



Topic Paper:

Rural Settlement Hierarchy

Regulation 18 Consultation on the Draft Local Plan

December **2020**



Dover District **Local Plan**
Supporting document



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1. Purpose of Topic Paper

- 1.1 The vision, strategic objectives and policies of the Dover District Local Plan will set out to deliver and manage the location of new development across the district over the plan period to 2040. Such policies must be developed in accordance with national planning policy which promotes, in the first instance, the principle of sustainable development, and which requires local planning authorities to ensure that, wherever possible, new development is located in the most sustainable locations.
- 1.2 Fundamental to the preparation of the Dover District Local Plan is an assessment of a range of quantitative and spatial options for the delivering the required level of housing and economic development for the district. A series of Growth Options, representing reasonable alternatives for the level and distribution of new housing in this district, were therefore developed, examined and assessed, separately to this Study, as part of the preparatory work on the Plan and through the parallel Sustainability Appraisal process. This Settlement Hierarchy Study has been undertaken to form part of the evidence base for this Growth Options strategy work, as well as for the policies of the Plan as a whole, particularly the approach to residential windfall development in the rural areas of the district.
- 1.3 The purpose of this study is to identify those settlements in the District that are the most sustainable, based on the range of facilities and services present. It focuses in particular on the rural settlements of the District, given that the sustainability credentials of the district's three main centres of Dover, Deal and Sandwich are well-established.
- 1.4 Drawing on the inventory of village facilities produced annually for the Dover District Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)¹, a hierarchy of settlements is presented. This work is based on an analysis of the presence in each village of a range of services nationally agreed to act as indicators of the sustainability of a settlement. These services include shops, primary schools, health services and access to public transport.

¹ This survey work is undertaken annually by Council officers and forwarded to parish councils for verification. Due to working restrictions imposed by central government to combat the global COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, this work has not been possible this year and therefore 2019 data has been used in this Topic Paper. Amendments will be made where necessary following consultation responses to the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan.

- 1.5 This survey work does not address other issues affecting the suitability of a settlement for additional development, such as environmental designations and flood risk, as these do not influence the sustainability of a location - conventionally understood to mean a reduction in the need to travel from home to access key services, thereby making effective use of land and reducing the demand for fossil fuels, in order to meet the objective of Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly. This resolution is cited in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) as ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
- 1.6 It is emphasised that the ranking of each settlement in the hierarchy, and thus it’s suitability to accommodate additional development in sustainability terms, should not be taken to mean that there is suitable land for development in such a village, or that environmentally it would be appropriate. As the recommendations at the end of this Study make clear, the Settlement Hierarchy is only one of a wide range of background studies that will feed into the Sustainability Appraisal and Growth Options work and subsequent site allocation process, as well as the identification of which rural settlements in the district are considered suitable for windfall development over the plan period.
- 1.7 Specifically, this Rural Settlement Hierarchy Study
- Describes in brief the character of the existing settlement pattern of Dover District;
 - Provides a brief overview of the relevant national planning context and current Local Plan policies governing the location of new development;
 - Sets out the broad methodology used to develop this settlement hierarchy;
 - Establishes a profile of each rural settlement based on the AMR 2019;
 - Identifies a rural hierarchy of settlements for Dover District to input into the preparation of the Dover Local Plan 2040;

2. Dover District: Settlement pattern

- 2.1 Dover District is home to a small number of urban areas and a large rural hinterland containing a wide range of small rural settlements, all located in a highly attractive landscape. The small number of urban centres is perhaps a factor of its location on the edge of the country away, until recently, from major communication routes, as well as the topography of the district which has enabled the largely agricultural basis of its rural settlement pattern to continue largely unaltered into the 21st century. The exception to the agricultural origins of the district's villages are the planned settlements built to serve the East Kent coalfields in the north and west of the district, including Aylesham, Nonnington and Tilmanstone, which were mined principally between 1920s and the 1950s, with Betteshanger being the last to close in 1989. Large areas of the district are subject to a number of international and national environmental designations, as well as being classified as areas at risk of tidal or fluvial flooding.
- 2.2 **Dover** is the district's principal town. Development at Dover has been historically focused on its role as an international port and gateway to the continent of Europe, for both freight and passenger traffic. The town is the largest settlement in the district with a population in 2011 of 43,070 people², representing approximately 40% of the total district population which, in 2018, stood at 117,000³. While its location is a nationally iconic one, the town is constrained by the steep chalk cliffs which rise on both sides of the seafront and port area. The town has therefore developed over the years in a linear form, inland from the coast following the valley of the river Dour. The town has seen some new retail development in recent years, but otherwise faces a number of environmental challenges including high volumes of port traffic passing through the town, areas of housing in poor condition and a tired and disconnected public realm. For planning purposes, the Dover Area has to date included the parishes of Guston, Whitfield, River and Temple Ewell.
- 2.3 **Deal** is the second town in the District with a population in 2011 of 30,085⁴, approximately 27% of the district's population. Deal is a historic town, an associate member of the Cinque Ports in the 13th Century, located on the coast away from

² 2011 Census, ONS, for the Dover Urban Wards (Buckland, Castle, Lydden, Temple Ewell, Maxton, Elms Vale & Priory, River, St Radigunds, Tower Hamlets, Town and Pier, Whitfield) the most recent ward/parish level data available.

