



DRAFT FAWKHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

REGULATION 14



Foreword

In 2011 the Localism Act gave communities the opportunity to have a greater influence on the planning decisions for their area by writing a Neighbourhood Plan.

The results of the Parish Survey of 2019 led the Parish Council to believe writing a Neighbourhood Plan would be a good idea, and, following consultation with residents, the unanimous decision was made in December 2020 to go ahead with preparing one.

Since then, the Parish Council and the volunteers of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have undertaken further public consultation and engagement activities to ensure that the content of the Plan reflects what local people want. This information has been used to develop background evidence for the Plan and also to commission studies to support the emerging Plan policies.

We recognise that the Parish has evolved throughout its long history to meet changing needs and understand there continues to be a need to evolve. But we also recognise the distinctiveness provided by the landscape, heritage and character - assets that should be protected to ensure Fawkham's sense of place in the Green Belt in the North Downs area of Kent. What has come through first and foremost from the evidence gathering and engagement to date is the desire to protect the beautiful Kent Downs landscape, with its woodland, open fields, ecological biodiversity and panoramic views, as well as maintaining our community facilities and local economy, protecting our heritage and meeting the very small need for housing originating from the Parish, and thereby allow what is a small rural Parish to retain all that it values highly.

It is a major undertaking for a small rural community like ours to take on the challenge of delivering its own Neighbourhood Plan, and I would like to thank all those volunteers who have helped get it to this stage, and all those residents who have taken the time to participate in the process by completing surveys and being involved in workshops. Whilst there has been professional advice and guidance from our planning consultant, Tony Fullwood of Tony Fullwood Associates - Chartered Town Planners, as well as support from the Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) planning policy team, the Plan is very much made in the community of Fawkham. The draft Neighbourhood Plan which follows has been developed through engagement with those who live and work in it.

The community's feedback on what the draft Plan contains is now being sought. This involves a questionnaire (which can be completed online or on paper) and drop in exhibitions where residents are able to discuss and comment on the draft Plan. These drop in sessions are being held on 5 July 7-9pm and 15 July 1.30-4.30 pm at Fawkham Village Hall where the questionnaire will be available, and the documents can also be found at <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>. Please send your comments to the Parish Council by 14 August 2023. Those involved in developing the Plan will listen carefully to the consultation responses to ensure that it reflects the views of the community.

Laura Evans
Chair, Fawkham Parish Council
June 2023

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Section 1: Introduction

The Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document for Fawkham Parish and is produced in Fawkham. It is part of the Government's approach to planning which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the Localism Act that came into force in April 2012.

If passed at a local referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted by Sevenoaks District Council as the plan which must be used in law to determine planning applications in Fawkham Parish. It will become part of the Development Plan alongside the District Council's Local Plan.

The Plan therefore provides the local community with a powerful tool to guide the long term future of Fawkham Parish for the period 2023 - 2040. The Plan contains a vision for the future of the Parish and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.

In order to develop the Neighbourhood Plan, Fawkham Parish Council set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which comprises at least two Parish Councillors supported by a number of local volunteers.

Some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, whilst others are site or area specific and apply only to the relevant areas illustrated on the associated Map. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, the Parish and District Council will apply all relevant policies of the Plan. It is therefore assumed that the Plan will be read as a whole and cross-referencing between Plan policies has been minimised.

The Plan should also be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Sevenoaks District Council's Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan evidence documents.

Which Area Does the Neighbourhood Plan Cover?

The Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan relates to the designated area covered by Fawkham Parish Council. The neighbourhood plan designation was approved by Sevenoaks District Council in May 2021. The area to which the Plan applies is shown on the Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan Designation Map (Figure 1).

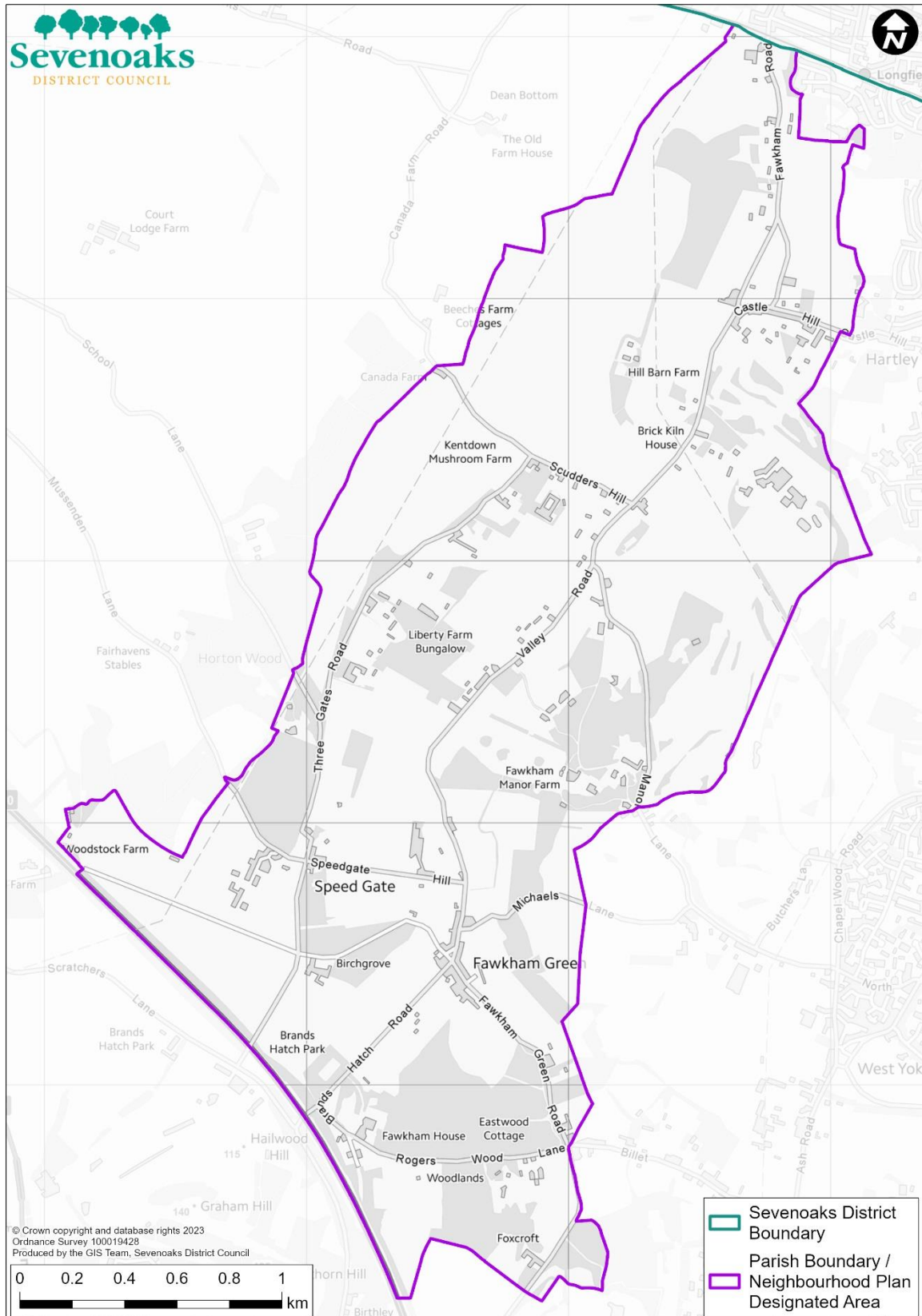


Figure 1 - Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan Area

Involvement in the Neighbourhood Plan Process

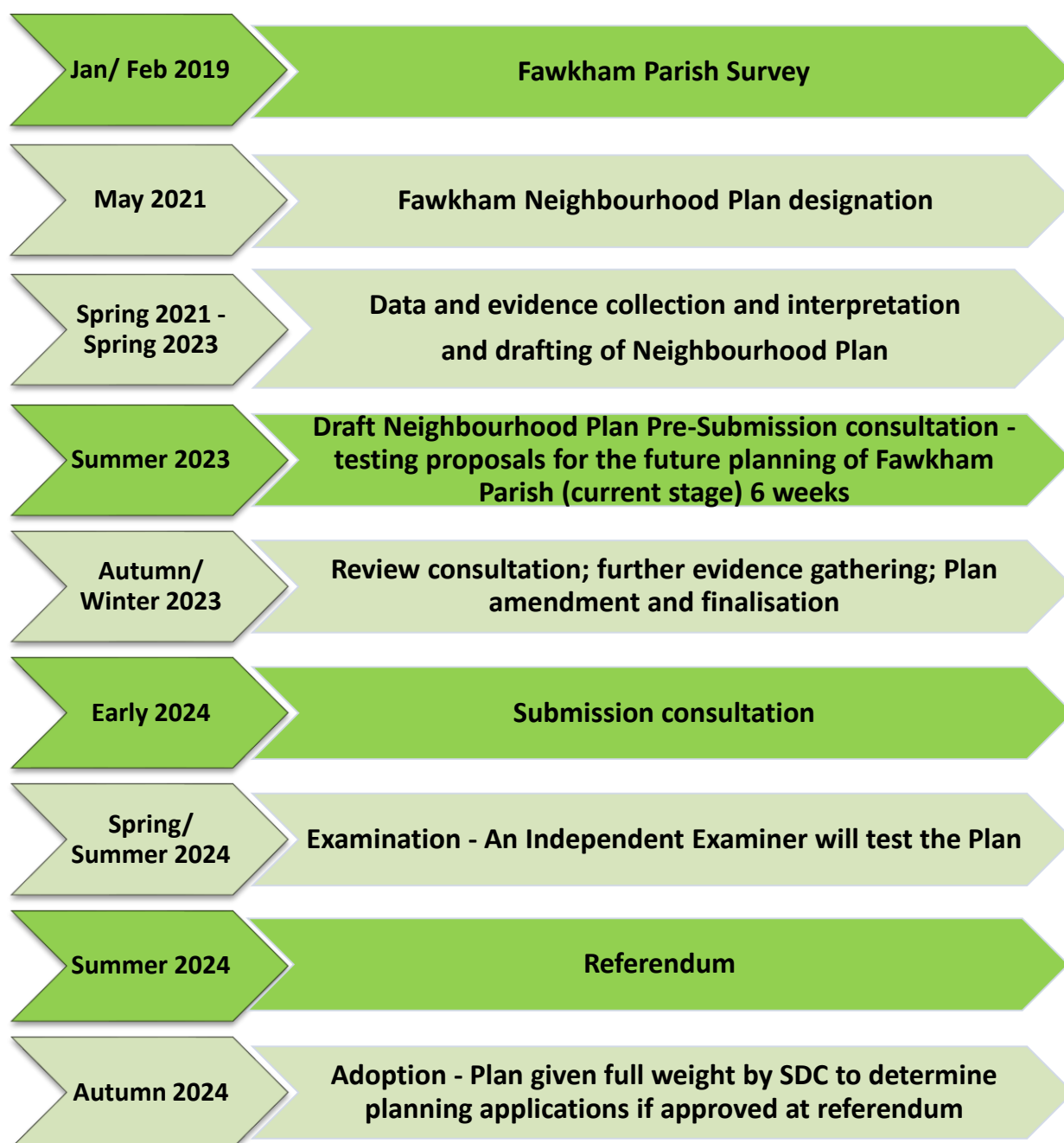
The Neighbourhood Plan team has followed the necessary legal steps to create the Plan. Importantly the team has enabled engagement with the people of Fawkham Parish and others with an interest in the area.

Details of the consultation to date will be recorded in the Consultation Statement which will be produced at the Regulation 15 stage of the process. To date, this has included residents' workshops looking at what residents value about Fawkham, and the local landscape; a business survey; a countryside survey; and a survey for schoolchildren.

The process is set out in Figure 2 – Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan Process with the opportunities for local involvement highlighted in dark green.

This Regulation 14 consultation in particular aims to engage the local community in reviewing the draft plan and the proposals for the future of the Parish. This involves an online questionnaire, a paper questionnaire, and drop in exhibitions where residents are able to discuss and comment on the draft Plan. The opportunities to view and respond to the Plan can be found on the Parish Council website (<https://fawkhampc.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>) and on notices around the Parish.

Figure 2 – Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan Process



How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the planning system

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their area, all Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy. That is, within the constraints imposed by national and local policy, neighbourhoods should develop plans that support the strategic development needs and strategic policies set out in Local Plans, including policies for the Green Belt, housing and economic development. Neighbourhood Plans must comply with European Regulations on strategic environmental assessments and

habitats, have regard to relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and generally conform to the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan (currently the Core Strategy, 2011 and the Allocations and Development Management Plan, 2015). In order to future-proof the Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan team has also ensured through dialogue with the District Council that the Plan takes account of up to date evidence of any strategic needs and constraints identified for the area.

If passed at a local referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted by Sevenoaks District Council as the plan which must be used in law to determine planning applications in Fawkham Parish. It will become part of the Development Plan alongside the District Council's Local Plan.

What is in the Neighbourhood Plan?

The Plan is for Fawkham Parish as a whole and looks at a wide range of issues, including:

- Protecting the Green Belt which washes over the Parish
- Protecting the rural and predominantly undeveloped landscape character, important public views and the character of rural lanes
- Conserving and enhancing woodland, trees and hedgerows
- Conserving and enhancing biodiversity
- Controlling surface water run-off from any new development and reducing increases in surface water flooding
- Conserving and enhancing Baldwin's Green Conservation Area and the Parish's listed buildings and their settings, and generally achieving high quality development which fits well with its location
- Retaining, and enabling regeneration of, existing business sites
- Retaining community buildings
- Protecting open space, sport and recreation facilities, public rights of way and historic routeways, and
- Securing any local infrastructure necessary to support development

What period does the Neighbourhood Plan cover?

The Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan covers the Plan period from 2023 - 2040 and would coincide with the period for the emerging Local Plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required under European legislation for all plans which may have a significant effect on the environment. To determine whether the Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan requires an SEA it is necessary to screen the proposals in the plan to determine whether it is likely to result in significant environmental effects.

Sevenoaks District Council is legally required to determine whether a neighbourhood plan will require an SEA. As part of this screening process it is necessary to consult the SEA consultation bodies (Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency) to get their opinion on whether or not the plan is likely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore whether an SEA is required.

The Screening Report concludes that the Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects and therefore an SEA is not required.

The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the appropriate assessment required for any plan to assess the potential implications for European wildlife sites. The first stage of the HRA process is a screening exercise undertaken by Sevenoaks District Council where the details of nearby internationally designated sites are examined to assess whether there is the potential for the implementation of the Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan to have an impact on the sites. Following a review, Sevenoaks District Council conclude that an HRA is not required as there is no SPA, SAC or Ramsar site that will be impacted by the Neighbourhood Plan.

How this Plan is organised

The Plan is divided into six sections:

Section 2: Fawkham Now: a brief description of the hamlet and surrounding countryside today and the key issues that have influenced the Plan

Section 3: The Vision for Fawkham Parish: a long term vision for the Parish up to 2040

Section 4: Fawkham Parish Neighbourhood Plan Strategy: the broad planning approach for Fawkham Parish and how this conforms to higher level planning policy

Section 5: Neighbourhood Plan Policies: which set out objectives and policies to support the overall vision, including site specific designations. Policies are arranged in the following themes:

- Environment
- Housing
- Local Economy
- Leisure and Wellbeing
- Local Infrastructure

Section 6: Monitoring and Review: which explains how the Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored and the circumstances which may lead to a review of the plan.

Section 2: Fawkham Parish Now

A wide range of issues have been considered in producing the Neighbourhood Plan.

These are grouped under five themes:

- Environment
- Housing
- Local Economy
- Leisure and Wellbeing
- Local Infrastructure

These themes are set out in more detail below. They have been identified through research along with various consultation events. The background reports used to help prepare the Neighbourhood Plan are referred to in more detail in Section 5 and can be found on the Fawkham Parish Council website.

Environment

Fawkham is a rural parish covering some 664 hectares. The Parish has a distinctive landform and character comprising the long steep Fawkham dry chalk valley, the steep dry tributary Pennis valley to the east and the Horton Wood ridge to the west which separates the Fawkham Valley from the Darent Valley. To the east of the Parish is a wider plateau on which the settlements of Hartley and New Ash Green are situated. The local topography and landscape character provide a number of important views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points. The dispersed nature of development and limited external lighting ensures the Parish enjoys dark skies and a low level of light pollution.

Almost 13% of the Parish is covered by Ancient Woodland (woods that have existed continuously since at least 1600) and in total over 22% of the Parish is covered by woodland. Hedgerows are also a distinctive feature in the Parish.

Four designated Local Wildlife Sites are situated within the Parish.

The hamlet of Fawkham comprises three small clusters of development dispersed along the floor of the dry chalk valley: Fawkham Green, a cluster adjoining the primary school and village hall, and Baldwins Green. Low density linear development extends from Hartley down Castle Hill, along one side. The Parish also comprises a number of dispersed farmsteads and houses.

The countryside and low density dispersed buildings of Fawkham Parish lie entirely within the designated Green Belt.

Fawkham Parish has a rich historic environment and, with settlement dating back to the Stone Age, the whole Parish is an area with multi-period archaeological potential. The Parish is also host to 13 listed buildings/structures (the earliest being the Grade 1 St. Mary's Church dating from the 12th Century) and Baldwin's Green Conservation Area.

Given the steep-sided valleys, if there are impermeable surfaces and/or the absence of vegetation, surface water flooding can be created in the valley at times of heavy rainfall.

Housing

The 2011 Census showed 578 usual residents. The Parish housing stock in 2011 was 221 dwellings, comprising largely detached properties (71.5%). The majority of dwellings (77%) were owner-occupied, with 13% privately rented and 6% social rented properties (see Housing Evidence Report).

