

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF – LAND WEST OF HALE LANE

Reference	Settlement	Address
ST4-24	Otford	Land west of Hale Lane, Otford



Introduction

The Council has prepared development briefs to set out high-level aspirations and design principles to guide future proposals, helping to ensure that development is both sensitively designed and appropriately ambitious for local communities. Development briefs help ensure that proposals for a site are well thought out, align with strategic planning goals, and respond to local needs and constraints. They are used to guide developers, inform planning applications, and support community engagement.

For the purposes of development briefs, allocated sites have been grouped into three categories according to scale. Smaller sites, comprising fewer than 50 dwellings, are supported by high-level guidance. Medium-sized sites, accommodating between 50 and 350 dwellings, are subject to more detailed guidance and may include a framework plan to illustrate key spatial principles. Larger sites, delivering more than 350 dwellings, are supported by more comprehensive guidance to reflect their scale and complexity, and may include additional spatial diagrams covering movement, nature and built form.

Policy Context

High-quality design is central to the delivery of the strategic objectives in this plan. All development is expected to prioritise design quality and adhere to the relevant Design Policies outlined in Chapter 5 of the Local Plan document. The development briefs provide additional and more specific policy and place-based guidance for allocated sites.

Development briefs have been prepared for sites which are allocated for development, as listed in Policy ST2 Urban Site Allocations – Housing and Mixed-use in Chapter 01 of the Local Plan, and they will be adopted as part of the Local Plan. Any future planning application relating to all or part of the site will be expected to demonstrate accordance with the development brief for that site. Where a proposal does not wholly comply with the development brief, the applicant must provide a clear and robust justification within the application, demonstrating how the alternative approach still achieves the overarching design and policy principles and provides significant benefits to the development.

The development brief should be read alongside the Local Plan and all relevant National and Local Plan policies applicable to the site and type of development.

Development Brief Guidance

The content and headings used throughout the development briefs are explained below.

Reference

This is the code used by the Council to identify the site.

Proposed Use

This outlines the use(s) proposed for the site, such as residential or commercial.

Proposed Net Density Range

This identifies the proposed net density range for the site, based on Policy H7 Housing Density and Intensification detailed within Chapter 2 of the Local Plan document. In accordance with this policy, the density ranges may differ if it has been considered that there could be a detrimental impact on local character or amenity. The site-specific net density will be determined as part of the development management process.

Proposed Residential Capacity

This is the proposed residential capacity range calculated using the net density range from Policy H7 and the developable area. The developable area is calculated using the formula in from evidence-base document Settlement Capacity Study Sevenoaks District Council Addendum May 2022. In some circumstances this may take into account site-specific constraints, for example ancient woodland, flood zones and proximity to designated heritage assets. The site-specific developable area will be established as part of the development management process.

Delivery Timeframe

This outlines the proposed timescales for when development on the site will be delivered, as defined by the Housing Trajectory for the Plan period.

Policy Priorities

All sites are expected to be fully policy compliant; however, this section outlines the key policies for the specific development and delivery of this site. All the policies noted can be found within the Local Plan.

Infrastructure Requirements

The infrastructure requirements set out in each development brief reflect the site-specific projects identified as necessary to support new development, either as required by policy or identified through engagement with the relevant infrastructure provider(s). Further detail on these projects is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which will be kept under regular review. Where a need for on-site infrastructure has been identified, the development briefs consider the most appropriate location, design and integration of that infrastructure within the site. In such cases, the development will be expected to deliver or contribute land towards the required provision, ensuring it is coordinated with the wider masterplanning and phasing of the site.

The development briefs focus on the key physical infrastructure that requires land to be safeguarded within each site, such as new schools, open space, children's play space and active travel routes. Infrastructure that is to be delivered off-site is not included within the

development briefs, as this will be secured through the mechanisms set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and through planning obligations. Infrastructure planning is a dynamic and iterative process, and engagement with infrastructure providers will continue throughout the lifetime of the Local Plan to ensure that requirements remain up to date, deliverable and aligned with the most up-to-date evidence.

Infrastructure requirements should be read alongside Chapter 9 of the Local Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which together provide a comprehensive overview of infrastructure priorities across the District and the mechanisms for their delivery.

