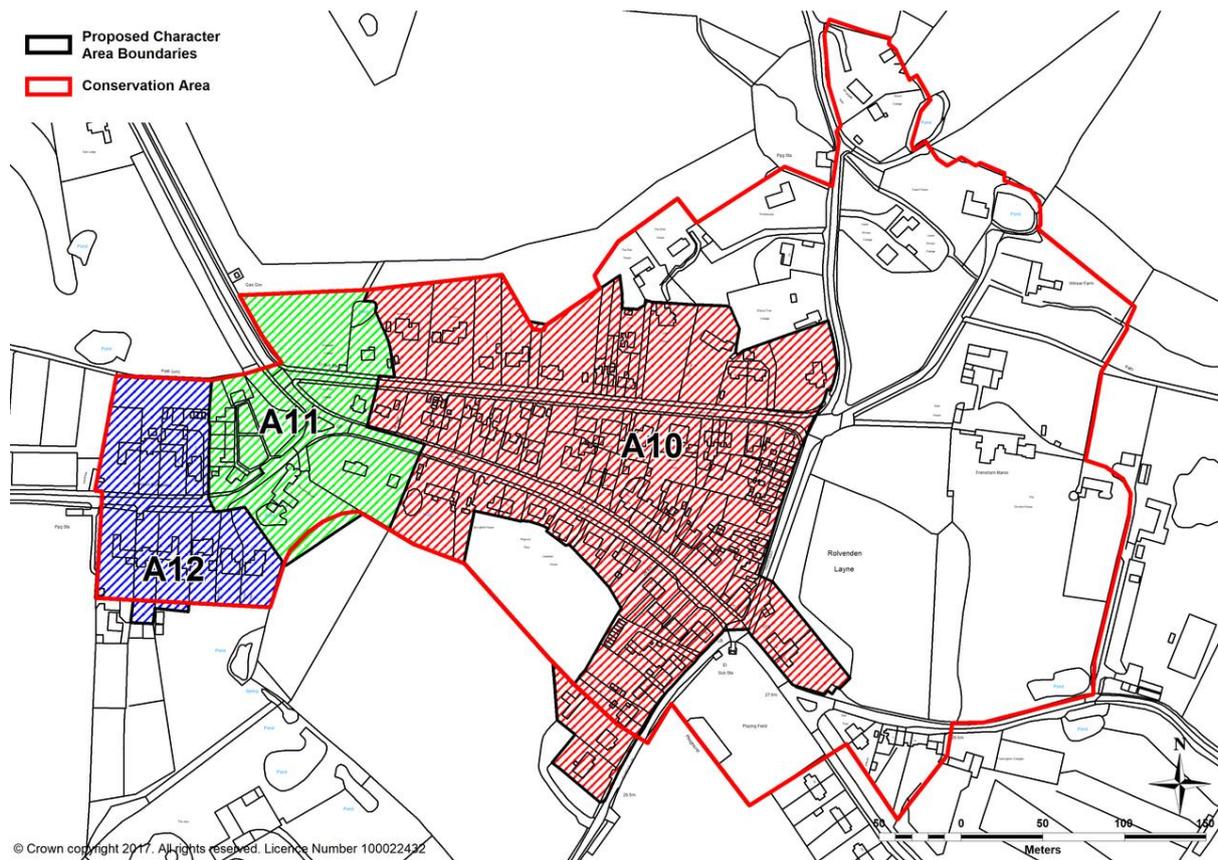
areas of distinctive character within the village envelopes of Rolvenden (see Map 5 below) and Rolvenden Layne (see Map 6 below) and the associated approaches to the villages.

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.





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 village envelope between the Newenden and Layne approaches and immediately to the east of Rolvenden Layne village envelope 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 (available at www.aonb.gov.uk) 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 as a place to live and visit and plays a vital role in maintaining the health and wellbeing of the population.

The area of countryside around Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne therefore has significant importance and a sensitivity to change. 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 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.

Areas of Important Open Space

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 areas of the villages. The location and importance of Rolvenden's open spaces has been summarised in the Open Space Assessment (www.). The sites are listed below and their location is identified on Maps 7 and 8 below.

IOS Ref No.	Open Space Description
ROLVENDEN	
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
ROLVENDEN LAYNE	
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 – Important Open Space – Rolvenden Layne

The areas are important visually 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 area provide important visual amenity.

A distinction has been made between open spaces within the village envelopes of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and those located outside. Open space outside the village envelopes (such as the Sports and Recreation Ground on Regent Street and the Recreation Ground at Rolvenden Layne) is defined as part of the countryside where priority is already given to preservation and enhancement. These public open spaces outside the village envelopes are also important to leisure and wellbeing in the Parish and are consequently to be protected in the Neighbourhood Plan (Policy RNP9).

Policy RNP2 – Protection of Important Open Space within the Village Envelopes

Proposals for development which would result in the loss of all or part of an Area of Important Open Space within the village envelopes, as defined on Maps 7 and 8, will not be permitted.

