

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

Final Report

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Purpose

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BMV	Best and Most Versatile
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CFMP	Catchment Flood Management Plan
CSS	Crime Severity Score
CQC	Care Quality Commission
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
EA	Environment Agency
FIT	Field in Trust
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HAR	Heritage at Risk Register
ICP	Integrated Care Partnership
IMD	Indices of Multiple Deprivation
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
KCC	Kent County Council
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LSOA	Lower Layer Super Output Areas
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MSA	Mineral Safeguarding Area
NCA	National Character Area
NMU	Non-Motorised Users
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OAN	Objectively Assessed Housing Need
OADR	Old Age Dependency Ratio
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PCN	Primary Care Network
PHE	Public Health England
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PPTS	Planning Policy for Traveller Sites
PRoW	Public Right of Way
RBLI	Royal British Legion Industries
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

Abbreviation	Definition
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Association
SLA	Special Landscape Areas
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
TMBC	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
TMLT	Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust
ULEV	Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) is currently producing a new Local Plan, in accordance with changes to government legislation, policy and guidance. The Local Plan will provide a planning framework and set out strategic priorities and detailed policies that will guide development in the borough up to 2039. To support this process, TMBC is undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which will consider the potential environmental and sustainability impacts of the Local Plan.

This Scoping Report represents the first stage of the SA process. It draws upon a wide range of existing information and provides a description of the baseline environmental characteristics and key environmental and sustainability issues of relevance to the borough, and identifies other relevant plans, programmes and policies that have influence over the development of the Local Plan. The Scoping Report establishes an appraisal framework that will be applied to the examination of potential sustainability impacts of implementing policies contained within the Local Plan. The framework comprises a series of Sustainability Appraisal objectives, and associated appraisal criteria, that reflect the key sustainability issues identified through the baseline review.

A proportionate approach has been adopted towards establishing the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal, reflecting the high-level nature of the Local Plan. Consultation with the statutory consultees (Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency) will be undertaken to refine and confirm the methodology and scope of the assessment. These aspects will be reviewed iteratively as the Local Plan develops to ensure the plan fully considers the environmental and sustainability impacts of its implementation before it is adopted.

Once the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal has been agreed, an Interim Environmental Report will be prepared, to inform the Regulation 18 Local Plan. The Interim Environmental Report will appraise potential impacts of several strategic development strategy options for the borough outlined within the Regulation 18 Local Plan. Further consultation will be undertaken on the Interim Environmental Report, and a Final Environmental Report will be produced to accompany the Regulation 19 Local Plan, assessing, and describing the likely significant sustainability impacts of implementing the policies contained within it.

1.2 Sustainable Development

The term “sustainable development” has been used in policy-making since 1987 following the publication of the World Commission on Environment and Development Report ‘Our Common Future’, commonly referred to as the Brundtland Report. The report developed guiding principles for sustainable development, as it is generally understood today, and contained the definition of sustainable development as being “development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. As such, sustainable development seeks to achieve sustainable economic growth, improved quality of life, and community well-being whilst protecting against biodiversity loss, depletion of resources and environmental deprivation.

Securing the future: delivering UK sustainable development strategy (2005) discusses five guiding principles that have been agreed by the UK Government, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government, and the Northern Ireland Administration, that will be used in the UK to achieve sustainable development:

- Living within environmental limits

- Ensuring a strong, healthy, and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly

1.3 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Sustainability Appraisal is a process for assessing the social, economic, and environmental impacts of a plan, with an aim of ensuring that sustainable development is integrated in the plan-making process. SA is a compulsory requirement for Local Plans under section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. UK Government guidance states that 'its role is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic, and social objectives' (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2020)).

In line with Government guidance, SA incorporates the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (commonly referred to as the 'SEA Regulations'), which implement the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the 'SEA Directive') (European Parliament, 2001). The Directive requires formal assessment of plans and programmes that are likely to have significant effects (either positive or negative) on the environment. It applies to all plans and programmes which are 'subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level' or are 'required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions' (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), first published by the UK Government in 2012 and most recently updated in July 2021, outlines the Government's approach to achieving sustainable development within Section 2. This outlines that there are three overarching interdependent objectives to achieving sustainable development:

- An 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;
- A 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 well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- An environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

1.4 Tonbridge and Malling Borough

Tonbridge and Malling Borough is located in the South East region of the country and one of twelve district councils within Kent County. Tonbridge and Malling borders the districts of Gravesham, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, and Maidstone, in addition to Medway Unitary Authority. ONS population data from 2021 indicates there is a population of 134,481 people within Tonbridge and Malling Borough. The borough covers an area of just over 24,000 hectares (ha), a large proportion of which is designated Green Belt.

Within the borough, Tonbridge is the main town with further urban areas including the Medway Gap, Kings Hill, Snodland and part of Walderslade, with additional rural service centres of Borough Green, Hadlow, Hildenborough and West Malling. Most of the borough is rural in character, with several villages and small towns. The borough benefits from proximity to London and the South East coast. There are three main railway lines that pass through the borough: the Maidstone Line, the Medway Valley line, and the South Eastern Main Line. The Channel Tunnel Rail Link is channelled under the Kent Downs. Within the borough there are various strategic key routes, including the A20, M20, A21, A227, A228, M2, A25, A26, A229 and M26 roads. These roads connect the borough to wider transport networks including the M25 motorway and channel ports.

There are two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) situated within the borough: the High Weald in the south and Kent Downs in the north. Additional ecological and biodiversity designations are located across the borough including two Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), eleven Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and 48 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

There are numerous heritage assets located within the borough, including over 1,300 listed buildings, 25 Scheduled Monuments, and 61 Conservation Areas.

The River Medway and River Bourne, and their tributaries, flow through the borough.

Figure 1-1 on the following page shows the location of Tonbridge and Malling Borough.

1.5 Key challenges facing Tonbridge and Malling

Following a review of a wide range of existing information the following challenges have been identified:

- **A growing population** – set to increase by 12.4% to 151,147 by 2039. Will create need for additional housing, education facilities, and improved social, leisure and transportation infrastructure (see section 4.9.1.)
- **Addressing housing need** – due to population growth and a current lack of available housing (see section 4.9.2)
- **Managing flood risk across the borough** –fluvial, surface water and tidal flooding presents a risk to communities and businesses in the borough. Potential for risk to increase due to effects of climate change (see section 4.4.5.)
- **Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change** – it is essential that the borough adapts to the potential effects of climate change (including increased flood risk, droughts and habitat destruction), whilst also mitigating the impact by reducing CO₂ emissions (see section 4.8.1.)

- **Further encouraging sustainable transport** – increasing usage of public transport across the borough, rather than allowing reliance upon private cars (see section 4.11.2.)
- **Addressing accessibility issues** – increasing accessibility of primary schools, post offices and GP surgeries across the borough (see section 4.9.3.)
- **Preserving the boroughs natural assets** – there are a wide range of designations across the borough which require protection from fragmentation, decline and pressure from future development (see section 4.3.4.)
- **Preserving the heritage assets of the borough** – some historic structures and buildings may be at risk from development pressures and neglect. Future development should aim to preserve heritage assets (see section 4.6.2.)
- **Maintaining landscape identity** – managing future developments to prevent adverse impacts on important landscapes (see section 4.2.3).
- **Maintaining and improving air quality** - increases in the population of the borough, greater development and increased traffic congestion can lead to greater air pollution, counter to efforts to improve air quality where limits are already being exceeded or may be exceeded in future (see section 4.7).
- **Preserving agricultural land** - development could also potentially affect good quality agricultural land, reducing the amount of land in the borough available for agriculture (see section 4.5.3).
- **Addressing skills imbalance** – reduce the need for highly skilled workers to commute out of the borough for work and low skilled workers to commute into the borough (see section 4.10).

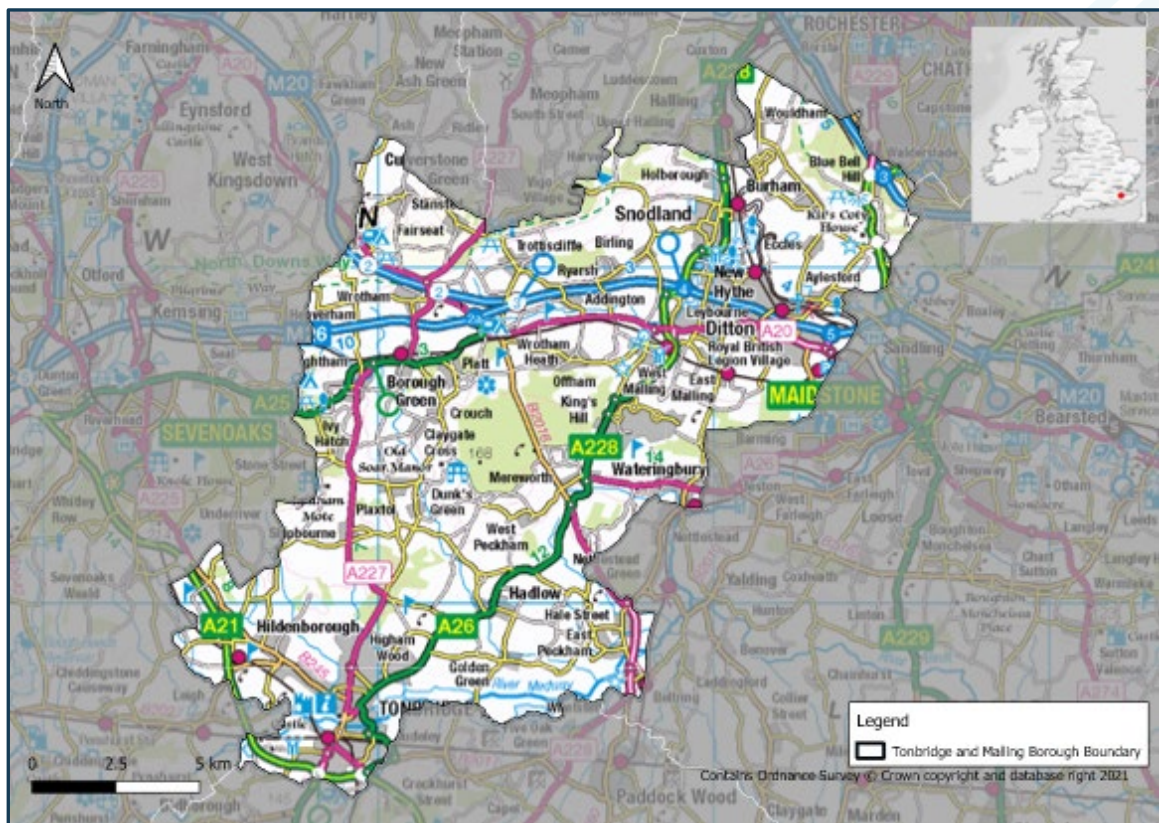


Figure 1-1: The location and boundary of Tonbridge and Malling Borough

2 The Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

2.1 Meeting the requirements of the SEA Regulations

Sustainability Appraisal is a compulsory requirement for certain development plans under section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Its purpose is to provide a systematic assessment of the extent to which Local Plan policies will contribute to the achievement of environmental, social and economic objectives. This information gained from the SA process is used to aid the selection of preferred policies for the Local Plan, which are those that best meet its economic, environmental and social objectives, and legal requirements.

Government guidance requires that Sustainability Appraisals should incorporate the requirements of the SEA Regulations. Therefore, the Sustainability Appraisal of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan will meet the obligations of both the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the SEA Regulations – in practice, Sustainability Appraisal and SEA follow very similar methodologies and it is possible to combine them without losing the essence of either. Therefore, for the remainder of this document 'Sustainability Appraisal' refers to the combined process.

As required by the SEA Regulations, the full range of environmental receptors have been considered when developing the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal. This meets the requirements of the SEA Regulations, which state that an assessment should identify the potentially significant impacts on 'biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic, material assets including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'. As an integrated Sustainability Appraisal and SEA is being undertaken, consideration of other 'sustainability' topics has also been made, and therefore the Sustainability Appraisal appraises other issues including housing, transport, waste, social inclusion and deprivation, and economic and employment characteristics. Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations sets out the scope of information to be provided. This is shown in Table 2-1 below, which also identifies where in the Sustainability Appraisal process each requirement will be met.

Table 2-1: Requirements of the SA/SEA process as identified within Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations

SEA Regulations requirements	Where in the SA
1. An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Scoping Report (Section 3)
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	Scoping Report (Section 4)
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Scoping Report (Section 4)
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds(a) and the Habitats Directive	Scoping Report (Section 4)

SEA Regulations requirements	Where in the SA
5. The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation	Scoping Report (Sections 3 and 4)
6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium, and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as— (a) biodiversity; (b) population; (c) human health; (d) fauna; (e) flora; (f) soil; (g) water; (h) air; (i) climatic factors; (j) material assets; (k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; (l) landscape; and (m) the inter-relationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l)	Environmental Report (to be prepared)
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	Environmental Report (to be prepared)
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Environmental Report (to be prepared)
9. A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.	Environmental Report (to be prepared)
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.	Environmental Report (to be prepared)

2.2 Stages of the Sustainability Appraisal Process

Sustainability Appraisal is an iterative process that aims to identify the significant environmental, social, and economic effects of a plan. Significant effects are defined as effects which may cause substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse, or beneficial changes to the existing environmental, social and economic baselines. For the Local Plan, this involves assessing the Plan strategies and policies against a series of Sustainability Appraisal objectives to identify the extent to which sustainable development is likely to be achieved.

This Scoping Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Regulations and the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities).

The PPG sets out a five-stage process (A to E) to be followed (see Table 2-2). This Scoping Report Addresses Stage A of the process wherein the context and objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal are identified, and the scope of the assessment is determined. For the purposes of this assessment, stages A1 to A4 will be completed, whilst stage A5 comprises consultation on this Scoping Report, which will be conducted as outlined in Section 6 of this document.

Table 2-2: Stages in the Sustainability Appraisal Process

SEA stages and tasks	Purpose	Where covered in the SA
Stage A	Set out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identify relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives.	Scoping Report
(A1) Identifying other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives	To establish how the plan or programme is affected by outside factors, to suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed and to help identify Sustainability Appraisal objectives.	Scoping Report (Section 3)
(A2) Collating baseline information	To provide an evidence base for environmental problems, prediction of effects, and monitoring; to help in the development of Sustainability Appraisal objectives.	Scoping Report (Section 4)
(A3) Identifying potential environmental problems	To help focus the SA and streamline the subsequent problems, prediction of effects, and monitoring; to help in the development of Sustainability Appraisal objectives.	Scoping Report (Section 5)
(A4) Developing SEA objectives	To provide a means by which the environmental performance of the plan or programmes and alternatives can be assessed.	Scoping Report (Section 6)

SEA stages and tasks	Purpose	Where covered in the SA
(A5) Consulting on the Scope of the SEA	To ensure that the SA covers the likely significant environmental effects of the plan or programme.	Scoping Report (Section 6)
Stage B	Developing and refining options and assessing effects	Interim Environmental Report and final Environmental Report (to be prepared)
Stage C	Preparing the Environmental Report.	Interim Environmental Report and final Environmental Report (to be prepared)
Stage D	Consulting on the draft Local Plan and the Environmental Report.	Interim Environmental Report and final Environmental Report (to be prepared)
Stage E	Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan.	Environmental Report (to be prepared)

The relationship between the Sustainability Appraisal process and development of the Local Plan is summarised in Figure 2-1.

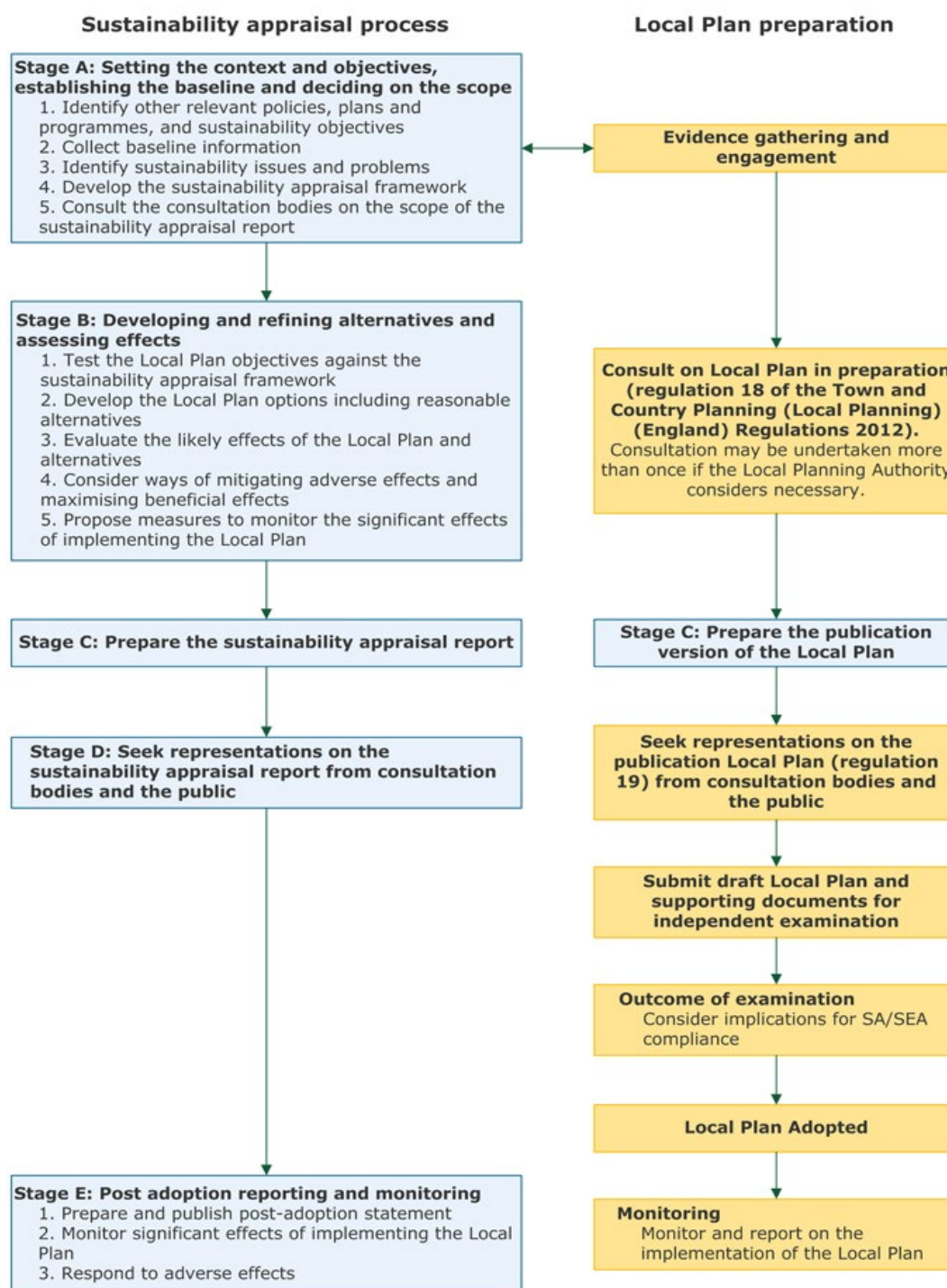


Figure 2-1: Key stages of Local Plan preparation and their link with the Sustainability Appraisal process

2.3 Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Stage

2.3.1 *Stage A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and environmental protection objectives*

The relationship between various policies, plans, programmes, and environmental protection objectives may influence the Local Plan. The relationships are analysed to:

- Identify any external social, environmental or economic objectives that should be reflected in the Sustainability Appraisal process;
- Identify external factors that may have influenced the preparation of the plan; and
- Determine whether the policies in other plans and programmes might lead to cumulative or synergistic effects when combined with policies in the plan.

The plans and programmes that need to be considered include those at the international, national, regional and local scale. These are identified and evaluated in Section 3.

2.3.2 *Stage A2: Collecting baseline information*

Sustainability Appraisal guidance and the SEA Regulations identify a range of environmental and sustainability topics that must be considered during the assessment process. These topics are identified in Table 5-1 alongside the sustainability issues and indicators.

Baseline information has been collected in relation to each of these topics, many of which are inter-linked. A desk study was undertaken to identify baseline information, which was used to determine the key environmental, social and economic characteristics of Tonbridge and Malling Borough. The information search included, but is not limited to, information from a range of sources including the following organisations:

- Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Office for National Statistics
- Historic England
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
- Kent County Council (KCC).

Where information was available, key sustainability targets and objectives have been identified; established and predicted trends in the status or condition of environmental features have been described; and significant environmental and sustainability issues have been highlighted. Trends evident in the baseline information have been used to predict the future baseline situation for the period of 2021-2039, which has assumed a continuation of the existing trends in some cases.

Sustainability topics to be covered in the Sustainability Appraisal are split into environmental, social and economic topics, as outlined in Table 2-3 below.

Table 2-3: Topics to be covered in the Sustainability Appraisal

Environmental

SEA Directive and Sustainability Appraisal guidance requirements	Where covered in the Scoping Report	Definition in relation to this report
Landscape	Landscape character	Local landscape character; protected and notable landscapes; key local landscape features.
Biodiversity (including flora and fauna)	Biodiversity and nature conservation	Designated nature conservation sites; protected and notable species and habitats; trends in condition and status.
Water	Water environment	Chemical and biological water quality; surface and groundwater resources; waterbody hydromorphology; flood risk.
Soil (including geology)	Land Use	Variety of rocks, minerals and landforms; the quantity and distribution of agricultural land including the highest-quality soils; land contamination.
Cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	Historic environment	Protected and notable heritage features; pressures on heritage features (including changes to setting).
Air	Air quality	Air quality issues.
Climatic factors	Climate	Regional climate patterns; trends in greenhouse gas emissions and the sources of these emissions; mitigation measures and adaptation options to manage climate change.

Social

Economy	Local economy	Local economic and employment conditions
Population	Population	Where people live and work; population trends and demographics; housing; education; inequality and deprivation; key community facilities; accessibility; crime.
Human health	Human Health	Trends and patterns in human health; recreation opportunities.

Economic

Economy	Local economy	Local economic and employment conditions
Material assets	Material assets	Critical transport and other infrastructure; community services; green infrastructure and open space.
Waste	Waste and minerals	Waste collection and recycling patterns.

Throughout the Scoping Report, the Sustainability Appraisal will also consider the interrelationship between the environmental, social and economic factors outlined in Table 2-3.

2.3.3 *Stage A3: Identifying environmental and sustainability issues and problems*

The identification of significant sustainability issues of direct relevance to Tonbridge and Malling Borough is an important step in establishing an appropriate appraisal framework. Such issues have been identified directly through the baseline information review or identified by evaluating the relationship between the aims of the Sustainability Appraisal and the established environmental baseline.

2.3.4 *Stage A4: Developing the Sustainability Appraisal objectives*

Sustainability Appraisal objectives are a key tool used to assess the potential positive and negative environmental and sustainability effects of the Local Plan. Together with associated appraisal criteria, they form an assessment framework that provides a means to predict, describe and analyse the effects that are likely to arise from the implementation of the Plan policies. The Plan options and policies are appraised individually against each Sustainability Appraisal objective, thereby allowing environmental, economic, and social effects, in particular those which are significant, to be identified.