³ 2018 Mid year estimates ONS

⁴ 2011 Census, ONS, for the Deal Urban Wards (Middle Deal and Sholden, Mill Hill, North Deal, Walmer)

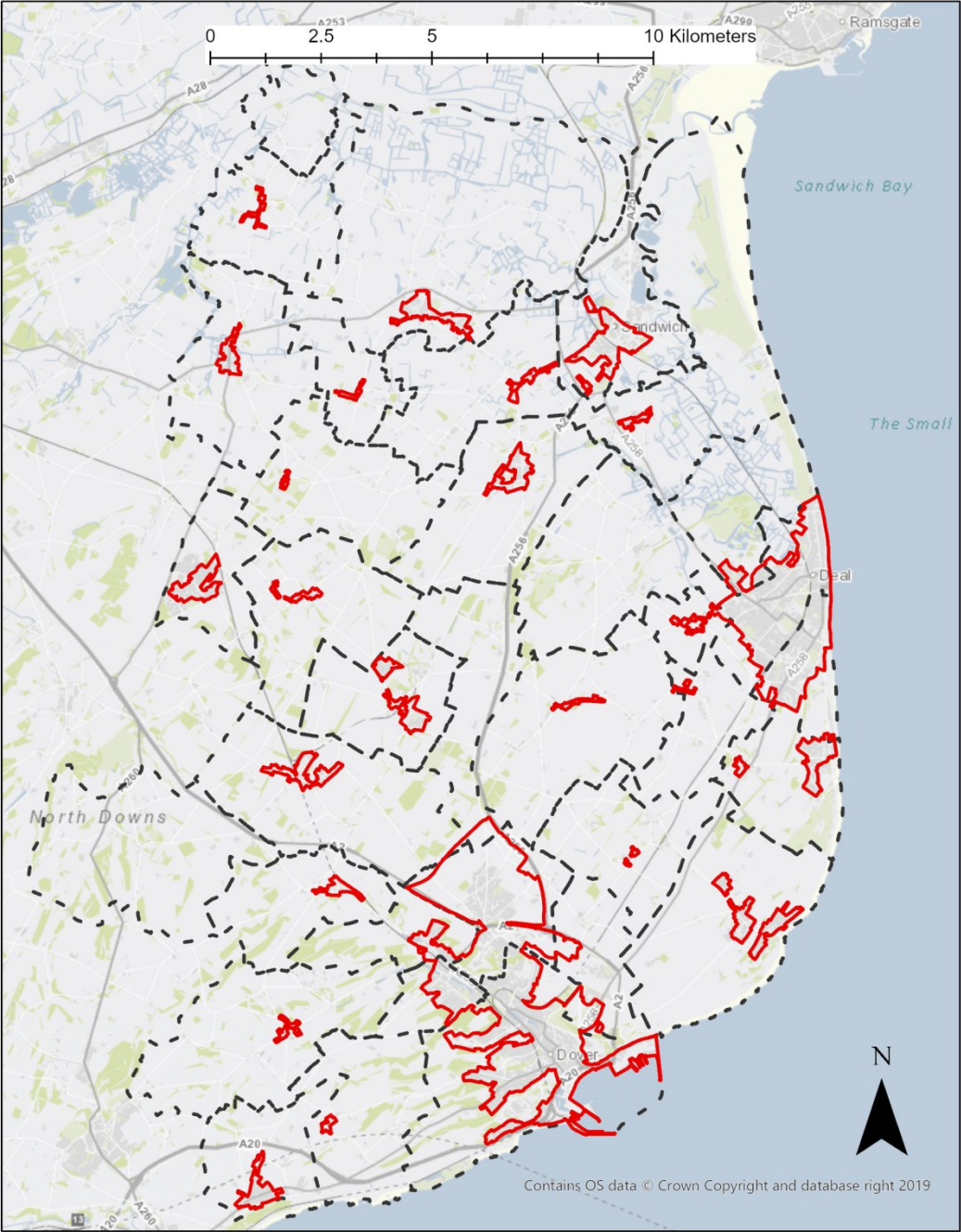
the main highway network. The town centre is characterised by small-scale development on a historic street pattern and is home to the first designated Conservation Area in Kent. Aside from its attractive small commercial core and seafront, the town has a strong residential character. To the north of the town extensive areas of land are subject to flood risk and deemed vulnerable to sea level rise, and large areas are protected by environmental designations due to the international significance of their habitats and bird populations. The Deal area, for planning purposes, includes Great Mongeham, Sholden and Walmer.

