



# Rolvenden Parish Council

## NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018

### POTENTIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SITE ASSESSMENT, 2017

**COMPILED BY:  
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE  
AND ROLVENDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

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## **1 Introduction**

The Rolvenden Potential Housing Development Site Assessment is a study of the potential of the Neighbourhood Plan area to accommodate additional housing development.

This report is a background paper only and is not a statement of Parish Council policy and does not allocate land. It forms part of the evidence base for the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan and is used to help inform judgements on the future development and allocation of land for housing.

The Potential Housing Development Site Assessment considers a number of housing site options promoted by landowners but does not pre-empt or prejudice any decision the Parish Council may make in the future on any particular site and does not alter any policies or land use designations as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. It is the role of the Assessment to provide information on the range of sites which are available to meet need, but it is for the Neighbourhood Plan itself to include those sites which are the most suitable to meet those needs.

## 2 Methodology

The Assessment has been based on the suggested methodology outlined in the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) but, as this guidance recommends, the assessment for the Neighbourhood Plan has been proportionate.

### Calls for Sites

Both the Borough and Parish Councils issued calls for potential housing sites from land owners within the Parish (formal submissions to Ashford Borough Council by 31.01.2014). The Borough Council's Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) 2017/18 summarises the position for Rolvenden Parish.

The Borough Council's SHELAA carried out screening assessments in three parts, eliminating sites at each stage to result in the most deliverable, developable and suitable sites remaining for inclusion in the land supply and taken forward to full assessment. Screening Part 1 assessed site availability, site size and sites with ecological designations.

The Parish Council accepted that if sites were not considered available, or of such a small scale or had significant ecological constraints they were not suitable as housing allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan and were not assessed further. However one site (Inkerman Field at the back of Regent Street) was eliminated as unavailable by Ashford Borough Council as it had not been re-submitted to them since 2007. Nevertheless, as the site was submitted to the Parish Council, the site has been retained within the Rolvenden Potential Housing Development Site Assessment.

Two further sites were proposed to be eliminated by the Borough Council at Screening Part 2 which assessed the location and physical limitations of the site and the impact on landscape, nature and heritage:

- Kingsgate View, Mounts Lane, Rolvenden Layne. As the site was remote from the villages and the proposal was for a single dwelling, the Parish Council accepted that it was unsuitable as a housing allocation within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Land adjacent to Redwood, Rolvenden. Whilst the site as a whole was considered unsuitable as a housing allocation within the Neighbourhood Plan, a small part of the site is considered suitable and the site has remained in this Potential Housing Development Site Assessment.

The Steering Group contacted landowners by phone and email with a final call for site submissions to be submitted for the Neighbourhood Plan by 26 November 2015. A number of sites were promoted for both residential and light industrial use. They have been appraised in this document for their potential for housing development. Although promoted for residential

use, Copfield Farm was considered too remote as a sustainable housing allocation and more appropriate as a site for business uses. As the Rolvenden Business Survey, 2015 did not reveal the need for substantial additional business floorspace and there is already extant consent for additional business floorspace in the Parish (as well as the opportunity to convert rural buildings) it was not considered necessary to assess or allocate further sites for business use.

## **Site Size**

The Potential Housing Development Site Assessment assesses a range of different site sizes from small-scale sites to opportunities for larger scale developments. For the purpose of this exercise, the site size threshold is 0.2ha. Other smaller sites may be able to come forward as windfall sites but in accordance with the National Planning Policy Guidance on housing land availability assessments, are considered too small to be considered in the Assessment.

## **Site Assessment**

A comprehensive set of sites derived from the data sources above was assessed against national and local policies and designations to establish which have potential for development. The Borough Council's SHELAA defers the final assessment of sites not filtered at Parts 1 and 2 Screening to the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan and, with the exception of Copfield Farm (see above) these are all included in the site assessments:

The following sites have been assessed using consistent criteria for their suitability as housing sites:

- R1 Land opposite West Lodge, Hastings Road
- R2 Inkerman Field
- R3 Cornex Garage
- R4 Land adjacent to Redwood
- R5 Windmill House Meadow
- R6 Sparkeswood Park
- R7 Frogs Lane – Dallens
- R8 Frogs Lane North
- R9 Kingsgate corner
- R10 South Field, Thornden Lane
- R11 Thornden Field (N)

## *Site Suitability*

Assessing the suitability of sites for development was guided by the development plan and national policy.

The NPPF sets out specific policies which indicate development should be restricted. For example, those designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; heritage assets; Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and locations at risk of flooding. Such factors were recorded for each site.

The most relevant factors in evaluating potential housing sites in Rolvenden Parish are those listed below:

1. **Heritage** (especially potential impact on listed buildings and the conservation area)
2. **Biodiversity** (particularly ancient hedges, woodlands, wildlife, ponds, streams and whether there were any locally known concerns about natural drainage and flooding)
3. **Landscape** (the location within the AONB and the potential impact of development on this landscape)
4. **Access to Services and Social Inclusion** (ease of pedestrian, wheeled or vehicular access to local facilities and public transport is important as well as distance from community amenities)
5. **Site Availability and Deliverability** (whether major infrastructure or provision of services would be required before works may be considered and expected time frames for completion).

An assessment template was devised to provide a consistent approach to the assessment of each site. Initially land owners submitting sites were asked to complete an Appraisal Form including confirmation of land availability. This information contributed to the Rolvenden Potential Housing Development Site Assessments.

Site surveys were conducted for all the sites by a small group from the steering committee; the Parish Council and planning consultant, Tony Fullwood on 29 November 2015 in order to record site characteristics such as:

- site topography and boundaries;
- current land uses and character of surrounding area;
- potential physical constraints (e.g. access, location of infrastructure / utilities);
- potential environmental constraints (eg woodland, hedges, water bodies).

Site visits were supplemented by reference to Ordnance Survey maps; aerial photography and local knowledge from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

### *Site availability*

A site was considered available for development, when, on the best information available (confirmed through the call for sites and information from land owners), there was reasonable confidence that it could come forward.

### *Site Achievability*

A site was considered achievable for development where there appeared to be a reasonable prospect that the site would be developed at a particular point in time. This is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site, and the capacity of the developer to complete and let or sell the development over a certain period. Any known development costs such as the removal of contamination or redevelopment of a brownfield site were noted.

### *Summary*

For each site a summary of its suitability, availability and achievability was prepared and concludes whether it is considered suitable or unsuitable for housing development.

