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Arches Chatham
Neighbourhood Plan

2022 - 2040





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Chapter 1

Foreword



Our neighbourhood planning journey began at a community event by Arches Local on a winter's day in Town Hall Gardens. Conversations transpired into an ambition to create Medway's first urban Neighbourhood Plan, born out of a desire to have a greater influence on the future of our community.

Through extensive engagement with hundreds of local people, we have formed a Plan whose purpose is to transform Shipwrights, Luton and The Brook into areas where people wish to sustainably live, work, raise children and grow old.

Our deepest thanks go to everyone that has taken part in our events, surveys and workshops that led to the creation of this Neighbourhood Plan. A special thank you to Catherine Smith and Raymonda Olivia Lawson of Medway Council and Nada Elfeituri and Lydia Ogden of Create Streets for their continued support.

Our work is by no means finished and with the Plan submitted another chapter begins - delivering it. Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic climate, we have already seen elements of our aspirations materialise, such as Luton Road's casualty reduction scheme and an urban greening programme.

While uncertainties lie ahead, this Plan will ensure the Chatham of tomorrow is happier, healthier and greener.

Arches 'Chatham' Neighbourhood Forum

December 2022

LUTON



Introduction

This Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by the Arches 'Chatham' Neighbourhood Forum (ACNF) and supported by Arches Local. Arches Local is a resident-led organisation that is part of the Big Local initiative administered by Local Trust.

The ACNF formally became a designated Neighbourhood Area (see Map 1) and Neighbourhood Forum on 6 August 2019 at Medway Council's Cabinet meeting (decision no. 90/2019). The forum encompasses local residents, business owners, community organisations and elected members.

The forum is named after the three railway bridges, collectively known as Luton Arches, located 900 metres from Chatham's town centre acting as the 'gateway' to and from Luton. The neighbourhood is made up of over 8,000 people enriched in a diversity of cultural and generational backgrounds.

Chatham is one of five towns that make up the Medway conurbation, within the county of Kent. It is situated at the point where the North Downs meets the River Medway. Much of the surrounding area is scenic, with an undulating topography that allows for wide views across Medway. Chatham's built environment largely comprises of Victorian and Edwardian terraces.

Chatham was historically a naval town whose economy largely depended on the Royal Naval Dockyard. The closure of the dockyard in 1984 significantly impacted employment levels and the town's prosperity. This in turn affected the condition of the built environment as homes and streets fell into disrepair.

While the Neighbourhood Area has been redeveloped in parts, it continues to suffer from high levels of deprivation exceeding Medway and south eastern averages. For example, the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) of Medway 015E within our Neighbourhood Area is ranked 144th most deprived out of 32,844 LSOAs - making it amongst the bottom 0.4%. As documented by the ACNF Area Study and Map, deprivation is further exacerbated by high rates of fly-tipping, poorly managed housing, sub-standard infill developments and hostile street environments towards active travel. In an attempt to solve some of these challenges, the community felt it was prudent to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

As documented by the Consultation Statement, the key issues and concerns expressed by local stakeholders formed the starting point for our Plan's vision and objectives as initially established in February 2020.

Chapter 2

Vision & Objectives

This Neighbourhood Plan sets out a framework to improve the area over the plan period.

"The plan's vision is to transform the neighbourhood area into a beautiful, green and prosperous place in which people wish to stay, live and work; a neighbourhood to raise children, help others and grow old; a place in which people can rediscover a sense of community, pride and purpose; a place with a beating heart."

This vision is supported by five key aims. These focus on improving the public realm, creating new affordable homes, promoting sustainable transport, supporting net neutral lifestyles, and facilitating a happier and healthier community.

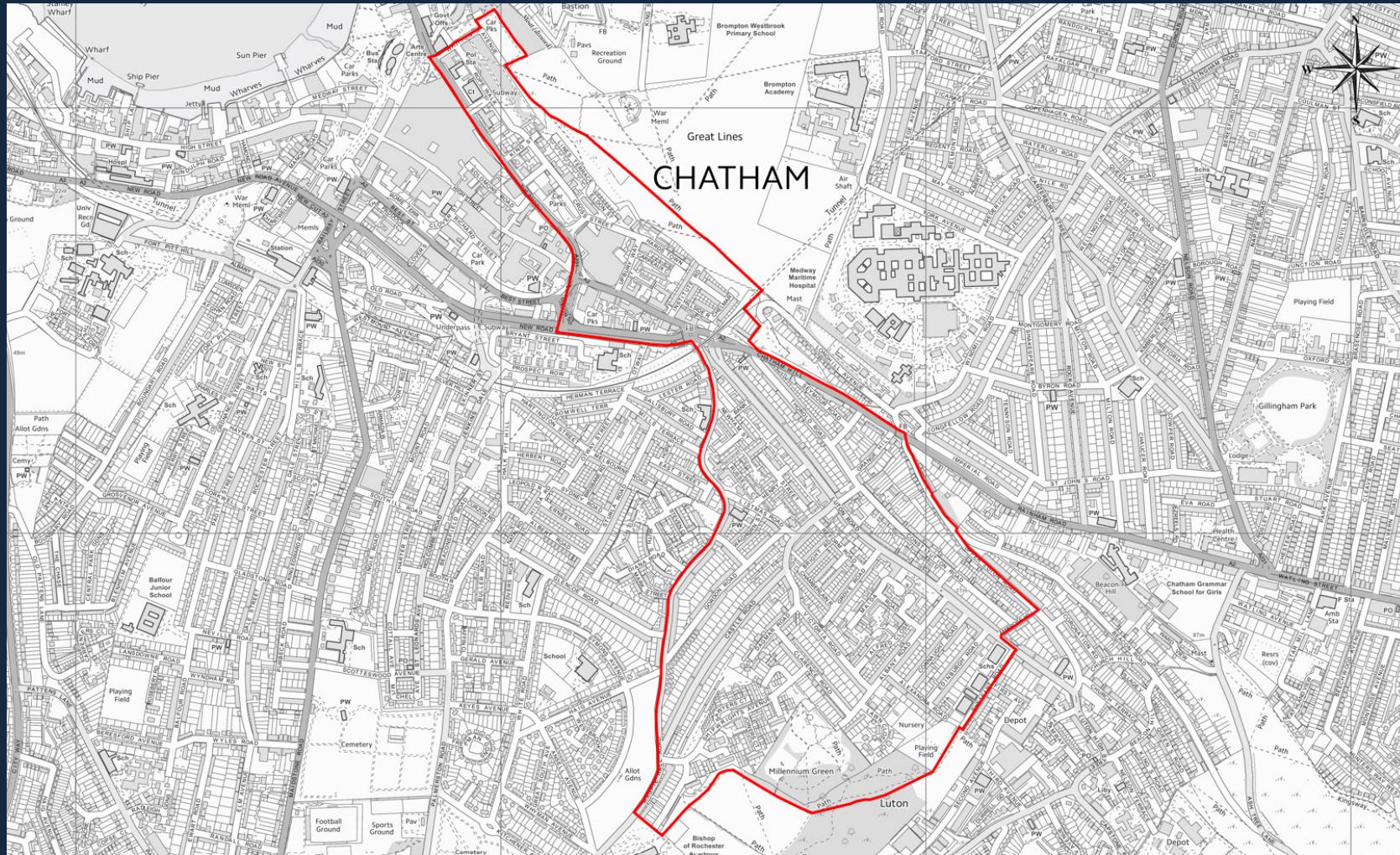
There are five key policy areas and a number of project proposals within the Community Action Plan to bring to life the vision and aims of the plan, including:

- 1. Housing:** Creating beautiful, high-quality and affordable homes that create a cohesive and multi-generational community.
- 2. Built & Natural Environment:** Providing safe, inclusive and pleasant streets and public spaces that protect our environment and will be embraced by all.
- 3. Sustainable Transport:** Creating a car-lite neighbourhood in which residents reclaim the streets for walking, cycling, playing and shopping.