Since the Census detailed monitoring has occurred with the latest published figures by SDC published for March 2022.

Monitoring shows a further 7 dwellings have been completed since the 2011 Census. In addition, planning permission has been granted for a further 54 dwellings, including 26 at Fawkham Manor and 26 at Salts Farm depot (10 of which will be affordable housing). Once completed, the housing stock figure will become 282 dwellings, an increase of 28.0% since 2011.

The most recent Local Housing Needs Survey, 2022 identified a low level of need being generated from within the Parish.

Local Economy

Within the Parish, local employment is to be found in local services (such as the public and private primary schools and pre-school, Corinthian Sports Club, golf club, The Rising Sun Inn); small scale businesses (including the Battersea Dogs and Cats Home and a number of stables and kennels) many at current and former farms; agriculture; tourist accommodation (such as Brands Hatch Place Hotel and Spa and The Rising Sun Inn) as well as those businesses based at home.

Such businesses employ local residents from within the Parish, whilst others commute in, mostly reliant on a private car. Access to premises by car or commercial vehicle is constrained by the lanes which serve the Parish.

A Business Survey, 2022 undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan identified that most local businesses felt that their current premises will suit their future needs, whilst others were improving their premises; none is looking to move away from Fawkham Parish.

Leisure and Wellbeing

There is good provision of open space serving the Parish whether in terms of local amenity green space, natural and semi-natural open spaces, outdoor sports facilities or the tranquil churchyard at St. Mary's church. In addition, the Parish has a good network of well used and

popular Public Rights of Way extending along and across the valleys. Residents highly value these open spaces, as demonstrated in the Fawkham Survey, 2019, in which the countryside and natural surroundings were the most frequently named benefits of living in Fawkham Parish.

Fawkham Village Hall provides a venue for indoor leisure activities including karate, taekwondo and adult and children's dance. Further indoor space is provided at Corinthian Sports Club (indoor 3G ball court, suitable for 5/6 a side), The Boxing Stables Gym (hall equipped for boxing/training) and Brands Hatch Place Health Club (indoor pool, sauna, steam room, gym, exercise studio) which, although located in the Parish, serve a wider catchment (see Indoor Leisure Evidence Report).

Local Infrastructure

Fawkham Parish has only two of the eight key services and facilities identified as key to settlement sustainability by Sevenoaks District Council in their Settlement Hierarchy, 2022: a village hall and a primary school.

Fawkham Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England school with a Planned Admissions Number of 15 (0.5 form entry) and a total capacity of 105 pupils.

The village hall is used every week day with a wide range of activities. It is also used for Parish Council and other meetings, as a polling station when required, plus ad hoc hires for birthday parties and other events, especially at the weekends.

In addition, other community facilities include:

- The Rising Sun Inn
- Mobile library outside the pub, once a fortnight for 30 minutes
- St Mary's Church
- 2 x bottle banks and 1x charity clothing recycling bank within Corinthian Sports Club car park

None of these facilities are safely accessible and within a reasonable walking distance (400m) of the majority of the Parish's dwellings due to the nature of the roads and the lack of footways or cycle paths.

There is no doctor's surgery, convenience store, post office, secondary school or recreation ground/ children's play area within the Parish. Almost all are over 2.5km away and beyond walking distance from the main clusters of houses. The facilities are accessed via narrow rural lanes without footpaths and there are no public transport services in the Parish.

The main route through Fawkham (the C269 - Valley Road/Fawkham Road/Brands Hatch Road) runs north-south along the valley floor for some 5 km (3.2 miles). The lane has no

central road markings for most of its length, no verge and, with the exception of a 0.5 mile section along one side leading from Michaels Lane to the Primary School, no footpath. Most sections of this lane where the 30mph and 40mph restrictions apply are less than 5.5m wide (the minimum width for two cars passing safely at this speed). During heavy or persistent rain, the lane quickly becomes flooded, in some places across its full width. The vast majority of the remaining lanes in the Parish are winding, narrow routes with limited passing places.

Small Grains (a short residential cul-de-sac) does not extend in front of all the houses it serves which causes some issues with parking, as residents have to park on the adjoining grassed amenity open space.

Section 3: The Vision for Fawkham Parish

Our vision is for Fawkham Parish to retain and enhance the distinctive rural character of the landscape (particularly its woodland, biodiversity and views), the separate, small scale scattered hamlet of Fawkham and the historic Baldwins Green Conservation Area and its setting whilst meeting the limited local housing need, sustaining the local economy and retaining and enhancing the open space and community facilities of the Parish.

Section 4: Fawkham Parish Neighbourhood Plan Strategy

All plans should be based on, and reflect, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and take account of the NPPF with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally. The national planning policy background to each of the Neighbourhood Plan themes is set out in the relevant sections of the Plan but the general context is that the whole Parish is washed over by the Green Belt where, with a few exceptions, the construction of new buildings is considered inappropriate.

The Neighbourhood Plan must also be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Sevenoaks District Council local plan (currently the Core Strategy, 2011 and the Allocations and Development Management Plan, 2015). These plans do not alter the Green Belt boundary or allocate sites for development within the Parish. Where neighbourhood planning is undertaken at the time of an emerging Local Plan, collaboration between the community and the District Council is critical. In developing the Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan, Sevenoaks District Council has taken an active role in advising and supporting the local Neighbourhood Plan team, sharing evidence and information and ensuring the Neighbourhood Plan fits with any relevant up-to-date evidence of strategic needs.

The Settlement Hierarchy for Sevenoaks District, 2022 prepared by Sevenoaks District Council as a basis for the emerging Local Plan classifies Fawkham as a hamlet with a very small population and very limited range of services and facilities, most of which are inaccessible by sustainable means of transport. The Settlement Hierarchy evidence concludes that it would be unrealistic to expect hamlets to accommodate much new development.

Coinciding with the restraint sought by national policies and the conclusion that Fawkham is not a sustainable location for anything other than very limited housing development, local surveys have revealed only a limited need emanating from the Parish for additional housing or other development. The Neighbourhood Plan is looking to ensure that the limited

development which is permitted in the Green Belt will be of an appropriate use and scale, well located and designed to respond to the distinctive local character.

As well as the 54 dwellings already permitted in the Parish, limited additional housing development may come forward through affordable housing required to meet local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan.

The planning strategy seeks to retain the four principal business sites within the Parish and give priority to business uses, or tourist facilities, in the conversion of buildings in the rural area. It is recognised that such sites are situated in the countryside and in locations that are not well served by public transport and development should therefore be sensitive to its surroundings, not have an unacceptable impact on local lanes and exploit any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport).

In accordance with the NPPF, the strategic role set for Fawkham in the adopted Local Plan, limited accessible services and the absence of significant local needs, priority is given to protecting the distinctive landscape character of the countryside including the key components of trees, woodland and hedgerows, rural lanes and important public views. The planning strategy also seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, including the four Local Wildlife Sites, and conserve local heritage assets, including listed buildings, the historic character of Baldwin's Green Conservation Area, and their settings.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the important community networks in Fawkham and seeks to retain the village hall and public house as important social hubs of the Parish. The church is also protected through its designation as a Grade 1 listed building.

The importance of all types of open space is recognised, whether local amenity green space or the tranquil churchyard; local woodland or outdoor sports provision. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and enhance these areas and the public rights of way that connect them.

This draft Plan will be discussed with the infrastructure providers to test whether the limited development which is likely to come forward during the Plan period can be supported by sufficient infrastructure to ensure the quality of life of existing and future residents. Any development permitted will be expected to ensure provision of the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development.

Section 5: Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Environment

Objectives

- To protect and enhance the landscape qualities within the Parish
- To conserve and enhance woodland, trees and hedgerows
- To protect important public views
- To retain the character of rural lanes
- To conserve and enhance biodiversity and connectivity between habitats
- To protect groundwater sources and mitigate the risk of increased surface water flooding
- To ensure sustainable on-site soil management associated with development proposals
- To preserve and enhance the heritage of the area

Natural Environment

Policies

Landscape

Fawkham Parish has a strong rural character, despite its proximity to London, and to the nearby settlements of Hartley, Longfield and New Ash Green. Despite their proximity, Fawkham retains a sense of tranquillity and a sense of visual and physical isolation from surrounding developments. The landform combines with extensive woodland and trees to create a gentle and verdant landscape with a strong sense of place.

The steep dry Fawkham Valley runs north-south. At the southern end are twin valley heads, and a further dry valley (the Pennis Valley) feeds in on the eastern side. To the west of the Fawkham Valley is a ridge of high land which separates the Fawkham Valley from the Darent Valley. To the east is a wider plateau on which the settlements of Hartley and New Ash Green are situated.

Dark skies represent one of the key characteristics of the local landscape (see the Dark Skies Evidence Report). The most detailed ever satellite maps of England's light pollution and dark skies were released in 2016 by the CPRE. The maps show that the majority of the Parish experiences low levels of radiance, especially in comparison with adjoining Parishes. Higher levels of radiance are seen at the southern end of the Parish over Brands Hatch racing circuit, which lies beyond the Parish boundary. The research comes at a time of increasing awareness of the harmful effects light pollution can have on the health of people and wildlife. It is recognised that some external lighting may be justified for reasons of safety, security or to enable the use of sports facilities. In such cases, the impact of lighting should

be minimised through design, location or timing and employing the latest Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance.

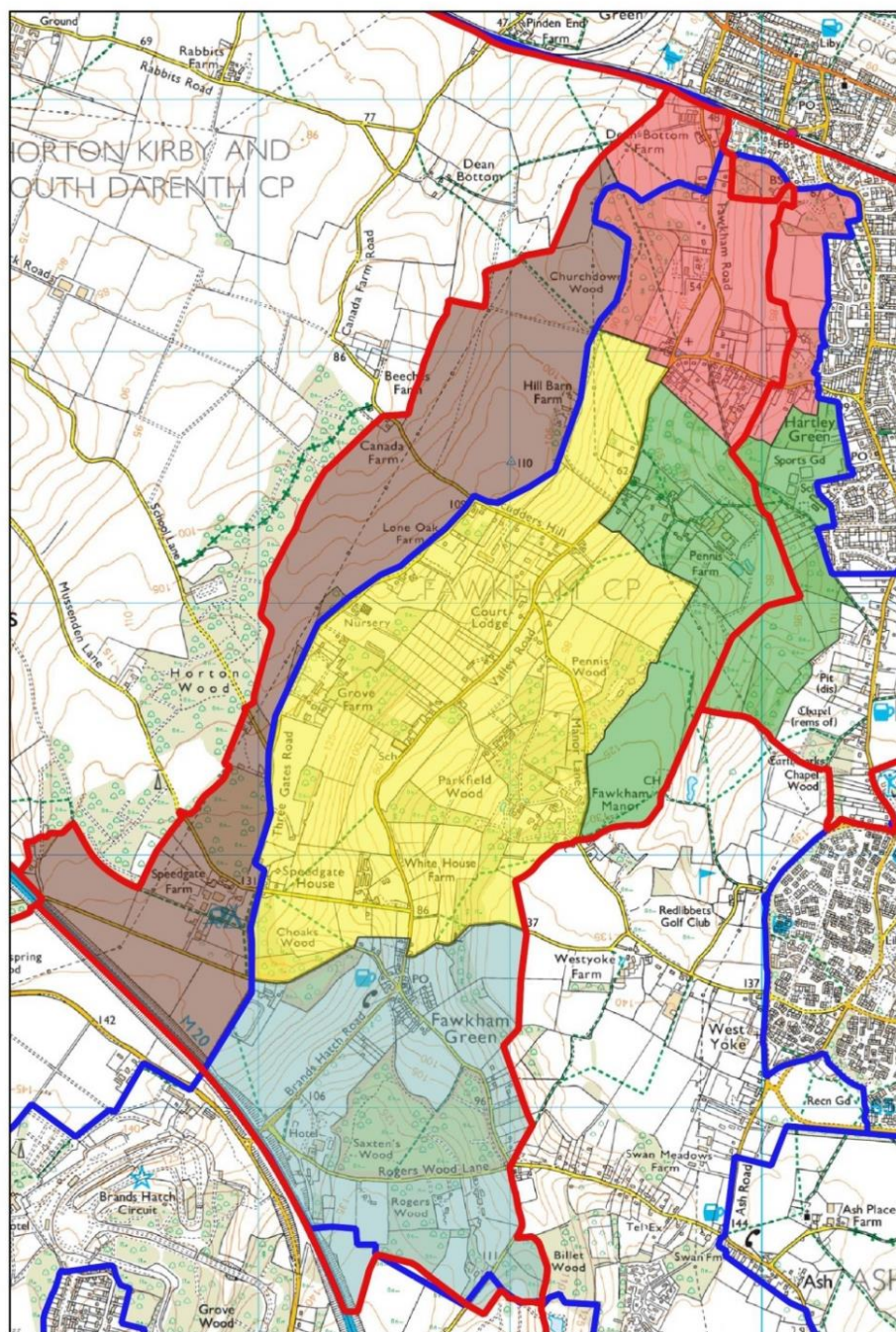
The NPPF states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (Para. 174). The NPPF also states that planning policies should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on intrinsically dark landscapes (Para 125).

Adopted Core Strategy Policy LO8 states that the countryside will be conserved and the distinctive features that contribute to the special character of its landscape and its biodiversity will be protected and enhanced where possible. In addition, particular regard is given to the condition and sensitivity of the landscape character, ensuring that all development conserves and enhances local landscape character. Similarly, the Allocations and Development Management Plan Policy EN5 states the proposals that affect the landscape throughout the District will be permitted where they would conserve the character of the landscape, including areas of tranquillity. Policy EN6 states that proposals for lighting should minimise impact on the night sky through time-limited and user activated lighting, the alignment of lamps, provision of shielding and selection of appropriate lighting type and intensity.

Public engagement in the preparation of this Plan has indicated that the landscape within the Parish is highly valued.

The Fawkham Local Landscape Character Assessment, 2022 identifies five Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) within the Parish, some of which extend across the Parish boundary. The Assessment draws on the Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment, 2011 which covers the whole district and provides a more detailed analysis and description of smaller distinct land areas within the Parish. The LLCAs are shown on Map 1 below, and are as follows:

- Horton Wood Ridge LLCA
- Upper Fawkham Valley LLCA
- Central Fawkham Valley LLCA
- Pennis Valley LLCA (extends into Hartley parish)
- Lower Fawkham Valley LLCA (extends into Hartley parish)



Key

- Parish Boundaries
- Sevenoaks Landscape Character Areas
- Horton Wood Ridge LLCA
- Upper Fawkhams Valley LLCA
- Central Fawkhams Valley LLCA
- Pennis Valley LLCA
- Lower Fawkhams Valley LLCA



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Map 1: Local Landscape Character Areas

The Fawkham Local Landscape Character Assessment, 2022 identifies a number of valued landscape qualities for each distinct LLCA which are set out below. The landscape is sensitive to change and in order to protect and enhance its special character these valued landscape qualities should be respected.

Horton Wood Ridge



The Horton Wood Ridge is located in the far west of Fawkham Parish, and spans almost its full north-south extent, from Churchdown Wood in the north to the M20 in the south. It comprises the ridge of high land which forms the watershed between the Fawkham Valley to the east and the Darent Valley to the west. It therefore forms the skyline for both valleys.

This is a relatively large scale landscape, comprising generally large fields and woodland blocks. The majority of Horton Wood is outside the Parish boundary, but still contributes to the character of the LLCA, which has an open, elevated and exposed feel, and few buildings.

The landform of the LLCA means that there are long panoramic views to the west and north, with central London, Canary Wharf and Essex visible on a clear day. The wide horizons and distant views contrast with the more enclosed feel of the Fawkham Valley.

Valued landscape qualities

- General lack of built development.
- Open character with contrasting large woodland blocks (including Ancient Woodland) within and adjacent to the LLCA, and small areas of surviving traditional orchard and field margins.
- A sense of detachment from surrounding settlements.
- An agricultural landscape with a simple pattern of fields and woodland blocks.
- An elevated feel, with long views from the LLCA, particularly to the west and north.
- Forms the skyline when seen from lower land.

Upper Fawkham Valley



The Upper Fawkham Valley is located in the south of Fawkham Parish and comprises the two steep dry valleys at the head of the Fawkham Valley, and the high land between them. The dramatic landform, which is emphasised by the wooded vegetation, is a dominant characteristic.

The nucleated cluster at Fawkham Green is located where the two tributary valleys meet. It is identified on early 19th Century maps, and contains a number of historic buildings, including the Rising Sun pub.

Lanes run along the tributary valley floors and also link them. Many of the lanes are deep, narrow and steep.

The area is well-wooded, particularly on high land between the valleys, and on the upper valley sides. Large parts of the woodland are publicly accessible, and some are Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Sites. The combination of landform, vegetation and historic features create an enclosed, strongly textured landscape with a distinctive sense of place.

Valued landscape qualities

- The strongly-rural character, including lanes.
- The nucleated form of Fawkham Green and the relative lack of ribbon development along lanes within this LLCA.
- Woodland and trees, including Ancient Woodland and access land.
- The strong relationship between woodland and landform (with open land below and woodland above) which emphasises the dramatic landform.
- A variety of historic buildings, including Listed Buildings.

Central Fawkham Valley



This area is located at the centre of Fawkham Parish and comprises the central part of the Fawkham Valley. It includes the small cluster of development around the school and village hall, as well as more dispersed properties along lanes. These include several historic farmsteads and other historic buildings along the valley floor.

This is a well-wooded and treed landscape, with blocks of woodland (including some Ancient Woodland) and many mature trees and hedges. The eastern valley side is characterised by

remnants of Parkfield Wood, later adapted to form ornamental grounds for Fawkham Manor, along with the remains of Pennis Wood and also Hatchfield Wood.