Countryside outside the Village Envelopes

Landscape Protection

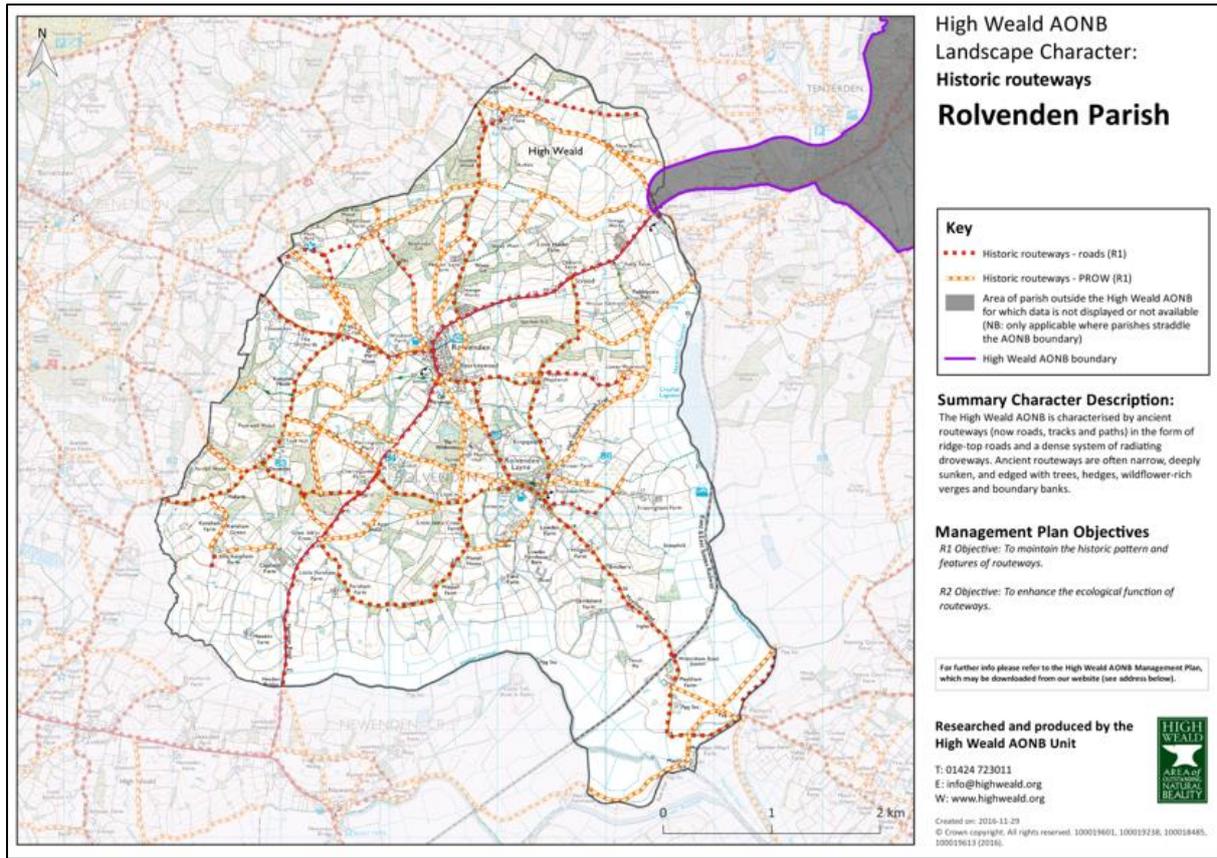
The landscape forms an intrinsic part of the character and setting of the villages and provides informal and formal recreational opportunities for the community and visitors alike. The immediate landscape setting of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne forms part of the designated Conservation Areas. The landscape also 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 where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances.

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.

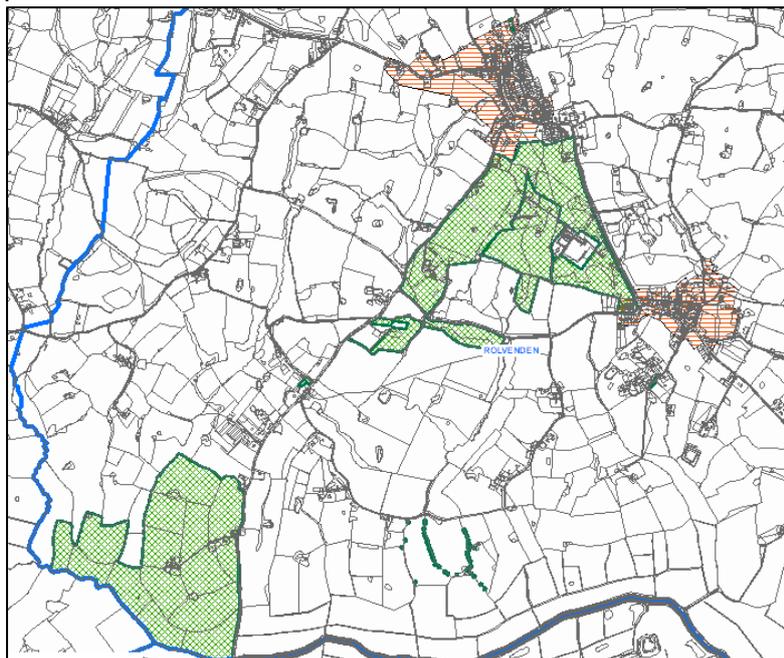
The assessment states that this is a richly textured landscape, where the angular patterns of the orchard and hop garden contrast with smooth sweeps of arable or intensively grazed pasture, set within a framework of dense shaws, thick hedges and stretches of broad-leaved woodland. According to the assessment, 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.

