

Housing Levels for Rural Settlements

Introduction

This paper considers the need and scope for housing at or adjoining Thanet's rural villages.

Policy context and background

National Planning Policy as expressed in the NPPF reflects government's aim of boosting the housing supply. It expects local planning authorities to

- use their evidence base to meet in full objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing.
- deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership create sustainable mixed communities and, where need is identified, set policies for meeting affordable housing need.
- apply (in rural areas) a responsive approach to local circumstances, with housing planned to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing (including through rural exception sites where appropriate).
- consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate provision of significant affordable housing to meet local needs.
- promote sustainable development in rural areas including locating housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. (The NPPF cites as an example where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby).
- avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances.

National Planning Practice Guidance emphasises the role of housing in supporting the broader sustainability of villages and smaller settlements. Specifically:

- Rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of local community facilities such as schools, local shops, public houses and places of worship.
- All settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development and blanket restrictions on housing/expansion should be avoided unless supported by robust evidence.
- Opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas.

In making provision for future housing the Council aims both to address objectively assessed need and realise its strategy for economic and employment growth.

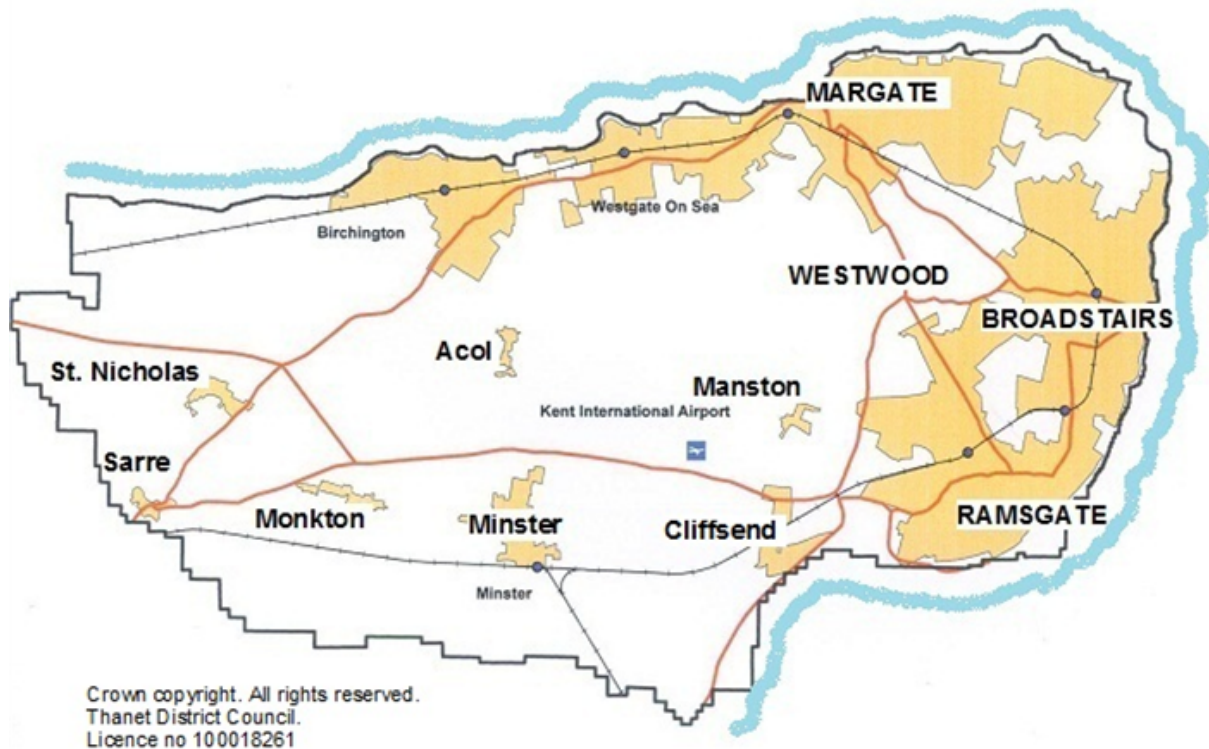
Consultation on issues and options and discussions with the housing development industry have identified the importance of housing choice and quality both for delivering planned provisions and for attracting and meeting the expectations of aspiring and entrepreneurial households. In particular engagement has shown that village housing is considered to represent an important component of this.