3 Relevant Plans, Programmes and Environmental Objectives

3.1 Introduction

The Sustainability Appraisal process requires a review of other plans, programmes and policies and their environmental protection and sustainability objectives, to identify how these strategic objectives may influence the development of the Local Plan.

Identifying these relationships enables potential synergies to be determined, strengthening the benefits that can be gained from implementation of the Local Plan. This information is also used to inform the development of the baseline review and the identification of key issues. In addition, any inconsistencies, constraints or potential sources of tension, can be identified, which could hinder the achievement of the environmental protection objectives or those of the Local Plan, and therefore provide a broad appraisal of the strategy's compliance with international, national, and local considerations.

Existing plans and strategies were reviewed within the context of this report. This task included revisiting all of the relevant international, national, regional and local plans, programmes and strategies

In accordance with the UK official SEA guidance (ODPM, 2005), and supported by the UK SA and SEA guidance (updated 2020) (paragraph 009) which provides an overview of the level of detail required, no list of plans or programmes can be definitive. As a result, this report describes only the key plans, programmes and policies that may influence the Local Plan.

International, national, regional and local policies, plans and programmes have been reviewed through this sustainability process, as outlined below.

International plans, programmes and policies:

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC)

Aarhus Convention (1998)

EU Air Quality framework directive on ambient air quality (2008/50/EC, 2004/107/EC, 2015/1480/EC)

EU Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC amended to 2009/147/EC)

EU Directive on enhancing cost-effective emissions reductions and low-carbon investments (2018/410/EC)

EU Directive on the assessment and management of environmental noise (2002/49/EC)

EU Directive on the assessment and management of flood risks (2007/60/EC)

EU Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC)

EU Landfill Directive 99/31/EC on the landfill of waste

EU Directive on promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (2018/2001/EC)

EU Directive on waste (2018/851)

EU Water Framework Directive – directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy.

EU Biodiversity strategy to 2030 (2020)

Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971)

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979)

EU Landscape Convention (Florence Convention) 2000

EU Convention on the protection of Archaeological Heritage (1992)

UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement (2016)

Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)

EU Seventh Environment Action Programme to 2020 (2014)

Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030 (2019)

European Spatial Development Perspective – Brussels (1999)

European Sustainable Development Strategy (2006)

Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) and Agenda 21

EU Directive on drinking water (98/83/EC)

National plans, programmes and policies:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

The Planning Act (2008)

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Natural Environment White Paper, 2011 The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (HM Government, 2011)

Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (Defra, 2011)

UK Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework (2012)

Conserving Biodiversity – the UK approach (2007)

Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their impact within the Planning System (2005)

Keepers of time: a statement of policy for England's ancient and native woodland (2019)

Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to improve the Environment (2018)

Defra (2013) Governments Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement

The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (Environment Agency, 2020) Infrastructure Act (2015)

National Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016) to 2021

National Policy Statements (NPS) 2011

Managing England's woodlands in a climate emergency (2019)

Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (DCLG, 2011)

Homes England Strategic Plan 2018/19 – 2022/23

Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (DEFRA, 2005)

The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK (DECC, 2012)

The National Adaptation Programme – Making the Country Resilient to a Changing Climate (Defra, 2013)

Healthy Lives, Healthy People: our Strategy for Public Health in England (DoH, 2010)

The Air Quality Plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) UK (2017)

The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland (Defra, 2007)

Clean Air Strategy (2019)

Housing Standards Review (2014)

The Carbon Plan: Delivering Our Low Carbon Future (2017 – amended 2018)

Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the way to a Low Carbon Future (2017 – amended 2018)

Decarbonising Transport – Setting the Challenge (2020)

Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier (White Paper: 2004)

DTI Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy (2003)

Energy Security Strategy (2012)

Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future (2003)

Natural Capital Committee advice on reaching net zero by 2050: advice on using nature-based interventions to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate (July 2018)

England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles (2008)

Community Energy Strategy (DECC, 2014)

Fixing our broken housing market. White paper (2017)

Quality and Choice for Older People's Housing (2001)

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, 2015)

Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for Public Health in England (2010)

Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2017)

The Energy Efficiency Strategy: The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK (2012)

Our Energy Challenge - Securing Clean, Affordable Energy for the Long-term (2006)
– Consultation Document

Planning our Electric Future: A White Paper for Secure, Affordable and Low-carbon Electricity (July 2011)

Renewable Energy Roadmap (July 2011)

The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030 (2004)

The Future of Transport White Paper (2004)

Planning for the Future: Planning policy changes in England in 2020 and future reforms (2021)

National Planning Policy for Waste (October 2014)

Resources and waste strategy for England (2018)

Safeguarding our soils: A strategy for England (2009)

Noise Policy Statement for England (2010)

Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change Report: Ready for Ageing?

Flood and Water Management Act (2010)

Decarbonising Transport: A better, greener Britain (2021)

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Regional plans, programmes and policies:

Kent County Council – Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2016

Kent County Council Active Travel Strategy 2018/2019

Commissioning Plan for Education Provision on Kent 2021-2025

Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy 2020 to 2045

Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy: Implementation Plan 2020–2023

Kent County Council Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016-2031

Kent County Council Growth and Infrastructure Framework 2018

Kent Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2017-2023

Kent Environment Strategy 2016

Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

South East Biodiversity Strategy 2009

South East Water Resources Management Plan (2010-2035)

The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004)

Securing the value of nature in Kent

Growing the Garden of England: A strategy for environment and economy in Kent

Local plans, programmes and policies:

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework – Core Strategy adopted 2007

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework – Tonbridge Central Area Action Plan 2008

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework – Development Land Allocations 2008

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030

Tonbridge and Malling Cycling Strategy 2013-2018

Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells – Tonbridge Urban Transport Strategy Delivery 2007

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Air Quality Action Plan 2020

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2016

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council – Borough Economic Recovery Strategy 2021-2023

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2020-2023

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Community Safety Partnership Plan 2019-2020

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2008

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2021

3.2 Summary of the review

The key environmental, social and economic themes identified by this review, including relevant planning policies outlined within Government's planning policy for England (the NPPF), are shown in Table 3-1 below. A summary of the documents outlined above and their relevance to the Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal Process is set out in Appendix A.

Table 3-1: Key sustainability themes of the Plans, Programmes and Policies review

Environment

SA topic	Key themes
Landscape character	Protection of sensitive landscape assets (including Special Landscape Areas (SLA) and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)); promotion of the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and amenity of important landscapes, including inland waters; definition and protection of regional and local landscape character; and the provision and enhancement of natural beauty and amenity of important landscapes, including inland waters; and the provision and enhancement of green infrastructure to benefit people and the environment.
Biodiversity and nature conservation	Protection of international and national designated sites and their qualifying features; preservation and enhancement of notable habitats and species, particularly those noted for their conservation value or under threat; protection and enhancement of valued sites of biodiversity and geodiversity value; identification of the roles and responsibilities of organisations including local authorities to protect and enhance biodiversity including the creation of local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species and promotion of BAP species; provision of new/restored habitat to enable species to adapt to the future impacts of climate change; recognising the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services; and minimising impacts with provision of net gains through development.
Water environment	Promotion of the sustainable use of water resources to meet future growth in demand and impacts of climate change; better regulation and management of the water environment to benefit water resources and flood risk, and the reduction of water pollution; avoidance and redirection of inappropriate development in areas at medium and high risks of flooding; minimise risk to people and property and reduce the impacts of flooding where possible; and promotion of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

SA topic	Key themes
Land Use	Long term protection, improvement and sustainable management of soil quality and quantity, including the preservation of best and most versatile land (Grades 1, 2, and 3a); maximum use of brownfield land as is feasible; optimisation of land to meet housing need; consideration of suitability of ground conditions for development; and the management and remediation of contaminated land to reduce the risk to human health and the environment, particularly soils and water quality.
Historic environment	Protection and enhancement of nationally and locally important heritage assets and historic landscapes; better integration of heritage protection within the planning process; consideration of wider benefits of conservation of the historic environment; and provision of better access to heritage sites including their promotion as an economic asset.
Air quality	Protection of air quality through enhanced management of polluting emissions; prevention of new and existing development contributing to, being put at risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of air pollution; and implementation of relevant limit values for pollutants such as air quality management areas (AQMA) and clean air zones.
Climate	Requirements to reduce future greenhouse gas emissions across all socio-economic sectors to limit the impacts of climate change on people and the environment; provision of measures to enable future adaptation to the impacts of climate change and increased resilience; proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change; and consideration of identification of suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supportive infrastructure where this would help secure their development

Social

SA topic	Key themes
Population and human health	Protection and improvement of human health, wellbeing and living standards; greater integration of socio-economic and environmental objectives to deliver sustainable development; promotion of prosperous, sustainable and coherent communities; provision of better public transport and access; reduction of flood risk; enhancement of/minimising loss of recreation and amenity resources to benefit health and wellbeing; protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access; identifying housing requirement; and development and provision of measures to enable adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

Economic

SA topic	Key themes
Local economy	Encourage sustainable economic growth; maximise economic value and the benefits of innovation; encourage economic development through the delivery of sufficient land and tourism development; encourage enterprise, including the creation of new businesses and aiding the growth and development of small businesses; release local growth potential; enable sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas; development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses; tackle worklessness and deprivation; promote links with neighbouring economies to allow the full potential of regional strengths to be recognised.
Material assets	Improvement and better management of material assets including highways and utilities infrastructure; encourage use of sustainable materials including secondary or recycled materials before extraction or primary materials; source materials indigenously; greater provision and enhancement of green infrastructure to delivery benefits to people and the environment; and provision of better public services to deliver socio-economic benefits.
Waste and minerals	Improvement and better management of waste, including promotion of the waste hierarchy. Implementation of waste reduction schemes. Sustainable use of mineral resources and improvement in the effects on the environment of their extraction.

4 Environmental, social, and economic characteristics of Tonbridge and Malling Borough

4.1 Introduction

A desk study was performed to identify the key baseline environmental, social, and economic characteristics of Tonbridge and Malling Borough. This includes details of the status and condition of notable environmental features; current and future predicted trends in evolution of the environment, social and economic aspects; and issues and problems currently affecting the environment and population.

The information obtained is set out in the following topic-specific sections, many of which are inter-linked. The information used to characterise the baseline environment is broadly strategic in nature and reflects the high-level nature of the Local Plan. It has been obtained from a broad range of sources and no new investigations or surveys have been undertaken as part of the scoping process. The baseline information will be required throughout the SA process and may require updating as the Local Plan is developed further and new information becomes available.

4.2 Landscape

4.2.1 *Landscape character*

As outlined by Natural England, there are four National Character Areas (NCA) within the borough: High Weald, Low Weald, Wealden Greensand, and North Downs.

Approximately 11% of the borough is covered by Ancient Woodland, equating to 2,621 ha. The 2012 Kent Habitat survey recorded the condition and extent of natural habitats in TMBC. The survey reported that TMBC land cover was largely characterized by Grassland, Arable and Development, and this land cover composition had remained relatively stable since 1990.

The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004) outlines that the borough is classified into 32 Landscape Character Areas (LCA) as shown on Figure 4-1 below.

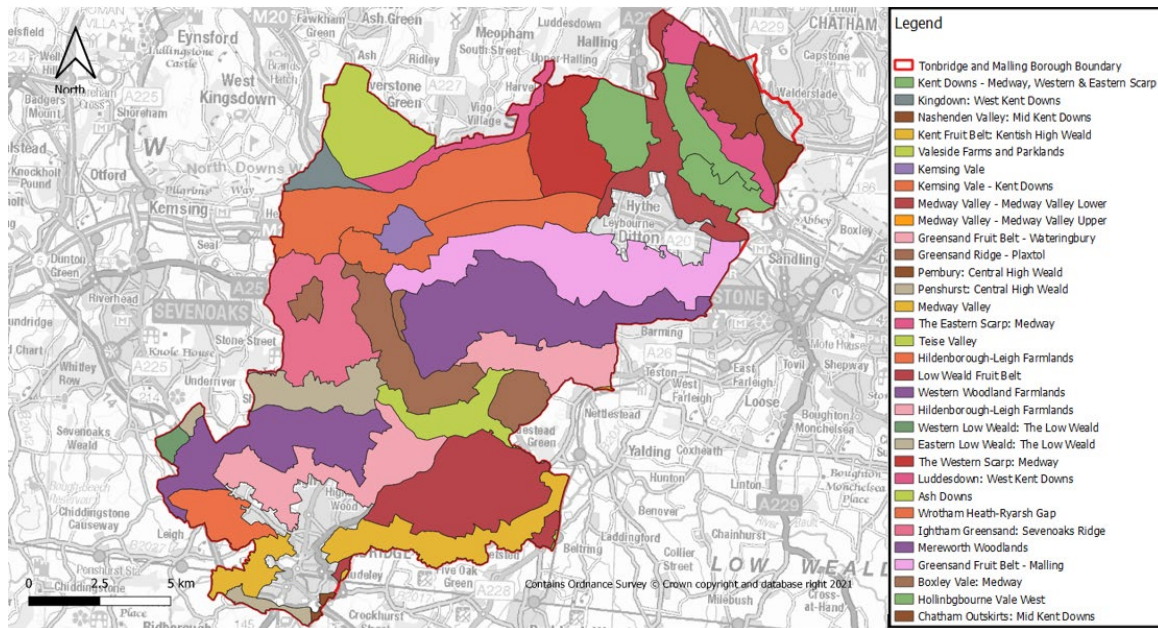


Figure 4-1: Landscape Character Areas across Tonbridge and Malling Borough (Kent County Council, 2004)

4.2.2 Landscape designations

Two AONBs designated by Natural England partially fall within the borough boundary. The Kent Downs AONB is situated along the northern and western boundaries of the borough. There is also a small area of the High Weald AONB in the south of the borough, both AONB have Management Plans adopted by the Council. Combined, the AONBs constitute approximately 26% of the borough.

Approximately 71.1% of the borough is covered by the Metropolitan Green Belt (DLUHC, 2021).

Figure 4-2 illustrates the extents of AONBs within the borough and Figure 4-3 illustrates the extent of the borough designated as Green Belt.

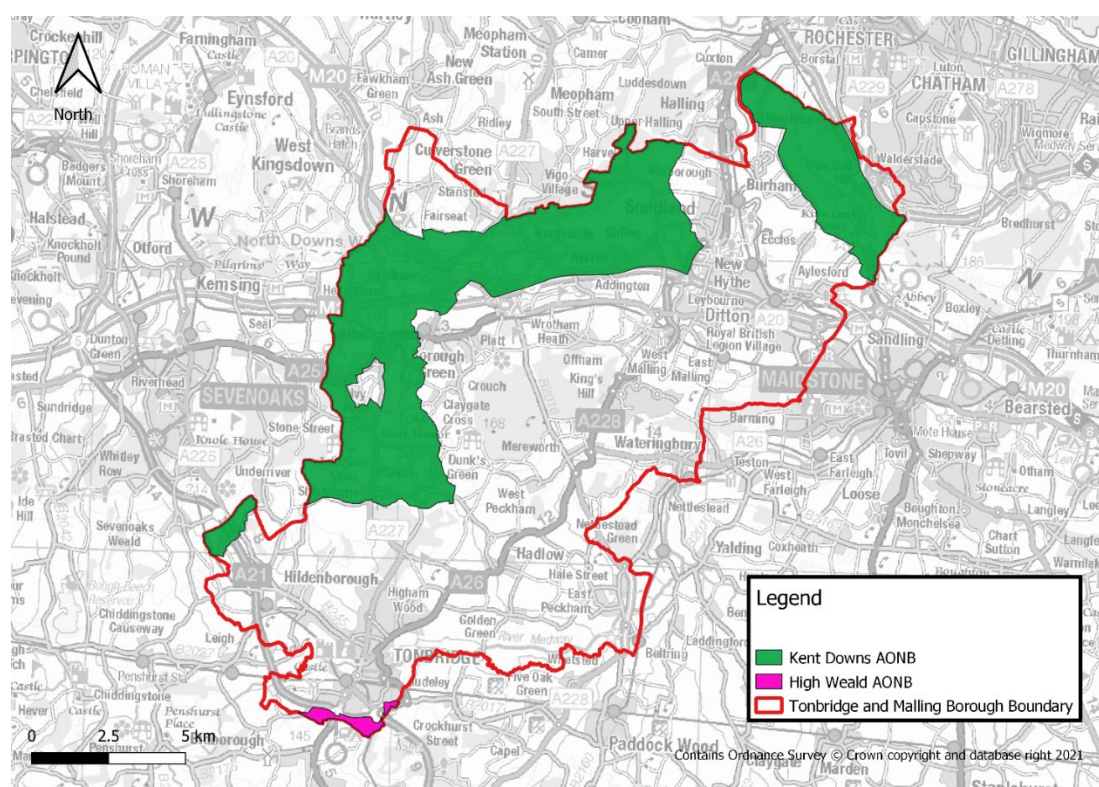


Figure 4-2: The landscape designations within Tonbridge and Malling Borough (Natural England, 2020)

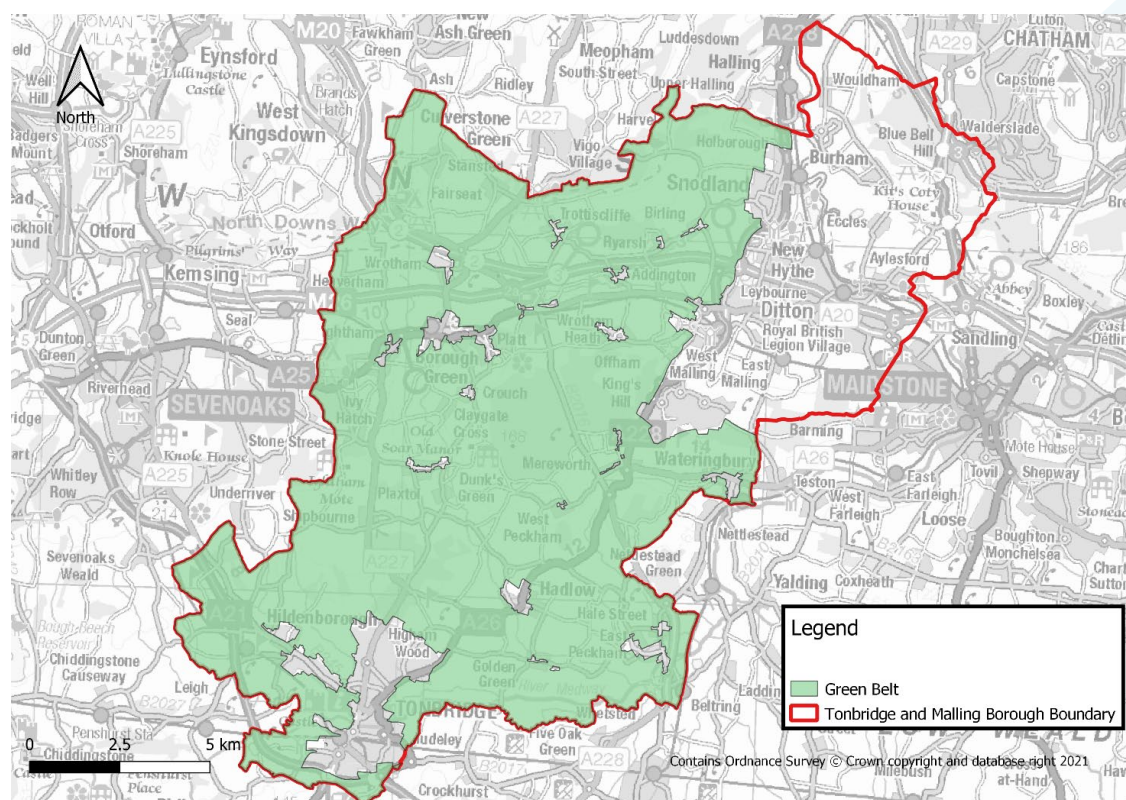


Figure 4-3: The extent of Green Belt coverage across Tonbridge and Malling Borough

4.2.3 *Key sustainability issues*

The key sustainability issue affecting landscape character and quality within the borough is the pressure of new development within the AONBs and their setting, and the effects this has on the preservation of the key landscape characteristics. This in turn effects levels of tranquillity, particularly in the rural areas of the borough.

4.3 **Ecology and biodiversity**

4.3.1 *National and international designated nature conservation sites*

The borough includes multiple valuable environments. There are two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) within the northern area of the borough, North Downs Woodland SAC, and Peters Pit SAC. SACs are protected areas in the UK, designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to conserve habitats and species considered to be most in need. North Downs Woodland is approximately 287 ha in size, however, only part of this SAC is within the borough. Peters Pit is the second SAC within the borough, it is much smaller with an area of 28.3 ha.

There are eleven Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) wholly or within the borough, the largest of which are the Halling to Trotiscliffe Escarpment (600.6 ha in total) and Holborough to Burham Marshes (149.8 ha in total). Peters Pit SAC is also a SSSI.

4.3.2 *Local designated nature conservation sites*

According to the latest available data from Kent Wildlife Trust, there are currently 48 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in the borough, the largest of which is Mereworth Woods in the middle of the borough. According to the latest data available from Natural England, within the borough, there are two Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Ditton Quarry Nature Reserve located towards Ditton in the north-east of the borough. There is also Haysden Nature Reserve, which includes Barden and Haysden Lakes.

Tables 4-1, 4-2 and 4-3 below outline the international, national and local designated sites within the borough, along with their Natural England citations where appropriate. The location of these designed sites is shown on Figure 4-4 below.