SDC Vision

This is a high-level statement that outlines the long-term aspirations and guiding principles for how the Council wish the site to evolve to support the Local Plan. It sets the tone and direction for future development by describing the key design considerations and overarching goals including connectivity, uses, public realm, character and landscape. Proactive, meaningful and ongoing community engagement should help shape the detailed design vision for the development

Design Requirements

Some briefs include a set of site-specific design principles that development on the site should follow in order to align with National and Local design policy. The design requirements have been structured around the 10 characteristics of a well-designed place from [The National Design Guide \(2021\)](#). Other local guidance used to inform these design requirements include [Sevenoaks District Character Study](#), [Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment](#), [Edenbridge Character Area Assessment](#), and [Sevenoaks District Landscape Character Assessment](#).

Framework Plan

Some briefs include a site plan indicating spatial design guidance such as key routes, active frontages and open space. These diagrams translate elements of the design requirements into a clear visual format. The annotations are indicative and diagrammatic.

Housing Types and Mix

For all sites promoted for residential development, the Targeted Review of Local Housing Needs Jan 2025 should be used to guide the type and mix of housing delivered on the site.

Glossary

Active frontage: The front of buildings have doors and windows onto public space to generate activity and engagement between the building interior and the space outside, particularly entrances.

Natural surveillance: When buildings around a space are designed with features that are likely to lead to people overlooking the space. These may be windows, balconies, front gardens or entrances. This helps to prevent anti-social behaviour within those spaces.

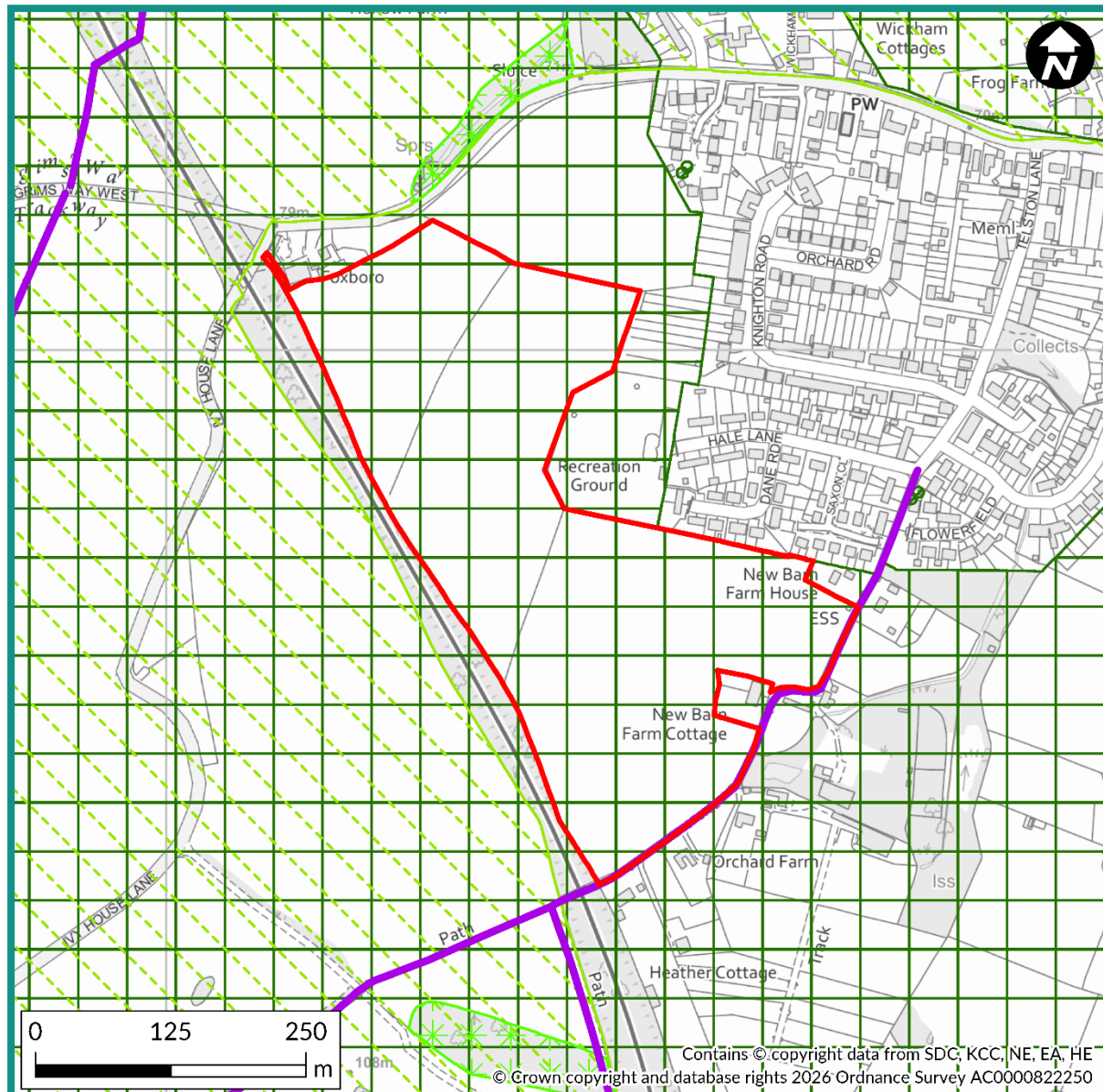
Active travel routes: Route designed specifically for walking, wheeling and cycling.

