

Objective A. Building a Strong, Competitive Economy & Ensuring the Vitality of the Village Centre



The village has a variety of business premises but this Plan recognises that some may be unable to support economically viable employment for the full term of the Plan. The Plan will therefore endeavour to support any potential appropriate long-term employment opportunities. New small-scale business development in the village will be encouraged, wherever possible. A number of villagers already work from home and the Plan aims to encourage this by supporting measures that work towards good internet and communication networks in existing and any new development. Most wage earners work outside the village. Plans to increase the size of any Village Business Park are to be welcomed if they help to secure more work for local people.

Policy A1

The loss of business premises used for A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 uses to other uses where this requires planning permission will not be permitted unless:

- a) it can be demonstrated that the use of the premises for these purposes is no longer viable; or
- b) the proposed alternative use would provide benefits for the local economy and community equal to or greater than the current use.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) section 1.19 states that 'planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth'.

Policy A2

Proposals for the development of new B1 business uses and Live-Work Units, within the built up area boundary of Bridge, will be permitted provided they:

- i. do not lead to the loss of A1 shops or of community facilities;
- ii. do not harm local residential amenity; and
- iii. comply with other relevant policies in the Canterbury District Local Plan.

The NPPF (1.21) states that the Plan should “facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit”.

Policy A3

To support the proposed conversion of redundant farm buildings at Great Pett Farm to units within use Class B1 appropriate to the rural setting, and within the current footprint, to provide local work opportunities, as long as this does not lead to increased road development and does not significantly increase traffic within the village.

Project A1

To support residents with their plans to work from home by encouraging the spread of high speed internet access throughout the parish by maintaining and upgrading existing facilities when technology allows and by supporting the introduction of the most modern new communication systems within the village.

The Canterbury District Local Plan (CDLP) section 3.49 states that “There are also potentially quite significant benefits to be gained in relation to reducing traffic congestion, hence improving air quality. In terms of the City Council’s vision for the District, therefore, home-working is supported.”

Project A2

To support the presence of a Post Office within the village.