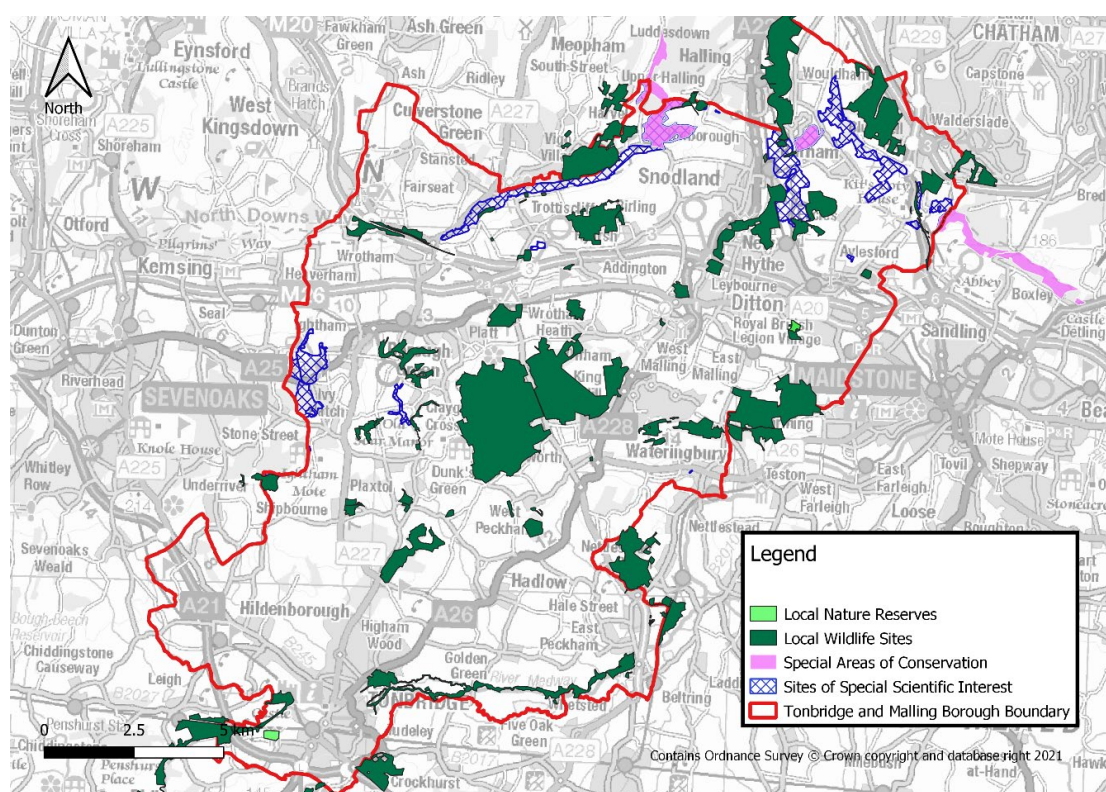


Figure 4-4: The ecological designations within Tonbridge and Malling Borough (Natural England, 2021 and Kent Wildlife Trust, 2021)

Table 4-1: European sites within Tonbridge and Malling Borough

Site	Location	Qualifying features
North Downs Woodland SAC	Parcels North of Snodland and East of the A229	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia); Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone. Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests; Beech forests on neutral to rich soils Taxus baccata woods of the British Isles; yew-dominated woodland.
Peters Pit SAC	North of Burham	Triturus cristatus; Great crested newt.

Table 4-2: National sites within Tonbridge and Malling Borough

Site	Location	Qualifying features
Wouldham to Delting Escarpment SSSI	North east (east of Burham)	10km of chalk escarpment north of Maidstone including representative examples of woodland, scrub and unimproved grassland habitats on chalk which support a number of rare and scarce species of plants and invertebrates.
Wateringbury SSSI	East (south of Wateringbury)	The site contains a tufa deposit (soft calcium carbonate commonly precipitated by prings which have flowed through chalk or limestone). It is important for Quaternary studies.
Trotiscliffe Meadows SSSI	North (south of Trotiscliffe)	The site is one of the few remaining examples of unimproved meadow in Kent and it supports several species scarce in the country. Increasingly uncommon habitat due to ploughing or draining of fields.
Peter's Pit SSSI	North (north of Burham)	An old chalk quarry with adjoining soil-stripped fields on the North Downs, with scattered ponds situated amongst grassland, scrub and woodland. The ponds support great crested newt breeding populations.
One Tree Hill and Bitchet Common SSSI	West (north of Shipbourne)	Site comprises an extensive area of woodland of varied composition on the Lower Greensand. Some plants and invertebrates of restricted distribution are present.
Oldbury and Seal Chart SSSI	West (west of Borough Green)	The site lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It contains acidic sessile oak woodland of ancient origin, relict heathland communities, recently derived secondary woodland and over 250 species of fungi.
Houlder and Monarch Hill Pits, Upper Halling SSSI	North (north of Holborough)	Upper Halling is important for Quaternary studies. Variations in the faunal assemblages together with associated lithological changes provide a valuable record of Late-glacial environmental history in south east England.

Site	Location	Qualifying features
Holborough to Burham Marshes SSSI	North (west of Burham)	The site lies along the flood plain of the River Medway. A variety of habitats are present which support breeding birds and wintering wildfowl and waders.
Halling to Trottiscliffe Escarpment SSSI	North west (north of Snodland)	Site consists of an extensive area of the North Downs west of the Medway Gap. The site is representative of Chalk grassland in west Kent and beech woodland on the chalk.
Bourne Alder Carr SSSI	West (south of Borough Green)	The site is a representative example of Wealden valley alderwood, with a rich flora including several locally distributed plants.
Aylesford Pit SSSI	East (north of Aylesford)	The pit dates back over a century providing exposures of Medway Terrace deposits overlying (Cretaceous) Folkestone Beds.

Table 4-3: Local sites within Tonbridge and Malling Borough

Site	Location	Site features
Ditton Quarry LNR	North east	Area of open space providing habitat for wildlife and birds.
Haysden LNR	South west	Includes a variety of natural habitats including, grassland, freshwater lakes, marshland and woodland.

4.3.3 Notable habitats and species

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats are those identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation (under the NERC Act 2006). Species of wildlife protected by legislation due to their rarity are considered protected species. Habitats and species with conservation designations, but no legal protection, are considered to be 'notable species'.

According to the 2012 Kent Habitat Survey, it was identified that Tonbridge and Malling Borough contribute 22% of the Kent County heathland resources. Further to this, Tonbridge and Malling Borough contribute 12% of the Kent County acid grassland resource, a habitat that had seen a decrease of approximately 40% since 1990 in the UK. Traditional Orchards within the borough constitute 11.9% of Kent's UK Biological Action Plan (UKBAP) priority habitat resource. Neutral grasslands constitute 6% of the district, forming 5.2% of the county resource. This represents 9.9% of the Annex 1 Lowland hay meadow habitat which is extremely rare habitat in the county.

Kent Biodiversity Strategy 2020-2045 states that Kent is home to 36 priority habitats and 387 priority species. For the purpose of the strategy, 17 priority

habitats and 13 species have been identified for which efforts should be specifically focused and targets set.

Priority habitats:

- Lowland beech and yew woodland
- Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland
- Chalk grassland
- Lowland meadow
- Lowland dry acid grassland / lowland heathland
- Hedgerows
- Brownfield
- Traditional orchard
- Rivers
- Chalk streams
- Ponds
- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
- Intertidal mudflats and coastal saltmarsh
- Wet woodland
- Vegetated shingle
- Intertidal chalk and subtidal chalk (nominated)
- Subtidal mud (nominated)

Priority species:

- Shrill carder bee
- Turtle dove
- Nightingale
- Swift
- Adder
- Adonis blue
- Heath fritillary
- Dwarf or Kentish milkwort
- European eel
- Lapwing
- Sandwich tern
- Water vole
- True Fox-sedge

4.3.4 *Key sustainability issues*

International, national and local designated sites within the borough may be at risk from damage as a result of development pressure and associated human disturbance.

There are two SAC's which are subject to international protection under the Habitats Directive, and therefore, must be protected in accordance with this legislation. At a local scale, developments should seek to support nature recovery including the establishment, enhancement and extension of ecological networks within the borough.

4.4 **Water environment**

4.4.1 *Water resources and wastewater management*

There are several aquifers concentrated around Aylesford and Snodland which are used for abstractions for public water supply. There are over one hundred licensed abstraction points. The borough's drinking water is supplied by South East Water. As a portion of the drinking water is abstracted from the groundwater, the Environment Agency (EA) has outlined source protection zones.

Southern Water is responsible for The River Medway Catchment Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan. This involves the management of sewerage catchments, and associated pollution incidents. Some of the more northerly areas of the borough are managed by Thames Water.

4.4.2 *Surface water*

Tonbridge and Malling Borough is within the Medway Management Catchment, and more specifically the Medway Middle Operational Catchment. The River Medway flows through the borough from Tonbridge town centre in a north-easterly direction and is fed by several small rivers and streams. The other main surface water feature is the River Bourne which flows from the vicinity of Borough Green southwards towards East Peckham. In 2013, the Tonbridge and Malling Stage 1 Surface Water Management Plan identified the main rivers within the borough. 'Main Rivers' are identified by the Environment Agency and are usually larger rivers or streams where the Environment Agency carries out maintenance, improvement or construction work to manage flood risk.

According to the Environment Agency designation of main rivers, there are 11 main rivers within the borough across two Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP) the North Kent Rivers and the Medway. These main rivers are listed below, and their spatial extent is illustrated on Figure 4-5:

- River Medway
- River Bourne
- Hilden Brook
- Little Hawden Stream
- Pen Stream
- Tonbridge Mill Stream
- Coult Stream

- Medway Tidal and Estuary
- Snodland Mill Stream
- Southborough Stream
- Alder Stream
- Ditton Stream

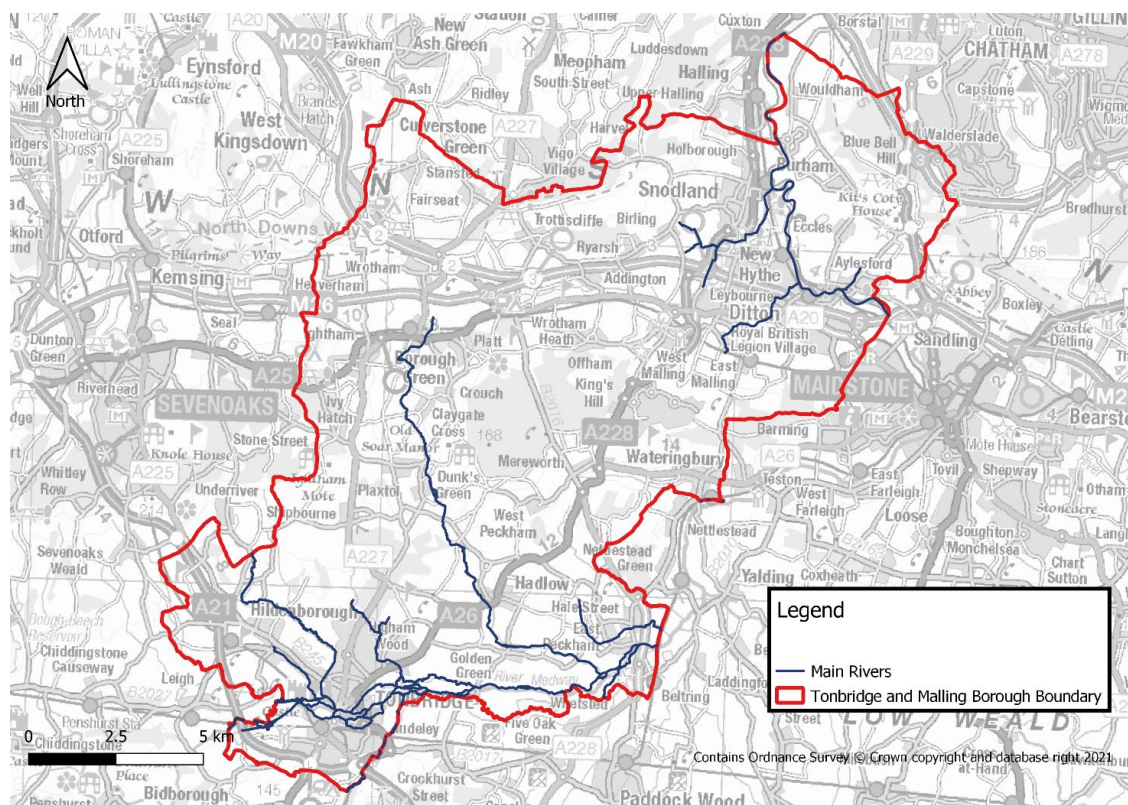


Figure 4-5: Main Rivers in Tonbridge and Malling Borough (Environment Agency, 2021)

4.4.3 Water Framework Directive

In 2019, across the Medway Middle Operational Catchment, the majority of water bodies were classified as being of 'Moderate' ecological status or potential status, with no water bodies classified as 'Good' or 'High'. Further to this, in 2019 all the surface water bodies in this operational catchment were classified as 'Fail' for the chemical status.

4.4.4 Groundwater

Groundwater vulnerability maps identifies how vulnerable groundwater sources are to pollution according to hydrological, geological, hydrogeological and soil properties in the vicinity. The 2017 Groundwater Vulnerability Maps published by the Environment Agency indicate that the groundwater surrounding Tonbridge town centre is a combination of High to Medium/High vulnerability. There are further areas of this high level of vulnerability towards the north of the borough around West Malling and Borough Green. The central area of the borough is characterised by low and unproductive groundwater classification.

4.4.5 Flood Risk

Although flood risk is centred around and caused through water environment features, the net effect of flooding can be argued to be mainly on people and where they live and work, affecting homes, communities, and infrastructure. One of its main affects is on health, whether this is the safety of residents and others, physical injury (or even death) or lost access to healthcare and emergency services, or people's mental health due to the impacts and recovery from flooding.

Flood risk is a cross-cutting theme as well in terms of how it affects the natural environment and the economy and is exacerbated by climate change.

The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning for fluvial flooding (i.e. from main rivers) illustrates that several areas have medium or high flood risk. There are areas of Flood Zone 3 (high risk – land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of flooding) located in the southern and north-easterly extents of the borough. The areas of Flood Zone 3 are located on land adjacent to the River Medway and its associated tributaries. This high flood risk encapsulates urban areas within Tonbridge and Malling Borough, including the town of Tonbridge in the south and the Medway Gap and Snodland in the north. The flood risk zones in Tonbridge and Malling Borough are outlined in Figure 4-6 below.

The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning for surface water flooding (i.e. from rainwater not draining away sufficiently) illustrates that surface water presents a significant risk throughout the borough. In addition to risks associated with fluvial flooding and surface water flooding, the River Medway, north of Allington Lock is vulnerable to tidal flooding.

According to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (2021), there are areas within the borough that currently benefit from flood defences which reduce the risk of flooding there, such as the Leigh Flood Storage Area. These are shown in Figure 4-7.

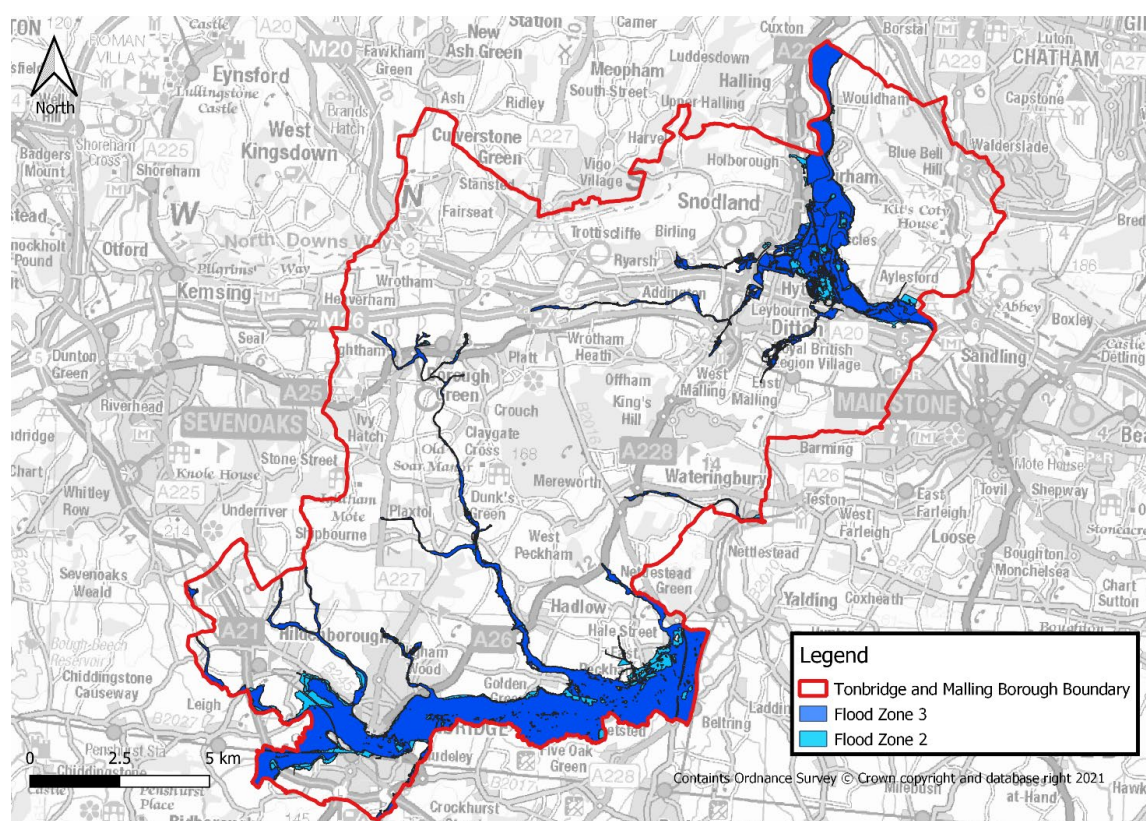


Figure 4-6: Environment Agency Flood risk zones in Tonbridge and Malling Borough (Environment Agency, 2021)

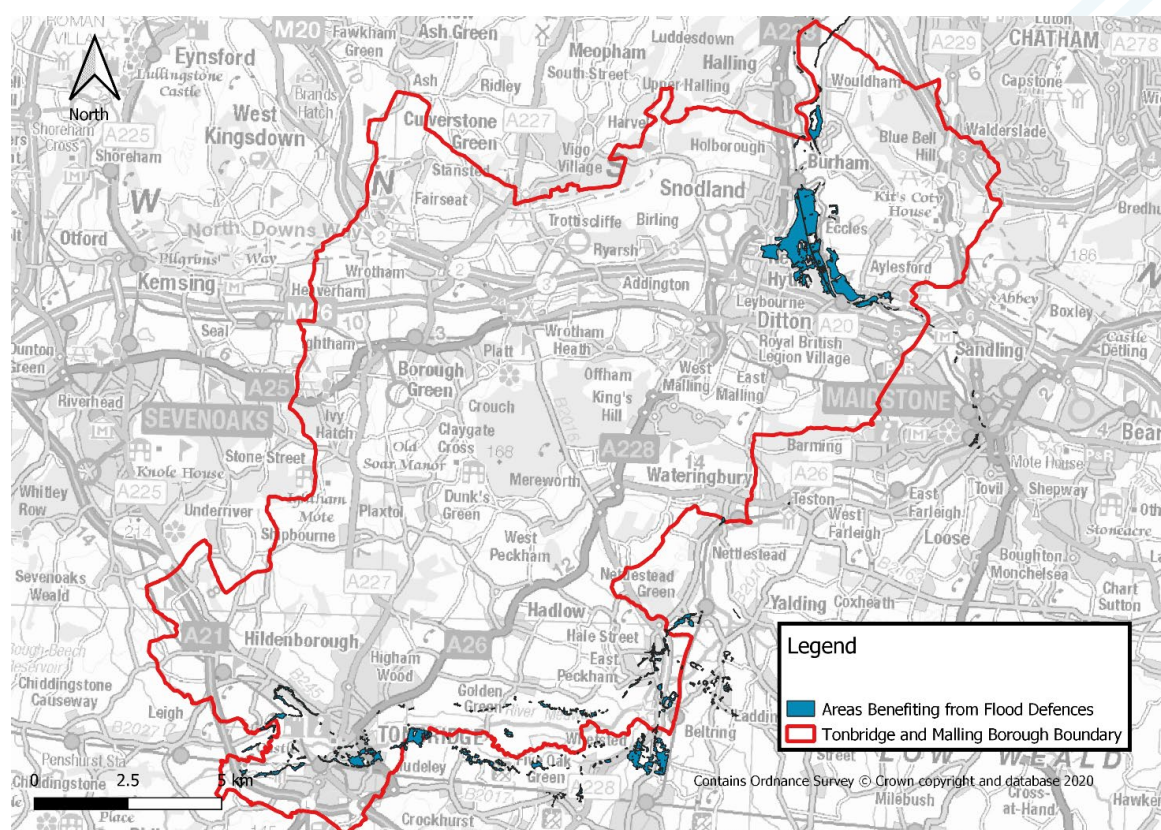


Figure 4-7: Areas in Tonbridge and Malling Borough benefitting from flood defences (Environment Agency, 2021)

4.4.6 *Key sustainability issues*

The River Medway and River Bourne are significant water resources within the borough and there are areas of Flood Zone 3 surrounding these watercourses. Many of these existing areas of flood risk may experience an increase in the number of flood events in the future due to climate change increasing rainfall intensity.

The ecological quality of the borough's waterbodies is generally of moderate status, whilst the chemical quality is classified as 'fail'. Further development in the borough could lead to an increase in the amount of surface water runoff, including pollution, from urban areas and cause further degradation of the water quality of these watercourses.

4.5 **Land**

4.5.1 *Soils and geology*

The soilscape within Tonbridge and Malling borough has four key varieties. Surrounding the north of Tonbridge, the soil is loamy with high groundwater. To the east of Tonbridge the soil is freely draining slightly acid loamy soils which is also found towards the southern boundary of the borough. The central area of the borough is characterised by areas of slightly acidic loamy and clayey soils some of which is slowly permeable or freely draining.

The bedrock geology of the borough is characterised by two key bedrock geologies. The northern area of the borough is largely constituted by Lower Greensand Group, which is sandstone and Mudstone. The southern area within the borough is largely Wealden Group mudstone, siltstone and sandstone, with some areas of siltstone and sandstone. The superficial geology of the area is largely within the southern boundary, with some areas of River Terrace deposits of sand and gravel.

4.5.2 *Geodiversity*

Regionally important geological and geomorphological sites (RIGS) are locally designated sites of regional and local importance for geodiversity. Within the borough, there are 9 RIGS identified, as outlined in the Managing Development and the Environment Development Plan Document (2010). These are primarily located in the northern areas of Wealden Greensand and the North Downs as illustrated on Figure 4-8 below.

