

**Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2016 Examination**

**Statement of Common Ground**

**As agreed between**

**Maidstone Borough Council**

**and**

**Medway Council**

**July 2016**

## INTRODUCTION

1. This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared jointly by Maidstone Borough Council ('MBC') and Medway Council .
2. This Statement sets out confirmed points of agreement between MBC and Medway Council on the key cross boundary issues with regard to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2016 ('the Local Plan') and its supporting evidence base, with the aim of assisting the Inspector during the Examination of the Local Plan. It should be read in conjunction with the Duty to Co-operate Compliance Statement (SUB 008) which was submitted with the Local Plan.

## AGREED MATTERS

3. The following matters are agreed:

### **Objectively assessed need for housing**

4. The Local Plan provides for Maidstone borough's full objectively assessed need for housing at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 base date within Maidstone borough's boundaries. It is agreed that MBC does not require Medway Council to accommodate a proportion of its objectively assessed need for housing.
5. Medway Council is preparing a Local Plan to cover the period 2012 to 2035. Medway Council undertook public consultation on an Issues and Options Local Plan (2012-35) in January and February 2016. The Local Development Scheme (November 2015) indicates that the forthcoming stages are for a Preferred Options consultation in January/February 2017, Publication (Regulation 19) consultation in November/December 2017, submission of the Local Plan in March 2018 with adoption to follow in December 2018.

6. It is Medway Council's intention to meet its full objectively assessed need for housing within its borough boundaries; its Issues and Options Local Plan confirms at paragraph 7.10 that "the council is embarking on the plan preparation process with the intention of meeting the objectively assessed needs identified for Medway's administrative area."

#### **Duty to Co-operate**

7. The Duty to Co-operate Compliance Statement (SUB 008) submitted with the Local Plan chronicles the extent and nature of positive engagement with Medway Council during the preparation of the Local Plan.
8. It is agreed that MBC has fully complied with the Duty to Co-operate with Medway Council during the preparation of the Local Plan with respect to matters of strategic importance between the two local authorities.
9. It is agreed that the two councils will continue to co-operate and work together on strategic cross-boundary issues.

#### **North Kent Environment Planning Group (NKEPG)**

10. A small part of Maidstone Borough, within the Kent Downs AONB, lies within 6km of the Medway Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area. The Local Plan allocates two gypsy and traveller sites (to provide a total of seven pitches) within the 6km zone; no other site allocations are proposed in this area.

11. The Habitats Regulations Assessment (ENV 016) prepared in association with the Local Plan concludes at paragraph 5.4.5 as follows;

*The above two site allocations are located south of the M2/A2. In line with findings identified in Point 5 and 6 of paragraph 5.4.2, it is considered unlikely that these residential site allocations will result in likely significant effects resulting from increases in recreational pressure within 6km of the North Kent designated site due to their location south of the M2/A2 and the small provision of new residential development. Further to this, Maidstone Council is not a partner in the NKEPG strategic mitigation package, suggesting that Natural England do not consider Maidstone Borough to be within the core catchment for recreational pressure to the designated sites. This impact pathway can be screened out both alone and in-combination with other projects and plans.*

12. Natural England, in its representation to the Local Plan (R19568), advised that this position should be confirmed with the NKEPG authorities which neighbour MBC, namely Medway Council and Swale Borough Council.
13. Medway Council notes that the HRA has properly considered the potential for likely significant impacts on the Medway Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area through recreational pressure arising from the site allocations in the Local Plan. Medway Council accepts the conclusions reached .

#### **MATTERS NOT AGREED**

14. [none]

## AGREEMENT

Signed On behalf of Maidstone Borough Council		
Name & position	Signature	Date
Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development	R. L. Jarman	13/7/16

Signed On behalf of Medway Council		
Name & position	Signature	Date
Catherine Smith, Planning Manager - Policy	C. Smith	15 JULY 2016

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