



08

OUR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

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08

OUR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Introduction



8.1 Tonbridge and Malling has a rich and varied historic environment that gives the borough a strong sense of place and a distinctive character shaped by its heritage. Heritage supports social cohesion, wellbeing, sustainability, environmental stewardship and economic renewal, making it central to place-making and quality of life.

8.2 Heritage assets, whether designated or non-designated, are irreplaceable and make an important contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of residents and visitors, strengthening community identity, cultural understanding, civic pride and a shared sense of place. All heritage assets are also a material consideration in the planning process.

8.3 The NPPF advises that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed by both existing and future generations. Significance is defined as an asset's heritage interest, whether archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic, and may be derived from both the asset and its setting.

8.4 The council has prepared a [Heritage Strategy \(2024\)](#), which provides an evidence-based vision to inform and support the Local Plan and identifies the borough's heritage assets in detail. Designated heritage assets include Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, and Conservation Areas. The borough also contains a significant number of non-designated heritage assets.

8.5 National Planning Guidance identifies these as 'buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.' These include, but are not limited to, sites that have been identified in the [Kent Historic Environment Record](#), the TMBC Heritage Strategy, in a Neighbourhood Plan, or in a Conservation Area character appraisal. The importance of an asset to the community should be a consideration when identifying non-designated heritage assets.

8.6 The Borough's sense of place is informed by the rich built heritage, including in the High Weald and Kent National Landscape. The historic public realm across the High Weald and the Kent Downs plays an important role in defining the rural landscape character of the two National Landscapes. Historic features such as locally distinctive paving, railings, lamp-posts, milestones and historic fingerpost signs, telephone kiosks and letterboxes, contribute positively to the character of the rural public realm.

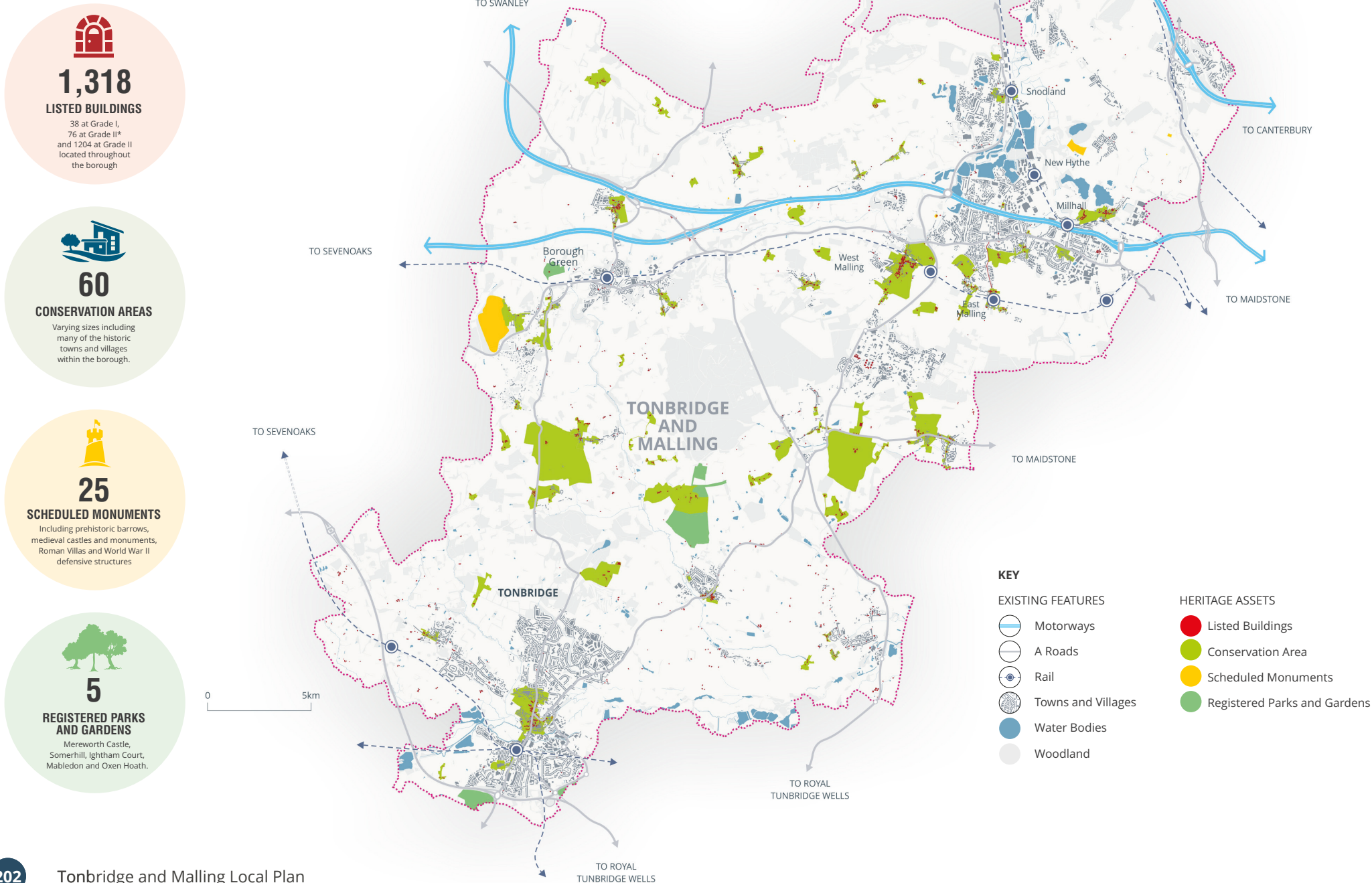
8.7 Development affecting a heritage asset is assessed against its impact on the asset's significance. In planning terms, the degree of harm to significance is more important than the scale of the development. Greater weight will be given to the conservation of more important heritage assets.