There has been very little change in the historic routeways within the Parish to those of today (Map 9). 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 9 - Historic routeways

The Parish also contains significant blocks of ancient woodland which contribute to the character of the countryside and two of the southern approaches to Rolvenden - shown shaded green on Map 10 below. The Conservation Areas are shown as red hatched areas. 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 10 – Ancient Woodland (green shaded areas)

Views

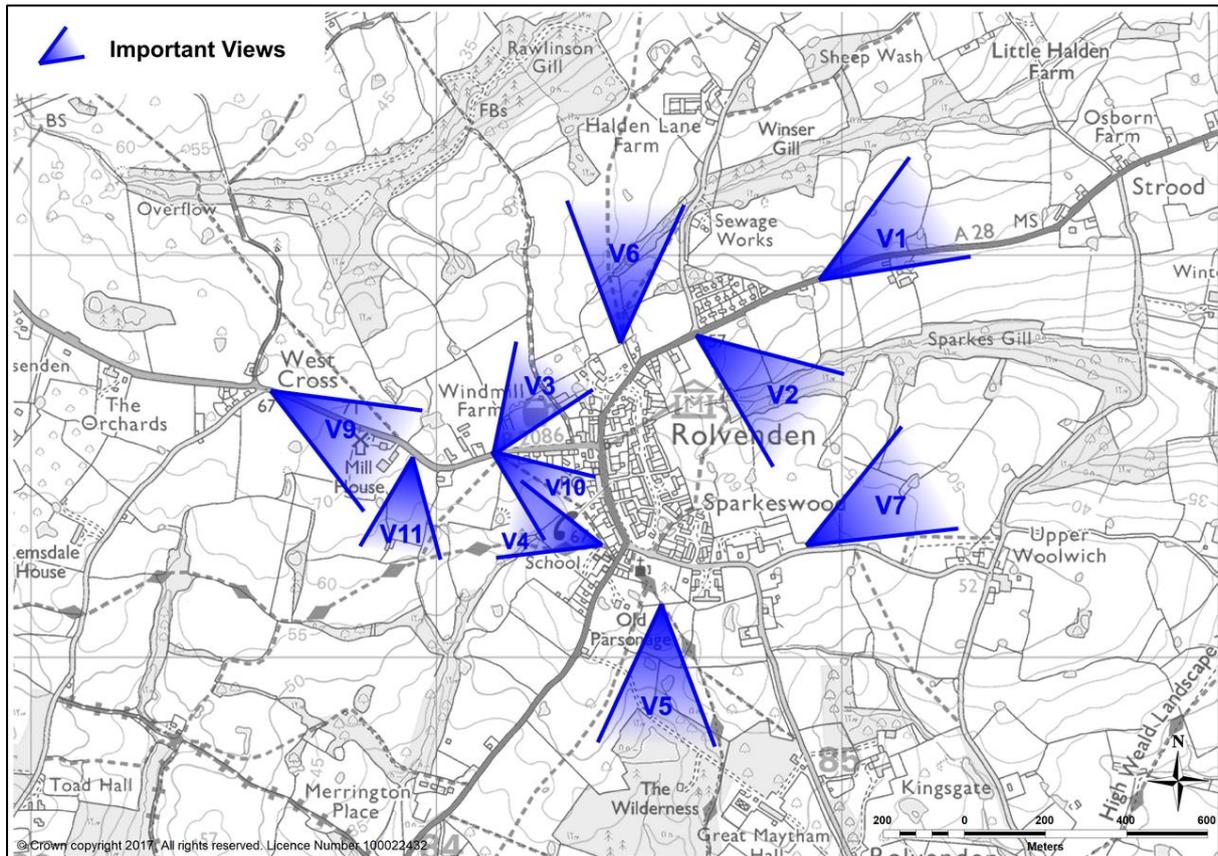
One of the distinctive features of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne is the visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside from public places. Important views are identified in the Rolvenden Important Public Views Assessment (www.rolvenden.org.uk). All the views fall into two principal groups:

- Those views looking outwards from the built up area 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

