

# Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan

(Regulation 15)

## Basic Conditions Statement

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Paragraph 8(2)  
of Schedule 4B Statement**

Rolvenden Parish Council

April 2019

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Appendix 1

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This Basic Conditions Statement sets out how Rolvenden Parish Council has met the legal requirements and basic conditions in producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Rolvenden Parish.

## **2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **The Neighbourhood Plan is being submitted by a qualifying body**

The area administered by Rolvenden Parish Council has been designated a qualifying area (see Appendix 1 for the Ashford Borough Council designation letter) and the Parish Council is a qualifying body.

### **What is being proposed is a Neighbourhood Development Plan**

The plan relates to planning matters and has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and associated Neighbourhood Planning Regulation.

### **The proposed neighbourhood plan states the period for which it is to have effect**

The Plan period is stated as 2013 – 2030 to align with the Ashford Borough Local Plan, 2030 plan period.

### **The policies do not relate to excluded development**

The neighbourhood plan proposals do not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

### **The proposed neighbourhood plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and there are no other neighbourhood development plans in place within the neighbourhood area.**

The neighbourhood plan proposal relates to the Rolvenden Parish and to no other area (as shown in Map 1 below).

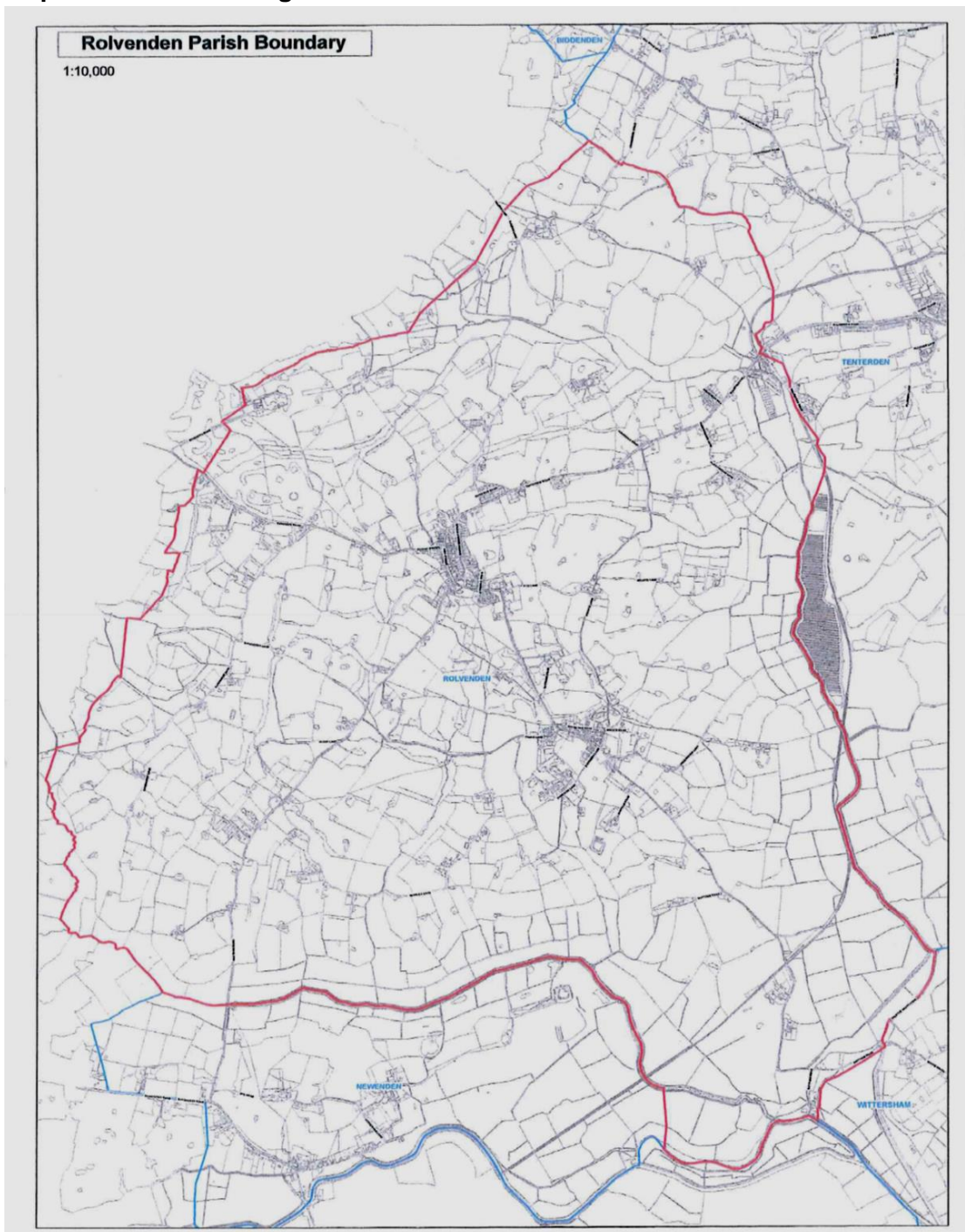
There are no other neighbourhood plans relating to that neighbourhood area.

The neighbourhood plan is informed by discussions with neighbouring Parish Councils regarding their aspirations and planning issues of cross-boundary importance.

It is not considered that there is any benefit in extending the area for the referendum beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

There are no other prescribed matters.

# Map 1 - Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Area



### 3. BASIC CONDITIONS

A Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions if:

- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan,
- the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,
- the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),
- the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations, and
- prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood development plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood development plan.

### 4. NATIONAL POLICIES AND ADVICE

The National Planning Policy Framework, 2019 (NPPF) will apply for the purpose of examining the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan.

This section demonstrates that the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has regard to the elements set out in the NPPF relevant to the designated area to deliver sustainable development:

- Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Supporting high quality communications
- Making effective use of land
- Achieving well-designed places
- Protecting Green Belt land
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

#### **Delivering a sufficient supply of homes**

The NPPF states *To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed...(Para 59).*

*Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes) (Para. 61).*

*Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority (Para 66).*

Neighbourhood planning groups are urged to *consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites suitable for housing in their area (Para. 69).*

*Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area (Para.70).*

*In rural areas, planning policies ...should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this (Para. 77).*

*To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services (Para. 78).*

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan sets the following 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.