### *Development Potential*

For those sites considered appropriate as a housing allocation an approximate density (dwellings per hectare) was proposed based on the site location and character of the surrounding development. It is important that the Site Assessment process recognises the balance that needs to be struck between making efficient use of land through good design principles and the character and historic fabric of the area and the amenities of surrounding land uses.

### *Deliverability over the plan period*

Where a site was considered appropriate as a potential housing option, the period when the site may be delivered was estimated (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years). This was based on the need to overcome constraints and any responses from landowners clarifying the potential development period.

## SITE ASSESSMENTS

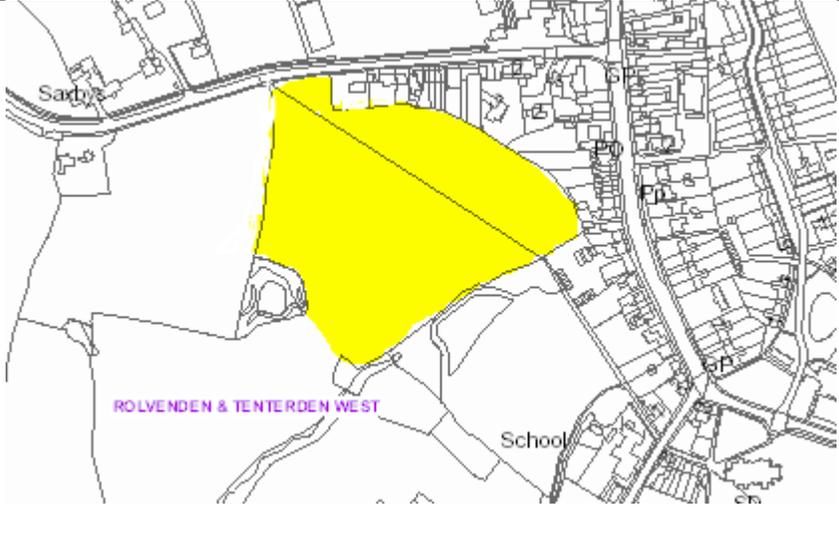
### R1 – Land opposite West Lodge – Hastings Road, Rolvenden

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Hastings Road, Rolvenden TN17 4LS Site No. R1
Site Area (hectares)	1.906
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield. Prominent site on rising land to the village. Single field which slopes down 10m from north east to south west and has extensive views to the south. Site has ancient hedges and TPOs. Site adjoins the village built up area. Northern site boundary adjoins generally linear development fronting the A28 and, to the rear, adjoins agricultural workshops
Recent planning history	None
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	1
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Conservation Area	Yes. Site immediately abuts Rolvenden Conservation Area (to the north and the east)
Part of setting of Listed Building	No
Character Area	Hastings Road / Newenden Approach
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No
Within or adjoining ancient woodland	No

Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	No, but the open field forms part of the Newenden Approach character area
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	The site is highly visible on the southern approach to Rolvenden. Any development of this large greenfield site would have a significant adverse impact on the AONB and the rural character of this approach to the village.
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Field gate to A28. A28 has a pavement running north to the village centre
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Hastings Road is an A road. No dedicated cycle path available
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	390
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	135
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	217/290
Proximity to public open space (metres)	580
Proximity to equipped play space	580
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	390 Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wednesday)
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No No No Yes Available in the village
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes

Economic viability and marketability of the site	The greenfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There are not likely to be any unexpected significant development costs. The site adjoining Rolvenden village is likely to prove acceptable to the market.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	<p>The site is accessible from the A28 and has reasonable access to the primary school and village centre facilities. However, development of this large prominent site at the entrance to the village would be likely to have a significant adverse impact on the AONB where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. The proposed development would protrude eastwards into open countryside and be out of scale and character with the adjoining largely linear and loose knit development to the north and east. The proposed development would not preserve and enhance the setting of the Rolvenden Conservation Area. Development of this prominent site would significantly adversely affect the rural character of this southern approach to Rolvenden.</p> <p>The proposed housing site is not suitable for development.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	
Approximate Number of Dwellings	
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	

## R2 – Inkerman Field – South of Benenden Road, Rolvenden

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	South of Benenden Road, Rolvenden TN17 4PE Site No. R2
Site Area (hectares)	2.87
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield. This single field falls gently from its northern road boundary on Benenden Road in a south easterly direction (approx. 5m). Low hedge boundary to Benenden Road allows views of the church across open fields. Strong south eastern boundary with tree copse. North eastern part of site abuts the rows of listed building frontages on Regent Street and the west side of the High Street. A public footpath runs diagonally through the site between the north west corner on the Benenden Rd and the primary school to the southeast.
Recent planning history	None
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	I
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	Yes, this site forms an extensive part of the rural character of this part of the Conservation Area and provides views towards the village Church to the south east.
Part of setting of Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Listed Building	Yes. Site provides open views toward the Church from the listed Windmill Farm and Oast
Character Area	Rolvenden: Benenden Approach
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No
Within or adjoining ancient woodland	No. Site is within 20m of an area of ancient woodland to the south

Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	Yes from Benenden Road towards the Church
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	The open landscape forms an important part of the rural character of this western approach to the village. Any development of this greenfield site would have a significant adverse impact on the AONB and the character of this rural approach to the village.
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Field gate to Benenden Road (B2086) which has pavements both sides leading to the village
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Country lanes and B roads. No dedicated cycle paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	270 (via Benenden Rd / Regent St) 140 via Cornex Site [R2] if redeveloped
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	130 via public footpath running at rear of High Street frontage
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	210/410
Proximity to public open space (metres)	100
Proximity to equipped play space	200
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	100 Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wed)
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No No No No Available in the village
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes
Economic viability and marketability of the site	The greenfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There would not be likely to be any unexpected significant development costs. The site adjoining Rolvenden village is likely to prove acceptable to the market.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/</b>	The site is accessible from the B2086 which has pavements both sides connecting to the village. The site has reasonable access to the primary school, play space, public

<b>availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	<p>open space and village centre facilities. However, development of this large prominent site at the entrance to the village would be likely to have a significant adverse impact on the AONB where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. The proposed development would not preserve and enhance the rural character of this part of the Rolvenden Conservation Area or the setting of its listed buildings. Development of this extensive site would interrupt distinctive uncluttered views of the more immediate setting of the village and the church. Development of this prominent site would significantly adversely affect the rural character of this western approach to Rolvenden.</p> <p>The proposed housing site is not suitable for development.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	
Approximate Number of Dwellings	
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	