Rural needs surveys (2013) have identified need for more affordable homes and some specific market housing requirements to meet local needs in all rural parishes except Acol (Annex 1)

In addition to providing for the needs of village communities, an element of village housing will also help to secure a deliverable housing land supply and support the imperative of Thanet's social and economic regeneration.

Scope for Additional Housing

The settlement hierarchy topic paper demonstrates that the urban area containing the coastal towns and Westwood is generally well served by services including retail meeting day to day needs. The seven rural settlements (listed in the table below) largely function as dormitory settlements, but their proximity to the services and facilities of the urban area is variable.



Village	Estimated dwellings (household spaces)	Shops	Other shopping area facilities	Health facilities	Sports Facilities	Primary School	Ratio dwellings: shops
Acol	133	0	0	0	1	0	n/a
Cliffsend	806	3	0	0	0	0	268
Minster	1688	6	13	2	3	1	281

Monkton	398	0	0	0	1	1	n/a
St Nicholas	386	1	0	0	1	1	386
Manston	143	0	0	0	1	0	n/a
Sarre	97	0	0	0	?	0	n/a

Household spaces from 2011 census (except for Manston which is best estimate from OS MAP)

The table above shows the number of dwellings and community facilities in each of the rural villages. In terms of services, Minster, which is largest in terms of its number of homes, is also best served by facilities including 6 shops and other shopping area facilities.

Cliffsend, and St Nicholas, being smaller than Minster have fewer shops; although alongside Minster, have a ratio of between 268-386 dwellings per shop. Monkton, although of comparable size to St Nicholas, has no shop, probably due to its close proximity to the facilities at Minster.

The smallest settlements of Manston, Acol and Sarre have no shops (although each previously had a village shop/post office).

Annex 2 summarises bus services serving the rural settlements. This shows that, with the exception of Sarre, the rural settlements are generally well served with bus services. In addition there is a Sunday bus service at St Nicholas covering Canterbury, Sturry, Birchington Westgate, Margate, Broadstairs and Westwood.

Some executive homes have been provided within village confines at Sarre and Manston. Following allocation in the 2006 Local Plan, 100 new dwellings (incorporating affordable homes) have recently been completed in Minster.

Conclusions

1) Rural Housing to meet Local Needs

As a first principle policy should aim to make provision to meet local needs identified for individual rural villages within the settlement where they arise.

2) Rural housing to provide additional choice

Beyond local needs arising within individual parishes, some villages have potential to accommodate some additional housing to provide a degree of choice as part of the District's total housing provision.

In light of the following observations the scale of any such additional housing to provide locational choice within overall provisions for Thanet should have regard to the conclusions in bold below.

Acol, Sarre and Manston

These villages are poorly served with services and facilities required day to day by their residents. The table above suggests that compared with facilities in the larger villages, the scale of growth that might attract even basic services such as a single convenience shop at Acol, Sarre and Manston would be very substantial in proportion to their existing size and difficult for their existing communities to absorb.

At the villages of Acol, Sarre and Manston housing development should therefore be minor in scale and consistent with their form and historic scale of growth.

Minster Cliffsend, St Nicholas and Monkton

The larger settlements of Minster, Cliffsend and St Nicholas have some local shopping facilities albeit of variable scale. In addition, Monkton although currently having no village shop is of comparable size to St Nicholas and is located in proximity to the services at Minster. Each of these settlements except Cliffsend has its own primary school.

These villages are considered to be of sufficient size and sustainability to assimilate potentially higher levels of housing development than the other rural villages in Thanet without harm to their historic form and communities.

Minster, Cliffsend, St Nicholas, and Monkton are regarded as suitable settlements to search for suitable sites to accommodate an element of village housing within overall housing provision for the district. The appropriate scale of development and suitability of locations should be assessed in light of:

- Consistency with the size, form, historic character and historic scale of the particular village's growth.
- The level of supporting services available (or the prospects of new housing development enabling their provision).
- Prospects of establishing, and potential location of, a Thanet Parkway Railway station.

Annex 1 - Housing Needs indicated from Rural Needs Surveys 2013

Acol

None

Cliffsend

Up to 8 affordable homes.

Also need from 1 older person needing more suitable owner occ accommodation.

Manston

Need for up to 9 affordable homes (4 of which are older people households).

Minster

Need for up to 29 affordable homes. Also need for more suitable housing for 3 older owner occupiers

Monkton

Need for up to 2 homes for local households in need of affordable. Also need for 4 owner occupiers seeking more suitable open market homes.