There is no specific housing target for Rolvenden in the adopted Local Plans although there is reference to an indicative figure of allocating land for 24 dwellings in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies that aim to provide small scale sites suitable for housing in the area through windfall opportunities and housing allocations and to encourage 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings to meet an identified local need:

Policy RNP 1 - Design of New Development and Conservation

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

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

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

Policy RNP7 – Housing Site Allocations

Policy RNP8 – Dwelling Size

The Neighbourhood Plan also cross references Local Plan Policy HOU2 which enables Local Needs Affordable Housing adjoining the built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne as ‘exceptions’ to policies restraining housing development.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan identifies the delivery of 89 additional dwellings during the Plan period:

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
Total	22	67	89

The housing supply is made up of a combination of completions since the start of the Plan period (2013), existing planning consents, allocations and windfall opportunities. The Neighbourhood Plan enables the development of suitable windfall sites.

Small scale dwellings (1 or 2 bedrooms) are sought to meet local need and to optimise the use of land.

Policies RNP1 and RNP3 should ensure the quality of design of new residential development.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has therefore had regard to the NPPF in setting out clear housing policies that seek to deliver an appropriate number and mix of new high quality homes.

### **Building a strong, competitive economy**

The NPPF states *Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.* (Para 80).

*Planning policies should enable:*

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.*

*Planning policies should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads.*

Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan sets the following economic objectives:

- 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
- 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.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies that aim to build a strong, competitive economy consistent with existing strengths and locally appropriate opportunities:

- Policy RNP9 – Village Shops and Public Houses
- Policy RNP10 – Retention, intensification and regeneration of existing business sites
- Policy RNP11 - Conversion of rural buildings to business use; tourist accommodation or tourist attraction

These objectives and policies meet the aims of the NPPF by supporting the retention, intensification and regeneration of the main clusters of business activities in Rolvenden Parish (including sites within the countryside); focussing on the retention of the economic and social hub of Rolvenden village centre and the public house in Rolvenden Layne and supporting appropriate conversion and expansion of rural buildings for business, and tourist uses.

The plan seeks to resist the loss of community buildings (including a place of worship); Local Green Spaces and recreation and leisure open space through Policies RNP13, 2 and 12.

The plan also seeks to conserve and enhance the built and natural environment which is important for the retention of a successful tourist industry.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has therefore had regard to the NPPF in setting out clear economic objectives and policies that seek to sustain and promote the local rural economy.

### **Promoting healthy and safe communities**

The NPPF seeks to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs through:

- planning positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- guarding against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- ensuring that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
- ensuring an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services (Para 92).

NPPF states: *Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space,*



*sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate (Para.96).*

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless a number of criteria are met and planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access (Paras. 97 and 98)

The NPPF enables the designation of land as Local Green Space through neighbourhood plans to protect green areas of particular importance to local communities (Para 99).

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan sets the following objectives in relation to community facilities and open space:

- 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.

The Plan identifies the provision and needs for community facilities and the policies that seek to secure future retention and provision are:

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

Policy RNP12 - Recreation and Leisure Open Space

Policy RNP13 - Retention of Community Buildings

Policy RNP14 - Multi-Sports Community Owned Pavilion

Policy RNP16 - Extension to Village Hall Car Park

Policy RNP17 - Securing Infrastructure

The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces in compliance with Paras. 99 – 101 of NPPF.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has therefore had regard to the NPPF in setting out clear objectives and policies that seek to promote a healthy local community.

### **Promoting sustainable transport**

The NPPF states that: *The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health (Para.103).*

Planning policies should:

- *support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities;*
- *provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans) (Para.104).*

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan sets the following infrastructure objective:

- 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.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policy that aims to promote sustainable transport:

#### Policy RNP17 - Securing Infrastructure

This objective and policy meet the NPPF aims by enabling development proposals which would ensure sustainable transport links are provided to the principal village facilities or provision of, or a contribution towards, appropriate transport measures which assist walking, cycling, public transport and other highway improvements.

In selecting housing sites to be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan, proximity to the following facilities was assessed:

- Village Centre
- Primary School
- Church and Village Hall
- Public open space
- Equipped play space
- Bus stop

In addition, as well as making provision for new housing development, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to balance land uses in the area through the retention of employment opportunities; retaining retail and open space provision and protecting community facilities.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has therefore had regard to the NPPF in setting out clear transport objectives and policies that seek to promote sustainable transport options.

### **Supporting high quality communications**

NPPF states that policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).

The Local Plan covers this topic.

### **Making effective use of land**

*NPPF states: Planning policies ...should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land (Para.117).*

Planning policies should also give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land and promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure) (Para. 118).

Planning policies need to reflect changes in the demand for land and as part of plan updates, reallocate the land for a more deliverable use that can help to address identified needs (Para. 120).

Planning policies should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it as well as the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character (Para. 122).

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan sets the following objectives which seek to make effective use of land:

- 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.
- 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

Policies RNP7, 10 and 11 seek to make optimal use of all available suitable brownfield sites for housing and business uses. Policy RNP7 specifies appropriate densities which make efficient use of land whilst maintaining the character of an area.

### **Achieving well-designed places**

*NPPF states: The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. (Para.124).*

*Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development (Para. 125).*

*Planning policies... should ensure that developments:*

*a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

*b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*

*c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*

*d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*

f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users<sup>46</sup>; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience (Para.127).*

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan places a strong emphasis on design - interpreting the community's desire to ensure that new development responds to the local character of the Plan area's built and natural environment.

The overall vision for Rolvenden 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. The Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies collectively support this vision.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan sets the following design 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.

The Plan includes an Appendix which describes the distinctive characteristics of the different character areas within Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and the associated approaches to the villages. The Appendix has been developed with the local community to reflect local understanding and evaluation of each distinctive character area's defining characteristics.

Specific reference is made to the two conservation areas and the High Weald AONB Management Plan seeks to ensure that the natural beauty, special character and the vitality of its communities are recognised, maintained and strengthened.