This is a peaceful, gentle and strongly-rural landscape, with striking dramatic views across and along the valley. The LLCA has high visual quality, and many opportunities to enjoy the views from lanes and footpaths. It also has areas (particularly away from roads) with a sense of peace and tranquillity.

Valued landscape qualities

- A dominance of landform and vegetation, rather than buildings.
- Strongly-rural character with little settlement, small-scale buildings and narrow rural lanes.
- A mosaic of farmland and woodland (much of which is Ancient Woodland) creating a varied and well-treed character and a diversity of habitats.
- Many views across and along the valley from roads and footpaths.
- Historic buildings (including historic farmsteads) and their settings, which retain strong connection with their immediate rural surroundings.

Pennis Valley



This LLCA is located in the eastern part of Fawkhams Parish and the western part of Hartley Parish. It also extends into Ash-cum-Ridley Parish to the south. It comprises the discrete dry valley of the Pennis Valley - a tributary of the main Fawkhams Valley.

Its landform creates a secluded and enclosed feel within the valley, although there are views into it from surrounding high land, including adjacent LLCAs. The Pennis Valley LLCA has a strongly recreational character as it contains a number of sports and recreation facilities, including golf courses and sports grounds. The golf courses have a particularly strong impact on its character, especially in terms of the species, ages and patterns of trees, the past loss of Ancient Woodland, and the erosion of traditional field patterns (although some lines of mature trees and ancient hedges remain). It is valued for private and public recreation facilities, including footpaths.

Buildings/ structures are often recreational in function. There are relatively few domestic properties (limited to the peripheries of the LLCA), and the larger-scale agricultural/ industrial/ recreational buildings at Gay Dawn Farm form a single cluster in the valley floor at the centre of the LLCA.

Valued landscape qualities

- Enclosed landform and abundant trees create a sense of enclosure and seclusion in the valley floor.
- Rural recreational character which retains traces of its earlier agricultural land uses (e.g. mature trees along former hedgelines, mature hedges, and bluebells in former woodland areas).
- Long views into the LLCA from surrounding high land, including the Central Fawkhams Valley and Hartley Hill Plateau LLCAs.
- Relatively little development, with few domestic properties, and the larger buildings at Gay Dawn Farm forming a single cluster of low rise buildings in a limited part of the valley floor.
- The soft green edge – including Ancient Woodland - to existing development on the western side of Hartley.
- Extensive tree, grassland and woodland cover with associated wildlife habitats (although little is currently designated).
- Extensive network of public rights of way (including ancient holloway behind Pennis Farm).

Lower Fawkham Valley



The Lower Fawkham Valley is located in the north of the Parish and contains land within both Fawkham and Hartley parishes. It comprises the fields and woodlands on both sides of the Fawkham Valley, as well as land along Castle Hill. There is strong visual connectivity across the LLCA, with views east-west across the valley from the upper valley sides. There is therefore strong intervisibility between the parishes within this LLCA. The sloping nature of the topography means that much of the LLCA is highly visible, and there are many views from lanes, footpaths and accessible areas within it. The open land around St Mary's Church has a strong visual connection to the surrounding rural landscape.

Much of the land is in agricultural use, but there are also significant blocks of woodland (including Ancient Woodland) and rough grassland. Baldwin's Green Conservation Area is located in the south-west of the LLCA, and includes the Grade I Listed St Mary's Church set in open land within the valley floor. Castle Hill is a rural lane with properties set back from the road, often in large grounds. There are glimpsed views north over open fields or into woodland.

Valued landscape qualities

- Prominent non-developed slopes which contribute to views and sense of place.
- The strongly-rural character of the LLCA.
- Open/ treed horizons which reinforce the rural character of the LLCA (properties in Hartley are not visible from Valley Road, and only limited rooftops may be glimpsed from the footpath below Churchdown Wood on the opposite side of the valley).

- The rural character of Castle Hill with woodland, open fields and occasional larger properties in grounds to the northern side and generally discrete detached houses on the southern side with long back gardens which screen the properties in longer views from the south.
- Nature Conservation Sites, including Rectory Meadow and Churchdown Wood Local Wildlife Sites and Rectory Meadow Local Nature Reserve. Along with Ancient Woodland, traditional orchard, grassland and historic hedges, they have landscape, heritage and ecological value.
- Baldwin's Green Conservation Area (and the Listed St Mary's Church building within it) and their settings, which create a strong and much appreciated sense of place and history.
- Notable views within the LLCA and also beyond as far as London to the west.
- The rural character of Valley Road and Castle Hill with narrow winding lanes, informal edges and dispersed properties.

Specific protection is afforded to woodland, trees and hedgerows by Policy FNP2, the character of rural lanes by Policy FNP4 and the open rural settings to the Church and Baldwin's Green Conservation Area by Policy FNP9 and development should also comply with these policies.

Policy FNP1 – Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character

Within Fawkham Parish priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the visually rural and predominantly undeveloped landscape from inappropriate development.

A proposal for development will only be permitted where it would:

- a) be informed by, and contribute to, local landscape character;
- b) respect the landscape qualities of the Horton Wood Ridge; Upper Fawkham Valley; Central Fawkham Valley; Pennis Valley and Lower Fawkham Valley Local Landscape Character Areas;
- c) ensure development would not visually intrude onto the undeveloped horizons and undeveloped slopes of the Upper, Central and Lower Fawkham Valley;
- d) protect and enhance the distinctive pattern of woodland on high ground and upper valley sides;
- e) retain and enhance existing hedgerows as landscape features;
- f) minimise the visual impact of conversions or redevelopment so that they do not have a materially greater impact on the landscape than the current development; and
- g) maintain the areas of dark skies and low level of light pollution away from existing light sources.

Proposals for private or public external lighting which are required for safe access and, where carefully justified, for security purposes should:

- i) include full details of the proposed lighting to be installed (number, design, specification, position and method of control);
- ii) comply with the current guidelines on the Reduction of Obtrusive Light for rural areas (zone E2) set out by the Institute of Lighting Professionals as a minimum;
- iii) be time limited, ideally motion-controlled and installed at a low height;
- iv) limit the correlated colour temperature of lamps to 3000 Kelvins or less
- v) include full shielding (at the horizontal and above) of any lighting fixture exceeding 500 initial lumens

Floodlighting to enable the use of sports facilities will need strong justification and will be required to have time restrictions and automated controls for switch off and dimming with reference to the Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light, The Institute of Lighting Professionals 2021, and any subsequent revisions.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Horton Wood Ridge; Upper Fawkham Valley; Central Fawkham Valley; Pennis Valley and Lower Fawkham Valley Local Landscape Character Areas shown on Map 1	No large scale or visually prominent development or deterioration in the landscape qualities of the Local Landscape Character Areas
Upper, Central and Lower Fawkham Valley	No visual intrusion of development on the undeveloped horizons or the undeveloped slopes of the Upper, Central and Lower Fawkham Valley
Dark Skies	No deterioration in the level of light pollution

Woodland, trees and hedgerows

The Parish contains significant blocks of Ancient Woodland (areas that have been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD), including Churchdown Wood (in the north of the Parish), Parkfield Wood and Pennis Wood (in the east of the Parish), Saxten's Wood, Cage's Wood and Rogers Wood (in the south of the Parish), and Choaks Wood, Wilmay Copse and part of Horton Wood (in the west of the Parish). There are also several smaller blocks of Ancient Woodland, including narrow strips known as 'shaws'.

There are further areas of deciduous woodland and many individual field trees (including ancient and veteran trees) and hedgerows.

A number of the Parish's hedgerows are considered to be important and are protected under Hedgerow Regulations 1997 as they formed part of a field system or look to be related to any building or other feature associated with the field system that existed before 1845.

Extensive woodland and trees particularly on the upper valley slopes or plateaux make a significant contribution to the local landscape character by emphasising the dramatic landform and creating a sense of contrast with the open fields, and providing changing seasonal colour and texture.

Several of the ancient woodland blocks are part of the three woodlands designated Local Wildlife Sites and, together with other woodland and hedgerows, provide an extensive network of wildlife habitats.

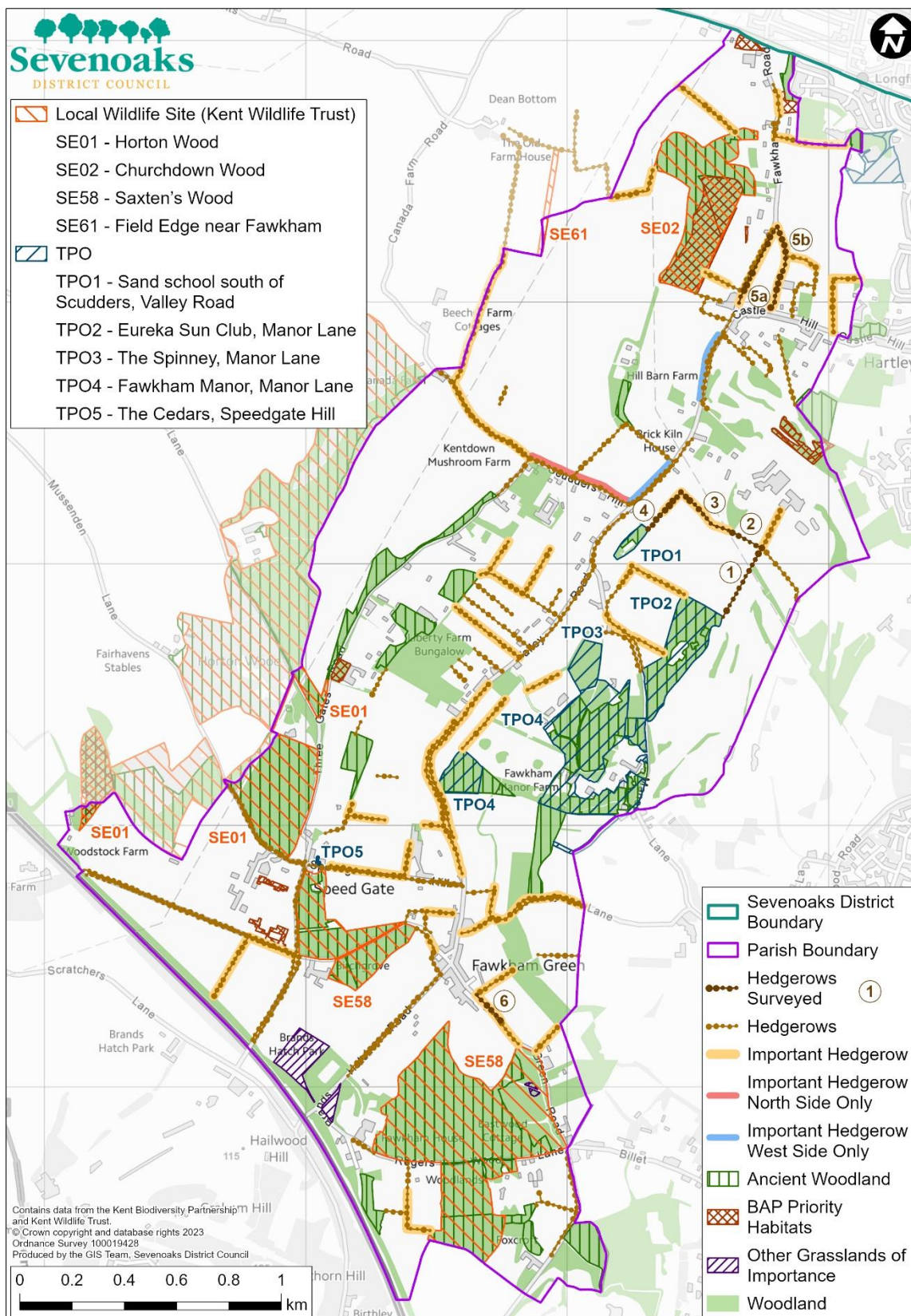
Woodland plays a significant role in the provision of open space within the Parish, with woodland forming much of the natural and semi-natural open space. Saxten's Wood, Cage's Wood and Wilmay Copse are owned and managed by the Woodland Trust and are access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. There are also public rights of way and informal paths through Churchdown Wood.

The NPPF states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons (Para. 180). In addition, planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of trees and woodland (Para.174). Allocations and Development Management Plan Policy EN1 seeks the sensitive incorporation of natural features such as trees and hedges within development proposals.

Important Hedgerows, as defined in the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, are shown on Map 2.

The location of the Parish's green infrastructure is shown on Map 2 below.

Such features are a vital component of the local landscape character, biodiversity, amenity recreation and green infrastructure and the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to conserve and enhance woodland, trees and hedgerows.



Map 2: Green Infrastructure

Policy FNP2 – Woodland, trees and hedgerows

A proposal for development will only be permitted where it would:

- a) conserve and enhance woodland, trees and hedgerows;
- b) protect Ancient Woodland, as defined on Map 2, and ancient and veteran trees;
- c) protect Important Hedgerows, as defined on Map 2;
- d) demonstrate that suitable opportunities for the restoration, enhancement or planting of woodland, trees and hedgerows are identified and incorporated provided this would avoid damaging valued areas of other habitat such as species-rich grassland;
- e) provide adequate protection zones and buffers around existing hedgerows and trees to prevent damage to root systems, taking account of future growth; and
- f) use an appropriate mix of native species.

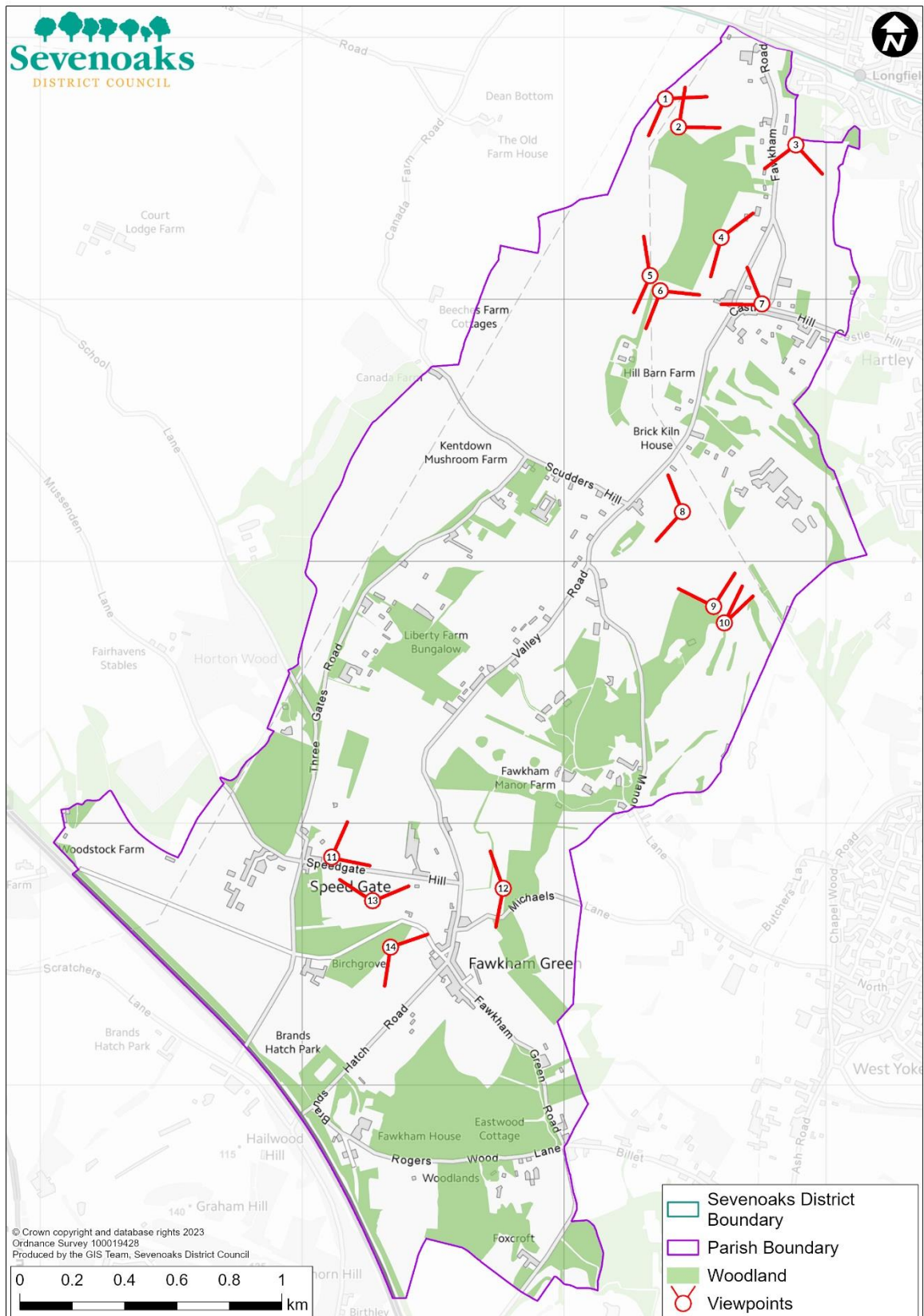
Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Woodland, trees and hedgerows (shown on Map 2)	No loss of woodland, trees or hedgerows
Ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees	No loss of ancient woodland or ancient and veteran trees as a result of development
Important Hedgerows as defined on Map 2	No loss of Important Hedgerows
Protection zones and buffers around existing hedgerows and trees	Development proposals include adequate protection zones and buffers around existing hedgerows and trees to prevent damage to root systems, taking account of future growth

Important Public Views

One of the distinctive features which results from the combination of landform, vegetation and historic buildings is that Fawkham Parish contains some panoramic and dramatic views. These include several views across and along the Fawkham Valley which are strongly rural in character, as well as views from high land with visibility beyond the Parish (occasionally as far as Central London, Canary Wharf and across the Thames to Essex).