Landscape-led: An approach to planning and design that places the landscape at the heart of the development process. Rather than treating landscape as an afterthought or a decorative element, it is used as the primary framework for shaping places. The layout for a landscape-led scheme should be driven by existing landscape features such as topography, trees, water features etc.

Recontouring: The reshaping of existing ground levels to achieve design, landscape or heritage objectives.

SuDs (Sustainable Drainage Systems): Sustainable Drainage Systems are a set of water management practices designed to align modern drainage with natural water processes. They aim to manage surface water runoff in a way that mimics natural drainage, reduces flood risk, improves water quality, and enhances biodiversity and amenity.

LAND WEST OF HALE LANE



Legend:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Site Boundary | Tree Preservation Order |
| Listed Building | Flood Zone 2 |
| Conservation Area | Flood Zone 3 |
| Locally Listed Asset | Metropolitan Green Belt |
| Ancient Woodland | Public Right Of Way |
| National Landscape (Formerly AONB) | |

Site Overview

Reference	ST4-24
Address	Land west of Hale Lane, Otford
Site Description	This is a greenfield site adjacent to the urban confines of Otford. The site comprises a parcel of land to the west of Otford, containing two large agricultural fields, separated by a hedgerow. The site is bound by residential development and a recreation ground to the east, Telston Lane and open countryside to the south, kennels and agricultural land to the north and the railway line to the west.
Site Area	13.34 ha
Proposed Use	Residential
Proposed Net Density Range	40 – 60 dph
Proposed Residential Capacity	162 – 243 Units
Delivery Timeframe	6 – 10 Years
Policy Priorities	• Affordable housing (H2) – provision of grey belt policy compliant affordable housing in sustainable location • Infrastructure (IN1) – provision of improvements to local infrastructure in accordance with grey belt policy • Open Space provision (OS1) – new or improved open space in accordance with grey belt policy • Sustainable Movement (T2) – prioritising public transport and active travel, and ensuring good site access • Landscape, including National Landscapes (NE1) and ecology (BW1) - medium landscape sensitivity and adjacent to National Landscape. • Wildlife and Nature (BW1) and Biodiversity in New Development (BW3) - near to Sevenoaks Gravel Pits SSSI, proposals must demonstrate how they align with the LNRS • Environmental Nuisance and Pollution (HW3) in relation to adjacent railway • Community Engagement (DE1)
Site Specific Infrastructure Requirements	• Open space provision in accordance with Policy OS1 • Children and young people's play space provision in accordance with Policy OS2

SDC Vision

This development will enhance the setting of the Kent Downs National Landscape through high-quality, contextual landscape and architectural design that respects and elevates its natural beauty. It will deliver improved walking and cycling routes that connect new and existing residents, encouraging active travel and stronger community links. Views from the North Downs Way towards the National Landscape and open countryside will be celebrated and used to shape proposals, ensuring a high-quality layout that places green infrastructure at its heart.

Opportunities should be taken to strengthen the use of the existing community facilities at Hale Lane Recreation Ground, through the provision of a generous new community space along the sites adjoining boundary. This will become the focal point of the development, weaving nature-rich public realm within its centre to support inclusive access and community wellbeing.

Community Engagement

The applicant will be expected to undertake proactive, meaningful and ongoing engagement with the local community. They will demonstrate that they have secured the views of the local community and that they have been incorporated into the scheme.

