

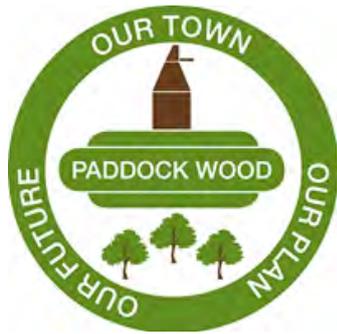
Paddock Wood

Neighbourhood Plan 2022 - 2038

REGULATION 14

CONSULTATION VERSION

January 2022



Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan

2022 – 2038

Regulation 14 Consultation Version
January 2022

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FOREWORD

Dear Residents

This Plan has been produced by the Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Paddock Wood Town Council.

The Localism Act 2011 provided us with the opportunity to help shape our own future rather than all decisions being made by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Paddock Wood Town Council (PWTC) applied to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area covering the whole of Paddock Wood. This was approved in February 2014 and was the first step towards preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Paddock Wood. At the start of 2015 a steering group, consisting of a mixture of residents and Town Councillors, initially under the chairmanship of Town Councillor Sarah Hamilton, was established to oversee the process and preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Professional consultants, Feria Urbanism, were employed by PWTC to guide the process.

A number of community engagement events for residents were held and working groups formed to develop policies for the key areas that had been identified. Younger members of the community including scouts and guides, the Primary School and the Secondary School were also involved in the consultation events together with the sports clubs and major organisations in the town. In July 2016 a draft interim report was presented by the Neighbourhood Plan's consultants to an audience of over 200 residents at the Primary School. Throughout 2017 draft policies were developed and by January 2018 the consultants had completed the production of the second draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. Over the next few months following helpful advice from TWBC some aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan were redrafted.

By the middle of 2018 it was becoming apparent that the Neighbourhood Plan was going to be affected significantly by the new TWBC draft local plan which proposed 4000 new homes around Paddock Wood. The Steering Group kept up to date with all the proposals for Paddock Wood but made the decision not to go out for further consultation until the draft local plan had been launched. This eventually happened in the summer of 2019.

In October 2019 the Steering Group decided it was time to proceed with the Neighbourhood Plan. Unfortunately, further delays due to the COVID 19 lockdown resulted but finally in June 2020 on the recommendation of the Steering Group, Paddock Wood Town Council employed a new consultant, Troy Planning and Design to take the Neighbourhood Plan through to completion.

An information leaflet on the draft Neighbourhood Plan vision and areas of focus for the plan, along with a questionnaire, was circulated to all residents of Paddock Wood during November and December 2020. At the time we were in the middle of the COVID 19 pandemic but despite this an above expected response was received from residents. The results of this questionnaire, which was analysed by our consultants, confirmed that the focus areas identified for the Neighbourhood Plan were well supported and appropriate, addressing many of the concerns held by the public of Paddock Wood. The survey responses ratified the focus of the Plan and provided a strong foundation for ongoing work. A range of additional issues was brought up by residents but many of these ideas were already included within the draft Plan previously prepared and have been strengthened as work on updating the Plan has taken place. The vision was also updated and amended to give greater emphasis to climate change matters.

Much time and effort has been devoted to the production of our Plan and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed, especially given the difficulties encountered with the intervention of the COVID 19 pandemic. Thank you to all those residents who contributed in so many ways; by completing questionnaires, attending community events and contributing to the work of the four key working groups. My thanks also go to all the members of the Steering Group, past and present, our original consultants

Feria Urbanism, Alison Eardley, AECOM and our current consultants Troy Planning and Design. Thanks also must be given to Paddock Wood Town and Borough Councillors, the Town Council Office staff as well as our contacts at TWBC who have all worked hard over the past few years to finally bring this project to fruition.

A full copy of the Neighbourhood Plan and other supporting documents including a timeline of all the consultations undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group can be found on the Paddock Wood Town Council website. This plan is fully compliant with national standards, has appropriate regard to national planning policy and conforms with the strategic plans of TWBC. In addition to its value as a statutory document used in planning decision making, the Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan will also help PWTC decide priorities for the parish and give guidance when making decisions on behalf of the Parish.

I hope you will be able to take the time to read this plan carefully and give it your support, which is based on the views of the Community. Paddock Wood faces a challenging time over the next few years and we need to fight in as many ways possible to preserve its character. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot prevent houses being built here but we can influence the design, quality and housing type, in managing development generally, and in bringing forward other proposed infrastructure improvements.

Finally, I would emphasise that this is **your** Plan and sets out **your** desires and ideas for the future of the Parish which is in the interest of every one of us.

Meryl Flashman

Chairman of Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This pre-submission consultation plan has been prepared by a Steering Group established by Paddock Wood Town Council on behalf of those who live and work within Paddock Wood. The Plan covers the entirety of Paddock Wood, as illustrated in Figure 1. The Plan covers the period 2020-2038, in line with the emerging Tunbridge Wells Local Plan, setting out a vision for the area through to 2038 supported by a set of planning policies and a series of specific projects. In accordance with the neighbourhood planning regulations, this plan has been prepared through extensive community consultation, with the Steering Group including representatives of the Town Council as well as local residents.

About Neighbourhood Planning

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area”

para. 29 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2021

- 1.2 The Government introduced the opportunity for local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Localism Act 2011, and through the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, which set out the requirements for neighbourhood plans.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood Plans are policy-based land use plans that need to be in general conformity with the Local Plan. In this case, the Local Plan is prepared by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Neighbourhood Plans are produced by community forum groups or parish or town councils.
- 1.4 Neighbourhood Plans can influence or allocate new housing; produce design policies for allocated sites or for general design policies; protect or identify new community facilities; and identify green spaces to be protected from any future development proposals and more.
- 1.5 Paddock Wood was formally designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in February 2014. The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan is being led by the Town Council, who set up a Steering Group of Councillors, residents and other community representatives to develop the Plan. There has also an ongoing dialogue between Paddock Wood Town Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to ensure the policies conform with national and local policy, as required by the Neighbourhood Plan regulations.

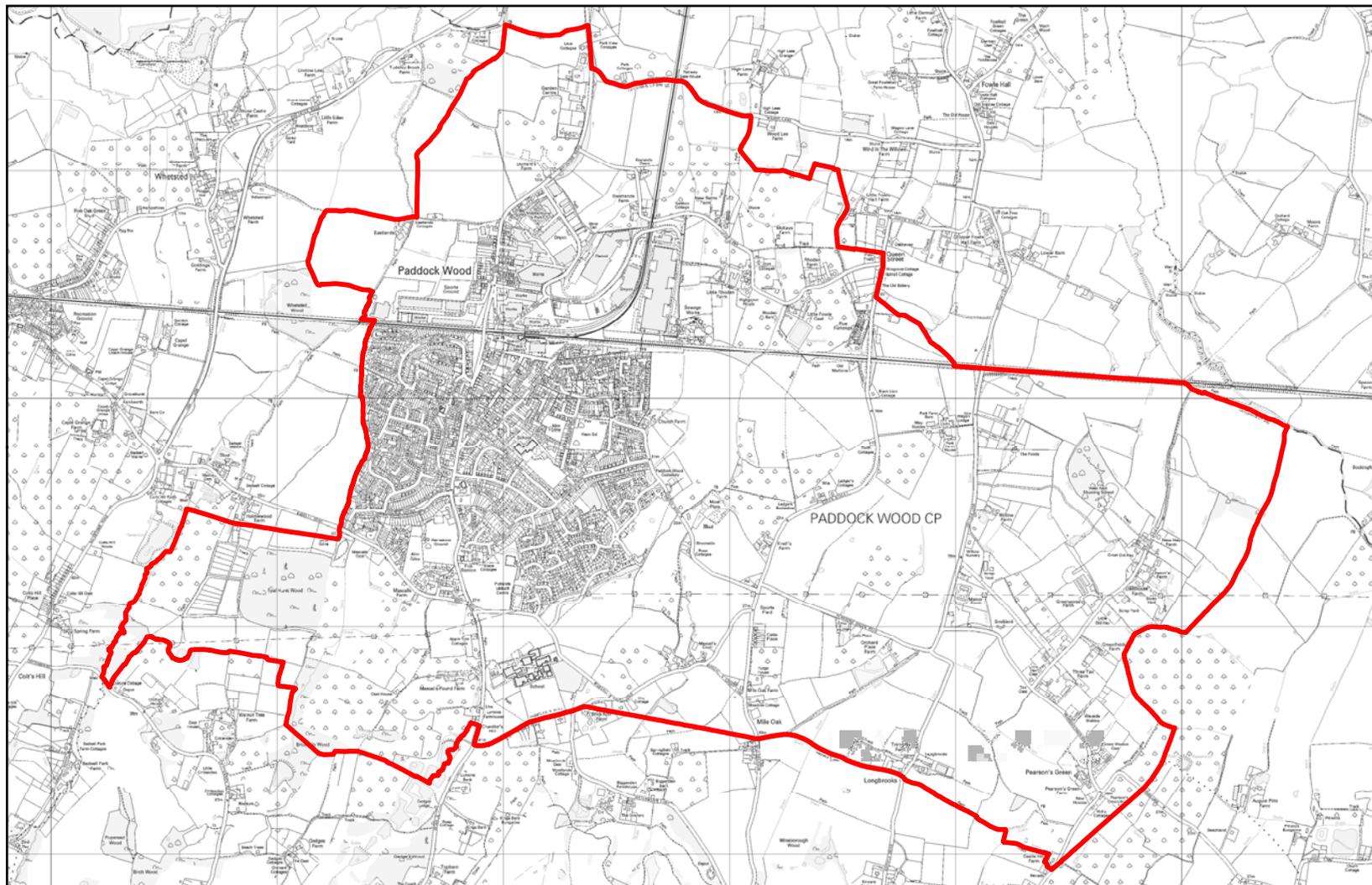


Figure 1: The designated Neighbourhood Plan Area

The process to date

- 1.6 Work on the Neighbourhood Plan originally commenced in 2015 following legislation introduced through the Localism Act of 2011, allowing communities to come together and have a greater say in how their areas might change over time. Extensive consultation was undertaken on the Neighbourhood Plan between 2015 and 2018, resulting in production of a draft document that was ready for formal consultation. However, as work on the Neighbourhood Plan was progressing, so, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council began preparing a new Local Plan. The scale of future growth in the Local Plan and its implications for the Neighbourhood Plan needed considering so progress on the Neighbourhood Plan was paused to allow for this. Work on the Neighbourhood Plan recommenced in 2020 with a consultation event seeking to 're-launch' the Plan and asking whether, in light of the scale of growth proposed in the Local Plan, the earlier vision, objectives and topics of focus for the Neighbourhood Plan remained relevant. The outcomes of that have helped inform this revised version of the Neighbourhood Plan that is now being consulted upon.
- 1.7 The Steering Group has taken the view that the Neighbourhood Plan represents an excellent opportunity for the Paddock Wood community to influence and shape future growth coming forward as part of the new Local Plan and help direct investment in new infrastructure and other town-wide projects of importance to the community. Following this period of consultation all comments will be reviewed and the Neighbourhood Plan updated as appropriate before being submitted for examination.

Status of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.8 This is the draft 'Regulation 14' version of the Neighbourhood Plan, which is subject to a formal six-week period of consultation. Following this, comments received will be reviewed and the Plan updated as appropriate prior to submission to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, commencing the examination process. Following independent examination a referendum will be held, where all people of voting age residing in Paddock Wood will be able to cast a vote on whether they think the Neighbourhood Plan should be brought into force ('made'). If more than 50% of those people who turn out vote 'yes', the Neighbourhood Plan will be used to help shape planning decisions and applications in Paddock Wood.
- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Plan is an exciting opportunity for the community to come together and influence future change in Paddock Wood. More information on the Plan and the process to date can be found via the Town Council website:

<https://paddockwood-tc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

Paddock Wood Design Guidance

Alongside this Neighbourhood Plan a set of Design Guidance has been prepared. This covers the entire Plan area and includes guidance and codes that should be used to inform new development as well as wider initiatives, such as improvements to the quality of the public realm and open spaces. It is referred to throughout the Plan, in policies and support text. It is presented as a free-standing Appendix to the Plan for use by applicants and decision-makers.

Local Planning Policy Framework

- 1.10 The current adopted development plan for the borough of Tunbridge Wells consists of the saved policies of the Local Plan 2006, the Core Strategy 2010 and the Site Allocations Local Plan 2016.
- 1.11 The Core Strategy sets the strategic planning context for the borough up to 2026 and provides the spatial vision, strategic objectives, distribution of development and the delivery strategy. This includes Core Policy 11: Development in Paddock Wood, which sets out the strategic policy context for Paddock Wood over the Plan period. Specific allocations to meet the identified housing and development needs are set out within the Site Allocations Local Plan, which includes a number of sites allocated for development within the parish of Paddock Wood in line with the Core Strategy.
- 1.12 The Borough Council is currently producing a new Local Plan, covering the period to 2038. This will eventually become the new development plan for the borough and will replace the previous development plan documents as set out above. It has now been submitted for examination and is henceforth referred to through the Neighbourhood Plan as the 'submission Local Plan'. The submission Local Plan will set out policies and plans to guide future development across the borough as a whole over the Plan period and will identify the scale of development required during this period as well as the key locations to meet this need. For Paddock Wood the submission Local Plan envisages significant growth and development, including major development at the edges of town (and which straddle the boundary with Capel Parish) as well as a strategy for development in the town centre. The submission Local Plan, although not yet adopted, presents the direction of travel for development in the area and it is the strategic policies and objectives in this document that frame the Neighbourhood Plan for Paddock Wood. The Neighbourhood Plan broadly conforms with these objectives but also puts in place more locally specific policies that respond to the qualities of Paddock Wood, issues and opportunities for development in the town.
- 1.13 Further information on relevant Local Plan policies are set out in Section 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- 1.14 The consultation processes undertaken by the qualifying body have resulted in the draft set of planning policy themes, a vision statement and a set of neighbourhood plan objectives. The planning policy themes, and their policy codes, are set out here as follows:
- Town Centre (PW TC)
 - Green Infrastructure (PW GI)
 - Heritage & Design (PW HD)
 - Sports & Recreation (PW SR)
 - Access and Movement (PW AM)
 - Housing and Infrastructure (PW HI)
- 1.15 The individual policies within each theme will be applied to the future decision-making process with regard for the vision statement and the neighbourhood plan objectives. This will ensure that they are complementary and will be effective at delivering the right balance between change and preservation across Paddock Wood.

It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan is read as a whole. All policies should be viewed together in the preparation and consideration of planning applications.

- 1.16 For the avoidance of doubt, each of the topic areas covered by the Neighbourhood Plan as outlined above includes some introductory and explanatory text, followed by one or both of the following:

Policy Box

The draft Neighbourhood Plan establishes land use and development management policies for Paddock Wood. These are contained in green shaded policy boxes, like this one. They are used for proposals that require planning permission.

Project / Aspiration Box

The draft Neighbourhood Plan covers more than just traditional planning matters as it presents the community's vision for the area. Items that the community are seeking, but that cannot be delivered through planning policy, are identified and contained in blue shaded project boxes, like this one. These are included within the body of the report, rather than being presented in a separate chapter or appendix, because they relate to the objectives and form a clear and important part of the story.

Structure of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.17 Following this introduction the Neighbourhood Plan comprises nine further sections. These are:
- Section 2: 'which presents an overview of the status of the Local Plan and key policies within this of relevance to Paddock Wood and the Neighbourhood Plan..
 - Section 3: which presents the vision and objectives that give direction to and structure the neighbourhood plan.
 - Section 4: which presents Paddock Wood's response to the growth designated for the town in the submission Local Plan, detailing how it should integrate with the existing settlement and help support beneficial change across Paddock Wood as a whole.
 - Sections 5 – 11: which present the policies and associated projects for Paddock Wood. These are grouped around and in response to the objectives outlined in Section 3.
 - Section 12: which outlines the current stage in the plan making process and what the future steps in the process are.

Monitoring the Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.18 Notwithstanding the defined period of the Neighbourhood Plan to 2038, it is recognised that, with further changes to and review of the Local Plan likely, the Neighbourhood Plan will need to be reviewed periodically. This will enable the Neighbourhood Plan to remain 'current' and in conformity with the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework.

2. TUNBRIDGE WELLS LOCAL PLAN

Status & Timeline

- 2.1 Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared in line with national guidance and legislation including the Localism Act (2011), the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012)¹, the Neighbourhood Planning Act, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- 2.2 Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan². For Paddock Wood the development plan is that prepared by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, covering the whole of the borough. The current development plan comprises 'saved' policies from the Local Plan 2006, plus the Tunbridge Wells Core Strategy 2010, plus the Site Allocations Local Plan 2016.
- 2.3 The Tunbridge Wells development plan is currently being reviewed and a new Local Plan being prepared. This has been submitted for examination. This will provide the basis for determining the suitability of development proposals across the borough to 2038. The role of the submission Local Plan is to set out the vision and objectives for the borough, detailing planning policies that will shape development for each parish/settlement. It will also outline specific sites allocated to help meet the housing need across the borough. When adopted, the submission Local Plan will replace the saved policies of the 2006 Local Plan, the Core Strategy 2010 and the Site Allocations Local Plan 2016.
- 2.4 Consultation on issues and options for the submission Local Plan took place in 2017, with a draft then published for consultation in Autumn 2019. A pre-submission version was subsequently published for consultation between March and May 2021, with the Plan then being submitted for examination purposes in November 2021. The submission version of the Local Plan envisages that Hearings will take place in March / April 2022, with adoption in January 2023.
- 2.5 Work on the Neighbourhood Plan is being undertaken in parallel to the submission Local Plan and is being progressed on the basis of the direction of travel established in this. Work on the Neighbourhood Plan has thus made use of evidence supporting the submission Local Plan to help demonstrate conformity.
- 2.6 In addition to the submission Local Plan a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) will also be prepared by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, providing further guidance on how to implement the requirements of policies in the submission Local Plan. These will include further information on growth proposals around Paddock Wood, the delivery of low traffic neighbourhoods, and biodiversity net gain. It is anticipated that the Paddock Wood SPD will be consulted on in Spring 2023 for adoption in Summer 2023. SPDs in respect of low traffic neighbourhoods and biodiversity net gain have a similar timetable.

¹ Updated in 2015 and 2016

² See Para 29 / Footnote 16, MHCLG, February 2021, NPPF

Key Policies for Paddock Wood

- 2.7 The submission Local Plan identifies Paddock Wood as being a major growth point (policy STR1), with approximately 3,700 new homes planned in and around the town, mainly taking the form of urban extensions to the north, east and west of the existing urban area, with growth to the west straddling the boundary between Paddock Wood Town Council and Capel Parish Council. This scale of growth is in addition to committed development to the south and east of Paddock Wood including that at Mascalls Farm (also known as Foalhurst Green), Mascalls Court (Mascalls Grange) and Church Farm (The Burrows).
- 2.8 This is expanded upon in Policy STR/SS1 and STR/PW1 which presents the strategy for Paddock Wood and land at east Capel. The submission Local Plan has been informed by production of a 'structure plan' which establishes the broad scale and distribution of growth around Paddock Wood. In addition to the scale of new housing proposed, the requirement for supporting services and infrastructure is also established, as well as the importance of high quality, well-designed neighbourhoods, high standards of sustainability and accessibility for all. Importantly, and recognising the scale of land identified for growth, policies in the submission Local Plan require a comprehensive approach to development to be taken.
- 2.9 Alongside the growth policies a strategy for Paddock Wood town centre is also set out (Policy STR/SS2). This supports provision of new commercial and leisure activities in the centre, residential development and improved connectivity.
- 2.10 The submission Local Plan policies map, as it relates to Paddock Wood, is presented in Figure 2.
- 2.11 The submission Local Plan is supportive of the production of Neighbourhood Plans (Policy STR10) and confirms that, once 'made', will form part of the statutory development plan for the borough, against which proposals for development will be determined.

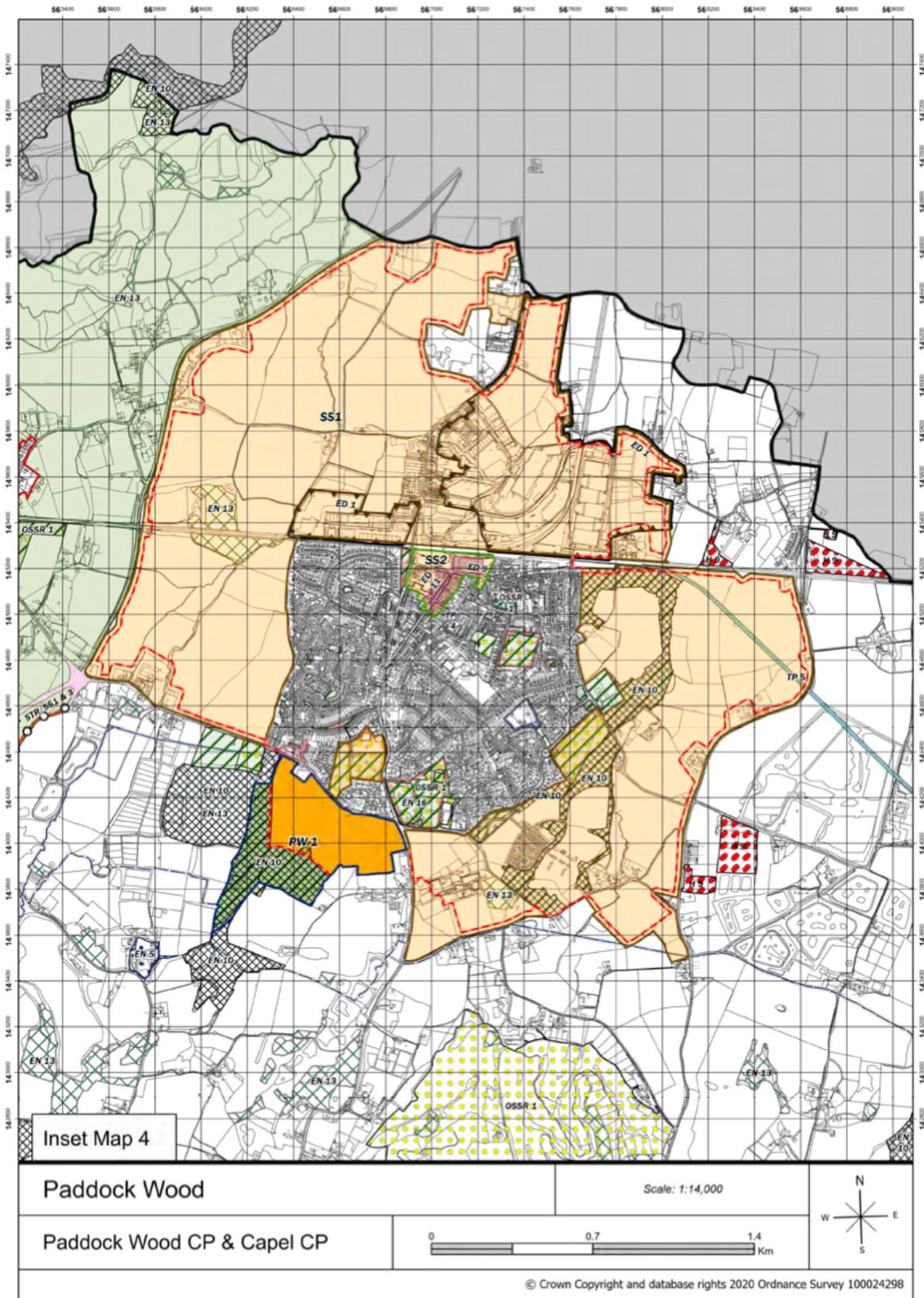


Figure 2: Submission Local Plan policies map, Paddock Wood extract, showing the extent of the major growth areas allocated around the existing built-up area (see associated key overleaf)



Figure 3: Submission Local Plan policies map key

PART I: STRATEGY

*"I am very passionate about Paddock Wood. I love the centre.
We need to retain its integrity and atmosphere"*

Consultation response

3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 This section of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out the vision and objectives for Paddock Wood. It has been informed through consultation and establishes the community's aspirations for the future of Paddock Wood.

3.2 The overwhelming view from local people is that Paddock Wood is perceived by residents as a very special place in which to live. The top four qualities that people have used to describe Paddock Wood are friendly, safe, accessible and unique. The Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan's overall vision seeks to maintain these characteristics.

3.3 Paddock Wood already has a distinctive character and identity, which is important to local people. However, this character is not the same across the town as a whole – different parts of Paddock Wood make different contributions to local character, each with their own local strengths and weaknesses. The aim should be to ensure that new development relates to the specific local character of Paddock Wood. New buildings must contribute positively to the historic diversity within the parish.

3.4 Paddock Wood must:

Continue to feel compact:

3.5 Walkability is important – at present the majority of people living in Paddock Wood are within walking distance of Commercial Road. Although the town will grow, it should remain reasonably compact. This means that new housing should be well integrated into the town. This will ensure that residents in the new homes feel integrated with the existing community.

Continue to have a close relationship with the open countryside around it:

3.6 Just as it doesn't take long to walk to the town centre, most residents live within walking distance of the surrounding open farmland. Compactness is important to a close relationship with open countryside. Foalhurst Wood is an important green area on the edge of the town.

Continue to act as a centre for the surrounding area, not just residents:

3.7 Paddock Wood needs to provide a range of different uses as well as housing i.e.: employment, shopping and community facilities including education. It is important that good car, public transport, walking and cycling access are provided so that people from the surrounding villages can get to them easily.

Continue to remain attractive to residents and visitors:

3.8 The many flat roofs of various buildings in the town are not considered attractive: pitched roofs are more sympathetic. There are some original buildings in Commercial Road with intricate brick detail and these should be retained. The lack of conformity of shop front designs is also seen as attractive. Building design must be appropriate to the historic context and new buildings should be designed to reflect the three-dimensional qualities of traditional buildings. We need a vibrant centre, to serve areas of residential development.

Paddock Wood in 2038: The vision

- 3.9 This vision statement has been prepared to describe the aspirations and requirements of the residents of Paddock Wood. To ensure all growth and development in Paddock Wood is well designed and appropriate for the community it must be supported by fully integrated infrastructure, which may involve collaboration with neighbouring parishes. Development proposals will be measured against this vision statement to inform planning decisions.

*Paddock Wood will retain its character as **a modern, 21st Century, rural market town**, preserving its built and natural heritage whilst sympathetically accommodating new growth.*

*New residential and commercial development **that embeds high environmental standards** will be delivered alongside the appropriate **infrastructure to support community life and activity for all ages**, including younger people.*

*New growth and development will integrate seamlessly with the existing settlement to create a balanced place with **a cohesive, socially inclusive community, with a thriving centre at its heart**, and accessible open spaces that support wildlife as well as people. A wide range of social, community and recreational facilities will help make Paddock Wood a better place to live, learn, work and visit for everyone, including the elderly, vulnerable and disabled.*

*Through **sustainable design and the promotion of active travel**, Paddock Wood will be future-proofed, responding proactively to the challenges posed by climate change.*

Objectives to guide the future of Paddock Wood

- 3.10 The public consultation process has identified a number of concerns from local residents and businesses. The same process also identified the features and characteristics of the area about which people are proud and wish to see protected or enhanced. These results have been used to generate the following objectives for Paddock Wood. These are the guiding principles of the Plan and are designed to strike the right balance between protection and enhancement. All objectives are of equal importance. The planning policies are written in such a way as to help the Plan meet these objectives.

Objective 01: Deliver the social and environmental infrastructure necessary to support a growing community in the 21st Century.

Objective 02: Coordinate all new development so that it contributes to the creation of a safe and sustainable community with good access to essential services for all residents.

Objective 03: Maintain and enhance the character of Paddock Wood as a rural market town, and protect and promote its culture, economy and heritage.

Objective 04: Ensure high quality new development through appropriate use of materials, details and designs that are sympathetic to the local context.

Objective 05: Ensure that future development will be designed in such a way as to improve the quality of life for all residents.

Objective 06: Create a robust and flexible network of streets, roads and spaces suitable for all modes of travel.

Objective 07: Working collaboratively with all our neighbouring parishes.

Objective 08: Maintain existing sports facilities and create additional sports and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the growing population.

Objective 09: Enhance the town's natural beauty and countryside setting by protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

Objective 10: Create a buoyant, thriving town centre, which acts as a focal point for residents and visitors alike.

4. FUTURE GROWTH STRATEGY

The 21st Century Market Town

- 4.1 The submission Local Plan proposes major growth at Paddock Wood, which will transform the town, increasing the population, the role and function of the town centre.
- 4.2 The vision is for Paddock Wood as presented in the Neighbourhood Plan is for it to be a '21st century market town'. The primary purpose of a market town is to provide goods and services to the surrounding locality. The modern market town should be a little bit of everything, offering those important everyday products and services like food and shopping, a library, a post office, medical services, opticians etc. It should have leisure and recreation facilities and entertainment such as a gym, a sports centre, an athletics track, playing fields - all of which Paddock Wood currently has. An aspiration for the future continues to be a swimming pool. And there are places in Paddock Wood where the community may meet such as coffee shops, cafes, pubs and restaurants.
- 4.3 Paddock Wood has a semi-rural feel with specialist independent shops and the Neighbourhood Plan aspires to have a central square in the town centre. The town has a self-sufficient infrastructure of a health centre, schools and transport. It is popular with young families thanks to good educational facilities as well as being convenient for Maidstone, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. However, there is an acknowledged lack of facilities for young people within the town. Despite that, it is a magnet for families looking for homes within walking distance of the town centre and the railway station, from where London can be reached in under an hour by train. There is a direct rail link to Gatwick and the Channel Tunnel is easily accessible. In addition, the town is located close to the A21 and motorways. However, as our way of working changes as a result of the Covid pandemic, so opportunities for home working, or space for people to work locally rather than commute longer distances, should be established in Paddock Wood. Growth and development in the town centre could provide scope for provision of new flexible office space. Future growth should take into consideration the quality of life, climate change and the local management of pandemics.
- 4.4 Paddock Wood is a small but growing town where many people know one another and there are whole community events such as the carnival and Light Up Paddock Wood. It has a very friendly atmosphere and is the natural centre for the area being surrounded by a cluster of "pretty" villages. It was formerly the centre for the hop industry, had its own cattle market and was/is a railway hub.
- 4.5 In the Neighbourhood Plan there are aspirations to make Paddock Wood an important hub for social interaction and plans are in hand for a community centre to be built within the town.

Spatial expression of the vision for Paddock Wood

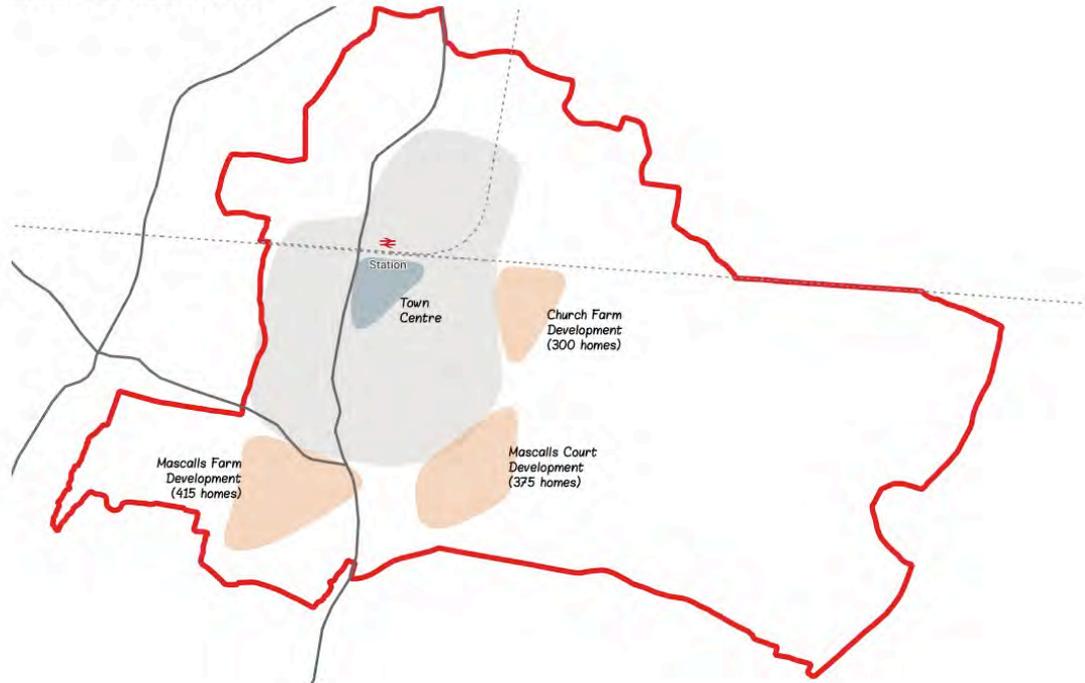
4.6 In preparing the submission Local Plan a community workshop was held by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to explore the growth of Paddock Wood. Key points raised by community representatives for consideration in the growth strategy included:

- The need for the town centre to be able to support additional growth whilst maintaining its character.
- Needing to explore the future of the town centre in response to the Covid pandemic and how new working arrangements might support local activity.
- Biodiversity should be protected, retaining important areas of green infrastructure.
- Retain green spaces for health and leisure, the importance of which was emphasised during the Covid pandemic, and needing to invest in new spaces and provision, including a new sports hub, preferably to the north of the railway line, improvements to existing facilities, including the Putlands centre, and providing facilities and activities for younger people.
- Access to the countryside and surrounding green spaces should be maintained for all to benefit from.
- Managing and mitigating flood risk, including surface water flooding and concerns with drainage capacity, which could be exacerbated by additional growth.
- Balancing the housing stock to cater for the needs of all, particularly for younger families and people looking to downsize. Homes should be 'future-proofed', to cater for changing demographics and life-cycle stages.
- Concerns about the impact of growth and increased traffic congestion and impacts on air quality, recognising that walking and cycle connections need providing, and that the north south barrier created by the railway line needs breaking. Public transport improvements, including electric busses serving the town centre were also suggested.
- A need to investigate new parking solutions in and around the railway station where capacity is limited.

4.7 Consultation exercises undertaken to inform the Neighbourhood Plan also sought to explore a future growth strategy for Paddock Wood. The messages outlined above resonate with comments and suggestions received through the Neighbourhood Plan. This section presents the growth strategy for Paddock Wood established through the Neighbourhood Plan, illustrating the spatial expression of the vision for the town. They build upon the overarching framework for growth established through the submission Local Plan, but provide more detail at the town-wide level as to what the growth means for Paddock Wood. Indeed, given the scale of growth proposed it is important to plan and design for this change at the town-wide scale, showing how new growth should integrate with the existing and help support beneficial change across Paddock Wood as a whole.

(i) Short-medium term growth

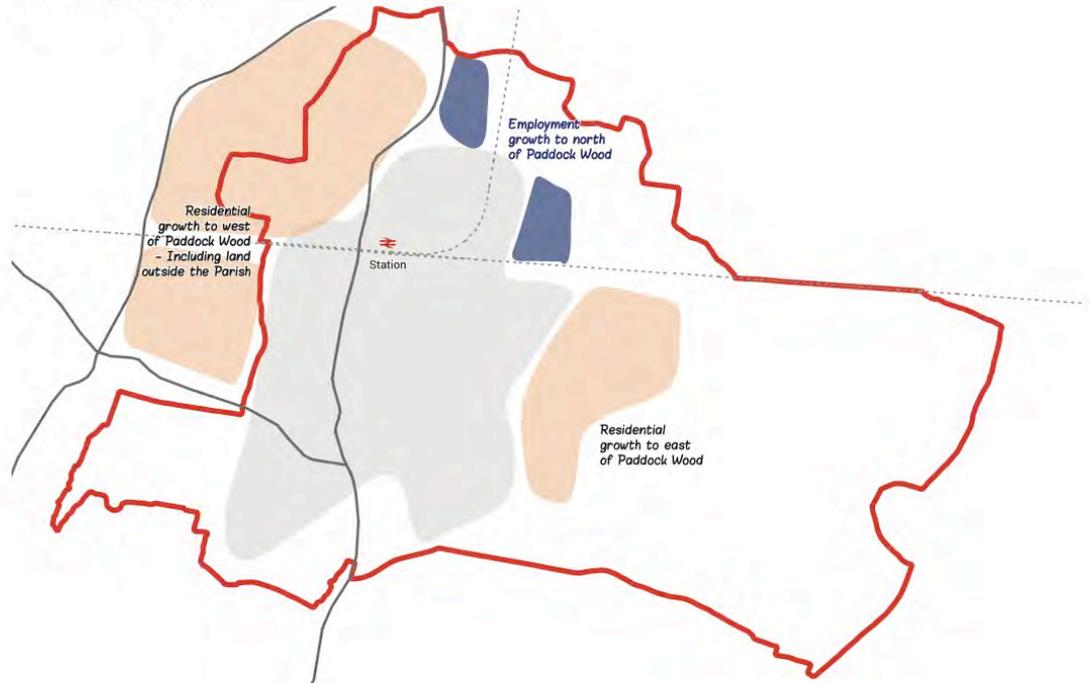
COMMITTED DEVELOPMENT



- 4.8 The existing settlement of Paddock Wood is already subject to growth, with new development coming forward to the south and east of the town at Mascalls Farm, Mascalls Court (also known as Mascalls Court Farm) and Church Farm. These will be developed in the short-medium term. It is important that residents in these areas feel part of the existing town and thus development should be well connected, supporting community cohesion and use of the town centre.

