

AGENDA

STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING



Date: Tuesday 8 September 2015

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Burton (Chairman), English,
Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, Harwood,
Paine, Springett, de Wiggondene and
Mrs Wilson

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Urgent Items

Continued Over/:

Issued on 28 August 2015

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**Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone Kent ME15 6JQ**

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5.	Disclosures by Members and Officers	
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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18 AUGUST 2015 ADJOURNED TO 19 AUGUST 2015

Present – **Councillor Burton (Chairman), and**
18 August **Councillors English, Mrs Gooch, D Mortimer,**
2015): **Paine, Patterson, Springett, Mrs Stockell and Mrs**
 Wilson

Also Present: **Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Clark,**
 Garland, Munford, Mrs Ring, Round,
 Sargeant and Thick

57. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors de Wiggondene, Mrs Grigg and Harwood.

58. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

The following substitute members were noted:

- Councillor Mrs Stockell for Councillor de Wiggondene
- Councillor D Mortimer for Councillor Mrs Grigg
- Councillor Paterson for Councillor Harwood

59. **URGENT ITEMS**

The Chairman stated that, in his opinion, the following should be taken as urgent items as they contained further information relating to items on the agenda:

Item 12 – Site Allocation Policies for New Land Allocations –
correction to the site area at Bentletts Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford and a late representation advocating allocation of a site in Green Lane, Langley, The Brishings, for residential development.

Item 14 – Site Allocations – H1(10) South of Sutton Road, Langley
– representations and site plan and criteria options.

Item 15 – Landscapes of Local value (supplementary report) –
representations.

Item 18 – Results of the VISUM Transport Modelling –

- Letter from Kent County Council (KCC) dated 23 July 2015 and Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) response dated 31 July 2015

- Letter and enclosures from KCC dated 13 August 2015
- Letter of response from MBC to KCC dated 17 August 2015
- Email and enclosures from KCC dated 18 August 2015

Item 19 – Employment Land Allocations – representation

Item 21 – Mixed Use Site Allocations – representation

60. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

The following Councillors were in attendance reserving their right to speak on the following items:

- Councillor Munford – 12, 13, 14, 15 and 20
- Councillor Thick – 10 and 15
- Councillor Round – 10 and 15
- Councillor Clark – all items
- Councillor Mrs Blackmore – all items
- Councillor Sargeant – all items
- Councillor Garland – from 9:15pm as an observer

61. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The Chairman Councillor Burton, disclosed an Other Significant Interest in Site H1(10) Land South of Sutton Road, Langley, item 14, and explained he would withdraw from the meeting for this item. He informed the Committee in his absence and the absence of the Vice Chairman, Councillor Springett would take the chair for this item.

62. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

All Committee members declared they had been lobbied on all items on the agenda.

63. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

64. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR NOTING

RESOLVED: That the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

65. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 JULY 2015 ADJOURNED TO 23 JULY 2015

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2015. Adjourned to 23 July 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed subject to the following amendment, that 'with an indicative yield of 6 units' be removed from the decision on Site H03 – 220 – Hubbards Lane, Loose and Boughton Monchelsea.

66. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

67. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor Cheryl Taylor Maggio, Chairman Langley Parish Council, asked the following question of the Chairman:

"Housing completions are shown in the Reconsideration report as running at 585 dwellings per annum (2339 in total April 2011 to March 2015), can the Borough Council advise how many of these completions arise from previously unidentified windfall sites, and if not why not?"

The Chairman responded as follows:

There were 2,341 dwellings completed in the four years from 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2015. Of these, **692** were built on 'windfall' sites.

A windfall site is a brownfield site which has not been previously identified through the Local Plan process, for example by being allocated in the adopted Local Plan (2000), identified in the Urban Capacity Studies (2002 and 2006) and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (2008, 2013 & 2014).

The number of completions on windfall sites has been declining over recent years. In 2009/10, there were **266** completions on such sites. In 2014/15 the equivalent figure was some **135** dwellings.

Consistent with this downwards trend, the future supply from large windfall sites (that is, sites of 5 or more dwellings) can be expected to become more modest because;

- Sites will be allocated in the Local Plan, so fewer sites will be 'unidentified'
- There has been a meticulous search for urban brownfield sites to allocate through the Local Plan process. These are exactly the type of sites which would have counted as windfall sites previously
- The Local Plan identified two 'broad locations' for additional dwellings on brownfield land, namely the Town Centre for 600 dwellings (and Councillors have indicated this should be raised to 700) and Invicta Barracks for 1,300 new homes.

Based on analysis of the available data, a windfall allowance of 114 dwellings per annum for the last 9 years of the plan is considered to be 'realistic' as required by the NPPF.

Councillor Cheryl Taylor Maggio asked the following supplementary question:

"Is the Chairman aware that a windfall allowance of 210 properties per annum is fully justified on the basis of current planning guidance and recently achieved windfall completion levels, and if that windfall allowance was adopted it would not be necessary to release some 850 green field dwellings, such as the site H1(10) Sutton Road, while still achieving the required housing target."

The Chairman responded as follows:

There are two aspects to your supplementary question, the latter part I cannot directly answer because I have declared an interest in that site, so I ask that you receive a written response from Officers. I think the first part of your question is fairly fully explained, the logic and the rationale, in the main answer to your question.

Councillor Simon Reeves, Langley Parish Council, asked the following question of the Chairman:

"The Landscapes of Local Value (Supplementary Report) states at para 1.3 "where development sites allocated in the Draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan fall within landscapes of local value, specific policy criteria will mitigate the impact of development on the landscape". Is not the Borough Council as ever putting the 'cart before the horse' and should not an analysis of local landscape quality inform the selection of suitable development sites in accordance with an overall strategy to achieve sustainable development options?"

The Chairman responded as follows:

Analyses of local landscape quality have preceded every stage of Local Plan preparation, including early work with Kent County Council and others to identify Special Landscape Areas (SLA) in the original Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000. For the 2014 consultation draft of the emerging Maidstone Local Plan, a comprehensive Landscape Character Assessment study was carried out by consultants Jacobs for the Council which reported in March 2012, and subsequently a Landscape Capacity Study by the same consultants was published in January 2015.

These studies comprised a detailed analysis of local landscape character and sensitivity in the light of central government guidance, primarily through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which requires a criterion based approach to any local landscape designation. As a result of the application of criteria, as discussed in the SPST Committee report on 14th July, Landscapes of Local Value (LLV) are recommended to form part of Policy SP5 The Countryside, which seeks to protect the countryside generally, and the areas delineated in particular. Specific development management policies will then inform the determination of any subsequent applications for these areas, in addition to the general and specific protection afforded by Policy SP5.

Councillor Simon Reeves asked the following supplementary question:

"Should the borough council not be ashamed at the amount of effort the 41 parish councils of Maidstone have put into responding to seemingly endless consultation and taking time off work to attend copious workshops on the issue over the past 2 to 3 years only for their views to be ignored."

The Chairman responded as follows:

Last year, in my capacity as Cabinet Member, I actually attended in excess of 26 of those direct liaison meetings and I can assure you personally that those comments received were actually fully noted and have been used throughout the process of consideration and I think that the work with the parishes and other groups is on-going.

68. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - SITE ALLOCATION POLICIES FOR NEW LAND ALLOCATIONS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Development containing specific policies for three sites to be approved for further public consultation (Regulation 18) and the urgent update report tabled at the meeting which included an amendment to the site area for Bentletts Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford to 1.94ha and a net density of 5.15 dwellings/ha.

Members raised concerns regarding the number of units for site H1(X) Hubbards Lane, Loose and H1(XX) Bentletts Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford.

The Committee was reminded that the number of units in the policies was indicative and detailed planning applications could be more or less, and would be considered on their merits at the time of application.

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft policy for Land North of Heath Road (Older's Field), Coxheath be approved for Regulation 18 public consultation (55 dwellings and 2.34ha strategic open space).

Voting:

For: 8 Against: 0 Abstain: 1

2. That the draft policy for Hubbards Lane, Loose be approved for Regulation 18 public consultation (8 dwellings) as an exception to the local plan settlement hierarchy.

Voting:

For: 9

3. That the draft policy for Bentletts Yard, Claygate Road, Laddingford, be approved for Regulation 18 public consultation (10 dwellings) as an exception to the local plan settlement hierarchy.

Voting:

For: 9

69. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - POLICY H1(12) HAYNES, ASHFORD ROAD AND FURTHER MODIFICATIONS TO POLICY DM24 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Committee considered the report which was included to advise the Committee of an error in the referencing of sites in the reports taken at the meeting on 23 July 2015 and to advise the Committee of the High Court Ruling on vacant building credit and the threshold at which affordable housing could be sought.

The Committee agreed that the Affordable Housing Policy should include a reference to zero affordable housing yield for fully serviced care homes and nursing homes.

RESOLVED:

1. That site H1(12) Haynes, Ashford Road, Maidstone for 200 dwellings be deleted from the draft local plan, to reflect the fact that the site is no longer available for residential development; and to incorporate its deletion in the further public consultation on key changes to policies and site allocations (Regulation 18).
2. That reference to the site at H1(12) Haynes, Ashford Road, Maidstone be deleted from draft policy DM24 and its supporting text, and that the cross reference to the Springfield site be confirmed as policy H1(11) in policy DM24:

DM24(1)(i) Maidstone urban area 30% with the exception of policy H1(11) Springfield, Royal Engineers Road 20%.

3. That the removal of references to vacant building credit and the exemption of small developments from making affordable housing contributions following a High Court ruling and consequent amendments to the National Planning Practice Guidance be noted.
4. That the modifications to policy DM24 Affordable Housing, set out in Section 4 of the report dated 18 August 2015, be approved for inclusion in the Regulation 19 consultation version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

5. That Officers be instructed to provide additional policy wording to recognise zero affordable housing yield for fully serviced care homes and nursing homes.

Voting:

For: 9

70. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN SITE ALLOCATIONS - H1(10) SOUTH OF SUTTON ROAD

The Chairman referred the Committee to the urgent update dated 18 August 2015 and, having disclosed an Other Significant Interest, left the meeting at 7.27pm whilst the item was discussed.

Councillor Springett took the Chair.

Councillors took five minutes to read the urgent update.

The Committee was reminded that this item had been brought back to them as a deferred item from the meeting on 23 July 2015 pending Officers reviewing the site boundaries and the addition of an anti-coalescence belt.

The Committee noted the representations tabled at the meeting as urgent updates including letters from Kent County Council (KCC), Langley Parish Council, a Langley resident and a developer and the Officer comments in response.

The Committee was reminded that Officers were trying to take this site back to Regulation 18 consultation when KCC, Southern Water, the Environment Agency etc. would be able to respond with any concerns. Officers intended to bring the transport policies to the Committee at their meeting of 8 September 2015.

The urgent update also included details of the revised criteria 2 and 14 to specifically refer to surface water drainage mitigation and criteria 19 regarding bus priority measures on the A274.

The Committee considered two options for defining the site boundaries, together with site allocation policies for further consultation (Regulation 18) and discussed the merits of open space and community facilities against the importance of design quality.

The Committee heard the revised criteria had been worded to enable a design led scheme that will ensure appropriate transition between the urban area and the countryside. It was also explained that the Local Plan policy options for the adopted Local Plan provided the necessary criteria for the provision of anti-coalescence. Policy SP5 provided landscape

protection outside of the criteria and it was therefore considered that a further policy on anti-coalescence would not strengthen the Council's position.

The Committee discussed concerns that the area on the site map showing as reserved for community infrastructure would be used for housing if it was not used to build a school. It was agreed this should be protected from any development other than Community Infrastructure development.

The density of the housing on the site was also raised as a concern by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That draft policy H1(10) South of Sutton Road, Langley be approved for Regulation 18 public consultation in accordance with the policy wording set out in Appendix 3 of the Urgent Update dated 18 August 2015, to include an indicative figure of up to 800 units with amended wording stating that the red and white striped area, shown on the Option A Site Plan in Appendix III of the report dated 18 August 2015, be used only as open green space if no plans come forward to use it for community infrastructure provision so that the area to the east of the public right of way is not built on.

Voting:

For: 6 Against: 2 Abstain: 0

71. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - LANDSCAPES OF LOCAL VALUE (SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT)

The Chairman returned to the meeting and took the Chair at 8.59pm.

The Committee was referred to the urgent update for this item which included five items of correspondence from various interested parties.

The Committee was reminded that the supplementary report in the agenda papers took account of the report presented to them at their meeting of 14 July 2015 on Landscapes of Local Value. This had been deferred for further consideration, with specific regard to the Low Weald. The Committee was also provided with a larger scale map as requested.

Concern was raised regarding the omission of the Low Weald area from the map showing the proposed areas of Landscapes of Local Value. Members felt that the Low Weald area could score as high as other areas shown on the map using the criteria shown in the report. The Committee was informed that the methodology used demonstrated this was not the case, however it was possible there were small pockets of the Low Weald that could score higher. It was also explained that if areas already protected through other means were included in this policy it would have to be justified why these areas needed extra protection and was likely to weaken the case at the inspection stage of the Local Plan.

Further concern was raised regarding the omission of two fields on Cripple Street, Loose from the Loose Valley area and it was agreed these should be included.

The Committee queried why the Len Valley extended further than the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which did not include Harrietsham and Lenham and asked that further work be carried out on these areas.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Officer responses to the representations received during the public consultation on the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014 (Regulation 18 consultation) for policy SP5(6) Landscapes of Local Value, as set out in Appendix B of the report dated 18 August 2015, be approved.

Voting:

For: 9

2. That the amendments to the draft policy SP5(6) and the supporting text for Landscapes of Local Value, as set out under Section 4 of the report dated 18 August 2015 "Preferred Option", be approved for further public consultation (Regulation 18 consultation).

Voting:

For: 9

3. That the Greensand Ridge, Len Valley and Medway Valley areas as identified on the Landscapes of Local Value Map in Appendix C of the report dated 18 August 2015 be approved for further public consultation (Regulation 18 consultation).

Voting:

For: 9

4. That the area shown as the Loose Valley, on the Landscapes of Local Value map in Appendix C of the report dated 18 August 2015, be extended to include the two fields off Cripple Street, Loose on the grounds that their location and high quality form an integral part of the topography of the Loose Valley.

Voting:

For: 8 Against: 0 Abstain: 1

5. That further work be undertaken on the setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), shown on the Landscapes of Local Value map in Appendix C of the report dated 18 August 2015, in particular in relation to the inclusion of the Lenham Vale, Court Lodge Road Harrietsham, Land North of Cuckoo Wood, Sandling Lane Maidstone and fields at Barty Farm, north of Barty House Bearsted.

Voting:

For: 6 Against: 0 Abstain: 3

6. That a re-examination of the area of the Low Weald, excluding SSSIs, be carried out to establish if areas within the Low Weald should be included in the Landscapes of Local Value policy.

Voting:

For: 7 Against: 0 Abstain: 2

72. LONG MEETING

Prior to 10.30pm the Committee considered whether to adjourn at 10.30pm or to continue until 11.00pm if necessary

RESOLVED: That the meeting should continue until 11.00pm if necessary.

73. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

At 10.30pm the Committee considered whether to adjourn the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the meeting be adjourned until 5pm on Wednesday 19 August 2015 when the remaining items on the agenda would be discussed.

74. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30pm to 10.30pm

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 AUGUST 2015 ADJOURNED FROM 18 AUGUST 2015

Present **Councillor Burton (Chairman), and**
on 19 **Councillors English, Mrs Gooch, D Mortimer, Munford,**
August **Paine, Paterson, Springett, Mrs Stockell, de**
2015: **Wiggondene and Mrs Wilson**

Also Present: **Councillors Sargeant, Thick and Willis**

75. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Grigg and Harwood.

Councillors Paine and de Wiggondene sent apologies for lateness.

Councillor Mrs Gooch apologised for having to leave the meeting early.

76. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were noted:

- Councillor Stockell for Councillor de Wiggondene until his arrival
- Councillor D Mortimer for Councillor Mrs Grigg
- Councillor Munford for Councillor Mrs Gooch from 7pm

77. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman stated, that in his opinion, the following document should be taken as an urgent item, along with those urgent items accepted 18 August, as it contained further information relating to items on the agenda:

- Summary chart from Amey presented to the Joint Transportation Board to assist with item 10 – Results of the VISUM Transport Modelling.

78. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

The following Visiting Members were in attendance reserving their right to speak:

- Councillor Sargeant
- Councillor Thick

- Councillor Munford from 6.45pm
- Councillor Willis from 8.10pm

79. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The Chairman disclosed an Other Significant Interest in Site H1(10) – Land South of Sutton Road, Langley. He informed the Committee that he would withdraw from the meeting should this site be discussed and Councillor Springett would take the Chair.

80. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

All Committee Members declared they had been lobbied on all items on the agenda.

81. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

82. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - FUTURE LOCATIONS FOR HOUSING GROWTH

The Committee was informed that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicated the Council was required to demonstrate that it had a supply of deliverable sites for a five year period. Policy H3 related to Future Locations for Housing Growth, also known as Broad Locations for growth, for years 6-10 and 11-15 of the plan period. Three locations had been identified in the policy which went out to public consultation Regulation 18 in March 2014:

- Maidstone Town Centre – 700 dwellings
- Invicta Park Barracks – 1300 dwellings
- Lenham – 1500 dwellings

The report assessed the responses made following the consultation and the Committee was asked to consider whether any changes to the policy should be made. The Committee was informed that Officers wished to proceed with master planning, in consultation with Parish Councils and other stakeholders.

The Committee was reminded the indicative number of dwellings for Maidstone Town Centre was increased from 600 to 700 at their meeting of 14 July adjourned to 23 July 2015.

It was confirmed by Officers that the dwelling numbers for the Town Centre should not be over-loaded, however a figure of 700 dwellings would be defensible at inspection.

The Committee was informed Officers were notified by developers when offices were to be converted to residential use through the permitted right to develop, and the numbers had been included in the supply figures for the Local Plan. The Committee was advised increasing the number of

dwellings for the Town Centre would need to be justified and increasing the figure further could put the Local Plan timetable back as a result.

Concern was raised regarding the allocation of public open space for both the Lenham sites and the Invicta Park Barrack site. The Committee agreed that the sites in Lenham might be impacted upon by the changes to the Landscapes of Local Value and that it was important that the sensitivities of both the Lenham sites and the Invicta Park Barrack site be taken into account when master planning took place. The Committee also agreed that during the master planning process, which should be undertaken immediately, both Ward and Parish Councillors be included as full partners.

The Committee was informed that there were no plans to close Maidstone Prison and there was no firm date for the closure of East Sutton Park prison, so neither site could be included as a Broad Location in the Local Plan.

RESOLVED:

1. That the broad locations be approved for incorporation into the Regulation 19 version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan with indicative dwelling figures as follows:
 - Maidstone Town Centre – 700 dwellings
 - Invicta Park Barracks – 1300 dwellings
 - Lenham – 1500 dwellings

Voting: For: 9

2. That the amendments to policies H3, H3(2) and H3(3) set out in section 4 of the report dated 18 August 2015 be approved for incorporation into the Regulation 19 version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

Voting: For: 9

3. That the master planning in relation to Invicta Park Barracks should commence immediately; and, the master planning in relation to Lenham should commence immediately after the results of the additional work on the Landscapes of Local Value (from 18 August 2015) are available with Ward and Parish Councillors involved as full partners in the master planning process.

Voting: For: 9

4. That the wording in point 6 of policy H3(3) Lenham 'Provision of publicly accessible open place, including natural and semi natural open space, as proven necessary, and/or contributions' be added to policy H3(2) Invicta Park Barracks.

Voting: For: 9

83. REFERENCE FROM MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD - RESULTS OF THE VISUM TRANSPORT MODELLING

RESOLVED: That the reference from the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board, dated 22 July 2015, be noted.

84. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - RESULTS OF THE VISUM TRANSPORT MODELLING

The Committee agreed that the results of the transport modelling were for noting.

The Committee discussed the recommendation from the Joint Transport Board (JTB) and considered the concerns it raised. The Committee considered the recommendation was clear but felt it was important that Officers were able to do further work on transport policies, taking into account the JTB recommendation, while maintaining the ability to report back to this Committee if it was found they were unable to *not* disrupt traffic flows.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee notes the results of the transport modelling undertaken jointly by MBC and KCC and its implications for the preparation of the Integrated Transport Strategy and the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.
2. That the Committee's broad support be noted of the Maidstone Joint Transport Board's recommendation dated 23 July 2015 and requests Officers to do further work on transport policy development.

Voting: For: 9

85. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN - EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATIONS

The Committee was reminded of the urgent update of 18 August 2015 which included an email from the Chief Executive of Gallagher Group and the Officers' response.

The Committee was advised that the report related to land allocations for class B uses such as offices, warehouses and industrial units and included representations to the policy received during Regulation 18 consultation together with suggested responses. The report focussed mainly on Junction 8 of the M20 as a site to fill the shortfall in the allocation of employment land in the Draft Local Plan, which needed to be underpinned by evidence that the land was the right type and form of land and in the right location.

Junction 8 provided two principal sites, Waterside Park and Woodcut Farm with Woodcut Farm considered to be the better site in terms of size, character and ability to mitigate development.

The Committee heard that by allocating Woodcut Farm as an employment site in the Local Plan it would provide an opportunity to mitigate any adverse impacts of development in this area.

The Committee was informed, even if this area was included in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it would be an exception site due to the need to meet the employment needs of the Borough.

The Committee discussed concerns of developing employment sites in this area and how any adverse impact could be mitigated through strong policy criteria including undeveloped buffers, minimising excavation on the land, control over heights, size and position of buildings, landscape and visual impact assessments and Section 106 agreements and other legal agreements to ensure the on-going management of landscape buffers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the officer responses to the representations submitted during the public consultation on the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014 for Policy EMP1, set out in Appendix A of the report dated 18 August 2015 be approved.
2. That the amendments to Policy EMP1 set out in Appendix D, be approved for incorporation into the Regulation 19 version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.
3. That the site allocation policy and plan for Land at Woodcut Farm set out in Appendices B and C of the report dated 18 August 2015 be approved for Regulation 18 consultation subject to the following additions (in **bold text**) and deletions (in ~~strike through~~ text):

Design and Layout

- 1 The proposals create a spacious parkland setting for development through the addition of substantial internal landscaping which will help break up the visual appearance of the development in particular in views from the AONB; buildings will cover not more than 40% of the developed site area

2 The development proposals will respect the topography of the site by minimising the need for site excavation

- 2 3** Landscape buffers of at least 15m in width are established along the site's boundaries to M20 and to Musket Lane which will also help

secure the setting to Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II listed) and the amenity of residential properties at Chestnuts and White Heath. The development will have a landscaped frontage to A20

3 4 An area of 9ha to the north and north west of Woodcut Farm is secured as an undeveloped landscape area including the addition of a landscape buffer of at least 30m along the eastern boundary. Future management of this area will be secured by means of a legal agreement **and maintained in perpetuity**

4 5 Larger footprint buildings are accommodated in the field to the east of the stream up to a maximum unit size of 10,000sqm with building ridge heights not to exceed ~~14m~~ **12m**. Units should be orientated end- on predominant views to and from the AONB

5 6 Development on the field to the west of the stream comprises smaller units with graded building heights that take account of the site's topography with building heights not exceeding 8m. The siting, scale and detailed design of development must have regard to Woodcut Farmhouse (Grade II) and its setting

Landscape and ecology

6 7 The development proposals are designed to take into account the results of a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) undertaken in accordance with the principles of current guidance. The assessment will specifically address the impact of development on views to and from the North Downs AONB escarpment. **This will include environmental enhancements of the wider landscape beyond the allocation boundaries using the mechanism of a S106 agreement.**

7 8 The development proposals are designed to take account of the results of a phase 1 habitat survey and any species specific surveys that may as a result be necessary, together with any necessary mitigation and **significant** enhancement measures

Archaeology

8 9 The proposals are designed to take account of the archaeological interest on the site as revealed through appropriate survey

Access

9 10 Vehicular access to the site will be from A20 Ashford Road

Highways

10 11 Development will contribute, as proven necessary through a Transport Assessment, to improvement at the following junctions:

- I. The M20 Junction 8 (including the west-bound on-slip and merge)
- II. The A20 Ashford Road/M20 link road roundabout
- III. The A20 Ashford Road/Penford Hill junction
- IV. The A20 Ashford Road/Eyhorne Street/Great Danes Hotel access; and
- V. The Willingdon Street/A20 Ashford Road junction

~~11~~ **12** Development will deliver a significant package of sustainable transport measures to secure access to the site, including the provision of a subsidised bus route, and must be supported by the implementation of a Travel Plan.

Voting: For: 5 Against: 2 Abstain: 1

86. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned for 15 minutes.

87. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN - GYPSY & TRAVELLER SITE ALLOCATIONS

Councillor Munford substituted for Councillor Mrs Gooch, who had left the meeting. Councillor de Wiggondene joined the meeting and Councillor Mrs Stockell, who was substituting for Councillor de Wiggondene left the meeting.