- 4. Local Economy:** Revitalising the local economy and reviving the high street along Luton Road, by making the area a desirable place to do business.
- 5. Community Spaces:** Protecting and improving community facilities and ensuring that no resident is left behind.

The Community Action Plan sets out a series of projects which can deliver tangible change within the Neighbourhood Area and plan period. This includes street art installations, urban greening and exploring School Streets initiatives.

This plan allocates a number of sites for potential development within the plan period. The site allocations should act as a guide to shape any forthcoming development proposed for those sites. Development of the sites remains at the discretion of the landowner. These allocations should help give greater certainty and clarity to landowners and developers on what is expected and to ensure that potential development aligns with the community's vision and aspirations set out within the ACNP.



Map 1: Designated Neighbourhood Area.

Chapter 3

Policies

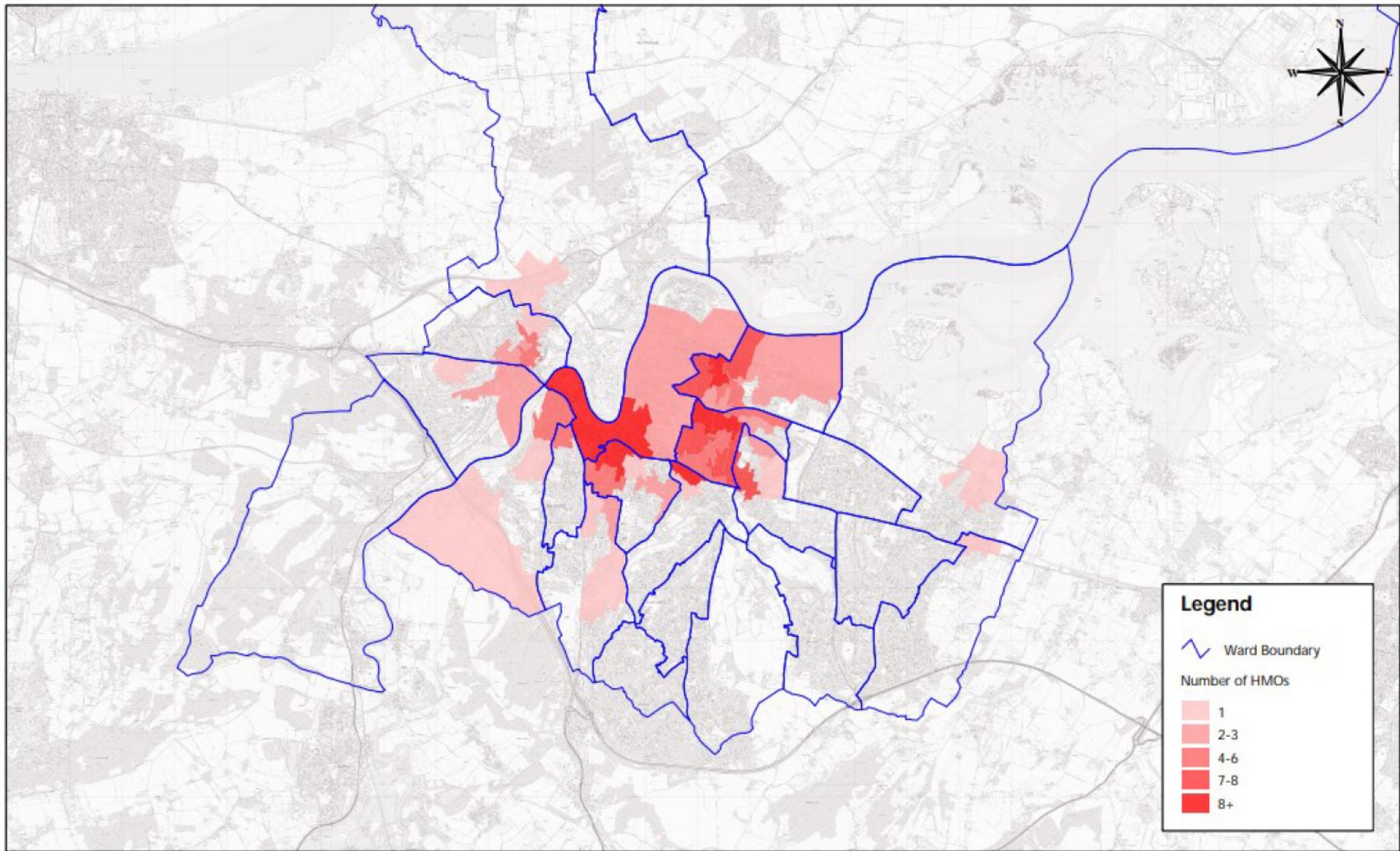
Housing



Policy No.	Description
HO1 - Affordable Housing	<p>Family housing is under-represented in the Neighbourhood Area and therefore the delivery of larger homes is strongly supported.</p> <p>At least 10% of dwellings in new developments of 10 homes or more should be affordable. These developments must be tenure blind and benefit the same level of access and amenities.</p> <p>Where new development is required to provide affordable housing, on-site delivery should be prioritised in the first instance. Off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu would require robust justification, and such provision or contribution should be made within the Neighbourhood Area where possible.</p>
HO1 - Rationale	<p>The trigger for affordable housing has been designed to align with the policy requirements of the emerging Medway Local Plan 2037. In addition, a life stage modelling exercise was undertaken as part of a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for the Heart of Chatham project, which looked at the sizes of dwellings occupied by households at different life stages and projects the growth and decline of those household age groups over the ACNP's plan period. For information, whilst not a policy requirement in the Neighbourhood Plan, the results from the exercise determined that new development should be restricted to homes with 3 or more bedrooms because these size categories are so under-represented at present compared with what the future population might be expected to need given the existing preferences of different age groups across Medway. It also suggested that an injection of larger homes would improve the offering for larger families who have few options for their next step on the property ladder, and would also widen choice in general. Affordable housing needs to be well-integrated into a mixed tenure development and indistinguishable from market housing, as national planning policy expects developments to foster social interactions between groups who 'might not otherwise come into contact with each other' (Paragraph 96 of the National Planning Policy Framework), and to be designed to be inclusive.</p>

HO2 - Beautiful Design	All development proposals should demonstrate that they have had regard to the Design Code (Appendix A). They should: respect the scale, density and identified valued characteristics of the Neighbourhood Area. The use of renewable energy and energy storage and/or the orientation of buildings to benefit from solar, water efficiency measures, and/or the reuse of locally sourced building materials, and/or the integration of district heating systems will be supported.
HO2 - Rationale	Community engagement has demonstrated that local people's valued characteristics of the area derive from the traditional housing stock of the neighbourhood, rather than what has been delivered through new-build developments (see Consultation Statement). New-build developments have been regarded as harmful to the area's historic character and architectural identity (see ACNF Area Study). In addition, a 2020 survey of 150 residents revealed that 73.3% of people strongly supported the notion that new buildings should be designed to be highly energy efficient/carbon neutral (see Consultation Statement).
HO3 - Family Housing	Developments that result in the net loss of family housing in the Neighbourhood Area will not be supported. Family housing can be defined as having 2 or more bedrooms with access to external amenity space. Developments that re-introduce family housing – including conversions of existing properties into family housing – will be strongly supported. Rear and upward extensions, as well as the combination of two homes into a larger family home, are also supported. Conversions should have regard to the standards set in the Design Code (Appendix A).
HO3 - Rationale	A Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) produced for the Heart of Chatham project illustrated the under-supply of family housing using a life stage modelling exercise. As the area comprises of a significant amount of two-up, two-down pre-war family homes, the policy defines family housing as encompassing 2 or more bedrooms with access to external amenity space. If it was to be defined as 3 or more bedrooms, the supply of this type of housing would be placed at further risk due to potential conversions of these aforementioned properties. This policy aims to bring back a greater mixed variety of different sized homes to the area, including family homes, and gives homeowners the opportunity to make their existing homes fit for growing families.