(ii) Longer term growth

GROWTH ALLOCATIONS



- 4.9 The submission Local Plan proposes major growth around Paddock Wood in addition to that already coming forward, expanding the town further to the east, west and north. The scale of growth is reflected in a long build-out programme and, as such, it is important that supporting facilities are provided at an early stage to help build a sense of community and place.
- 4.10 Land to the north of the railway line includes proposed new employment areas. Improved access to these will be required for all. This, plus proposed new residential development to the north of the railway, will begin to rebalance the town around the station and town centre, with all residents being in relatively close proximity to this.
- 4.11 A substantial area of growth, proposed to the west of Paddock Wood, falls within the neighbouring parish of Capel. Development here will however 'look towards' Paddock Wood for day-to-day services and facilities.
- 4.12 Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan does not include policies that specifically relate to land outside of the Paddock Wood parish boundary (i.e.: in Capel), it is hoped that the guidance and principles contained within the Plan will help inform a development response in those parts of the growth areas in Capel and thus which respond to the overarching aims and objectives for Paddock Wood. Ongoing collaboration and communication with Capel parish will be undertaken to help understand the pressure resulting on local services resulting from new growth and thus how these needs can best be met through delivery of new infrastructure and the most appropriate location of supporting services and facilities.

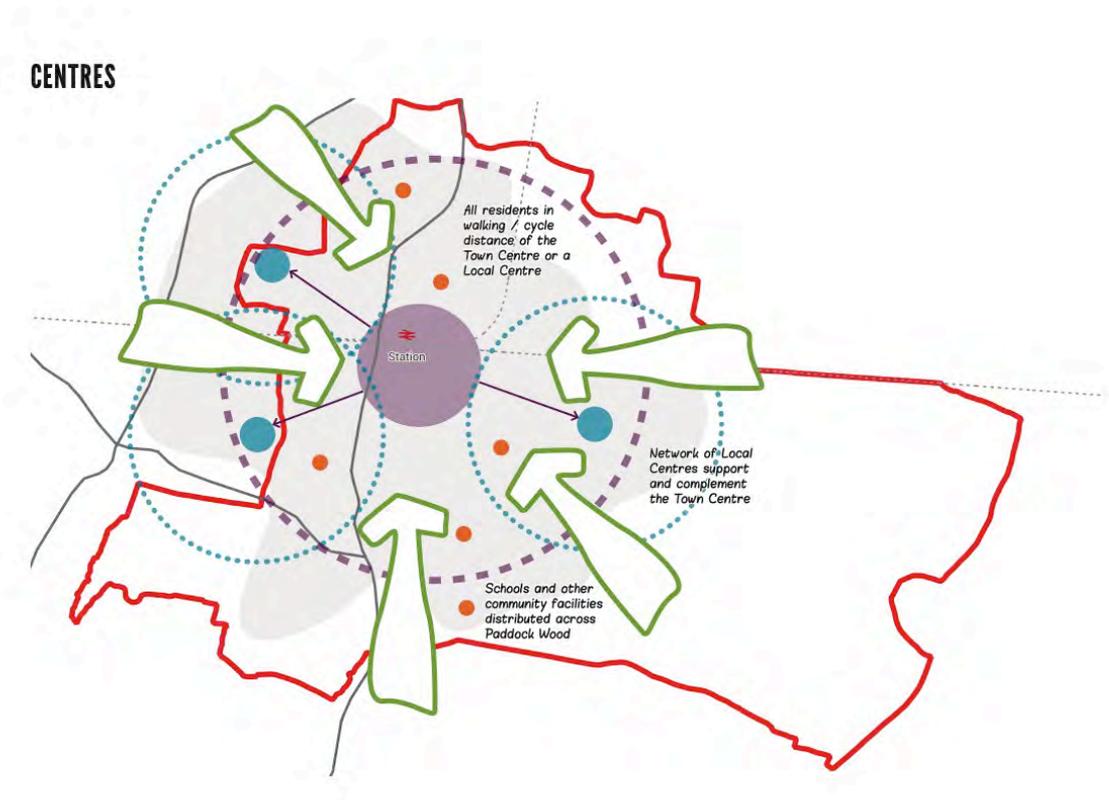
(iii) Connecting with the countryside

GREEN WEDGES



- 4.13 As the town grows so it's connection with the landscape and surrounding countryside will change. To maintain this sense of identity a series of green wedges should be provided, linking the existing built-up area with the new growth areas and out to the countryside. These will help introduce and maximise access to nature and help bind the town together, creating distinct identity without creating isolation.
- 4.14 These spaces have a multi-functional role, being used for leisure and recreation and as places for biodiversity. They also form part of the drainage strategy for Paddock Wood, with swales and ponds helping to manage the impacts of surface water flooding on new and existing residents. Designed appropriately, the green wedges should become a connecting element between communities rather than a separating element.

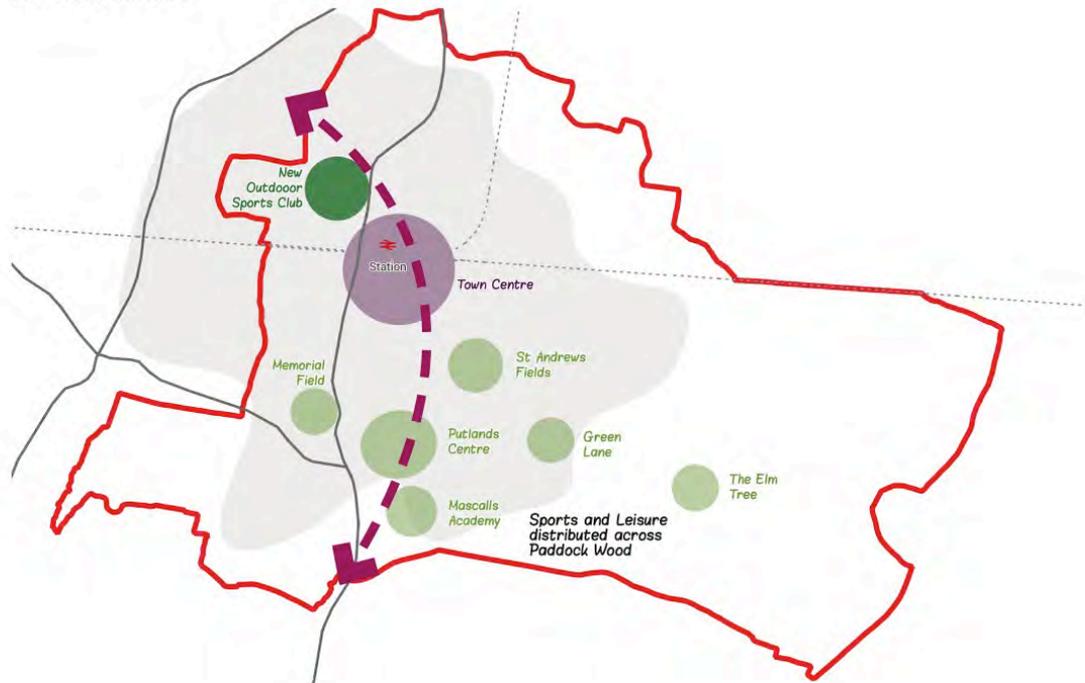
(iv) Services and facilities



- 4.15 As the town grows so the role and function of the town centre becomes ever more important, being a place for the local community to come together for retail, employment, civic and entertainment purposes. The range and mix of uses in the town centre, as well as the quality of public realm and access to the centre will be enhanced, serving the community and minimising the need to travel elsewhere. Some new housing in the centre would help support vibrancy and businesses that operate at different times of the day.
- 4.16 The heart of the town should remain around Commercial Road, with high street enhanced to provide for a growing population, and town centre uses expanded and improved. The growth of non-residential uses needs to be in lock-step with the growth of housing in the neighbourhood area. This will allow both new and existing residents to access the facilities they need, increase the vibrancy of the town, and make Paddock Wood work for everyone.
- 4.17 The town centre should be supported by a network of local or neighbourhood centres, that provide for essential, day-to-day services within comfortable walking distance of the home. Such services should complement the role and function of the town centre, including small convenience stores, pubs, community centres and activities for younger people, for example. These should be integrated with community facilities, such as schools and health care, and designed to support and enable access by foot and bicycle.
- 4.18 Other services, including schools and health centres, are currently distributed across Paddock Wood. Routes and connections to these need to be improved to support access to them for all. Where growth triggers the need for new schools and health centres, and other community facilities, these should be located within the new local centres, providing a hub of local activity and where shared trips to services can be made.

(v) Sports and leisure

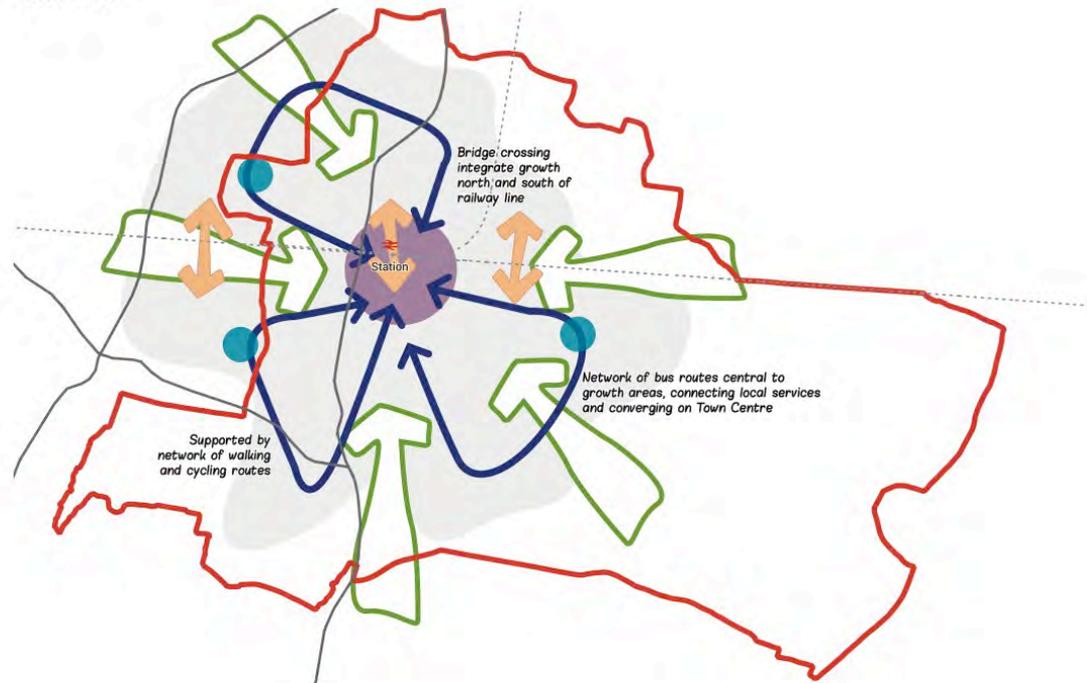
SPORTS & LEISURE



- 4.19 New sports and leisure provision is required in Paddock Wood. At present, all such facilities are located in the south and east of the town. The opportunity exists through growth to rebalance this provision, with new facilities provided to the north and west, such that all residents, existing and new, are within access of these. Alongside provision of new facilities the existing should be upgraded. Good internal connections and links between the neighbourhoods will be required, including new routes across the railway line.

(vi) Access and movement

TRANSPORT



- 4.20 Growth of Paddock Wood should be designed such that it is well connected to and integrated within the existing built-up area, and that opportunities are provided that support movement by foot, bicycle and public transport, minimising the need for car journeys, particularly for shorter, every-day journeys.
- 4.21 New bus routes, running centrally through the growth areas and connecting to the station and other town wide facilities, via the town centre, should be delivered, with all residents living within a short distance of a bus stop. A network of direct, permeable walking and cycling links on safe, dedicated routes, will help support a mode shift and contribute to improved health and air quality, and helping to minimise increasing traffic and parking pressures on the town centre.
- 4.22 Provision of a network of good quality routes for walking, cycling and public transport will strengthen social cohesion. Essential to this is the provision of new routes across the railway line, stitching the north and south of the town together and providing good access to all, wherever they live.

Quality of Life

- 4.23 In March 2021 the Quality of Life Foundation published 'The Quality of Life Framework'. The Foundation, which is supported by MHCLG (now DLUHC), the TCPA and RTPI amongst others, aims to improve people's quality of life by making health and wellbeing central to the way we create and care for our homes and communities. The Framework presents six overarching themes intended for use by communities, developers and their designers, and local authorities, to encourage the creation of better places for all to live in. The themes are introduced below:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. Control</p> | <p>2. Health</p> |
| <p>When problems occur, as they sometimes do, they are easier to deal with if we feel that we have a degree of control over our situation. This is as true of the home as it is of the neighbourhood. One of the biggest issues that disempowers us is feeling unsafe and vulnerable. A sense of wellbeing comes from believing that there is something that we and our neighbours can do to improve our area and address local problems. This is particularly important when major change is planned where we can be involved through participation and co-design of new development.</p> | <p>Our health is crucial to our quality of life. The difference in life expectancy between affluent and deprived areas can be more than ten years, even for adjacent neighbourhoods. This health inequality is partly due to lifestyle, including smoking, diet, alcohol and exercise, but the quality of housing has a sizeable impact, as does the local environment, which might include opportunities for exercise, air quality and noise level. Looking forward, we want to help communities create neighbourhoods that allow people to pursue healthy lifestyles.</p> |
| <p>3. Nature</p> | <p>4. Wonder</p> |
| <p>Contact with nature on a day-to-day, hour-by-hour and minute-by-minute basis is central to our wellbeing as humans. Many studies have shown that contact with nature, even just a green view from our window, is good for our mood and aids our recovery when we are ill. We need to green our towns and cities at every level, from our window boxes to the great parks, and maintain access in the countryside. We also need to respect the environment in the way we construct our homes to minimise carbon use and reduce the use of toxic materials.</p> | <p>Quality of life is about more than our health and comfort, more than just our feeling of control and belonging, important as all those things are. Quality of life also includes a sense of wonder, delight and fun – all of the things that bring us happiness and make us human. This includes creativity and cultural expression, museums and libraries, as well as the design of the places where we live and work, and the opportunity to enjoy ourselves.</p> |
| <p>5. Movement</p> | <p>6. Belonging</p> |
| <p>We should probably accept that having a car contributes to your quality of life. It allows you to get to places for work and leisure that would otherwise be hard to reach, particularly for those of us who don't have access to good public transport. The problem is that when everyone enjoys these freedoms our collective quality of life suffers. Roads become unsafe, congested, noisy and polluted. Parked cars clog our streets, and our health suffers as we walk and cycle less. We must therefore encourage more people to walk, cycle and use public transport. Initially, this may mean that the car is used less, but before long people will ask why we need two cars, or even a car at all. This will contribute to everyone's quality of life.</p> | <p>Belonging to a community is a powerful need in humans and is central to our wellbeing. This is partly about community groups and events, but many of us feel a strong sense of belonging even if we don't have the time to go to a meeting or engage in community activities. It is about being part of a group and sharing an identity; about trust, cooperation and reciprocity. This is built by knowing our neighbours, chatting to fellow parents at the school gate or in the park, or even just nodding at our fellow dog walkers and exchanging pleasantries with local shopkeepers. This is all too often taken for granted and is hard to create, especially in new developments. However, there are things we can do with the mix of housing, the design of the neighbourhoods and the social infrastructure that can encourage this sense of belonging.</p> |

4.24 At the heart of the Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan is the ambition to improve quality of life for all. The themes established in the Framework and the way in which the Neighbourhood Plan responds to these are set out below:

| Theme | Sub-Theme | The Neighbourhood Plan Response |
|------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Control | a. Influence | This Neighbourhood Plan is the spatial expression of the communities manifesto for Paddock Wood and has been informed by consultation with the community as a whole. As plans and proposals for growth progress so the community should be involved in that design process. |
| | b. Safety | The Neighbourhood Plan establishes design principles that seek to create safe streets and spaces, including, for example, routes that are well overlooked with active development frontages, street design that slows traffic, and provision of safe cycling infrastructure. |
| | c. Permanence | Delivery of community facilities and a wide range of housing types, that are well integrated with the existing built-up area, will help build community cohesion and social inclusion. Support for self and custom build housing, including different models of delivery, such as co-housing schemes, will widen the opportunity for people to take ownership of and greater control over the management and delivery of housing. |
| 2. Health | a. Housing | The Plan promotes delivery of a wide range of housing types built to high design and sustainability standards, as well as inclusive and adaptable homes that respond to changing demographics and life-cycle stages. |
| | b. Air Quality | The Plan supports a move to walking and cycling, as well as greater use of public transport, the construction of new buildings and retrofitting of existing buildings to meet low and zero carbon development standards. |
| | c. Recreation | The Plan supports provision of new sports facilities, including improvement to existing sports facilities at Putlands, as well as facilities for younger people, new green space for leisure and recreation, with a network of green wedges, walking and cycling routes providing good access to these facilities for all. |

| | | |
|-----------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. Nature | a. Green Space | The Plan seeks to protect green spaces, as well as requiring delivery of new green space within growth areas. The Plan promotes multi-functional green spaces that provide for leisure and recreation, as well as areas for wildlife and biodiversity gain. |
| | b. Interaction | The Plan promotes the creation of new green wedges within the growth areas, connecting the countryside with new and existing communities. Opportunities for new allotments and community gardens in close proximity to the home are encouraged. Equally, the Plan supports delivery of pedestrian friendly home zones and play streets within new areas of development, which provide scope for the community to take greater ownership of these spaces. |
| | c. Environment | The Plan supports delivery of new homes and retrofitting of existing buildings to meet high energy efficiency standards. It requires incorporation of sustainable urban drainage and other flood mitigation measures within new development and promotes walking and cycling, as well as emerging mobility solutions that will help support a move away from car use and polluting vehicles. |
| 4. Wonder | a. Culture | The Plan promotes revitalisation of the Town Centre, including improvements to the quality of the public realm, providing new civic space for the community where events and activities might take place. |
| | b. Distinctiveness | The Plan establishes a series of design guidance and principles that reflect the character and identity of Paddock Wood, and uses the form and layout of village centres around Paddock Wood to help inform the morphology of new local centres. Important local heritage assets are also recognised and should be responded to positively, retaining local identity and sense of place. |
| | c. Playfulness | The Plan encourages safe places for all to spend time in and move through, with new green spaces and sports facilities provided, with work on the Plan being informed through discussion with sports and leisure partners in Paddock Wood. The promotion of Play Streets and Homezones will provide child friendly spaces close to home. |

| | | |
|--------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5. Movement | a. Walking & Cycling | The Plan strongly supports provision of a connected and safe walking and cycling network, including supporting infrastructure, alongside efforts that reconfigure streets and junctions to make walking and cycling the preferred mode of travel for shorter, every-day journeys. |
| | b. Public Transport | The Plan includes policies that support integration of bus routes within new growth areas, linking local centres with the town centre, station and other important destinations and facilities in the town. The Plan suggests that bus stops should be located such that as many people as possible are in walking distance of a bus stop. Support is also given to bus stops becoming mini-mobility hubs, where provision of micro-mobility solutions are also present, offering people a range of transport choices. |
| | c. Cars | The Plan includes design guidance in respect of car parking provision such that it does not dominate the street environment. It is recognised that people will continue to drive and own cars, but support is given for integration of rapidly evolving technologies, as well as street typologies that treat the 'car as a guest'. |
| 6. Belonging | a. Diversity | The Plan promotes delivery of a wide range of housing types, new local centres and supporting social and community facilities, as well as a stronger town centre, providing for the needs of the community as a whole. |
| | b. Neighbourliness | The Plan promotes creation of high quality public space across the town, as well as new green spaces, where the community can come together. |
| | c. Services | The Plan includes a strategy for revitalisation of the town centre, including promotion of new uses and improved links, as well as delivery of the full range of supporting facilities in the areas of new growth, which should form part of the network of local centres in Paddock Wood, all of which are well connected by foot, by bicycle and public transport, maximising access for all. |

Changing world circumstances and influences

- 4.25 During the course of writing this Neighbourhood Plan two global events took place which have begun to impact on the way we live and plan for our towns and cities. First, the ever increasing momentum behind the climate change agenda has seen many authorities, including Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, declare a climate emergency. Second, the rapid spread of COVID-19 at the start of 2020 and the social distancing measures put in place as a result of that, including the need for homeworking and home schooling, had a profound effect on day-to-day life. The implications of these for development planning will likely be far reaching.

Climate change

- 4.26 This Neighbourhood Plan is set in the context of the Climate Emergency declared by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in July 2019.
- 4.27 The Borough Council will set out a series of actions with the goal of making the Borough carbon neutral by 2030 and seeking to ensure that forthcoming plans and strategies, including the submission Local Plan, are developed with this goal in mind. Indeed, the submission Local Plan notes that the proposed growth of Paddock Wood should be designed around a low or zero carbon vision (see para 5.175).
- 4.28 This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote high quality, eco-friendly design that respects the environmental qualities and landscape setting of Paddock Wood. It promotes walking, cycling and better public transport facilities. It seeks to protect and enhance green infrastructure, as well supporting the full range of facilities that make Paddock Wood a vibrant and attractive place, reducing the need to travel, maximising social cohesion, health and wellbeing.
- 4.29 As the Borough Council reviews and updates policies in response to the Climate Emergency, so this Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed.

COVID-19 and management of pandemics

- 4.30 The COVID-19 pandemic that spread across the world at the start of 2020 will have far reaching consequences for plan-makers, service and infrastructure providers, with questions asked as to whether lifestyles and the working environment should change.
- 4.31 With social isolation and homeworking measures put in place the need to travel quite so extensively on a daily basis for many people reduced. This resulted in improvements to air quality as well as quieter and safer streets for walking and cycling. At the same time, it increased awareness of the importance of local shops and essential services, and the ability of people to be able to access those, with matters such as resilience in regard to food supplies, for example, recognised. The measures also highlighted the importance of good quality broadband provision, the need for parks and spaces for people to exercise in, and the importance of well-designed homes and living spaces. Moreover, the importance of good social networks and community cohesion was highlighted, providing support to neighbours and those in need.
- 4.32 Research undertaken by the Place Alliance³ into the design of homes and neighbourhoods and the impact of these on life experiences during the height of the lockdown period drew attention to the need for all to have good access to open space, local shops and space for people to walk and cycle safely. The research calls for measures that promote the concept of the 'ten-minute' town,

³ Place Alliance et al, October 2020, Home Comforts: how the design of our homes and neighbourhoods affected our experience of the Covid-19 lockdown and what we can learn for the future

whereby all residents live within easy reach of the shopping basket of services and facilities needed to support day-to-day life, promoting more socially inclusive and cohesive communities. Good housing standards are also called for, providing access to private open space and being big enough to comfortably live in, with fresh air, daylight and good insulation.

4.33 As part of this Neighbourhood Plan we have sought to future proof growth and development, with the suite of policies, and projects, set out in the Plan responding to these challenges. These include:

- Provision of social and community facilities, shops and other services, in accessible locations, supporting day-to-day life and activity.
- Protection of important local spaces and provision of new open spaces, for leisure, recreation and biodiversity, within new growth areas.
- Promoting a network of safe and attractive walking and cycling routes, as well as expanded and improved public transport services, providing for mobility needs for all people of all ages.
- Promoting the highest design and sustainability standards in new development.
- Promoting opportunities for locally-based employment.
- Promoting delivery of outdoor space for people to meet and interact.

4.34 As the implications of the pandemic are more understood so the Neighbourhood Plan and suite of policies and projects within it will be reviewed.

PART II: POLICIES

“New developments should enhance rather than detract from the appearance of the surrounding countryside and should be rural rather than urban in nature. Strong pedestrian and cycling links should be provided to the rest of the town to make these the preferred mode of transport”

Consultation response

5. TOWN CENTRE

Policy Objectives

- 5.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 01:** Deliver the social and environmental infrastructure necessary to support a growing community in the 21st Century.
 - **Objective 02:** Coordinate all new development so that it contributes to the creation of a safe and sustainable community with good access to essential services for all residents.
 - **Objective 10:** Create a buoyant, thriving town centre, which acts as a focal point for residents and visitors alike.

Introduction

- 5.2 Paddock Wood is a compact town centre that is well-used by local residents and visitors from surrounding villages and settlements. According to the Tunbridge Wells Retail and Leisure Study 2017 it provides a range of services and amenities not widely available in the smaller settlements to the east of the Borough. It contains a good mix of independent and national businesses, including Waitrose and the popular independent department store Barsley's, which has been in the town for over 100 years. The neighbourhood plan seeks to maintain and enhance this balance over the plan period.
- 5.3 The submission Local Plan prepared by TWBC envisages Paddock Wood as '*a compact bustling town that is popular with its residents and serves local needs*', and that proposed growth will '*inject the town centre with new vitality and viability*' (see para 5.168). It goes on to say that the planned growth of Paddock Wood '*provides an important opportunity for ambitious investment into the town centre so it can enhance its role in the borough as a local service centre, meet the demands of the additional residents the town centre will serve over the plan period, and ensure the new growth is assimilated fully into the existing town*' (para 5.180). Policy STR/SS 2 of the submission Local Plan establishes key principles for the town centre, including:
- Provision of a mix of commercial, leisure, residential and employment uses, including flexible workspace.
 - Provision of new residential development, including a minimum of 30 homes.
 - Improved connectivity, particularly with the new growth areas and across the railway line, and creation of a safer and more attractive walking and cycling environment.
 - Rationalisation of car parking spaces, to potentially include a new multi-storey car park.
- 5.4 At present the focus of retail and service provision in the town centre is primarily located along Commercial Road, with a large Waitrose food store and Paddock Wood Train Station to the north of the centre. It has the potential to expand and diversify, with a series of opportunity sites and growth options. These include making greater use of under-utilised land to the rear of Commercial Road, improving the quality of the public realm, enhancing the visitor experience and providing attractive space for people to socialise and spend time in, and supporting provision of a wider range of uses and activities in the Town Centre.

The hallmarks of a successful town centre

- 5.5 The importance of creating and maintaining a vibrant town centre was highlighted through the consultation process for the Neighbourhood Plan. Set out below are some guiding principles on how to achieve this and why different activities should be combined into a close-knit, compact town centre.

Physical & Mental Health Benefits

- 5.6 By positioning goods and services within a walkable distance from one another people can easily access what they need while enjoying the health benefits of active travel as well as the benefits of social interaction for well-being. Providing a range of retail, leisure, food and drink, and health services or associated support services, can play a key part in a unified town centre strategy.

Increased Footfall & Economic Benefits

- 5.7 As people use the town centre for a range of services – e.g. retail, health, leisure, employment – the combined footfall benefits the local businesses and local economy. Increased levels of activity help to create a vibrant and attractive town centre, which attracts more customers, tourists, investment, and businesses, further strengthening the economy.
- 5.8 Relatively small-town centres, such as Paddock Wood, need a critical mass of activity to make them economically successful. When the centre is vibrant and pleasant to be in, employees of the local businesses and public services, such as shop workers, will be encouraged to do their lunchtime shopping in the centre, rather than driving out of town.

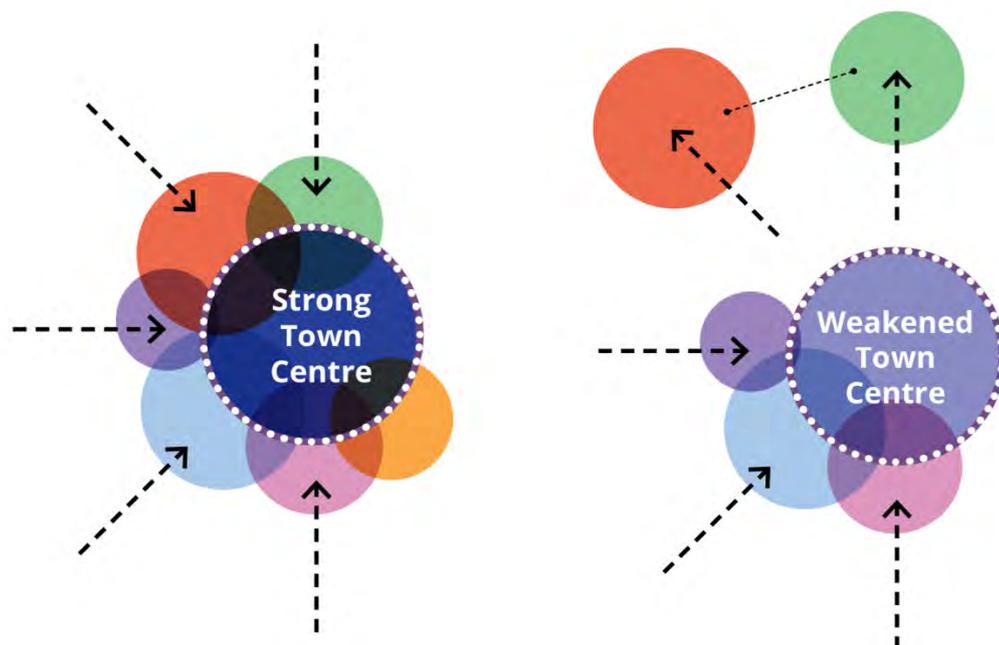


Figure 4: Bringing land uses together strengthens the viability and vitality of a town centre (above left) compared to the dispersal of services (above right) which can leave a town centre weakened and can place pressure on the wider road network

Meeting on the Street

- 5.9 The opportunity for exchanging knowledge and sharing ideas on a personal level has been shown to advance business innovation and enterprise. Traditional town centre facilities should be accessible locally rather than in an out of town location. Face-to-face interactions on the street and chance encounters help improve individual happiness and wider social cohesion. This can reduce isolation for the elderly and can improve mental health.

Public Transport

- 5.10 Good public transport from peripheral parts of the town and the local villages reduces the need for private cars and potentially increases activity in the town centre. Development of a public transport hub at the railway station would improve people's ability to access the town and surrounding villages.

Increased 'dwell time'

- 5.11 The ability to dwell within public spaces allows people the time to reflect and relax which is important for health. Quality of life improves with the quality of the public realm. People enjoy spending time in places that are pedestrian-friendly, compact, mixed-use, have public transport, and are green and healthy. Town centres are becoming ever more the focus of leisure and non-retail activity, placing greater emphasis on the need for them to encourage these experiences.

The strategy for Paddock Wood town centre

- 5.12 The strategy for the town centre is to capture the benefits of growth to strengthen and enhance the retail and visitor experience, maintaining the role and function of Commercial Road as the 'High Street' and complementing this with new uses, development and public realm interventions that help create a strong and vibrant heart of a growing town. This is illustrated in the concept plan presented overleaf (Figure 5) which aligns with the submission Local Plan and supports the following opportunities:
- Public realm improvements along Commercial Road and Station Road, providing increased space for pedestrians.
 - Creation of a new town square and arrival point around the railway station framed with uses that could support outdoor events and activities, including market stalls and similar.
 - Improved connections across the railway line stitching the north and south of the town together, and including a new station arrival point to the north of the station.
 - Opportunities to reconfigure and rationalise town centre car parking, potentially through provision of new multi-storey car park(s), which should be wrapped with active development uses to help create a street.
 - Potential for reuse and development of land to the rear of Commercial Road and Station Road for uses that complement the 'High Street', with new links provided through that help connect the centre with its surrounds.
 - Reconfiguration of the Commercial Road / Maidstone Road junction improving access into and the sense of arrival at the southern gateway into the town centre.

TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT STRATEGY



Figure 5: Town centre concept diagram. Image source © Google

Town Centre Design Principles

- 5.13 Growth and development of the town centre should help strengthen the role of the centre as the civic and commercial hub for Paddock Wood and surrounding rural communities who will use the town as their main leisure and retail centre. Good design must be reflected in the layout and distribution of buildings and uses, the spaces between them, the scale and architecture of buildings. Efforts to revitalise the centre should make it an attractive place to visit and spend time in.
- 5.14 Proposals for change and development in the centre should reflect the growth and evolution of Paddock Wood, supporting the main spine of activity along Commercial Road, linking with the railway station. Proposals should also allow for buildings to be changed and adapted over time, responding to changing circumstances, retail, working and living habits. Where development or interventions are suggested, such as the creation of a town square or decked parking provision, this will need developing in partnership with landowners, including Network Rail. Work undertaken on behalf of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council suggests that planned growth will aid delivery, as does the consolidated pattern of land ownership on larger opportunity sites, such as that land around the railway station. Partnership working is supported, though the submission Local Plan does also refer to the Borough Council making use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers should that be necessary to facilitate delivery of change and development in the town centre.
- 5.15 The concept plan illustrated in Figure 5 above is supported by a 'town centre structure plan' (Figure 6) which identifies:
- Existing defined retail frontages in the Local Plan and where town centre uses are supported
 - Other existing development frontages in the town centre which help structure streets, spaces and the movement network.
 - Potential opportunities where new frontages might be provided through future development, helping to define new spaces and enhance the form and structure of existing streets, spaces and routes.
- 5.16 Development that broadly follows these ideas will be supported. Development should also respond to good urban design principles, responding both to the character and setting of the town centre, but also allowing for change and flexibility over time. Important design principles for Paddock Wood town centre are set out in Policy PW TC1 and supported by illustrative material in Figure 7.
- 5.17 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is in the process of preparing a Supplementary Planning Document which will provide more guidance on the potential form and structure of new development that might be supported in Paddock Wood town centre, including any amendments to existing and new retail frontages in the town centre. As and when published that document should be read alongside the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

TOWN CENTRE STRUCTURE DIAGRAM

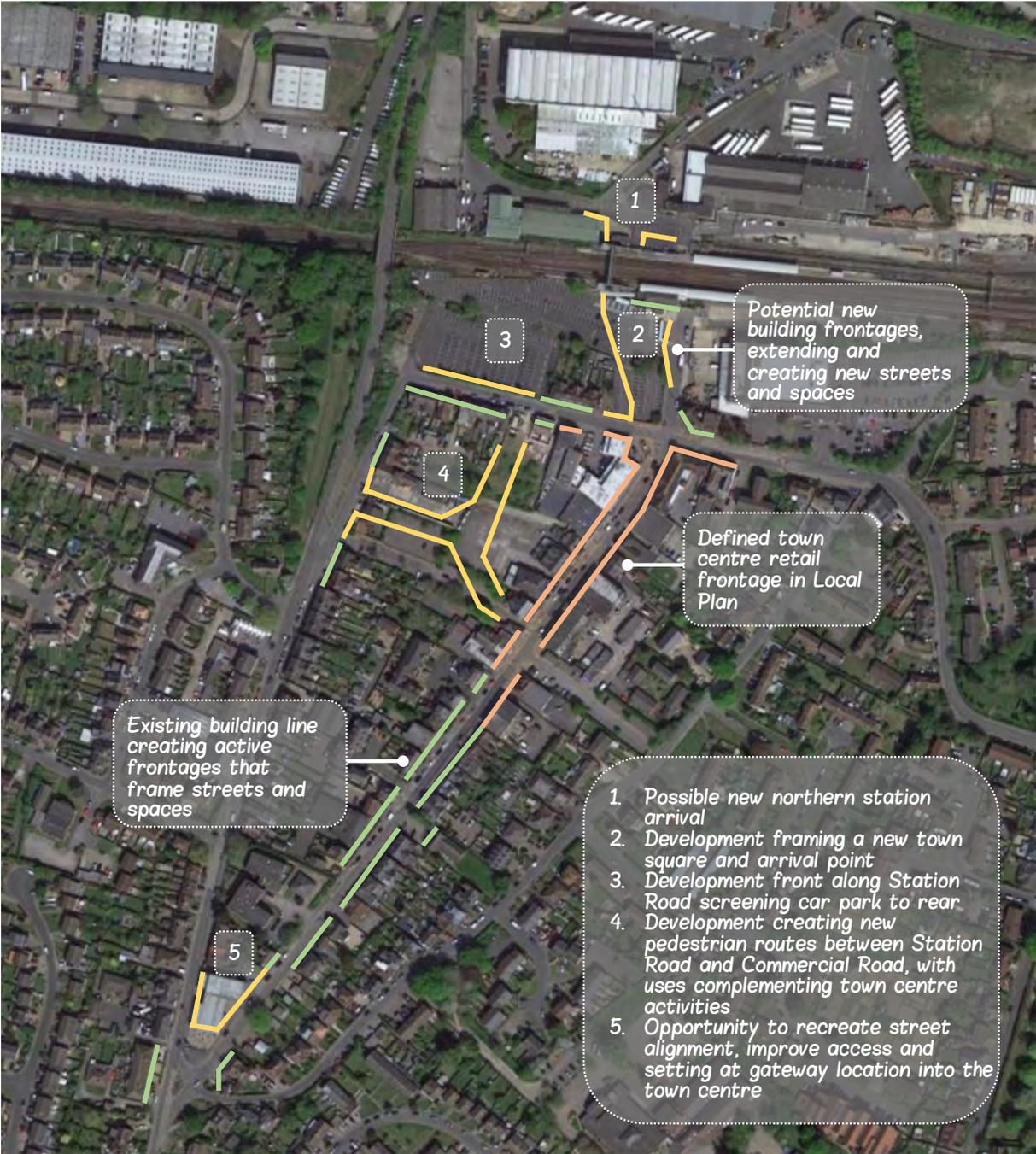


Figure 6: Indicative town centre strategy plan. Image source © Google

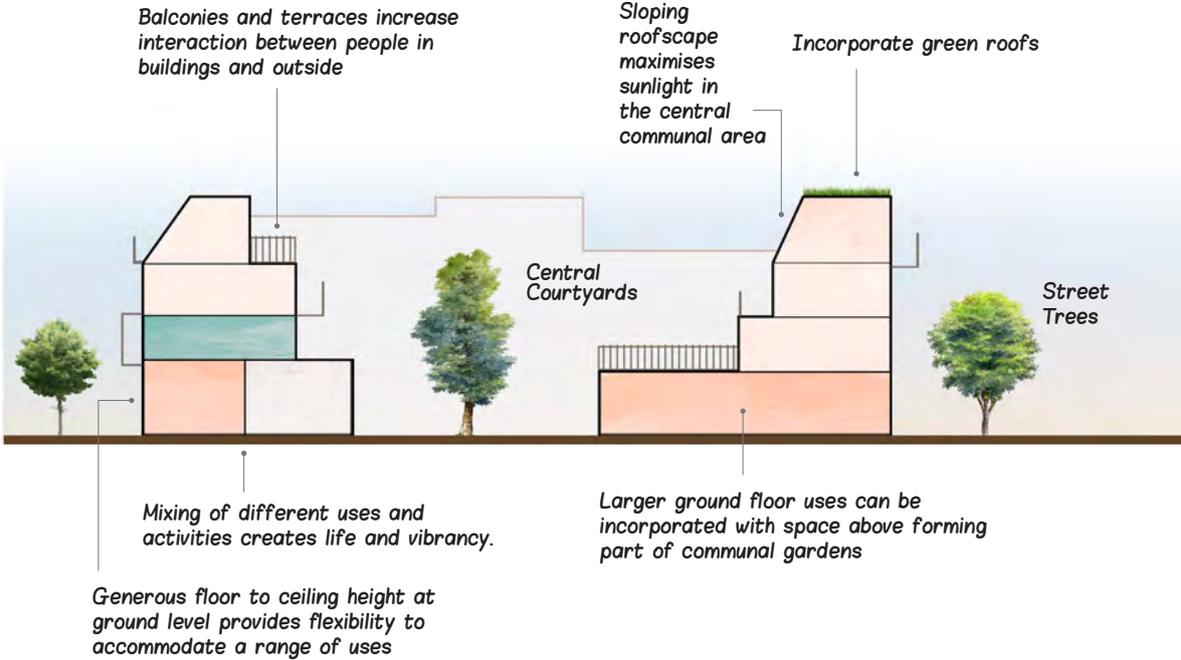
Policy PW TC1 – Town Centre Design Principles

Proposals for development in the Town Centre should:

- a. Reinforce Commercial Road as the main spine of activity and location of retail uses, supported by complementary facilities and uses along Station Road and Church Road, as well as by opportunities for the reuse of under-utilised land to the west of Commercial Road providing a mix of retail, employment, community and residential uses as appropriate to the town centre.
- b. Create clear and consistent buildings lines with active frontages at ground floor level, following established building lines where they exist.
- c. Provide the principal points of access to buildings on the main street or public space onto which it fronts.
- d. Provide for clear, direct and well-overlooked pedestrian routes through or around the development site, connecting with the existing network. The creation of blank gable ends should be avoided.
- e. Clearly define areas of private and public realm through well-defined building lines and the enclosure of private space. Blank walls and exposed back land areas, including car parking and areas of servicing, should be screened from view, preferably through the use of perimeter blocks and wrapping of these with active development edges, or with other solutions such as provision of green walls (planted walls) that improve the quality of the townscape.
- f. Avoid the creation of 'superblocks', allowing for the subdivision of land into different parcels which can come forward for change and development over time
- g. Create variety and interest with different building heights and roof forms, though respecting the prevailing building height. Where building heights vary this change should be subtle and step up or down by no more than half to one storey between buildings. Building heights should match the prevailing height defined as two-three storeys. Some opportunities for taller buildings may be appropriate where there is a clear and justifiable design rationale for this.
- h. Incorporate generous floor to ceiling heights at ground floor level to allow for flexibility and change of use over time. Where large floorplates are provided at ground floor and which are wider than the storeys above, project beyond and to the rear of these, the roof should be used as an outdoor space, including planting as appropriate.
- i. Allow for the mixing of uses and activities within buildings, including retail, commercial and community uses on the ground and lower floors, and residential above where appropriate. Other uses such as office and some community uses might also be appropriate on upper floors.
- j. Balconies, loggias and roof terraces should be provided on upper storeys, maximising outdoor space, access to sunlight, the increased potential for interaction with the street and introduction of greenery to the building, including green roofs and planting on balconies.
- k. Support improvements to the quality of the public realm.

Figure 7 illustrates some of these design principles.

CROSS SECTION THROUGH PERIMETER BLOCK



STREETScape

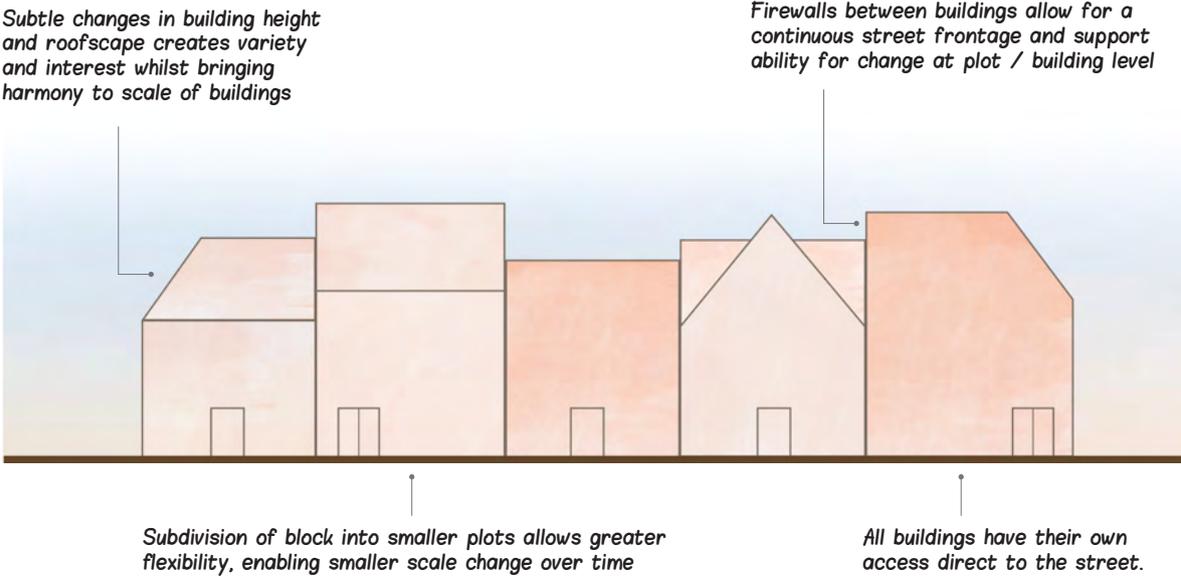


Figure 7: Design principles for the town centre

Activities and uses in the town centre

- 5.18 Paddock Wood is identified as a “Town Centre” in the submission Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy (Policy ED 8). As such, permission will be granted for a range of uses where they contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre (Policy ED 9).
- 5.19 Policy ED 11 stipulates that in Primary Shopping Areas (of which Paddock Wood Town Centre is one), proposals for Commercial E Class use at ground floor level or proposals for other town centre uses that would support the vitality and viability of the town centre, such as drinking establishments and live music venues, will be permitted. Emphasis is placed on retaining active frontages when there is a change of use on ground floor premises.
- 5.20 Through Policy STR/SS2, the submission Local Plan sets out a more detailed strategy for Paddock Wood Town Centre. Identifying the primary commercial area, the policy recommends a mix of town centre uses to provide “commercial, leisure, residential and employment uses”. These services will be supported by residential development (at least 30 units), the provision of pedestrian and cycle friendly environments, new linkages across the railway line and a new (potentially multi-storey) car park. A Framework Masterplan SPD will be used to guide change, identifying key sites for redevelopment and setting out the range and mix of uses that will sustain the centre in terms of planned expansion of Paddock Wood.
- 5.21 The Neighbourhood Plan supports the submission Local Plan’s proposal to revitalise Paddock Wood’s Town Centre, particularly in the face of forthcoming growth. The Tunbridge Wells Retail and Leisure Study 2021⁴ assesses the vitality and health of town centres within the Tunbridge Wells Borough, obtaining a clear picture of what capacity might exist for future retail and leisure provision. The health check for Paddock Wood identifies the following key issues for the town centre:
- Despite the success of hosting events in the town centre, such as the annual carnival and fete, there is no evening economy, such as restaurants and bars, which would contribute to the vitality of the centre.
 - There is no overarching public realm strategy, with the street furniture that is provided often restricting pedestrian movement.
 - There has been an increase in shop vacancies between 2016 (the date of the previous town centre health check) and 2021, although overall vacancy remains below the UK average. (However, the increase in vacancies is primarily associated with proposals for development which will incorporate replacement retail units. Otherwise, vacancies are filled quickly).
 - Car parking is poorly sign posted.
- 5.22 The health check also reports on stakeholder engagement undertaken and which identified a lack of variety of uses in the town centre as well as limited support for independent businesses attempting to enter the market.
- 5.23 It was though recognised that Paddock Wood retains its function as an important market town, serving smaller settlements in the area, and that this should continue to be the case, particularly with the significant growth proposed in and around the town.

⁴ Nexus Planning for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, February 2021, Tunbridge Wells Retail, Commercial Leisure and Town Centre Uses Study Update. Available at: https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/385405/01_RCLTCU_main-report.pdf

- 5.24 To help achieve this it is considered that Paddock Wood should offer a wide variety of retail uses, maintaining a variety of shops that complement each other, rather than a small number of retailers dominating the townscape. The local character of the area suits a diverse retail approach and recognises the importance of independent businesses which can successfully occupy smaller premises. These uses should be supported by the introduction of a family friendly evening economy, uses and facilities for younger people, as well as improvements to the look and appearance of individual units as well as the quality of the public realm, making this an attractive destination to visit, spend time and money in.
- 5.25 Commercial Road is the historic heart of the town and which should remain the primary focus of town centre activities. The town centre is well connected to existing residential areas and has the ability to provide high quality shops and services to a local catchment that can arrive on foot and by bicycle, as well as to a wider catchment from further afield. The focus should be on encouraging a good mix of shops for all age groups. The preference is for independent shops rather than national chains wherever possible to provide variety for shoppers.
- 5.26 There are currently no hotels within Paddock Wood, so visitors must stay further afield in Tonbridge or Tunbridge Wells. This means a loss in the potential contributions to the local economy and a subsequent reduction in the town's economic vibrancy. The Tunbridge Wells Hotel Capacity Study (2017) acknowledges that though there is a healthy provision of tourist accommodation in the rural hinterlands, there is scope for further services in the area, particularly in the form of a 'larger, budget branded hotel'. The Neighbourhood Plan supports this recommendation; an attractive town with a range of visitor accommodation will allow people to stay close to the core facilities and they will therefore be more likely to use local shops, restaurants and other services.
- 5.27 Expansion of the mix of town centre land uses should be relative to the planned residential expansion of Paddock Wood. The growth of non-residential uses needs to happen alongside with the growth of housing in the neighbourhood area. This will allow both new and existing residents to access the facilities they need, increase the vibrancy of the town, and make Paddock Wood work for everyone.
- 5.28 Paddock Wood currently lacks a traditional town square. Providing such a space is an integral part of regeneration and will help encourage "dwell time" and boost the social and economic vitality of the centre. This meeting place could accommodate markets, events, and local festivals. Land between the railway station and Station Road / Commercial Road could fulfil this function.
- 5.29 Development proposals should prioritise these facilities and services to ensure that a balance is retained in Paddock Wood Town Centre.

Policy PW TC2 – Activities and uses in the town centre

The town centre's retail provision should be enhanced to support an expanding town. Use Class E commercial, business and services will be supported where it can be demonstrated that proposals enhance community uses and add to a safe, vibrant and attractive street scene. Appropriate locations for these services including Commercial Road and Station Road should be supported by the following:

- a. Clear and legible pedestrian and cycle connections;
- b. open, landscaped civic space within the heart of the development;
- c. active frontages on ground floors; and
- d. vehicle access for servicing, deliveries and disabled parking.

Use Class Sui Generis (pubs and drinking establishments) will also be encouraged in key areas of the town centre, including Commercial Road and Station Road.

Future development of a town square should include provision of family friendly uses that help support the early evening economy, including cafes and restaurants (Use Class E) and other social meeting places.

Tourist and Business Traveller Accommodation

Support will be given for planning applications for the development small hotels and guest houses (Use Class C1), subject to the following criteria:

- i. Preference will be given to town centre locations, in close proximity to the railway station and Commercial Road.
- ii. Support will be given to small boutique hotels and guest houses within residential areas subject to planning conditions to ensure the potential noise and parking impacts are mitigated.

Town Centre Living

Residential development (Use Class C3) proposals within the town centre must be located on upper floors or away from the primary retail areas. They should be within a convenient walking distance of services and facilities.

Applications for residential development above ground floor will be supported provided they respect scale and amenity of the neighbouring buildings and do not reduce existing retail space.

Balanced and Phased Development

All future town centre development should keep the right balance of retail, residential, and community facilities, and should be phased in a manner that is not detrimental to the trading success of existing shops and services.

Attention should be paid to the Tunbridge Wells Retail and Leisure Study 2021 to ensure that appropriate facilities and services that meet the needs of the local community and town centre are prioritised.

Public Realm Improvements

- 5.30 The public realm – the streets, squares and spaces between the buildings – is an essential asset of community life in Paddock Wood. These spaces are where social connections are made and individual well-being is improved. Enhancement of the public realm will be supported and is often the means by which to measure the liveability of the town. Strong pedestrian, cycle and public transport connections are vital factors to ensure successful public realm design.
- 5.31 At present, the town centre lacks a main focal point. Opportunities present themselves through growth and revitalisation of the centre to create a new civic heart and meeting space. This is particularly important given the recent Covid-pandemic and role of outdoor spaces providing both for ease of movement but for social events and gatherings.
- 5.32 A new square could be facilitated through an improved access to the railway station, linking Commercial Road with the station itself, providing a direct connection to the town. Other smaller spaces might be created through development, including that to the rear of Commercial Road and Station Road. The Public realm along Commercial Road and Station Road is tired and would benefit from improvement. A coordinated strategy to public realm will be supported, including use of a consistent palette of materials, provision of places to sit and relax, new tree planting or soft landscaping, and rationalisation of extensive 'street clutter' (including for example bollards, litter bins, bike racks, pavement and street surfacing). Any such change, which might be delivered through development or via other partner organisations, including Kent County Council as highways authority for example, should be subject to consultation with the wider community to understand user requirements.

Project / Aspiration PW TCa – Public Realm Design

Development proposals that improve the public realm in the town centre will be supported, especially where they improve pedestrian connectivity, encourage cycling and connections with public transport and do not reduce existing retail space.

Public realm improvements may come to fruition, either through existing S106 / S278 agreements (or through future CIL payments should that be introduced) or the masterplanning process, and will be further explored and coordinate with partner organisations such as the Highways Authority, Borough Council and Network Rail to assist the process.

These improvements might include the following:

- a. Provision of a new town square and arrival space located between the railway station and Station Road / Commercial Road. Such a space should be multi-functional, providing opportunities for outdoor events to take place, and which might accommodate market stalls and kiosks.
- b. A coordinated public realm strategy along Commercial Road and Station Road, providing increased pedestrian space and integrating street tree planting and soft landscaping. Trial projects that create additional pedestrian space, such as the use of parklets will be supported.
- c. Remodelling of the Maidstone Road / Commercial Road junction, rationalising vehicular movements and supporting improved crossings for pedestrians and cyclist.

Movement in the Town Centre

- 5.33 To achieve a more vibrant town centre, it is important to attract families and young professionals moving from London and other urban areas by providing good train links. This will require safe and accessible routes to and from the train station. Continued provision of taxis are essential for commuters and the public using the station.
- 5.34 A comprehensive wayfinding strategy will allow people to navigate through the town and the wider area. Signs should reflect the character of the local area. A consistent and artistic design, possibly based on Paddock Wood's local heritage with regards to the railway or hop industry, would receive support from the Town Council. Signs that are brightly illuminated will be resisted.
- 5.35 In addition, wayfinding information expressed in "minutes to destination" or "calories burned" will make pedestrian and cycle routes more appealing, supporting health initiatives and encouraging more people to use them.
- 5.36 Road signs should clearly direct people to the Town centre and key facilities such as car parks, green spaces and the railway station. They should be visible for all street users, including cyclists and pedestrians. All gateways or access points to the town centre should be clearly labelled with distinctive and welcoming messages.

Project / Aspiration PW TCb – Town Centre wayfinding strategy

When places are legible and well signposted, they are easier for the public to comprehend and likely to both function well and be more pleasant to spend time in. Opportunities to implement a comprehensive wayfinding strategy in the town centre will be investigated, working alongside the Highways Authority and other partner organisations to devise a clear and concise strategy.

New signage should be consistent in design, reflects local character and be visible for all street users, including drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. Support will be given for innovative wayfinding strategies that encourage active travel.

The railway station and environs

- 5.37 The railway station is an important arrival (and departure) point into the town centre and Paddock Wood as a whole. The station is though offset from the main central area and there is no real sense of welcome nor 'celebration of arrival', with the traveller greeted by views of car parking, service yards and collection points, with pedestrian connections between the station and town centre limited at best. Exits north and south of the railway are key to forming people's first impression of the town and there is potential for significant improvements to lighting and quality of the public realm in these areas.
- 5.38 With the growth of Paddock Wood the importance of the station will increase, not just as a commuter route but also as a link between the north and south of the town, the existing central area and growth to the north.
- 5.39 The station should thus be better integrated with the town, on both sides of the railway line, with accessibility for all improved, particularly those traveling by foot, bicycle or public transport. Secure cycle parking facilities that are connected to a town-wide cycle network should be provided and which can act as parking both for rail travellers as well as those visiting the town centre.
- 5.40 Equally, redesign of the public space outside the station will support movement to and from the station, providing an opportunity for crowds to disburse and visitors to orientate themselves. Furthermore, and in a town with limited public space, this provides an opportunity to act as a town or civic square. The space should thus be designed such that it can accommodate a variety of outdoor activities and temporary events, including, for example, market stalls and outdoor screenings. Development that fronts onto this space, activating the edges will be encouraged.

Policy PW TC3 – Paddock Wood Railway Station

Development that strengthens the role of the railway station and a gateway into Paddock Wood are encouraged. Proposals that will be supported include:

- a. Rationalisation and improvement to drop-off and pick-up area outside the station, transforming this into a pedestrianised town square that is designed to allow multi-functional use and the hosting of outdoor events. Such a square should include places for people to sit as well as planting of trees of native species to Paddock Wood.
- b. Development of an appropriate scale around a new town square, with active edges to this that open onto the square.
- c. New pedestrian and cycle routes and crossing along Station Road, connecting the station with the wider town centre.
- d. Secure, covered cycle parking facilities integrated with the station, with cycle lanes leading directly into this.

Case Study: Utrecht Stationsstalling

With 12,500 spaces, Utrecht central railway station is home to the largest cycle parking hub in the world. Spanning three floors, the scale of the facility means that it was designed to be navigated by bike, with each floor reachable via cyclable ramps.

Different floors provide access to different parts of the station, with users encouraged to choose the floor that suits their needs. For example, the basement floor is largely used by those needing to catch a train as it has direct access to the platforms, whereas people working in the vicinity of the station are more likely to use spaces on level 1, where a small flight of stairs takes you directly onto the public square. The ground floor is reserved for people with a subscription.



Figure 8: Inside Utrecht cycle parking 'garage'

Although the Utrecht cycle parking station is on a grand scale similar facilities can be found in the UK. Kingston station, in south west London, is the 'hub' of the new Mini-Holland network of safer cycle routes being introduced across the borough. A new multi-level cycle storage facility is being provided adjacent to the station. The upper levels provide secure and convenient cycle storage throughout the day. On the ground floor a coffee shop becomes a sociable meeting place and community event space, while a new cycle workshop offers free tools and a space to carry out repairs.

Crossing the railway

- 5.41 The railway line, which runs east west through the centre of Paddock Wood provides an important connection to London and surrounding towns, but also acts as a barrier to movement, severing the main settlement area in the south with employment land and future growth areas to the north.
- 5.42 With future growth expected to increase the number of residents north of the railway line, as well as new employment opportunities, it is vital that the severance created by the railway line is broken through the provision of new bridges, allowing those in the north to more easily access the town centre, and those in the south to access the forthcoming employment areas in the north. In doing so, Paddock Wood will become a more integrated and complete place to live and work for residents on both sides of the railway.
- 5.43 The delivery of new and or improved crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists align with the Neighbourhood Plan's aspirations to promote active travel, allowing north-to-south mobility without having to use a private vehicle. In doing so, the provision of footbridges helps meet the challenges posed by climate change, whilst also promoting a healthy and sustainable place to live.

Case Study: Dafne Schippersbrug, Utrecht

This new foot and cycle bridge across the Rhine Canal in Utrecht has been designed such that the ramp from ground to bridge level is integrated with and curves around a new school. It provides a focal point for the community, bringing together neighbourhoods separated by the canal, as well as delivering much needed new and improved school facilities, a public park, and, importantly, a seamless connection with the rest of the city.



Figure 9: Dafne Schippersberg Bridge, Utrecht, showing school and grounds in the foreground. Image source: Next Architects

- 5.44 New and improved crossing points must be delivered alongside growth. The Paddock Wood structure plan included in the submission Local Plan identifies two locations for new and improved pedestrian crossing points in addition to the existing crossing point at Paddock Wood station: first, at Tudeley Brook on the western edge of the existing settlement boundary; and second, at the eastern edge of the existing settlement boundary. These will be planned into growth area proposals from the start and be subject to an equalisation agreement or similar with all growth area landowners to contribute to their delivery.
- 5.45 The bridges should be direct and attractive routes, accessible to all and fully integrated with future development and network of routes, streets and spaces proposed. Wherever possible, design solutions should allow for cyclists to access and use the bridge without having to dismount, requiring gently sloping ramps to be provided. Innovative designs are encouraged that allow ease of access and which also integrate steps, lifts and other arrangements as appropriate to also cater for the needs of the less able.
- 5.46 Within the town centre improved bridge connections should be combined with development adjacent to the station and connected with that where possible, providing access to this from both sides of the railway line.

Policy PW TC4 – Pedestrian and Cycle Bridges

New bridges must be provided across the railway line alongside growth, including one in the town centre and two within growth areas to the edge of Paddock Wood. Bridges will be for the use of pedestrians and cyclists. They should, unless there are very good grounds as evidenced:

- a. be safe, providing adequate street lighting to ensure that the bridge is well lit at night;
- b. be direct, providing users with an efficient and practical way of moving north to south and vice versa;
- c. provide adequate space and infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians to use the bridge in tandem;
- d. incorporate disabled access;
- e. be located to integrate with the wider pedestrian and cycle network; and
- f. allow cycle use without the need to dismount.

The design, construction and delivery of bridges will be subject to consultation and approval from Network Rail and other relevant partners.

Case Study: Stratford railway bridge

The footbridge in Stratford connects the town centre and bus station with the Westfield shopping centre and Olympic Park, crossing a combination of train and tube lines.

The bridge is designed as a wide street and allows for seamless transition from the town centre to the Olympic Park. The use of weathering steel brings a sophisticated, urban appearance in keeping with the character and emerging vision of Stratford. Transparent material either side act as a strong safety measure whilst providing long distance views.



Figure 10: Stratford station footbridge. Image source: © Thomas Nugent ([cc-by-sa/2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/))

Car Parking in the Town Centre

- 5.47 Car parking capacity in the town centre should be maintained, though it can be rationalised to make more effective use of the land.
- 5.48 Given the scale of growth allocated for Paddock Wood (see submission Local Plan Policy STR/SS 1) it is accepted that existing parking provision in Paddock Wood Town Centre is currently insufficient. To ensure that the town centre is able to support the increasing number of people and remain an important hub of social and community facilities, retail and business activity, car parking provision will have to expand in line with future growth, whilst at the same time, active and sustainable travel measures also promoted that provide a wide range of travel choice.
- 5.49 On-street parking in the town centre creates more problems than it solves, causing congestion and harming the public realm by reducing space for pedestrians. This has environmental, social and economic consequences and should be avoided.
- 5.50 The rationalisation of car parking in the town centre could thus involve provision of a new multi-storey car park on land adjacent to the railway station, serving both the station and the town centre. This would help release existing surface car parking elsewhere in the centre enabling wider development opportunities to come forward. Such uses would need to confirm with those set out in Policy PW TC2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.51 This strategy aligns with the submission Local Plan's aspirations for Paddock Wood Town Centre, which notes that growth in the Town Centre will be supported by "rationalisation of car parking, including the provision of new (potentially multi-storey) car parks, to replace the loss of existing surface car parking" (Policy STR/SS2).
- 5.52 Any multi-storey car park should be located alongside the railway on brownfield land. This has two main advantages: first, as it is not in the main retail core (but close to it) it will not dominate the town centre streetscape; and second, it can serve the train station in addition to the town centre. If located to the south of the railway line the multi-storey should be wrapped with active uses, which help create an attractive street frontage. Suitable uses include commercial, leisure and retail activities. If located to the north of the railway, a footbridge should be included to provide direct access to the town centre and railway station.

Policy PW TC5 – Town Centre Car Parking

Development of a new multi-storey car park within the Town Centre will be supported where it involves the rationalisation and reduction of surface parking spaces in the centre.

Locations adjacent to the railway line are appropriate for a new multi-storey car park.

Proposals for a multi-storey car park to the south of the railway line must be wrapped with active development, and with doors and windows opening onto the street. Non-residential uses, including retail, commercial and leisure comprise suitable uses to be wrapped around the car park. The wrapping of the car park with active uses should be designed to break down the mass of the building, with the scale and rhythm of frontages informed by adjacent buildings.

Any proposals for a multi-storey car park to the north of the railway line will be required to demonstrate how users of the car park can access the railway station and town centre from the north. Where possible, links to and from the car park should incorporate or connect with a footbridge across the railway line providing a connection with the town centre. The connection shall be accessible for all, incorporating, as appropriate, steps, ramps, lifts and escalators that respond to the needs of the mobility impaired.

Any footbridge link shall be designed such that it creates a welcoming experience for all arriving in the town centre. It shall be wide, with clear sightlines, and be accessible to all at all times of the day.

Where possible and feasible, the footbridge should provide a second means of access to Paddock Wood railway station.

6. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy Objectives

- 6.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 01:** Deliver the social and environmental infrastructure necessary to support a growing community in the 21st Century.
 - **Objective 06:** Create a robust and flexible network of streets, roads and spaces suitable for all modes of travel
 - **Objective 09:** Enhance the town's natural beauty and countryside setting by protecting and enhancing biodiversity

Introduction

- 6.2 Paddock Wood is a small town with a rich and varied history set in a high-quality natural environment. Despite the proposed growth and expansion of Paddock Wood it is important to retain green spaces and, as part of new growth, provide accessible new space as well as protecting and enhancing important habitats and areas of wildlife and biodiversity.
- 6.3 Green open space makes a vital contribution to the overall character and setting of the town. Indeed, Paddock Wood is situated in an area which in the recent past contained a number of ancient woodlands, including the Local Nature Reserve at Foalhurst Wood and woodland at the Spinney.
- 6.4 Local residents are proud and protective of those features that give the Paddock Wood a sense of place and of identity which stem from its character and setting. The Neighbourhood Plan Vision seeks to maintain Paddock Wood's defining assets as an historic railway town including: the essentially rural setting; a range of heritage assets; the green, open aspects of all approaches to the town; the important landscape setting of the town within a transition zone between the upland area of the High Weald to the south and the flatter more open river valley of the Medway and Teise of the Low Weald landscape to the north; woodland embedded within the parish; well-established street trees; open green spaces and orchards; and green and wildlife corridors.
- 6.5 The Plan seeks to protect areas of green open space, implement a network of green paths and cycle ways around the town, and enhance biodiversity and green gaps that deliver a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits for local people.
- 6.6 Space for allotments has also been identified as a significant issue for residents and feedback has confirmed that all existing allotment space needs to be retained and new sites for potential allotments are required.

The importance of Green Space

- 6.7 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (Paragraph 5) highlights the importance of green infrastructure for communities, referencing benefits such as *'enhanced well-being, outdoor recreation and access, enhanced biodiversity and landscapes, food and energy production, urban cooling and the management of flood risk'*.
- 6.8 Green infrastructure can drive economic growth and regeneration, reinforce and enhance local landscape character and contribute to a sense of place (PPG, Paragraph 6). It can also help to improve the health and well-being of a community, providing opportunities for residents and visitors to exercise, interact with one another, experience nature and get involved in their community through activities like food growing and gardening, all of which bring physical and mental health benefits (PPG, Paragraph 6).
- 6.9 In their research project 'Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces', Fields in Trust, the independent charity working to secure the protection of parks and green spaces at both the local and national level, quantified the 'Wellbeing Value' of such spaces. Parks and green spaces are estimated to save the NHS around £111 million per year based solely on a reduction in GP visits⁵.
- 6.10 Such spaces are particularly important in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. With access to gyms, sports facilities, cafés, shops and other community facilities restricted, open spaces have become hugely important sites where people can exercise and interact with one another in a socially distanced and safe environment⁶.
- 6.11 In recognition of the important role of green space, and to help foster community pride and cohesion, there should be opportunities for the community to have a greater role in learning about, managing and caring for the environment.

Project PW Ga – Green Apprenticeships

Opportunities should be available for residents, and in particular young people, to become involved in the care of Paddock Wood's environment and green infrastructure. Working in partnership with local schools and colleges, it is envisaged that apprentice and work experience opportunities to practice arboriculture, horticulture and other related skills might be provided.

In an attempt to restore appreciation for our environment, other opportunities to collaborate with schools to encourage the use of natural habitats during learning will be investigated.

⁵ Fields in Trust – Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces: <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/research>

⁶ LSE London Blog – Valuing London's urban green space in a time of crisis – and in everyday life: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lseLondon/valuing-londons-urban-green-space-in-a-time-of-crisis-and-in-everyday-life/>

Access to the countryside

- 6.12 Just as it does not take long to walk to the town centre, most residents live within walking distance of the surrounding open countryside. The existing footpaths and rights of way that criss-cross the parish are enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike. It is important to preserve and maintain these routes and relationship with the countryside.
- 6.13 Easy access to such wildlife sites is vital for people's health and well-being. In the event that development occurs on the edges of the built areas, the interface between the countryside and new development needs to be designed that continues to allow public access to the countryside beyond the town boundaries.
- 6.14 Footpaths, and bridleways and cycle paths, provide sustainable ways for travelling around the town and out into the countryside. They provide recreation and exercise for residents, wildlife routes and green corridors.
- 6.15 However, and although many residents value living close to some of the most attractive countryside in England, access can be frustrated through blocked footpaths or private ownerships. Therefore, the introduction of additional access routes around the new edges of Paddock Wood as part of new developments will be one way to ensure new edges have a sense of permanence.
- 6.16 A new link may be able to connect to the disused Hop Pickers railway line (see Section 7 and Appendix D for more information) in the future and other links out from Paddock Wood may connect with nearby national trails.

Policy PW GI1 – Access to countryside

Where existing routes forming part of the Public Right of Way network run through proposed development sites, the route shall be retained and incorporated into the development proposals. Such routes, whether retained in their current alignment or rerouted where required to enable significant redevelopment, should be well integrated within the development, such that they are safe and attractive for all to use. The stopping up of these will not be permitted. Any proposal that would result in harm to or loss of a green route must be justified, and any harm minimised.

Proposals to improve links or provide new links will be supported, particularly where they increase access to the countryside and make better use of the former Hop Pickers railway line as a 'green route'

Project/Aspiration PW Gb – New green routes

The existing paths that criss-cross the parish are enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike. To enable a greater appreciation of the local landscape features, interaction with the countryside and the built parts of Paddock Wood, the provision of improved routes (footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths) as part of the Public Right of Way network and, where possible new routes, is strongly encouraged. Where new routes or improved existing routes are provided, they should accord with best practice design principles, including that established by Sustrans in the 'Handbook for Cycle Friendly Design' and 'Greenway Management Handbook'.

Working with partner organisations, such as the Highways Authority and Sustrans, the feasibility of delivering new or improved routes across the neighbourhood area will be explored. Also included within the provision of new and improved routes is the delivery of adequate supporting infrastructure e.g. wayfinding, mapping resources and surfacing.

Green fingers

- 6.17 The vision and objectives for Paddock Wood include creation of a series of green fingers or wedges within new areas of growth and development and which link back into fabric of the existing built form, proving a green connection for existing and new residents to the countryside. These are also intended to create biodiversity networks and contribute towards the greening of the existing built form. The intention is that they should:
- Be designed as a response to the existing landscape, retaining and incorporating existing trees, hedgerows and woodland, including natural areas for wildlife and biodiversity.
 - Include and enable the establishment of new areas of trees, shrubs and grassland areas that reflect the landscape character of the corridor. These should add to rather than replace existing trees and hedgerows.
 - Link open spaces within the existing built form out towards new development areas, creating a series of linked spaces, strengthening community cohesion and integration.
 - Contain areas for formal and informal play, including equipped play areas and playing fields, supporting the health and well-being of the community.
 - Be integrated with new development, being fronted by new homes and other supporting uses, becoming a defining feature of Paddock Wood.
 - Incorporate areas of biodiversity and sustainable urban drainage systems.
 - Connect with and allow for the retrofitting and redesign of existing streets and spaces, introducing new planting and street trees, connecting existing neighbourhoods with new neighbourhoods.
 - Incorporate routes for walking and cycling.
- 6.18 Guidance on design features associated with green fingers and relationship with development in existing and new areas is set out in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance to which applicants should refer.

Policy PW GI2 – Green fingers

Proposals for the growth areas identified around Paddock Wood must include provision of green fingers that provide a connection between the countryside, new and existing areas of development.