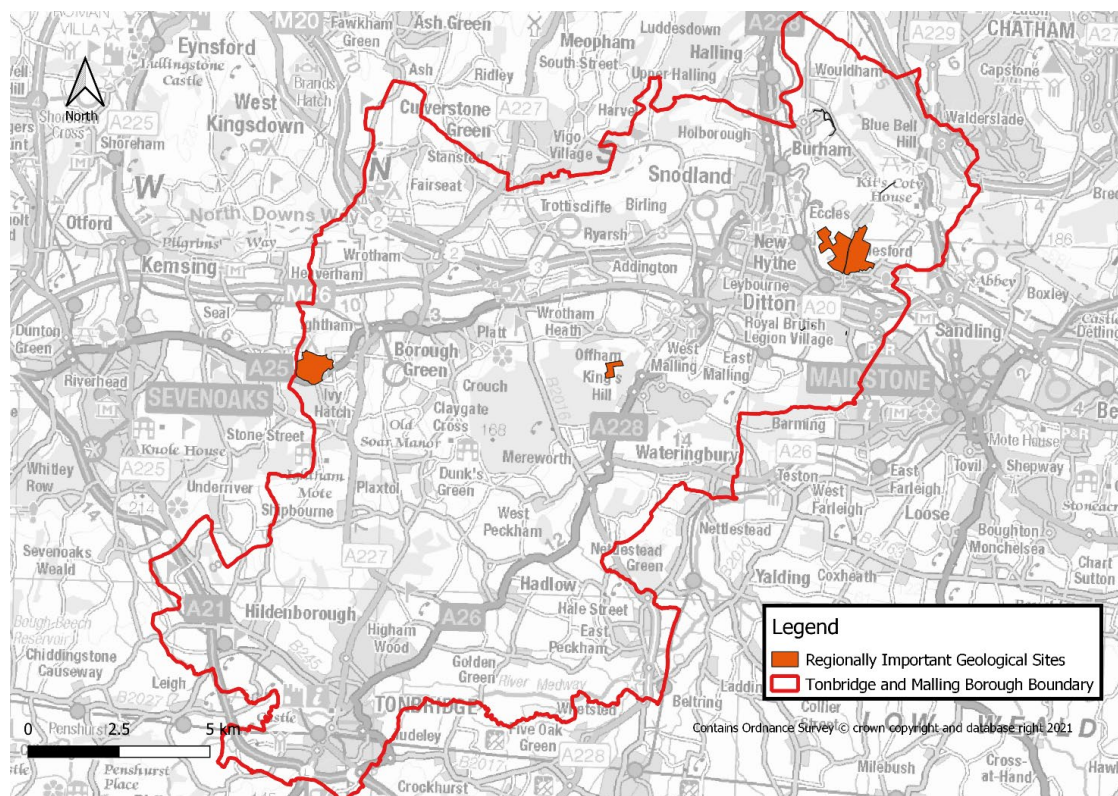


Figure 4-8: Location of RIGS within Tonbridge and Malling Borough

4.5.3 Agricultural land

Agricultural land is graded from 1 to 5 with the highest grade (1) going to land that is versatile, produces a consistent high yield/output and requires less input. Agricultural land that is considered best and most versatile (BMV) is graded 1 to 3a.

According to Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Grades – Post 1988 published by Natural England and most recently updated in 2020, most of the agricultural land in Tonbridge and Malling Borough is classified as Grade 3 – ‘Good to Moderate’. There are also some areas of Grade 2: ‘Very Good’ with small areas of Grade 1 ‘Excellent’ agricultural land around West Malling, Borough Green, and Watlingtonbury.

4.5.4 Land contamination

The 2016 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Contaminated Land Strategy states that previous desk-based studies identified approximately 600 potential areas of contaminated land from sites of current or former industrial, commercial, or other use. These sites are primarily located around the industrial areas of Tonbridge, Snodland and Aylesford.

There are multiple current and historic landfill sites within the borough, according to publicly available data from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra, 2021). Current landfill sites are defined as permitted waste sites that are currently authorised by the Environment Agency under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. Historic landfill sites are sites where there is no environmental permit in force. There are 15 current landfill sites and 54 historic landfill sites within the borough, as illustrated on Figure 4-9.

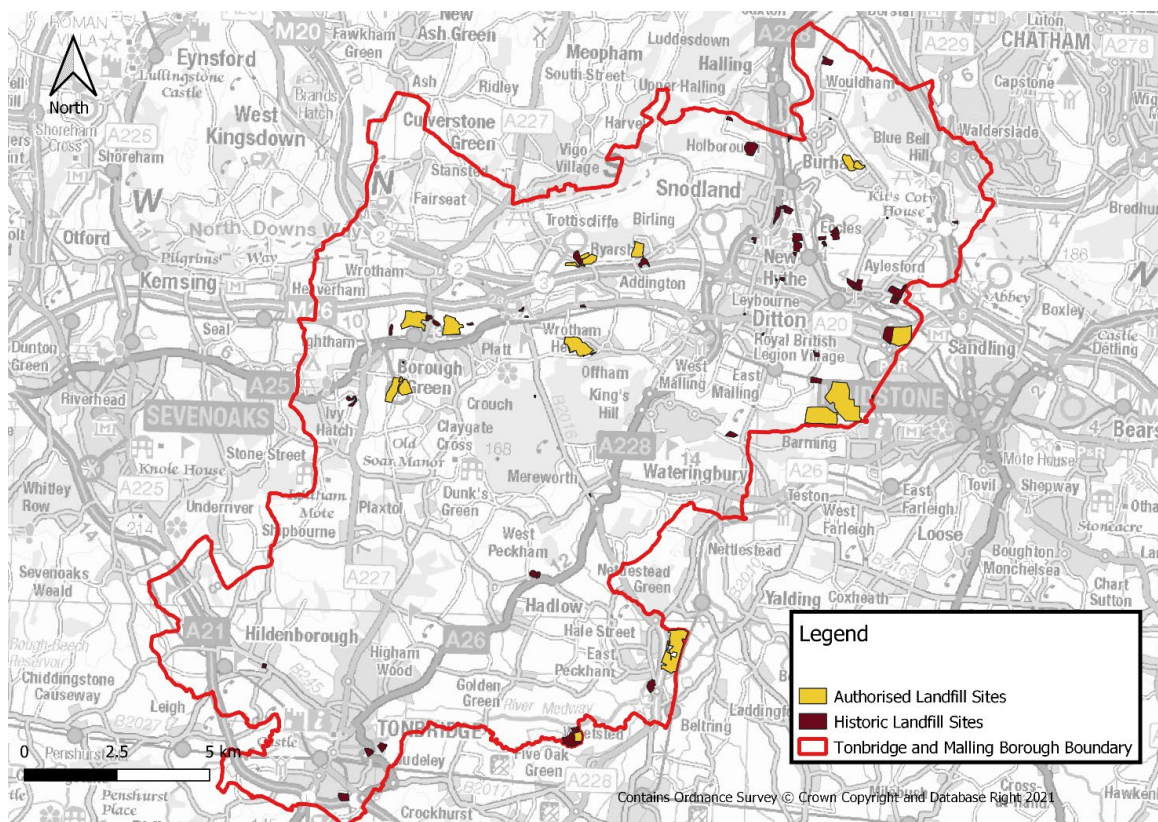


Figure 4-9: Landfill Sites within Tonbridge and Malling Borough (Defra, 2021)

4.5.5 Key sustainability issues

Development on brownfield land or land at risk of contamination could cause the release of contaminants into groundwater or surface waters. Contaminants could impact on environmental receptors such as nature conservation sites or watercourses. Development could also potentially affect good quality agricultural land, reducing the amount of land in the borough available for agriculture.

Any development on contaminated land should adequately deal with the contamination risk as to prevent harm to human health, property and the environment.

Continued industrial activities could release contaminants into the environment through pollution incidents such as release of chemicals or dust from quarrying. Often quarries are closely related to RIGS, which are also important geological conservation sites. There is a need for the protection and maintenance of the integrity of RIGS, particularly those that may be affected by nearby development.

4.6 Historic Environment

4.6.1 Heritage assets

There are over 1,300 listed buildings and 25 Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Further to this, there are 23 Historic Parks and Gardens of which five are of national interest. Within the borough, four heritage assets were identified on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register (HAR) in 2020, as outlined in Table 4-4. The condition of these assets ranged between 'poor' to 'extensive significant problems'.

Table 4-4: Heritage assets in Tonbridge and Malling Borough included on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register

Site name	Designation	Condition
Church of All Saints, Snodland	Listed Place of Worship, Grade I	Poor
Town Banks, Tonbridge	Scheduled Monument	Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems
Romano-British villa, Anglo-Saxon cemetery and associated remains at Eccles, Aylesford	Scheduled Monument	Extensive significant problems
Chapel of St Blaise, Offham	Scheduled Monument	Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems

Across the borough there are 61 conservation areas, these are buildings, spaces and landscapes which contribute to the areas architectural and historic character. These areas are protected under additional legislation, therefore any future development within proximity or within these areas are subject to additional planning controls.

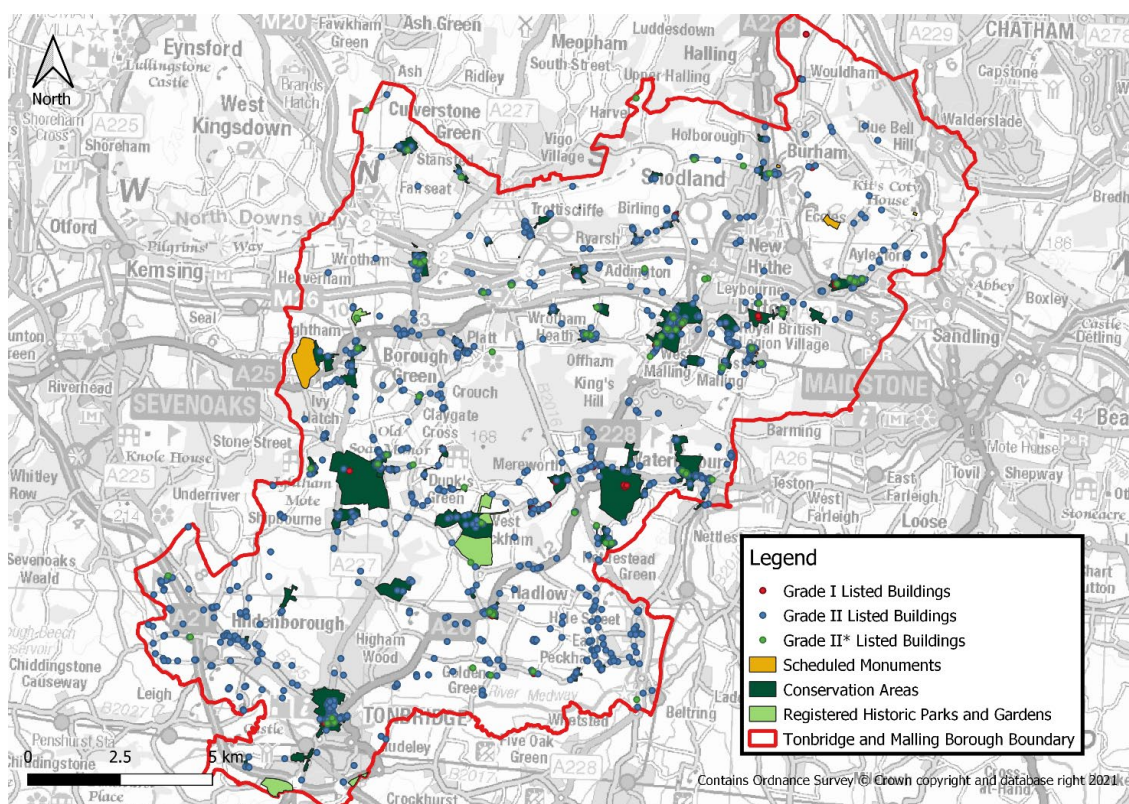


Figure 4-10: The heritage assets present in Tonbridge and Malling Borough

4.6.2 Key sustainability issues

Tonbridge and Malling Borough contains a wealth of heritage assets. There is a risk that adverse impacts could arise from development in the future. Any development that has the potential to affect these assets should not detract from their historic setting and should aim to enhance the historic character of the area.

4.7 Air quality

The Tonbridge and Malling Borough Air Quality Annual Status Report in 2020 indicated that the main source of air pollution within the borough is road traffic from main A roads and the M20. Consequently, 7 AQMAs have been declared, relating to emissions from motor vehicles. All the AQMA's are exceeding the annual NO₂ objective, and the M20 AQMA is also in exceedance of particulate matter. These AQMAs are outlined below and illustrated in Figure 4-11.

- AQMA No.1 (M20)
- Maidstone Borough Air Quality Management Area
- Aylesford AQMA
- Larkfield AQMA
- Tonbridge High Street AQMA
- Watlington AQMA
- AQMA No.7 (Borough Green)

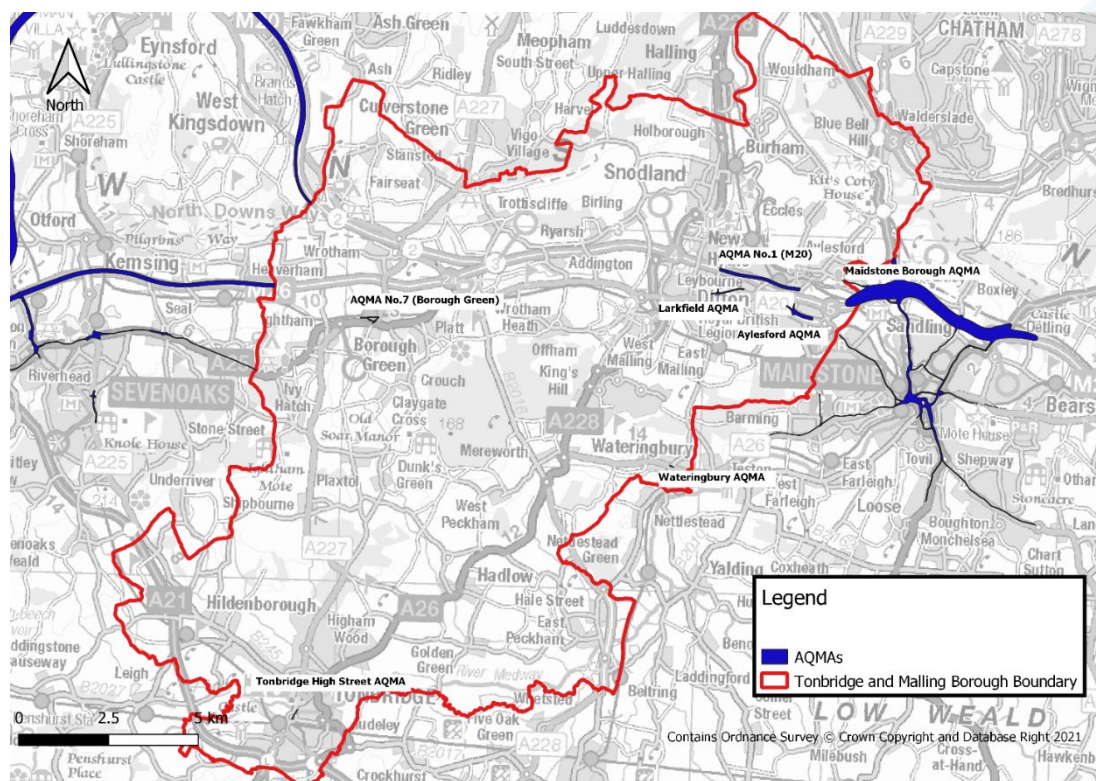


Figure 4-11: Air Quality Management Areas across Tonbridge and Malling Borough (Defra, 2021)

The draft Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Air Quality Action Plan 2021 outlines four key priority areas. The overarching aim of this action plan is to address the AQMA and further aid a behavioural shift to promote sustainable methods of transport. This will help reduce the levels of harmful pollutants and the potential threat to health and wellbeing of the population within the borough.

Across the transport sector, the Air Quality Action Plan intends to implement a series of measures to achieve the overarching aim. These include developing a Quality Bus Partnership scheme, encouraging taxi/private hire companies to switch to low emission vehicles, and developing Freight Quality Partnerships in addition to other measures. From a planning and infrastructure perspective, the Council outlines the additional measures including the installation of electric charging points and installation of green walls and vegetation across the borough. These measures need to be considered for any future development

4.7.1 *Key sustainability issues*

Greater pressures in air quality may occur in the future through increases in the population of the borough, greater development and increased traffic congestion. This could lead to a deterioration in air quality and the introduction of more AQMAs to address these local impacts on air quality.

4.8 **Climate**

The TMBC Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030 states that, based on the Paris Agreement's commitment for staying "well below 2°C and pursuing 1.5°C global temperature rise", the Tyndall Centre for Climate Research recommends between 2020 and 2010, Tonbridge and Malling Borough stay within a maximum cumulative CO₂ emissions budget of 6.4 million tonnes (MtCO₂). According to 2017 CO₂ emissions, TMBC will use the entire budget by 2027. To remain within the recommended budget the borough needs to transition from fossil fuels. Therefore, the overarching commitment of the council is to be carbon neutral by 2030.

The transport sector contributes significantly to CO₂, since 2013 there has been a 7% increase in emissions within the borough. Collaborating with Kent County Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough aims to tackle this issue by promoting lower carbon and healthy transport choices. The borough is further looking to work towards all taxis becoming Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV).

The borough needs to adapt to the changes in its climate. The Tonbridge and Malling Borough Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030 states that the borough currently experiences hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters. This has resulted in increased severe weather incidents such as storms and flooding. At present, the borough council is working with Kent County Council to produce a Kent and Medway Climate Change Adaptation Programme and Implementation Plan.

A summary of UK Climate Projections 2018 (UKCP2018) for Kent County identified the following climate changes:

- Increased average summer temperature of 2-3 °C by 2040.
- Increased average winter temperature of 1-2 °C by 2040.
- Decreased average summer precipitation of 20-30% by 2040.
- Increased average winter precipitation of 10-20% by 2040.

4.8.1 *Key sustainability issues*

Should climate change predictions be realised, there is the potential for significant adverse effects on the borough's infrastructure, public health, built heritage and natural environment. Species and habitat abundance will become threatened as a result of changing habitats, drier soils and increased competition from invasive and non-native species throughout the borough. There is also increased risk of soil erosion due to drier soils, potentially having adverse impacts on agriculture, aquatic ecosystems and air quality. Increased temperatures and extreme weather events have the potential to impact upon public health during heat waves and flood events. This includes increased risk of outbreaks of disease and potential increased contamination risk.

Flooding from increased rainfall and more intense storm events may lead to significant adverse impacts on utility, residential, industrial and transport infrastructure with subsequent economic consequences. There is potential for an increase in river flooding and also flooding from surface water runoff, which can overwhelm the local drainage and sewerage infrastructure. Damage to infrastructure may incur economic costs as well as social and public health implications as a result of distress and disruption caused.

Projected population growth has the potential to increase greenhouse gas emissions from a variety of lifestyle choices such as private vehicle use. Actions and objectives to reduce the borough's carbon emissions will need to take this into account. New development could reduce associated emissions relative to existing developments through appropriate selection of sustainable building design and materials.

4.9 **Population and human health**

4.9.1 *Population*

ONS subnational population projections for England: 2018-based outline the population of Tonbridge and Malling Borough in mid-2021 is 134,481. Over the period 2021 to 2039 the population is projected to increase by 12.4% to 151,147. This value is greater than the wider county-level projection of a 10.6% increase in population in Kent between 2021 and 2039.

Population projections for 2021-2039 indicate a shift in the current age structure of the population of Tonbridge and Malling Borough. The percentage of the population aged over 65 within Tonbridge and Malling Borough is currently 19.1% (2021). It is projected that this will increase to 23.9% by 2039.

The old age dependency ratio (OADR), defined as the number of people of State Pension age (SPA) per 1,000 people of working age (from 16 years up to State Pension age) is also expected to increase within Tonbridge and Malling Borough between 2021 and 2039. In 2021, there were 294.2 people of SPA per 1,000 people of working age. In 2039 it is predicted that this number will increase by 22.5% to 360.5 people of SPA per 1,000 people of working age.

As outlined by the above statistics, there will be a significant increase in ageing population within Tonbridge and Malling Borough between 2021 and 2039.

According to the 2020 Mid-Year Population Estimates, Ward level population in Kent, approximately 70% of the total population in Tonbridge and Malling Borough is concentrated in urban areas, whilst the remaining 30% are distributed within rural areas. This figure reflects the same spatial distribution across Kent where 73% of individuals live in urban areas, and 27% live in rural. This spatial distribution across

the borough has remained stable across the 2019 and 2020 mid-year population estimates.

4.9.2 *Housing*

According to the 2011 Census, the average household size in Tonbridge and Malling Borough was 2.4, slightly less than the county average of 2.5. Average house prices across Tonbridge and Malling Borough have increased by 12% between 2018 and 2021. According to ONS median residential property prices for administrative geographies data, the median house price (2021) in the borough was £370,000, this is significantly higher than the English median residential property price by approximately £104,000. The 2020 housing affordability ratio (ONS, 2020) is calculated by dividing house prices by gross annual workplace-based earnings (based on the median and lower quartiles of both house prices and earnings) to give a ratio which serves as an indicator of relative affordability. A higher ratio indicates that on average, it is less affordable for a resident to purchase a house in their local authority district. The 2020 housing affordability ratio indicates that the Tonbridge and Malling Borough (11.79) is less affordable than surrounding areas of Medway (7.57), Gravesham (8.4), and Maidstone (10). However, the borough is slightly more affordable than neighbouring areas of Sevenoaks (12.59) and Tunbridge Wells (13.27). The Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (2021) states that, as of March 2020, the Council can demonstrate 2.93 years of housing land supply. This figure was generated from the standard method, which was 843 dwellings per annum.

According to the 2011 Census (ethnic group by measures data), 350 people within the borough identified themselves to be of 'Gypsy/Traveller/Irish Traveller' ethnicity. In comparison, there were 322 people within Tunbridge Wells, 320 people in Gravesham, 391 people in Sevenoaks and 838 people in Maidstone who identified themselves as being of 'Gypsy/Traveller/Irish Traveller' ethnicity.

The proportion of rough sleepers in Kent by local authority data has increased from 1.6% to 5.9% from 2010-2020. According to Kent Analytics, of the six estimated rough sleepers in Tonbridge and Malling Borough, three individuals are between 18-25. Compared across Kent, the estimated number of rough sleepers in Tonbridge and Malling Borough is lower than five out of twelve local authorities.

According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD2019): Headline findings for Kent, Tonbridge and Malling Borough has experienced the largest increase in deprivation relative to other districts in the county.

According to a Kent County Council report on Child Poverty from Kent Analytics (2020), there are two districts in the county where there has been an increase in children living in absolute low-income families from 2010/2011 to 2019/2020: Tonbridge and Malling (+4.5%, +115 children) and Tunbridge Wells (+2.5%, +52 children). In total, there are around 9.8% (2,657) children living in absolute low-income families in the borough.

According to Public Health England Local Authority Health Profiles for the period 2018-2020, life expectancies at birth for males was 80.4 years, and for females this figure was 84.4 years. However, life expectancy is 5.9 years lower for men and 7.5 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Tonbridge and Malling Borough compared to the least deprived areas. A comparison between the life expectancies within Tonbridge and Malling Borough and surrounding local authorities is outlined in Table 4-5 below.

Table 4-5: Life expectancy within Tonbridge and Malling Borough and surrounding local authorities (in years) (PHE, 2020)

Local Authority	Male	Female
Tonbridge and Malling	80.4	84.4
Tunbridge Wells	81.3	84.5
Gravesham	79.2	83.2
Sevenoaks	82.1	84.2
Maidstone	80.2	83.3
Medway (Unitary Authority)	78.3	82.4
Kent	80.6	84.1
England	79.4	83.1

The rates of statutory homelessness, under 75 mortality rates from cardiovascular diseases, under 75 mortality rates from cancer, infant deaths and suicide within Tonbridge and Malling Borough, compared to surrounding local authorities are outlined in Table 4-6 below. On average, rates for all/most indicators within Tonbridge and Malling Borough are higher (and therefore worse) than Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, and Gravesham, but lower (and therefore better) than Maidstone and Medway (PHE,2020).