HO4 - Site Allocations	<p>The following 8 sites are allocated for a mix of uses, which includes residential and commercial:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Brook and King Street land 2. Former Go Outdoors 3. Union Place 4. 393 High Street 5. Pembroke Court car park 6. Arches View 7. Bright Road 8. Dagmar Road <p>Development proposals should have regard to the site-by-site guidance provided in Chapter 4 and to the ACNP Design Code. For any new residential development in this area, financial contributions towards the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy are required, to mitigate increased recreational disturbance on those coastal SPAs and Ramsar Sites.</p>
HO4 - Rationale	<p>There are a number of sites in the Neighbourhood Area which may be expected to come forward for development in the duration of the plan period. See the Site Allocations Report (Appendix E) for the rationale and process that led to the identification of the 8 allocated sites.</p>
HO5 - HMO	<p>An over-concentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) within the Neighbourhood Area will not be supported. The threshold is defined as 20% HMO on the road of the planning application, ensuring that only 1 out of a consecutive row of 5 units is converted to C4. Two C4s should not adjoin and no C3 property should be sandwiched between two HMO.</p>
HO5 - Rationale	<p>HMO can play an important role in the supply of housing locally. However, concentrations of HMO have resulted in changes to the character of the area, contribute to high parking stress, produce transiency and lower the standards of amenity for local residents. In turn, this has led to concerns that the community is becoming unbalanced in parts due to the number of short-term tenants with weaker community ties. Locally, numerous clusters of licensed HMO exist (see Map 2 on p.14), although these are in a state of disrepair (see ACNF Area Study map) and there are also some that exist without the benefit of planning permission but are now immune from enforcement action. ACNF has developed this policy guided by the successes of other Local Planning Authorities, particularly Enfield Council who share similar housing and socio-economic challenges.</p>



Number of HMOs by neighbourhood (5+ residents) in 2021

Map 2: The number of HMO by neighbourhood in Medway, 2021.

HO6 - Outdoor Space	All new developments must provide high quality outdoor space for use by occupants. The loss of existing garden space will not be supported where it results in harm to the amenity of occupiers.
HO6 - Rationale	Friends of the Earth scored the Neighbourhood Area a rating of D and E, which means the neighbourhood is among the most deprived of green space, including gardens and parks.
HO7 - Historic Environment	Development must conserve heritage assets in accordance with their significance. Subject to this, the use of traditional materials, patterns or designs where appropriate and the interpretation, alteration or use of heritage assets to better reveal their significance will be supported.
HO7 - Rationale	In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 196), plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and appreciation of the historic environment. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that 'great weight' should be given to the need to conserve designated heritage assets against the threat imposed by new developments.