The location of green fingers will be determined through the masterplanning process but should be located to connect with routes within the built-up area that support walking and cycling movements and where the potential exist to connect with existing green spaces and or provide new tree planting or landscaping within the street.

The green fingers should provide for a range of green space typologies, including play space, natural and semi-natural space. They may be suitable locations for provision of sustainable urban drainage systems and delivery of biodiversity net-gain.

The development edges of the green fingers should be overlooked by new development and provide walking and cycling routes that link through and across the green fingers.

Biodiversity

- 6.19 The Environment Act, together with the declared Climate Emergency, has raised the importance of biodiversity and natural habitats. The Wildlife Trusts envisage creation of a Nature Recovery Network⁷, with greenery integrated into all development and resulting in a net gain for wildlife. It is proposed that nature is brought back into the places where people live their lives, also having a positive impact on health and wellbeing. The provision of green fingers running through growth areas around Paddock Wood, linking the existing built-up area through new development to the surrounding countryside supports this concept.
- 6.20 The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the need to conserve and enhance areas of importance for biodiversity and nature conservation and the valuable contribution these make to the natural heritage. Paddock Wood has a number of valued natural areas, habitats and species which need to be protected and enhanced. These areas are of significant community benefit for local residents who value the contribution they make to the town. In particular, natural and semi natural open space is highly valued by local residents not just for its recreational value but also for its landscape character, quiet enjoyment and biodiversity.
- 6.21 Existing areas of nature conservation need to be retained and protected from any negative impacts likely to arise from development by the following measures:
- through protecting designated sites, species, ancient hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands;
 - by preserving ecological networks and the migration and transit of flora and fauna;
 - protecting ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value;
 - promoting the mitigation, preservation, restoration and recreation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species;
 - providing a net gain in flora and fauna; and
 - adopting best practice in Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS).
- 6.22 Well planned new developments can provide an increased variety of habitat types over monocultural agricultural fields. Street trees and other public plantings, gardens with trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants with associated compost heaps and ponds can all benefit wildlife. Indeed, there are streets in Paddock Wood which include, in places, areas of mown grass verge and which have little amenity nor wildlife value.
- 6.23 These present an opportunity to introduce street tree planting and other landscaping, including raingardens and planting of wildflowers. This would transform the nature of the urban environment, providing a link between the built area and surrounding green space, whilst also enhancing biodiversity and flood management. Replanting mown verges with wildflowers would also bring cost benefits, reducing the need for regular maintenance.
- 6.24 However, the removal and alteration of some habitats (unimproved grassland, old orchards etc) will have a detrimental effect and the proximity of more people and their pets to natural areas invariably leads to damage and disturbance.
- 6.25 To maintain the rural feel, all new development proposals should include a green infrastructure strategy, which designates sufficient space within the site to meet ecological requirements, such

⁷ The Wildlife Trusts, 2018, Towards a Wilder Britain: Creating a Nature Recovery Network to bring back wildlife to every neighbourhood, A report for the Westminster Government

as retention of mature hedgerows and trees and the creation of wetland habitats, linked to deliver of sustainable urban drainage systems (see following section).

- 6.26 The submission Local Plan, at Policy EN9, establishes an approach to biodiversity net-gain that applies to all development (excluding minor householder applications and change of use) and which is linked to use of the Defra Biodiversity Metric. Alongside this it is expected that development proposals will reinforce wildlife habitats and ecological corridors. Equally, policies seek to protect trees and support enhancement of the network of green and blue infrastructure. Design guidance prepared by the London Wildlife Trust⁸ includes a range of design solutions that can be utilised increase biodiversity value and augment existing habitats. Applicants are encouraged to refer to this guidance.
- 6.27 Development proposals should not have a detrimental impact on and should enhance areas identified as having major or substantial landscape value or sensitivity. Proposals should also not have an adverse impact on the landscape setting of Paddock Wood and should maintain the distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built-up area. Development should protect and enhance biodiversity through positive actions and should, wherever possible:
- Protect designated sites, protected species and ancient or species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands.
 - Protect ancient woodland, ancient/veteran trees and trees of arboricultural value, including adoption of root protection areas commensurate with the size and species of tree.
 - Preserve ecological networks and the movements of flora and fauna.
 - Protect and promote the mitigation, preservation, restoration and recreation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species.
 - Include bird and bat boxes where possible.
 - Use native plants in landscaping schemes.
 - Plant a minimum of two trees to replace any tree removed.
 - Incorporate green roofs on new buildings.
 - Utilise climbing plants on buildings which can provide shelter and foraging opportunities for wildlife.
 - Create new habitats, especially woodlands, wetlands, unimproved grasslands and wildflower meadows.
 - Provide front and back gardens, with permeable surfaces and including the planting of locally native trees and shrubs.
 - Alignment of back gardens where possible to provide for continuous wildlife corridors, with bird boxes or bricks in walls installed to enhance biodiversity and wildlife.
 - Incorporating insect homes into brickwork.
 - Utilise fencing with holes (minimum of 13cm x 13cm) to allow for the free movement of hedgehogs and amphibians.
 - Install tunnels and/or kerbs wherever they may impact on amphibian migration routes.
 - Provide new planting that enhances and supports existing bat 'commuting routes'.

⁸ London Wildlife Trust for the Mayor of London, March 2021, Urban Greening for Biodiversity Net Gain: A Design Guide.

Policy PW GI3 – Biodiversity

Development should not result in any significant loss of natural assets, and should seek to enhance the existing. Where there is unavoidable loss or damage to habitats, sites or features because of exceptional circumstances, mitigation and compensation will be required. Development which causes loss of trees, hedgerows and woodland should include replacement of those assets within the site or, where this is demonstrated to not be practical, contribute to off-site provision.

Development proposals should manage impacts on biodiversity and aim to secure a minimum net biodiversity gain of 10% on-site, as demonstrated through use of the most up-to-date version of the Defra / Natural England biodiversity metric (or any successor document to this) and submission of a biodiversity net gain plan submitted as part of planning application material. This should be informed by current site conditions and with any proposed habitat creation being appropriate to local context. This applies to all developments, including smaller sites, which should make use of the Small Sites Toolkit published by Defra / Natural England as part of the Metric.

Where measures are proposed off-site these should be located as close as possible to the development site. The applicant will need to demonstrate these are deliverable.

Where green infrastructure is to be provided, it is expected that this will provide permeability for wildlife through and around development. This should be functional as wildlife habitat in its own right not just as a link between habitats. The width of wildlife corridors should be proportionate to the requirements of target species. These should allow for movement of nocturnal wildlife, with the impact of lighting and glare minimised.

Where landscaping is to be provided, it is expected that native species appropriate to the area will be used wherever possible.

Project PW Gc – Street Greening

The Town Council is keen to promote delivery of greener streets throughout Paddock Wood and hopes to work with partner organisations, including the Borough and County Council, to explore how underused green spaces and roadside verges might be better used to increase biodiversity value, provide new wildlife habitats and space for local food production. Reuse of such space for raingardens and wildflower meadows is encouraged, and which would also help manage surface water run-off. These may act as a network of 'B-Lines' allowing bees, butterflies and other insect pollinators to extend their range. The associated management and maintenance regimes would be agreed with the relevant authorities.

Flooding and drainage

- 6.28 The Paddock Wood Stream flows through the centre of Paddock Wood from south to north and is largely culverted south of the railway line. To the west of Paddock Wood are the Tudeley Brook and Gravelly Ways Stream and to the east are the two Rhoden watercourses, the East Rhoden and West Rhoden. These flow from south to north and are all open watercourses aside from the culverts or bridges under the railway. These local watercourses flow into the large regional rivers to the north of Paddock Wood: the Rivers Medway and Teise. Much of Paddock Wood is at risk from fluvial (river) flooding from these watercourses (Figure 11).
- 6.29 The Environment Agency classifies the rivers in Paddock Wood as ‘main rivers’⁹ and recommends that where development is proposed next to a river it should include a green buffer strip (8 metres for fluvial rivers, 16 metres for tidal rivers) alongside the watercourse. This green buffer can take the form of a sustainable drainage system, which will help reduce the risk of flooding as well as provide recreational and wildlife benefits.
- 6.30 Furthermore, Paddock Wood is situated on the Low Weald, which is a relatively flat area underlain by impermeable Weald Clay. As such, rainwater cannot easily drain¹⁰. Surface water flood risk (Figure 12) is highest around the railway line, particularly on the southern side where in some parts the risk is high.
- 6.31 The Paddock Wood Flood Alleviation Study 2015 identifies the following as the main sources of flooding in the area:
- Tudeley Brook and Gravelly Ways Stream contribute to flooding to the western side of Paddock Wood (west of the B2160 (Maidstone Road)).
 - Excess surface water from the west of the town tends to collect in a low area at Allington Road, flood risk in this area is further exacerbated from flooding arising from Tudeley Brook and Gravelly Ways stream. Surface water drainage from this area drains out through Station Road, entering Paddock Wood Stream north of the railway.
 - Paddock Wood Stream creates moderately low flood risk to the town, with the exception of flooding from the junction of B2160 with Badsell Road, where floodwater running off the fields contributes to surface water flowing down the B2160.
 - The Rhoden East and Rhoden West contribute to flood risk to the east of Paddock Wood, affecting the ability of surface water from the Dimmock Close area to discharge.
- 6.32 It is important to minimise the risk and put in place mitigation strategies to contain flooding events when they do occur.

⁹ <https://environment.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=17cd53dfc524433980cc333726a56386>

¹⁰ Paddock Wood Flood Alleviation Study 2015 Available at: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/flooding-and-drainage-policies/surface-water-management-plans/paddock-wood-surface-water-management-plan#tab-2>

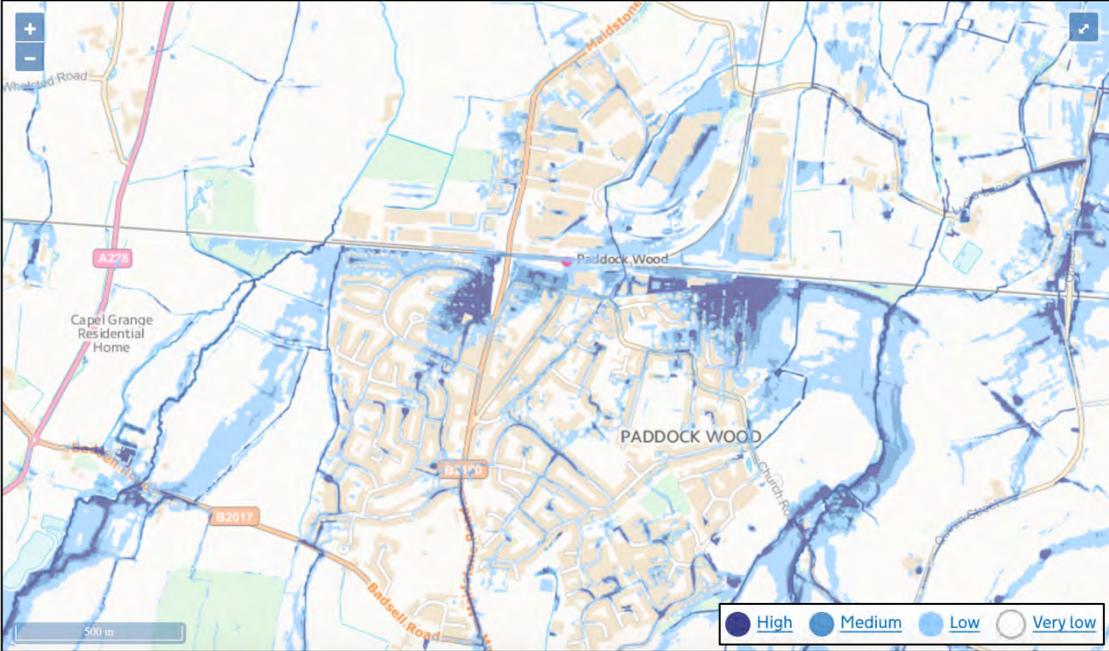


Figure 11: Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Risk for Paddock Wood

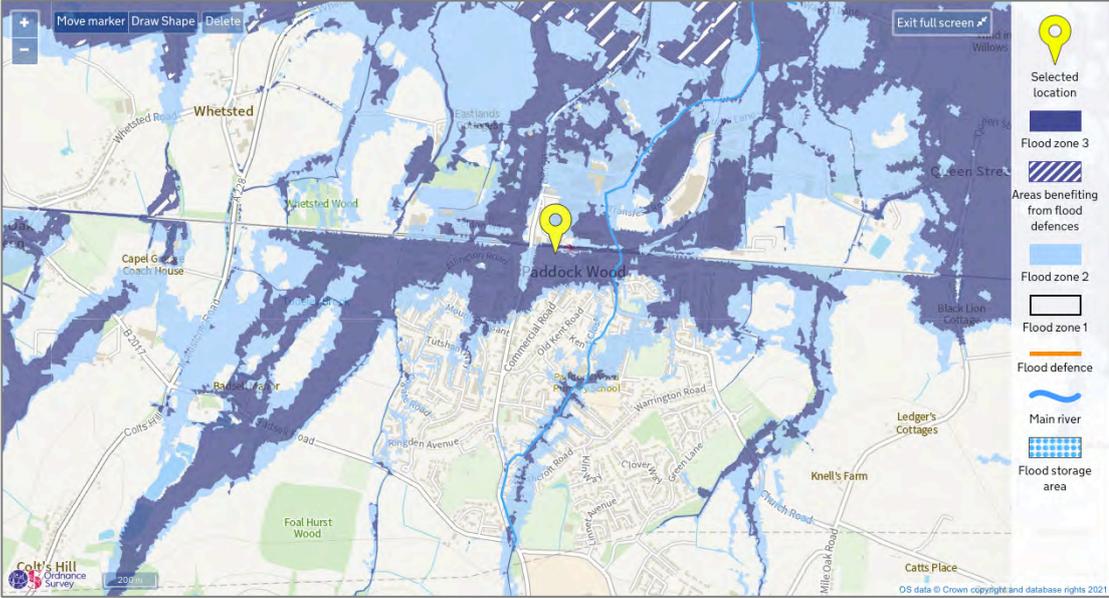


Figure 12: Environment Agency Fluvial Flood Risk for Paddock Wood

- 6.33 The submission Local Plan¹¹, at Policy EN26: Sustainable Drainage, prioritises the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). It also recognises the role that SuDS can play in contributing towards the achievement of other objectives in the Local Plan, for example by improving water quality and efficiency, reinforcing local landscape character, enhancing the design of development, and the provision of amenity, landscape, and recreational open space.
- 6.34 SuDS are an approach to managing surface water run-off which seeks to mimic natural drainage systems and retain water on or near the site as opposed to traditional drainage approaches which involve piping water off site as quickly as possible. SuDS offer significant advantages over conventional piped drainage systems in reducing flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water run-off from a site, promoting groundwater recharge and biodiversity benefits, as well as improving water quality and amenity value. As a way of potentially delivering biodiversity net-gain, support is given to the use of SuDS, both as part of new development but also as part of a wider response to climate change and resilience across Paddock Wood. This may include the use of SuDS as 'raingardens' within the public realm as part of wider highways projects (see, for example, figure 2). These are generally low maintenance, wildlife-friendly spaces that manage rainwater runoff from hard surfaces. They are also often referred to as bioretention facilities.

Case Study: Integrating flood management in a major growth area

Upton is a new development of 1,350 homes on the edge of Northampton. The masterplan for the site was informed by the use of an 'enquiry-by-design' style charrette. A detailed design code was prepared and this establishes principles in relation to the layout, massing and appearance of development.

A network of SUDs is integrated into the street pattern. This helps control flooding and enhances green space and biodiversity. The SUDs form part of the wider green infrastructure network, which also comprises a new country park and wetlands along the River Nene. Surface water from the adopted highways is discharged into the SUDs.

A management company has been established and is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of unadopted public space, such as the SUDs and other areas of landscaping.

- 6.35 To help minimise and mitigate the risk of flooding from development the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) for Kent¹² contains guidance and requirements relating to the use of SuDS. Furthermore, Kent County Council has worked with partners to develop guidance to promote the use of SuDS in new development, leading to the production of Water.People.Places¹³ report. This report promotes the inclusion of SuDS in new developments at the Masterplanning stage, as well as providing guidance aimed at helping developers understand the suitability of different SuDS typologies for their site. It is expected that any drainage proposal submitted to Kent County Council for approval and adoption will include the identification, management, control and mitigation of risks through planning and would follow the detailed design process illustrated in Figure 13.

¹¹https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/387793/Pre-Submission-Local-Plan_final-compressed.pdf

¹²https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/79453/Local-Flood-Risk-Management-Strategy-2017-2023.pdf

¹³https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/23578/Masterplanning-for-SuDS.pdf

6.37 The Strategy and associated guidance should both be referred to in all proposals for major development. Although the use of SuDS is not a requirement for small sites, such schemes will be required to demonstrate how they are contributing to bio-diversity net gain in any event, utilising the Small Sites Toolkit¹⁴ developed by Natural England and Defra. The provision of SuDS, including the planting of wildflowers for example, might be a way of helping to achieve this, whilst also managing localised flood risk. Solutions appropriate to the site and context should be designed and consulted upon with the County Council as the lead local flood authority (LLFA). This is to ensure that new development does not contribute to increased flood risk from surface water and that surface water arising from the development is managed in a sustainable way, prioritising the use of SuDS.

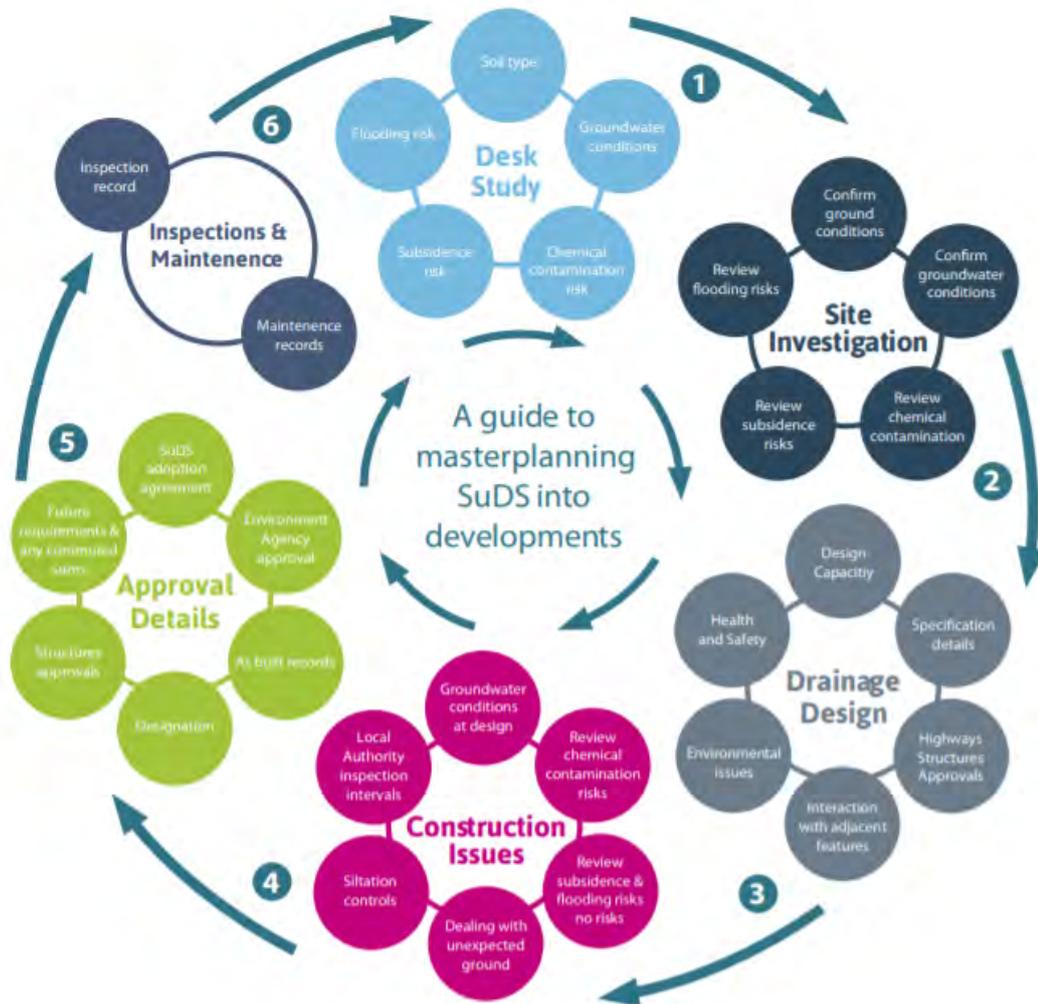


Figure 13: A guide to masterplanning SuDS into developments (source: Kent Design Guide – Making it Happen)

¹⁴ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720>

Policy PW GI4 – Flooding and drainage

Planning applications for developments in Paddock Wood which are located within an area at risk from flooding must include mitigation measures giving priority to the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS):

- a. To ensure that surface water run-off will not be increased and if possible will be reduced.
- b. To ensure that the development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Sustainable Drainage System, or other appropriate mitigation measures identified in relevant Flood Risk Assessments, should be satisfactorily integrated into the design and layout of the development.
- c. To ensure that all development proposals are safe and flood resilient over their lifetime.

Development proposals including roads and paths must increase flood resilience throughout and around the town and surrounding communities. The use of permeable surfacing material for parking areas, hard-standing areas and paths will be required.

Where it is proposed to provide SuDS within the public realm these should be designed as an integral part of the green infrastructure and street network, responding positively to the character of the area.

Where practicable, sustainable urban drainage systems should be designed to be multi-functional and deliver benefits for wildlife, amenity and landscape.

The design of SUDS should reflect best practice guidance established in the LFRMS and the *Water. People. Places* report (or a subsequent update of this). This includes:

- i. Keeping impermeable areas to a minimum.
- ii. Managing surface runoff at its source (where practicable).
- iii. Managing surface runoff on the surface (where practicable).
- iv. Integrating drainage systems with public space so that it serves more than one property.
- v. Design drainage systems that account for the likely impacts of climate change over the design life of the development.

Project PW Gc – Raingardens

Alongside the provision of SuDS within specific development schemes, the Town Council is keen to see wider measures introduced that manage and mitigate flood risk, including that associated with surface water runoff.

The Town Council is keen to work with partners, including the County Council as highways authority and lead local flood authority, to explore opportunities for 'de-paving' extensive areas of hard-surfacing, and which might include the creation of rain gardens and tree-pits alongside or as part of the remodeling of the carriageway.

Local Green Spaces

- 6.38 Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans can designate Local Green Spaces which are of importance to the local community. The NPPF (at paragraph 102) states that Local Green Spaces should only be designated where the green space is:
- a) *in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
 - b) *demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
 - c) *local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*¹⁵
- 6.39 It is important to note that whilst designation affords the green space similar policy protection to Green Belt, it does not place any new restrictions or obligations on landowners. Management of the land remains the responsibility of the landowner although, with the agreement of the landowner, there may be opportunities that can be explored which allow the local community to become more involved in the management of the space. Furthermore, designation does not confer any rights of access over what exists at present.
- 6.40 The submission Local Plan identifies a number of Local Green Space Designations across Paddock Wood (see Table 1 below). In addition to these two further Local Green Space Designations have been identified in the Neighbourhood Plan, as mapped on Figure 14. Both are considered to meet the criteria for designation outlined in the NPPF. The designated sites are summarised below.
- **Warrington Road, Woodland:** The site has value for wildlife and biodiversity and forms part of a green corridor linking to the countryside beyond the built-up area and connecting with adjacent sites that benefit from local green space designation in the submission Local Plan.
 - **Green Lane, Woodland:** The site is of value to Paddock Wood community as a whole for wildlife and biodiversity, and forms part of a wider green corridor for wildlife and biodiversity on the south of the existing built-up area, connecting adjacent sites designated as Local Green Space by TWBC in the submission Local Plan. The pressure from future development to the south and its role as a connected green corridor emphasises the importance of the site for wildlife, as well as contributing to the character and setting of the residential area.
- 6.41 New development will only be allowed within designated Local Green Spaces where very special circumstances can be demonstrated in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and which might include provision of essential utility infrastructure, such as drainage pipes or sewer tunnels, or where the proposal is supplementary to and supports the function of that green space.

¹⁵ Para 102, MHCLG, February 2021, NPPF



Figure 14: Local Green Space Designations – Top: Warrington Road Woodland, Bottom: Green Lane Woodland. Map produced by MAGIC <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/> (c) Crown Copyright and database rights 2021. Ordnance Survey 100022861

Policy PW GI5 – Local Green Space Designations

The following are designated as Local Green Spaces, as identified on Figure 14:

1. Warrington Road, Woodland
2. Green Lane, Woodland

Planning applications for development on the Locally Designated Green Spaces, including those within the submission Local Plan listed in Table 1 below, will not be permitted unless they perform a supplementary and supporting function to the green space and the use of that space, and comply with the wider policies set out in the Development Plan.

Planning applications for development that may cause undue harm to such designated Local Green Spaces will be refused.

New development proposals that detract from the visual, historic, recreational, landscape or ecological value of designated Local Green Spaces will not be supported.

| Site Name | Submission Local Plan site reference |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Green space with Church Farm development | 145 |
| Green space within Mascalls Court development | 146 |
| Paddock Wood cemetery | 147 |
| St. Andrews Recreation Ground | 148 |
| Recreation Ground and Memorial Park, Maidstone Road | 150 |
| Putlands Leisure Centre field | 151 |
| Playground, The Ridings | 152 |
| Playground, Fuggles Close | 153 |
| Green space in development south of Badsell Road | 154 |
| Paddock Wood allotments south of Badsell Road | 155 |
| Paddock Wood allotments north of Badsell Road | 159 |
| Green space, south of Green lane | 161 |
| Green space, north of Green Lane | 162 |
| Green space on Ringden Avenue | 165 |
| Green space north of Tutsham Way | 167 |
| Green space / rest area on Cogate Road | 168 |
| Green space on Cobbs Close | 169 |
| Green space / rest area on Commercial Road | 170 |
| Green space / rest area on Maidstone Road | 172 |
| Paddock Wood allotments, Courthope | 175 |
| Green space at The Granary | 176 |
| Church Road cemetery | 177 |
| Green Lane Recreation Ground | 178 |
| Green space with ponds on Church Road | 179 |
| Green space at Newton Gardens | 181 |
| Green space adjacent to railway bridge | 183 |
| Clover Way playground | AS_55 |
| Field north of Foal Hurst Wood | AS_66 |
| Green corridor adjacent to Poppy Meadow | AS_68 |

Table 1: Local Green Space Designations in Paddock Wood in the submission Local Plan

New Green Spaces

- 6.42 The submission Local Plan, at Policy OSSR 2, states that, for new housing and mixed use development sites, new open space and places for recreation shall be delivered in accordance with specific minimum standards. Green spaces play a vital role in creating a positive environment, fostering community cohesion and gathering. Furthermore, and in light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of local and accessible green spaces for leisure and recreation was highlighted.
- 6.43 Where new spaces are to be provided principles set out in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance should be referred to. Such spaces should be safe, accessible and usable for all, and provide a range of open space types and play facilities that cater for all ages, including some areas specifically set aside for wildlife. Green spaces should be connected by a network of green infrastructure, including public rights of way, tree-lined and landscaped streets. This network of spaces should incorporate measures that help manage surface water run-off and include wildflowers enabling insect pollinators to extend their range.

Policy PW GI6 – New green spaces

All green spaces in Paddock Wood shall be retained.

Development of a scale that triggers provision of new green space should be provided in line with standards established by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. The design of this space should reflect the principles established in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance. Development should:

- a) Avoid creation of left over space that lacks purpose.
- b) Integrate open space within the development rather than pushing this to the periphery.
- c) Locate new green space within walking distance of as many residents as possible.
- d) Link green spaces through a network of green routes wherever possible, including public rights of way and tree-lined or landscaped streets.
- e) Provide a range of open space types, including areas of play for all age groups, including adolescents, opportunities for growing food, and quieter areas for relaxation.
- f) Ensure that play areas and public spaces are well overlooked wherever possible, providing natural surveillance of the space. Hidden spots must be avoided.
- g) Enable play spaces to be accessible for all children and incorporate elements relating to nature and landscape as well as play equipment.

Development that contributes to the enhancement of existing green spaces for recreation, including indoor and outdoor facilities, will be supported. Opportunities for creating areas for community activities, such as barbeque and seating facilities, will be supported.

A connected network of green spaces that incorporates measures that minimise surface water run-off and which help extend the range of insect pollinators is supported.

Allotments and Community Gardens

- 6.44 Allotments are essential facilities for the local residents of Paddock Wood who do not have access to their own green spaces.
- 6.45 Paddock Wood currently has three allotment sites: Kent Close, Ringden and Badsell Road. Across these three sites there are 123 plots, the equivalent of approximately 250 square metres. There are currently vacant plots at these sites.
- 6.46 However, forthcoming growth across Paddock Wood will place additional pressure on the existing allotment sites. Submission Local Plan Policy OSSR 2 states that for every 1,000 new dwellings, 0.3Ha of allotment space should be provided. With more than 3,500 new homes planned in Paddock Wood, there will be an additional need of more than 1.05Ha of allotment space.
- 6.47 In anticipation of this, the Neighbourhood Plan supports the protection, expansion and the provision of new allotment spaces in Paddock Wood. Where new allotments are to be provided they should be in close proximity of the home.

Policy PW GI7 – Allotments

The loss of allotments at Kent Close, Ringden and Badsell Road will be resisted. Development proposals that contribute to the improvement of these spaces will be supported.

The provision of communal outdoor space for residents, potentially including areas for self-managed allotments or garden land in new developments of 10 or more units will be actively encouraged, wherever possible and viable. Where such spaces are delivered, they should be positively managed.

All existing and future allotments will be designated as Assets of Community Value.

Proposed Garden Developments

- 6.48 Gardens provide a number of important functions, including providing amenity space, biodiversity and the infiltration of water into the ground reducing the amount of surface waste run off produced. Paddock Wood includes some residential areas of low density with large mature gardens. In order to preserve these areas from inappropriate back garden development, this policy seeks to control further infill. Back garden development is considered to be 'development of landlocked sites' behind existing buildings (usually houses), such as rear gardens and private open space, usually within predominantly residential areas. Such sites often have no street frontages.
- 6.49 Through Policy H11 (Residential Extensions, Alterations, Outbuildings, and Annexes), the submission Local Plan permits development in back gardens, only if it adheres to the following criteria:
- *They are compatible with the character and appearance of the main dwelling and its setting in terms of design, siting, layout, size, mass, height, form (including roof form), external finishing materials, and detailing;*
 - *They do not significantly harm the amenities of neighbouring properties in terms of direct overlooking to main habitable room windows and/or private amenity areas, resulting in loss of privacy;*
 - *They do not significantly harm the amenities of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of immediate outlook/dominance, resulting in an overbearing impact, loss of daylight/sunlight, and overshadowing of habitable (as defined above) room windows and private amenity areas;*
 - *They would retain usable and reasonable external space for garden/amenity, refuse, recycling, and cycle storage, and the parking and turning of vehicles to meet the continuing needs of the dwelling.*
- 6.50 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to align with and extend these protections further, placing greater emphasis on the important role back gardens play with regard to protecting and enhancing wildlife and biodiversity.

Policy PW GI8 – Proposed Garden Developments

Where back garden development is proposed and it satisfies wider policies in the development plan, it must protect and enhance biodiversity, existing trees, shrubs and hedges. Proposals that fail to do so will be resisted.

Where a garden is rich in biodiversity or where there are protected species on or adjacent to the site, an ecological survey will be required to assess its value.

Cemeteries and Natural Burial

- 6.51 According to the TWBC Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2013-2033), Paddock Wood has 2.83 Ha of cemeteries and churchyards. Given the forthcoming growth around Paddock Wood and an ageing population across the Borough as a whole, it is likely that pressure on existing burial sites will increase. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore supports proposals for a new burial site.
- 6.52 The Town Council is responsible for the maintenance of all three burial sites in Paddock Wood, including the Closed Churchyard, Cemetery and Gardens of Remembrance. The Cemetery and Garden of Remembrance are located in the flood plain and susceptible to waterlogging in winter months. Where new burial space is provided the appropriate national guidance on site, location and management must be adhered to, particularly in respect of groundwater pollution.
- 6.53 Natural or Woodland burial refers to the burial of the deceased in as natural a way as possible, usually in an existing wooded or natural space. Interest in natural burial has grown as people have become increasingly concerned about the emissions and fuel-use associated with cremation, the use of stone for memorials (often shipped considerable distances from overseas quarries), or the use of formaldehyde for embalming, which has an adverse effect upon groundwater¹⁶. The main benefit of natural burial is that it is more environmentally friendly than traditional burial methods, enhancing wildlife and biodiversity by increasing the variation in plant and habitat opportunities. Such a space would be a welcome addition to Paddock Wood's green infrastructure network.
- 6.54 The Natural Death Centre¹⁷ recommends that proposed sites for natural burial should consider risks to ground water, archaeological disturbance, ecological scoping surveys and visual splays. As such, it is important to engage with the Local Arboriculture Officer or landscape conservation personnel, and other local authority departments when developing a proposal.
- 6.55 Cemeteries also provide a useful resource for the local community and wildlife. Whilst a place for the laying to rest the deceased, cemeteries also provide opportunities for wildlife and use of the open space by the public for walking and relaxing. Cemeteries, whilst preserving the open character of the countryside can also reflect the local culture and heritage of an area.

Policy PW GI9 –Burial space

Proposals for the provision of a cemetery and or natural burial site within the parish are welcome. Suitable locations do not include those inside areas of medium or high flood risk, nor in close proximity to busy roads where noise and air pollution would negatively impact the tranquillity and ecological value of the site.

Proposals for a natural burial site should be accompanied by an ecological survey that assesses the existing ecological value of the site and the potential impacts of future burial processes on the land and biodiversity.

Any new burial site should be added to the list of Local Green Spaces once developed.

¹⁶ Natural burial grounds – Guidance for operators; Ministry of Justice (2009)

¹⁷ How to set up a natural burial ground; The Natural Death Centre. Available at: <http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk/index.php?page=how-to-set-up-a-natural-burial-ground>

7. HERITAGE & DESIGN

Policy Objectives

- 7.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 03:** Maintain and enhance the character of Paddock Wood as a rural market town, and protect and promote its culture, economy and heritage
 - **Objective 04:** Ensure high quality new development through appropriate use of materials, details and designs that are sympathetic to the local context
 - **Objective 05:** Ensure that future development will be designed in such a way as to improve the quality of life for all residents

Introduction

- 7.2 While Paddock Wood is a relatively new settlement in comparison to other towns and villages within the Weald, it still has a unique and special heritage and cultural history worthy of recognition, protection and enhancement. In 1841, only 23 dwellings were recorded on the census with a total population of 121 people. Around 1863, twenty-two acres of land adjacent to the railway station were purchased and the land was allocated for building on and around what is now Commercial Road and Old Kent Road. However, development of the community was relatively slow as mains drainage, gas and electricity had still not arrived by the end of the century.
- 7.3 The railway brought many thousands of hop pickers and Paddock Wood became a major centre for the hop growing industry. The original Hop Marketing Board building located north of the railway remains and to date is still in use by the hop industry. The Hop production is reflected by the presence of oast houses around the edge of the town and surrounding farmsteads in the rural areas contributing to its character. Over the years Paddock Wood has grown from a village of only 816 people in 1901 to a town of 8,253 in 2011
- 7.4 The character of the townscape is generally more modern and changed dramatically post WW2. A variety of housing types can be seen ranging from detached homes, Edwardian apartments (for example Smarden Place) and the original distinctive Victorian cottages and villas, to large, modern housing developments, such as at Green Lane, Badsell Road, Church Farm and Mascalls Court. Even with the expansion of the town it retains much of the original Victorian design.
- 7.5 Paddock Wood evolved predominantly as a result of the railway, which supported the fruit production, livestock farming (there was once a market) and the hop industry. The style of new development should respond to this. There are also older premises in the area such as Catts Place, Mascalls Court, Warrington Farmhouse, Mascalls and Mascalls Pound There are some original buildings on Commercial Road with intricate brick detail and the style of these should be retained and reflected in new buildings and development. Building design must be appropriate to the historic context and new buildings should be designed to reflect the three-dimensional qualities of traditional buildings.
- 7.6 Examples of building styles and materials found in Paddock Wood are presented across the following pages (Figure 15 and Figure 16) and are intended to serve as a reference point for future development. This is expanded upon further in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance.



