

**To Councillors:** J Aldridge (*Chairman*), A Baker, B Cummings, M Gemmell Smith, A Layland, M McArthur, S McGregor, V Parker, A Read (*Vice-Chairwoman*), M Stockdale, J Streets, B Todd.

Notice is hereby given of a **Planning and Transport Committee Meeting** to be held in Rickards Hall on 7 April 2025 at 7:30 pm. Members of the Committee are summoned to attend.

Members of the public are welcome to attend. If you wish to comment on an agenda item, it is helpful to contact the Town Clerk in advance of the Meeting.

Town Clerk  
2 April 2025

To assist in the speedy and efficient dispatch of business members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the Town Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

Council Meetings may be recorded. Any person intending to make recordings is advised to notify the Clerk in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made

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## Agenda

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# Meeting Papers & Report

## 1 **To Receive Apologies for Absence**

## 2 **Declaration of Interests or Predetermination, including interests not already registered**


Members of the District Council wish to state that although they will be considering planning applications at this meeting they would be reconsidering them at the district level, taking into account all relevant evidence and representations there.

## 3 **Public Questions and Statements**

Members of the public, and members with prejudicial interests on items on the Agenda, may make representations, answer, ask questions and give evidence at this meeting in respect of items on the Agenda. (This is the only opportunity for members of the public to make a contribution during the meeting.)

Both public and members are limited to three minutes per person to speak and the total time designated for public questions shall not exceed fifteen minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting.

## 4 **To Receive, Adopt and Sign the Minutes of The Planning Committee Meeting Held on 10th March 2025 p2023-089/01-3**

 Planning and Transport | 10 March 2025 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-089/1-3)

## 5 **Matters Arising Not Covered Elsewhere**

## 6 **Planning Applications to Be Considered**

### 6.1 **25/00262/FUL - Ambe House Commerce Way Edenbridge TN8 6ED**

Installation of purpose made steel stanchions and bird proof netting to pitched roofs at Ambe House.

 <https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SQWVFBKLYD00>

### 6.2 **25/00167/LBCALT - Eden Cottage Mill Hill Edenbridge TN8 5BU**


Internal and external alterations to the rear extension

 <https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SQECSCBKLPX00>

### 6.3 **25/00077/FUL - New Barns Farm Greybury Lane Marsh Green TN8 5QP**

Demolition of five agricultural barns. Conversion of Dutch barn to single dwelling.

Construction of four single dwellings (including amendment to previously granted new dwelling under 22/03413/FUL). Associated infrastructure and landscaping.

 <https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SQ1E4JBKLJX00>

### 6.4 **24/02765/OUT - Land North Of Town Station Cottages Forge Croft Edenbridge TN8 5LR**

Outline application for the erection of 450 dwellings, including affordable housing; land for at least a 4FE secondary school including playing fields; land for a new twin-hall venue for Edenbridge Scout Group; land for a new Youth Centre; land for the creation of a new car

park for Edenbridge Town Station and associated infrastructure improvements and provision of a private parking area for Station Cottages. Creation of access from Four Elms Road. Creation of secondary and emergency access, public open space, attenuation areas and landscaping. All matters reserved save for means of access.

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SLK85EBKJRE00>

## 7 **For Information**

### 7.1 **25/00658/WTPO - The Oaks 47 Highfields Road Edenbridge TN8 6JW**

1x Oak tree 10% small branch reduction.

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SSWH9FBK0ZE00>

### 7.2 **25/00684/DETAIL - Kybo Solar Farm Ltd Hilders Lane Edenbridge TN8 6LQ**

Details pursuant to Condition 9 (Biodiversity Method Statement) of 23/00505/FUL

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=STOSNLBKMSA00>

### 7.3 **25/00768/DETAIL - Kybo Solar Farm Ltd Hilders Lane Edenbridge TN8 6LQ**

Details pursuant to Condition 10 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) of 23/00505/FUL

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=STDN8BBK10P00>

### 7.4 **25/00769/DETAIL - Kybo Solar Farm Ltd Hilders Lane Edenbridge TN8 6LQ**

Details pursuant to Condition 11 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) of 23/00505/FUL

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=STDNIWBK10P00>

### 7.5 **25/00470/LDCPR - Christmas Place Shernden Lane Marsh Green Edenbridge TN8 5PR**

General Permitted Development for a proposed pool house.

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SRW1Y4BKMCM00>

### 7.6 **25/00791/DETAIL - Land North West Of Little Browns Railway Bridge Hilders Lane Edenbridge TN8 6LQ**

Detail pursuant to condition 4 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) of 23/00505/FUL

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=STFMBFBKMZW00>

### 7.7 **25/00703/DETAIL - Wheatsheaf Inn Marsh Green Road Marsh Green Edenbridge TN8 5QL**

Details pursuant to Condition 7 (Biodiversity) of 22/02378/FUL

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=ST2NPXBKMTF00>

### 7.8 **25/00770/NMA - Oast Farm Lydens Lane Hever TN8 7EP**

Non-material amendment to 24/00313/FUL

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=STDRGKBKMY800>

## 8 **SDC Planning Decisions**

### 8.1 **24/00313/FUL - Oast Farm Lydens Lane Hever TN8 7EP**

Demolition of all existing buildings and erection of 13x dwellings with associated parking, access and landscaping.

**Status: Granted**

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=S8HWZABKM3U00>

8.2 **24/03331/HOUSE - 48 Hever Road Edenbridge TN8 5DJ**

Demolition of existing outhouse to be replaced with a single-storey rear extension.