The Neighbourhood Plan identifies 14 Important Public Views visible from the public highway, public footpaths, public open spaces or space to which the public has unfettered access (Views Evidence Report). The views are shown on Map 3 below and play an important part in the perception of the local landscape and are valued by local residents. Development must be carefully managed to avoid adversely affecting these distinctive views.



Map 3: Important Public Views

Policy FNP3 - Protect Important Public Views

A proposal for development should maintain and not adversely impact the distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points, in particular the Important Public Views defined in Map 3.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Important Public Views defined in Map 3	No partial or complete loss of, or adverse impact on, Important Public Views as a result of development.

Rural Lanes

One of the distinctive features of the Parish is the narrow lanes. Even the principal north-south route through the Parish along the floor of Fawkham Valley is narrow (in some places allowing only single lane traffic) and is without footways for most of its length. These narrow, curving, mostly sunken, lanes are edged with hedges, trees and boundary banks. The rural character is emphasised by the absence of formal footpaths, street lights and, with some exceptions, highway clutter.

The pattern of routes across the Parish dates back over the centuries. Three Gates Road, Sun Hill, Scudders Hill, Manor Lane, Michaels Lane, Fawkham Green Road, Rogers Wood Lane, Crowhurst Lane, Castle Hill and Valley Road/Fawkham Road (which has altered its course around the church) are all present on maps from the 18th and 19th Century and PRoW SD223 is an ancient hollow way which used to be the main route to West Yoke and Ash.

Rural lanes are an important component of the local landscape character. The hedgerows which line the lanes can provide corridors for wildlife.

The generally sporadic, low density, loose-knit development is not prominent (often set back in larger plots and concealed behind hedges and trees). However, suburban style property boundaries (e.g. close-board fencing, ornamental gates and walls, lighting, and hard surfaces) can result in the removal of hedges and trees and cumulatively have a suburbanising effect on the rural character of the lanes. A Boundary Treatment Good Practice Guide is included at Appendix 1.

Policy FNP4 - Rural Lanes

A proposal for development will only be permitted where it would not result in unsympathetic change to the character of a rural lane and would have regard to the Boundary Treatment Good Practice Guide in Appendix 1.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Rural Lanes	No unsympathetic change to the character of a rural lane

Biodiversity

Fawkham Parish has a variety of habitats and species as set out in the Biodiversity Assets Evidence Report, 2023.

The Parish has four designated Local Wildlife Sites which make up almost 10% of the land coverage of the Plan area. Almost 13% of the Parish is covered by Ancient Woodland and in total over 22% of the Parish is swathed in woodland. The Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland and other woodland, and Tree Preservation Orders are shown on Map 2: Fawkham Parish Green Infrastructure. The Parish's hedgerows including Important Hedgerows, as defined in the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, are shown on Map 2.

Map 2 illustrates how hedgerows act as connections between woodland, preventing these habitats from being isolated. Thus, all areas of ancient woodland in the Parish are connected to other areas by hedgerows and/or other woodland, creating wildlife corridors. A wildlife corridor provides habitat connectivity to enable wildlife populations to move between otherwise isolated places for living, breeding, foraging and feeding. Climate change is likely to have a major impact on the biodiversity of the Parish over the Plan period and beyond. Resilience to such change can be increased through having high regard to its ecological networks. The formal identification of a local ecological network or corridor, mapped by a project with assistance from KCC/ Kent Wildlife Trust/ North West Kent Countryside Partnership/ Kent Nature Partnership/ Woodland Trust, will be explored. Policies may then be developed, identifying appropriate levels of protection and opportunities to create, restore or enhance habitats and/or improve connectivity.

Data on species recorded by the Kent and Medway Biological Record Centre shows Fawkham to have a diverse range of species, including a third of the UK BAP priority mammals (hedgehog, brown hare, dormouse, noctule bat, long-eared brown bat and soprano pipistrelle). Records also show that half of the UK BAP priority Herptile species (reptiles and amphibians) are represented in the Parish. Fawkham has records of several UK BAP priority bird species, including skylark, linnet, house sparrow, starling and herring gull. In terms of vascular plants, Fawkham's records include 32 Kent rare or scarce species. Eight of these are UK BAP priority species, including Pheasant's Eye, White Helleborine, Man Orchid and Eyebright.

The NPPF states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity value in a manner commensurate with their statutory status and minimising impacts on, and providing net gains for, biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures (Para. 174). Plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation. Plans should also 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 (Para. 179).

Core Strategy Policy SP 11 Biodiversity seeks to conserve the biodiversity of the District with opportunities sought for enhancement through the creation, protection, enhancement, extension and management of sites and through the maintenance and, where possible, enhancement of a green infrastructure network to improve connectivity between habitats.

The Parish's natural assets are highly valued by residents, as demonstrated in the Fawkhams Survey of 2019.

Ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees and hedgerows are already afforded protection by Policy FNP2 with which development should also comply.

Policy FNP5 – Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity

A proposal for development should protect and enhance biodiversity of the Parish by:

- a) protecting Local Wildlife Sites, as defined on Map 2, and protected species;
- b) preserving or enhancing linked corridors and ecological networks formed by woodland blocks, shaws and hedgerows, as defined on Map 2; and
- c) enhancing biodiversity through net biodiversity gains associated with development with enhancements which focus on species known to be present in the Parish, and, where appropriate, priority given to the creation/restoration of species-rich grasslands, hedgerows, woodland and/or improved management of these habitats. Where new development is proposed, an appropriate depth of buffer must be provided between the development and any protected habitat. The size of that buffer shall be appropriate to safeguard the significance of that habitat and must itself create, and be maintained as, a suitable complementary natural wildlife haven.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland, ancient and veteran trees or hedgerows and protected species	No loss of Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland, ancient and veteran trees, hedgerows or protected species
Habitats for wildlife on development sites	A minimum 10% increase in biodiversity value for wildlife compared with the pre-development baseline.

Groundwater Source Protection Zone

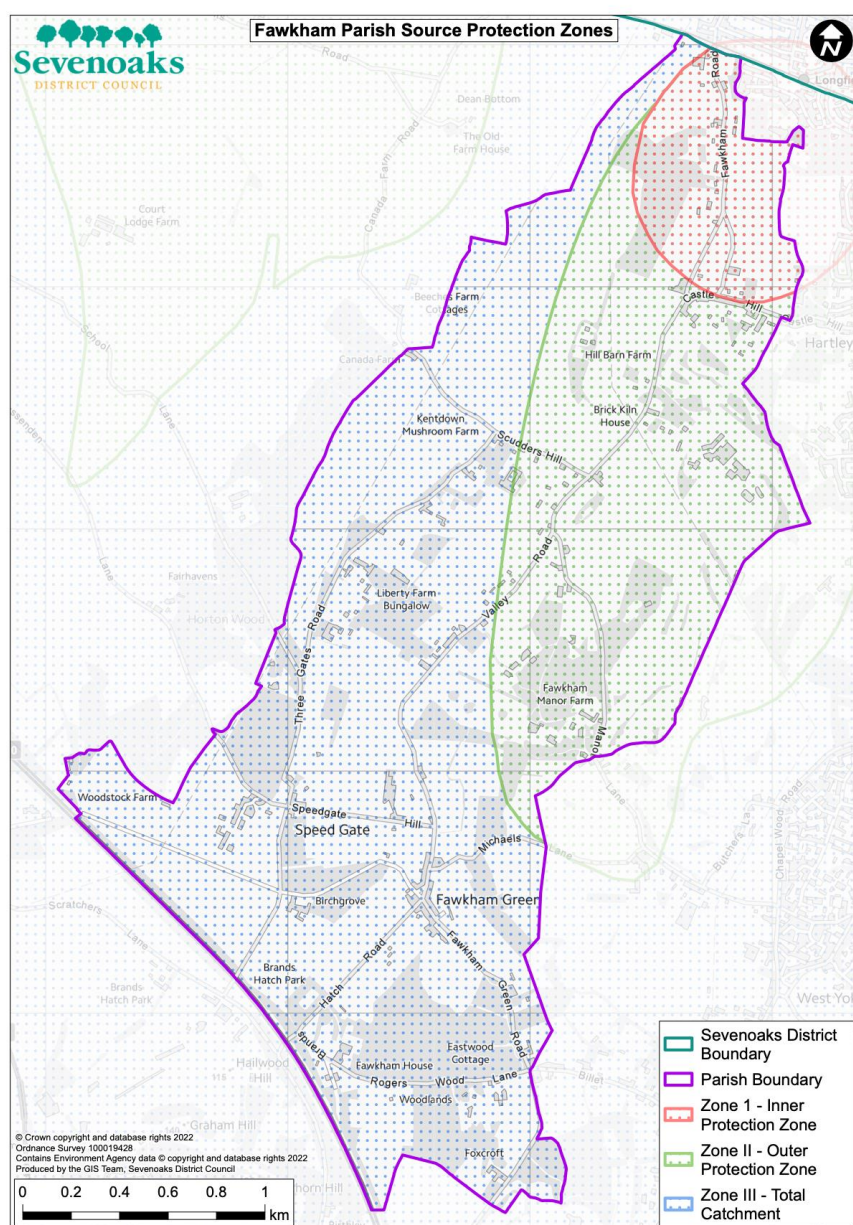
The Environment Agency defines Groundwater Source Protection Zones (GSPZs) in the vicinity of groundwater abstraction points. The purpose of GSPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact on drinking water.

One such extraction point is within Fawkhams Parish (see Flooding and Water Quality Evidence Report). Southern Water has a water pumping station at the northern end of the

Parish. As a consequence, the Parish is a Groundwater Source Protection Zone and Map 4 below shows the various zones.

- Inner zone - this zone is 50 day travel time of pollutant to source with a 50 metres default minimum radius.
- Outer zone - this zone is 400 day travel time of pollutant to source. This has a 250 or 500 metres minimum radius around the source depending on the amount of water taken.
- Total catchment - this is the area around a supply source within which all the groundwater ends up at the abstraction point. This is the point from where the water is taken. This could extend some distance from the source point.

The Groundwater Source Protection Zone requires new development to provide attenuated storage of surface water runoff to prevent infiltration and contamination.



Map 4: Groundwater Source Protection Zones

Policy FNP6 – Groundwater Source Protection Zone

A proposal for development within the Groundwater Source Protection zones, as shown in Map 4 will only be permitted if there is no risk of contamination to groundwater sources which cannot be adequately mitigated.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Groundwater Source Protection zones	No contamination of groundwater

Surface Water Flooding

The drainage within the Parish appears to be insufficient to cope with the surface water generated during heavy or intense rainfall, even when clear and functioning correctly (see Flooding and Water Quality Evidence Report). The quantum of drainage assets, coupled with the topography of the Parish, means that during heavy or prolonged periods of rainfall surface water flooding runs in a continuous manner along the lane at the foot of the valley, from south to north.



Particular areas with regular surface water flooding include:

- Junction of Fawkham Green Road with Valley Road, around the village green
- Baldwins Green/Castle Hill junction with Valley Road
- Valley Road, north of the village school
- Valley Road, south of Castle Hill and south of Pennis Lane
- Fawkham Road, north of junction with Steephill

Flooding is often across the full width of the carriageway and in some instances, is internal to properties. Flints, silt and debris are regularly washed down the valley sides and banks and onto the carriageway by surface water runoff, including on Valley Road, Manor Lane and Crowhurst Lane. This represents a danger to road users.

Kent County Council advises that the issues reported within their database are unlikely to meet the requirements for intervention for improvement works. Improvement works are based on the severity of flooding, frequency of flooding and danger of flooding to road users or property (internal, habitable areas). In addition, the natural presence of flints, silt and debris means that existing drainage assets will be readily blocked.

The NPPF states that local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere when determining planning applications (Para. 167).

Climate change is predicted to result in wetter winters and increased summer storm intensity in the future. This increased rainfall intensity will increase the risk of surface water flooding, due to the increased volume of water entering the drainage system. In order to minimise the risk of exacerbating surface water flooding in the Parish, development proposals should include mitigation measures such as sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) as an integral part of the landscape structure. Where practicable SuDs should be positively designed into schemes from the outset as public realm and/or biodiversity features. These features can include ponds, infiltration basins, swales/rain gardens and wetlands and can make a positive contribution to the biodiversity, character, appearance and sustainable performance of development.

Policy FNP7 - Surface Water Flooding

A proposal for development should be designed to ensure it would not increase surface water run off and the risks of surface water flooding and, where mitigation measures are required, should give preference to Nature Based Solutions style SuDS, with engineering solutions used only when it has been demonstrated that no other form of SuDs is feasible. Where practicable, SuDs should be positively designed into schemes from the outset as public realm and/or biodiversity features.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Surface water drainage	No increase in surface water flooding

Soil Conservation

The bedrock chalk geology is consistent across the Parish, but there are variations in the superficial geology. The highest land is covered with clay-with-flints deposits (formed by surface weathering of chalk) giving heavy but fertile soils. Alluvial surface deposits (also relatively fertile) are found in the valley bottom.

The objectives of soil conservation are to retain the natural soil fauna and flora of the Parish; to assist the establishment of new native planting; to reduce the spread of undesirable and potentially invasive plant material and soil-borne diseases, and to reduce off-site traffic movements associated with the import and export of soils and any other excavated materials. Appropriate soil conservation measures should address the handling and temporary storage of soils, as well as preventing erosion, both during construction and until stabilizing vegetation is re-established.

Policy FNP8 – Soil Conservation

A proposal for development should demonstrate sustainable on-site soil management and minimise the import of subsoil and topsoil and the export of any excavated ground materials.

Character, Heritage and Identity

Policy

High Quality Design

The planning strategy anticipates limited development within the Parish over the Plan period. New development should comply with national guidance, local plan policies and Neighbourhood Plan policies which seek to ensure it is designed to a high quality which responds to the distinctive landscape character in which it is located and to local heritage assets which may be affected.

The NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Sustainable development involves achieving positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including replacing poor design with better design. One of the Government's core planning principles is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Core Strategy Policy SP1 states that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated. Account should be taken of guidance adopted by the Council including Kent Design, local Character Area Assessments and Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans. In rural areas account should be taken of guidance in the Countryside Assessment. In areas where the local environment lacks positive features new development should contribute to an improvement in the quality of the environment. Allocations and Development Management Plan Policy EN1 sets out more detailed design principles aimed at creating high quality designs.

Policy FNP1 requires new development to respect the landscape qualities of the area within which it is situated; Policy FNP 4 seeks development which would not result in unsympathetic change to the character of a rural lane and Policy FNP9 seeks to conserve and enhance the Baldwin's Green Conservation Area and the Parish's listed buildings and their settings.

Heritage

It is believed that the area of the North Downs that is now Fawkham was settled in the Stone Age, and many shaped flints have been found to support this.

There is some evidence of Roman occupation in the Fawkham area. A Romano-British farmstead, dated from about the time of the conquest, and abandoned not later than A.D. 100, was discovered in 1957 at Eastwood Farm, in Rogers Wood Lane. Additionally, two cremation burials were found when trenches were being dug for foundations for a new cottage. Pottery dating from 50-80 AD was also recovered. Further Romano-British pot shards from the 1st century AD have been found around Dene Bottom Farm/Fawkham Business Park.

In the Domesday Book, Fawkham is named as Falceham. The survey shows a manor with around 400 acres of land, including a church, two mills, four meadows and enough wood for 30 swine. It is believed a Norman family established themselves in Fawkham, adopting the name of the village as their surname, de Fawkeham (or various alternative spellings). This was in the reign of Henry I (1100-1135) and it is thought they replaced a Saxon wooden church with the present Norman one.

The first Fawkham manor house is believed to have been in Church Meadow, behind the church. The ruins of a building existed there until 1846-57. Court Lodge was probably built for the manor of New Fawkham following division of the manor into two in the early 14th Century.

Fawkham Street was the name of the original settlement between the church and Court Lodge with the village cross probably at the bottom of Pennis Lane. A small area of granite setts marks the likely site of the cross (next to Cross House) and this is now a piece of Common Land.

Fawkham Green was originally the hamlet of Ilkenden (there are various spellings).

Designated Heritage Assets

Fawkham Parish has a rich historic environment (see Heritage Assets Evidence Report).

The NPPF states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations (Para 189). Core Strategy Policy SP1 states that Sevenoaks District's heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, conservation areas and archaeological remains, will be protected and enhanced.

Listed Buildings

Fawkham contains 13 listed buildings/structures, most of which are occupied as dwellings. Fawkham Manor is currently in the process of conversion to flats.

The four non-residential buildings/structures are St Mary's Church, Brands Hatch Place (now a hotel and spa), the war memorial and a pair of gate posts and railings to the north of Pennis House.

Ranked by age, St Mary's Church is the oldest listed building in the Parish and the War Memorial the most recent:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 12th Century - | St Mary's Church |
| 16th Century - | Court Lodge |
| 17th Century - | Cross House, Gabriels, Pennis Farm, Scudders |
| 18th Century - | Brands Hatch Place, Pennis House (and gates/railings), The Old Rectory, The White House |

19th Century - Fawkham Manor

20th Century - War Memorial



Pennis House

Baldwins Green Conservation Area

Baldwins Green Conservation Area includes the loose knit cluster of historic buildings at the junction of Valley Road and Castle Hill. The small number of buildings comprise the Parish Church of St Mary; The Shaws (now Beech House and The Laurels); Churchdown House and Churchdown Farm and outbuildings.