## R3 – Cornex Garage, High Street, Rolvenden

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Cornex Garage, High Street, Rolvenden TN17 4LN Site No. R3
Site Area (hectares)	0.2
Current Use	Sui Generis. Motor Garage – servicing and repair plus outbuilding and garaging to the rear
Site description (brownfield/greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Largely flat brownfield site fronting the west side of the High Street and abutting countryside to the west. The western boundary is enclosed by a hedge. Site is located within the built up area boundary and between predominantly residential properties.
Recent planning history	89/01324/AS Erection of Q8 flag pole – withdrawn by applicant. 89/00160/AS Erection of Q8 twin pole sign – refused.
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	I
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	Yes. The site detracts from the character of the Conservation Area.
Part of setting of Conservation Area	Yes
Part of setting of Listed Building	Yes. Existing commercial unit is set back from the building line on High Street which on its west side comprises almost entirely listed buildings. The rear (western) section of the site abuts the gardens of those listed High Street properties.
Character Area	The Streyte (High Street)
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No
Within or adjoining ancient	No

woodland	
Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	No
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	No
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Yes, access directly onto High Street
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Site is located on an A road with no dedicated cycle paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	50 – within the village centre
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	80 via public footpath 120 via High Street
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	150/350
Proximity to public open space (metres)	200
Proximity to equipped play space	200
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	10 Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wed)
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes. This site has been put forward by the owner for development later in the plan period on the cessation of the garage use.
Economic viability and	The brownfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There are likely to be

marketability of the site	demolition and remediation costs for any on site contamination caused by the current use. Nevertheless, the site within the centre of the village is likely to prove acceptable to the market and a residential scheme of small scale dwellings is likely to be viable.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	<p>This centrally located brownfield site is highly accessible to all local facilities. Whilst the site currently provides some limited local employment, in the longer term its redevelopment with high quality, small scale infill housing development could enhance the character of this part of the Conservation Area and the setting of the adjoining listed buildings. The site is enclosed from the wider landscape by a hedge to the western edge and there would be no wider adverse impact on the landscape setting of the village.</p> <p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan should allocate Cornex Garage, High Street (0.2 hectares) as a housing site option.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	50dph
Approximate Number of Dwellings	10
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	6+

## R4 – Land adjacent to Redwood , Tenterden Road, Rolvenden

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Tenterden Road, Rolvenden TN17 4NB Site No. R4
Site Area (hectares)	2.0
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/ greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield. Site slopes down some 10m from the north west towards Sparkeswood Ghyll to the south east and allows extensive views to the south and east. Strong hedgerow to the east. Land is to the south and east of “Redwood” and opposite Gatefield Cottages and the proposed residential development at Halden Field. Site has public footpath running across it from north to south.
Recent planning history	06/02370/AS Construction of factory to provide for relocation of Korkers Sausages Ltd from Branns Drive. Creation of new vehicular access. Application withdrawn by applicant.
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	1
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No. Natural pond is located in the northwest corner of the site and the land slopes downwards towards the Ghyll.
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Listed Building	No
Character Area	Tenterden Approach
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No

Within or adjoining ancient woodland	Yes. Southernmost boundary of site abuts Ancient Woodland of Sparkeswood Ghyll
Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	Yes, views of the Sparkeswood Ghyll from A28
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	This large greenfield site is highly visible on the eastern approach to Rolvenden and offers views to Sparkeswood Ghyll. Development of this extensive site would have a significant adverse impact on the AONB and the rural character of this approach to the village.
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Field gate to Tenterden Road (A28). Road has pavement leading to village centre
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Access to the site is via an A road. No dedicated cycle paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	480
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	800
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	700/900
Proximity to public open space (metres)	430
Proximity to equipped play space	430
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	20 Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wed)
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No (Adjacent to site) No (Adjacent to site) No (Adjacent to site) Yes Yes
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes
Economic viability and marketability of the site	The greenfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There are not likely to be any unexpected significant development costs. The site adjoining Rolvenden village is likely to prove acceptable to the market.

**Summary of Assessment  
(Site suitability/  
availability and  
achievability for  
allocation)**

The site is accessible from the A28 and has reasonable access to the village centre and public open space but is more distant from the primary school, community hall and church. Development of this site would not harm the Conservation Area or any listed buildings but development of this extensive site at the entrance to the village would be likely to have a significant adverse impact on the AONB; the rural character of this eastern approach to Rolvenden and locally important views from the A28 to Sparkeswood Ghyll. Development of part of the site immediately to the south of Redwood with a new landscaped eastern boundary would not have the same adverse consequences as it would retain the rural character of this eastern approach to Rolvenden and locally important views from the A28 to Sparkeswood Ghyll.

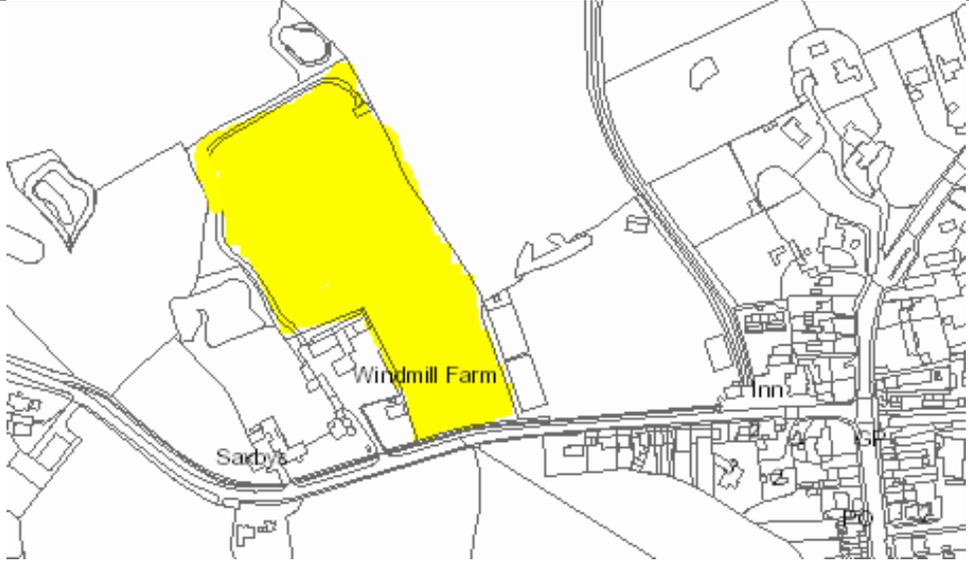
The draft Neighbourhood Plan should allocate land immediately south of Redwood (approximately 0.48 hectares) as a housing site option as defined below but exclude the remainder of the site as unsuitable for development.



**FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION**

Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	20 dph
Approximate Number of Dwellings	10
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	0-5 years

## R5 – Windmill House Meadow, Benenden Road, Rolvenden

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Benenden Road, Rolvenden TN17 4PF Site No. R5
Site Area (hectares)	2.4
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield. Site generally level and rising slightly to the north. Ancient hedges to road frontage (south) and to Recreation Area (east). No natural boundary marking the northern extent of the site. Site has recently completed a dedicated access, running from the Benenden Road along its eastern boundary to serve the adjoining football club facilities. Part of the site abuts a loose knit collection of agricultural buildings (light industrial area) close to Benenden Road and a single residential dwelling but adjoins open countryside to the north and south and the village recreation ground to the east.
Recent planning history	None
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	1
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	Yes. Southern section of site within Conservation Area
Part of setting of Conservation Area	Yes. Northern part of the site forms part of the setting of the Conservation Area
Part of setting of Listed Building	Part of setting for adjoining dwelling and oast
Character Area	Benenden Approach
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No

Within or adjoining ancient woodland	No
Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No but contains a number of natural ponds all of which have the potential for harbouring wildlife and protected species.
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	No
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	The site is highly visible on the western approach to Rolvenden. Development of this site for would protrude northwards into open countryside and have a significant adverse impact on the AONB and the rural character of this approach to the village.
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Yes access is available to Benenden Road with footpath connection on north side to the village.
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Site is located on a B road with no dedicated cycle paths
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	250
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	400
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	450/670
Proximity to public open space (metres)	50
Proximity to equipped play space	100
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	200 Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wed)
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No (Adjacent to site) No (Adjacent to site) No (Adjacent to site) No (Adjacent to site) Available
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes
Economic viability and	The greenfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There are not likely to be

marketability of the site	any unexpected significant development costs. The site adjoining Rolvenden village is likely to prove acceptable to the market.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	<p>The site is accessible from Benenden Road with footpath connection to the village. The site has reasonable access to the village centre, primary school and public open space. However, development of this prominent site at the entrance to the village would not preserve and enhance the rural character of this part of the Rolvenden Conservation Area or this western approach to the village. The site protrudes northwards into open countryside and housing development would be out of scale and character with the adjoining loose knit buildings and open space and would significantly adversely affect the rural character of the AONB where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. There may be an impact on protected species.</p> <p>The proposed housing site is not suitable for housing development.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	
Approximate Number of Dwellings	
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	

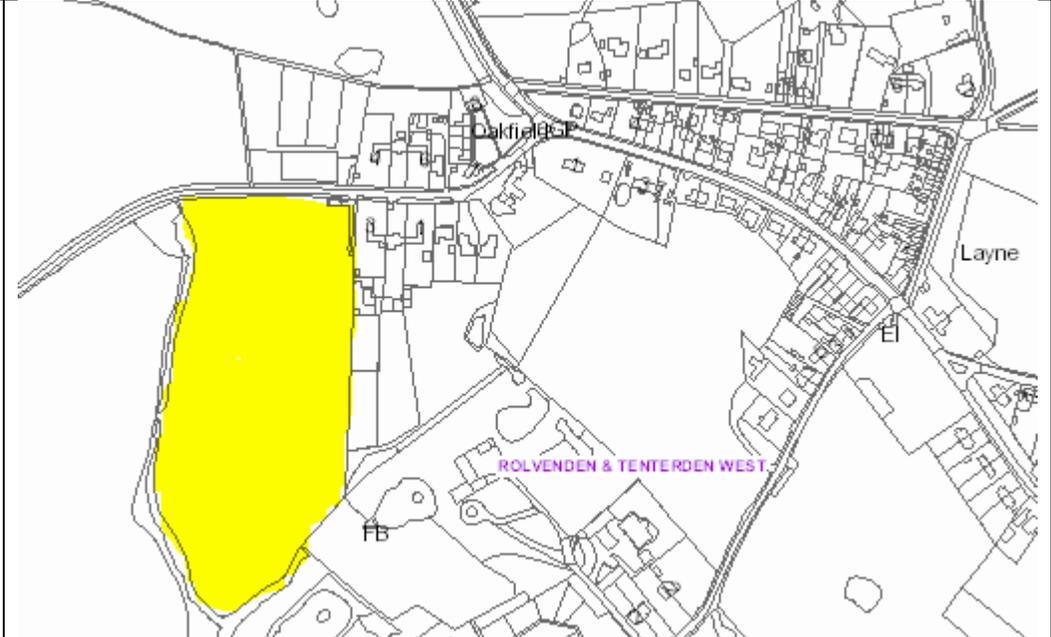
## R6 – Sparkeswood Park, Rolvenden

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Land to the rear of Sparkeswood Avenue, Rolvenden TN17 4NA Site No. R6
Site Area (hectares)	4.75
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield, comprising two fields: the southern relatively level field to the rear of Gybbons Road and the large northern sloping field falling some 15m (from south west to north east) from rear boundary of Sparkeswood Estate towards Sparkeswood Ghyll. The extensive northern field has a parkland character of rolling countryside. Area has ponds, ancient hedges and TPOs and adjoins ancient woodland at its north east corner.
Recent planning history	None
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	1
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Conservation Area	Yes. The southern field adjoins Conservation Area
Part of setting of Listed Building	No
Character Area	Adjoins Sparkeswood
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No
Within or adjoining ancient	An area containing ancient hedges, pathways or TPO's. Adjoins ancient woodland.

woodland	
Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No but contains natural ponds, draining to Sparkeswood Ghyll, all of which have the potential for harbouring wildlife and protected species
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	No
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	Development of this extensive greenfield site would have a significant adverse impact on the parkland setting of the village and the character of the AONB.
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Pedestrian access via public footpath crossing the site diagonally between the Sparkeswood Estate and the village centre. No direct vehicular access – suggested via adjoining property on Pix Lane
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	In an area of mainly country lanes and B roads. No dedicated cycle paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	175
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	230
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	160/350
Proximity to public open space (metres)	280
Proximity to equipped play space	280
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	175 Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wed)
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No No No Yes Available in the village.
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes

Economic viability and marketability of the site	Owner indicates intention is for mixed usage: a community facility when required and housing. The community facility is not specified but would clearly incur a cost to the development. The site adjoining Rolvenden village is likely to prove acceptable to the market.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	<p>There is no direct vehicular access to this site and in order for this to be achieved land acquisition and property demolition outside the site boundary may be required. The site is connected to the village via a footpath through the Sparkeswood Estate. The site has reasonable pedestrian access to the village centre; primary school; play space; village hall; church and public open space. However, development of this extensive greenfield site would be likely to have a significant adverse impact on the parkland setting of this part of the village and the AONB where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. There may be an impact on protected species.</p> <p>The proposed housing site is not suitable for development.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	
Approximate Number of Dwellings	
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	

## R7 – Dallens, Frogs Lane, Rolvenden Layne

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Land south of Frogs Lane, Rolvenden Layne TN17 4NH Site No. R7
Site Area (hectares)	3.44
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/ greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield. Level single field surrounded by hedgerows and ancient woodland to the south east. Northern part of the site adjoins generally linear development fronting Frogs Lane and, to the south, adjoins open countryside.
Recent planning history	None
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	1
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Conservation Area	Yes. Site adjoins the eastern edge of the Rolvenden Layne Conservation Area where the character is formed by a narrow rural lane and linear development.
Part of setting of Listed Building	Yes – directly adjoins the listed southern section of Lutyens designed Maytham Cottages.
Character Area	Frogs Lane Approach and Maytham Cottages.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No

Within or adjoining ancient woodland	An area containing ancient hedges, pathways or TPO's.
Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	No
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	Any development of this large greenfield site would have a significant adverse impact on the rural character of this approach to Rolvenden Layne and the AONB
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Yes direct access onto Frogs Lane. Narrow country lane, single car width in places
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Country lanes and B roads. No dedicated cycle paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	1680
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	1480
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	1260
Proximity to public open space (metres)	600
Proximity to equipped play space	600
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	300m and 1680m Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wed) Sat 07.06 09.08 10.28 12.38
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No No Yes Yes. There is a pumping station on site. Available in the village
<b>Site Availability and</b>	

<b>Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes
Economic viability and marketability of the site	The greenfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There are not likely to be any unexpected significant development costs. The site adjoining Rolvenden Layne is likely to prove acceptable to the market.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	<p>This extensive site would need to gain vehicular access from the narrow Frogs Lane which has no dedicated footpath in this location. The site is remote from the primary school and village centre facilities. Development of this large site at the entrance to Rolvenden Layne would have a significant adverse impact on the rural character of this approach to the Layne and the AONB where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. The proposed development would protrude southwards into open countryside and be out of scale and character with the adjoining largely linear adjoining development to the north east. The proposed development would not preserve and enhance the setting of the Rolvenden Conservation Area or the adjoining southern section of the Lutyens-designed listed Maytham Cottages.</p> <p>The proposed housing site is not suitable for development.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	
Approximate Number of Dwellings	
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	

## R8 – Land north of Frogs Lane, Rolvenden Layne

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Frogs Lane, Rolvenden Layne TN17 4NH Site No. R8
Site Area (hectares)	0.2
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield. Portion of field bordered to the north, south and east by hedging and trees. Land rises from the road frontage approximately 5m to the rear (north). There are public footpaths to the northern and western boundaries, the latter is excluded from the site by the hedge. The site is separated from the built up area to the east by an equestrian facility. Land to the west is agricultural. Outside of the village built up area.
Recent planning history	None
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	1
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Listed Building	No
Character Area	Frogs Lane Approach and Maytham Cottages Character Areas.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No
Within or adjoining ancient woodland	An area containing ancient hedges, pathways or TPO's.
Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No

<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	No
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	Development of this isolated greenfield site would have a significant adverse impact on the rural character of this approach to the Layne and the AONB
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Yes direct access onto Frogs Lane. Narrow country lane, single car width in places.
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Country lanes and B roads. No dedicated cycle paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	1680
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	1480
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	1260
Proximity to public open space (metres)	600
Proximity to equipped play space	600
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	300m and 1680 Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wednesday)
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No No No No Available in the village
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes – 2017 + only if needed by the village (i.e. for starter homes for young people)
Economic viability and marketability of the site	The greenfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There are not likely to be any unexpected significant development costs. The site adjoining Rolvenden Layne is likely to prove acceptable to the market.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	This site would need to gain vehicular access from the narrow Frogs Lane which has no dedicated footpath in this location. The site is remote from the primary school and village centre facilities. Development of this site which does not adjoin the built up area at the entrance to Rolvenden Layne would have a significant adverse impact on the rural character of this approach to the Layne and the AONB where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. The proposal would extend development along Frogs Lane and would not be contained by an

	<p>existing boundary to the west.</p> <p>The proposed housing site is not suitable for development.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	
Approximate Number of Dwellings	
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	

## R9 – Kingsgate Corner, Maytham Road / Frensham Road, Rolvenden Layne

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Land lying north at the corner of Maytham Road/Frensham Road, TN17 4NJ R9
Site Area (hectares)	0.263
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield. Site adjoins the defined village built up area. Some natural screening: Hedgerows and trees to the north (rear of the site). The south and west is bounded by highway and small scale development.
Recent planning history	<p>03/02110/AS – Erection of a four bedroomed dwelling. Decision: Refuse. Reasons: The development would be contrary to Policies RS1, RS5, ENV3,4,17 of the Kent Structure Plan and Policies QL1, E1, E4,E5 of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2003 and policies DP2, EN2,15,26,27 and HG6 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000.</p> <p>(i) The adopted development plan for the Borough seeks to protect the countryside for its own sake; (ii) The erection of a dwelling would be contrary to the objective identified in (i) above and adopted approach to the restriction of sporadic development in the countryside; (iii) The erection of a dwelling, without any land use planning justification, would establish a harmful precedent that would give rise to intrusive development within the Special Landscape Area, AONB and Conservation area and a diminution in its existing character.</p> <p>87/00764/AS – erection of a dwelling house. Decision: Refuse – no documents available.</p>
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	1

Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	Yes
Part of setting of Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Listed Building	Yes, dwelling immediately to the east
Character Area Country lanes and B roads. No dedicated cycle paths.	Four Wents Character Area.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No
Within or adjoining ancient woodland	TPO is 12m away
Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	No
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	Development of this small scale enclosed field bordered by two roads and abutting development to the east and south would not have a significant impact on the wider landscape.
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Direct access exists onto Frensham Road with pavement opposite Four Wents cottage
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Country lanes, B roads. No dedicated cycling paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	1000m
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	1000m
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	1000m
Proximity to public open space (metres)	400m
Proximity to equipped play space	400m