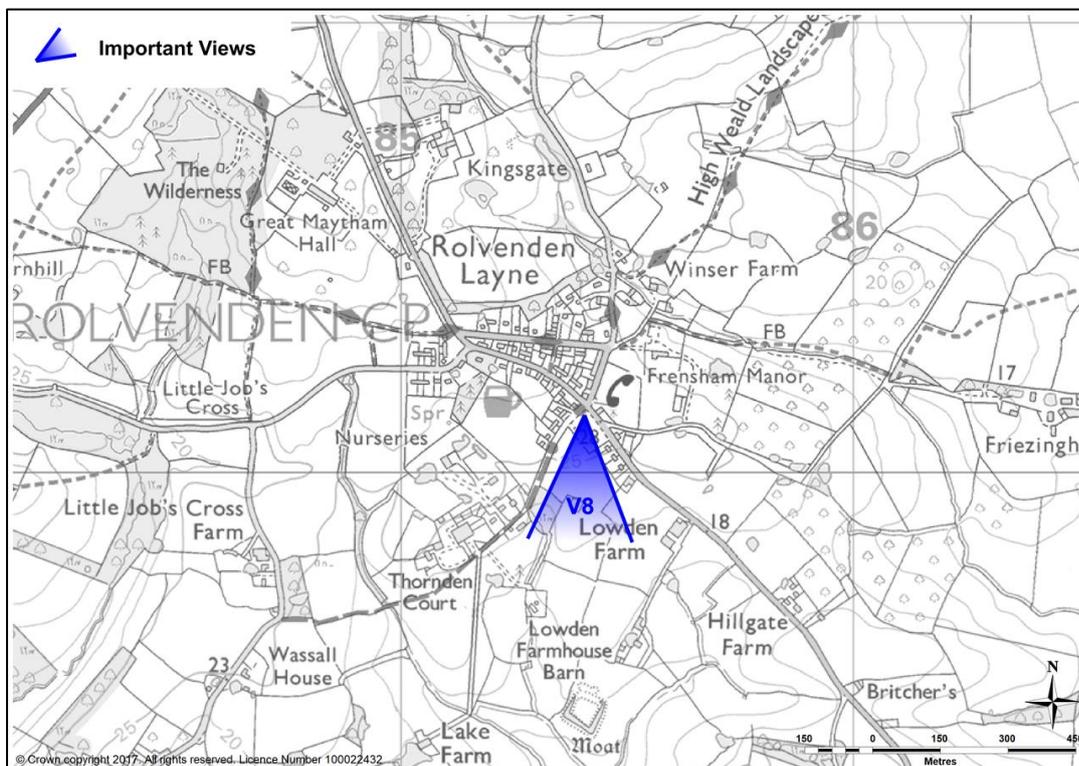
Ref.	Views from Villages towards Countryside - Description
V1	From Gatefield cottages development, A28, looking north-east, view of Tenterden church, St Michaels' church and skyline
V2	From land adjoining Redwood on A28 - looking south-east across the public footpath, view of Sparkeswood Gill (ancient 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 Ghyls (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 Jubilee Seat c/o 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 roofscape
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 x – Map 12 - Important View at Rolvenden Layne

Protect and Enhance the Countryside

The planning strategy for Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne generally is to focus development within the defined village envelopes and to restrict development in the countryside in order to conserve and enhance the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; views from public areas; formal and informal recreational amenities as well as biodiversity.

Policy RNP3 - Protect and Enhance the Countryside

Outside of the village envelopes of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne, as defined in Maps 3 and 4, priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the countryside 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 not have an adverse impact on the landscape setting of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne including the designated Conservation Areas;
- c) It would maintain the distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built up area, in particular those defined on Maps 11 and 12, and
- d) It would protect and, where possible, enhance the following features:
 - i) ancient woodland;
 - ii) rural lanes which have an historic, landscape or nature conservation importance.

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 promote the development of 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 (www.) 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. Further, the adopted Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD, 2010 allocates a site at Halden Field, Rolvenden for 40 dwellings which is under construction. The adopted DPD has no further strategic housing requirements for Rolvenden but enables minor residential development or infilling within the built-up confines of Rolvenden (Policy TRS1). There is therefore no strategic housing need to be met within the Plan area.

In developing the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan, Ashford Borough Council has taken an active role in advising and supporting the local Neighbourhood Plan team, sharing evidence and information and ensuring the Neighbourhood Plan takes account of any relevant up-to-date evidence of strategic needs. The emerging Local Plan anticipates Rolvenden playing a minor role in meeting housing needs through minor development and infilling and minor allocations through the Neighbourhood Plan. Rolvenden does not have a strategic housing target in the emerging plan nor any housing site allocations.

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 (www.). 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

	Affordable Housing	Market Housing	Total Requirement
YES	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 2016/17 and therefore these form part of the Plan’s housing land supply. The emerging 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 2016/17.

Sites with Planning Permission

Rolvenden Parish had extant planning consents for 42 dwellings at 31 March 2017. This comprised 40 dwellings, including 14 affordable homes, at Halden Fields, Rolvenden and two further dwellings on small sites.

Windfall Sites

As set out in the Planning Strategy, housing development is expected to come forward within the Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne village envelopes subject to meeting the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. Over the past 12 years, windfall sites (excluding residential gardens) have made a contribution towards the housing land supply in the Neighbourhood Plan area. A total of 29 dwellings have been completed over this period at an average of 2.4 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 2019/20. 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. A more cautious estimate of 2 dwellings per annum on windfall sites is included for the period 2019/20 – 2029/30 giving a total contribution of 22 dwellings over the Plan period.

Housing Allocations

In broad terms, the committed housing supply should meet the identified need for 69 additional dwellings as well as meeting 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 consult on further housing site options.

The Rolvenden Potential Housing Development Site Assessment, 2017 ([www.](#)) 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. The assessment identifies three 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) and a brownfield site at the centre of Rolvenden is potentially suitable for housing development. In addition, one small greenfield site has been identified as potentially suitable options for housing development at the edge of both Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne.

Site	Approximate No. of Dwellings
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
Total	24

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. 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. The central location makes this an ideal site for small dwellings suitable for younger families and older downsizing households. 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. Similarly, development at this edge of Rolvenden must be well integrated into the landscape through sensitive designs and by creating a new landscape buffer of appropriate native species to form a strong natural eastern boundary to the site and create a buffer to the countryside. Access would be provided from Tenterden Road. 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 replicated 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 draft Neighbourhood Plan puts these sites forward as options for housing development and will test their suitability and deliverability further through consultation. Consultation gives the opportunity for further discussion with local residents about the principle of development and the density, form, layout, dwelling mix, landscaping and access for these sites.

Policy RNP4 – Housing Site Options

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 RNP4 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). 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.

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 RNP4 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 native species should be planted 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.