Baldwins Green Conservation Area, looking west to Churchdown Wood

The Parish Church of St. Mary is the earliest building, with much Norman detailing. Walls are rendered and painted white and a white painted weatherboarded bellcote on the ridge

provides a landmark within local views. The churchyard is accessed by an attractive lychgate. It is enclosed to the west by mature trees and hedgerows with the village cemetery to the south. The remaining open grounds to the east of the Church were the site of the original medieval Manor House. The Grade 1 listed church has a generally open setting to the north along the Lower Fawkham Valley and to the west up to the Horton Wood Ridge. Local topography and the absence of development means that views from the Conservation Area are uninterrupted. The Conservation Area and its unspoiled setting, including the landmark building of St Mary's church, is also visible in wider views from the public footpath network.

The Shaws provides another focal point within the Conservation Area. This large house, now subdivided into two, is constructed of flint with brick relief to the openings, brickwork quoins and bands of horizontal brickwork. The tall chimneys are also constructed of fairfaced brickwork.

Churchdown House is also visible from the road and is constructed of brickwork, with brick flat arches forming the window heads and a curved arch above the door opening fanlight.

The converted timber framed barn of Churchdown Farm, now a private residence, is weatherboarded with a brick plinth to the ground floor. The outbuildings of Churchdown Farm are also evident.

A variety of building materials and finishes are used. Generally, roofs in the area are either slated with clay-ridge tiles, lead-hip and ridge-rolls, or (more commonly) covered with clay tiles hung on pegs or nibs. The degree of the roof pitches varies depending on the material used and the contrasting heights of the ridgelines lend variety and interest to the street scene. Most of the traditional timber casement and vertical sliding sash windows have been retained.

Boundary walls are generally low and constructed of either brick or stone with panels of ironwork placed between taller piers, contributing to the openness of the area. Other boundary features are open fencing and hedgerows, all of which add to the rural qualities of the area.

Archaeology

As a result of its history back to the Stone Age, the entire Parish is an area of multi-period archaeological potential.

Non-designated heritage assets

There are currently no recognised non-designated heritage assets within the Parish, although the Kent Heritage Environment Record maintained by Kent County Council includes one unlisted building, ten archaeological sites and nine cropmarks and other features. The NPPF recognises local listings as heritage assets which should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. The Framework states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be

taken into account in determining a planning application. A project specification has been prepared to identify buildings/features which, while not on the statutory list of buildings that are of national significance, make a valuable contribution to the distinctiveness of the Parish (see project FP18 - Creation of a Local List of Non-designated Heritage Assets in Appendix 3).

Policy FNP9 - Heritage

Fawkham Parish's listed buildings and their settings should be conserved.

The open rural character of Baldwin's Green Conservation Area and its setting should be preserved and enhanced. Any development should be designed to a high quality and retain those buildings and other features, including open spaces, trees and views which make a significant contribution to the character of Baldwins Green Conservation Area.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of objections to the design of new development in Baldwin's Green Conservation Area or its setting from the Parish Council.	No design objections to new development in Baldwins Green Conservation Area from the Parish Council.
Baldwin's Green Conservation Area and its setting	Rural character of Baldwin's Green Conservation Area and its setting preserved and enhanced.
Listed buildings and their settings	Listed buildings and their settings conserved.

Housing

Objective

- To facilitate local people staying in the Parish through existing and future windfall planning permissions, supporting the adaptation and proportionate additions to existing homes and, where justified, enabling a limited supply of affordable housing which meets the needs of the Parish within the identified policy and environmental constraints.

Policy

The NPPF states that neighbourhoods should develop plans that support the strategic housing development needs set out in Local Plans and plan positively to support local development, taking into account any specific policies in the Framework which indicate development should be restricted including those relating to the Green Belt (Paras. 11 and 29). The NPPF states that in rural areas, planning policies should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs (Para. 78). In addition, the NPPF states that planning policies should generally avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside (Para.80).

Fawkham is not classified as a settlement in the Core Strategy (Policy LO1 Distribution of Development or Policy LO7 Development in Rural Settlements) and the Allocations and Development Management Plan does not allocate a site for housing within the Parish.

Allocations and Development Management Plan Policy GB1 allows limited extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt provided certain criteria are met whilst Policy GB4 permits replacement dwellings in the Green Belt. Core Strategy Policy SP4 and Allocations and Development Management Plan Policy GB5 enable small scale developments for affordable housing to meet local needs identified through rural housing needs surveys as an exception to restrictive Green Belt policies provided certain criteria are met.

The most recent Local Housing Needs Survey, 2022 identified a low level of need for three affordable homes: 2 x 2 bed first homes and 1 x 2 bed shared ownership homes. In addition, a need for seven open market properties were identified, including one for an older household wanting to downsize (with no need for level access) and four who were interested in self-build only.

Planning permission has already been granted for a further 54 dwellings, including 10 affordable homes. This, together with the turnover of existing housing, will more than meet the need for market housing generated within the Parish. If nomination rights are given for Fawkham Parish residents to the permitted affordable units, this need may also be met. If this is not the case, Core Strategy Policy SP4 and Allocations and Development Management Plan Policy GB5 would enable limited development to meet any unmet affordable housing need. Fawkham Parish is also a Designated Rural Area whereby a lower

threshold of 6-9 dwellings would trigger an affordable housing contribution in the form of a commuted sum payment under Core Strategy Policy SP3.

The Settlement Hierarchy for Sevenoaks District, 2022 prepared by Sevenoaks District Council classifies Fawkham as a hamlet. The Settlement Hierarchy states that hamlets have very small populations (less than 1,000 inhabitants), have a limited range of services and facilities and, in the case of Fawkham, is washed over by the Green Belt. It should be noted that even the limited facilities provided within the Parish are not generally accessible by sustainable modes of transport with narrow rural lanes and the absence of footpaths and public transport. The Settlement Hierarchy evidence concludes that it would be unrealistic to expect these settlements to accommodate much new development.

In summary, there is no strategic requirement for Fawkham to accommodate new housing allocations, the Parish is not a sustainable location for anything other than very limited housing development, there is only a low level of local need for market and affordable homes, and a further 54 dwellings already have planning consent. For these reasons, it is not the intention for the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate housing sites for new housing development. Rather, the Neighbourhood Plan wishes to ensure that any housing development which may come forward during the Plan period within the constraints of the NPPF, Local and Neighbourhood Plans is of high quality design and responds to the distinctive landscape character and heritage of Fawkham in which it is located (see Policies FNP1; Policy FNP4 and Policy FNP9).

Whilst the NPPF makes the re-use of redundant or disused buildings an exception to the restriction of isolated homes in the countryside (Para.80), Neighbourhood Plan Policy FNP10 gives priority to business uses, or tourist facilities, in the conversion of rural buildings. Isolated dwellings within the Parish would be remote from the limited local facilities available and would not be safely connected by sustainable transport.

Local Economy

Objective

- To maintain a thriving rural economy by retaining and enabling the regeneration of well located existing business sites.

Policy

Whilst employment in the Parish is provided in a variety of sectors and locations, one of the principal sources is the clusters of business units located at current and former farms (see Local Economy Evidence Report).

Business Sites

Fawkham Parish has four principal clusters of business units located at current and former farms, involving the conversion of rural buildings and purpose built structures ranging in size from nine to 29 units, with 68 in units in total across these sites:

- Speedgate Farm units
- Fawkham Business Park
- Kentdown Mushroom Farm units
- Grove Farm



Fawkham Business Park

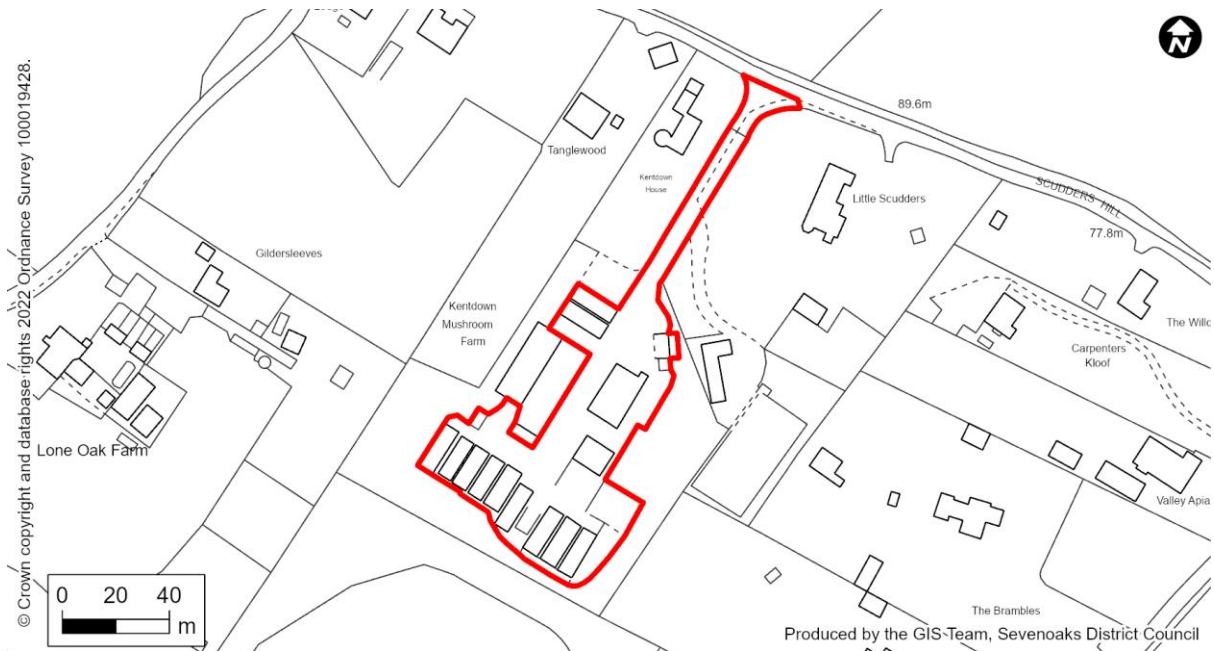
The structures are not readily suited to residential conversion and consequently permitted development would not apply. The sites are shown in Maps 5 – 8 below.



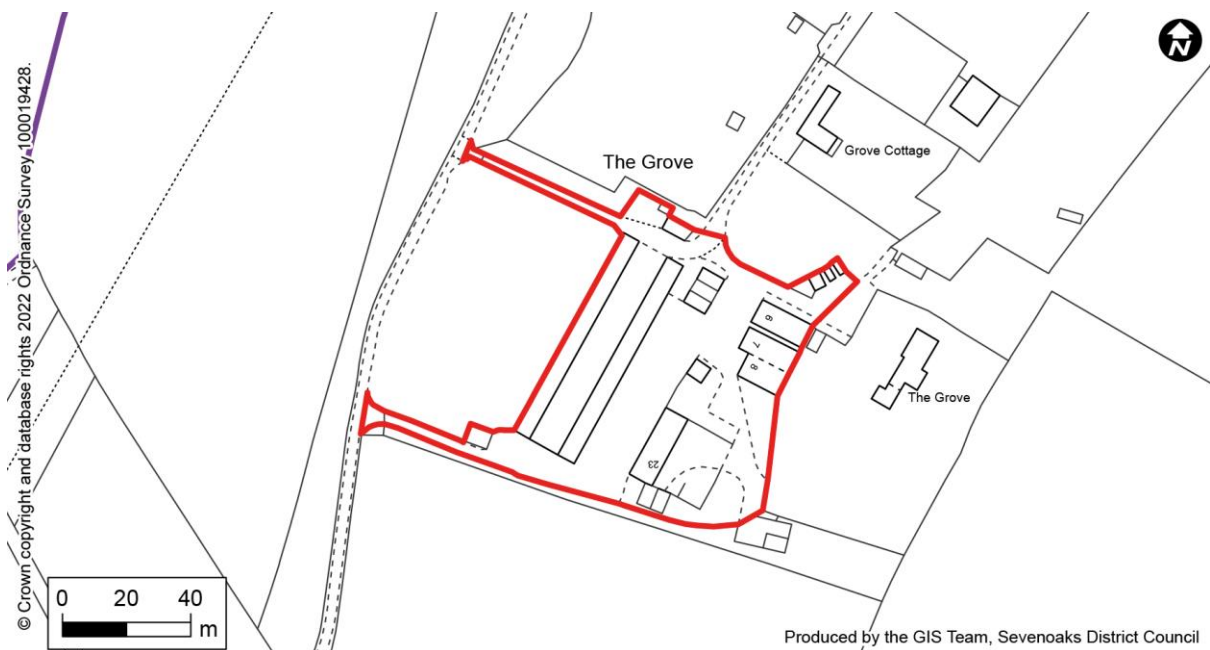
Map 5 Speedgate Farm Business Site



Map 6 Fawkhams Business Park Site



Map 7 Kentdown Mushroom Farm Business Site



Map 8 Grove Farm Business Site

The NPPF states that planning policies should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of business in rural areas but that it is important to ensure that development exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable by providing improved sustainable transport links. Policies should recognise that sites to meet local business needs may have to be found in locations that are not well served by public transport (Paras. 85 – 85).

Core Strategy Policy SP8 states that sites used for business purposes will be retained in business use unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for business purposes during the Core Strategy period. In addition the Policy gives priority to business uses, or tourist facilities, in the conversion of buildings in

the rural area. The four business sites within the Parish are not allocated in the Allocations and Development Management Plan. Policy EMP5 states that when considering proposals for the creation or loss of business uses on unallocated sites, the Council will assess the impact of the proposals on the environment, local economy and the local community. Consistent with the Core Strategy, the Council will permit the loss of non-allocated lawful business premises and sites to other uses provided it can be demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Council, that the site has been unsuccessfully marketed for re-use in employment for a period of at least 6 months and that there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for business use at the site/premises in the longer term.

The Neighbourhood Plan Business Survey, 2022 identified that most local businesses felt that their current premises will suit their future needs, whilst others were improving their premises. None is looking to move away from Fawkham Parish.

There is strong demand within the District and the Parish for commercial premises and the Sevenoaks Economic Needs Study, 2022 recommends that commercial land and premises should be retained unless it can be demonstrated that the use is no longer feasible or viable.

The presence of businesses is important to the sustainability of Fawkham Parish and a number of businesses have long term associations with the Parish. Businesses provide local employment opportunities and the Parish Council are keen that Fawkham retains a thriving local economy rather than becoming a dormitory area.

Policy FNP10 – Business development

1. Sites used for business purposes, as defined on Maps 5 – 8, will be retained in business use unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for business purposes during the Plan period.
2. Existing business sites may be regenerated through redevelopment or the limited extension of an existing building provided:
 - a) the redevelopment or extension would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt;
 - b) the extension would be proportional and subservient to the original building
 - c) development, including advertising and lighting, would be integrated sensitively into its context respecting the landscape character of the area and, where applicable, the character and heritage of any existing building;
 - d) the amenities of any neighbouring residential occupiers or the tranquillity of the countryside would not be significantly adversely affected;
 - e) development would not generate a type or amount of traffic that would be inappropriate to the rural lane network that serves the site and should exploit any opportunity to make the site more sustainable; and
 - f) sufficient on-site car and cycle parking would be provided for visitors, staff and delivery vehicles.
3. Priority will be given to business uses, or tourist facilities, in the conversion of buildings.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Four business sites as defined on Maps 5 - 8	No loss of business sites as defined on Maps 5 - 8

Home Working

Working from home for professionals, service providers and craft workers is becoming increasingly common and the Neighbourhood Plan is supportive of the provision of facilities to enable sustainable homeworking which will improve locally based employment, support local services and reduce traffic movements. Small scale businesses which are incidental to the enjoyment of the home do not require planning permission and this form of employment opportunity will continue to be available over the Plan period.

Leisure and Wellbeing

Objectives

- To promote well-being and healthy living
- To protect and enhance open space and the network of footpaths serving the Parish
- To maintain community meeting places to serve the Parish

Policies

The NPPF states that planning policies should: plan positively for the provision and use of community facilities (such as meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs (Para. 93). The Framework states that access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. 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). Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use. (Paras. 98 – 99). Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way (Para.100).

Core Strategy Policy SP10 seeks to retain open space, sport and recreation facilities, including indoor sports facilities of value to the local community. For the purposes of this policy, open space includes amenity open space, natural and semi natural open space, outdoor sports facilities and churchyards.

Community Buildings

The dispersed community of Fawkham has a number of places in which it is able to meet:

- Fawkham Village Hall
- The Rising Sun Inn
- St Mary's Church

Fawkham Village Hall

Fawkham Village Hall is a vital community resource for the Parish and is located on Valley Road amidst a cluster of buildings close to the Church of England Primary School. It is used every weekday by six regular hirers for 13.75 hours a week with activities including adult dance, karate, taekwondo, children's dance and furniture restoration. It is also used for Parish Council and other meetings, as a polling station when required, plus ad hoc hires for birthday parties and other events, especially at the weekends.

The hall is not accessed by footways but has a car park with 24 spaces (including one disabled space) and three cycle parking hoops, together with 14 spaces reserved for the residents of 1-7 Six Acre Cottages. The car park generally provides sufficient parking for hall users and residents and is also used, by arrangement with the Parish Council, for drop off and collection during school run times.

Policy FNP11 - Protection of Fawkham Village Hall

The loss of the village hall community building will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists and that suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.

Rising Sun Inn

The Rising Sun Inn is located next to the village green within the Fawkham Green cluster of development. The public house has a bar and a restaurant and is open every day. There are six guest rooms. The inn is not accessed by footway but has a small car park with additional on-street parking in the vicinity. The landlord has advised there are no plans for any changes at the pub. The public house is important to the social and economic sustainability of the Parish and the Neighbourhood Plan will seek its retention unless it can be demonstrated that the operation of the public house facility is not financially viable.