Both Councillor Munford and Councillor de Wiggondene confirmed they had no declarations to make and had been lobbied on all items on the agenda.

The Committee heard that the Council had a duty to provide locations for Gypsy and Traveller communities. Seven sites had been submitted as part of the Regulation 18 consultation in March 2014. The report included the representations made during the consultation and the Officer responses to them. A further call for sites did not yield any further sites and Officers had pursued other solutions by searching sites put forward for other uses. Nine sites were recommended for inclusion in the Local Plan which still left a shortfall of 45 pitches.

The Committee discussed the inclusion of temporary site numbers and heard that these sites had been considered, but had been granted temporary consent as permanent consent could not be granted as it was considered it would cause significant harm to the landscape.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Officer responses to the representations submitted during the public consultation on the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan

(Regulation 18) for Policy GT1 Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations, set out in Appendix A of the report dated 18 August 2015, be approved.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstain: 1

2. That the amendments to Policy GT1 set out in Appendix B of the report dated 18 August 2015 be approved for incorporation into the Regulation 19 version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

Voting: For: 9

3. That the additional Gypsy and Traveller site allocation set out in the Appendices C and D of the report dated 18 August 2015 be approved for Regulation 18 public consultation.

Voting: For: 6 Against: 2 Abstain: 1

88. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN - MIXED USE SITE ALLOCATIONS

The Committee was advised that the report included details of the representations made to the Mixed Use Allocation policies in the draft Local Plan which went to Regulation 18 consultation in March 2014, together with the responses and proposed changes to be approved for inclusion in the Regulation 19 consultation in early 2016. Included in the papers was the urgent update from 18 August 2015, a letter from the Chief Executive of Gallagher Properties Ltd regarding Eclipse Park, which was already designated in the Local Plan as an important employment site.

The Committee heard there were minor changes to the Newnham Court site with regard to replacement landscaping.

The Committee was informed that the Springfield site was highly sustainable and all the original mill buildings would be protected through policy criteria together with the setting and trees.

The Committee discussed the Maidstone East/Royal Mail site and heard it was a difficult site which needed to provide significant retail space as it was in the Town Centre. The access and parking needs created by the development of this area were a concern and it was suggested that a variety of smaller retail units be included as part of the development.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Officer responses to the representations submitted during public consultation on the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014 for policy RMX1 retail and Mixed Use Allocations, set out in Appendix I of the report dated 18 August 2015 be approved.

Voting: For: 9

2. That the amendments to Policy RMX1 set out in Appendix II of the report dated 18 August 2015 be approved for incorporation into the Regulation 19 version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan with the addition of the words 'and/or smaller units in a variety of formats' to the end of the sentence '*This could include a large foodstore*' RMX1(2) Maidstone East & Maidstone sorting office.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstain: 1

89. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN OPEN SPACE ALLOCATIONS

The report was presented to the Committee and it was explained that it recommended land allocations for strategic natural and semi-natural open space provision, predominantly associated with strategic locations for housing development.

The Committee discussed the report and agreed there was a need for large areas of open space, not just small pockets. It was confirmed there was a shortfall in this type of land and Officers would continue to work to identify how it could be provided, including promoting it through the Regulation 18 consultation process.

The Committee identified that the Land North and South of Sutton Road, should be cross referenced with this policy and land in the Lenham and Invicta Park Barracks sites should be sought for inclusion in the policy.

RESOLVED:

1. That new draft policy OS1 in respect of strategic natural and semi-natural open space allocations be approved for inclusion in the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan for public consultation (Regulation 18).
2. That the promotion of potential additional sites for strategic natural and semi-natural open space be sought through the public consultation process as part of the Regulation 18 consultation for draft policy OS1.
3. That further amendments to policy DM11 Publicly Accessible Open Space and Recreation, relating to a sequential approach for open space delivery, be approved for inclusion in the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan for public consultation (Regulation 18).
4. That decisions 1 to 3 above be made subject to the modifications to the sites Land North of Sutton Road and Land South of Sutton Road, Langley being made, in alignment with the Regulation 18 consultation, and, it be noted that, through the master planning process,

appropriate open space in Lenham and Invicta Park Barracks will be actively sought.

Voting: For: 9

90. DURATION OF MEETING

5.00pm to 9.13pm



21

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee Work Programme

Democratic Services Team
E: democraticservices@maidstone.gov.uk

Publication Date: 10/08/2015

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the decisions to be taken by the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee of Maidstone Borough Council on a rolling basis. This document will be published as updated with new decisions required to be made.

DECISIONS WHICH COMMITTEES INTEND TO MAKE IN PRIVATE

The Committee hereby gives notice that it intends to meet in private after its public meeting to consider reports and/or appendices which contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The private meeting of any Committee is open only to Committee Members, other Councillors and Council officers.

Reports and/or appendices to decisions which Committee will take at their private meetings are indicated in the list below, with the reasons for the decision being made in private. Any person is able to make representations to the Committee if he/she believes the decision should instead be made in the public part of that Committee meeting. If you want to make such representations, please email committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk. You will then be sent a response in reply to your representations. Both your representations and the Committee's response will be published on the Council's website at least 5 working days before the Committee meeting.

ACCESS TO COMMITTEE REPORTS

Reports to be considered at any of the Committee's public meetings will be available on the Council's website (www.maidstone.gov.uk) a minimum of 5 working days before the meeting.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

The Council actively encourages people to express their views on decisions it plans to make. This can be done by writing directly to the appropriate Officer or to the relevant Chairman of a Committee.

Alternatively, you can submit a question to the relevant Committee, details are on our website (www.maidstone.gov.uk).

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)
9 June 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan Position Statement	Sue Whiteside	Public	
9 June 2015	Strategic Housing Market Assessment update – implications of the 2012-based household projections	Sarah Anderton	Public	SHMA Update – Implications of 2012 Based Household Projections
9 June 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan: Housing Sites Update	Sarah Anderton	Public	
9 June 2015	Neighbourhood Planning: changes to decision making arrangements	Jillian Barr	Public	
14 July 2015	Retail and mixed use site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public	
14 July 2015	Landscape and Open Space – policies and site allocations	Jillian Barr	Public	
14 July 2015	Affordable Housing policy	Sue Whiteside	Public	
14 July 2015	Recommendations from PTD OSC review of Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using the car	Tessa Mallett	Public	Final review report
14 July 2015	Reconsideration of previously rejected MBCLP Reg 18 draft and SHLASS housing sites	Steve Clarke	Public	
18 August 2015	Results of the VISUM transport modelling	Steve Clarke	Public	
18 August 2015	Policies for new land allocations (Older's Field, Hubbards Lane, Bentletts Yard)	Sue Whiteside	Public	
18 August 2015	Gypsy and Traveller site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public	
18 August 2015	Employment site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public	

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (<i>other relevant documents may be submitted</i>)
18 August 2015	Future locations for housing growth	Steve Clarke	Public	
18 August 2015	Landscapes of Local Value (supplementary report)	Sue Whiteside	Public	
18 August 2015	Open space allocations	Chris Berry	Public	
18 August 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan – mixed use allocations (deferred item)	Sarah Anderton	Public	
8 Sept 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan – transport policies			
8 Sept 2015	Landscapes of Local Value (deferred item)			
8 Sept 2015	5 year housing supply position			
6 Oct 2015	North Loose Neighbourhood Plan			
10 Nov 2015				
1 Dec 2015				
12 Jan 2016	Consideration of the Publication version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan for consultation (Reg 19)	Sue Whiteside	Public	
9 Feb 2016	CIL Draft Charging Schedule	Andrew Thompson	Public	
8 Mar 2016				
5 Apr 2015				

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

8 SEPTEMBER 2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

BUDGET MONITORING 2015/16 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016/17 ONWARDS

Final Decision-Maker	Council: 2 March 2016
Lead Head of Service	Head Of Finance & Resources
Lead Officer and Report Author	Paul Riley Head Of Finance & Resources
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee note the outturn for 2014/15 and the position for 2015/16 as at the end of June 2015.
2. That a reference is made by this Committee to Policy & Resources Committee confirming agreement with the decision of the Policy and Resources Committee on the strategic revenue projection and the capital programme, in so far as it affects this Committee's budget.
3. That the Committee requests an informal meeting with relevant officers to discuss budget pressures and opportunities to provide savings to support the medium term financial strategy and that the results of that informal meeting be reported to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.
4. That the Committee also requests that potential capital projects be informally discussed at that meeting and that the results of that informal meeting be reported to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

The medium term financial strategy and the budget are a re-statement in financial terms of the priorities set out in the strategic plan. It reflects the Council's decisions on the allocation of resources to all objectives of the strategic plan.

Timetable

Meeting:	Date:
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee	8 September 2015
Policy & Resources Committee	23 September 2015
Policy & Resources Committee	16 December 2015
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee	12 January 2016
Policy & Resources Committee	24 February 2016
Council	2 March 2016

BUDGET MONITORING 2015/16 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016/17 ONWARDS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a financial analysis of the recent outturn for 2014/15, the current performance in the first quarter of 2015/16 and the recently agreed draft medium term financial strategy for 2016/17 onwards. The information is provided where these three issues affect the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee.
- 1.2 The intention of the report is to inform the Committee of the current financial position to enable the Committee to consider options for supporting the Council's need to make saving in future years and the Committee's need to resolve any current budget pressures.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Outturn 2014/15

- 2.1 The revenue outturn for the financial year ended 31 March 2015 was reported to Policy & Resources Committee on 29 July 2015. That report detailed financial performance during 2014/15 for all services. The report required a contribution of £22,000 from balances to be agreed so that all actions previously agreed by Council and Cabinet during 2014/15 could be completed. No underspend was available to carry forward, beyond the sums that had received prior approval by Cabinet in April 2015.
- 2.2 The financial information set out in that revenue outturn report can be summarised by committee as set out in table 1 below:

Committee	Estimate £	Actual £	Variance £
Policy & Resources	11,664,440	10,749,096	915,344
Communities, Housing & Environment	8,816,010	9,165,320	-349,310
Heritage, Culture & Leisure	590,710	682,171	-91,461
Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transport	113,730	-228,634	342,364
Use of Balances & Reserves	-2,068,140	-1,229,060	-839,080
	19,116,750	19,138,893	-22,143

Table 1: 2014/15, outturn compared to budget analysed by service committee.

As can clearly be seen from the table, the Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transport Committee reported an overall positive variance of £342,264 against a net budget of £113,730. This means the Committee's services ended the year in net surplus.

- 2.3 The report detailed the major services that contributed to the adversely to the variance for this Committee as follows:
- a) Land Charges – The service has made payments against claims for backdated refunds following legislative change. The total cost was in

excess of budget and the service ended the year with an over spend of £49,000;

- b) The Conservation service failed to achieve its income target ending the year with a shortfall of £21,000;
- c) The MK Planning Support shared service was reported regularly to Members during the year and, as expected, ended the year with an over spend of £61,000.

2.4 The major positive variances were as follows:

- a) Development control income exceeded the budgeted figure, with a positive variance of £200,000 at the end of 2014/15; and
- b) Income from on and off street parking has also continued to exceed targets, with a combined variance totalling £300,000 from these services. However, it should be noted that this income is ring fenced so this does not represent a general underspend.

2.5 The positive variance includes a surplus reported on some parking activities where income is ring fenced to the provision of certain services. As such the Committee is unable to utilise this money for alternative purposes.

2.6 The Outturn Report to Policy & Resources Committee recognised the risk that the variances represent to the Council and these services will be closely monitored as part of that Committee's quarterly budget monitoring work.

First Quarter Results and Forecast 2015/16

2.7 Attached at **Appendix A** is a report on the current budget and the position in relation to the first quarter of 2015/16, to June 2015. The appendix details net budget per cost centre for this Committee. The full analysis of all services will be reported to the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.

2.8 The columns of the table in the Appendix show the following detail:

- a) The cost centre description;
- b) The value of the total budget for the year;
- c) The amount of the budget expected to be spent by the end of June 2015;
- d) The actual spend to that date;
- e) The variance between expected and actual spend;
- f) The forecasted spend to year end; and
- g) The expected significant variances at 31 March 2016.

2.9 Appendix A shows that of an annual budget of -£491,340 (surplus) the expectation is that £361,175 (deficit) would be spent in the first quarter of the year. Seasonal budgets in the shared service and car parking mean that the overall budget is not evenly allocated throughout the year.

- 2.10 At this point in time the budget is reporting an under spend of £144,151 and the forecast for year-end shows that this continues to be the likely outcome at 31 March 2016 with a forecasted positive variance of approximately £175,000.
- 2.11 The key budgets that are likely to require careful attention during the year are the MK Planning shared service, which will be affected by workload and future service levels, Development Management Applications, as service levels and related costs grow care should be taken to keep income levels high enough to ensure affordability.

Strategic Revenue Projection 2016/17 to 2020/21

- 2.12 The Policy and Resources Committee on 29 July 2015 also considered an initial report on the medium term financial strategy for the period 2016/17 to 2020/21. The Policy & Resources Committee's decisions are set out at **Appendix B** to this report and the full report can be viewed on the agenda for that meeting.
- 2.13 Based on the decisions of the Policy & Resources Committee, this report asks the Committee to consider the factors as they relate to the Committee's services and respond to Policy & Resources Committee's request for feedback.
- 2.14 The report to Policy & Resources Committee requested the approval of a strategic revenue projection to enable budget planning to progress. The officer recommended projection was approved and it took into account the following factors in relation to the Council's available resources:
- a) Business Rates: That the Council would continue to be a member of the Kent Business Rates Pool, an arrangement that is likely to benefit the Council by enabling the retention of up to £400,000 of business rates growth that would otherwise have been transferred to central government;
 - b) Revenue Support Grant: Following the Chancellor of the Exchequer's emergency budget it is clear that local government can expect renewed pressure on resources as part of the continued austerity programme. The assumption is currently that the Council can expect to lose a further £1m from its revenue support grant in 2016/17 with the grant falling to zero by 2019/20;
 - c) Council Tax Levels: The current prediction is for there to be a 2.49% increase in council tax each year. This is the aggregate of a 1.99% increase in the council tax charge and a 0.5% increase in the tax base (chargeable dwellings);
 - d) Locally Derived Income: This has been held at the current level in the projection although there is an expectation in the Council's policy on fees and charges that there will be appropriate consideration of an increase at least in line with inflation, where appropriate.

2.15 It should be noted at this point that the services provided by this Committee are fully funded by the locally derived income generated by those services. In the main this is income from car parking and income from planning application fees, because of this fact there is no allocation of Council Tax and other income from taxation to the services provided by this Committee.

2.16 In addition factors that create budget pressures were also taken into account in developing the strategic revenue projection. Where those pressures create implications for this Committee the details are as follows:

a) Employee costs – In the emergency budget the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced actions that will have an impact on the employee costs of the council. The two main issues impacting the council are:

- Funding for a 1% annual increase in public sector pay over the period of the current parliament; and
- An increase in the national living wage to £9 per hour by 2020. This included an increase to £7.20 in 2016/17.

These two issues will cause a budget pressure for all committees and officers are reviewing the longer term implications of the increase in the national living wage to £9.00. Policy & Resources Committee approved a planned increase in employee costs of 1.7% to allow for both factors and the potential cost of incremental increase for some employees.

b) Inflation Increases – For the majority of service budgets and for over a decade the Council has set a policy of zero inflation in order to ensure a regular pressure on all services to promote efficiency. Where there are contractual or unavoidable commitments that include inflationary increases then these values are specifically set as a budget pressure. For this Committee this would include contractual arrangements within the parking service.

c) Single Tier Pension Arrangements – From the commencement of the tax year 2016/17 the government is changing the state pension arrangement. As set out in previous medium term financial strategies the intention is to pay a single tier pension to all contributors. This will increase national insurance contributions for the Council as an employer and for all employees as the ability to “contract out” of some national insurance because of the local government pension scheme will be removed

2.17 These pressures have been set against the current resources utilised by this Committee’s services and the current budget for those services. Set out at **Appendix C** to this report is a strategic revenue projection that approximates this Committee’s share of the overall shortfall in resources that was reported to Policy & Resources Committee.

2.18 This shows that this Committee will utilise more resources than its allocation in future years. The need to find savings for the Council as a whole and the

approximation of the share that can be expected on an apportioned basis from this Committee is set out in the table below:

	2016/17 £,000	2017/18 £,000	2018/19 £,000	2019/20 £,000	2020/21 £,000	Total £,000
Council Savings Target	1,632	791	713	526	103	3,765
Apportioned to SPST	123	78	79	81	82	443

Table 2: Apportioned savings target per financial Year

2.19 When considering these figures and the actions that might be taken to resolve the need to identify savings, the Committee should bear in mind that the Council will look to support areas that are its key priorities and expect greater contributions from other areas. The priorities that are directly provided by this Committee's services include one of the two highest priorities, based on public opinion. The public consultation on the Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020 showed that key priorities for the public are:

- Providing a clean and safe environment; and
- Securing improvements to the transport infrastructure of our borough.

However this priority is not a specific service provided by a district council directly and as such is mainly funded by allocations through the capital programme.

2.20 In any circumstance it is essential that the Council is prepared for the future loss of financial resilience as set out in this report and in more detail in the report to the Policy & Resources Committee. For this reason all service committees have been requested to consider the strategic revenue projection and provide views back to the Policy & Resources Committee on its accuracy and options to balance expected resources and expenditure.

Capital Programme 2016/17 to 2020/21

2.21 The capital programme, also considered by the Policy & Resources Committee on 29 July 2015, includes schemes that provide additional assets for this Committee.

2.22 Funding for the programme remains consistent with previous decisions of Council in that the majority of resources come from the New Homes Bonus receipts available to the Council along with a small grants budget and a small number of receipts from asset sales. Previous decisions of Council and Cabinet have focused the use of New Homes Bonus on infrastructure projects where these are required by the infrastructure delivery plan that forms part of the Local Plan.

2.23 The current programme includes resources for various categories of infrastructure that appear in previous drafts of the infrastructure delivery plan. Resources currently identified for infrastructure works over the five years of the draft programme total £14.2m.

2.24 The Policy & Resources Committee wishes to consider schemes that service committees may wish to propose, where these schemes meet strategic

priorities and a suitable business case exists. Should the Committee wish to consider any future schemes they may put them forward for consideration.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 In its decision the Policy & Resources Committee approved the strategic revenue projection for the whole Council and the projection set out at Appendix C is extracted and apportioned to this Committee's services from that overall projection. The Committee also requested that the service committees review the medium term financial strategy and feedback their views of the resources and budgets available. Of special interest to Policy & Resources Committee are proposals from services committees on how to find savings of £1.6m in 2016/17 and in total £3.8m over the five year period 2016/17 to 2020/21.
 - 3.2 The Committee should consider the requests of Policy & Resources Committee to review the factors set out in the revenue and capital budget assumptions.
 - 3.3 In addition the Committee should consider its approach to identifying contributions towards the savings requirements as set out in table 2 in paragraph 2.17. It is possible for the Committee to put forward no options for savings but the pressure on the Council as a whole is considerable and it is in the interests of the Committee to be in control of the consideration of its options to make savings both immediately and in the medium term (up to five years).
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the factors used in the agreed strategic revenue projection as they are the best estimates available from the information known to date. During the remainder of this financial year, as the strategy develops and more accurate information becomes available, it is possible to amend the factors and the overall plan up until the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 24 February 2016, which will agree the budget for recommendation to Council on 2 March 2016.
 - 4.2 In considering options for savings the Committee should be aware that while proposals will be put forward for consideration they may need to be considered confidential in nature and may not gain full support from all committee members. For this reason it is recommended that the Committee meets informally with service managers to consider options for savings that will improve value for money service delivery or reductions in non-priority service delivery. Once the Committee is satisfied with the proposals that it wishes to submit they can be considered formally by the committee and referred to Policy & Resources Committee.
 - 4.3 Finally the Committee should request proposals from officers for capital projects that it may wish to then put forward for inclusion in the developing capital programme.
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5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 This report is an initial stage report in the development of the medium term financial strategy and the budget for 2016/17. From this report information will be provided to Policy & Resources Committee for inclusion in their consideration of the public consultation plan. Once this is complete public consultation will commence late October 2015 or Early November 2015.
- 5.2 This Committee's final opportunity to consider the medium term financial strategy and budget for 2016/17 will be on 12 January 2016 and feedback from consultation and other stakeholder's views will be included in that report along with final details relating to approved savings proposals.
-

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Information on this decision will be passed back to the Policy & Resources Committee for their consideration when preparing the budget consultation for this year.
- 6.2 If the recommendations are agreed this Committee will work with relevant officers to develop savings and growth proposals to submit to a later Policy & Resources Committee so that all final proposals can be considered in the light of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's autumn statement and the local government finance settlement in December 2015.
-

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	It is the purpose of the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) to allocate resources to the priorities in the strategic plan, including the allocation of resources to other plans and strategies developed to achieve those outcomes.	Head of Finance & Resources
Risk Management	Matching resources to priorities in the context of the significant pressure on the Council's resources is a major strategic risk. The MTFS is improved each year to enhance its resilience and effectiveness. The MTFS is considered by Policy & Resources Committee, all service committees, the Audit Governance & Standards Committee and	Head of Finance & Resources

	<p>Council.</p> <p>Specific budget risks and opportunities are identified in the main body of the report, especially the consideration of the factors in the strategic revenue projection.</p>	
Financial	The budget strategy and the MTFS impact upon all activities of the Council. The future availability of resources to address specific issues is planned through this process. It is important that the committee gives consideration to the strategic financial consequences from the recommendations in this report.	Head of Finance & Resources
Staffing	The process of developing the budget strategy will identify the level of resources available for staffing over the medium term and the proposals include adequate resources to meet current plans.	Head of Finance & Resources
Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to set a balanced budget and development of the MTFS and the strategic revenue projection in the ways set out in this report supports achievement of a balanced budget.	Head of Finance & Resources
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	<p>The report sets out a policy that will have a positive impact as it will enhance the lives of all members of the community through the provision of resources to core services. In addition it will affect particular groups within the community.</p> <p>It will achieve this through the focus of resources into areas of need as identified in the Council's strategic priorities.</p>	Head of Finance & Resources
Environmental/Sustain	No specific issues arise	Head of Finance &

able Development		Resources
Community Safety	No specific issues arise	Head of Finance & Resources
Human Rights Act	No specific issues arise	Head of Finance & Resources
Procurement	No specific issues arise	Head of Finance & Resources
Asset Management	Resources available for asset management are contained within the strategic revenue projections and capital programme set out in this report.	Head of Finance & Resources

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

Appendix A: First Quarter 2015/16 Budget Monitoring Report

Appendix B: Decision of Policy & resources Committee 29 July 2015

Appendix C: Strategic Revenue Projection 2016/17 to 2020/21 – Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2015/16

BUDGET POSITION TO JUNE 2015

Cost Centre	Full Year Budget	To June	Actual	Variance	Forecast	Year End Variance	Explanation
Building Regulations Chargeable	-298,860.00	-75,136.00	-89,188.08	14,052.08	-298,860.00	0.00	
Building Control	-990.00	-219.00	-112.90	-106.10	-990.00	0.00	
Street Naming & Numbering	-29,000.00	-7,251.00	-19,142.50	11,891.50	-29,000.00	0.00	
Development Control Advice	-73,000.00	-17,673.00	-18,554.89	881.89	-73,000.00	0.00	
Development Control Applications	-902,690.00	-222,366.00	-245,567.26	23,201.26	-1,002,690.00	100,000.00	As a consequence of additional planning fee income tempered by additional employee costs yet to be incurred this year
Development Control Appeals	150,000.00	108,287.86	108,287.86	0.00	150,000.00	0.00	
Development Control Enforcement	67,070.00	-726.00	200.65	-926.65	67,070.00	0.00	
Planning Policy	155,020.00	113,214.55	113,214.55	0.00	155,020.00	0.00	
Conservation	-11,670.00	-3,894.00	-3,459.00	-435.00	3,330.00	-15,000.00	The current expectation is that the service will continue to under perform against its income target
Land Charges	-231,170.00	-67,336.40	-62,484.84	-4,851.56	-231,170.00	0.00	
Environment Improvements	12,300.00	3,074.00	1,201.52	1,872.48	12,300.00	0.00	
Name Plates & Notices	17,600.00	4,402.00	2,402.61	1,999.39	17,600.00	0.00	
On Street Parking	-280,190.00	-72,917.00	-76,288.16	3,371.16	-280,190.00	0.00	
Residents Parking	-223,410.00	-52,474.00	-71,271.87	18,797.87	-223,410.00	0.00	
Pay & Display Car Parks	-1,209,890.00	-181,650.00	-208,906.76	27,256.76	-1,309,890.00	100,000.00	Early predictions of year end forecast are notoriously difficult for parking income as weather and other trends have a direct impact.
Non Paying Car Parks	9,160.00	6,983.00	6,762.49	220.51	9,160.00	0.00	
Off Street Parking - Enforcement	-157,010.00	-39,964.00	-38,265.83	-1,698.17	-157,010.00	0.00	
Park & Ride	467,420.00	158,041.00	154,310.89	3,730.11	467,420.00	0.00	
Socially Desirable Buses	63,780.00	1,398.00	0.65	1,397.35	63,780.00	0.00	
Other Transport Services	15,700.00	12,867.00	12,146.40	720.60	15,700.00	0.00	
Development Management Section	582,170.00	154,434.00	63,161.01	91,272.99	557,170.00	25,000.00	Possible continuation of low level vacancies
Spatial Policy Planning Section	354,770.00	88,806.00	87,482.89	1,323.11	354,770.00	0.00	
Head of Planning and Development	92,020.00	23,003.00	24,485.80	-1,482.80	92,020.00	0.00	

STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2015/16

BUDGET POSITION TO JUNE 2015

Cost Centre	Full Year Budget	To June	Actual	Variance	Forecast	Year End Variance	Explanation
Development Management Enforcemer	135,930.00	33,978.00	35,626.35	-1,648.35	135,930.00	0.00	
Building Surveying Section	403,770.00	106,165.48	89,165.08	17,000.40	383,770.00	20,000.00	Possible continuation of low level vacancies
Mid Kent Planning Support Service	-28,420.00	180,447.00	246,617.13	-66,170.13	26,580.00	-55,000.00	The outcome of the work currently underway in the shared service are not yet confirmed. Additional costs are currently being incurred and may increase over this figure
Heritage Landscape and Design Section	155,790.00	38,944.00	38,823.86	120.14	155,790.00	0.00	
Parking Services Section	272,460.00	68,737.00	66,376.81	2,360.19	272,460.00	0.00	
Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Tra	-491,340.00	361,175.49	217,024.46	144,151.03	-666,340.00	175,000.00	

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**RECORD OF DECISION OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES
COMMITTEE**

Decision Made: 29 July 2015

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016/17 ONWARDS

Issue for Decision

To give initial consideration to a Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2016/17 and beyond.