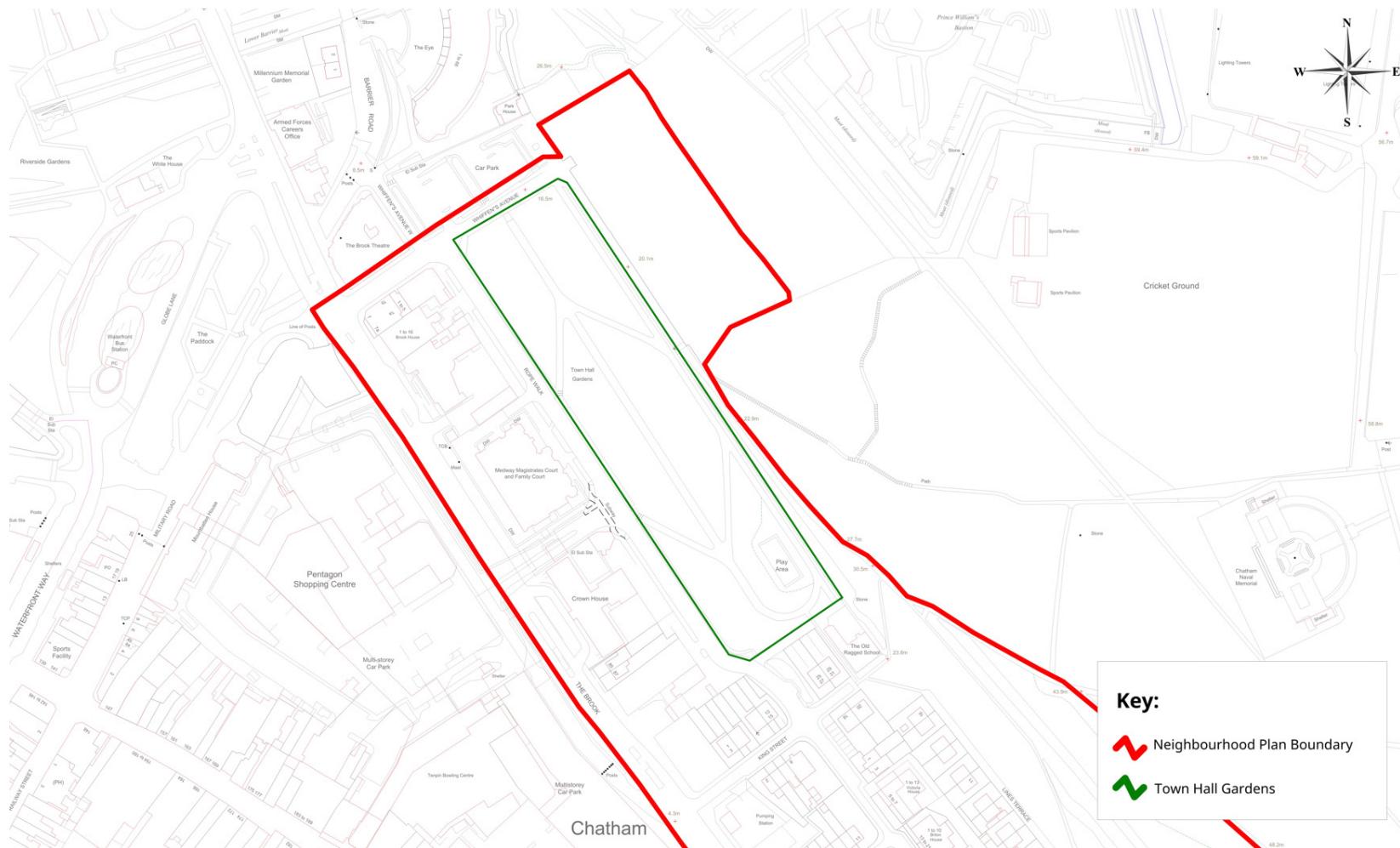
Policies

Built & Natural Environment



Policy No.	Description
BNE1 - Public Realm Enhancement	<p>The following public realm improvements will be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening and improving pedestrian routes, including high quality paving, and raised crossing points. • Enhancing the connectivity of the neighbourhood area, including ecological connectivity through the creation of linear parks and ecological corridors. • Where possible, incorporating permeable surfaces and/or other suitable sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) designs to reduce the risk of surface water flooding and increase local resilience to climate change. • Increasing the frequency and quality of greenery in the area. • Improving the safety of the public realm from road traffic collisions and anti-social behaviour. • Contributing to the identity of the neighbourhood through public art interventions.
BNE1 - Rationale	<p>Studies of the area, which include an AECOM area-wide assessment and the ACNF Area Study revealed that the current streetscape provides an unpleasant experience for pedestrians and cyclists. Pavements are often narrow and of poor quality materials, including tarmac, and excessive street furniture, such as pedestrian guard railing, create a 'cluttering' effect. In addition, the policy's suggested public realm improvements are demonstrably supported by residents through community consultation. This is also supported by De-Cluttering Streets in Medway 2013 report and Manual for Streets 2.</p>

BNE2 - Local Green Space	<p>This plan designates the following as Local Green Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Hall Gardens • Luton Millennium Green <p>The areas of Local Green Space are shown on the plans in this Chapter. The management of development within areas of Local Green Space will be consistent with that for development within Green Belts, as set out in national policy.</p>
BNE2 - Rationale	<p>The designation of Town Hall Gardens and Luton Millennium Green as Local Green Spaces was determined by a set of criteria, which is demonstrated in Appendix D. In addition, in a survey of 150 residents, 91.3% said that green space was important for their physical and mental well-being (see Consultation Statement).</p>



Map 3: Boundary of Local Green Space designation for Town Hall Gardens.



Map 4: Boundary of Local Green Space designation for Luton Millennium Green.

BNE3 - Public Open Spaces	The enhancement of existing and the development of new public open spaces that provide for a range of activities meeting local needs will be strongly supported. The provision of new sports and recreational facilities will be supported. New public open spaces should be easily accessible. Existing public open spaces should be retained unless they are replaced with equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in at least as accessible a location within the Neighbourhood Area and replacement must result in biodiversity net gain.
BNE3 - Rationale	There are two principal public open spaces in the area, Town Hall Gardens and Luton Millennium Green. In a densely populated area, these spaces provide valuable parks for local communities and further investment in them can provide for more facilities and improved access. The benefits of open spaces are evidenced in national studies, including the National Heritage Fund's Parks for People 2021 report.
BNE4 - Urban Greening	<p>The planting of new trees, hedges and hedgerows will be supported. New development (excluding householder applications) should take opportunities to increase green infrastructure, including green roofs and walls and pleached trees.</p> <p>Existing trees in the Neighbourhood Area should be retained. In the exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that a tree needs to be felled, it must be replaced within the Neighbourhood Area with at least one new tree of at least Heavy or Extra Heavy Standard (12cm-16cm girth).</p> <p>All new tree planting should be of a native species suited to pollution absorption wherever possible.</p>
BNE4 - Rationale	There is currently a clear lack of urban green infrastructure in the area and the limited amount in existence is not well joined up. Community-led efforts by Arches Local to introduce greenery into the dense, built-up parts of the area have proved successful and are continuing annually. Various international studies have demonstrated street trees' ability to reduce toxic air mortality, improve mental health, and encourage biodiversity (Riondato, 2020), (Wolf, 2018) and (Wood & Marzluff, 2020).

BNE5 - Protection of Designated Sites	Development proposals must demonstrably avoid harm, directly or indirectly, to the scientific or nature conservation interests of designated sites including SPA, Ramsar, SSSI and national nature reserves. They should also promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitat deciduous woodlands located within the Neighbourhood Area (see DEFRA Central England Inventory 2022).
BNE5 - Rationale	The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that development in the Neighbourhood Area has the potential to impact on sites of international importance (see Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment information submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan). In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to encourage the protection and improvement of its limited woodland.
BNE6 - Non-designated Heritage Assets	<p>Proposals which directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets should demonstrate that the benefits of the development outweigh any loss of significance of the asset and cannot otherwise be provided in a less harmful manner. The Neighbourhood Plan nominates the following sites/buildings as Non-designated Heritage Assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Crown, 346 High Street, Chatham • 421 High Street, Chatham • 2-4 Luton Road, Chatham • 4a Luton Road, Chatham • 8a Luton Road, Chatham • 134a Luton Road, Chatham • Invicta Social Club, 207 Luton Road, Chatham • All Saints Church, Magpie Hall Road, Chatham • 31 Grove Road, Chatham • Sydney Villa, 5-7 Constitution Road, Chatham • Town Hall Gardens, Rope Walk, Chatham • Loxley House, 219 New Road, Chatham • Elephant & Castle, 142 Luton Road, Chatham • Luton Arches, Chatham
BNE6 - Rationale	These sites have been identified by the Neighbourhood Forum as being of key significance to the local community's built heritage and identity, which is demonstrated in Appendix B. By nominating these sites as Non-designated Heritage Assets, they are afforded protection from the negative impacts of future development.



Policies

Sustainable Transport

Policy No.	Description
ST1 - Air Quality	<p>Developments which provide a gain of housing should demonstrate how they will contribute to the improvement of local air quality. Proposals should also be in accordance with any local air quality action plan and planning guidance. The following will be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of low emission vehicles in construction • Street-level greenery to absorb pollution • Tree planting (where possible native, particularly those best suited for pollution absorption) • Freight consolidation • Pedestrian-priority street design • Cycle parking • Segregated cycle tracks • Incorporating active travel routes through sites
ST1 - Rationale	<p>Nitrogen dioxide is the main pollutant of concern within Medway, primarily deriving from road traffic emissions. New development is likely to put existing areas of poor air quality under additional pressure and could negate actions to improve air quality. The Neighbourhood Area partly falls within the Central Medway Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), including A2 New Road and Luton Road. The AQMA was declared by Medway Council in 2010 due to exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ above the Air Quality Objective (AQO).</p>
ST2 - Active Travel Routes	<p>The revival or creation of new routes for active travel which are publicly accessible, well-maintained and safely designed for users will be supported.</p>
ST2 - Rationale	<p>The provision of new or improved routes for active travel can enable increased levels of walking and cycling throughout the Neighbourhood Area, in turn reducing air pollution and improving the physical health of residents. In addition, in a survey of 150 residents, the question of 'how do you want to travel in 2030' was overwhelmingly answered as 'walking', followed by tram (see Consultation Statement). Example locations of existing active travel routes in the Neighbourhood Area include Luton Road service road (Pig Alley), Henry Street/Newnham Street estate and Market Place (between New Road and High Street).</p>

ST3 - Humanising Luton Road	Improvements to the public realm along Luton Road, including measures to minimise traffic impacts, will be supported.
ST3 - Rationale	Luton Road is categorised as a C class road, although it has become a rat-run thoroughfare for motorists travelling to and from the outlying suburbs of Chatham, such as Lordswood. This is despite 43% of residents living in the Neighbourhood Area not owning a private car (Census 2011). The car-dominated public realm has harmed the experience for pedestrians and cyclists, with access to local shops and amenities hindered by the impact of traffic. A shift towards a more pedestrian-friendly environment as well as a higher-quality public realm is needed in order to revive Luton Road (see Appendix C).
ST4 - Parking	Parking provision in new development should be minimised and must not dominate the street scene. Opportunities for on-street parking should be supported by a parking stress survey. New car parking spaces for residential development should have electric chargers or passive electric chargers with future capability built in. Electric car club spaces will be supported.
ST4 - Rationale	In order to achieve a human-centred and environmentally sustainable local centre, a modal shift from private vehicles to active travel and public transport is needed. The long-term reduction in car parking provision associated with new development can help to reduce car dependency. Reducing the spatial impacts of parking can create opportunities for the provision of additional homes, green infrastructure, parks, etc. In the instance that parking is provided, 90.9% of respondents agreed that new developments should be future-proofed with electric car charging infrastructure (see Consultation Statement).