The policies that seeks to secure good design are:

Policy RNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation

Policy RNP3 - Conserve and Enhance the Countryside

In order to maintain a strong sense of place, the Neighbourhood Plan expects new development to be designed to a high quality which responds to the local heritage and distinctive character and reflects the identity of the local context of Rolvenden.

In addition to the above policies, Policy RNP7 - Housing Site Allocations optimises the potential of the site and sets out requirements in relation to the design, layout and landscaping of each housing allocation.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has therefore had regard to the NPPF in setting out clear design policies that seek to reinforce local distinctiveness.

### **Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change**

NPPF states: *Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection*

*measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure (Para.149).*

*Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future) (Para. 155).*

Whilst the NPPF and the Borough Council's local plan are expected to set out clear policy approaches to meeting the challenge of climate change nationally and in Ashford Borough, the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to climate change and flood risk at the local level.

The level of development anticipated reflects the limited number of facilities available to serve each community (particularly Rolvenden Layne) and the very limited public transport options available.

In allocating sites for development, the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to the need for sustainable transport, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with travel to and from new development.

A number of policies seek the retention and enhancement of existing trees and landscape features which can help in carbon reduction and provide shade.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has therefore had regard to the NPPF in setting out a local approach to help meet the challenge of climate change and flooding.

### **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**

NPPF states: *Planning policies... should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

*a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*

*b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;...*

*d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*

*e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*

*f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate (Para.170).*

*Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas...The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances...(Para. 172).*

To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks... (Para.174).

The overall vision for Rolvenden 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. The Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies collectively support this vision.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan sets the following objectives in relation to conserving and enhancing the natural environment:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the High Weald landscape and the setting of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne.
- To maintain the distinctive locally valued views and visual connectivity of the villages with the surrounding countryside.

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty washes over almost all of the Plan area and great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of the area. Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to the NPPF in the allocation of development sites, which has been informed by an assessment of the impact of development on landscape. Only small scale greenfield sites have been allocated or will be considered on the periphery of Rolvenden as windfall development. In addition, an assessment was made of whether a site was within or adjoining SSSI, a Local Wildlife Site or ancient woodland and whether it was known locally to be occupied by protected species.

In addition to considering the location of new development, the policies that seek to conserve and enhance the natural environment are:

Policy RNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation

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

Policy RNP3 - Conserve and Enhance the Countryside

Policy RNP12 - Recreation and Leisure Open Space

Policy RNP1 expects all development to protect and sensitively incorporate natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds and be well integrated into the landscape. Other policies seek to protect and enhance open space and important views.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has therefore had regard to the NPPF in setting out clear objectives and policies in relation to conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

### **Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

The NPPF states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations (Para.184).

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 overall vision for Rolvenden 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. The Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies collectively support this vision.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan sets the following objectives in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment:

- 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.

The Neighbourhood Plan policies that seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment are:

Policy RNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation

Policy RNP3 - Conserve and Enhance the Countryside

Through Policy RNP1, all development is expected to be designed to a high quality which responds to the heritage and distinctive character of the area.

The Neighbourhood Plan has had careful regard to designated and non-designated heritage assets in the allocation of development sites and Policies RNP1 and RNP3 should have the effect of protecting and enhancing the character of conservation areas, listed buildings and their setting (including Buildings of Note as set out in Neighbourhood Plan Appendix 1) and other heritage assets.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan has therefore had regard to the NPPF in setting out clear objectives and policies in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

### **National Planning Practice Guidance**

The Neighbourhood Plan has also followed updated National Planning Practice Guidance where relevant.

## 5 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The NPPF states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework (paragraph 10).

International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Neighbourhood Plan's vision for Rolvenden closely reflects this approach:

*Rolvenden Parish to continue to thrive by meeting identified local housing needs, sustaining the local economy and improving the strong social fabric, whilst preserving and enhancing the distinctive heritage and village character and the valued landscape setting.*

Following a careful assessment of the evidence and responses from public consultation, the planning strategy for Rolvenden Parish is to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and protect and enhance the rich heritage assets and their setting whilst helping to meet the local need for additional housing development, especially smaller (1 and 2 bedroom) dwellings and affordable housing.

The Plan seeks to allow limited development within the countryside by enabling small scale residential development on the periphery of Rolvenden built-up confines; suitable conversions for business or tourist uses; the expansion of existing business premises and, if justified by local need, an 'exception site' for local needs housing adjoining the village built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne. Nevertheless, any development beyond the built up confines should conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the tranquillity of the countryside as well as preserving and enhancing the landscape character of the designated Rolvenden Conservation Area and its setting and maintaining 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.

The Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development by:

- planning positively for housing development to help meet the needs of present and future generations by identifying opportunities to meet housing need up to 2030;
- locating new housing development where it relates well to the existing villages and protects the high quality environmental assets of the Plan area;
- contributing to building a strong local economy and supporting the rural economy by supporting the retention, intensification and regeneration of the main clusters of business activities in the parish; focussing on the retention of the economic and social hub of Rolvenden village centre and the public house in Rolvenden Layne and supporting the change of use or extension of rural buildings for business or tourist purposes;
- supporting the retention and enhancement of community and leisure facilities which are important to the social fabric of the villages;
- protecting and enhancing the high quality natural, built and historic environment of Rolvenden and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty; encouraging high quality development that responds to the distinctive character of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and



- securing the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development, or the additional infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan which can be provided in a timely manner.

## **6. GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC POLICIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE AREA**

One of the basic conditions that Neighbourhood Plans must satisfy is that they are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan for the local area, i.e. the high-level strategic elements in the local plan that are essential to delivering the overall planning and development strategy for the local area.