Decision Made

- 1) That, for planning purposes, a council tax increase of 1.99% be agreed for the development of the medium term financial strategy;
- 2) That the officer recommended strategic revenue projection as set out in Appendix C to the report of the Head of Revenues and Resources be agreed for submission to all Service Committees for their consideration and respond back to this Committee on the factors outlined;
- 3) That the current capital programme be advanced by one year as set out in Appendix D to the report and agreed for planning purposes; and
- 4) That all Service Committees be requested to consider possible submission for the future capital programme.

Should you wish to refer this decision to Council, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by five Councillors, to the Head of Finance and Resources by: 6 August 2015

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORT

BUDGET STRATEGY 2015/16 ONWARDS
REVISED REVENUE PROJECTION

2015/16 £,000		2016/17 £,000	2017/18 £,000	2018/19 £,000	2019/20 £,000	2020/21 £,000
AVAILABLE FINANCE						
0	REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	0	0	0	0	0
0	RETAINED BUSINESS RATES	0	0	0	0	0
0		0	0	0	0	0
0	COUNCIL TAX	0	0	0	0	0
0	BUDGET REQUIREMENT	0	0	0	0	0
5,486	OTHER INCOME	5,486	5,486	5,486	5,486	5,486
5,486	TOTAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE	5,486	5,486	5,486	5,486	5,486
EXPECTED SERVICE SPEND						
5,227	CURRENT SPEND	5,486	5,486	5,486	5,486	5,486
	INFLATION INCREASES					
76	PAY AND INFLATION INCREASES	76	78	79	81	82
	NATIONAL INITIATIVES					
	SINGLE TIER PENSION ARRANGMENTS	47				
5,303	TOTAL PREDICTED REQUIREMENT	5,609	5,564	5,565	5,567	5,568
-183	ANNUAL SAVINGS TARGET	123	78	79	81	82

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee

8 September 2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?	Yes
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Landscapes of Local Value

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee
Lead Director or Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Chris Berry
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All wards

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the amendments to draft policy SP5(6) and the supporting text for Landscapes of Local Value, as set out under Section 4 “Preferred Option” of the report, be approved for further public consultation (Regulation 18 consultation).
2. That the draft map identifying five areas of Landscapes of Local Value, attached at Appendix A, be approved for further public consultation (Regulation 18 consultation).

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

While the Local Plan will make a significant contribution to the delivery of the corporate priorities this report focuses on Landscapes of Local Value and relates most directly to respecting the character of the borough under the priority of:

Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee	8 September 2015

Landscapes of Local Value

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report follows the consideration by this committee of landscapes of local value (LLV) on 18th August 2015 and the approval of three areas to be designated; namely the Greensand Ridge, the Len Valley and the Medway Valley. Members required further work to be done on two further areas; the Loose Valley, and the Setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
 - 1.2 This further work is described and the results are presented in terms of recommended additions to the designated areas following from the application of criteria relating to landscape character and sensitivities. Reference should be made to the previous report for a description of the methodology used to identify landscapes of local value (LLV).
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 18th August 2015 this committee received a report regarding the designation of areas for additional protection to that already offered by Policy SP5 The Countryside in the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan. The previous report noted that Maidstone Borough is predominantly rural in nature and much of the rural landscape is of high quality with valuable agricultural and ecological resources and has an intrinsic value that should be conserved and protected for its own sake.
- 2.2 It further noted that a significant amount of work has been undertaken over the years at both county and district levels previously culminating in the identification of Special Landscape Areas (SLA) in former structure and local plans. The most significant landscape area in the borough, which formed part of an SLA, is the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which covers a large area (over 27% of the borough) to the north.
- 2.3 Legislative support for locally designated SLAs has however been gradually withdrawn, and the responsibility for the identification of locally significant landscape areas for protection has become a local responsibility. The NPPF makes distinctions between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, whereby protection is commensurate with their status, and permits the protection of locally valued landscapes through the application of criteria and the local analysis of landscape character and sensitivities.
- 2.4 The previous report described the process and analysis undertaken by the council which led to the identification of five areas for designation as landscapes of local value (LLV), and three areas were approved for public consultation, namely:
 - Greensand Ridge

- Len Valley
- Medway Valley.

- 2.5 Members required further work to be done on the two remaining areas identified; the Loose Valley and Setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to investigate whether additions could be made to reflect local representations, while being supported by the technical work on landscape sensitivities undertaken by the council's consultants, Jacobs.
- 2.6 Members also requested further investigation of the Low Weald to determine whether this significant proportion of the land area of the borough could be designated as a LLV on the basis of local representation and evidence provided by the technical studies undertaken by the consultants.

Additions to LLV – Loose Valley

- 2.7 Two fields adjacent to Cripple Street and the edge of the Loose Valley LLV were identified as being originally omitted from analysis by the consultants due to anticipated development. However, they are clearly part of the Borough Wide Farleigh Greensand Fruit Belt landscape character area, reference 27 in the Jacobs study (Landscape Capacity Study 2015) which demonstrates the high rating in both landscape character and visual sensitivities, thus providing the evidence for their inclusion in the Loose Valley LLV.

Additions to LLV – Setting of the AONB

- 2.8 Significant representations have been made with regard to the inclusion of further areas in the Harrietsham and Lenham area into the Setting of the AONB LLV and the landscape character areas affected are Harrietsham to Lenham Vale (reference 16 in the Jacobs study, op cit.) and East Lenham Vale (17). Harrietsham to Lenham Vale does not score as highly as other parts of the Setting of the AONB LLV, but East Lenham Vale rates highly in both landscape character and visual sensitivities, providing the technical evidence for its inclusion in the Setting of the AONB LLV.

The Low Weald

- 2.9 The Low Weald as a whole, made up of twelve landscape character areas, dissected by two river valley areas, meets three of the landscape value criteria identified in the analysis undertaken for the previous report, one of which is a landscape identified through community engagement (which all areas satisfy). It comprises approximately a third of the land area of the borough and whilst the landscape is undeniably valued by local communities, no previous statutory plans have identified more than very limited areas of the Low Weald for special protection.
- 2.10 Detailed boundaries for Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) were first defined in the 1983 Kent Countryside Local Plan and a limited area of the Low Weald was added in the 1996 Kent Structure Plan (Policy ENV4) with the instruction that the detailed boundaries of the area be defined through Local Plans. The 2000 adopted Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan accordingly designated very

limited areas for the SLA west of Staplehurst and around Headcorn which also stretched into the neighbouring boroughs of Tonbridge & Malling and Ashford. As already noted in paragraph 2.3 above however, non-criteria based designations are no longer supported by government policy, and at present neither of the neighbouring boroughs are considering criteria based policies for landscape protection.

- 2.11 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council are “unlikely to pursue a specific policy on protection of local landscapes” (email from TMBC: 12.08.15) as they do not believe that the NPPF provides sufficient support for local designations. Similarly, Ashford Borough Council has indicated that they are not considering such a policy and regard their existing policies on landscape character to be sufficient.
- 2.12 Accordingly, it is necessary to take full account of the comprehensive assessment of the borough’s landscapes undertaken for the council by Jacobs which rated all areas in terms of landscape character and visual sensitivities. Eleven of the Low Weald character areas and the two river valley areas do not demonstrate high ratings in both categories thus not providing sufficient evidence for this area to be included in the designation.
- 2.13 Following Members’ concerns, Low Weald landscape character areas have been investigated and the Ulcombe Mixed Farmlands (ref 43 in the Jacobs study, op cit) rate highly in both landscape character and visual sensitivities and lie immediately south, and contiguous with, the Greensand Ridge LLV. The Ulcombe Mixed Farmlands (ref 43 in the Jacobs study op cit.), however, rate highly in both categories and lie immediately south of, and contiguous with, the Greensand Ridge LLV. Accordingly, this area may be added to the already approved LLV, maintaining a coherent area for protection.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The further analysis outlined in this report leads to the consideration of policy amendments to protect landscapes of local value (LLV) as identified in policy SP5(6) of the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014.
- 3.2 Option 1: Do nothing and retain draft local plan policy SP5 which identifies four areas as LLV. It is clear that at least one new landscape area scores highly in the assessment so this option is not recommended.
- 3.3 Option 2: Designate the Setting of the Kent Downs AONB as an additional LLV under policy SP5(6). This option scored highly as a contiguous area of high quality landscape with significant long distance public views and skylines. The landscape is locally distinctive in its field patterns, geology and other features and the Setting of the Kent Downs AONB is recommended as a fifth landscape of local value, to be subject to further public consultation.
- 3.4 Option 3: Designate additional areas in the Loose Valley, the Setting of the AONB and the Greensand Ridge to reflect the evidence provided by the Jacobs study for highly rated landscape character areas, including part of the Low

Weald to be included in the Greensand Ridge LLV, to be renamed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald LLV.

- 3.5 Option 4: Designate the whole of the Low Weald character areas as a landscape of local value. Neither during the preparation of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 nor previously, has the whole of the Low Weald been identified for special protection beyond that afforded to the countryside generally. Technical studies forming the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan do not provide the justification for its designation.
- 3.6 Option 5: Do not designate additional areas as identified in Option 3 above. This would not take account of the significant representations made by Members and other stakeholders, or the results of the consultant's analysis of landscape character and visual sensitivities.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Committee is recommended to approve the following amendments to policy SP5 of the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014 in respect of landscapes of local value, and to approve the revised policy for further public consultation (Regulation 18). The recommended amendments reflect Options 2 and 3 set out in Section 3 above of the report. Additions to the policy are in **bold text** and deletions are in ~~strike through text~~.

Landscapes of local value

- 4.2 The council will protect its most valued landscapes which are in good condition. In addition to the Kent Downs AONB and sites of European and national importance, the borough includes significant tracts of landscape which are in good condition and are highly sensitive to significant change. **Landscapes of local value have been identified according to criteria relating to the character and sensitivity of the areas:**
- i. **Part of a contiguous area of high quality landscape;**
 - ii. **Significant in long distance public views and skylines;**
 - iii. **Locally distinctive in their field patterns, geological and other landscape features;**
 - iv. **Ecologically diverse and significant;**
 - v. **Preventing the coalescence of settlements which would undermine their character;**
 - vi. **Identified through community engagement;**
 - vii. **Providing a valued transition from town to countryside.**
- 4.3 **Development proposals within landscapes of local value should, through their siting, scale, mass, materials and design, seek to contribute positively to the conservation and enhancement of the protected landscape. Designated areas include the setting of the Kent Downs AONB, including parts of the Greensand Ridge, the Low Weald together with and the Medway, Loose and Len river valleys. These landscapes were highlighted as areas of local value by the public through previous consultations.**

- 4.4 The setting of the Kent Downs AONB comprises the land to the south of the North Downs escarpment which is to some extent compromised by the presence of the M20 motorway and railway lines but still provides relatively uninterrupted views of the nationally designated landscape area. It is characterised by open grassland which is generally used for livestock grazing or arable cultivation.
- 4.5 The Greensand Ridge lies to the south of Maidstone and is defined by the scarp face of the Ridge with extensive views across the Low Weald to the south. It is characterised by frequent small blocks of coppice and deciduous woodland, extensive orchards and frequent oast houses, with ragstone being a predominant material in walls and buildings. **Immediately south of the ridge is an area of the Low Weald with long views and distinctive buildings and landscape.**
- 4.6 The Medway Valley is characterised by the wide River Medway and steep valley sides where the valley incises the Greensand and is crossed by distinctive ragstone bridges. The area lends itself to much recreational land use including the Medway Valley Walk, although some sections are more wooded and remote in character. The Loose Valley lies to the south of Maidstone and is characterised by the Loose stream, mill ponds and springs with steep wooded valley sides, mature native woodland and traditional mill buildings and cottages. The Len Valley lies to the east of Maidstone and is bordered by Bearsted to the west. It is characterised by the River Len, historic mills and a network of pools with remnant orchards.

Policy SP5 Countryside

6. The **Setting of the Kent Downs AONB**, Greensand Ridge and **Low Weald**, Medway Valley, Len Valley and Loose Valley, as defined on the policies map, will be protected and maintained as landscapes of local value.

7. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- a. Previously, parts of the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan have been subject to public consultation in accordance with Regulation 18. The representations submitted in respect of landscapes of local value are set out in Appendix A of the report, together with officer responses.

8. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- a. The draft policy for landscapes of local value will be subject to further public consultation (Regulation 18) before being included in the Publication version of the local plan (Regulation 19).

9. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The adoption of the local plan will assist in the delivery of the council's corporate priorities. This policy has specific implications for respecting the character of our borough.	Head of Planning & Development
Risk Management	A sound evidence base and further public consultation on policy amendments will minimise the risk of policy SP5 being found unsound at examination into the local plan.	Head of Planning & Development
Financial	There are no financial implications arising from this report.	Head of Finance & Resources
Staffing	The Regulation 18 consultation will require staff resources but, given this will be a focused consultation on key policy changes only, the consultation can be managed within existing staff resources.	Head of Planning & Development
Legal	There are no legal implications directly arising from this report, although the Legal Team continues to provide advice and guidance on local plan matters, and to review any legal implications of reports.	Legal Team
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	There are no specific implications arising from this report	Policy & Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	There are no specific implications arising from this report	Head of Planning & Development
Community Safety	There are no specific implications arising from this report	Head of Planning & Development
Human Rights Act	There are no specific implications arising from this report	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
Procurement	There are no specific implications arising from this report	Head of Finance & Resources
Asset Management	There are no specific implications arising from this report	Head of Finance & Resources

10. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Landscapes of Local Value Map
-

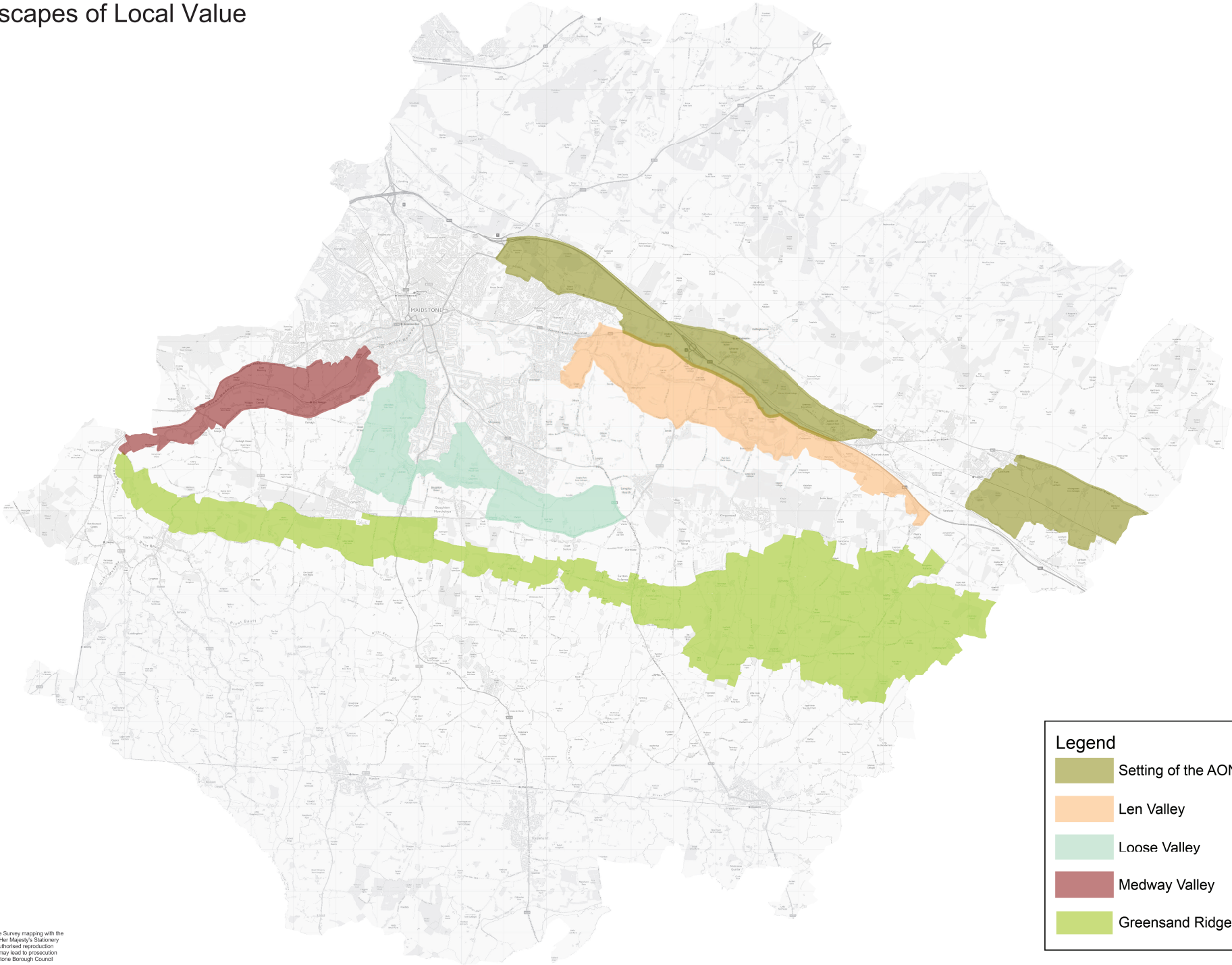
11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Landscapes of Local Value



47



Legend

Setting of the AONB

Len Valley

Loose Valley

Medway Valley

Greensand Ridge and Low Weald

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Agenda Item 14

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUSTAINABILITY & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

**8TH September
2015**

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

5 year housing land supply

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transport Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Sue Whiteside , Team Leader (Spatial Policy) Sarah Anderton , Principal Planning Officer (Spatial Policy)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All wards

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee notes that, at 1st April 2015, the council has 3.3 years' supply of housing land.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Planning for sufficient homes to meet our Borough's needs" which comes under the corporate priority "Securing a Successful Economy for our Borough"

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transport Committee	8 th September 2015

5 year housing land supply

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At councillors' request, this report sets out the position on 5 year housing land supply at 1st April 2015.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the 23rd July adjourned meeting of this Committee, an urgent update report was circulated which set out the current housing land supply position. Councillors have requested that the 5 year supply section of that urgent report be included in the agenda for this meeting.
- 2.2 With respect to 5 year supply, the urgent update report set out the following:

5-year housing land supply

The NPPF (paragraph 47) is clear that local planning authorities must identify and annually update five years' worth of housing land supply against their housing requirements with an additional buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Sites must be deliverable and have a realistic prospect of being delivered within 5 years. This is important because the NPPF is clear that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites (NPPF, paragraph 49).

Again, the methodology used to calculate 5-year housing land supply will be subject to scrutiny at examination and appeals, so it is important that the methodology is robust enough to stand up to challenge. The approach used in the calculation is the same as that which is increasingly being adopted by Planning Inspectors at appeals.

In calculating the requirement, any undersupply against OAN for housing in the early years of the plan period must be delivered in the next 5 years. For the past 4 years the council has been unable to deliver 1,371 units against its annual OAN figure. Consequently, the 5-year requirement is 6,312 units, but only 4,154 dwellings have a reasonable prospect of being delivered within the 5-year period. Housing land supply comprises dwellings on sites with planning permission that are not started or under construction, together with a proportion of dwellings on allocated sites in the emerging local plan that have been permitted subject to S106 (taking account of lead-in times for development).

*Against a need to demonstrate delivery of 5 years housing land supply at 1 April 2015, the council has **3.3 years**. This compares to*

2.1 years at 1 April 2014, which is a significant increase primarily due to the granting of planning permissions (some subject to S106) on sites identified for allocation through the emerging local plan. In the past year the emerging local plan has given a high level of certainty to developers, which has led to an increase in planning applications and thus a greater number of dwellings from allocated sites which can now be counted. The position will improve further once the local plan is submitted for examination when the projected rate of dwelling completions on a proportion of allocated sites pending an application can also be included in calculations.

Unlike the cumulative 20-year calculation of housing land supply, the council's 5-year supply is always a snapshot at 1 April each year. Supply cannot be accurately updated during the year unless the relevant additional number of months' target is added to calculations, surveys are undertaken and the database is updated, which is a resource intensive exercise.

5-year Housing Land Supply as at 1 April 2015 – Sedgefield Method (All elements of supply are net of dwelling losses)	Dwellings	Dwellings
Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) 2011 to 2031	18,560	
Annual need $18,560 \div 20$ years	928	
Delivery target 01.04.11 to 31.03.15 928×4 years	3,712	
Less completed dwellings 01.04.11 to 31.03.15	(2,341)	
Shortfall against OAN 01.04.11 to 31.03.15	1,371	
Basic 5-year target against OAN 928×5	4,640	
Plus shortfall against OAN 01.04.11 to 31.03.15	1,371	
Plus 5% buffer $(4,640 + 1,371) \times 5\%$	301	
5-year housing land target at 01.04.15		6,312
Extant planning permissions to be built in 5 years	2,743	
Allocations subject to S106 to be built in 5 years	1,411	
5-year housing land supply		(4,154)
5-year housing land shortfall		(2,158)
Annual housing land target $6,312 \div 5$		1,262
No. years housing land supply $(4,154 \div 1,262)$		3.3 years

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The 5 year land supply position and the calculation used to derive it are set out in the preceding section. The committee is invited to note the 5 year land supply position.

4. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 4.1 The 5 year housing land supply position is not subject to specific public consultation.
-

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Securing an adequate supply of housing land through the allocation of suitable, deliverable sites in the Local Plan and the granting of planning consents will directly contribute to 'planning for sufficient homes to meet our Borough's needs'.	Head of Finance & Resources
Risk Management	Without a confirmed 5 year land supply, the policies for controlling the supply of housing in the adopted Local Plan can no longer be considered up to date. The allocation of sufficient sites in the emerging Local Plan is the best means by which a 5 year land supply will be secured.	Head of Planning & Development
Financial	The report is provided for information and there is not a direct financial consequence.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	n/a	[Head of Service]
Legal	The legal background (national planning policy) is set out in the body of the report	Deputy Head of Legal Partnership
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	n/a	[Policy & Information Manager]
Environmental/Sustainable Development	Securing an adequate supply of housing land through the allocation of suitable, deliverable sites in the Local Plan and the granting of planning consents contribute to	Head of Planning & Development

	the delivery of sustainable development.	
Community Safety	n/a	[Head of Service or Manager]
Human Rights Act	n/a	[Head of Service or Manager]
Procurement	There are no specific implications	Head of Finance & Resources
Asset Management	There are no specific implications	Head of Finance & Resources

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

nil

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

8 September 2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Maidstone Borough Local Plan: Transport Policies

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Steve Clarke, Principal Planning Officer, Spatial Policy
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the officer responses to the representations submitted during public consultation on the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014 for policies DM13 (Sustainable Transport), DM14 (Public Transport) and DM15 (Park and Ride), set out in Appendix One be approved.
2. That the officer responses to the representations submitted during public consultation on the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014 for policies PKR1(1) (Linton Crossroads) and PKR1(2) (Old Sittingbourne Road) set out at Appendix Two be approved.
3. That the proposed changes to the supporting text (which include reference to the Leeds Langley Relief Road) and the criteria for policies DM13 (Sustainable Transport) and DM14 (Public Transport) set out at Appendix Four to the report be approved for Regulation 19 Consultation.
4. The proposed changes to Policy DM15 (Park and Ride) deleting reference to the park & ride sites at Linton Crossroads and Old Sittingbourne Road set out at Appendix Five to the report and the deletion of policy PKR1 and as consequence PKR1(1) and PKR1(2) as set out at paragraphs 4.21, 4.23 and at paragraphs 4.57 to 4.62 within the report be approved for further Regulation 18 Consultation.
5. That Officers be directed to continue the preparation of a revised draft Integrated Transport Strategy in conjunction with Kent County Council which reflects recommendation 3 and 4 above and that the completed draft should be reported for consideration to a subsequent meeting of this Committee and the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough - Securing improvements to the transport infrastructure of our Borough is viewed by the public as the second highest desired outcome from the current strategic plan. This report deals with issues that are of importance in delivering the Council's desired outcomes.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee 53	08 September 2015

Maidstone Borough Local Plan: Transport Policies

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers the responses to the Regulation 18¹ public consultation on the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, which took place between 21 March and 7 May 2014, for policies DM13 (Sustainable Transport), DM14 (Public Transport and DM15 (Park and Ride) as well as PKR1 (1) (Linton Crossroads) and PKR1 (2) (Old Sittingbourne Road).
- 1.2 Consideration of policies DM13, DM14 and DM15 was deferred by Cabinet at their meeting on 14 January 2015 pending the completion and consideration of the outcomes of the VISUM strategic traffic modelling undertaken by Amey on behalf of Kent County Council (the Highway Authority), and the Council.
- 1.3 The results of the VISUM modelling have now been received and have been considered by officers and also reported to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board (22 July 2015) and the meeting of this Committee held on 18 August 2015 adjourned to 19 August 2015.
- 1.4 The previously reported schedule of issues raised to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation draft and officer responses to policies DM13, DM14 and DM15 is attached at Appendix One.
- 1.5 A schedule of issues that were raised to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation draft and officer responses to policies PKR1 (1) and PKR1 (2), which have not previously been considered by Councillors, is attached at Appendix Two.
- 1.6 The report assesses whether any changes to Policies DM13, DM14, DM15, PKR1(1) and PKR1(2) and the supporting text should be made following consideration of the responses to the Regulation 18 Consultation as well as the recommendations of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board (22 July 2015) and that of this Committee at its meeting on 18 August 2015 adjourned to 19 August 2015.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report considers the responses to the Regulation 18 public consultation on the Maidstone Borough Local Plan for policies DM13 which deals with Sustainable Transport, DM14 which deals with Public Transport and DM15 which deals with Park and Ride as well as PKR1 (1) and PKR1(2).
- 2.2 Policies DM13 to DM15 and the responses to Regulation 18 public consultation were originally reported to the Council's Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 December 2014 and then to Cabinet on 14 January 2015 as part of a report considering a

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

range of other Development Management policies from the emerging local plan. The schedule of issues raised in the Regulation 18 Consultation and the officer response to policies DM13, DM14 and DM15 is attached at Appendix One.

- 2.3 Attached at Appendix Two is a schedule of issues raised to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation draft and officer responses to policies PKR1 (1) and PKR1 (2). These have not been considered previously by Councillors.
- 2.4 The Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 16 December 2014 recommended to Cabinet that the development management policies be amended as recommended by Officers in the schedule of responses to consultation and that they be approved for Regulation 19² public consultation. The Committee also recommended that criterion 3 (iii) to policy DM13 be amended to read:

Development proposals must:

' 3iii. Demonstrate that development in, or likely to adversely affect, in particular where a number of developments are likely to result in cumulative impact, that Air Quality Management Areas incorporate mitigation measures to reduce impact to an acceptable level, in line with the Borough's air quality action plan.'

- 2.5 At their meeting on 14 January 2015, Cabinet resolved to defer consideration of policies DM13, DM14 and DM15 until the results of transport modelling (VISUM) became available.
- 2.6 The results of the VISUM strategic traffic model have now been received and the Forecasting Report and commentary were reported to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board on 22 July 2015 and to the meeting of the Strategic Planning Sustainability and Transportation Committee on 18 August adjourned to 19 August 2015.
- 2.7 The Maidstone Joint Transportation Board, an advisory committee, resolved on the 22 July 2015 that:

'This Board recommends to Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways, Transportation and Waste and to Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee that a combination of DS2 and DS3 form the basis of the Integrated Transport Strategy for Maidstone to underpin the Local Plan. This with the exception of the following and subject to costing to ascertain affordability and the evaluation of feasibility, sustainability and deliverability;

- Additional North/South Park and Ride removed from DS2;
- All references to percentage targets removed from DS2;
- That it is specified with reference to parking costs, it refers to long-term car parks; and
- That frequent bus services are encouraged with appropriate junction improvements but at no detriment to existing traffic capacity.'

This recommendation was formally noted at the meeting of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee on 18 August 2015 adjourned to 19 August 2015.

² The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

- 2.8 A report on the outcomes of the VISUM modelling was also presented to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee on 18 August 2015 adjourned to 19 August 2015. In reaching their decision the minutes note that;

'The Committee discussed the recommendation from the Joint Transport Board (JTB) and considered the concerns it raised. The Committee considered the recommendation was clear but felt it was important that Officers were able to do further work on transport policies, taking into account the JTB recommendation, while maintaining the ability to report back to this Committee if it was found they were unable to *not* disrupt traffic flows.'

Councillors resolved the following:

'1. That the Committee notes the results of the transport modelling undertaken jointly by MBC and KCC and its implications for the preparation of the Integrated Transport Strategy and the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

2. That the Committee's broad support be noted of the Maidstone Joint Transport Board's recommendation dated 23 July 2015 and requests officers to do further work on transport policy development.'

- 2.9 The text and supporting text of policies DM13, DM14, DM15, PKR1(1) and PKR1(2) as presented in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Draft 2014 are attached at Appendix Three.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

Option 1

- 3.1 Keep policies DM13, DM14, DM15 and PKR1(1) and PKR1(2) as drafted in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Draft 2014.
- Such an approach however, would not take into account any of the representations received during the Regulation 18 Consultation period nor would it take into account the outcomes of the VISUM modelling.

Option 2

- 3.2 Amend policies DM13, DM14 and DM15 in line with the proposed changes recommended to the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 December 2014 together with the change(s) recommended by that Committee and subsequently recommended to Cabinet on 14 January 2015.
- This would take into account officers' consideration of representations received, but would not take into account the outcomes of the VISUM modelling.

Option 3

- 3.3 Amend policies DM13, DM14 and DM15 in the light of the changes recommended to Cabinet on 14 January 2015 and amend policies PKR1(1) and PKR1(2) to reflect the representations received at Regulation 18 Consultation stage as well as the recommendations of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board (22 July 2015) and this committee at its meeting on

18 August (adjourned to 19 August 2015) to reflect the outputs from the VISUM modelling.

- This option would take into account all representations received and also the outputs from the VISUM modelling.

- 3.4 Whichever option is chosen it will be necessary to continue the work on the revised draft Integrated Transport Strategy in conjunction with Kent County Council to provide the impetus, along with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, for the implementation of the measures foreshadowed in the policies.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Committee is recommended to adopt Option 3 as set out above. This will ensure that account is taken of the representations received at Regulation 18 Consultation stage and also of the outcomes of the recently completed VISUM modelling and the recommendation of this Committee and the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board at earlier meetings.
- 4.2 Maidstone, as the county town, faces transport challenges which are not uncommon across the country. These challenges may be characterised as increasing road congestion which arises as a result of population and private car usage growth, leading to environmental degradation and health and environmental implications through more pollution, parking and so on.
- 4.3 Furthermore, Maidstone has relatively poor public transport infrastructure compared with similar sized towns in the South East such as Dartford/Gravesend and Chelmsford. It also compares unfavourably with neighbouring towns in Kent. 2011 census data shows that Maidstone has a higher than average usage of, and dependence on, the private car and there are also economic implications from lost time and perceptions that conditions are deteriorating significantly.
- 4.4 As well as existing conditions, the Local Plan which the Borough is required to produce proposes approximately 18560 extra houses and more employment and economic activity throughout the Borough. This will lead to impacts on transport networks which need to be mitigated if the situation is not to worsen. However future planning needs to be kept separate from dealing with the present situation and existing concerns should not fetter a full understanding of the implications of future development which will continue whether there is a plan or not.
- 4.5 The strategy that is needed for Maidstone should also be an integrated one, which means that it is necessary for it to encompass transport provision across all modes. Recent research has shown comprehensively that traffic always outgrows road capacity if no other demand restricting measures are put in place, and this would certainly be the case in Maidstone. The strategy will also need to take account of the borough's geography as sustainable modes of transport are more feasible in some locations and for some journeys than others.

National and regional context

- 4.6 National transport policy is the responsibility of the Department for Transport (DfT) and local authorities through the statutory planning process. The DfT's stated vision is for:

"a transport system that is an engine for economic growth but one that is also greener and safer and improves quality of life in our communities"

- 4.7 This vision is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which emphasises the importance of rebalancing the transport system in favour of sustainable transport modes whilst encouraging local authorities to plan proactively for the transport infrastructure necessary to support growth.

Paragraphs 29 & 30 state:

'Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. Smarter use of technologies can reduce the need to travel. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel.'

'30. Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should therefore support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport.'

Paragraphs 34 and 35 state

'34. Plans and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. However this needs to take account of policies set out elsewhere in this Framework, particularly in rural areas.

35. Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to

- accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies;
- give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;
- create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones;
- incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles; and
- consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.'

Paragraph 41 states

'Local planning authorities should identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice.'

4.8 Similarly, KCC in its overall 'Vision for Kent', the county-wide strategy for the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Kent's communities has three major ambitions:

- "Grow the economy by supporting business, including improvements to the transport network and the provision of broadband
- Tackle disadvantage by..... provision of comprehensive, reliable and affordable public transport
- Put the citizen in control...including support for community bus and rails schemes."

4.9 While the Transport Delivery Plan for Kent (2010) concentrates on major strategic issues such as the Lower Thames crossing, Operation Stack and Foreign Lorry Road Charging, the Local Transport Plan for Kent (2011) re-emphasises; 'Growth without Gridlock', 'A Safer and Healthier County', 'Supporting independence', 'Tackling Climate Change' and 'Enjoying Life in Kent' and the promotion of sustainable transport policies.

Local policy context

4.10 The above national and county policy context and MBC's own Sustainable Community Strategy (2013) (SCS) promotes the integrated nature of a transport strategy for the Borough. The SCS acknowledges the significance of congestion and the overriding aim of an integrated transport strategy to provide genuine transport choice for residents, businesses and visitors.

4.11 The Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan 2000 recognises the need for the promotion of sustainable transport and encouraging a modal shift away from a reliance on the use of the private car. It recognises the need to produce an integrated Transport Strategy (policy T1) and the need to prioritise bus and hackney carriage access along identified corridors (Policy T2) and promoted Park & Ride (policy T17).

4.12 Existing draft policies seek to promote accessibility, and economic prosperity, and the significance of Maidstone as a regional transport hub. Specifically improvements to the transport network identified in the Local Plan include minor highways improvements and the promotion of public transport including park and ride and bus prioritisation.

4.13 The policies and supporting text have been re-examined in the light of the representations received at Regulation 18 Consultation stage and the outcomes of the strategic VISUM traffic modelling and the resultant recommendations of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board (22 July 2015) and this Committee at it last meeting on 18/19 August 2015.

- 4.14 A reference has been added to the supporting text relating to a potential Leeds-Langley Relief Road (LLRR) that was included by the County Council as part of the VISUM modelling in tested options DS1 and DS3. Representations have been made by the County Council and others that the road should be made subject to an explicit policy indicating that it will be delivered within the plan period i.e. prior to 2031.
- 4.15 The case for the justification for construction and also the delivery of a LLRR lies with the County Council as the Highways Authority. However, there are currently a number of uncertainties relating to this potential project. To-date the detailed costings (estimates vary between £50 and £80 million), environmental and route appraisals and also an assessment of whether future housing requirements would necessitate and also support construction of a LLRR which will be required to progress the proposals, have not been undertaken.
- 4.16 Councillors are advised that a very recent Inspector's report (dated 14 August 2015) into the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Joint Local Plan, which was found sound with modifications, also made reference to a highway proposal in that plan area. The Inspector commented as follows;
- '121. Reference to a 'safeguarded' route for the A354 Weymouth to Portland Relief Road was included in the adopted LP (Local Plan) 2005 to support economic growth and to mitigate the impact of vehicular traffic accessing the island. A new route could be of considerable benefit to businesses and local residents but it appears the County Council have doubts as to how it could be funded. Uncertainty over timescales runs the risk of unreasonably 'blighting' land and properties. Until further work to assess alternative routes, economic and environmental factors, timescales and funding sources have been fully considered I am not persuaded there is sufficient justification for safeguarding a route at present.'*³
- 4.17 It is considered that the situation with regard to a potential LLRR and the Maidstone Borough Local Plan is very similar. The uncertainties are such that they render safeguarding a potential route unjustified in the current local plan period. However, it is considered appropriate to 'signpost' the potential delivery of a road by an indication in the supporting text that the proposals would be subject to detailed consideration with a view to potential construction of the LLRR post 2031 at the first review of the Local Plan.
- 4.18 The largest change recommended to the policies is the deletion of the previously proposed additional Park and Ride Site at Linton Crossroads and also the site at Old Sittingbourne Road in Policy DM15 and as a consequence deletion of policy PKR1.
- 4.19 Having assessed and reviewed the representations received at Regulation 18 Consultation stage, it is considered that the provision of a park and ride facility on the Linton Crossroads site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from the lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies

³ Report on the Examination into the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Joint Local Plan 14 August 2015 p.25.

within the proposed Greensand Ridge Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.

- 4.20 In relation to the Old Sittingbourne Road Park and Ride Site (PKR1 (2)), the representations received from the landowner have again made it clear that the site is not available for the intended use. It is therefore recommended that this proposed allocation is also deleted.
- 4.21 Policy DM15 should therefore be amended accordingly to delete reference to the Linton Crossroads and Old Sittingbourne Road Park and Ride sites. Policy PKR1 should also be deleted and in addition the criteria and site plans relating to PKR1(1) Linton Crossroads and PKR1 (2) Old Sittingbourne Road. It will be necessary therefore to undertake further Regulation 18 Consultation on the proposed deletion.
- 4.22 Clearly there will be a need to ensure that the loss of these potential pieces of sustainable transport infrastructure is mitigated. It is considered that it would be appropriate to work with the public transport service operators to facilitate the introduction of express/limited stop buses on the radial routes into Maidstone particularly from the north including the Newnham Park Area and from the south, including Coxheath, that would serve the town centre and also Maidstone East/Maidstone West Railway Stations, primarily in the morning and evening peaks to encourage modal shift together with the implementation of bus priority measures to seek to secure the reliability and speed of such services. Preliminary discussions with the largest operator indicate that this is a potentially deliverable option. Details would be included within the ITS.
- 4.23 The Committee is therefore, recommended to approve the following changes to the supporting text for transport policies DM13, DM14 and DM15. Additions to the policies and their supporting text are in **bold text** and deletions are in ~~strike through text~~. Paragraphs 4.24 to 4.53 set out the supporting text to the policies as proposed to be amended. The tables at paragraphs 4.54 to 4.56 set out the proposed revisions to policies DM13, DM14 and DM15 respectively. Paragraphs 4.57 to the table at paragraph 4.62 now show the deletion of policy PKR1 and its supporting text in its entirety. As a consequence of the recommended deletion of policy PKR1, the development criteria and policy plans at pages 327 to 330 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Draft 2014 should also be deleted. The proposed deletion of policy PKR1 and the resultant amendments to policy DM15 will need to be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation. The changes to policies DM13 and DM14 are recommended for Regulation 19 Consultation.

Policy DM13 - Sustainable transport Transport

- 4.24 Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local ~~transport~~ **highway** authority), the Highways ~~England Agency~~, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the Council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), prepared by the Council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order

to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub. The ITS needs to address a number of transport challenges as set out below.

Highway network

- 4.25 Maidstone borough has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, Tonbridge and Malling, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells and London. Four north-south and east-west primary routes pass through the town centre and numerous secondary routes run in concentric rings around the town, providing local links to the rural parts of the Borough. Maidstone also enjoys good connections to the motorway network, including direct access to four junctions of the M20.
- 4.26 The principal constraint on the borough's urban road network is the single crossing point of the River Medway at the Town Centre bridges gyratory, where the A20, A26 and A229 meet. From this point, congestion spreads along the main radial approaches to Maidstone during the morning and evening peaks, leading drivers to seek alternative routes for longer journeys around the periphery of the town.
- 4.27 **Strategic VISUM traffic modelling was jointly commissioned by the Council and Kent County Council to assess traffic growth and the impact on the local highway network of background traffic growth and planned development in the period 2014 - 2031. The modelling conducted in 2012 indicates that by 2031, 26, the combination of background traffic growth and planned housing and employment development will increase the number of person trips in Maidstone during the morning peak hour by 4217%. Significantly however, background growth associated with increased economic activity and greater car ownership is expected to have over one and a half times the impact on trip generation of new housing and employment, demonstrating that robust solutions to Maidstone's transport challenges are required. regardless of the development proposed in the local plan.**
- 4.28 Maidstone has an average vehicle occupancy of approximately 1.23 persons per car, which is significantly lower than the UK average of 1.6 persons per car. This represents an inefficient use of road space and contributes to greater traffic congestion and air pollution. Whilst it is recognised that the private car will continue to provide the primary means of access in areas where alternative travel choices are not viable, the traffic data suggests that the ITS should focus on demand management measures that enable a higher people-moving capacity over the existing road network. Specifically, the strategy should aim for a reduction in the number of single-occupancy car trips into Maidstone Town Centre by long-stay commuters – particularly during peak periods – which can be achieved through interventions such as enhanced **public transport provision on the main radial routes**, Park and Ride and walking and cycling infrastructure. This approach, combined with targeted capacity improvements to strategic junctions such as the bridges gyratory **in the Town Centre**, would improve the reliability and hence attractiveness of public transport, as well as providing businesses and freight operators with greater journey time reliability.

- 4.29 **Some of the VISUM modelling options tested included a proposed Leeds-Langley Relief Road (LLRR) that would relieve traffic on the current B2163 towards junction 8 of the M20 motorway. The results indicate that the construction of such infrastructure may have a beneficial impact on some traffic movement patterns in the South East sector of Maidstone. This is however seen against the context of traffic movements generally in which Maidstone Town Centre itself and intra-urban movements (from one part of the Maidstone urban area to another) are the key drivers behind trips on the network.**
- 4.30 **The case for the justification of the construction and the delivery of a LLRR lies with the County Council as the Highways Authority. To-date, the detailed costings (estimates vary between £50 and £80 million), environmental and route appraisals and also an assessment of whether future housing requirements would necessitate and also support construction of a LLRR which will be required to progress the proposals, have not yet been undertaken. It is therefore considered appropriate to give detailed consideration to the potential construction of the LLRR post 2031 at the first review of the Local Plan.**

Car Parking

- 4.31 The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the Borough's retail economy, to facilitate access to areas where alternative travel modes are limited or unavailable, and to ensure that mobility impaired persons are able to access key education, employment and leisure opportunities. However, the supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can therefore contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. Therefore it is crucial that MBC and its partners avoid an overprovision of parking, particularly in and around Maidstone Town Centre.
- 4.32 The ITS will seek **to** address parking issues by producing a refreshed Town Centre Parking Strategy. **A key aspect of this strategy for example, will be the use of measures to provide disincentives to the use of long-term car-parking in the Town Centre, whilst,** prioritising shoppers and visitors; ~~giving consideration to a reduction in town centre long stay parking supply;~~ **by** utilising **long-stay** town centre parking tariffs to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport such as Park and Ride and reviewing the Residents' Parking Zones to ensure they are fair, simple and meet the needs of all road users.

Park and Ride

- 4.33 **The Council** ~~MBC~~ has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s and was one of the first local authorities in the UK to introduce the concept. The service aims to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and has met with varying levels of success to date. Three sites are currently in operation at London Road, Sittingbourne Road, and Willington Street, which in total comprise some 1,450 parking spaces.

- 4.34 During the 2012/13 financial year some 400,000 transactions were recorded on Park and Ride bus services, which equates to a fall of 7% from the previous year. The Park and Ride services are also available for use by concessionary pass holders, and indeed approximately half of the trips recorded in 2012/13 were made by this group.
- 4.35 The reduction in patronage can be partially explained by the recession and suppressed economic activity in the town centre. Usage of the Park and Ride service should also be considered in the context of the supply of town centre car parking (both public and private) and the associated parking tariffs. The Park and Ride service is used by both commuters and shoppers; however it accounts for just 2% of all person trips into the town centre during peak periods (excluding walking and cycling), compared to 12% for bus and 77% for private car. The service currently requires a significant annual subsidy and therefore the ITS is seeking to take a targeted approach to address this situation.
- 4.36 The ITS **will seek to retain the** ~~is to targeting the provision of an enhanced Park and Ride service, with an improved site on Old Sittingbourne Road in the vicinity of M20 Junction 7 and on the A229 corridor at Linton Crossroads to the south of the town,~~ **existing sites at Willington Street and London Road. All sites are** aimed at long-stay commuters into the Town Centre. Bus priority measures will also be provided on Park and Ride routes in tandem with the ~~enhanced service.~~

Bus services

- 4.37 Maidstone borough has a well-established bus network provided principally by Arriva, together with a number of smaller independent operators. The network is centred on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban areas with longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns, including Ashford, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and the Medway Towns.
- 4.38 Although KCC and the Council do not directly influence the provision of commercial bus services, both authorities work closely with the operators to improve the quality of services and to ensure that the highway network is planned and managed in a way that facilitates the efficient operation of buses. This relationship has been formalised through the signing of a voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) agreement, which includes commitments by Arriva, KCC and MBC to work collectively to improve all aspects of bus travel and to increase passenger numbers.
- 4.39 **Given the deletion of the previously proposed Park and Ride sites at Linton Crossroads and at Old Sittingbourne Road, the Council will work with the service operators to procure express/limited stop bus services on the radial routes into Maidstone (particularly from the north including the Newnham Park Area and from the south on the A229 and A274) to the Town Centre and railway stations in the morning and evening peaks to encourage modal shift together with the implementation of bus priority measures to seek to secure the reliability and speed of such services.**

- 4.40 A number of services cannot be provided commercially and are classed as socially necessary services that require subsidy from KCC. These primarily consist of school, rural, evening and weekend services, which provide access to education, employment, healthcare, or essential food shopping. KCC also completed the countywide roll out of the Kent Freedom Pass during 2009. The County Council now provides free travel on almost all public bus services in Kent **Monday to Friday** for an annual fee of **£250** ~~£100~~ for young people living in the county and in academic years 7 to 11. The County Council also assumed responsibility from MBC for the administration and funding of the statutory Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme for disabled people, their companions and those aged over 60, in April 2011. As the Local Education Authority, KCC also provides free or subsidised home-to-school transport to children who meet the criteria.
- 4.41 Through the ITS bus service frequencies will look to be increased (to at least every 7 minutes) on radial routes serving Maidstone Town Centre. **(The A274 Sutton Road corridor from Parkwood already has an 8-minute frequency)**. Bus priority measures will be provided in order to encourage the use of public transport **by seeking to ensure the reliability and frequency of services** and services will continue to be made more accessible to all users.

Rail services

- 4.42 Three railway lines cross Maidstone borough, serving a total of 14 stations. The operator of the vast majority of rail services in the area is the current south east franchise holder, Southeastern.
- 4.43 The principal rail route serving Maidstone town is the London Victoria to Ashford International line (also referred to as the Maidstone East Line), which includes stations at Maidstone East, Bearsted, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Lenham. The average journey time between Maidstone East and London Victoria is an hour and runs half-hourly. The London Charing Cross/Cannon Street to Dover Priory/Ramsgate line passes through the south of the borough, with stations at Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn. Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations are located in close proximity to the City of London and hence services on this line are heavily used by commuters, which, places pressure on the limited station car park capacity in these villages.
- 4.44 The Medway Valley Line, connecting Strood and Paddock Wood, runs from north to south across the borough, with stations at Maidstone Barracks, Maidstone West, East Farleigh, Watlingbury, Yalding and Beltring. The line operates as part of the Kent Community Rail Partnership, which has delivered improvements to the stations and promoted the service widely. In May 2011, Southeastern commenced the operation of direct peak-time services between London St Pancras and Maidstone West via Strood and High Speed 1 on a trial basis. This has reduced rail journey times between Maidstone and London to 48 minutes and provided commuters from the town with the option of travelling to an alternative London terminus closer to the City. Collectively, these enhancements have contributed to a 25% increase in passenger numbers on the Medway Valley Line since 2007, putting it in the top 10 lines nationally for ridership growth according to the Association of Train Operating Companies.

