

# Cabinet – Supplementary Agenda No.1

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on:

**Date:** Tuesday, 8 March 2022

**Time:** 3.00pm

**Venue:** Meeting Room 8 - Level 3, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham  
ME4 4TR

## Agenda

**4. Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan**

**(Pages  
3 - 190)**

Please find enclosed Appendices 1 – 5 to the report.

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**Date: 28 February 2022**

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Cliffe and Cliffe Woods  
Neighbourhood Plan  
September 2021

**Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan 2021  
Submission Version**

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# Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan 2021

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### 1. About Neighbourhood Planning

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.

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.

#### **How the C&CW Neighbourhood Plan fits into the planning system**

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 Medway Council. Neighbourhood Plans are produced by community forum groups or Parish or town councils. In this case the Neighbourhood Plan has been produced by a Steering Group of residents and Parish councillors with an agreed Terms of Reference to work on the Neighbourhood Plan. This has ensured that residents and local groups were in the driving seat of producing policy based on local knowledge and views.

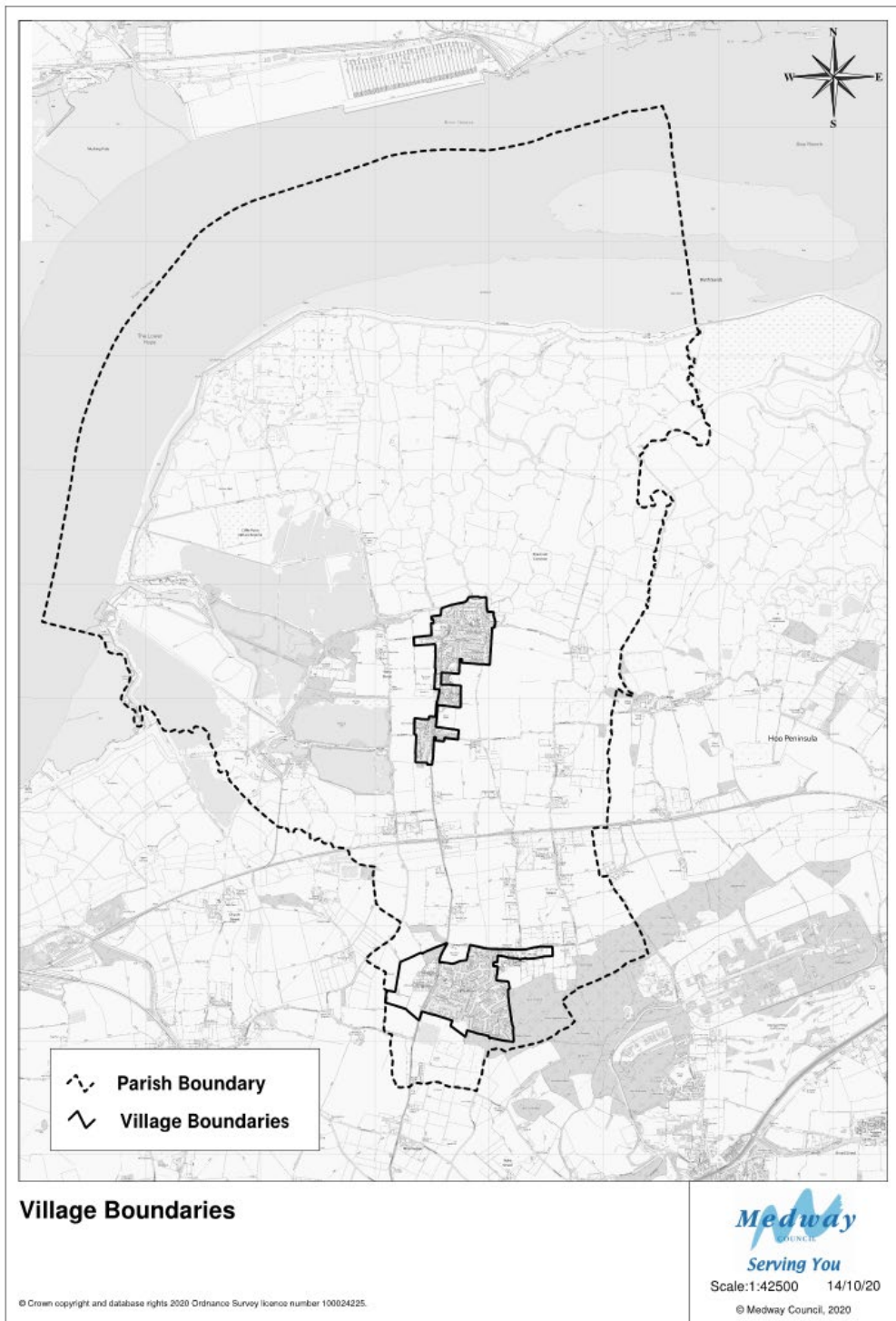
To do this a dialogue between Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council (C&CWPC) and Medway Council has been necessary to ensure that the policies and proposals in the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan conform to national and local policy, as required by the Neighbourhood Plan regulations.

The development of the Neighbourhood Plan has taken place during a period of great uncertainty in relation to Local Plan policy making by Medway Council and has had to follow the Medway Council Local Plan review process. Regulation 18 consultations on the Local Plan took place between Jan 2016 and June 2018. The Medway Local Development Scheme of August 2020 proposes a Regulation 19 consultation on the plan in the spring of 2021 and submission for inspection in December 2021 with final adoption in December 2022. The Medway Local Plan must consider the needs of the whole of Medway and accommodate their duty to cooperate with local authorities and other service providers on issues like housing development, transport, and health provision.

As far as possible the C&CW Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has taken a flexible and positive approach to the development of the Medway Local Plan's emerging policies and their supporting evidence as the Neighbourhood Plan has developed and discussed its policies with Medway as part of the process.

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**Map 1: The Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area**



The Neighbourhood Plan area to which the Neighbourhood Plan applies is the whole of the Parish of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. This was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area by Medway Council on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and is shown on the map above.

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### 2. About Cliffe and Cliffe Woods (C&CW) Parish

The location and character of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which covers the whole Parish is a predominantly rural area which provides both important opportunities for, and constraints to, Neighbourhood Planning proposals and policies to guide future development within the area. Below is an overview of the main characteristics of the Parish today and the current issues that the Parish faces.

The Parish of C&CW is home to over 5,000 people located in the Medway Unitary Authority<sup>1</sup> area. Table 1 below shows key statistics about the population of the Parish.

**Table 1: Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Key Statistics**

#### Population

Population	No. of Households	Under 15 years %	Over 65 years %
5,370	2066 aver size 2.6	20.7	13.6

#### Transport

No. of cars in Parish	No. of households without a car
3,571	173

#### Employment

Persons economically active %	Persons Unemployed %	Persons working at home %
72.4	2	3.4

#### Travel to work

Car as driver or passenger %	Train %	Bicycle or walking %
55.4	4.6	2.6

*Source 2011 census summary profile*

The parish is one of the largest in the historic county of Kent and has two villages: the ancient village of Cliffe which is believed to be one of, if not the oldest, settlement on the Hoo Peninsula, with human evidence from the Mesolithic period continuing to the present day. Cliffe has a compact built form with a variety of vernacular architectural styles and materials.

The more recent village of Cliffe Woods, is essentially a 20th-century development which started as a turn of the century 'Plot Lands' development in the proximity of the B2000. It was developed as a mixture of speculative larger scale development and self-build which has given it a more open form than Cliffe but is similarly mixed in form and materials. The Neighbourhood Plan area also has several smaller hamlets such as Cooling Street.

The Parish, due to its location and history, has many heritage assets (scheduled monuments, listed buildings and a conservation area) that benefit from special

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<sup>1</sup> Set up in 1998 and administratively independent from Kent County Council.

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protections. The landscape and wildlife assets of the parish are similarly protected under local, national, and international law (see Chapter 7).

These special protections are particularly relevant in relation to climate change impacts that may become more pressing over the life of the Neighbourhood Plan. The future management of these areas in relation to resilience to change and protection from disturbance makes initiatives like Birdwise – (the North Kent Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Scheme (SAMMS) which covers the coastline of north Kent, between Gravesend and Whitstable) - important for wildfowl protection and sensible management of their habitats. Medway Council is a supportive member of this initiative.

The basic infrastructure that supports the population of the Parish reflects the character of the landscape and its historical development. The B2000 is the main access road through the Parish. It is the only real access available to connect with the Medway towns, the wider district and beyond.

Provision for walking and cycling exists throughout the Parish but there is some lack of route connectivity. Over 50% of local residents travel to work by car (Census 2011) and increased car ownership since then generally means that existing road infrastructure is under pressure in terms of parking, overall volumes, and types of vehicles (including on un-adopted smaller roads that provide access within and between villages and hamlets).

The water company responsible for provision of water services in the Neighbourhood Plan has been classified by the Environment Agency as operating in an area of severe water stress (Environment Agency (2013) “Water stressed areas”).

Sewage infrastructure is provided via main drainage connecting the core of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods to the sewage plant at Whitewall Creek, Upnor. Outside these core areas residents have their own septic tanks.

Water sewage and wastewater services in the Neighbourhood Plan area raise important issues for accommodating any growth in demand as a result of development. As part of the consultations on the Neighbourhood Plan residents have reported sewage incidents locally. The Medway Council Jan 2017 Infrastructure Position Statement indicated that water services to accommodate growth needed further assessment and the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework (2015) identified problems of identifying the need for new provision and the necessary funds to achieve it.

The most recent views from Southern Water’s regional planning team (February 2020) indicates that in terms of sewerage there are some external flooding issues at Town Road View Road and Church Road Cliffe. The reported sewage leak incidents from local residents are not considered issues of capacity for sewage but blockages and it is their view that capacity is currently adequate. In terms of water supply they stress that although they are not statutory consultees on planning applications, they do encourage Local Planning Authorities to consult them so that the need for extra capacity can be

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ascertained and a business case can be made for investment in the network of supply from Colewood Strood Water Service Reservoirs.

The provision of gas services is also relatively recent (the 1980s) and public transport infrastructure relies on infrequent bus services.

Broadband and mobile telephone Infrastructure is problematic for residents and businesses as connectivity is patchy and lacking in speed since it is limited to 3G capability via local boxes.

The residents of the Parish mainly go elsewhere to work according to the 2011 census, since the various cement works and other industry in the area declined and have been replaced by marine aggregate activities, resulting in much reduced and less local employment.

Much of the Parish is high grade agricultural land and local employment in this sector still exists for residents of the Parish. The main sectors they work in (Census 2011) are retail and construction. It is part of the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan to protect jobs associated with this land use but to also preserve it in uses that are open and rural in feel as they contribute to the overall rural character of the area and landscape of the area. Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Framework 2019 does require that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside be recognised and that planning decisions should maintain the character of the undeveloped coast.

Community infrastructure that supports education, health, cultural, leisure and religious activity meets most of the needs of residents The Neighbourhood Plan area, has an exceptionally fine church in Cliffe, two very popular primary schools, one medical practice (part of a group of four surgeries which also serves Higham and Wainscott beyond the Neighbourhood Plan area), social clubs and two community halls. Active leisure facilities include recreation grounds, a bowls club, tennis courts, rugby/football pitches, a skateboard park, ball courts, play areas and allotments.

There are local retail providers in both villages, although Cliffe Woods with its small parade of shops fares slightly better than Cliffe in this regard. The distance between the two villages is a 40-minute walk along the busy B2000 – much of this road has no pavements. Alternatively, it is a 6-minute drive, so provision of services in the two main villages is important for residents for local shopping needs.

Housing in the Parish is mainly owner occupied and is predominantly provided as detached or semi-detached homes although there are rows of terraces in Cliffe associated with its industrial past – their importance in historical terms is covered by their inclusion in the Conservation Area which covers the centre of Cliffe. There are some families within the Parish who are in housing need and since the 2011 census the population of Cliffe village consists of younger families and the population of the village of Cliffe Woods is ageing.



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### Current Issues

The people of the Parish have had many meetings and participated in surveys about the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and options for its future.<sup>2</sup> During that time a number of applications have come forward for development of parts of the Parish for housing and discussions have taken place with Medway Council about the future of the Parish as part of their work updating the 2003 Medway Local Plan.

Residents have identified several key issues which they would like to address because of these discussions and development activity within the Parish:

- Provision of affordable housing, particularly to cater for the older population and younger people who would like to remain in the Parish (bungalows and smaller properties)
- Ensuring the design and impact of new development is appropriate to the character of the villages of the Parish, its surrounding countryside, and its supporting infrastructure.
- Protection of the built environment heritage of the Parish
- Protection of the rural character of the Parish and its wildlife
- Pedestrian, cycling, transport, and parking improvements
- Upgrade and extension of community and leisure facilities to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and any potential increase in the residential population.
- Consider possibilities for visitor and education facilities to support the local economy and provide opportunities for employment that obviate the need to use a car.

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<sup>2</sup> See C&CW Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement

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### 3. The Vision and Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan

The development of the Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by a long process of discussion between the Parish Council and residents which started with a survey of resident's views about a range of issues in 2015<sup>3</sup>.

A Steering Group to start the work of developing a Neighbourhood Plan was established and considered what the scope of the Plan should be in February 2016.

This work identified key issues for local residents as concern about development impacts on existing community infrastructure, speeding and traffic, housing development and need. To follow this up, a wider process of consultation began in July 2016 with a general community planning event and then focussed on the content of a Neighbourhood Plan at events held between February and July of 2017.

A series of themed workshops were widely publicised and held in the Parish. These workshops were organised with the participation of Medway Council planning department and considered both the purpose and potential of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish, a vision for the Parish, how to engage as wide a cross section of the community as possible and how Neighbourhood Plans fitted into the Local Plan making process in Medway.

In addition, detailed workshops based on the following themes were held, where participants looked at current data under each theme and considered both challenges and options for addressing them:

- Environment and Heritage
- Housing and Community Facilities
- Traffic Transport and the Economy

The results of these workshops enabled the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – made up of local residents and Parish Councillors, to develop the following Vision and Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan.

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<sup>3</sup> See C&CW NP Consultation Statement

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### Vision

***“By 2037 the unique rural landscape of Cliffe and Cliffe Wood Parish will continue to be a haven for wildlife and agriculture, and provide homes, jobs and community infrastructure for people by protecting the heritage of the area and enhancing its character through sustainable development.”***

Policy Theme	Objectives
Sustainable Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that the distinct identity of the two main settlements in the Parish is preserved and enhanced.</li> <li>To ensure that existing facilities to support life for residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area are not depleted.</li> <li>To encourage an increase in the services and employment available to residents and in the Neighbourhood Plan area that will support increases in its population and reduce the need to travel</li> </ul>
Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable improved community spirit in the villages and settlements of the Parish with infrastructure and facilities that cater for all age groups within a rural setting.</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area to fulfil local needs that is sustainable including: affordable housing, retirement housing, bungalows, chalet bungalows and small terraces.</li> <li>To ensure that all housing development proposals are appropriate to the rural setting.</li> <li>To provide a choice of ways that housing can be developed</li> </ul>
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote green and historic tourism, and small-scale craft workshops using redundant farm buildings and mixed-use development opportunities to provide opportunities for local benefit from visitors to the area in a sustainable way that is appropriate to the Parish and its setting.</li> <li>To protect agricultural jobs and employment land in the Parish</li> </ul>
Environment	<p>To enhance the rural, environmental, and historic character and assets of the Parish by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserving the rural environment which already has extensive environmental protection for negative impacts of development and climate change,</li> <li>To enable the green and blue infrastructure of the Parish to deliver a wide range of environmental, economic, health and well-being benefits for nature, climate, and the wider community.</li> <li>Preserving rural views, wildlife sites and corridors and agricultural land uses.</li> </ul>
Heritage	<p>To enhance and the historic character of the Parish and its hidden history by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration of expansion of the existing conservation area and appraisal of the present Conservation Area in collaboration with Medway Council</li> <li>Protecting the character of farmsteads in the Parish (including buildings)</li> <li>Preserving the historic landscape features that define today’s Parish: the pattern of draining ditches, earthworks, and sea defences, field boundaries tracks and lanes.</li> <li>Conserving properties and archaeological areas that are still of value despite their Non-Designated Heritage Asset status.</li> <li>Ensuring the materials and design of all new development in the Parish is sympathetic to its existing character and avoids poor quality design.</li> <li>Preserving for the future archaeological sites in the Parish for learning and historical recording</li> </ul>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the safety of roads in the Parish</li> <li>To improve connections with footpaths, cycle ways and public transport.</li> <li>To improve the connection of the residents and businesses of the Parish to online resources.</li> <li>To ensure that the provision of schools, public transport services and health services keep pace with increases in population in the Parish</li> </ul>

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## 4. Sustainable Development in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

### Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan area and the settlements within it are currently not sustainable from an economic, environmental, and social perspective. This is not uncommon for many rural areas and their villages in England who all face similar issues. Addressing this means that development can be used as a good opportunity to improve the area and services for existing and new residents and businesses as well as its features that are valued locally.

Future development in the neighbourhood plan area is constrained by both its existing rural character and unique landscape and the lack of facilities to support people going about their daily lives (shops, services). Currently the infrastructure for movement of goods and people is dominated by the car and heavy good vehicles with the concomitant effects on the environment. These effects encompass people's safety and health (pollution) and potential degradation of its nationally and internationally recognised sites of wildlife importance and heritage assets. Additionally, the economy of the area is dominated by one or two employers with most people travelling out of the area for employment.

**Table SD1 – Getting Around in the neighbourhood Area**

Car Ownership

	Cliffe and Cliffe Woods	%	Medway	%
Households without a car/van	173	8.4	23,231	21.9
Households with 1 car/van	711	34.4	45,163	42.5
Households with 2 cars/vans	856	41.4	28,790	27.1
Households with 3 cars/vans	218	10.6	6,609	6.2
Households with 4 or more cars/vans	108	5.2	2,416	2.3
Total cars/vans in the area	3,571	100	133,257	100

Source 2011 census

**Table SD2 – Travel to work**

Travel to Work	Cliffe and Cliffe Woods	%	Medway	%
Work mainly at or from home	134	3.4	4,615	2.4
Underground, metro, light rail, tram	3	0.1	283	0.1
Train	178	4.5	11,252	5.8
Bus, minibus, or coach	72	1.8	5,903	3.0
Taxi	4	0.1	444	0.2
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	22	0.6	1,416	0.7
Driving a car or van	2,083	52.2	80,403	41.4
Passenger in a car or van	127	3.2	7,778	4.0
Bicycle	13	0.3	1,449	0.7
On foot	90	2.3	12,461	6.4
Other method of travel to work	17	0.4	685	0.4
Not in employment	1,250	31.3	67,469	34.7

Source 2011 census



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Despite this there are landowners who wish to develop land, but the neighbourhood will have difficulty absorbing its impacts. The scale and design of previous proposals has failed in the past to take account of the character of the Parish; it has a remote and wild character, open views, big skies and extensive areas of agricultural land, open water, woodland, and wetland.

Valuing the character of the Parish whilst at the same time wanting to address the needs of its population has been the focus of people’s concerns during consultation on this plan and guiding future development in the neighbourhood. There is a desire to address the lack of services, local housing needs, sustainable travel options and opportunities for employment whilst retaining the rural nature of the two settlements and their surroundings.

### Neighbourhood Plan Policies

To achieve the vision for the Neighbourhood Plan, the following objectives have been adopted to develop policy for sustainable development across the Neighbourhood Plan area.

#### Objectives

<b>Sustainable Development in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish</b>	To ensure that the distinct identity of the two main settlements in the Parish is preserved	To ensure that existing facilities to support life for residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area are not depleted	To encourage an increase in the services and employment available to residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area that will support increases in its population and reduce the need to travel
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Sustainable development is a cornerstone of national planning policy in England and Wales and its importance to the health and well-being of places and people cannot be understated since planning control presumes that sustainable development of land and buildings should be favoured.

Sustainable development in the National Policy Planning Framework 2019 is summarised as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Para 7). In more detail the policy framework suggests that the planning system can achieve this by pursuing economic, environmental, and social objectives in “mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives) (para 8)”.

#### **POLICY SUSDEV 1: Settlement coalescence**

Development proposals that would result in the visual or physical merging of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods will not be permitted.

To preserve the unique characteristics and differences between the two main villages and preserve the open areas between them is considered a key objective to ensure that

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the rural character of the Neighbourhood Plan area is protected<sup>4</sup>. This is also important to the future economic prospects of the neighbourhood as currently visitor and visitor related facilities are one of the few areas of potential employment that have seen growth in the last ten years across Medway as a whole<sup>5</sup>. (See **Chapter 8 Economy and Employment**). The value to the local economy and biodiversity of the neighbourhood and the viability of the wildlife and landscape protections that currently exist may be undermined if development proposals result in ribbon development along the B2000 – the main artery that could make development possible on the grounds of accessibility.

#### **POLICY SUSDEV2: Loss of local facilities**

Development proposals that would involve the loss of one of the uses listed below in the Neighbourhood Plan area, other than those which are permitted development, will not be supported, unless they relate to a change of use to another use in this list.

shops

financial and professional services

restaurants and cafes

drinking establishments

hot food takeaways

Hotels

Non-residential institutions

Assembly and leisure

National policies on permitted development have impacted on the ability of rural settlements to protect high street and services available locally. Notwithstanding these changes every effort should be made to maintain the currently limited provision of shops and other facilities since these can support the local economy, provide services to local residents and visitors, and encourage social interaction. Further loss of these uses through development would undermine the sustainability of the two main settlements and the ability of existing and future residents to meet their needs for retail services and leisure activities and for local businesses to thrive.

#### **POLICY SUSDEV3: Changes of use**

Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, development or change of use to the uses listed in Policy **SUSDEV2** will be supported in principle, where they do not conflict with other policies within this Plan, and where they would not be harmful to the living conditions of neighbouring residents and are otherwise consistent with sustainable development.

Changes of use will need to be justified with evidence of their non-viability and demonstrate that every effort has been made to market them in their current use.

Work on the Medway Local Plan that will replace its current 2003 Local Plan has seen several iterations of the Medway Strategic Housing Land Availability and Assessment. These have both rejected the possibilities of all sites offered up by local landowners in

<sup>4</sup> See 2017 AECOM Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Heritage and Character Assessment

<sup>5</sup> See 2018 Destination Research - Economic Impact of Tourism Medway 2017 Results

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the Neighbourhood Plan area on the basis of the infrastructure which exists to support new residents and their impact on agricultural land and wildlife sites. However, despite this, some applications have been approved. Influencing the design and infrastructure support available to new support development and limiting the loss of existing facilities in the development process was a desire expressed consistently in consultations with local residents and businesses in the Neighbourhood.

### **POLICY SUSDEV4: Character**

All new development, particularly on Greenfield site land, should be sensitive to the landscape and be of a height that does not impact adversely on views from the surrounding countryside.

All development proposals should demonstrate how they conserve, enhance, or strengthen the character and distinctive features of the landscape of the Neighbourhood Plan area and comply where feasible with the **Design Guidelines** appended to this plan.

Where appropriate, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be provided with proposals to ensure that impacts, mitigation, and enhancement opportunities are appropriately addressed.

The Heritage and Character Assessment produced by AECOM for this Neighbourhood Plan outlines the strong attributes of the four local character areas it describes in terms of its rural feel, its strong farmland features, and their importance as backdrops to SSSI designated land and its visibility from surrounding areas. Ensuring that development proposals address these strengths is a key objective of policy in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The individual chapters of the plan identify the current infrastructure available in the Neighbourhood Plan area and its current condition and identifies need for improvement where necessary. Ensuring that all development proposals are underpinned by supporting infrastructure is key to achieving the vision of the Neighbourhood Plan.

To ensure that these issues are considered in the round, future development proposals should specifically consider how their plans can be accommodated by existing or committed infrastructure provided by the various agencies that are responsible for them and specific discussion with those agencies on the impact of their proposals on infrastructure capacity:

- Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
- Medway Clinical Commissioning group
- Medway Council
- Southern Water

Proposals that the Neighbourhood Plan specifically supports in relation to infrastructure provision within the area are included in Chapter 9.

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#### **POLICY SUSDEV5: Infrastructure Sufficiency Statements**

All major new development<sup>6</sup> proposals must be supported by a statement demonstrating infrastructure sufficiency to support the proposal. An assessment of existing infrastructure provision should be undertaken which addresses:

- a) Waste, water, health, education and transport provision and the needs, commitments and planning requirements set out in the Medway Local Plan and relevant thematic policies and site allocation specifications that it contains.
- b) Recent technical studies and engagement with strategic infrastructure commissioners and providers that may update the position set out in the latest Medway Local Plan Infrastructure position statement/ Infrastructure Development Plan or Strategy.
- c) Accessibility, capacity, and availability of existing infrastructure in the area where this is to be relied upon to support a development proposal.

Chapter 9 of this plan outlines proposals for infrastructure improvements which are needed in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

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<sup>6</sup> The threshold for a **major development** is any application that involves mineral extraction, waste **development**, the provision of 10+ dwellings / a site area over 0.5 Hectares or a floor space of over 1,000sqm / an area of 1 hectare.

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### 5. Housing

#### Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan area has some small hamlets, but has two main villages, Cliffe and Cliffe Woods (which are situated two miles apart) with agricultural and commercial land between, with one minor road, B2000, connecting the two. Cliffe, being the older village, consists of brick-built terraces many of which were extended in later years to accord with modern life, and modern developments have been erected both on Greenfield site land and infill sites. The properties in Cliffe Woods are now mostly post 1960s, earlier houses having been demolished and rebuilt.

Tables H1 and H2 below show the nature of housing currently in the Neighbourhood Plan area compared with Medway as a whole, showing the dominance of houses and bungalows and the limited availability of shared ownership provision and of housing provided by the local authority or registered providers.

**Table H1: Housing Types in the Neighbourhood Plan area**

	Cliffe and Cliffe Woods	%	Medway	%
Total Household spaces	2,145	100%	110,263	100%
Detached houses or bungalows	663	30.9	15,031	13.6
Semi-detached houses or bungalows	870	40.6	32,487	29.5
Terraced houses or Bungalows	480	22.4	44,980	40.8
Flats Maisonettes or apartments	127	5.9	16,856	15.3
Caravans or other Temporary structures	5	0.2	909	0.8

Source 2011 census

**Table H2: Housing Tenure in the Neighbourhood Plan area**

	Cliffe and Cliffe Woods	%
All Households	2,066	100%
Owner Occupied Households	1,666	80.6
Shared Ownership	12	0.6
Living Rent free	22	1.
Rented households:	366	17.7
Rented from a local authority	17	4.6
Rented from a housing association	167	45.6
Privately rented	182	46.4

Source 2011 census



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Since the 2003 Local Plan there have been relatively low levels of development but since 2016 there had been an increase in development proposals coming forward across Medway as a whole. As of September 2020, there are a total of 506 new dwellings in the planning application process in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Little has changed in relation to housing need in the Neighbourhood Plan area over this period and affordable housing in particular. As with the rest of Medway this has grown. The Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment conducted for Medway in 2018 identified a need for 13,387 affordable homes over the Local Plan period 2017-2037 (the Local Plan period had since been changed to 2019-2037). At a neighbourhood level affordability is an issue as so few of the rented properties are provided by Registered Providers or the Local Authority and privately rented property is more expensive. The responses to the 2017 Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Housing Needs Survey, showed that most properties are owner occupied, some were rented, some were shared ownership, and many families were living with relatives. The comments received identified the need for affordable housing and some housing for older people. It also showed that:

- a) Residents wanted to remain in the villages, but the housing stock was not available
- b) Some older people wanted to move to smaller accommodation that more suited their needs
- c) Young families wanted to move into the area but there was no affordable housing.

Most however wanted to maintain the character of the neighbourhood and felt that any development should take account of the rural nature of the Neighbourhood Plan area and must be sustainable.

Medway Council is in the process of updating their Local Plan. In this new draft plan (Regulation 18 Development Strategy consultation version 2018), there is a requirement for 29,463 homes to be built by 2037. Currently, based on the Medway SLAA<sup>7</sup> as of 2019, thirty-two sites were submitted for consideration for development. All the sites were assessed by Medway as unsuitable for development as part of the SLAA process. The Neighbourhood Plan process has also considered these sites. In fact, 5 of the sites now have planning consent providing 350 homes, but the remainder were assessed for potential designation in the Neighbourhood Plan, and it was considered most of them were unsuitable for development for the same reasons as the Medway Council SLAA assessments.

### Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Our approach to development of housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area is to accept that although Medway Council has not currently allocated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area for housing, the future development of the Local Plan may result in some allocations prior to its final adoption in 2021<sup>8</sup>. In addition, applications are likely to be received and may be approved before the Local Plan is adopted. This means that Cliffe

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<sup>7</sup> Strategic Land Availability Assessment 2019

<sup>8</sup> Medway Local Development Scheme December 2019

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and Cliffe Woods will play its part in meeting the number of homes Medway Council needs. Whilst the need for new homes is recognised, any development within the Neighbourhood Plan area should be sustainable and achieve the Neighbourhood Plan Vision.

To do this, the following objectives were agreed to guide the development of policy in relation to housing development in the Neighbourhood Plan area but considering the Housing Needs Survey 2017 of the area.

### Objectives

<b>Housing in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods—meeting Local and Wider needs</b>	To provide housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area to fulfil local needs that is sustainable including: affordable housing, retirement housing, bungalows, chalet bungalows and small terraces	To ensure that all housing development proposals are appropriate to the rural setting	To provide a choice of ways that housing can be developed
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### **POLICY H1: Housing on Greenfield <sup>9</sup>Sites**

Major development proposals for housing on Greenfield sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be requested to contribute to sustainable development by including uses other than housing that are appropriate to the size and location of sites and where they do not conflict with other policies in this plan

The nature and character of the Neighbourhood Plan area means that sites coming forward for housing development within it should include other land uses, not just housing or mitigation through planning obligations, to meet the requirements of the Local Plan. This will help to ensure that residents and visitors have access to a range of supporting services and potential employment in the Neighbourhood Plan area and reduce the need to travel.

There is no green belt designated land in the Neighbourhood Plan area (although there is designated green belt land in the adjacent Parish of Gravesham), but it does have designations that underline the rural character and setting of the Parish in the form of a number of SSSIs, the RAMSAR and Special Protected Area. Greenfield sites must therefore be carefully developed at a scale that is appropriate to the rural location of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

### **POLICY H2: Housing Infill**

Within the Neighbourhood Plan area proposals for new housing development on Previously Developed Land, within the existing village boundaries (Map 2) will be supported in the form of small-scale infill development within or immediately adjoining the boundaries of its two main villages.

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<sup>9</sup> Previously undeveloped land

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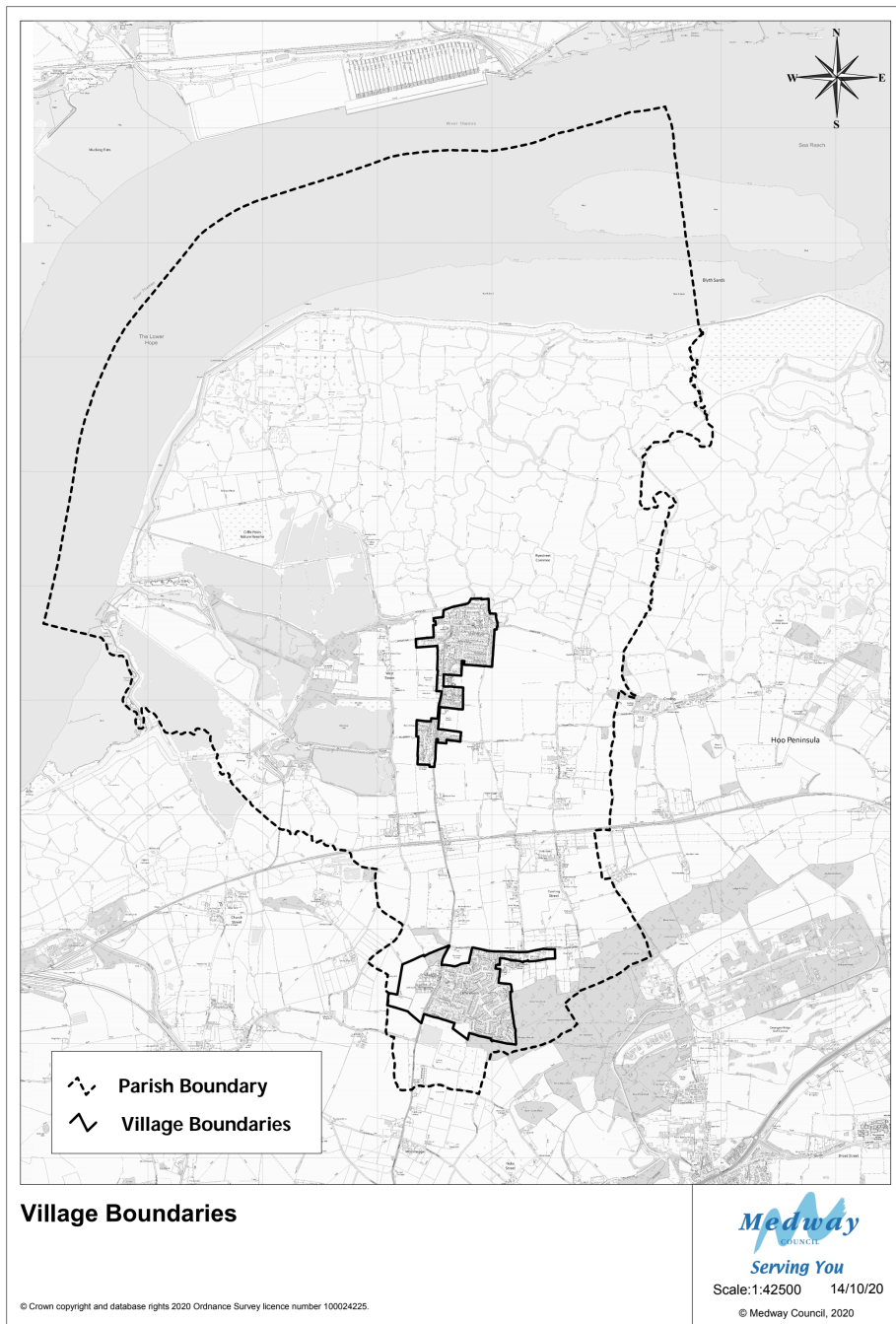
Although the amount of previously developed land in the Parish is likely to be limited (no sites are identified in the Medway Brownfield Land register of 2019), it is important that it is developed wherever feasible and appropriate to ensure the effective use of land in the Neighbourhood Plan area. These and Rural Exception sites and conversions will help to meet the local need for housing.

The following maps outline the village boundaries of the two main villages, the 'village envelopes'.

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### MAP 2 Village boundaries for Cliffe and Cliffe Woods



### POLICY H3: Rural Exception sites

Within the Neighbourhood Plan area proposals for new housing development on previously undeveloped land to meet an identified local need which cannot be met in any other way will be supported subject to the other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan. Criteria to be applied to define local need are:

- A local connection to the Neighbourhood Plan Area – currently resident, currently employed or with a close family connection.
- To address housing need that cannot otherwise be met locally at affordable cost

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#### **POLICY H4: Conversion of Agricultural Buildings to Residential Use**

Proposals for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings in the countryside to small scale residential use will be supported if they:

- a) Do not result in a significant increase in the existing building footprint or height, are confined to the existing area of farm buildings and maintain the main characteristics of farm buildings, as set out in the Kent Farmsteads Design Guidance
- b) Conform to the relevant aspects of the **Design Guidelines** appended to this plan.
- c) In the event of wishing to develop farmsteads or their attendant farmyards and agricultural buildings designs should be shown to conform to the Kent Farmsteads Design Guidance Part 5.
- d) Do not conflict with other policies in this plan, particularly **ECON&EMP1**

This will preserve the rural characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan area, whilst increasing the housing stock and ensuring there will be minimal impact on the rural setting of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

#### **POLICY H5: House Extensions outside Village Boundaries**

Proposals to extend existing houses in the countryside will be supported, provided they are not in conflict with the other policies in this plan and follow the **Design Guidelines** appended to this plan.

Extensions to existing homes enable households to meet their housing needs as they change over time. However, it is important that they do not have negative impacts on their immediate neighbours and the wider area.

#### **POLICY H6: House Design**

All new housing design should respect the rural character of the Neighbourhood Plan area and its immediate context having appropriate regard to the standards set out in the **Design Guidelines** appended to this plan. Residential development will be permitted to encourage a sustainable mix of housing types and sizes to address local requirements to include social housing in accordance with the Medway Local Plan.

Particular attention should be given to building heights to ensure that roof heights do not spoil the aesthetic of the local area. Open front gardens or low hedges will be encouraged to retain the general open look and feel of the Parish.

The villages of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods can be seen from a wide distance from the rest of the Neighbourhood Plan area which is principally countryside; the design of new homes needs to consider this visibility and the resultant need to carefully consider its interface with the wider area in terms of appropriate design for its setting.

#### **POLICY H7: Housing Type and Tenure**

New housing development should reflect local housing need, particularly for bungalows and small family accommodation in the Neighbourhood Plan area in



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### **POLICY H7: Housing Type and Tenure**

terms of mix and tenure as identified in the most up to date SHMA/SHENA<sup>10</sup> and any additional up-to-date evidence.

The mix must be appropriate to the size, location, and characteristics of the site as well as to the established character and density of the immediate environment to include sufficient parking appropriate to the size of the property as set out in **Policy INFRA4** of this plan.

In common with Medway as a whole, housing need and affordability are a challenge in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. Across Medway the SHENA (2015) concluded that “Over the assessed projection period (2012 -2037) the calculated need for 18,592 affordable dwellings (744 dwellings per annum) constitutes 58% of the total number of dwellings required to deliver the OAN<sup>11</sup> figure of 1,281 dwellings per annum.)

At the Neighbourhood Plan level, the Housing Needs Survey (2017) undertaken for Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish identified need for 18 affordable homes; 3 of which are for older households. In addition, it identified a requirement for 4 open market properties suitable for older households who want to downsize or move to more suitable housing for their needs. The need identified was for smaller homes with a mixture of 1-3 bedrooms for first time owners, “downsizers” and homes suitably adapted to accommodate the needs of the elderly. Bungalows were particularly supported as they are one of the major housing types in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

In addition, the survey identified that 56 households had seen members of their household – mainly their children leave the Parish in the last five years with the majority citing lack of affordable housing or employment opportunities as the reason they left.