- 2.4 **Sandwich** is a highly attractive historic Cinque Port and small market town, with a well-preserved medieval street pattern, located on the river Stour in the north east of the District. It had a population in 2011 of 7,043⁵. The town centre serves the daily needs of the town and neighbouring villages, while its high concentration of Listed Buildings is a major draw for tourism. Discovery Park, designated as an Enterprise Zone in 2011, and formerly Pfizer's Research and Development facility, lies to the north of Sandwich. It is the largest employment site in the district and comprises around 280,000 sq m of high-quality research and development buildings, offices and ancillary facilities set within a landscaped campus. Discovery Park is the UK's top performing Enterprise Zone. To the north, east and south-east of the town extensive areas of land are subject to flood risk and deemed vulnerable to sea level rise, and large areas are protected by environmental designations due to the international significance of their habitats and bird populations.
- 2.5 The extensive rural area of the district contains a great diversity of settlements in terms of character, size and facilities, ranging from the planned villages associated with the former East Kent Coalfield, to small villages and hamlets that have their origins predominantly in the agricultural history of this part of East Kent.
- 2.6 While this Study is assessing the services available to residents of rural settlements within Dover District, it is acknowledged that settlements in neighbouring districts also provide facilities and services for residents of Dover District. For example, taken in isolation the south west of the district would appear to be poorly served. The town of Folkestone is, however, located adjacent to the district boundary and provides most of the higher-level facilities and services for the south western corner of Dover District. Similarly, Canterbury, to the west, and the large out-of-town retail centre at Westwood Cross in the neighbouring district of Thanet to the

⁵ 2011 Census, ONS, for the Sandwich Ward.

north, also provide higher order services and facilities for residents of Dover District.

Settlement Confines and Parish Boundaries



Legend

- Settlement Confines
- Parish Boundaries

PARISH	POPULATION (2011 CENSUS)
Alkham	688
Ash	3,365
Aylsham	3,999
Capel-le-Ferne	1,884
Deal	20,823
Denton with Wootton	372
Dover	31,022
Eastry	2,492
Eythorne	2,594
Goodnestone	378
Great Mongeham	747
Guston	1,740
Hougham Without	463
Langdon	558
Lydden	673
Nonington	906
Northbourne	772
Preston	674
Ringwould with Kingston	2,030
Ripple	372
River	3,876
St Margaret's at Cliffe	2,499
Sandwich	4,985
Shepherdswell with Coldred	1,849
Sholden	1,084
Staple	551
Stourmouth	268
Sutton	772
Temple Ewell	1,669
Tilmanstone	401
Walmer	8,178
Whitfield	5,142
Wingham	1,775
Woodnesborough	1,066
Worth	992

TABLE 1: 2011 CENSUS PARISH LEVEL POPULATION DOVER DISTRICT ⁶

⁶ 2011 Census Table KS101, The Office for National Statistics (ONS) as cited in Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletin 2011 Census: Parish population Kent County Council (March 2013)

3. Planning Policy

National Policy

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) places sustainable development at the heart of the planning system. To achieve sustainable development, the Framework sets out three overarching objectives⁷ which are inter-dependent, and which need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

(NPPF (2019) paragraph 8 (emphasis for the purposes of this Study, only))

- 3.2 Paragraph 78 of the NPPF requires that new housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas. It also advises that planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services and acknowledges that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- 3.4 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which is updated regularly, emphasises that every Local Plan must be informed and accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal. This allows the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the proposals to be systematically taken into account, playing an important part in demonstrating

⁷ National Planning Policy Framework (2019), Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government. paragraph 8

that the Local Plan reflects sustainability objectives and has considered reasonable alternatives. As set out in Section 1 of this Study, this Settlement Hierarchy analysis has been undertaken as part of the evidence base for the policies in the Regulation 18 Draft Dover District Local Plan which set out the Council's proposed distribution of new development across the district.

- 3.5 The NPPG acknowledges that people living in rural areas can face particular challenges in terms of housing supply and affordability, while the location of new housing can also be important for the broader sustainability of rural communities and that a wide range of settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas⁸.

Local Policy

- 3.3 The current Local Plan policy approach to the distribution of development across Dover District is set out in the Dover Core Strategy (2010) and the Dover Land Allocations Local Plan (2015). These documents reflect the overarching national planning strategy, at the time of their preparation, of promoting sustainable development. New development is therefore currently focused at urban areas in the first instance, supporting the range of existing services and facilities in such areas and minimising the need to travel, and secondly, at rural settlements which have a good range of facilities and public transport connections and where new development will enable to grow sustainably. Such an approach was also in accordance with the then Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East⁹.
- 3.4 A settlement hierarchy setting out the general role of individual settlements in Dover District was developed¹⁰ as part of the evidence base for the Dover Core Strategy. This Hierarchy provided evidence to shape the distribution of development across the District and the land allocations of the Dover Core Strategy. It follows the approach set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy of the time which identified Primary and Secondary Regional Centres across the South East region, leaving the identification of other centres for local planning authorities to determine through their local development frameworks.
- 3.5 This 2008 Dover Settlement Hierarchy is set out in Policy CP1 of the Dover Core Strategy 2010 (see Appendix A of this Study). Dover was identified in the South East Plan as a Secondary Regional Centre and thus functions as the major focus for development in the District. One District Centre suitable for urban scale development was identified (Deal) in the Hierarchy and two Rural Service Centres, at Sandwich and Aylesham, were designated as providing a focus for development in the rural area of

⁸ NPPG Paragraph 009 Reference ID: 67-009-20190722

⁹ *South East Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East*, South East Regional Assembly (2009)

¹⁰ Dover Settlement Hierarchy, Dover District Council (2008)

the district. The expansion of Aylesham, a former mining village established in 1926 to house miners working in the nearby newly sunk Snowdown Colliery to serve as a Rural Service Centre, was identified in the Dover Local Plan 2002. Aylesham had originally been intended by its masterplanner, Sir Patrick Abercrombie, to become a town with a population of up to 30,000 accommodating future workers at two other proposed new pits at Adisham and Wingham, but neither colliery was ever built.