- 4.45 KCC published its Rail Action Plan for Kent in 2011, which sets out the County Council's objectives for the new South Eastern Franchise. The reinstatement of services between Maidstone and the City of London is the plan's top priority. It also recognises the need for the level of rail fares charged in Kent to offer better value for money and for the roll out of Smartcard ticketing offering combined bus and rail travel, similar to Transport for London's Oyster card.

Air quality

- 4.46 Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to poor air quality at both the local level and on a wider global scale. Indeed the entire Maidstone Urban Area has been declared an Air Quality Management Area, primarily due to the level of traffic congestion at peak times. The ITS will therefore support the delivery of the measures identified in the Maidstone Air Quality Action Plan to deliver an improvement in the air quality of the urban area and to reduce pollutant levels below the Air Quality Objective Levels set out by European legislation.
- 4.47 Development in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas should where necessary incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact. Examples of mitigation measures include:
- Using green infrastructure to absorb dust and other pollutants;
 - Promoting infrastructure to encourage the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality
 - Contributing funding to measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development

Influencing travel behaviour

- 4.48 Through the ITS the Council, together with KCC, will seek to promote and support a range of initiatives to influence travel behaviour in the borough. This can be achieved through the use of Travel Plans, behaviour change programmes and introducing improvements to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling and the use of transport, car sharing and car clubs.
- 4.49 The Council, together with KCC, will continue to promote and support the use of Travel Plans as a way of influencing travel behaviour away from journeys by private car to more sustainable modes. Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will continue to implement and monitor their own corporate Travel Plans as well as securing Travel Plans for new development as part of the planning process. Workplace and School Travel Plans will also continue to be developed, implemented and monitored through partnership working across the borough where appropriate.

Cycling and walking

- 4.50 Both KCC and **the Council** ~~MB~~ are therefore committed to the provision of a comprehensive cycle network for residents and visitors to Maidstone.
- 4.51 The Borough currently has a number of cycle routes that link the town centre to the suburban areas; however connections within the town and further afield are limited and there is a lack of cycle parking at key

destinations. Consequently, cycle use in Maidstone is very low, the 2011 Census travel to work data indicated that 1% of work trips were undertaken by bike. However 12% of journeys to work were made on foot.

- 4.52 The provision of attractive and safe walking and cycling routes with adequate cycle parking will be incorporated within the ITS. The borough's walking environment, its walking routes and its public realm will be developed and improved through local plan policies, the ITS, the IDP, and through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. The Maidstone Cycling Strategy will be developed through the ITS. These strategies and documents will have the aim of increasing the proportion of trips made by walking and cycling in the borough by 2031.

Assessing the transport needs of development

- 4.53 New developments have the potential to generate a considerable number of vehicular and pedestrian trips which in turn has both a direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. Improvements to public transport, walking, cycling and highway infrastructure to mitigate these impacts need to be in place to ensure the increase in trips generated will not lead to an unacceptable level of transport impact. To further minimise these impacts, measures and initiatives must be incorporated into the design of development to minimise vehicular trip generation. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, developed in accordance with KCC guidance will be expected to accompany all planning applications for new developments that reach the required threshold. New development proposals will also be expected to enter into legal agreements to mitigate both their direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. The Council will also ~~also~~ seek to secure Construction Management Plans to minimise impacts from new developments during construction.

4.54

Policy DM13

Sustainable Transport

1. Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local ~~highway transport authority~~), ~~the Highways Agency~~ **Highways England**, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the Borough Council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy, prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to Maidstone town centre, in order to promote the town as a regionally important transport hub.

2. In doing so, the council and its partners will:

- i. Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan and facilitates economic prosperity;
- ii. Manage demand on the transport network through enhanced public transport and **the continued** Park and Ride services and walking and cycling improvements;

- iii. Improve highway network capacity and function at key locations and junctions across the borough;
- iv. Manage parking provision in the town centre and the wider borough to ensure it is fair and proportionate and supports demand management;
- v. Improve transport choice across the borough and seek to influence travel behaviour;
- vi. Develop the strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, ~~and connections to the rural service centres;~~ **including increased bus service frequency along the radial routes into the town centre and its railway stations, particularly in the morning and evening peak travel times;**
- vii. Work with service providers to improve bus links to the rural service centres and larger villages, including route options and frequency;**
- viii. Improve strategic links to Maidstone across the county and to wider destinations such as London;
- ~~viii-ix.~~ **ix.** Ensure the transport network provides inclusive access for all users; and
- ~~ix-x.~~ **x.** Address the air quality impact of transport.

3. Development proposals must:

- i. Demonstrate that the impacts of trips generated to and from the development are remedied or mitigated, **including where feasible an exploration of delivering mitigation measures ahead of the development being occupied;**
- ii. Provide a satisfactory Transport Assessment and a satisfactory Travel Plan in accordance with the threshold levels set by Kent County Council's Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans; and
- iii. Demonstrate that development in, or likely to adversely affect, **in particular where a number of developments are likely to result in cumulative impact, that** Air Quality Management Areas incorporates mitigation measures to reduce impact to an acceptable level, **in line with the Borough's Air Quality Action Plan.**

A parking standards supplementary planning document will be produced to provide greater detail in support of the policy.

4.55

Policy DM 14

Public transport

- 1. Within the bus and hackney carriage corridors, as defined on the policies map, the council and the highway authority will develop preference measures to improve journey times and reliability and make public transport more attractive, particularly on park and ride routes **and the radial routes into the town centre.** Such measures **will** include:
 - i. Dedicated bus lanes, including contraflow lanes where appropriate;
 - ii. Bus priority measures at junctions;
 - iii. Prioritisation within traffic management schemes; and/or
 - iv. Enhanced waiting and access facilities and information systems for

passengers, including people with disabilities.

2. Proposals for major development will be permitted if adequate provision is made, where necessary and appropriate, within the overall design and site layout for the following facilities for public transport secured through legal agreements:

- i. Priority or exclusive provision for public service vehicle access to or through the proposed development area;
- ii. Safe and convenient passenger waiting facilities, information systems and signed pedestrian access routes;
- iii. Suitable provision for disabled access to the waiting facilities from all parts of the development area; and
- iv. Suitable provision for disabled access onto buses from the waiting facilities.

4.56

Policy DM 15

Park and ride

1. The following sites, as defined on the policies map, are designated bus park and ride sites:

- ~~i. Old Sittingbourne Road (to serve the A249 corridor);~~
- i. London Road (to serve the A20 west corridor);
- ii. Willington Street (to serve the A20 east corridor); and
- ~~iv. Linton Crossroads (to serve the A229 corridor).~~

2. The provision of new or replacement park and ride facilities should meet the following criteria:

- i. Satisfactory access, layout, design, screening and landscaping;
- ii. Provision of suitable waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities; and
- iii. The implementation of complementary public transport priority measures both to access the site and moreover along the route. Measures will include dedicated bus lanes (including contraflow lanes where appropriate), together with bus priority measures at junctions.

~~Policy PKR1 – Park and ride allocations~~

~~4.57 Park and ride is an important part of the council's transport vision for Maidstone and the rest of the borough. The existing park and ride service accommodates demand for access from the A249/M20 transport corridor and from east and west on the A20 transport corridor. The Integrated Transport Strategy sets out how the service can help to accommodate journeys from new housing and employment developments in the borough. The A229 transport corridor from the south of the borough into Maidstone (Staplehurst, Marden, Linton, Coxheath, Boughton Monchelsea and Loose) is an area of strong demand, which is currently not served.~~

~~4.58 The A229/B2163 Linton crossroads is allocated for a new park and ride facility. This location is at an appropriate distance from the town centre to intercept traffic movements early enough along the A229 corridor and provide easy access to the identified catchment area. Along the length of the A229 corridor bus priority measures will help provide faster access to~~

and from the town centre in peak times than an equivalent private vehicle journey could achieve.

4.59 Landscape mitigation is key to the delivery of the site due to its prominent location at the top of the Greensand Ridge. The site will be designed to mitigate the impact of long range views, incorporating structural landscaping to lessen any visual impact. The site is also in close proximity to the Linton conservation area, which lies to the south of the site, at a lower level on the scarp slope. The development of this site will need to be such that there are no incompatible impacts on the setting of the conservation area.

4.60 The existing park and ride site at the A249, Old Sittingbourne Road, near junction 7 of the M20 will be retained and improved. The suitability of this site for park and ride will be enhanced by the addition of a single deck of car parking spaces, which will increase the capacity of the site without increasing the site's footprint. Public transport priority measures on the Bearsted Road and Sittingbourne Road will also make the site a more attractive travel mode for commuters.

4.61 Landscape mitigation will be key to the delivery of an expanded site in this location, and any design will need to be sensitively incorporated into the surrounding landscape with consideration of long distance views from the Kent Downs AONB.

4.62

Policy PKR 1

Park and ride allocation

The following sites are identified on the policies map for park and ride:

Policy reference	Site name, address
(1)	Linton crossroads (A229/B2163). Capacity of 1000 car parking spaces
(2)	Old Sittingbourne Road (A249) at M20 junction 7. Capacity of 1000 car parking spaces

5 CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 The draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) was subject to public consultation and the issues raised in the representations which were received are discussed in this report and its appendices.

6 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 As part of the Local Plan process further iterations of Policies DM13, DM14, DM15, PKR1(1) and PKR1(2) will be subject to public consultation.

7 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The adoption of the Local Plan will assist in the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities.</p> <p>The Council's priorities include the outcome of securing improvements to the transport infrastructure of our Borough and the consultation on the strategic plan showed this outcome to be the second highest scoring outcome.</p>	Head of Finance & Resources
Risk Management	A key risk to the local plan programme relates to the Council's ability to provide a package of sustainable transport measures alongside the infrastructure necessary to support planned growth.	Head of Planning and Development
Financial	<p>The cost of the VISUM modelling has been funded jointly by the Council and KCC. The cost has been met from the existing budget. Future funding requirements will need to take account of available resources which may impact on other Council priorities.</p> <p>Delivery of the works required by the infrastructure delivery plan (IDP) have been identified as a priority for the Council over the last four years. As such the Council has a policy of setting aside resources from New Homes Bonus to support the plan. The IDP as previously developed, without the LLRR, was recognised as requiring additional resource input above the funding the Council can generate even accounting for</p>	Head of Finance and Resources

	potential developer funding (s106 and/or CIL).	
Staffing	N/A	Head of Planning and Development
Legal	There are no legal implications directly arising from this report, although the Legal Team continues to provide advice and guidance on local plan matters and to review any legal implications of reports	Kate Jardine, Solicitor, Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	The policies were informed by the EqIA for regulation 18 public consultation on the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, which will be reviewed to support the Regulation 19 version of the local plan. The Regulation 19 version of the local plan will be considered by SPS&T Committee before approval by Full Council	Policy and Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The policies seek to deliver a package of sustainable transport measures in addition to specific highway improvements as part of the local plan which aims to deliver sustainable growth as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.	Head of Planning and Development
Community Safety	N/A	Head of Planning and Development
Human Rights Act	N/A	Head of Planning and Development
Procurement	Consultants are used to prepare specialist or technical evidence to support the local plan and are appointed in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures.	Head of Planning and Development & Head of Finance and Resources
Asset Management	There are no direct implications arising from this report.	Head of Finance & Resources

8 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Schedule of issues raised to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation draft and officer responses relating to policies DM13, DM14 and DM15
 - Appendix 2: Schedule of issues raised to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation draft and officer responses relating to policies PKR1(1) and PKR1(2)
 - Appendix 3: Supporting text and policies DM13, DM14 DM15 PKR1 (1) and PKR1(2) as published in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Draft 2014
 - Appendix 4: Proposed supporting text and criteria for policies DM13 and DM14
 - Appendix 5: Proposed criteria for policy DM15
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9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDIX ONE

DM13 SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Consultation issues and responses

Policy: DM13 Sustainable transport

Key issues:

1. Maidstone needs High Speed railway station.
2. Roads at capacity, Leeds/Langley bypass needed.
3. General disagreement with approach.
4. Better bus service in rural areas/to and from Weald required.
5. Policy is too aspirational.
6. Travel through Maidstone town centre if travelling north-south and vice-versa is a big problem.
7. Targets for modal split and journey times should be included.
8. Integrated Transport Strategy not supported by KCC.
9. Impact of development on A26 should be referenced.
10. Policy is unclear.
11. Rapid transit system required e.g. monorail.
12. Bus lanes/bus priority measures take road space from other modes.
13. Support SPD on parking standards, particularly for RSCs. Currently provision standards too low – need to be realistic.
14. Use of Willington Street needs to be reduced, where are the measures for this?
15. Plan is not yet based on the transport evidence.
16. B2163 should be upgraded into a southern bypass.
17. More cycle routes required.
18. Linton Crossroads inappropriate location for park and ride – traffic, junction issues, landscape character, effect on Coxheath, Linton communities.
19. Bus frequency should be referenced in policy.
20. More car parking required in town centre.
21. Infrastructure should be provided before development.
22. Policy contrary to NPPF – with reference to residual development impacts being severe. Currently not worded this way. Air quality impacts need to be addressed proportionately, not as de facto requirement of all developments.
23. Transport infrastructure improvements required on A249 at Detling Aerodrome.
24. Policy parts 1 and 2 need to be reworded as these do not provide appropriate guidance for developers.
25. Employment strategy is at odds with transport strategy because it will require HGV movements through town centre – should make use of motorway junctions, specifically junction 8.

Key issue 1: Maidstone needs High Speed railway station.

Detail: The high speed railway line (HS1) runs through Maidstone Borough but does not have a station within the borough. Connections to London from Ashford on HS1 take 38 minutes throughout the day. The quickest connection to London from Maidstone takes 50 minutes at peak times from Maidstone West.

Officer response: Partially accept. In practice it is difficult for Maidstone to construct a station on the high speed line because of its route across and adjacent to the Kent Downs AONB. The Maidstone West peak hour service connects to the high speed line at Ebbsfleet, having travelled along the Medway Valley line and then the north Kent line through Strood and Gravesend. This offers the quickest service to London. Thameslink is due to be extended to

Policy: DM13 Sustainable transport
Maidstone, which means that although speeds to London may not increase, the service options will.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 2: Roads at capacity, Leeds/Langley bypass needed.
Detail: The Leeds/Langley bypass is an adopted scheme in the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000. There have been a number of iterations of this scheme, whether adopted or not, in including a proposed South East Maidstone Strategic Link (SEMSL), but none have ever gained funding. It is contended that this road, if built, would take traffic away from the town centre.
Officer response: Partially accept. The Leeds/Langley bypass is being modelled as part of the transport modelling exercise required to mitigate transport issues in association with development proposed in the draft local plan. The modelling will indicate if this is an appropriate solution.
The capacity of roads in the borough is another question to be addressed through transport modelling, which may include such schemes as expanded park and ride, for which the Borough Council has been successful in part funding.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 3: General disagreement with approach.
Detail: General disagreement with approach.
Officer response: Noted.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 4: Better bus service in rural areas/to and from Weald required.
Detail: The issue of bus provision in rural areas continues to be difficult. Bus services are limited and do not run late into the night.
Officer response: Accept. This is an important issue that needs to be addressed. The Borough Council is limited in its options, however, when possibilities arise, it will look to exploit them.
Proposed change: Amend criterion 2(vi) to read: "Develop the strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, including increased bus service frequency;" Add new criterion 2(vii): "Work with service providers to improve bus links to the rural service centres and larger villages, including route options and frequency;"
Key issue 5: Policy is too aspirational.
Detail: Policy is considered too aspirational i.e. the comment doubts that improvements to the level proposed can be achieved.
Officer response: Reject. Some aspects of the policy undoubtedly are aspirational, however, this indicates the way that the Borough Council is thinking and without aspirations set out in policy, it is difficult to envisage any changes being achieved.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 6: Travel through Maidstone town centre if travelling north-south and vice-versa is a big problem.
Detail: Travel to and through the town centre is very difficult because a lot of the traffic converges on the Bridges Gyratory. This includes the A20 east and west, the A229 north and

Policy: DM13 Sustainable transport
south, the A26 and the A249.
Officer response: Accept: The council, in conjunction with Kent County Council, has won funding from the Local Growth Fund to improve some of the movements via the Bridges Gyratory. There will now be an option for traffic coming from the south on the A229 to bypass the Bridges Gyratory and travel north without having to twice cross the River Medway. This means in effect that as well as traffic movements south to north being improved, there will be more space on the gyratory itself, easing other movements i.e. east-west and vice-versa.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 7: Targets for modal split and journey times should be included.
Detail: Modal split is an issue that many highways authorities are dealing with. Influencing people to travel by means other than private transport helps to reduce congestion and carbon emissions.
Officer response: Partially accept. Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will prepare an integrated transport strategy, for consultation alongside the regulation 19 draft of the local plan. It is not until then that the two councils will be able to say with certainty what are realistic targets to aim for in achieving modal split. However, adopting a target will be an important aspect of the policy.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 8: Integrated Transport Strategy not supported by KCC.
Detail: The previous draft of the integrated transport strategy was rejected by members of the Joint Transportation Board (JTB), which includes Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council members.
Officer response: Accept. The integrated transport strategy, in its previous incarnation, was rejected by members sitting on the JTB. Members from both councils are now working together, including through transport modelling, to seek joint solutions for the transport issues in Maidstone Borough.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 9: Impact of development on A26 should be referenced.
Detail: The A26 will be subject to a number of transport impacts resulting from the development proposed in the local plan. The north west area of Maidstone, in particular at Hermitage Lane, has been identified as a strategic housing location in the plan.
Officer response: Partially accept. Transport impacts will result from a number of proposed developments in the local plan, including along the primary transport corridors into and out of town – the A26, the A229, the A249, the A20 and the A274. However, this wider picture will be considered as part of the joint work being undertaken to develop the integrated transport strategy. The policy in its current form does not specify particular transport corridors, therefore at this moment in time, and until at least the transport modelling and integrated transport strategy have been completed, no further detail in this respect should be added.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 10: Policy is unclear.
Detail: Comment considers policy unclear.
Officer response: Noted.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 11: Rapid transit system required e.g. monorail.
Detail: Rapid transit systems are found in major cities around the world and in larger cities across England. In Sheffield, Nottingham, Manchester and Edinburgh there are tram systems. In Newcastle and Glasgow there are metro systems and in London there is the Underground.

Policy: DM13 Sustainable transport
Many tram systems used to exist across the country but were replaced when cars became more popular and affordable.
Officer response: Reject. Rapid transit systems can move large numbers of people in relative ease. In the 1990s the Government indicated that it was willing to fund the reinstatement of a number of light rail (tram) systems. The Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 included a policy for the establishment of a light rail service between Maidstone and Strood, using the Medway Valley railway line. A re-evaluation of re-establishing tram services meant, however, that Government funding was restricted and since then the business cases for such schemes are scrutinised more stringently. In Maidstone it would be difficult to seek the establishment of a rapid transit system – tram or monorail, because the population does not exist in the urban area to make it viable. It is difficult to establish priority measures for buses and a tram system would require much more of these.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 12: Bus lanes/bus priority measures take road space from other modes.
Detail: Concern regarding the implementation of any bus priority measures, including a bus lane.
Officer response: Reject. Depending on the measure sought, bus priority schemes can take road space from other road users. The benefit of any bus priority measures that are proposed will be evidenced by transport modelling. This will ensure that the costs and benefits of any proposal are weighed up adequately.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 13: Support SPD on parking standards, particularly for RSCs. Currently provision standards too low – need to be realistic.
Detail: Considers that parking standards are currently too low. This is particularly the case in RSCs where alternative transport modes to the car are not as comprehensive as in the urban area.
Officer response: Accept. Parking standards are an issue that will be addressed through an SPD. Any proposals contained in the parking standards will be based on evidence and take into account the wider transport context of any particular location.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 14: Use of Willington Street needs to be reduced, where are the measures for this?
Detail: Willington Street provides an effective bypass to the east of Maidstone town centre, linking the A274 to the A20.
Officer response: Accept. Transport modelling is underway to assess the options for mitigating the impact of transport measures proposed in the draft local plan. One of the schemes that will be modelled is the Leeds/Langley bypass, which if eventually constructed would ease the use of Willington Street.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 15: Plan is not yet based on the transport evidence.
Detail: Comment considers that no evidence has been produced to support the transport measures proposed in the local plan.
Officer response: Reject. A number of rounds of transport modelling have been undertaken to support the development of the local plan. The most recent was in support of the 2012 Core Strategy Strategic Site Allocations document. A large part of this work remains valid.
The site allocations proposed in the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan mean that more

Policy: DM13 Sustainable transport
transport modelling is required and as a result, further transport modelling is currently being undertaken.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 16: B2163 should be upgraded into a southern bypass.
Detail: The B2163 runs from Leeds near to junction 8 of the M20, through Boughton Monchelsea and Coxheath, to Teston on the A26. This is a minor road, although people do use what of it they can as an effective southern bypass around Maidstone.
Officer response: Reject. This has been proposed in past years, however, a mixture of issues has meant that it has never been delivered i.e. agreement whether this an appropriate solution and funding.
Even if funding were available, it would have to be born in mind that upgrading the B2163 into a southern bypass would irreversibly alter the rural character of the areas that it runs through.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 17: More cycle routes required.
Detail: As part of the aim to encourage modal shift, including to bicycles, more cycle routes will be required.
Officer response: Accept. A large amount of work has already been undertaken on this subject and a cycle strategy will be developed as part of the integrated transport strategy and this will be published alongside the Maidstone Borough Local Plan regulation 19 draft in July 2015. This will include options for the future of cycling in Maidstone, including the potential for creating more cycle routes.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 18: Linton Crossroads inappropriate location for park and ride – traffic, junction issues, landscape character, effect on Coxheath, Linton communities.
Detail: Linton crossroads should not be identified as a park and ride site.
Officer response: Reject. This comment is more appropriately related to policy DM15 – Park and ride. However, the basis for the park and ride site being proposed at Linton Crossroads is that transport modelling undertaken in support of the 2012 Core Strategy Strategic Site Allocations document showed the A229 corridor from the south of Maidstone to have the strongest demand.
Proposed change: No change
Key issue 19: Bus frequency should be referenced in policy.
Detail: Bus frequency is an issue when trying to encourage people to use public transport instead of private transport. One of the benefits of private transport is the ability to travel when required i.e. 'turn up and go', rather than having to wait for a service. In places like London, the high frequency of public transport means that as an option it rates very highly in comparison.
Officer response: Accept. Modal shift requires an element of carrot and stick. If the incentives for people to travel on public transport do not exist then restrictive measures will not work effectively and the council could actually be portrayed in a bad light.
Proposed change: Amend criterion 2(vi) to read:
"Develop the strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, including increased bus service frequency."
Key issue 20: More car parking required in town centre.

Policy: DM13 Sustainable transport
Detail: More car parking is required in the town centre.
Officer response: Reject. Maidstone town centre benefits from a number of car parks, which are operated by different organisations, among them The Mall, Fremlin Walk and Maidstone Borough Council. There is a debate about the future of car parking in Maidstone, especially in relation to the traffic travelling into the town centre, however, it is difficult to say that the town centre is under-catered for.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 21: Infrastructure should be provided before development.
Detail: Often infrastructure can be delivered in line with development, or lagging behind development. This can cause issues when residents move into houses but essential services are not up to standard. In relation to transport, this might be where bus services are delivered to a development an amount time after it has been occupied and when the new residents' behaviour has become normalised driving their cars.
Officer response: Accept. Where possible infrastructure should be provided in advance of residents occupying new homes.
Proposed change: Amend criterion 3(i) to read: "i. Demonstrate that the impacts of trips generated to and from the development are remedied or mitigated, including where feasible an exploration of delivering mitigation measures ahead of the development being occupied;"
Key issue 22: Policy contrary to NPPF – with reference to residual development impacts being severe. Currently not worded this way. Air quality impacts need to be addressed proportionately, not as de facto requirement of all developments.
Detail: The impact on air quality is a key consideration in allocating land for new developments and in determining planning applications. The concern raised by this comment is how that impact is dealt with and who is liable for it.
Officer response: Reject. Policy DM13 does not specify the extent to which air quality impacts are addressed. Policy DM16 – Air quality, more comprehensively addresses the topic and should be referred to in the first instance.
Proposed change: Amend criterion 3(iii) to read: "Demonstrate that development in, or likely to adversely affect, Air Quality Management Areas incorporates mitigation measures to reduce impact to an acceptable level, in line with the borough's air quality action plan."
Key issue 23: Transport infrastructure improvements required on A249 at Detling Aerodrome.
Detail: Transport infrastructure i.e. a roundabout, should be included on the A249 at Detling Aerodrome, in conjunction with redevelopment and expansion of the existing business park.
Officer response: Reject. Detling Aerodrome was not included in the allocations policy for further development. As long as this is the case, no transport improvements would be required in relation to the aerodrome.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 24: Policy parts 1 and 2 need to be reworded as these do not provide appropriate guidance for developers.
Detail: The strategic aspect of this policy needs to be reworded as this is not true development management guidance.
Officer response: Partially accept. The structure of the local plan has been developed as such

Policy: DM13 Sustainable transport
to be less topic based and more about place shaping. Therefore a number of topics have been included under the umbrella of 'development management', which is opposed to the structure of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000. Inevitably this does not deal neatly with all aspects of policy and is the reason why policy DM13 includes strategy as well as more specific development management requirements [at criterion 3].
The structure of the plan is such that this is a necessary compromise.
Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 25: Employment strategy is at odds with transport strategy because it will require HGV movements through town centre – should make use of motorway junctions, specifically junction 8.
Detail: By allocating land at the motorway junctions, the council could restrict traffic movements through the town centre.
Officer response: Partially accept. While not accepting that this in itself means land should be allocated at motorway junctions for employment uses, there is a point to take regarding transport issues in the town centre not necessarily indicating that dispersed employment allocations are the best solution.
It is worthwhile noting that in Maidstone Borough and at the motorway junctions specifically, there are already a number of employment uses/approval for employment uses. At junction 6 the Audi dealership has been built and there is approval for distribution development at Brooklyn Yard. At junction 7 the Eclipse business park is still developing, including a local planning agent, a law firm, an insurance firm, a retail use and an approval for a new hotel. On the opposite side of the A249 the KIMS hospital has been built and the wider Maidstone Medical Campus has approval to expand on this. There is also an allocation to redevelop the Newnham Court shopping village with limited expansion. It is only at junction 8 where further land could feasibly be allocated in line with the comments expressed. It could be argued therefore that the council has already taken heed of such arguments regarding the use of motorway junctions.
The transport modelling currently being undertaken is considering the possibility of a Leeds/Langley bypass and this, if eventually delivered, could take some commercial traffic away from the town centre.
Proposed change: No change.