Policy FNP12 - Protection of Public House

The loss of The Rising Sun Inn public house will be resisted. Exceptions will be made where evidence is provided to the District Council to show that the operation of the facility is no longer financially viable and where there are no other realistic proposals for a public house use on the site.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Community hall and public house	No loss of community hall or public house

St Mary's Church

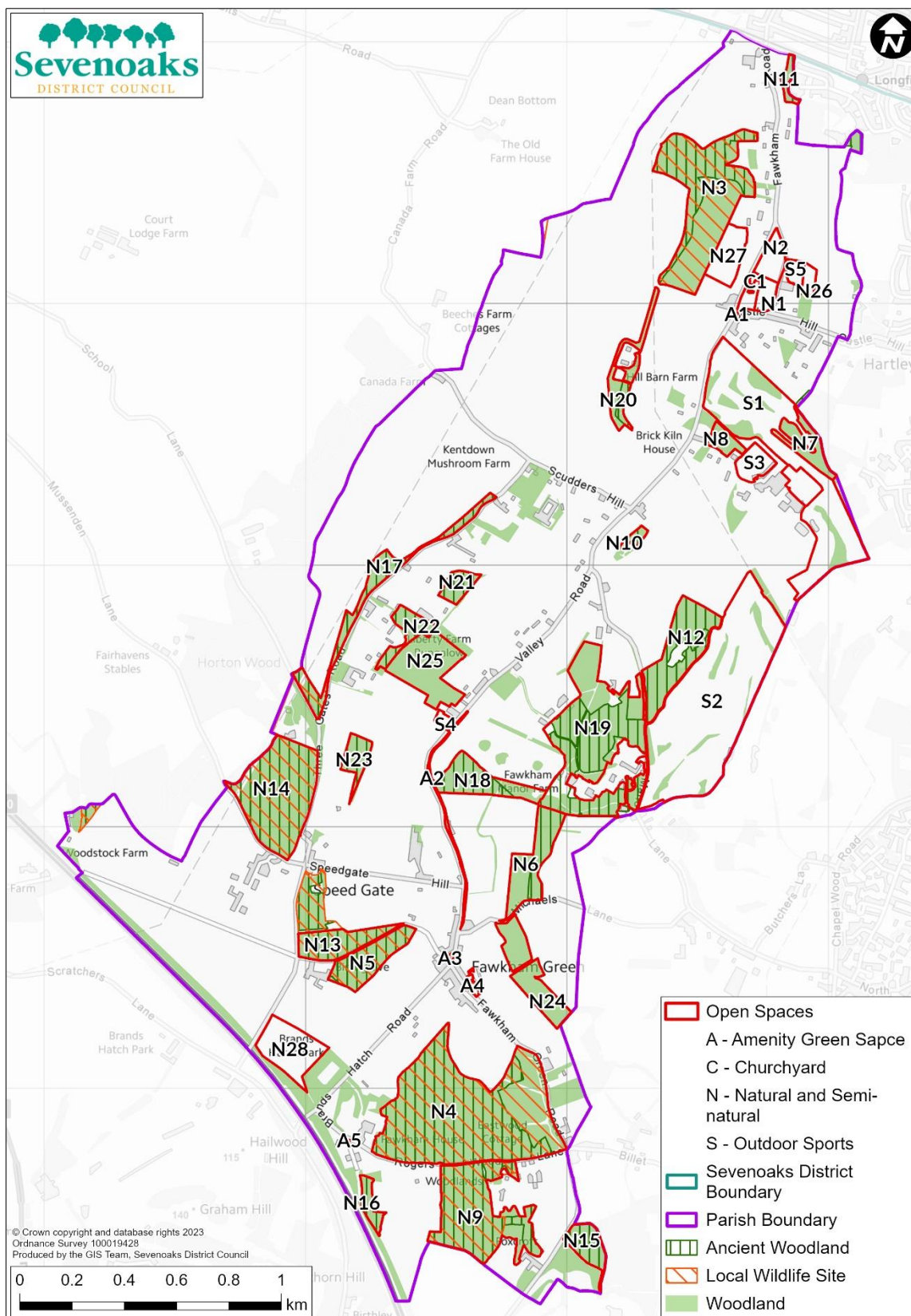
The Parish Church is already protected as a Grade 1 listed building.

Open space, sport and recreation facilities

The Environment section of the plan attaches great importance to the protection of networks of green spaces, commonly referred to as green infrastructure, which can provide a wide range of environmental benefits, including contributing to the reduction in atmospheric carbon dioxide and improved air quality particularly areas which include trees, woodland or hedgerows. Open spaces also play an important part in the character of the landscape and views, as well as the setting of built development (including heritage assets). They provide habitats which are important to biodiversity. They can provide health, wellbeing and social benefits acting as locations for community and social events. In addition, many of the green spaces are used regularly for informal or formal recreational purposes.

Sevenoaks District Council has undertaken an open space audit in accordance with government guidance (Open Space Study, 2018) which assesses the provision for each type of open space including local amenity green space, natural and semi-natural open spaces, outdoor sports facilities and churchyards. In accordance with the Government definition of open space, the study excludes agricultural land and paddocks. The quality audit was updated and supplemented for the Neighbourhood Plan in 2022 (Open Space Evidence Report). The Audit included existing open spaces within the Parish irrespective of ownership or the extent of public access as all forms of provision can contribute to meeting local needs.

The multiple functions of open space, for example in relation to landscape character and biodiversity, mean that most are included on Map 2: Green Infrastructure. However, in order to identify the types of open space present in the Parish, open spaces are shown on Map 9 below. More detailed maps for the smaller areas of amenity open space and the churchyard site are included within Appendix 2.



Map 9 Fawkham Parish Open Space

Amenity Green Space

The primary purposes of this typology of open space are to provide opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or to enhance the appearance of a residential area. The Parish has five areas of amenity green space as shown on Map 9. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to prevent further erosion of the Small Grains amenity green space by regularising parking provision for the adjoining dwellings. The residual area of amenity open space allowing for the introduction of car parking spaces is shown on Map 9 and in Appendix 2.

- A1 Baldwins Green
- A2 Footway verge/bank, Valley Road
- A3 Village Green
- A4 Small Grains
- A5 Rogers Wood Lane triangle



Footway verge/bank, Valley Road

Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space

The primary purposes of this typology of open space are wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness. Fawkham Parish contains many areas of natural and semi-natural open space as shown on Map 9.

- N1 Church Meadow (part 1)
- N2 Church Meadow (part 2)
- N3 Churchdown Wood
- N4 Saxten and Cages Woods
- N5 Wilmay Copse
- N6 Loaves Wood
- N7 Fawkham Valley woods

- N8 Cross House woodland
- N9 Roger's Wood
- N10 Scudders Shaw
- N11 Woodland East of Salts Farm
- N12 Pennis Wood
- N13 Choaks Wood
- N14 Horton Wood (part of)
- N15 Billet Wood
- N16 Gallows Wood
- N17 Woodland besides Three Gates Road
- N18 Hatchfield Wood
- N19 Parkfield Wood
- N20 Woodland at Hill Barn Farm
- N21 Parefield Wood
- N22 Grove Wood
- N23 Hopkins Spring Wood
- N24 Shortledge Wood
- N25 Fawkham Primary Woodland/Forest School
- N26 Steephill School Orchard and Forest School
- N27 Church Downs grassland
- N28 Brands Hatch grassland



Wilmay Copse

Cemeteries and Churchyards

Aside from burials, the primary purpose of this typology of open space is quiet contemplation, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

The Parish has one cemetery and churchyard as shown on Map 9.

- C1 St. Mary's Churchyard

Land Associated with Outdoor Sports Facilities

The primary purpose of this typology of open space is participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports. Golf courses are also included in this typology.

The Parish has two golf courses (one of which straddles the parish boundary and is only partially within Fawkham Parish). The Parish is also home to the multiple football pitches at Corinthian Sports Club which the Sevenoaks District Council Playing Pitch Strategy, 2018 states is a very impressive large site, hosting good football provision throughout. The Primary School has access to a 7 v 7 mini-football pitch situated on private land abutting the school. Similarly, Steephill Independent School & PreSchool has a mini 7v7 football pitch. The sites are used by the schools for matches, training, physical education and other activities and without such pitches, greater pressure would be put on surrounding pitches. The following sites are shown on Map 9.

- S1 Corinthian (Fawkham Valley) Golf Course
- S2 Redlibbets Golf Course (part of)
- S3 Corinthian Sports Club: football pitches
- S4 Fawkham Primary sports field 1 Mini 7v7 football pitch
- S5 Steephill Independent School & PreSchool 1 Mini 7v7 football pitch



Corinthian Sports Club

The Playing Pitch Strategy, 2018 recommends the three sites providing football pitches should be protected as playing pitches in the Local Plan. The Sevenoaks District Council Open Space Study, 2018 notes that there is a need to ensure continued provision of quality facilities for football and golf and recommends generally maintaining and improving the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space.

The wide benefits derived from the Parish's open spaces are highly valued by the local community. The open spaces with public access are well used. In relation to natural and semi-natural open space almost 50% of residents walk daily in the countryside (Countryside Survey, 2021). Whilst the football pitches and golf courses are used by some local residents, these facilities serve a wider catchment and are part of the district-wide sports provision. The quality of open space is generally good. The Parish Council is keen to maintain the existing Parish open spaces.

Policy FNP13 - Protection of open space, sport and recreation facilities

Open space, as defined on Map 9 and Appendix 2, will be retained and, where appropriate, enhanced. Development may exceptionally be allowed where replacement provision of at least equivalent value to the local community is provided.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Open space, as defined on Map 9 and Appendix 2	No loss of open space

Public Rights of Way and historic routeways

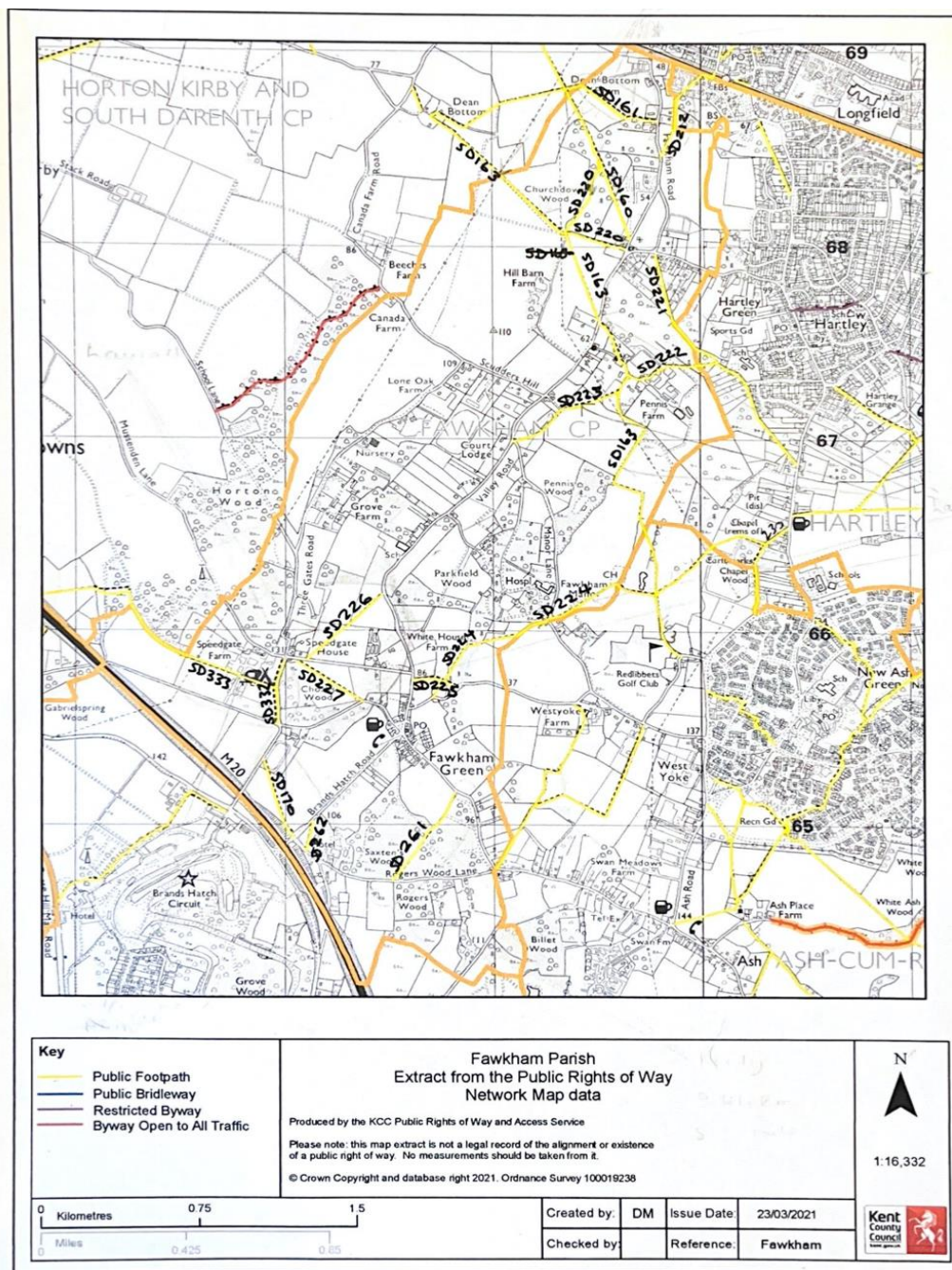
A network of footpaths extends across Fawkham Parish (see Informal Outdoor Recreation Evidence Report) and are shown on Map 10 below. Many of these Public Rights of Way (PRoW) have been in existence for centuries, such as the hollow way which leads up behind Pennis House and can be seen on the 1801 Mudge Map (SD223).

Most of the PRoW are paths across/ around fields or through woodland, but occasionally they have become narrow passageway between garden fences (e.g. path SD221 leading south-east from the western end of Castle Hill). Their use as footpaths can be limited by difficult-to-cross stiles and poor signposting. Kent County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2018 – 2028 aims to provide a high quality, well maintained public rights of way network, that will:

- support the Kent economy
- encourage active lifestyles and sustainable travel choices
- contribute to making Kent a great place to live, work and visit.

Saxten's Wood, Cage's Wood and Wilmay Copse are owned and managed by the Woodland Trust, and are access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

In terms of outdoor leisure activities, over two thirds of respondents view wildlife daily and almost 50% walk daily in the countryside (Countryside Survey, 2021).



Map 10: Public Rights of Way

Policy FNP14 – Protection of existing Public Rights of Way and historic routeways

The alignment and character of existing public rights of way and historic routeways, as shown on Map 10, will be protected and enhanced.

Monitoring Indicators

Public Rights of Way at the start of the Plan period.

Targets

No net loss of length or character of Public Rights of Way.

Local Infrastructure

Objective

- To ensure sufficient infrastructure is provided in a timely manner, appropriate to the scale of new development.

Policy

Fawkham Parish has only two of the eight key services and facilities identified as key to settlement sustainability by Sevenoaks District Council in the Settlement Hierarchy, 2022: a primary school and village hall (see Community Facilities Evidence Report).

The capacity of the Primary School is 105 pupils. The school is full in all but two year groups, with around 30% of pupils living in Fawkham Parish and others travelling by car from nearby Parishes (including New Ash Green and Longfield). The school considers the size of the playgrounds is insufficient, especially before school as it is used as a car park by parents dropping children at school. Neither Kent County Council (as Education Authority) nor the school has plans or proposals to address this. More generally, there are no plans to expand the school. The site size and accessibility make it unlikely that the Education Authority would look to expand the school in preference to other schools nearby which have sites that could better accommodate any expansion requirements.

The village hall is used every week day with a wide range of activities. It was extensively refurbished in 2020. The car park generally provides sufficient parking for hall. The hall is not used to full capacity and there are no plans to expand it in size. The Parish Council will explore the need for further enhancement of the hall's facilities (see Project FP12 in Appendix 3).

There is no doctor's surgery, convenience store, post office, secondary school or recreation ground/ children's play area within the Parish. Almost all are over 2.5km away and beyond walking distance from the main clusters of houses. The facilities are accessed via narrow rural lanes without footpaths and there are no public transport services in the Parish.

The local highway network is constrained (see Transport Evidence Report). The main route through Fawkham (the C269 - Valley Road/Fawkham Road/Brands Hatch Road) runs north-south along the valley floor for some 5 km (3.2 miles). The lane has no central road markings for most of its length, no verge and no footpath, with the exception of a 0.5 mile section along one side leading from Michaels Lane to the Primary School. There are many sections of this lane which are less than 5.5m wide (the minimum width for two cars passing safely at the 30mph and 40mph restrictions applying to much of this lane). During heavy or persistent rain, the lane quickly becomes flooded, in some places across its full width. The majority of the remaining lanes in the Parish are winding narrow routes with limited passing places.

In summary, local infrastructure provision constrains any substantial development within the Parish.

The NPPF states that plans should set out the contributions expected from development towards local infrastructure (Para.34). Sevenoaks District Council collects a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from most development to secure funding for infrastructure which supports that development. Funding should normally be spent on infrastructure needs in the locality of the scheme but should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies unless the new development makes the deficiency more severe. When a development takes place, the Parish Council will receive 25% of the CIL from that development.

During the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan a number of opportunities emerged for the positive enhancement of the Parish and a number of projects are included in Appendix 3 which reflect these. The projects may be facilitated by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) held by Fawkham Parish Council and/or Sevenoaks District Council, any section 106 contributions, and other grants, donations or funds made via Kent County Council, Sevenoaks District Council or direct to Fawkham Parish Council.