Proximity to bus stop (metres)	100m Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wed) Sat 07.06 09.08 10.28 12.38
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No (Substation on site) No (Adjacent to site) No (Adjacent to site) No (Adjacent to site) Available in the area
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes. Owner proposes smaller homes to meet village needs making provision for starter and retirement homes in a similar design to the Oakfield development opposite.
Economic viability and marketability of the site	The greenfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There are not likely to be any unexpected significant development costs. The site adjoining Rolvenden Layne is likely to prove acceptable to the market.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	This site would need to gain vehicular access from Frensham Road opposite Four Wents cottage. The site is remote from the primary school and village centre facilities. Development of this small scale enclosed field bordered by two roads and abutting development to the east and south would not have a significant impact on the wider landscape. The open character of the corner site is part of the character of the Conservation Area on arrival at Rolvenden Layne from the north. Nevertheless, other development is visible at this point and, provided a high quality development sympathetic to its context could be achieved, some small scale development could be suitable on this site.  The draft Neighbourhood Plan should allocate Kingsgate Corner (0.263 hectares) as a housing site option.
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	15
Approximate Number of Dwellings	4
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	0-5 years

## R10 – South Field, Thornden Lane, Rolvenden Layne

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Thornden Lane, Rolvenden Layne, TN17 4PS R10
Site Area (ha)	0.8
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield. Open countryside surrounded on all sides by tall hedges with TPOs to the north. The land slopes gently away from the road towards a stream on the south-east perimeter. Limited development of isolated group of detached and semi-detached properties to the north side of Thornden Lane. One pair of semi-detached properties lie on the same (south) side to the North east and the converted stable block is opposite. There is a small sewerage plant close by hidden from view.
Recent planning history	<p>89/01857 Food processing factory including warehousing and storage. Decision: Refused. Reasons: Harmful to vehicular and pedestrian safety in Thornden Lane; deleterious effect on AONB by introduction of a large building into open countryside.</p> <p>93/00601 – Store for Dry Goods and Packaging Withdrawn by applicant</p> <p>08/01270/AS Erection of machinery, tool and plant store building upon existing nursery land and for occupation in accordance with the nursery. Decision: Refused. Reasons: The proposed development would be contrary to Policies QL1, EN1, EN4 and EN5 of the Kent &amp; Medway Structure Plan 2006, policy EN27 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000, policies CS1 and CS9 of the Ashford Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy document 2008 and to Central Government advice contained within PPS1 and PPS7 and would therefore constitute development contrary to the aims of acknowledged planning importance for the following reason:</p> <p>1) In the absence of any overriding justification having been demonstrated the proposed development would not be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture at this site and would result in an unjustified and visually intrusive form of development, detrimental to the character, appearance and functioning of this important and unique landscape designated as a Special Landscape Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, particularly as the primary objective of their designation is conservation of the natural landscape.</p> <p>05/00263 2 x three-bed detached houses with integral garage Decision: Refused. Reasons:</p>

The proposal would be contrary to Policies RS1, RS5, ENV3 and ENV4 of the Kent Structure Plan 1996, Policies DP2, HG6, HG7, EN26 and EN27 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000 and Policies HP6, SS7, E4 and E5 of the Kent & Medway Structure Plan (Deposit Draft) September 2003, and would therefore be contrary to issues of acknowledged planning importance for the following reasons:

- 1 The application site is located outside the built confines of the village of Rolvenden Layne for development control purposes in an area of open countryside, where new residential development is not permitted.
- 2 Given the above, the development would represent unjustified and new sporadic permanent built development to the detriment of the essential rural character of the southern part of the lane, acknowledged as being of special importance through designation as a "Special Landscape Area" and "Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty".

Appeal: ref E2205/A/05/1180288 dismissed

#### **Main Issues**

1. There are two main issues in the determination of this appeal. These are: first, the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, taking account of the policies of restraint towards development in the countryside as set out in the development plan, and the material considerations advanced in this case; secondly the effect upon the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Special Landscape Area (SLA).

#### **Development Plan and other Planning Policies**

2. The development plan for the area is the Kent Structure Plan 1996 (SP) and the Ashford Borough Local Plan adopted in 2000 (LP).
3. SP Policy RS1 requires all development to, amongst other things, be well designed *appropriate in location, scale, density and appearance to its surroundings*; and *preserve and, as far as possible enhance the character, amenity and functioning of settlements and the countryside*. SP Policy RS5 while providing for particular exceptions seeks to restrict development outside rural settlements in the interest of countryside conservation and efficient use of land resources.
4. SP Policy ENV3 and LP Policy EN26 seek to provide long term protection for the designated Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) while SP Policy ENV4 and LP Policy EN27 have an identical objective for Special Landscape Areas (SLAs).
5. LP Policy DP2 sets out the general requirements for development proposals. Amongst other things, development must be designed in a way which respects the character and *appearance of the area around it*. LP Policy HG6 lists towns and villages where minor development or infilling will be acceptable and sets the criteria against which such development will be assessed. LP Policy HG7 seeks to restrain new residential development outside the confines of an existing village other than in certain specified

circumstances.

6. The SP is currently being reviewed and the Kent and Medway Structure Plan has reached Deposit Plan stage. Accordingly I can only afford it little weight. However, emerging SP Policies HP6, SS7, E4 and E5 carry forward broadly similar objectives to adopted SP Policies RS1, RS5, ENV3 and ENV4.

### **Reasons**

7. The appeal site is located to the south west of number 4 Nursery Cottages and to the south east of Thornden Lane, from where it is accessed. The site is overgrown and currently contains a number of polytunnels. It falls gently away from the lane towards open countryside.
8. The appeal site is situated to the south west of Rolvenden Layne, part of the AONB, and also within an SLA. The character of the area is rural despite the close proximity of residential development immediately to the north west of the site.