### **Ashford Borough Local Plan 2030**

The Ashford Local Plan 2030 sets out a vision for Ashford Borough in 2030. The following extract relates to the Neighbourhood Plan area:

*Ashford Borough will meet its housing and employment needs, and take account of the needs of investors, through the provision of new high quality development forming attractive places, with the necessary supporting infrastructure and services, and in sustainable and accessible locations that take account of the Borough's environmental constraints...*

*The other rural service centres of Charing, Hamstreet and Wye will remain important providers of local shops and services, whilst delivering new development of a scale appropriate to the individual characteristics of the settlement. Smaller rural settlements will also provide smaller scale new development, to help sustain local communities. Development within all the rural settlements must conserve and enhance the historic centres and heritage and natural assets.*

*The identity and attractive character of the Borough's rural area, with its range of attractive settlements, wealth of heritage assets and its expansive countryside, including the Kent Downs AONB to the north and the High Weald AONB to the south, will be conserved and enhanced.*

*The Borough's green spaces will be protected and enhanced to serve expanding populations including two new strategic parks at Ashford and the promotion of sporting and recreational hubs in accessible locations; the retention of flood storage areas; reinforcement of wildlife corridors and an improved cycle network to foster healthier lifestyles for residents and workers.*

*A positive approach to adapting to and mitigating against the effects of climate change will be secured by promoting sustainable transport, sustainable energy technologies, and encouraging sustainable building design; avoiding development in areas at greatest risk of flooding; protecting and enhancing green networks; carefully considering the location, layouts and design of new housing; promoting sustainable drainage and challenging water efficiency standards.*

The Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with this vision where it applies to the Plan area.

Policy SP1 comprises a number of Strategic Objectives to deliver the 'Vision'. They form the basis of the Local Plan's policy framework, as well as providing the core principles that planning applications are expected to adhere to:

- a) To focus development at accessible and sustainable locations which utilise existing infrastructure, facilities and services wherever possible and makes best use of suitable brownfield opportunities;*
- b) To conserve and enhance the Borough's natural environment including designated and undesignated landscapes and biodiversity and promote a connected green infrastructure network that plays a role in managing flood risk, delivers net gains in biodiversity and improves access to nature;*

- c) *To conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and the relationship between them and their settings in a way that promotes distinctive places, proportionate to their significance. Place-based heritage will be a key principle underpinning design and spatial form of development;*
- d) *To create the highest quality design which is sustainable, accessible, safe and promotes a positive sense of place through the design of the built form, the relationship of buildings with each other and the spaces around them, and which responds to the prevailing character of the area;*
- e) *To ensure development is supported by the necessary social, community, physical and e-technology infrastructure, facilities and services with any necessary improvements brought forward in a co-ordinated and timely manner;*
- f) *To promote access to a wide choice of easy to use forms of sustainable transport modes including bus, train, cycling and walking to encourage as much non-car based travel as possible and to promote healthier lifestyles;*
- g) *To provide a mix of housing types and sizes to meet the changing housing needs of the Borough's population including affordable homes, self- build and custom build properties, specialist housing for older and disabled people, accommodation to meet the needs of the Traveller community, spacious, quality family housing and for newly forming and downsizing households;*
- h) *To provide a range of employment opportunities to respond to the needs of business, support the growing population and attract inward investment; and*
- i) *To ensure new development is resilient to, and mitigates against the effects of climate change by reducing vulnerability to flooding, promoting development that minimises natural resource and energy use, reduces pollution and incorporates sustainable construction practices, including water efficiency measures.*

The Neighbourhood Plan objectives are consistent with these objectives where they apply to the Plan area with particular reference to heritage, design, landscape, a mix of housing types and sizes, local employment opportunities, community facilities and necessary infrastructure.

The Local Plan contains no housing or economic development allocations within Rolvenden Parish, delegating non-strategic allocations to the Neighbourhood Plan:

*Where Neighbourhood Plan Areas had been established early on in the preparation of this Local Plan, proposals to allocate sites within these areas fall to the neighbourhood plan, where they are non-strategic in nature. Rolvenden Parish Council is committed to allocating land for 24 dwellings in its emerging NP...These figures are therefore included within the Housing Trajectory.*

Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for approximately 24 dwellings.

In order to provide some additional clarity to the neighbourhood plan making process, the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan policies have been assessed for their general conformity with the Local Plan policies which have been identified by Ashford Borough Council as strategic policies.

The following detailed development management Local Plan Policies have not been repeated in the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Policy HOU8 - Residential Extensions
- Policy HOU9 - Standalone Annexes
- Policy HOU10 - Development of residential gardens
- Policy HOU11 - Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Policy HOU12 - Residential space standards (internal)
- Policy HOU14 - Accessibility standards

Policy HOU15 - Private external open space  
 Policy HOU16 - Traveller Accommodation  
 Policy HOU17 - Safeguarding existing Traveller sites  
 Policy EMP1 – New employment uses  
 Policy EMP6 - Promotion of Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)  
 Policy TRA3 (a) - Parking Standards for Residential Development  
 Policy TRA3 (b) - Parking Standards for Non Residential Development  
 Policy TRA4 - Promoting the local bus network  
 Policy TRA5 - Planning for Pedestrians  
 Policy TRA6 - Provision for Cycling  
 Policy TRA8 - Travel Plans, Assessments and Statements  
 Policy TRA9 - Planning for HGV movement  
 Policy ENV1 – Biodiversity  
 Policy ENV4 – Light Pollution and Promoting Dark Skies  
 Policy ENV6 – Flood Risk  
 Policy ENV7 – Water Efficiency  
 Policy ENV8 - Water Quality, Supply and Treatment  
 Policy ENV9 - Sustainable Drainage  
 Policy ENV10 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy  
 Policy ENV11 - Sustainable Design and Construction - Non-residential  
 Policy ENV12 - Air Quality  
 Policy ENV15 – Archaeology  
 Policy COM4 - Cemetery Provision  
 Policy IMP2 – Flexibility, Viability and Deferred Contributions