**Status: Granted**

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SOCA8YBKL1B00>

8.3 **24/02370/LBCALT - The King And Queen 81 High Street Edenbridge TN8 5AU**

Internal works to staircase, structural remedial works, external utility meter cupboards, fire protection to existing (north) party wall, double-glazing and secondary glazing to building, rear extension roof alterations, rooflights and reinstatement of lath and plaster wall and ceilings.

**Status: Granted**

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SJEFA6BKIRZ00>

8.4 **24/03199/FUL - Amberly Crouch House Road Edenbridge TN8 5EE**

Demolish existing house and build new house.

**Status: Granted**

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SNO7GBBKQT00>

8.5 **25/00280/REM - Hilders Farm Hilders Lane Edenbridge TN8 6LE**

Reserved matters (layout, scale, access, appearance and landscaping) for Plot 7 pursuant to condition 4 of 23/02261/HYB (Outline application phases 3b-3g for the erection of 6 self-build dwellings (plots 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) with all matters reserved.

**Status: Granted**

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SQYQ2YBKLZM00>

8.6 **24/03421/FUL - Medhurst Farmyard Pootings Road Crockham Hill TN8 6SF**

Adaptation and conversion of agricultural buildings into 7no. dwellings with associated parking, amenity space and landscaping.

**Status: Granted**

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SOSY60BKL7G00>

8.7 **25/00303/FUL - 5 & 7 Station Road Edenbridge TN8 5HP**

Change of use of existing ground floor from Class E to 2x flats, associated external alterations

**Status: Granted**

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SR64RSBKM1J00>

9 **Planning Applications Considered Outside of A Meeting**

9.1 **24/03431/CONVAR - Cherry Bryn Stick Hill Edenbridge TN8 5NJ**

Variation of condition 2 (Approved drawings), 3 (details of external materials) and 4 (details of the proposed foul water drainage systems) of 24/01741/FUL to Demolition of existing dwelling, garage and store and erection of a replacement dwelling with amendment to amend plans to provide a new basement with changes to fenestration. Change materials

condition and change the foul drainage condition.

**Recommendation:** *Members supported this application.*

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SOSZ3WBKL8000>

9.2

**25/00532/REM - Hilders Farm Hilders Lane Edenbridge TN8 6LE**

Reserved matters (Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout, Scale) for Plot 8 pursuant to condition 4 of 24/02782/CONVAR - Variation of condition 3 (Approved plans) and 6 (Design parameters/plot passports) of 23/02261/HYB with amendment to revised site layout plan, floor plans and elevations for Plots 1,2,4,5 and 11 and a revision to the Design and Access Statement to cover the proposed amendments and alter the plot passports.

**Recommendation:** *Members supported this application.*

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SS7695BKM900>

9.3

**24/01927/FUL - Wilding Farm Spode Lane Cowden TN8 7HG**

Change of use of land to residential. Formation of new pond and associated hard/soft landscaping.

**The application has now been amended, and a summary of the main changes is set out below;**

**Description changed to better reflect the development.**

**Recommendation:** *Members support this application.*

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SH4Y3SBKHSQ00>

9.4

**25/00589/CONVAR - Hilders Farm Hilders Lane Edenbridge TN8 6LE**

Variation of condition 22 of 24/02782/CONVAR (variation of condition 3 (Approved plans) and 6 (Design parameters/plot passports) of 23/02261/HYB with amendment to revised site layout plan, floor plans and elevations for Plots 1,2,4,5 and 11 and a revision to the Design and Access Statement to cover the proposed amendments and alter the plot passports.) with amendment to change the tenure of plots 8, 9 and 10 to market housing rather than self-build.

**Recommendation:** *Members supported this application but strictly on the following conditions:*

- *This new CONVAR application represents a major change to the approved development in 23/02261/HYB.*
- *Members were concerned that the "Self Build" approach originally approved resulted in limited developer contributions and reverting to a more conventional build model must not result in reduced contributions on the whole development project.*
- *The Viability Study is too heavily redacted to be meaningful.*

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SSK4TBBKMKW00>


10

**Update to the Settlement Hierarchy - Edenbridge Town Audit: To appoint a Councillor Working Group to look through and update the services and facilities in Edenbridge – deadline for response 30 April**

SDC has asked the Town Council to review the services and facilities in the town. This data is to assist in informing its annual retail monitoring work and so it is important that every service or facility is listed, irrespective of its location regarding existing settlements.

SDC has reviewed its settlement hierarchy methodology which is attached for information.

## **Members are asked to appoint a Councillor Working Group to look through and update the services and facilities in Edenbridge.**

 Annex 1: Settlement Hierarchy 2025 - Methodology (Final).pdf

### 11 **Consultations**

#### 11.1 **The Better Together Community Scheme**


As part of the Sevenoaks District Council's 'Better Together' community scheme, they launched a consultation on **Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March** that will run for 6 weeks, closing on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May.

The purpose of the consultation is to better understand our communities - looking at all aspects and asking for feedback, including how people feel about their community and how they could get involved to benefit their local area. They also hope to gain further understanding of potential barriers to volunteering and the need for training opportunities across the District.

As Sevenoaks District Council wish to gain insight from as many locations and demographics as possible, all completed surveys will enter a draw to win a £50 Amazon voucher.

Below is the link for the consultation that is now live:

Hard copies will also be available from the Council offices.


 <https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/bettertogether>

#### 11.2 **Sevenoaks District Council – Targeted Call for Sites (April 2025)**

Sevenoaks District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for the District and there will be a forthcoming Regulation 18 public consultation in the autumn.