8.8 The NPPF defines the conservation of heritage assets as 'the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance'. Policy HE1 supports this approach and complements national policy by providing a positive, proactive and locally tailored framework for conserving and enjoying the borough's historic environment. Managing change and safeguarding the value of heritage assets is a core part of the council's planning function.

8.9 The borough's designated heritage assets are set out in Figure 8.1.



Figure 8.1: Heritage assets within the Borough



Policy HE1: The Historic Environment

Development proposals will be supported where they conserve and enhance the historic environment, based on the following approach:

- 1 Development will contribute towards the conservation and enjoyment of the borough's historic environment and will make a positive contribution to its character and distinctiveness, supporting community identity, cultural value, sense of place and the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.
- 2 All designated heritage assets and their settings will be given a high level of protection and should be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. Great weight should be given to an asset's conservation in accordance with the national planning policy. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Redevelopment of heritage assets that put them into viable use consistent with their conservation will be supported.
- 3 All non-designated heritage assets including locally listed heritage assets and their settings, as relevant, will also be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance and contribution to the historic environment including their contribution to local character, cultural significance, community identity and sense of place. Applications that result in the harm or loss of a non-designated heritage asset will be judged having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Proposals that have a positive effect on non-designated heritage assets should be approved.
- 4 Where heritage assets are identified to be at risk, from neglect, decay and other threats, a positive pro-active approach will be applied. Landowners shall be expected to engage with the local planning authority to bring forward proposals to preserve or enhance these assets, to facilitate their successful rehabilitation and seek their viable re-use consistent with their heritage value and special interest.
- 5 Proposals that would lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and where appropriate evidence / justification is provided, unless substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all the following apply:
 - a The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
 - b No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
 - c Conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - d The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
- 6 Development proposals affecting any heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) and /or their setting must demonstrate sufficient understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and / or its setting and for this information to be used at an early stage to inform development proposals in order to avoid or minimise harm, ensuring that heritage is at the heart of place-making, supporting locally distinctive places that foster community cohesion, cultural appreciation and wellbeing. Heritage statements must provide detail proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset.
- 7 Where a proposal would result in the partial or total loss of a heritage asset or its setting, the applicant will be required to secure a programme of recording and analysis of that asset and any archaeological excavation and ensure that the information is recorded to an appropriate standard and submitted to the Kent Historic Environment Record. The ability to record will not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.
- 8 Proposals should seek to retain and restore historic public realm features which cumulatively contribute to the townscape character of settlements and the landscape character of rural areas.

Strategic Policy



Policy Implementation

8.10 This policy refers to all heritage assets across the borough, including designated and non-designated assets. Proposed development affecting a heritage asset, including its setting, shall be assessed against the effect that such development will have on its significance.