Detailing of brick lintels and string courses



Brick diaperwork and sting courses with contrasting brick work



Brick detailing, diaperwork and black railings



Brick detailing and decorative bargeboard along verge of the roof



Slate roofs, intricate brickwork, bay windows, enclosed gardens and house name plates



Slate roofs and brickwork, bay windows, enclosed garden and house name plate

Figure 15: Examples of building styles and details found in Paddock Wood. Further examples are presented in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance prepared alongside the Neighbourhood Plan (see Appendix G).



Example of converted oasts with restored vent cowls



Example of converted oasts with restored vent cowls



Slate roof tiles evident in central Paddock Wood



Decorative bargeboards on Victorian building



Playing card motif on chimneys



Weatherboarding

Figure 16: Examples of building styles and materials found in Paddock Wood. Further examples are presented in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance prepared alongside the Neighbourhood Plan (see Appendix G).

High Quality Design

- 7.7 Good design has a major role in contributing to quality of life and creating attractive, sustainable places and the achievement of high quality design is a core principle of the NPPF. It states, at paragraph 126, that *'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps makes development acceptable to communities'*. The importance of the design of the built environment and its contribution to making better places for people is emphasised. It goes on to note that *'Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development'* (paragraph 127).
- 7.8 Good design will help create high quality, safe and successful places where people enjoy living, working and visiting. This is emphasised in the National Design Guide¹⁸, which also refers to Climate, Character and Community. This should be referred to by all involved in the planning system when shaping, responding to and considering applications for planning permission. This recognises the importance of local character and the role of the community in the design process. For example, it states that:
- 'Local communities can play a vital role in achieving well-designed places and buildings and making sure there is a relationship between the built environment and quality of life'* (paragraph 17).
- 7.9 Design is also about wider issues including transport, highways, environment and employment, as well as culture and heritage. The National Design Guide notes that successful places are those which reflect the following characteristics¹⁹:
- Enhance the surroundings.
 - Are attractive and distinctive.
 - The built form presents a coherent pattern of development.
 - Are accessible and easy to move around.
 - Enhance and optimise nature.
 - Have safe, social and inclusive public spaces.
 - Mixed and integrated uses.
 - Functional, healthy and carbon neutral; homes and buildings.
 - Are efficient and resilient.
 - Are made to last.
- 7.10 Recent changes to the NPPF (2021) and the publication of the National Model Design Code (2021) place greater emphasis on design in the built environment. The National Model Design Code provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes and guides, and to promote successful design, expanding on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. It promotes use of design codes at the neighbourhood level.
- 7.11 This Neighbourhood Plan, and the design guidance prepared alongside it, build upon this and establish policies and principles for Paddock Wood that respond specifically to local character and context.
- 7.12 Recognising the historic growth, economy and development of Paddock Wood helps create a sense of identity and place. Any new development, both residential and non-residential, should be shaped and influenced by the traditional character and style of Paddock Wood. All new

¹⁸ MHCLG, October 2019, National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places

¹⁹ *ibid*

developments should enhance the local context, outlook and amenity, as well as utilise high quality materials and styles appropriate to the town.

- 7.13 The aim for all new developments should be for them to leave a positive architectural legacy, to be sensitive to their local context and environment and add to the positive character of the Paddock Wood area. In order to demonstrate how this will be achieved, applicants are expected to make use of the assessment framework established in Building for a Healthy Life²⁰.
- 7.14 The approach to design outlined in Paddock Wood does not exclude innovation in design, modern or contemporary architecture. Indeed, innovative design, which raises the standard of design in Paddock Wood, but which also promotes and reinforces local distinctiveness, is welcome. This includes the use of contemporary design approaches where they respond positively to context, outlook and amenity.

Policy PW HD1 – Design

New development in the neighbourhood area shall contribute to the creation of high quality places through a design-led approach to development underpinned by thorough site appraisals and good practice principles as set out in national guidance and assessment frameworks. Development proposals shall respond to guidance and best practice principles set out in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance.

Development in Paddock Wood shall, where appropriate:

- a. Respond to the historic settlement pattern, architecture and style, making use of materials present within the built environment that complement Paddock Wood's character.
- b. Retain existing trees and incorporate defensible open space in line with the appropriate standards of provision.
- c. Use boundary treatments that complement the street scene and landscape setting, including common treatments found in Paddock Wood such as cross-hatched fencing and black railings.
- d. Minimise visual intrusion through the appropriate scale, design and siting of development, and through retention and planting of trees and traditional hedgerows to encourage biodiversity.
- e. Maintain views of the landscape when entering the town as well as maintaining views of the landscape that frame the town.
- f. Reflect the prevailing building height of the immediate setting.

Thoughtful innovation in design is not precluded by this policy. Development that leaves a positive architectural legacy will be encouraged. Developments demonstrating design innovation and an imaginative sense of place, whilst respecting the surrounding context and reinterpreting local design cues, will be encouraged. This includes alternative models of housing and development, including modular, prefabricated and 'tiny homes'. Demonstration of how best practice in design and placemaking will be achieved should be set out through submission of a Building for Healthy Life assessment (or later equivalent).

²⁰ Birkbeck, D., and Kruczkowski. S. et al, 2020, Building for a Healthy Life

- 7.15 Architectural competitions are encouraged, providing interest and variety, particularly so within proposals for larger schemes forming the growth areas around Paddock Wood where the scheme can be broken down into different parcels or phases, each creating their own character.
- 7.16 This aspiration aligns with guidance on creating character and identity set out in the National Design Guide, which states at para 59, that the design of large scale development "*may benefit from a variety of characters so that different areas or neighbourhoods each have their own identity*".

Project/Aspiration PW Ha – Architectural variety and innovation

Site promoters and developers are encouraged to run architectural competitions that lead to variety and interest. Where larger schemes are capable of being delivered in phases and or include several development outlets, support is given to use of multiple architectural practices, each leading on the design detail for one parcel or outlet, but operating within an overarching masterplan for the site that establishes key principles, such as layout, connectivity and green infrastructure.

Case Study: Delivering variety in a major growth area

New Hall, on the outskirts of Harlow, Essex, is a major growth area which will deliver 5,000 new homes when complete. The growth area was divided into a series of smaller land parcels which have been sold to different developers who have employed different architects to help create neighbourhoods with variety and distinctive character.

A design code was prepared for the entire growth area. This 'prohibits' the use of 'standard' housing products. Key principles have been established through the design code, including the creation of a consistent block structure which makes for a legible street pattern, with compact blocks promoting walking and cycling. These common elements bind the area together, with different architectural responses to buildings then creating variety.

- 7.17 The NPPF states (at paragraph 133) that Local Planning Authorities should have access to and make use of tools and processes to assess and improve the design quality of development, including making use of design review arrangements. Design review is a way of assessing the design quality of new developments by an independent panel of experts to help support high standards of design. Guidance on the Design Review process can be found via the Design South East website²¹.
- 7.18 In Paddock Wood it is envisaged that major applications for development (including growth area proposals and development in the town centre), as well as smaller schemes in sensitive or important locations, should be subject to design review. This might include residential, commercial and mixed-use development proposals, infrastructure, community facilities, public realm and open space proposals. Where schemes involve heritage assets, they should show, through the review and consultation / engagement process, how they enhance the quality of that asset, reflected in the environment and experience of the asset.
- 7.19 Design review and any associated consultation / engagement should take place at the pre-application stage to inform the design process and again following submission of the application, to help inform officer recommendations. The final proposals submitted should show how comments made during the design review have influenced the proposed development.

Project/Aspiration PW Hb – Design Review

Emerging schemes for major development should be assessed through design review. Design review of smaller schemes is also encouraged, including those in sensitive or important locations.

It is envisaged that schemes will be referred to Design South East for review until such a time that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council runs and operates a Design Review Panel.

Encouragement is given to early engagement with the Design Review panel, allowing scope for input into emerging designs. The final schemes submitted to the Council should include a report on the design review process and show how the scheme has responded to this. Design Review of live applications is also encouraged.

Important design principles to be considered during Design Review and indeed in all proposals and applications for development are presented in Table 2.

²¹ <https://designsoutheast.org/services/review/> accessed March 2021

Important design considerations for proposed new development

Amenity - Green spaces of appropriate scale and quality within new developments will be expected. All new houses to have private amenity space and/or gardens, at the front, back or side of the property, as appropriate. Safe, and tranquil spaces should also be provided within the public realm as appropriate.

Construction - The build quality of new developments, and the materials selected as part of the construction process, should ensure a high standard of appearance over time. Construction techniques and materials should prevent a rapid deterioration that can lead to buildings with an unsightly or neglected appearance. Building maintenance should be cost-effective and easy to administer. Use of traditional materials (e.g.: Kent Rag Stone) is welcomed.

Density - The density of new development should be in character with the local surrounding area, respect the character of the area and, in lower density residential areas, be designed to give an impression of spaciousness with opportunity for green landscape between buildings.

Discretion - Car parking is to be discreet, with a proper provision of off-road parking as appropriate. On-road parking needs to be accommodated carefully to ensure that footways are not blocked or narrowed. Innovative new approaches to parking that help encourage a mode-shift to active and sustainable modes of travel are welcome.

Extension - House extensions should respond sympathetically with the style of the host house, making use of similar materials and fenestration. Modern style extensions may be appropriate where they are subservient to the main building and complement this.

Integration - New buildings should be well-integrated into the site and become part of a unified and interrelated composition, both with other buildings on site, particularly older buildings, and with existing buildings adjacent to the site. Pastiche should be avoided.

Layout - New developments should incorporate access routes and footpaths within the layout that reflect the historic and rural character of Paddock Wood, where appropriate, connecting with the wider movement network across the town and supporting access by foot and bicycle.

Lighting - Consideration should be given to the need for lighting, and where it is deemed essential, efforts should be made to seek to minimise its impact in the landscape through choice of light source and control of light spillage. Lighting should only be installed in areas of need, such as alongside pedestrian routes in and around the built areas. Areas adjacent to open spaces should be left unlit to avoid light pollution and impacts on wildlife.

Locality - New buildings are to be based on local needs, use local construction materials, and reflect local building traditions. Materials should be obtained from local sustainable sources where possible.

Resource Efficiency - Measures to help conserve water and energy in new buildings will be encouraged. The reuse and recycling of building materials will be encouraged, as will the use of locally sourced timber in construction.

Security - All developments and improvements in Paddock should be designed to ensure that safety and security are built in. Designs should ensure people feel safe during hours of darkness through unobtrusive path lighting and active frontages (i.e. doors and windows facing onto the street) and safe, permeable routes where appropriate. Secure by Design principles should be followed, including provision of defensible space.

Sustainability - New development should deliver ecological enhancement and biodiversity net gain to the immediate area, including incorporation of ideas outlined in paragraph 6.27.

Tradition - Styles and materials that relate to those found in the more historic parts of the locality will be encouraged.

Table 2: Important design considerations for proposed new development in Paddock Wood

Protecting Local Heritage Assets

- 7.20 Paddock Wood's heritage assets should be protected, and any new development or alteration to existing structures should preserve or enhance the setting of heritage assets, whether designated or not.
- 7.21 Concerns have been expressed during all the consultations that development should not be allowed to damage the historic environment. Any developments that affect the centre of Paddock Wood should preserve or enhance existing older buildings, particularly those of merit to the town and which contribute to its sense of identity. The town benefits from a number of listed buildings afforded protection through national planning policy (Table 3). There are other historic buildings in the parish of Paddock Wood that do not benefit from statutory listing but which are important to the character and identity of Paddock Wood. It is important that the town retains the few heritage assets and historic buildings that it has left.
- 7.22 Proposals should include an appraisal of the site in its surroundings, with detailed drawings accurately showing its relationship to heritage assets and historic buildings, including roofscapes and visual aspects, utilising, as appropriate, Historic England guidance²². Explanation should be given as to how the chosen design, scale and materials respond to any nearby heritage assets. An appraisal of the impact of construction work and traffic on heritage assets is also required.
- 7.23 The Wesley Centre, Hop Pickers Railway and Old Closed Courtyard on Church Road have been identified as local heritage assets in Paddock Wood. These are introduced below:

The Wesley Centre

- 7.24 The Wesley Centre (Appendix C) is a valuable resource, particularly for youth group meetings and church use. It is a well-loved community and heritage asset to the town, and its central location makes it easily accessible and sustainable. Proudly bearing the date 1888, the Wesley Centre is the oldest publicly owned building in Paddock Wood. It is owned by the Borough Council and houses the town's oldest World War One memorial tablet to commemorate members of the church who died.
- 7.25 Formerly the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, between 1888 and 1979, the chapel was used for baptisms, marriages and funeral services by local residents and it is thought there may have been burials there. As an important symbolic example of the Town's Victorian heritage there is a continuing need to retain the Wesley Centre and its curtilage. It remains a valuable asset currently occupied by the Community Storehouse (food bank) and Heritage Paddock Wood Ltd. The hall and-garden area is used by the Children's Centre (KCC) and other tenants. It is the oldest and last remaining 19th Century community building in the town. The retention of the curtilage is important as it is the only green space in the centre of Paddock Wood available for use.

²² See, for example: Historic England, 2017, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, The Setting of Historic Assets

The Hop Pickers Railway

"You will come down booked from Maidstone I will meet you at Paddock Wood and we will go thither in company over a most beautiful little line of railroad."

Charles Dickens, writing to John Forster, 1845

- 7.26 Between 1892 and 1961, a single-line steam railway, developed by the talented young engineer Holman Fred Stephens, linked the rural communities of Paddock Wood, Horsmonden, Goudhurst, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst. It also brought thousands of residents from the East End of London to the area every summer for their annual hop-picking "holiday" in this area of Kent, thus earning this iconic little railway the proud nickname of the "Hop Pickers Line" (Appendix D).
- 7.27 This former railway line is an important piece of local heritage. The route has been afforded protection by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council against future development, and a way-marking and interpretation scheme, featuring specially designed fingerposts, monoliths and information panels, has been organised by the Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group.

The Old Closed Courtyard, Church Road

- 7.28 The old closed churchyard is on the site of the original St Andrew's Church, which was built in 1859, damaged by bombing in 1940 and then demolished – some of the Kent ragstone then being incorporated in the replacement church. Left behind is a wonderful area largely untouched where indigenous plants grow and wildlife thrives undisturbed. Lime trees border the main road, along with yews and many other species. On part of the remains of the wall lichen grows on the stonework. Along with many interesting gravestone designs of the 1920s and 1930s, there are several war graves – including those from the Marines, Air Force, Artillery and an army driver. Dorothy Dickens, granddaughter of Charles, is buried here.

Local List

- 7.29 To date Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has not compiled a List of Local, 'non-statutory' Heritage Assets. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect local assets not currently afforded adequate protection by designating the Wesley Centre, the Historic Railway and Old Closed Courtyard to the Tunbridge Wells List of Local Heritage Assets. Consideration will be given to the preparation of a List of Local Heritage Assets in Paddock Wood for publication at a later date which will extend the list of assets to be afforded further protection. It will be subject to consultation.

Policy PW HD2 – Local Heritage Assets

Any new development or alteration to an existing structure or heritage asset, whether designated or non-designated, will be required in its design, scale and materials to preserve or enhance the historical character and setting of Paddock Wood.

Proposals affecting the following non-designated heritage assets will be assessed on the basis of the scale of harm or loss against the significance of the asset:

1. **The Wesley Centre:** The Wesley Centre and its curtilage should be retained because of its historic character, architectural merit and location in the centre of the town. This site should continue to be used for public and community purposes (Use Class F1 and F2). In the event of changing circumstances in terms of viability, and in light of robust and current evidence, other uses / activities (Use Class E) may be supported where this would enhance the vitality, amenities and current public need across the Neighbourhood Plan area.
2. **The Historic Railway:** Proposals which preserve and enhance the historic Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst railway line will be supported.
3. **Old Closed Churchyard, Church Road:** Proposals which preserve and enhance the Churchyard and its value as a wildlife habitat will be supported

Proposals for development that impact on the setting or character of a heritage asset will be accompanied by a Heritage Statement as required by the TWBC validation requirements.

Project/Aspiration PW Hc – Local List

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance of non-designated heritage assets. The Wesley Centre, The Hop Pickers Railway and Old Closed Courtyard are identified as such in Policy PW HD2.

As and when TWBC prepares a list of local heritage assets across the borough, the assets identified in the Neighbourhood Plan should be added to that. This will help reinforce efforts to preserve the character and appearance of those assets.

The heritage assets included on the list will be subject to criteria to be agreed with TWBC and, once finalised, it is anticipated that the document will be available through the TWBC website.

| |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Old Mullions, Queen Street |
| Mascalls (previously Mascalls Farmhouse), Badsell Road including Gates & Gate Piers |
| Sunnycot, Badsell Road |
| Burnside, Church Road |
| 1 & 2 Rose Cottages, Church Road |
| Warrington Place Farmhouse, Church Road |
| The War Memorial, Commercial Road |
| Swatlands, Lucks Lane |
| Nos 1, 2 & 4 Joys Cottages, Lucks Lane |
| Little Rhoden, Lucks Lane |
| September Cottage, Queen Street |
| Putlands Farmhouse, Maidstone Road including garden walls and railings to the west Barn, cartshed and walls about 40m NW of Putlands Farmhouse, Maidstone Road |
| Oasthouse about 40m SW of Putlands Farmhouse, Maidstone Road |
| Mascalls Pound, Maidstone Road |
| Oasthouse immediately SW of Mascalls Pound, Maidstone Road |
| The Cottages, Mascalls Court, Mascalls Court Road |
| Cartshed about 30m NE of the Cottages, Mascalls Court, Mascalls Court Road |
| Mile Oak Farmhouse, Mile Oak Road |
| Oasthouse immediately W of Mile Oak Farmhouse, Mile Oak Road |
| Catts Place Farm, Mile Oak Road |
| Barn immediately W of Catts Place |
| Barn incorporating oasthouse about 50m NE of Catts Place, Mile Oak Road |
| Stables about 40mN and W of Catts Place, Mile Oak Road |
| Pearson Farmhouse, Pearsons Green Road |
| Great Weston, Pearson Green Road |
| Little Old Hay, Pearson Green Road |
| Roundabouts and Hawthorns, Pearson Green Road |
| Knell Farmhouse, Queen Street |

Table 3: Listed buildings in Paddock Wood (all Grade II)*

Low and zero Carbon development

- 7.30 The community expressed strong support for action to address climate change and were positive about finding ways to achieve sustainable development locally. For these reasons, sustainability considerations thread through the Plan and underpin all its policies. To play its part in moving towards a low carbon future in a changing climate, the community strongly backs improvements to energy efficiency.
- 7.31 Most carbon dioxide emissions come from heating, cooling and powering buildings. Reducing carbon dioxide emissions and other air pollutants will contribute to efforts aimed at tackling the effects of man-made climate change. This is recognised by the declaration of the Climate Emergency by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and which seeks to reduce the Council's own carbon emissions as well as encouraging others to work towards net zero emissions. At the same time, the Government is planning to introduce a 'Future Homes Standard', requiring new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and energy efficiencies. It is anticipated that the Future Homes Standards will be implemented by 2025.
- 7.32 The growth of Paddock Wood represents an opportunity to secure reduced emissions, potentially through the construction of highly energy efficient homes, the provision of decentralised energy networks and the retrofitting of existing homes to reduce their energy use and fuel bills. Indeed, the submission Local Plan recognises this, noting that the growth of Paddock Wood should be an exemplar development, with the vision being that it embeds low or zero carbon vision into the development. The vision for the borough as a whole set out in the submission Local Plan states that 'development should help achieve the Council's goal of carbon neutrality for the borough by 2030'.
- 7.33 All development in Paddock Wood will be expected to make use of the best available sustainable design and technology. Proposals for development are expected to minimise the use of resources and mitigate against and be resilient to the impact of climate change. Buildings should be designed to maximise solar gain and incorporate technologies that maximise the use of energy from renewable sources.
- 7.34 Current sustainability standards for new construction will be used for assessing the sustainability of new, non-residential buildings. This includes those established by BREEAM²³. For new homes, the Home Quality Mark²⁴ developed by BREEAM is intended to provide an indication of the quality and environmental performance of those homes. Housebuilders are encouraged to use this assessment method.
- 7.35 Proposals for new buildings that achieve zero or near zero net energy consumption in line with the Passivhaus Standard²⁵ are particularly supported and it is expected that all new homes in the growth area around Paddock Wood will be designed to meet these or equivalent standards as far as is possible.

²³ BREEAM UK, 2014, Non-domestic Buildings (United Kingdom), Technical Manual SD5076 4.1

²⁴ See: <http://www.homequalitymark.com>

²⁵ Passivhaus is the world's leading fabric first approach to low energy buildings. The core focus of the Passivhaus standard is to dramatically reduce the requirements for space heating and cooling, whilst also creating excellent indoor air quality and comfort levels. See <http://www.passivhaus.org.uk> for more information.

Policy PW HD3 – Low and Zero Carbon development

New homes within the growth areas around Paddock Wood should be designed as Low or Zero Carbon buildings, reflecting Passivhaus standards or similar. Where possible:

- a) Buildings should be orientated to maximise solar gain where appropriate to site topography and creating a consistent building frontage to the street.
- b) Solar access along the south facade of the building should be maximised, with appropriate shading elements and cross ventilation employed in new and existing buildings.
- c) Renewable energy technologies should be integrated within the development, including, as appropriate, ground source and air source heat pumps, biomass heating, photovoltaics and solar panels.

Housebuilders are encouraged to register for assessment under the Home Quality Mark. This should show how resource efficiencies and climate change adaptation measures will be incorporated through aspects such as the layout of the proposed development, orientation, massing, landscaping and building materials. Developers should demonstrate they have taken reasonable steps to achieve zero carbon in construction methods and sourcing of materials.

The retrofitting of existing properties is encouraged and any alterations that are carried out must be designed with energy reduction in mind. The retrofitting of historic buildings and heritage assets must safeguard the special characteristics of these assets.

All proposed developments in Paddock Wood are encouraged to include:

- High levels of energy conservation in the construction and use of new buildings.
- Integration of rainwater capture and grey water recycling technologies in new buildings.
- The use of local building materials.
- The reuse of rainwater and minimisation of the amount of impermeable ground cover.
- The use of sustainable on-site energy sources, where applicable – solar, wind, ground-source heat pumps, biomass etc.
- The use of local forms of power to minimise power loss through the national grid.
- The promotion of low CO₂ transport options through the design of new buildings.
- Electric vehicle charging points in each dwelling or commercial premise.
- Space for storage of recycling bins and boxes.
- Flexible spaces that support working from home.
- Accessibility for those with disabilities and restricted mobility.
- Secure cycle storage.
- Good sound proofing and insulation.

Case Study: Passivhaus development in the UK

The Goldsmith Street development in Norwich is an award winning scheme of 105 new homes all built to Passivhaus standards, benefitting from high insulation and low energy costs. The scheme is designed around a network of terraced streets, with all homes having their own front door and private garden. Parking is provided for but is primarily at the edge of the scheme, making for attractive streets for people to walk freely and safely within, whilst at the same time increasing social networks, inclusion and community cohesiveness. The homes are two and three storeys, reflecting the scale of surrounding Victoria terraces. The scheme was led by the Council and comprises entirely social housing.



Figure 17: Goldsmith Street Passivhaus scheme, Norwich (Photo © Mikhail Riches / Dezeen)

In York, plans have been developed for a new 600-home zero-carbon development, including car-free streets, community gardens and allotments. All homes are to be provided with cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points. A fleet of shared cargo bikes will also be available for people to use. Homes are orientated to maximise solar gain and are fitted with solar panels. All homes are also fitted with energy-efficient air-source heat pumps. Buildings are timber-framed and the embodied energy of construction materials monitored as well as the energy consumption of individual homes, maximising energy efficiencies at all stages of the development process.

8. SPORTS & RECREATION

Policy Objectives

- 8.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 01:** Deliver the social and environmental infrastructure necessary to support a growing community in the 21st Century.
 - **Objective 02:** Coordinate all new development so that it contributes to the creation of a safe and sustainable community with good access to essential services for all residents
 - **Objective 08:** Maintain existing sports facilities and create additional sports and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the growing population

Introduction

- 8.2 Enhancing the sports and recreation facilities within Paddock Wood will be important to the health and well-being of the growing population. The population includes the residents of the town and surrounding villages and rural areas, as users of sports facilities come from both within and outside the town. Government policy outlines the importance of areas for multi-activity use, advocating investment in green space and green routes between focuses of activity.
- 8.3 Consultation with local sports and recreation groups has identified a current need for improvements in sports fields and changing facilities as well as better use of the Putlands Sports & Leisure Centre. In addition, local people have stated the need for improved indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, with activities for all age ranges.
- 8.4 All current sports facilities are located to the south and east of the town, including the Putlands centre, Memorial Fields and St Andrews Field, as well as those facilities at Mascalls Academy available to the public during term time, but by prior arrangement only, and which it is not possible to book during holiday periods. There are also facilities at Green Lane and at the Elm Tree sports and recreation ground. The Elm Tree is important as it is home to the largest club in Paddock Wood but there is no room for expansion and it suffers from limited access other than by car but where there is also a lack of parking. With future growth proposed across town new sports facilities will be required to the north of the railway line, balancing provision across the town and complementing those facilities existing to the south of the railway line.
- 8.5 An expanding town may create demand for a different range of sports and recreational facilities in the future, requiring existing facilities to expand or add activities. Facilities will need to be flexible, to cope with changing demand, but the current configuration of outdoor and indoor sports facilities lack the flexibility for significant expansion. More flexible use and improved upkeep of sporting facilities would come from having an improved indoor sports hub at Putlands Leisure Centre as well as a new outdoor sports hub to the north of the railway. This will allow sports, such as rugby, tennis, football and cricket to grow, as well as sports such as baseball, netball and basketball to be provided for, being sports that young people currently travel out of Paddock Wood to participate in. Investment in facilities should be complementary to, not competitive with, investment in the town, with sports provision distributed across the town to maximise access to these for all. In particular, safe routes to these facilities for younger residents will need to be

provided so that they can access these for play and for organised sports, and minimising traffic movements associated with sporting events.

- 8.6 Government guidance on accessible facilities aims to guide development of facilities catering for the needs of people with a range of disabilities including sensory, physical and psychological or learning difficulties. In order to promote social inclusion for those with special needs, all facilities should be developed to ensure accessibility for all. Providing the opportunity for all people to access sports will improve the health and well-being of the local community.

Putlands and Indoor Sports Facilities

- 8.7 It is important to encourage healthy lifestyles across all age groups. The Putlands Leisure Centre provides a range of activities, including a gym and exercise studio, and a sports hall that can be used for a variety of sports including trampolining badminton, netball, basketball and volleyball. However, consultation with residents of Paddock Wood has identified limitations in indoor sports and exercise facilities and limited facilities for young people within the town. Residents surveyed proposed a range of facilities which they wanted to see provided including a swimming pool and improved gym and exercise class provision. Young people were actively engaged in the consultation and proposed changes which could improve youth participation in sport. Consultation with younger people across Paddock Wood also indicated a need for a wider range of facilities, including, amongst others, a youth hub, indoor bowling, music venues, cinema and exhibition space.
- 8.8 The Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Sports & Active Recreation Strategy 2016 – 2021 (October 2020) aims to increase participation in sports and active recreation to increase the number of residents enjoying active and healthy lifestyles. The Strategy also states that the Borough will seek to *'maintain and enhance existing high quality facilities and develop key centres of excellence worthy of the Borough'*.
- 8.9 Specific actions identified in the strategy include working *'with Town and Parish Councils across the Borough to improve and enhance the facilities they provide for local residents'* and *'to improve facilities at our sports and leisure centres in Tunbridge Wells, Paddock Wood and Cranbrook to ensure that they meet customer needs and expectations'*.
- 8.10 The Tunbridge Wells Borough Indoor/Built Facility Needs Assessment 2017-2033 has identified that Paddock Wood has a *'sizeable population, large state-funded school but no community swimming pool'*, with much of Paddock Wood outside the standard of 15 minutes to travel to a local authority pool. The borough states that existing provision meets demand but pressure on existing facilities will be increased with population increases. Paddock Wood will see significant population increase with the planned growth outlined in the submission Local Plan. Provision of a swimming pool at Putlands Leisure Centre will expand the indoors sports offer here and be accessible to existing schools and new development in the south of the town.
- 8.11 The athletics track in Paddock Wood was reported by the Borough to have been the likely cause of Borough participation in track & field sports (Tunbridge Wells Borough Indoor/Built Facility Needs Assessment 2017-2033). The '2-4-6' track, which benefits from full provision of 'in-field' facilities, was opened by Dame Kelly Holmes in Summer 2015 and was the first of its kind in the region. It was funded through contributions from Sport England, Kent County Council, the Borough and Town Councils, developer contributions and fundraising activities by the athletics club and local community. Although an excellent local asset, and the only synthetic track in the Borough, it is limited by not having six lanes all round. Future development of the track with club house provision at Putlands Leisure Centre creates the opportunity for this to become the athletics hub and centre of excellence for the Borough.

- 8.12 Support is given through the Neighbourhood Plan to the retention and improvement of the Putlands Leisure Centre and field, expanding the range of facilities available and, through a wider package of active and sustainable travel measures, making this more accessible for a wider cross section of the community, and minimising potential vehicular traffic movements associated with an increased population. Where new development is required to accommodate new facilities this should be undertaken so as to make most effective and efficient use of the land, minimising loss of mature trees and retaining outdoor sports and play provision, including football and rugby pitches, bowling green and skate park. Should any of the sports played on Putlands Field require relocation, such as rugby and or football, these could be moved to the new outdoor sports hub to the north of the town.

Case Study: Investment in indoor sports

Morden Leisure Centre, which sits in the grounds of Morden Park, south west London, includes a six-lane 25-metre swimming pool and smaller pool with movable floor for teaching, exercise and diving. Other facilities include a fitness suite, badminton courts, studio, community room and café. The Leisure Centre was opened in 2018, having replaced an existing swimming pool and gymnasium built on the site in the 1960s but no longer consider fit for modern use. The site of the old building was converted to park land.



Figure 18: Morden Leisure Centre (Photo © GT3 Architects)

Policy PW SR1 – Putlands

Support will be given for proposals that seek to improve and expand sports facilities at the Putlands Sports & Leisure Centre, including the addition of a swimming pool and upgrades to the athletics track and associated facilities.

Any changes to the sports centre and grounds as a whole must incorporate elements of flexibility so that spaces can adapt to changes in preference and need, as well as the requirements of different age groups.

Where changes involve new development, either by way of extension or replacement buildings, these must minimise loss of mature trees on site and impact on existing outdoor sports facilities. The scale and siting of development shall not have a significant impact on the local living environment and the amenities of adjacent residential properties.

Improvements shall incorporate secure cycle parking facilities with cycle routes providing between the main point of access and sports centre buildings. More efficient provision of car parking will also be delivered.

All new indoor sporting and recreational proposals in Paddock Wood must cater for the needs of people with a disability. The impact of any sporting and recreational proposal upon the needs of people with a disability, along with any required enhancement measures, should be specified in a Design & Access Statement, submitted with the planning application.

Outdoor Sports Hub

- 8.13 Paragraph 98 of the NPPF notes that *"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"*. It is therefore essential to enable residents and visitors to the town to participate in sport, regardless of age or ability.
- 8.14 Through submission Local Plan Policy OSSR 2, the delivery of housing and mixed use development will be supported by the provision of open space, sports and recreation provision. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2017-2033 identifies a current need in Paddock Wood for an additional junior 11v11, 9v9 and 5v5 pitch. Extensive consultation with sports clubs and organisations in Paddock Wood through the Neighbourhood Plan has also highlighted deficiencies in current provision, both in terms of quantum and quality, with the lack of facilities leading to their over use, which consequently impacts on the quality of that provision. The facilities within the town act as a hub for those living in settlements further afield and whom travel to Paddock Wood to utilise these, both by car and by rail. It is thus important to provide additional facilities to meet the demands of new growth, but also to retain and enhance the quality of existing provision. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2017-2033 identifies a current need in Paddock Wood for additional junior pitches. Sports groups in Paddock Wood have also identified the need for additional football and rugby pitches and would like space to develop hockey.

Case Study: Marden Sports Ground

The Marden Sports Ground in Maidstone includes a range of sports facilities, including outdoor tennis courts, grass and artificial pitches which can be used for a range of sports, such as hockey, football, cricket and netball. The purpose-built ground was opened in April 2018 and includes a clubhouse, bar and changing facilities for use by all sports. The facility, which is in the sole ownership of Marden Sports Club, was built as part of a Section 106 agreement between Countryside Properties and the Borough Council, which also extended to sponsorship of adult hockey for a three year period.



Figure 19: Marden Sports Club, Maidstone (source: Marden Business Forum)

- 8.15 This Neighbourhood Plan identifies a preferred site – opposite Baxalls along Eastlands Lane and off Maidstone Road - for the provision of an outdoor sports hub, where these and other new sports facilities should be located, due to the proximity to public transport and walking routes, enabling access via bus, rail and on foot. This has been subject to extensive discussion with representatives of local sports clubs and organisations and highlighted to the Borough Council during production of the Paddock Wood Structure Plan.
- 8.16 Locating the outdoor sports hub north of the railway will bring better balance to the distribution of sports and recreation facilities across Paddock Wood (with Putlands Leisure Centre, Memorial Park, Mascalls Academy, St. Andrews Field, Green Lane and the Elm Tree all located in the south), such that all residents, existing and new, are within access of these. New railway crossing points will ensure that north-south movement is not restricted, allowing residents from either side of the railway line, including the mobility impaired, to access a diverse and complementary set of facilities. A location north of the railway line will also cater for those who travel into Paddock Wood from surrounding settlements, both by rail and car.

- 8.17 It is important that the outdoor sports hub includes on-site changing facilities and car and cycle parking. The facility should also include a café and bar to make it a vibrant social attraction that encourages all day use. This could increase participation from residents of surrounding villages, bringing more visitors to the town.
- 8.18 To increase the efficient use of land, the hub could be co-located with forthcoming school provision and local centre north of the railway line, either acting as shared sports fields, or as facilities located adjacent to each other as a combined hub for sports and education. Where facilities are shared these should be designed and delivered in accordance with guidance for Sport England²⁶ and available for public use for as much of the day as possible, during term-time and school holiday periods. Any such provision should be accessible to all and support travel by modes other than the car, reducing carbon footprint.

Policy PW SR2 – Outdoor Sports Hub

Support will be given for proposals that seek to create a hub for outdoor team sports, with space for future expansion. The preferred location for this is land to the north of Eastlands Lane off Maidstone Road.

The new hub and associated playing pitches must incorporate elements of flexibility such as a 3G pitch, so that pitches can adapt to changes in preference and need. Proposals must include on-site changing facilities, toilets and a café / bar. Proposals for co-location with primary school facilities may be considered appropriate where it can be demonstrated that public access to the facilities can be provided throughout the year, including during school holidays.

The hub should incorporate secure cycle parking facilities with cycle routes providing between the main point of access and sports centre buildings.

Support for a new sports hub must not come at the expense of the athletics track, skate park or bowls club at Putlands Field. These should not be relocated to the outdoor sports hub.

Any proposal for an outdoor sports hub in Paddock Wood must cater for the needs of people with a disability. The impact of any sporting and recreational proposal upon the needs of people with a disability, along with any required enhancement measures, should be specified in a Design & Access Statement, submitted with the planning application.