SDC are updating their Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), to assess the availability, suitability and deliverability of land for housing, employment and other uses. They have re-opened a targeted '**call for sites**', which is now available through the link below:

Please note that if you have already submitted a site and have a reference number (with the prefix HO, EM, MX, GT) then you do not need to resubmit your site. These sites will be re-assessed taking into account the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024.

 <http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/callforsites>

### 12 **Other Planning Business**

### 13 **Press Release**

### 14 **Date of Next Meeting 28th April 2025**

Sevenoaks District Settlement Hierarchy 2025

## Methodology

- 1.1. This section sets out the methodology and justification for producing this update to the Settlement Hierarchy.
- 1.2. The Settlement Hierarchy uses the criteria set out in Table M1 below to determine the position and grouping of the settlements.

**Table M1 - Criteria Included in the Settlement Hierarchy**

Criteria Used	Justification
<b>The population of a settlement</b>	The population of a settlement serves as a good indicator of its size. This can then be used proportionally against the other criteria to determine the position of a settlement in the hierarchy
<b>Facilities and services to meet the daily needs of residents</b>	<p>These are services and facilities which support a community. These include, but are not limited to, shops and businesses, community facilities, such as village halls and places of worship, and sport and leisure facilities.</p> <p>The range of facilities and services available in each settlement gives an indication to how sustainable a settlement is. It also indicates whether a settlement is dependent on others to provide the facilities and services for its residents.</p>
<b>Access to education</b>	Access to education is considered as a key service for a settlement and the local community. Access to education encompasses all forms of education provision (i.e. early years education, primary, secondary, higher education). However, due to accessibility requirements, this excludes private education.
<b>Access to health services</b>	Access to health services is an important service within a community. Therefore, this is identified as a facility that contributes towards a settlement being sustainable.
<b>Connectivity and access to public transport</b>	It is important that a settlement is connected by public transport and allows greater choice and opportunities for residents to travel. Therefore, public transport is important when looking at the sustainability of a settlement.

Criteria Used	Justification
<b>A defined urban confines boundary (the reverse of the Green Belt boundary)</b>	Settlements with a defined urban confines boundary are more likely to be sustainable locations than those that are washed over by the Green Belt. Identifying opportunities for urban renewal and regeneration to contribute towards the sustainability of a settlement is increasingly likely with larger towns and villages which have a defined urban confines boundary.

## Settlement Scoring

### Population

- 1.3. To determine approximate population figures for the Settlement Hierarchy, we have followed a methodology aligned with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) approach, specifically incorporating the use of Population Weighted Centroids.

### Definitions

**Population Weighted Centroid** – This is a calculated point that represents the centre of population distribution within a geographical area. It takes into account the distribution of the population across the area. The Population Weighted Centroids have been used as at the 2022 mid-year population estimates.

**Output Area (OA)** – These are small, stable geographical units used for statistical purposes. They are designed to have a similar population size and are used to ensure consistency in data collection and analysis. The Output Areas have been used as at the 2022 mid-year population estimates.

**OS Built Up Areas Layer** – This is a geographical boundary that defines built-up areas, which are regions of significant human settlement and structure.

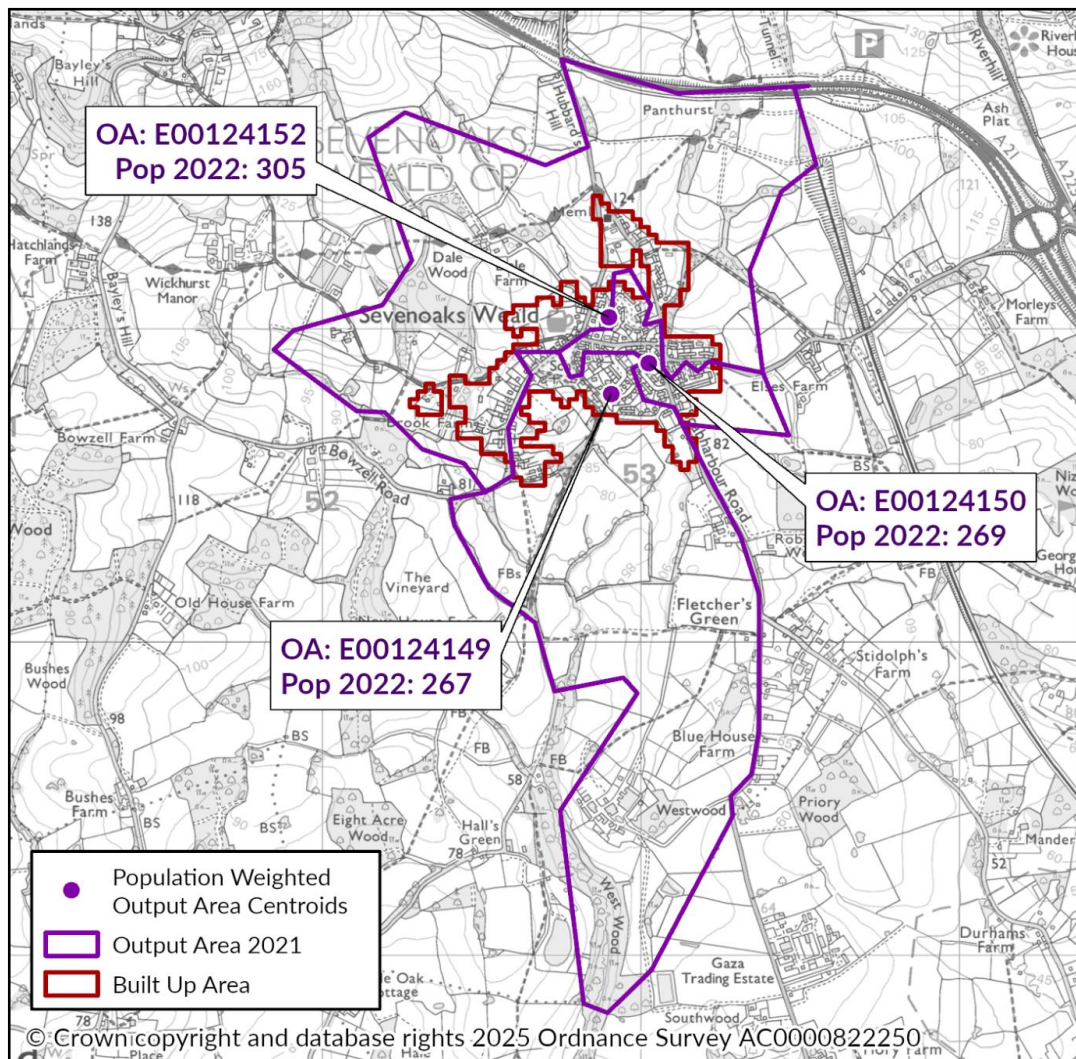
**OS Named Areas Layer** – In the absence of an OS Built Up Area boundary, this boundary is used to define the extent of a settlement based on recognised place names and boundaries.