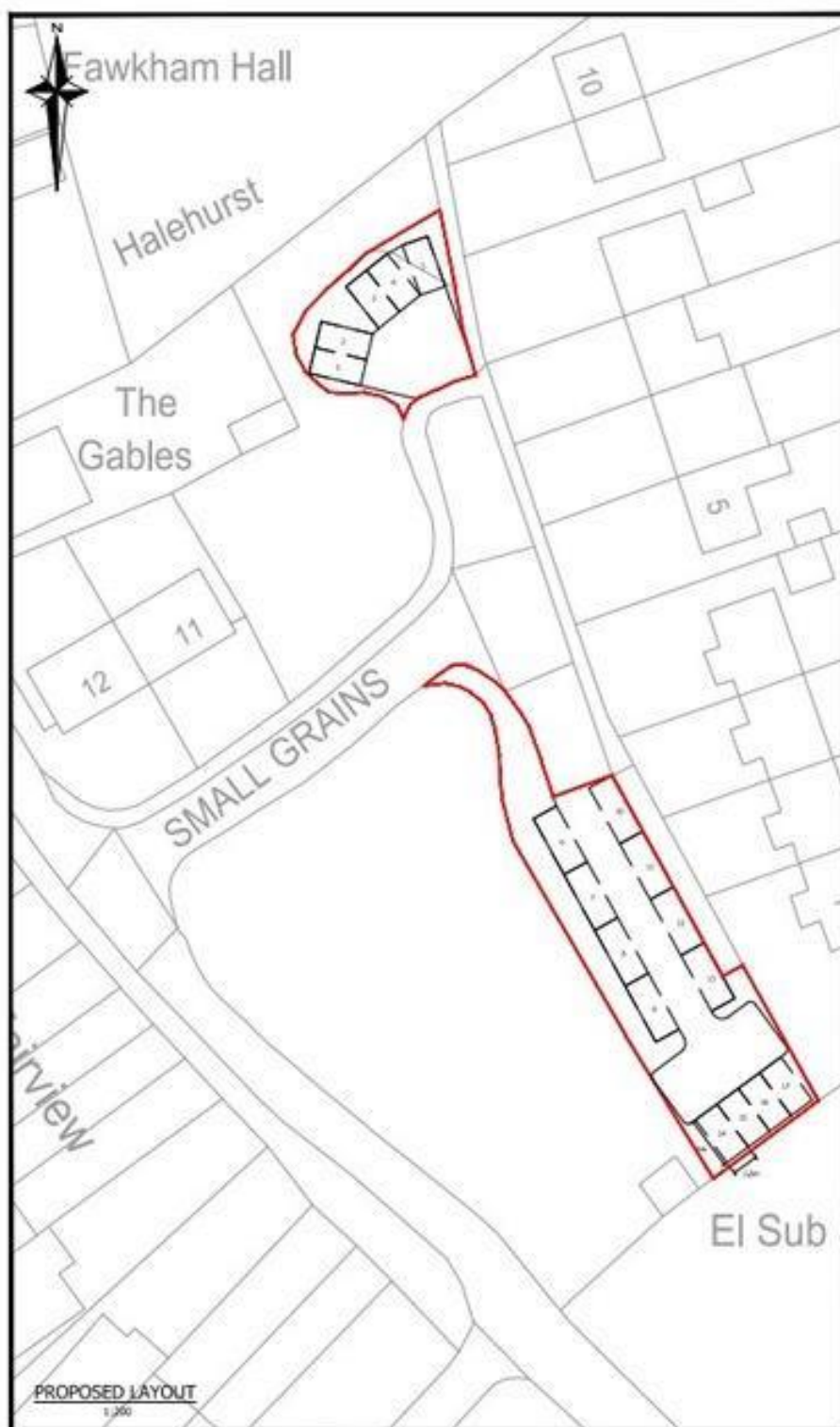
Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan strategy is for limited development within the Parish during the Plan period, all development puts additional pressure on existing infrastructure and, where justified, CIL funding will be directed towards eligible projects.

Policy FNP15 - Securing Infrastructure

A proposal for development will be expected to ensure provision of the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development.

Small Grains

The road called Small Grains does not extend to the front of all 10 houses, only to the front of numbers 4 to 7. An informal parking area has been created for numbers 8 -10, whereas numbers 1-3 are required to drive across part of the amenity green space to park. This has created deep ruts to the surface and an unsightly appearance to that part of the space. Residents have requested provision of a suitably surfaced, dedicated car parking area for numbers 1-3 Small Grains and the formalisation of the informal parking area serving numbers 8 - 10. The Neighbourhood Plan includes a proposal for the provision of parking areas for 17 parking spaces (and the necessary turning areas) to serve Small Grains residents and visitors as shown in Map 11 below and Appendix 4. The parking areas would be segregated from the amenity open space by wooden barriers which would protect the rest of the amenity green space. The areas required for car parking and turning are excluded from the area of amenity green space protected by Policy FNP13.



Map 11 – Small Grains Residents' Parking Area

Policy FNP16 – Provision of Small Grains Residents Parking

Land at Small Grains, as defined in Map 11, is allocated for the provision of residents' car parking.

Section 6: Monitoring and Review

Effective monitoring is an essential component in achieving sustainable development and sustainable communities. Monitoring provides crucial information to establish what is happening now and whether policies are working.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out the long-term spatial vision for Fawkham Parish with agreed objectives and policies to deliver the vision in the period up to 2040. Where relevant, targets are set in the Plan against which the delivery of the policy will be measured. Monitoring will evaluate the progress being made towards delivering the spatial vision and assess the extent to which the policies are being implemented.

Where monitoring shows that progress towards targets is unsatisfactory the Parish Council will review the situation and, where necessary, take remedial action.

The Sevenoaks local plan is under review and it is intended that the revised Local Plan will be adopted in 2025. It is hoped that liaison with the District Council will ensure that the emerging Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan are compatible.

If necessary the Neighbourhood Plan can be formally reviewed prior to 2040.

Appendix 1: Boundary Treatment Good Practice Guide

Introduction

The majority of the lanes within the Parish are ancient routeways shown on the First Ordnance Survey Field Drawing of the area dating from 1798. The rural character of these ancient lanes should be retained by seeking to avoid the further introduction of suburban style fencing, walls, gates, lights, signage and surfacing.

Although the Parish is not located within the AONB, the Kent Downs AONB design guidance is useful to determine the appropriateness of development in rural contexts. This design guidance generally considers chainlink, weldmesh and close boarded fences to be more urbanising and considers local styles of timber and iron fences and gates to be more appropriate. It also recommends dark colours and planting for screening¹.

Preferred features for boundary treatments to retain the rural character within Fawkham Parish are shown in the photographs below and include:

- Wooden fencing including post and rail and picket styles
- Wooden field style gates
- Low brick or local stone walls, eg flint
- Mixed, native hedging
- Open entrances
- Gravel, bound gravel
- No lighting or minimal low level, motion-sensitive, timed lighting



¹ Kent Downs AONB: Rural Streets and Lanes, A Design Handbook



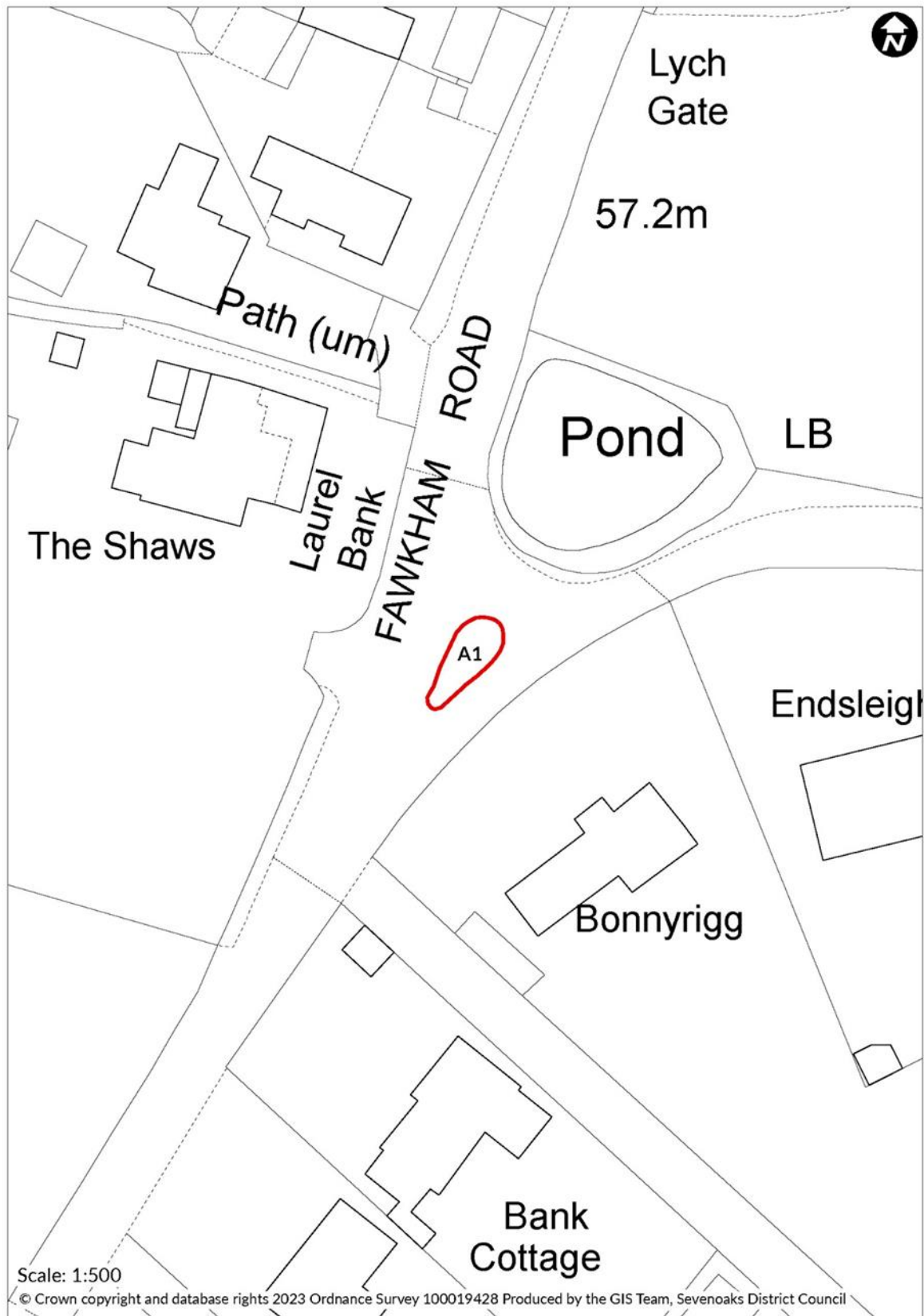


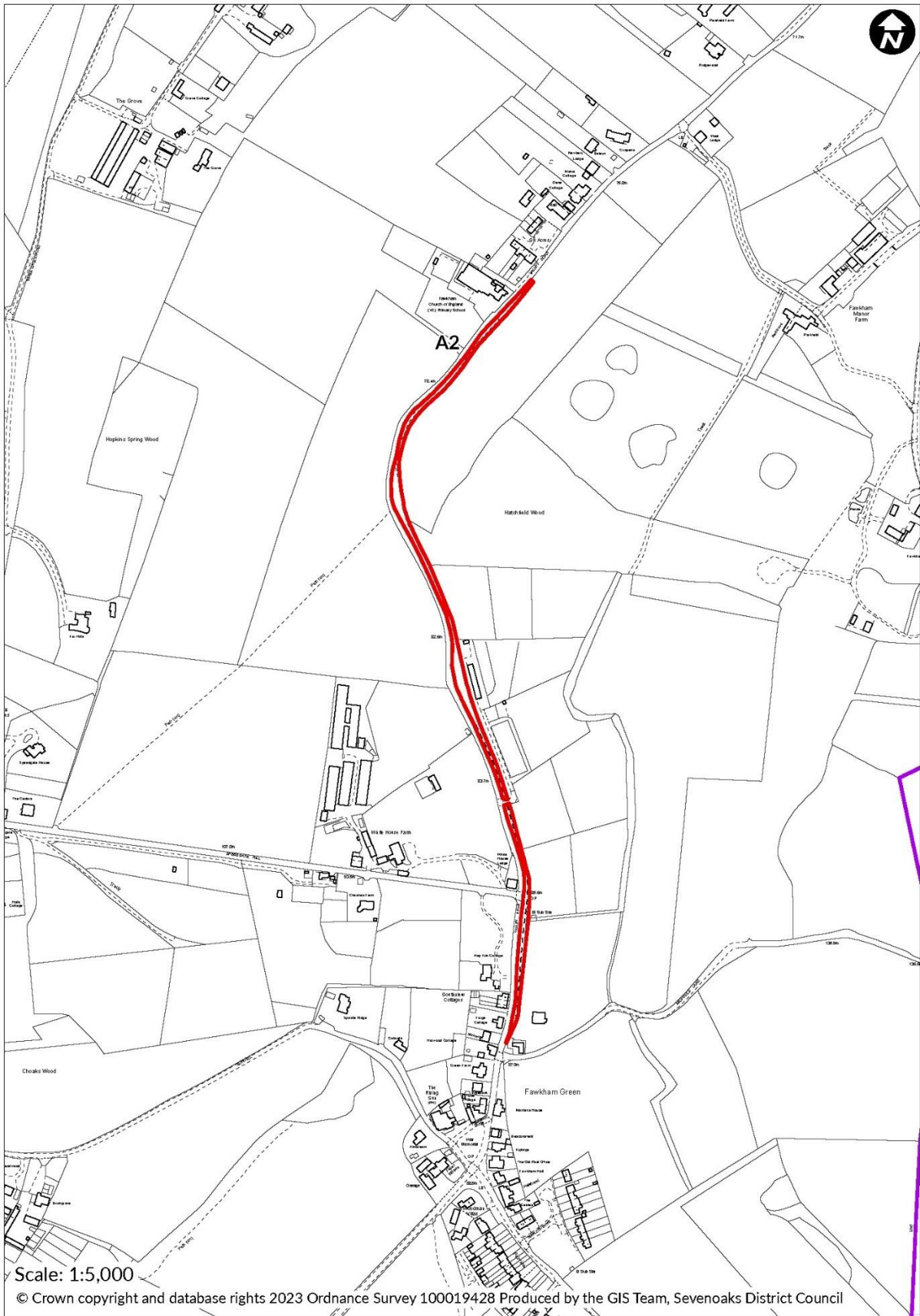
Features to be avoided on public-facing boundaries because of their suburbanising effect on the rural character of the lanes include:

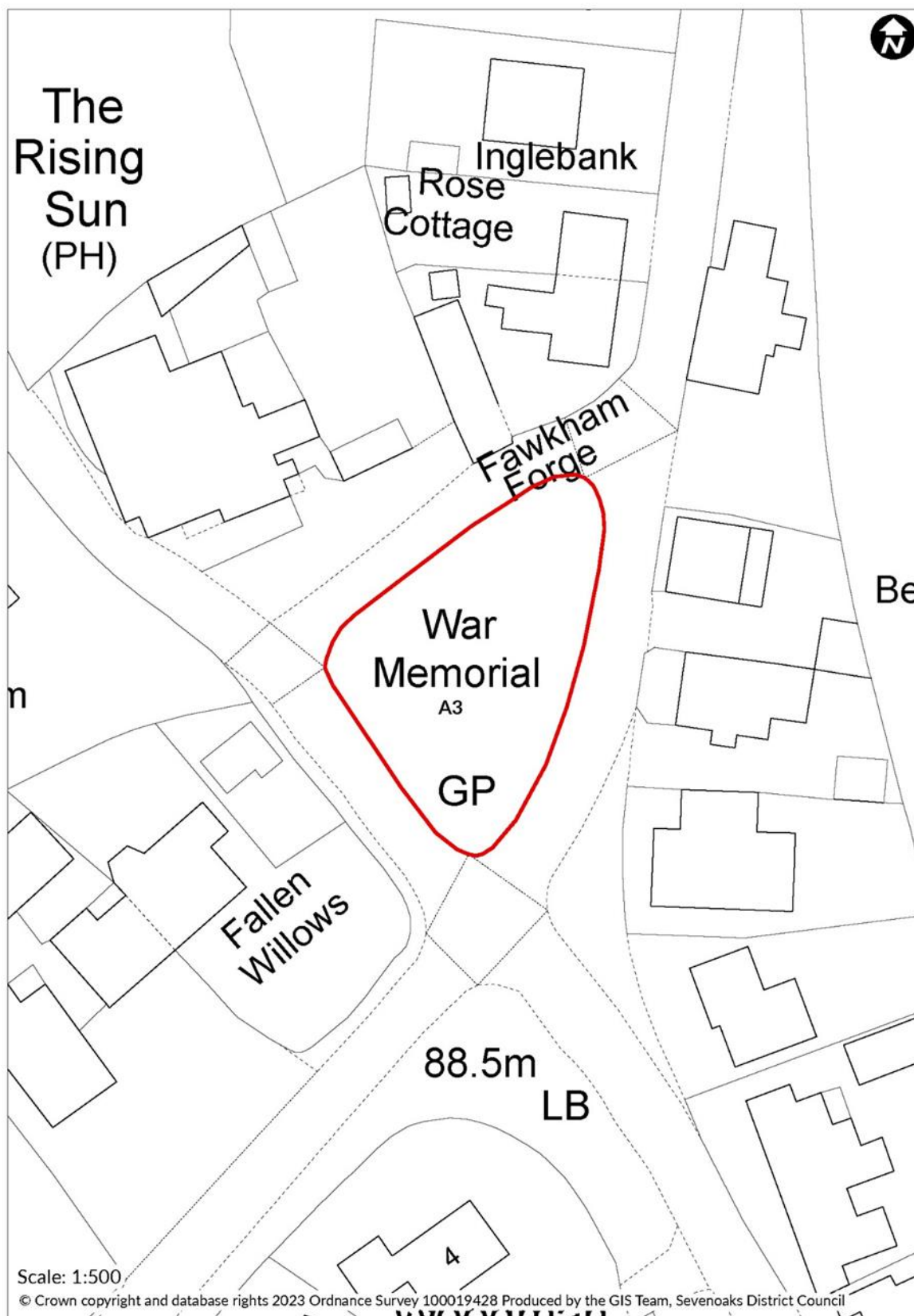
- Tall, close-boarded fencing, especially with cement posts and/or boards
- Tall, rendered or brick walls
- Tall metal gates with elaborate, decorative spikes or similar features
- Tall gate pillars, especially with decorative lighting which will spill from height
- Non motion-sensitive decorative lights or decorative lights which are not timed to switch off by midnight
- Large and prominent CCTV and accompanying signage
- Large areas of tarmac, concrete or block paving (other than black or grey)