8.11 Heritage Statements are required for all Listed Building Consent applications and planning applications which affect a heritage asset, providing detail proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset. The Heritage Statement must include a description of the significance of the heritage asset or assets. Heritage statements should follow best practice and Historic England's advice notes. Such assessments shall demonstrate the following:

- a** How the understanding of significance has informed the principles of the proposal and the potential impact of the proposal on the heritage asset and why the works proposed are desirable or necessary. As a minimum, the Historic Environment Record as well as the Tonbridge and Malling Heritage Strategy should be consulted and positively addressed within the heritage statement. It should reference the heritage themes of the strategy that apply and the heritage assets assessed using the appropriate expertise where necessary; and
- b** How it has considered and positively addressed the cumulative impact of incremental change from development on the significance of heritage assets.

8.12 Understanding the borough's heritage is an essential first step in ensuring development responds sympathetically to local character. Applicants should use resources such as the council's Heritage Strategy, Historic Environment Records and Heritage Impact Assessments to understand the significance of affected heritage assets. Proposals affecting historic farmsteads within the borough shall be informed by and draw upon the [Kent Farmsteads Guidance \(2014\)](#) or its equivalent replacement.

Listed Buildings



Introduction

8.13 The borough's historic environment includes over 1,300 designated Listed Buildings, reflecting its rich architectural and cultural heritage. The vast majority of these are Grade II listed, but the borough also hosts a small number of Grade II* and Grade I listed buildings. A Grade I listed building is a structure considered to be of exceptional national architectural or historic interest, and a Grade II* listed building is deemed to be of particularly special interest or national importance.

8.14 Such assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Policy HE2 sets out how statutory Listed Buildings within the borough will be managed and afforded such protection.

8.15 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for Listed Buildings. National Policy within the NPPF also seeks to protect designated assets such as listed buildings and requires any harm or loss of the significance of a listed building to require clear and convincing justification.

8.16 Development proposals can affect the significance of a listed building in several ways. Physical impacts may range from minor internal or external alterations and new buildings, to the complete loss of the asset. Other proposals may not directly alter the building but may affect its setting, and therefore its significance. Proposals therefore require careful consideration and management.

8.17 An inappropriate change of use of a listed building has the potential to result in long-lasting damage, not only physically, but also through a potential loss of a historical past use and its contribution to society through time. A change of use will only be permitted where the proposal is considered to protect the assets historic significance whilst contributing to enjoyment and improving public access (if appropriate).

8.18 Overall, development proposals must demonstrate that they have given special regard to preserving the asset or its setting. Listed buildings should be assessed holistically, recognising that interiors can be as significant as external appearance. The protection and enhancement of all aspects of significance should be considered, and great weight will be given to their preservation and, where appropriate, their restoration to optimal condition.

8.19 The setting of a listed building is normally the surroundings in which a heritage asset is situated. Its extent is not fixed and can alter over time as the environment evolves. The importance of setting lies in its contribution to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance. Failure to consider and subsequently preserve the setting may result in the council refusing planning and listed building consent.

8.20 It is important that any energy improvement proposals demonstrate a ‘whole building’ approach that is based on an understanding of the construction, history and evolution of the building to ensure a balance is achieved in protecting the special historic character and setting, whilst ensuring worthwhile energy savings. Historic England have produced advice on the ‘Whole Building Approach for Historic Buildings’ which relies on an understanding of a building in its context to find balanced solutions that save energy, whilst sustaining heritage significance and maintaining a comfortable indoor environment.

8.21 Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that historic/traditional buildings are generally very sustainable, having mostly been built of local, traditional, natural materials via local labour and therefore having an inherently low carbon footprint. These are also quite often located within very sustainable locations such as market towns and mixed-use settlements. The removal and replacement of traditional buildings and materials with modern buildings/ materials is considered likely to use more energy and carbon than retention and repair using traditional, local materials.

8.22 The policy for listed buildings and their preservation is set out in policy HE2.

Policy HE2: Listed Buildings

- 1** Development proposals affecting statutorily listed buildings shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the asset or its setting. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade I or II* listed building should be wholly exceptional, whilst loss or substantial harm to a grade II building should be exceptional having regard to the policy set out in HE1.
- 2** Whilst it is preferred that listed buildings retain their original intended use, proposals for alternative uses, including change of use applications, will be supported where they contribute positively to the buildings special architectural or historic interest or setting. The Local Planning Authority will support proposals that improve public access, provided these do not compromise the existing character or appearance of the heritage asset.
- 3** Proposals to improve energy efficiency or environmental sustainability will be supported where they preserve the significance of the listed building. Where a proposal would result in less than substantial harm to significance, the harm must be clearly justified and will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including energy efficiency and decarbonisation benefits, in accordance with national policy. Proposals that harm the architectural or structural integrity of a listed building will not be supported.