### Methodology

- 1.4. Geographic Unit of Analysis – In most cases, OA boundaries are not the same as the settlement boundaries. Population calculations are based on Output Areas (SOAs), which represent the smallest level of geography at which data is recorded.
- 1.5. Incorporating Population Data:
  - Where an Output Area overlaps with the OS Built Up Areas Layer, and where its Population Weighted Centroid falls within this boundary, the population of that OA has been included in the Settlement Population.
  - In cases where a settlement does not have an OS Built Up Area boundary, we have instead used the OS Named Areas Layer to determine the population inclusion.

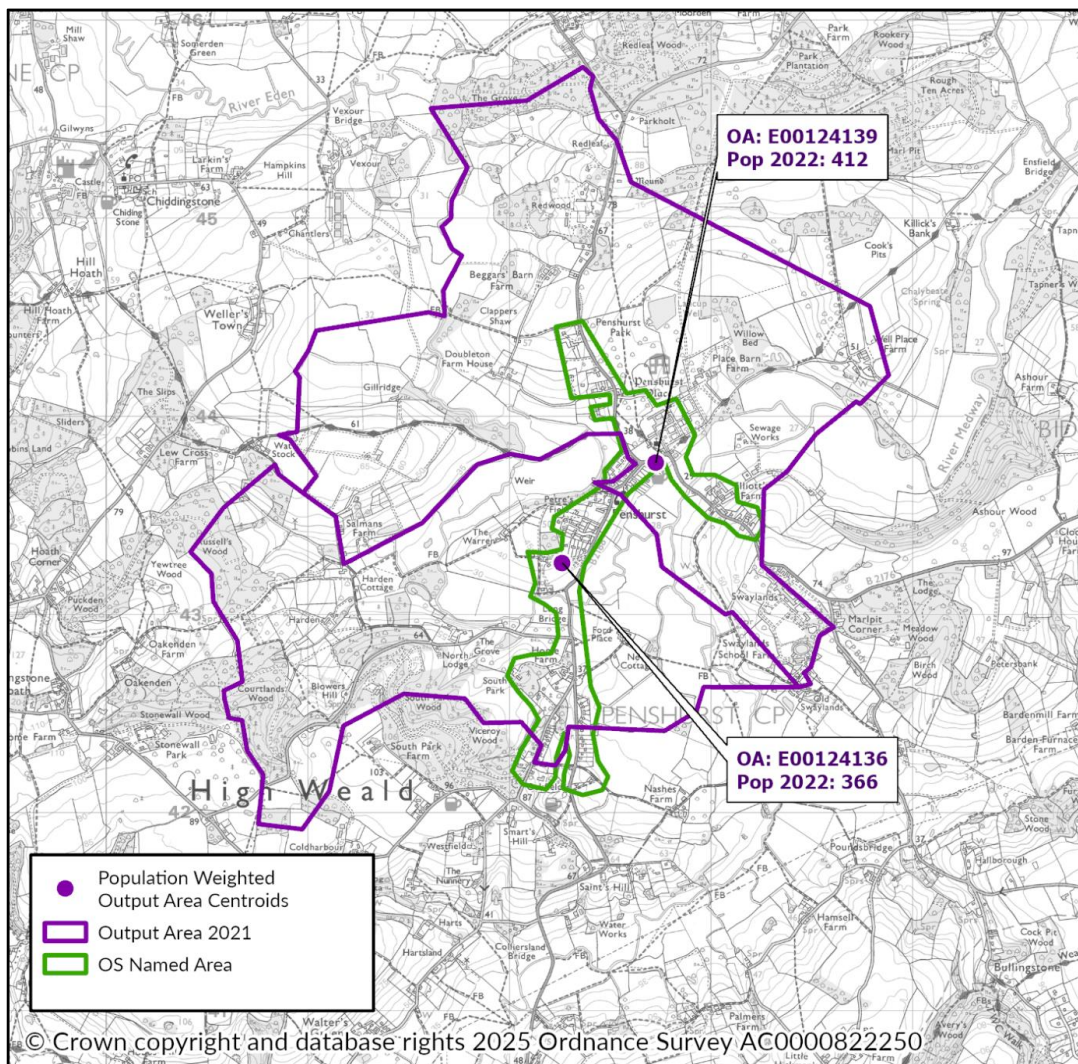
### Worked Example – Sevenoaks Weald

- 1.6. The map below shows the OS Built Up Area layer surrounding Sevenoaks Weald. The Output Areas which overlap with the Built Up Area are shown on the map. Within each OA, the Weighted Population Centroid has been shown on the map.
- 1.7. In the case of Sevenoaks Weald, all of the Weighted Population Centroids fall within the boundary of the Built Up Area, and therefore these will all be counted towards the population of the settlement. Had one of these Weighted Population Centroids fallen outside of the Built Up Area boundary, then it would have been discounted.