### **POLICY H8: Housing Density**

The density of new housing development on Greenfield<sup>12</sup> sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area should, as far as possible, be no more than 30 dwellings per hectare to maintain the rural character of the area its sustainability and promote good health impacts from improved residential quality.

Building at higher densities than those which currently exist in the Parish will inevitably create public concerns because of perceived changes it may bring to its character. Good design can address this challenge to some extent and can potentially enhance the character of the Parish.

In addition, densities do vary across the Neighbourhood Plan area. Cliffe for example, at its historic core is denser than Cliffe Woods – but this is largely due to its historic character. To maintain the overall character of existing settlements and their surroundings, densities on Greenfield sites should, wherever possible, be kept at levels

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<sup>10</sup> Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment 2015

<sup>11</sup> Objectively Assessed Need

<sup>12</sup> Land that has not been previously developed

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which address the local distinctiveness of the Neighbourhood Plan area, particularly its historic features notable landscape character and unique biodiversity.

The Medway Local Plan proposes a site-by-site approach to housing density but given the limited sites considered acceptable for development in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the associated infrastructure needed to support it, any developer should be guided to lower expectations of the amount of housing that can be achieved on sites within it.

Homes designed for health such as those proposed to meet the criteria for Homes Plus (which has been developed by the NHS England Healthy New Towns Programme<sup>13</sup>) are encouraged in the Neighbourhood Plan area which also require lower density. The criteria for homes of this standard provide increased space and other facilities to enable healthy living and so will also need lower density site layouts and detailed design features related to natural ventilation, noise abatement and energy generation that can be included in the design of new homes such as solar roofs and ground source heat pumps.

## 6. Community Facilities and Well Being

### Introduction

The community halls and other buildings made available for hire by local groups and individuals in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods play an important role in dealing with isolation, providing for social interaction and spaces for education, health, and leisure activities.

**Table CF1** shows the facilities currently available in each settlement and in addition there are spaces available in Cliffe Woods Academy, St Helens School, and the Six Bells Public House in Cliffe, and a small meeting room in the Buckland Nature Reserve (just south of Cliffe).

Provision currently needs improvement in terms of the potential for a wide range of uses. Many current facilities are already operating at capacity given the mainly voluntary nature of their management. Some are currently a simple hall with some ancillary facilities i.e., kitchens and toilets but many cannot accommodate or are unsuitable for informal sports or leisure activities.

**Table CF1: Community Facilities in the Neighbourhood Plan area**

Cliffe	Limitations	Cliffe Woods	Limitations
Cliffe Memorial Hall	Lack of storage space and internet access. Limited disabled WC facilities to all halls	Cliffe Woods Community centre	Size of main hall and kitchen, ceiling heights do not allow for indoor sports

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/innovation/healthy-new-towns/>

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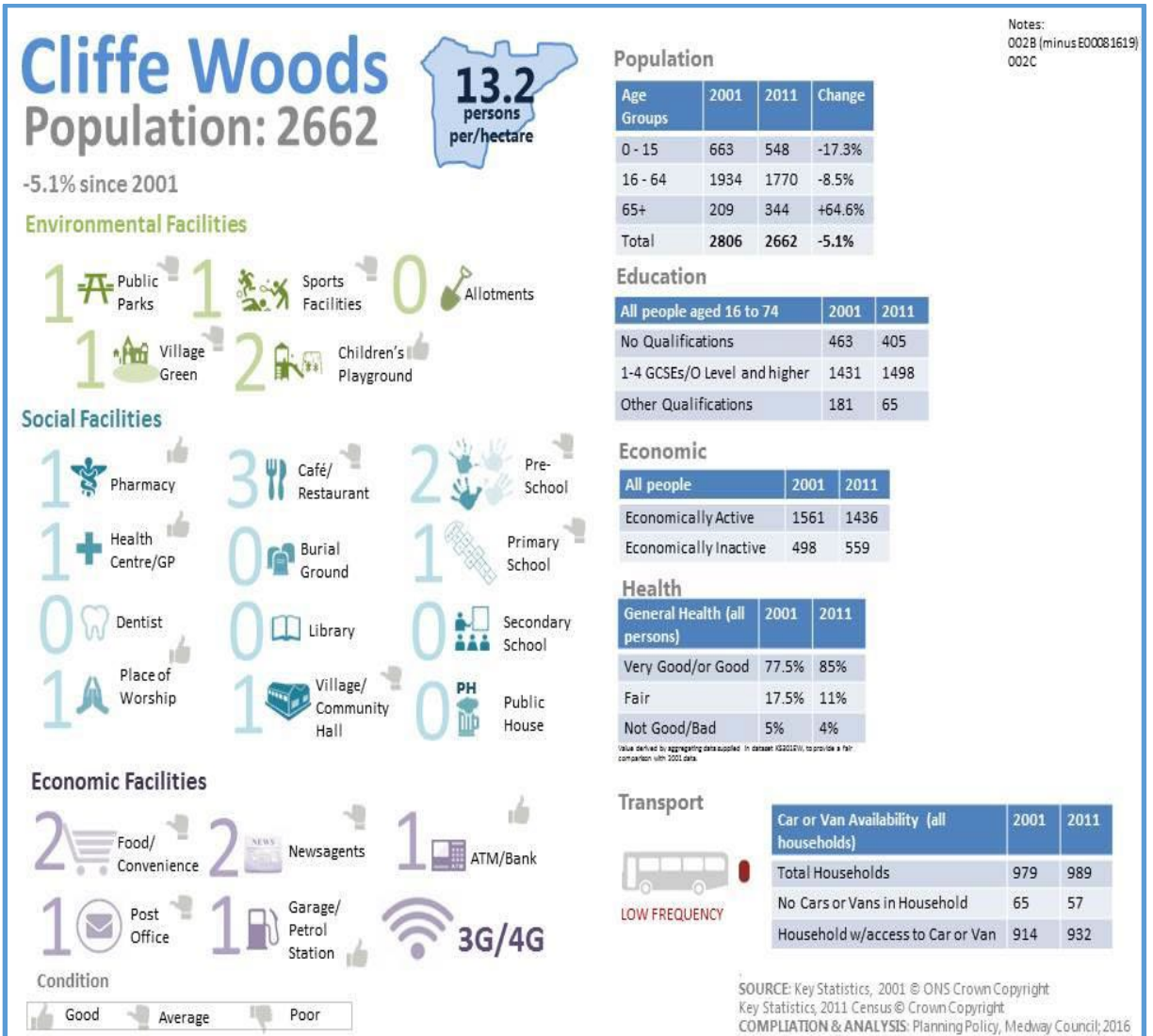
Cliffe	Limitations	Cliffe Woods	Limitations
St Helen's House	Limited size	Cliffe Woods Social Club (Woodpecker Lounge)	Mainly functions for socialising rather than events as Cliffe Woods has no public house
Cliffe Men's Social Club	Limited size	Emmanuel Christian Centre	Needs another small room as main hall though sub-dividable does not cater for demand
Village Club	Mainly for members of the club		
Scout Hut	Not available for non-scouting activities		
Bowling Club Pavilion	Members only		

As part of the evidence base collated for the current Medway Local Plan review, Parish councils in Medway were required to complete a Village infrastructure Audit (2015) for both villages in the Parish. These were collated into a final report in 2017. This noted the audit response in relation to Cliffe and Cliffe Woods requesting further provision overall. The tables below show its summary analysis. This was supplemented by a survey undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan which covered further details such as WC and kitchen provision, promotion, opening hours, equipment, and pricing.

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### Summaries from Medway Village Infrastructure Audit January 2017

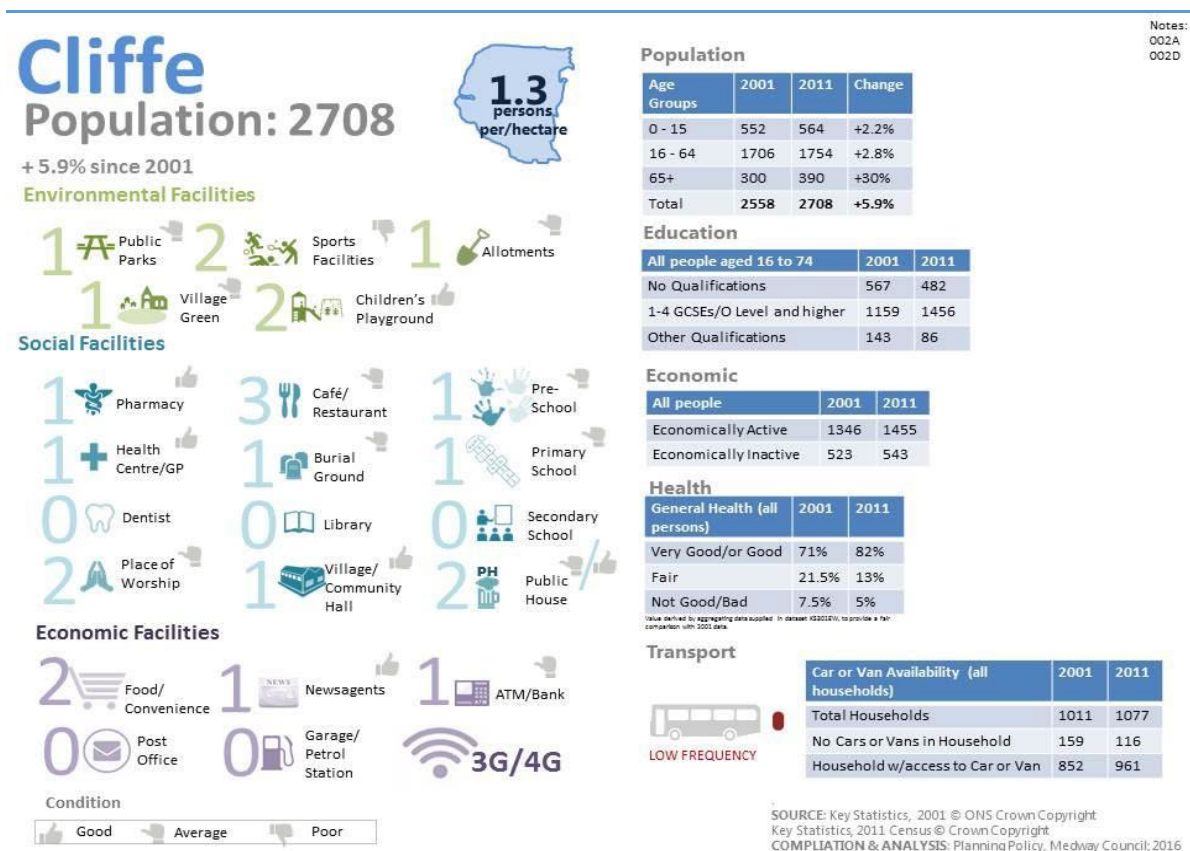


In addition, there is a weekly mobile library service that stops near Cliffe Woods shops and then at the primary school.

Schools in the Parish go to Hoo for pupil swimming lessons.

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Both of these analyses are in fact out of date – there is no longer a petrol station and no outdoor ATM either. But they do indicate that the following improvements are needed to existing facilities:

- An overall increase in provision is required due to the limited capacity and suitability for some activities in the stock of facilities available.
- An increase in storage capacity at Cliffe Village Hall
- Upgrading of the Cliffe Memorial Hall due to its age
- An increase in the range of halls at Cliffe Woods Community Centre (including smaller rooms and new storage)
- A need for secure youth facilities in Cliffe Woods

There is a need for places for residents and visitors to use spaces when activities cannot be accommodated in their own home. They are also needed to allow service providers to make services available to people in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish without the need for them to travel.

Similarly, there are a limited number of leisure facilities in the Neighbourhood Plan area, including allotments. Most residents must travel to Strood or Hoo to make use of indoor sports facilities, e.g., for gym work and swimming. The NPPF<sup>14</sup> (para 8b and 91a) policies make it clear that social objectives, including health should be considered in the planning of development into the future. These facilities offer opportunities and provide for activities conducive to health, social interaction, well-being, and lifelong learning.

<sup>14</sup> National Planning Policy Framework 2019

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### Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The Neighbourhood Plan has identified the following objective in relation to community facilities to guide policy making in the Plan.

#### Objectives

<b>Community Facilities</b>	To enable improved community spirit in the villages and settlements of the Parish with infrastructure and facilities that cater for all age groups within a rural setting.
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All the Neighbourhood Plan policies have been developed to ensure that facilities are protected as far as possible given the limited potential for development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. All these facilities are important due to the limited number and variety of shops, cafes, and other entertainment facilities available to residents and visitors. Their continued improvement over time to allow them to cope with the impacts of Climate change and pandemics are very important since they are often the base for front line response to support communities in difficult times.

#### **POLICY CF1: Loss of leisure and recreation facilities**

Proposals that result in the loss of existing facilities used for indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation shown on Table CF1 and Map CF1 will be resisted unless there is clear evidence that there is no need for the facility or a suitable alternative of facilities of a similar size, quality and accessibility are re-provided or where proposals offer alternative benefits in terms of increased access to leisure and recreation activities

The Medway Council “Playing Pitch Strategy - Needs Assessment” of October 2019 identified that C&CW Parish Council and Medway operate pitches in the area of the Neighbourhood Plan. Currently there is a shortfall for one additional rugby pitch and one youth size pitch and flood-lit training /mid-week facilities (4G pitch). The opportunity to increase the facilities would need external support (grant funding) to address this and this need is reflected in Policy **INFRA9** which identifies local priorities for investment in facilities in the neighbourhood area.

The following maps show the locations of both the community facilities and outdoor recreation facilities in the Neighbourhood Plan area.



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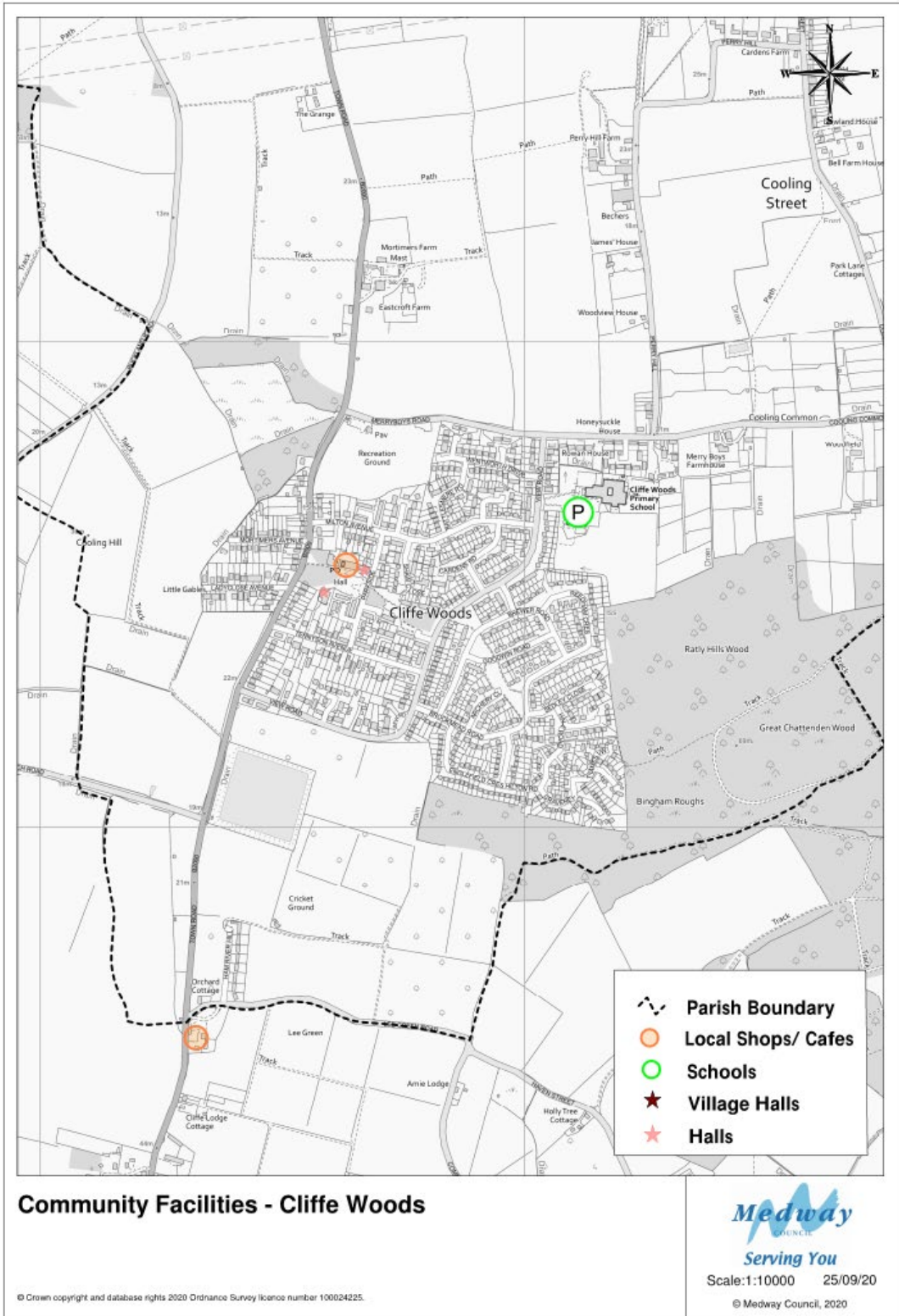
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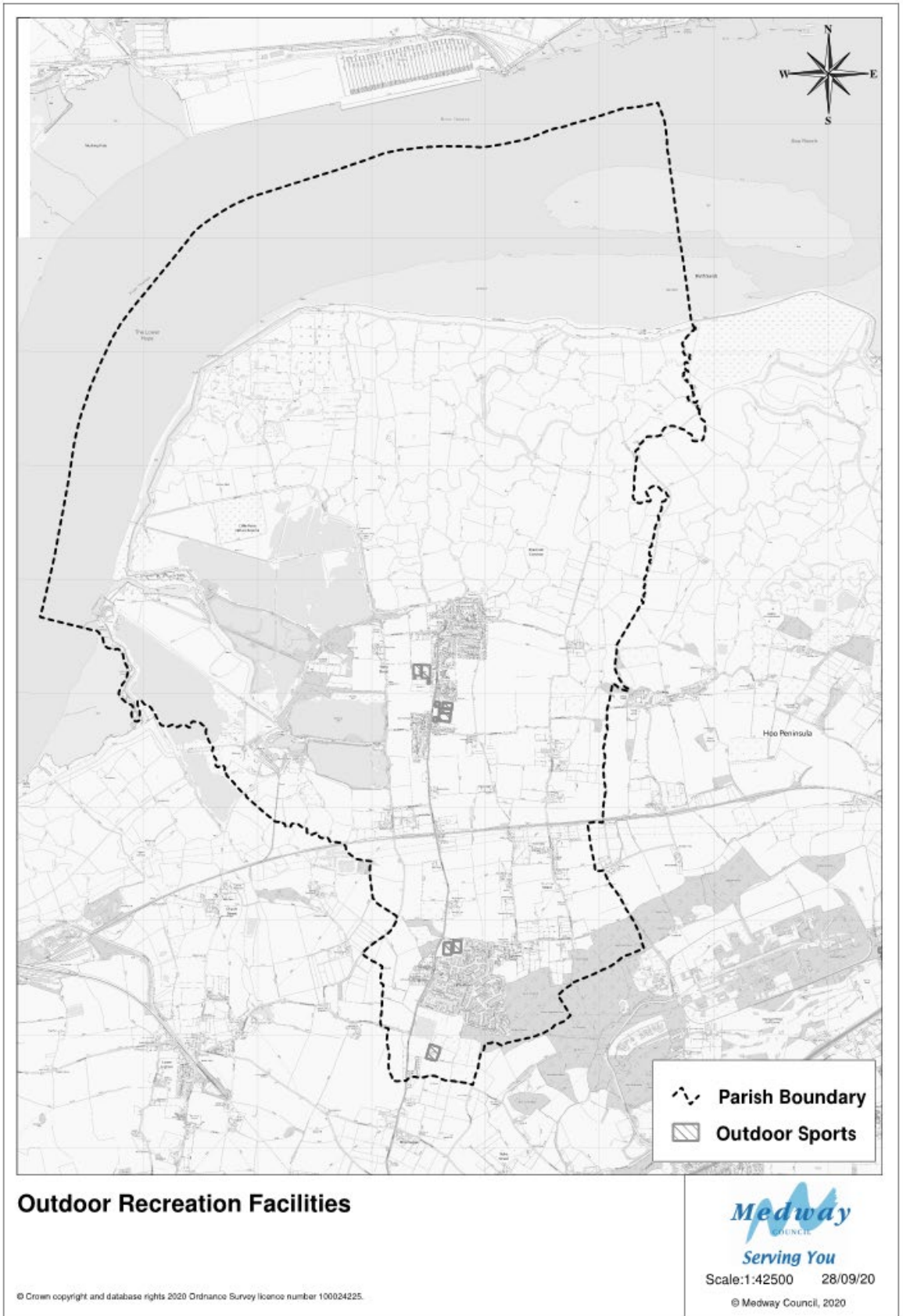


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#### **POLICY CF2: New and Improved provision**

Development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area which include new leisure and recreation facilities, or the improvement of existing facilities will be encouraged where they are consistent with other proposals and policies in this Plan and adequate to meet the needs generated by new proposals.

Facilities should be designed for multiple uses to ensure that facilities are viable and sustainable. Developers will be encouraged to work with providers of such facilities to develop proposals and to design them in accordance with the **Design Guidelines** appended to this plan.

#### **POLICY CF3: Loss of community halls, centres, and place of worship**

Proposals that result in the loss of existing community facilities will not be permitted unless there is clear evidence that:

- a) there is no need for the facility (in terms of the current capacity of existing provision, its opening times, location, accessibility, and range of facilities available to local people and businesses) or suitable alternative facilities of a similar size and quality are re-provided as part of the proposal.
- b) proposals offer alternative benefits to the community in terms of access to space to assemble, worship, participate in educational activities and personal or civic celebrations

#### **POLICY CF4: Allotments**

1. Any proposals that result in harm to or loss of existing allotments will not be permitted unless:

- a) The proposal provides a clear and significant social, economic, or environmental benefit to the local population that outweigh the benefits of their current use as allotments.
- b) Replacement provision is made of at least an equivalent area and quality.
- c) The proposed alternative land will be located within a radius of no more than 1000 metres of its present location.
- d) Any developer will prepare new land for immediate use.
- e) Any developer will compensate existing tenants for loss of any crops and relocation costs.

2. Any proposal to increase allotment or community garden provision across the Neighbourhood Plan area will be welcomed and encouraged where it is consistent with other policies in this Plan.

#### **POLICY CF5: Community Health**

Development proposals should be supported by a health impact assessment that is proportionate to their size and scope.

The protection and improvement of community facilities and the provision of outdoor sports and leisure facilities is critical to the sustainability of the settlements into the

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future and the health of its residents. It is important that this issue is taken account of in all development proposals and that proposals are informed by a proper assessment of health impacts in terms of the checklist in **Table CF2**.

**Table CF2: Health Impact Checklist**

Housing quality and design	Access to healthcare services and other social infrastructure
Access to open space and nature	Air quality, noise, and neighbourhood amenity
Accessibility and active travel	Crime reduction and community safety
Access to healthy food	Access to work and training
Social cohesion and lifetime neighbourhoods	Minimising the use of resources Climate change

This checklist (source - HUDU (2013) Planning for Health Rapid Health Impact Assessment Tool) should provide the basis for promoters of development to scope the potential impacts of their proposals during their design to ensure that all potential impacts are mitigated.

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### 7. Environment and Heritage

#### Introduction

The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan area is characterised by and celebrated for its attractive, distinctive estuarine landscape to the north and its farmed countryside to the south. Ancient woodlands form an important part of the area too (See Map showing Environmental designations in the Neighbourhood Plan Area). As a whole the neighbourhood area sustains a rich diversity of wildlife. It also faces key challenges in terms climate change impacts like flooding, putting at risk the environment and heritage assets of the area.

The area has a rich built heritage and historic assets, with twenty-five listed buildings, a conservation area in Cliffe and a two Scheduled Monuments. It also has a wealth of natural heritage which is of local, national, and international importance, most of which is protected under local, national, and international laws such as EU Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar sites (Wetland bird habitats of global importance) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) landscape designations.

The area is a rich mosaic of habitats, filled with birds and other flora and fauna including some of the most threatened and vulnerable species in the UK i.e., water vole, nightingales, shrill carder bees and scarce emerald damselfly to name but a few.

It has a farming heritage with predominantly the highest-grade agricultural land and some lower grade grazing marsh, a national resource. The plan area also includes a national Cycle Trail, the England Coastal Path National Long-Distance Walking Trail and miles of footpaths, bridle paths, byways, Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and common land.

The protection of this environment is important to both the resident and business communities of the area and visitors to it; views of the hills, woodlands, river, open farmland, and marshes form part of the daily lives of residents and provide opportunities for outdoor learning, physical activity, and involvement in environment, ecology, landscape, and social history.

The farmland of the area is classified as excellent Grade I and Grade II. There are orchards too. This farmland is important as a national resource that contributes to future food security as well as biodiversity. It is currently very fragile. A survey of Farms undertaken for this plan in 2020 shows that overwhelmingly farmland in the Neighbourhood Plan area is tenanted rather than owned outright, leaving farming activity vulnerable to the intentions of owners who want to release it to achieve more financial value from its development.

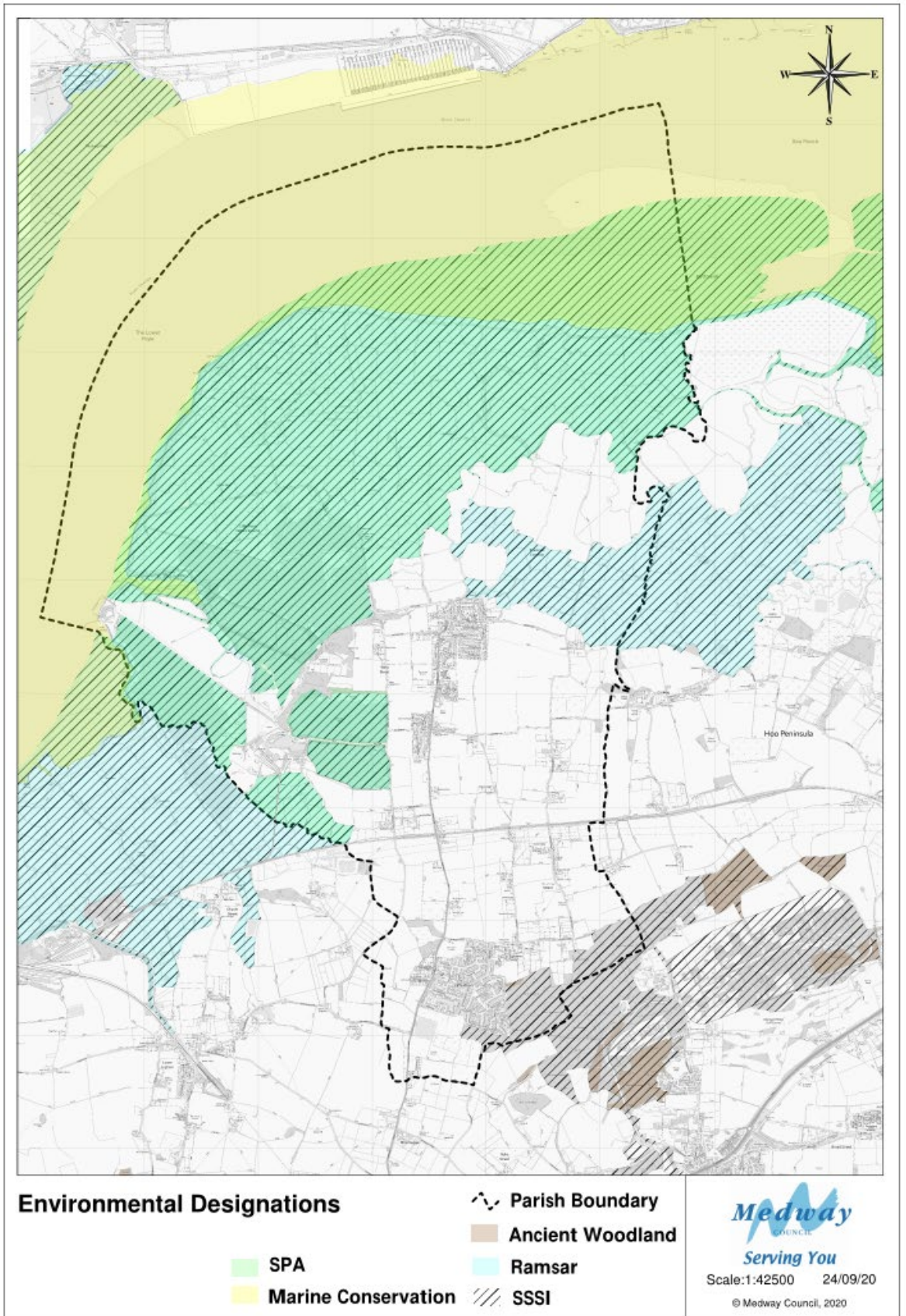
For the future planning of the local economy, it also provides opportunities for visitor accommodation, tea rooms, tours and cultural pursuits related to arts and crafts, writing and photography as well as healthy activity like cycling, running, walking, sailing and so on; provided it is appropriate to co-existence with the wildlife of the area.

Local residents are fortunate to have access to such a rich landscape and wildlife assets, but they also have green spaces which are on their doorstep necessary to allow for relief from buildings and street activity and to allow for play and recreation – both active and passive.

The extent and location of these natural environment and heritage assets is summarized in the following tables and maps:

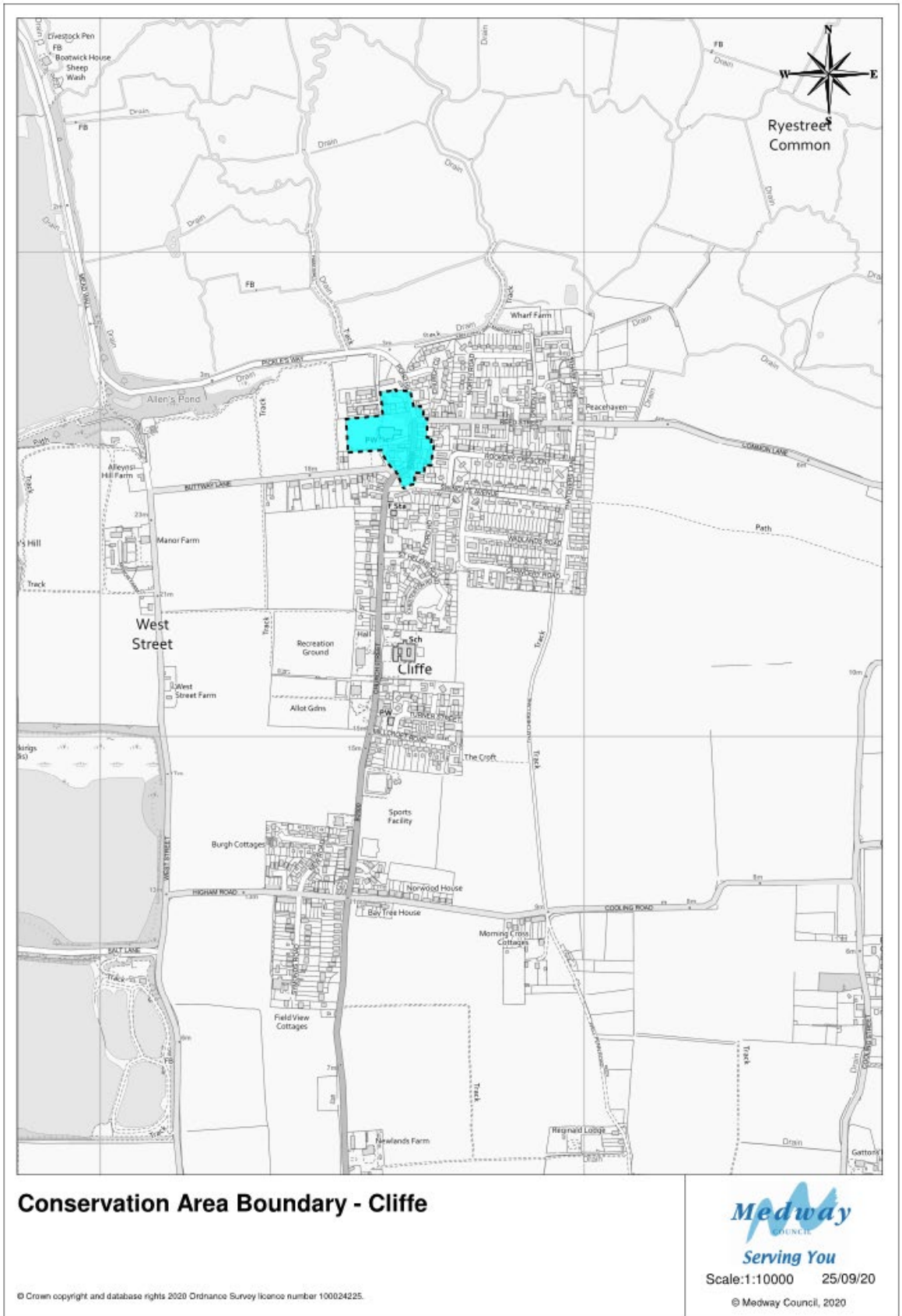


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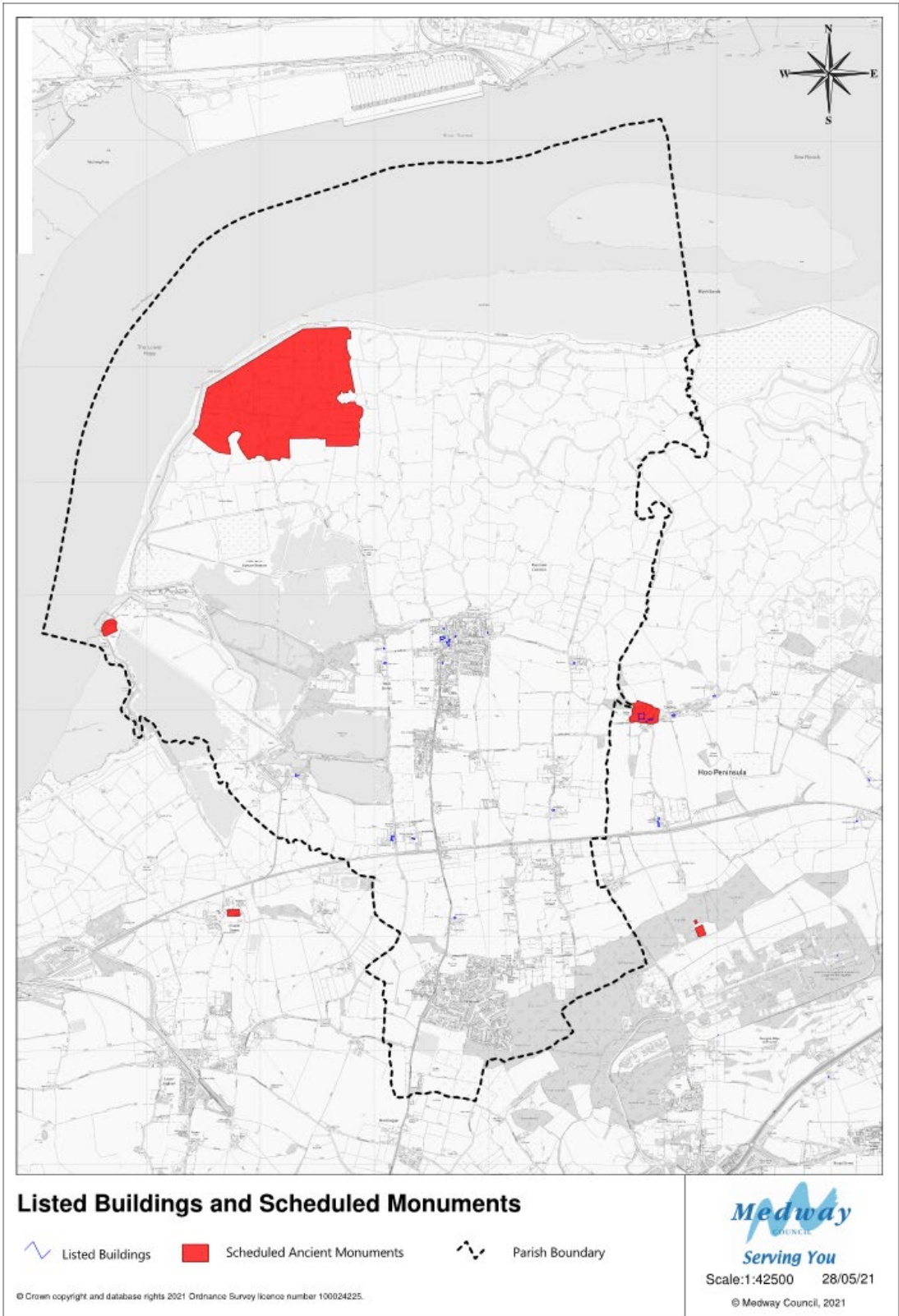
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**E&H Table 1 : Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings in the Neighbourhood Plan Area**

ID	List Entry	Name	Grade	Eastings	Northings	List Date
SM1	1003403	Cliffe Fort Location: TQ 70675 76724				
SM2	1428315	Cliffe Explosive Works Location: The scheduled monument covers an area of about 114 hectares located at TQ 72399 78947				
1	1085760	WEST COURT FARMHOUSE	II	572311.6	175417.2	14-11-86
2	1085761	GRANARY 20 YARDS NORTH EAST OF WEST COURT FARMHOUSE	II	572333.7	175423.4	14-11-86
3	1085762	MANOR FARMHOUSE	II	573096.9	176407.1	21-11-66
4	1085763	GRANARY AT BUCKLAND FARM	II	573158.7	174847	14-11-86
5	1085764	CHARNEL HOUSE AT NORTH WEST CORNER OF CHURCHYARD	II	573509.5	176655.8	14-11-86
6	1085765	HARVEY MONUMENT 20 YARDS SOUTH WEST OF SOUTH PORCH OF CHURCH OF ST HELEN	II	573573	176602.4	14-11-86
7	1085766	170-174, CHURCH STREET	II	573651.5	176564	14-11-86
8	1085767	THE RED HOUSE	II	573712	176645.4	14-11-86
9	1085768	WALNUT TREE COTTAGE	II	573993	176673.4	14-11-86
10	1086505	185, CHURCH STREET	II	573636.7	176586	17-07-90
11	1204042	CHURCH OF ST HELEN	I	573594	176626.4	21-11-66
12	1204054	STEEL AND HATCH MONUMENT 1 YARD SOUTH OF SOUTH AISLE OF CHURCH OF ST HELEN	II	573596	176614.4	14-11-86
13	1204092	THE RECTORY HOUSE	II*	573338.3	174867.4	21-11-66
14	1204114	MORTIMER'S FARM HOUSE	II	573704	174169.4	14-11-86
15	1278057	CHANCERY COTTAGE	II	573636.9	176591.6	17-07-90
16	1281378	BARN AT RYE FARM	II	574753.1	176406.2	14-11-86
17	1281406	SMITH MONUMENT 30 YARDS WEST OF CHURCH OF ST HELEN	II	573550	176617.4	14-11-86
18	1281409	176, CHURCH STREET	II	573655.9	176599.7	14-11-86
19	1336467	GATTONS FARMHOUSE	II	574569	175115.9	21-11-66
20	1336468	ALLENS HILL FARMHOUSE	II	573087.2	176533.6	14-11-86
21	1336469	BARN AT BUCKLAND FARM	II	573149	174870.6	14-11-86
22	1336470	QUICKRILLS	II	573600	176405.4	21-11-66
23	1336471	LONGFORD HOUSE	II	573657.9	176611.2	21-11-66
24	1336472	COURT SOLE	II	573607.5	176708.8	21-11-66
25	1432857	CLIFFE WAR MEMORIAL	II	573576	176602	23-05-16

### Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The distinctive nature of the Neighbourhood Plan area is described in the Heritage and Character Assessment 2017 undertaken to inform the development of this Neighbourhood Plan. The Assessment identifies four-character areas:

- The Historic Settlement of Cliffe
- Cliffe Marshland and Cliffe Pools
- Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Farmland
- Cliffe Woods Modern Settlement

The assessment also sets out the particular challenges in each area for managing change in the future and which have been addressed as far as possible in the **Design Guidelines** which form part of the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan related to Environment and Heritage and to meet the following objectives and Neighbourhood Plan vision.