DM13 SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Proposed policy following amendments

Policy DM 13 – Sustainable transport

- Additions and amendments
 - Deletions
-

Transport

11.59 Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local transport authority), the Highways Agency, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub. The ITS needs to address a number of transport challenges as set out below.

Highway network

11.60 Maidstone borough has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, Tonbridge and Malling, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells and London. Four north-south and east-west primary routes pass through the town centre and numerous secondary routes run in concentric rings around the town, providing local links to the rural parts of the borough. Maidstone also enjoys good connections to the motorway network, including direct access to four junctions of the M20.

11.61 The principal constraint on the borough's urban road network is the single crossing point of the River Medway at the town centre bridges gyratory, where the A20, A26 and A229 meet. From this point, congestion spreads along the main radial approaches to Maidstone during the morning and evening peaks, leading drivers to seek alternative routes for longer journeys around the periphery of the town.

11.62 Modelling conducted in 2012 indicates that by 2026, a combination of background traffic growth and planned housing and employment development will increase the number of person trips in Maidstone during the morning peak hour by 42%. Significantly however, background growth associated with increased economic activity and greater car ownership is expected to have over one-and-a-half times the impact on trip generation of new housing and employment, demonstrating that robust solutions to Maidstone's transport challenges are required regardless of the development proposed in the local plan.

11.63 Maidstone has an average vehicle occupancy of approximately 1.23 persons per car, which is significantly lower than the UK average of 1.6 persons per car. This represents an inefficient use of road space and contributes to greater traffic congestion and air pollution. Whilst it is recognised that the private car will continue to provide the primary means of access in areas where alternative travel choices are not viable, the traffic data suggests that the ITS should focus on demand management measures that enable a higher people-moving capacity over the existing road network. Specifically, the strategy should aim for a reduction in the number of single-occupancy car trips into Maidstone town centre by long-stay commuters – particularly during peak periods – which can be achieved through interventions such as enhanced Park and Ride and walking and cycling infrastructure. This approach,

combined with targeted capacity improvements to strategic junctions such as the bridges gyratory, would improve the reliability and hence attractiveness of public transport, as well as providing businesses and freight operators with greater journey time reliability .

Car Parking

11.64 The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the borough's retail economy, to facilitate access to areas where alternative travel modes are limited or unavailable, and to ensure that mobility impaired persons are able to access key education, employment and leisure opportunities. However, the supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can therefore contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. Therefore it is crucial that MBC and its partners avoid an overprovision of parking, particularly in and around Maidstone town centre.

11.65 The ITS will seek address parking issues by producing a refreshed Town Centre Parking Strategy, prioritising shoppers and visitors; giving consideration to a reduction in town centre long-stay parking supply; utilising town-centre parking tariffs to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport such as Park and Ride and reviewing the Residents' Parking Zones to ensure they are fair, simple and meet the needs of all road users.

Park and Ride

11.66 MBC has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s and was one of the first local authorities in the UK to introduce the concept. The service aims to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and has met with varying levels of success to date. Three sites are currently in operation at London Road, Sittingbourne Road, and Willington Street, which in total comprise some 1,450 parking spaces.

11.67 During the 2012/13 financial year some 400,000 transactions were recorded on Park and Ride bus services, which equates to a fall of 7% from the previous year . The Park and Ride services are also available for use by concessionary pass holders, and indeed approximately half of the trips recorded in 2012/13 were made by this group.

11.68 The reduction in patronage can be partially explained by the recession and suppressed economic activity in the town centre. Usage of the Park and Ride service should also be considered in the context of the supply of town centre car parking (both public and private) and the associated parking tariffs. The Park and Ride service is used by both commuters and shoppers; however it accounts for just 2% of all person trips into the town centre during peak periods (excluding walking and cycling), compared to 12% for bus and 77% for private car . The service currently requires a significant annual subsidy and therefore the ITS is seeking to take a targeted approach to address this situation.

11.69 The ITS is targeting the provision of an enhanced Park and Ride service, with an improved site on Old Sittingbourne Road in the vicinity of M20 Junction 7 and on the A229 corridor at Linton Crossroads to the south of the town, aimed at long-stay commuters into the town centre. Bus priority measures will also be provided on Park and Ride routes in tandem with the enhanced service.

Bus services

11.70 Maidstone borough has a well established bus network provided principally by Arriva, together with a number of smaller independent operators. The network is centred on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban areas with longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns, including Ashford, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and the Medway Towns.

11.71 Although KCC and the council do not directly influence the provision of commercial bus services, both authorities work closely with the operators to improve the quality of services and to ensure that the highway network is planned and managed in a way that facilitates the efficient operation of buses. This relationship has been formalised through the signing of a voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) agreement, which includes commitments by Arriva, KCC and MBC to work collectively to improve all aspects of bus travel and to increase passenger numbers.

11.72 A number of services cannot be provided commercially and are classed as socially necessary services that require subsidy from KCC. These primarily consist of school, rural, evening and weekend services, which provide access to education, employment, healthcare, or essential food shopping. KCC also completed the countywide roll out of the Kent Freedom Pass during 2009. The County Council now provides free travel on almost all public bus services in Kent for an annual fee of £100 for young people living in the county and in academic years 7 to 11. The County Council also assumed responsibility from MBC for the administration and funding of the statutory Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme for disabled people, their companions and those aged over 60, in April 2011. As the Local Education Authority, KCC also provides free or subsidised home-to-school transport to children who meet the criteria.

11.73 Through the ITS bus service frequencies will look to be increased (to at least every 7 minutes) on radial routes serving Maidstone town centre. Bus priority measures will be provided in order to encourage the use of public transport and services will continue to be made more accessible to all users.

Rail services

11.74 Three railway lines cross Maidstone borough, serving a total of 14 stations. The operator of the vast majority of rail services in the area is the south east franchise holder, Southeastern.

11.75 The principal rail route serving Maidstone town is the London Victoria to Ashford International line (also referred to as the Maidstone East Line), which includes stations at Maidstone East, Bearsted, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Lenham. The average journey time between Maidstone East and London Victoria is an hour and runs half-hourly. The London Charing Cross / Cannon Street to Dover Priory / Ramsgate line passes through the south of the borough, with stations at Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn. Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations are located in close proximity to the City of London and hence services on this line are heavily used by commuters, which places pressure on the limited station car park capacity in these villages.

11.76 The Medway Valley Line, connecting Strood and Paddock Wood, runs from north to south across the borough, with stations at Maidstone Barracks, Maidstone West, East Farleigh, Watlingbury, Yalding and Beltring. The line operates as part of the Kent Community Rail Partnership, which has delivered improvements to the stations and promoted the service widely. In May 2011, Southeastern commenced the operation of direct peak-time services between London St Pancras and Maidstone West via Strood and High Speed 1 on a trial basis. This has reduced rail journey times between Maidstone and London to 48 minutes and provided commuters from the town with the option of travelling to an alternative London terminus closer to the City. Collectively, these enhancements have contributed to a 25% increase in passenger numbers on the Medway Valley Line since 2007, putting it in the top 10 lines nationally for ridership growth according to the Association of Train Operating Companies.

11.77 KCC published its Rail Action Plan for Kent in 2011, which sets out the County Council's objectives for the new South Eastern Franchise. The reinstatement of services between Maidstone and the City of London is the plan's top priority. It also recognises the need for the level of rail fares charged in Kent to offer better value for money and for the roll out of Smartcard ticketing offering combined bus and rail travel, similar to Transport for London's Oyster card.

Air quality

11.78 Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to poor air quality at both the local level and on a wider global scale. Indeed the entire Maidstone Urban Area has been declared an Air Quality Management Area, primarily due to the level of traffic congestion at peak times. The ITS will therefore support the delivery of the measures identified in the Maidstone Air Quality Action Plan to deliver an improvement in the air quality of the urban area and to reduce pollutant levels below the Air Quality Objective Levels set out by European legislation.

11.79 Development in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas should where necessary incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact. Examples of mitigation measures include:

- Using green infrastructure to absorb dust and other pollutants;
- Promoting infrastructure to encourage the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality; and
- Contributing funding to measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development.

Influencing travel behaviour

11.80 Through the ITS the council, together with KCC, will seek to promote and support a range of initiatives to influence travel behaviour in the borough. This can be achieved through the use of Travel Plans, behaviour change programmes and introducing improvements to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling and the use of transport, car sharing and car clubs.

11.81 The council, together with KCC, will continue to promote and support the use of Travel Plans as a way of influencing travel behaviour away from journeys by private car to more sustainable modes. Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will continue to

implement and monitor their own corporate Travel Plans as well as securing Travel Plans for new development as part of the planning process. Workplace and School Travel Plans will also continue to be developed, implemented and monitored through partnership working across the borough where appropriate.

Cycling and walking

11.82 Both KCC and MBC are therefore committed to the provision of a comprehensive cycle network for residents and visitors to Maidstone.

11.83 The borough currently has a number of cycle routes that link the town centre to the suburban areas; however connections within the town and further afield are limited and there is a lack of cycle parking at key destinations. Consequently, cycle use in Maidstone is very low, the 2011 Census travel to work data indicated that 1% of work trips were undertaken by bike. However 12% of journeys to work were made on foot.

11.84 The provision of attractive and safe walking and cycling routes with adequate cycle parking will be incorporated within the ITS. The borough's walking environment, its walking routes and its public realm will be developed and improved through local plan policies, the ITS, the IDP, and through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. The Maidstone Cycling Strategy will be developed through the ITS. These strategies and documents will have the aim of increasing the proportion of trips made by walking and cycling in the borough by 2031.

Assessing the transport needs of development

11.85 New developments have the potential to generate a considerable number of vehicular and pedestrian trips which in turn has both a direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. Improvements to public transport, walking, cycling and highway infrastructure to mitigate these impacts need to be in place to ensure the increase in trips generated will not lead to an unacceptable level of transport impact. To further minimise these impacts, measures and initiatives must be incorporated into the design of development to minimise vehicular trip generation. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, developed in accordance with KCC guidance will be expected to accompany all planning applications for new developments that reach the required threshold. New development proposals will also be expected to enter into legal agreements to mitigate both their direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. The council will also seek to secure Construction Management Plans to minimise impacts from new developments during construction.

POLICY DM 13

Sustainable transport

1. Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local transport authority), the Highways Agency, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the borough council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy, prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to Maidstone town centre, in order to promote the town as a regionally important transport hub.
2. In doing so, the council and its partners will:
 - i. Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local

- Plan and facilitates economic prosperity;
- ii. Manage demand on the transport network through enhanced public transport and Park and Ride services and walking and cycling improvements;
- iii. Improve highway network capacity and function at key locations and junctions across the borough;
- iv. Manage parking provision in the town centre and the wider borough to ensure it is fair and proportionate and supports demand management;
- v. Improve transport choice across the borough and seek to influence travel behaviour;
- vi. Develop the strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, including increased bus service frequency;
- vii. Work with service providers to improve bus links to the rural service centres and larger villages, including route options and frequency;
- viii. Improve strategic links to Maidstone across the county and to wider destinations such as London;
- ix. Ensure the transport network provides inclusive access for all users; and
- x. Address the air quality impact of transport.

3. Development proposals must:

- i. Demonstrate that the impacts of trips generated to and from the development are remedied or mitigated, including where feasible an exploration of delivering mitigation measures ahead of the development being occupied;
- ii. Provide a satisfactory Transport Assessment and a satisfactory Travel Plan in accordance with the threshold levels set by Kent County Council's Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans; and
- iii. Demonstrate that development in, or likely to adversely affect, Air Quality Management Areas incorporates mitigation measures to reduce impact to an acceptable level, in line with the borough's air quality action plan.

A parking standards supplementary planning document will be produced to provide greater detail in support of the policy.

DM14 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Consultation issues and responses

Policy: DM14 Public transport
Key issues: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Object to bus priority measures 2. Need reference to timing of public transport in new development – it needs to be delivered early enough to be considered mode of first choice 3. No reference made to rural area, needs commitment to increase public transport in these areas 4. Part 1 does not provide enough guidance for developers and should be reviewed
Key issue 1: Objection to bus priority measures. Increases congestion & pollution. What's the point where buses are polluting, go slow, only have about 5 people on them expect for school time. You really have absolutely no idea how bad the roads are already with congestion in Maidstone I now shop in other towns as its too polluting, too noisy, too expensive to park, poor selection of shops, poor access. It takes me longer to drive round the one way system in Maidstone & Park than driving to Ashford or Bluewater! Take a leaf out of Ashford Books - lots of Business parks, good shops in town plus out of town & new houses but they have built the roads too to cope with it. Nice big dual carriageways & good links to the M20 Officer response: The council supports bus priority measures such as bus-only roads, bus lanes and selective vehicle detection at traffic signals as these are essential tools in ensuring that the limited people-carrying capacity of the road network is being used most effectively. The Council supports these measures as they help to reduce bus journey times, improve bus reliability and increase the efficiency of the bus network, especially when they are considered as part of a whole route approach. Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 2: Need reference to timing of public transport in new development – it needs to be delivered early enough to be considered mode of first choice. Detail: There is no mention of ensuring public transport is provided at an appropriate stage of new developments so that public transport is considered as the mode of first choice Officer response: Agree, the council agrees that new developments require a regular high quality transport service which should be provided early in the development phase to encourage early take up of bus services. Policy DM13 requires that development proposals to provide a satisfactory Transport Assessment and a satisfactory Travel Plan. Proposals will be assessed at application stage using Local Plan and NPPF policies. Proposed change: No change.
Key issue 3: No reference to rural areas. Detail: No reference to rural areas - no commitment to increase public transport to the rural areas Officer response: Maidstone borough has a well established bus network. The network is centred on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban areas with longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns. Neither MBC or KCC directly influence the provision of commercial bus services. However, a

Policy: DM14 Public transport
number of services cannot be provided commercially and are classed as socially necessary services that require subsidy from KCC. These primarily consist of school, rural, evening and weekend services which provide access to education, employment healthcare or essential foot shopping.
MBC and KCC will continue to work collectively with the bus operators to improve the quality of bus services to rural areas and to ensure the highway network is planned and managed in a way that facilitates the efficient operation of buses to increase passenger numbers.
Proposed change: No change necessary
Key issue 4: Part 1 does not provide enough guidance for developers and should be reviewed.
Detail: CPRE Protect Kent fails to see in what way part 1 of this Policy actually comprise a development management policy that provides guidance to prospective developers. This seems to be expressions of strategy that would be more at home in Chapters 4 or 5 than here. We would suggest that the construction of the Policy is reviewed or this part is included as an 'SP' Policy and moved to earlier in the Plan, perhaps combined with parts 1 and 2 of Policy DM13 to create a strategic policy on transport.
Officer response: Disagree – Part 1 of policy DM14 sets out the council's preference to improve journey times and make public transport more attractive.
Proposed Change: No change.

DM14 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Proposed policy following amendments

Policy DM 14 Public transport

- No policy changes proposed

POLICY DM14

Public transport

Within the bus and hackney carriage corridors, as defined on the policies map, the council and the highway authority will develop preference measures to improve journey times and reliability and make public transport more attractive, particularly on park and ride routes. Such measures may include:

- i. Dedicated bus lanes, including contraflow lanes where appropriate;
- ii. Bus priority measures at junctions;
- iii. Prioritisation within traffic management schemes; and/or
- iv. Enhanced waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities.

2. Proposals for major development will be permitted if adequate provision is made, where necessary and appropriate, within the overall design and site layout for the following facilities for public transport secured through legal agreements:

- i. Priority or exclusive provision for public service vehicle access to or through the proposed development area;
- ii. Safe and convenient passenger waiting facilities, information systems and signed pedestrian access routes;
- iii. Suitable provision for disabled access to the waiting facilities from all parts of the development area; and
- iv. Suitable provision for disabled access onto buses from the waiting facilities.

DM15 PARK AND RIDE

Consultation issues and responses

Policy: DM15 Park and Ride
<p>Key issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need Park and Ride site on A274 2. Park and Ride is unsustainable 3. Support in principle, but Linton crossroads is the wrong place 4. Air quality impacts 5. Disagrees that there is evidence to support Linton Crossroads 6. Not enough room for bus priority measures south of Maidstone 7. Old Sittingbourne Road should not be included for park and ride; this is subject to a short term lease. Site has more value for economic development use.
<p>Key issue 1 & 3: Need Park & Ride site on A274 and; Support in principle, but Linton crossroads is the wrong place</p> <p>Detail: Whilst appreciating the desirability of the P&R site proposed at Linton crossroads we would need to see a comprehensive proposal before being fully supportive. The omission of a Park & Ride site on the A274 is something we recommend is reconsidered.</p> <p>Officer response: The council is supportive of a Park & Ride site at Linton Corner. The proposed site is forecast to perform well above initial expectations and would cover its operating costs. A Park & Ride site on the A274 would only attract trips in the local vicinity with no long-distance trips accessing the site. The Council believes that if a site on the A274 was the sole site to the south of Maidstone, it would perform well and would cover its operational costs. However the site would fail to cover all of the demand that would travel to a Linton Corner Park & Ride site. Therefore a Park & Ride site at Linton is the councils preferred site.</p> <p>Proposed change: No change.</p>
<p>Key issue 2: Park & Ride is unsustainable.</p> <p>Detail: DM15 - OBJECT - park and ride unsustainable</p> <p>Officer response: The Council considers Park & Ride to be an important part of the council's transport vision for the Borough. New developments have the potential to generate a considerable number of vehicular trips. Improvements to public transport, such as Park & Ride help to mitigate these impacts and ensure that increase in trips will not lead to an unacceptable level of transport impact. The goal of providing a range of park & ride sites is to offer the travelling public a choice with a view to reducing traffic levels, congestion and CO2 emissions.</p> <p>Proposed change: No change.</p>
<p>Key issue 4: Air Quality Impacts.</p> <p>Detail: Unconvinced that it will be possible to implement safe access to the proposed Park & Ride site at Linton crossroads as there are no bus priority measures in place and there is no scope for measures such as bus lanes to be built. Impact of cars accessing the new park & ride site will have a negative impact on the areas air quality.</p> <p>Officer response: The Council recognises that planning can play an important role in improving air quality and reducing individuals' exposure to air pollutants. The council will review the significance of the air quality impacts from proposals in line with national guidance. Evaluation of air quality impacts will take into account factors such as the number of people affected the absolute levels and the predicted magnitude of the change in pollutant</p>

Policy: DM15 Park and Ride

concentrations, the scale and kind of proposed mitigation.

Section 2 of the policy states that new facilities should provide satisfactory access, layout, design, screening and landscaping. Issues such as access to the site access will be considered during the planning application stage.

Proposed Change: No change.

Key issue 5: Objection to the location of Park & Ride at Linton crossroads.

Detail:

Park and ride is not a sustainable transport panacea, and if poorly located can increase local traffic congestion and pollution and damage the landscape. Park and ride works best where it is well-related to existing communities and not located within more remote stand-alone locations. Old Sittingbourne Road, London Road and Willington Street succeed in this context because they also serve the local community as a bus service. The defunct Langley Park park and ride would have brought optimal benefits because it would have complemented the originally proposed mixed-use development of the site and reduced the generation of local car journeys. However, the proposed Linton Crossroads site is relatively remote from settlements and will therefore increase rather than reduce car journeys, with a major potential for rat running through local country roads, especially from the major development in the Sutton Road / Boughton Monchelsea locality. Further, the Linton Crossroads proposal is totally unacceptable in scale and landscape terms because of the inevitable damage to the irreplaceable landscape of the Greensand Ridge by day and night. The impact of lighting in this prominent location is a particular concern. A smaller 'satellite' park and ride may be acceptable on the A229 corridor but it must be better related to population centres and in a less sensitive location. A location within the A274 corridor well related to the major residential developments along the Sutton Road and avoiding sensitive or bio-diverse landscapes is favoured as an alternative. A key to reducing traffic congestion within Maidstone town centre is intercepting vehicles on the heaviest private car commuting route into the town centre i.e. the A229 Bluebell Hill. A focus of any park and ride policy must therefore be to work with Medway Council to deliver a park and ride serving both Maidstone and Medway Towns along the A229 axis.

Officer response: The Council believes that due to the distance from the town centre of a park & ride site at the A229 on Blue Bell Hill additional costs would be incurred resulting in increased operating costs and the site would fail to make a profit. The modelling outputs also suggest that much of the demand will be from along the M20 corridor to the east¹. Whilst there may be some journey time benefits for travellers using this route if their ultimate destination is on the north side of the town centre, overall it is considered that this is likely to be considered an unfavourable route choice.

A Park & Ride site on Sutton Road would only attract trips in the local vicinity with no long-distance trips accessing the site. The Council believes that if the site was the sole site south of the town, Sutton Road would perform well and would cover its operational costs. However the site would fail to cover all of the demand that would travel to a Linton Corner Park & Ride site. A park & ride site at Linton Corner is forecast to perform well above initial expectations and would cover its operating costs. A smaller site would require an additional park & ride site to be allocated in the same A229 Linton Hill corridor. A limited site would also not cover the operating costs of the site, nor justify, the 10 minute bus frequency throughout the day¹.

¹ Maidstone Integrated Parking Strategy Research – Option Appraisal Report – Draft Final Report (April 2012), Para 11.6 – 11.13

Policy: DM15 Park and Ride
Proposed Change: No change.
Key issue 6 – Not enough room for bus priority measures south of Maidstone.
Detail: Roads in the area are already congested and there are highway safety concerns. The local infrastructure into Maidstone cannot cope with the additional demand and bus priority measures will not work. The site should be protected as it was in the previous Local Plan. There will be impacts on wildlife and additional noise, light pollution and environmental damage.
Officer Response: The council is working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local transport authority), the Highways Agency, infrastructure providers and public transport operators to facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy is in the process of being prepared by the council and its partners, which will aim to improve accessibility from the south of Maidstone and across the borough to Maidstone town centre.
Proposed Change: No change.
Key Issue 7 - Old Sittingbourne Road should not be included for park and ride; this is subject to a short term lease. Site has more value for economic development use.
Detail: Both policies identify land at Eclipse Park ('Old Sittingbourne Road') as a Park & Ride site. This site, although currently operating as a Park & Ride site, is subject to a short term lease to Maidstone Borough Council which expires in November 2014. No new or extended lease is in place and no terms have been agreed for continued leasing of the land. Furthermore, the landowner has confirmed that the site is not available for continued Park & Ride use, and the land is not available at a value likely to be affordable for Park and Ride at the site to be viable, as it has inherent economic development value for the reasons already outlined.
Given this, it cannot be demonstrated that the site is available and is not therefore deliverable. The site is thus not effective and is unsound.
Notwithstanding availability, this site does not present the most suitable site in the Junction 7 area for Park & Ride development. As draft Policy DM17 confirms (and as supported by the Plan's evidence base and the site's planning history), Eclipse Park forms a key strategic employment site for development as part of the Plan's spatial strategy. To designate a large portion of the site to Park & Ride development thus fails to make best and effective use of this site and does not therefore deliver sustainable development.
The Council have failed to assess alternative locations in the area that would not result in the effective loss of key employment land. It is considered that such a search for alternative sites should be undertaken to find land more suited for Park & Ride provision that would not forego prime employment land and would deliver the sustainability benefits that Park & Ride at Junction 7 would bring. Furthermore, the Integrated Transport Strategy does not provide any basis to conclude that Eclipse Park is the most suitable site at Junction 7, notwithstanding its unavailability for the Plan period. The ITS lacks sufficient evidence to reach a conclusion on the strategy for Park & Ride at Junction 7 and in the absence of this and clear agreement with KCC on the strategy, there can be no certainty at present over delivery, irrespective of site availability. Even if the site at Eclipse Park were available and affordable, then the case has not been made.