²⁶ <http://direct.sportengland.org/facilities-and-planning/use-our-school/designing-for-community-use/#>

9. ACCESS & MOVEMENT

Policy Objectives

- 9.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 01:** Deliver the social and environmental infrastructure necessary to support a growing community in the 21st Century.
 - **Objective 02:** Coordinate all new development so that it contributes to the creation of a safe and sustainable community with good access to essential services for all residents
 - **Objective 05:** Ensure that future development will be designed in such a way as to improve the quality of life for all residents
 - **Objective 06:** Create a robust and flexible network of streets, roads and spaces suitable for all modes of travel

Introduction

- 9.2 Through consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan local people across all ages have identified a need to improve access and movement options across the area and facilitate the easy movement of people around the town. This will require the promotion of walking and cycling modes and enabling easy access for people with disabilities and special needs. These measures will encourage healthier lifestyles, social inclusion and community interactions. A reduction in car use will improve air quality and the provision of appropriate pedestrian and cycle routes will maintain safety and security for all.
- 9.3 Another positive effect of this shift away from motorised travel will be the long-term economic vitality of the town. Convenient and safe pedestrian access is vital to creating a successful town centre. Allowing people to take pleasure in walking will increase footfall within the town, benefit shops and other services and help to keep it alive.
- 9.4 That said, the car will continue to be accommodated in the town centre over the plan period but in a sensitive and proportionate manner. This will ensure that Paddock Wood town centre is not dominated by traffic but becomes a pleasant place to spend time. The projects and policies in this section should be read alongside the Neighbourhood Plan as a whole, including those within the Town Centre section.

Active Travel

- 9.5 Efforts to make walking and cycling the 'norm' for short journeys should be prioritised. Indeed, this is now required by the Government, with the updated Traffic Management Act²⁷ requiring local authorities to introduce new measures that make walking and cycling safer and more attractive propositions for all people of all ages and abilities.
- 9.6 The Government's Cycling and Walking Investment strategy²⁸ points to the importance of and need for investment in new infrastructure to support active travel. It is recognised that encouraging a mode shift from private vehicles to walking and cycling has many benefits, with research showing that this is good for the environment, for health and social well-being, and for the economy²⁹. In response to this, a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has been prepared alongside and in support of the submission Local Plan. This includes borough-wide recommendations as well as a number of potential interventions in Paddock Wood to support walking and cycling.
- 9.7 In Paddock Wood improvements to footpaths will enhance the pedestrian environment and encourage more people to walk, more often. The area in and around Commercial Road and the town centre needs to be made more pedestrian friendly. A priority is for a comprehensive footpath network between all new housing areas to the town centre. Residential development should be focused within proximity to the centre and designed with strong pedestrian links throughout, increasing the likelihood of walking becoming a default mode of travel.
- 9.8 Residents have identified a need for better pedestrian routes, linking key areas within the town centre such as housing developments and schools, and between new housing developments and the railway station, shops, health centre and parks. In addition, pedestrian access to areas on the edge and outside the town boundary are also important for the local economy including footpaths to the Hop Farm and surrounding villages.
- 9.9 The residents of Paddock Wood would like to see cycle routes introduced throughout the town to improve links between key sites, with robust security to prevent theft when left for long periods, particularly at the railway station.
- 9.10 Safe and secure bicycle storage should be installed on both side of the railway tracks, and at key points across the town centre. Including sufficient cycle storage within homes, schools and places of work will increase the likelihood of people choosing to cycle rather than drive. Designing obstacle free cycle routes will provide residents and workers with an easy and attractive option. This will result in health, social and environmental benefits to the whole town and its community.
- 9.11 The creation of streets that are safe for cycling will encourage healthy active lifestyles for all ages. In certain areas, segregated or dedicated cycling infrastructure may be required, for example, at key junctions. These measures should help raise the level of utility cycling (e.g. riding to work, the shops or to school). Good quality cycle infrastructure will give cyclists the space they need to ride safely on the roads and keep pavement space for pedestrians. Where facilities intended to be shared between pedestrians and cyclists must be built to high standards and draw upon best

²⁷ Department for Transport, May 2020, Statutory Guidance, Traffic Management Act 2004: network management in response to COVID-19

²⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy> accessed July 2020

²⁹ See, for example, the Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) developed by the World Health Organisation (Europe) which is designed to help conduct economic assessments of the health benefits of walking or cycling by estimating the value of reduced mortality that results from specified amounts of walking or cycling (<https://www.heatwalkingcycling.org/#homepage>). Also, see, London School of Economics, 2011, The British Cycling Economy: Gross Cycling Product (<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/38063/>), and Arup for Victoria Walks, 2018, The economic case for investment in walking

practice. In addition, rural routes for pedestrians and cyclists should also be supplemented by a network of bridleways where appropriate to create a network for horse riders around the town.

Policy PW AM1 – Active Travel

Development proposals should enable active travel through delivery of new walking and cycling routes, and or improvements to existing routes.

Where new walking and cycling routes are provided, they must be direct, safe, comfortable and convenient to use. The layout of proposed development should allow for natural surveillance of routes through overlooking with active development frontages.

New routes, including those emerging from the new growth areas, must integrate with the existing network where possible, ensuring connectivity between the new and old. Where new cycle routes are provided, they should reflect best practice principles established in Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20)³⁰.

Where existing walking and cycling routes are provided within or adjacent to a site, development proposals should link into the networks.

Lighting along walking and cycle routes should use renewable energy sources wherever possible.

Proposals for residential, commercial, leisure and community uses are encouraged to support and enable active travel through inclusion of safe, secure and convenient cycle parking and changing facilities where appropriate. Proposals for secure and dry cycle parking areas are welcome, subject to compliance and wider design policies.

Proposals should not result in the loss of existing walking or cycling routes, nor reduce the capacity of that infrastructure.

³⁰ Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20), 2020, Department for Transport

Project/Aspiration PW AMa – Encouraging active travel

The Town Council is keen to improve the town-wide cycling and pedestrian network, providing scope for short, everyday activities and trips to be made on foot or by bicycle. Segregated routes on the main road network should be supplemented by a network of safe streets and routes in residential areas, with junctions and crossings redesigned along 'Dutch-principles' to make cycling as safe and attractive as possible for all members of society. To help further facilitate active travel, the delivery of new pedestrian and cycle paths is supported, subject to cost and feasibility. Through consultation with residents, the following have been identified as important interventions to be taken forward alongside the TWBC LCWIP:

- Pedestrian and cycle routes to and from the station
- Cycle lane and footpath along Badsell Road linking with Five Oak Green, supporting pupils travelling to Mascalls Academy
- A cycle route from Five Oak Green to Whetstead to Eastlands, Nursery Road and the station.
- Provision of new cycle routes from Foal Hurst Green to Matfield.
- Improvements to the quality of the surface of the path through Moatlands to Brenchley to make this more suitable for use by cyclist.
- Continuation of existing cycle route from East Peckham into the centre of Paddock Wood.
- Improvements to and provision of new crossings along the A228 to improve the safety of crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.
- New walking routes alongside Tudeley Brook for leisure and recreation.
- A network of safe routes between residential areas, schools and play areas, supporting safe travel for children.

Some of these routes extend outside the Parish and would require collaboration with a range of partners.

Other measures should also be introduced that make the use of streets and spaces safer for all, including the widening and resurfacing of selected footpaths and cycleways and the provision of improved signage to improve wayfinding throughout the town centre and the wider neighbourhood area. Other initiatives to support a move to active travel include:

- Provision of 'Copenhagen-crossings', where the level of the pavement and surfacing used continues across side roads, giving priority to pedestrians over passing cars and other motorised traffic.
- Timing traffic lights for cyclists to provide a 'green-wave', allowing cyclists to maintain momentum on longer journeys between the growth areas and town centre for example.
- Installation of street furniture that makes cycling easier for all, including foot-rests at traffic lights, rubbish bins angled to allow cyclists to use these, and provision of foot-pumps and other essential cycle maintenance tools in the public realm, preferably close to or associated with areas of cycle parking.

Working alongside the Highways Authority, encouragement will be given to strategies that help lorries to avoid the town centre, encouraging a more human-scale street environment.

Street types and hierarchy

- 9.12 Across Paddock Wood new streets should be designed, or existing streets redesigned, to enable safe travel by all, making walking and cycling more attractive propositions.
- 9.13 Within areas of growth proposed around Paddock Wood proposals for development should be accompanied by information establishing the street hierarchy in the area and supplemented by a set of illustrative cross-sections through different street typologies. These should reflect best practice guidance established in Manual for Streets and the forthcoming update of that.
- 9.14 The growth areas should be designed with bus access in mind, with a central street running through these, connecting residents with new local centres, social and community facilities, and employment opportunities. Such streets should be designed to accommodate busses but at the same time balancing the movement function of the street with its place-making role.
- 9.15 Design features should be incorporated that discourage speeding and give space to pedestrians and cyclists, supporting active and healthy lifestyles. In particular, residential streets within new growth areas should, first and foremost, be places for people. Streets that take the form of 'Home-Zones' and 'Play Streets' are actively encouraged. Such streets are intended to create greener, safer streets for residents while also creating connections with the surrounding natural environment. The concept derives from The Netherlands, where such streets are known as 'Woonerfs'. These streets typically include shared spaces, greening, traffic calming and low speed limits. A central goal of the concept is to remove the traditional segregation of vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in public spaces and encourage natural human interaction.



Figure 20: The 'Fietsstraat', or 'Bike Street', is a common feature of Dutch towns and cities. The streets are designed such that movement by bike has priority over vehicular traffic. Cars and other motorised vehicles are allowed, but are treated 'as guests', with access limited to a small number of properties. These are thus designed to be used in low volume areas for vehicular traffic. Combined with the use of filtered permeability, through routes for vehicles are removed but maintained for people walking or cycling, such that travel by foot or by bike, particularly for shorter journeys, is safe, direct and often quicker than by car. (Image source © Mark Treasure www.aseasyasridingabike.wordpress.com)

- 9.16 The network of streets in the growth areas should also integrate 'filtered mobility'. Such an approach allows direct access between streets and spaces for pedestrians and cyclists, but limits access for those travelling by car, directing vehicles onto the main road network, limiting through traffic and, by making these journeys longer, encourages travel by foot or by bike for shorter journeys. Further information on such approaches will be published in the Supplementary Planning Document on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods to be published by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
- 9.17 Equally, and across Paddock Wood as a whole, safer routes to school are encouraged, minimising the impact of the school run. The introduction of the 'Sustainable Travel Recognition and Accreditation for Schools (STARS)' scheme is supported. This seeks to change the way that children travel to school, promoting a shift towards walking and cycling.



Figure 21: This new development in Cambridge shows how pedestrian routes can be successfully incorporated within new development, making these safe and attractive for all to use at all times of the day, encouraging people to walk and promoting active and healthy lifestyles. Image source © 2019 Google (Image capture: July 2015)

Policy PW AM2 – Street Hierarchy

Proposals for land within the growth areas to the north, east and west of Paddock Wood must be based around a permeable street network that is safe for people to travel around by foot and by bicycle.

A hierarchy of streets shall be integrated within the growth areas and details of these should accompany planning application material.

Street design shall respond to guidance illustrated in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance. In particular:

- a. Culs-de-sac should be avoided where possible, though filtered permeability that allows for direct routes by foot and bicycle is encouraged.
- b. Streets should be designed to minimise the impact of parked cars.
- c. Street trees and semi-natural planting shall be incorporated within new streets, subject to the nature of the street. Equally, SUDs and raingardens should be incorporated into the street wherever possible.
- d. Proposals for play streets and homezones within new development areas will be supported, including streets that incorporate shared spaces, greenery, traffic calming, pinch points and low speed limits.
- e. The street network should be designed to minimise the impact of the car-based 'school run', with safe routes to school for pedestrian and cyclist provided, and with drop-off points and waiting areas limited. The street network should be designed to facilitate the operation of school streets at school start and end times.

Public Transport

- 9.18 Provision of good public transport services are essential to creation of a socially inclusive community, providing opportunities for all to access services and employment opportunities. Within Paddock Wood, bus links between the residential areas, the railway station and town centre are important. Bus and rail links to destinations outside of Paddock Wood are also important: rail for those commuting to London, and bus for those commuting for work elsewhere in Tunbridge Wells for example.
- 9.19 The quality and frequency of services at present is limited, with many of those who can, travelling by car instead. However, and at the same time, many respondents raised concern about traffic congestion and the impact of this on journey times. Travelling by car contributes to congestion. Promoting an improved public transport service, with regular and direct links to key destinations, would help influence a mode shift away from the car to public transport services and, at the same time, relieve congestion and free-up space for those who need to travel by car.
- 9.20 Given forthcoming development in Paddock Wood, there is a particular need for the delivery of new bus routes that connect new growth areas to the existing town centre and wider neighbourhoods. New routes should incorporate sustainable, safe and effective supporting infrastructure. Bus stops should be located such that there is one within walking distance (400m) of all residents; they should also have sheltered waiting facilities with real-time updates on bus times. This will make travelling by bus in public transport a more efficient and enjoyable experience, encouraging more people to make a modal shift.

Policy PW AM3 – Public Transport

Proposals for development should respond to the need to reduce the generation of road traffic and help reduce air and noise pollution. Development should, where appropriate to the scale of proposals, incorporate sustainable public transport measures, including new bus routing, new or improved waiting facilities, and or accessibility to services. Proposals that support provision of improved bus services between new growth areas, the railway station and town centre will be encouraged.

Within the growth areas, streets running central to the development should be designed to accommodate bus access with bus stops provided at regular intervals such that all homes are within a 400 metre walk of a bus stop.

Project/Aspiration PW AMb – New Strategic Bus Routes

Opportunities to work with partners, including the Kent County Council, bus and rail operating companies and the highways authority, will be explored to help deliver improvements to public transport services in Paddock Wood. This includes the delivery of new strategic bus routes that connect the new growth areas to the existing town centre and the wider neighbourhood area and the application of the latest technology to ensure that services are efficient and environmentally sustainable.

- 9.21 In addition to bus services, improvements to rail services are strongly encouraged. These include reinstatement of the Medway Valley Line services to Tonbridge (which currently terminate at Paddock Wood), as well as a rail connection into the Transfea employment area to help eliminate road traffic. More frequent and regular trains that cater for existing passengers and those generated from the growth of Paddock Wood are also supported.

Project/Aspiration PW AMc – Rail services and infrastructure

In partnership with the Medway Valley Line and Kent Community Rail Partnership, opportunities for improvements to rail services and infrastructure, for passengers and freight, will continue to be explored and supported.

Residential parking provision

- 9.22 The quality and provision of car parking can be a major determinant on the quality of place, particularly in residential areas. If not provided or used in the correct manner it can impact on the street environment and use of space, discouraging people from walking or cycling. The location and provision of parking should respond to good urban design and place making principles³¹.
- 9.23 Guidance and standards for residential parking as set out by Kent County Council in the Kent Design Guide shall be followed. However, innovative approaches to parking provision are welcome and strongly encouraged. Communal parking courts located to the edge of proposed development areas are one such approach: providing space in line with standards but, being located away from the home, means that it is often more convenient for people to walk, cycle or use public transport to reach their destinations. Such approaches have been used in exemplar urban extensions, such as that at Rieselfeld on the edge of Freiburg in Germany. These approaches are coupled with provision of local services and facilities in comfortable walking distance of the home, an efficient public transport system, street design that discourages driving, and a well-connected, safe and convenient network of walking and cycling routes both within the new development area and linking with the existing settlement. Streets within the development are often car-free and places for play and socialising. Other similar examples include the B01 development in Malmo (Figure 22).



Figure 22: This narrow street typology within the B01 development in Malmo promotes walking and cycling. Parking provision is located on the edge of development and, coupled with narrow streets and a lack of on-plot parking, restricts the ability for people to park on the street, reducing the visual intrusion of the car and making for a safer environment. At the same time, the street is wide enough to allow access, at slow speeds, when necessary. Image source © 2021 Google (Image capture: July 2019)

³¹ See, for example, URBED, University of Edinburgh and Design for Homes, 2013, Space to Park, and online resource: <http://www.spacetopark.org>

- 9.24 Other examples often found in the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries include smaller communal parking courts within the development but which can be adapted over time to become pocket parks or new development sites should car use and ownership fall because other transport alternatives are more attractive (Figure 23). Such approaches are often combined with narrow streets, removing the opportunity for people to park elsewhere, and the introduction of 'filtered mobility' which allows people to walk and cycle in a direct route from one area to another, but which requires people travelling by car to travel on a circuitous route, lengthening their journey times.
- 9.25 Where 'more traditional' forms of parking are provided these should be accommodated on-plot wherever possible. In such instances parking spaces should be set back from the main building line and be of a sufficient size to accommodate a parked car and access to this. On-street parking should only be used for the purpose of visitor parking. Rear courtyards should be avoided, particularly where they include narrow points of access and are not overlooked nor directly accessed by surrounding properties. Examples of such approaches are presented in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance.

Policy PW AM4 – Parking in new residential development

Where parking is provided within the proposed development it should be unobtrusive. Key principles for integrating parking, as illustrated in the Paddock Wood Design Guidance include:

- a. On-plot parking should be set back from the main building line. They should be of a sufficient size to accommodate a parked car and access to the car.
- b. Formal parking spaces, for unallocated visitor parking, can be planned into the street, where forming a comprehensive public realm strategy, including tree planting and use of materials to define parking spaces and soften the visual impact of parked cars.
- c. Rear parking courts should only be provided where they are well overlooked, are directly accessed from the front of properties, and are designed as attractive, functional spaces, incorporating tree planting. Narrow vehicular accessways should be avoided. Pedestrian access must be provided from multiple points.
- d. Undercroft and decked parking may be appropriate, but should in all instances be wrapped with active development frontages, particularly at ground floor level.

Parking provision should be designed in relation to street hierarchy and circulation plans to support creation of walking and cycle friendly streets with low volumes of traffic within residential areas and which minimises through traffic.

Innovative approaches to parking provision are welcome within areas of growth around Paddock Wood and which should be delivered as a package of transport measures including public transport provision, and a street hierarchy that prioritises walking and cycling. This includes communal parking courts located on the edge of the development area, or smaller parking areas integrated within the development but which can be adapted over time. Appropriate standards of provision in growth areas will be determined in conjunction with KCC through the production of SPDs for the growth areas and should be read alongside this policy.

All new development will have regard to the vehicle parking standards established by Kent County Council.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO PARKING PROVISION SHOWING POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE OVER TIME

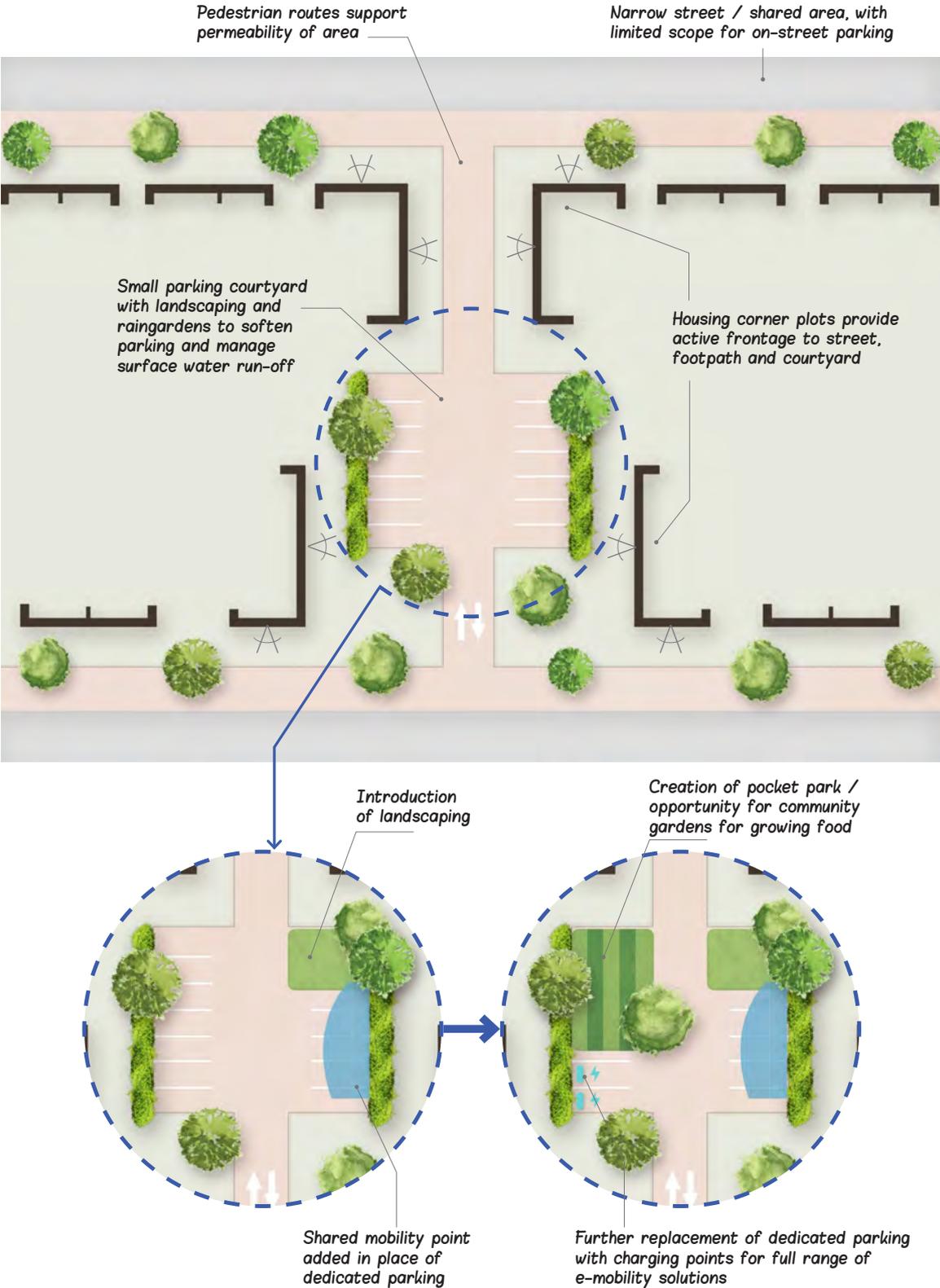


Figure 23: Innovative approaches to parking provision in residential areas are encouraged, reducing the visual intrusion of the car on the street and helping to create pedestrian and cycle friendly streets. Design that allows for adaptation over time is encouraged. Fronts of houses on the diagram are indicated by the thick black lines.

Supporting new Technologies

- 9.26 The way in which people move, own and access means of transport is evolving, with new concepts, such as 'mobility as service'³² and the e-vehicle revolution, providing new choice and opportunity. With technology rapidly advancing, and the climate change agenda given ever more emphasis, the role and future of traditional modes of transport, based around private car use and ownership, will need to be questioned.
- 9.27 The House of Commons cross-party Science and Technology Select Committee has recently reported³³ that, if the UK is to meet climate change targets, then transport solutions are required. It reports that '*in the long-term, widespread personal vehicle ownership does not appear to be compatible with significant decarbonisation*'. Improvements in public transport, walking and cycling are supported.
- 9.28 The Government is committed, through the 'Road to Zero' Strategy³⁴, to half of all new car sales being ultra-low emission vehicles by 2030 (with the sale of all petrol and diesel vehicles phased out by 2040), whilst also rolling-out the necessary infrastructure to support provision of electric vehicles. The National Infrastructure Audit³⁵ goes further than this and includes recommendations that are based on preparing for the sale of all new cars by 2030 to be electric. More recently, the Government has launched a consultation³⁶ on proposals to make it mandatory for all new homes to be fitted with an electric car charging point.
- 9.29 In Paddock Wood, support will be given to projects and proposals that embed new technologies, providing a wider range of choice and opportunity for all. Such technology should be designed such that it does not cause obstruction within the public realm (e.g.: e-vehicle charging points and cables placed on the footway which impede pedestrian movement).
- 9.30 Where mobility is provided as service, through car sharing and docking points for bikes and other forms of personal mobility solutions, such as scooters, these should be located within a convenient walk of the home and main destination (such as the town centre, railway station and places of work), encouraging their use. Where provided in the public realm, these should replace existing car parking provision, encouraging a modal shift away from use of the private car.
- 9.31 Research undertaken by Transport Systems Catapult³⁷ provides an overview of Mobility as a Service, how it works, and examples of how it might be used on a day-to-day basis. It notes that transport services need to better suit customers' circumstances and provide options that align with their lifestyles. Traditional 'one size fits all' approaches are no longer an option.
- 9.32 Mobility as a Service, in its current form, works through an app that enables customers to access a journey planner to show which route and combination of modes are available, including public transport, docked hire vehicles or on-demand services. Research undertaken on behalf of the Government³⁸ acknowledges that Mobility as a Service will transform the way in which we travel, and that this needs reflecting in policy decisions. The research states:

"MaaS potentially offers a paradigm shift from transport being fundamentally provider-led (i.e.: where fixed capacity is provided to serve a predictable demand), to being a fully user-led system

³² See, for more information: <https://maas-alliance.eu/homepage/what-is-maas/>

³³ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/news-parliament-2017/clean-growth-report-published-17-19/>

³⁴ Department for Transport, July 2018, The Road to Zero: Next steps towards cleaner road transport and delivering our Industrial Strategy

³⁵ National Infrastructure Commission, National Infrastructure Audit, July 2018

³⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/electric-car-chargepoints-to-be-installed-in-all-future-homes-in-world-first>

³⁷ Transport Systems Catapult, Mobility as a Service: Exploring the opportunity for mobility as a service in the UK, July 2016

³⁸ Foresight, Government Office for Science, December 2018, Mobility as a Service (MaaS) in the UK: change and its implications

whereby the level and type of transport supply continually adjust in response to the specific desires of individual travelers."

- 9.33 The importance of new transport technology is recognised in the submission Local Plan for Tunbridge Wells, with Policy STR6 stating that *'The Council will realise opportunities for changing transport technology and usage'*.
- 9.34 It is recognised that people in Paddock Wood will continue to own cars, and that they will continue to be used for some journeys. The provision of new technology and mobility solutions is though intended to provide wider choice and opportunity for all, reducing reliance on private car ownership and use, contributing to an improved environment.
- 9.35 Proposals for new development in Paddock Wood should be future-proofed and embed new technology and mobility solutions that provide wider choice and opportunity for all, which reduce reliance on private car use and ownership, and which contribute to an improved environment. All new homes should be supplied with super-fast charging points, reflecting guidance from the Institute of Air Quality management and as consulted upon by the Government in proposed changes to Building Regulations.

Policy PW AM5 – E-vehicles and new transport solutions

Proposals for super-fast communal e-vehicle charging points and shared mobility infrastructure within the public realm are encouraged. This should include opportunities for micro-mobility solutions. Where proposed, such infrastructure should be located sensitively to ensure that there are no harmful impacts upon pedestrian circulation or the immediate appearance of the street scene and wider townscape. Wherever possible, EV charging infrastructure, such as cabling, should be provided in such a way that it can be expanded in the future to provide additional charging points.

Proposals for EV infrastructure and or mobility hubs will be supported in the following locations, subject to compliance with wider policies in the Development Plan:

- a) In all existing and any new areas of car parking to be provided in the town centre.
- b) In all new local centres proposed within the growth areas around Paddock Wood.
- c) At the railway station.
- d) At the Putlands Sports Centre and any new outdoor sports hub provided within the growth area around Paddock Wood.
- e) At any car parks associated with sports and playing fields, including St Andrews, Green Lane and Memorial Field.
- f) At community facilities, including the Wesley Centre.
- g) At existing petrol stations.

All new homes shall be fitted with e-vehicle charging points.

10. HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy Objectives

- 10.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 01:** Deliver the social and environmental infrastructure necessary to support a growing community in the 21st Century.
 - **Objective 02:** Coordinate all new development so that it contributes to the creation of a safe and sustainable community with good access to essential services for all residents.
 - **Objective 05:** Ensure that future development will be designed in such a way as to improve the quality of life for all residents.

Introduction

- 10.2 The scale of growth proposed through the submission Local Plan for Paddock Wood will more than double the size of the town. To help create a truly cohesive and inclusive community the areas of new growth must be well connected with the existing, providing a range of housing choice and be fully supported by the 'shopping basket' of services and facilities that support everyday life. Such facilities should be located such that they are accessible to all. This includes health, leisure and education, as well as local shops, but also extends to energy networks and other utilities, including waste water and management of surface water drainage.
- 10.3 A range of housing types must also be provided that meet local needs and requirements so that people can make Paddock Wood their life-long home. This means a range of housing sizes and affordability, including that suitable for young families and the elderly, as well as other 'products' such as modular home construction, self and custom build opportunities, as well as flexible homes that are designed around the concept of 'long-life, loose-fit', responding to changing demographic and working patterns, as well as life-cycle stages.

Case Study: Housing choice and variety in a growth area

Nansledan is an urban extension of Newquay, in Cornwall. Newquay has a current population of approximately 20,000 people. Development of the first phase of development of 800 homes is now underway at Nansledan. Later phases will increase this to 4,000 homes. A wide variety of housing types are being provided at Nansledan, including flats and apartments, terraces, detached and semi-detached housing. Affordable housing comprises a mix of affordable rented and shared equity housing, and are designed such that they are tenure blind. They are distributed across the development area.

The urban extension is built to a design code reflecting the local vernacular and use of a 'local pattern book'. It is based on a legible street-network, with all routes and spaces overlooked by buildings. Efficient use of land means all homes are within walking distance of services and facilities. A Community Orchard has been provided as part of the urban extension. This provides a link between the new and existing community. It has created social cohesion and strengthened local identity, being a place for community activity and social interaction. Food grown at the orchard is sold in the local market and used in local restaurants.

Housing type and mix

- 10.4 The most recent Authority Monitoring Report prepared by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (December 2019) points to increasing housing prices across the Borough in excess of those across Kent and the wider South East, with the ratio between house prices and earnings also widening, exacerbating issues of affordability.
- 10.5 The submission Local Plan, at Policy H1, requires proposals for development to provide a mix of housing types to support the 'creation and maintenance of balanced communities'. At Policy H3 the approach to affordable housing is set out, requiring 40% of all new homes on major development sites (comprising ten or more homes) on greenfield locations to be affordable. For brownfield sites the requirement is for 30% of all new homes to be affordable. The breakdown of affordable housing products and the need for these to be tenure blind (designed such that they are indistinguishable from market housing) is also set out.
- 10.6 Information provided by the Borough Council indicates that, at the time of writing (November 2021) there are 38 households within a local connection to Paddock Wood on the housing register for social housing, with more than half of these requiring a one-bed property. There are also a further 244 households on the housing register seeking Paddock Wood as an area of choice. 95 (almost 40%) of these require a one-bed property, with 75 requiring a two-bed property. 61 households require a three-bed property and 13 a four-bed property.
- 10.7 The Government's new First Homes policy³⁹ indicates that Neighbourhood Plan qualifying bodies will have discretion to increase the discount on the new First Homes products above the 30% level established in national policy where evidence indicates an increase is appropriate. The affordability gap outlined above and explored further in Appendix E of the Neighbourhood Plan shows that the average price of new properties in Paddock Wood, including smaller properties, is beyond the reach of most households based on the income necessary to obtain a mortgage. This indicates that the highest possible discount level of 50% is necessary and strongly justified in Paddock Wood.
- 10.8 The Authority Monitoring Report also notes that the population of the borough as a whole will increase over the period 2019 – 2036 but that the growth in those aged below 65 years is modest compared to those in the 65+ age category, with the population in this age group anticipated to increase by more than 43%. This is reflected in projected household size, with an anticipated increase in one person households and those with no dependent children. This is recognised in the submission Local Plan which points to a need for extra care housing, with policy requirements set out at Policy H6.
- 10.9 Within the Neighbourhood Plan support is given in Paddock Wood to provision of housing for the elderly, including schemes that provide smaller homes for those looking to downsize. Housing for the elderly should ideally offer easy access to community facilities, services and good public transport. Although this Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development, it does support the principle of such development within the proposed growth areas, where such housing should be located in close proximity to local services and public transport accessibility.
- 10.10 Planning Practice Guidance⁴⁰ notes that there are a variety of specialist housing types that can meet the needs of older people. This includes, but is not limited to, (1) age-restricted general

³⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>

⁴⁰ MHCLG, June 2019, PPG: Housing for older and disabled people <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people> accessed December 2019

market housing, (2) retirement living or sheltered housing, (3) extra care housing or housing-with care, and (4) residential care homes and nursing homes.

10.11 Where housing for the elderly is to be provided it should meet the principles of inclusive design outlined in Planning Practice Guidance⁴¹, as well as those principles set out in the HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation) report⁴² which are applicable to housing for elderly people and age-friendly places.

10.12 Planning Practice Guidance notes that:

'accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently, while also saving on health and social costs in the future. It is better to build accessible housing from the outset rather than have to make adaptations at a later stage – both in terms of cost and with regard to people being able to remain safe and independent in their homes.'

10.13 In line with this, opportunities to provide flexible housing types that can be adapted over time in response to changing lifestyles will be supported.

Policy PW HI1 – Housing Type and Mix

New residential development within the growth areas should provide a mix of housing types and tenures in line with the Local Plan requirements.

- a. The size and mix of the housing units and the tenure of the affordable housing units must be consistent with the most up-to-date evidence of housing need, including the property requirements and mobility needs of households requiring a home in Paddock Wood as indicated on the Borough Council Housing Register for Social Housing.
- b. All qualifying developments in Paddock Wood are required to provide First Homes at a discount of 50%.
- c. All affordable-housing, including First Homes, must be designed such that it is tenure-blind i.e.: of an equal quality in terms of its design and use of materials compared to the market element and it should be fully integrated into the overall proposal, avoiding the clustering of affordable homes in a particular location.

Proposals for innovative housing types that meet local needs and affordability, including modular and prefabricated homes, are encouraged.

Support will be given to development which includes the provision of housing suitable for older residents. Housing that meets the needs of an ageing population may include, where appropriate, bungalows, supported and sheltered housing, and independent living. Housing suitable for an ageing population should be:

- i. Located within easy access of shops, facilities and public transport services.
- ii. Well-integrated within the wider neighbourhood and be designed in accordance with the HAPPI principles.

⁴¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people> accessed December 2019

⁴² <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/> accessed December 2019

Policy PW HI2 – Long-life, loose-fit housing

Proposals for new loose-fit, flexible residential typologies that respond to changing lifestyles, demographic life cycles and working patterns will be supported. This includes the ability for people to work at home separate from the main living space, as well as opportunities for multi-generation homes that enable part of the home to be subdivided as a separate stand-alone unit with its own entrance, allowing older children and elderly family members to live independently. Live/work accommodation and provision of flexible internal layouts are encouraged.

- 10.14 To support diversification of the housing offer and the ability of people to access a home, opportunities for self-build and custom housebuilding in Paddock Wood are supported. The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act came into effect in 2015 and places a duty on certain public authorities, in this case Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, to keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who wish to acquire serviced plots of land to bring forward self-build and custom housebuilding projects. The Act places a duty on those public authorities to have regard to those registers in carrying out planning and other functions. The most recently available information indicates that (as of 31st October 2020) there were 134 registrations on the Self-build register. It is anticipated that over the life of the submission Local Plan there will be a need for 518 plots for self or custom build homes across the whole Borough.
- 10.15 The submission Local Plan encourages sites for self and custom build homes to be identified within neighbourhood plans. In Paddock Wood it is expected that sites within the growth areas shall provide plots for self and custom build. The exact location of provision should be determined through the detailed masterplan process for the growth areas but with land to the north, east and west of Paddock Wood all providing plots. In each of these broad locations no less than 5% of the housing plots shall be for self or custom build.
- 10.16 Where self or custom build plots are to be made available a set of plot passports should be produced. These will provide a summary of the design parameters for any given plot and help private housebuilders understand what they are allowed to build on the plot. They capture key information from the planning permission or the site, design constraints and procedural requirements. The passports clearly show permissible building lines within which the new dwelling can be built as well as height restrictions and other details such as parking requirements. Aspects such as materials, roof styles and fenestration are usually left for the plot owner to decide.
- 10.17 A range of housing and delivery models might come forward on the self and custom build plots, including shared delivery through collaboration. To allow for this, any area of self and custom build should be no smaller than ten plots in size. All plots should also be connected to the utilities network to enable private housebuilders to plug directly into these.
- 10.18 In line with national guidance effective and efficient use of land should be made, whilst also responding to local character and landscape setting. Across Paddock Wood housing density varies between 10-40 dwellings per hectare, gross (see Appendix 2). This measure includes other uses and spaces, and thus net densities may be greater in some places.
- 10.19 It is important not to confuse density with height. The majority of new development should be in the order of two storeys, with some two-and-a-half and three storey buildings, though with some taller elements appropriate where these form part of a clear design rationale for development, such as acting as a local landmark or articulating an important corner on a key view.

