

Policy HOU5 - Residential windfall development in the countryside Proposals for residential development adjoining or close to the existing built up confines of the following settlements will be acceptable: Ashford, Aldington, Appledore, Bethersden, Biddenden, Brabourne Lees/Smeeth, Challock, Charing, Chilham, Egerton, Great Chart, **Hamstreet**, High Halden, Hothfield, Kingsnorth\*, Mersham, Pluckley, Rolvenden, Shadoxhurst, Smarden, Tenterden (including St Michaels), Wittersham, Woodchurch and Wye.

\*Existing Kingsnorth village

Providing that each of the following criteria is met:

- a) The scale of development proposed is proportionate to the size of the settlement and the level, type and quality of day to day service provision currently available and commensurate with the ability of those services to absorb the level of development in combination with any planned allocations in this Local Plan and committed development
- b) The site is within easy walking distance of basic day to day services in the nearest settlement, and/or has access to sustainable methods of transport to access a range of services
- c) The development is able to be safely accessed from the local road network and the traffic generated can be accommodated on the local and wider road network without adversely affecting the character of the surrounding area
- d) The development is located where it is possible to maximise the use of public transport, cycling and walking to access services
- e) Conserve and enhance the natural environment and preserve or enhance any heritage assets in the locality
- f) The development (and any associated infrastructure) is of a high quality design and meets the following requirements:
  - i. it sits sympathetically within the wider landscape
  - ii. it preserves or enhances the setting of the nearest settlement
  - iii. it includes an appropriately sized and designed landscape buffer to the open countryside
  - iv. it is consistent with local character and built form, including scale, bulk and the materials used
  - v. it does not adversely impact on the neighbouring uses or a good standard of amenity for nearby residents
  - vi. it would conserve biodiversity interests on the site and / or adjoining area and not adversely affect the integrity of international and national protected sites in line with Policy ENV1.

Residential development elsewhere in the countryside will only be permitted if the proposal is for at least one of the following:

- a) a) Accommodation to cater for an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside
- b) Development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets
- c) The re-use of redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting
- d) A dwelling that is of exceptional quality or innovative design\* which should be truly outstanding and innovative, reflect the highest standards of architecture, significantly enhance its immediate

setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area; e) A replacement dwelling, in line with policy HOU7 of this Local Plan

Where a proposal is located within or in the setting of an AONB, it will also need to demonstrate that it is justifiable within the context of their national level of protection and conserves and enhances their natural beauty.

\*These proposals will be required to be referred to the Ashford Design Panel and applications will be expected to respond to the advice provided.