Policy: DM15 Park and Ride

In its current form therefore, these policies are unsound as they are not proven to be deliverable and are thus not effective; are not consistent with National Policy as they compromise the delivery of sustainable economic development; and are not justified as more suitable alternatives should be sought in any event. Accordingly and to make the Plan sound, these policies should be amended to delete reference to the Eclipse Park site as it is not deliverable and a more suitable alternative site in the vicinity of Junction 7 should instead be identified in the event that it is concluded Park and Ride at Junction 7 is required.

The Local Plan is intended to provide a vision for Maidstone to 2031 and as drafted clearly fails to reflect the needs of the market and the opportunities for Maidstone that they represent.

I trust that the above comments will be given due consideration and would be happy to provide any further information or answer any queries as required.

Officer Response: Reject: The existing site on Sittingbourne Road has a long established use as a park & ride site and was allocated in the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000. Paragraph 30 of the NPPF encourages the support of solutions to reduce congestion. The council fully supports the continued use of the park & ride facility located on Sittingbourne Road. The use of the site for park & ride will continue to reduce car borne pollution in built up areas and reduce congestion in Maidstone town centre.

Park and ride is an important part of the council's transport vision for the Borough. A Study of park & ride opportunities in the borough was undertaken in April 2012 as part of the Maidstone Integrated Parking Strategy Research, which identified that the existing site on Sittingbourne Road will continue to have significant utilisation during the AM peak period accommodating demand for access to the town centre from the A249/M20 transport corridor. No other sites have been submitted during a call for sites that would serve the A249/M20 transport corridor. The Sittingbourne Road site has an existing use as a park & ride site and is the council's preferred option for a park & ride site serving the A249/M20 transport corridor.

Officer Response: No change.

DM15 PARK AND RIDE

Proposed policy following amendments

Policy DM 15 Park and ride

- No policy changes proposed

POLICY DM15

Park and ride

The following sites, as defined on the policies map, are designated bus park and ride sites:

- i. Old Sittingbourne Road (to serve the A249 corridor);
- ii. London Road (to serve the A20 west corridor);
- iii. Willington Street (to serve the A20 east corridor); and
- iv. Linton Crossroads (to serve the A229 corridor).

2. The provision of new or replacement park and ride facilities should meet the following criteria:

- i. Satisfactory access, layout, design, screening and landscaping;
- ii. Provision of suitable waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities; and
- iii. The implementation of complementary public transport priority measures both to access the site and moreover along the route. Measures will include dedicated bus lanes (including contraflow lanes where appropriate), together with bus priority measures at junctions.

APPENDIX 2: schedule of issues and responses for Policy PKR1

Policy Number PKR1	General comments /objections to Policy PKR1		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
For Park & Ride to be effective, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses must be more frequent (resident) • Fares must be as low as possible (resident) • Town centre parking needs to be more difficult/expensive (resident, parish council) • Dedicated bus lanes (resident) 		The measures suggested are to be pursued in the relevant DM transport policies and the Integrated Transport Strategy	No change
The lack of high frequency bus services outside the urban area on key radial routes around Maidstone, ie A274 and A229 (south) needs to be dealt with (bus operator)		Policies DM13 and DM14 and the Integrated Transport Strategy will seek to improve the frequency and reliability of bus services on key radial routes.	No change
KCC and MBC do not appear to be in agreement on the transport strategy for Maidstone (residents)		The two authorities are working constructively together to prepare an Integrated Transport Strategy to support the proposed Transport Policies in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.	No change
Overall support for the concept of Park & Ride (councillor). Support addition of further Park & Ride facilities (resident); support the two Park & Ride sites (business representative).		Noted	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation

Policy Number PKR1	General comments /objections to Policy PKR1		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
A radial park & ride scheme would be the better solution with 500 spaces per arterial route (parish council)	Park and Ride is proposed on key routes in appropriate locations where it is considered that most benefit can be accrued	No change	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
Support (landowner)	Noted	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge</p>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
		and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.	
Support Park & Ride site to the south of the town but Linton Crossroads site has too many disadvantages (Councillor)	Noted.	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits..</p>	
Congestion at the site and along the route into Maidstone would worsen (residents; councillors including ward councillor; parish council)	Whilst there may be a localised impact at Linton Crossroads, the aim of Park and Ride is to reduce the number of journeys made by private car and to encourage modal shift and thus help to mitigate	Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
	congestion	This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.	
Proposal would result in polluting emissions at the site and along the route into Maidstone (residents; parish council; councillor)	Whilst there may be a localised impact at Linton Crossroads, the aim of Park and Ride is to reduce the number of journeys made by private car and to encourage modal shift and thus help to mitigate congestion	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies</p>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
		within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.	
<p>Proposal will not reduce journey times (residents). The service is only likely to work if there are highway measures to enable buses to achieve overall journey times below that of using alternative transport (bus operator).</p>	<p>The provision of a Park and Ride site would be accompanied by appropriate bus priority measures along the traffic corridor into the town centre as outlined in policies DM13, DM14 and DM15</p>	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>	
<p>Concerns about road safety at Linton crossroads including for school children attending local schools (residents; parish councils)</p>	<p>If the site were to come forward, site access and the approaches to the site would be designed to ensure the safety of pedestrians and road users</p>	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
		<p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>	
Proposals will result in increased traffic noise (residents)	An acoustic assessment would be required with any application and any necessary mitigation required secured through the application process	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the</p>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
			crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.
Increased security risk to nearby properties (residents)		Any scheme would be designed to include appropriate security measures. This would be assessed at application stage.	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>
Previous park & ride site at Armstrong Road on the south side of the town was closer to the town centre but this was closed to build		The site at Armstrong Road was not of a viable size to operate without significant	Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
housing. (residents)	subsidy	<p>allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>	
Proposal would result in the loss of agricultural land (residents)	The majority of the site comprises Grade 2 or Grade 3a agricultural land which falls within the Best and Most Versatile category. Development is not prevented in such areas, but should be justified as to why it is necessary, including examination of alternative sites. This was done in this case and the site was considered the most suitable for the proposed use.	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the</p>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
			surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.
Undue heat from the tarmac (residents)		The site would be provided with appropriate landscaping to assist in the mitigation of such impacts.	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>
Development will have an adverse impact on the landscape and rural character of the area. Proposed mitigation measures would be		Agreed. It is considered that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site	<u>Delete site PKR1 (1): Linton Crossroads, and that the proposed</u>

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
Insufficient to lessen the visual impact (residents).	whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.	<u>deletion be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation.</u>	
<p>Ambiguous terms such as ‘structural landscaping’ should be avoided. A 10m wide buffer is not sufficient. This greensand ridge is characterised by fields broken up with windbreaks, thicker shaws which tend to follow the contours, and woodland blocks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend PKR1 to create a thick shaw, which follows the contours to the south of the site. • There are opportunities to improve connectivity which should be taken. • The choice of species and type of management of these features will either serve to reinforce or erode landscape character so choices should be based on evidence from the very outset. • Lighting will cause long-range visual impacts, making the prominent ridge top location stand out at night from a huge area to the south. 	Agreed. It is considered that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.	<u>Delete site PKR1 (1): Linton Crossroads, and that the proposed deletion be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation.</u>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
Careful consideration should be given to lighting design, types and timings. (Kent County Council)			
Adverse impact on nearby Conservation Area (resident)	The southern site boundary is located some 330m north of the Linton Conservation Area boundary, albeit on higher ground with other properties and a business centre and some woodland in between. There is likely to be some adverse impact arising from the proposed lighting when the Conservation Area is viewed in its setting from the south and south west.	<u>Delete site PKR1 (1): Linton Crossroads, and that the proposed deletion be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation.</u>	
No bus lane along the route so Park & Ride buses will simply add to the congestion at the Wheatsheaf, Cripple Street and the Armstrong Road junctions and Sheals Crescent; it will not save time compared with driving so many people will continue to use their cars (residents; residents association; parish council)	The provision of a Park and Ride site would be accompanied by appropriate bus priority measures along the traffic corridor into the town centre as outlined in policies DM13, DM14 and DM15.	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from</p>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
		lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.	
The evidence which supports the proposal has not been put forward (resident)	Not agreed. Work to support the proposed allocation of the site was undertaken as part of the evidence base supporting the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation draft.	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>	
Linton is situated in the countryside. It is removed from the built up area of Maidstone unlike the existing Park & Ride sites (residents).	Studies indicate that the site is appropriately located to 'catch'	Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
<p>There would be insufficient demand for a Park & Ride in this location (residents; parish council). Location would mean people driving away from the town in order to reach the Park & Ride site (residents). Question commercial viability; site will be underused and will eventually be developed for housing (residents; parish councils).</p>	<p>Maidstone –bound traffic on this radial route.</p>	<p>allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>	
<p>Previous draft Integrated Transport strategy (2012) rejected a Park & Ride Site at Linton crossroads on landscape/biodiversity impacts.</p>	<p>Agreed. It is considered that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value</p>	<p><u>Delete site PKR1 (1): Linton Crossroads, and that the proposed deletion be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation.</u></p>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
Adverse impact on the Greensand Ridge, including for those using the long distance footpath (residents; councillors including ward councillor; parish councils)		Agreed. It is considered that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value	<u>Delete site PKR1 (1): Linton Crossroads, and that the proposed deletion be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation.</u>
Money should be spent on making improvements to make traffic flow more easily (residents)		Appropriate bus priority measures and junction improvements along the traffic corridor into the town centre as outlined in policies DM13, DM14 and DM15 would be secured	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge</p>

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
			and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.
Impact of queuing traffic on Linton village; queues outside Cornwallis Academy; queues along Heath Road, Coxheath (residents)		Whilst there may be a localised impact at Linton Crossroads works would be undertaken to mitigate this impact. The aim of Park and Ride is to reduce the number of journeys made by private car and to encourage modal shift and thus help to mitigate congestion	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>
Will result in rat running along unsuitable rural lanes (residents; councillors)		There is no evidence to suggest that this will be the case	Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
		This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.	
Increased risk of flooding from surface water . Sewerage system could not cope. (residents).	Any scheme would be accompanied by an appropriately designed drainage system to ensure that the new development made the existing situation no worse	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies</p>	

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
			within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.
Ecological habitat, including wildlife corridors, would be destroyed (residents)		Any scheme would be accompanied by appropriate ecological surveys and any identified and necessary mitigation measures.	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>
Increased light pollution with resulting adverse impact on the wider landscape and adjoining properties (residents)		Agreed. It is considered that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms would have on balance	<u>Delete site PKR1 (1): Linton Crossroads, and that the proposed deletion be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation.</u>

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
		such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value	
Recommend that the service is additionally used to transport commuters from south Maidstone to Marden (parish council).		Policies DM13 and DM14 and the Integrated Transport Strategy seek to secure improved frequency and reliability of bus services from the south of Maidstone	<p>Whilst there is no change to the policy as a result of this representation. It is recommended that the proposed allocation be deleted and be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .</p> <p>This is on the basis that the provision of a park and ride facility on this site whilst appropriate in transport and accessibility terms, would have on balance such a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly from lighting which would be situated at the crest of the scarp slope which lies within the proposed Greensand Ridge and Low Weald Area of Local Landscape Value as to outweigh the transport benefits.</p>
Additionally a petition with some 1129 signatures opposing the Linton crossroads allocation was received			

Policy Number PKR1(1)	Site Name: Linton crossroads		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change

Policy Number PKR1(2)	Site Name: Old Sittingbourne Road		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
Support for this allocation (bus operator)	Noted	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation	
Concern that 1,000 places are not enough. Evidence that the P&R is being used by people parking for free and then car-share commuting into London. Also insufficient parking provision at Newnham Park (parish council)	The provision of 1000 spaces is considered the minimum necessary to provide a viable service. Issues of inappropriate use of the car park should be resolved through its day to day management	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation	
Need for an expanded Park & Ride facility in this location has not been demonstrated. (business). The Integrated Transport Strategy does not provide any basis to conclude that Eclipse Park is the most suitable site at Junction 7 (landowner/developer)	The site at Eclipse Park is capable of appropriate expansion. The provision of 1000 spaces is considered the minimum necessary to provide a viable service.	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for	

Policy Number PKR1(2)	Site Name: Old Sittingbourne Road		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
			deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation
The site is not available for continued Park & Ride use, and the land is not available at a value likely to be affordable for Park and Ride at the site to be viable so the site is not deliverable. Eclipse Park forms a key strategic employment site; to designate a large portion of the site to Park & Ride development fails to make best and effective use of this site. (landowner/developer). A search for alternative sites should be undertaken to find land more suited for Park & Ride provision (landowner/developer).		Noted. Given that the site can no longer be considered as available, its proposed allocation cannot proceed. It is therefore necessary to recommend that the proposed allocation PKR1 (2) be deleted and that the proposed deletion be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation .	Given that the site is no longer to be considered available the proposed allocation under Policy PKR1 and PKR1(2) should be deleted and that the deletion be subject to Regulation 18 Consultation
Car parking should be prioritised for existing business park users (business)		Park and Ride is part of a wider package of measures to encourage modal shift for journeys into Maidstone Town Centre. The provision made at the existing businesses on Eclipse Park in conjunction with approved Travel Plans is also part of the need to encourage a shift away from reliance on the use of the private car.	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation
Proposal in conjunction with Next and KIMS would result in congestion within the business park and along feeder roads. (business; councillor)		Whilst there may be some localised impact, the aim of Park and Ride is to reduce the number of journeys made by private car and to encourage modal shift	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for

Policy Number PKR1(2)	Site Name: Old Sittingbourne Road		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
	and thus help to mitigate congestion	deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation	
A high-rise car park would impact negatively upon the setting of the Kent Downs AONB, contrary to the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan (councillors including ward councillor). Decked car park is not in keeping with the character of the business park (business)	A high rise car park is not proposed only a further single deck. Given appropriate design at application stage and the existing site topography and surrounding landform it is considered that the visual impact of the car park can be appropriately mitigated. .	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation	
There is no reference to an ecological survey and mitigation for protected wildlife - both viviparous lizard and slow worm can be found within the allocation footprint. (councillors including ward councillor)	Any application for changes to the car park would be accompanied by ecological appraisals. The policy criteria should be amended to reflect this. However, it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation .	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation	
The nature of the bus priority measures are unspecified (councillor).	Bus mitigation measures would be investigated and secured in conjunction with the County Council as Highway Authority and would be addressed in the Integrated Transport Strategy	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation	

Policy Number PKR1	Omissions from Policy PKR1		
Summary of issues	Officer Response	Proposed change	
The omission of a Park and Ride Scheme at Langley on the A274 is a major missed opportunity to mitigate traffic entering Maidstone from the south and would have contributed to the sustainability of development on the Sutton Road (resident) . High frequency bus services that are provided on the A274 could be enhanced if a P&R site could be established in the vicinity of Parkwood at or close to one of the potential development sites. (bus operator)	Whilst no Park and Ride site is proposed on the A274 corridor, Policies DM13 and DM14 as proposed to be amended as well as the emerging Integrated Transport Strategy seek to facilitate the introduction of express/limited stop bus services and for accompanying bus priority measures to ensure reliability and speed of service on the corridor as an encouragement to modal shift.	No change	
The existing site for P&R at J7 M20 should be replaced with a site at the north western corner of the Newnham Court site as there is a fundamental conflict between retaining the existing Park & Ride facility and providing for business uses at Eclipse Park (landowner)	There are potentially significant issues to overcome to provide suitable access for site users and the bus service operator for a site in this location.	Whilst there is no recommended change to the policy as a result of these representations it should be noted that Policy PKR1 and therefore PKR1(2) is now recommended for deletion and further Regulation 18 Consultation	
It would be helpful if the Willington Street P&R site could be expanded but we recognise it would impact on Mote Park. (bus operator)	There are currently no plans to expand the Willington Street site. Moreover, the Willington Street site lies within the registered Historic Park of Mote Park. The existing site is well screened and contained further expansion is likely to	No change	

Policy Number PKR1	Omissions from Policy PKR1		
Summary of issues		Officer Response	Proposed change
		have Heritage impacts	

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APPENDIX THREE

Policy DM 12

Community facilities

The adequate provision of community facilities, including social, education and other facilities, is an essential component of new residential development.

1. Residential development which would generate a need for new community facilities or for which spare capacity in such facilities does not exist, will not be permitted unless the provision of new, extended or improved facilities (or a contribution towards such provision) is secured by planning conditions or through legal agreements unless the specific facilities are identified for delivery through the Community Infrastructure Levy
2. Proposals which would lead to a loss of community facilities will not be permitted unless demand within the locality no longer exists or a replacement facility acceptable to the council is provided.
3. The council will seek to ensure, where appropriate, that providers of education facilities make provision for dual use of facilities in the design of new schools, and will encourage the dual use of education facilities (new and existing) for recreation and other purposes.

Policy DM13 - Sustainable transport

Transport

11.59 Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local transport authority), the Highways Agency, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub. The ITS needs to address a number of transport challenges as set out below.

Highway network

11.60 Maidstone borough has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, Tonbridge and Malling, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells and London. Four north-south and east-west primary routes pass through the town centre and numerous secondary routes run in concentric rings around the town, providing local links to the rural parts of the borough. Maidstone also enjoys good connections to the motorway network, including direct access to four junctions of the M20.

11.61 The principal constraint on the borough's urban road network is the single crossing point of the River Medway at the town centre bridges gyratory, where the A20, A26 and A229 meet. From this point, congestion spreads along the main radial approaches to Maidstone during the morning and evening peaks, leading drivers to seek alternative routes for longer journeys around the periphery of the town.

11.62 Modelling conducted in 2012 indicates that by 2026, a combination of background traffic growth and planned housing and employment development will increase the number of person trips in Maidstone during the morning peak hour by 42%. Significantly however, background growth associated with increased economic activity and greater car ownership is expected to have over one-and-a-half times the impact on trip generation of new housing and employment, demonstrating that robust solutions to Maidstone's transport challenges are required regardless of the development proposed in the local plan.

11.63 Maidstone has an average vehicle occupancy of approximately 1.23 persons per car, which is significantly lower than the UK average of 1.6 persons per car . This represents an inefficient use of road space and contributes to greater traffic congestion and air pollution. Whilst it is recognised that the private car will continue to provide the primary means of access in areas where alternative travel choices are not viable, the traffic data suggests that the ITS should focus on demand management measures that enable a higher people-moving capacity over the existing road network. Specifically, the strategy should aim for a reduction in the number of single-occupancy car trips into Maidstone town centre by long-stay commuters – particularly during peak periods – which can be achieved through interventions such as enhanced Park and Ride and walking and cycling infrastructure. This approach, combined with targeted capacity improvements to strategic junctions such as the bridges gyratory, would improve the reliability and hence attractiveness of public transport, as well as providing businesses and freight operators with greater journey time reliability .

Car Parking

11.64 The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the borough's retail economy, to facilitate access to areas where alternative travel modes are limited or unavailable, and to ensure that mobility impaired persons are able to access key education, employment and leisure opportunities. However, the supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can therefore contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. Therefore it is crucial that MBC and its partners avoid an overprovision of parking, particularly in and around Maidstone town centre.

11.65 The ITS will seek address parking issues by producing a refreshed Town Centre Parking Strategy, prioritising shoppers and visitors; giving consideration to a reduction in town centre long-stay parking supply; utilising town centre parking tariffs to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport such as Park and Ride and reviewing the Residents' Parking Zones to ensure they are fair, simple and meet the needs of all road users.

Park and Ride

11.66 MBC has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s and was one of the first local authorities in the UK to introduce the concept. The service aims to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and has met with varying levels of success to date. Three sites are currently in operation at London Road, Sittingbourne Road, and Willington Street, which in total comprise some 1,450 parking spaces.

11.67 During the 2012/13 financial year some 400,000 transactions were recorded on Park and Ride bus services, which equates to a fall of 7% from the previous year. The Park and Ride services are also available for use by concessionary pass holders, and indeed approximately half of the trips recorded in 2012/13 were made by this group.

11.68 The reduction in patronage can be partially explained by the recession and suppressed economic activity in the town centre. Usage of the Park and Ride service should also be considered in the context of the supply of town centre car parking (both public and private) and the associated parking tariffs. The Park and Ride service is used by both commuters and shoppers; however it accounts for just 2% of all person trips into the town centre during peak periods (excluding walking and cycling), compared to 12% for bus and 77% for private car. The service currently requires a significant annual subsidy and therefore the ITS is seeking to take a targeted approach to address this situation.

11.69 The ITS is targeting the provision of an enhanced Park and Ride service, with an improved site on Old Sittingbourne Road in the vicinity of M20 Junction 7 and on the A229 corridor at Linton Crossroads to the south of the town, aimed at long-stay commuters into the town centre. Bus priority measures will also be provided on Park and Ride routes in tandem with the enhanced service.

Bus services

11.70 Maidstone borough has a well established bus network provided principally by Arriva, together with a number of smaller independent operators. The network is centred on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban areas with longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns, including Ashford, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and the Medway Towns.

11.71 Although KCC and the council do not directly influence the provision of commercial bus services, both authorities work closely with the operators to improve the quality of services and to ensure that the highway network is planned and managed in a way that facilitates the efficient operation of buses. This relationship has been formalised through the signing of a voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) agreement, which includes commitments by Arriva, KCC and MBC to work collectively to improve all aspects of bus travel and to increase passenger numbers.

11.72 A number of services cannot be provided commercially and are classed as socially necessary services that require subsidy from KCC. These primarily consist of school, rural, evening and weekend services, which provide access to education, employment, healthcare, or essential food shopping. KCC also

completed the countywide roll out of the Kent Freedom Pass during 2009. The County Council now provides free travel on almost all public bus services in Kent for an annual fee of £100 for young people living in the county and in academic years 7 to 11. The County Council also assumed responsibility from MBC for the administration and funding of the statutory Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme for disabled people, their companions and those aged over 60, in April 2011. As the Local Education Authority, KCC also provides free or subsidised home-to-school transport to children who meet the criteria.

11.73 Through the ITS bus service frequencies will look to be increased (to at least every 7 minutes) on radial routes serving Maidstone town centre. Bus priority measures will be provided in order to encourage the use of public transport and services will continue to be made more accessible to all users.

Rail services

11.74 Three railway lines cross Maidstone borough, serving a total of 14 stations. The operator of the vast majority of rail services in the area is the south east franchise holder, Southeastern.

11.75 The principal rail route serving Maidstone town is the London Victoria to Ashford International line (also referred to as the Maidstone East Line), which includes stations at Maidstone East, Bearsted, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Lenham. The average journey time between Maidstone East and London Victoria is an hour and runs half-hourly. The London Charing Cross / Cannon Street to Dover Priory / Ramsgate line passes through the south of the borough, with stations at Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn. Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations are located in close proximity to the City of London and hence services on this line are heavily used by commuters, which places pressure on the limited station car park capacity in these villages.

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Air quality

11.78 Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to poor air quality at both the local level and on a wider global scale. Indeed the entire Maidstone Urban Area has been declared an Air Quality Management Area, primarily due to the level of traffic congestion at peak times. The ITS will therefore support the delivery of the measures identified in the Maidstone Air Quality Action Plan to deliver an improvement in the air quality of the urban area and to reduce pollutant levels below the Air Quality Objective Levels set out by European legislation.

11.79 Development in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas should where necessary incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact. Examples of mitigation measures include:

- Using green infrastructure to absorb dust and other pollutants;
- Promoting infrastructure to encourage the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality
- Contributing funding to measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development

Influencing travel behaviour

11.80 Through the ITS the council, together with KCC, will seek to promote and support a range of initiatives to influence travel behaviour in the borough. This can be achieved through the use of Travel Plans, behaviour change programmes and introducing improvements to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling and the use of transport, car sharing and car clubs.

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Cycling and walking

11.82 Both KCC and MBC are therefore committed to the provision of a comprehensive cycle network for residents and visitors to Maidstone.

11.83 The borough currently has a number of cycle routes that link the town centre to the suburban areas; however connections within the town and further afield are limited and there is a lack of cycle parking at key destinations. Consequently, cycle use in Maidstone is very low, the 2011 Census travel to work data indicated that 1% of work trips were undertaken by bike. However 12% of journeys to work were made on foot.

11.84 The provision of attractive and safe walking and cycling routes with adequate cycle parking will be incorporated within the ITS. The borough's walking environment, its walking routes and its public realm will be developed and

improved through local plan policies, the ITS, the IDP, and through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. The Maidstone Cycling Strategy will be developed through the ITS. These strategies and documents will have the aim of increasing the proportion of trips made by walking and cycling in the borough by 2031.