Policies

Local Economy



Policy No.	Description
E1 - Encouraging New Business	The development of new Class E(g) business space with superfast broadband will be supported. Amongst other business space, this includes support for the development of social and cultural enterprises and/or affordable workspace at rents below the market average.
E1 - Rationale	The Neighbourhood Area is in a highly sustainable location featuring several key qualities for a successful 15-minute neighbourhood. Distance to key amenities is generally better against the Medway average and car ownership is lower, but there's a severe lack of local employment opportunities despite many vacant premises which could provide spaces for businesses. There are 84.86 claimants of Universal Credit for every locally available job compared with 6.55 complaints per job across Medway (OCSI Local Insights Profile for 'Arches Local - Neighbourhood Plan Area', November 2022). Residents support encouraging reinvestment in empty commercial spaces, as well as using innovative ideas to encourage new businesses to set up shop (e.g. pop-up cafés, co-working spaces) (see Consultation Statement). Social enterprises are businesses whose primary purpose is to address a specific social or environmental issue. Meanwhile, cultural enterprises are organisations that are underpinned by a particular artistic and cultural remit. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including social and cultural enterprises, tend to struggle more in finding suitable premises, and therefore affordable workspace measures would support start-ups and early growth by reducing the initial fixed costs for those start-ups.
E2 - Retail Frontages	Development proposals that involve alterations to, or the creation of, shopfronts must demonstrate how they have taken account of relevant guidance in the ACNP Design Code.
E2 - Rationale	An attractively presented, well-designed shopfront can make a positive contribution to the character and trading success of an individual business or street, as it gives a favourable impression to the business and to the area as a whole.
E3 - Healthy Businesses	New hot food takeaways should not be developed within 400m walking distance of primary or secondary schools.
E3 - Rationale	An over-concentration of hot food takeaways in the Neighbourhood Area was identified by Medway Council's Hot Food Takeaways Guidance Note 2014. The Neighbourhood Area has higher cases of obesity among children and adults, and uptake of smoking is than the averages of Medway and the South East, whilst healthy eating levels (consumption of five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day among adults) are lower than these areas. Furthermore, our Neighbourhood Area ranks poorly against Medway's averages in every category of general health and limiting long-term illness (OCSI Local Insights Profile for 'Arches Local - Neighbourhood Plan Area', November 2022).

Policies

Community Spaces



Policy No.	Description
CS1 - Safeguarding Existing Social Infrastructure	<p>The neighbourhood forum has identified several sites and buildings which should be safeguarded for community use, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magpie Centre and Community Cafe • St Paul with All Saints Church • Luton Invicta Club • Jesus Revival Ministries International • Kent Islamic Centre Mosque • Muslim Community Centre/Naseemia Shamimia • Goodly Speak • The Redeemed Evangelical Church of Christ • Chatham Education and Cultural Centre • Richard Cobden Irish Pub • Kings Theatre • The Temple of Light Spiritualist Church • Shipwrights Avenue Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) <p>The enhancement of community facilities will be supported. The loss of community facilities will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that any of the following can be met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no existing or future need or demand for such uses, including reuse for other community services locally, and adequate alternative accommodation is available to meet the needs of the area. 2. Replacement facilities are proposed on or off site of better functionality to serve the needs of the area. 3. Where diversification through the inclusion of additional uses can sustain the existing community space.
CS1 - Rationale	<p>The Neighbourhood Area experiences poor community and civic infrastructure, relative isolation and low levels of participation in community life. The Community Needs Index (Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion & Local Trust, 2019) concluded that the Neighbourhood Area demonstrates a high level of community need, which is valued at 103.1% - while the South East's is 60.8%. The research also found that the Neighbourhood Area scores very poorly for the presence of civic assets, which includes community spaces and libraries, at 6.1% - the score for the South East is 22.1%.</p>

CS2 - Provision of Sports Facilities and Play Spaces	The development of new sports facilities and outdoor play spaces accessible by walking and cycling will be supported.
CS2 - Rationale	<p>There are only three sports facilities and play spaces in the Neighbourhood Area - these being at Luton Millennium Green, Town Hall Gardens and Shipwrights Avenue MUGA. Providing sports facilities will encourage residents - particularly children and young people - to take part in physical exercise, thus improving their health. It is also crucial to create safe play spaces for children, as many of the schools in the area do not have outdoor facilities.</p> <p>For information, Play England's Design for Play Guide recommends that quality play spaces should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be bespoke • be well-located • make use of natural elements • provide a wide range of play experiences • be accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children • meet community needs • allow children of different ages to play together • build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge • be sustainable and appropriately maintained • allow for change and evolution.
CS3 - Improving Green Space	<p>The enhancement of existing green spaces will be supported. Improvement measures could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving signage and wayfinding interventions to improve pedestrian access. • Linkages to other green spaces through the creation of linear parks and tree-lined, green corridors that both encourages ecological connectivity and opportunities for active transport. • Ensuring biodiversity net gain by supporting planting of both trees and other natural vegetation.
CS3 - Rationale	<p>Friends of the Earth scored the Neighbourhood Area a rating of D and E, which means the neighbourhood is among the most deprived of green space, including gardens and parks. Furthermore, Public Health England in "Improving access to greenspace - A new review for 2020" identifies "that older people, those in poor health, with a physical disability, of lower socioeconomic status, ethnic minorities, and those who live in deprived areas – continue to use greenspace less often and so continue to have less opportunity to benefit from it."</p>

Chapter 4

Site Allocations

This section provides further details in respect of the sites allocated for development in Policy HO4. The information provided is intended to inform the future development of the eight Site Allocations in the Neighbourhood Area. The sites are expected to come forward for potential development during the plan period of the ACNP, which is 2022-2040. The allocations are outlined within the Plan with a site boundary, the indicative land use(s), and the indicative amount of development and building heights.

For clarity, this information is indicative only – the sites will be subject to planning applications made at the discretion of the landowners. The intention of the information provided is to set out the community's vision and aspirations for the sites. The information set out below also suggests a number of 'key development principles.' Again, these are intended to help steer future development at this early stage, providing information in respect of access, flood risk and heritage.

All sites allocated for development in the Neighbourhood Area lie within an Impact Risk Zone in relation to potential detrimental impact on the Medway and the Thames SPAs and Ramsar Sites. Any new developments within this area will require financial contributions towards the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMM) to mitigate increased recreational disturbance on coastal SPAs and Ramsar Sites. A report on the site allocations process is found in Appendix E. All sites allocated in this Neighbourhood Plan have been analysed as part of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).





Map 5: Site allocations in the Neighbourhood Area.

Site 1 - The Brook and King Street land

Existing use: Vacant land.