Table 4-6: Health profile highlights for Tonbridge and Malling Borough and surrounding local authorities (count of persons) (PHE, 2020)

Local Authority	Stautory homeless ness	Under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases	Under 75 mortality rate from cancer	Infant mortality rate	Suicide rate
Tonbridge and Malling	16	216	417	12	37
Tunbridge Wells	5	181	365	7	33
Gravesha m	27	180	355	10	34
Sevenoak s	10	182	417	8	27
Maidstone	165	243	556	13	52
Medway (Unitary Authority)	186	484	986	38	62

In the 2019/2020 National Child Measurement Program, 16.3% of children within Year 6 in Tonbridge and Malling Borough were classified as obese compared to the national average of 21% (Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, 2018).

4.9.3 Access to health and social care

Within the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Tonbridge and Malling Borough is part of the West Kent Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), formerly West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). From April 2021, the West Kent ICP became responsible for the commissioning duties of West Kent CCG. Within the West Kent ICP there are 9 Primary Care Networks (PCNs), four of which overlap with the borough boundary. These PCNs, along with the GP practices they operate within Tonbridge and Malling Borough, are outlined below:

- ABC Network: Aylesford Medical Centre
- Malling PCN: Phoenix Medical Practice, Snodland Medical Practice, Thornhills Medical Practice, Watringbury Surgery, and West Malling Group Practice.
- Sevenoaks PCN: Borough Green Medical Practice.
- Tonbridge PCN: Hadlow Medical Centre, Hildenborough Medical Group, Tonbridge Medical Group, and Warders Medical Centre.

Within the borough, there is Tonbridge Cottage Hospital which operates one large ward and an ambulatory care room. Outside of the borough Tonbridge and Malling residents utilise services in neighbouring local authorities; Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust provides services at Maidstone Hospital and Tunbridge Wells

Hospital at Pembury. Hospice care is provided at the Hospice in the Weald (Pembury).

The West Kent CCG Heath Needs Assessment (2018) indicated that the demand for service use for general practice, planned care, urgent and emergency care, and social contacts is expected to rise in excess of the total population growth over the next 25 years.

There are approximately 12 care homes regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in the borough. There are also 9 different services offering specialist support for individuals with autism, and 12 different services offering support for individuals with dementia. There are also four different foodbanks within the borough. The Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) located in Aylesford, offers a support for Armed Forces Veterans and their families. The organisation has a range of programmes for Armed Forces Veterans and wider support for individuals over 16 for seeking employment, disability support and back to work guidance.

4.9.4 Deprivation

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is based on 39 indicators which cover the seven key themes of deprivation. The IMD value for Tonbridge and Malling Borough in 2019 was 13.3, which was lower than the national average of 21.7. In 2019, Tonbridge and Malling Borough was categorized as being within the 20% least deprived authorities in England. The IMD splits each local authority area into Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) which have an average population of 1500 people or 650 households, to further breakdown and comparison of data.

Within Tonbridge and Malling Borough, the highest levels of deprivation are within the Trench Ward in Tonbridge. In 2019, this ward was ranked within the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

The Barriers to Housing and Services Domain within the IMD measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. This indicator broadly reflects geographical barriers and wider barriers concerning affordability. In 2019, eight LSOAs out of 72 in Tonbridge and Malling Borough were ranked within the 10% most deprived in the country relating to barriers to Housing and Services domain. This indicates a significant increase in deprivation, since only 3 LSOAs in the borough were within the 10% most deprived in 2015.

The IMD sub-domain 'geographical barriers' measures road distance to amenities, including road distance to primary schools, post offices and GP surgeries. The more rural areas within the borough, including areas surrounding Borough Green, Shipbourne, across to Mereworth and up along the western side of Snodland are shown to have the least proximity to these services, suggesting poor accessibility. There are some pockets of improved accessibility across all indicators in Borough Green centre, Tonbridge, Snodland and West Malling. Approximately 75% of the borough is characterised by poor accessibility scores across all indicators of geographical barriers. However, geographical proximity provides only a partial picture of overall accessibility, as public transport plays an important role in ensuring everyone has equal access to services and facilities, including for households of lower income or hitting financial difficulty.

There are three main railway lines that pass through the borough: the Maidstone Line, the Medway Valley line, and the South Eastern Main Line. The Channel Tunnel Rail Link also passes through the northern section of the borough.

There is an established public bus network throughout the borough served by Arriva bus services. The Nu-Venture service provides school transport for several schools across the borough.

There are cycling facilities throughout the borough, including the cycle route linking Tonbridge and Penshurst which forms part of the National Cycle Network. There is also a Non-Motorised Unit (NMU) route between Tunbridge Wells North Farm and the Vauxhall Roundabout as part of the dualling of the A21. These more sustainable transport facilities can be used to boost healthier lifestyles of residents.

4.9.5 *Education*

Within Tonbridge and Malling Borough there are 59 schools and colleges, including public and private education providers. The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent from 2021-2025, published by Kent County Council (KCC), indicates that within Tonbridge and Malling Borough there will be sufficient primary school provision until 2025, with local place pressure within Tonbridge South, West Malling, East Malling and Snodland. It is likely that there will be some additional pressures within the secondary sector, with deficits in selective and/or non-selective places across Sevenoaks, Borough Green, Tonbridge, and Tunbridge Wells. Across into Maidstone, there will be sufficient primary school places, however there is forecasted pressure for selective and non-selective places within the secondary sector.

The 2018/2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Score by School and Home District in Tonbridge and Malling Borough indicates the school district is relatively less deprived than the Kent average. In the borough, 20% of individuals aged 16-74 have no academic, vocational, or professional qualifications, this is slightly lower than the national average of 22% (ONS, 2011). Approximately 37% of residents aged 16 and over have gained the equivalent of 1-4 GCSE's, this is higher than the national average of 34% (ONS, 2011). However, the percentage of Tonbridge and Malling Borough residents with a degree is slightly below the national average.

4.9.6 *Active leisure facilities and participation*

The latest data for participation in sport and physical activity is from the Active People Survey undertaken by Sport England to measure sport participation rates across Local Authority Areas in the UK in 2015/2016. This data demonstrated a 4.4% decrease in survey results from 2014/2015. However, Tonbridge and Malling Borough showed the second greatest increase in participation across the county since the 2005/2006 survey.

Within the borough there are four sportsgrounds: Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground, Tonbridge Farm Sportsground, Frog Bridge Sportsground and Swanmead Sportsground. Across these four sportsgrounds there are the facilities for baseball, bowling, football, cricket, rugby, crazy golf, tennis, skateboarding and basketball.

The delivery of many sport and leisure facilities is managed by Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust (TMLT). The not-for-profit organisation manages six key facilities across the borough: Larkfield Leisure Centre, Angel Centre, Tonbridge Swimming Pool, Poulton Wood Golf Course, The Games Hut at Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground, and bookings for sports pitches in Tonbridge. The Trust also provides for additional specialist needs groups during the week, and offers discounted leisure passes for individuals who are registered disabled.

4.9.7 *Crime*

Crime statistics indicate that there is a comparatively lower level of crime in Tonbridge and Malling Borough than the national average.

In March 2020, the ONS Crime Severity Score (CSS) for total recorded crime in Tonbridge and Malling Borough was 10.3, compared to the national average of 13.8. The offence rate per 1,000 individuals was 76, compared to the national average of 89.

The 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data within the crime domain indicates that the highest levels of crime in the borough are in the Downs and Mereworth Ward and Trench Ward. The data suggests that on a relative scale, crime levels within both wards have worsened between 2015 and 2019. The lowest levels of crime are located within the Kings Hill and Hildenborough wards.

4.9.8 *Key sustainability issues*

A growing population will create a substantial need for further housing (including affordable housing), education facilities, and improved social, leisure and transportation infrastructure. This growing population will place increased demand on a range of community services and facilities, and also increase competition for jobs. Pressure also arises from a higher population density and an increasing ageing population in the borough.

There are some areas of deprivation across the borough, creating disparity. There are also a number of health issues that affect the community which increases vulnerability of the population and places further demands on community services and facilities.

4.10 **Economy and employment**

The Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS) data in 2021 recorded a total of 6,140 businesses in the borough, 89% of which of these businesses were micro enterprises (employing less than 10 employees). This business composition is echoed throughout West Kent and the South-East. The greatest providers of employment are wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (ONS, 2020).

Across the borough, 85.4% of people aged 16-64 are economically active, with 80.6% in employment, higher than the national average of 78.7% and 74.8% respectively. The job density statistics which indicate the total ratio of jobs to population between 16-64 years is greater in Tonbridge and Malling Borough than the national average. Therefore, broadly there are more people in Tonbridge and Malling Borough in employment and a greater ratio of jobs per working-age individual than average in England. The percentage of individuals claiming out-of-work benefits in Tonbridge and Malling Borough in 2021 was 3.1% compared the national average of 5%.

According to Nomis data on earnings by place of residence (2021), gross weekly pay for full-time workers in Tonbridge and Malling is £692.40 compared to £660.10 for the South East region and £613.10 across Great Britain.

ONS Annual population survey (2020-2021) indicates a greater proportion of elementary occupations and process plant and machine operatives in the borough compared to county and national statistics. The borough also demonstrates fewer occupations of managers, directors and senior officials, professional occupations, and associate professional and technical roles, than both county and national

averages. Data published from the ONS via Nomis (2014) indicates that residents were commuting out of the borough to attain highly skilled employment, and individuals were commuting into the borough from surrounding districts to fulfil lower skilled employment. Projections indicate an increase supply of lower skilled jobs within the borough, resulting in an over-reliance on in-commuting from surrounding areas.

4.10.1 *Key sustainability issues*

Although employment levels within the borough are higher than the national average and weekly pay for full time workers in the borough is greater than the South East region and Great Britain as a whole, residents commute out of the borough to attain highly skilled employment, with individual's community in to fulfil lower skilled jobs.

The movement of workers between Tonbridge and Malling Borough and the adjacent boroughs also places pressure on the borough's transport network, increasing congestion.

4.11 **Material assets**

4.11.1 *Transport and infrastructure*

Key highway routes within the borough including the A20, M20, A21, A227, A228, M2, A25, A26, A229 and M26 roads. These roads connect the borough to wider transport networks including the M25 motorway and channel ports.

Within the borough there are nine railway stations with two additional stations along the borough boundary. There are three main railway lines that pass through the borough: the Maidstone Line, the Medway Valley line, and the South Eastern Main Line. The closest airport is London Gatwick Airport.

Most bus routes are operated on a commercial basis; however, some routes are partially funded by Kent County Council. There are regular bus services within the borough as well as services connecting Tonbridge and Malling to neighbouring towns. However, some smaller bus operators which serve smaller populations, such as Borough Green, do not operate seven days a week.

The 2014-2019 Tonbridge and Malling Cycling Strategy aimed to increase cycle route connectivity from the Tonbridge town centre and station to the surrounding schools and colleges. The strategy aims to create continuous cycle routes by joining up existing routes and targeting important pathways.

Cycling infrastructure throughout the borough is generally good, there is a cycle route linking Tonbridge and Penshurst which forms part of the National Cycle Network. A Non-Motorised Unit (NMU) route links Tunbridge Wells North Farm and the Vauxhall Roundabout. There is also a recent shared walking/cycling path from Kings Hill to West Malling rail station to improve cycle access for commuters. However, there are some populated areas such as Borough Green and Wrotham which do not have any cycle facilities.

4.11.2 *Transport Patterns*

The 2011 Census data on method of travel to work reported that a greater percentage (60.2%) of individuals travel by car to work than the national average (55.9%). Fewer individuals utilise public transport networks and active modes of transport. The development of better cycling routes is identified within the Kent County Council's Active Travel Strategy and the Tonbridge and Malling Cycling

Strategy (2014). There has also been the development of the Tonbridge 20 mph zone to encourage active modes of travel across the area.

4.11.3 *Green infrastructure, open space and rights of way*

There are numerous amenity green spaces and natural green spaces across Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Evaluating the provision of these against population statistics in 2011 indicated there has been a decrease of 0.92% in provision per 1,000 population. Using Fields In Trust (FiT) Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play, the provision of Children's and Young People's Play Areas did not achieve national benchmarks of 0.55 ha per 1,000 population.

The Old Chalk New Downs project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, due to end in 2022, is currently aiming to restore the chalk grassland habitat whilst connecting communities to the natural environment.

Within the borough there is also Haysden Country Park, located in the western outskirts of Tonbridge. It is approximately 65 ha and includes a series of river, grassland, marshlands, woodlands, and freshwater lakes. The park offers activities for young people, fishing, sailing and open water swimming. Manor Park Country Park managed by Kent County Council (KCC) is located near West Malling. The park is approximately 21 ha, within this there are four distinct sections; the lake, the Abbey Field and Chestnut Paddocks, the Ice House field, and Douce's meadow.

Within the borough there is also Leybourne Lakes Country Park located in Aylesford. The park is approximately 93 ha and includes multiple lakes, wildflower meadows and wetlands. There are a range of facilities for visitors of the country park including walking route and guided trails.

There are two AONBs in the borough. The Kent Downs in the north and a small section of High Weald AONB in the south.

Due to being largely rural in nature, Tonbridge and Malling Borough is fortunate to have ready access through a dense Public Rights of Way (ProW) network from settlements to the wider countryside. This allows access to a wide variety of habitats across the borough which can be beneficial to health and well-being.

4.11.4 *Key sustainability issues*

The borough has good internal and external transport links. The predicted increase in population will place greater pressure on the transport network, which could be exacerbated by an increase in future development pressure, particularly around areas of current high traffic volume.

The borough has good ProW networks which helps facilitate access to the countryside, and provision of open space has increased. However, the predicted increase in population will require the provision of open space to increase accordingly.

The Local Plan offers opportunity to support and improve public transport networks and integrate the provision of open space with new developments.

4.12 **Waste and minerals**

The Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework is the responsibility of Kent County Council. Mineral Consultation Areas cover the Mineral Safeguarding Areas with additional areas to ensure that consultation takes place between county and district/borough planning authorities.

There are 48 Sites listed under the Kent County Council registered minerals and waste sites in Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Kent County Council Kent Minerals and Local Plan 2013-2030 outlines measures to be taken to achieve the objective of ensuring that as much waste as possible is recycled. Throughout the plan period 2021-2030, the spatial vision for minerals and waste in Kent is that minerals and waste development will make a positive and sustainable contribution to the Kent area and assist with progression towards a low carbon economy.

The 5-year review of The Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework by Kent County Council demonstrated a cumulative annual increase in consented capacity across all waste streams. By 2020, there was over 2 million tonnes per annum of additional capacity across all waste streams.

There are 32 recycling sites located across Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Across the borough there has been a significant reduction in waste to landfill over the recent years due to the recent opening of Kent Enviropower (Energy from Waste) facility in Allington. In 2018-2019, 41.9% of waste within the borough was recycled and composed. The Council aims to increase this level to over 50% in 2020/2021, in addition to reducing the overall mass of waste through minimisation of packaging. Between 2013-2020 the borough demonstrated a decrease of 12.1% of Residual Household Waste per Household (kg/h'hold).

There are no household waste recycling centres located in Tonbridge and Malling Borough. The closest household waste recycling centres are located in the neighbouring boroughs of Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Medway and Maidstone.

4.12.1 *Key sustainability issues*

Recycling rates have increased across the borough and will need to continue to increase in alignment with Kent County Council goals. Future population increase is likely to place increased pressure on waste management systems and facilities.

4.13 Business As Usual

The SEA guidance (paragraph 016) outlines that wherever possible, data should be included on historic and likely future trends, including a 'business as usual' scenario (i.e., anticipated trends in the absence of new policies being introduced). This information enables the potential effects of the implementation of the plan to be assessed in the context of existing and potential environmental, economic and social trends. This section therefore considers potential trends that could arise in the absence of a new Local Plan.

4.13.1 *Environment*

The Local Plan will guide the development needs of Tonbridge and Malling Borough through to 2039. A Local Plan is required as valued local natural assets may be at risk of being lost through ad hoc developments without strategical planning during this period. Additionally, opportunities to improve biodiversity value through the preservation and enhancement of local landscapes may be lost. This element holds particular importance with the incoming requirements of biodiversity net gain in association with development which will require adequate and appropriate strategic planning to ensure targets are met.

4.13.2 *Housing*

Without the Local Plan being developed, there is a risk that there will be an insufficient supply of strategically planned land to meet the housing needs of the future population in Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Furthermore, it is essential that

affordable housing targets are achieved, and that affordable housing is incorporated into housing targets. This is necessary to reduce the ratio of median house price to median gross annual earnings and adapt the housing market to suit the working population. Additionally, infrastructure and facilities needed to support planning development will not be prepared to support housing developments long-term, affecting the sustainability of Tonbridge and Malling Borough.

4.13.3 *Economy*

The Tonbridge and Malling Borough economy is currently performing well. To maintain this performance, the Local Plan will need to implement the strategies and policies necessary to support continued business and employment development through to 2039. The Local Plan can help address this imbalance by providing a range of employment opportunities to maximise the skills of the resident population and encourage more sustainable travel patterns to benefit the local long-term economy. Additionally, some households in the borough have lower levels of income than witnessed in surrounding local authorities. The Local Plan will need to provide a range of employment opportunities to meet the skills of the population. In the absence of the Local Plan, the imbalance of skills and income may continue.

5 Proposed Scope of Assessment and SA Framework

5.1 Introduction

The Sustainability Appraisal framework is used to identify and evaluate the potential issues associated with the implementation of the Local Plan. The framework comprises a set of Sustainability Appraisal objectives that have been developed to reflect the key environmental, social and economic issues identified through the baseline information review. These objectives are supported by a series of appraisal criteria, which are used as a means to measure the potential significance of the sustainability issues, and associated indicators, which can be used to monitor the effects of implementation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan is tested against the Sustainability Appraisal framework to identify whether each Local Plan policy will contribute to or conflict with the achievement of each objective. Table 5-1 below summarises the purpose and requirements of the Sustainability Appraisal objectives, appraisal criteria and indicators.

Table 5-1: Definition of Sustainability Appraisal objectives, sub-objectives and indicators

Item	Purpose
Objective	Provide a benchmark 'intention' against which the sustainability effects of the plan can be tested. The need to be fit-for-purpose and represent the key sustainability issues of relevance to the Local Plan area.
Sub-Objectives	Aid the assessment of impact significance. Provide a means of ensuring that key environmental and sustainability issues are considered by the assessment process.
Indicator	Provide a means of measuring the progress towards achieving the sustainability objectives over time. They need to be measured and relevant and ideally rely on existing monitoring networks.

5.2 Key Sustainability Issues

The review of the environmental, social and economic baseline information identified a range of sustainability issues affecting Tonbridge and Malling Borough. A summary of these issues is presented in Table 5-2 below.

Table 5-2: Key Sustainability Issues

Sustainability topic	Key Sustainability Issues/ Opportunities
Environment	
Landscape character	Within the borough there are designated AONBs, the High Weald and Kent Downs. The high-quality landscape is a valuable resource to the quality of life for residents. Therefore, it is important that landscape quality and character is maintained, restored, and enhanced.

Sustainability topic	Key Sustainability Issues/ Opportunities
Biodiversity and nature conservation	<p>There are a variety of high-quality environments throughout the borough which require conservation and enhancement.</p> <p>There are two SAC's which are subject to international protection under the Habitats Directive, and therefore, must be protected in accordance with this legislation.</p> <p>The continued provision of high-quality natural environments poses as an opportunity to develop community engagement.</p>
Water environment	<p>The surface water within Tonbridge and Malling Borough has demonstrated a decline in chemical status. All surface water bodies within the operational catchment of Medway Middle failed the chemical quality in 2019. In 2015, all bodies had achieved a 'good' chemical status.</p> <p>The ecological quality of the catchment has remained relatively stable, with most water bodies achieving a moderate ecological status in both 2015 and 2016.</p> <p>There are some pockets of 'high/ medium high' vulnerability groundwater in the borough around the Tonbridge town centre with further areas towards the north of the borough towards West Malling and Borough Green.</p> <p>Fluvial flooding presents the greatest flood risk within the borough primarily associated with areas of Flood Zone 3 surrounding main rivers within the borough. Climate change is likely to cause an increase in flood risk. Therefore, development should consider preventing increasing flood risk.</p> <p>Future developments should seek to utilise sustainable water management options, such as SuDS. Developments and households should also be encouraged to re-use water, and minimise water use generally. Future developments should seek to utilise sustainable water management options, such as SuDS. Developments and households should also be encouraged to re-use water, and minimise water use generally.</p>
Land Use	<p>The borough has nine important geological sites. There are also areas of good quality agricultural land (Grade 1, 2, and 3a). The Local Plan should protect these areas from inappropriate development.</p> <p>Future development should seek to reuse previously developed sites where possible. It should be noted however that there are several contaminated sites within the borough due to the presence of historic landfill sites.</p>

Sustainability topic	Key Sustainability Issues/ Opportunities
Historic Environment	<p>The borough has many statutory and non-statutory heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings, and conservation areas which could be affected by future development.</p> <p>Four heritage assets were identified on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register (HAR) in 2020. The condition of these assets was categorised as between 'poor' and 'extensive significant problems'. The restoration and maintenance of these assets should be considered.</p> <p>Risks of development adversely affecting the setting of heritage assets.</p>
Air quality	<p>In the borough, seven Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) were declared due to the exceedances of the Annual NO₂. The AQMA in M20 was also declared based on modelled exceedances of the PM₁₀ 24hr mean objective. The Local plan should seek to reduce road traffic and promote public transport use to improve air quality.</p>
Climate	<p>Tonbridge and Malling Borough is already experiencing increases in severe weather events. Kent County Council is producing a Kent and Medway Climate Change Adaptation Programme and Implementation Plan. The Tyndall Centre for Climate Research recommend that the borough remains within a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget of 6.4 million tonnes between 2020 and 2100. Based on 2017 carbon dioxide emissions, the borough will have fulfilled its entire budget by 2027.</p> <p>This poses a significant sustainability issue for future development to address the CO₂ emissions within the borough.</p>
Social	
Population	<p>The borough has a demonstrated issue with an ageing population. The proportion of elderly individuals is projected to increase significantly across the plan period (2021-2039). Consequently, there will be an increased reliance on specialist health care facilities. This will also have consequences on the housing market, with increased demand for appropriate housing for elderly individuals.</p>

Sustainability topic	Key Sustainability Issues/ Opportunities
Human Health and well-being	<p>General health in Tonbridge and Malling is good and reflects the national distribution of health. As previously identified, the increasing elderly population is likely to increase demand for specialist health care facilities.</p> <p>There is variation in the life expectancy between people living in the least deprived and most deprived areas of the borough.</p>
Equality and accessibility	Affordability statics for the borough indicates a deterioration in the housing market from 2015-2017, preventing lower-income households from entering the housing market. The borough is comparatively less affordable than surrounding areas.
Economic	
Economy and employment	Economic forecasting has indicated economic growth in the borough to be greater than regional growth. A range of employment opportunities is needed.
Material Assets	<p>Using 2011 census data, a greater percentage of residents in Tonbridge and Malling Borough travel to work by car than the national average. This figure is likely due to the predominantly rural nature of Tonbridge and Malling borough. Therefore, the Local Plan should seek to reduce the reliance on private vehicles in favour of sustainable transport methods.</p> <p>At present there are strategies which aim to improve the cycling route connectivity in the borough.</p>
Waste and Minerals	<p>The nearest household recycling centre is in a neighbouring authority and therefore Tonbridge and Malling Borough is an exporter of household waste.</p> <p>Sustainable sourcing and waste management principles should be promoted for all new developments within the borough.</p>

5.3 Sustainability Appraisal objectives and appraisal criteria

Sustainability Appraisal objectives and appraisal criteria have been compiled for each of the sustainability receptors (see Table 5-3). These objectives are currently in draft form and can be refined or revised in response to comments received during the consultation phase on this Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. The objectives and appraisal have been informed and developed by a range of information including the baseline review, the Key Challenges identified in the adopted Core Strategy, the key environmental protection and sustainability themes identified by the PPP review.