### Objectives

Environment	<p>To enhance the rural, environmental, and historic character and assets of the Parish by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conserving the rural environment which already has extensive environmental protection for negative impacts of development and climate change,</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To enable the green and blue infrastructure of the Parish to deliver a wide range of environmental, economic, health and well-being benefits for nature, climate, and the wider community.</li><li>• Preserving rural views, wildlife sites and corridors and agricultural land uses.</li></ul>
Heritage	<p>To enhance and the historic character of the Parish and its hidden history by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consideration of expansion of the existing conservation area and appraisal of the present Conservation Area in collaboration with Medway Council</li><li>• Protecting the character of farmsteads in the Parish (including buildings)</li><li>• Preserving the historic landscape features that define today's Parish: the pattern of draining ditches, earthworks, and sea defences, field boundaries tracks and lanes.</li><li>• Conserving properties and archaeological areas that are still of value despite their Non-Designated Heritage Asset status.</li><li>• Ensuring the materials and design of all new development in the Parish is sympathetic to its existing character and avoids poor quality design.</li><li>• Preserving for the future archaeological sites in the Parish for learning and historical recording</li></ul>

### Environment

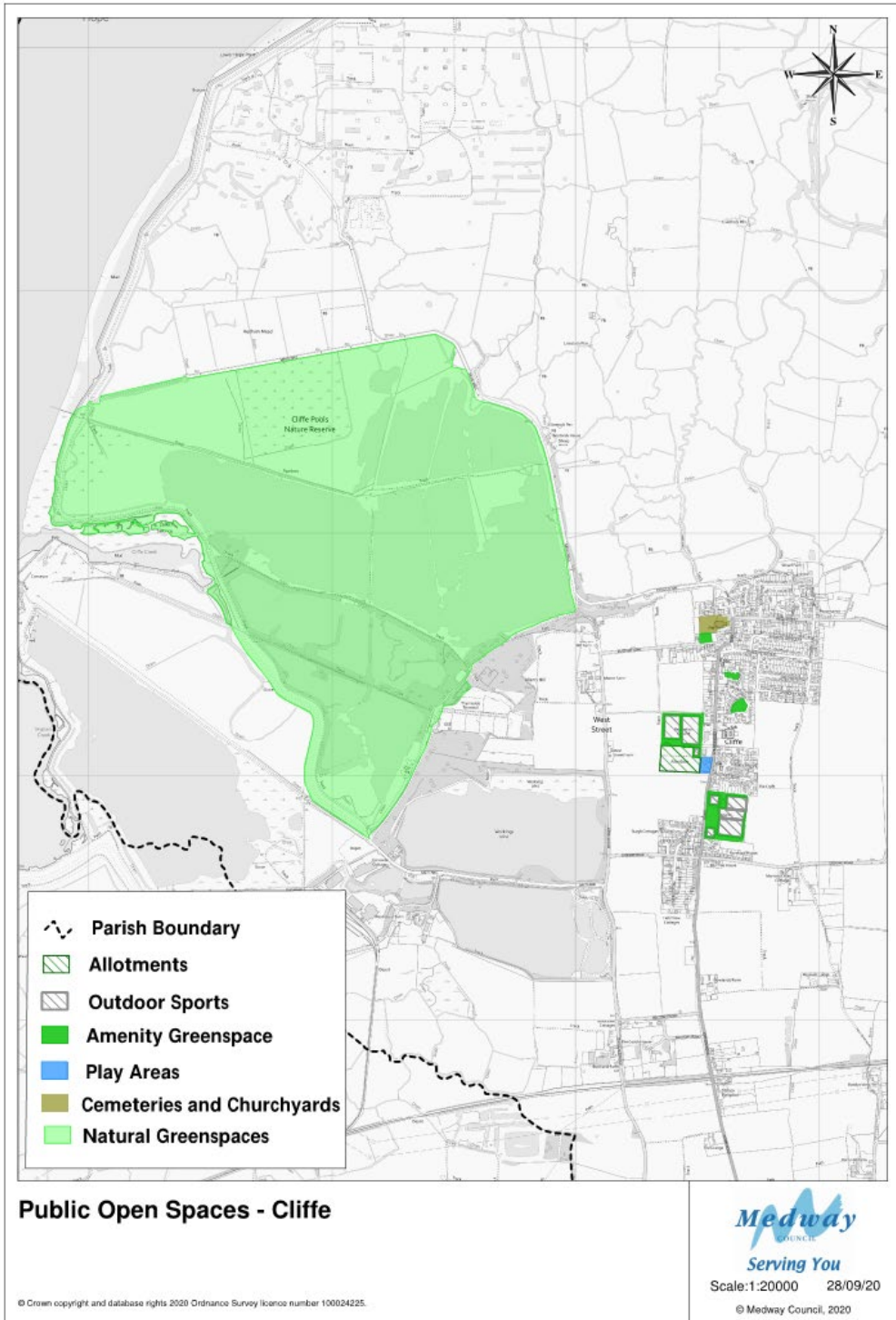
The sensitivity of the character of the Neighbourhood Plan area is such that all potential development in the future is likely to be located at the edge of the two existing main settlements and affect both agricultural land and sites with specific environmental designations. The **Design Guidelines** appended to this plan and Environment and Heritage policies have been devised to minimise these impacts and ensure that development is sensitive to and protects the heritage and character of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

These policies are complimentary to those set out in Chapter 6 that concern provision of community facilities and development impacts on the health of local people and visitors.

Those living and working in the Neighbourhood Plan area benefit from the wider countryside, but this does not replace the function of Public Open spaces as smaller areas for social interaction, children's play and so on. Currently, the area benefits from fifteen spaces, two of which have play facilities. These are shown on the maps below:

As these are key infrastructure to support the needs of children and families their loss should be avoided.

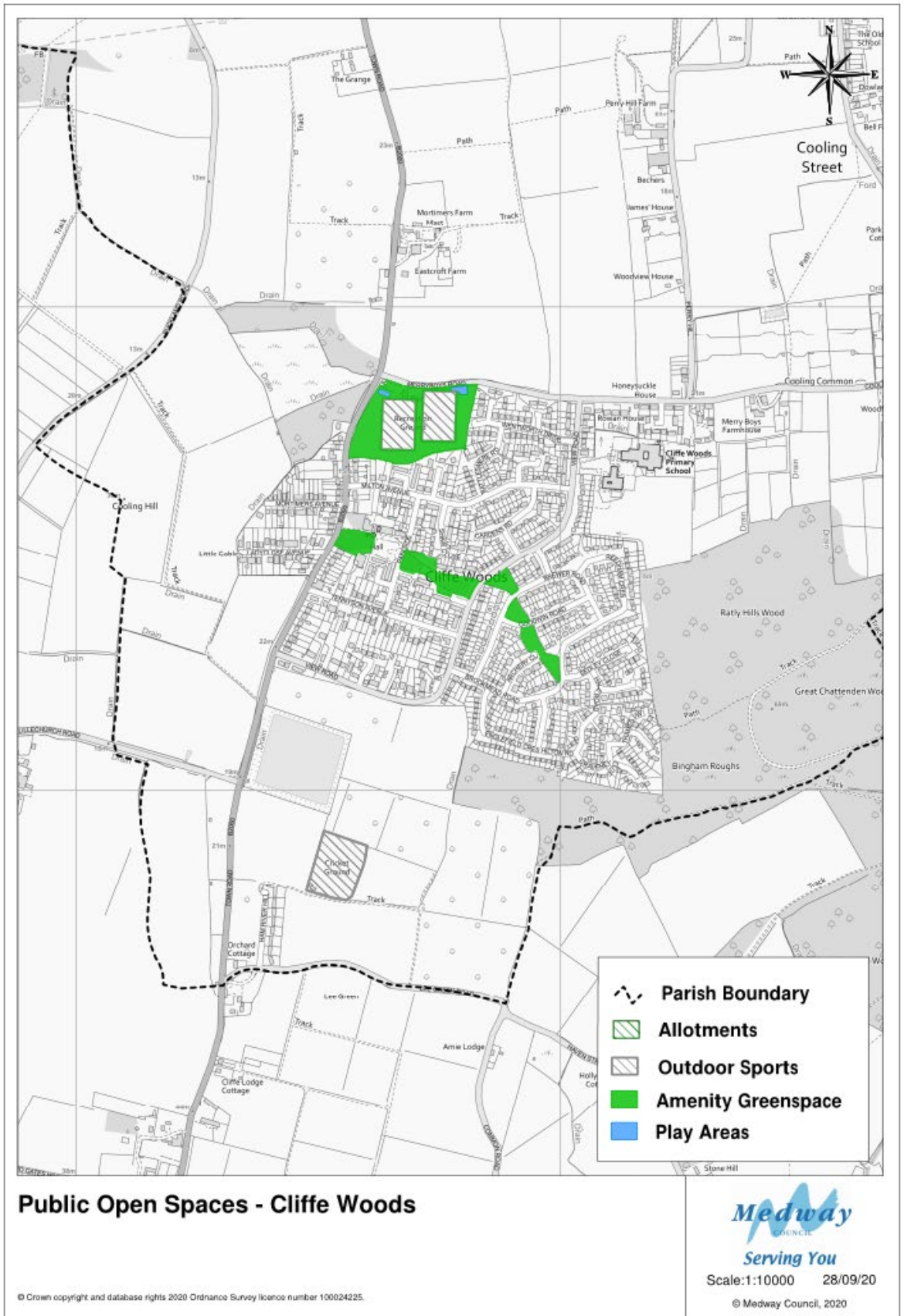
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### **POLICY E&H1: Public Open Spaces**

Development proposals that result in any loss of existing public green spaces as shown on the maps, across all types within the Neighbourhood Plan area will be

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supported only where replacement green spaces which are suitably located and equal or superior (in terms of size and quality) are provided for public use.

### **POLICY E&H2: Biodiversity**

All development in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be expected to protect and enhance biodiversity in line with NPPF and Medway Local Plan requirements. Development must demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity in an ecological report consistent with BS 42020.<sup>15</sup>

Proposals for additional tree planting, where appropriate, will be welcomed.

### **Heritage**

The Neighbourhood Plan area, as described in Chapter 2 of this plan and in the Heritage and Conservation Assessment (2018), prepared to inform it, is a place with a rich and long history. As a result, it has many building and landscape designations that seek to protect and enhance it.

This plan also seeks to protect and enhance, wherever appropriate, the built heritage and history of the area for the purposes of learning into the future and to guide the design of future development which will allow it to consider its distinct character.

This means not only what is visible, but what is hidden in terms of archaeology.

To develop the Neighbourhood Plan, significant work has gone into providing guidance to developers about the presence or likely presence of historical artefacts - their presence and relative density across the area in order to identify areas where a variety of approaches set out in policy **E&H3** may need to be taken to proposals for development in the planning process.

As a result of feedback from Kent Archaeological Services on the Neighbourhood Plan, we have produced maps to support Policy **E&H3** that reflect not only the historic character of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods and their environs, but the north of the Parish, bordered by the village of Cliffe and the River Thames, which covers part of the North Kent Marshes which is rich in both military and industrial history.

At one time the 'marshes' were known to be firm and there existed a crossing point of the Thames to Essex by means of a ford.

Throughout the area comprising the 'marshes' there is strong evidence that suggests that salt working formed an important component of the Bronze Age economy of the area and that, together with the Hoo Peninsula, became an important centre for Romano-British industry, with production of pottery and salt being undertaken on a large-scale. Within the Cliffe Marshes there are several identified Romano-British and medieval salt-working sites along with Romano-British occupation and burial sites. During the digging for mud at the area to the north of the site of Thames Works (Alpha Cement Works) much concern was raised by the vast amount of important

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<sup>15</sup> BS42020:2013 Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development

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archaeological finds that were cast aside or completely destroyed. It is here that finds of a Roman altar and yet another Roman cemetery, comprising several inhumations together with several cremation urns were uncovered.

One important factor supporting the amount of industry, military presence and enabling the growth of the Parish is that of the River Thames as a major route way. All along the foreshore of the Thames there are numerous examples of significant archaeological remains dating from the Prehistoric period onwards and preserved archaeological remains can still be found in the intertidal zone and buried archaeological remains preserved within the alluvial deposits.

At some point, towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, the land became susceptible to flooding and conditions deteriorated continuously from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century to the early 15<sup>th</sup> Century, and it was during this time that extensive works were carried out, initiated by Christ Church Priory, to drain and protect the land. The drainage channels and earthworks, together with the field patterns, some of which are still in evidence today.

It has been recorded that Cliffe was once a large town of much importance by William Lambarde, (A Perambulation of Kent, 1576), again by Richard Kilburn in 1659 and finally by Edward Hasted, in his work "The History and Topographical History of the County of Kent" where he writes "once being a larger town than it is now" and continued to describe Cliffe as "daily growing into further ruin and poverty, the number of the inhabitants lessening yearly, and several of the houses, for want of them, lying in ruins"

The Parish's two scheduled monuments, Cliffe Fort, and the Curtis & Harvey Explosives Works, are situated in this area.

Cliffe Fort is one of five surviving Royal Commission Coastal Forts in the Thames and Medway and construction began in 1861, under the supervision of General Charles George Gordon.

In 1855 building work commenced to convert one of the 9" magazines into a Brennan Torpedo Station, the Brennan Torpedo was introduced at the fort in 1890. The torpedo was a wire-guided harbour defence missile that was launched from the station via launching rails – the remains of the launching rails are still visible today. Cliffe Fort, together with the Brennan Torpedo rails, have been recorded as being on the 'At Risk Register' by Heritage England due to its flooded condition and impact erosion. Presently Cliffe Fort and the connecting road access are in the private ownership of Brett Aggregates.

The Curtis & Harvey Explosives Works began life as a Gunpowder Works, established in 1892 by Hay, Merricks and Company, gunpowder makers of Roslin, Scotland. In 1898 the site was acquired by Curtis's and Harvey for the manufacture of nitro-glycerine, and nitro-glycerine-based products.

Extensive remains of the factory survive on Cliffe Marshes with the potential to recover an almost complete plan of the works. The remains comprise earthworks of traverses and the lines of internal tramways, concrete floor slabs and several standing but roofless buildings. A row of concrete stanchions also survives on the site, which may



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represent the line of steam heating pipes or may be an element of a Second World War Bombing Decoy.

Together with the nearby cement work plants it was the major source of employment for the expanding village of Cliffe.

The Second World War stop line between Hoo St. Werburgh and Higham Marshes is a notable surviving example of anti-invasion defence. It is the northern section of the Newhaven-Hoo General Headquarters (GHQ) Line where it crosses the Hoo Peninsula in Kent between the rivers Medway and Thames. It is an important remnant of the Second World War defended landscape of the peninsula and is a well-preserved example of this type of defence and is understood to be one of the best and most complete remaining examples of a section of the GHQ line in the country, which is part of a major chapter in the national story.

Several structures associated with this Stop Line survive within the Neighbourhood Plan area; these include several pillboxes and other features. Elsewhere along the Stop Line individual pillboxes have been designated as Listed Buildings. Development that erodes our ability to appreciate the Stop Line as a coherent feature should be avoided. The Stop Line should be considered as a monument in its own right, with the surviving pillboxes etc. being component features of the line.

The 'marshes' also saw the sites of the construction of a number of cement works between 1854 – 1970, much of their remains can still be seen today at:

The Pottery (Cliffe Creek Cement Works) 1854 – 1886

Nine Elms (Cliffe Creek, Francis & Co. Cement Works) 1867 – 1900

Cliffe Quarry (Johnson's Cement Works) 1874 – 1921

Thames Works (Alpha Cement Works) 1912 – 1970.

The Nine Elms plant began its operation with nine bottle kilns to which a further ten were added. The kiln block of 1866-8 can still be seen today together with a grinding mill base a possible prototype for the Johnson chamber kiln.

Cliffe Conservation Area was designated in 1973 covering part of the core area of the nucleated settlement of Cliffe which includes St Helens Church. It has been suggested that a formal Conservation Area appraisal is undertaken by Medway Council as part of its ongoing heritage programme. This will reflect new historical data studies and may include items such as a revision of the boundary area and additional controls such as Article 4 direction guidance and a management plan to help to protect and enhance its character and appearance.

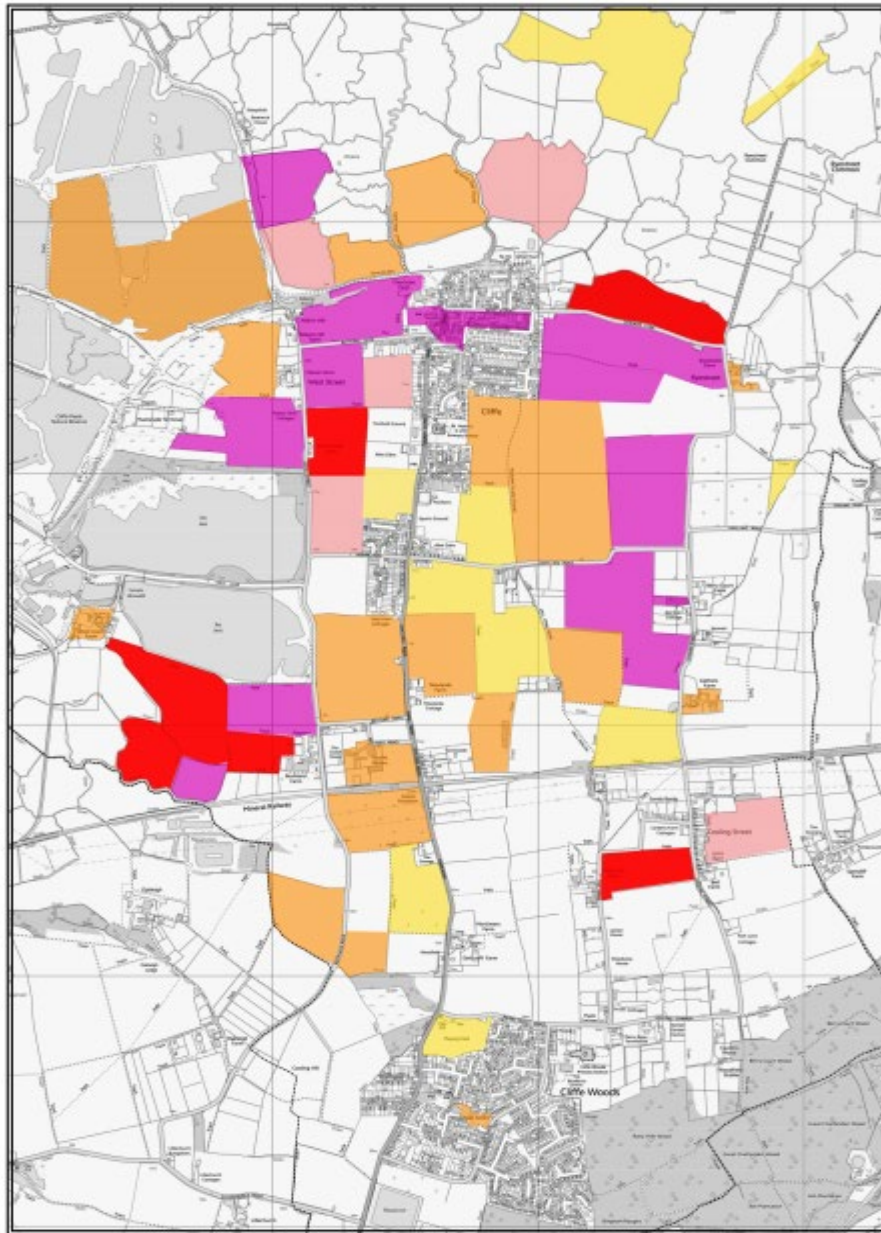
Evidence is mounting of the fundamental significance that the ecclesiastical establishment had in Cliffe parish as a whole being a Parish Peculiar of the Archbishop of Canterbury up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The nucleated village appears to be the Manor of Parsons Borough in which the Conservation Area now sits.

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### Hidden History Map 1 – Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

#### Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish—Areas of Known Historical & Archaeological Importance.



Map showing the density of historical & archaeological finds based upon data from Kent Historic Environment Records (HER) and the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)\*

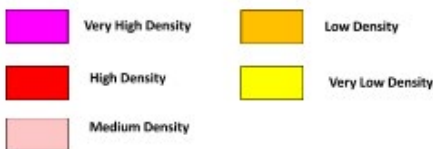
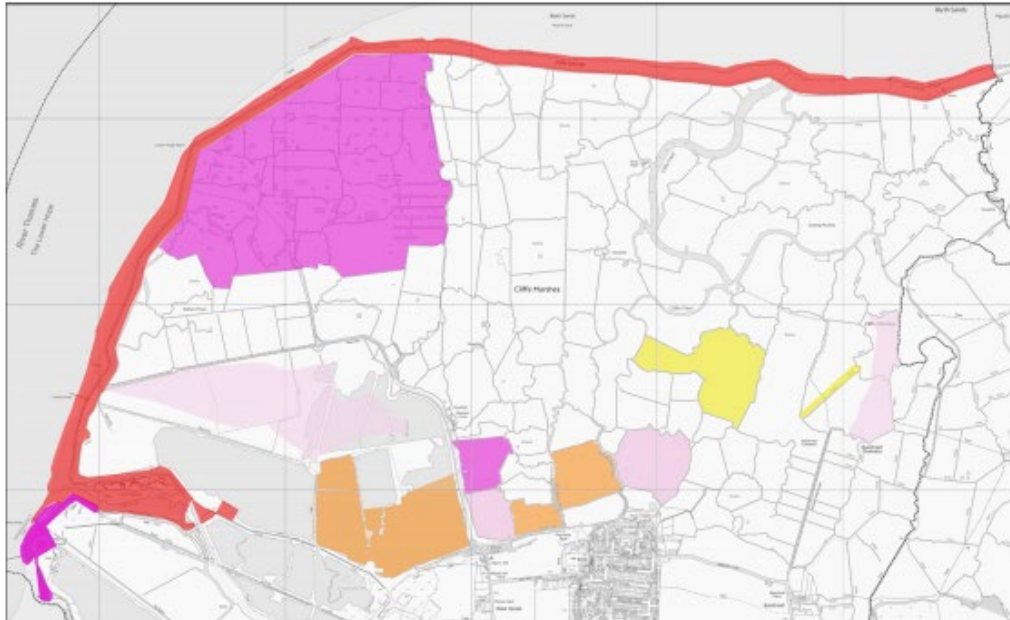
\*PAS is a voluntary scheme dating from 1997 and is extensively used by the Cliffe Metal Detecting Club on land they are permitted to detect upon. However, on land that they are unable to search, the traditional aphorism, "Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence," should be kept in mind.

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### Hidden History Map 2 - Marshes

#### Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish—Areas of Known Historical & Archaeological Importance.



Map showing the density of historical & archaeological finds based upon data from Kent Historic Environment Records (HER) and the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)\*

\*PAS is a voluntary scheme dating from 1997 and is extensively used by the Cliffe Metal Detecting Club on land they are permitted to detect upon. However, on land that they are unable to search, the traditional aphorism, "Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence," should be kept in mind.

### POLICY E&H3: Hidden History

Development proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be expected to consider its unique history and heritage assets as part of developing the details of their proposals. In particular regard should be had to:

- a) The nature and significance of the heritage assets identified within the detailed records Heritage Environmental Records (HER).
- b) The general location and grouping of known heritage assets (see Hidden History Maps 1 and 2) Maps that will aid Medway Council, as the planning authority to be more aware of the possible hidden heritage. Areas within the nucleus of the old village of Cliffe and surrounding ancient manors and farmsteads should be treated as highly significant.
- c) It will be necessary for any development proposal to be discussed with Medway Council at the earliest opportunity to review the Kent Heritage Environment Records and maps showing areas of archaeological/historical significance in an around the development proposal site. This will guide the nature of investigations required and enable early guidance from Kent County Council's Heritage Conversation team on purely archaeological matters, where relevant.

Development proposals should include;

- a) An assessment of the likely impact of development on the heritage assets in and around the site and how impact can be avoided or mitigated.
- b) Any proposals for enhancement of any heritage asset in and around the development site

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#### **POLICY E&H3: Hidden History**

- c) Ensure that these assessments and proposals are distinctly and conspicuously included in the development proposals.

The development of the Neighbourhood Plan has seen a significant investment in developing guidance for promoters of development in the area to guide its form and character. This is so that it enhances local distinctiveness whilst respecting appropriate architectural diversity, originality, and innovation. The Design Guidelines (2019) created for the Neighbourhood Plan area, is a very important guide to achieving the Vision and Objectives for this plan and are referred to in many of its policies.

#### **POLICY E&H4: Design Guidelines**

All development proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan area should apply the principles and guidelines included in the **Design Guidelines** appended to this plan.

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### 8. Economy and Employment

#### Introduction

The 2011 census shows that in the Neighbourhood Plan area of the residents aged 16-74, 3,993 were economically active and 2,680 were employed. These employees work in the following sectors:

**POLICY ECON&EMP Table 1: Employment in the Neighbourhood Plan area**

Industry	% age of the population aged 16-64 in employment
Wholesale and Retail	14.7%
Construction	13.9%
Education	10.00%
Human Health and Social Work	10.2%
Manufacturing	7.8%

Source: 2011 Census

The number of residents who work within (or close to) the Parish lies between 90 and 180 **see Table SD2**.

Industry within the Parish is concentrated in the Salt Lane Industrial Area, to the west of the village of Cliffe which grew in relation to the employment opportunities offered. This includes the Alpha and Conoco jetties, although the amount of industry has declined in the last 50 years, the population of Cliffe has not.

**E&E Map 1 of Salt Lane Industrial area**



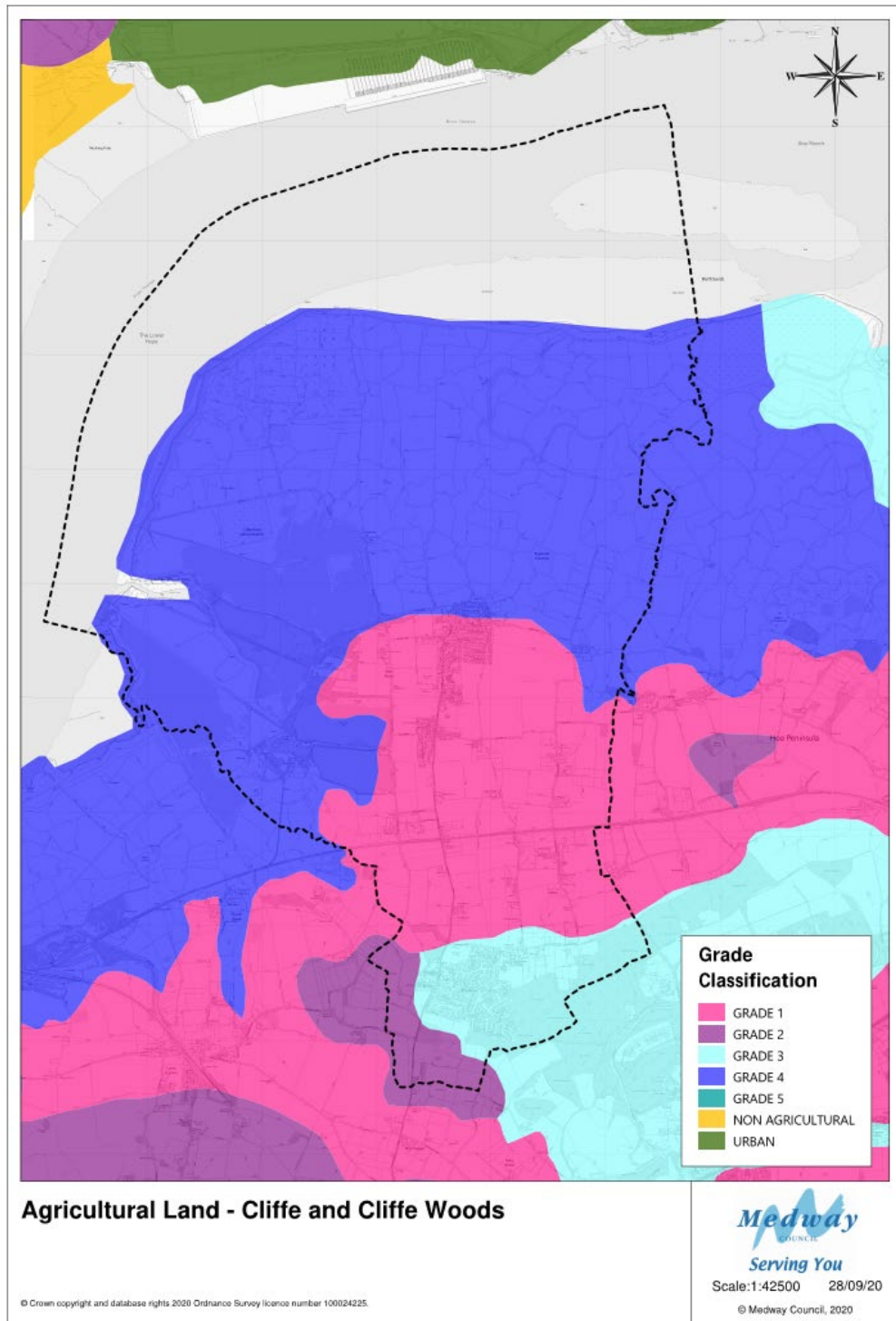


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There is a lot of land in the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is in agricultural use, a lot of it high grade (see **E&E Map 2**). As a result, it does provide some employment opportunities for local people.

**E&E Map 2: Agricultural Land in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods**



There are 19 farms in the Neighbourhood Plan Area either owned by or leased by farmers, which are a combination of arable, grazing for both livestock and horses as well as fruit growing. Three of these farms are affected by future plans for development. (See **E&E Map 4**) As with many aspects of the economy, technology has reduced the number of people employed in agriculture. There is however a seasonal workforce on some farms. Mockbeggar Farm, albeit just outside the Neighbourhood Plan area typically has 180 seasonal staff. This sector is very important to the

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Neighbourhood Plan area as many residents have low levels of skill and qualifications (See **ECON&EMP Table 2**).

**ECON&EMP Table 2 - Qualifications**

% of population aged 16+	Cliffe and Cliffe Woods number	Cliffe and Cliffe Woods %	Medway number	Medway %	South East number	South East %
No Qualifications	887	20.8	48,226	22.9	1,333,955	19.1
Level 1 qualifications	837	19.7	35,473	16.9	946,056	13.5
Level 2 qualifications	787	18.5	38,653	18.4	1,110,706	15.9
Apprenticeship	248	5.8	9,857	4.7	253,423	3.6
Level 3 qualifications	526	12.4	26,818	12.7	892,915	12.8
Level 4 qualifications and above	804	18.9	40,275	19.1	2,093,693	29.9
Other qualifications	169	4.0	11,209	5.3	361,918	5.2

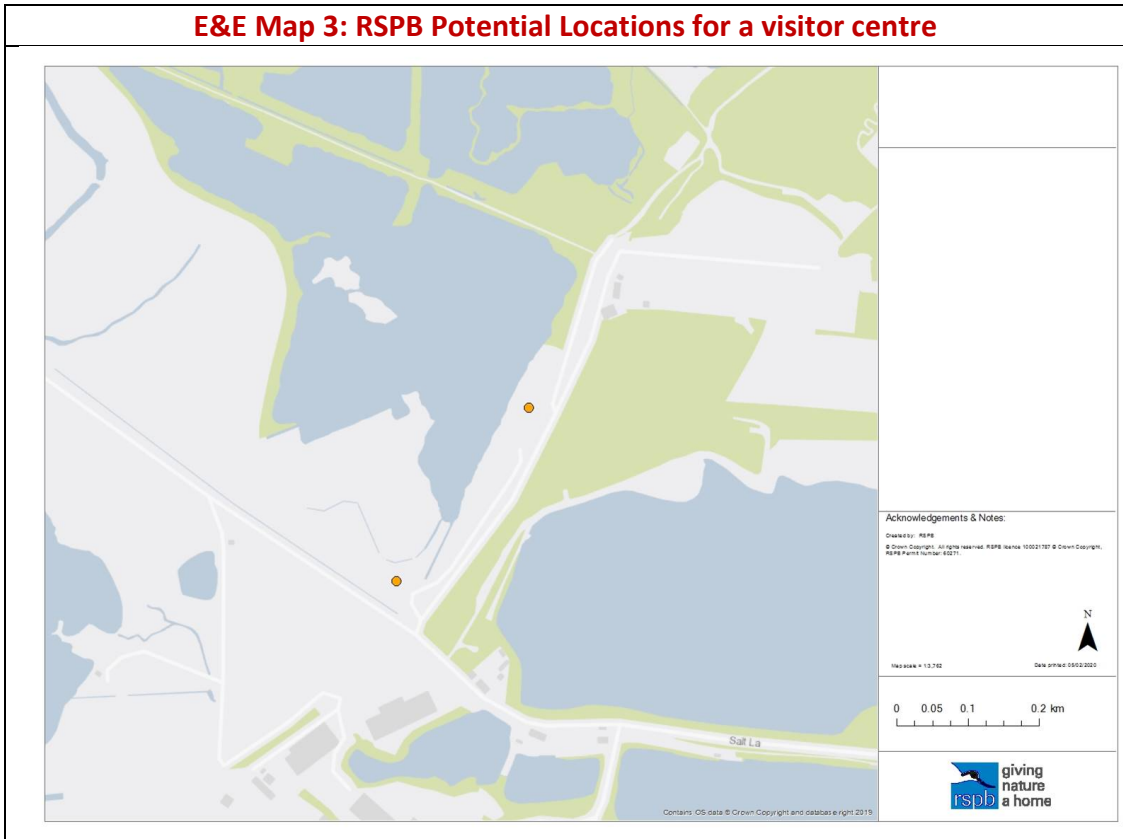
Source 2011 census

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds owns the area of land known as Cliffe Pools, which is next to the Salt Lane Industrial Area. The RSPB is considering siting a visitor centre in the area (shown **E&E Map 3** below) to enable people to fully enjoy and appreciate the beauty and variety of birds in the Neighbourhood Plan area and their associated habitats.



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Significantly, a defined group of workers in terms of travel is those who “work mainly at or from home” (See **Table SD2**). There is no detail related to these workers in terms of the sectors that they work in and the extent to which they may be smaller companies rather than self-employed individuals. As data suggests that construction is a main employment sector for people locally it is likely that they are based in the Parish but work in multiple locations. Based on the popularity of small storage premises in the parish or just outside (Mockbeggar Farm provides this facility) it is likely that they meet some of their space needs for their work in this way or keep tools and materials in their vehicles.

Information on business premises that pay non-domestic rates (**ECON&EMP Table 3**) will not cover this category of employment activity. But as the need to reduce car travel to limit climate change and pandemics such as COVID 19 impacts are felt, it may be that this pool of workers will grow into the future and that there may be demand for small flexible workspace or shared managed workspace within the Neighbourhood Plan area if it was available.

A UK study of shared workspace undertaken in 2016, noted the vigorous growth of shared and managed workspace across the UK and pointed to the variations in the size and location of provision to address local needs, particularly outside major cities.

There are 1,299 residents who are not in employment (54.6% compared to the national figure of 35.6%, possibly indicating more retired residents than other areas). Data on educational qualifications indicates that 29.6% of residents have no qualifications compared to the national figure of 22.7%. The Local Education Authority and Regional Schools Commissioners should be encouraged to examine this in relation to education/training opportunities.