Availability & viability: The site is included as part of a wider allocation within the 2019 SLAA (site reference 866), which indicated a site capacity of 23 homes and an expected delivery timeframe of 6-10 years.

Site parameters:

- Site area: 0.06 hectares
- Indicative future use(s): Residential
- Indicative site capacity: 100-250 dwellings per hectare
- Indicative height parameter: 6 storeys (see Design Code)
- Flood zone: Low risk with a high risk of surface water flooding

Land ownership: mhs homes and Medway Council.

Key development principles: The site is suitable for residential development with primary access to the south and east of the site to provide continuity with the existing street layout. The provision of access and amenity space to the northern part of the site would serve to reduce traffic noise and pollution.

Heritage: The site is situated within the setting of the Brompton Lines Conservation Area, Brompton Lines Scheduled Monument and the Grade I-listed Naval War Memorial. It is also located approximately 25m to the north of 'The Brook Low Level Pumping Station' Scheduled Monument.

Relevant planning history: N/A



Site 2 - Former Go Outdoors

Existing use: Former Go Outdoors superstore, a former indoor market hall and the Market Hall multi-storey car park.

Availability & viability: The site was identified as suitable and available in the 2019 SLAA with a capacity of 120 homes and an expected delivery timeframe of 11-15 years (site reference 760). Furthermore, the Chatham Town Centre Masterplan 2019 indicates that the redevelopment of the site is deliverable in the medium-term between 2025 and 2030 (Opportunity Site V). An urban design competition for the site was commissioned by the former Head Tenant, Lightstone Chatham LLP, in 2019, which included entries from Pod Architects and Design Engine Architects, demonstrating a commitment to explore future development options at the time. In 2022, Arpenteur secured the unconditional purchase of the site as a development and investment opportunity to provide a new residential mixed use quarter for Chatham.

Site parameters:

- Site area: Circa 1.34 hectares
- Indicative future use(s): residential-led mixed use
- Indicative site capacity: 100-250 dwellings per hectare
- Indicative height parameter: 6 storeys (see Design Code)
- Flood zone: Low risk

Land ownership: Medway Council (freehold and sub-lease), Arpenteur (head lease) and Go Outdoors Ltd (sub-lease).

Key development principles: Topographical considerations include the land rising towards the east of the site with a level change of approximately 9 metres from the land to the south west. Provision of an active frontage of mixed uses on the High Street would help to repair the historic urban grain of the street. There is also an opportunity to achieve enhanced permeability and pedestrian connectivity to improve connections between the Great Lines Heritage Park and Chatham town centre.

Heritage: The site is situated within the setting of the Brompton Lines Conservation Area, Brompton Lines Scheduled Monument and the Grade I-listed Naval War Memorial.





This town centre site represents a hugely influential site for the future of Chatham. This positive development of this piece of land could be the catalyst for a greener, healthier and happier Chatham. At present this site does not serve the interests of the community or contribute to the sustainable development of Chatham as a whole.

This allocation provides opportunities for development to:

- Reduce the impact of The Brook, a dual carriageway that splits the town centre into two.
- Restitch the High Street back together by fitting into the local context, character, and scale.
- Provide a mix of residential, retail, and green spaces to accommodate the needs of the whole community and minimise the need for private vehicle use.
- Contribute to increased levels of greenery and biodiversity in the town centre.
- Provide a mix of housing and tenure types that responds to the needs of the local community.
- Prioritise sustainable travel and pedestrian movement by limiting vehicle movement through the development.

Site 3 - Union Place

Existing use: Former Buzz Bingo and Union Place Car Park.

Availability & viability: In 2022 this site, in part, was acquired by Donard Living with Zetland Capital LLP to pursue a residential-led mixed use development on this entire site (including the Medway Council-owned Union Place car park). ACNF is in conversations with Donard Living and its partners (Savills, Pod Architects, etc) to ensure that any forthcoming proposals are reflective of community aims and aspirations. An outline planning application is anticipated with some matters reserved to fall within Q4 2022/Q1 2023. Medway Council's Cabinet is set to convene where a recommendation has been put forward to declare Union Place Car Park surplus to requirements, so that it can be disposed of for development. It is expected the marketing of the car park is likely to take place in Q4 2022/Q1 2023, with sale completing and the car park closing in spring 2023. Donard Living has publicly announced its intentions to purchase the car park and it has therefore been included within its proposed development.

Site parameters:

- Site area: 0.26 hectares
- Indicative future use(s): Residential-led mixed use
- Indicative site capacity: 100-250 dwellings per hectare
- Indicative height parameter: 6 storeys (see Design Code)
- Flood zone: Low risk with a high risk of surface water flooding

Land ownership: Multiple land owners. A private land developer, Donard Living, owns the former Buzz Bingo, while the adjacent Union Place Car Park is owned by Medway Council.

Key development principles: The site is situated within the Central Medway Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The development of the site presents an opportunity for access and amenity space to be located to the northern part of the site which is less susceptible to traffic noise and pollution.

Heritage: The site is situated within the setting of the Brompton Lines Conservation Area, Brompton Lines Scheduled Monument and the Grade I-listed Naval War Memorial.

Relevant planning history: MC/22/2582 Screening Opinion on EIA for 250 residential dwellings and flexible commercial space (Class E) - demolition of existing building - November 2022.



Site 4 - 393 High Street

Existing use: Vacant land.

Availability & viability: The site has been subject to 4 planning applications (MC/06/0452, MC/06/0483, MC/07/2089 and MC/14/1772), demonstrating the availability of the site and the land owner's intention to pursue development.

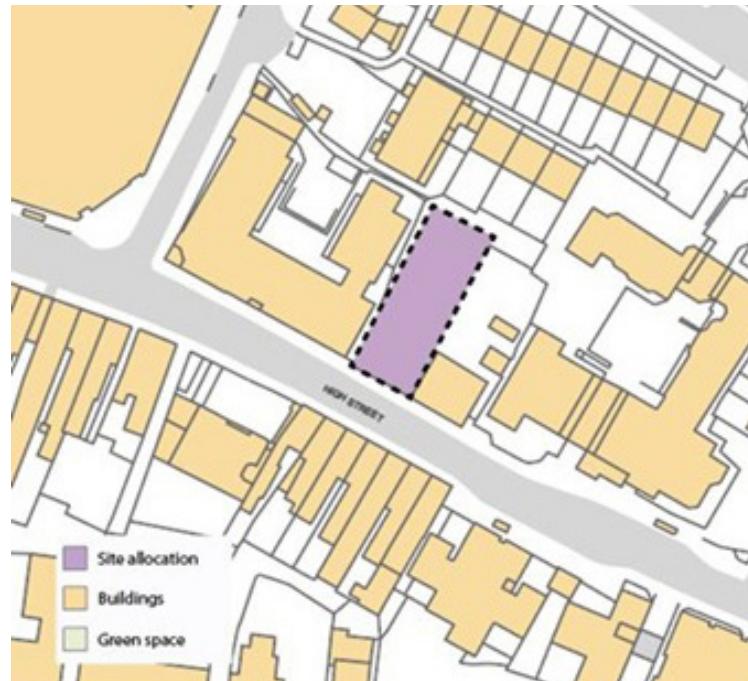
Site parameters:

- Site area: 0.055 hectares
- Indicative future use(s): Residential
- Indicative site capacity: 100-250 dwellings per hectare
- Indicative height parameter: 6 storeys (see Design Code)
- Flood zone: Low risk with a high risk of surface water flooding

Land ownership: Private

Key development principles: There is an opportunity for proposals to consider the sloping nature of the upwards towards Cavalier Place in the north east of the site and the site's location within the Central Medway Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

Relevant planning history: In March 2018, the landowner received planning approval (discharge of conditions) for a 6-7 storey residential building with ground floor retail space.