- 3.6 The 2008 Hierarchy identified five Local Centres in the rural areas of the district, suitable for a scale of development that would reinforce their roles as providers of services to its home and adjacent communities at Ash, Capel-le-Ferne, Eastry, Shepherdsweil and Wingham. The remaining rural settlements were categorised as villages, where small scale development commensurate with their role as provider of services for their own communities would be acceptable in principle, and hamlets which are not deemed suitable for further development unless such development functionally requires a rural location.
- 3.7 This hierarchy informed the overarching distribution of housing allocations (Policy CP3 of the Dover Core Strategy 2010 – see Appendix A of this Study) including four strategic allocations at Dover, and the Dover Land Allocations Local Plan 2015 which identifies and allocates specific sites for development across the whole of the district.
- 3.8 As evidenced in the Council’s annual Authority Monitoring Report, Policy CP1 is one of the most frequently used local plan policies in development management in the District. In the year 2018-2019 the Council’s Settlement Hierarchy was used in 12% of planning refusals¹¹ and referred to 14% of appeal decisions¹² over that time period.

¹¹ *Authority Monitoring Report 2018-2019, Table 3.4 Use of Development Plan Policies in Planning Application Refusals 2018-19*, Dover District Council, page 30.

¹² *Authority Monitoring Report 2018-2019, Table 3.7 Use of Policies/NPPF Paragraphs in Planning Appeals 2019-19*, Dover District Council, page 33.

4. Survey Methodology

- 4.1 As part of the evidence base for the Regulation 18 Draft Dover District Local Plan to 2040 it was necessary to update the 2008 Hierarchy. Data collected for the Authority Monitoring Report 2019 was used to identify the facilities and transport connections available to residents of each the District's rural settlements. Due to their geographical proximity with the urban area of Dover, the villages of River, Temple Ewell and Whitfield are deemed to form part of Dover for the purposes of this study only. Likewise, the villages of Great Mongeham, Sholden and Walmer are considered, for the purposes of this Study only, as falling within the urban area of Deal. These settlements are therefore not included in this survey.
- 4.2 The objective of this work is to contribute to the process of selecting land for residential development, and of identifying which settlements are capable of sustainably accepting additional windfall housing in principle, in the emerging Dover Local Plan. Such objective is realised by establishing whether, on the basis of existing social and community facilities and transport connections, a settlement would constitute a sustainable location for future development.
- 4.3 The Settlement Summaries that follow in the Section 5 of this Study are set out by Parish. Parish councils play a valuable role in checking survey data and parishes are traditionally the unit of survey data in rural areas. The survey work revealed a small number of settlements that are close to, and therefore served by the facilities of other villages, for example the school at Eythorne is in walking distance of, and thus also serves the settlement of Elvington. Where this occurs, this is noted in the summary and footnoted in the resultant Settlement Hierarchy. Such incidents are in line with the acknowledgement in the NPPF¹³ that adjacent rural settlements do often share community infrastructure and other facilities, and as a consequence that new development in one village can support services in a nearby village.
- 4.4 The survey examines a range of services and amenities that are deemed to provide for the basic needs of those living in the village, including shops and social facilities, education, healthcare, leisure and public transport links. Specifically, these are
- **Public transport:** Bus service (frequent/infrequent), train station
 - **Shops:** Local foodstore/s, post office, other shops, public house/café, cash point
 - **Community facilities:** Village hall, church, playing field, other community services
 - **Education:** Primary school

¹³ National Planning Policy Framework (2019) paragraph 78.

- **Health services:** GP surgery
- 4.5 These categories are based on the services and facilities that form the basis of previous surveys by this District Council, including the Authority Monitoring Reports. In addition, such services have historically been highlighted as important indicators of the sustainability of rural communities, including by the Commission for Rural Communities in their State of the Countryside reports.
- 4.6 Scores are assigned to each facility to determine each rural settlement's position in the Hierarchy. Weighting of a number of facilities was applied. This is an approach prevalent amongst other settlement hierarchy studies and reflects the view that some services are deemed to make a more significant contribution towards the sustainability of a settlement than others. Such 'key services' are defined in this instance as
- **frequent¹⁴ bus service**
 - **train station**
 - **primary school**
 - **post office**
 - **local supermarket or foodstore**
 - **public house/café**
 - **GP surgery**
- 4.7 For schools, only state primary schools are included. Other schools or educational establishments are noted in the Settlement Summaries. Given evidence nationally of the increasing role that public houses and cafés are playing as focal points for community life in recent years, including examples of pubs offering part time Post Office services, and both pubs and cafés operating as venues for regular community meetings such as Knit and Natter groups, coffee mornings for the elderly, and meeting places for new mothers and children for example, it was felt that such facilities fall to be considered as a Key Service in the context of establishing the sustainability of settlements based on the facilities on offer to those who live there. In addition, such businesses frequently operate takeaway food services which have emerged in recent years as sought-after local facility for householders, and that has been particularly in evidence in 2020. Each key service scores 3 points. Additional shops, primary schools, community facilities and public houses/ cafés score 1 point each.
- 4.8 For a settlement to score points the service or amenity must be located within the built-up area of a settlement, or within 800m (reasonable walking distance) of the centre of that settlement.