The analysis of business premises in the Neighbourhood Plan area based on the payment of non-domestic rates identifies a total of 43 premises categorised as follows:

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**ECON&EMP Table 3: Business premises in the Neighbourhood Plan area**

Warehouses	2	Riding schools/stables	2	Workshops	2	Car Parks	1
Outdoor Storage areas	1	Fish Farms	1	Vehicle Repair Workshops	2	Surgeries	2
Offices	1	Halls/Community Centres	8	Guesthouses	1	Shops	7
Schools	2	Fire stations	1	Public Houses	1	WCs	1
Kennels	1	Catteries	1	Nurseries	1	Farms	3
Comms stations/Masts	2	Concrete/aggregates	4				

*Source: Valuation Office Agency (downloaded May 2018)*

This shows the limited economic base on which the Neighbourhood Plan area is based and data for employment (See **Table SD2**) underlines the extent to which residents travel out of the area to work.

This presents an opportunity into the future for provision of new employment space and employment generating facilities, but also the need to protect existing employment land into the future. As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan has adopted the following objectives in relation to the economy and employment.

#### Objectives

<b>Employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote green and historic tourism, and small-scale craft workshops using redundant farm buildings and mixed-use development opportunities to provide opportunities for local benefit from visitors to the area in a sustainable way that is appropriate to the Parish and its setting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To protect agricultural jobs and employment land in the Parish</li> </ul>
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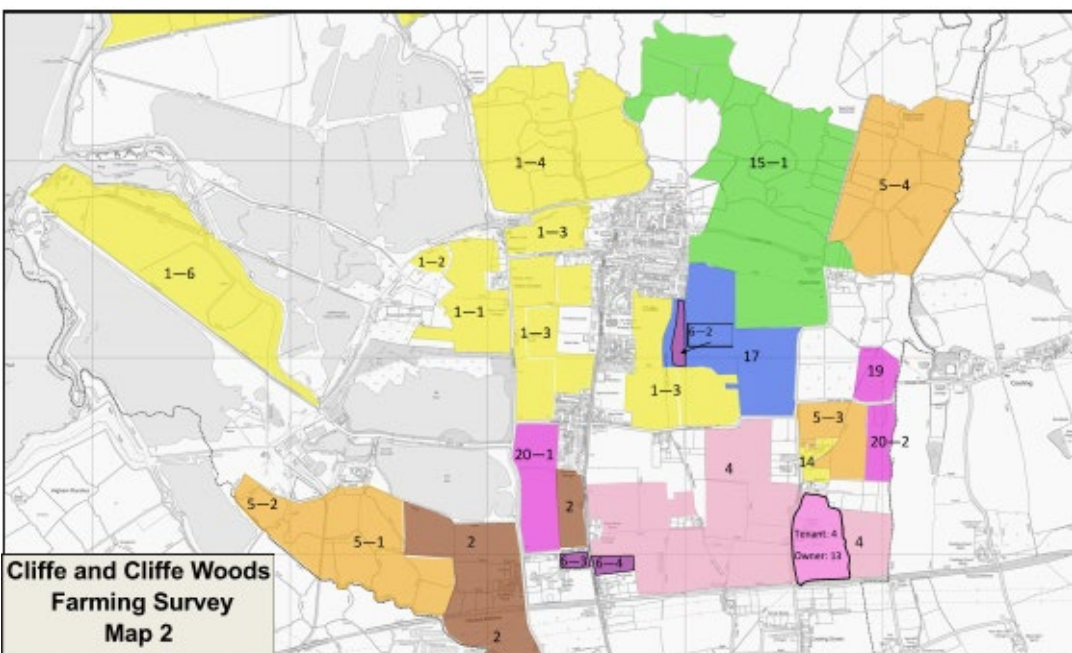
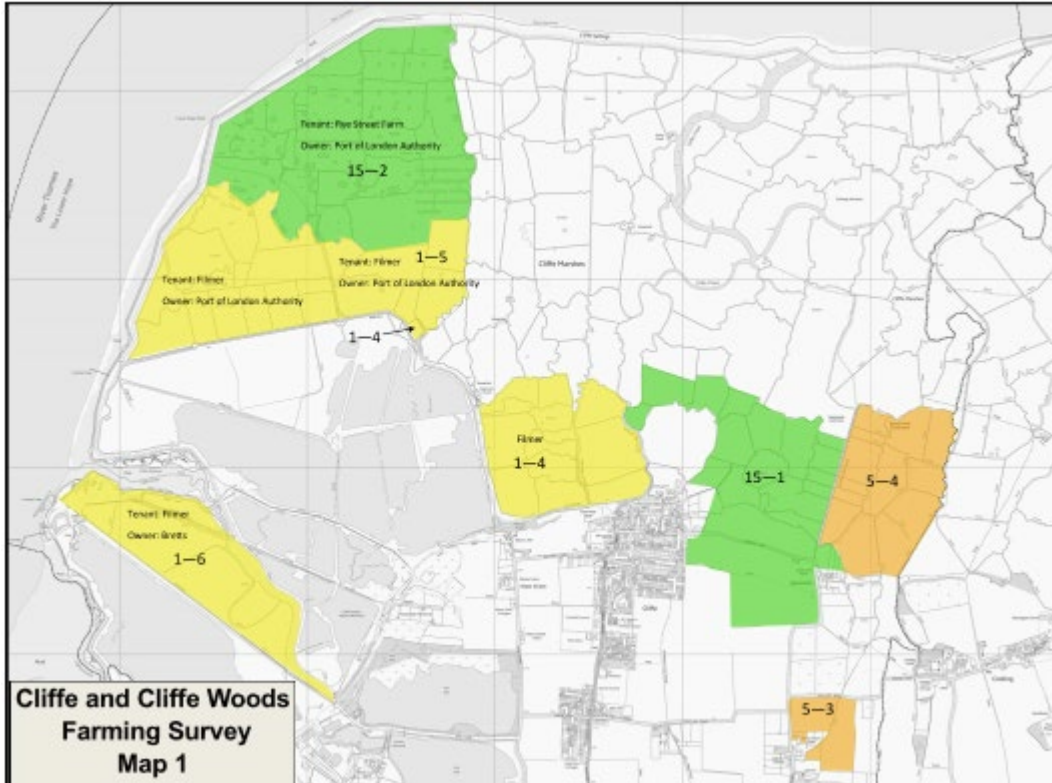
The protection of farmland and the employment associated with it is an objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. This has been agreed to protect the viability of the communities of the hamlets and villages in the Neighbourhood Plan area by ensuring that everyone does not have to travel out of the area for employment, adding to problems of congestion and pollution that are already significant challenges. This policy will help to ensure that the character of the area is protected, and that farming does not disappear as a result of individual farms areas being reduced to the point that they are unviable enterprises. A survey of farms undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan shows that of the 20 farms identified, one is no longer in operation. The rest are dominated by tenanted farmland which makes them vulnerable to the plans of landowners for development. **Policy H4** related to residential conversion of agricultural

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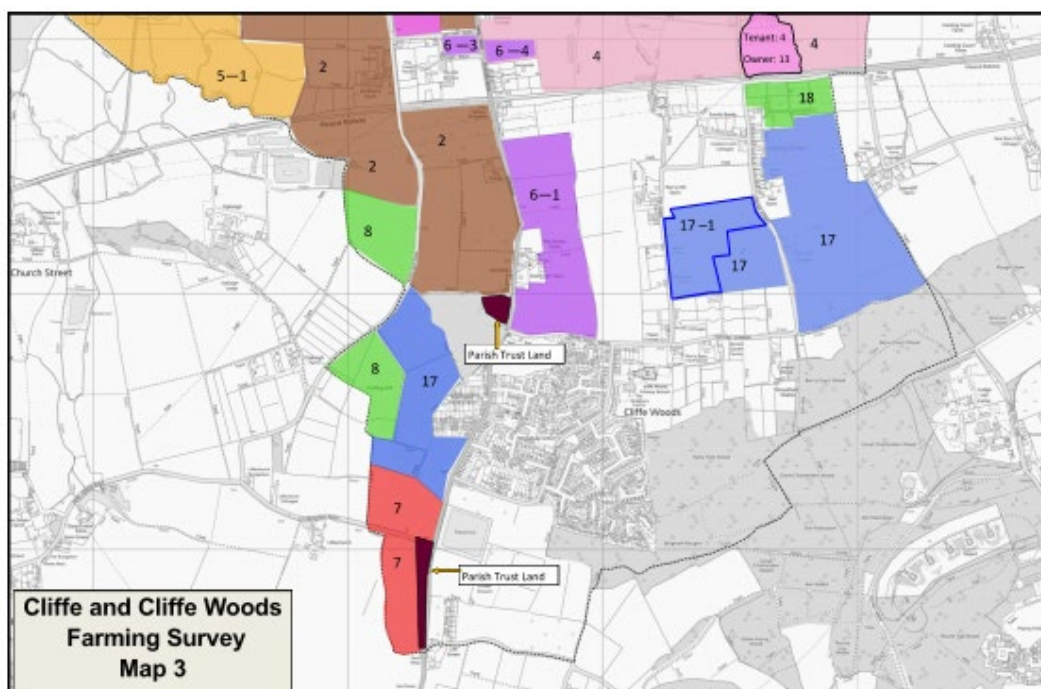
buildings will also need to be considered in relation to the viability of farming across the Neighbourhood Plan area.

**E&E MAP 4 : Farms in the Neighbourhood Plan Area**



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**E&E Table 4 : Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Farming Survey 2020**

	<u>Farm</u>	<u>Use</u>
1	Filmer Farms (Allens Hill) (West Street Farm)	Area 1-1 Owned and used as arable land Area 1-2 Purchased from Brett site with quarry Area1-3 Land rented from Trenport (owners) Area 1-4 Land owned but rented out to neighbour – use not stated Area 1-5 Land rented from Port of London Authority used as grazing/pasture Area 1-6 Land rented from Brett used as grazing/pasture No outbuildings to let out
2	J L Wright Limited Bucklands Farm	Owned - all the land marked 2 on the map. Owns Grange Farm but this is farmed by Stuart Wright for arable crops. Small piece of land marked 2-1 rented from Trenport. Outbuildings only on Bucklands Farm. None let out.
3	Fenn Ltd	Farm now part of 2 above
4	Newlands Farm	Tenant. Fields rented. Grows vegetables/arable crops. Minimal outbuildings – none rented out
5	West Court Farm	Area 5-1 is owned and used as grazing for cattle/sheep Area 5-2 Tenanted Area 5-3 Tenanted Area 5-4 Owned and used for livestock grazing. Farm used mainly for livestock. No arable Outbuildings – all owned and used for farming
6	Eastcroft Farm S & G Lane	Area 6-1 largely rented. Remainder used by Eastcroft Roses which is co-owned with Peter Cox Area 6-2 is owned but rented out to Nick Whitebread (Spendiff Farm) Area 6-3 is owned and left fallow Area 6-4 rented out to tenant of Newlands Farm Outbuildings located only on Area 6-1. 8 units let out for light industrial purposes
7	Lillechurch Farm	Tenant. Works on two small parcels of land within the Parish which is owned by St John's College. Used as arable farming. No outbuildings let



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8	Oakleigh Farm	Tenant. Works on two small parcels of land within the Parish which is owned by St John's College. Used as livestock/grazing. No outbuildings let
9	(J Myatt & Co)	Based on comments from other farmers operates on land east of Cliffe Woods from Lee Green Road up to the southern edge of the village. Status not confirmed.
10	Perry Hill Farm	A parcel of land from Mockbeggar Road north to the railway line along Perry Hill and east towards Cooling Street. Status not confirmed.
11	Merryboys Farm (Tile Barn Farm on map)	(extent of land unknown) Large areas of land on both sides along Cooling Common. Some land was owned by Gattons Farm but sold to Merryboys Farm. Land owned and used primarily for equestrian/stabling and grazing of horses. Now developing land east of the main house but refused permission for land west
12	Bell Farm	(not operating)
13	Gatton Farm	Rented to Newlands Farm
14	Berry Court Farm	Minimal amount of land which is used primarily as stable and horse grazing
15	Rye Street Farm	Land used primarily for grazing for livestock (cattle and sheep) Some arable land Equestrian centre and stables Owns land on Area 15-1 which includes equestrian centre and stables Tenant on land marked 15-2 on Marshes – land owned by Port of London Authority.
16	West Street Farm (no longer operates)	Land owned by Trenport and rented to Filmer Farm.
17	Spendiff Farm	Area 17 owned and all fields used primarily for arable stewardship (environmental crops). Area 17 in Cliffe Woods subject to planning application (Gladman). Area 17-1 owned but rented out. Outbuildings – none sublet
18	Satis House	Area 18 Owned and mainly used for livestock grazing and growing animal feed.
19	Cooling Castle	Land owned and used for grazing. Extent unknown
20	Childs Farm (Cooling)	Area 20-1 Owned and used as orchard Area 20-2 Owned and used as arable/fruit growing

The NPPF 2019 para 118b states that planning policies “should recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production”. Combined with the wildlife value of much of the undeveloped land in the Neighbourhood Plan area, the protection of agricultural land in the area enables the achievement of both the Neighbourhood Plan vision and national policy related to the effective use of land.

Much of the land in agricultural use (see **E&E Map 2** and **E&E Map 4**) also holds some of its most important environmental designations - Sites of Special Scientific Interest that protect rare flora and fauna, Ancient Woodlands, Special Protected Areas to protect wild birds and RAMSAR sites to protect wetland. In these cases where they are in agricultural use there is limited threat to their current function, but in others



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they present a challenge to balancing the need to protect land that can contribute to food supply and the protection of biodiversity. As noted in “Foresight. The Future of Food and Farming (2011) Final Project Report” - “Until recently, policies in conservation and in food security were largely developed in isolation. However, they are increasingly being pursued together, driven by a growing realisation of their interdependence”.

In particular residents and businesses in the Neighbourhood Plan area, and visitors to it, benefit from the Future of Food and Farming report definition of eco-system services classified as:

- *Provisioning services* are direct goods such as food, fibre, or timbers.
- *Regulating services* help enable the provision of direct goods, for example by providing pollinators, natural enemies of pests, pure water, and a conducive local climate.
- *Supporting services* are more fundamental processes, such as those producing fertile soils and recycling water or nutrients, as well as the maintenance of genetic diversity that may be of future value to agriculture.
- *Cultural services* are generally less tangible public goods, such as landscapes that people cherish, and the preservation of biodiversity, that in most value systems are considered beneficial.

Protecting agricultural land from development enables these benefits to be preserved in addition to meeting national policy objectives on the effective use of land.

<b>POLICY ECON&amp;EMP1: Agriculture</b>
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Development proposals that result in the loss of land classified as agricultural (Grades 1-3) will not be supported unless there is a proven need for sustainable development which demonstrates benefits which far outweigh the loss of food growing space in the Neighbourhood Plan area and its contribution to national food security.
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Sustainable development in the Neighbourhood Plan area needs to address the current lack of employment opportunities available. As noted in Chapter 5, across Medway visitor and visitor related facilities are one of the few areas of potential employment that is currently growing across the District as a whole. Undoubtedly the COVID pandemic will have undermined some of this sector’s resilience. Hospitality businesses have however adapted the way that they can serve and accommodate customers and accommodation venues have reconfigured to accommodate COVID restrictions. The ICAEW (2020)<sup>16</sup> has reported that private rentals of accommodation are part of the way that the sector is responding as well as using technology to reduce costs where appropriate for bookings, reception and so on.

The landscape and wildlife assets of the Neighbourhood Plan area provide good opportunities for this sector to adapt safely and opportunities to protect it and to encourage growth at an appropriate scale and in keeping with the character of the area should be considered.

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<sup>16</sup> ICAEW Business and Management Magazine July 2020 – Tourism in the UK Post COVID)

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#### **POLICY ECON&EMP2: Recreation and Tourism**

Development proposals for recreational and tourism activities/facilities will be encouraged in the Neighbourhood Plan area provided that the proposals do not conflict with other policies in this Plan and that:

- a) It can be demonstrated that they do not have a significantly harmful effect on congestion or road safety as defined by Medway Council
- b) Their siting and scale have strong regard to potential impacts on the character and the historic, natural environment and disruption of wildlife assets of the Neighbourhood Plan area
- c) Design and materials are in keeping with the character of the area, reinforce local distinctiveness and sense of place and follow the principles set out in the **Design Guidelines** included in this plan.

The assets of the Neighbourhood Plan area for enjoyment of nature and other leisure pursuits are very significant. Opportunities for development such as visitor centres, visitor accommodation and facilities that support them such as cafés, rural craft workshops and retail would add to the possibilities of increasing locally based employment opportunities for residents, with potential beneficial increases in business for those that support their supply chains.

#### **POLICY ECON&EMP3: Change of use**

Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of land or buildings in employment use to non-employment uses, other than those which are permitted development, will only be permitted when:

- a) Marketing of the site over a period of a minimum of 24 months demonstrates that there is no realistic prospect of the use of the site for employment purposes; or
- b) The proposals allow for retention of some employment uses on the proposed site where feasible given the size of the site

The loss of existing employment space to other uses will further undermine the local economic base of the Neighbourhood Plan area and increase pressure on the limited local travel infrastructure that currently serves it.

#### **POLICY ECON&EMP4: Retail**

Development proposals for local retail and other village centre uses will be supported in suitable alternative locations elsewhere in the Parish. Proposals for a new grocery store/small supermarket will be supported provided that:

- a) It does not conflict with other policies in this plan:
- b) It is no larger than 200–300 sq. m,
- c) It is in an accessible and central position, providing good links to each village and other community facilities.

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There are currently very few retail spaces available in the Neighbourhood Plan area which adds considerably to the need for residents to travel by car out of it. This is particularly the case for Cliffe and new provision, based on consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan, would be welcomed and supported subject to the other policies in the Plan.

#### **POLICY ECON&EMP5: New employment space**

Applications for the development of new small business units, including through change of use of redundant rural buildings to business use, will be favourably considered, subject to other policies in this plan and the following criteria:

- a) that proposals are designed to accommodate the **Design Guidelines** of this plan
- b) there is no harm to the rural character of the area or to the amenities of residents
- c) there would be no negative impact on the local road network.
- d) there is no unacceptable conflict with agriculture and other land-based activity
- e) if an existing building, the building concerned would not require substantial extension by over 50% of its current footprint.

### 9. Infrastructure

#### Introduction

The Infrastructure of the Neighbourhood Plan area is deficient from several perspectives – physical and network connectivity is poor, roads are felt to be unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists due to traffic speeds, lack of pavements and pollution. Roads are also unsuitable for their current traffic volumes and types due to their character and the existing prevalence of on street parking. Like much of Medway there is a shortage of play facilities.

Currently Medway plans for infrastructure are underdeveloped and focused on areas of growth associated with the emergent Local Plan. The Infrastructure Position Statement produced by Medway in 2017 is a high-level commitment to ensuring that infrastructure is in place as development happens and that all needs are catered for. This will be developed into a full Infrastructure plan as the Local Plan progresses.

The policies at neighbourhood level set out here are proposed to ensure that developers are clear about the need to consider the impact of their proposals on current infrastructure provision and to ensure that the provision of new infrastructure is provided for as part of their developments if they are required and are viable.

In Medway there is no Community Infrastructure Levy regime in place so there is a reliance on the use of planning obligations to achieve new provision. Consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan has uncovered great concern about any development which will add any further pressure on all infrastructure and improvements were regarded as a high priority for residents and businesses. Similarly, there is concern about the extent to which developer contributions arising from development within the Neighbourhood Plan area have been invested in the area in line with Medway policy (currently the Guide to Developer Contributions and Obligations 2018) . The Neighbourhood Plan proposals and policies on improving infrastructure can guide Medway on what these contributions should be applied to when proposals come forward and are approved within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Neighbourhood Plan policies are based on improving the current situation and guiding development so that it does not have further negative impact on the infrastructure of the area and providing local priorities for the type and location of improvements.

This is particularly the case for parking provision associated with new development proposals. The parking survey undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan showed a clear problem with on street parking and a problem with the size of car parking spaces and garages provided in relation to modern car sizes. This has been recognised by both the Automobile Association and National Car Parks, with damage to cars, problems turning and garages being too small to accommodate modern cars being recognised problems due to an increase in car sizes since the common standard of 2.4 x 4.8m was adopted.

Public transport provision is currently a serious impediment to the sustainability of the villages of the Neighbourhood Area. The nearest train stations are at Higham and Strood for connections to the Medway towns and London where most people locally

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need to travel for work and leisure. This lack of provision creates the usual circular problem of people having to use their cars if no public transport option is available.

Unless improvements are secured, businesses and residents will struggle with travel accessibility to all parts of the Neighbourhood area and their homes and to be connected to on-line service provision. In addition, local businesses will experience difficulty operating viably to serve their customers.

The following objectives were therefore agreed for the Neighbourhood Plan:

### Objectives

<b>Infrastructure</b>	To improve the connection of the residents and businesses of the Parish to online resources	To improve the safety of roads in the Parish	To improve connections with footpaths, cycle ways and public transport for residents, businesses, and visitors	To ensure that the provision of schools, public transport services and health facilities keeps pace with increases in population in the Parish and the needs of all age groups
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### Neighbourhood Plan Policies

All the policies associated with provision have been developed to guide development proposals, the use of planning obligations and investment by other statutory service providers.

As outlined in Chapter 2 the Neighbourhood Plan area needs improvements to infrastructure to enable it to be sustainable into the future. The policies are a combination of improving existing infrastructure capacity which enables sustainable modes of transport to be used in the Neighbourhood Plan area and dealing with existing problems associated with car parking, road safety and online connectivity.

#### **POLICY INFRA1: Health Facilities**

Proposals for new health facilities-in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be supported where they:

- a) Enable an increase in capacity for numbers of patients from the Neighbourhood Plan area to be accommodated.
- b) Are consistent with other policies in this Plan.

Developers will be encouraged to work with relevant partners to ensure that adequate health facilities are delivered and included within development proposals where appropriate, or through planning obligations to provide land or make financial contributions towards their development.

#### **POLICY INFRA2: Communications**

Proposals for the provision, improvement, and enhancement of the speed of advanced communication technologies within the Neighbourhood Plan area for residents and businesses for education, training and access to services will be supported as part of development proposals where they are consistent with other

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#### **POLICY INFRA2: Communications**

policies in this Plan. These should include the following that should have the ability for further upgrade as technology advances:

- a) Implementation of Fibre optic broadband connection to all premises
- b) Full 4G and 5G mobile telephone coverage and next generation telephone data systems as they become available.
- c) Radio and television broadcasting reception and coverage.

#### **POLICY INFRA3: Transport – walking and bridle ways**

Existing rights of way will be protected from development that adversely impact on accessibility within and between settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan area

Proposals for new development will be expected to take advantage of opportunities to make appropriate connections to, and where feasible improvements, to existing footpaths, alleyways, public rights of way and bridleways in the Neighbourhood Plan area to improve connectivity for residents and businesses.

Where changes to paths and bridleways are needed as a result of new development opportunities to make them multi-user should be considered.

#### **POLICY INFRA4: Parking – Cars and Cycles**

The provision of car and cycle parking should, as far as possible, allow for:

- a) Off street vehicle and cycle parking to be contiguous with, and part of, each property, rather than provided as part of a shared arrangement.
- b) Shared parking areas that are provided are built to Secured by Design standards and each space is clearly visible from the property it serves.
- c) Parking provision for new development will be required to meet the following standards set out below unless there is a clear justification for the application of a lower standard to achieve sustainable development:
  - 1 bed house/flat - 1.5 off-road car parking space (rounded down, i.e., 3 dwellings = rounded to 4)
  - 2 bed house/flat - 2 off-road car parking spaces
  - 3 bed house/flat - 3 off-road car parking spaces
  - 4+ bed house/flat - 3 off-road car parking spaces
  - A garage will be acceptable as a parking space provided that its internal dimensions are at least 3m wide x 6m long. Tandem parking will only be permitted where there is no suitable alternative.
  - Car space dimensions should be 2.7m x 5.4.
  - Electric charging points accessible to all spaces

#### **POLICY INFRA5: Public Transport**

The improvement of the bus terminus in Cliffe at the Six Bells Public House, should be pursued to improve its safety and usability (lighting, amenity for bus users). This should be secured through planning obligations for its provision or for financial contributions towards their implementation.



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#### **POLICY INFRA6: Public Transport - Cycling in the Neighbourhood Area**

Locations for improvements to cycling in the neighbourhood area are shown on the **INFRA6 MAP** below.

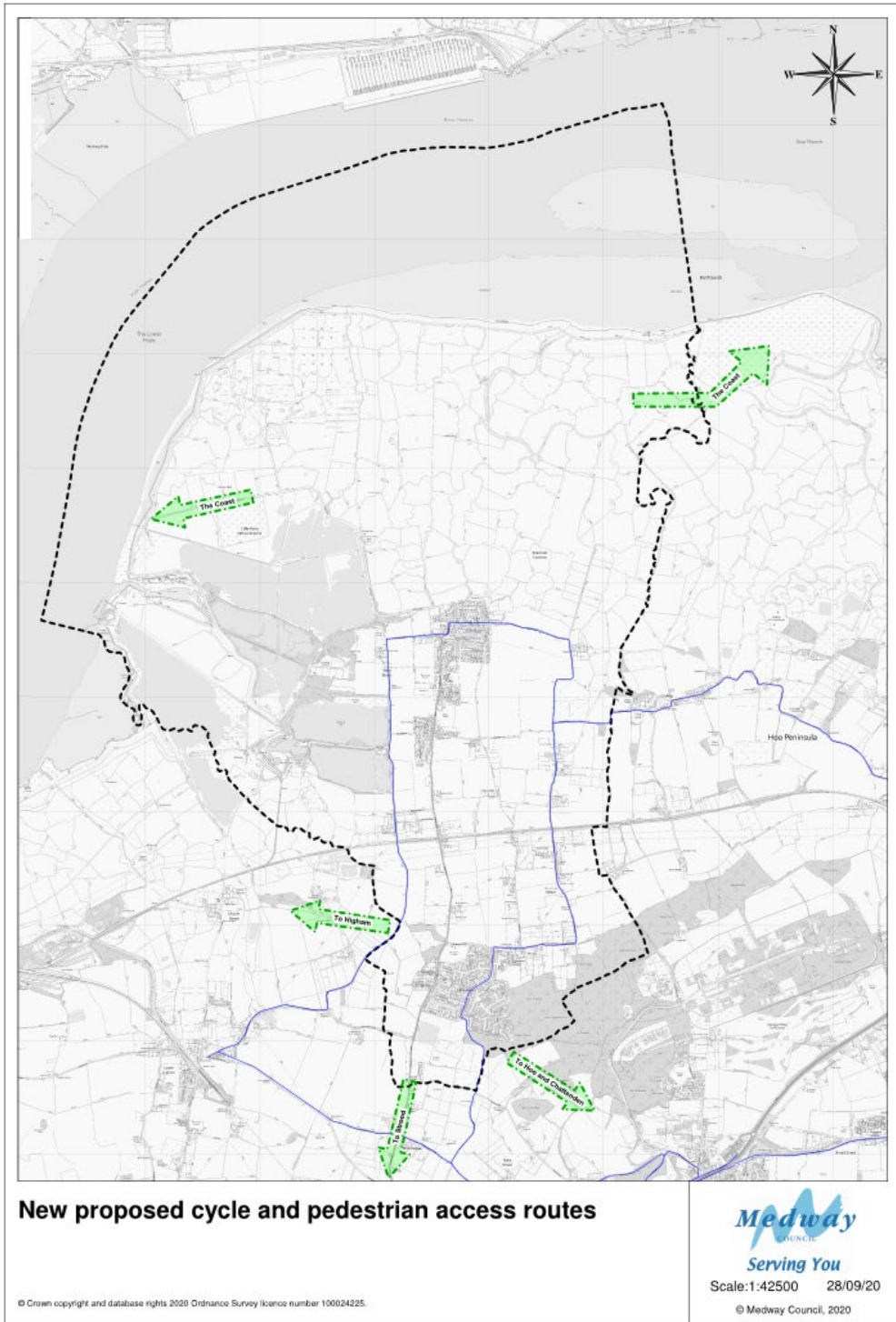
- the joint footpath/cycle path on the B2000 at Mockbeggar Farm
- New cycle and pedestrian access routes from the Neighbourhood Plan area to Higham Station, Hoo Centre and Strood town centre

New shared pedestrian/cycling provision should be provided in accordance with Department of Transport Local Transport Note 1/12 September 2012

These improvements will be secured, where applicable, via Section 106 agreements attached to planning consents within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

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**INFRA 6 MAP: New proposed cycle and pedestrian access routes**



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#### **POLICY INFRA7: Road Safety**

The improvement of visibility on the B2000 at its junctions with View Road, Tennyson Avenue, Ladyclose Avenue, Mortimers Avenue, Milton Road and Merryboys Road will be secured through planning obligations for their provision or for financial contributions towards their implementation

#### **POLICY INFRA 8: Provision of outdoor sports pitches**

Currently there is a shortfall for one additional rugby pitch and one youth size pitch and flood-lit training /mid-week facilities (4G pitch) within the neighbourhood area to enable residents to take part locally without the need to travel. Support to provide these facilities will be secured through planning obligations for their provision or for financial contributions towards their implementation

#### **POLICY INFRA 9: Infrastructure priorities**

Provision of infrastructure improvements outlined in policies **INFRA 2, INFRA 5, INFRA6 INFRA7 and INFRA8** are regarded as priorities for implementation using section 106 contributions secured from developments that take place within the neighbourhood area in order to mitigate pressures on local infrastructure arising from development

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# CLIFFE AND CLIFFE WOODS

## Design Guidelines



## Quality information

Project role	Name	Position	Action summary	Signature	Date
Qualifying body	Chris Fribbins	Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	Review		
Director / QA	Ben Castell	Technical Director			
Researcher	Jimmy Lu	Urban Designer	Research, site visit, drawings		
Researcher	Tom Beck	Senior Landscape Architect	Research, site visit		
Project Coordinator	Mary Kucharska	Project Coordinator	Review		

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Introduction

01



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# 1. Introduction

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This section provides context and general information to better introduce the project and its location.

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## 1.1. Introduction

Through the Ministry of Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The Steering Group is working on the production of its Neighbourhood Plan, which is at an early stage. Early consultation events have already been carried out. Although the Local Plan has not allocated any new housing numbers to Cliffe or Cliffe Woods, the Steering Group has requested professional advice on design guidelines to ensure that any potential development within the parish fits with the character of the area. This document should support Neighbourhood Plan policies that guide the assessment of any future development proposals and encourage high quality design. It advises on physical development helping to create distinctive places integrated with the existing settlements.

## 1.2. Objective

The main objective of this report is to develop design guidelines that future development in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods should follow to retain and protect the rural, tranquil character and scenic beauty of the area. In particular:

- The design of new buildings should respond to the scale, density, and position of existing buildings in relation to the streets and plots. It should enhance local distinctiveness without limiting architectural diversity, originality, and innovation;
- Development proposals should avoid the loss of trees, hedgerows, or woodland, and should provide a clear commitment to replace this vegetation should any loss occur;
- Any development should conserve and protect heritage assets and their settings;
- Where new domestic access points are required, small-scale features such as hedgerows, walls, fencing, and entrance gates should respond to the local vernacular to promote and enhance local distinctiveness;
- Proposals to alter historic buildings should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the history and design qualities of the buildings and provide a clear rationale for how this has been taken into account in the design of the proposed alterations, without limiting originality and innovation.

## 1.3. Process

Following an inception meeting and a site visit, AECOM and the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group carried out a high level assessment of the villages. The following steps were agreed with the group to produce this report:

- Initial meeting and site visit;
- Urban design analysis;
- Preparation of design principles and guidelines to be used to assess future developments;
- Draft report with design guidelines; and
- Final report.

This work builds on a heritage and character assessment (HCA) prepared by AECOM for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The findings of the HCA are summarised in a separate report prepared in December 2018 and will not be the subject of this report.



Figure 1: View from the edge of the Cliffe built up area towards the marshland and the London Gateway Port across the Thames Estuary.



## 1.4. Area of Study

### Location

The parish of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods is located in Medway, Kent, about 5 km north of Rochester and 9 km east of Gravesend. It is situated in the north-west of the Hoo Peninsula and is bordered by the Thames Estuary on the north. The parish includes two main settlements, Cliffe and Cliffe Woods, which are about 2 km apart.

Settled areas consist in a mix of terrace, detached, and semi-detached residential properties. The built up areas are surrounded by scattered settlement, arable farmland, as well as the North Kent Marshes to the north. RSPB Cliffe Pools Nature Reserve and industrial areas occupy the west of the parish, and the south borders the Great Chattenden Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The west of the parish abuts the London green belt.

The parish is situated in the National Character Area (NCA) 81 Greater Thames Estuary and National Character Area (NCA) 113 North Kent Plain defined by Natural England.

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods are home to Cliffe Pre-School, St Helen C of E Primary School, Cliffe Woods Primary School, and Cliffe Woods Middle School. The Grade I listed Church of St Helen serves as the parish church. The closest train station is located in Higham 2 km west of Cliffe Woods.

### Population

At the 2011 census the population of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish was 5,370. The built up areas of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods had 2,403 and 2,662 inhabitants respectively.

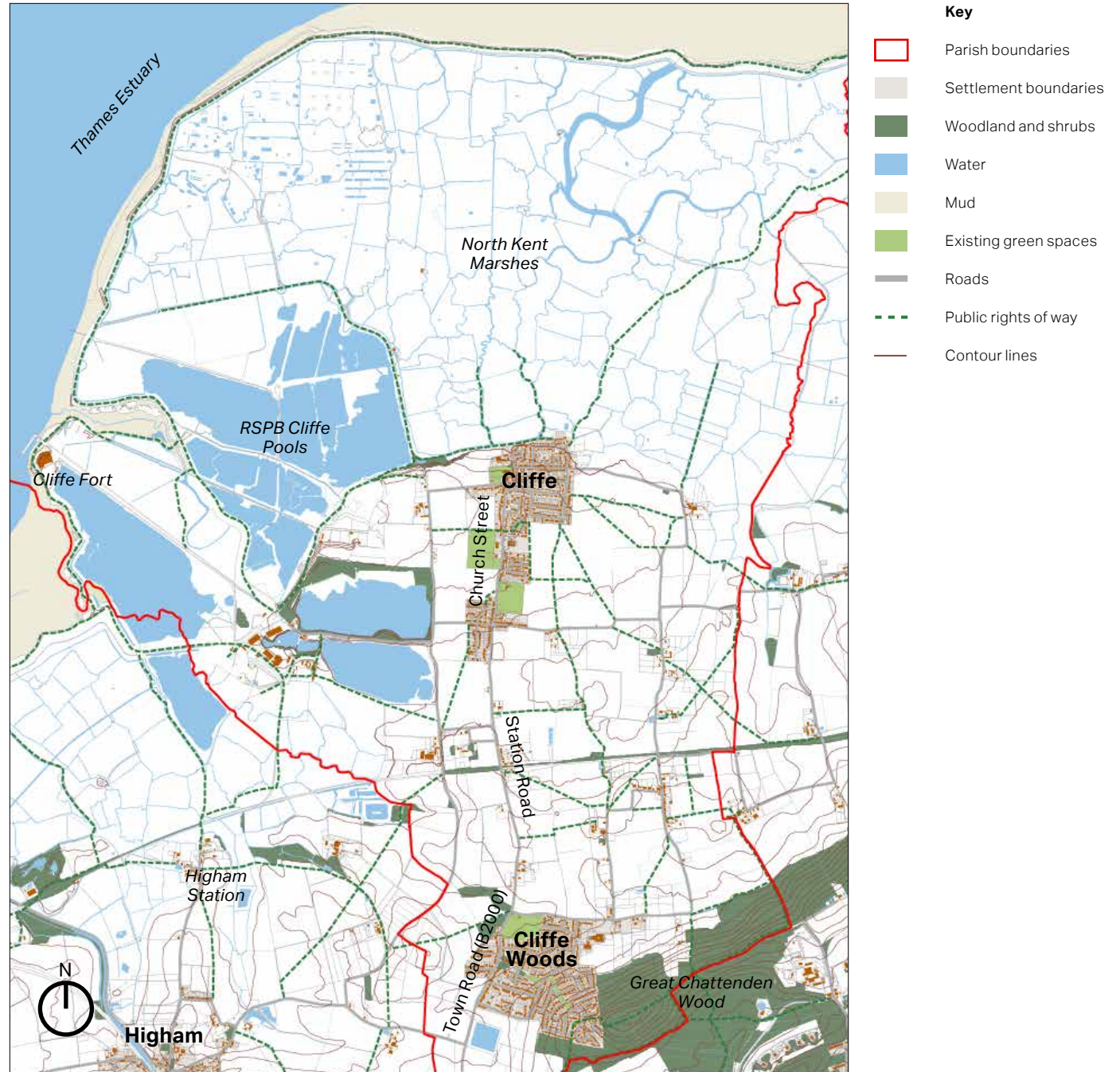


Figure 2: Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish area, with parish boundaries shown in red (© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 0100031673)





Figure 3: Listed buildings inside the Cliffe Conservation Area.



Figure 4: 20th century residential development in Cliffe Woods.



Figure 5: The 2 km unbuilt gap between the settlements of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods.









## Local Character Analysis

02



## 2. Local Character Area

This section outlines the broad physical, historical and contextual characteristics of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. It analyses the pattern and layout of buildings, hierarchy of movements, topography, building heights and roofline, and parking. Images in this section have been used to portray the built form of both settlements.

### 2.1. Introduction

There is a number of listed buildings that reflect the history and architectural diversity of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. In total, there are 26 listed buildings within the parish boundaries. Cliffe Conservation Area was designated in 1973 and covers the historic core of Cliffe, including the Grade I listed Church of St Helen.

The early 20th century legacy of plotland development is still visible in the regular parcel layout of significant parts of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods, despite most of the original buildings having been replaced.



Figure 6: Listed building with white weatherboarding on Church Street



Figure 7: View of London Gateway port and the North Kent Marshes from the yard of St Helen's Church.



Figure 8: The Six Bells pub on Church Street



Figure 9: Central green space on Woodside Green



Figure 10: Deep front gardens and green verges on Swingate Avenue



Figure 11: New development and renovated agricultural buildings with a view on St Helen's Church



Figure 12: Listed gabled houses with jettying upper floors on Church Street



## 2.2. Cliffe Local Character Analysis

### Streets and Public Realm

The main streets are organic in nature and seemingly evolved from historic routes, natural features, and topography, especially in the older northern part of Cliffe. Victorian and 20th century streets form more regular patterns while the network is more sparse in the more recent southern part. Church Street and Station Road form the main village spine. Footpaths connect the built up area with the open countryside and marshes to the north.