### Worked Example – Penshurst

- 1.8. The map below shows the OS Named Area layer surrounding Penshurst. The OS Named Area layer has been used for this settlement as there is no Built Up Area layer available in this location.
- 1.9. In the case of Penshurst, both of the Weighted Population Centroids fall within the boundary of the Named Area, and therefore these will both be counted towards the population of the settlement. Had one of these Weighted Populations Centroids fallen outside of the Named Area boundary, then it would have been discounted.



## Settlement Exceptions

**1.10.** In some limited circumstances, as set out below, both the OS Built Up Area and the OS Named Area layer have been inappropriate to use. Where this is the case, we have reverted to the urban confines boundaries where these are available. This is the case for:

- Hartley – Hartley and New Ash Green form one single Built Up Area, and therefore we have utilised the Urban Confines boundaries for these two settlements so as to calculate separate population estimates.
- Kemsing – Kemsing and Otford form one single Built Up Area, and therefore we have utilised the Urban Confines boundaries for these two settlements so as to calculate separate population estimates.
- New Ash Green - New Ash Green and Hartley form one single Built Up Area, and therefore we have utilised the Urban Confines boundaries for these two settlements so as to calculate separate population estimates.
- Otford – Otford and Kemsing form one single Built Up Area, and therefore we have utilised the Urban Confines boundaries for these two settlements so as to calculate separate population estimates.

**1.11.** Where an urban confines boundary is not available, and the OS Built Up Areas or Named Areas layers are not appropriate, we have not been able to calculate an approximate population. It is important to note that this circumstance only applies to the District’s smallest settlements and will not affect the outcome of the Settlement Hierarchy. This is the case for:

Austin Lodge	Park Gate
Barnfield Park	Petham
Birchfield	Phillippines Shaw
Cotman’s Ash	Powder Mills
Crowdleham	Riverhill
Darns Hill	Rock Hill
Emmetts	Salters Heath
Everlands	Seal Chart
Fawkham	Shorehill
Fort Halstead	Skeet Hill
Knotley Hall	Starhill
Marwood	Threshersfield
Morants Court	Wellars Town
Norman Street	Wested
Oveny Green and Combe Bank	Winkhurst Green

### Scoring

- 1.12.** One point has been awarded for every 1000<sup>th</sup> resident within each settlement. It is important to note that the populations have not been rounded up for the purposes of scoring. The population total for Sevenoaks Urban Area includes all settlements that lie within the defined urban confines boundary.
- 1.13.** Whilst many of the District's settlements have approximate populations far below 1,000, and therefore will not be scored according to population, this information is useful to calculate and publish and we have therefore endeavoured, where possible, to calculate approximate populations for all settlements in the District.

### Urban Confines Boundaries

- 1.14.** Settlements with a defined urban confines boundary are more likely to be sustainable locations than those which are washed over by the Green Belt. Identifying opportunities for urban renewal and regeneration, to contribute towards the sustainability of a settlement, is increasingly likely with larger towns and villages which have a defined urban confines boundary.
- 1.15.** The following settlements have a defined urban confines boundary and therefore will receive one point each:

**Table M2 – Settlements with defined urban confines boundaries:**

Sevenoaks Urban Area	Seal
Swanley	Halstead
Edenbridge (including Marlpit Hill)	Crockenhill
Westerham	Shoreham
New Ash Green	Farningham
Otford	Sevenoaks Weald
Hartley	Leigh
West Kingsdown	Sundridge
South Darenth	Horton Kirby
Kemsing	Knockholt (including Knockholt Pound)
Hextable	Badgers Mount
Eynsford	Pratts Bottom
Brasted	

- 1.16.** It is important to highlight that Sevenoaks Urban Area has been given one point between all settlements within the defined settlement boundary.

## Transport Links

**1.17.** The District has strong rail connections, given its proximity into London and other nearby key destinations such as Bromley, Tunbridge Wells and Hastings. There are four rail lines that run through the District:

- The London to Tonbridge mainline servicing Sevenoaks, Dunton Green and Knockholt;
- The Swanley to Maidstone East line servicing Eynsford, Kemsing, Otford, Shoreham and Swanley
- The Tonbridge to Redhill (via Edenbridge) line which services Leigh, Chiddingstone Causeway and Edenbridge; and
- The Uckfield to London line servicing Cowden, Hever and Edenbridge

**1.18.** Sevenoaks Urban Area has three stations available, which offer services to different destinations. Sevenoaks Station, Bat and Ball Station and Dunton Green all have services to London Terminals. Edenbridge has two stations, with Edenbridge Town having services to London Terminals, and Edenbridge Station also having access to Gatwick Airport via the Tonbridge to Redhill line. There is no direct service between Sevenoaks and Edenbridge.

**1.19.** It is important to highlight that in this update to the Settlement Hierarchy, the following changes have been made in relation to railway provision:

- Hildenborough Station has been included, as it is situated within cycling distance of Leigh. Due to the direct services to London, it is reasonable to assume that this station would be preferable for residents in nearby settlements.
- The additional scoring of train stations within cycling distance of a settlement.