¹⁴ Defined as hourly during working weekday hours

- 4.9 It should be emphasised that other issues which influence the suitability of locations for new development, such as flood risk and designated protected landscapes, are not taken into account in this work, as the survey, and resultant Hierarchy, is solely concerned with the way in which a settlement functions. These environmental issues are instead addressed through the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan and as part of site- specific land allocation considerations and assessment work.

5. Settlement Summaries

5.1 The following summaries are set out in alphabetical order by Parish.

ALKHAM	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Dover and Folkestone with two buses every hour on weekdays
Retailing	Public House, garden centre with a café, farm shop
Community Facilities	village hall and a church
Education	none
Medical services	none

ASH	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Sandwich and Canterbury with buses every hour on weekdays
Retailing	11 retail outlets including two general stores, a chemist and a car servicing garage, two public houses, a take-away and a restaurant and a cashpoint
Community Facilities	two village halls, a library, a nursery and a church
Education	two primary schools (one independent prep school)
Medical services	GP surgery and a private physiotherapy practice

AYLESHAM	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Dover and Canterbury with buses every hour on weekdays. Railway station on Dover to London Victoria line.
Retailing	nine shops including a post office, a co-op and a butchers, four take-aways and four cashpoints.
Community Facilities	village hall, two churches, fire station, sports club, social club, leisure centre and a library
Education	two primary schools
Medical services	medical centre (under construction?)

CAPEL-LE-FERNE	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Dover and Folkestone with buses every hour on weekdays
Retailing	one general store, Public House, café
Community Facilities	village hall and two churches, weekly farmers market
Education	primary school
Medical services	none

DENTON WITH WOOTTON	
Denton	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Folkestone and Canterbury
Retailing	Public house
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area (shared with Wootton)
Education	none
Medical services	none
Wootton	
Public Transport	no
Retailing	none
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area (shared with Denton)
Education	none
Medical services	none

EASTRY	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Deal, Sandwich, Canterbury and Ramsgate with buses hourly on weekdays
Retailing	Post Office, cashpoint, 12 shops including a bakers, butchers, general store and two hairdressers, two public houses
Community Facilities	village hall and a church, scout hut, nursery, fire station, bowling green and football pitch
Education	primary school
Medical services	GP surgery

EYTHORNE	
Elvington	
Public Transport	Regular bus services to Dover, Canterbury and Sandwich
Retailing	village store and a hairdressers, two take-aways; facilities in Eythorne in walking distance
Community Facilities	village hall and a church, heritage centre, allotments
Education	Primary school in Eythorne is within walking distance (300m) of Elvington
Medical services	none
Eythorne	
Public Transport	Regular bus services to Dover, Canterbury and Sandwich
Retailing	Post Office, village shop, three pubs/cafes
Community Facilities	two village halls, two churches, a play area and a bowls club
Education	Primary School
Medical services	none

GOODNESTONE	
Chillenden	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	Public House
Community Facilities	village hall and a church
Education	none
Medical services	none
Goodnestone	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	a public house cafe
Community Facilities	village hall and church (outreach PO from hall 2 days a week)
Education	primary school
Medical services	none

GUSTON	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Dover
Retailing	Public house
Community Facilities	village hall, church
Education	primary school and Duke of York's secondary boarding school
Medical services	none

HOUGHAM WITHOUT	
West Hougham	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Dover and Folkestone but at 1.5km from the village itself
Retailing	Public House
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area
Education	none
Medical services	none

KINGSDOWN WITH RINGWOULD PARISH	
Kingsdown	
Public Transport	Regular bus service to Deal, hourly on weekdays
Retailing	Post office, butchers, hairdressers, newsagents, three public houses
Community Facilities	village hall, church, a scout campsite and golf club.
Education	primary school
Medical services	none
Ringwould	

Public Transport	Regular bus service to Dover and Deal
Retailing	public house, garden centre
Community Facilities	village hall and church
Education	none
Medical services	none
LANGDON	
East Langdon	
Public Transport	infrequent bus services
Retailing	Post Office open twice a week
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area
Education	primary school
Medical services	none
Martin	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	public house
Community Facilities	none
Education	none
Medical services	none
Martin Mill	
Public Transport	Train station (HS1 to Dover, Ramsgate and London St Pancras) and infrequent bus services
Retailing	one public house
Community Facilities	camp site
Education	none
Medical services	none
West Langdon	
Public Transport	none
Retailing	none
Community Facilities	village hall and church
Education	none
Medical services	none