Policy RNP4 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 relevant to the provision of affordable housing (Core Strategy, 2008 – Policy CS12 – Affordable Housing) sets a threshold of 15 dwellings or a site area in excess of 0.5ha at which affordable housing will be required. The emerging Local Plan, 2030, Policy HOU1 - Affordable Housing sets the threshold at 10 dwellings or more (and on sites of 0.5 hectares or more). As the potential site options fall below the threshold of the adopted Local Plan, they would not yield additional affordable housing. If the emerging policy is adopted, two of the site options would yield affordable housing in accordance with this policy.

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

In addition, the adopted Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD, Policy TRS4 - Exception sites for local needs housing - 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. The emerging Ashford Local Plan 2030 contains a similar enabling policy: HOU2 - Local needs / specialist housing. 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 Options:			
Cornex Garage, High Street	3	7	10
Land to rear of Redwood, Tenterden Road	3	7	10
Kingsgate Corner, Maytham Road / Frensham Road	0	4	4
Windfall sites	0	22	22
Total	20	73	93

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan aims to deliver approximately 93 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.

Dwelling Size

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%)
Total No. units	24	14	38

* 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	22

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 potential housing site options are specifically included to help increase the supply of smaller 1 – 2 bedroom dwellings. They 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. There is virtually no local need identified for new properties with 4 or more bedrooms.

Policy RNP5 – Dwelling Size

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

Proposals for residential development on Housing Site Options identified in Policy RNP4 will be permitted if they incorporate a majority of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings.

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

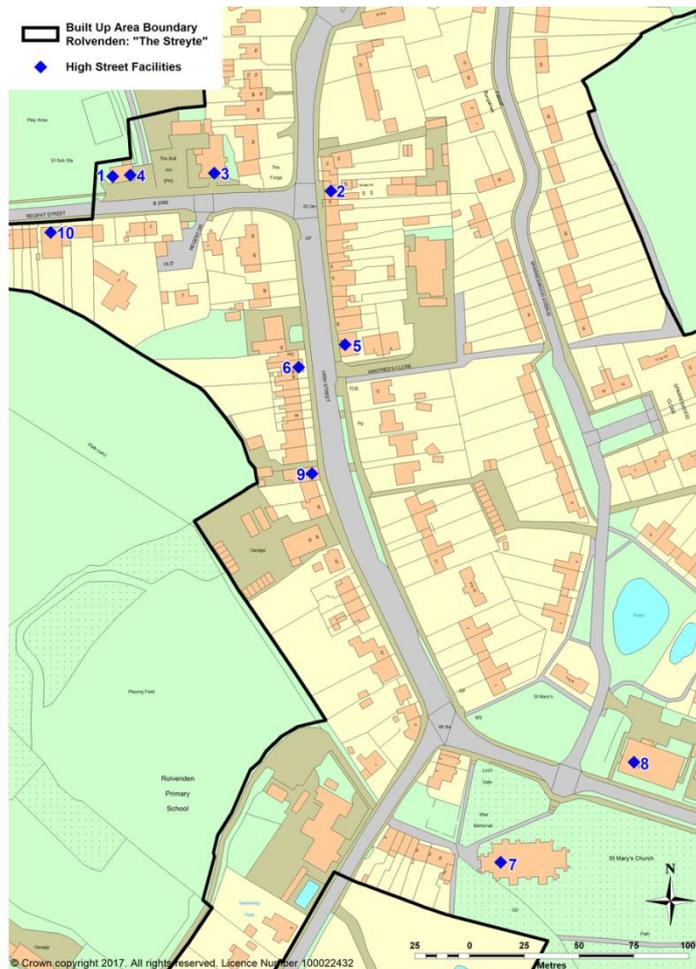
Local Economy Policies

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. The Tenterden and Rural Sites Development Plan Document, Policy TRS16 seeks to protect shops and public houses and the Neighbourhood Plan identifies the local premises which it seeks to protect in Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne. Emerging Local Plan Policy EMP10 resists the loss of shops and services in village centres in certain circumstances.

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

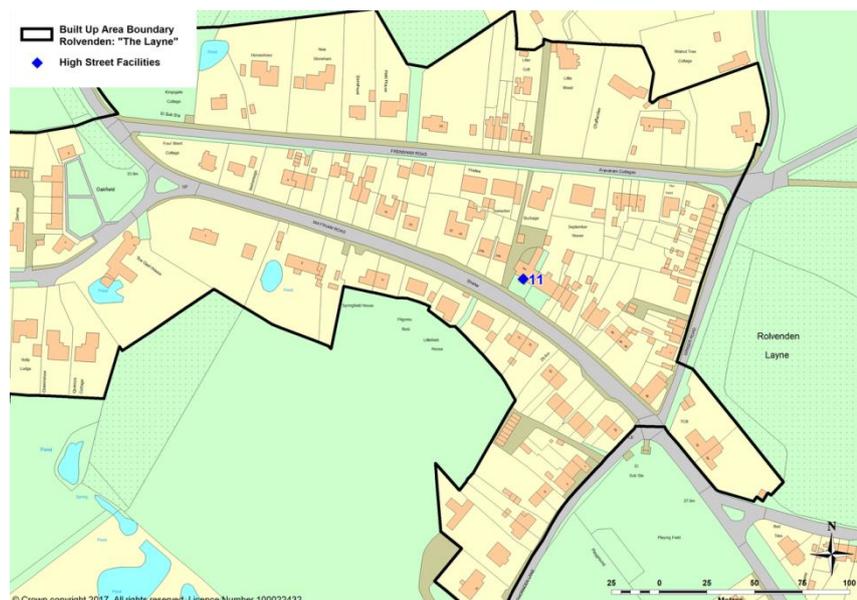


Map 16 – location of the shops and public houses in Rolvenden High Street/Regent Street