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11.85 New developments have the potential to generate a considerable number of vehicular and pedestrian trips which in turn has both a direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. Improvements to public transport, walking, cycling and highway infrastructure to mitigate these impacts need to be in place to ensure the increase in trips generated will not lead to an unacceptable level of transport impact. To further minimise these impacts, measures and initiatives must be incorporated into the design of development to minimise vehicular trip generation. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, developed in accordance with KCC guidance will be expected to accompany all planning applications for new developments that reach the required threshold. New development proposals will also be expected to enter into legal agreements to mitigate both their direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. The council will also also seek to secure Construction Management Plans to minimise impacts from new developments during construction.

Policy DM 13

Sustainable transport

1. Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local transport authority), the Highways Agency, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the borough council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy, prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to Maidstone town centre, in order to promote the town as a regionally important transport hub.
2. In doing so, the council and its partners will:
 - i. Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan and facilitates economic prosperity;
 - ii. Manage demand on the transport network through enhanced public transport and Park and Ride services and walking and cycling improvements;
 - iii. Improve highway network capacity and function at key locations and junctions across the borough;
 - iv. Manage parking provision in the town centre and the wider borough to ensure it is fair and proportionate and supports demand management;
 - v. Improve transport choice across the borough and seek to influence travel behaviour;

- vi. Develop the strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, and connections to the rural service centres;
- vii. Improve strategic links to Maidstone across the county and to wider destinations such as London;
- viii. Ensure the transport network provides inclusive access for all users; and
- ix. Address the air quality impact of transport.

3. Development proposals must:

- i. Demonstrate that the impacts of trips generated to and from the development are remedied or mitigated;
- ii. Provide a satisfactory Transport Assessment and a satisfactory Travel Plan in accordance with the threshold levels set by Kent County Council's Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans; and
- iii. Demonstrate that development in, or likely to adversely affect, Air Quality Management Areas incorporates mitigation measures to reduce impact to an acceptable level.

A parking standards supplementary planning document will be produced to provide greater detail in support of the policy.

Policy DM14 - Public transport

Policy DM 14

Public transport

1. Within the bus and hackney carriage corridors, as defined on the policies map, the council and the highway authority will develop preference measures to improve journey times and reliability and make public transport more attractive, particularly on park and ride routes. Such measures may include:
 - i. Dedicated bus lanes, including contraflow lanes where appropriate;
 - ii. Bus priority measures at junctions;
 - iii. Prioritisation within traffic management schemes; and/or
 - iv. Enhanced waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities.
2. Proposals for major development will be permitted if adequate provision is made, where necessary and appropriate, within the overall design and site layout for the following facilities for public transport secured through legal agreements:

11 . Development management policies for Maidstone Borough

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- i. Priority or exclusive provision for public service vehicle access to or through the proposed development area;
- ii. Safe and convenient passenger waiting facilities, information systems and signed pedestrian access routes;
- iii. Suitable provision for disabled access to the waiting facilities from all parts of the development area; and
- iv. Suitable provision for disabled access onto buses from the waiting facilities.

Policy DM15 - Park and ride sites

Policy DM 15

Park and ride

1. The following sites, as defined on the policies map, are designated bus park and ride sites:
 - i. Old Sittingbourne Road (to serve the A249 corridor);
 - ii. London Road (to serve the A20 west corridor);
 - iii. Willington Street (to serve the A20 east corridor); and
 - iv. Linton Crossroads (to serve the A229 corridor).
2. The provision of new or replacement park and ride facilities should meet the following criteria:
 - i. Satisfactory access, layout, design, screening and landscaping;
 - ii. Provision of suitable waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities; and
 - iii. The implementation of complementary public transport priority measures both to access the site and moreover along the route. Measures will include dedicated bus lanes (including contraflow lanes where appropriate), together with bus priority measures at junctions.

Policy DM16 - Air quality

Air Quality

11.86 Pollution due to dust and poor air quality, resulting from either existing sites or proposed developments, has the potential to adversely affect human health and the environment in Maidstone. It is therefore essential that these issues are adequately assessed through the development management process.

Policy PKR1 - Park and ride allocations

10.1 Park and ride is an important part of the council's transport vision for Maidstone and the rest of the borough. The existing park and ride service accommodates demand for access from the A249/M20 transport corridor and from east and west on the A20 transport corridor. The Integrated Transport Strategy sets out how the service can help to accommodate journeys from new housing and employment developments in the borough. The A229 transport corridor from the south of the borough into Maidstone (Staplehurst, Marden, Linton, Coxheath, Boughton Monchelsea and Loose) is an area of strong demand, which is currently not served.

10.2 The A229/B2163 Linton crossroads is allocated for a new park and ride facility. This location is at an appropriate distance from the town centre to intercept traffic movements early enough along the A229 corridor and provide easy access to the identified catchment area. Along the length of the A229 corridor bus priority measures will help provide faster access to and from the town centre in peak times than an equivalent private vehicle journey could achieve.

10.3 Landscape mitigation is key to the delivery of the site due to its prominent location at the top of the Greensand Ridge. The site will be designed to mitigate the impact of long range views, incorporating structural landscaping to lessen any visual impact. The site is also in close proximity to the Linton conservation area, which lies to the south of the site, at a lower level on the scarp slope. The development of this site will need to be such that there are no incompatible impacts on the setting of the conservation area.

10.4 The existing park and ride site at the A249, Old Sittingbourne Road, near junction 7 of the M20 will be retained and improved. The suitability of this site for park and ride will be enhanced by the addition of a single deck of car parking spaces, which will increase the capacity of the site without increasing the site's footprint. Public transport priority measures on the Bearsted Road and Sittingbourne Road will also make the site a more attractive travel mode for commuters.

10.5 Landscape mitigation will be key to the delivery of an expanded site in this location, and any design will need to be sensitively incorporated into the surrounding landscape with consideration of long distance views from the Kent Downs AONB.

Policy PKR 1

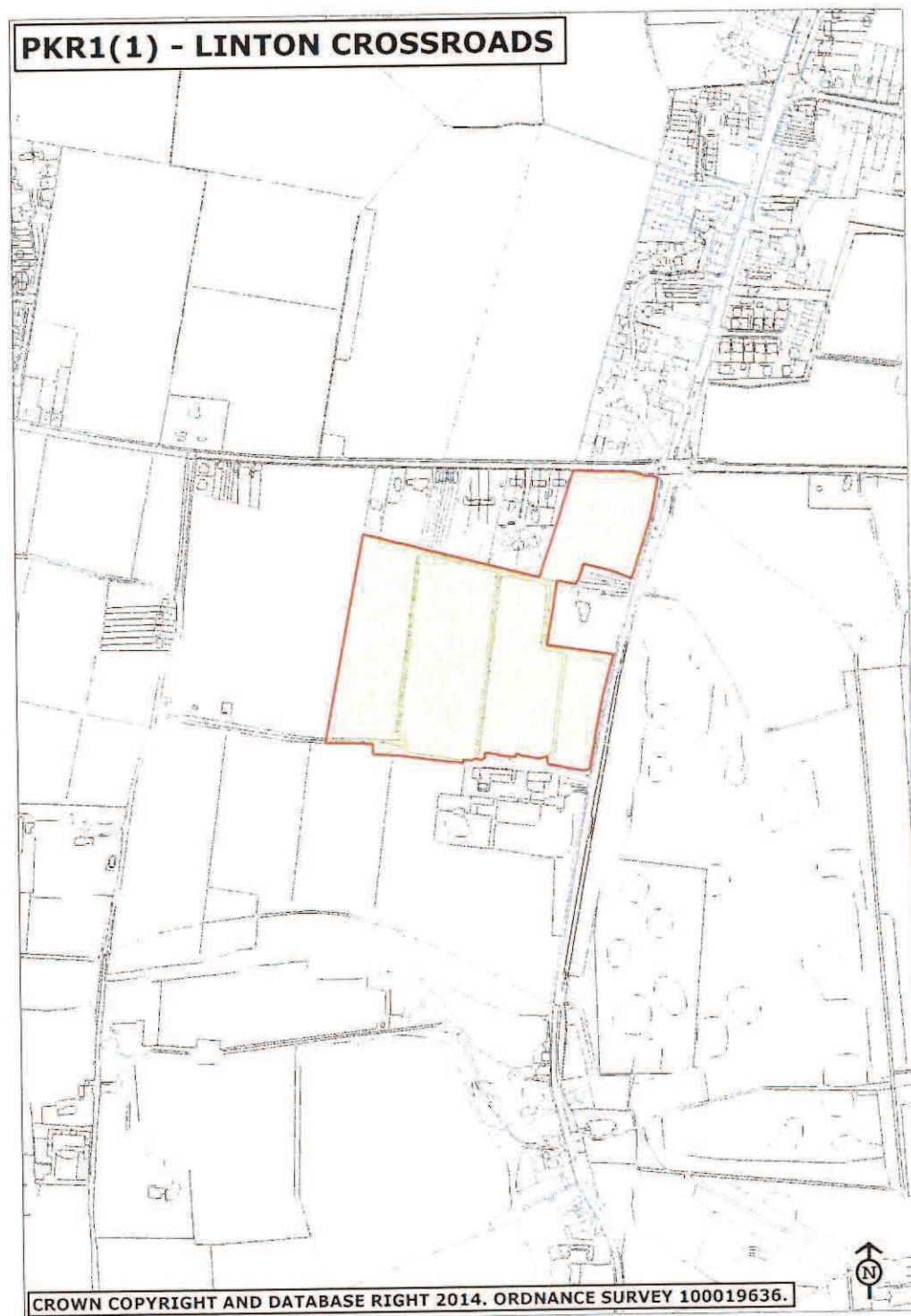
Park and ride allocation

The following sites are identified on the policies map for park and ride:

Policy reference	Site name, address
(1)	Linton crossroads (A229/B2163). Capacity of 1000 car parking spaces
(2)	Old Sittingbourne Road (A249) at M20 junction 7. Capacity of 1000 car parking spaces

Site name, address	PKR1(1) - Linton crossroads		
Ward	Coxheath and Hunton	Parish	Linton
Current use	Agricultural land		
Linton crossroads development criteria			
Linton Crossroads is allocated for a car park with capacity for up to 1000 spaces together with bus priority measures as defined on the policies map. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:			
On site			
<div>1. The proposed facility is designed in accordance with the results and recommendations of a phase one ecological survey;</div> <div>2. Primary access is taken from the A229 Linton Hill;</div> <div>3. Secondary access is taken, if required, from the B2163 Heath Road;</div> <div>4. A structural landscape buffer (minimum of 10m) is planted on the eastern boundary of the site, to provide screening from Linton Hill;</div> <div>5. A structural landscape buffer (minimum of 10m) is planted on the western boundary of the site, to provide screening from long distance views;</div> <div>6. A significant structural landscape buffer (minimum of 10m) is planted along the southern boundary of the site, to help provide screening of views from the slope of the Greensand Ridge and the Linton conservation area;</div> <div>7. The terminal facility is designed to a high standard, incorporating necessary personal safety features and providing a comfortable environment for service users, including toilets and a passenger information display;</div> <div>8. Directional lighting is incorporated in the car park to minimise light pollution during the hours of darkness;</div> <div>9. Covered bicycle parking is provided in an appropriate location to improve the choice of travel modes for commuters;</div> <div>10. Planting measures are incorporated throughout the site, to be agreed with the council, to provide breaks in an urbanising feature of the countryside; and</div> <div>11. Sustainable drainage measures to minimise the impact of hardstanding on the natural hydrology of the local area.</div>			
Off site			
<div>12. Appropriate bus priority measures to be delivered northbound on the A229 Loose Road, prior to the junction with the A274 Sutton Road, to be approved by the council and Kent County Council.</div>			
Gross area (ha)	6.8	Net area (ha)	6.0

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Site name, address	PKR1(2) - Old Sittingbourne Road		
Ward	Boxley	Parish	Boxley
Current use	Park and ride		
Old Sittingbourne Road development criteria			
Land at Old Sittingbourne Road is allocated for a decked car park with a capacity for 1000 spaces together with bus priority measures as defined on the policies map. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:			
On site			
1. A structural landscape buffer (minimum of 10m) is planted on the northern boundary of the site, to provide screening from long distance views from the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;			
2. Mitigation measures such as green walls are used to reduce the visual impact of the upper level of the car park, particularly from long distance views from the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty			
3. The terminal facility is designed to a high standard, incorporating necessary personal safety features and providing a comfortable environment for service users, including toilets and a passenger information display;			
4. Covered bicycle parking is provided in an appropriate location to improve the choice of travel modes for commuters;			
5. Directional lighting is incorporated in the car park to minimise light pollution during the hours of darkness; and			
6. Planting measures are incorporated throughout the site, to be agreed by council.			
Off site			
7. Appropriate bus priority measures to be delivered southbound on the A249 Sittingbourne Road to be approved by the council and Kent County Council.			
Gross area (ha)	1.7	Net area (ha)	1.7



APPENDIX FOUR

Supporting text and policy criteria for policies DM13 (Sustainable Transport) and DM14 (Public Transport) with amendments.

(Paragraph numbering as Regulation 18 Consultation Draft)

Additions

Deletions

Policy DM13 - Sustainable transport

Transport

11.59 Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local ~~transport~~ **highway** authority), ~~the Highways England Agency,~~ infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the Council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), prepared by the Council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub. The ITS needs to address a number of transport challenges as set out below.

Highway network

11.60 Maidstone borough has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, Tonbridge and Malling, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells and London. Four north-south and east-west primary routes pass through the town centre and numerous secondary routes run in concentric rings around the town, providing local links to the rural parts of the Borough. Maidstone also enjoys good connections to the motorway network, including direct access to four junctions of the M20.

11.61 The principal constraint on the borough's urban road network is the single crossing point of the River Medway at the Town Centre bridges gyratory, where the A20, A26 and A229 meet. From this point, congestion spreads along the main radial approaches to Maidstone during the morning and evening peaks, leading drivers to seek alternative routes for longer journeys around the periphery of the town.

11.62 **Strategic VISUM traffic modelling was jointly commissioned by the Council and Kent County Council to assess traffic growth and the impact on the local highway network of background traffic growth and planned development in the period 2014 - 2031. The modelling** ~~conducted in 2012~~ indicates that by **2031, 26,** ~~the~~ combination of background traffic growth and planned housing and employment

development will increase the number of person trips in Maidstone during the morning peak hour by ~~42~~**17**%. ~~Significantly however, background growth associated with increased economic activity and greater car ownership is expected to have over one and a half times the impact on trip generation of new housing and employment,~~ demonstrating that robust solutions to Maidstone's transport challenges are required. ~~regardless of the development proposed in the local plan.~~

11.63 Maidstone has an average vehicle occupancy of approximately 1.23 persons per car, which is significantly lower than the UK average of 1.6 persons per car. This represents an inefficient use of road space and contributes to greater traffic congestion and air pollution. Whilst it is recognised that the private car will continue to provide the primary means of access in areas where alternative travel choices are not viable, the traffic data suggests that the ITS should focus on demand management measures that enable a higher people-moving capacity over the existing road network. Specifically, the strategy should aim for a reduction in the number of single-occupancy car trips into Maidstone Town Centre by long-stay commuters – particularly during peak periods – which can be achieved through interventions such as enhanced **public transport provision on the main radial routes**, Park and Ride and walking and cycling infrastructure. This approach, combined with targeted capacity improvements to strategic junctions such as the bridges gyratory **in the Town Centre**, would improve the reliability and hence attractiveness of public transport, as well as providing businesses and freight operators with greater journey time reliability.

11.64 Some of the VISUM modelling options tested included a proposed Leeds-Langley Relief Road (LLRR) that would relieve traffic on the current B2163 towards junction 8 of the M20 motorway. The results indicate that the construction of such infrastructure may have a beneficial impact on some traffic movement patterns in the South East sector of Maidstone. This is however seen against the context of traffic movements generally in which Maidstone Town Centre itself and intra-urban movements (from one part of the Maidstone urban area to another) are the key drivers behind trips on the network.

11.65 The case for the justification of the construction and the delivery of a LLRR lies with the County Council as the Highways Authority. To-date, the detailed costings (estimates vary between £50 and £80 million), environmental and route appraisals and also an assessment of whether future housing requirements would necessitate and also support construction of a LLRR which will be required to progress the proposals, have not yet been undertaken. It is therefore considered appropriate to give detailed

consideration to the potential construction of the LLRR post 2031 at the first review of the Local Plan.

Car Parking

- 11.66** The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the Borough's retail economy, to facilitate access to areas where alternative travel modes are limited or unavailable, and to ensure that mobility impaired persons are able to access key education, employment and leisure opportunities. However, the supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can therefore contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. Therefore it is crucial that MBC and its partners avoid an overprovision of parking, particularly in and around Maidstone Town Centre.
- 11.67** The ITS will seek **to** address parking issues by producing a refreshed Town Centre Parking Strategy. **A key aspect of this strategy for example, will be the use of measures to provide disincentives to the use of long-term car-parking in the Town Centre, whilst, prioritising shoppers and visitors; ~~giving consideration to a reduction in town centre long stay parking supply;~~ by** utilising **long-stay** town centre parking tariffs to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport such as Park and Ride and reviewing the Residents' Parking Zones to ensure they are fair, simple and meet the needs of all road users.

Park and Ride

- 11.68 The Council** MBC has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s and was one of the first local authorities in the UK to introduce the concept. The service aims to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and has met with varying levels of success to date. Three sites are currently in operation at London Road, Sittingbourne Road, and Willington Street, which in total comprise some 1,450 parking spaces.
- 11.69** During the 2012/13 financial year some 400,000 transactions were recorded on Park and Ride bus services, which equates to a fall of 7% from the previous year. The Park and Ride services are also available for use by concessionary pass holders, and indeed approximately half of the trips recorded in 2012/13 were made by this group.
- 11.70** The reduction in patronage can be partially explained by the recession and suppressed economic activity in the town centre. Usage of the Park and Ride service should also be considered in the context of the supply of town centre car parking (both public and private) and the associated parking tariffs. The Park and Ride service is used by both commuters and

shoppers; however it accounts for just 2% of all person trips into the town centre during peak periods (excluding walking and cycling), compared to 12% for bus and 77% for private car. The service currently requires a significant annual subsidy and therefore the ITS is seeking to take a targeted approach to address this situation.

11.71 ~~The ITS is to targeting the provision of an enhanced Park and Ride service, with an improved site on Old Sittingbourne Road in the vicinity of M20 Junction 7 and on the A229 corridor at Linton Crossroads to the south of the town,~~ **existing sites at Willington Street and London Road. All sites are** aimed at long-stay commuters into the Town Centre. Bus priority measures will also be provided on Park and Ride routes in tandem with the ~~enhanced service.~~

Bus services

11.72 Maidstone borough has a well-established bus network provided principally by Arriva, together with a number of smaller independent operators. The network is centred on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban areas with longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns, including Ashford, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and the Medway Towns.

11.73 Although KCC and the Council do not directly influence the provision of commercial bus services, both authorities work closely with the operators to improve the quality of services and to ensure that the highway network is planned and managed in a way that facilitates the efficient operation of buses. This relationship has been formalised through the signing of a voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) agreement, which includes commitments by Arriva, KCC and MBC to work collectively to improve all aspects of bus travel and to increase passenger numbers.

11.74 **Given the deletion of the previously proposed Park and Ride sites at Linton Crossroads and at Old Sittingbourne Road, the Council will work with the service operators to procure express/limited stop bus services on the radial routes into Maidstone (particularly from the north including the Newnham Park Area and from the south on the A229 and A274) to the Town Centre and railway stations in the morning and evening peaks to encourage modal shift together with the implementation of bus priority measures to seek to secure the reliability and speed of such services.**

11.75 A number of services cannot be provided commercially and are classed as socially necessary services that require subsidy from KCC. These primarily consist of school, rural, evening and weekend services, which provide access to education, employment, healthcare, or essential food

shopping. KCC also completed the countywide roll out of the Kent Freedom Pass during 2009. The County Council now provides free travel on almost all public bus services in Kent **Monday to Friday** for an annual fee of **£250** ~~£100~~ for young people living in the county and in academic years 7 to 11. The County Council also assumed responsibility from MBC for the administration and funding of the statutory Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme for disabled people, their companions and those aged over 60, in April 2011. As the Local Education Authority, KCC also provides free or subsidised home-to-school transport to children who meet the criteria.

- 11.76** Through the ITS bus service frequencies will look to be increased (to at least every 7 minutes) on radial routes serving Maidstone Town Centre. **(The A274 Sutton Road corridor from Parkwood already has an 8-minute frequency)**. Bus priority measures will be provided in order to encourage the use of public transport **by seeking to ensure the reliability and frequency of services** and services will continue to be made more accessible to all users.

Rail services

- 11.77** Three railway lines cross Maidstone borough, serving a total of 14 stations. The operator of the vast majority of rail services in the area is the current south east franchise holder, Southeastern.
- 11.78** The principal rail route serving Maidstone town is the London Victoria to Ashford International line (also referred to as the Maidstone East Line), which includes stations at Maidstone East, Bearsted, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Lenham. The average journey time between Maidstone East and London Victoria is an hour and runs half-hourly. The London Charing Cross/Cannon Street to Dover Priory/Ramsgate line passes through the south of the borough, with stations at Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn. Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations are located in close proximity to the City of London and hence services on this line are heavily used by commuters, which, places pressure on the limited station car park capacity in these villages.
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their own corporate Travel Plans as well as securing Travel Plans for new development as part of the planning process. Workplace and School Travel Plans will also continue to be developed, implemented and monitored through partnership working across the borough where appropriate.

Cycling and walking

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2. In doing so, the council and its partners will:

- i. Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan and facilitates economic prosperity;
- ii. Manage demand on the transport network through enhanced public transport and **the continued** Park and Ride services and walking and cycling improvements;
- iii. Improve highway network capacity and function at key locations and junctions across the borough;
- iv. Manage parking provision in the town centre and the wider borough to ensure it is fair and proportionate and supports demand management;
- v. Improve transport choice across the borough and seek to influence travel behaviour;
- vi. Develop the strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, ~~and connections to the rural service centres;~~ **including increased bus service frequency along the radial routes into the town centre and its railway stations, particularly in the morning and evening peak travel times;**
- vii. **Work with service providers to improve bus links to the rural service centres and larger villages, including route options and frequency;**
- viii. Improve strategic links to Maidstone across the county and to wider destinations such as London;
- ~~viii~~ **ix.** Ensure the transport network provides inclusive access for all users; and
- ~~ix~~ **x.** Address the air quality impact of transport.

3. Development proposals must:

- i. Demonstrate that the impacts of trips generated to and from the development are remedied or mitigated, **including where feasible an exploration of delivering mitigation measures ahead of the development being occupied;**
- ii. Provide a satisfactory Transport Assessment and a satisfactory Travel Plan in accordance with the threshold levels set by Kent County Council's Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans; and
- iii. Demonstrate that development in, or likely to adversely affect, **in particular where a number of developments are likely to result in cumulative impact, that** Air Quality Management Areas incorporates mitigation measures to reduce impact to an acceptable level, **in line with**

the Borough's Air Quality Action Plan.

A parking standards supplementary planning document will be produced to provide greater detail in support of the policy.

Policy DM 14

Public transport

1. Within the bus and hackney carriage corridors, as defined on the policies map, the council and the highway authority will develop preference measures to improve journey times and reliability and make public transport more attractive, particularly on park and ride routes **and the radial routes into the town centre**. Such measures **will** include:

- i. Dedicated bus lanes, including contraflow lanes where appropriate;
- ii. Bus priority measures at junctions;
- iii. Prioritisation within traffic management schemes; and/or
- iv. Enhanced waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities.

2. Proposals for major development will be permitted if adequate provision is made, where necessary and appropriate, within the overall design and site layout for the following facilities for public transport secured through legal agreements:

- i. Priority or exclusive provision for public service vehicle access to or through the proposed development area;
- ii. Safe and convenient passenger waiting facilities, information systems and signed pedestrian access routes;
- iii. Suitable provision for disabled access to the waiting facilities from all parts of the development area; and
- iv. Suitable provision for disabled access onto buses from the waiting facilities.

APPENDIX FIVE

Supporting text and policy criteria for policy DM15 (Park and Ride) with amendments.

Additions

Deletions

Policy DM 15

Park and ride

1. The following sites, as defined on the policies map, are designated bus park and ride sites:

- ~~i. Old Sittingbourne Road (to serve the A249 corridor);~~
- i. London Road (to serve the A20 west corridor);
- ii. Willington Street (to serve the A20 east corridor); and
- ~~iv. Linton Crossroads (to serve the A229 corridor).~~

2. The provision of new or replacement park and ride facilities should meet the following criteria:

- i. Satisfactory access, layout, design, screening and landscaping;
- ii. Provision of suitable waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities; and
- iii. The implementation of complementary public transport priority measures both to access the site and moreover along the route. Measures will include dedicated bus lanes (including contraflow lanes where appropriate), together with bus priority measures at junctions.