*Issue One: The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.*

9. The proposal is to erect two 3 bedroom detached dwellings with integral garages with a single point of access to the lane.
10. Rolvenden Layne is one of the villages identified in LP Policy HG6 where minor development or infilling will be acceptable within the confines of the identified town or village. From my site visit I found that the small enclave of development in which the appeal site is located is separated from the nucleus of the village by an undeveloped area of rural character. I consider, therefore, that the site is beyond the limits of continuous development forming the existing built up area of the village. Accordingly the proposal does not meet the criteria set out in LP Policy HG6 as the proposed development would be beyond the confines of the village.
11. In policy terms the appeal site lies outside the confines of the village and therefore the proposal is subject to the restraint policies of the development plan, in particular SP Policy RS5 and LP Policy HG7, which relate to sporadic development in the countryside and outside rural settlements.
12. These policies set out certain specified circumstances where new residential development will be permitted. The proposed dwellings would, if allowed, provide moderate size family orientated properties for which the appellant states there is a severe shortage. However, the proposal would not meet the stated criteria in the development plan policies as, amongst other things, the proposal is not a local needs scheme on an exception site under LP Policy HG15. The proposal therefore does not accord with either SP Policy RS5 or LP Policy HG7.

13. Although there is development to the north of the appeal site, it abuts open countryside to the south and west. The development of this site would therefore result in the consolidation of the loose-knit development which characterises the area. New dwellings on this site would be prominent to the wider view and, therefore, in my opinion would appear as a discordant and harmful intrusion into the countryside.

14. I have concluded, therefore, in respect of issue one that the proposal would be detrimental to the rural character of the area and is contrary to adopted SP Policies RS1 and RS5, emerging SP Policies HP6 and SS7, and LP Policies DP2, HG6 and HG7.

*Issue Two: The effect upon the AONB and SLA.*

15. The proposed development of two detached dwellings on this site would extend new built development into the countryside designated as part of the AONB and SLA.

16. I note, from the appellant's evidence, that the design of the proposed dwellings has been drawn from a limited palette of traditional external materials in an effort to blend the proposed dwellings into their surroundings by using the language of the local architecture. Nevertheless, because of the topography of the site, the position of the proposed houses immediately alongside the lane, their three dimensional form and the limited opportunities, due to the proposed access drive and turning area, for screen planting, I consider that the two dwellings would be very prominent in the landscape. Therefore, in my view, they would appear as a discordant and seriously harmful intrusion into the countryside.

17. I conclude, in respect of issue two, that the introduction of a built form beyond the existing development on this site would cause harm to the AONB and SLA contrary to the objectives of adopted and emerging SP Policies ENV3, ENV4, E4 and E5 as well as LP Policies EN26 and EN27.

**Other Considerations**

18. The appellant's advice is that similar developments have occurred in the area in the recent past, in particular planning permission was granted in 1994 for the detached dwelling opposite, Thornden Oaks. Whatever the background to those developments, and Thornden Oaks in particular, I have considered the appeal proposal on its own merits.

19. The appellant states that there continues to be pressure for commercial development in the Thornden Lane area. While that may well be the case, in itself this does not provide sufficient justification for allowing another form of development on this site.

**Conclusion**

20. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

08/01270 Machinery, tool and plant store building for nursery use. Large storage building necessary for storage of plant and fertiliser for nursery. Decision: Refuse

Reasons:

The proposed development would be contrary to Policies QL1, EN1, EN4 and EN5 of the Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006, policy EN27 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000, policies CS1 and CS9 of the Ashford Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy document 2008 and to Central Government advice contained within PPS1 and PPS7 and would therefore constitute development contrary to the aims of acknowledged planning importance for the following reason:

1) In the absence of any overriding justification having been demonstrated the proposed development would not be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture at this site and would result in an unjustified and visually intrusive form of development, detrimental to the character, appearance and functioning of this important and unique landscape designated as a Special Landscape Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, particularly as the primary objective of their designation is conservation of the natural landscape.

09/01379/AS Formation of hardstanding off existing private drive. Regrading of steeply sloping land to the south east of the site & importation of topsoil dressing – retrospective Decision: refuse

Reasons:

The proposed development would be contrary to policies CC1 and C3 of the of the Regional Spatial Strategy (The South East Plan, May 2009), policy EN27 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000, policies CS1 of the Ashford Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy document 2008 and to Central Government advice contained within PPS1 and PPS7 and would therefore constitute development contrary to the aims of acknowledged planning importance for the following reason:

1) In the absence of any overriding justification having been demonstrated the proposed hardstanding would not be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture at this site and would result in an unjustified and visually harmful form of development, detrimental to the character and appearance and functioning of this important and unique landscape designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, particularly as the primary objective of its designation is conservation of the natural landscape.

Appeal 09/01379/CONA/AS Decision: Permit – Planning permission granted

Discharge of conditions 1- 4 on appeal decision notice for formation of hardstanding off existing private drive. Regrading of steeply sloping land to the south east of the site & importation of topsoil dressing – retrospective.

11/01438/AS Erection of replacement storage building Decision: Refuse

Reasons:

The proposed development would be contrary to policies CC1 and C3 of the South East Plan 2009, policies CS1 and CS9 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008, Policies TRS10 and TRS17 of the Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD 2010 and policy GP12 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000, and is therefore considered development harmful to interests of acknowledged planning importance for the following reason:

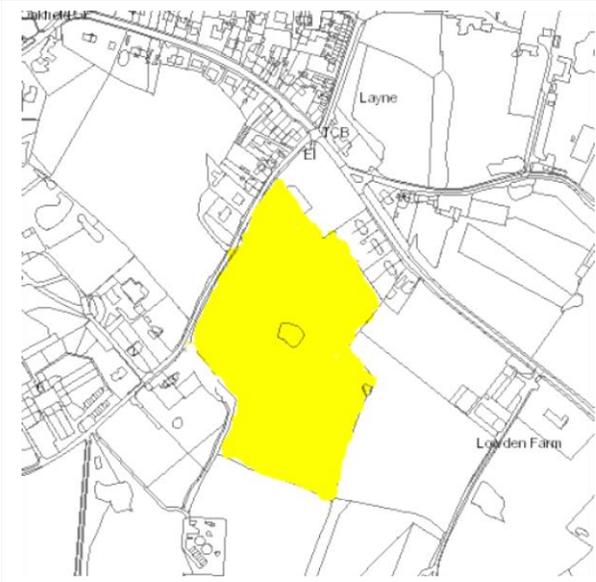
- a) The proposed building by virtue of its size, scale and design would represent a dominant and visually intrusive form of development which together with the opening up of the site to provide the required visibility splays would result in harm to the character of the countryside acknowledged as being of particular importance as part of the High Weald AONB.