Design Requirements

Context	
Landscape Character	• The site lies within the Hextable Settled Farmland landscape character area as defined within the Sevenoaks District Landscape Character Assessment 2017. The development will be guided by the valued and sensitive characteristics described within the report in order to generate a development which enhances the landscape. • The site falls within the setting of the Kent Downs National Landscape and therefore development should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas. The Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan will be utilised to inform how the development can positively contribute to the setting of this designated landscape.
Heritage	• The site is within the wider rural setting of Danes Hollow Farmstead and oast, which is a non-designated heritage asset. Due to the undulating topography, there is intervisibility between the north part of the site and the farmstead and oast. The development will be informed by the surrounding heritage and will provide a sympathetic setting for the non-designated heritage asset.
Archaeology	• Archaeological potential: Pre-determination assessment will be required to understand the archaeological significance, in accordance with policy HEN3, and to inform the master planning of the site. Early engagement with Kent County Council Archaeology is recommended.
Other	• Engagement with the Town Parish is required at an early stage to determine the use of any land put forward for community use and how the development will positively respond to this.
Identity	

Local Character	- To provide a positive response to the National Landscape, development will be limited to the south-eastern portion of the site and will ensure significant set-backs from the western and southern boundaries. - The immediate built context lies to the north east of the site and is characterised by low-rise housing of varying typologies. There are a small number of larger, more isolated properties located along Telston Lane, which sit within larger plots and follow a much looser grain. The site presents an opportunity to improve the existing relationship between the Kent Downs National Landscape and the settlement edge of Otford, creating an attractive and well-defined settlement edge.
Public Spaces	
Open Space	- The northern portion of the site will be retained as high quality, publicly accessible open space, ensuring a significant landscape buffer between development proposals and the KDNL. The character will be informed by that of the National Landscape and Landscape Character Area Appraisal. - Meaningful green corridors will be retained in order to preserve views from the North Downs Way through the site, maintaining a connection to the National Landscape and open countryside to the west and north of the site. - Community use and open space will be provided adjacent to Hale Lane Recreation Ground, enhance existing community assets. The use of this space is to be determined through meaningful community engagement and discussions with local stakeholders. - In accordance with Policy OS2, the scheme must provide a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP), a Local Area for Play (LAP) and informal playspace.
Active Frontage	All open spaces and streets will have active frontage along its edges, provided by entrances and windows overlooking the public space, creating a safe and attractive route through and around the development.
Built Form	
Building Line	Should be informal and varied along Telford Lane, with varying set-backs in response to the sensitive landscape setting and to preserve the existing character of North Downs Way.
Building Heights and Massing	Any development in the north-west portion of the site (towards Pilgrims Way West) will need to respond sympathetically to views from the nearby Danes Hollow Farmstead and oast.
Density	- Lower densities will be provided along the western and southern edges of development in response to the proximity to the National Landscape and Kent Downs Way. - Development will be limited to two storeys in order to protect the setting of the National Landscape.
Movement	
Connectivity	Active travel routes will be provided to Hale Lane Recreation Ground and onto Telston Lane.

Sustainable Travel	• The development will be designed to prioritise sustainable travel as per Policies T1 and T2, through clear, direct and safe walking and cycling routes through the site towards local public transport. • The design will incorporate appropriate site connectivity and access to Sevenoaks LCWIP Route 1. • All new homes must provide (and demonstrate) easy and convenient cycle storage facilities to prioritise active travel, preferably at the front of properties. Cycle parking facilities are required at key public spaces.
Car Parking	• Car parking will be designed to be attractive, well landscaped and sensitively integrated into the built form so that it does not dominate the development or the street scene, particularly along key movement routes and surrounding open spaces. • Strips of landscaping which include trees will be incorporated into rows of continuous car parking. A maximum of 5 spaces in a row without landscaping.
Nature	
Trees and Hedgerows	• Led by an Arboricultural Survey, existing mature trees and landscape features found within the site will be retained and strengthened wherever possible, specifically mature tree-lined boundaries. • The historic field boundaries and landscape features (e.g. ponds, hedgerows, routes) so far identified in the site must be retained and integrated into the proposals.
Landscape Design	• The landscape design will capture the rural character of the site, taking cues from it's setting within the National Landscape • A comprehensive tree-planting strategy must achieve high canopy cover across the site. Planting must prioritise native and climate-resilient species along streets, within open spaces, and in SuDS landscapes. • Primary movement routes will be tree-lined, providing trees in soft verges. Introduced species will be climate-resilient, native and across all streets and spaces for shade, air quality and identity.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	• Drainage systems must be designed as positive landscape features and well-integrated into the public realm: swales, rain gardens, wetlands, and permeable paving integrated into streets, squares, and open spaces. SuDS elements should provide habitat, informal play, and educational opportunities where appropriate • The development will prioritise surface water drainage within the design of the development to ensure surface water flood risk is improved and not exacerbated.

Framework Plan

A site plan indicating spatial design guidance such as key routes, active frontages and open space. These diagrams translate elements of the design requirements into a clear visual format. The annotations are indicative and diagrammatic.