- 10.20 The grain and density of development across the growth areas should vary. In central areas development density should be highest, with small plots and more compact development forms promoting walkability, and continuous frontages helping to create well defined streets and spaces. Within and close to central areas residential development may take the form of townhouses, terraces and semi-detached homes, with small front gardens providing a buffer and privacy to the street.
- 10.21 Moving away from central areas towards the edges of the new growth areas, development plots may increase in size, comprising mainly semi-detached and detached homes with deeper front and back gardens.
- 10.22 Towards the edge of the growth area a more informal and fragmented arrangement of buildings may be more appropriate, providing a porous and informal settlement edge. Houses with generous gardens shall overlook well landscaped streets and spaces, which form attractive routes for people to walk and cycle along, linking with the wider network of green wedges running through the growth area and linking back into the existing settlement area. Shared surface type lanes, which are reflective of a rural or informal development edge, may be appropriate.

Policy PW HI3 – Self and Custom Build Housing

Provision of plots for self and custom build homes will be supported. Growth areas to the north, east and west of Paddock Wood are expected to make provision for self and custom build, with the location of the plots determined through the detailed masterplanning for those areas.

The following criteria shall apply:

- a) Where viable, a minimum of 5% of the plots at land within each of the three main growth areas to the north, east and west of Paddock Wood shall be for self and custom building.
- b) Areas for self and custom build housing on land within the growth area around Paddock Wood should be no smaller than ten plots in size, allowing opportunities for co-housing and other collaborative delivery models to come forward.
- c) Plot passports shall be prepared for approval by the Local Planning Authority at outline planning application stage. These will establish the form of development and building parameters for each plot, including, inter alia, building heights, footprint, frontages, density and parking requirements.

All plots for self and custom build housing shall be provided with connections to utilities and communication infrastructure.

Policy PW HI4 – Housing density and heights

Development shall make the most effective and efficient use of land.

Proposals for development in the existing built-up area shall respond to the built form and development densities within the vicinity of the site, with higher density developments supported within and close to the town centre. Within the town centre, building heights shall reflect the prevailing height of three storeys. Taller elements may be appropriate subject to wider policies in the development plan and where they form an important design function, such as articulating an important corner or terminating a key view. Outside the town centre and within the existing urban area, buildings of two-three storeys in height are appropriate.

Within the growth areas, the net average density of development shall be in a range between 30 – 50 homes per hectare, with the highest densities found in new local centres and in close proximity to public transport services, and where residential development might be mixed with other complementary uses. Buildings of two-three storeys are appropriate within areas of growth outside the existing urban area.

Local Centres and Convenience Shopping

- 10.23 The three main areas of growth around Paddock Wood – to the north, east and west – should all be served by new local centres, such that residents have access to daily facilities within convenient distance of the home. These are places where residents might be able to purchase essential goods: a pint of milk for example. They should not detract from but rather complement the town centre offer. The submission Local Plan establishes the quantum of retail floorspace to be provided across the three centres. Each will be relatively small in size.
- 10.24 Subject to ongoing masterplanning work associated with the growth around Paddock Wood, one of the local centres may, or may not, be located in the adjacent parish of Capel, though forming part of Paddock Wood. If one of the centres is to be within Capel, the Town Council will continue to liaise with partners to influence the design and mix of the local centre and supporting facilities such that it contributes towards the objectives for Paddock Wood as a whole.
- 10.25 The Local centres should be located such that as much of the new areas of growth as possible are in close proximity to these, with a well-connected network of safe and direct walking and cycling routes meaning that facilities are accessible within a five to ten minute journey by foot or by bicycle. Equally, the centres should be well connected with the existing settlement area, allowing wider usage and facilitating the coming together of new and existing residents.
- 10.26 The local centres should include new retail space as well as other complementary services and facilities, including as appropriate to each location, schools and healthcare, leisure, recreation and employment floorspace. Together, such uses can provide for day-to-day needs but also help create active and lively areas at the centre of the new communities. The provision of these activities will help create places of identity and support community cohesion.
- 10.27 Each of the centres should develop its own identity and complementary mix of uses. Centres in the north and east should include a new primary school. The centre to the north may also be well related to provision of new outdoor sports facilities. To the west, the centre should incorporate a new health centre. Where schools are located with the central areas the facilities should ideally be available for use by residents and local clubs outside of school hours.
- 10.28 Residential uses can be incorporated in the centre, with mixed-use development (above the shop for example), but should be holistically designed to form part of the overall approach to the local centre. Front doors to residential uses should be clear and well-defined, and form part of the main street frontage.
- 10.29 To help create a sense of place and identity the design and layout of the local centres should be informed by analysis of and take inspiration from local and village centres around Paddock Wood, with key features of the centre morphology being reinterpreted within the growth areas. Such features commonly found are:
- Centres develop around the intersection of streets, with the streets often forming a 'y-shaped' layout. In the new centres, the streets and spaces should be designed to maximize the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment.
 - Village Greens are often found at the heart of the centre, with mature trees helping create a sense of place.
 - Village greens and central spaces are overlooked by buildings, with building lines fronting the space.

- Some buildings are set back from the street edge, allowing the public space to be used for different activities, including parking or, more traditionally, markets.
 - Churches act as local landmarks and aid orientation, though are often located slightly 'off-centre', but visually connected through extension of green space.
 - There are subtle variations in building heights, though all are normally between two-three storeys high. Taller elements do exist and act as local landmarks, including church towers and oast houses.
- 10.30 It is important that the local centre, buildings and spaces within it are designed with flexibility in mind, so that they can adapt to changing circumstances and use over time. The ground floor of buildings should for example have generous floor to ceiling heights to allow for different uses.
- 10.31 The local centre should be a pedestrian-friendly space, with generous pavement space and plentiful street crossing points provided. This will allow commercial units to spill out onto and activate the street, without causing undue obstruction.
- 10.32 The public realm should be designed such that driver behaviour adapts to the space, with speeds slowing and priority given to pedestrians and cyclists. Street furniture, including benches and landscaping, should be integrated within the public realm, providing places for people to meet and relax outside.
- 10.33 Each of the centres should be served by bus routes, with bus stops located within or close to the central area. Stops and waiting facilities should be designed such that they are integrated with other street furniture, minimising visual intrusion. Support will be given to bus stops forming part of a wider mobility hub, providing residents with travel choice, including, for example, cycle hire and other micro-mobility solutions, as expanded upon in Section 9. This might also be places for parcel drop-off and delivery.
- 10.34 Cycle parking should also be provided in the central areas. This should preferably be sheltered and in a visible location in close proximity to shops and facilities within the centre. Where car parking is provided this should form part of the overall public realm design and could take the form of on-street bays interspersed with street trees and different use of materials to help define the space.

Policy PW HI5 – Local centres within growth areas

The three main areas of growth and expansion around Paddock Wood – to the north, east and west – will all include provision of a new local or neighbourhood centre. The location of these will be determined through the masterplanning process. These should:

- a) Provide a mix of uses that serve the day-to-day needs of the local community, including retail (Use Class E(a)-E(c)), workspace (Use Class E(g)), community and leisure uses (Use Classes E(f) and F2), as well as healthcare (Use Class E(e)). Where residential (Use Class C3) is provided in the centre this should be provided on upper floors.
- b) Provide active uses at ground floor level, with flexibility designed in to buildings such that uses can change and adapt over time.
- c) Integrate new primary schools and early years provision within the local centre, where appropriate, with main entrances located within the centre. Layout and design solutions shall minimise the impact of vehicular traffic movements associated with the school run.
- d) Be located so that as many homes as possible in the growth area are in a five to ten minute walk of the centre, and which are well connected to the wider growth area via a network of walking and cycling routes.
- e) Be accessible by bus, with streets designed to balance their movement function with their placemaking role in the centres, where streets and spaces should be pedestrian friendly.
- f) Incorporate mobility hubs alongside bus stops that allow for the integration of evolving mobility solutions and technology, including charging points for micro mobility and e-vehicles. Parcel collection points shall also be integrated.
- g) Carefully integrate parking within the local centre, designing this as part of the street, including new tree planting.
- h) Be designed to create identifiable places, responding to and taking inspiration from the form and character of local centres in Paddock Wood and wider area.

The height of buildings in the centres can be between two-three storeys, with subtle variation between the heights of different buildings. Taller elements may be appropriate where these form a landmark element and where the scale and mass of that building is carefully designed in respect of visual impact.

Social and Community Facilities

- 10.35 The submission Local Plan establishes the range and mix of facilities that should be provided to support the growth of Paddock Wood, including delivery of two new two-form entry primary schools (one of which has the potential to be expanded to become three-form entry) as well as provision of a new health hub. This is expanded upon in the supporting Structure Plan documents and Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).
- 10.36 New social and community facilities should be delivered during the earliest practical phases of development (subject to trigger points and thresholds established by service providers) as these can help generate a sense of community. The preference is for primary schools to be located in growth areas to the north and east of Paddock Wood, and for a health hub to be located in the growth area to the west. All should be integrated within new local centres where possible, practical and feasible to do so.
- 10.37 Of particular note:

Schools and childcare

- 10.38 Paddock Wood has a range of pre-school facilities and a Children's Centre which is currently located in the Wesley Centre in Commercial Road. The Children's Centre serves the population of Paddock Wood and the surrounding rural communities as well as the substantial facility for homeless families located in the centre of Paddock Wood. There is also a need for expanded day care, pre-school and nursery facilities where there is already a shortage of capacity. This need includes before and after school care and care during school holidays.
- 10.39 As with many schools there is already traffic congestion around Paddock Wood Primary School at arrival and departure times and there is likely to be further congestion around any new school in Paddock Wood. Proposals for all new schools should include strategies that contribute to a reduction in traffic created by the car-based school run. Similarly, strategies should be rolled-out across existing schools, including, for example, the use of school streets.

Healthcare

- 10.40 Existing healthcare buildings do not meet current needs and the Health Centre resources do not meet the current needs of local residents. The Kent & Medway Sustainability & Transformation Partnership (STP) aims to provide high quality services closer to home, with a focus on prevention of ill health and early intervention where health and social care needs exist⁴³. The initial focus of the STP has been on older people who often have prolonged stays in hospital due to lack of local facilities to provide care and support.
- 10.41 In addition to provision of a new health hub as set out in the submission Local Plan it is anticipated that the following services and facilities are required:
- Nursing and Care Homes – local to enable people to remain close to their family and support systems, located in quiet areas with sufficient parking for staff and visitors.
 - Supported / Assisted living services - local to enable people to remain close to their family and support systems and in their own homes.
 - Day care and drop in facilities for older people and children – to prevent social isolation for older people and families.

⁴³ <https://kentandmedway.nhs.uk/stp/>

- Facilities for provision of health and social care in the community where people live (Day centres, nursing & therapy services, health visiting and midwifery and GP services) – this will require provision of facilities where health and social care can be co-located to ensure that social prescribers, voluntary organisations, therapists, pharmacists, nurses, health visitors and midwives all work alongside GPs.

Other community facilities

- 10.42 In addition to requirements arising from new growth the town already has a range of facilities, all of which should be retained and, wherever possible, enhanced over the life of the Plan. Indeed, the presence of existing facilities, and access to these, is essential to help generate a sense of community and social cohesion, binding new and existing neighbourhoods. The submission Local Plan, at Policy ED12, sets out the approach to the retention of community facilities and steps to be considered should proposals be submitted for the loss or replacement of such facilities. Where proposals would result in the loss of a facility they should be supported by evidence to demonstrate there are clear reasons for this, and that, in the first instance, alternative provision or a comparable quality is provide for in the locality. To help future proof any new or replacement facilities, the Neighbourhood Plan expands upon this and suggests that any new facilities should be designed to be flexible and adaptable, accommodating different uses and activities during the day and over time, sharing core elements such as reception areas and parking provision. All facilities should be accessible to as wide a section of the resident population as possible, being in comfortable walking and cycling distance of the home, connected via safe infrastructure, and with secure cycle parking provided at all facilities.
- 10.43 The IDP (March 2021), published alongside the submission Local Plan, identifies the need for a range of infrastructure items to support new growth and expansion of the town. In addition to schools and healthcare is an identified need for new book stock within the library. Expansion of the library as a community hub and place where people can borrow a range of goods (not just books) is supported in the Neighbourhood Plan, supporting the long-term future of library space through diversification and helping the environment by reducing the consumption of goods that are rarely used and often disposed of. Such a 'community borrowing' centre can also be a place where people learn new skills, volunteer services, and become more connected to their community.

Case Study: the 'Library of Things'

Set up as a social enterprise, the Library of Things operates in three locations across South London, taking inspiration from similar ventures in Berlin and Toronto. Typically operating from a kiosk inside an existing library, members are able to hire a wide range of goods for a small charge, including tools, cleaning and gardening equipment. A series of regular events are also held, providing people with new skills, an opportunity to expand social networks, and to help others.

The concept is similar to the idea of the 'community kiosks' which form part of the plans to transform Paris into a series of fifteen minute neighbourhoods, where all residents can have their day-to-day needs met within fifteen minutes of the home. The community kiosks are a key part of the initiative, being places where people can exchange services, join a local club or borrow items for the home.

- 10.44 The former Paddock Wood Police Station is currently being redeveloped for housing, with police operations having been relocated to the Fire Station. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the re-provision of these facilities, which may include a smaller but still accessible public presence, ideally within the Town Centre.
- 10.45 Furthermore, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies a wider range of community facilities that would be supported in proposals for new growth and development, including facilities for younger people. This has been informed by information collected from consultation with a wide range of groups, including schools, uniformed groups, church groups & groups attached to Youth Council.

Policy PW HI6 – Social and Community Facilities

New growth areas will provide new school and healthcare provision as established in the submission Local Plan, with primary schools within the north and eastern growth areas, and a health hub in the western growth area. All should be integrated with delivery of new local centres where feasible and, where possible, delivered during the early phases of development to help build a sense of community and integration with existing neighbourhoods.

Provision of a new health hub should be coordinated with delivery of specialist accommodation and supported living, providing for the needs of an ageing population.

Proposals for new social and community facilities across Paddock Wood as a whole (including replacement of existing facilities) will be supported where they:

- a. Include provision of flexible space that can be used for a variety of community uses and which can be adapted over time.
- b. Are provided in locations that capitalise on opportunities to promote walking, cycling and use of public transport, and incorporate safe and secure cycle parking provision.
- c. Are easily accessible to all.
- d. Respond to local character, design policies and guidance set out in the Development Plan.
- e. Strengthen the cultural, social and sporting offer for existing and new residents in Paddock Wood, as well as visitors to the town.

Proposals for new or improved community and social facilities that would be supported include:

- i. Expanded library and wider integrated 'community borrowing' centre.
- ii. Community hall to accommodate local music and drama groups, family events and catering facilities.
- iii. Meeting space for small and large groups and activities.
- iv. A youth hub.
- v. Art gallery space.
- vi. Evening entertainment including bowling, cinema and music venues.
- vii. Play areas for all age groups including adolescents in new developments.
- viii. Provision of space for outdoor community activities, including, where appropriate, barbeque and seating facilities.
- ix. Police Station / publicly accessible police counter.

Project/Aspiration PW H1a – Youth Hub

Through engagement with younger members of the Paddock Wood society and with various organisations the need for facilities for younger people has been identified, with provision of a youth hub providing space for a wide range of activities, including music and arts, aspired to. The Town Council will work with partner organisations to explore the feasibility of delivering such a facility and, through ongoing consultation, better understand the needs and requirements. Developers of major growth areas around Paddock Wood are encouraged to work with the Town Council and others to help deliver a Youth Hub, as well as exploring arrangements for the ongoing management and maintenance of such a facility.

Commercial and Employment Premises

- 10.46 Policy STR/SS 1, which sets out the strategy for Paddock Wood in the submission Local Plan, allocates “significant new land for a mix of employment uses on sites to the north and south of Lucks Lane, and to the east of Transfesa Road. These are Key Employment Areas and, as per submission Local Plan Policy ED 1, are allocated for Class E (financial, professional and other business uses), Class B2 (general industry) and Class B8 (storage and distribution).
- 10.47 The Tunbridge Wells Economic Needs Study 2016 highlighted the shortage of employment land across the borough, including in Paddock Wood, with local letting agents holding waiting lists for premises. With the forthcoming expansion of Paddock Wood, pressure on existing employment areas will grow. Provision of land for economic development in and around Paddock Wood will therefore be important to prevent the town becoming a dormitory in the future.
- 10.48 There is a strong desire for economic growth and development in the area, providing work for people living locally and attracting employers to the area. To facilitate economic growth, Paddock Wood must provide an attractive environment for businesses and skilled workers. This should include being located nearby to main roads, good public transport connections, ample car parking and having access to amenities and services.
- 10.49 There is a growing need for mixed employment opportunities in the town centre area bordered by station road and Commercial Road. In particular, the growth of small businesses, self-employment and start-ups is supported. Flexible workshop/shared units that suit such businesses are encouraged. The restriction of certain types of businesses that are already prevalent in Paddock Wood Town Centre such as charity shops, estate agents and betting shops, would allow space for others to emerge.
- 10.50 The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is seeking investment in transport infrastructure for accelerated growth in the ‘knowledge economy’ to balance the current reliance on public sector employers. This aligns with the TWBC Retail & Leisure Study 2017 which states that the combination of a highly skilled and growing workforce would make the area attractive to professional, scientific and technical businesses. Paddock Wood, with its strong road and rail links, is a good location for these services and could become a hub for the industry.

Policy PW HI7 – Commercial and Employment Premises

Encouragement is given to proposals that maximise opportunities to access employment and development, including suitable premises for micro and start-up businesses such as flexible working spaces.

Support will also be given to proposals for research and development services (Use Class E) to encourage growth of the knowledge economy sector.

Proposals that create new employment opportunities will be supported where:

- a. Their size, materials and design respects the immediate surroundings which they are to be located whilst enhancing the location to make it attractive for new businesses;
- b. They are well integrated with and complement existing businesses;
- c. They do not have significant impact on the local environment and the amenities of adjacent residential properties or other land uses;
- d. They do not result in a material increase in large and heavy vehicle traffic on non-strategic routes; and
- e. They enable active travel through delivery of new walking and cycling routes that enhance connections to the town centre.

Project/Aspiration PW H1b – Article 4 Direction

The potential introduction of an Article 4 Direction (which withdraws permitted development rights) will be explored, for application to employment uses, retaining important local employment floorspace and jobs.

Specific offices suitable for Article 4 direction would include the office space along Commercial Road and in other business areas. This would prevent these employment spaces being converted to residential properties providing a major opportunity for growth in the area.

Community energy supplies

- 10.51 The NPPF (Paragraph 155a) stipulates that plans should provide a positive strategy to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat. This aligns with the aspirations of the residents of Paddock Wood, who recognise the importance of community renewable energy generation within the context of meeting the challenge posed by the climate emergency.
- 10.52 There are many examples of community energy projects across the UK, including community owned renewable electricity installations such as solar photovoltaic panels, wind turbines or hydroelectric generation, or members of the community jointly switching to a renewable heat source such as a heat pump or biomass boiler.
- 10.53 The submission Local Plan, through Policy STR 7, notes that all development within the borough will recognise the Climate Emergency and be supportive of the Borough Council's ultimate target to achieve net zero emissions across the borough by 2030. Actions emerging from the Climate Emergency declared by the Borough Council include implementing policy that supports the delivery of appropriate renewable energy generation, and will engage with communities on action plans to facilitate this.
- 10.54 Despite central government financial cuts relating to renewable energy feed-in tariffs, community energy projects could provide significant economic and social as well as environmental benefits for Paddock Wood residents, including low cost energy generation, a reduction in fuel poverty, local job creation and greater community cohesion.
- 10.55 Support is given to proposals for individual and small-scale community renewable energy generation and planning decisions should look favourably on applications that incorporate renewable energy generation and storage technology.

Policy PW HI8: Community Energy Generation

Proposals for individual and community scale energy from hydro-electricity, solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and
- b. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and
- c. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.

11. PROJECTS

- 11.1 Paddock Wood will inevitably experience growth over the next decade or more. This growth will only be successful if the right level of investment is made to improve the community and social infrastructure at the right time. Many of these are established in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and other associated documents sitting alongside and informing the submission Local Plan. There are though a series of more locally specific infrastructure projects that are important to Paddock Wood.
- 11.2 Infrastructure projects will be funded by developers through Section 106 agreements where related to the development. The Borough Council has adopted a Good Practice Guide to Section 106 Planning Obligations as a Supplementary Planning Document. Kent County Council has also published a Developer Contribution Guide, establishing requirements for those schemes which qualify for a Section 106 Agreement.
- 11.3 Equally, projects may be funded by partner organisations through different funding streams available to them. This might include, for example, the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan prepared by the Borough Council, identifying new walking and cycling routes, costs and funding streams.
- 11.4 Alongside the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan a series of projects and aspirations have been identified. These represent the wider aspirations for change and improvement expressed by the community, but which are not necessarily linked to specific developments. They are identified to help inform strategies and investment plans being developed by partner organisations. These are referred to through the Neighbourhood Plan and highlighted in the blue project boxes. These are projects towards which funding, either by way of a Section 106 agreement or through other arrangements, including funding streams available through partner organisations, might be directed. These projects will be kept under review. They include, but are not limited to:
- Improvements to the quality of the public realm in the town centre, including a wayfinding strategy.
 - Supporting apprenticeships that support work experience in arboriculture and horticulture.
 - Delivery of a network of new and expanded public rights of way connecting Paddock Wood with the surrounding countryside.
 - Delivery of a connected network of safe walking and cycling routes around Paddock Wood reflecting best practice design principles.
 - New bus routes and services across Paddock Wood.
 - Improvements to rail services and infrastructure for both passengers and freight.

12. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Consultation on the Draft Plan

- 12.1 This is the 'Regulation 14' pre-submission consultation draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group wants to know the views of the people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area. Information on how to respond is available via the Town Council website:

<https://paddockwood-tc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

Revisions to the Draft Plan

- 12.2 Once the Regulation 14 consultation period is closed, Paddock Wood Town Council will gather together all the comments received and make amendments to the Plan as appropriate. This will then form the submission version Neighbourhood Plan and will be accompanied by (a) a Basic Conditions Statement, setting out how the Plan aligns with national policy and statutory requirements, and (b) a Consultation Statement, setting out the process of consultation followed in the production of the Plan and how this has informed the structure and content of the Plan and policies.

Submission to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

- 12.3 The revised version of the Neighbourhood Plan, together with supporting material, will then be formally submitted to the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, the local planning authority. In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, the Borough Council must satisfy itself that the draft Neighbourhood Plan complies with all the statutory requirements before then commencing the it examination process.

Independent Examination

- 12.4 At the commencement of the examination process the Plan will be published for a further six-week period of consultation, to be organised by the Borough Council, after which an independent examiner will be appointed to review the Plan and any comments made in response to the consultation. Following this, the examiner will issue a report to the Borough Council advising whether:

- The Plan should proceed to referendum.
- The Plan should proceed to referendum subject to modification.
- The Plan should not proceed to Referendum.

- 12.5 For the examiner to advise that the Plan proceed to referendum it will need to demonstrate that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

- 12.6 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council will organise the referendum. All people of voting age in Paddock Wood are eligible to vote on whether the Plan should be brought into force ('made') or not. If more than 50% of all people who turnout vote in favour of the Plan, then it will become part of the suite of planning policies used by the Borough Council to help shape and determine planning applications in Paddock Wood.

APPENDIX A: LOCAL GREEN SPACE DESIGNATIONS

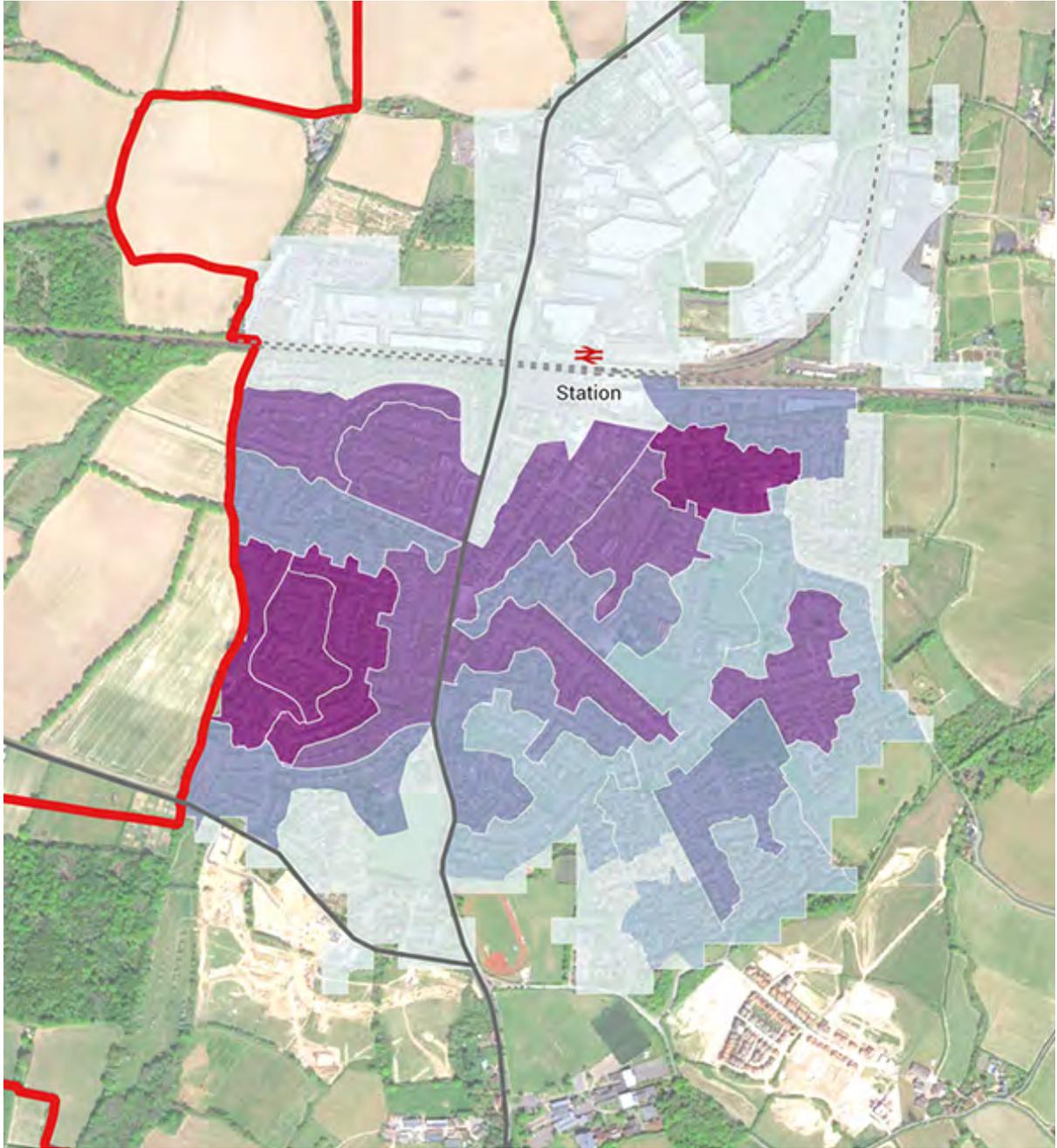
A staged approach to the assessment of potential Local Green Space designations was taken.

The first sought to map and consider all green spaces in Paddock Wood against the criteria for designation established in the NPPF (at paragraphs 100 – 101). Those sites proposed for designation in the submission Local Plan were removed, focussing on additional sites that might be designated in the Neighbourhood Plan. Consultation with landowners was undertaken on these sites, with the responses informing the second stage of the assessment. The second stage considered the responses alongside submission Local Plan policies and the value of the site to the community as a whole. This process filtered out a number of sites, with those remaining being designated in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Further information is presented in the Local Green Space report which forms a free-standing appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan.

APPENDIX B: RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

The plan below shows residential density across Paddock Wood, based on houses recorded as of the 2011 census and calculated by output area. This is a gross density: when land for other uses is factored out the net residential density increases.



| Symbol | Values | Legend |
|--------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | 5.360000 - 8.000000 | 5.36 - 8 dph |
| | 8.000000 - 20.000000 | 8 - 20 dph |
| | 20.000000 - 25.000000 | 20 - 25 dph |
| | 25.000000 - 30.000000 | 25 - 30 dph |
| | 30.000000 - 40.000000 | 30 - 40 dph |

APPENDIX C: THE WESLEY CENTRE

The Wesley Centre is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan as a locally important heritage asset. This appendix presents information about the building and its importance to the community:

PADDOCK WOOD METHODIST CHURCH

by John Flashman

Centrally sited in Commercial Road, Paddock Wood, and proudly bearing the date 1888, stands the former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (formally known since November 1979 as the Wesley Centre). This, the oldest publicly owned building in Paddock Wood, houses the town's oldest World War One memorial tablet on which are inscribed the names of 13 men, former worshippers at the Chapel who gave their lives for their country.



Prior to the Chapel being built, Paddock Wood Methodists would have worshipped at either East Peckham, Brenchley or Laddingford. But as the community grew it became clear that Paddock Wood needed a chapel of its own. Building work commenced in early 1888, the successful tenderers being Messrs White and Humphreys of Tunbridge Wells. The overall cost of the project amounted to £580. The land on which the Chapel stands was clearly donated but by whom is not recorded.



On 11 July 1888 four memorial stones were laid in the front wall of the Chapel. From left to right these stones bear the names of Thomas Twiddy of Rotherfield, Sussex, Mrs H J Overy of Paddock Wood, Mrs Bretherton of Tunbridge Wells and the late J.M. Cole of Roxholme Hall, Sleaford, Lincolnshire. The first three were probably benefactors to the Chapel but the fourth, whilst having no known connection with Paddock Wood, was a staunch supporter of the (Wesleyan) Methodist movement who had subscribed liberally to the cause and who had died just ten days

previously. Mrs Overy was Sarah, wife of Henry James Overy, of Mascalls Court House.

By Act of Parliament the new Chapel had to be registered as a place of worship. This was done on 12 October 1888 when the required statutory document was submitted to the Registrar General. The signatory was Henry James Overy who was described as a trustee of the Chapel. The Chapel was formally opened on Tuesday 3 October 1888 when two special services were held, each attracting a large congregation.

In early 1889 the Chapel became part of the newly-formed Tonbridge Methodist Circuit. Support for the movement in Paddock Wood continued to grow, congregations at services steadily increased and in 1897 the decision was taken to appoint a resident minister.

During its existence the Chapel would have seen many baptisms, marriages and funeral services. There is no evidence that the Chapel had its own



baptismal register although the Circuit would have kept its own record of christenings at Paddock Wood. As regards marriages, it appears that the Chapel was registered to perform marriages (probably after the Marriage Act of 1898 was passed) but the County Archives only have registers dating from 1948 (see below). Funerals would not have been officially recorded but by law burials had to be entered in Circuit registers. No record of Wesleyan burials in Paddock Wood has so far emerged but the land to the rear of the Chapel had the potential to act as a graveyard and intriguingly a number of older Paddock Wood residents are adamant that there were three (or possibly four) graves in the open area behind the Chapel schoolroom (on the right hand side as you view the building from Old Kent Road).



The marriage registers are housed in 3 volumes ie 1948-1954, 1954-1976 and 1976-1979 and reveal that in total 40 marriages were conducted in the Chapel during these years. The earliest was a marriage between Ernest Cole of Rhoden House, Church Road, and Eunice Humphrey of Woodsdale which took place on 2 August 1948, Commercial Road. One other wedding took place at the Chapel that year and 1949 also saw two marriages as did 1950. The numbers rose a little after that, with four taking place in 1951, five in 1952, three in 1953 and five in 1954. But after that the numbers began to decline, with two in 1956, two in 1957 and none at all in 1958. There was one solitary wedding in 1959, none in 1960 or 1961, one in 1962 and none in 1963 or 1964. After that the numbers are one each in 1965, 1966, 1970 and 1971, two in 1972, and one in each of 1973, 1974, 1975 and 1979.

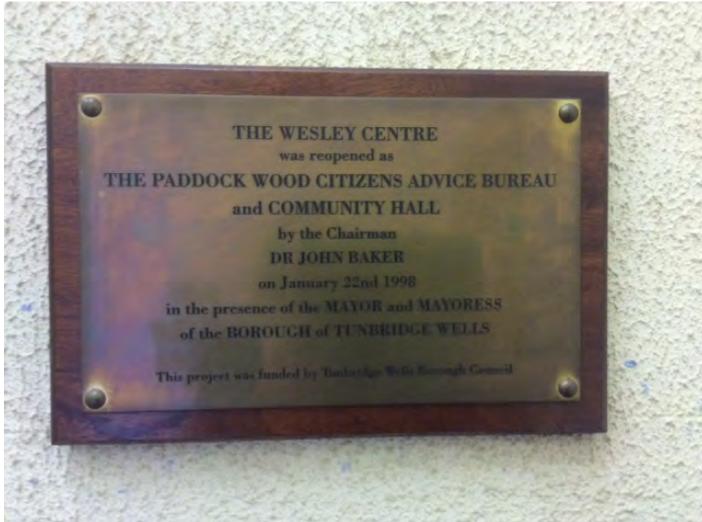
This last and final marriage which took place on 1 September 1979 was between Henry Morton of Ringden Avenue and Edith Pilbeam nee Bridges of Dowding House. Both were in their seventies, proving yet again that romance is not the sole prerogative of the young.

At this point the marriage register ends, with the following entry dated 5 August 1982:

In consequence of the Trustees of the Methodist Chapel, Commercial Road, Paddock Wood, having ceased to avail themselves of the provisions of Section 43 of the Marriage Act 1949 this register is closed at this point by direction of the Registrar General.



The events concerning the Chapel from 1900 onwards and the changes which gradually and ultimately led to joint worship with the Anglican Church of St Andrew are admirably described by the Rev Stuart Radford in his booklet *Methodism in Paddock Wood*, published circa 1997. Suffice it to say here that the Chapel closed as a place of worship in September 1979 and despite several attempts to sell the building and replace it with new development it was eventually purchased in 1996 by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in whose ownership it currently remains.



The sale enabled building of the 'new' community halls at St Andrews Church.

The building was purchased by the Borough Council as a result of campaigning by the former Mayor Mrs Ruth Baker and her husband, a local GP Dr John Baker, to keep it for the benefit of the community.

The building also became home to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

At the time of writing (2021) the building is occupied by the Community Storehouse (a food bank), and Heritage Paddock Wood Ltd. The Hall and garden

area is used by the Children's Centre (KCC) and community groups. It is also used for exhibitions and events. Negotiations and engagement with the community, Borough Council & Amelia Project staff (The Amelia is due to open in early 2022) are ongoing with the aspiration to retain the whole curtilage for wellbeing, cultural and economic benefit with a focus on the heritage of the immediate and wider area. This will embed sustainability by meeting current needs to enrich lives and flexibility for future generations to meet their own needs in terms of placemaking and the continued promotion of health happiness and wellbeing.

As mentioned above the Wesley Centre is the only Victorian building in public ownership left in Paddock Wood.

The premises contain a commemorative plaque to those members of the local Methodist congregation who lost their lives whilst serving in World War One. This beautiful memorial stone inside the building must be preserved for future generations.