	<p>I3/00067/AS Erection of additional storage building. Decision: Refuse Reasons:</p> <p>The proposed development would be contrary to policies CS1 and CS9 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008, policies TRS10 and TRS17 of the Tenterden &amp; Rural Sites DPD 2010, policy GP12 of the Ashford Borough Local Plan 2000, and the policies contained in the NPPF and is therefore considered development harmful to interests of acknowledged planning importance for the following reasons:</p> <p>a. The proposed development because of its size, massing, design and associated hard-standing, parking and turning areas would represent a dominant and visually intrusive form of development in this area of open character and would therefore result in harm to the character of the countryside which lies within the nationally important and valued landscape of the High Weald AONB.</p> <p>Dismissed.</p>	Appeal Decided:
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	I	
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No. The land slopes away from the access road towards a stream.	
<b>Heritage</b>		
Within Conservation Area	No	
Part of setting of Conservation Area	No	
Part of setting of Listed Building	No	
Character Area	Thornden Approach	
<b>Biodiversity</b>		
Within or adjoining SSSI	No	
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No	
Within or adjoining ancient woodland	TPO in the hedgerow adjacent to the road	
Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No	
<b>Landscape</b>		
Within AONB	Yes	
Is the site designated an Important View	No	
Is the site proposed as a Local Green	No	

Space	
Impact of development on landscape	Land is surrounded by tall hedges but there would be some impact of development on the landscape in the AONB.
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Vehicular access from Thornden Lane. The road is a relatively quiet dead end, leading to residential properties and a PROW/Bridal path. It is thought to be partly unadopted and unsuitable for heavy traffic. There are no pavements.
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Country lanes and B roads. No dedicated cycle paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	2350
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	2150
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	1970
Proximity to public open space (metres)	300
Proximity to equipped play space	300
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	450m and 2350m Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wednesday) Sat 07.06 09.08 10.28 12.38
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	Yes No Adjacent to site Yes  Available in the village
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes. Owners currently considering the possibility of an eco house or an option of holiday lets/chalets on this site.
Economic viability and marketability of	The viability and marketability of an eco house in this location is not known.

the site	
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	<p>This site would need to gain vehicular access from the narrow Thornden Lane which has no dedicated footpath in this location. The site is remote from the primary school and village centre facilities. Development of this site, which does not adjoin the built up area of Rolvenden Layne, would represent sporadic development to the detriment of the rural character to the southern side of the lane. Development would be likely to be visually intrusive and have a significant adverse impact on the AONB where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. Allocation of this isolated site for a single dwelling would be inappropriate.</p> <p>The proposed housing site is not suitable for development.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	
Approximate Number of Dwellings	
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	

## R11 – Thornden Field (N), Thornden Lane, Rolvenden Layne

Map	
Site Address and RNP Reference	Thornden Field, Thornden Lane, Rolvenden Layne TN17 4PR Site No. R11
Site Area (hectares)	4
Current Use	Agriculture
Site description (brownfield/ greenfield; topography; boundary; trees; neighbouring uses)	Greenfield site to the south of Rolvenden Layne Recreation Ground with limited residential properties close by. Undulating land with far reaching views to Newenden and Fairlight. No natural borders or screening.
Recent planning history	None
Flood Zone (1,2,3a,3b)	1
Are there known local concerns regarding natural drainage and flooding?	No
<b>Heritage</b>	
Within Conservation Area	No
Part of setting of Conservation Area	Adjoins the Conservation Area to the north and provides an open setting to the village
Part of setting of Listed Building	Yes. Listed buildings to the north west corner on Thornden Lane
Character Area	Adjoins 4 character areas: Thornden Approach, Wittersham Approach, Frensham, Maytham-Winsler-Frensham Road Triangle.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
Within or adjoining SSSI	No
Within or adjoining Local Wildlife Site	No
Within or adjoining ancient woodland	No

Is the site known locally to be occupied by protected species	No
<b>Landscape</b>	
Within AONB	Yes
Is the site designated an Important View	Yes. Part of outstanding far reaching open views to Newenden and Fairlight
Is the site proposed as a Local Green Space	No
Impact of development on landscape	Any development of this large greenfield site would have a significant adverse impact on the rural character of this approach to Rolvenden Layne and the AONB.
<b>Access to Services</b>	
Availability of direct pedestrian and vehicular access from public highway	Yes from Thornden Lane but no pavement available. Road considered unsuitable for heavy traffic.
Availability of safe cycling option to the site	Country lanes and B roads. No dedicated cycle paths.
Proximity to Village Centre (metres)	1875
Proximity to Primary School (metres)	1870
Proximity to Church and Village Hall (metres)	1530
Proximity to public open space (metres)	5
Proximity to equipped play space	5
Proximity to bus stop (metres)	220m and 1875 Limited services: No. 2 to Tenterden and Ashford Mon – Fri only 06.45 and 09.00 No. 297 to Tunbridge Wells from the Bull Mon – Fri 06.53 09.08 10.38 12.38 14.08* 17.02 17.48 (*14.40 on Wed) Sat 07.06 09.08 10.28 12.38
Existing Connections to - Mains Electricity Supply - Mains Gas Supply - Mains Sewerage - Mains Water Supply - Broadband	No –Adjacent to site No –Adjacent to site Main pipe crosses the site No – Adjacent to site Available in the village
<b>Site Availability and Achievability</b>	
Confirmed as available by land owner	Yes owners indicate part or all of the land is available for residential or light industrial usage.
Economic viability and marketability of the site	The greenfield site has been promoted by the landowner. There are not likely to be any unexpected significant development costs. The site adjoining

	Rolvenden Layne is likely to prove acceptable to the market.
<b>Summary of Assessment (Site suitability/ availability and achievability for allocation)</b>	<p>This extensive site would need to gain vehicular access from Thornden Lane which has no dedicated footpath in this location. The site is remote from the primary school and village centre facilities. Development of this large prominent site at the southern entrance to Rolvenden Layne would have a significant adverse impact on the rural character of this approach to Rolvenden Layne and the AONB where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty. The proposed development would protrude southwards into open countryside and be out of scale and character with the adjoining largely linear and sporadic development to the north. Development would interrupt extensive uncluttered views to the south towards Newenden and Fairlight. The proposed development would not preserve and enhance the open setting of the Rolvenden Layne Conservation Area.</p> <p>The proposed housing site is not suitable for development.</p>
<b>FOR SITES CONSIDERED SUITABLE, AVAILABLE AND ACHIEVABLE FOR ALLOCATION</b>	
Approximate Density (Dwellings per hectare)	
Approximate Number of Dwellings	
Delivery (0-5 years; 6-10 years; 10+years)	