There is potential for enhancement of the public realm at the centre of Rolvenden and opportunities 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)

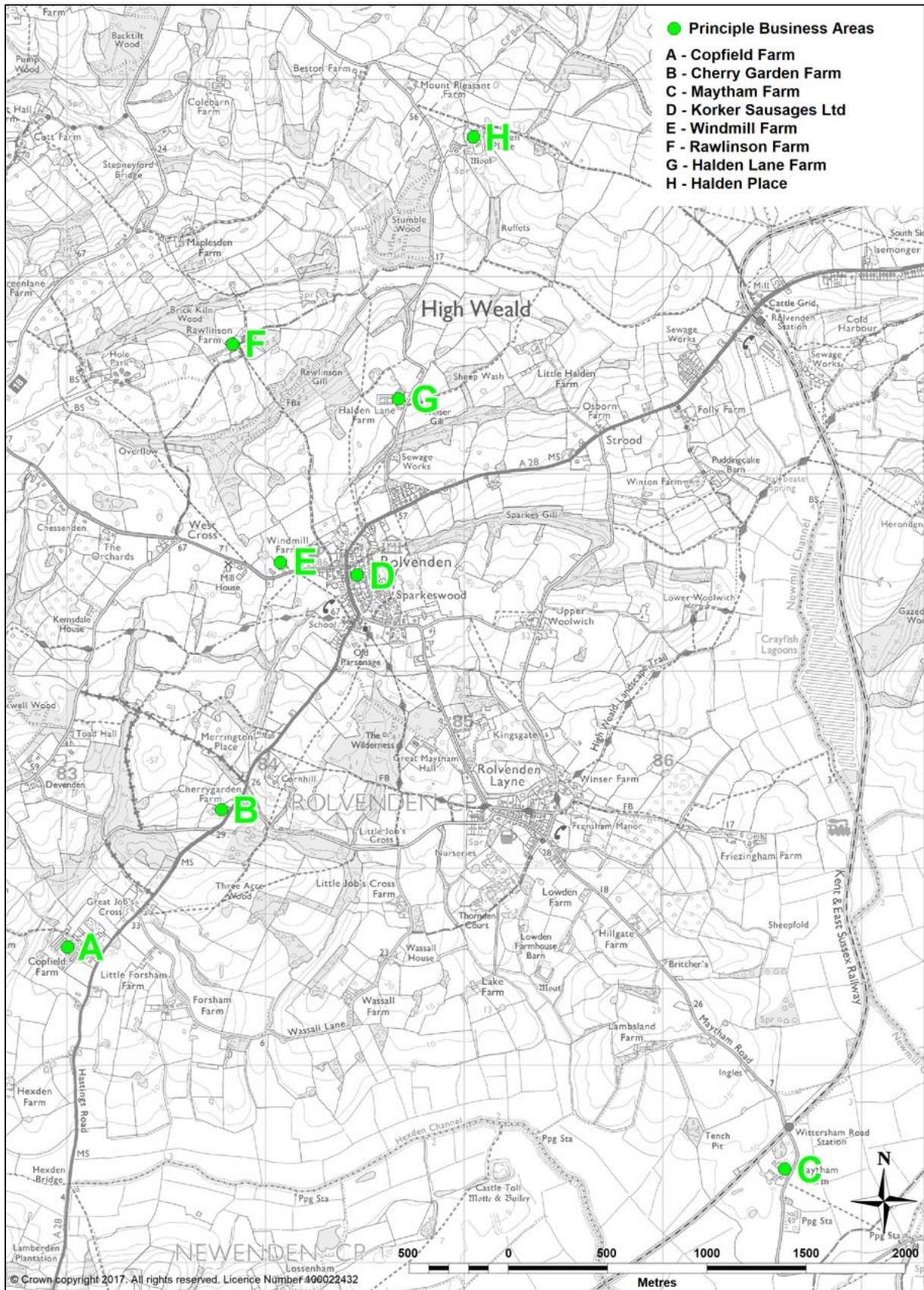
The contribution made to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the villages by the existing shops and public houses is recognised and wherever possible existing shops and public houses should be retained. If there is demand, the existing uses should be allowed to extend. If viable, small 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 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 RNP6 – 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 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.

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 ([www.](http://www.rolvendenparish.org.uk)) 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.



The Borough Council's Employment Land Review (2008) advised that Local Plan policies should continue to resist the loss of existing employment sites. 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 RNP7 seeks to retain the supply of local business premises.

The 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 RNP7 – 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
Halden Lane Farm
Halden Place
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 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 ([www.](http://www.rolvendenparish.org.uk)) 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.

The Tenterden and Rural Sites Development Plan Document, Policy TRS11 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.

Tourism

According to the Tourism Study, 2017 (www.rolvenden-tourism.co.uk), 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 Tenterden and Rural Sites Development Plan Document, Policy TRS11 allows proposals to convert rural buildings to business uses and tourism facilities whilst Policy TRS12 permits proposals to convert rural buildings to tourist accommodation subject to meeting a number of criteria.