Site 5 - Pembroke Court car park

Existing use: Private car park.

Site parameters:

- Site area: 0.06 hectares
- Indicative future use(s): Residential
- Indicative site capacity: 100-250 dwellings per hectare
- Maximum height parameter: 6 storeys (see Design Code)
- Flood zone: Low risk with a high risk of surface water flooding

Land ownership: Ashdown Medway Accommodation Trust.

Key development principles: As there are existing terraced housing adjacent to the site, there is an opportunity to continue this typology. Its location at the junction of two streets also provides an opportunity to design a building to effectively turn the corner.

Relevant planning history: N/A



Site 6 - Arches View

Existing use: Vacant land with advertising hoardings.

Availability & viability: Wexham Homes Limited acquired the site from the previous land owner JCDecaux with an intention to develop it. Three planning applications were submitted between 2019 and 2020 (MC/19/0211, MC/20/1257 and MC/20/3102), with all three refused planning permission by Medway Council and a dismissed appeal (APP/A2280/W/19/3238080). Despite this, the principle of residential development on this site was considered acceptable, demonstrating that development is achievable and viable.

Site parameters:

- Site area: 0.04 hectares
- Indicative future use(s): Residential
- Indicative site capacity: 70-150 dwellings per hectare
- Indicative height parameter: 4 storeys (see Design Code)
- Flood zone: Low risk

Land ownership: Wexham Homes Limited.

Key development principles: Proposals will need to consider the significant level change between the site and the properties on Hillside Road and its location within the Central Medway Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

Relevant planning history: MC/20/3102 | Outline application with some matters reserved (Landscaping) for construction of an apartment block comprising nine 1-bedroom flats with associated bin/cycle storage. Refused in February 2021.



Site 7 - Bright Road

Existing use: Terraced garage block, accessed from Bright Road.

Availability & viability: mhs homes has pursued a programme to redevelop its redundant garage blocks for residential use in recent years. Examples within the Neighbourhood Area include Alfred Close and Cavalier Place. The site is in a poor condition, attracts anti-social behaviour and is vacant in part. It is therefore expected that the site will come forward for development within the plan period.

Site parameters:

- Site area: 0.07 hectares
- Indicative future use(s): Residential
- Indicative site capacity: 70-150 dwellings per hectare
- Indicative height parameter: 4 storeys (see Design Code)
- Flood zone: Low risk with a high risk of surface water flooding

Land ownership: mhs homes

Key development principles: This site is suitable for terraced development of up to 4 stories (e.g. car-free mews with shared courtyard/garden). Access into the site might be focused from Bright Road although there is the opportunity to provide a pedestrian route through the site from Castle Road. This site could also provide the opportunity to improve the interaction between the site and the pedestrian footpath on the north east edge of the site as currently the garages create an inactive frontage.

Relevant planning history: N/A



Site 8 - Dagmar Road

Existing use: Vacant land to the rear of 52 Dagmar Road. It is accessed via the service road off Shipwrights Avenue.

Availability & viability: The site has been subject to 5 planning applications between 2011 and 2019 (MC/11/1114, MC/15/0032, MC/16/4779, MC/17/1325 and MC/19/1599) and a dismissed appeal (APP/A2280/W/20/3251866). This demonstrates the availability of the site and the land owner's intention to develop it.

Site parameters:

- Site area: 0.049 hectares
- Indicative future use(s): Residential
- Indicative site capacity: 70-150 dwellings per hectare
- Indicative height parameter: 4 storeys (see Design Code)
- Flood zone: Low risk

Land ownership: Private.

Key development principles: Proposals might consider the sloping nature of the site, upward towards Dagmar Road. The site is suitable for terraced development with access to the north west of the site via the service road. Outdoor amenity space might be located on the south-eastern edge of the site.

Relevant planning history: MC/19/2408 Construction of a terrace of four 3-bedroom houses with associated landscaping and parking. Refused by LPA and dismissed at appeal.





Chapter 5

Community Action Plan

ACNF's Community Action Plan sets out wider community aspirations that sit outside the scope of planning policy but are considered important to the future of the Neighbourhood Area.

The following projects would endure the plan period of the ACNP and may be delivered in a variety of ways, including developer contributions from Section 106 agreements, or working alongside community groups who have been instrumental in undertaking small projects across the Neighbourhood Area to date. The projects presented are subject to relevant consents and funding being secured.

These projects are put forward by the local community and represent examples of locally supported projects which fulfil the policy objectives of this plan. ACNF is aware that projects and programmes will evolve, priorities will change, and costs and the flow of funding will fluctuate, meaning that mechanisms will be required for ACNF to update and reprioritise plan aspirations and secure local consensus to the outcomes of this process on at least an annual basis.

Urban greening	Luton Road Shoppers Car Park improvements	Pedestrian guardrail (PGR) removal	Street art
Studies have shown that street trees can indirectly improve the mental health of street users and reduce urban heat island effects. Trees also have the ability to lock in carbon dioxide which helps to slow climate change effects and tackles air pollution.	Luton Road Shoppers Car Park is currently an unmanaged council car park that is prone to regular anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping. Inspired by schemes such as Gillett Square and Barcelona's Superblock, this project seeks to reimagine the car park as a positive contribution to the local community. Improvements could include a temporary/pop-up or permanent public square and greening.	Guardrails contribute to a car-dominated environment that restricts pedestrian movement and is hostile towards pedestrians. Their overall effectiveness is facing increasing scrutiny. Where possible, PGR should be removed and/or replaced with more visually pleasing interventions, such as planters.	Following the successes of the Luton Arches and Bowen Moto murals, street art is recognised as a tool to foster civic pride and develop local identity in the public realm. There is an opportunity to extend the presence of street art across the area, particularly targeting blank elevations in the estates of Henry Street/ Newnham Street, Shipwrights Avenue and Maida Road.
	Pig Alley public realm improvements	Humanising Luton Road	School Streets
Running parallel to Luton Road, Pig Alley is a service road that allows access to the back gardens of properties in Newham Street, Henry Street and Luton Road. This route is prone to prone regular anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping and rat-running. Improvements could include: modal filters, street art, urban greening and a play-as-you-go trail.	Luton Road is a car-dominated environment hostile to pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities. This project seeks improvements that would humanise this road, improvements could include: urban greening in build outs, raised crossing points and continuous pavements, and decluttering of street furniture. See Appendix C AECOM Masterplan for further design guidance.	There are currently no streets designated as School Streets in Medway. This project aims to turn parts of Magpie Hall Road and Pheasant Road - where two schools are located - into School Streets. This means that motorised traffic will have restricted access on these roads during pick-up and drop-off times to ensure a safer environment for those walking, cycling and scooting to school.	

Chapter 6

Monitoring & Implementation



ACNF is the neighbourhood forum established under the provisions of the Localism Act, and recognised by Medway Council (LPA) as the designated body to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the designated area.

One of ACNF's key roles is to monitor the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan and provide input into the priorities for S106 agreements or the most up-to-date developers contribution mechanism.

ACNF intends to work actively with the LPA and other bodies in identifying, pursuing and securing all other sources of funding available to secure the implementation and delivery of the Neighbourhood Plans' projects and priorities.