Table 5-3: Proposed SA Framework

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
1. To improve human health and well-being		
<p>To reduce health inequalities amongst different groups in the community.</p> <p>To improve access to health and social care services.</p> <p>To promote healthy lifestyles, including equitable access to recreational opportunities such as open space, children's play areas and the countryside.</p> <p>To reduce flood risk to people, property and communities, and manage flooding.</p> <p>To maintain low crime levels.</p> <p>To reduce the fear of crime.</p> <p>To reduce levels of anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>To encourage safety by design.</p> <p>To promote healthy lifestyles through connecting people with nature and promoting high standards of Green Infrastructure.</p>	<p>Percentage of the resident population who consider themselves to be in good health.</p> <p>Number of wards with LSOAs in the bottom 40% most deprived for health deprivation and disability.</p> <p>Life expectancy at birth for males and females.</p> <p>Percentage of working-age population with a long-term limiting illness.</p> <p>Percentage of adults (16+) taking part in sport and active recreation at least three times a week).</p> <p>Number and distribution of wards with LSOAs in the bottom 40% most deprived for crime deprivation.</p> <p>Crime rates per 1,000 of the population for key offences.</p> <p>Number of new developments actively incorporating safety by design principles.</p> <p>Number of new initiatives implemented to tackle anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Number of new developments meeting the open green space standards in the adopted Local Plan.</p>	<p>Maintain and increase number of people claiming to be in good health.</p> <p>Increase access to health services.</p> <p>Increase the number of adults and young people participating in sport and physical activity through increasing accessibility to sport facilities and recreational space.</p> <p>Reduce the number of crimes per 1000 population.</p> <p>Increase access to high quality healthcare facilities.</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
2. To improve equality and access to community facilities and services.		
<p>Improve access to affordable housing and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures within local communities.</p> <p>To tackle homelessness more effectively.</p> <p>To reduce flood risk to people, property and communities, especially the most deprived areas.</p> <p>To improve access to cultural and leisure facilities.</p> <p>To maintain and improve access to essential services and facilities.</p> <p>To promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport.</p> <p>To encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.</p>	<p>Average house price.</p> <p>Ratio of median house prices to median income</p> <p>Percentage of homes deemed unfit.</p> <p>Number of LSOAs in the bottom 40% most deprived for barriers to housing and services provision.</p> <p>Percentage of housing vacant.</p> <p>Number of housing /affordable housing completions per annum.</p> <p>Homelessness rates</p> <p>Net additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches</p> <p>Number of essential services and facilities within local settlements.</p> <p>Number and distribution of sports facilities and recreational space.</p> <p>Journey to work by mode.</p> <p>Public transport patronage.</p> <p>Percentage of dwellings approved and located within 400m of an existing or proposed bus stop or within 800m of an existing or proposed railway station.</p> <p>Number of homes with broadband internet access.</p>	<p>Increase the number of homes, (particular affordable homes) in the district in accordance with housing targets.</p> <p>Make best use of existing housing stock.</p> <p>Reduce levels of homelessness.</p> <p>Increase access to basic services and amenities.</p> <p>No net loss of basic services and amenities.</p> <p>To increase use of sustainable transport and reduce private car dependence.</p> <p>To increase access to broadband internet across the borough (for residential and employment uses).</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
3. To improve levels of educational attainment and skills and training development for all age groups and all sectors of society		
<p>To maintain and increase levels of participation and attainment in education for all members of local communities.</p> <p>To improve the provision of education and training facilities.</p> <p>To improve access to and involvement in higher education for 16-19 year olds.</p>	<p>Location and number of educational establishments in Tonbridge and Malling.</p> <p>Number and distribution of wards with LSOAs in the bottom 40% most deprived for education, skills and training deprivation.</p> <p>Percentage of 15 year old pupils in local authority schools achieving 5 or more GCSEs at Grades 9 – 4 or equivalent.</p> <p>Percentage of people aged 19-64 achieving national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 4 or above.</p> <p>Percentage of resident adults with no qualifications.</p> <p>Percentage of 16-19 year olds continuing in to higher education.</p>	<p>At least 95% of adults to have basic skills in both functional literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>At least 90% of adults to hold at least level 2 qualifications or equivalent.</p> <p>At least 40% of adults to hold at least level 4 qualifications or equivalent.</p> <p>No net loss of educational establishments.</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
4. To encourage sustainable economic growth, business development, and economic inclusion across the borough.		
<p>To diversify employment opportunities.</p> <p>To increase employment opportunities.</p> <p>To encourage economic growth.</p> <p>To reduce levels of unemployment.</p> <p>To improve physical accessibility to jobs.</p> <p>To reduce flood risk to businesses and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Location of key industries and major employers.</p> <p>Economic activity rate.</p> <p>Employment by sector.</p> <p>Number of VAT registered businesses including sectoral information.</p> <p>Visitor numbers and tourist revenue data.</p> <p>Number of wards with LSOAs in the bottom 40% most deprived for employment deprivation.</p> <p>Number of wards with LSOAs in the bottom 40% for income deprivation.</p> <p>Percentage of unemployed working-age population.</p> <p>Location of employment areas relative to housing.</p>	<p>Increase number of VAT registered businesses.</p> <p>Provision of sufficient employment land to meet economic needs.</p> <p>No net loss in employment land provision.</p> <p>Increase accessibility to employment areas for LSOAs exhibiting higher levels of employment and income deprivation.</p> <p>No increase in businesses relocating outside the borough. [2021 AMR]</p> <p>Net gain in number of planning permissions involving new or improved tourism or recreational facilities [2021 AMR]</p> <p>Increase the visitor spend on tourism</p> <p>Decrease the numbers of employed people currently working outside of the district.</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
5. To protect and enhance biodiversity		
<p>To protect and enhance designated sites of nature conservation importance.</p> <p>To protect and enhance wildlife especially rare and endangered species.</p> <p>To protect and enhance habitats and wildlife corridors.</p> <p>To provide opportunities for people to access wildlife and open green spaces.</p> <p>To increase biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>To protect and enhance priority species and habitats of conservation importance that contribute to reversing the trend of ecological decline.</p> <p>To protect, enhance and expand ecological networks and their interconnectivity.</p> <p>Conservation of biodiversity, including priority habitats and species, under the NERC Act (S41).</p>	<p>Number and distribution of designated sites including SAC, SPA, Ramsar sites, SSSI, NNR, LNR and LWSs.</p> <p>Number of planning applications approved that result in the loss of extent or other adverse effects on these sites.</p> <p>Condition of SSSIs.</p> <p>Proportion of the population that has full access to the requirements of the Accessible Natural Green Space Standard.</p> <p>Planning/applications refused/granted in designated sites, green wedges, and wildlife corridors.</p> <p>Percentage of land designated as nature conservation sites as a result of Local Plan policies. Completed development that has resulted in the loss or creation/restoration of BAP habitats.</p> <p>Creation, restoration or enhancement of a population or habitat.</p> <p>Increase in percentage/increase in area or length of habitat creation/enhancement achieved by development.</p> <p>Number of planning applications which incorporate habitat creation, restoration, enhancement and connectivity (e.g. linear habitats and wildlife corridors as part of wider ecological networks).</p>	<p>Maintain and improve number of SSSIs and SACs in favourable condition along with LNRs and LWSs.</p> <p>Increase access to greenspace per head.</p> <p>Minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity in association with development.</p> <p>Protect and enhance priority habitats and species. Contribute to the protection and creation of new BAP habitats.</p> <p>Avoid habitat fragmentation and increase connectivity of habitats.</p> <p>Enhance community engagement with biodiversity.</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
6. To protect and enhance the borough's landscape and townscape character and quality		
<p>To protect and enhance landscape character and quality.</p> <p>To protect and enhance townscape character and quality.</p> <p>Protect and enhance the integrity and quality of the Borough's urban and rural landscapes, maintaining local distinctiveness and sense of place.</p> <p>To protect and enhance AONBs within the borough and their settings.</p>	<p>Number, location, size and character of Conservation Areas.</p> <p>Amount of development in the AONBs</p> <p>Conservation Areas at risk</p> <p>Change in quality of landscape character and condition.</p> <p>The condition and quality of new characteristics introduced to the environment.</p> <p>Percentage of open countryside.</p> <p>Change in areas designated for their landscape value.</p>	<p>No major development within AONBs other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.</p> <p>No net loss of Conservation Areas.</p> <p>No increase in Conservation Areas at risk.</p> <p>Maintain settlement identity and prevent coalescence. Protect and enhance areas of tranquillity.</p> <p>Promote schemes designed to promote the diversity of landscape and built character into new development.</p> <p>Minimise detrimental visual intrusion.</p> <p>Minimise light pollution.</p>
7. To protect and enhance the cultural heritage resource		
<p>To protect and enhance historic buildings and sites.</p> <p>To protect and enhance historic landscape/townscape value.</p>	<p>Number and distribution of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens.</p> <p>Percentage of listed buildings or other assets on the English Heritage at risk register.</p> <p>Number of permissions granted against English Heritage advice</p> <p>Loss or damage of heritage assets.</p> <p>Number of heritage assets on the Heritage Risk Register</p>	<p>No increase in heritage at risk as a result of new development.</p> <p>No permissions granted against English Heritage advice [2021 AMR].</p> <p>Conserve and enhance designated heritage features</p> <p>Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of Conservation Areas.</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
8. To protect and enhance the quality of water features and resources		
<p>To protect and enhance ground and surface water quality. Reduce the risk of flooding to existing communities and ensure no new developments are at risk.</p> <p>To contribute towards achievement of relevant River Basin Management Plan aims.</p> <p>To protect and enhance water quantity, such as through high standards of water efficiency.</p>	<p>Percentage of rivers with good/fair chemical and biological water quality.</p> <p>Percentage of waterbodies achieving 'Good' ecological status</p> <p>Number of pollution incidents.</p> <p>Number of schemes contributing to the achievement of WFD objectives.</p> <p>Number of planning applications granted permission contrary to Environment Agency advice.</p> <p>Number of planning applications within SPZ Zones 1 and 2.</p> <p>Number of developments accompanied by a Surface Water Management Plans.</p> <p>Number of SuDS schemes installed.</p> <p>Water efficiency of new developments.</p>	<p>To introduce SuDs into new development.</p> <p>No planning permissions granted against EA advice.</p> <p>Contribute to the achievement of WFD objectives.</p> <p>Encourage sustainable and efficient management of water resources.</p> <p>Protect and where possible improve drinking water quality.</p> <p>Improve water quality in the borough's watercourses.</p> <p>Enhancement and recreation of natural watercourses.</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
9. To conserve and enhance soil resources and guard against land contamination		
<p>To reduce the amount of derelict, contaminated, and vacant land.</p> <p>To encourage development of brownfield land where appropriate.</p> <p>To protect soil functions and quality.</p> <p>Avoid development of 'best and most versatile' soil.</p>	<p>Percentage of housing completions on previously developed land.</p> <p>Percentage of employment development on previously developed land.</p> <p>Area of greenfield land affected by development.</p> <p>Areas of ALC grades 1, 2 and 3a lost to development.</p> <p>Number of land remediation schemes.</p>	<p>100% of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land</p> <p>Greater than 51% of employment land permitted for development on previously developed land [2021 AMR]</p> <p>Reduce soil erosion and protect and enhance soil quality and quantity</p> <p>Minimise the loss of Grade 1, 2 and Grade 3a ALC land. Reduce contamination of soils from development, industry or agriculture. Promote the use of brownfield land for development where possible.</p> <p>Increase the remediation and regeneration of contaminated land.</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
10. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions so as to minimise climate change		
<p>To reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>To increase energy efficiency and require the use of renewable energy sources.</p> <p>To reduce the use of energy.</p> <p>To promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport.</p> <p>To reduce the use of private car.</p> <p>To encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.</p> <p>Encourage the uptake of ICT.</p>	<p>Total carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions per capita per year.</p> <p>Number of planning applications granted permission contrary to Environment Agency advice regarding flooding.</p> <p>Annual average domestic gas and electricity consumption per consumer.</p> <p>Annual gas and electricity consumption in the commercial/industrial sector.</p> <p>Number of applications for renewable energy developments and details of their location.</p> <p>Journey to work by mode.</p> <p>Public transport patronage.</p> <p>Percentage of dwellings approved and located within 400m of an existing or proposed bus stop or within 800m of an existing or proposed railway station.</p> <p>Number of homes with broadband internet access.</p>	<p>To reduce per capita CO₂ emissions each year.</p> <p>No planning applications permitted contrary to EA advice on flooding.</p> <p>Number of new developments where SuDS are appropriately used to increase each year.</p> <p>To reduce Annual average domestic gas and electricity consumption per consumer.</p> <p>To reduce Annual gas and electricity consumption in the commercial/industrial sector.</p> <p>90% of permissions granted fulfilling renewable energy requirements within policy and by type of renewable energy [2021 AMR].</p> <p>20MW/pa delivery of renewable energy generation permitted [2021 AMR].</p> <p>To increase use of sustainable transport and reduce private car dependence.</p> <p>To increase access to broadband internet across the borough (for residential and employment uses).</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
11. To improve adaptation to climate change so as to minimise its impact		
<p>Reduce the impacts of climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>To encourage the inclusion of SuDS in developments.</p> <p>To increase the use of materials which withstand climate change impacts (e.g. heat, extreme weather).</p> <p>To increase the nature-based solutions such as green walls, tree-planting, etc.</p>	<p>Number of SuDS implemented across the borough.</p> <p>Number of new developments featuring nature-based solutions.</p> <p>Reduction in use of unsustainable materials.</p> <p>Greenhouse gas emissions. Proportion of total electricity consumption from renewable sources.</p> <p>Condition of designated sites.</p> <p>Waste to landfill, recycling and composting rates.</p> <p>Number of public transport services and cycle routes created.</p>	<p>Increase number of new developments where SuDS are appropriately used to increase each year.</p> <p>Increase number of new developments featuring nature-based solutions.</p> <p>Increase use of sustainable materials rather than unsustainable materials (for example, using timber rather than concrete)</p> <p>Deliver schemes that promote habitat and species resilience and adaptability to the effects of climate change.</p> <p>Promote measures that minimise greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Minimise the likely impacts of climate change through promotion of appropriate adaptation measures in new development.</p> <p>Reduce waste and increase reuse, recycling and energy produced of waste.</p> <p>Promote measures that reduce the need to travel and travel distances. Promote measures to reduce the need to travel by car.</p> <p>Promote use of public transport</p>

SA Objectives and Sub-Objectives	Indicators (Current and Proposed)	Targets
12. To protect and improve air quality		
<p>To protect and improve local air quality.</p> <p>To promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport.</p> <p>To reduce the use of private car.</p> <p>To encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.</p>	<p>Number and distribution of AQMAs.</p> <p>Combined Air Quality Indicator Scores for LSOAs in Tonbridge and Malling.</p> <p>Distribution of known key polluting industries.</p> <p>Rate of transport modal shift across Borough.</p> <p>Exceedances of air quality objectives.</p> <p>Nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and particulate emissions.</p> <p>Population living in AQMAs. Number of complaints received regarding odour nuisance.</p>	<p>No new AQMAs to be designated in the borough.</p> <p>To increase use of sustainable transport and reduce private car dependence.</p> <p>Maintain and improve local air quality.</p> <p>Promote measures that will remove the occurrence of AQMAs.</p> <p>Reduce the impacts on air quality from transport. Mitigate against the uses that generate NO2 or other particulates.</p>
13. To protect material assets and minimise waste		
<p>To ensure sustainable use of natural resources.</p> <p>To reduce the demand for raw materials</p> <p>To promote the use of recycled and secondary materials in construction</p> <p>To increase the proportion of waste recycling and reuse</p> <p>To reduce the production of waste</p> <p>To reduce the proportion of waste landfilled</p>	<p>Incorporation of secondary and recycled materials in new development projects.</p> <p>Number of grey water recycling and water minimisation schemes implemented.</p> <p>Number of sustainable design schemes implemented.</p> <p>Levels of composting and recycling achieved.</p> <p>Levels of fly-tipping</p> <p>Amount of household waste landfilled.</p> <p>Number and distribution of Household Waste Recycling Centres</p> <p>Total aggregates extracted from the borough.</p> <p>Environmental incidents from mineral extraction facilities.</p>	<p>Increase use of secondary and recycled materials in construction for new developments.</p> <p>Increase use of water efficiency schemes in new developments.</p> <p>Increase the percentage of municipal waste that is recycled or composted.</p> <p>Decrease the amount of fly-tipping.</p>

5.4 SA Assessment Stage Proposed Methodology (Stage B)

5.4.1 *Developing Alternatives*

The SEA Regulations require an assessment of the plan and its 'reasonable alternatives'. In order to assess reasonable alternatives, different options for delivering the Local Plan will be developed and assessed at an appropriate level of detail (generally desk-based) against the above Sustainability Appraisal objectives relative to baseline conditions as detailed in Section 4. The results of this assessment will be used to inform the decision-making process in choosing a preferred way of delivering the Local Plan. There will be three main Local Plan development phases at which reasonable alternatives will be developed, assessed and considered:

- Individual sites as potential land allocations ('call for sites')
- Strategic spatial options – different combinations of sites which can meet the development targets (for each applicable development type) of the Local Plan, based around relevant environmental or planning objectives or motivations
- Policy alternatives – different ways of using or implementing criteria or developer requirements in the Local Plan policies to appropriately screen, guide, and inform development proposals which come forward for consideration for planning permission

The Local Plan's options / alternatives will be assessed iteratively throughout the process, with details of each provided in the Environmental Report.

The Sustainability Appraisal will also consider a 'business as usual' scenario (i.e. how the situation would develop in relation to each environmental receptor without implementation of the Local Plan, but with reasonable assumptions about development management, e.g. the current adopted local planning policy in place). A 'Do nothing' scenario will not be considered. It is not reasonable to assume a scenario without any local planning system in place.

5.4.2 *Types of Effect to be Considered*

The Local Plan will be evaluated in light of its potential cumulative, synergistic and indirect effects on the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. The assessment of these effects will be informed by the baseline data collected at this scoping stage, professional judgement, and experience with other Sustainability Appraisals, as well as an assessment of national, regional and local trends.

Throughout the assessment the following will apply:

- Positive, neutral and negative impacts will be assessed, with uncertain impacts highlighted.
- The duration of the impact will be considered over the short, medium and long term.
- The reversibility and permanence of the impact will be assessed (e.g. temporary construction impacts, impacts which can be mitigated against/restored over time or completely irreversible changes to the environment).
- In-combination effects will also be considered.

The significance of effects upon each of the Sustainability Appraisal objectives will then be evaluated and used to inform option selection.

5.4.3 Impact assessment and likely significant effects

The SA will include assessment of Local Plan strategy and policy alternatives, including the preferred options and policies. The steps required to enable policy option assessment in general are as follows:

- 1 highlight or establish relevant aspects of the current baseline, including any key environmental, social (including equalities and health), and economic issues (as summarised in this Scoping Report);
- 2 define the 'do minimum' scenario (e.g. what will happen without the option or policy);
- 3 establish the future baseline under the defined 'do minimum' scenario;
- 4 identify when proposals would come into / take effect;
- 5 assess options or proposals against the baseline at those timelines; and
- 6 make SA recommendations (mitigation) – e.g. amend the option, choose an alternative option, amend other policies to better manage effects, etc.

The SA will assess policy options against the "Business as Usual" scenario – i.e. the current baseline and how it will evolve without the Local Plan in place. This will have to consider the direction of the adopted local planning framework, intra- and inter-boundary environmental / sustainability issues, the results of the SAs and SEAs of the adopted local planning framework relative to those issues, and evolution in understanding since the adopted LDF documents.

Each policy option will be assessed for potential significant changes against the adopted Development Plan, including relative to any geographical / site-level risks of adverse effects or opportunities for beneficial effects known. This approach to assessment, known as 'tiering' or 'tiered assessment' in SA / SEA is an established, robust approach to ensuring the assessment is realistic, and can provide useful outcomes. It is also referred to as being a 'risk-based' approach, as it identifies the likely significant risks of adverse effects and the potential benefits of development 'on the ground' when assessing the likely efficacy of policy in mitigating those risks or securing those benefits.

The SA will lead to recommendations that will feed into both preferred policy option development, and site selection (i.e. vis-à-vis the risks of potential adverse effect which are over and above what policy can fully mitigate).

The unmitigated impacts of the Local Plan options and policies on achieving the Sustainability Appraisal objectives will be identified through the analysis of the baseline conditions and use of professional judgement. The significance of effects will be scored using the five-point scale summarised in Table 5-4. The level of uncertainty regarding the likelihood and potential significance of an impact (either positive or negative) will be assessed separately on a scale from "Very high" to "very low". Where certainty is lower, the 'worst case' impact will be assessed and illustrated, with commentary how the effect may be better or improved through action.

Table 5-4: Impact Significance Key

Impact Significance	Description	Impact Symbol
Significant positive impact	The proposal/policy contributes to the achievement of the SA Objective and is likely to deliver enhancements.	++

Minor positive impact	The proposal/policy contributes partly to the achievement of the SA Objective but not completely.	+
Neutral impact	There is no clear relationship between the proposal/policy and/or the achievement of the SA Objective or the relationship is negligible.	0
Minor negative impact	The proposal/policy partially detracts from the achievement of some elements of the SA Objective.	-
Significant negative impact	The proposal/policy detracts from the achievement of all elements of the SA Objective.	--

5.4.4 *Proposed SA method – site assessment*

A 'call for sites' exercise will be undertaken by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. Suitable sites will be appraised in more detail and in full using a range of criteria, including the full SA Framework, in order to consider, against each SA Objective and any relevant sub-objective (at a site level):

- Risks of potential adverse effects
- Opportunities for, or likely, beneficial effects

The plan-making process will take the SA into account, in addition to any other factors (e.g. NPPF compliance, landowner intentions, economic feasibility, responses to consultations etc.), to develop strategic spatial alternatives, which will be assessed in detail by the SA (informed by the individual site assessments). The SA will consider whether any additional reasonable strategic spatial alternatives need to be considered, on the basis of environmental grounds.