Policy Implementation

8.23 Policy HE2 refers to all designated Listed Buildings and sets out more detailed criteria for development proposals affecting Listed Buildings. It does not cover non-designated assets.

8.24 In accordance with policy HE1, all development proposals affecting a designated Listed Building must be supported by a Heritage Statement. Applications without an accompanying statement will not be validated. The Heritage Statement should identify the significance of the asset and set out the impact of the development. The applicant should consult the relevant Historic

Environment Record (HER). The level of detail required to support the application should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset and the impact of the development. In some cases, depending on the nature of the works, a structural report to demonstrate that the integrity of the building will not be undermined, covering both internal and external areas of the building, may be needed. This must be carried out by a suitably qualified structural/building engineer. The Heritage Statement should be prepared by a conservation professional with appropriate qualifications and experience.



8.25 There are many measures that can be applied to traditionally built historic buildings to improve energy performance whilst ensuring protection of heritage significance. Many do not require planning permission/listed building consent and would be permitted development, such as loft insulation or draft excluders. For proposals that require planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent, the council will take into consideration the nature, character and scale of the proposed measures and the subsequent public benefits gained, and weigh these against the scale of harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

Conservation Areas



Introduction

8.26 Conservation Areas are identified and designated by the local authority for their “special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance¹”. Designation provides recognition in the planning process of the special character of an area and ensures that preservation or enhancement of this character is a priority in decision making. Conservation Areas contribute significantly to local identity, sense of place, cultural value and community wellbeing by helping to maintain the distinctive character of settlements and neighbourhoods. They are a heritage asset and therefore considered to be an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

8.27 There are 60 Conservation Areas in the Borough, with the majority of these covering historic village cores, hamlets, parkland, and areas of historic townscape. Conservation Areas in the borough are of varying scales and sizes. Of those 60, 17 currently have [published appraisals](#) that detail the aspects of their character which make them significant. In addition, the council has recently progressed work on additional and updated Conservation Area Appraisals.

8.28 These appraisals provide an understanding of the special interest of a Conservation Area to ensure that development or changes are sensitive and appropriate to the character of the area. Conservation Area Character Appraisals are a material consideration when determining planning applications.

8.29 In the absence of Conservation Area Appraisals for other Conservation Areas, the council is progressing work to ensure that information is available to support the plan-making process. Conservation Area Statements have been completed as an interim measure to support plan-making and the development management function. These will provide important information that should be a material consideration in the decision-making process. The council is committed to progressing and reviewing Conservation Area Appraisals over the plan period.

8.30 Once an area is designated as a Conservation Area, additional planning controls are introduced by the council to preserve and enhance the identified special historic character and interest, for example, control over works to trees and control over demolition of unlisted buildings.

¹ [Section 69 of the Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) Act 1990.](#)

Policy HE3: Conservation Areas

8.31 One of the biggest threats to Conservation Areas is the gradual erosion of their special architectural or historic character through inappropriate development. This can also diminish local distinctiveness, community identity and the sense of place that Conservation Areas provide for residents and visitors. However, not all change within Conservation Areas is detrimental, and the right development of a high-quality design or removal of a visually harmful building can provide an opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

8.32 The setting of a Conservation Area can also have significance, as can views both into and out of the area. Where these are considered important, an analysis should form part of any Heritage Statement.

8.33 Policy HE3 sets out the council's approach to managing change within Conservation areas, which seeks to protect significant features, promote enhancement and ensure that new development is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 1** Development proposals within or affecting a Conservation Area will be supported where it has been demonstrated that the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting has been preserved or enhanced, taking into account cumulative impact, and recognising the contribution Conservation Areas make to local identity, cultural value, sense of place and community wellbeing..
- 2** All new development and alterations within or affecting Conservation Areas and their settings shall:
 - a** Be of an appropriate land use that respects the origins and development of the settlement, historic functioning, character and appearance of the area;
 - b** Be sensitively designed to respect the physical form, layout, scale, massing, architectural features, materials, height, building lines, roofscapes, relationships between buildings and the spaces and enclosures between them;
 - c** Preserve trees and landscaping, open spaces, historically significant boundaries, boundary treatments, including historic walls and railings, that positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Area;
 - d** Preserve traditional features such as shop fronts, signage, street furniture and lighting and surface treatment including the absence of kerbstones in some areas that positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Area;
 - e** Preserve important views and vistas into and out of the Conservation Area including views of surrounding landscapes; and
 - f** Have regard to key features and any recommendations set out in the applicable Conservation Area Appraisal or Conservation Area Statement.
- 3** Proposals involving demolition or substantial demolition within a conservation area will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that:

