

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

SESSION 10A – YALDING REPRESENTATIONS AND SIMILAR ISSUES

Inspector's Agenda with Matters, Issues, and Questions

We note that many of the questions in this section are directed to Maidstone Borough Council, however we have had sight of the DRAFT Strategic Flood Risk Assessment prepared by JBA Consulting, version 2 dated October 2016 so we have provided comments to those questions where we believe our views will be useful.

RMX1(4) Former Syngenta Works

Qn10.4 Is there scope to improve Hampstead Lane in association with new development and should that be a policy criterion?

- 2.7 **The Environment Agency (Representation R19446) objects to the residential development on the Syngenta site on the grounds of flood risk. It considers the Strategic Flood risk assessment 2008 to be out of date, would require that adequate flood mitigation be demonstrated before supporting residential development, and doubts that sufficient mitigation could be incorporated that did not increase flood risk to existing developed areas in the vicinity.**

EA - If site RMX1(4) is to be allocated and residential development is included within the allocation, it is necessary to improve access to an area within Flood Zone 1. As described in the DRAFT Site Assessment Report prepared by JBA Consulting, version 2 dated October 2016, a new road would be required to convey residents from Yalding Railway Station to Station Road. Alternatives could be considered to raise the existing level of Hampstead Lane and provide flood defences to existing property south of Hampstead Lane. This would contribute to safe access from the Syngenta site and reduce flood risk to existing dwellings. This should be considered essential if residential development is to be allocated to the Syngenta site.

- 2.8 In response to a written question from the Inspector question MBC has reported in a letter dated 18 July 2016 that:

'The Council has commissioned Jeremy Benn Associates to undertake a review of its existing SFRA (2008, Mott MacDonald) and to update any sections now out-of-date because of changes in planning legislation, policy and guidance, more recent flood events, and to take account of the recently completed Medway catchment flood risk modelling undertaken for the Environment Agency. This will also include climate change allowances as per the updated National Planning Practice Guidance of February 2016. Once completed in draft the report will be shared with the Environment Agency with a view to reaching a Statement of Common Ground in advance of the examination hearings. The consultant has also been commissioned to explore detailed site specific mitigation measures for the site allocations where the Environment Agency has expressed some concerns, including the Syngenta site at Yalding. Both reports are expected to be completed and published in advance of the examination hearings.'

Qn10.6 Would the Syngenta allocation be consistent with national policy for flood risk in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)?

EA - The site is wholly within Flood Zone 3a and at high risk to flooding. The majority of the site along with Hampstead Lane, was inundated with floodwater in 2013. Previous uses of the site were classified as less vulnerable, as described in Table 2 of the Technical Guidance to the NPPF. Table 1 of the Technical Guidance describes the policy aims for Flood Zone 3a which includes,

“Relocating existing development to land within flood zones with a lower probability of flooding.”

The DRAFT Site Assessment Report V2 confirms there is a slight worsening of flood risk and in our view, there is a high probability the site should not be considered favourably against part 2 of the Exception test. Consequently, the proposal is contrary to guidance within the NPPF.