<b>Ashford Local Plan 2030</b>	<b>Policy Content</b>	<b>Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan Policies which are in general conformity with policy</b>
Policy SP6 - Promoting High Quality Design	<p>Development proposals must be of high quality design and demonstrate a careful consideration of and a positive response to each of the following design criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Character, distinctiveness and sense of place</li> <li>b) Ease of movement</li> <li>c) Legibility</li> <li>d) Mixed use and diversity</li> <li>e) Public safety and crime</li> <li>f) Quality of public spaces and their future management</li> <li>g) Flexibility and liveability</li> <li>h) Richness in detail</li> <li>i) Efficient use of natural resources</li> </ul> <p>Development proposals should show how they have responded positively to the design policy and guidance, including national and local design guidance, relevant Neighbourhood Plans, Village Design Statements and site specific development briefs.</p> <p>Developers are strongly encouraged to participate in the Council's 'Quality Monitoring Initiative' which works to make sure that the approach agreed to design quality when planning permission is given is delivered on</p>	<p>Policy RNP1 states new development in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan will be permitted where it 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. Appendix 1 contains a Character Area Assessment which identifies the key characteristics of each distinctive character area.</p>

	site.	
Policy HOU1 – Affordable Housing	<p>The Council will require the provision of affordable housing on all schemes promoting 10 dwellings or more (and on sites of 0.5 hectares or more), with provision being not less than the area specific requirements set out in the following table. All proposals are expected to meet their full affordable housing provision on-site.</p> <p><u>Rest of Borough (applies to Rolvenden)</u> Affordable/Social Rented Requirements (% of total dwellings) 10%</p> <p>Affordable Home Ownership Products (% of total dwellings) 30% (including a minimum of 20% shared ownership)</p> <p>Total 40%</p>	<p>Based on evidence from the Rolvenden Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015 and the Council Waiting List, there is a local need for affordable housing. This strategic policy is important to the delivery of additional affordable housing in the Parish and is cross referenced in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
Policy HOU2 - Local needs / subsidised specialist housing	<p>Planning permission will be granted for proposals for local needs / subsidised specialist housing within or adjoining rural settlements identified under policy HOU3a as 'exceptions' to policies restraining housing development provided that all the following criteria are met</p> <p>a) the local need or requirement for specialist housing is clearly evidenced,</p> <p>b) the development is well designed, would not result in a significant adverse impact on the character of the area or the surrounding landscape and is appropriate to the scale and character of the village,</p> <p>c) there would be no significant impact on the amenities of any neighbouring residential occupiers.</p> <p>It is expected that all local needs/ specialist housing schemes will be delivered without the need for any cross market subsidy. Where this is not the case a proposal will need to be supported by robust and transparent viability evidence that will be independently verified by the Council. Should a viability case be proven, the Council will accept an enabling amount of starter homes and /or custom build/ self-build plots as a means of providing the necessary subsidy to allow the identified need to be delivered, providing the proposal remains in accordance with criteria b) – d) above.</p> <p>Proposals which promote general market housing as a means of enabling the identified need element of a scheme will not normally be supported unless it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding planning benefit from its delivery and that there is no other cross subsidy solution.</p>	<p>Based on evidence from the Rolvenden Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015 and the Council Waiting List, there is a local need for affordable housing. At Rolvenden, land is currently retained by a social housing provider in a location outside the village confines. This strategic policy is important to the delivery of additional affordable housing in the Parish and is cross referenced in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