Policy HE3: Conservation Areas continued

- a The structure to be demolished makes no material contribution to the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area; or
 - b It has been demonstrated that the structure is beyond repair or incapable of an alternative suitable use; or
 - c The removal of the structure and its subsequent replacement would enhance the area; and, in each case
 - d Redevelopment of the site would make an equal or greater contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4 Proposals for energy efficiency and/or measures to mitigate climate change will be supported where they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting and are easily reversible.
- 5 Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans will be used to assess relevant applications.

Policy Implementation

8.34 The council will support proposals that demonstrate that they preserve or enhance the special character of a Conservation Area and its setting, including where relevant, views into and out of the area. Policy HE3 lists the planning considerations that are important in relation to Conservation Areas and development proposals are expected to have full regard to these. New development will be expected to respect, and where appropriate, positively contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

8.35 Planning applications which directly or indirectly affect the significance of a Conservation Area should be informed by, and respond to, the Conservation Area Appraisal or the Conservation Area Statement.

8.36 Development within Conservation Areas can result in positive, negative or neutral impacts. Proposals that include the restoration of original details, historic fabric or preservation of special features of interest that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area will be supported.

8.37 The council will look favourably upon applications that replace or renovate buildings that make a negative or neutral contribution to a Conservation Area, for example buildings identified as having such an effect within an adopted Conservation Area Appraisal. Proposals for new buildings and extensions within or affecting Conservation Areas, will be expected to achieve a high standard of design that positively responds to special architectural or historic interest.

8.38 For applications involving demolition within Conservation Areas, the council will assess the condition of the building or structure and the contribution it makes to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Where the council considers that the building or structure makes a positive contribution, the total or substantial demolition of the building or structure will be resisted.

8.39 A programme of reviewing the existing Conservation Area Appraisals and preparing new Conservation Area Appraisals for those areas without an appraisal in place is underway and will continue over the plan period.



Historic Parks and Gardens



Introduction

8.40 As a rural borough within the Garden of England, Tonbridge and Malling is fortunate to accommodate several designated (registered on Historic England's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England) and many non-designated Historic Parks and Gardens.

8.41 Historic Parks and Gardens are a precious part of the borough's historic environment, comprising gardens, grounds and open designed spaces. Quite often they are associated with historic houses such as Mereworth Castle and Oxen Hoath and frequently located within historic areas such as Conservation Areas.

8.42 These gardens often have traditional features and structures such as historic walls, sculptures, follies, landscaping and veteran trees. They are also a multi-faceted resource, being part of the borough's open space asset as well as providing benefits for biodiversity, tourism, recreation and education.

8.43 The borough currently has 5 registered historic parks and Gardens listed on the national register. These are Mereworth Castle, Oxen Hoath, Somerhill, Mabledon and Ightham Court. In addition to the national register, within the borough there are 45 Historic Parks and Gardens (non-designated) listed within the [Kent Gardens Compendium](#) which are also relevant and worthy of protection. The Kent Gardens Compendium is a comprehensive Register of Parks and Gardens of historic, horticultural, amenity or other value in the County of Kent, produced by KCC and the Kent Gardens Trust. As valuable heritage assets, the council must consider the impact that development proposals may have on their special character.

8.44 Policy HE4 seeks to ensure that development proposals affecting Historic Parks and Gardens do not adversely impact upon these irreplaceable historic assets and seeks to protect them for future generations to enjoy. The policy is relevant to both designated (registered) Historic Parks and Gardens and non-designated Parks and Gardens.