### Pattern and Layout of Buildings

Buildings in the historic core form an informal pattern of continuous street frontages with little or no recess from the street line, creating a small scale and enclosed character. Some Victorian terraced houses have small front gardens.

Most 20th century buildings are detached and semi-detached houses sited on wider and more regular plots with larger front gardens. Some late 20th century infill sites, for example the development around Chesterton Road, form meandering cult-de-sac clusters.

Many houses in the west and south of Cliffe either face or back onto open space. Outside the settlement boundaries, the settlement pattern is characterised by dispersed farmsteads.

### Building Heights and Roofline

Building heights typically vary between one and two storeys. The roofline in the historic core is informal with a variety of roof heights and shapes. Victorian to mid-20th century terraced and semi-detached houses form continuous and uniform roof lines.

### Car Parking

Most houses have either front yard or garage parking, or front gardens converted into driveways. On larger plots along Buttway Lane and Church Street as well as on Chesterton Road, front yard parking is partially screened by hedges or low masonry walls. Plots in the historic core are usually too small to accommodate on-plot parking.

### Open Space & Landscape

Within the settlement, there are few large open spaces. Cliffe is divided from Cliffe Woods by a 2 km long stretch of open countryside. The settlement is surrounded by open fields, marshes, and artificial lakes with long views towards the countryside and the Thames Estuary. The unbuilt area is rich in biodiversity and a significant portion of the land to the north and west of Cliffe falls under a combination of several designations including Ramsar, special protection area, special scientific interest (SSSI), and RSPB reserve.

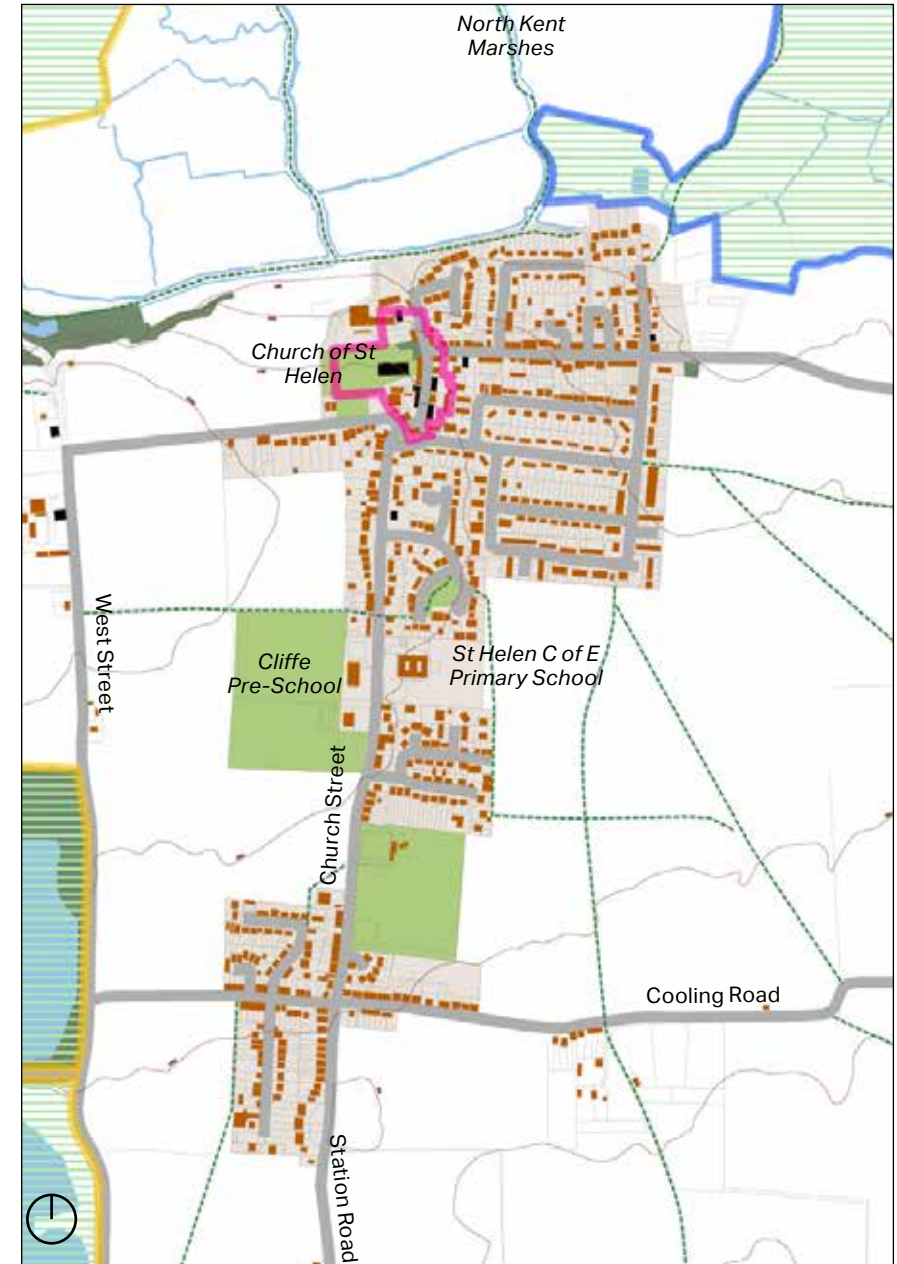


Figure 13: Map of Cliffe showing street patterns, building footprints, and open spaces (© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 0100031673)



## 2.3. Cliffe Woods Local Character Analysis

### Streets and Public Realm

The main roads, Town Road and Merryboys Road, have an organic nature. Mortimers Avenue and Ladyclose Avenue to the west of Cliffe Woods have regular orthogonal layouts typical of early 20th century plotland developments. Most other residential streets have sinuous loop and cul-de-sac layouts typical of postwar suburban developments. Streets are bordered with a combination of landscaped hedges, lawns, and low brick or wooden walls.

### Pattern and Layout of Buildings

Houses are typically detached and semi-detached, with a minority of terraces. Most buildings face the street with various recesses that usually include a front yard and garden. The dominance of detached and semi-detached houses with important recesses from the property line create a more open character than in Cliffe.

Many houses are arranged in clusters around a cul-de-sac, whereas those located west of Town Road demonstrate a regular orthogonal plotland arrangement. Overall, the pattern and layout of buildings is more homogeneous to the east of the settlement. A few isolated farmsteads are located north and east of the settlement boundaries of Cliffe.

### Building Heights and Roofline

Houses are typically two storeys high, with a minority of bungalows. The west of Cliffe has more variety in building heights and roofline. Houses to the east and south are more homogeneous in height, but the sloping terrain to the south adds dynamism to the roofline.

### Car Parking

Most cars are stored in on-plot garages and front yards. Those are partially screened by low masonry walls, wooden fences, or landscaped hedges to the west of the settlement, while properties to the east typically have no screening. Cul-de-sacs provide additional parking in courtyards. The commercial cluster in the village centre and the Primary School have car parks.

### Open Space & Landscape

A ribbon of green spaces bisects the village diagonally. Cliffe Woods also borders the Great Chattenden Wood SSSI to the east and south. The west of Cliffe is located close to the eastern edge of the London green belt. The playing fields to the north contain two football pitches as well as a children's play area. Due to its higher altitude, the south of Cliffe Woods offers views long distance views towards the open countryside and the Thames Estuary.

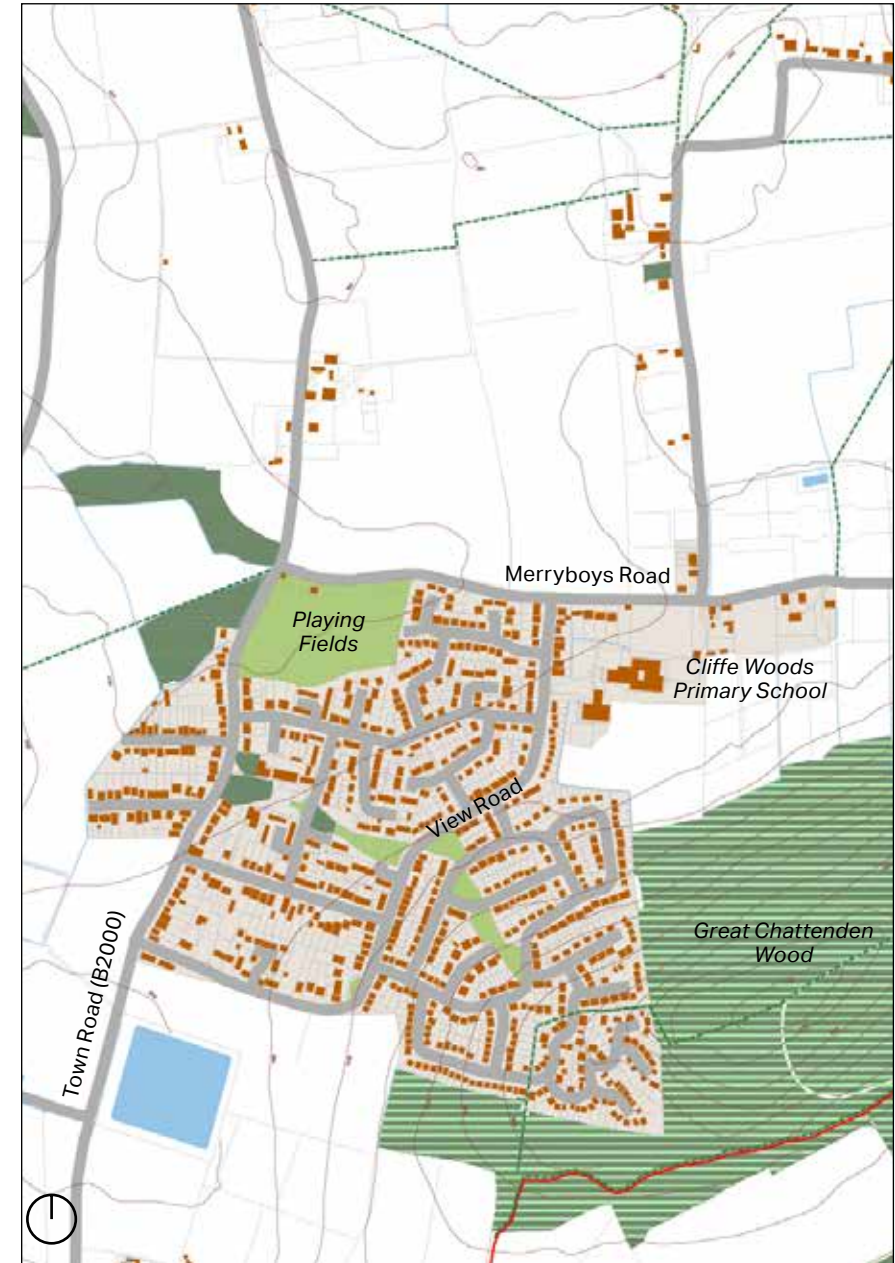


Figure 14: Map of Cliffe Woods showing street patterns, building footprints, and open spaces  
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## 2.4. Architectural Details

The following section showcases a good amount of local building details which should be considered as positive examples.



Churchyard and Church of St Helen with a crenelated parapet and walls composed of an alternation of flint and stone.



Gabled façade with white weatherboarding and jettying upper floors



Six Bells corner building with red and grey brick façade.



Renovated agricultural building with brick and black weatherboarding



Victorian terrace houses with painted brick façades on Reed Street.



Listed building with a half-hipped roof with clay plain tiles and white weatherboarding.





Façade with white weatherboarding and clay plaintiles.



Building with black weatherboarding and clay roofs



Contemporary building with grey and red brick façade and front yard planting.



AECOM

Red brick façade with painted door and window frames.



Listed buildings with clay plaintiles roofs, white weatherboarding, and black window and door frames.



Gabled dormer, brick chimney, and clay plaintile roof.



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GASK  
ALES  
MALT & HOPS  
ONLY  
Fine  
Wines







SHEPHERD NEAME  
SIX BELLS

## Design Guidelines



SCHOOL HOUSE

# 03

## 3. Design Guidelines

This section outlines key design elements and principles to consider when assessing a design proposal.

### 3.1. General questions to ask and issues to consider when presented with a development proposal

Based on established good practice, this section provides a number of questions against which the design proposal should be evaluated. The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in the proposals. The proposals or design should:

1. Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
2. Reinforce or enhance the established village character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
3. Respect the rural character of views and gaps;
4. Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
5. Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long distance views;

6. Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
7. Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
8. Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
9. Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
10. Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
11. Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
12. Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
13. Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours; and
14. Positively integrate energy efficient technologies.

Following these ideas and principles, there are number of questions related to the design guidelines outlined later in the document.

#### Street Grid and Layout

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists, and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern? Are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

#### Local Green Spaces, Views and Character

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Has the proposal been considered in its widest context?



- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal affect trees on or adjacent to the site?
- How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

#### **Gateway and Access Features**

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between villages?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

#### **Buildings Layout and Grouping**

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

#### **Building Line and Boundary Treatment**

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Have the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

#### **Building Heights and Roofline**

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing, and scale?
- If a higher than average building is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

### Household Extensions

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing, or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extension, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

### Building Materials and Surface Treatment

- What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local material?
- Does the proposal use high quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves, and roof been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

### Car Parking Solutions

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

### Architectural Details and Contemporary Design

- If the proposal is within a conservation area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?
- Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?
- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?
- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?

## 3.2. Design Guidelines

### 3.2.1. Streets

- Streets must meet the technical highways requirements as well as be considered a 'space' to be used by all, not just motor vehicles. It is essential that the design of new development should include streets that incorporate needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and if applicable public transport users.
- New streets, should any be built, should tend to be linear with gentle meandering - providing interest and evolving views. Routes should be laid out in a permeable pattern allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes, particularly on foot. Any cul-de-sacs should be relatively short and include provision for onward pedestrian links.
- Access to properties should be from the street where possible.
- The distribution of land uses should respect the general character of the area and street network, and take into account the degree of isolation, lack of light pollution, and levels of tranquillity.
- Pedestrian paths should be included in new developments and be integrated with the existing pedestrian routes.



**Figure 15: Church Street has an organic layout with gentle meander typical of the historic core of Cliffe**



**Figure 16: Swinggate Avenue, a road fronted with gardens and framed with planted verges.**



**Figure 17: Milton Avenue, Cliffe Woods, with footways and a variety of edge treatments - hedges, low-level landscaping, and wooden fences.**

### 3.2.2. Local Green Spaces, Views, and Character

- Development adjoining public open spaces and important gaps should enhance the character of these spaces by either providing a positive interface (i.e. properties facing onto them to improve natural surveillance) or a soft landscaped edge.
- Any trees or woodland lost to new development must be replaced.
- The spacing of development should reflect the rural character and allow for long distance views of the countryside from the public realm. Trees and landscaping should be incorporated in the design.
- The existing quiet and peaceful atmosphere of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods should be preserved.
- Green gaps between settlements and built up areas, especially between Cliffe and Cliffe Woods, must be retained to avoid coalescence.
- Native trees and shrubs should be used to reinforce the rural character of the village.



Figure 18: View from the edge of the Cliffe built up area towards the marshland and the London Gateway Port across the Thames Estuary.



Figure 19: Buckland Lake Reserve





Figure 20: Green corridor running across the centre of Cliffe Woods



Figure 22: View of the Church of St Helen's clock tower from Pond Hill



Figure 21: The sloping terrain of Cliffe Woods offers views towards the surrounding countryside.



Figure 23: Green space in the centre of Cliffe



### 3.2.3. Pedestrian Connectivity

- It is important that all newly developed areas should provide direct and attractive footpaths between neighbouring streets and local facilities. These will usually be pavements alongside roads. Establishing a robust pedestrian network a) across any new development and b) among new and existing development is key in achieving good levels of permeability.
- A permeable street network at all levels, provides people with a choice of different routes and allows traffic to be distributed in general more evenly across the network rather than concentrated on to heavily trafficked roads.
- Design features such as barriers to vehicle movement, gates to new developments, or footpaths between high fences should be kept at minimum and the latter should be avoided. In particular, new developments should retain pedestrian accessibility to residents and non-residents alike.



Figure 24: Direct pedestrian path through a green space in Cliffe.



Figure 25: Direct pedestrian path through a green space in Cliffe Woods.

### 3.2.4. Way Finding, Legibility

- New developments should assure from the design stage that their movement network is fully integrated to the existing network of routes. Also, the width of pedestrian footpaths should be minimum 2 meters wide and should be aligned by lamp posts to encourage its use at all times.
- New development schemes should aim to create places that have identity and that are easy to navigate through. New design schemes should contain local landmark buildings to aid legibility.



Figure 26: Pedestrian wayfinding signs in Cliffe



Figure 27: Map of the Cliffe village centre showing the main landmarks



### 3.2.5. Gateway and Access Features

- In the case of any future development, the design proposals should consider placing gateway and built elements highlighting the access or arrival to the new developed site.
- The gateway buildings or features should reflect local character. This could mean larger houses in local materials with emphasis on the design of chimneys and fenestration, as well as well laid and cared for landscape.
- Besides building elements acting as gateways, high quality landscaping features could be considered appropriate to fulfil the same role.



Figure 28: Symmetry in building massing and roofline is used to form a gateway into the development and the village centre



Figure 29: The northern end of Pond Hill, a gateway framed by tall trees, landscaping, and brick walls opening into the open countryside.

### 3.2.6. Landmarks and Vistas

- In any new development, buildings should be designed to respond to existing view corridors or reinforce views of existing landmarks. It is important that building massing and architectural detailing should respect the local character and enhance the sense of place. The location of landmarks should be clearly justified as they contribute to the wider legibility of that particular area.
- Besides adapting to local heritage, landmark buildings should also be innovative and interesting. They should promote good architecture and ensure that places are distinct, recognisable and memorable.



Figure 30: View from Pound Hill towards St Helen's Church, Cliffe's main landmark



Figure 31: View from Church Street towards the Six Bells Pub



Figure 32: View from Church Street towards the Six Bells Pub



### 3.2.7. Pattern and Layout of Buildings

- The existing rural character must be appreciated when contemplating new development, whatever its size or purpose.
- Where an intrinsic part of local character, properties should be clustered in small pockets showing a variety of types. The use of a repeating type of dwelling along the entirety of the street should be avoided.
- Boundaries such as walls or hedgerows, whichever is appropriate to the street, should enclose and define each street along the back edge of the highway, adhering to a consistent property line for each development group.
- Properties should aim to provide rear and front gardens or at least a small buffer to the public sphere where the provision of a garden is not possible.
- Plotland development patterns in Cliffe Woods should be preserved through the retention of rectangular curtilages and the ratio between the garden and the built portion of the plot.



Figure 33: Historic buildings on Church Street forming a consistent building line.



Figure 34: Semi-detached homes with large front gardens on Swinggate Avenue.



Figure 35: Houses with front yard parking and front gardens in Cliffe Woods.

### 3.2.8. Building Scale and Massing

- Buildings should be sympathetic in scale to the context and should not pass 2-2.5 storey in residential areas.
- Subtle variation in height is encouraged to add visual interest, such as altering eaves and ridge heights. Another way of doing it could be by variation of frontage widths and plan forms. This can be appropriate in both central and more suburban locations.
- The massing of new buildings should ensure adequate privacy and access to natural light for their occupants, and avoid over shadowing existing buildings.



Figure 36: A variety in massing used for house frontages.



Figure 37: Church Street is bordered by historic buildings that display a variety of scale and massing



### 3.2.9. Buildings at Corners

- Properties should aim to provide rear and front gardens or at least a small buffer to the public sphere where the provision of a garden is not possible.
- Streets should have strong continuity of frontage not only for being visually attractive and enhancing streetscape, but also for providing high levels of natural surveillance. Eyes on the street ensures that public space is well overlooked.
- Corner buildings should have both side façades animated with doors and/or windows. Exposed, blank gable end buildings with no windows fronting the public realm should be avoided.
- Decorative architectural elements also should be considered in treating these building types. It is not necessary for strong corner buildings to be taller than neighbouring buildings.



Figure 38: A prominent village centre corner occupied by the Six Bells Pub



Figure 39: Modern buildings oriented at an angle to face the junction.

### 3.2.10. Building Line and Boundary Treatment

- Buildings should have their main façade and entrance facing the street where this is in keeping with local character. The building line should have subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions but will generally form a unified whole.
- Buildings should be designed to ensure that streets and/or public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from buildings. This can be ensured by placing ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows facing the street.
- Boundary treatments should reinforce the sense of continuity of the building line and help define the street, appropriate to the rural character of the area. They should use local materials such as flint and red brick. The use of either panel fencing or metal or concrete walls in these publicly visible boundaries should be avoided. Also, boundary treatments should not impair natural surveillance.
- Front gardens should be included where this is characteristic of the area.
- If placed on the property boundary, waste storage should be integrated as part of the overall design of the property. Landscaping could also be used to minimise the visual impact of bins, recycling containers, and vehicle parking.



**Figure 40: Façade orientations form a unified building line while allowing for subtle bends, recesses, and protrusions.**



**Figure 41: Edge treatments using a combination of brick walls and hedges.**



**Figure 42: A diversity of boundary treatments in Cliffe Woods formed by low brick walls, metal and wooden fences, and soft landscaping. The top of mature trees is visible above the roofline.**



### 3.2.11. Building Heights/ Roofline

Creating a good variety in the roof line is a significant element of designing attractive places. There are certain elements that serve as guideline in achieving a good variety of roofs:

- The scale of the roof should always be in proportion with the dimensions of the building itself;
- Monotonous building elevations should be avoided, therefore subtle changes in roofline should be ensured during the design process;
- Locally traditional roof detailing elements should be considered and implemented where possible in cases of new development; and
- Dormers can be used as design element to add variety and interest to roofs.



Figure 43: Street elevations showing a dynamic roofline with a unified materials palette.



Figure 44: Back of buildings showing a diversity of roof styles, orientations, and pitches.

### 3.2.12. Fenestration

- Fenestration on public/private spaces increase the natural surveillance and enhance the attractiveness of the place. Long stretches of blank (windowless) walls should be minimised. Overall, considerations for natural surveillance, interaction, and privacy must be carefully balanced.
- Windows must be of sufficient size and number for abundant natural light.
- Site layout and building massing should ensure access to sunshine and avoid over shadowing as many buildings as possible. New developments should also maximise opportunities for long distance views.
- In proximity to historic areas, fenestration must reflect an understanding of locally distinctive features such as scale, proportions, rhythm, materials, and articulation.



Figure 45: Listed building with historic window features.



Figure 46: Contemporary building using variations in building rhythm and proportions to articulate the horizontal mass of the building



### 3.2.13. Development Edges with Open Space

Due to their unique location near the Thames Estuary, the west and north of Cliffe are located near environmentally sensitive habitat areas for a wide array of protected species. These areas benefit from various, often overlapping, European and national environmental protection designation: Ramsar, sites of special scientific interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Priority Habitat Inventory - coastal floodplain grazing marsh, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) reserve, and Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).

In other places, the settlements border large areas of open countryside that often enable long views due to the flat topography, especially to the east of both settlements and between them. There are also sites west of Cliffe Woods that are adjacent to green belt land.

New settlement extensions, should they come forward, will need to minimise disruptions to wildlife habitat areas as well as their visual impact on the rural landscape. The opposite page present two diagrammatic sections of potential new development layouts at their interfaces with either environmentally sensitive sites or the open countryside for more successful integration with the existing landscape and ecosystem.

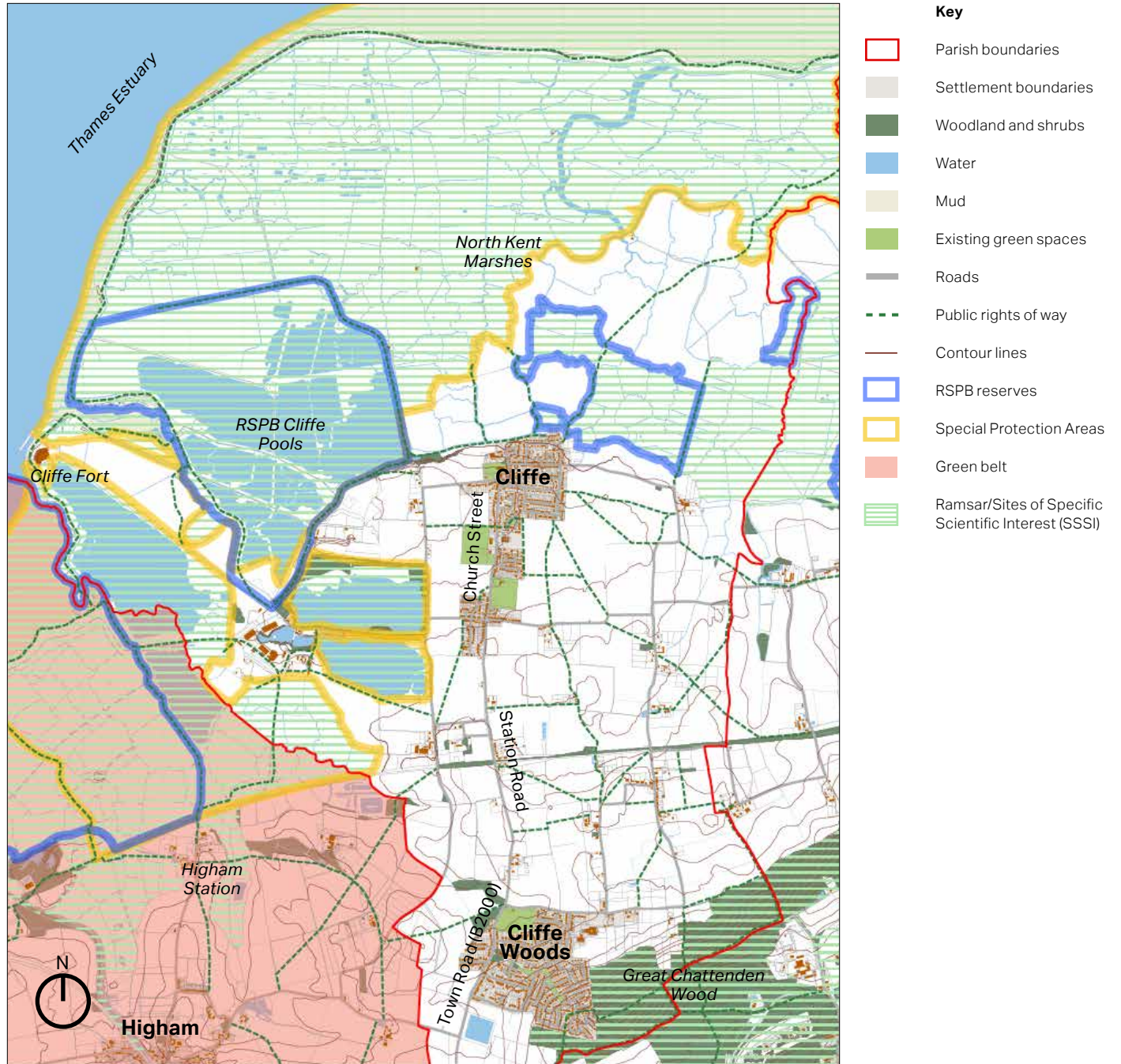
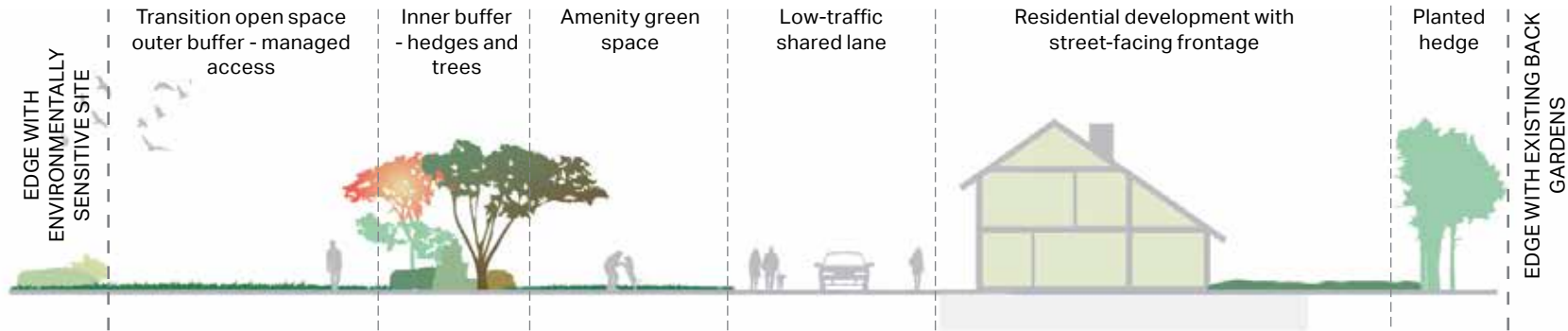


Figure 47: Parish map showing interface between built up and sensitive areas (© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 0100031673)

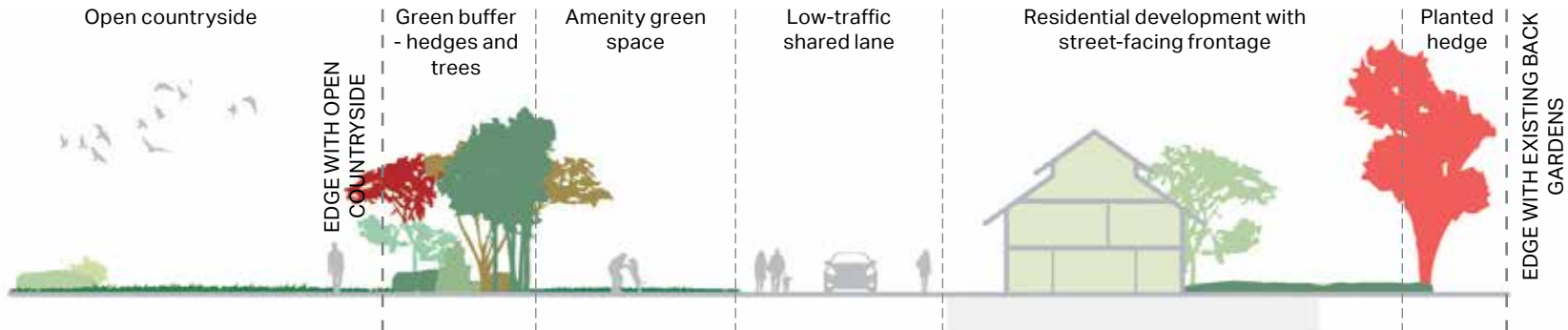


### Development edge with environmentally sensitive site



New developments should leave an undeveloped outer buffer at the edge with designated sites. Managed access in the forms of gates should be required to minimise disturbance to wildlife. An inner buffer planted with hedges and trees should provide additional physical and visual screening. This inner edge could also incorporate amenity green spaces. Residential areas should be designed with an outward-facing building that front low-traffic lanes. The internal layout of the site can be more flexible, however the back of houses at the interface with the existing settlement should include green hedges to avoid overlooking the back of existing properties. Where the site faces an existing street, the new access should incorporate gateway treatments, and new buildings should be placed to face the street.

### Development edge with open countryside



Due to the mostly flat topography and the rural setting of both villages, new constructions will be visible from long distances. A green buffer consisting in hedges and trees is needed to soften the impact of new extensions and ease the transition with the open countryside. Amenity green spaces could also be incorporated at the site edges. Low-traffic lanes at the perimeter of the development area should be fronted with outward-facing buildings. The back gardens of houses adjacent to existing residences should incorporate green buffers to avoid overlooking issues. New houses that border existing roads should face outward to increase natural surveillance.

### 3.2.14. Household Extensions

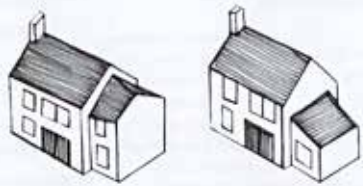
- The original building should remain the dominant element of the property regardless the amount of extensions. The newly built extension should not overwhelm the building from any given point.
- Extensions should not result in a significant loss to the private amenity area of the dwelling.
- Designs that wrap around the existing building and involve overly complicated roof forms should be avoided.
- The pitch and form of the roof used on the building adds to its character and extensions should respond to this where appropriate.
- Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features, window sizes, and proportions of the existing building and recreate this style to design an extension that matches and complements the existing building.
- In case of side extensions, the new part should be set back from the front of the main building and retain the proportions of the original building. This is in order to reduce any visual impact of the join between existing and new.
- In case of rear extensions, the new part should not have a harmful effect on neighbouring properties in terms of overshadowing, overbearing or privacy issues.



**Figure 48: Successful side extension to a Grade II listed building.**



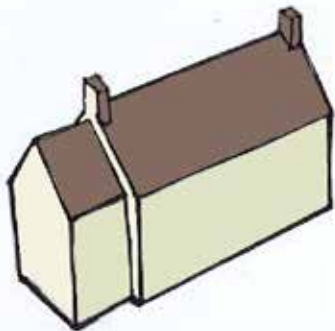
**Figure 49: Positive design for a back extension for a red brick building.**



Good example for side extensions, respecting existing building scale, massing and building line.



Both extension present a negative approach when considering how it fits to the existing building. Major issues in regarding roofline and building line.



The extension has an appropriate scale and massing in relation to the existing building.

**Design treatment in case of loft conversion:**



Loft conversion incorporating skylights.



Loft conversion incorporating gabled dormers.



Loft conversion incorporating a long shed dormer which is out of scale with the original building.



Original roofline of an existing building.



Loft conversion incorporating gabled dormers.



Loft conversion incorporating gabled dormers which are out of scale and do not consider existing window rhythm nor frequency.



### 3.2.15. Materials and Building Details

The variety of materials and architectural detailing used throughout Cliffe and Cliffe Woods contribute to the rural character of the area and the local vernacular. It is therefore important that the materials used in proposed development are of a high quality and reinforce local distinctiveness. Any future development proposals should demonstrate that the palette of materials has been selected based on an understanding of the surrounding built environment. New developments, regardless of size, should use a diversity of materials and building details to avoid monotonous developments and aid wayfinding by improving the legibility and imageability of the built environment.

This section includes examples of building material that contribute to the local vernacular of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods which could be used to inform future development.



WHITE-PAINTED BRICK



LOW BRICK GARDEN WALLS



CONTRASTING RED BRICK LINTELS AND TRIM



PAINTED DOOR FRAME



PAINTED WINDOW FRAME



GREY BRICK



RED BRICK



WHITE WEATHERBOARDING



LANDSCAPED HEDGE



BLACK WEATHERBOARDING



SLATE ROOF



BAY WINDOW



HUNG CLAY OR TIMBER TILES



SLATE ROOF



CLAY PLAIN TILE ROOF

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### 3.2.16. Parking

- Car parking solutions should be a mix of on plot and garage parking.
- For family homes cars should be placed at the front or side of the property. For small pockets of housing a front or rear court is acceptable. Also, multiple garage parking is encouraged.
- Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles.
- When placing parking at the front, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings by means of walls, hedging, planting, and use of differentiated quality paving materials.



Figure 50: On-street inset parking and front yard parking with landscaped and masonry boundary treatments



Figure 51: Informal on-street and front yard parking on Chesterton Road. The landscaped boundaries prevent the creation of a car-dominated character.



### 3.2.17. Public Realm and Streetscape

- High quality landscaping and building materials should be used across the new development. Care should be taken when selecting the materials that will be used for the paved areas.
- High quality stone, gravel, granite, and bricks can provide durable and attractive hard surface throughout the public realm.
- More expensive materials such as sandstone and limestone could also be used to further enhance the quality of particular spaces.



Figure 52: Shared area with block and sett surfacing on Chesterton Road. The well-kept landscaping and footpaths also encourage walking.



Figure 53: Planted verges with street trees along Swingate Avenue.



Figure 54: Pond Hill, a de-facto shared low-traffic street in the historic core of Cliffe.

### 3.2.18. Traditional Architecture

The gradual evolution of the parish over the centuries has resulted in an organic character to development. Each building in the conservation area has its own individuality resulting in variations in construction materials, height, the pattern of openings, and detailing. Buildings are predominantly 1 or 2 storeys and the change in roof heights and the presence of chimneys contribute to the visual interest of the historic village.



Figure 55: Red brick buildings showing a variety of window treatment details.



Figure 56: Longford House, a Grade II listed building with jettied upper storeys and painted window frames.



Figure 57: Grade II listed buildings with traditional white weatherboarding and clay roof tiles on Church Street.



Figure 58: Grade II listed 18th century house with red brick façade



### 3.2.19. Contemporary take on Traditional Architecture

Within the parish there are a few examples of successful contemporary architecture. These buildings are usually refurbished agricultural buildings with a contemporary extension built in high quality building materials. Although their design is contemporary, they demonstrate an intelligent understanding of materials, massing, and local traditional architecture that blends harmoniously with their physical context.

It is suggested that this trend continues to further expand with additional eco design features incorporated in future developments.



**Figure 59: Grey brick house with flat-arched red brick lintel, sash windows with white muntins, and slate roof**



**Figure 60: Building conversion on Pond Hill using high quality traditional building materials.**









**Next steps and  
Recommendations**

**04**



## 4. Next steps

This section concludes the report with recommendations on how to embed findings in the Neighbourhood Plan and engage with Medway Council to develop policies supporting the guidelines.

### 4.1. Embed the masterplan and guidelines in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The objective of this report is to develop a series of design guidelines for development possibilities in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods.

The report can be used as evidence to support the forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan (and its draft policies) where the analysis highlights relevant issues and opportunities that can be influenced by land use planning interventions.

The focus of this report has primarily been on important local character assets and urban design guidelines to be considered in future development proposals. These suggestions should be considered alongside other non-design interventions, such as exploring opportunities for supporting or restricting certain types of development/land uses and allocating the key sites identified for development. Any policies put forward must be capable of meeting the basic conditions (e.g. having regard to national policies and general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan).