<p>Policy HOU3a - Residential windfall development within settlements</p>	<p>Residential development and infilling of a scale that can be satisfactorily integrated into the existing settlement will be acceptable within the built-up confines of the following settlements:  ... Rolvenden, Rolvenden Layne...  Providing that the following requirements are met:  a) It is of a layout, design and appearance that is appropriate to and is compatible with the character and density of the surrounding area;  b) It would not create a significant adverse impact on the amenity of existing residents;  c) It would not result in significant harm to or the loss of, public or private land that contribute positively to the local character of the area (including residential gardens);  d) It would not result in significant harm to the landscape, heritage assets or biodiversity interests;  e) It is able to be safely accessed from the local road network and the traffic generated can be accommodated on the local and wider road network;  f) It does not need substantial infrastructure or other facilities to support it, or otherwise proposes measures to improve or upgrade such infrastructure;  g) It is capable of having safe lighting and pedestrian access provided without a significant impact on neighbours or on the integrity of the street scene; and,  h) It would not displace an active use such as an employment, leisure or community facility, unless meeting the requirements of other policies in this Plan.  Where a proposal is located within, or in the setting of an AONB, it will also need to demonstrate that it is justifiable within the context of their national level of protection and conserves and enhances their natural beauty.</p>	<p>Policy RNP6 permits small scale residential development such as infilling; redevelopment, conversion or extension within the defined built-up confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne providing it would not result in the loss of defined village facilities including village shop, public house, business site, Local Green Space, recreation and leisure open space or community building. Policy RNP1 safeguards design quality in relation to the context of the site.</p>
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<p>Policy HOU5 - Residential windfall development in the countryside</p>	<p>Proposals for residential development adjoining or close to the existing built up confines of the following settlements will be acceptable...Rolvenden</p> <p>Providing that each of the following criteria is met:</p> <p>a) the scale of development proposed is proportionate to the size of the settlement and the level, type and quality of day to day service provision currently available in the nearest settlement, and commensurate with the ability of those services to absorb the level of development in combination with any planned allocations in this Local Plan and committed development, in liaison with service providers;</p> <p>b) the site is within easy walking distance of basic day to day services in the nearest settlement, and/or has access to sustainable methods of transport to access a range of services;</p> <p>c) the development is able to be safely accessed from the local road network and the traffic generated can be accommodated on the local and wider road network without adversely affecting the character of the surrounding area;</p> <p>d) the development is located where it is possible to maximise the use of public transport, cycling and walking to access services;</p> <p>e) conserve and enhance the natural environment and preserve or enhance any heritage assets in the locality;</p> <p>f) the development (and any associated infrastructure) is of a high quality design and meets the following requirements:-</p> <p>i) it sits sympathetically within the wider landscape,</p> <p>ii) it preserves or enhances the setting of the nearest settlement,</p> <p>iii) it includes an appropriately sized and designed landscape buffer to the open countryside,</p> <p>iv) it is consistent with local character and built form, including scale, bulk and the materials used,</p> <p>v) it does not adversely impact on the neighbouring uses or a good standard of amenity for nearby residents,</p> <p>vi) it would conserve biodiversity interests on the site and / or adjoining area and not adversely affect the integrity of international and national protected sites in line with Policy ENV1.</p> <p>Residential development elsewhere in the countryside will only be permitted if the proposal is for at least one of the following:-</p> <p>a) Accommodation to cater for an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in</p>	<p>In considering development on the periphery of Rolvenden the Neighbourhood Plan has set detailed boundaries and defined policy terminology in a local context. The village is surrounded by countryside which is designated as part of the High Weald AONB where the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty. The final part of Policy HOU5 recognises that where a proposal is located within the AONB, it will also need to demonstrate that it is justifiable within the context of the national level of protection and conserves and enhances their natural beauty. 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. Policy HOU5 e) requires development to preserve or enhance any heritage assets in the locality and Policy ENV14 also requires development within Conservation Areas to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting. 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 and,</p>
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	<p>the countryside;</p> <p>b) Development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;</p> <p>c) The re-use of redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting;</p> <p>d) A dwelling that is of exceptional quality or innovative design* which should be truly outstanding and innovative, reflect the highest standards of architecture, significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area;</p> <p>e) A replacement dwelling, in line with policy HOU7 of this Local Plan;</p> <p>Where a proposal is located within or in the setting of an AONB, it will also need to demonstrate that it is justifiable within the context of their national level of protection and conserves and enhances their natural beauty.</p>	<p>given the environmental constraints, any development should be limited in scale.</p> <p>In accordance with the NPPF and Policies HOU5 and ENV14, Policy RNP3 gives great weight to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and conserving the character of the designated Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne Conservation Areas. This allows the effective operation of Policy HOU2 - Local needs / subsidised specialist housing at a site currently retained by a social housing provider in a location outside the village confines.</p>
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<p>Policy HOU18 - Providing a range and mix of dwelling types and sizes</p>	<p>Development proposals of 10 or more dwellings will be required to deliver a range and mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet local needs. The specific range and mix of dwellings to be provided should be informed by proportionate evidence that is robust, up to date and provides an assessment of need. Development proposals for standalone older persons housing are exempt from this requirement and will be supported in principle where the need has been identified by extensive and robust evidence, and where they can be located in a suitable and sustainable way.</p>	<p>Based on evidence from the Rolvenden Local Housing Needs Survey, 2015 and the Council Waiting List, Policy RNP8 states that proposals for 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings will be encouraged on minor residential development or infill sites within the villages of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and that proposals for residential development on Housing Site Allocations identified in Policy RNP7 will be permitted if they incorporate a majority of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings.</p>
<p>Policy EMP2 - Loss or redevelopment of Employment Sites and Premises</p>	<p>Within Tenterden and villages: Proposals for the loss or redevelopment of existing employment sites or premises within the confines of Tenterden or the villages listed in policy HOU3a, or adjoining/close to a settlement listed in policy HOU5 will not be permitted, unless one of the following criteria apply; a) The site is no longer appropriate for the continuation of the previous or any other employment use in terms of its serious impact on the neighbouring occupiers or environment; b) the premises are replaced with the same-sized or larger sites or premises within or adjoining the same rural settlement, or at the nearest rural service centre, or, c) It has been shown that the unit has remained unlet or for sale for a substantial period for all appropriate types of B class employment uses or other suitable employment generating uses, despite genuine and sustained attempts to let or sell it on reasonable terms,</p>	<p>Policy RNP10 – Retention, intensification and regeneration of existing business sites identifies one site within Rolvenden built-up confines to 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.</p> <p>It identifies 7 other sites within the Parish which should similarly be retained.</p> <p>The policy also states that 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</p>
<p>Policy EMP10 - Local and Village Centres</p>	<p>In local centres and villages, planning permission will be granted for additional shopping and service provision, where proposals are of a scale appropriate to the particular centre. Proposals that result in the loss of shops and</p>	<p>Policy RNP9 seeks to prevent the loss of existing village shops (Use Class A1) and allows extensions to existing shops and the change of use of premises to a shop within</p>

	<p>services will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:</p> <p>a) there is alternative provision for a similar use within reasonable walking distance; or,</p> <p>b) the unit is no longer viable for that purpose, or an alternative local service, and that it has remained vacant for a substantial period of time, despite genuine and sustained attempts to let it on reasonable terms.</p>	<p>Rolvenden High Street and Regent Street, Rolvenden.</p> <p>Within Rolvenden it is the range of shop units which serve the day to day needs of the local community and attract 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. In some cases the shops occupy listed buildings and more generally contribute significantly to the character of the Conservation Areas. For these reasons, demonstration that there is alternative provision for a similar retail use within reasonable walking distance is not sufficient to allow a change of use in the case of Rolvenden.</p>
Policy EMP11 - Tourism	The Council will support the retention of existing tourism facilities and encourage sustainable growth of tourism through the provision of a wide variety of new facilities in appropriate locations across the borough...	Policy RNP11 allows the conversion of rural buildings to tourist accommodation or a tourist attraction provided certain criteria are met.
Policy TRA7 - The Road Network and Development	..In rural areas, proposals which would generate levels and types of traffic movements, including heavy goods vehicle traffic, beyond that which the rural roads could reasonably accommodate in terms of capacity and road safety will not be permitted.	Policy RNP3 seeks to permit development outside the defined confines of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne only where it would protect and, where possible, enhance rural lanes which have an historic, landscape or nature conservation importance.
Policy ENV3a - Landscape Character and Design	<p>All proposals for development in the borough shall demonstrate particular regard to the following landscape characteristics, proportionately, according to the landscape significance of the site:</p> <p>a) Landform, topography and natural patterns of drainage;</p> <p>b) The pattern and composition of trees and woodlands;</p> <p>c) The type and composition of wildlife habitats;</p> <p>d) The pattern and composition of field boundaries;</p> <p>e) The pattern and distribution of settlements, roads and footpaths;</p> <p>f) The presence and pattern of historic landscape features;</p>	Policy RNP3 seeks to 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; the landscape setting of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne including the designated Conservation Areas; maintain the defined distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within,