Policy HE4: Historic Parks and Gardens (Designated and Non-Designated)

- 1 Development proposals affecting Historic Parks and Gardens on the national register or of those with local significance will be supported where they maintain, conserve or enhance the character, appearance, historic interest and setting, significance, design and layout of the landscape and views into and from the historic park or garden.
- 2 Substantial harm to or loss of grade II registered parks and gardens should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of grade I and II* registered parks and gardens should be wholly exceptional.
HE1(5) will apply to designated Historic Parks and Gardens on the national register.
HE1(3)(b) will apply to non-designated Historic Parks and Gardens.

Policy Implementation

8.45 This policy refers to both designated (registered) Historic Parks and Gardens which are listed on the national register and non-designated Historic Parks and Gardens which are contained within the Kent Gardens Compendium. Parks and Gardens with local significance are listed in Annex 4.

8.46 Development proposals which are considered to affect these assets will only be supported where they maintain, conserve or enhance their historic interest.

8.47 For registered Historic Parks and Gardens of national importance, great weight will be given to their conservation. For non-designated Historic Parks and Gardens (that are not of national importance) a balanced judgement will be applied that has regard to the scale of the harm/loss posed by the development and the significance of the heritage asset.

8.48 One of the biggest threats posed to Historic Parks and Gardens is the pressure for new development within their setting and on views, which may have a detrimental impact on their significance. Development proposals affecting the setting and/or views into and out of Historic Parks and Gardens should have particular regard to detrimental effects, including the ability to access these views.

Archaeology

Introduction

8.49 Tonbridge and Malling's archaeological sites shape local identity, uncovering the borough's past and enriching its sense of place. Archaeology is an irreplaceable and fragile resource which is vulnerable to damage or degradation over time, requiring specialised management and recording. Archaeology can include both below ground as well as above ground assets. The Kent County Council Historic Environment Record is the definitive record of all known archaeology in the County.

8.50 Within the borough, archaeology is a significant and rich heritage asset that includes areas of both national and local significance ranging from Palaeolithic rock shelters at Oldbury Hill, to World War II remains at Kings Hill. Whilst there are 25 scheduled monuments identified throughout the borough, the majority of archaeological sites are not scheduled monuments and are recognised as locally important non-designated assets. There can also be sites where there are currently no records of archaeological value, but which can later be revealed before or during development works.

8.51 National Policy advises that 'there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point' (NPPF Annex 2 Glossary). Archaeology is therefore a material planning consideration with the key objective to conserve and enhance the historic significance of any development proposal.

8.52 Planning decisions will therefore take account of the significance of remains, including the wider advantages that conservation of the historic environment can deliver. Development proposals that affect heritage assets of archaeological significance should include a desk-based assessment and where appropriate, archaeological fieldwork. Should significant archaeological finds occur during development, the council will seek specialist advice and encourage appropriate action. In some instances, permitted schemes may need to be amended to avoid damage to archaeological remains.

8.53 Policy HE5 sets out detailed criteria for development proposals affecting all archaeological assets.

Policy HE5: Archaeology

- 1 The borough's archaeology and historic integrity of Scheduled Monuments and other important archaeological assets, as well as their settings, will be conserved and where possible enhanced.
- 2 Where a development may either directly or indirectly impact on a heritage asset of archaeological interest (above or below ground), it will only be permitted where the impact can be fully justified in relation to the asset's archaeological interest (significance) and its setting. This includes direct impacts on designated sites e.g. Scheduled Monuments, impacts on the setting of designated sites, and impacts on other sites of archaeological interest.
- 3 Development proposals on sites where there is, or potential for, an archaeological asset, shall include an appropriate desk-based assessment of the asset. Where the assessment reveals that important or potentially significant archaeological assets may exist, developers will be required to undertake field surveys and evaluations by an appropriately qualified person prior to the determination of the planning application. Such an evaluation shall determine:
 - a The character, significance and condition of any archaeological deposits or structures within the application site;
 - b The likely impact of the proposed development on the archaeology, its significance and setting; and
 - c Measures to mitigate the effect of the proposed development including a statement setting out the impact of the development.
- 4 All stages of archaeological fieldwork shall be subject to a Written Scheme of Investigation or specification approved by the Local Planning Authority. No development shall take place on the proposed development site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, is in receipt of a Written Scheme of Investigation or specification approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- 5 Where development proposals affect non-designated heritage assets within an archaeological setting, the council will expect the archaeological deposits to be preserved in-situ. If this cannot be achieved, clear and robust justification will be required and appropriate archaeological investigation, recording and mitigation measures will be secured.