Emerging Local Plan Policy EMP4 permits the conversions of rural buildings to non-residential uses provided a number of criteria are met.

Policy RNP8 - Conversion of rural buildings to business use; tourist accommodation or tourist attraction

Proposals to convert rural buildings to business use at Copfield Farm will be permitted.

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 staff and delivery vehicles

Home Working

Of the businesses surveyed for the Business Needs Survey, 2015 (www.) by far the majority of businesses (38%) were situated in a home office. 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

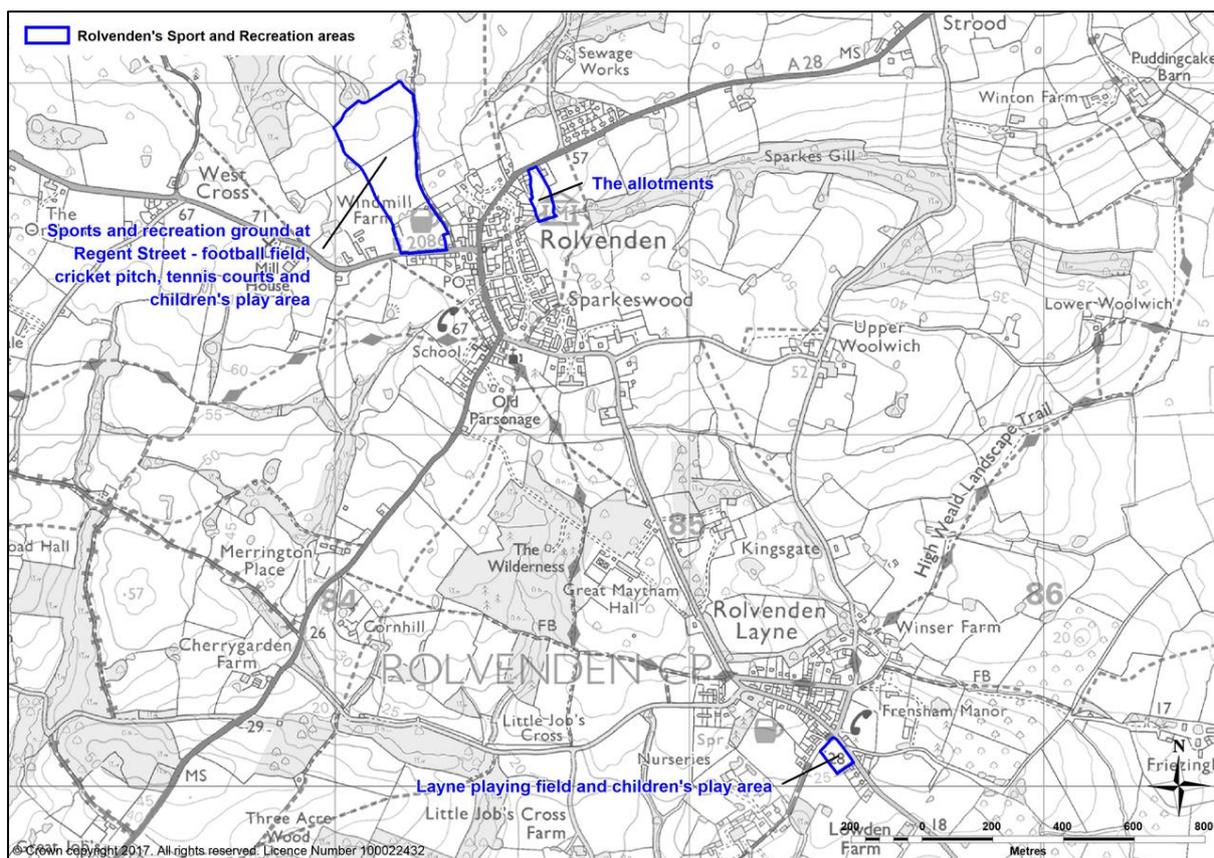
- To ensure that sufficient community and leisure facilities are maintained to serve the Parish including new provision in association with new development.
- To protect and enhance open spaces used for recreational purposes, including provision of a new multi-sport community owned pavilion at the Rolvenden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

Leisure and Wellbeing Policies

Open Spaces and Public Rights of Way

The NPPF states that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. It states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless, for example, the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location. The NPPF seeks planning policies that promote opportunities to improve the local open space network. In addition, the NPPF states that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access.

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 – Sport and Recreation Facilities

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.

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 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 open spaces and rights of way are protected.

Policy RNP9 - Open Space

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.