### 4.2. Engage with the Council to develop policies supporting the proposals

The inputs from the Council's policy and development management specialists would be invaluable in advance of formal consultation and submission. The Steering Committee should consider how our recommendations can be transposed into policy through discussions with Medway Council and use the best practice guidance from Locality to prepare draft policies for consultation. Locality's 'Writing Planning Policies' guidance sets out how different planning policies are designed to achieve different things. The guide describes the three most common as:

**Generic** – a simple policy which applies universally to development across the entire Neighbourhood Plan area;

**Criteria based** – a policy with a series of requirements that should be met by development proposals. These can be set out as separate bullet points; and

**Site specific** – this is where a policy applies to particular areas of land. One of the most powerful tools for a Neighbourhood Plan is to allocate land for a particular type of development. As well as allocating land you can use your plan to set out the principles which need to be followed in developing a particular site. This might include specifying what needs to be covered in a design brief to accompany any planning application. If you have site specific policies then you need to include a clear map showing the location and boundaries.

Site specific allocations are the hardest to do well. They would normally include associated policy related to land uses, quantum of development, configuration and design.

The Steering Committee should check with the Local Planning Authority that their emerging preferred options are planning matters (i.e. suitable for inclusion as land use planning policy). Those that are not can be considered as community projects or neighbourhood infrastructure to be included within a delivery and implementation section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### 4.3. Additional Recommendations

Many potential development sites are located next to or in close proximity with areas with environmental protection designations (Ramsar, Special Protection Areas, RSPB reserves), or within SSSI impact zones. Should such sites come forward for development, early liaison and consultation with relevant agencies and non-profits such as Natural England and the RSPB is encouraged to mitigate potential negative impacts on the ecosystem.





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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council has produced a draft Neighbourhood Plan based on the consultations it has carried out (see Summary Table “You said, we did”), and the evidence it has gathered. It has produced the plan with the help of a steering group of local residents and parish councillors as well as officers at Medway Council.

The decision to undertake the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan was motivated by a number of factors including the high number of planning applications coming forward, the lack of an up to date Medway Local Plan and concerns about lack of infrastructure.

These were highlighted by residents in a parish survey conducted in the summer of 2015 followed by a Community Planning Workshop conducted in June 2016 funded by the Big Lottery’s Village SOS scheme. As a result the parish council, who had already considered developing a Neighbourhood Plan, formed a steering group to take the project forward. The steps are set out in more detail later in the document.

## **2. BACKGROUND TO CLIFFE AND CLIFFE WOODS**

The Parish sits on the Hoo Peninsula in the Greater Thames Estuary, which is one of the most important areas for birdlife in Europe. The Parish is one of the largest in the historic county of Kent and has two villages: the ancient village of Cliffe which is believed to be one of, if not the oldest, settlement on the Hoo Peninsula, with evidence of habitation from the Bronze Age continuing to the present day. Cliffe has a compact built form with a variety of styles and materials.

The more recent village of Cliffe Woods, is essentially a 20th-century development which started as a turn of the century ‘Plot Lands’ development in the proximity of the B2000. It was developed as a mixture of speculative larger scale development and self-build which has given it a more open form than Cliffe but is similarly mixed in form and materials.

Due to its location and history, the Parish has many heritage assets (two scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings and a conservation area) that benefit from special protections. The landscape and wildlife assets of the Parish are similarly protected under local, national and international law.

The basic infrastructure that supports the population of the Parish reflects the character of the landscape and its historical development. The B2000 is the main access road through the Parish. It is the only real access available to connect with the Medway towns, the wider district and beyond. The provision of gas services is also relatively recent (the 1980s) and public transport infrastructure relies on infrequent bus services.

## **3. THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 set out a legal requirement at Regulation 15 that a parish council submitting a neighbourhood plan proposal to the local planning authority must include certain documents, amongst which is a “consultation statement”. In this regulation, “consultation statement” means a document which:

- (a) contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan
- (b) explains how they were consulted
- (c) summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
- (d) describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and , where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan

This document is intended to fulfil the above legal requirement

#### **4. OUR OVERALL APPROACH TO CONSULTATION**

Throughout the preparation of the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Development Plan, we have tried to promote the widest possible engagement of the local community in planning for the future development of the parish. Our guiding principles have been:

- (a) to commence community engagement early on, before we started drafting anything , and to seek a clear understanding of those issues and concerns which are of most importance to the local community;
- (b) as work progressed on the plan, to offer further opportunities for comment as draft objectives and planning policies were worked up and a draft plan prepared;
- (c) to offer a range of different ways for people to engage as preparation of the plan has progressed. We have tried to make our arrangements appropriate and proportionate for a small rural community. This has included residents' surveys, workshops and discussions, web site, parish newsletter, public notice boards , and direct contact with key groups in the local community (such as businesses, developers , clubs and societies) and external consultee such as Medway Council and the RSPB;
- (d) tapping into the knowledge and experience available in the local community wherever possible, by making the process as open and inclusive as possible;
- (e) through all the above actions, to meet the statutory requirements for public engagement set out in in the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations.

#### **5. CONSULTATIONS DURING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROCESS**

##### ***Designation of Neighbourhood Plan Area***

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council decided to make a formal application to the Medway Council, the Local Planning Authority (LPA)for the parish, under regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, for the designation of a neighbourhood area in early 2015. The application was for a neighbourhood plan to cover the entire civil parish of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. (See map below in Fig 1.)

Planning officers met representatives of the Parish Council on 9 March 2015 to discuss how it intended to approach the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, including the scope of the plan, and the timetable for developing a draft. The application was published on the Medway Council web site over a four week period and invited representations from interested parties. The LPA also had a copy of the application available for public inspection at their offices in Chatham. The application was also publicised locally in the parish. There were no responses received to the consultation.

The application by Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council for designation of the parish as a neighbourhood area was approved at Medway Council's Cabinet meeting on 16 June 2015. Since the designation of the area the Parish Council has been working residents, stakeholders and Medway Council to progress the plan.

##### ***Formation of working group***

The Parish Council then set up a Working Group to oversee the preparation of the plan, comprising the following councillors and volunteers, meeting at regular intervals:



- Fred Harper – Parish Councillor, Chair of Planning Committee, designer
- Annette Cooper – resident 30 years, Parish Councillor (Planning, finance and governance committees), ICT Project Manager, Lloyds of London
- Sue McDermid – resident 42 years, Parish Councillor (Chair 2015-19), Trustee of Cliffe Wood Community Association and member of Highparks Medical Practice Participation Group
- Frank Withers – resident 37 years, civil and aerospace engineer, local historian (vernacular architecture 1066 to Restoration 17C.)
- Dave Green – resident 40 years, deputy head teacher, Member of the Kent Archaeological Society and administrator for the Cliffe History website.
- Chris Fribbins – resident 41 years, former parish council chair, district and unitary councillor, primary school governor and trustee of community association and community trust. Parish Clerk for 5 years in Cliffe & Cliffe Woods and Allhallows. ICT professional.
- Di Harper – Legal Secretary
- Dianne Forman
- Roger Brown – resident 45 years, former director of multi-academy trust, former chair / trustee of Cliffe Woods Residents Association, retired head teacher, member of CPRE

The Group has worked throughout the process to gather together an evidence base to support the Neighbourhood Plan. This has used both published and online sources – such as the Census and documents produced by the local authorities and the NPA - and information gathered through surveys and other local sources.

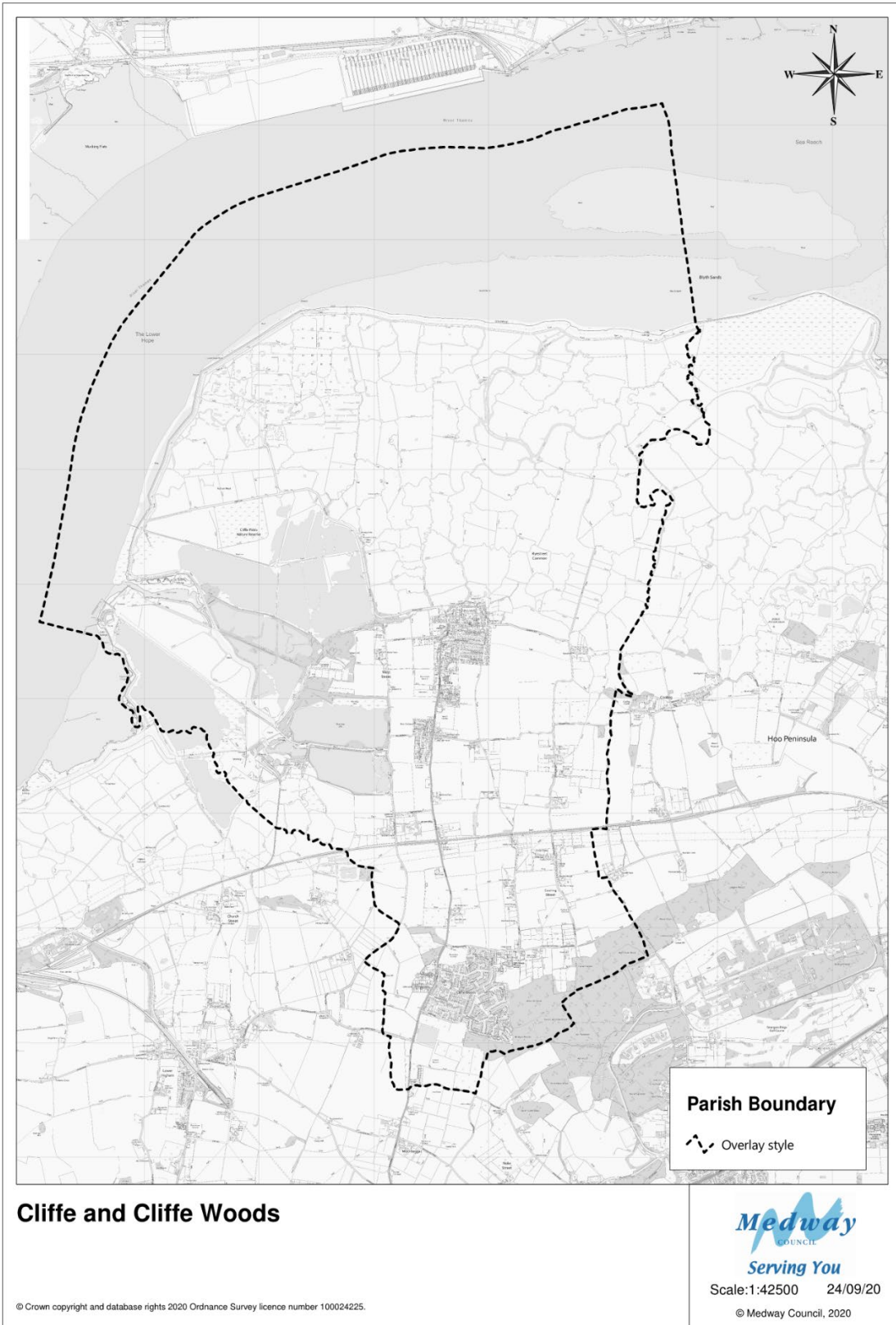


Figure 1: The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan Area

## 6. Consultation – overview

Early on the Parish Council engaged Jim Boot, an Associate with Action for Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) to provide community planning and engagement assistance and latterly Lorraine Hart RTPI of Community Landuse Associates to provide professional planning assistance with the work. AECOM have assisted by produced a Heritage Character Assessment and Design Guidance through a Technical Support Package provided by Locality.

Even before the formal Neighbourhood Plan started, the parish council has consulted with residents. The first action being a parish survey conducted in the summer of 2015 followed by a Community Planning Workshop conducted in June 2016 funded by the Big Lottery's Village SOS scheme at which residents were asked whether to continue with the Neighbourhood Plan. Throughout the process, the parish council and the Neighbourhood Plan steering group have had in mind the words of the government's Planning Practice Guidance which states: 'The consultation statement submitted with the draft neighbourhood plan should reveal the quality and effectiveness of the consultation that has informed the plan proposals<sup>i</sup>.'

During the development of the plan, the parish council and steering group has met with Medway Council's planning policy team on a regular basis and Catherine Smith, Planning Policy Manager and other officers have participated in the workshops and steering group meetings including providing feedback on an early draft of the Neighbourhood Plan in September 2019

A Dropbox folder for all documents, plans and photos was shared with members of the steering group and the planning policy team at Medway Council so that they could track activity, drafting the plan and evidence documents.

Below is a list of the consultation events carried out in relation to the Neighbourhood. Later in this report Plan the results of the activities and events are summarised under the headings: 'We asked' (what was the purpose of the event), 'You said' (what the key observations or outcomes from the consultation event) and 'We listened' (how the consultation influenced the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan). The key consultation events / activities were:

- Parish survey – July 2015
- Village infrastructure survey (Medway Council) – 2015
- Community planning workshop – June 2016
- Visioning workshop – February 2017
- Transport and employment workshop – April 2017
- Heritage and environment workshop – April 2017
- Housing and Community facilities workshop – July 2017
- Housing Needs Survey conducted by Action for Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) – October 2017
- Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Notes of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Workshop, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019
- Vision, objectives and policies exhibitions, Cliffe 13<sup>th</sup> July and Cliffe Woods, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019
- Consultation on a first draft NP with Medway Council and Kent County Council (heritage and conservation) – September to December 2019/

To follow is a summary description of the consultation events / activities and their outputs:



**Parish Survey – July 2015**

A survey form was sent to every household in the parish. The results are set out in more detail in the Visioning Workshop report February 2017 which can be found at: <http://www.cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk/community/cliffe-and-cliffe-woods-parish-council-12909/ccw-neighbourhood-plan/> . Here is a list of the parish priorities from that survey:

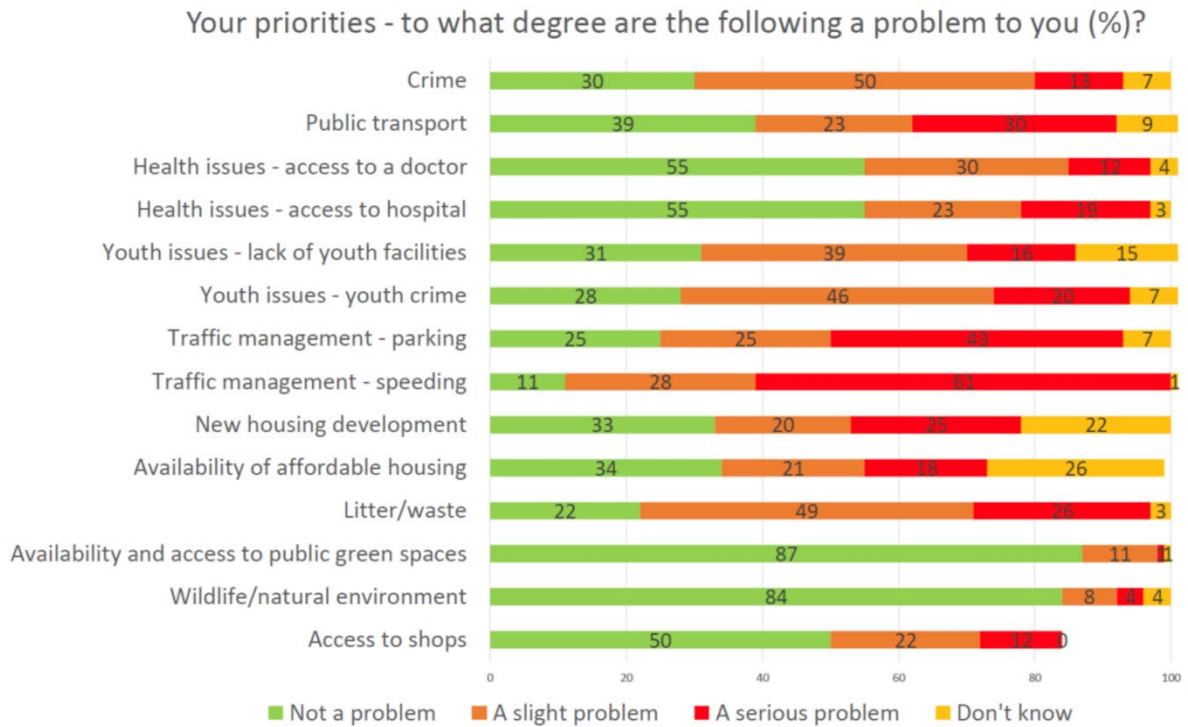


Figure 2: Results of parish survey (summary)

**Village Infrastructure Survey – 2015**

A survey was sent by Medway Council and completed by the parish council to inform the Medway Local Plan. The survey looked at community infrastructure. The full survey results are available in the supporting evidence folder on the Neighbourhood Plan website. Opposite is an extract for Cliffe Woods:

<b>Economic</b>				
Would you like to see more employment provision in the village?	Yes	X	No	
What type of employment provision would you like to see in the village?	Office			
	Manufacturing			
	Storage/warehousing			
	Retail			
	Other (please specify)		Green Infrastructure/Green Tourism	
If there are any specific sites where you think employment provision could or should be located, please provide details here and mark them on the map at the beginning of the survey.	There are concerns about existing HGV Lorry traffic on B2000 and speed of vehicles through the village.			

Figure 3: Village infrastructure survey (Medway Council) – 2015

**Community Planning Workshop – June 2016**

The workshop was commissioned through Action for Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) by the parish council and funded by the Big Lottery’s Village SOS to ascertain if there was a need and appetite to undertake a NP in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. It was well attended approx. 35 people. A ‘good’, ‘bad’, ‘dreams’ post-it note exercise enabled attendees to think about what was working well in the parish, what needed improving and their dreams or visions for the future. Here is a summary of their dreams that were used to inform the visioning workshop that followed early in the new year:

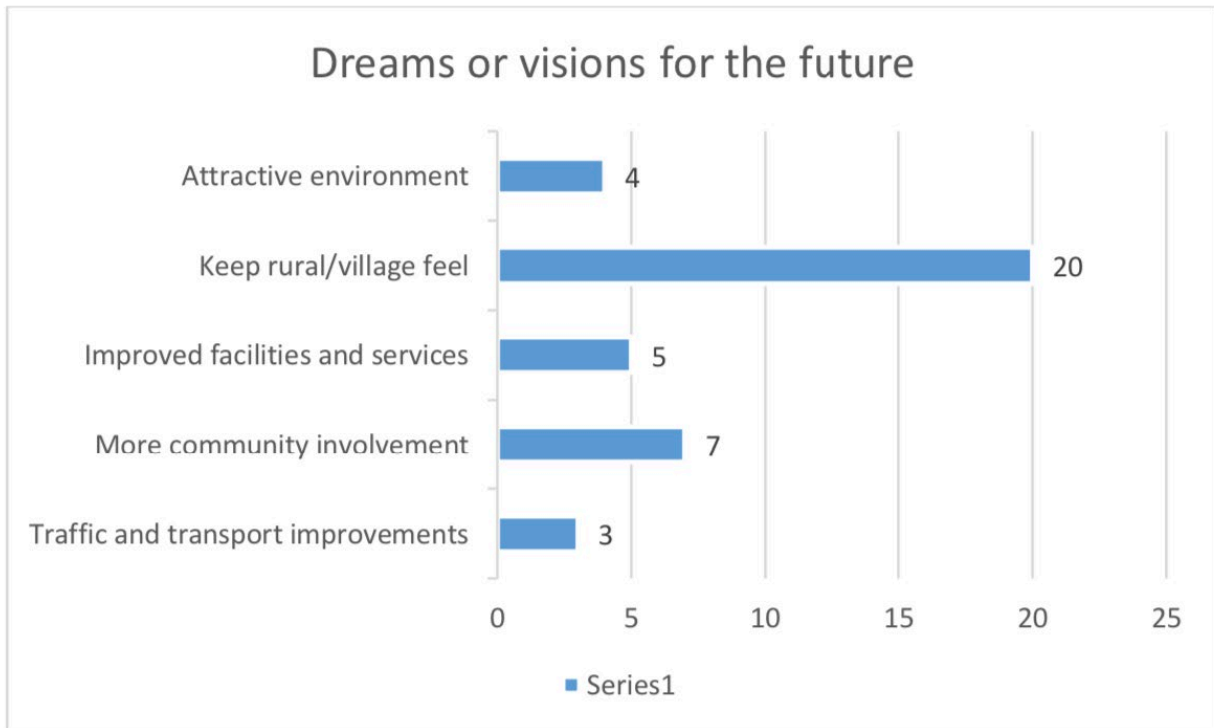


Figure 4: Dreams from Community Planning Workshop

**Visioning Workshop – February 2017**

Following the Community Planning Workshop in the summer of 2016 it took a little while to form a steering group, carry out preliminary scoping work, appoint a consultant and then plan for a visioning workshop to re-launch the NP in February 2017. This event was held in Cliffe (the previous event being held in Cliffe Woods – the aim was to hold events in each of the settlements so that both would be fully involved. The event recapped on the household survey and the community planning event (see Wordle on front page) before setting the 60+ participants to work on developing and then voting on a series of visions.

The most popular vision on the day was:

**Maintain rural environment with wildlife corridors and agriculture using only sustainable development and brownfield sites with bungalows/chalet bungalows linked by traffic calming and roads and continuous footpath/cycle way.**

This has since been refined by the steering group and shared with residents and stakeholders through the Regulation 14 plan.



**Transport and employment workshop – April 2017**

This was the first themed workshop covering two areas of high interest to the community. The aim was to present and then interrogate issues and options to be addressed through the NP. It included presentations on Census data on traffic, car ownership and employment and from a transport planner at Medway Council showing travel to work patterns. The workshop element involved the 30+ participants carrying out a SWOT analysis for topics including public transport, speeding and economic development and then with the same groups teasing out a series of options or reasonable alternatives based on the opportunities. Here is the employment SWOT and options:

*Economic development*

<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools / pre-schools / nurseries</li> <li>• Out- commuting</li> <li>• Agricultural</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrow roads</li> <li>• Heavy traffic (weight/size)</li> <li>• Out commuting (traffic)</li> <li>• Cliffe shops</li> <li>• Large lorries / small deliveries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green tourism             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ B&amp;B</li> <li>○ Café</li> <li>○ Shops</li> <li>○ Transport</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use of rail?</li> <li>• Food security</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial – Cliffe Pools</li> <li>• Pubs</li> <li>• Rail branch / Thames Ports</li> <li>• Industrial farming</li> </ul>

*Economic development*

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Green tourism	Use of rail? Freight / passenger. Heritage rail.	Multi-purpose community facility / centre

### ***Heritage and environment workshop – April 2017***

Speakers from the RSPB and Medway Council were able to set the context in terms of landscape, environment and heritage. The steering group's own very experienced local archaeologists / historians Frank Withers and Dave Green gave a presentation on the history of the area from the Palaeolithic to the present including Cliffe's conservation area and both scheduled ancient monuments Cliffe Fort and Curtis and Harvey Explosive Works and Cliffe Woods' more recent history from the WW1 Plotlands, the 1960s Compulsory Purchase and creation of the new village from 1970s. This followed a similar format to the previous workshop with SWOTs used to generate reasonable alternatives.



*Figure 5: Map showing archaeological finds in the area*

**Housing and Community facilities workshop – July 2017**

*Housing to meet local needs (mix of market and affordable)*

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Self-build – including modular construction, recognise custom build and quicker to build. Opportunities to use small local sites. Local self-build association.	Specialist provision for older people – linked with wider social and health support.	Provision for younger people including key workers.

*Housing to meet local needs (affordable)*

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Development of sheltered housing communities – bungalow style. Local needs met first, age specific.	Release properties to local families. More apartment development for young persons (low rise).	Shared ownership.

*Community facilities*

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Develop village halls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Internet / computer suite</li> <li>• Youth [equivalent]</li> <li>• Active Retirement Association</li> <li>• Multi-media</li> <li>• Parent / toddler</li> <li>• Families</li> <li>• Advice centre</li> </ul>	Tech business hub: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for home business / local business</li> <li>• Shops</li> </ul> Farm diversification Village hall advice centre	Village retail hub (Cliffe): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supermarket</li> <li>• ‘Pop-ups’</li> <li>• Farm shop</li> <li>• Crafts</li> <li>• Advice centre</li> </ul>



This was the last in the series of themed workshops with residents and other stakeholders. Options on design and character drawn up at the last workshop were shared along with a breakdown on house types and tenure. Some time was spent explaining the definitions of affordable housing and windfall sites so that residents had a better understanding of the context. Then as before a series of SWOT analyses to develop issues and options were worked on in groups. The results are shown on the previous page.

### Question 19. Why are you seeking a new home?

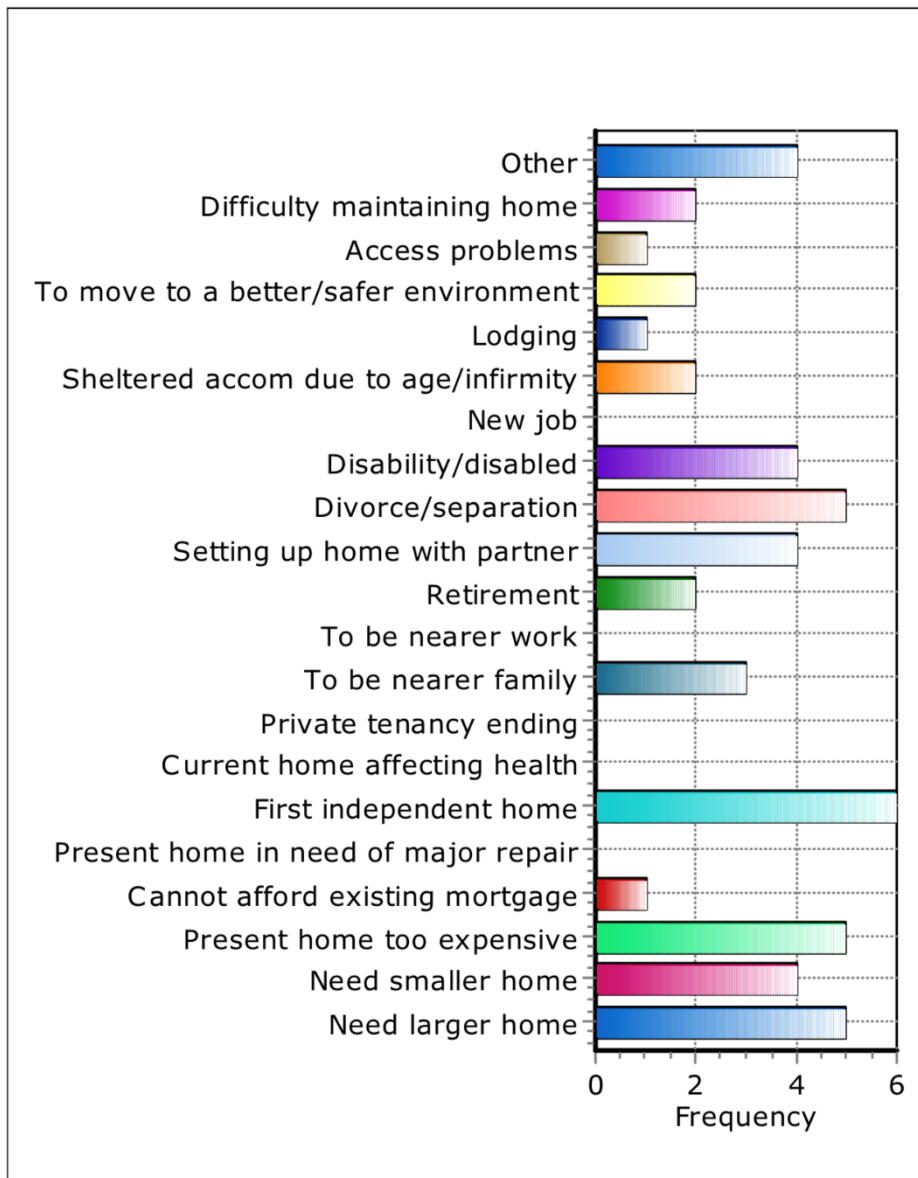


Figure 6: Excerpt from Housing Needs Survey

**Housing Needs Survey conducted by Action for Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) – October 2017**

The housing needs survey was commissioned from Action for Communities for Rural Kent’s Rural Housing Enabler. The survey is a standard survey slightly to establish local housing needs and was slightly adapted so that older residents wishing to move into more appropriate accommodation provided either by social landlords or the market. A survey was delivered to every household in the parish in September (2100 surveys) with 296 surveys returned or a 14% response rate. The survey identified a need for 18 affordable homes; 3 of which are for older households. A full copy of the report is available on the NP website. The following chart shows the reasons why people might be seeking a new affordable home:

**Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Workshop, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019**

This was a low-key meeting of the steering group that looked at Parking Standards, GP Surgeries, Pre-School, Nurseries and Primary Schools and the overall structure of the NP.

**Vision, objectives and policies exhibitions, Cliffe 13<sup>th</sup> July and Cliffe Woods, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

Two exhibitions were held in both settlements to share the vision, objectives and policies as well as the stages that led up to this point. The Partnership also shared an earlier draft of the ‘We asked, you said, we listened’ in the following table. In Cliffe 127 people attended (leaving their contact details) and in Cliffe Woods 94. There were strong concerns raised about the level of development set out in the draft Medway Local Plan and about its impact on the two villages, the surrounding countryside and the ability of the road and other infrastructure to cope.

**Consultation on a first draft NP with Medway Council and Kent County Council (heritage and conservation) – September to December 2019**

Given the split in responsibilities both within Medway Council and with Kent County Council it was decided to seek comments from the two local planning authorities on a 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the NP prior to going to formal Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation. The feedback from MC and KCC is summarised at the end of the table that follows.

**“We Asked, You Said, We Listened” summary table**

The following table summarises the feedback that was given at each of the consultation events / activities and how this was used to develop the objectives and policies in the Plan.

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
July 2015 Parish Survey	To what degree are the following a problem to you?	... the following were a slight or serious problem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime 63%</li> <li>• Public transport 53%</li> <li>• Lack of youth facilities 55%</li> <li>• Youth crime 66%</li> <li>• Speeding 68%</li> <li>• New housing development 45%</li> <li>• Availability of affordable housing 39%</li> </ul>	We have included objectives and policies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport and traffic-including road safety</li> <li>• Community facilities including youth facilities</li> <li>• Housing that is affordable and appropriate to the rural setting</li> <li>• Conserving the rural environment and</li> </ul>

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
		Litter / waste 75%	environmental protection We embarked on a programme of continuing community engagement including with schools.
2015 Village infrastructure survey	Medway Council asked the parish council about the facilities within the two villages and their condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allotments have a waiting list,</li> <li>• Capacity issues at the Cliffe Woods Community Centre,</li> <li>• Lack of youth centre, super-market in both villages,</li> <li>• Heavy HGV traffic on B2000 &amp; speeding,</li> <li>• Nature sites need further interpretation / education, but an opportunity for green tourism,</li> <li>• Memorial hall is ageing, has capacity, poor storage and maintenance issues.</li> </ul>	Further allotment provision to be considered, enhancements sought for both village community centres through S106 or CIL, youth provision, limits on HGV movements without improvements to B2000, a visitor centre at Cliffe Pools RSPB.
June 2016 Community Planning Workshop funded by Village SOS / Big Lottery	<p>What is 'good' or working well</p> <p>What is 'bad' or needs improving</p> <p>Your 'dreams' or visions for the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attractive environment</li> <li>• Community spirit</li> <li>✗ Traffic and transport</li> <li>✗ Facilities and services</li> <li>✗ Concerns over development</li> <li>• Keep rural / village feel</li> </ul> <p>More community involvement</p>	We have sought to protect the attractive environment, build on the community spirit, address traffic and transport issues, seek developer contributions for facilities and services and address concerns over development by making sure it is sustainable and meets the housing and other needs of local residents. We have taken steps to



Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
			involve the community throughout the NP process.
February 2017 Visioning workshop	Describe your ideal or dream Cliffe and Cliffe Woods in 2035 <sup>1</sup>	Attendees developed six visions with common themes but favoured: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain rural environment with wildlife corridors and agriculture using only sustainable development and brownfield sites with bungalows/chalet bungalows linked by traffic calming and roads and continuous footpath/cycle way.</li> </ul>	We developed these into:  “By 2035 the unique rural landscape of Cliffe and Cliffe Wood Parish will continue to be a haven for wildlife and agriculture, and provide homes, jobs and community infrastructure for people by protecting the heritage of the area and enhancing its character through sustainable development.”
April 2017 Transport and Employment Workshop	What are the Options for:  Cycling and walking Public transport Speeding traffic Parking Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shuttle / more convenient buses and rail improvements</li> <li>• 20 mph zones, footpaths on B2000, narrowing of road not widening</li> <li>• Identify current issues, off-street parking</li> <li>• Green tourism, multi-use community facilities</li> </ul>	Improve safety of roads in the parish and connections with footpaths, cycle ways and public transport Include sufficient parking appropriate to the size of the property including cycle parking in new developments Joint foot and cycle path and improvements of visibility on B2000 Encourage recreational and tourism activities and facilities

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<sup>1</sup> Same timeframe as the Medway Local Plan

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
<p>June 2017 Heritage and Environment Workshop</p>	<p>What are the Options for:</p> <p>Agriculture Heritage Nature conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve landscape, wildlife corridors and high-quality agricultural land, more self-sufficiency, limited development of low-grade land</li> <li>• Survey and record heritage, describe and maintain local character, avoid uniform development</li> <li>• Protect and retain special landscape for future generations, celebrate natural wildlife assets and preserve quality of life for residents.</li> </ul>	<p>Protect agricultural jobs and employment land Enhance and preserve the historic character of the Parish Enhance and preserve the rural, environmental and historic assets of the Parish</p>
<p>July 2017 Housing and Community Facilities Workshop</p>	<p>What are the Options for:</p> <p>Affordable and market housing to meet local needs Community facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-build, small local sites</li> <li>• Provision of housing for older people with social care and health support</li> <li>• Housing for younger people including key workers</li> <li>• Sheltered housing – downsizing and shared ownership</li> </ul>	<p>New housing development should reflect local housing need, particularly for bungalows and small family accommodation Development proposals for local retail including a new grocery store or small supermarket will be supported Proposals that result in the loss of existing facilities used for indoor and outdoor leisure and</p>

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve existing village halls, tech hub and improved Cliffe village retail</li> </ul>	recreation will be resisted
October 2017 Housing Needs Survey	<p>Would you support a small development of affordable housing if there was a proven need for people with a genuine local connection? And do you or a member of household need separate or alternative accommodation now or in the next five years? In response to the questionnaire, 296 surveys were returned.</p>	<p>The survey identified a total need for 18 affordable homes; 3 of which are for older households. In addition there is a requirement for 4 open market properties suitable for older households who want to downsize/move to more suitable housing for their needs. Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many young people wish to live in Cliffe but cannot afford to</li> <li>It would need to be both a small development and truly affordable. We did not have a positive experience with shared ownership housing when our son was moving out!</li> <li>These proposals are put forward as benefitting local residents but these types of homes are</li> </ul>	<p>New development should reflect local housing need, particularly for bungalows and small family accommodation in terms of mix and tenure.</p> <p>All major new development<sup>2</sup> proposals must be supported by a statement demonstrating infrastructure sufficiency to support the proposal. An assessment should be undertaken which takes into account:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The needs, commitments and planning requirements set out in the Medway Local Plan and relevant thematic policies and site allocation specifications that it contains;</li> <li>Recent technical studies and engagement with</li> </ol>

<sup>2</sup> The threshold for a **major development** is any application that involves mineral extraction, waste **development**, the provision of 10+ dwellings / a site area over 0.5 Hectares or a floorspace of over 1,000sqm / an area of 1 hectare



Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
		<p>not taken by locals but are allocated to outsides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need more one and two bedroom properties so people like myself can free up bigger homes</li> <li>• There is enough housing in village now, without the amenities to cope with so no more housing is needed</li> </ul>	<p>strategic infrastructure commissioners and providers that may update the position set out in the latest Medway Local Plan Infrastructure position statement of Infrastructure, Infrastructure Development Plan or Strategy;</p> <p>c) Accessibility, capacity and availability of existing infrastructure in the area where this is to be relied upon to support a development proposal.</p>
<p>July 2019 Vision, objectives and policies exhibitions</p>	<p>What do you think of the vision, objectives and policies proposed for the draft Neighbourhood Plan?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overdevelopment is unsustainable, too many houses, not enough infrastructure,</li> <li>• Don't mind more houses if we get better transport links and more frequent buses,</li> <li>• Can schools, doctors cope,</li> <li>• Concerned about flooding from a Thames surge,</li> <li>• Housing for local needs including</li> </ul>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan needs to acknowledge and where it can address residents' concerns in particular by making new development conditional on bringing about improvements to services and infrastructure, providing homes to meet local needs, and all the while ensuring that climate change is also taken into account (a more detailed response is set out below).</p>

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
		<p>elderly residents to downsize,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B2000 is unsafe / needs a by-pass.</li> </ul>	
<p>December 2019 Consult on draft Neighbourhood Plan with Medway Council and Kent County Council (Archaeological Dept)</p>	<p>The vision, objectives and policies were amended following the July 2019 exhibitions and included in a first draft NP. This was sent to Medway and Kent Councils for comment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern raised about consulting on Regulation 14 Draft NP prior to Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan,</li> <li>• Greater policy reference to the extensive designated habitats, climate change (especially flood risk) and health impacts,</li> <li>• Medway LP now to 2037,</li> <li>• Role of farming, accommodation of seasonal workers and poly tunnels,</li> <li>• Managing recreation and its impact on vulnerable wildlife and habitats,</li> <li>• Stronger use of / reference to evidence ie for need for chalet bungalows and housing types,</li> <li>• Clearer priorities for infrastructure improvements,</li> </ul>	<p>Generally the NP steering group and parish council were supportive of the comments received and have used these to make greater cross-reference use of evidence and address gaps such as role of agricultural businesses.</p>

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mention Thames path and Medway PROW improvement plan,</li> <li>• Map wildlife corridors,</li> <li>• Travel to work information,</li> <li>• Reference Draft Medway Heritage Strategy including the newly scheduled Ancient Monument Cliffe Explosive Works,</li> <li>• Give consideration to a Conservation Area Appraisal as none exists,</li> <li>• Reference Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation 2014 and Historic England Hoo Peninsula Historic Landscape Project,</li> <li>• Also mention WW2 GHQ Stop Line (anti-invasion defence) including pill-boxes and Nine Elms (cement) Works,</li> <li>• There were further comments on the Design Guidance for AECOM to implement,</li> <li>• There were recommendations on farm-steads and archaeology to be addressed.</li> </ul>	

Reports of all the consultation events and activities listed above are available on the parish council's neighbourhood plan page on its website: <http://www.cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk/community/cliffe-and-cliffe-woods-parish-council-12909/ccw-neighbourhood-plan/>. Representatives of the parish council and steering group have met with Medway Council planning policy officers on a regular basis throughout the NP process. They have also met as a steering group on an almost monthly basis throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. The minutes of the steering group meetings will soon be posted on the website as well.