Policy Implementation

8.54 This policy refers to all archaeological assets, both designated and non-designated, and seeks to conserve and where possible enhance all assets including their setting.

8.55 Where development proposals are likely to impact upon known assets, as a minimum the relevant Historic Environment Records (HER) should be consulted to gain a clear understanding of the asset's significance. Applicants shall undertake a heritage assessment as part of any application with a full Heritage Statement. It is recommended that pre-application advice is sought prior to the submission of an application at the earliest stages. Development which affects a scheduled monument, and its setting will require permission from the Secretary of State.

8.56 Applicants proposing development on sites where there is, or is the potential for archaeology to be found, will be required to undertake an appropriate desk-based assessment of the area. Where the assessment reveals that important or potentially significant archaeological assets may exist, field surveys and evaluations of the archaeological impact of any development should be undertaken by an appropriately qualified person. This should be done prior to the determination of the planning application. This fieldwork must be as per the Written Scheme of Investigation or specification approved by the council.

8.57 However, in some circumstances, the council may decide to impose a condition to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation. The scheme shall be in accordance with the professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CfIA) and approved by the local planning authority.

8.58 The conservation of an archaeological asset in its original location (preservation in situ) is the council's preferred approach where possible. This can often be achieved by avoiding sensitive areas. If this is not possible, a clear justification must be provided to the council and if approved, a programme of archaeological investigation, excavation, recording and analysis may be required. The scope of the work should be proportionate to the significance of the archaeological asset and the nature and extent of the proposed development. Such work shall be undertaken by an appropriately qualified archaeological contractor in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the Council. Where archaeological remains are affected, the programme of work may include desk-based assessment, field evaluation, excavation, post-excavation assessment, analysis, reporting, publication and the deposition of the site archive in an appropriate repository. Any archaeological investigation shall be appropriately recorded, and the resulting reports and archive made publicly accessible through an appropriate repository, such as a record office or accredited museum.

8.59 As well as physical impacts on archaeology, development proposals can also affect the setting of archaeological assets. This could be from the loss of important views, vantage points or the introduction of new and visually harmful development to the area. The setting forms part of the significance of the asset with any impact assessed as part of any planning application.



Enabling Development for Heritage Assets



Introduction

8.60 In some instances, development proposals are submitted which do not accord with national or local policy but may be regarded as acceptable to secure the long-term conservation of a heritage asset. Such development is known as ‘enabling development’.

8.61 This mechanism is required to secure the conservation of a small minority of heritage assets at risk. Such development is an exception to policy and can only be used to ensure that the heritage asset at risk can be preserved in the public’s interest for future generations to enjoy.

8.62 National Planning policy advises that Local Planning Authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

8.63 Policy HE6 seeks to support enabling development for heritage assets where it is justified, and it is the last option to secure a heritage asset’s preservation.

Policy HE6: Enabling Development for Heritage Assets

- 1** Applications for enabling development affecting a heritage asset, where no reasonable alternative exists and where the proposal may conflict with this Plan and/or national planning policy, will be supported where it is clearly demonstrated that the proposal meets the following criteria:
 - a** The proposal will not demonstrably harm the heritage values of the asset or its setting;
 - b** Alternative solutions were unsuccessful;
 - c** The proposed development is the minimum necessary to protect the significance of the heritage asset;
 - d** The proposal complies with the guidance set out in the Historic England (2020) GPA4: Enabling Development and Heritage Assets or its equivalent replacement;
 - e** A legal agreement to secure the restoration of the asset is provided; and
 - f** The proposal facilitates public appreciation of the saved heritage asset.

Policy Implementation

8.64 Enabling development should only ever be regarded as a last choice in conserving heritage assets once all other options have been considered.

8.65 The need for enabling development normally occurs because of the difference between the costs of renovating the asset in an appropriate manner and the end value. This is known as the 'conservation deficit' and the proposed development should be the absolute minimum required to cover this deficit.

8.66 Any such application should contain a full heritage assessment set out in a heritage statement as well as a fully costed conservation management plan that refers to the conservation deficit. As part of the supporting information, the applicant needs to be able to demonstrate that they have explored all alternative ways of securing the asset, including sources of public and private investment. The enabling development must follow the guidance set out in the [Historic England \(2020\) GPA4: Enabling Development and Heritage Assets](#) document or its equivalent replacement. A s106 agreement will be entered into to secure the long-term conservation benefits.