LYDDEN	
Public Transport	Frequent bus service to Dover and Canterbury
Retailing	Public House a car servicing/repair garage
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area
Education	primary school
Medical services	doctor's surgery

NONINGTON	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service to Dover and Canterbury
Retailing	petrol station/garage
Community Facilities	village hall, church

Education	Primary school
Medical services	none

NORTHBOURNE	
Finglesham	
Public Transport	hourly bus service to Dover and Sandwich
Retailing	Public House
Community Facilities	none
Education	none
Medical services	none
Little Betteshanger	
Public Transport	hourly bus service to Dover and Sandwich
Retailing	none
Community Facilities	play area
Education	Northbourne primary school is less than 300m away
Medical services	none
Northbourne	
Public Transport	Frequent bus services to Dover and Sandwich
Retailing	public house
Community Facilities	hall, church
Education	primary school
Medical services	none

PRESTON	
Elmstone	
Public Transport	none
Retailing	none
Community Facilities	church, social club
Education	none
Medical services	none
Preston	
Public Transport	infrequent bus services to Margate/Canterbury and Aylesham/the QEQM Hospital Margate/Westwood shopping centre
Retailing	four shops, public house
Community Facilities	village hall, church
Education	primary school
Medical services	none

RIPPLE	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	Public House, farm shop open summer months only
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area, camp site

Education	private primary school
Medical services	none

ST MARGARET'S	
St Margaret's at Cliffe	
Public Transport	hourly bus route to Deal Dover and Canterbury
Retailing	post office, village shop, hairdressers, cafes, two public houses
Community Facilities	village hall, church, library, bowls club, fire station, museum, play area
Education	nursery school, primary school, and a secondary school for children with special educational needs
Medical services	doctors surgery

SHEPHERDSWELL AND COLDRED	
Shephersdwell	
Public Transport	railway station on Dover to London Victoria line, infrequent bus service
Retailing	village shop, public house, cafes, cashpoint
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area
Education	primary school
Medical services	doctors surgery
Coldred	
Public Transport	Infrequent bus service
Retailing	Public house
Community Facilities	church
Education	none
Medical services	none

STAPLE	
Barnsole	
Public Transport	none
Retailing	public house, garden centre/vineyard
Community Facilities	none
Education	none
Medical services	none
Staple	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	none
Community Facilities	village hall and church
Education	none
Medical services	none

STOURMOUTH	
East Stourmouth	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	public house
Community Facilities	none
Education	none
Medical services	none

SUTTON	
Ashley	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	none
Community Facilities	none
Education	none
Medical services	none
East Studdal	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	horticultural nursery
Community Facilities	village hall
Education	none
Medical services	none

TILMANSTONE	
Public Transport	infrequent bus service
Retailing	public house, saddlery shop, ciderworks
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area
Education	none
Medical services	none

WINGHAM	
Wingham	
Public Transport	frequent bus services to Canterbury, Sandwich and Deal; infrequent service to QEQM hospital and Westwood Cross shopping centre
Retailing	ten village shops, three public houses, cafe
Community Facilities	village hall, children's nursery, church, fire station, play area
Education	primary school
Medical services	dental surgery
Wingham Green	
Public Transport	frequent bus service
Retailing	village shop, petrol station, classic car dealership
Community Facilities	none
Education	none

Medical services	none
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WOODNESBOROUGH	
Public Transport	hourly bus service to Sandwich, Deal and Canterbury and a KCC funded service on Thursday to Deal and Sandwich
Retailing	none
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area
Education	none
Medical services	none

WORTH	
Public Transport	hourly bus service to Deal and Canterbury
Retailing	Two public houses
Community Facilities	village hall, church, play area
Education	primary school
Medical services	none

5.2 The following Table sets out the scoring for each settlement. A number of clarifications of local circumstances are noted at the end of the Table.

SERVICES	Rail	Bus	Primary School	Local Food store	Other shops	Pub/ Cafe	Post Office	GP	Hall	Church	Cash point	Play area	other community facilities	SCORE
POINTS	3	hourly service: 3 regular daily: 1	3	3	1 per shop	3 and 1 per additional	3	3	1	1	1	1	1 per facility	
Alkham		√ (3)			2	√			√	√		√		11
Ash		√ (3)	√	√	6	4 (score6)		√	√	√	√	√	5	33
Aylesham	√	√ (3)	√/a	√	12	3 (score5)	√	√	√	√	√		4	45
Capel-le-Ferne		√ (3)	√	√		2 (score4)			√	√			1	16
Denton		√ (3)				√			√	√		√b		9
Wootton		-							√	√		√		3
Eastry		√ (3)	√	√	11	2 (score4)	√	√	√	√	√		5	38
Eythorne		√ (1)	√	√	1	3 (score5)	√		√	√		√	1	20
Elvington		√ (1)	√c	√	1	2 (score4)	√d		√	√		√	2	20
Goodnestone		√ (1)	√			2 (score4)			√	√			2	11
Chillenden		√ (1)				√			√	√			2	8
Guston		√ (3)	e			√			√	√				8
Langdon Parish:		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
East Langdon		√ (1)	√				√		√	√		√		10
Martin		√ (1)				√								4
Martin Mill	√	√ (1)			1	√							1	9
West Langdon		-							√	√				2
Lydden		√ (3)	√		1	√		√	√	√				15
Nonington		√ (1)	√		1				√	√				7