A Community Action Plan has been developed outlining a set of projects that are intended to act as targets for S106 developer contributions. These projects are put forward by the local community and represent examples of locally supported projects which fulfil the policy objectives of this plan.

ACNF is aware that projects and programmes will evolve, priorities will change, and costs and the flow of funding will fluctuate, meaning that mechanisms will be required for ACNF to update and reprioritise plan aspirations and secure local consensus to the outcomes of this process on at least an annual basis.

The Neighbourhood Plan is aimed at helping to achieve the community's vision for Chatham and will be used in a number of ways:

- in pre-application discussions to show prospective developers where the priorities are when deciding on the type and location of development and how it may affect other aspects of the plan;
- in the decision-making process for planning applications to ensure that the objectives of the plan are met;
- when any bids are made for funding to demonstrate need and the priorities for specific projects;
- to indicate where the responsibilities lie for carrying out or administering the projects and which partners may be able to assist, and;
- to indicate to any relevant organisations planning any type of work or activity in the area where their budget decisions can be directed to best effect.

Glossary

15 minute neighbourhood	A place in which most of people's daily needs can be met within a short walk or cycle.
Active frontage	A building frontage which contains uses that promote activity on the street, such as shops. It could also be achieved by placing windows and doors that face onto the public realm.
Active travel	Making journeys in physically active ways, including walking, wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid), cycling, or scooting.
Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.
Amenity space	An indoor or outdoor space designed to meet the recreational and domestic needs of the occupants of a dwelling. Depending on the type of dwelling, amenity space could be used for passive recreational activity such as sitting out, for active recreational activity such as play space for children and gardening, and for other outdoor requirements such as drying clothes.
Bay	A window that sticks out from the outer wall of a house and usually has three sides.
Biodiversity net gain	An approach which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand.
Blue infrastructure	The use of blue elements, like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains and water treatment facilities in urban and land-use planning.
Built environment	Man-made structures, features and facilities viewed collectively as an environment in which people live, work and play.

Build-outs	Build-outs, also known as road width restrictions, are a form of traffic calming, involving the narrowing of an existing road profile by the extension of a pavement or other raised surface.
Car-lite	Car-lite development is considered to be less dependent on private vehicles and more reliant on active travel and public transport.
Carbon neutral	Climate - or carbon - neutrality is achieved when the same amount of carbon dioxide is emitted (CO ₂) into the atmosphere as it is removed by different means, achieving a zero balance, also known as a zero carbon footprint.
Civic identity	An individual's sense of self-definition within a larger community, including their attachment to that community and their perception of their role in political and civic life.
Climate change	Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the Earth's climate.
Climate emergency	A situation in which urgent action is required to reduce or halt climate change and avoid potentially irreversible environmental damage resulting from it.
Co-working space	An office space that is shared by people who are self-employed or working for different companies.
Community facilities	Facilities available for use by the community. Examples include village halls, doctors' surgeries, pubs, churches and children play areas; may also include areas of informal open space and sports facilities.
Community spaces	Land and buildings used to help meet health, educational and social needs in terms of developing and maintaining the health and well-being of everyone in the community.
Conservation Area	A designated area of special architectural or historic interest.
Derelict	A building or place that is vacant, neglected and in a very poor condition requiring repair in order to be reoccupied.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	The statutory process and documentation required by the Birds and Habitats Directives of the European Union to assess the effects of a plan on a nature conservation site of European importance. The aim is to enable a judgement to be made as to whether there will be an adverse impact on the site's integrity.
Heavy standard and extra heavy standard trees	Young trees of 12-14cm and 14-16cm girth respectively.
House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	A property rented out by at least three people who are not from one 'household' (e.g. a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen.
Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)	A study that considers the need for affordable housing and the size, type and tenure of housing need for specific groups in a particular area.
Human scale	Human scale environment means making sure that the objects that we interact with every day are of a size and shape that is reasonable for an average person to use.
Infrastructure	A collective term for utility services, transport, schools, open space, community, health and leisure services.
Listed building	A building or structure of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II* or II - with grade I being the highest. They benefit from statutory protection against untoward demolition and unsuitable alterations which would adversely affect their character or significance.
Local economy	Local economies refer to economic and social systems that are part of a specific community.
Local Plan	A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two. They are used to decide whether to grant permission for planning applications.
Local Planning Authority (LPA)	The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area.

Localism Act	An Act of Parliament devolving greater power to local councils and giving local communities greater overall control over housing decisions. The Act was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011.
Masterplan	A document that outlines the preferred land uses, layout, infrastructure and built form of a site or area. It provides detailed guidance for subsequent planning applications.
Mitigation	A measure which is carried out to reduce the impact of certain activities or development on the environment.
Mixed use development	A type of development that blends a mix of land uses. Such developments would typically consist of both residential and non-residential uses, such as commercial or leisure.
Multi generational	Consisting of, relating to, or involving more than one generation (as of a family).
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	A framework that sets out the government's planning policies for England.
Native species	Indigenous to a given region or ecosystem.
Natural capital	The world's stocks of natural assets which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things.
Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)	An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which parish councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.
Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)	A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
Non-designated Heritage Assets	Buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage interest but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.

Overwintering	The process by which some organisms pass through or wait out the winter season.
Parking stress	Parking stress is represented as the percentage of kerbside parking spaces occupied at peak periods. It is calculated by undertaking a survey at the most heavily used times to assess the number of vehicles parked in a particular area.
Permitted Development Rights (PDR)	Permitted development rights allow certain building works and changes of land use to be undertaken without needing to submit a planning application.
Planning inspector	An independent decision-maker appointed by the Secretary of State.
Public open space	Land laid out for the purpose of public recreation, such as gardens, town squares and parklands.
Public realm	The spaces between buildings that are publicly accessible, such as streets, squares and parks.
Ramsar Sites	Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.
S38 agreement	A section of the Highways Act 1980 that can be used when a developer proposes to construct a new estate road for residential, industrial or general purpose traffic that may be offered to the Highway Authority for adoption as a public highway.
School Street	A road outside a school with a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times.
Section 106 Agreement	A legal agreement entered into under section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. It is a mechanism which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on measures to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.
Site allocation	A site which is expected to come forward for potential development during the plan-period. Development remains at the discretion of the landowner.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They are areas of special interest due to their fauna, flora, geological or physiographical features.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME)	A legally independent company which employs fewer than 250 employees.
Special Protection Area	Designation under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	An assessment required by national policy to identify land for housing and assess the ability to develop and deliver sites. The SHLAA is a key component of the evidence base used to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's need for more homes. This assessment now considers employment land, and is referred to as a Strategic Housing and Employment Availability Assessment (SHELAA).
Street furniture	Objects placed or fixed in the street for public use, such as postboxes, road signs, and benches.
Streetscape	The visual elements of a street, including the road, adjoining buildings, street furniture, trees and open spaces, that combine to form a street's character or appearance.
Sustainable transport	Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, ultra low and zero emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	The collection of surface water and its natural drainage back into the ground via soakaway or to existing watercourses using infiltration methods where necessary.
Urban design	The art of making places. It is a collaborative and multi-disciplinary process involving the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes in villages, towns and cities, and the establishment of frameworks which facilitate successful development.
Valued characteristics	Qualities of a place that local people have defined as important and would like to see more of.
Ward	A small sub-area of a local authority district.
Wayfinding	The process of navigating a route between an origin and a destination.

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