**1.20.** It should be noted that Oxted Station, which lays just outside of the District boundary in Tandridge, plays a key role in servicing residents in Westerham. However, for consistency, Oxted Station has not been included in the scoring for Westerham, due to its distance, just over the 5km, from the settlement boundary of Westerham.

**1.21.** For the purposes of this scoring, peak and off-peak times have been informed by National Rail's definitions: follows:

- Peak times (Travelling to London): Weekday services that depart from the station between 4.30am and 9.30am
- Peak times (Travelling from London): Weekday services that depart from London Zones 1-9 between 4.00pm and 7.00pm
- Off-peak times: Services that depart after 9.30am

**1.22.** Also for the purposes of train station scoring, in considering walking and cycling distances between settlements and train stations, we have utilised the industry accepted standards published by Active Travel England, in relation to the '15-minute City' concept. This considers that:

- The average walking distance within 15 minutes is 1.2km; and
- The average cycling distance within 15 minutes is 5km.

**1.23.** We note that there is a selection of small settlements, which have no defined settlement boundary, which lie only within cycling distance of a train station, which will affect access to public transport options. However, it is considered that local residents remain likely to utilise the closest train station through different access options, such as driving and parking or lift-sharing, and it is therefore considered that a score should still be given for these smaller settlements. Therefore, where this criteria is met, the scores associated with the settlement will be capped at 2 points, to reflect the limited safe access to public transport options.

**1.24.** A scoring mechanism for footfall through train stations has also been added to this Settlement Hierarchy update, to reflect the difference in usage of stations across the District. Footfall estimates have been taken from the latest statistical release from the Office of Rail and Road, for the year April 2023 – March 2024.

**1.25.** The following stations are located outside of the District boundary, and have been included due to their proximity to settlements within the District and playing a key role in the sustainability of the settlement:

- Farningham Road Station
- Hildenborough Station
- Knockholt Station
- Longfield Station
- Ashurst Station

**1.26.** Table M3 overleaf below sets out the methodology for rail service scoring.

**Table M3 - Methodology for rail service scoring**

<b>Peak Scoring</b>	One service departing per hour: 1 point Two or more services departing per hour: 2 points
<b>Off-Peak Scoring</b>	One service departing per hour: 1 point Two or more services departing per hour: 2 points
<b>Number of Lines</b>	One point has been given for each additional line serving the station
<b>Fast Service to London</b>	One point has been given if the station has a fast service to London
<b>Footfall</b>	One point for train stations which had over 500,000 entries and exits in 2023/24.
<b>Within Walking Distance</b>	One point has been given where the station is within walking distance (up to 1.2km) from the settlement
<b>Within Cycling Distance</b>	One point has been given where the station is within cycling distance (between 1.2km and 5km) from the settlement.

## Facility Scoring

- 1.27.** Many services and facilities contribute towards the sustainability of a settlement, meeting the daily needs of residents and providing a variety of services for a range of people.
- 1.28.** When considering services and facilities, it is important to account for all facilities within walking distance of the settlement, whether they are within the settlement boundary, or just outside. This marks a key change in methodology since our previous iteration of the Settlement Hierarchy. It is important for us to acknowledge that the movement of people, in and around their communities, does not necessarily align with administrative boundaries. It is true that services and facilities lying outside of urban confines, where safely accessible by foot, positively influence the sustainability of the settlement, and therefore it is correct that these are taken into account in our scoring.
- 1.29.** In scoring services and facilities which lie outside of the District Boundary, we have again utilised the Active Travel England industry accepted standard for the '15-minute City' concept. Therefore, we have considered services and facilities which lie within 1.2km of the settlement boundary. It is important to note that, where a service or facility lies within 1.2km of the settlement boundary, it has only been included where there is a safe walking route (i.e. where there is a Public Right of Way, or pavement, for the entirety of the route).
- 1.30.** Whilst we have considered train stations which lie within cycling distance of the settlement, we have made the decision not to consider services and facilities that lie within cycling distance. This is due to a number of factors:
- Train stations often have specific bicycle storage available, whilst it is not expected that individual services and facilities would have
  - Cycling is a common method of commuting and is usually undertaken by younger generations, who are more physically able to cycle. This trend is not similarly reflected in the use of day-to-day services and facilities within the community.
  - The ability of residents to cycle to services and facilities would also depend on the topography of the route, and therefore it is not expected that we would be able to apply the cycling methodology consistently to all services and facilities.
- 1.31.** It is important to note the rise in popularity of electric bicycles as a mode of transport, and the impact that this has on the sustainability of settlements for certain residents. Whilst the increase in electric bicycle use is welcomed and encouraged, and the increased potential for sustainable locations is acknowledged, we have chosen not to take account of this in our scoring methodology. Given the higher cost associated with electric bicycles, in comparison with non-electric bicycles, it is considered that they are not equally accessible to all residents and as such as fair and justified scoring

methodology is difficult to implement. For the purpose of this Settlement Hierarchy, the use of electric bicycles should be considered alongside the methodology for regular cycling distance.

**1.32.** It is important to recognise that the services and facilities that contribute towards a sustainable settlement and meet the daily needs of residents can change regularly with current affairs. For example, in recent Settlement Hierarchy methodologies, it has become important for us to include an audit of cycling routes and Electric Vehicle Charging Points, due to national and district-wide climate change priorities and policies.