	<p>g) The setting, scale, layout, design and detailing of vernacular buildings and other traditional man made features;</p> <p>h) Any relevant guidance given in the Landscape Character SPD;</p> <p>i) Existing features that are important to and contribute to the definition of the local landscape character shall be retained and incorporated into the proposed development;</p> <p>j) Any non-designated, locally-identified, significant landscape features justified in a Parish Plan or equivalent document.</p>	<p>and adjacent to, the built up area and protect and, where possible, enhance ancient woodland and rural lanes which have an historic, landscape or nature conservation importance of which there is an abundance within the Plan area.</p>
<p>ENV3b – Landscape Character and Design in the AONBs</p>	<p>The Council shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs and High Weald AONBs. Major development proposals within the AONBs will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it is demonstrated they are in the public interest. All proposals within or affecting the setting of AONBs will also only be permitted under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The location, form, scale, materials and design would conserve and where appropriate enhance or restore the character of the landscape.</li> <li>• The development would enhance the special qualities, distinctive character and tranquillity of the AONB.</li> <li>• The development has regard to the relevant AONB management plan and any associated guidance.</li> <li>• The development demonstrates particular regard to those characteristics outlined in Policy ENV3a, proportionate to the high landscape significance of the AONB.</li> </ul>	<p>Policy RNP3 seeks to 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; the landscape setting of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne including the designated Conservation Areas; maintain the defined distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built up area and protect and, where possible, enhance ancient woodland and rural lanes which have an historic, landscape or nature conservation importance of which there is an abundance within the Plan area. Policy RNP1 safeguards design quality.</p>
<p>Policy ENV13 - Conservation and Enhancement of Heritage Assets</p>	<p>Proposals which preserve or enhance the heritage assets of the Borough, sustaining and enhancing their significance and the contribution they make to local character and distinctiveness, will be supported. Proposals that make sensitive use of heritage assets through regeneration, particularly where these bring redundant or under-used buildings and areas into appropriate and viable use consistent with their conservation, will be encouraged.</p> <p>Development will not be permitted where it will cause loss or substantial harm to the significance of heritage assets or their settings unless it can be demonstrated that substantial public benefits will be delivered that outweigh the harm or loss. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan includes two designated Conservation Areas within the Plan area. Policy RNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation seeks new development which is designed to a high quality and 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:</p> <p>i. height, form, layout, orientation, materials, fenestration and boundary treatment;</p>

	<p>asset, or where a non-designated heritage asset is likely to be impacted, harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the optimum viable use of the heritage asset.</p> <p>All applications with potential to affect a heritage asset or its setting should be supported by a description of the asset's historic, architectural or archaeological significance with an appropriate level of detail relating to the asset and the likely impact of the proposals on its significance.</p>	<p>ii the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape); Development should also protect and enhance heritage assets and their setting (including Buildings of Note as set out in Appendix 1) and, where appropriate, contribute to enhancement measures as set out in Appendix 1.</p>
<p>Policy ENV14 - Conservation Areas</p>	<p>Development or redevelopment within Conservation Areas will be permitted provided such proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting.</p> <p>Proposals should fulfil each of the following:</p> <p>a) the scale and detailed design of all new development and alterations should respect the historical and architectural character, proportion and massing, including roofscapes, of the area, the relationship between buildings, the spaces between them and with their setting;</p> <p>b) the materials proposed should be appropriate to the locality and complement those of the existing buildings;</p> <p>c) buildings and streets of townscape character, trees, open spaces, walls, fences or any other features should be retained where they contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area;</p> <p>d) the development should not generate levels of traffic, parking or other environmental problems which would result in substantial harm to the character, appearance or significance of the area; and</p> <p>e) the use should be appropriate to and compatible with the character, appearance and historic function of the area.</p> <p>f) the development would not prejudice important views into or out of the conservation area.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan includes two designated Conservation Areas within the Plan area. Policy RNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation seeks new development which is designed to a high quality and 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:</p> <p>i. height, form, layout, orientation, materials, fenestration and boundary treatment;</p> <p>ii the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape); Development should also protect and enhance heritage assets and their setting (including Buildings of Note as set out in Appendix 1) and, where appropriate, contribute to enhancement measures as set out in Appendix 1.</p> <p>Policy RNP3 seeks to maintain defined views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built up area,</p>
<p>Policy COM1 - Meeting the Community's Needs</p>	<p>Infrastructure and facilities required to meet the needs generated by new development, including sports, arts, community (including youth) and voluntary sector space, education and health provision, open space and play areas shall be provided as the community is established.</p> <p>Infrastructure or facilities designed to meet localised needs should normally be provided on-site. Other needs will be delivered in liaison</p>	<p>Policy RNP17 states that any development permitted will be expected to ensure provision of the necessary social, infrastructure needed to support the proposed development, including Multi-Sports Community Owned Pavilion through developer contributions, in a timely</p>

	<p>with the relevant stakeholders and service providers to ensure that the provision is supplied in a way that meets their requirements and supports sustainability. Provision shall be secured through S106 and/or CIL as set out in policies IMP1 and IMP2, and have regard to any relevant supplementary planning documents.</p> <p>If a site comes forward as two or more separate schemes, of which one or more falls below any appropriate threshold, the Council will seek an appropriate level of contribution on each part to match in total the provision that would have been required on the site as a whole.</p> <p>In the Borough as a whole, the loss of existing community infrastructure will be resisted unless sufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that they are no longer required or are obsolete and that suitable replacement provision is being provided or is located nearby.</p>	<p>manner subject to an appropriate assessment of viability.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan identifies locally important community buildings and Policy RNP13 resists their loss unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or that suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.</p>
<p>Policy COM2 - Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces</p>	<p>...In the rural area, provision should normally be delivered in a way that helps maintain, enhance and potentially expand existing facilities at the settlement where the development is proposed, or at the nearest settlement that has existing similar facilities. Unless otherwise stated in site-specific policies, on-site provision shall normally be limited to informal/natural green space, and space or facilities which have been identified to meet a local need generated by the development itself. This provision shall be phased in a way that supports the local community as it grows.</p> <p>Exceptions to the approach outlined above could be justified, should the following circumstances arise in that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) there is suitable public open/ green space provision nearby and this provision can be accessed by green routes,</li> <li>b) there is a suitable sports facility nearby which has the capacity to be used by the public at key times and this access can be secured over the long term at determination of the application,</li> <li>c) delivering such facilities would render a scheme unviable,</li> <li>d) not delivering the required provision is supported by the Council or in agreement with, where relevant, the Parish Council.</li> </ol> <p>Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not redeveloped or used for other purposes, unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the provision is surplus to requirements, or</li> <li>- Any loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality</li> </ul>	<p>Policy RNP12 defines and seeks to retain recreation and leisure open space. There is no over provision of such open space in the Parish and development of open space may only exceptionally be allowed where replacement provision is made of at least equivalent value to the local community in terms of quantity, quality and location.</p>