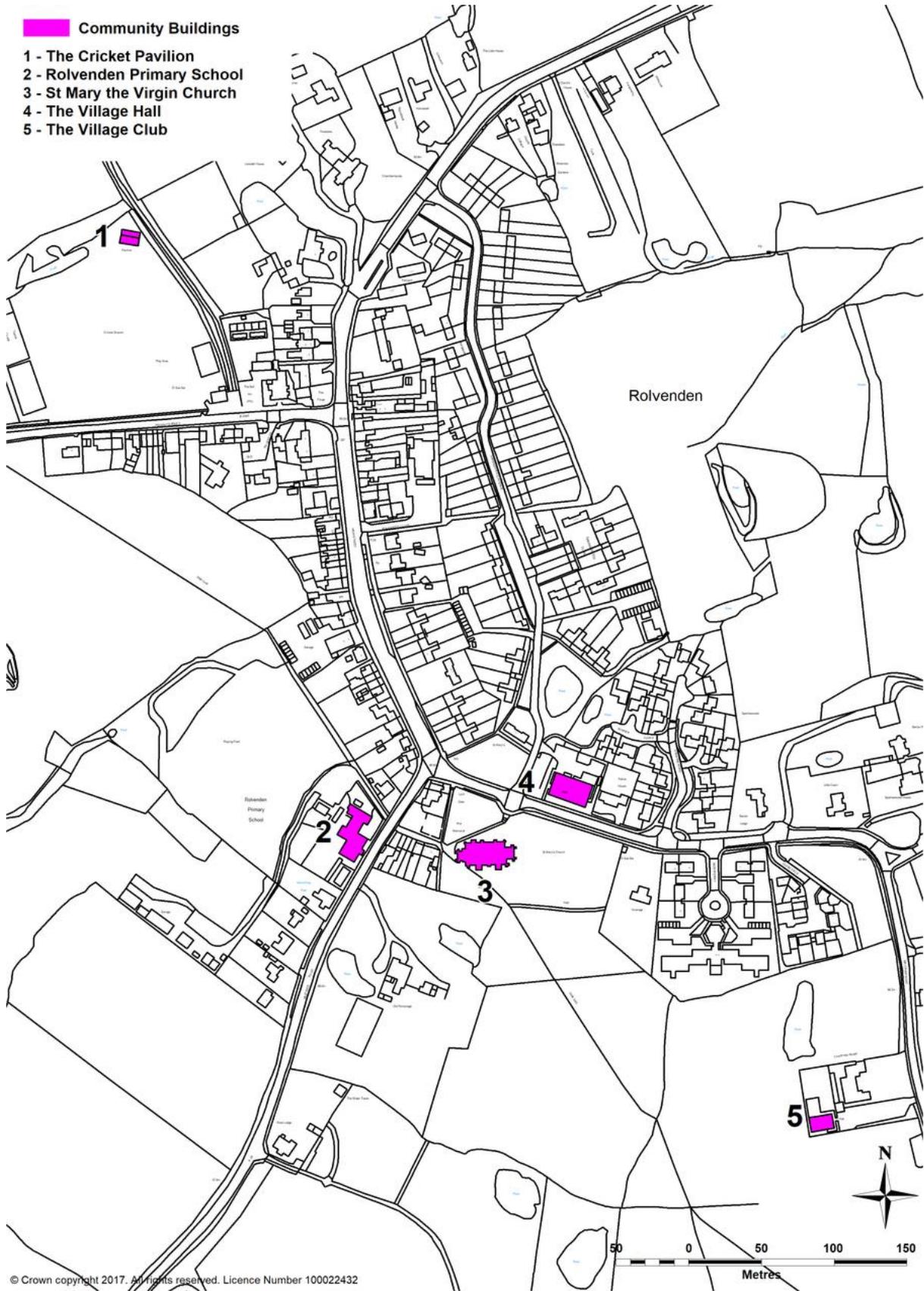
Existing public rights of way will be protected and enhanced.

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.

Community Buildings

- 1 - The Cricket Pavilion
- 2 - Rolvenden Primary School
- 3 - St Mary the Virgin Church
- 4 - The Village Hall
- 5 - The Village Club



Map 20 – Community Buildings

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 RNP10 - 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 Community Owned Pavilion

The Parish Council and local sports groups are keen to progress the building of a new multi-sports community-owned pavilion together with an area for outdoor adult gym equipment and associated parking within the sports and recreation grounds 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 RNP11 - Multi-Sports Community Owned Pavilion

A Multi-Sports Community-Owned 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)

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 Community Owned Pavilion

The Parish Council and local sports groups are keen to progress the building of a new multi-sports community-owned 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 RNP11. 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 Important Open 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 RNP12- Off Street Parking

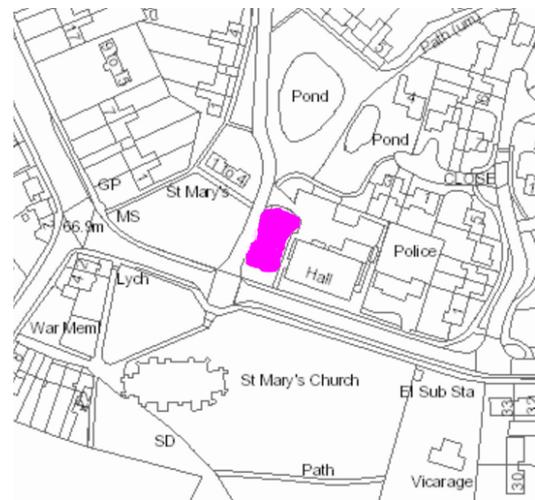
Within areas identified as having insufficient on-street parking facilities, as defined on Map 2, proposals for new development should:

- a) provide at least the Kent County Council minimum parking requirement,
- 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.

The grassed area to the west of the Village Hall, bordering Sparkeswood Avenue (Map 21) has been identified as a possible 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 RNP13 - 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 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 Community Owned 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 RNP14 - 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 the infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan through developer contributions, in a timely manner subject to an appropriate assessment of viability.

Appendix 1

THE CHARACTER AREAS ASSESSMENTS AND VILLAGE APPROACHES