**1.33.** The way in which we have scored these services and facilities has also changed in this update to the Settlement Hierarchy. A 'key' service is defined as one that supports a sustainable, smaller settlement by fulfilling the essential needs of daily life. These services ensure that residents can access all necessary provisions within their settlement, without the need to travel elsewhere. In this Settlement Hierarchy, the key services are identified as:

- Primary School
- Doctors Surgery
- Post Officer
- Convenience Store / Newsagents / Pharmacy
- Community Hall (for hire)
- Recreation Ground / Park
- Permanent Library
- Recycling Facilities (beyond what is offered by Council collection services)
- Access to Bus Service

**1.34.** In this version, what we consider 'key' services and facilities have been afforded more weight and therefore scored higher, to account for the fact that they contribute more significantly to the sustainability of a settlement. For example, a Doctors Surgery would score 2 points, whereas a Flower Shop would score 1 point. This change to the scoring ensures that the most sustainable settlements are higher up the Hierarchy.

**1.35.** Table M4 overleaf sets out the services and facilities which are included in the audit, the services we consider as 'key' to the sustainability of a settlement and also sets out the scoring methodology.

**1.36.** With the exception of Transport provision, the scoring mechanism set out at Table M4 below will be applied per available service and additional points will be given where there are multiple of the same service available. For example:

- If the settlement has a single doctor's surgery, it would score 2 points
- If the settlement has three doctor's surgeries, it would score 6 points, 2 for each surgery

**1.37.** It is also important to note that the Settlement Hierarchy provides a snapshot of the services and facilities available at the time of the audit. It is noted that these services will change over time, and it is expected that the Settlement Hierarchy be reviewed every 5 years to account for these changes. In the meantime, specific changes to services and facilities, especially where this impacts on planning decisions, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Table M4 – Services and Facilities Scoring Methodology**

	Services and Facilities	Key Service?	Scoring
<b>Transport</b>	Rail Services		See <b>Table M3</b>
	Bus Services	Yes	1 point per route
	Electric Vehicle Charging Points		1 point if Yes
	Public Bicycle Storage		1 point if Yes
	Cycle Lanes		1 point if Yes
<b>Education</b>	Primary School	Yes	2 points
	Nurseries / Childcare Facility		1 point
	Secondary School		1 point
	Other Educational Facility		1 point
<b>Employment</b>	Designated Business Area		1 point (as designated in ADMP Employment policies)
<b>Health</b>	Doctors Surgery	Yes	2 points
	Dentist		1 point
	Hospital / Minor Injuries Unit		1 point
	Other Medical Facility		1 point
	Older Persons Care Facility		1 point
<b>Retail and Consumer Services</b>	Post Office	Yes	2 points
	Convenience Store / Newsagents / Pharmacy	Yes	2 points
	Bank / Building Society		1 point
	Superstore (over 2,500m <sup>2</sup> )		1 point
	Other Shops and Services (e.g. Butchers / Hairdressers / Other Shops / Office or Business)		1 point

Services and Facilities		Key Service?	Scoring
	Pubs / Takeaways / Restaurants / Tea Rooms		1 point
	Visitor Attraction		1 point
<b>Community Facilities</b>	Community Hall (for hire)	Yes	2 points
	Recreation Ground / Park	Yes	2 points
	OR Where there are one or more of the following additional services at the same location:  Children's Play Area Playing Pitch Outdoor Sports Facility Sports Pavillion		With one extra point for each additional service at the same address, to be capped at: 4 points
	Permanent Library	Yes	2 points
	Recycling Facilities	Yes	2 points
	Mobile Library		1 point
	Place of Worship		1 point
	Playing Pitch		1 point
	Outdoor Sports Facilities		1 point
	Children's Play Area / Provision for Young People		1 point
	Major Indoor Sports & Leisure Facility		1 point
	Veterinary Practice		1 point
	Hotel		1 point
	Public Car Park		1 point

### Reasonable Alternatives

- 1.38.** When preparing this new Settlement Hierarchy methodology and following extensive research into methodologies adopted by other Local Planning Authorities, several changes have been made. In addition, following recent consultations on the emerging Local Plan, we received valuable feedback on the previous Settlement Hierarchy methodology, including suggestions on how to alter this going forwards.
- 1.39.** The draft Settlement Hierarchy has also been presented to all District Council Members, for comment. All suggestions on methodology have been fully considered and this has been reflected, either by implementation in the above methodology, or addressed in the below reasonable alternatives section.
- 1.40.** We have considered this research and stakeholder comments on our methodology and subsequently reached conclusions on whether these suggestions should be implemented in the new methodology. The options, outcomes and reasonings are set out at Table M5 below.

**Table M5 - Reasonable Alternatives**

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
Considering Services and Facilities located outside of administrative boundaries	Accepted	<p>Previously, the methodology for Sevenoaks District has not taken account of services and facilities outside of administrative boundaries, such as settlement boundaries of the District boundaries.</p> <p>However, it is important to note that these administrative boundaries do not define the movement of communities, and it is justified to consider that services and facilities, within walking distance of a settlement, do contribute positively to the sustainability of a settlement.</p> <p>This has therefore been implemented in this new methodology.</p>
Considering cycling distance to train stations	Accepted	<p>Previously, only train stations within walking distance of a settlement have been included in the settlement scoring.</p> <p>However, it is reasonable to assume that train stations which are within cycling distance of a settlement contributes positively to</p>