St Nicholas at Wade with Sarre

Up to 17 affordable homes (5 of which are needed for older people).

Annex 2 - Bus Services Serving Thanet Villages

Frequent day and evening bus service (8) linking St Nicholas with the urban area centres on the north an east coast and with Westwood and with Canterbury.

Northern Cliffsend is served by an hourly six day service to Ramsgate, Broadstairs and Westwood (but not on Sundays) and Canterbury. (9)

Manston, Minster and Monkton are served by a 5 journey a day (except Sundays) service to Westwood and Canterbury.

Except Sundays, there are several journeys each day (38) linking Acol and Manston with Ramsgate, Broadstairs and Birchington.

There is one daily journey (38A) on weekdays linking St Nicholas, Minster, Acol and Manston with Ramsgate and Broadstairs.

Except on Sundays there are several journeys (42) per day linking Monkton, Minster and Cliffsend with Ramsgate.

Bus services (2/3 journeys a day) link St Nicholas, Monkton and Minster with Birchington, Margate, the QEQM hospital and Westwood (service 51)

On 3 weekdays there is one journey service linking Monkton, Minster, Manston and Acol with Westwood Cross. (E50)

Except on Sundays there is an hourly service linking Cliffsend with Ramsgate, Sandwich and Dover. (88/88A)

School services

2 way

Cliffsend, Minster, Acol, Birchington, Westgate, Margate & St Peters. (942)

Monkton, St Nicholas, Birchington, Westgate, Margate and S peters, (943)

Cliffsend Ramsgate, St Peters and Ellington School (947)

Birchington, Sarre, Minster, Monkton, North Cliffsend, Sandwich Technical College. (954)

Minster, Minster, Monkton, Broadstairs and Ramsgate. (965)

1 way

Charles Dickens School to St Nicholas, Monkton, Minster and northern Cliffsend. (940)

St Peters, Margate, Birchington to Acol & Minster, North Cliffsend (944)

Source Thanet Public Transport map December 2011

Notes from above village by village

NB there are no Sunday services except where shown below.

Acol to Ramsgate. Broad & Birchington, Westwood Cross.

Cliffsend north to Ramsgate, Broadstairs & Westwood, Canterbury Cliffsend, Sandwich & Dover.

Manston to Westwood, Canterbury, Ramsgate, Broadstairs.

Minster to Westwood and Canterbury, Ramsgate & Broadstairs, Birchington, Margate QEQM hospital.

Monkton to Westwood and Canterbury, Ramsgate, Birchington, Margate QEQM hospital.

Sarre None.

St Nicholas –Canterbury, Sturry, Birchington Westgate, Margate, Broadstairs, Westwood, QEQM and Ramsgate. Note this a Sunday service covering all destinations except Ramsgate and QEQM).

Annex 3 – Village Services

Acol	Cliffsend	Manston	Minster	Monkton	Sarre & St Nicholas	
Shops and Commercial Services						
Convenience shop	0	1	0	2	0	0
Post Office	0	1	0	1	0	1
Other Shops	0	1	0	3	0	0
Public House	1	1	1	3	1	3
restaurants/cafes	0	1	0	11	0	0
Bank	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cashpoint	0	1	0	2	0	0
Other Shopping Area Services	0	0	0	13	0	0
Petrol Filling Station	0	1	0	1	0	0

Health & Wellbeing						
Doctor surgery/health centre	0	0	0	1	0	0
Dentist surgery	0	0	0	1	0	0
Community halls	1	1	1	4	1	1
Leisure facilities	0	0	1		0	0
Cultural buildings	0	0	2	1	0	1
Community IT facilities	0	0	0	1	0	0
Indoor and outdoor sports facilities	1	0	1	3	1	1
Playing field	1	1	1	1	1	1
Playground	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pre school/nursery/crèche	0	1	1	3	1	1
Care home	0	0	0	0	0	0

Place of worship	1	1	2	2	2	1
Public Library/service	1	1	1	1	0	1
Museum	0	0	0	1	0	0
Visitor attraction	0	1	0	1	1	0
Other (please specify)						
Estimated population	250					
Key						
currently for sale						
mobile/fortnightly library						
community run						
In addition to above Minster has vet, funeral directors, hotels, B & B						

Source of above = 2012 village audits