SERVICES	Rail	Bus	Primary School	Local Food store	Other shops	Pub/ Cafe	Post Office	GP	Hall	Church	Cash point	Play area	other community facilities	SCORE
POINTS	3	hourly service: 3 regular daily: 1	3	3	1 per shop	3 and 1 per additional	3	3	1	1	1	1	1 per facility	
Northbourne		√ (3)	√			√			√	√		√		12
Little Betteshanger		√ (3)	√f									√		7
Finglesham		√ (3)				√								6
Preston		√ (1)	√	√	3	√			√	√				15
Elmstone										√			1	2
Ringwould		√ (3)			1	√			√	√				9
Kingsdown		√ (3)	√	√	3	3 (score 5)			√	√			1	20
Ripple		√ (1)	g		1	√			√	√		√	2	10
St Margaret's at Cliffe		√ (3)	√h	√	2	2 (score 4)		√	√	√		√	4	25
Shepherdswell	√	√ (1)	√	√	1	4 (score 6)		√	√	√	√	√	3	27
Coldred		√ (1)				√				√				4
Staple		√ (1)							√	√				3
Barnsole					3	√								6
Stourmouth		√ (1)				√								4
Sutton					1					√				2
Ashley		√ (1)												1
East Studdal		√ (1)			1									2
Tilmanstone		√ (1)			2	√			√	√				8

SERVICES	Rail	Bus	Primary School	Local Food store	Other shops	Pub/ Cafe	Post Office	GP	Hall	Church	Cash point	Play area	other community facilities	SCORE
POINTS	3	hourly service: 3 regular daily: 1	3	3	1 per shop	3 and 1 per additional	3	3	1	1	1	1	1 per facility	
West Hougham		√ (1)							√	√		√		4
Wingham		√ (3)	√	√	9	4 (score 6)	√	√	√	√		√	5	38
Wingham Green		√ (3)		√	3									9
Wood'borough		√ (3)							√	√		√		6
Worth		√ (3)	√			2 (score 4)			√	√			1	13

TABLE 2: SETTLEMENT SCORING TABLES BY SERVICES/FACILITIES

a Aylesham has two state primary schools

b Denton shares a play area with Wootton, the play/sports area being located closer to the smaller settlement of Wootton

c Eythorne Primary School is in walking distance of Elvington

d Eythorne Post Office is in walking distance of Elvington

e Guston is home to Duke of York's secondary boarding school

f Northbourne Primary School is in walking distance of Little Betteshanger

g The primary school at Ripple is privately run

h St Margaret's at Cliffe also has a secondary school for pupils with special educational needs

6. The Rural Settlement Hierarchy

- 6.1 As noted earlier in this Study, Dover District is home to a wide range of small rural settlements which play a key part in establishing its overall character. As the above Table illustrates, these villages and hamlets enjoy a broad range of services and facilities. The NPPF and NPPG require that Local Planning Authorities promote sustainable development in rural areas to support the vitality of their rural communities. New housing can enable rural communities to retain their existing services and community facilities and help to create a prosperous rural economy. At the same time national policy advises that a balance must be achieved between allowing new housing and the need to protect the character and heritage of the settlements themselves, as well as the surrounding countryside.
- 6.2 Each settlement's position in the hierarchy is based on the number of facilities and services it enjoys. As noted in paragraph 3.5 above, **Aylesham** has been identified as a Rural Service Centre since the Dover Local Plan of 2002. Such a unique strategic role, combined with its scale (it is the largest rural settlement by population in the district) and wide range of existing services and facilities, places this village in a separate category to the other rural settlements.
- 6.3 In examining the results of the village survey work, a small number of rural local centres in Dover District are identified (**Eastry, Wingham, Ash, Shepherdswell, St Margarets at Cliffe, Eythorne and Elvington**). Given the wide range of services present in such villages each has the capability to act as a principle focus for services in its rural catchment area.
- 6.4 A group of larger villages (**Kingsdown, Capel-le-Ferne, Lydden, Preston, Worth, Northbourne, Alkham, Goodnestone, Ripple and East Langdon**) emerge from the survey work as sustainable settlements containing a reasonable range of key services, and therefore as able to meet some of the daily needs of their inhabitants.
- 6.5 Finally, the largest tier of rural settlements in the district are those with a limited number of community facilities or services. Residents of these smaller villages and hamlets, it is assumed, rely on the services of nearby larger villages or the urban centres of the district for day to day needs.