5.4.5 *Proposed SA method – policy assessment / Local Plan holistic assessment*

Once policy options are available, the SA will assess the 'suite of policies' acting together on each relevant SA Objective, as far as is reasonably practicable. This reflects the reality of Local Plan implementation, whereby any individual proposal submitted to the Council will be considered against all policies, rather than any one policy individually. This holistic approach allows both the Council and SA practitioners to focus on sustainability / environmental outcomes.

The approach requires that SA practitioners:

- Establish the sustainability and environmental risks / benefits from the site assessment, including in particular sites acting 'in combination';
- Consider the adopted Local Plan policy position, and overlay the spatial implications of policies with preferred sites; and
- Review new effects against the adopted Local Plan and assess policy change against that baseline.

This policy assessment approach allows focuses on impacts and improving Local Plan policy, wherever practicable. The SA will consider the range of policy mitigations feasible, in addition to infrastructure provision (e.g. new public transport links, roads, schools, and green infrastructure) to ensure that development is sustainable.

Where individual policy areas have practicable, viable alternatives, a suite of policies and assumptions around those policies will be assessed alongside each policy option. For example, should there be different policy options around Green Belt, the SA will not consider the complete lack of any policy protecting biodiversity and landscape. Instead, the SA would initially consider the “baseline policy” (i.e. current Local Plan / LDF) for each of these areas, and it would then consider as mitigation how those policies would have to adapt to changing Green Belt policy (i.e. the ‘residual effect’ with SA mitigation recommendations).

5.5 Geographical / spatial scope

5.5.1 *Tonbridge and Malling Borough*

The proposed study area for the SA is Tonbridge and Malling Borough, defined by the boundary illustrated in Figure 1-1. Some themes addressed in the SA are part of national and international issues, such as climate change, and as such it is likely that the effects will extend beyond the boundaries of the borough. However, there can be regional and local indicators of the effects of these impacts as well as objectives at this level that can mitigate these global issues. This is what the scope of the SA will focus on.

Data has been collected as part of a baseline review as a part of the SA scoping process, with further data collated as information has become available regarding policies and plans relevant to the Local Plan. This has included information about the surrounding districts and Kent County overall.

5.5.2 *Cross-boundary Issues*

For many authorities, the geographical scale of particular issues means that they relate closely to neighbouring authorities. For example, housing provision and education can all result in flows of people across local authority boundaries. In order to help to characterise the scope further, some of these key ‘cross-boundary’ issues have been identified below.

- Population growth and a lack of affordable housing in Tonbridge and Malling borough may lead to increased demand for housing in surrounding districts.
- There are not any household recycling centres within Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Therefore, residents within Tonbridge and Malling Borough are likely to continue to travel to other districts to dispose of waste which is likely to have adverse traffic movements around this area.
- There is limited secondary school places across Tonbridge and Malling, with deficits in selective and/or non-selective places across Sevenoaks, Borough Green, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. This is likely to further increase as the population grows.
- Housing, business, and road developments in close proximity to the borough border can result in changes in traffic patterns that impact several local authorities.
- Changes in air quality in the borough and surrounding areas due to increased levels of traffic.

5.6 Temporal scope

The temporal scope of the SA is the plan period (to 2039), and a period of approximately 10 years beyond to ensure that the long-term implications of any decisions implemented during, and especially towards the end of, the plan period have been considered. This will help to identify whether the effects are likely to be

permanent (i.e. irreversible at least through the lifetime of the proposed measures/scheme) or temporary.

6 Next steps in the Sustainability Appraisal process

6.1 Consultation

A key aspect of the Sustainability Appraisal process is consultation (see Table 2-2, Stage A5). The Sustainability Appraisal process provides a mechanism to ensure that stakeholder engagement requirements are achieved by providing interested parties/organisations and the public an opportunity to inform the process and comment on decisions taken. Stakeholder engagement also ensures that environmental and social issues, constraints and opportunities are identified and assessed at an early stage of the project.

The draft Scoping Report will be subject to a consultation with the statutory consultation bodies (Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency) for a 5-week period. Comments received will be reviewed and the scope of the assessment revised accordingly.

The Interim Environmental Report will be the next output in the Sustainability Appraisal process, and it will document the assessment of the Regulation 18 Local Plan against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. Consultation will be undertaken on the Interim Environmental Report, and the findings will be integrated into the Final Environmental Report.

Following the Interim Environmental Report, the Final Environmental Report will be produced documenting the assessment of the Regulation 19 Local Plan against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives.

6.2 The Interim Environmental Report and final Environmental Report

Following the consultation period on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, the Regulation 18 Local Plan will be developed, concurrently with the Sustainability Appraisal, following the framework outlined above. The results of this will be summarised in an Interim Environmental Report.

Consultation will be undertaken on the Interim Environmental Report and the outcomes will be integrated into the final Environmental Report which will summarise the outcomes of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

A proposed structure for the Interim Environmental Report and Final Environmental Report is outlined in Table 6-1 below.

Table 6-1: Proposed structure for the Interim Environmental Report and Environmental Report

Section	Information to be included
Non-technical summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-technical summary of the Sustainability Appraisal process.
Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who carried out the Sustainability Appraisal, how, who was consulted, and when. Difficulties in collecting data or assessment.

Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal and integration with the Local Plan.
Baseline characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of baseline review, including the future baseline without the plan. This will be updated from the Scoping Stage with information brought to light during the consultation period. Links to other plans, programmes and relevant environmental protection objectives, and how they have been incorporated. Existing and foreseeable future environmental problems. Limitations of the data, assumptions etc.
Sustainability framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Appraisal objectives and appraisal criteria.
Plan issues and alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of significant sustainability effects of the Local Plan policies. Assessment matrix for each policy/option. How problems were considered in developing the policies and choosing the preferred alternatives. Other alternatives considered, and why these were rejected. Proposed mitigation and enhancement measures to deliver Sustainability Appraisal objectives.
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to project environmental impact assessment, design guidance etc. Proposals for monitoring and reporting.

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Appendices

Appendix A Plans, Policies and Programmes Detailed Review

A.1 International Objectives

Source	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Aarhus Convention (1998)	Establishes several public rights, including access to environmental information held by public authorities, the right to public participation in environmental decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters regarding community institutions and bodies.	The preparation process of the Local Plan and its SA will need to have regard to the convention through ensuring effective public participation and ensuring the accessibility of environmental information relating to the plan.
EU Directives on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality (2008/50/EC, 2004/107/EC, 2015/1480/EC) • Conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC amended to 2009/147/EC) • Emission reductions (2018/410/EC) • Environmental noise (2002/49/EC) • Flood risk (2007/60/EC), • Habitats (92/43/EEC) • Landfill of Waste (99/31/EC) • Promotion of use of energy from renewable sources (2018/2001/EC) • Waste (2018/851/EC) • Water framework (2000/60/EC) 	<p>Directives are legal acts of the EU that require member states to achieve a particular result without dictating the means of achieving that result, leaving them with a certain amount of leeway as to how it can be achieved. They tend to be implemented by the transposition into legislation e.g. Regulations by the Member States.</p> <p>Relevant objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and management of ambient air quality. • Conservation of wild birds and their habitats, including identifying Special Protection Areas (SPAs). • Reduction of overall greenhouse gas emissions of the Union by at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. • Providing a framework for national and local noise policy and requiring the production of strategic noise maps. • Reducing and managing the risks that floods pose to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity, and the requirement for Member States to carry out preliminary assessments to identify river basins and coastal areas at risk of flooding and to establish flood risk management plans. • Ensure the conservation, maintenance and restoration of natural habitats and wild fauna/flora. • Preventing and reducing the negative effects of landfill waste on the environment and health, and setting waste reduction targets. • Promotion of renewable energy and setting of target for 15% of energy to be from renewable sources by 2020. • Preventing and reducing the generation of waste, the adverse impacts of waste generation and management, and reducing the overall impacts of resource use and improving the efficiency of resource use. • Improvement of water quality for ground and surface waters ('good' status to be achieved for all water bodies), and co-ordinated river basin management. 	The Local Plan will need to have regard to the relevant UK legislation that has been transposed from these EU Directives.
Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020, European Commission (2011)	The EU Biodiversity Strategy aims to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU and help stop global biodiversity loss by 2020. It reflects the commitments taken by the EU in 2010, within the international Convention on Biological Diversity. In 2011, the EU adopted an ambitious strategy setting out 6 targets and 20 actions to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU by 2020. The mid-term review of the strategy assesses whether the EU is on track to achieve this objective. It shows progress in many areas but highlights the need for much greater effort.	The Local Plan should have regard to the relevant goals of the strategy, particularly in relation to protecting habitats and species. The SA should assess potential effects of the plan on biodiversity and seek to maximise positive impacts.

Source	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Convention on Biological Diversity (1993) and Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020	The three main objectives are to conserve biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources. In 2010, the Convention adopted a revised Strategic Plan for Biodiversity to provide an overarching framework on biodiversity, not only for the biodiversity-related conventions, but for the entire United Nations system and all other partners engaged in biodiversity management and policy development.	The Local Plan will need to have regard to the government's Biodiversity 2020 strategy. The SA will assess potential impacts on biodiversity from the plan and identify required mitigation.
Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)	The Convention aims to ensure conservation of wild flora and fauna species and their habitats. The Parties undertake to take all appropriate measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats of the wild flora and fauna species. Such measures should be included in the Parties' planning and development policies.	The Local Plan will need to have ensure the appropriate conservation of wild flora and fauna and species and their habitats through its development strategy, site allocations and policies. The SA (and HRA) will assess potential effects of the plan on species and habitats and identify any required mitigation.
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971)	The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".	The Local Plan will need to ensure that its policies and proposals do not adversely affect Ramsar sites). Potential effects will be assessed using the SA process and Habitats Regulations Assessment and Appropriate Assessment.
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	An environmental treaty under the aegis of the UN Environment Programme, which provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats. It lays the legal foundation for internationally coordinated conservation measures. Its objective is to ensure co-ordinated action across a range of parties to protect migratory species and habitats and to avoid any migratory species becoming endangered.	The Local Plan should assess its potential impacts on migratory species and minimise the loss or harm to important migratory habitats. This will be achieved through the SA and HRA process.
European Landscape Convention – Florence Convention (2000)	The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is the first international convention to focus specifically on landscape. Created by the Council of Europe, the convention promotes landscape protection, management and planning, and European co-operation on landscape issues. Signed by the UK Government in February 2006, the ELC became binding from March 2007. It applied to all landscapes, towns and villages, as well as open countryside; the coast and inland areas; and ordinary or even degraded landscapes, as well as those that are afforded protection. It highlights the importance of developing landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and creation of landscapes and establishing procedures for the general public and other stakeholders to participate in policy creation and implementation.	The Local Plan will need to ensure the protection, management and creation of landscapes through its policy making and development strategy. Landscape character assessments will be used to inform policy making and site selection in the Local Plan, and landscape effects will be assessed through the SA.

Source	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (Revised from 1985 Granada version) – Valetta Convention (1992)	The Convention replaced and updated the original London Convention of 1969. It reflected the change in the nature of threats to the archaeological heritage, which now came less from unauthorised excavations, as in the 1960s, and more from the major construction projects carried out all over Europe from 1980 onwards. It established new basic legal standards for Europe, to be met by national policies for the protection of archaeological assets. The revised text makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. It is concerned in particular with arrangements to be made for cooperation among archaeologists and town and regional planners in order to ensure optimum conservation of archaeological heritage. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings.	The Local Plan should have due regard to archaeological heritage through the development of its proposals and policies, and the SA should assess potential effects on archaeological heritage.
UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)	Preservation of natural and cultural heritage sites. Countries that have signed the convention pledge to conserve not only the World Heritage sites in their territory but also to protect their national heritage. States are encouraged to integrate the protection of cultural and natural heritage into regional planning programmes and undertake research and adopt measures that give heritage a function in the day-to-day life of the community.	The SA will assess the Local Plan's potential effects on cultural and natural heritage to ensure that it is protected and enhanced.
Paris Agreement (2016) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	In 2015, Parties to the UNFCCC reached a landmark agreement to combat climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future. The Paris Agreement builds upon the Convention and – for the first time – brings all nations into a common cause to undertake take ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. The Paris Agreement's central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The Paris agreement effectively supersedes the Kyoto Protocol (1997).	The Local Plan should help deliver carbon reductions locally to contribute to the achievement of the Paris agreement at a national and international level.
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)	The ultimate objective of the convention was the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and the limiting of average global temperature averages. Such a level should be achieved within a timeframe sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.	The Local Plan will need to ensure carbon reductions in line with current national and international targets.

Source	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
<p>Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)</p>	<p>Signed at a UN Summit in 2015, the agenda contains a set of 17 sustainable development goals and 169 targets across topics including poverty, food security, health and well-being, inclusive and equitable education for all, gender equality, sustainable water management, sustainable energy, economic growth, settlements that are safe, inclusive and resilient, sustainable consumption, climate change, marine conservation, ecosystems and biodiversity, peaceful and inclusive societies and global partnerships.</p> <p>The 2030 Agenda takes all of the goals set by Agenda 21, and re-asserts them as the basis for sustainable development, and adds on 17 agreed goals revolving around the same concepts of Agenda 21.</p> <p>The 17 goals are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere 2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture 3) Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages 4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all 5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls 6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all 7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all 8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all 9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation 10) Reduce inequality within and among countries 11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable 12) Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns 13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts 14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development 15) Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss 16) Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels 17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. <p>National progress against these goals is measured using a series of indicators and UK data is available at https://sustainabledevelopmentuk.github.io/.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should take account of the sustainable development goals and they should be reflected in the SA. Many are directly related to spatial planning.</p>

Source	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
EU Seventh Environment Action Programme to 2020 (2014)	<p>The 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP) guides European environment policy until 2020. In order to give more long-term direction it sets out a vision beyond that, of where it wants the Union to be by 2050:</p> <p>"In 2050, we live well, within the planet's ecological limits. Our prosperity and healthy environment stem from an innovative, circular economy where nothing is wasted and where natural resources are managed sustainably, and biodiversity is protected, valued and restored in ways that enhance our society's resilience. Our low-carbon growth has long been decoupled from resource use, setting the pace for a safe and sustainable global society."</p> <p>The programme identifies three priority areas where more action is needed to protect nature and strengthen ecological resilience, boost resource-efficient, low-carbon growth, and reduce threats to human health and wellbeing linked to pollution, chemical substances, and the impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>The Local Plan needs to reflect the objectives of the programme.</p> <p>Particularly, it must consider the impacts of climate change and present a strategy that will enable Tonbridge and Malling to grow within its environmental limits.</p>
Europe 2020 strategy	<p>The Europe 2020 strategy is the EU's agenda for growth and jobs for the current decade. It emphasises smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as a way to overcome the structural weaknesses in Europe's economy, improve its competitiveness and productivity and underpin a sustainable social market economy.</p> <p>It includes targets around employment levels, education, poverty and climate change and renewables. The Europe 2020 strategy is used as a reference framework for activities at EU and at national and regional levels.</p> <p>EU governments have set national targets to help achieve the overall EU targets and are reporting on them as part of their annual national reform programmes. In the UK the 'Europe 2020: UK National Reform Programme 2019' sets out the actions the government is taking to address structural reform challenges facing the UK. It sets out the key areas of focus for the UK of limiting the nominal growth rate of net primary government expenditure, boosting housing supply, and addressing skills and progression needs.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should have regard to the national focus areas, particularly around boosting housing supply, and should ensure that it helps contribute to national priorities to support economic growth. The SA should assess the impacts of boosting housing supply and growth and ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between economic, social and environmental objectives.</p>
European Spatial Development Perspective – Brussels (1999)	<p>The ESDP defines at a Union level policy objectives and general principles of spatial development to ensure the sustainable balanced development of the European territory which respects its diversity. The policy objectives and options of the ESDP are addressed to all those involved in spatial development at the European, national, regional and local levels. They are as follows: A) the establishment of a polycentric and balanced urban system, B) the promotion of integrated transport and communications concepts offering parity of access to infrastructure and knowledge throughout the Union, C) the development and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should have regard to the policy objectives in the ESDP and consider how it can contribute to them.</p>

Source	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
European Sustainable Development Strategy (2006)	This strategy provides an EU-wide policy framework to deliver sustainable development, i.e. to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It rests on four separate pillars - economic, social, environmental and global governance - which need to reinforce one another. The economic, social and environmental consequences of all policies thus need to be examined in a coordinated manner and taken into account when those policies are being drawn up and adopted. This strategy, which complements the Lisbon Strategy, is a catalyst for policy makers and public opinion, to change society's behaviour. It is built around measures covering the main challenges identified, as well as cross-cutting measures, adequate funding, the involvement of all stakeholders and effective policy implementation and follow-up.	The principles of sustainable development contained within the strategy need to be considered by all policy makers in the EU. The Local Plan therefore needs to be built around these principles and the economic, social and environmental consequences of all the policies and sites need to be examined a coordinated manner through the Sustainability appraisal.
Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) and Agenda 21	<p>Reaffirmed the Declaration of the UN Conference on the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm in 1972 and sought to build upon it. Sets out 27 principles of sustainable development, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 3: 'The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations' • Principle 4: 'In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it' <p>Agenda 21 was a product of the Rio Earth Summit and is a vast work programme for the 21st Century representing 98% of the world's population. It is a blueprint for a global partnership and strives to reconcile the twin requirements of a high-quality environment and a healthy economy for all people of the world. The Rio declaration, and the global commitment to sustainable development has been confirmed, reasserted and added to at subsequent UN conferences including Johannesburg 2002 and Rio 2012 (see The Future We Want that re-affirmed the Rio 1992 declaration 20 years on)</p>	The SA will ensure that sustainability principles are embedded into the Local Plan.

A.2 National Policy Review

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A.2.1 Overview of national strategies and plans

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied, providing a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. This framework must be taken into account when preparing the development plan alongside international obligations and statutory requirements.

The NPPF generally captures the local development planning aspects of other national strategies, plans and policies. However, these have been considered in this review and include:

- Natural Environment White Paper, 2011 The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (HM Government, 2011)
- Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (Defra, 2011)
- UK Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework (2012)
- Conserving Biodiversity – the UK approach (2007)
- Circular 06/05: Biodiversity & Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their impact within the Planning System (2005)
- Keepers of time: a statement of policy for England's ancient and native woodland (2019)
- Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to improve the Environment (2018)
- Defra (2013) Governments Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement
- The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (Environment Agency, 2011) Infrastructure Act (2015)
- National Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016) to 2021
- National Policy Statements (NPS)
- Managing England's woodlands in a climate emergency (2019)
- Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (DCLG, 2011)
- Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy (Defra, 2005)
- The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK (DECC, 2012)
- The National Adaptation Programme – Making the Country Resilient to a Changing Climate (Defra, 2013)
- Healthy Lives, Healthy People: our Strategy for Public Health in England (DoH, 2010)
- The Air Quality Plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) UK (2017)
- The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland (Defra, 2007)
- Clean Air Strategy (2019)
- Housing Standards Review (2014)

- The Carbon Plan: Delivering Our Low Carbon Future (2011)
- Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the way to a Low Carbon Future (2017 – amended 2018)
- Decarbonising Transport – Setting the Challenge (2020)
- Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier (White Paper: 2004)
- DTI Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future – Creating a Low Carbon Economy (2003)
- Energy Security Strategy (2012)
- Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future (2003)
- National Capital Natural Capital Committee advice on reaching net zero by 2050: nature based interventions
- Net Zero: The UK's contribution to stopping global warming Committee on Climate Change (CCC) (2019)
- The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate (July 2018)
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- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, 2012)
- Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for Public Health in England (2010)
- Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (2011)
- Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2016)
- The Energy Efficiency Strategy: The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK (2012)
- Our Energy Challenge - Securing Clean, Affordable Energy for the Long-term (2006) – Consultation Document
- Planning our Electric Future: A White Paper for Secure, Affordable and Low-carbon Electricity (July 2011)
- Renewable Energy Roadmap (July 2011)
- The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030 (2004)
- The Future of Transport White Paper (2004)
- Planning for the Future (2020)
- National Planning Policy for Waste (October 2014)
- Resources and waste strategy for England (2018)
- Safeguarding our soils: A strategy for England (2009)
- Noise Policy Statement for England (2010)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

A.2.2 Achieving sustainable development

A presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF to ensure sustainable development is pursued. This means that:

- All plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development – meets development needs, aligns growth and infrastructure, improves the environment, mitigates climate change through effective land use, and adapts to climate change
- Strategic policies should provide for assessed needs for housing and other uses (unless the application of the framework provides a strong reason for restricting development or adverse impacts would outweigh the benefits)
- Developmental proposals that are in accord with an up to date development should be approved without delay

However, this presumption doesn't change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

Sustainable development is defined in the UK by the Sustainable Development Strategy (2005). The strategy set out the following goal:

The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations. For the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations, that goal will be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment; and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal wellbeing. This will be done in ways that protect and enhance the physical and natural environment, and use resources and energy as efficiently as possible. Government must promote a clear understanding of, and commitment to, sustainable development so that all people can contribute to the overall goal through their individual decisions. Similar objectives will inform all our international endeavours, with the UK actively promoting multilateral and sustainable solutions to today's most pressing environmental, economic and social problems. There is a clear obligation on more prosperous nations both to put their own house in order, and to support other countries in the transition towards a more equitable and sustainable world.

A.2.3 Plan-making

The NPPF sets out that plans should provide a positive vision for the future, a framework for addressing housing needs and other priorities, and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings. Plans should:

- Be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development
- Be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable
- Be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between planmakers, stakeholders, and statutory consultees
- Contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals
- Be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation
- Serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area

Effective cooperation should be maintained throughout, with authorities collaborating and engaging with their local communities and relevant bodies including Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Nature Partnerships, the Marine Management Organisation, county councils, infrastructure providers, elected Mayors and combined authorities.

Strategic policymaking authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these in accordance with national planning guidance, and which should be made publicly available.

A.2.4 General environmental and sustainability integration into planning

Plans should ensure that developments set out a clear design vision and expectations, and are developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations. They should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development.

Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale, and design quality of places over a minimum of 15 years (if larger scale developments, at least 30 years). They should make sufficient provision for housing, employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development, and infrastructure for:

- transport
- telecommunications
- security
- waste management
- water supply
- wastewater
- flood risk and coastal change management
- the provision of minerals and energy
- community facilities

Policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Plans should set out the contributions expected from development:

- Levels and types of affordable housing required
- Infrastructure needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure

Such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the plan.

Strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative appropriate approach. The size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required. Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas

Where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount to encourage

brownfield land re-use. Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership (exemptions apply).

Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs. Housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

A.2.5 Economy and vitality of town centres

Planning policies should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration. They should set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period, seeking to address potential barriers to investment.

Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances. They should recognise the needs and address specific locational requirements of different sectors, and should support a prosperous rural economy, including:

- the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas
- the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses
- sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments
- the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities

It is important that development does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable.

Planning policies should define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters. Where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, policies should explain how identified needs can be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre.