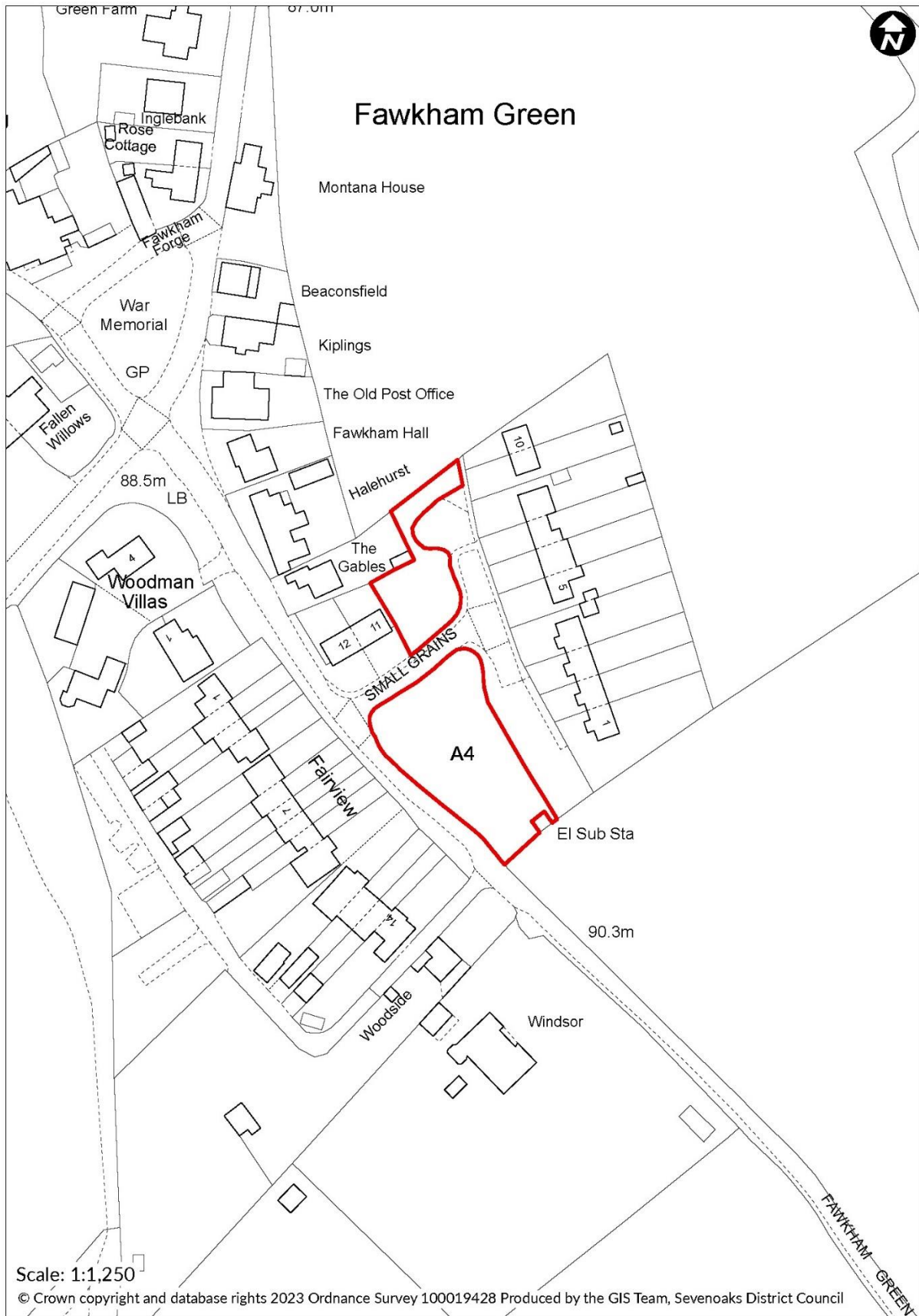


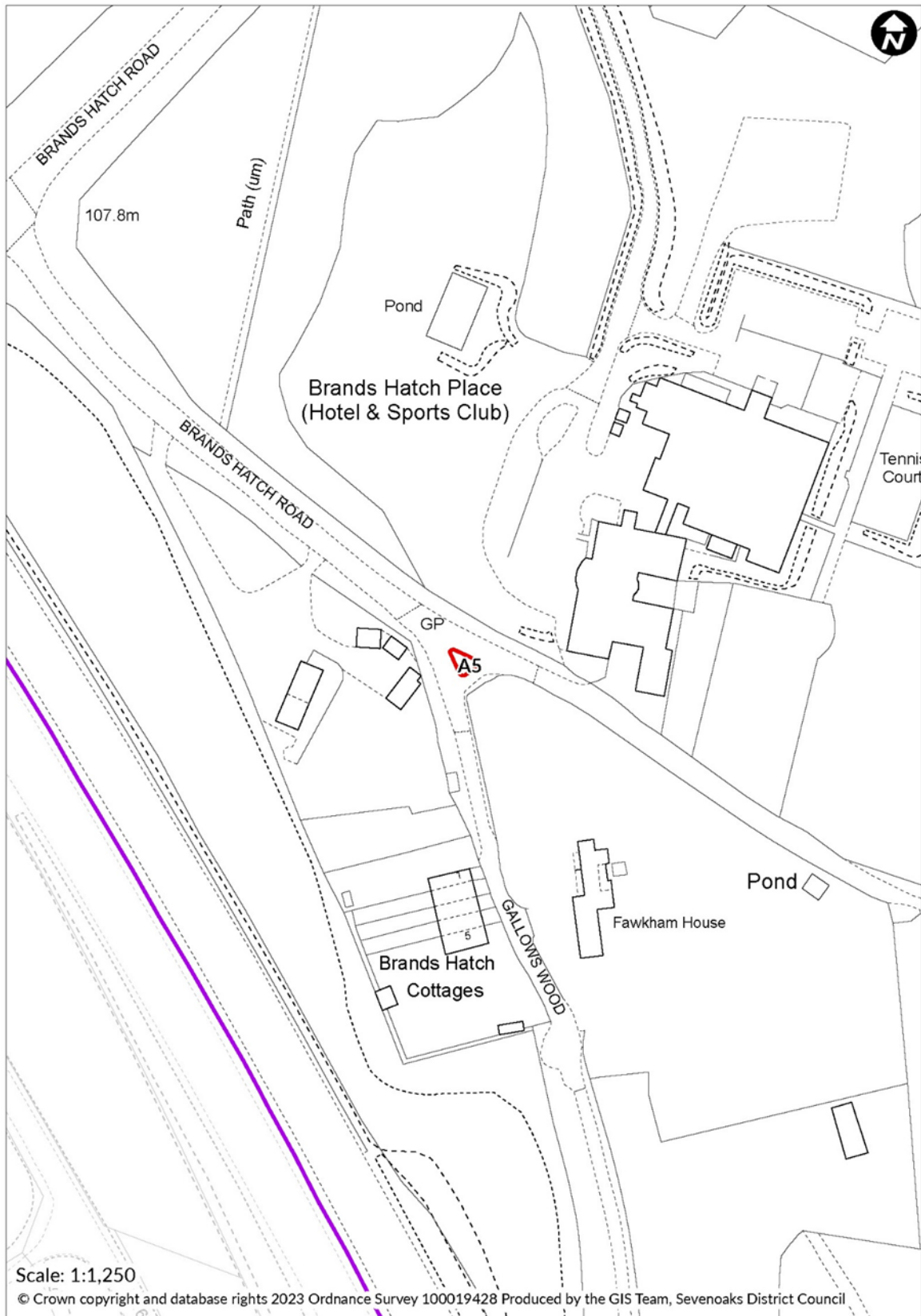
Appendix 2: Maps of Amenity Open Space and Churchyard

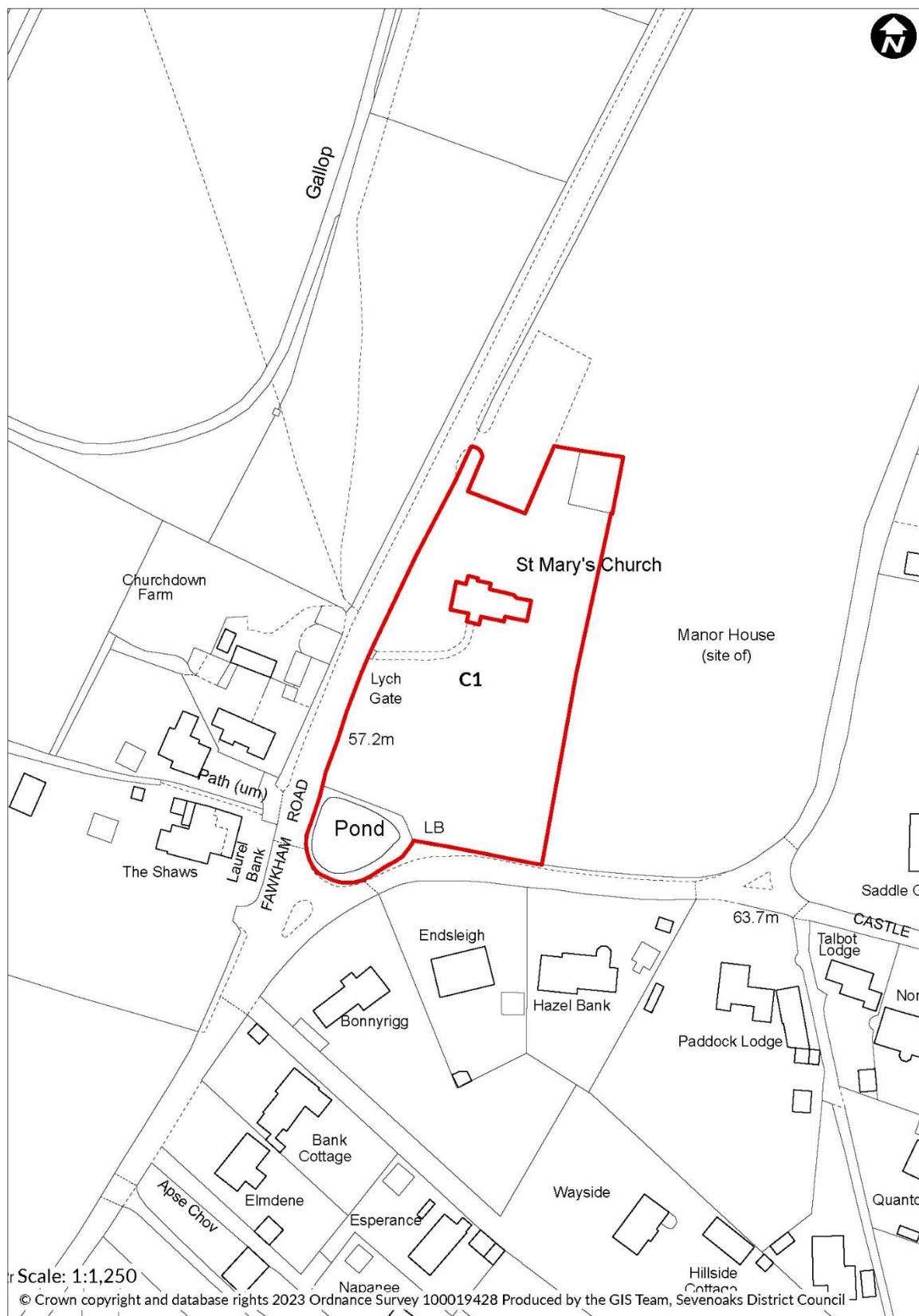












Appendix 3: Projects - Opportunities leading on from the Neighbourhood Plan

During the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan a number of opportunities emerged for the positive enhancement of the Parish. This section does not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan, but sets out ideas for enhancement projects. Many of these will require the proactive involvement of Fawkham Parish Council, Sevenoaks District Council and/or Kent County Council, as well as local volunteers and organisations. Several will require consultation with the community and collaboration with subject matter experts. The purpose of recording them within the Plan is to guide the Parish Council and other stakeholders on how to prioritise and allocate efforts and funding, and to encourage the community to pursue these enhancements.

The projects may be facilitated by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) held by FPC and/or SDC, Parish precept, any section 106 contributions, and other grants, donations or funds made via Kent County Council, Sevenoaks District Council or direct to Fawkham Parish Council.

Initial scoping for each project should be led by the Parish Council, who should then review and assess them to prioritise and determine which proposal(s) should be taken forward.

They are listed below in no particular order of priority.

	Opportunity	Further information	Potential Partners
FP1	Identify and designate wildlife corridors and stepping stones	The aim is to protect and enhance Fawkham's rich biodiversity assets and inform future planning policy by identifying and mapping wildlife corridor(s) that connect identified wildlife sites. Linkages to the creation of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Kent and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas will also be explored	Landowners, including The Woodland Trust Community Volunteers Kent County Council (Ecology team) Kent Wildlife Trust North West Kent Countryside Partnership Kent Nature Partnership CPRE Kent

FP2	Small Grains parking arrangements	Creation and/or improvement of parking for residents alongside protection of the remainder of the amenity space	Fawkham Parish Council Sevenoaks District Council Kent County Council (Highways) West Kent Housing Association
FP3	Small Grains amenity space	Improvements to management of and facilities at Small Grains amenity space	Sevenoaks District Council Fawkham Parish Council West Kent Housing Association
FP4	Interpretation boards within open spaces	Provision of boards describing the open space's biodiversity, heritage etc.	Landowners, including The Woodland Trust Fawkham Parish Council St. Mary's PCC
FP5	Tree Preservation Orders	Explore whether TPOs should be sought for certain hedgerow trees and trees	Community volunteers Landowners Sevenoaks District Council Fawkham Parish Council
FP6	Ancient and Veteran Trees	Identification and notification of these via the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory	Community volunteers Landowners The Woodland Trust
FP7	Calcareous grassland and traditional orchards	Identification and notification of further areas of these BAP Priority Habitats	Kent County Council (Ecology team) Kent Wildlife Trust Landowners
FP8	Important hedgerows	Recognition/designation of identified hedgerows as "important" under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 by SDC	Sevenoaks District Council Kent County Council (Ecology team) CPRE Kent

FP9	Defra's 25 year Environment Plan	Promotion of the four schemes to landowners/farmers: - Countryside Stewardship - Sustainable Farming Initiative - Local Nature Recovery - Landscape Recovery	CPRE Kent Kent County Council Landowners Fawkham Parish Council
FP10	Parish Signs	Provision of replacement Parish signs as an improvement to the open spaces on which they are located, making them more welcoming, as well as interpreting some of the history and heritage of the Parish through their design, and adding to "sense of place"	Fawkham Parish Council
FP11	Fawkham Primary School	Explore opportunities to enhance the school's facilities	Fawkham Primary Headteacher and Governors Kent County Council (Education) Fawkham Parish Council
FP12	Fawkham Village Hall	Explore the need for further enhancement of the hall's facilities	Fawkham Parish Council as sole trustee of Fawkham Village Hall Charity
FP13	Road safety	Replace the flashing school wig-wag signs	Kent County Council (Highways) Fawkham Primary Headteacher and Governors Fawkham Parish Council
FP14	Footway safety	Liaise with KCC to further improve pedestrian safety along the footway which leads to the school	Fawkham Parish Council Kent County Council (Highways)
FP15	Improvements to PRowS	Replacement of stiles with gates for improved access; ensure adequate signage is in place and maintained	Landowners Kent County Council Fawkham Parish Council
FP16	Litter	Explore the need for further litter picking/litter bins/dog waste bins	Fawkham Parish Council Sevenoaks District Council

FP17	Highways Improvements	Funding of improvements identified through the annual Highways Improvement Plan process	Fawkham Parish Council Kent County Council (Highways)
FP18	Creation of a Local List of Non-designated Heritage Assets	A project specification has been prepared to identify buildings/features which, while not on the statutory list of buildings that are of national significance, make a valuable contribution to the distinctiveness of the Parish	Property Owners Community Volunteers Sevenoaks District Council Conservation Officer
FP19	Walking group/village walks	To provide more opportunities for people to meet and explore the Parish/local area	Community volunteers Fawkham Parish Council
FP20	Heritage direction signs	Explore options for installing heritage style direction signs in selected locations	Fawkham Parish Council Kent County Council (Highways)
FP21	Road name signs	Explore options for funding replacement of damaged road name signs	Fawkham Parish Council Sevenoaks District Council
FP22	Night light pollution	Continue to encourage businesses and residents to reduce the level of light pollution at night	Fawkham Parish Council

Appendix 4: Small Grains Residents' Car Park – turning/ tracking plan