## **7. Next Steps**

The comments received from residents and other stakeholders at the exhibitions in July 2019 were incorporated into a first draft NP which was sent to Medway Council and forwarded to Kent County Council in September 2019. Their extensive commentary was considered and where appropriate the Neighbourhood Plan has been amended. The Parish Council were then asked to approve a revised draft NP for formal (Regulation 14) consultation in Spring 2020<sup>3</sup>. The statutory consultation period is six weeks. Following the consultation, the responses from residents, businesses, developers, neighbours and statutory bodies have again been considered and where appropriate incorporated into a revised draft NP to be submitted by the parish council to Medway Council with a Basic Conditions and Consultation Statement (Regulation 15). Medway Council will then undertake their own consultation (Regulation 16) prior to jointly appointing and submitting the NP and supporting documents to an Examiner. Following Examination the Examiner may require the parish council (as the qualifying body) to make some modifications at which point the residents of the parish of voting age will be allowed to vote for or against the NP at a Referendum. If a majority of those who vote are in favour of the NP, the NP will be 'made'.

## **8. Acknowledgements**

The parish council would like to thank the following other residents of the parish who have also been involved in one way or another:

1. Nigel Moore
2. Joan Darwell
3. Gill Moore (died 2017, sadly missed)
4. Sue Hibbert
5. Iain Walton
6. Barry Dibble
7. Lynne Bush
8. Phillip Stanley
9. Ian Prior
10. Ron Naughton-Dean

Jim Boot, Community Planner, originally April 2020, revised July 2021

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<sup>i</sup> HM Gov Neighbourhood Planning Guidance, Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 41-007-20190509, Revision date: 09 05 2019

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<sup>3</sup> Although due to the Covid 19 pandemic it is likely this will need to be postponed until at least the summer or perhaps the autumn 2020.







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## **1. Introduction**

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council has produced a draft Neighbourhood Plan based on the previous consultations it has carried out (see previous report Part 1: Consultation Prior to Regulation 14), and the evidence it has gathered. It has produced the plan with the help of a steering group of local residents and parish councillors as well as officers at Medway Council.

The government's Neighbourhood Planning regulations say the Parish Council – as the “qualifying body” producing the plan – must consult for six weeks with local people, businesses and other organisations to let people know what the Neighbourhood Plan contains and why so that they can give their views. This is called a “Regulation 14” consultation. The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan regulation 14 consultation ran from Tuesday 1st December 2020 to Tuesday 26th January 2021.

A leaflet was produced that is a summary of what is in the Neighbourhood Plan and explained where the full Neighbourhood Plan could be seen online and in hard copy and how residents and other consultees including statutory consultees could comment on it.

The leaflet was delivered to every house in Cliffe/Cliffe Woods and Cooling Street (and also made available on the website see below). A webinar was held (online) on 8th December 7 to 8:30pm (and you can now view the recording). Two face to face events planned for 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> January planned for Cliffe and Cliffe and Cliffe Woods had to be cancelled due to Covid restrictions.

You can see the Neighbourhood Plan online in full at:

<https://tinyurl.com/CANDCWREG14>

The Neighbourhood Plan also includes Design Guidelines which are referred to in all the policy themes. The design guidelines aim to preserve the rural nature of the Parish, ensure that development is in keeping with its character and that local views are protected from negative impacts of development. These were consulted on as part of the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The following report summarises all the consultations that have taken place in drawing up the Neighbourhood Plan but in particular focusses on the formal Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation that has just taken place, a summary of the submissions (listed in full in the appendix) and how the Neighbourhood Plan has been modified as a result.

## **2. Compliance with Neighbourhood Plan Regulations**

In line with Neighbourhood Plan Regulations, Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council applied to Medway Council to start the process of preparing a neighbourhood plan in early 2015. The first stage was the consultation on and then approval of the designation of the civil parish as a neighbourhood plan area which was approved at Medway Council's [Cabinet meeting](#) on 16 June 2015. Since the designation of the area the parish council and its neighbourhood plan steering group has been working with residents, local groups and Medway Council to progress the plan.

## **3. Overview of consultation**

The development of the Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by a process of consultation which started with a survey of residents' views about a range of issues in 2015. As a result of this survey, the following key issues were identified to be addressed in the neighbourhood plan:



- concern about development impacts on existing community infrastructure,
- speeding and traffic,
- housing development and need.

After a pause, a wider process of consultation began in June 2016 with a general community planning event to consider both the purpose and potential of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. This was then followed by a visioning workshop held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and three topic workshops based on the following themes:

- Environment and Heritage
- Housing and Community Facilities
- Traffic Transport and the Economy

At these workshop participants were able to consider a range of evidence under each theme and considered challenges and options for addressing them. Full reports of each of these events can be found on the Neighbourhood Plan website: <http://www.cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk/community/cliffe-and-cliffe-woods-parish-council-12909/ccw-neighbourhood-plan/>.

As a result of these workshops, it was felt important to get a stronger understanding from residents of their current and future housing needs and a survey was commissioned from Action for Communities in Rural Kent in October 2017.

Overall residents and other stakeholders have identified the following key issues to be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Provision of affordable housing, particularly to cater for the older population and younger people who would like to remain in the Parish (bungalows and smaller properties)
- Ensuring the design and impact of new development is appropriate to the character of the villages of the Parish, its surrounding countryside, and its supporting infrastructure
- Protection of the built environment heritage of the Parish
- Protection of the rural character of the Parish and its wildlife
- Pedestrian, cycling, transport, and parking improvements
- Upgrade and extension of community and leisure facilities to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and any potential increase in the residential population
- Consider possibilities for visitor and education facilities to support the local economy and provide opportunities for employment that obviate the need to use a car.

#### 4. Summary table of consultations “You said, we did”

The table below summarises the responses to the consultation activities dating back to 2015 undertaken to inform the drafting of the neighbourhood plan. These have been set out by date and topic/s, what was the purpose of the event (We asked), what was found out (You said) and what was taken forward into the neighbourhood plan as a result (We listened):

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
July 2015 Parish Survey	To what degree are the following a problem to you?	<p>... the following were a slight or serious problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime 63%</li> <li>• Public transport 53%</li> <li>• Lack of youth facilities 55%</li> </ul>	<p>We have included objectives and policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport and traffic- including road safety</li> </ul>

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth crime 66%</li> <li>• Speeding 68%</li> <li>• New housing development 45%</li> <li>• Availability of affordable housing 39%</li> <li>• Litter / waste 75%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community facilities including youth facilities</li> <li>• Housing that is affordable and appropriate to the rural setting</li> <li>• Conserving the rural environment and environmental protection</li> <li>• We embarked on a programme of continuing community engagement including with schools.</li> </ul>
<p>June 2016 Community Planning Workshop funded by Village SOS / Big Lottery</p>	<p>What is 'good' or working well What is 'bad' or needs improving Your 'dreams' or visions for the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Attractive environment</li> <li>✓ Community spirit</li> <li>✗ Traffic and transport</li> <li>✗ Facilities and services</li> <li>✗ Concerns over development</li> <li>✚ Keep rural / village feel</li> <li>✚ More community involvement</li> </ul>	<p>We have included objectives and policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport and traffic- including road safety</li> <li>• Community facilities including youth facilities</li> <li>• Housing that is affordable and appropriate to the rural setting</li> <li>• Conserving the rural environment and environmental protection</li> <li>• We embarked on a programme of continuing community engagement including with schools.</li> </ul>
<p>February 2017 Visioning workshop</p>	<p>Describe your ideal or dream Cliffe and Cliffe Woods in 2035<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>Attendees developed six visions with common themes but favoured:</p>	<p>We developed these into: "By 2035 the unique rural landscape of Cliffe and</p>

<sup>1</sup> Same timeframe as the Medway Local Plan

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Maintain rural environment with wildlife corridors and agriculture using only sustainable development and brownfield sites with bungalows/chalet bungalows linked by traffic calming and roads and continuous footpath/cycle way.</li> </ul>	<p>Cliffe Wood Parish will continue to be a haven for wildlife and agriculture, and provide homes, jobs and community infrastructure for people by protecting the heritage of the area and enhancing its character through sustainable development.”</p>
<p>April 2017 Transport and Employment Workshop</p>	<p>What are the Options for:</p> <p>Cycling and walking Public transport Speeding traffic Parking Economic development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shuttle / more convenient buses and rail improvements</li> <li>• 20 mph zones, footpaths on B2000, narrowing of road not widening</li> <li>• Identify current issues, off-street parking</li> <li>• Green tourism, multi-use community facilities</li> </ul>	<p>Improve safety of roads in the parish and connections with footpaths, cycle ways and public transport Include sufficient parking appropriate to the size of the property including cycle parking in new developments Joint foot and cycle path and improvements of visibility on B2000 Encourage recreational and tourism activities and facilities</p>
<p>June 2017 Heritage and Environment Workshop</p>	<p>What are the Options for:</p> <p>Agriculture Heritage Nature conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve landscape, wildlife corridors and high-quality agricultural land, more self-sufficiency, limited development of low-grade land</li> <li>• Survey and record heritage, describe and maintain local character, avoid uniform development</li> <li>• Protect and retain special landscape for future generations, celebrate natural wildlife assets and preserve quality of life for residents.</li> </ul>	<p>Protect agricultural jobs and employment land Enhance and preserve the historic character of the Parish Enhance and preserve the rural, environmental and historic assets of the Parish</p>

Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
July 2017 Housing and Community Facilities Workshop	<p>What are the Options for:</p> <p>Affordable and market housing to meet local needs</p> <p>Community facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-build, small local sites</li> <li>• Provision of housing for older people with social care and health support</li> <li>• Housing for younger people including key workers</li> <li>• Sheltered housing – downsizing and shared ownership</li> <li>• Improve existing village halls, tech hub and improved Cliffe village retail</li> </ul>	<p>New housing development should reflect local housing need, particularly for bungalows and small family accommodation</p> <p>Development proposals for local retail including a new grocery store or small supermarket will be supported</p> <p>Proposals that result in the loss of existing facilities used for indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation will be resisted</p>
October 2017 Housing Needs Survey	<p>Would you support a small development of affordable housing if there was a proven need for people with a genuine local connection? And do you or a member of household need separate or alternative accommodation now or in the next five years? In response to the questionnaire, 296 surveys were returned.</p>	<p>The survey identified a total need for 18 affordable homes; 3 of which are for older households. In addition there is a requirement for 4 open market properties suitable for older households who want to downsize/move to more suitable housing for their needs. Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many young people wish to live in Cliffe but cannot afford to</li> <li>• It would need to be both a small development and truly affordable. We did not have a positive experience with shared ownership housing when our son was moving out!</li> <li>• These proposals are put forward as benefitting local residents but these types of homes are</li> </ul>	<p>New development should reflect local housing need, particularly for bungalows and small family accommodation in terms of mix and tenure.</p> <p>All major new development<sup>2</sup> proposals must be supported by a statement demonstrating infrastructure sufficiency to support the proposal. An assessment should be undertaken which takes into account:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The needs, commitments and planning requirements set out in the Medway Local Plan and relevant thematic policies and site allocation specifications that it contains;</li> <li>b) Recent technical studies and engagement with</li> </ol>

<sup>2</sup> The threshold for a **major development** is any application that involves mineral extraction, waste **development**, the provision of 10+ dwellings / a site area over 0.5 Hectares or a floorspace of over 1,000sqm / an area of 1 hectare



Date & activity	We asked	You said	We listened (objectives and policies)
		<p>not taken by locals but are allocated to outsiders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need more one and two bedroom properties so people like myself can free up bigger homes</li> <li>• There is enough housing in village now, without the amenities to cope with so no more housing is needed</li> </ul>	<p>strategic infrastructure commissioners and providers that may update the position set out in the latest Medway Local Plan Infrastructure position statement of Infrastructure, Infrastructure Development Plan or Strategy;</p> <p>c) Accessibility, capacity and availability of existing infrastructure in the area where this is to be relied upon to support a development proposal.</p>

## 5. Drafting the Neighbourhood Plan

The parish council asked a planning consultant Lorraine Hart RTPI help them with drafting the Neighbourhood Plan which was then somewhat delayed as it was felt important to understand the intentions of the draft Medway Local Plan, including a substantial review, before taking a draft Neighbourhood Plan to the community of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. So that momentum wasn't lost it was decided to present a 'work in progress' plan at two events held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2019 in the Memorial Hall in Cliffe and on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019 in the Emmanuel Centre, Parkside, Cliffe Woods at which residents and stakeholders were asked:

- Have we captured key issues for both Cliffe and Cliffe Woods (within the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan?)
- What areas of policy do you have strong concerns with?
- Are there any additional policy areas you would like considered?
- Have you any other comments?

At Cliffe 126 households attended and in Cliffe Woods 45 households. An analysis of the responses was carried out that showed general agreement with the policies in the plan (775 agrees, 93 disagrees, 20 don't know). The most commonly raised issues were impact of new development on the B2000, concerns about overdevelopment including on green field sites, and impact on GP surgeries, school places, parking outside schools and the impact on wildlife of new development. Many of these issues were well rehearsed but as a result of the feedback, the plan was further modified. But due in part to the continuing review of the Medway Local Plan and the onset of Covid in early 2020 it wasn't possible for the parish council to complete drafting their plan until the autumn of 2020.

## 6. Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan and consultation

The parish council as the qualifying body should be satisfied that it has a complete draft Neighbourhood Plan and preferred approach. This was achieved over the course of 2020, despite the onset of Covid and the parish council agreed to undertake its formal regulation 14 consultation on the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan from Tuesday 1st December 2020 to Tuesday 26th January 2021.

A leaflet was produced that summarised what is in the Neighbourhood Plan and explained where the full Neighbourhood Plan can be seen online and in hard copy and how residents and other consultees including statutory consultees could comment on it.

The leaflet was delivered to every house in Cliffe/Cliffe Woods and Cooling Street (and also made available on the website see below). A webinar was held (online) on 8th December 7 to 8:30pm (and you can now view the recording). Two face to face events planned for 7<sup>th</sup> January and 14<sup>th</sup> planned for Cliffe and Cliffe and Cliffe Woods had to be cancelled due to Covid restrictions.

The Neighbourhood Plan also includes Design Guidelines which are referred to in all the policy themes. The design guidelines aim to preserve the rural nature of the Parish, ensure that development is in keeping with its character and that local views are protected from negative impacts of development. These were consulted on in tandem with the draft Neighbourhood Plan. A form was included with the summary which is reproduced below asking for people’s address details and:

**PART B: Which part of the C&CW Neighbourhood Plan does your comment relate to?  
(Please tick relevant themes)**

Neighbourhood Plan Policy theme	Sustainable development in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods	Economy and Employment	Environment and heritage	Housing	Infrastructure	Community facilities and well being	Design Guidelines	General Comment
Please tick relevant theme								

**Please give details of your reasons for support/opposition to the policy themes/individual policies here:**

**What improvements or modifications would you suggest?**

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

If you have additional representations feel free to include additional pages. Please make sure any additional pages are clearly labelled/ addressed or attached.

## 7. Summary of the main issues and concerns raised through the consultation process (Reg 14)

A survey was carried to seek people's general response to the draft plan. The following charts show that support or otherwise:

### 1 Sustainable Development in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

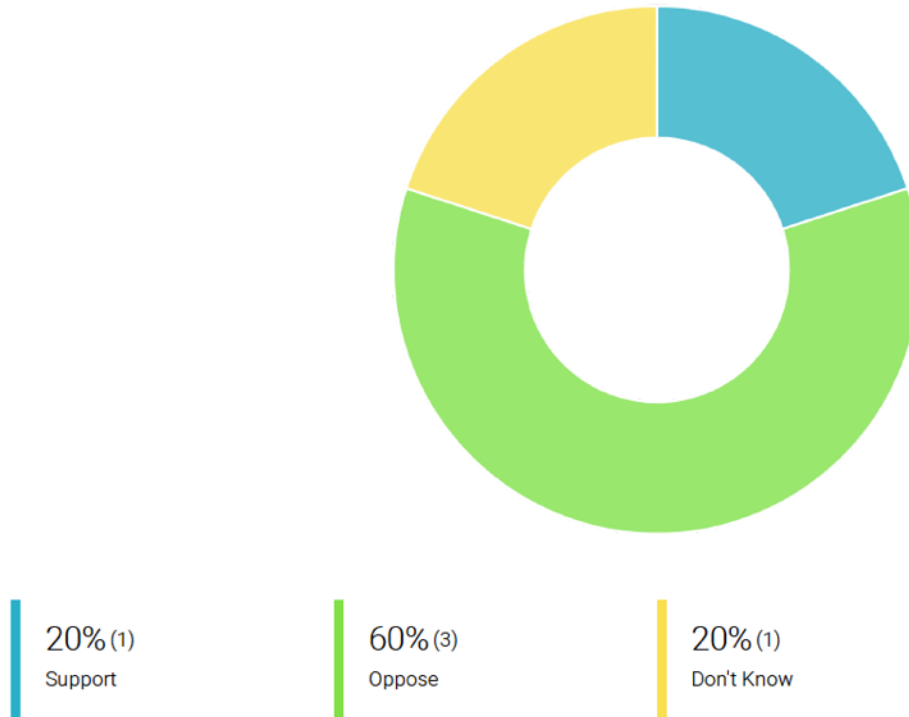


Figure 1: Support for Sustainable Development in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

Residents who make up the bulk of respondents to this survey do not generally support further development (particularly housing) in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. This is a challenge for the Neighbourhood Plan as the government National Planning Policy Framework (2019) require Neighbourhood Plans to plan positively for development. Specifically paragraph 16:

Plans should:

- a) be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development<sup>10</sup>;
- b) be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable

Below are two contrasting views from the survey:

- *I agree with the guidelines set out in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan that inform and ensure that all developments especially in respect of housing and road infrastructure are carried out in a most sustainable way and are sensitive to the environment and the wellbeing of local residents.*
- *We have opposed the development of the building of 225 new houses to the West of Town Road Cliffe Woods for some years now. The grounds to these are in line with those of many other residents and relate to environmental impact.*

## 4 Economy and Employment

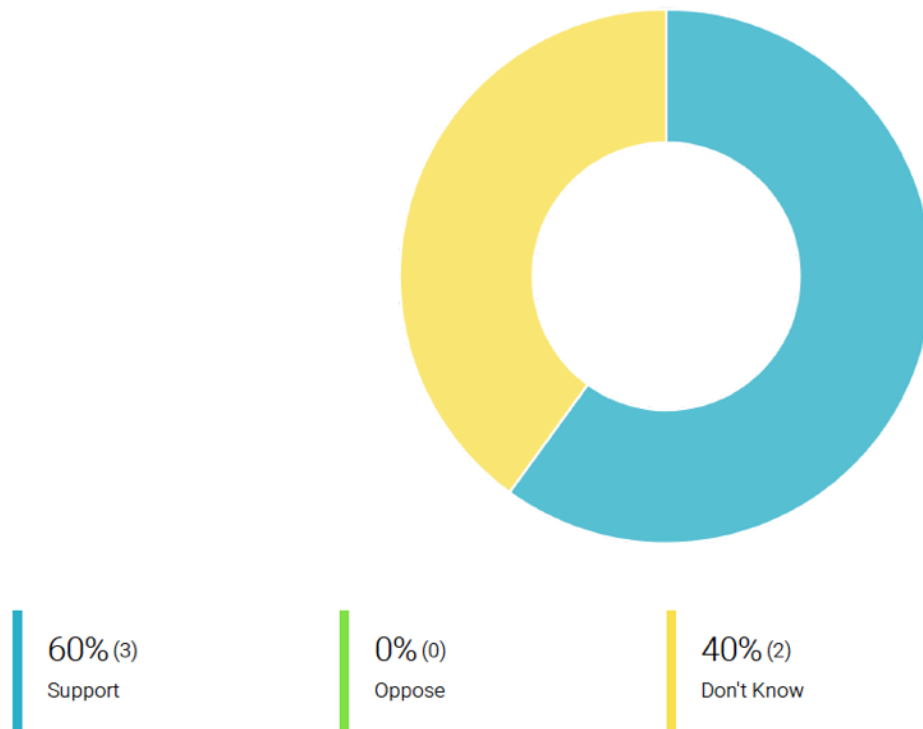


Figure 2: Support for Economy and Employment

It is encouraging that there was more support for addressing the Economy and Employment in the plan. A flavour of the comments received:

- *Employment is vital and key to health, security, wellbeing and fulfilment and it is therefore compelling that any plans regarding sustainable developments look at how best to use such plans with employment as a key objective.*
- *Saves people travelling*
- *Few are able to work in villages.*



## 7 Environment and Heritage

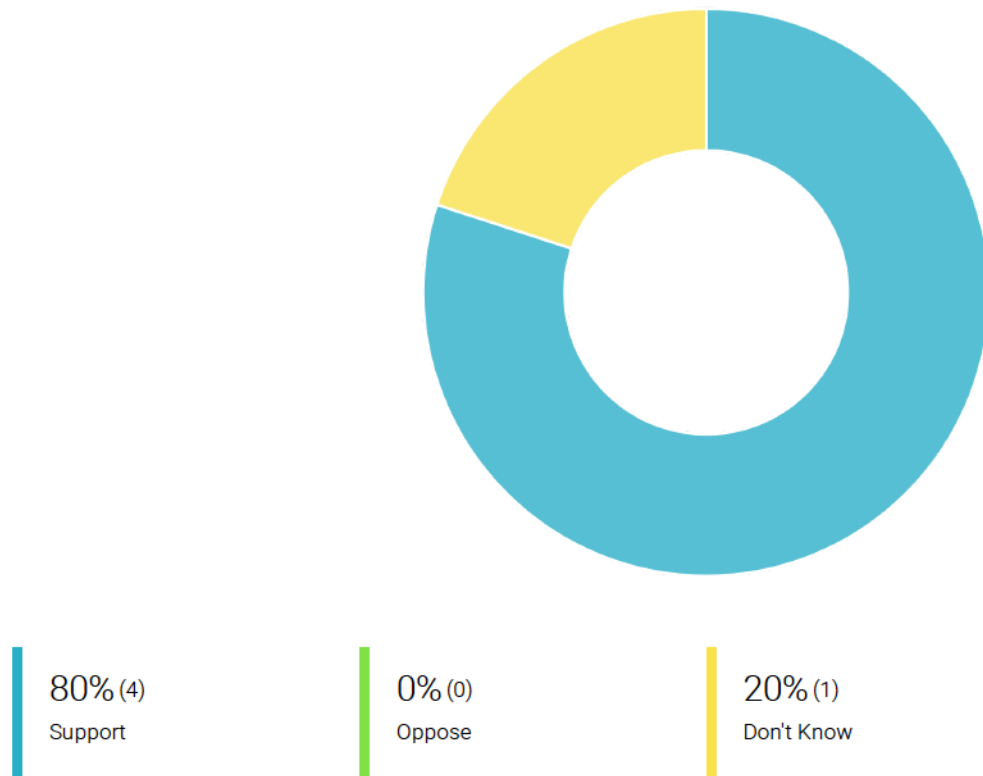


Figure 3: Support for Environment and Heritage

There was strong support for the chapter and policies on the Environment and Heritage.

- *The areas around Cliffe and Cliffe Woods are rich in cultural heritage as detailed in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.*
- *We have a rich agricultural heritage, and the above proposals would help to safeguard some of this heritage. The local area around Cliffe Woods has rich historical and literary connections which are also defined by the character of the local area.*

## 10 Housing

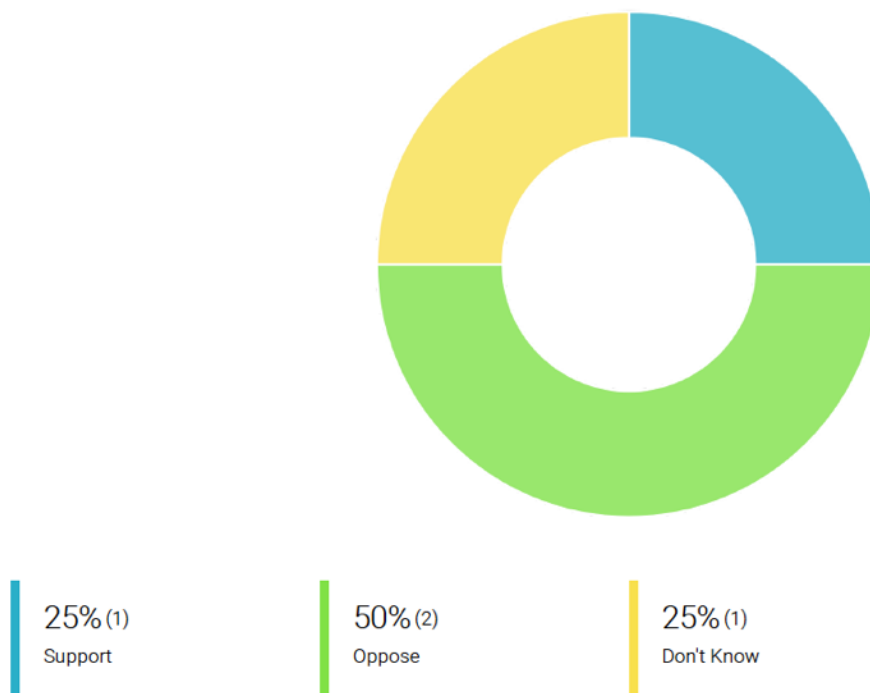


Figure 4: Support for Housing

There wasn't strong support for additional housing in the parish as previous consultations have demonstrated. Concerns are mainly around larger scale estates and the capacity of local physical and social infrastructure to manage development without significant investment, particularly the B2000.

- *I agree that we need to fulfil unmet housing need as is the duty of any local authority. All new housing developments should be small scale and sensitive to the environment including wildlife and the rural character of the area as you recognise in the Neighbourhood Plan*
- *Small infills are ok, but not very large development, the roads, schools, doctors, can't take all the extra people, even the sewers are overloaded.*
- *Let us remain a village*

## 13 Infrastructure

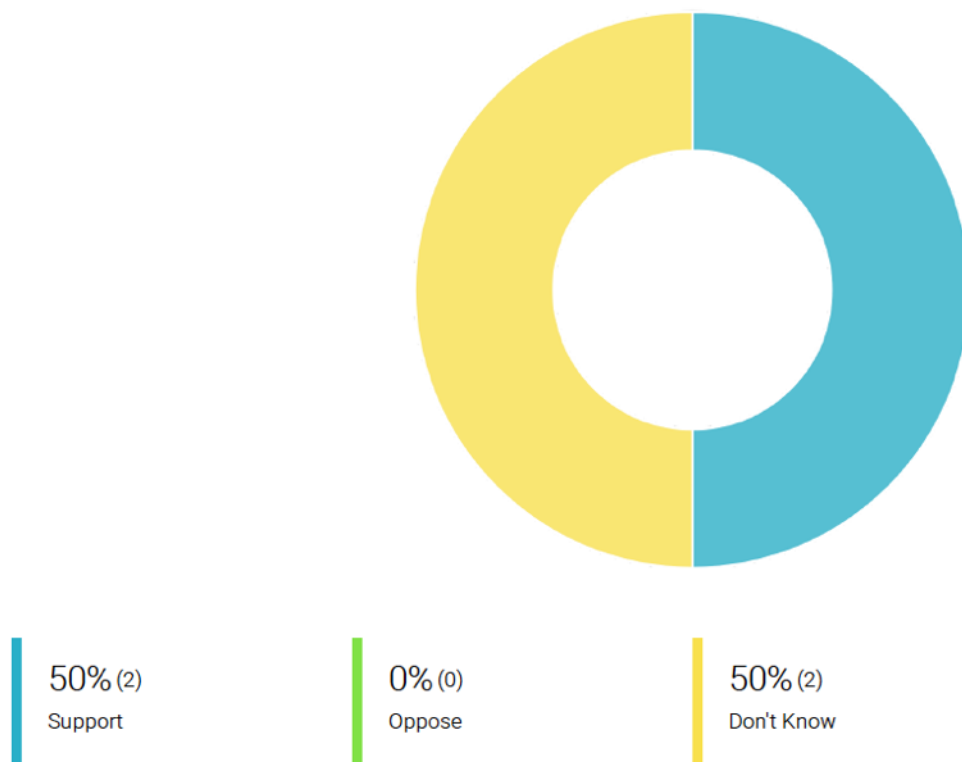


Figure 5: Support for Infrastructure

This is acknowledged as a challenge for the plan:

- *The Neighbourhood Plan has recognised the need for improvements in the local infrastructure which needs to be improved.*
- *For an improved public transport infrastructure.*
- *Needs improvements*

## 16 Community Facilities and Well-Being

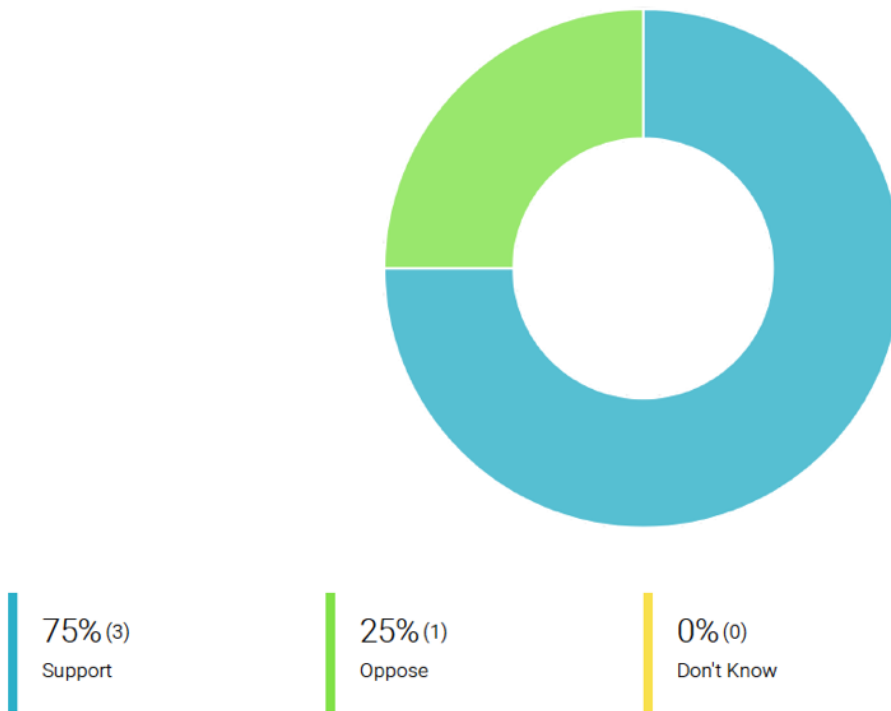


Figure 6: Support for Community Facilities and Well-being

There was general support for the improvements to community facilities and well-being that can come from new development – if not for the development itself.

- *Community Facilities for the promotion of wellbeing are essential to any such plans as this one. Public Health England have backed up what many of us have believed in for such a long time.*
- *Safer pathways, wider B2000*



## 19 Design Guidelines

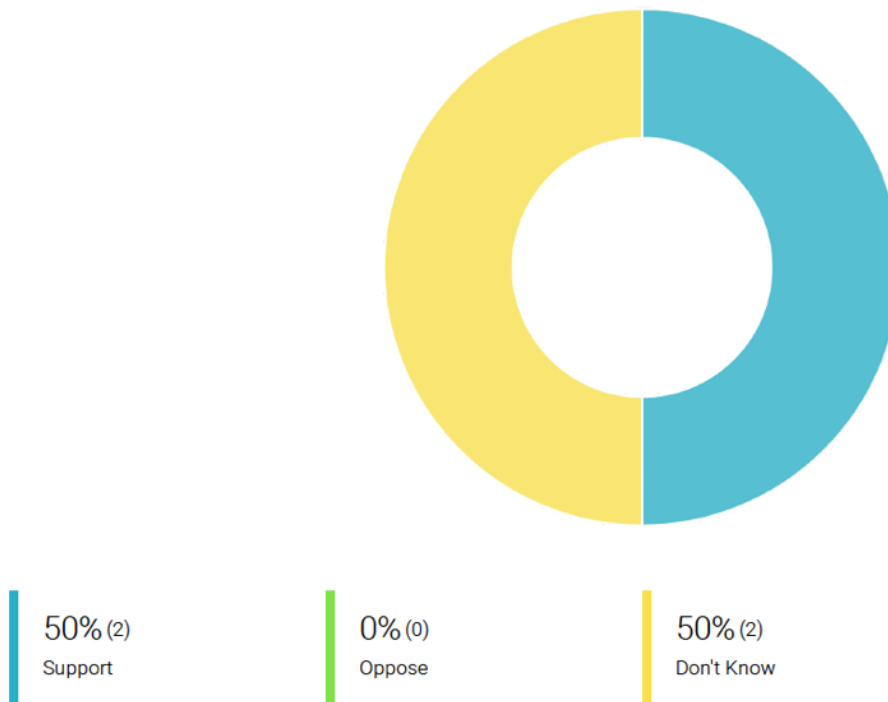


Figure 7: Support for Design Guidelines

It is perhaps disappointing given the work that has gone into these and the government's aspiration for better design – there is a whole chapter in the NPPF 2019 devoted to Achieving well-designed places that there wasn't greater support for this aspect of the plan and the Design Guidelines and the design elements of policies SUSDEV4 and H6

Overall or general comments about the plan:

- *I think that the plan is well drawn together and is detailed well researched and laid out as well as being comprehensive in its scope.*
- *For the local authority to consider any further housing developments in relation to the environmental and road traffic impact by existing ones such as the one between Hoo and Chattenden. To ensure that other developments such as retail parks, drive through fast food outlets and bypasses are not added on to the existing and planned housing expansions.*

### 8. Summary of submissions and modifications made to plan

The following table summarises all the submissions and what modifications the qualifying body will make to the plan as a result of the regulation 14 consultation process:

Type of response	Respondent	Type of consultee	Relevant policy referred to or issue	Issue to address	Response
Survey	Simon Victor Bojczuk Marlene Lynch	Individual Individual	EMP/HSG and ENV and Heritage policies Protect agriculture policies	Most comments are supportive but suggest proposals that are not site specific or beyond planning control	Add in Bowls Club into the community facilities section Refer in narrative to interest in rewilding and

Type of response	Respondent	Type of consultee	Relevant policy referred to or issue	Issue to address	Response
	Nicola Bojczuk Kenneth Kentell Ruby Hunt Paul Sutton John Harris Sylvia Richards	Individual Individual Individual Individual Individual Individual	Add Bowls Club into the community facilities section  Need a community wildlife trust and wilding schemes Developments to include meadows, trees and indigenous species of planting.  Refer to SUDS 5 impact assessments  Keep to small infill sites only	(public transport increased provision) so can only be addressed by projects with potentially some developer contributions.	wildlife/local heritage trust  Note concern and opposition to housing policies due to impact on infrastructure particularly water and sewage addressed in SUSDEV 5: Infrastructure Sufficiency Statements
Comment Form	Glyn Smith	Individual	Infrastructure INFRA 9	General comment that application decisions should be frozen until a plan is in place due to lack of infrastructure to support development	Not possible to amend plan to accommodate this suggestion – infrastructure deficiency is however, already subject of a policy and narrative see SUSDEV 5 Infrastructure Sufficiency Statements
Comment Form	Trenport	Company	SUSDEV 4 and 5 INFRA 4 and HSG	Be more positive about development that it can meet objectives of NP  Update use classes in policy SUSDEV2  Parking should be set by Medway  H2 table clarify percentages  SUSDEV on infrastructure – is covered by rest of planning regime	Review narrative re positivity about development  Update Use Classes to reflect changes by government.  It is reasonable for NPs to set their own parking standards so there is No amendment to Plan policy on Parking or infrastructure sufficiency (See INFRA4) given local circumstances and

Type of response	Respondent	Type of consultee	Relevant policy referred to or issue	Issue to address	Response
					historical levels of parking provision
Comment Form	Anthony Randall	Individual	INFRA	Mention need for station and the location that already exists Strengthen footpaths policy	Amend narrative, INFRA3: Transport walking and possibly INFRA 6: Public Transport
Comment Form	Norman and Julia Hopkins	Individual	HSG and INFRA	No to housing on greenfield sites Improve B2000	Not possible to be anti-development in a NP as has to be in line with National Planning Policy. Infrastructure INFRA 6 Public Transport and Cycling and INFRA 7 Road Safety policies both address B2000.
Comment Form	Mr and Mrs Stuart Michie	Individual	HSG	No more housing	Outside objectives of NP as there is a local need for housing and has to be in line with National Planning Policy
Comment Form	JS Brown	Individual	SUSDEV 1-4 HSG 1-7	More emphasis on importance of environmental designations Specify energy efficiency performance Concern about mixed uses - Esquire Tree planting Hates photo on Plan because it will be gone as it is on Gladman site	Review and amend narrative at beginning of Environment chapter to highlight environmental designations and amend photo. Also see Policy SUSDEV 4 Character, E&H 1 Public Open spaces and E&H2 Biodiversity. Energy performance is addressed in national policy and building regulations.
Letter/E Mail	Dickens' Country	Organisation	H4 SUSDEV 4	Supportive but suggests that	Amend plan as suggested.

