

Draft Canterbury District Local Plan 2040
Regulation 18 Consultation 2024

RURAL SETTLEMENT STUDY

(2023)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. As part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan, the council has undertaken a review of the previous Rural Settlement Study which was published in 2019.
- 1.2. Since the completion of the 2019 study the council has undertaken further consultation on the new Local Plan and a multitude of factors such as Covid-19 and rising inflation could have potentially affected local facilities and businesses operations in our rural settlements.
- 1.3. Such changes have the potential to impact upon the overall scoring and subsequent hierarchical designation of rural settlements in the district. This review was therefore carried out to ensure that the new Local Plan is informed by up-to-date information.

2. Rural Settlement Assessment Summary

- 2.1. The Rural Settlement Study (2019) audited the various services and facilities within the built up area of each rural settlement, and applied a scoring to these to assess the ability of local residents to meet their day to day needs within that settlement.
- 2.2. The list of recorded services and facilities were attributed to one of two categorisations - either the 'Key' or the 'other' - to determine the scoring for each settlement.
- 2.3. The 'key' services which were considered by the study were:
 - Primary school;
 - Convenience store;
 - Community hall;
 - GP surgery; and
 - Nursery or pre-school.
- 2.4. The services and facilities classified as 'other' services were:
 - Pharmacy;
 - Dentist;
 - Post office;
 - Veterinary practice;
 - Public house;
 - Recreation ground;
 - Play area;
 - Hairdressers;
 - Takeaway;
 - Other retail; and
 - Place of worship.

- 2.5. To develop a picture of the function of each settlement the following classifications were used:
- 2.6. **Rural Hub:** Full range of services, including all five of the key services.
- 2.7. Residents living there can meet most of their day to day needs within the settlement. The level of service provision within a Rural Hub means that the settlement plays a key role in the wider area, providing access to a wide range of services for residents living in smaller settlements nearby.
- 2.8. **Rural Service Centre:** All five of the key services, and may also have other services.
- 2.9. Residents living there can meet most of their day to day needs within the settlement. The level of service provision in a Rural Service Centre means that the settlement plays an important role in the wider area, providing access to key services for residents living in smaller settlements nearby.
- 2.10. **Local Service Centre:** At least two of the key services, and may also have other services.
- 2.11. Residents living there will need to travel outside of the settlement to access the full range of key services. The level of services within a Local Service Centre may mean that residents living in other settlements nearby use it for important services.
- 2.12. **Village:** At least one service; which could be either a key service or other service.
- 2.13. It may have a limited range of services which meet some day to day needs, but residents living in a village will need to travel outside of the settlement to access the range of services, including key services. Depending on the range of services in the village, the settlement may play a limited role for residents living in other settlements nearby.
- 2.14. **Hamlet:** Has no services or facilities.
- 2.15. Residents living in a hamlet will need to travel outside of the settlement to meet their day to day needs and to access the range of services, including key services.
- 2.16. Reflecting this scoring and methodology, the proposed hierarchy of settlements was as below:
- **Rural Hub** - Sturry
 - **Rural Service Centres** - Blean, Bridge, Chartham, Hersden, Littlebourne
 - **Local Service Centres** - Adisham, Barham, Broad Oak, Harbledown, Hoath, Lower Hardres, Petham, Rough Common, Thanington Without, Westbere, Wickhambreaux
 - **Village** - Bossingham, Bekesbourne, Bishopsbourne, Boyden Gate, Bramling, Bullockstone, Chartham Hatch, Chislet, Fordwich, Ickham, Herne Common, Kingston, Maypole, Patribourne, Pett Bottom, Stodmarsh, Tyler Hill, Waltham, Womenswold, Woolage Green, Upper Harbledown, Upper Hardres, Upstreet

- **Hamlet** - Anvil Green, Blooden, Breach, Cooting, Garlinge Green, Highstead, Ileden, Marshside, Out Elmstead, Radfall, Woodlands, Woolage Village, Wraik Hill, Yorkletts

3. Methodology of 2023 Review

3.1. The 2023 review consisted of four key components;

- Identifying concerns from Parish Councils/District residents in regards to the designation of specific settlements in the Hierarchy
- Confirming accuracy of results via desktop investigations i.e., mapping and business searches.
- Coordinated visits to each of the designated rural settlements to confirm the existence of services and facilities which were originally documented back in 2019, record any vacant facilities and also identify any new amenities which were previously unaccounted for.
- Reviewing the findings and updating the scoring for the hierarchy designation of each settlement.

3.2. Some comments were received during the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation in 2022/23 regarding the scoring methodology itself. However, following a review the scoring methodology has been maintained in line with the 2019 study as it continues to reflect national policy and guidance, other than those amendments highlighted below.