Acknowledgements to Rev Stuart Redford, Maidstone Archives, Richard Ratcliffe, Meryl Flashman, Sarah Hamilton & Heritage Paddock Wood

APPENDIX D: THE HOP PICKERS RAILWAY

The Hop Pickers Railway is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan as a locally important heritage asset. This appendix presents information about the building and its importance to the community:

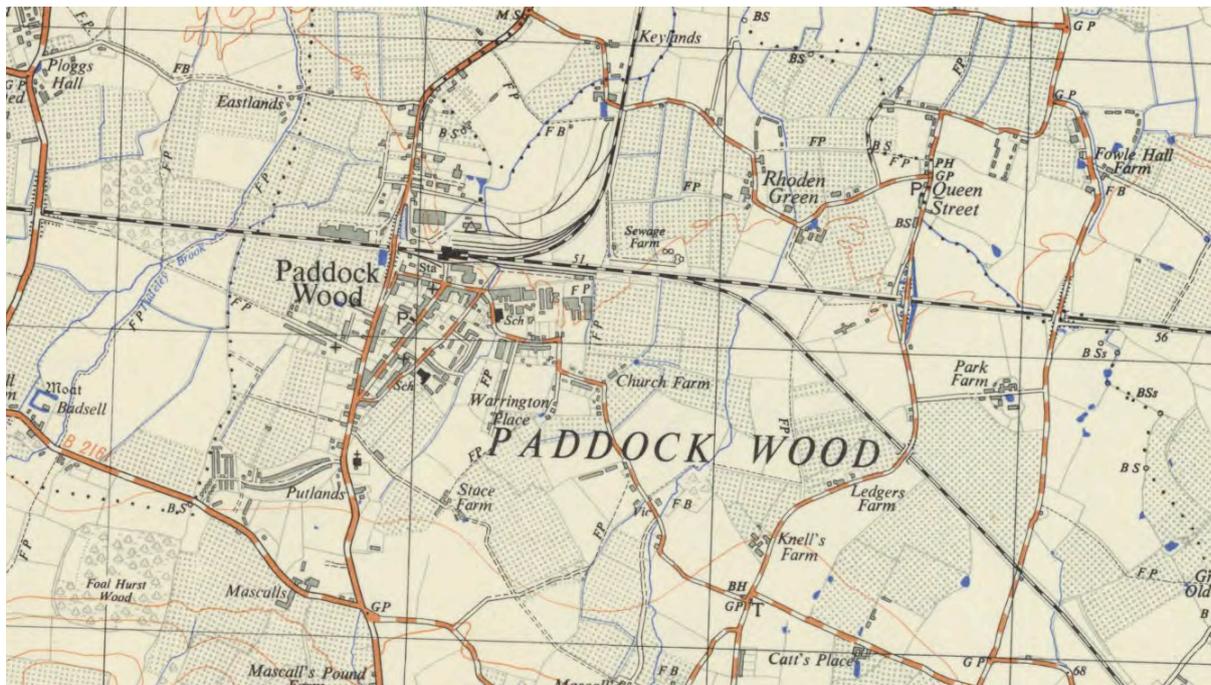


Figure 24: Historic Map of Paddock Wood (publication date 1957) showing route of Hop Pickers railway line to south and east (source: www.maps.nls.uk)

COPY OF NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY FROM:

AOC Archaeology Group, January 2016, Paddock Wood To Hawkhurst Branch Line: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

AOC was commissioned by the Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the Kent County Council Heritage Services Group to undertake an historic environment desk-based assessment of the former route of the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line. The Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst railway line was opened in 1892 with Hawkhurst Station opened in 1893. A unique feature of the line was its service to the hop growers along the route. It was decommissioned in the 1960s and is now a dismantled railway line. Due to its association with the hop picking industry and produce, it became to be known as the 'Hop Pickers Line'.

The Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group, working with the Kent County Council Heritage Services Group, expressed a desire to re-integrate the original route of the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst railway line into usage through opening sections for public access and recreation and through promotion of the heritage of the line. To facilitate this, the Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group commissioned the production of an historic assessment in the form of this document.

The aims of the historic environment assessment were the following:

- To identify and assess the archaeological, historic building and historic landscape attributes surviving within the site;
- To provide a baseline description of the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line as a heritage asset with component parts and provide a baseline historic background;
- To identify the survival, quality and significance of the heritage asset;
- To identify modern disturbance which may have removed heritage assets;
- To inform and guide more detailed assessment and survey as part of a future project for improved access and interpretation
- Provide recommendations for further studies by volunteers and/or specialist archaeologists
- Identify opportunities to raise awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line.
- Identify conservation threats and pressures.

The original branch line was constructed by the Cranbrook and Paddock Wood Railway with the support of the South Eastern Railway Company, which took over running of the line in the early 20th century.

The route of the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line obviously commenced at Paddock Wood Station, which then wended its way across the Kent countryside in a south-easterly direction towards Horsmonden and the station there. From Horsmonden the line headed south towards Goudhurst although it traversed some distance to the west of the actual village at the Green Cross Inn where Goudhurst Station was previously located. From here the line meandered across fields and forests until it came within striking distance of Cranbrook and Cranbrook Station, or more accurately Hartley, which was the closest settlement.

The line turned south from here towards Hawkhurst although it only got as far as Gills Green, which formed the terminus and the Hawkhurst Station.

Following the decommissioning of the line in the early 1960s, the lines were removed in 1964 and the stations and other assets were sold off in 1967.

The AOC assessment covered the whole route of the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line and 500m either side to identify possible heritage assets associated with the former railway, and hop growing and picking. The assessment looked at data from the Kent Historic Environment Record, historic Ordnance Survey Maps, aerial photographs and airborne LiDAR (Light Detecting and Ranging), documentary evidence held at archives and a walkover survey of the route of the railway.

In general, the assessment found that the decommissioning, and subsequent break-up and sale of the railway line and associated land, structures and buildings was relatively thorough. Almost the entire track has been removed, with the only exception being a short length near to the Paddock Wood Station terminus.

Structurally, many of the former railway buildings have either gone, as in the case of Hawkhurst Station and Goudhurst Station, or been turned into private dwellings, such as has happened to Cranbrook Station, or become commercial properties, such as Horsmonden Station. The former railway cottages and level crossing cottages have almost all become private dwellings.

The route of the railway line has been relatively well preserved, with the line being demarked by hedgerows, boundaries and earthworks. Particularly well preserved stretches are located to the north of Horsmonden, near to Swigs Hole Farm and along the stretch by Cranbrook Station, where even parts of the platform survive. The tunnels at Badgers Oak and Horsmonden are well preserved.

The assessment found that certain classes or groups of surviving structures, such as the remaining keepers cottages and the engine and goods sheds at Cranbrook and Hawkhurst, were of sufficient significance to be considered for more statutory protection.

Those structures associated with the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst railway worthy of greater protection, through the planning system, were identified as:

- Hop Pickers Huts at Hardlots
- Swigs Hole Bridge
- Cranbrook Station House
- Cranbrook Workers Cottages
- Cranbrook Goods Shed
- Badger Oak Tunnel
- Hawkhurst Workers Cottages
- Hawkhurst Engine Shed

The assessment has suggested a number of possible avenues for further enhancement of the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line and its heritage and opportunities to expand on its usage, both as a local recreational asset and as an attraction from visitors to the region.

APPENDIX E: HOUSE PRICES AND AFFORDABILITY

HOUSE PRICES IN PADDOCK WOOD

As of July 2021, the average house price in the UK was £255,535. In Tunbridge Wells this figure was £408,486. Table E1 and Figure E1 below present house prices in Paddock Wood between 2011-2021 based upon Land Registry Paid Price Data. This shows a clear upward trajectory in house prices over the last ten years.

| | Detached | Semi-detached | Terraced | Flat/maisonette | Overall Average |
|-------------|----------|---------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2011 | £336,282 | £223,417 | £204,356 | £131,333 | £242,836 |
| 2021 | £556,331 | £367,869 | £297,333 | £239,875 | £401,211 |

Table E1. Paddock Wood average house prices 2011-2021

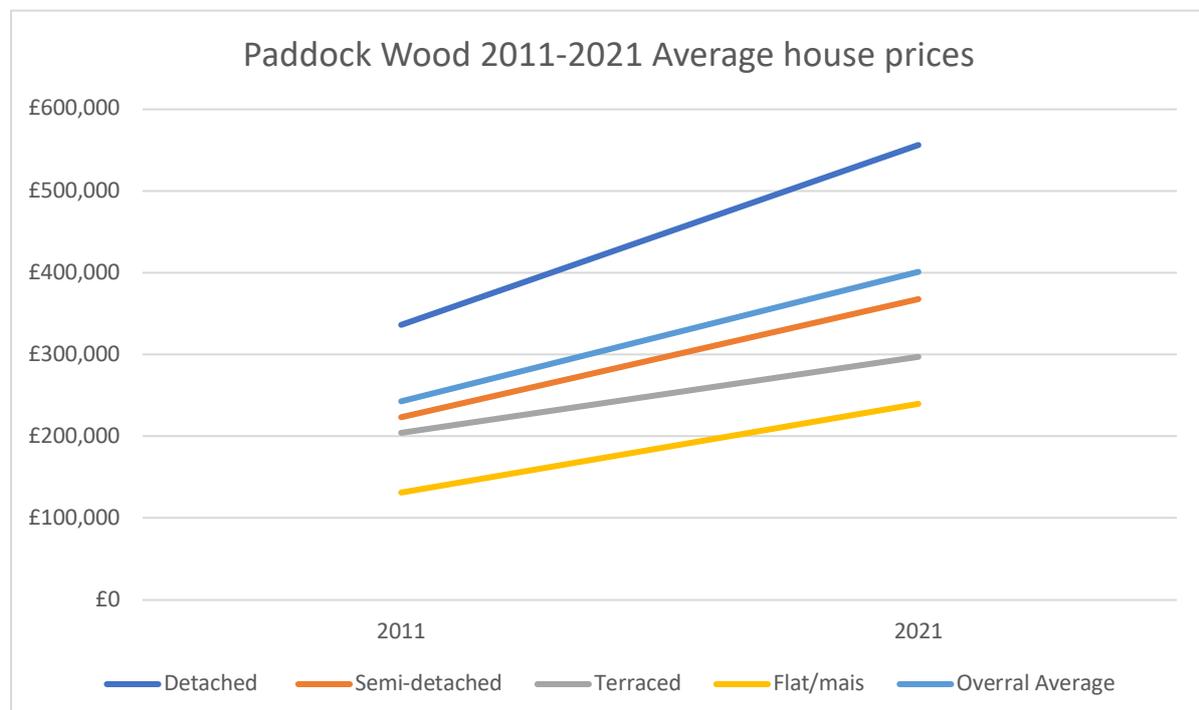


Figure E1. Paddock Wood average house prices 2011-2021

This data represents the TN12 6 postcode (See Figure E2), which is the closest fit to the Neighbourhood Plan area available from the Land Registry dataset. The average house price in Paddock Wood, at £401,211, is significantly above the national average, but below the Tunbridge Wells average.

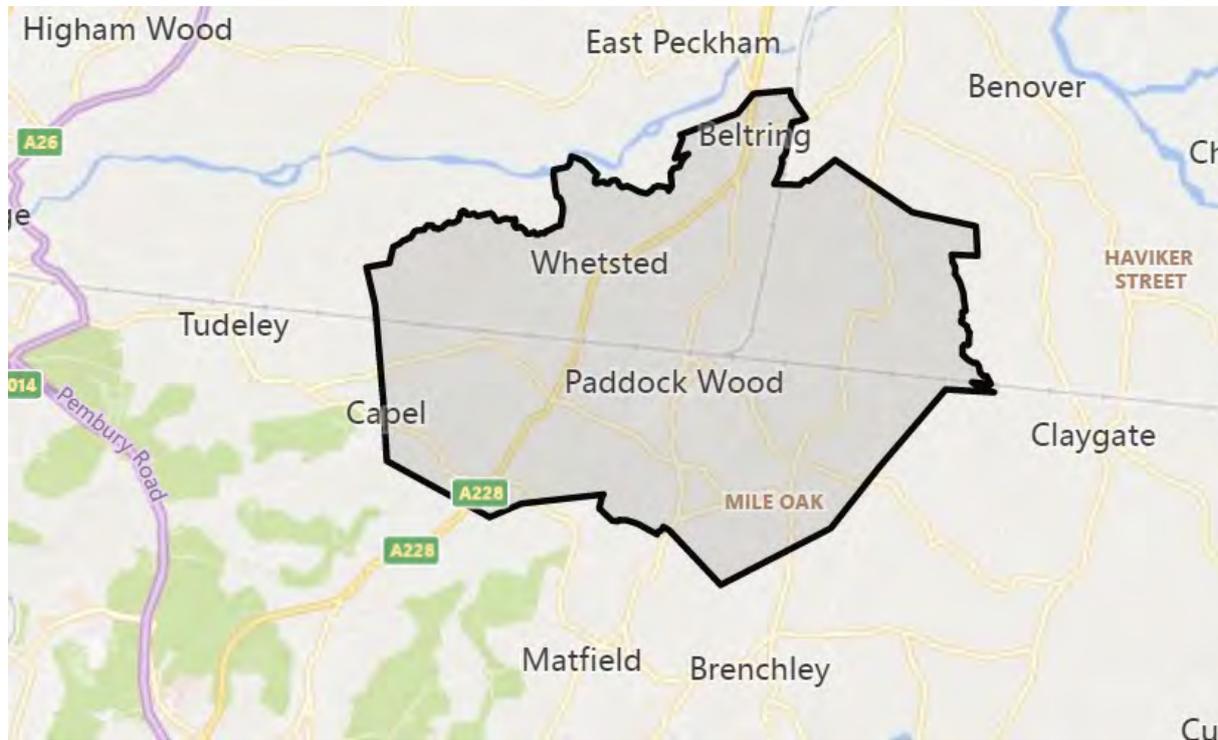


Figure E2. Map displaying the TN12 6 area used for housing figures from ONS data.

In terms of the sales prices of new-build homes, Land Registry data records sales of two properties so far in 2021, 44 in 2020, and 29 in 2019. The majority of these have been detached and semi-detached houses (See Table E2). The average price of a new build home is in line with the average house price of the local area.

| | Detached | Sales | Semi-detached | Sales | Terraced | Sales | Flat/ maisonette | Sales | Overall average | Total sales |
|-------------|----------|-------|---------------|-------|----------|-------|---------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------|
| 2019 | £494,511 | 9 | £345,132 | 11 | £298,283 | 3 | £238,125 | 6 | £364,505 | 29 |
| 2020 | £473,852 | 24 | £352,450 | 16 | £0 | 0 | £182,487 | 4 | £403,218 | 44 |
| 2021 | £461,950 | 1 | £347,950 | 1 | £0 | 0 | £0 | 0 | £404,950 | 2 |

Table E2. Average house price and number of sales of new builds in Paddock Wood 2019 onwards.

INCOMES

Household incomes determine the ability of households to exercise choice in the housing market, and consequently the level of need for affordable housing products. By using ONS's income estimates for small areas, we can see that the average total household income before housing costs in Paddock Wood was £49,700, measured March 2018.

This is the average of the MSOA within which Paddock Wood is situated (Figure E3). This total (gross) income figure is typically used by mortgage lenders to assess a household's ability to afford to borrow.



Figure E3: Area used to calculate average incomes.

AFFORDABILITY

Based on the data above, there is an affordability issue in Paddock Wood. The calculation of the income required for market housing is as follows:

- Value of median house price (2020) = £401,211;
- Purchase deposit at 10% of value = £40,121;
- Value of dwelling for mortgage purposes = £361,090;
- Divided by loan to income ratio of 3.5 = purchase threshold of **£103,168**

For a household to be able to afford to buy a house of average value in Paddock Wood, they would have to be earning over twice the average annual income (which is £49,700 in Paddock Wood). In reality, many house buyers will have equity which they are able to put towards the purchase price and thus reducing the mortgage loan to value. However, and following the method above, smaller properties, which might be targeted towards first time buyers, and thus those with a smaller deposit, are also unaffordable for many households in Paddock Wood. In 2021 the average cost of a flat was £239,875. Using the same technique as above it shows a household would need an income of **£61,682** to be able to afford it. Even where buyers have equity there remains an affordability gap across all property types, but which is particularly pronounced for first time buyers.

APPENDIX F: FLOODING AND VEGETATION

This appendix includes a series of plans related to flood risk in Paddock Wood.

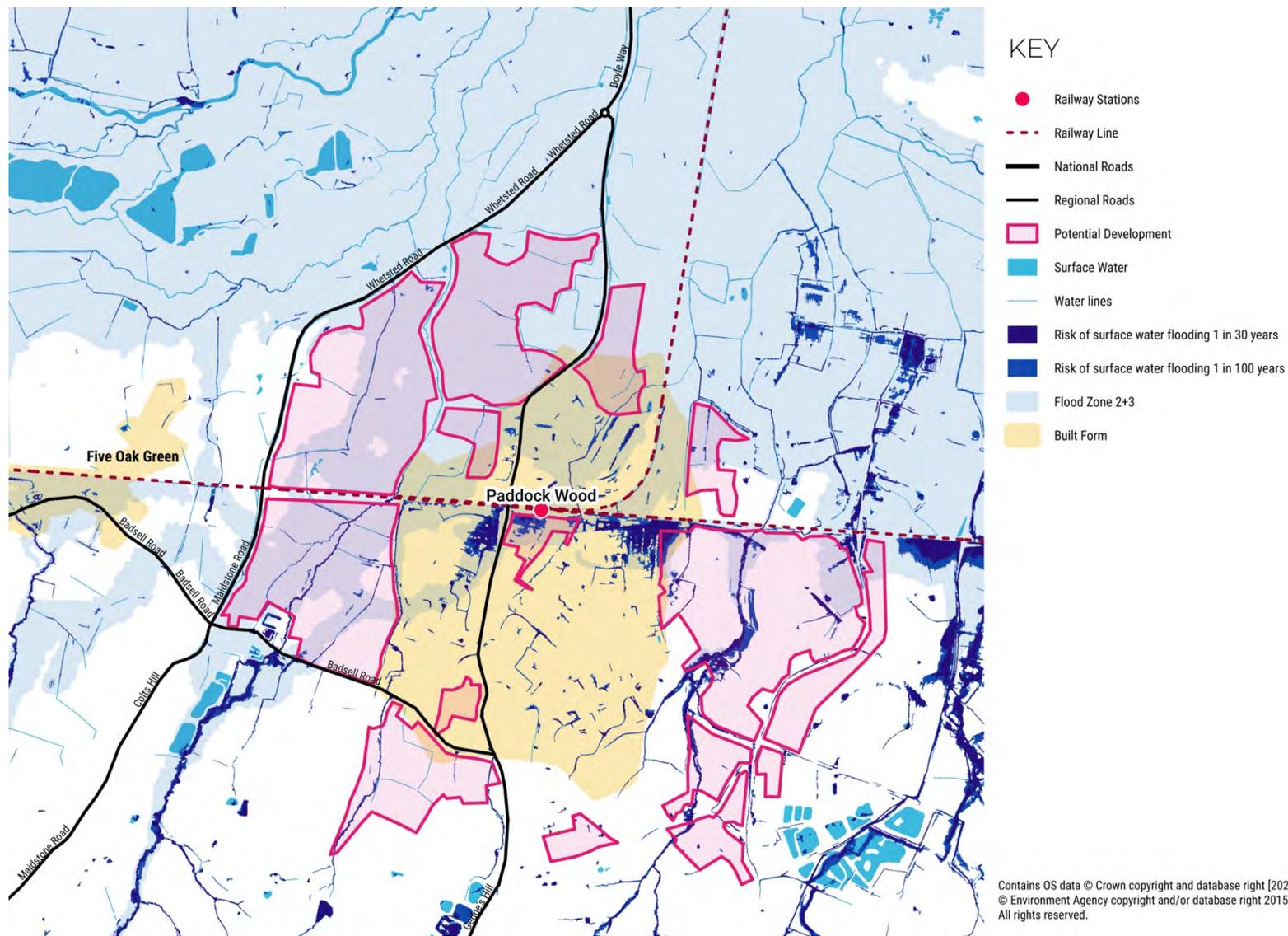


Figure 25: Flood Risk in Paddock Wood, with areas of future growth indicated

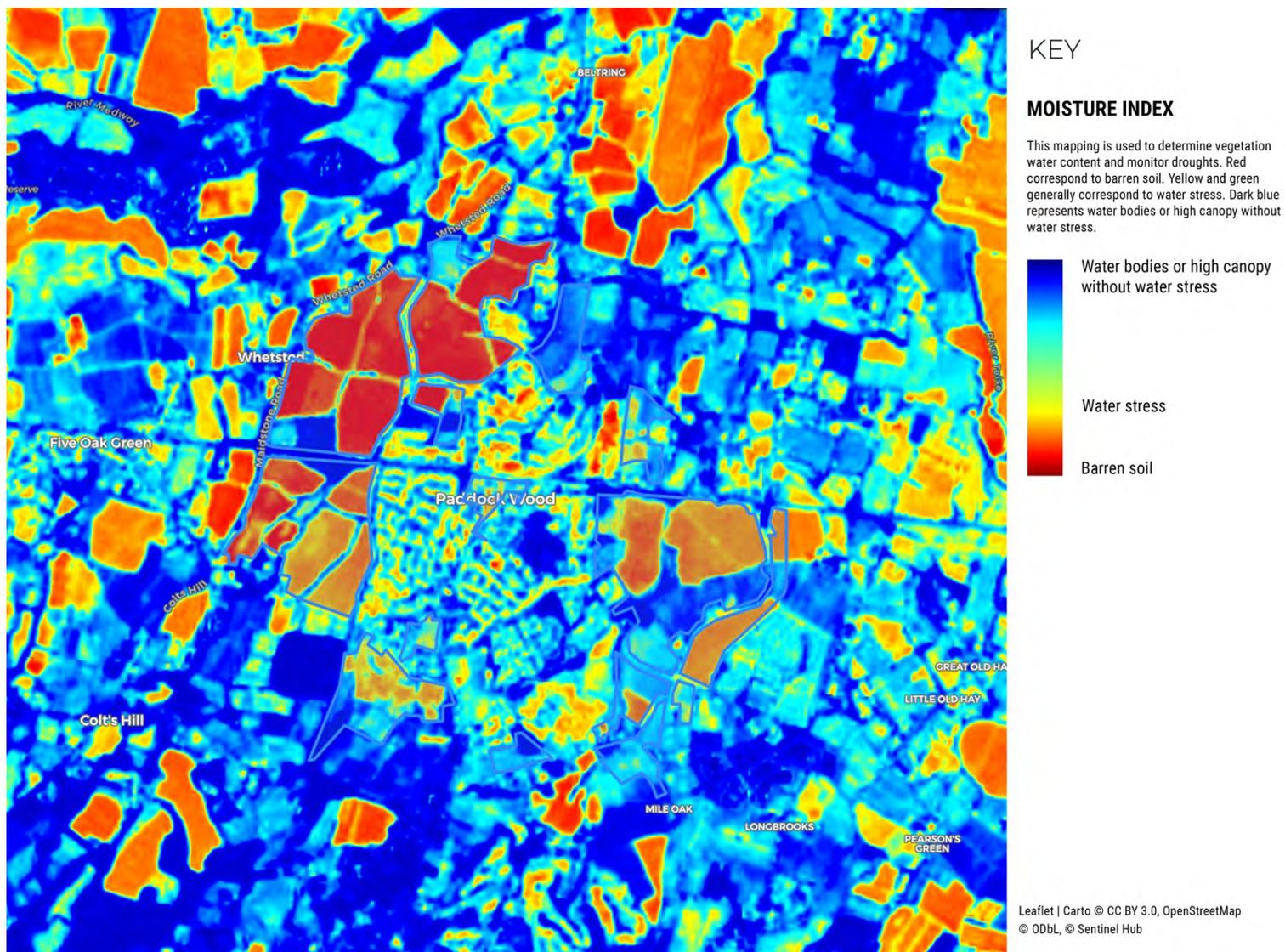


Figure 26: Moisture Index of land in Paddock Wood based on Sentinel mapping. This mapping is used to determine vegetation water content and monitor droughts. Red corresponds to barren soil. Yellow and green generally correspond to water stress. Dark blue represents water bodies or high canopy without water stress.

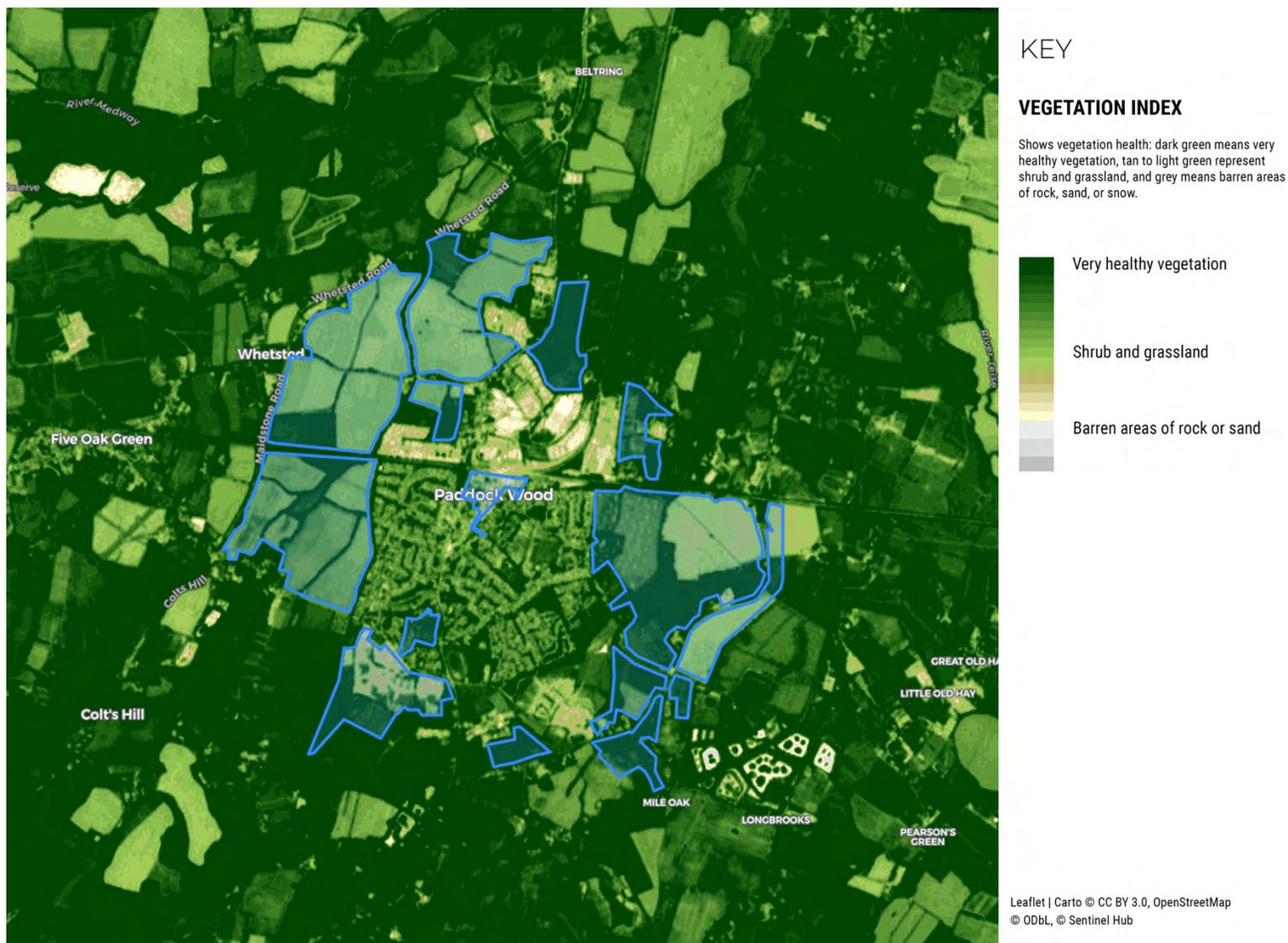


Figure 27: Vegetation index of land in Paddock Wood, based on Sentinel mapping, and showing future growth areas. This mapping is used to show vegetation health: dark green means very healthy vegetation, tan to light green represent shrub and grassland, light yellow correspond to water and grey means barren areas of rock, sand, or snow.

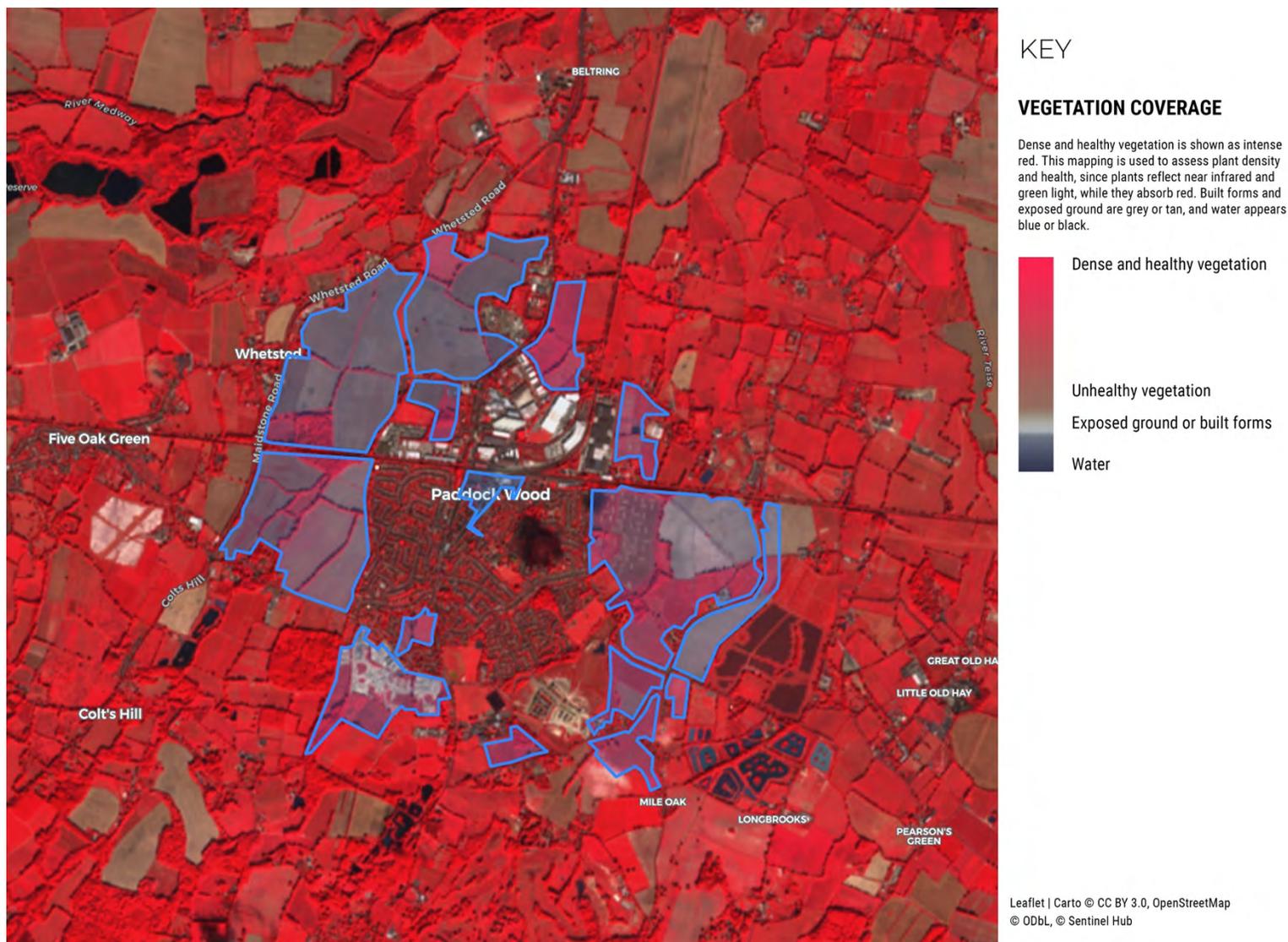


Figure 28: Vegetation coverage in Paddock Wood, based on Sentinel mapping, and showing future growth areas. Dense and healthy vegetation is shown as intense red. This type of mapping is commonly used to assess plant density and health, since plants reflect near infrared and green light, while they absorb red. Built forms and exposed ground are grey or tan, and water appears blue or black.

APPENDIX G: DESIGN GUIDANCE

The Paddock Wood Design Guidance is presented as a free-standing appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan and to which all applicants for development should refer. The document is available via the Town Council website.

GLOSSARY

Adoption – The final confirmation of a Development Plan by a local planning authority.

Affordable housing – Housing which meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. A full definition is available in the NPPF (2021).

Brownfield site – See Previously Developed Land.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – A levy that allows Local Authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their areas. Money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport schemes, schools, health centres, leisure centres and parks. The local planning authority for Paddock Wood is Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. At the time of writing the Borough has not yet implemented CIL.

Conservation Area - An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is preserved by local planning policies and guidance.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)- is the Government department with responsibility for planning, housing, urban regeneration and local government. Previously known as the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and, before that, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Development Plan – A document setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. For Paddock Wood, this includes the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan and the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans, once made, form part of the Development Plan.

Evidence base - The background information and data that any Development Plan Document is based on and is made up of studies on specific issues, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.

Filtered Permeability – A concept that 'filters out' through traffic on selected streets to create a more attractive environment for walking and cycling, while maintaining accessibility for local inhabitants, deliveries or emergencies.

Green Belt – A designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped. The purposes of the greenbelt is to (i) check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas (ii) prevent neighbouring towns from merging (iii) safeguard the countryside from encroachment (iv) preserve the setting and special character of historic towns (v) assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Greenfield site – Land, or a defined site, where there has been no previous development, often in agricultural use.

Green-space - Those parts of an area which are occupied by natural open space, parkland, woodland, sports fields, gardens, allotments and the like. Also often referred to as 'Green Infrastructure'.

Heritage Asset – A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated assets (e.g.: listed buildings) and assets identified by the local planning authority, which may include a local list of assets. (Also see entry for Non-designated Heritage Assets below)

Housing Associations – Not-for-profit organisations that work with councils to offer affordable flats and houses to local people.

Independent Examination - An assessment of a proposed Development Plan carried out by an independent person to consider whether a Development Plan conforms with the relevant legal requirements.

Infill Development – Small scale development filling a gap within an otherwise built up frontage.

Infrastructure – Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Listed Building – A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II or II*, with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the exterior as well as the interior of the building.

Local Plan – The Plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority. This forms part of the Development Plan.

Local Planning Authority - Local government body responsible for formulating planning policies and controlling development in a particular area, e.g.: a district council, metropolitan council, county council, a unitary authority or national park authority. For Paddock Wood this is Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Made – Terminology used in Neighbourhood Planning to indicate whether a Plan has been adopted.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The current version of the NPPF was published in 2021.

Neighbourhood Plan – A plan prepared by a Town or Parish Council, or a Forum, for a particular Neighbourhood Area, which includes land use topics. Once made this forms part of the Development Plan.

Non-designated Heritage Asset - buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets

Outline Application – A general application for planning permission to establish that a development is acceptable in principle, subject to subsequent approval of detailed matters. Does not apply to changes of use.

Permitted Development – Comprises certain categories of minor development as specified in the General Permitted Development Order, which can be carried out without having first to obtain specific planning permission.

Planning Permission - Formal approval granted by a local planning authority (e.g. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council) in allowing a proposed development to proceed. Permission may be sought in principle through outline planning applications, or be sought in detail through full planning applications.

Previously Developed Land - Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Public Open Space - Open space to which the public has free access and which fulfils, or can fulfil, a recreational or non-recreational role (for example, amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural uses).

Public Realm – Those parts of a city, town or village, whether publicly or privately owned, which are available for everyone to use. This includes streets, squares and parks.

Public Right of Way – Paths on which the public has a legally protected right to pass and re-pass.

Raingarden – An area designed to receive surface water run-off from roofs and other hard surfaces, and thus manage the risk of surface water flooding. Species of plants used in the raingarden will typically be able to stand waterlogging for up to 48 hours at a time.

Registered Social Landlords (RSL) – See Housing Associations

Section 106 Agreement – A legal agreement under Section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. These are agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to development are undertaken.

Settlement Development Limits Boundary – Settlement or development boundaries (village envelopes) seek to set clear limits to towns and villages. They are designed to define the existing settlement and to identify areas of land where development may be acceptable in principle, subject to other policies and material planning considerations.

Soundness – The soundness of a statutory local planning document is determined by the planning inspector against three criteria: whether the plan is justified (founded on robust and credible evidence and be the most appropriate strategy), whether the plan is effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored), and whether it is consistent with national and local planning policy.

Stakeholder – People who have an interest in an organisation or process including residents, business owners and national organisations and government departments

Sustainability Appraisal – An appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a Plan from the outset of the preparation process to allow decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.

Sustainable Communities – Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

Sustainable Development – An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment or natural resources. Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Urban Design – The art of making places. It involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes, in villages, towns and cities, to create successful development.

Use Classes Order – The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) is the statutory instrument that defines the categories of use of buildings or land for the purposes of planning legislation. 'Change of use' can occur within the same use class or from one use class to another. Depending on the specifics of any proposed change of use, including any building work associated with the proposal, it may require an application for planning permission or prior approval. The Use Class Order was most recently updated in September 2020 and can be accessed via the link below:

https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use

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Paddock Wood

Neighbourhood Plan, 2020-2038

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