Type of response	Respondent	Type of consultee	Relevant policy referred to or issue	Issue to address	Response
	Protection Society		CF4	conversions should be genuinely redundant and tree planting could be included in SUSDEV 4  CF4 rewording to say "area and" before quality in text	
Letter/E Mail	Port of London Authority	Statutory consultee	ECON and EMP policies	Supportive but mention Alpha and Conoco Jetties	Amend introduction to Economy and Employment Chapter paragraph 3 to recognise role of jetties.
Letter/E Mail	Sports England	Statutory consultee		Generic comments related to development supporting health and activity	Consider amending Policy CF1: Loss of leisure and recreation facilities to be more positive.
Letter/E Mail	Gravesham Borough Council	Statutory consultee	H7	Inconsistent approach towards density that may be in contravention of NPPF	Check wording of Policy H7 Housing Type and Density and H8 Housing Density to ensure they conform with NPPF See para 123 b.
Letter/E Mail	KCC Archaeology	Statutory consultee	ENV and Heritage	Policy wording amendment	Amend preamble to and Policy E&H3: Hidden History and E&H4 to reflect suggested amendments.
Letter/E Mail	Medway Council	Statutory consultee	All policies	Strengthening wording and narrative	Amend as appropriate policies to make them clear and more effective.
Letter/E Mail	Medway Prow Officer	Statutory consultee	INFRA	Mention connections to PROW and bridleway use and new paths to accommodate where feasible Improve INFRA 6 maps	Review Policies INFRA 3 Transport – walking and INFRA 6 Public Transport – Cycling to reflect comments. Consider insets for map INFRA 6 to highlight potential



Type of response	Respondent	Type of consultee	Relevant policy referred to or issue	Issue to address	Response
					linkages / circular routes.
Call to PC Clerk	Medway tree Officer	Statutory consultee	ENV	Trees and woodland include in policy or narrative	Amend introduction to Environment and Heritage Chapter paragraph 3 to directly reference woodlands including Lodge Hill SSSI woods.
Letter/E Mail	Medway Conservation	Statutory consultee	ENV&HER	A Number of amendments to narrative and objectives to strengthen policies	Amend Environment and Heritage Chapter to reflect comments including more directly referencing Cliffe Conservation Area and give consideration to a list of Non-Designated Heritage Assets.
Letter	Medway Greenspace Access Officer	Statutory consultee	Introduction to Environment and Heritage chapter.	Various re coastal flooding, visitor centre, green blue infrastructure, climate change	Consider additional policy / policies to reflect issues raised.
Letter/E Mail	Police	Statutory consultee	CF2 and Infra 4	Suggests specific reference to secured by design in text	Amend policy H6 House Design to include reference to Secured by Design.
Letter/E Mail	Natural England	Statutory consultee		Natural England did not have any specific comments on the plan.	The plan will not be amended.

#### Appendix 1: List of statutory and other consultees

The following were consulted in line with Regulation 3 which provides SCHEDULE 1 Consultation Bodies for Neighbourhood development plans:

1. For the purposes of regulations 14 and 16, a “consultation body” means—
  - (a) where the local planning authority is a London borough council, the Mayor of London;
  - (b) a local planning authority, county council or parish council any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority;
  - (d) the Homes and Communities Agency(2);
  - (e) Natural England(3);
  - (f) the Environment Agency(4);
  - (g) the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as English Heritage)(5);

- (h) Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (company number 2904587);
- (i) the Highways Agency;
- (j) the Marine Management Organisation(6);
- (k) any person—
  - (i) to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003; and
  - (ii) who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority;
- (l) where it exercises functions in any part of the neighbourhood area—
  - (i) a Primary Care Trust<sup>3</sup> established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(7) or continued in existence by virtue of that section;
  - (ii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) and (c) of the Electricity Act 1989(8);
  - iii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(9);
  - (iv) a sewerage undertaker; and
  - (v) a water undertaker;
- (m) voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area;
- (n) bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the neighbourhood area;
- (o) bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area;
- (p) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the neighbourhood area; and
- (q) bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area.

**Appendix 2: Table of comments received (Regulation 14 Consultation only)**

Also see separate Comments Forms Received

A Randall
Greenspaces Access Manager, Medway Council
Cooling Parish Council
Dickens Country Protection Society
G Smith
Gravesham Borough Council
Historic England
J Brown
Heritage Team, Kent County Council
Conservation Officer, Medway Council
Planning officers Medway Council
Tree Officer, Medway Council
Public Rights of Way, Medway Council
Natural England
Kent and Medway Police
Port of London Authority

<sup>3</sup> Now Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Southern Water
Trenport Investments Ltd





# Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan 2021 Basic Conditions Statement

## INTRODUCTION

This document sets out how the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan fulfils the “basic conditions” of Neighbourhood Planning in order to satisfy the requirements set out in legislation and pass the Independent Examination.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the Plan and the Consultation Statement which sets out the consultation and engagement with local residents and other consultees during its preparation.

Part of the Basic Conditions are that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan should “not breach or be otherwise incompatible with, EU obligations”. These EU obligations include environmental assessments. In order to support the qualifying body, Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council, to meet this requirement, Medway Council has undertaken a screening to determine whether the proposed Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14 version) should be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). It concluded that the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood plan does not need to be subject to an SEA or an HRA.

## BASIC CONDITIONS AND TESTS TO BE MET

[Schedule 4b of the Town and Country Planning Act \(para 8\)](#) sets out the following conditions which a Neighbourhood Development Plan is required to meet;

*8(1). The examiner must consider the following—*

- (a) whether the draft neighbourhood development order meets the basic conditions (see sub-paragraph*
- (b) whether the draft order complies with the provision made by or under sections 61E(2), 61J and 61L,*
- (c) whether any period specified under section 61L(2)(b) or (5) is appropriate,*
- (d) whether the area for any referendum should extend beyond the Neighbourhood Area to which the draft order relates, and*
- (e) such other matters as may be prescribed.*

*(2) A draft order meets the basic conditions if—*

- (a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order,*
- (b) having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, it is appropriate to make the order,*
- (c) having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area, it is appropriate to make the order,*
- (d) the making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,*
- (e) the making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),*

## Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan 2021 Basic Conditions Statement

*(f) the making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations, and*

*(g) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the order and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order.*

### LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The proposed Neighbourhood Plan is submitted by Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council which, as a qualifying body, is entitled to submit a Neighbourhood Plan for its own parish. The Plan has been prepared by the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Development Plan Group, which is led by Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council.

The whole parish of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods has been formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area through an application made on under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and approved by the Cabinet of Medway Council on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

Although Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council as the qualifying body use the term Neighbourhood Plan, it is the same as a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The proposed Neighbourhood Plan contains policies relating to the development and use of land within the Neighbourhood Area. Proposals relating to planning matters (the use and development of land) have been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended in 2016).

The Plan will have effect until December 2037. The period has been chosen to align with the dates of the Medway Council emerging Local Plan which has had three rounds of regulation 18 consultation (Jan/Feb 2016, Jan/May 2017, March/June 2018) and will be published in draft for regulation 19 consultation in 2021.

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

The draft Plan relates only to the parish of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. It does not relate to more than one Neighbourhood Area. There are no other neighbourhood development plans in place within the Neighbourhood Area. As the whole Neighbourhood Plan Area is within the parish of C&CW the Neighbourhood Plan Area is also referred to as the parish in the Neighbourhood plan.

We recommend that the boundary of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish is the referendum area.

### HAVING REGARD TO NATIONAL POLICIES

The table below shows how the Neighbourhood Plan polices match section of the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) July 2021 update.

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	<b>NPPF Paragraph</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Plan Policies</b>
3. Plan Making	20 b) Infrastructure	SUSDEV 5
	20 c) community facilities	SUSDEV 2
	20 d) conservation	SUSDEV 1
	28 non-strategic policies	All NP Policies
	34 Development Contributions	INFRA 9
4. Decision Making	39 Early engagement 43 Right information	E&H3
6. Building a Strong Competitive Economy	82 c) Infrastructure 82 d) Investment	SUSDEV 5 ECON&EMP 2
7. Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres	89 rural developments	ECON&EMP 4 SUSDEV 2 SUSDEV 3
8. Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities	92 a) social interaction and mixed uses 92 c) Healthy lifestyles 93 a) Community facilities 93 b) Local Strategies to improve health 93 d) retention of local services 98 and 99 Open space	H1 INFRA 1 CF2 CF3 CF5 E&H1 CF4 SUSDEV 2 SUSDEV 3
9. Promoting Sustainable Transport	104 impacts, access to all modes	INFRA 3 INFRA 4 INFRA 5 INFRA 6
10. Supporting High Quality Communications	114 – infrastructure to support economy and social well being	INFRA 2
11. Making Effective use of Land	120 a) mixed uses 120 b) land for wildlife and food production 120 c) Brownfield land 120 d) development of underused buildings	H1 H4 H5 ECON&EMP 1
12. Achieving Well designed Places	126 good designs 127 clear vision 128 design expectations 130 a) Function 130 b) Visual Attractiveness	E&H 4 H4 H6 Design Guidelines

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	NPPF Paragraph	Neighbourhood Plan Policies
	130 c) Local Character and history 133 Processes to improve design 134 Poor design	
14 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change	152 Transition to low carbon and account of flood risk	E&H2 ECON&EMP4
15. Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment	174 Contribute to and enhance the natural environment	E&H2
16. Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment	189 Conservation of heritage assets 190 Positive strategy for conservation 192 Up to date and accessible historic records 194 Requirements of applicants	E&H3

### HOW THE PLAN CONTRIBUTES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Neighbourhood Plan does not designate sites for any type of development but seeks to ensure that its current settlements are sustainable into the future. It seeks to guide development so that those proposals that do come forward can ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan Area continues to have an economic base and a residential population that can be sustained in a way that better lives for existing residents do not worsen lives for future generations. They aim to ensure that the natural and heritage assets of the Neighbourhood Plan Area can continue to be enjoyed into the future and used to nurture local employment, learning and good health.

In Cliffe and Cliffe Woods sustainable development means protection for its distinctive rural landscape and wildlife and its two small settlements. If this is not done without community infrastructure to support new residents, it will not be sustainable.

This is why policies **SUSDEV2 to SUSDEV4** are not prescriptive about new development but try to ensure that infrastructure is protected and developed to support it. Mixed use proposals are encouraged to come forward so that development:

- Has a mix of uses including housing provision
- Is sustainable for existing and new residents
- Ensures that the principal assets of the Neighbourhood Plan Area – its rural landscape and wildlife assets are not eroded.



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In addition, policies **INFRA1 to INFRA8** provide specific proposals for improvements to infrastructure that can support bringing infrastructure up to date to support new forms of employment in a digital world and better transport connectedness across all modes.

### HOW THE PLAN CONTRIBUTES TO ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

*“NPPF economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure (Feb 2019)”*

The Neighbourhood plan policies seek to protect employment space and agricultural land and employment. Policies encourage appropriate new employment activities to nurture a sensitively grown visitor economy and services that enable residents to access what they need without car travel.

### HOW THE PLAN CONTRIBUTES TO SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

*“NPPF Social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being (Feb 2019)”*

The Neighbourhood Plan policies discourage settlement coalescence to prevent loss of character of existing settlements and negative impact on the landscape of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. They also prevent dispersed new development which may lead to isolation and greater car use to access services.

They also seek to protect existing employment space and other community infrastructure to ensure that space is available to sustain both existing and future residents.

Housing policies in the neighbourhood plan encourage use of brownfield land, redundant buildings, and expansion for existing homes to accommodate the growth of households. Policies toward new development encourage a mixed-use approach to support the local economy and provide new facilities that promote health and social well-being.

### HOW THE PLAN CONTRIBUTES TO THE ENVIRONMENT

*“NPPF Environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy. (Feb 2019)”*

The environment and history of the Neighbourhood Plan Area is key to its attractiveness as a place to live and work. It’s protection and also its productive use into the future for economic, social and environmental purposes is a key part of the Neighbourhood Plan Vision:

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*“By 2037 the unique rural landscape of Cliffe and Cliffe Wood Parish will continue to be a haven for wildlife and agriculture, and provide homes, jobs and community infrastructure for people by protecting the heritage of the area and enhancing its character through sustainable development.”*

### GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH MEDWAY COUNCILS LOCAL PLAN

Medway Councils current Local Plan was adopted on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2003. As this plan is now 18 years out of date, using it as the main basis for its conformity with planning policies for Medway has presented some difficulties as national policy has changed significantly as have local circumstances. As a result, the emerging Local Plan has also been included in this Basic Conditions Statement. Medway has been preparing a new Local Plan since 2015 which started in earnest in 2016 with an issues and options report and associated consultation.

Since then Medway has held two rounds of regulation 18 consultation - one on development options in 2017 and one on development strategy in 2018. In order to assess the conformity of the NP with the Emerging Local Plan we have examined both these policy documents to ensure that the Neighbourhood plan is as up to date as possible. For the Development Options of the Local Plan, Medway proposed “Policy Approaches” and for the Development Strategy of the Local Plan Medway proposed “Development Strategy Policies”. Allocation of specific sites for development will not be proposed until the publication of the Local Plan which is currently scheduled in the autumn of 2021. It has to date however, produced a SHELAA which has rejected most sites for development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

In order for the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood plan to reflect the latest evidence as far as possible the Emerging Medway Local Plan evidence base, including its Infrastructure Position Statement has been used to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies.

The tables below show the policies in the Neighbourhood plan against the relevant current local plan of 2003 and the policy approaches and strategy polices of the emergent Medway Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan focusses its policies on those areas no sufficiently covered by the current Local Plan or insufficient to deal with the particular circumstances of the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

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<b>Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan Policy</b>	<b>Current Medway Local Plan Policies 2003</b>	<b>Emerging Medway Local Plan</b>	
		<b>Development Options Policy Approaches</b>	<b>Development Strategy Policies</b>
<p><b>POLICY SUSDEV 1: Settlement coalescence</b></p> <p>Development proposals that would result in the visual or physical merging of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods will not be permitted.</p>	<p><b>S1 (ii)</b> <b>BNE35</b> <b>BNE 36</b> <b>BNE 37</b></p>		<p><b>DS1</b> <b>DS2</b></p>
<p><b>POLICY SUSDEV2: Loss of local facilities</b></p> <p>Development proposals that would involve the loss of one of the uses listed below in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, other than those which are permitted development, will not be supported, unless they relate to a change of use to another use in this list.</p> <p>shops financial and professional services restaurants and cafes drinking establishments hot food takeaways Hotels Non-residential institutions Assembly and leisure</p>	<p><b>ED1</b> <b>R10</b></p>		
<p><b>POLICY SUSDEV3: Changes of use</b></p> <p>Within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, development or change of use to the uses listed in Policy <b>SUSDEV2</b> will be supported in principle, where they do not conflict with other policies within this Plan, and where they would not be harmful to the living conditions of neighbouring residents and are otherwise consistent with sustainable development.</p> <p>Changes of use will have to be justified with evidence of their non-viability and demonstrate that every effort has been made to market them in their current use</p>	<p><b>ED1</b> <b>R10</b></p>		

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<p><b>POLICY SUSDEV4: Character</b></p> <p>All new development, particularly on Greenfield site land, should be sensitive to the landscape and be of a height that does not impact adversely on views from the surrounding countryside. All development proposals should demonstrate how they conserve, enhance, or strengthen the character and distinctive features of the landscape of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and comply where feasible with the <b>Design Guidelines</b> appended to this plan. Where appropriate, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be provided with proposals to ensure that impacts, mitigation, and enhancement opportunities are appropriately addressed.</p>	<b>BNE6</b>		<b>H1</b> <b>H9</b> <b>NE1</b> <b>NE2</b> <b>NE3</b> <b>NE4</b>
<p><b>POLICY SUSDEV5: Infrastructure Sufficiency Statements</b></p> <p>All major new development<sup>1</sup> proposals must be supported by a statement demonstrating infrastructure sufficiency to support the proposal. An assessment of existing infrastructure provision should be undertaken which addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Waste, water, health, education and transport provision and the needs, commitments and planning requirements set out in the Medway Local Plan and relevant thematic policies and site allocation specifications that it contains</li> <li>b) Recent technical studies and engagement with strategic infrastructure commissioners and providers that may update the position set out in the latest Medway Local Plan Infrastructure position statement/ Infrastructure Development Plan or Strategy.</li> <li>c) Accessibility, capacity, and availability of existing infrastructure in the area where this is to be relied upon to support a development proposal.</li> </ul>	<b>S2 (ii)</b>		

<sup>1</sup> The threshold for a **major development** is any application that involves mineral extraction, waste **development**, the provision of 10+ dwellings / a site area over 0.5 Hectares or a floor space of over 1,000sqm / an area of 1 hectare



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		<b>Development Options Policy Approaches</b>	<b>Development Strategy Policies</b>
<p><b>POLICY H1: Housing on Greenfield <sup>2</sup>Sites</b></p> <p>Major development proposals for housing on Greenfield sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be requested to contribute to sustainable development by including uses other than housing that are appropriate to the size and location of sites and where they do not conflict with other policies in this plan.</p>	<b>S2 (ii)</b>	<b>Housing Delivery</b>	<b>H1</b>
<p><b>POLICY H2: Housing Infill</b></p> <p>Within the Neighbourhood Plan Area proposals for new housing development on Previously Developed Land within the existing village boundaries (map 2) will be supported in the form of small-scale infill development within or immediately adjoining the boundaries of its two main villages</p>	<b>H11</b>	<b>Housing Delivery</b>	<b>H1</b>
<p><b>POLICY H3: Rural Exception sites</b></p> <p>Within the Neighbourhood Plan Area proposals for new housing development on previously undeveloped land to meet an identified local need which cannot be met in any other way will be supported subject to the other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan. Criteria to be applied to define local need are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A local connection to the Neighbourhood Plan Area – currently resident, currently employed or with a close family connection</li> <li>b) To address housing need that cannot otherwise be met locally at affordable cost</li> </ul>	<b>H1</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>	<b>H3 H9</b>

<sup>2</sup> Previously undeveloped land

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		<b>Development Options Policy Approaches</b>	<b>Development Strategy Policies</b>
<p><b>POLICY H4: Conversion of Agricultural Buildings to Residential Use</b></p> <p>Proposals for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings in the countryside to small scale residential use will be supported if they:</p> <p>a) Do not result in a significant increase in the existing building footprint or height, are confined to the existing area of farm buildings and maintain the main characteristics of farm buildings, as set out in the Kent Farmsteads Design Guidance</p> <p>b) Conform to the relevant aspects of the <b>Design Guidelines</b> appended to this plan</p> <p>c) In the event of wishing to develop farmsteads or their attendant farmyards and agricultural buildings designs should be shown to conform to the Kent Farmsteads Design Guidance Part 5.</p> <p>d) Do not conflict with other policies in this plan, particularly <b>ECON&amp;EMP1</b></p>	<b>BNE1</b>	<b>Housing Delivery</b>	<b>H1 H9</b>
<p><b>POLICY H5: House Extensions outside village boundaries</b></p> <p>Proposals to extend houses in the countryside will be supported, provided they are not in conflict with the other policies in this plan and follow the <b>Design Guidelines</b> appended to this plan.</p>	<b>H11</b>	<b>Housing Delivery</b>	<b>H1 BE1</b>
<p><b>POLICY H6: House Design</b></p> <p>All new housing design should respect the rural character of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and its immediate context having appropriate regard to the standards set out in the <b>Design Guidelines</b> appended to this plan. Residential development will be permitted to encourage a sustainable mix of housing types and sizes to address local requirements to include social housing in accordance with the Medway Local Plan.</p> <p>Particular attention should be given to building heights to ensure that roof heights do not spoil the aesthetic of the local area. Open front gardens or low hedges will be encouraged to retain the general open look and feel of the Parish.</p>	<b>H1</b>	<b>Housing Delivery Design Housing Design</b>	<b>BE1 BE3</b>

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<p><b>POLICY H7: Housing Type and Tenure</b></p> <p>New housing development should reflect local housing need, particularly for bungalows and small family accommodation in the Neighbourhood Plan Area in terms of mix and tenure as identified in the most up to date SHMA/SHENA<sup>3</sup> and any additional up-to-date evidence.</p> <p>The mix must be appropriate to the size, location and characteristics of the site as well as to the established character and density of the immediate environment to include sufficient parking appropriate to the size of the property as set out in <b>Policy INFRA4</b> of this plan.</p>	<b>H1</b>	<b>Housing Mix Affordable Housing</b>	<b>H2 H3</b>
<p><b>POLICY H8: Housing Density</b></p> <p>The density of new housing development on Greenfield<sup>4</sup> sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area should, as far as possible, be no more than 30 dwellings per hectare to maintain the rural character of the area its sustainability and promote good health impacts from improved residential quality.</p>		<b>Housing Density</b>	<b>BE4</b>
<p><b>POLICY CF1: Loss of leisure and recreation facilities</b></p> <p>Proposals that result in the loss of existing facilities used for indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation shown on Table CF1 and Map CF1 will be resisted unless there is clear evidence that there is no need for the facility or a suitable alternative of facilities of a similar size, quality and accessibility are re-provided or where proposals offer alternative benefits in terms of increased access to leisure and recreation activities</p>	<b>L1 L3</b>	<b>Community Facilities</b>	<b>HC1 HC2</b>

<sup>3</sup> Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment 2015

<sup>4</sup> Land that has not been previously developed

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<p><b>POLICY CF2: New and Improved provision</b></p> <p>Development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan Area which include new leisure and recreation facilities, or the improvement of existing facilities will be encouraged where they are consistent with other proposals and policies in this Plan and adequate to meet the needs generated by new proposals</p> <p>Facilities should be designed for multiple uses to ensure that facilities are viable and sustainable. Developers will be encouraged to work with providers of such facilities to develop proposals and to design them in accordance with the <b>Design Guidelines</b> appended to this plan.</p>	<b>L2</b>	<b>Community Facilities</b>	<b>I1</b>
<p><b>POLICY CF3: Loss of community halls, centres, and places of worship</b></p> <p>Proposals that result in the loss of existing community facilities will not be permitted unless there is clear evidence that:</p> <p>a) There is no need for the facility (in terms of the current capacity of existing provision, its opening times, location, accessibility, and range of facilities available to local people and businesses) or suitable alternative facilities of a similar size and quality are re-provided as part of the proposal.</p> <p>b) proposals offer alternative benefits to the community in terms of access to space to assemble, worship, participate in educational activities and personal or civic celebrations</p>	<b>CF1</b>	<b>Community Facilities</b>	<b>HC2</b>



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		<b>Development Options Policy Approaches</b>	<b>Development Strategy Policies</b>
<p><b>POLICY CF4: Allotments</b></p> <p>1. Any proposals that result in harm to or loss of existing allotments will not be permitted unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The proposal provides a clear and significant social, economic, or environmental benefit to the local population that outweigh the benefits of their current use as allotments.</li> <li>b) Replacement provision is made of at least an equivalent area and quality.</li> <li>c) The proposed alternative land will be located within a radius of no more than 1000 metres of its present location.</li> <li>d) Any developer will prepare new land for immediate use.</li> <li>e) Any developer will compensate existing tenants for loss of any crops and relocation costs.</li> </ul> <p>2. Any proposal to increase allotment or community garden provision across the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be welcomed and encouraged where it is consistent with other policies in this Plan.</p>	<b>L3 CF1</b>	<b>Healthy Food Environment</b>	<b>HC1 HC2</b>
<p><b>POLICY CF5: Community Health</b></p> <p>Development proposals should be supported by a health impact assessment that is proportionate to their size and scope.</p>		<b>Health Health Inequality</b>	<b>HC1</b>
<p><b>POLICY E&amp;H1: Public Open Spaces</b></p> <p>Development proposals that result in any loss of existing public green spaces as shown on the maps, across all types within the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be supported only where replacement green spaces which are suitably located and equal or superior (in terms of size and quality) are provided for public use</p>	<b>L3</b>	<b>Open Space and Sports Facilities</b>	<b>HC1 HC2</b>

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		<b>Development Options Policy Approaches</b>	<b>Development Strategy Policies</b>
<p><b>POLICY E&amp;H2: Biodiversity</b></p> <p>All development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be expected to protect and enhance biodiversity in line with NPPF and Medway Local Plan requirements. Development must demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity in an ecological report consistent with BS 42020.<sup>5</sup></p> <p>Proposals for additional tree planting, where appropriate, will be welcomed</p>	<p><b>S1 (i)</b> <b>BNE 36</b> <b>BNE 37</b> <b>BNE 47</b></p>	<p><b>Strong Green Infrastructure Landscape</b></p>	<p><b>NE1</b> <b>NE2</b> <b>NE4</b></p>
<p><b>POLICY E&amp;H3: Hidden History</b></p> <p>Development proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be expected to consider its unique history and heritage assets as part of developing the details of their proposals. In particular regard should be had to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The nature and significance of the heritage assets identified within the detailed records Heritage Environmental Records (HER).</li> <li>b) The general location and grouping of known heritage assets (see Hidden History Maps 1 and 2) Maps that will aid Medway Council, as the planning authority to be more aware of the possible hidden heritage. Areas within the nucleus of the old village of Cliffe and surrounding ancient manors and farmsteads should be treated as highly significant.</li> <li>c) It will be necessary for any development proposal to be discussed with Medway Council at the earliest opportunity to review the Kent Heritage Environment Records and maps showing areas of archaeological/historical significance in an around the development proposal site. This will guide the nature of investigations required and</li> </ul>	<p><b>S1 (ii)</b> <b>BNE 12</b></p>	<p><b>Heritage</b></p>	<p><b>BE5</b> <b>BE6</b></p>

<sup>5</sup> BS42020:2013 Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development

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<p>enable early guidance from Kent County Council’s Heritage Conversation team on purely archaeological matters, where relevant.</p> <p>Development proposals should include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) An assessment of the likely impact of development on the heritage assets in and around the site and how impact can be avoided or mitigated.</li> <li>b) Any proposals for enhancement of any heritage asset in and around the development site</li> <li>c) Ensure that these assessments and proposals are distinctly and conspicuously included in the development proposals.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>POLICY E&amp;H4: Design Guidelines</b></p> <p>All development proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan Area should apply the principles and guidelines included in the <b>Design Guidelines</b> appended to this plan.</p>	<p>S2 (i) S4 BNE 1 BNE 2</p>	<p>Landscape Design</p>	<p>NE1 NE2 NE4 NE5</p>
<p><b>POLICY ECON&amp;EMP1: Agriculture</b></p> <p>Development proposals that result in the loss of land classified as agricultural (Grades 1-3) will not be supported unless there is a proven need for sustainable development which demonstrates benefits which far outweigh the loss of food growing space in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and its contribution to national food security.</p>	<p>BNE28 BNE 29 BNE 48</p>	<p>Rural Economy</p>	<p>E1 E2 E3</p>

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		<b>Development Options Policy Approaches</b>	<b>Development Strategy Policies</b>
<p><b>POLICY ECON&amp;EMP2: Recreation and Tourism</b></p> <p>Development proposals for recreational and tourism activities/facilities will be encouraged in the Neighbourhood Plan Area provided that the proposals do not conflict with other policies in this Plan and that:</p> <p>a) It can be demonstrated that they do not have a significantly harmful effect on congestion or road safety as defined by Medway Council</p> <p>b) Their siting and scale have strong regard to potential impacts on the character and the historic, natural environment and disruption of wildlife assets of the Neighbourhood Plan Area</p> <p>c) Design and materials are in keeping with the character of the area, reinforce local distinctiveness and sense of place and follow the principles set out in the <b>Design Guidelines</b> included in this plan</p>	<p><b>S2 (iii)</b> <b>BNE 2</b> <b>BNE 26</b> <b>ED12</b> <b>ED16</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Development</b> <b>Rural Economy</b> <b>Tourism</b></p>	<p><b>E1</b> <b>E2</b> <b>E4</b></p>
<p><b>POLICY ECON&amp;EMP3: Change of use</b></p> <p>Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of land or buildings in employment use to non-employment uses, other than those which are permitted development, will only be permitted when:</p> <p>a) Marketing of the site over a period of a minimum of 24 months demonstrates that there is no realistic prospect of the use of the site for employment purposes; or</p> <p>b) The proposals allow for retention of some employment uses on the proposed site where feasible given the size of the site</p>	<p><b>BNE 26</b> <b>ED1</b> <b>ED3</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Development</b> <b>Rural Economy</b> <b>Tourism</b></p>	<p><b>E2</b> <b>RTC1</b> <b>RTC2</b> <b>RTC10</b></p>



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		<b>Development Options Policy Approaches</b>	<b>Development Strategy Policies</b>
<p><b>POLICY ECON&amp;EMP4: Retail</b></p> <p>Development proposals for local retail and other village centre uses will be supported in suitable alternative locations elsewhere in the Parish. Proposals for a new grocery store/small supermarket will be supported provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) It does not conflict with other policies in this plan:</li> <li>b) It is no larger than 200–300 sq. m,</li> <li>c) It is in an accessible and central position, providing good links to each village and other community facilities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>S2 (iii) BNE 26 R10</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Development Rural Economy Tourism Retail and Town Centres</b></p>	<p><b>E2 RTC1 RTC2 RTC10</b></p>
<p><b>POLICY ECON&amp;EMP5: New employment space</b></p> <p>Applications for the development of new small business units, including through change of use of redundant rural buildings to business use, will be favourably considered, subject to other policies in this plan and the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) that proposals are designed to accommodate the <b>Design Guidelines</b> of this plan</li> <li>b) there is no harm to the rural character of the area or to the amenities of residents</li> <li>c) there would be no negative impact on the local road network</li> <li>d) there is no unacceptable conflict with agriculture and other land-based activity</li> <li>e) if an existing building, the building concerned would not require substantial extension by over 50% of its current footprint</li> </ul>	<p><b>ED3</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Development Rural Economy Tourism</b></p>	<p><b>E2</b></p>

## Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan 2021 Basic Conditions Statement

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<p><b>POLICY INFRA1: Health Facilities</b></p> <p>Proposals for new health facilities to merge, extend and/or to improve existing ones in the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be supported where they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Enable an increase in capacity for numbers of patients to be accommodated</li> <li>b) Are consistent with other policies in this Plan.</li> </ul> <p>Developers will be encouraged to work with relevant partners to ensure that adequate health facilities are delivered and included within development proposals where appropriate, or through planning obligations to provide land or make financial contributions towards their development.</p>	<b>CF 3</b>	<p><b>Health Health Inequalities Community Infrastructure</b></p>	<p><b>HC1 I1</b></p>
<p><b>POLICY INFRA2: Communications</b></p> <p>Proposals for the provision, improvement, and enhancement of the speed of advanced communication technologies within the Neighbourhood Plan Area for residents and businesses for education, training and access to services will be supported as part of development proposals where they are consistent with other policies in this Plan. These should include the following that should have the ability for further upgrade as technology advances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Implementation of Fibre optic broadband connection to all premises</li> <li>b) Full 4G and 5G mobile telephone coverage and next generation telephone data systems as they become available.</li> <li>c) Radio and television broadcasting reception and coverage.</li> </ul>	<b>CF 14</b>	<p><b>Communications Infrastructure</b></p>	<p><b>I1 I4</b></p>

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<p><b>POLICY INFRA3: Transport – walking and bridleways</b></p> <p>Existing rights of way will be protected from development that adversely impact on accessibility within and between settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan Area</p> <p>Proposals for new development will be expected to take advantage of opportunities to make appropriate connections to and where feasible improvements to existing footpaths, alleyways, rights of way and bridleways in the Neighbourhood Plan Area to improve connectivity for residents and businesses.</p> <p>Where changes to paths and bridleways are needed as a result of new development, opportunities to make them multi-user should be considered</p>	<b>S6</b>	<b>Transport Connectivity</b>	<b>I1</b> <b>T1</b> <b>T2</b> <b>T9</b> <b>T10</b> <b>T11</b>
<p><b>POLICY INFRA4: Parking – Cars and Cycles</b></p> <p>The provision of car and cycle parking should, as far as possible, allow for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Off street vehicle and cycle parking to be contiguous with, and part of, each property, rather than provided as part of a shared arrangement</li> <li>b) Shared parking areas that are provided are built to Secured by Design standards and each space is clearly visible from the property it serves</li> <li>c) Parking provision for new development will be required to meet the following standards set out below unless there is a clear justification for the application of a lower standard to achieve sustainable development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 bed house/flat - 1.5 off-road car parking space (rounded down, i.e. 3 dwellings = rounded to 4)</li> <li>- 2 bed house/flat - 2 off-road car parking spaces</li> <li>- 3 bed house/flat - 3 off-road car parking spaces</li> <li>- 4+ bed house/flat - 3 off-road car parking spaces</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>T 13</b> <b>T 18</b>	<b>Transport Vehicle parking Cycle parking</b>	<b>I1</b> <b>T1</b> <b>T2</b> <b>T9</b> <b>T10</b> <b>T11</b>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A garage will be acceptable as a parking space provided that its internal dimensions are at least 3m wide x 6m long. Tandem parking will only be permitted where there is no suitable alternative.</li> <li>- Car space dimensions should be 2.7m x 5.4</li> <li>- Electric charging points accessible to all spaces</li> </ul>			
<p><b>POLICY INFRA5: Public Transport</b></p> <p>The improvement of the bus terminus in Cliffe at the Six Bells Public House, should be pursued to improve its safety and usability (lighting, amenity for bus users). This should be secured through planning obligations for its provision or for financial contributions towards their implementation.</p>	<p><b>S 6</b> <b>T11</b> <b>T18</b></p>	<p><b>Infrastructure Developer Contributions</b></p>	<p><b>I1</b> <b>T1</b> <b>T2</b> <b>T9</b> <b>T10</b> <b>T11</b></p>
<p><b>POLICY INFRA6: Public Transport - Cycling in the Neighbourhood Area</b></p> <p>Locations for improvements to cycling in the Neighbourhood Area are shown on map <b>INFRA6</b> below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the joint footpath/cycle path on the B2000 at Mockbeggar Farm</li> <li>- New cycle and pedestrian access routes from the Neighbourhood Plan Area to Higham Station, Hoo Centre and Strood town centre</li> </ul> <p>New shared pedestrian/cycling provision should be provided in accordance with Department of Transport Local Transport Note 1/12 September 2012</p> <p>These improvements will be secured, where applicable, via Section 106 agreements attached to planning consents within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.</p>	<p><b>S 6</b> <b>T11</b> <b>T18</b></p>	<p><b>Infrastructure Developer Contributions</b></p>	<p><b>I1</b> <b>T1</b> <b>T2</b> <b>T9</b> <b>T10</b> <b>T11</b></p>



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<p><b>POLICY INFRA7: Road Safety</b></p> <p>The improvement of visibility on the B2000 at its junctions with View Road, Tennyson Avenue, Ladyclose Avenue, Mortimers Avenue, Milton Road and Merryboys Road will be secured through planning obligations for their provision or for financial contributions towards their implementation</p>	<b>T11</b>	<p><b>Transport Infrastructure Developer Contributions</b></p>	<p><b>I1</b> <b>T1</b> <b>T2</b> <b>T9</b> <b>T10</b> <b>T11</b></p>
<p><b>POLICY INFRA 8: Provision of outdoor sports pitches</b></p> <p>Currently there is a shortfall for one additional rugby pitch and one youth size pitch and flood-lit training /mid-week facilities (4G pitch) within the Neighbourhood Area to enable residents to take part locally without the need to travel. Support to provide these facilities will be secured through planning obligations for their provision or for financial contributions towards their implementation</p>		<p><b>Open Space and Sports Facilities</b></p>	
<p><b>POLICY INFRA 9: Infrastructure priorities</b></p> <p>Provision of infrastructure improvements outlined in policies <b>INFRA 2, INFRA 5, INFRA6 INFRA7 and INFRA8</b> are regarded as priorities for implementation using section 106 contributions secured from developments that take place within the Neighbourhood Area in order to mitigate pressures on local infrastructure arising from development</p>	<b>T11</b>	<p><b>Transport Infrastructure Developer Contributions</b></p>	<p><b>I1</b> <b>T1</b> <b>T2</b> <b>T9</b> <b>T10</b> <b>T11</b></p>

# Diversity impact assessment

<b>TITLE</b>
Draft Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan for consultation
<b>DATE</b>
17 February 2022
<b>LEAD OFFICER.</b>
Catherine Smith, Planning Manager – Policy Planning Service, RCE
<b>1 Summary description of the proposed change</b>
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
<p>Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council has prepared a draft Neighbourhood Plan for its parish and submitted it to Medway Council to progress the process of bringing the plan to adoption. Medway Council is required to publish the draft Neighbourhood Plan for consultation.</p> <p>This is first Neighbourhood Plan submitted to Medway Council. Once adopted, it will form part of the development plan for the area, alongside the Medway Local Plan, and will be used in determining planning applications.</p> <p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan sets out policies for the sustainable growth of the parish of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. It includes policies for community services, infrastructure, environment, heritage, transport and employment.</p> <p>The policies guide decisions on future development. The Neighbourhood Plan will apply to the parish area of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods.</p>
<b>2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment</b>
<p>Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile</p> <p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan considers the demographic profile of the community in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods and notes the ageing population in Cliffe Woods and an increasing younger population in Cliffe. The Neighbourhood Planning group carried out consultation and engagement with all sectors of the local community throughout the preparation of the draft plan in recent years. The policies seek to provide for sustainable development in the parish, supporting local communities and protecting the area's heritage and environment. These include housing to meet the needs of local residents. The policies and the Neighbourhood Plan are intended to provide the benefits of sustainable development for all residents. Given the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is difficult to define impacts on specific groups in the community, as the policies will apply to the whole parish in relation to development proposals.</p>

## Diversity impact assessment

### 3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	No
Disability	No	Yes	No
Gender reassignment	No	No	Yes
Marriage/civil partnership	No	No	Yes
Pregnancy/maternity	No	No	Yes
Race	No	No	Yes
Religion/belief	No	No	Yes
Sex	No	No	Yes
Sexual orientation	No	No	Yes
Other (eg low income groups)	No	No	Yes

### 4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

The draft Neighbourhood Plan promotes sustainable development in the parish of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. It aims to promote social and economic well-being for residents, and protect and strengthen the environment. All residents are potentially affected. The housing policies seek to provide for a range of local needs, including for older and younger people. The draft plan seeks to secure community facilities that can benefit a range of local residents, particularly those who are less mobile.

# Diversity impact assessment

**5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?**

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

N/A

**6 Action plan**

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date

**7 Recommendation**

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

To proceed with publishing the draft Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan for consultation.

To review on receipt of Examiner's report and final draft of Neighbourhood Plan proposed for adoption (timetable to be confirmed), and to monitor the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan on an annual basis, following adoption.

**8 Authorisation**

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

**Assistant Director**

**Date of authorisation**



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