4. Review Findings

4.1. In most cases, the outcome of the review for the majority of rural settlements was consistent with the 2019 data; this was particularly the case for the Hamlets and the places which had fewer facilities and services. However, the review did give rise to a number of issues such as;

- The inclusion of a library as a new 'Key service' ;
- The inclusion of "Cafe/Coffee Shop" as a new "Other service";
- The need to affirm that the study only scores the services within the 'built up area' of a settlement;
- Clarification on the exclusion of private schools from the study.

Including libraries

4.2. After carrying out the site visits and subsequent desktop research, it was established that the only settlement which has a Library is Sturry. Sturry is already designated as a 'Rural Hub' the highest position on the hierarchy; due to its full range of services, including all five

of the key services, and the settlement's ability to provide services and facilities for residents in surrounding rural settlements. Consequently, although Sturry's overall scoring increased slightly, its position on the Hierarchy remained the same as in 2019.

Including Cafes

- 4.3. While undertaking the site visits it became apparent that there are a number of cafes and coffee shops located within some of the district's rural settlements. These facilities provide services to our rural communities and also provide opportunities for socialising, and have therefore been included within the assessment as an "other service".

Geography of the Assessments

- 4.4. A number of comments received through the Local Plan consultation referred to services and facilities located outside of individual rural settlements, and within the countryside.
- 4.5. This is particularly relevant in settlements such as Bishopsbourne and Bekesbourne, where farm buildings outside of the village have been converted into business and commercial premises.
- 4.6. These facilities have been reviewed to ensure that those included within the assessment are located within the built confines only.
- 4.7. After consideration of both the distance from the settlement and the nature of each individual business in relation to the methodology, the following developments would not be included in the assessment:
- Frog Ln, Bishopsbourne, Canterbury CT4 5HU
 - Builders Square, Court Hill, Littlebourne, Canterbury CT3 1XU
 - Chalkpit Farm, Bekesbourne, Canterbury CT4 5EU
 - Heppington Barn, Lower Hardres, Canterbury CT4 7AN

Inclusion of Previously Missed Services

- 4.8. Two additional garages were identified as part of the review: R Jackson Motors in Bullockstone and Autocar Drive Centre in Chartham.
- 4.9. Their recognition in the review boosted Chartham and Bullockstone's scoring by one point each, taking the total score for Chartham to 37 and the scoring of Bullockstone to 2. This minor increase has had no impact upon the overall hierarchical designation of either settlement.

Clarification of the Council's Position on Private Schools

- 4.10. Finally, during the review it transpired that further clarity was needed on the exclusion of private schools within the assessment. The King's Primary School in Sturry is the only instance of a private school in one of our rural settlements.
- 4.11. Although the school is located within the built up area of the settlement, it is recognised that most pupils in attendance are predominantly not from the local community and often travel significant distances to attend. As a result of this distinction, an important amendment to the methodology was the clarification that only private schools would be excluded from the assessment.
- 4.12. The removal of the King's Private School reduced the overall scoring of Sturry by Three points from 44 to 41 however there is no impact on the overall hierarchy position of the Rural Hub.

5. Report Summary

- 5.1. Whilst the 2023 Rural Settlement Review resulted in little impact to the overall Settlement hierarchy, it does bring the data up-to-date and clarifies the methodology, taking into account the responses received through the consultation. The rural settlement hierarchy therefore remains unchanged, as set out below:
- **Rural Hub** - Sturry
 - **Rural Service Centres** - Blean, Bridge, Chartham, Hersden, Littlebourne
 - **Local Service Centres** - Adisham, Barham, Broad Oak, Harbledown, Hoath, Lower Hardres, Petham, Rough Common, Thanington Without, Westbere, Wickhambreaux
 - **Village** - Bossingham, Bekesbourne, Bishopsbourne, Boyden Gate, Bramling, Bullockstone, Chartham Hatch, Chislet, Fordwich, Ickham, Herne Common, Kingston, Maypole, Patricbourne, Pett Bottom, Stodmarsh, Tyler Hill, Waltham, Womenswold, Woolage Green, Upper Harbledown, Upper Hardres, Upstreet
 - **Hamlet** - Anvil Green, Blooden, Breach, Cooting, Garlinge Green, Highstead, Ileden, Marshside, Out Elmstead, Radfall, Woodlands, Woolage Village, Wraik Hill, Yorkletts
- 5.2. A full detailed inventory, reflecting the outcomes of the most recent review is set out in the Appendix

6. Appendix

Rural Settlement Review Inventory (2023)

Please refer to the additional document, 'Appendix Rural Settlement Review Inventory (2023)', to view the updated inventory.