A.2.6 Healthy and safe communities

Planning policies should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services. They should take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community, and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services. They should ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained, and an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

They should also aim to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe place which:

- Promote social interaction
- Are safe and accessible
- Enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs

Sufficient school places should be proactively planned for, and authorities should work with promoters to ensure faster delivery of public service infrastructure.

Planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements.

A.2.7 Open space, recreation and green space

Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Plans should seek to accommodate any provision determined by assessments. Existing open space should not be built upon unless subject to exceptions.

Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Communities can identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them, which should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Green spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period, and only be designated when certain criteria is met. Management policies for green space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

A.2.8 Sustainable transport

Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan making. Planning policies should:

- Support an appropriate mix of uses across an area to minimise the number and length of journeys needed
- Be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils
- Identify and protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure
- Provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities
- Provide for any large scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation
- Recognise the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields

Criteria should be taken into account if local parking standards are being set.

In considering development proposals, it should be ensured that:

- Appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up
- Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users

- The design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance
- Any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree

Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact. Applications for development should:

- Give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements and facilitate access to high quality public transport,
- Address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport
- Create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter
- Allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles
- Be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations

All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan and be supported by a transport statement/assessment.

A.2.9 Communications infrastructure

Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology and full fibre broadband connections. They should set out how high-quality digital infrastructure is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments.

Policies should minimise the number of radio and electronic communications masts. If new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged. There should be evidence to demonstrate that electronic communications infrastructure is not expected to cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation. Proposals should have considered the possibility of the construction of new buildings or other structures interfering with broadcast and electronic communications services. Applications for development should be supported by a variety of evidence to justify the proposed development

A.2.10 Geology, soils and effective use of land

Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance sites of geological value and soils. Planning policies should prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil pollution or land instability. Policies should ensure that developments remediate and mitigate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land. Planning policies should:

- Encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains
- Recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions
- Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land
- Promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively
- Support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes
- Support development that makes efficient use of land, taking different objectives into account

Appropriate densities of housing should be achieved through effective use of land, with the plan aiming to optimise land use and meet housing needs.

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that:

- A site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination
- After remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments

The Soil Strategy for England provides additional and current policy context on soils and a number of core objectives for policy and research. The strategy's vision is that:

- agricultural soils will be better managed and threats to them addressed
- soils will play a greater role in the fight against climate change and in helping us to adapt to its impacts
- soils in urban areas will be sufficiently valued for the ecosystem services they provide and given appropriate weight in the planning system
- where development occurs, construction practices will ensure that vital functions can be maintained
- pollution of soils is prevented and our historic legacy of contaminated land is being dealt with.

A.2.11 Well-designed places (landscape / townscape) and Green Belt

Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes, and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation.

Plans should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. They should ensure

development which is sympathetic to local character and history, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change. They should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area. This includes light pollution.

Plans and development should:

- establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks
- Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

All local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences.

New streets should be treelined, trees should be incorporated elsewhere into developments, and existing trees should be retained where possible.

Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development

As Green Belts are generally already established, any proposals for new Green Belts should be set out in strategic policies and should meet criteria that demonstrate why it is necessary. Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans - strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries. When defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should:

- Ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development
- Not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open
- Where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period
- Make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development
- Be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period
- Define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent

Once defined, local planning should be done positively to enhance their beneficial use such as improved access, improved opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, improve biodiversity etc. Inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be approved except in exceptional circumstances.

A.2.12 Climate change

Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change and policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts. New development should be planned for in a way that avoids increased vulnerability to climate change and that helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Plans should:

- Provide a positive strategy for energy from renewable and low carbon heat and energy sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed
- Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure
- Identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers

(See also 'Sustainable Transport' above.)

A.2.13 Flood risk

Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at the highest existing or future risk. Strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment, and should manage flood risk from all sources.

All plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid risk to people and property, managing risk by applying tests, safeguarding land, reducing impacts of flooding in new developments where possible. If not possible for development to be located in areas of lower risk, the exceptional test may need to be applied – this will depend on the vulnerability of the site and should be carried out by a strategic flood risk assessment to determine if this test is passed.

Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems where applicable.

In coastal areas, planning policies and decisions should take account of the UK Marine Policy Statement and marine plans. Integrated Coastal Zone Management should be pursued across local authority and land/sea boundaries. Plans should reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas and they should identify as a Coastal Change Management Area any area likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast. Development in a Coastal Change management Area will only be appropriate under certain circumstances.

A.2.14 Biodiversity and nature conservation

Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance sites of biodiversity value, minimise impacts and provide net gains for biodiversity. They should recognise the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.

Plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework. Potential SPAs, SACs, and Ramsar sites should be given the same protection as habitat sites.

Plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks. They should promote the conservation, restoration

and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Local planning authorities should apply specific principles when determining planning applications regarding biodiversity. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site.

A.2.15 Air quality and noise

Planning policies should prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of air noise pollution. Policies should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area. This includes noise pollution.

Policies should ensure that development contributes and complies with relevant limit values for pollutants, including air quality management areas and Clean Air Zones.

A.2.16 Water environment

Planning policies should prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of water pollution.

A.2.17 Historic environment

Plans should set out a positive strategy that takes into account:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place

Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. Local authorities have criteria to follow regarding proposals that may affect heritage assets and considerations of the potential impacts.

Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance.

A.2.18 Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

Planning policies should:

- Provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance, but not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction
- So far as practicable, take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the

supply of materials, before considering extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously

- Safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas, adopting appropriate policies so that known locations of specific minerals resources of local and national importance are not sterilised by non-mineral development
- Set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place
- Safeguard existing, planned and potential sites for: the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material
- Set out criteria or requirements to ensure that permitted and proposed operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health

Local planning authorities should not normally permit other development proposals in Mineral Safeguarding Areas if it might constrain potential future use for mineral working.

A.3 Regional and County Level Plans and Programmes

Policy/Plan/Programme/Strategy	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Kent County Council - Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2016	This Local Plan fulfils the statutory responsibility to plan for future minerals supply and waste management in Kent. The plan identifies and sets out the following subjects for the period up to 2030. This includes the long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives for Kent's minerals and waste, and areas where strategic mineral and waste development is likely to occur. This plan will be used by the County Council when determining applications for materials and waste facilities.	The SA framework should include objectives, targets and indicators that seek to promote sustainable waste management and effective resource use. The Local Plan should consider any mineral and waste issues that are likely to affect the borough.
Kent County Council Active Travel Strategy 2018/2019	The KCC Active Travel Strategy is intended to build on the statutory transport, environment and road safety policies to promote walking and cycling as a regular means of travel. The overarching aim of the strategy is to: "Make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for short journeys in Kent". Achieving this aim will result in, improved health through an increase in physical activity, reduced congestion on the highway network by providing better travel choices and safer active travel. In order to realise these outcomes, three main actions are set out, to integrate active travel into planning, provide and maintain appropriate routes for active travel and support active travel in the community.	The SA framework should include objectives, targets and indicators that seek to promote active travel methods. The Local Plan must develop strategies to make active travel methods accessible.
Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2021-2025	This report features as a part of the five-year rolling plan which sets out the future plans as Strategic Commissioner of education provision across all types and phases of education across Kent. The plan details the future need for education standards. The overarching aim of the plan is to make Kent a county that works for all children.	The SA framework should incorporate objectives to ensure education provision achieves the commissioning plans overarching aim. The Local Plan must address issues in education provision across the borough.

Policy/Plan/ Programme/ Strategy	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy 2020 to 2045	<p>This strategy was developed in response to the Governments 25 Year Environmental Plan to translate these national policies to the local level. It sets out how the county will deliver healthy sustainable and coherent biodiversity in Kent. It aims to provide a natural environment that inspires citizen engagement and is well used and appreciated, so that the health and well-being of such connection can be realised by Kent County's residents. This will be achieved through the delivery of the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rich and growing terrestrial biodiversity, underpinned by more resilient and coherent ecological networks and healthy, well-functioning ecosystems. • Clean, plentiful and biologically diverse freshwater and intertidal ecosystems underpinned by implementation of a catchment based approach. • A reverse in the loss of marine biodiversity and delivering clean, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas through good management. • The widest possible range of ages and backgrounds will be benefiting from the mental and physical health benefits of the natural environment; and we will have inspired the next generation to take on guardianship of the county's biodiversity. <p>It further established four key goals for 2045 which covers terrestrial, marine, fresh water, intertidal ecosystems and connecting people with the natural environment.</p>	<p>Relevant objectives, targets and indicators should be integrated into the SA framework. The Local Plan should promote the enhancement of biodiversity.</p>
Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy: Implementation Plan 2020-2023	<p>This plan sets out the response to the UK climate emergency and promote clean and resilient economic recovery that eliminates poor air quality, reducing fuel poverty and promotes the development of an affordable, clean and secure energy supply across Kent and Medway.</p> <p>The strategy identifies ten high-level priorities for collaborative action in the short- and medium- term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority 1: Emission Reduction Pathways to 2050 • Priority 2: Public Sector Decision Making • Priority 3: Planning and Development • Priority 4: Climate Emergency Investment Fund • Priority 5: Building Retrofit Programme • Priority 6: Transport, Travel and Digital Connectivity • Priority 7: Renewable Energy Generation • Priority 8: Green Infrastructure • Priority 9: Supporting Low Carbon Business • Priority10: Communities <p>Monitoring and evaluation of progress will be carried out annual, with any new actions being added to the implementation as appropriate. Each priority is address, with a rational and action plan detailing the delivery partners, output, outcome, timeline and resource.</p>	<p>The SA framework should include objectives to promote clean and resilient economic recovery which promotes clean and secure energy supply across the borough. The Local Plan should include the implementation of the Low Emissions Strategy for future development.</p>
Kent County Council Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016-2031	<p>The local transport plan is a statutory duty under the Transport Act 2000. The strategy outlined the transport priorities for the county whilst also linking with South East Local Enterprise Partnerships and national Governments. This plan sets out a clear evidenced basis from which to bid for funding and deliver infrastructure to support housing and economic growth,</p>	<p>The SA framework should incorporate objectives which support economic growth that supports sustainable transportation methods which do not contribute to growing congestion issues. The Local Plan should support the development of economic growth which facilities improved transport links without contributing to congestion.</p>

Policy/Plan/ Programme/ Strategy	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Kent County Council Growth and Infrastructure Framework 2018	<p>The Growth and Infrastructure Framework covers all forms of infrastructure to support the economic, environmental, and social needs of Kent and Medway. This allows growth and infrastructure requirements to be considered over a spatial perspective. The report provides a strategic framework across the county for identifying and prioritising investment across a range of infrastructure for planned growth up to 2031. This is developed from Local Plans, Infrastructure Delivery Plans, and infrastructure and service providers.</p>	<p>The SA framework and Local plan should consider the growth and infrastructure framework to support the economic, environmental, and social needs of the borough.</p>
Kent Local Flood Risk Management strategy 2017-2023	<p>As the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Kent County Council must produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy that sets out how local flood risks will be managed in the county by the authorities involved. The aims of the local strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support and improve the safety and wellbeing of Kent's residents and the economy of Kent through appropriate flood risk management. • To ensure collaborative work to understand and deliver appropriate flood risk management in Kent. • To contribute to sustainable development, regeneration and land management in Kent through the promotion of sustainable flood risk management practices that utilise natural processes where appropriate. <p>Providing these aims are met Kent will be more resilient to flooding with sustainable flood risk management measures, residents and the economy will be better protected from flooding and catchments and drainage systems will be managed to account for all flood risks.</p>	<p>The SA framework should include indicators, targets and objectives that address flood risk management. The Local Plan should consider how flood risk will be managed.</p>

Policy/Plan/ Programme/ Strategy	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Kent Environment Strategy 2016	<p>The overarching vision of the Kent Environment Strategy is that the "county of Kent is benefitting from a competitive, innovative and resilient economy, with our natural and historic assets enhanced and protected for their unique value and positive impact on our society, economy, health and wellbeing". The report identifies significant challenges for Kent County currently, and into the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality: the county's unique position with proximity to London has additional challenges through cross-channel freight and traffic. • Transport: the county is currently facing increased congestion on both road and rail; growth will be constrained without investment in increasing capacity. • Water: the county is one of the driest regions in England and Wales, therefore, water resources are under continued pressure requiring careful management and planning. • Severe weather, heat, and flooding: severe weather events seriously impact local communities, homes, infrastructure and the delivery of services. • Land-use change: the county is expected to accommodate significant housing and economic growth until 2031. An increasing population requires the space and resources. • Biodiversity: the county has not met its Biodiversity 2010 targets and without targeted intervention, the county is likely to fail the 2020 targets. • Energy and consumption and generation: the county is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2030. • Resourcing activity: public sector finances continue to be constrained and therefore, resources need be used more efficiently. 	<p>The SA framework should include objectives to achieve the strategy's overarching aim of encouraging economic development whilst preserving natural and historical environment. The Local Plan should consider the impact of development on the historic and natural assets.</p>
Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy	<p>The overarching aim of the health and wellbeing strategy is to 'improve health and wellbeing outcomes, deliver better coordinated care, improve the public's experience of integrated health and social care services and ensure that the individual is involved at the heart of everything they do'.</p> <p>The four key priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle key health issues where Kent is underperforming than the national average. • Tackle health inequalities. • Tackle the gaps in provision • Transform services to improve outcomes, patient experience and value for money. <p>There is a series of measures to check the county's progress against the key priorities.</p>	<p>The SA framework should include objectives to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the borough. The Local Plan should include objectives to address the four key priorities for this strategy.</p>

A.4 Local Plans and Programmes

Policy/Plan/Programme/Strategy	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework – Core Strategy adopted 2007	<p>The core strategy outlined the council’s visions, aims and objectives which will determine the future pattern of development in the borough over the period until 2021. This strategy enables the social, economic, and environmental needs of the borough to be met in a sustainable way.</p> <p>The strategy produces the general locations for the delivery of housing and other strategic development requirements and broad areas of constraint for developments. This document summarises broad planning strategy which is aimed at meeting the council’s vision with additional Core Policies which allow for the preparation of Local Development Schemes.</p> <p>The effectiveness of the strategy will be evaluated on an annual basis through the production of an annual monitoring report.</p> <p>The Local Development Framework refers to The Vision as the overarching ambition which is;</p> <p>“To make Tonbridge and Malling Borough a safe and excellent place to live, work and visit for existing and future generations. To make it a place where its natural beauty, biodiversity, historic environment and public places are valued, protected or enhanced; where the built environment is sustainable, properly served and of high quality; and housing, economic and social needs of all sectors of society are met and reconciled with any environmental conflicts.”</p> <p>This is further broken down into three key aims and their associated objectives. The first aim concerns ensuring that new development is achieved in accordance with the principles of sustainability. To establish a spatial context to guide new development and co-ordinate the transport and community infrastructure needed to serve that development. The final aim is to ensure that new development and other actions result in a high quality environment.</p>	The SA Framework and the Local Plan should include objectives relating to the vision and policy themes included within the strategy.
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030	<p>This document aims to address how the borough council intends to address climate change. It highlights sets out the strategy to achieve the aspiration of a carbon neutral borough by 2030. The document covers 8 key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy usage and renewables • Adaption/ Sustainable Development • Transport • Air Quality • Habitats and Biodiversity • Housing and Energy Conservation • Waste Minimisation and Recycling • Community and Business Engagement <p>Within these 8 key areas, the council addresses the current position whilst outlining future aims.</p>	The SA Framework and the Local Plan should include objectives relating to the aspirations set out in the climate change strategy, to achieve the council’s goal to be a carbon neutral budget by 2030.
Tonbridge and Malling Cycling Strategy 2013-2018	<p>This document collates the relevant policies and related action plans to promote cycling and the development of appropriate cycling facilities throughout the borough. This document builds upon the Putting Wheels in Motion published in September 1998. The overarching aim of this strategy is to release some of the suppressed demand to cycle, particularly in the urban areas.</p>	The SA framework should implement objectives to promote cycling throughout the borough. The Local Plan should include provisions to promote cycling and the development of cycling facilities.

Policy/Plan/ Programme/ Strategy	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Air Quality Action Plan 2020	<p>The Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) has been as part of the statutory duties by the Local Air Quality Management framework. The primary aim of the AQAP is to implement measures which will ensure levels of NO₂ decrease across the borough, focusing on the declared Air Quality Management Areas.</p> <p>The core priorities of this plan is to facilitate a behavioural shift to promote sustainable transport method which in turn will reduce the production of harmful pollutant concentrations and reducing the risk of detrimental effects for the health and wellbeing of individuals in the borough.</p> <p>The report presents the actions to be taken by the borough council up to 2025 to reduce the concentrations of air pollutants within the borough. The AQAP has been developed in recognition of the legal requirement of the local authority to work towards Air Quality Strategy objectives within the Environment Act 1995 and the Local Air Management statutory process.</p>	<p>The SA framework should include objectives and measures to address air quality issues within the borough. The Local Plan should recognise the importance of resolving air quality problems for the health and wellbeing of borough residents.</p>
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2016	<p>The Environmental Protection Act 1990 introduced a new regime for the regulation of contaminated land in England. The main objective is to provide a system for the identification and remediation of land where contamination is causing an unacceptable risk to human health or the wider environment because of the historic or current use and circumstances of the land.</p> <p>The report highlights the principles of pollutant linkages and the three components of contaminant risk: contaminant, receptor and pathway. The relevant objectives to the SA concern the identification and prioritisation of special sites of contaminated land and to inform decisions about future land uses through the Local Plan process.</p>	<p>The SA framework and Local Plan should consider the implications of contaminated land on future development and its potential consequences for human health and the natural environment.</p>
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council – Borough Economic Recovery Strategy 2021-2023	<p>The purpose of this local strategy is to address the economic recovery following the covid-19 pandemic and the severity of its effect on business activity on both national and local level. The overarching aim is to help build confidence back into the local area, it is essential that the Borough Council helps to facilitate sustainable housing and commercial developments along with the essential infrastructure that is needed in order to create a more resilient transport network. The sustainability of the initiatives and the developments undertaken in the Borough is a critical concern for the Borough Council with our aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030. The core vision is “maximising the unique strengths of the local area to help create a resilient, dynamic and inclusive economy that fosters sustainable growth.</p> <p>To ensure synergy across the other districts and boroughs through the Kent Economic Recovery Cell, this strategy uses the same five channels of activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications, Confidence and Trust • Open for Business • Supporting Business • People • Investment. <p>This plan is linked to the Digital Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and Local Plan by the three cross cutting themes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaner and Greener • Productive and Open • Better Opportunities, Fairer Chances. <p>The action plan uses this framework as a means of highlighting how the individual activities and indicatives planned for the next few years will meet the vision and objectives.</p>	<p>The SA framework should include economic objectives, indicators and targets that complement this Strategy. The Local Plan should provide a suitable spatial framework for promoting and enhancing economic growth in the borough.</p>

Policy/Plan/Programme/Strategy	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2020-2023	<p>This strategy follows on from the 2017-2019 Corporate Strategy. The vision for the next three years is "to continue to be financially sustainable Council with strong leadership that delivers valued services, a commitment to delivering innovation and change to meet the needs of the Borough".</p> <p>The strategy outlines the following values and priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving Efficiency • Embracing Effective Partnership Working and Funding • Valuing our environment and encouraging sustainable growth • Innovation <p>The report also defines how it will evaluate future success by outlining the key outcomes to be achieved. These involve, delivering a climate change strategy, meeting budget constraints, introducing new technologies to become a smart borough, providing housing support, delivering a new local plan and effective health provision and local economy in collaboration with West Kent.</p>	The SA framework should include objectives covering a wide range of social, economic, and environmental issues. The assessment should consider opportunities for delivering enhancements as well as seeking to protect and maintain existing conditions.
Tonbridge and Malling Community Safety Partnership Plan 2019-2020	The Tonbridge and Malling community Safety Partnership (CSP) produces an annual Plan which sets out the objectives that the partnership will work towards to address community safety issues in the Borough over the coming year. This is based on a Strategic Assessment that considers current data and trends to address the priorities for the borough in reducing and tackling crime and disorder. The vision for this plan is to create a safe place for people to live, work and visit by protecting the public from crime and antisocial behaviour.	The SA framework should include a range of objectives towards crime and community safety. The Local Plan should recognise the importance of community safety on the borough's wellbeing.
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework – Tonbridge Central Area Action Plan 2008	This report is based on the regeneration of the central area of Tonbridge but balance the opportunities for investment in the town centre with the need for improvement to the range of service and amenities available with enhancements to the environmental quality of the area. The changes need to also be sensitive to the context of Tonbridge's attractive natural setting and historic town identity. The report considers the access movement and connectivity, town centre profile, the role of water, design quality and different character areas in the centre.	The SA framework should include objective towards the sensitive regeneration of central areas. The Local plan should provide a framework for how the regeneration of central areas will protect heritage assets.
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Affordable Housing supplementary Planning Document 2008	<p>The production of this report is founded on the need for affordable housing in Tonbridge and Malling Borough. The aims of this supplementary planning document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to secure the provision of an appropriate amount and mix of tenures to meet housing need; • to secure high-quality design and promote energy efficient and, where practicable, renewable energy, in the provision of affordable housing; • to ensure the tenure-blind and seamless integration of affordable housing within market housing development; • to ensure the timely delivery of affordable housing; • to seek the provision of housing for special needs; and • to create sustainable mixed communities in both urban and rural areas. 	The SA framework should include objectives towards the delivery of an affordable housing market that promotes energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. The Local Plan should seek to provide a suitable framework for the delivery of an affordable and sustainable housing market.
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2021	The overarching purpose of this report is to understand the issues affecting housing supply in Tonbridge and Malling Borough and to identify actions to help boost the delivery of new homes. The report covers the local context, housing delivery and a root cause analysis. The root cause analysis considers the additional factors influence the local housing delivery such as the Covid-19 pandemic and exit from the European Union and the influence on short-medium time scales.	The SA framework and Local Plan should consider housing provision in the borough whilst remaining conscious of the additional factors influence the delivery of houses.



Policy/Plan/ Programme/ Strategy	Key Objectives or Requirements relevant to SA	Implications for Local Plan and SA
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework – Development Land Allocations 2008	This document is part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Tonbridge and Malling Borough. It lists, and specifically identifies on the Proposals Map, all development sites necessary to meet the needs of the area as identified in general terms in the Core Strategy (including housing sites, major developed sites in the Green Belt, sites for new employment development and existing employment areas, the extent of retail areas and land safeguarded for public authority uses).	The SA Framework and the Local Plan should include objectives relating to the vision and policy themes included within the Local Development Framework.
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells – Tonbridge Urban Transport Delivery Strategy 2007	This report sets the context for modelling work in support of the Tonbridge Central Area Action Plan (TCAAP). The aim of the TCAAP is to regenerate and improve the vitality of the town centre. As such, this report seeks to identify ways to regenerate and improve connectivity within Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. It acknowledges that air quality management will be a critical issue in bringing the strategy to fruition.	The SA framework and Local Plan should consider ways to improve connectivity within Tonbridge, including implications for air quality.

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