	<p>in a suitable location,</p> <p>- The development is for an alternative sport and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.</p>	
Policy COM3 - Allotments	<p>The provision of new allotments will be supported provided they follow the design principles established within the Public Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD. Proposals for the redevelopment of existing allotment land will only be permitted where the allotment site is significantly under-used and suitable alternative provision for allotment holders is available nearby, where the site is not needed to rectify any local shortages in informal open space, and where the proposed development would not lead to the loss of an important undeveloped area which plays a significant role in the character of the local environment.</p>	<p>Policy RNP12 defines and seeks to retain recreation and leisure open space. There is no over provision of such open space in the Parish and development of open space may only exceptionally be allowed where replacement provision is made of at least equivalent value to the local community in terms of quantity, quality and location.</p>
Policy IMP1 - Infrastructure Provision	<p>The Council will continue to work with relevant service providers to identify and deliver the infrastructure that is needed to support the development set out in this Plan. Developments shall make provision to meet the additional requirements for infrastructure arising from the development where it is justified to do so in line with the NPPF and CIL regulations</p> <p>The infrastructure should be provided at a time that is required to support the needs generated by the development. Provision should be made either by delivery of the infrastructure or by financial contributions towards the cost of the delivery. This shall normally be secured through Section 106 Agreements, Section 278 agreements and / or Community Infrastructure Levy contributions. The Council will take a flexible approach where it is justified to do so for reasons of development viability.</p>	<p>Policy RNP17 states that 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. Specific infrastructure improvements are identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• Multi-Sports Community Owned Pavilion</li> <li>• Extension to the Village Hall Car Park</li> <li>• Conservation Area environmental enhancement measures within the High Street and Regent Street Character Areas.</li> </ul>

## **7. EU OBLIGATIONS**

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Reports prepared by Ashford Borough Council, November 2017, concludes, following consultation with the three statutory consultees - Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England - that the Regulation 15 Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to result in any significant environmental effects and that an SEA is not required. The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report concluded that the Regulation 15 Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan proposals will not adversely affect the integrity of the internationally designated sites, alone or in combination with other projects and plans and that a full HRA of the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan is not required.

The Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be compatible with EU obligations.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are considered to be met by the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan complies with Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

## Area Designation Decision Letter



## PUBLIC NOTICE

### DESIGNATION OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA, ROLVENDEN

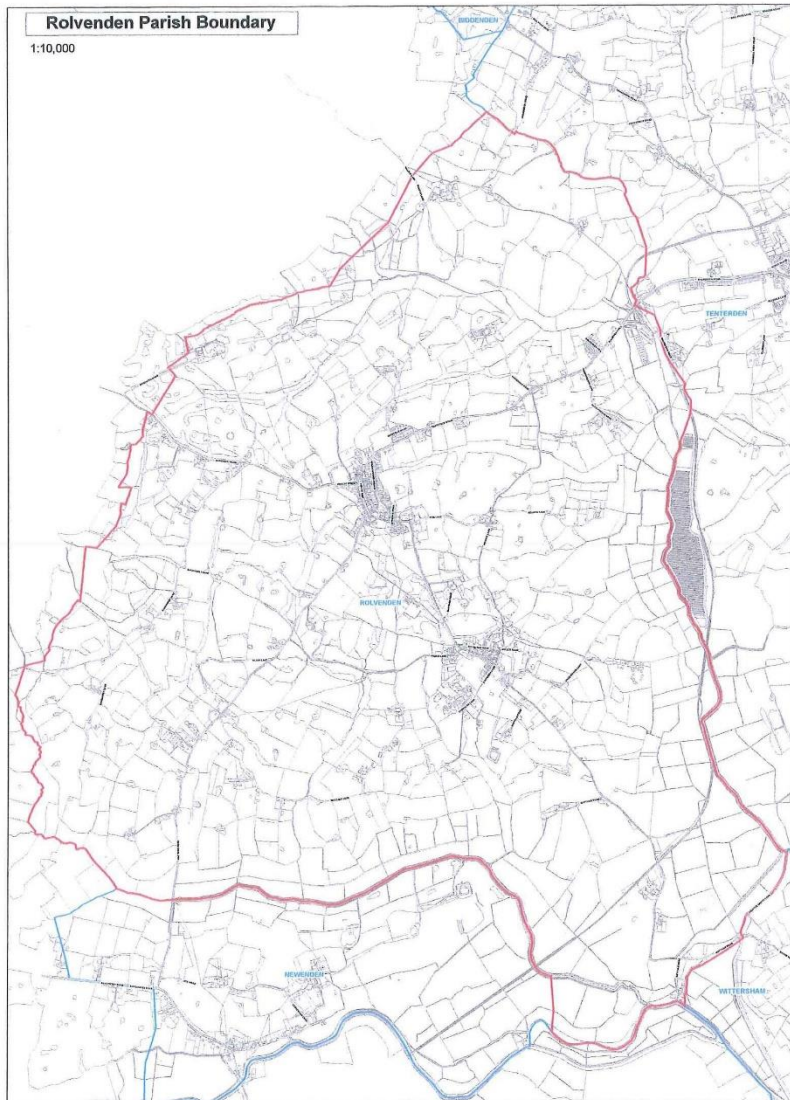
Ashford Borough Council has designated under section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the following neighbourhood area:-

Neighbourhood Area Name: **Rolvenden Parish**

Name of body who applied for the designation: **Rolvenden Parish Council**

The neighbourhood area is identified on the map below





This Basic Conditions Statement has been prepared on behalf of Rolvenden Parish Council  
by

**Tony Fullwood  
Associates**  
Chartered Town Planners