Table 3: DOVER DISTRICT RURAL SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

SETTLEMENT	SCORE
Aylesham	42
Eastry	38
Wingham	38
Ash	33
Shepherdswell	27
St Margarets at Cliffe	25
Eythorne	20
Elvington	20
Kingsdown	20
Capel-le-Ferne	16
Lydden	15
Preston	15
Worth	13
Northbourne	12
Alkham	11
Goodnestone	11
Ripple	10
East Langdon	10
Denton	9
Martin Mill	9
Ringwould	9
Wingham Green	9
Chillenden	8
Tilmanstone	8
Guston	8
Nonington	7
Barnsole	6
Finglesham	6
Woodnesborough	6
Betteshanger	4
Coldred	4
Martin	4
Stourmouth	4
West Hougham	4
Staple	3
Wootton	3
Elmstone	2
East Studdal	2
Sutton	2
West Langdon	2
Ashley	1

(Key Below)

	Rural Service Centre
	Local centres
	Larger villages
	Smaller villages and hamlets

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This Study updates the Dover District Settlement Review and Hierarchy 2008. It has been undertaken to inform the preparation of the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan for Dover District to 2040, including the sustainability appraisal and the growth models and reasonable alternatives analysis. The Strategic Objectives of the new Dover District Local Plan will continue to reflect national planning policy and therefore to focus development at accessible and sustainable locations which utilise existing infrastructure, facilities and services wherever possible.
- 7.2 Due to the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hierarchy is based on the outcomes of village survey work undertaken for the AMR 2019 with additional online research as necessary. Such survey work, it is emphasised, is clearly a snapshot of the facilities enjoyed by each settlement at the time of survey and will change over time. Data will be updated where necessary following responses to the Regulation 18 Draft public consultation exercise in Spring 2021.
- 7.3 The settlement of Aylesham to the north west of the district emerges from this Study as having successfully developed as a Rural Service Centre, its strategic role since 2002. It is a larger village with a stronger range of facilities, particularly retail and public transport services, than other villages. The settlements of Eastry, Wingham, Ash, Shepherdswell, St Margarets at Cliffe, Eythorne and Elvington, all enjoy a wide range of the services regularly identified as key indicators of sustainability and appear to currently serve as local centres with each offering a good and sustainable range of facilities including all key services, with the exception of a lack of Post Offices at Ash, St Margaret's at Cliffe and Shepherdswell. The villages of Eythorne and Elvington are located adjacent to each other and share a number of key services, including a primary school and post office, both of which are located in Eythorne but are readily accessible to residents of Elvington along a road with footpaths.
- 7.4 The villages in the district fall into two categories: those containing a reasonable number of key services such as a primary school, a GP service, a food shop or general

store able to meet a range of daily needs, and a commuter-friendly bus or train service and those which have a low level of such sustainable facilities.

- 7.5 It is emphasised that this Settlement Hierarchy Study is only one of a number of factors that guide the distribution of new development across the district which will be set out in the emerging Local Plan. There are many other considerations that will be factored into land allocations and development management policies, including landscape designations, transportation links, flooding issues and any local housing issues and Neighbourhood Plans. Dover District enjoys large areas of highly attractive and protected landscapes including five internationally protected SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites and the Kent Downs AONB which covers a third of the district. Large areas along the eastern coastline and in the north east of the district are at risk of flooding, both tidal and fluvial. The district is also home to a rich range of heritage assets, high numbers of scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings and many conservation areas.
- 7.6 Finally, it is not within the remit of this Study to set out quantum of development appropriate for each tier of the hierarchy. However, the continued national policy emphasis on sustainable development means that housing development will, where possible, be concentrated in the three urban centres of the district, Dover, Deal and Sandwich, with new development in the rural areas focused on villages commensurate with their scale and position in the hierarchy, unless local factors, including flood risk and environmental designations, dictate otherwise.

APPENDIX A

DOVER CORE STRATEGY (2010) **Policy CP 1 Settlement Hierarchy**

The location and scale of development in the District must comply with the Settlement Hierarchy. The Hierarchy should also be used by infrastructure providers to inform decisions about the provision of their services.

Settlement Type	Function	Town/Village
Secondary Regional Centre	Major focus for development in the District; suitable for the largest scale developments	Dover (including the built-up parts of the parishes of River, Temple Ewell and Whitfield)
District Centre	Secondary focus for development in the District; suitable for urban scale development	Deal (including the built-up parts of the parishes of Sholden, Walmer and Great Mongeham)
Rural Service Centre	Main focus for development in the rural area; suitable for a scale of development that would reinforce its role as a provider of services to a wide rural area	Sandwich - established Aylesham - proposed*
Local Centre	Secondary focus for development in the rural area; suitable for a scale of development that would reinforce its role as a provider of services to its home and adjacent communities	Ash Capel-le-Ferne Eastry Shepherdsweil Wingham
Village	Tertiary focus for development in the rural area; suitable for a scale of development that would reinforce its role as a provider of services to essentially its home community	Alkham, East Langdon, East Studdal, Elvington, Eythorne, Goodnestone, Kingsdown, Great Mongeham, Lydden Nonington, Preston Ringwould, Ripple St. Margaret's, Staple West Hougham, Woodnesborough, Worth
Hamlet	All other settlements in the rural area; not suitable for further development unless it functionally requires a rural location	All other settlements

* The Structure Plan and saved District Local Plan policies propose village expansion and enhancement at Aylesham which would enable it to function as a Rural Service Centre.