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
		<p>sustainability for the local community. This is especially true where these stations are on commuter lines into London.</p> <p>For this reason, this change has been implemented in this new methodology.</p>
Scoring of Recreation Grounds	Accepted	<p>Feedback on the previous methodology highlighted concerns with the scoring for recreation grounds which had additional services available, such as a children’s play area or a sports pitch, which was inflating the scoring for these locations.</p> <p>This feedback has been taken on board and is reflected in the scoring for Recreation Grounds.</p> <p>A Recreation Ground will be awarded an initial 2 points, as a key service, with an extra point for each additional service available at the same site (e.g. outdoor gym, children’s play area etc.). This will be capped at 4 points, where additional facilities are available.</p>
Additional categories included in services and facilities audit	Accepted	<p>Consideration was given to the categories set out in the ‘services and facilities’ audit at Table M4.</p> <p>Whilst in previous audits, additional services have been picked up in the ‘Other Shops and Services’ category, it was considered important to specify additional services in this audit.</p> <p>This has resulted in new categories: Nurseries/Childcare Facility, Other Educational Facility, Other Medical Facility, Visitor Attraction, Car Park.</p> <p>We have also specifically mentioned ‘Minor Injuries Unit’ alongside ‘Hospital’.</p>
Introducing a scoring cap in relation to train stations,	Accepted	Feedback from member consultation highlighted that there is a selection of small

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
for small settlements, without a defined settlement boundary, which have a station within cycling distance only		<p>settlements, which have no defined settlement boundary, which lie only within cycling distance of a train station, which will affect access to public transport options.</p> <p>However, it is considered that local residents remain likely to utilise the closest train station through different access options, such as driving and parking or lift-sharing, and it is therefore considered that a score should still be given for these smaller settlements.</p> <p>Therefore, where this criteria is met, the scores associated with the settlement will be capped at 2 points, to reflect the limited safe access to public transport options.</p>
Consider including Footfall into the scoring methodology for train station scoring	Accepted	Scoring mechanism for footfall at train stations added to Table M3 to reflect the difference in use of train stations across the District.
Considering Oxted Station in the scoring methodology for Westerham	Partially taken forwards	Oxted Station lies beyond the cycling distance of 5km as set out in our methodology and therefore has not been included in the scoring for Westerham. This reasoning is explained in full at paragraph 1.22.
Considering Services and Facilities within cycling distance of settlement boundaries	Not taken forwards	Whilst we have considered train stations which lie within cycling distance of the settlement, we have made the decision not to consider services and facilities that lie within cycling distance. This reasoning is explained in full at paragraph 1.30.
Discounting train stations outside of settlement and District boundaries	Not taken forwards	<p>Feedback on the previous methodology highlighted concerns regarding the inclusion of train stations which lay outside of settlement or the District boundary.</p> <p>This feedback has been considered. However, it is considered that administrative boundaries do not reflect the movement of residents. If a station is within walking or cycling distance of</p>

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
		<p>a settlement, it is considered that this contributes to the sustainability of the location, and therefore stations outside of administrative boundaries continue to be included in this methodology.</p>
<p>Consideration of additional environmental constraints</p>	<p>Not taken forwards</p>	<p>Whilst additional environmental constraints, such as National Landscapes, Conservation Areas and Flooding, do affect the suitability of settlements for new development, we have specific Evidence Base documents which take account of these constraints.</p> <p>The Settlement Hierarchy reflects an audit of sustainability for settlements at a specific point in time and does not in itself consider the potential for future development.</p>
<p>Counting additional services as 'Key Services'</p>	<p>Not taken forwards</p>	<p>Consideration was given to additional services which could be included as 'key' services, namely Hospitals, Dentists and Secondary Schools.</p> <p>However, it is considered that, whilst these services undoubtedly contribute towards sustainability of a settlement, they are not a key service required in each settlement and residents are likely to travel to nearby larger settlements to access these services.</p> <p>Therefore, there has been no change to the 'key services' considered in this methodology.</p>
<p>Considering the reliability of transport services</p>	<p>Not taken forwards</p>	<p>It is important to note that we are aware of periodic reliability issues with rail and bus services across the District, and that this will undoubtedly have an impact on residents' ability to access these services.</p> <p>Whilst these issues are important to be aware of, there is no clear way to accurately measure and record the reliability of these specific services for the purpose of the Settlement Hierarchy, and therefore it is difficult to</p>

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
		<p>implement a fair and justified scoring methodology for this issue.</p> <p>As such we propose that they are dealt with on a case-by-case basis, at site allocation or planning application stage, and as such these issues will not be considered in relation to settlement sustainability for the purposes of the Settlement Hierarchy.</p>
<p>Adding methodology for electric bicycles and the greater distance they can cover in relation to cycling distance to train stations</p>	<p>Not taken forwards</p>	<p>We are aware of the rising popularity of use surrounding electric bicycles. So, touching on this we investigated including wording in support of electric bicycle use within our methodology regarding the improved distance of travel in comparison to regular bicycles. With much consideration we have decided to not take this point forwards due to the implications it causes due to there not being as much widespread guidance at this time.</p>
<p>Considering that Recycling Facilities are not considered a key service</p>	<p>Not taken forwards</p>	<p>Recycling facilities are currently considered a key service due to the fact that the current SDC collection services do not cover specific materials, such as glass and clothing.</p> <p>It should be noted that this is a technical document which audits the services and facilities at a specific point in time and future collection services would be taken account of in future iterations of the Settlement Hierarchy.</p> <p>Therefore, recycling facilities such as bottle banks, which collect materials not currently collected by the Council, should be considered a key service.</p>
<p>Considering that Hotels and Visitor Attractions should not be included in the audit</p>	<p>Not taken forwards</p>	<p>It is important to highlight that hotels and visitor attractions have not been considered a key service contributing towards sustainability, since they would not be a requirement for everyday life.</p>

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
		<p>However, both Hotels and Visitor Attractions provide additional services and facilities for the local community. For example, they provide employment opportunities, recreational facilities and amenities such as event venues, restaurants and green and open spaces.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered that Hotels and Visitor Attractions should be included in the audit and will be awarded one point per service, towards the settlement which they lie within, or are within walking distance of.</p>