

COUNCIL

10 DECEMBER 2014

BRIEFING NOTE ON PETITIONS

Petition 1

Harrietsham Against Reckless Development has been formed by villagers concerned about the proposed scale of expansion of our lovely village.

This petition calls for our Parish Council and Maidstone Borough Council to:

- *Reduce the proposed expansion of Harrietsham to a more proportionate level, similar to other rural villages*
- *Refuse any development on greenfield sites of special landscape value and to prioritise brownfield sites*
- *Refuse any major development off minor village roads.*

Response:

This council, as local planning authority, seeks to maintain and enhance both the character and appearance of Harrietsham, in particular, its setting in terms of the northern edge (beyond the railway line) being higher land on the scarp slope of the North Downs.

Housing sites are recommended on the basis of capacity, notably, environmental and infrastructure capacity.

This council is seeking to prioritise the development of brownfield sites through these sites being at the top of the settlement hierarchy and having lower s106 obligations for affordable housing etc in order to encourage the use of brownfield sites.

If access is substandard and cannot be improved in a satisfactory manner then housing allocations should not be made and planning applications refused. We would work hand in hand with KCC Highways on this issue. However, I am not aware of any objections from KCC Highways on the existing draft housing allocations.

This petition will be carefully considered in terms of future housing allocations in the local plan and in the determination of planning applications.

Petition 2

We, the undersigned, object to Maidstone Council's plans for Sutton Valence to be designated a "Larger Village" leading to increased housing development. This threatens to change the cherished rural nature of our Parish, overwhelm local infrastructure and amenities, threaten Greenfield sites, and add to traffic and parking congestion. We further call upon Maidstone Council to recognise the constraints to growth in Sutton Valence and ensure delivery of levels and types of housing which will respond to local population trends and needs.

Response:

It does not follow that the larger villages designation equates to large housing numbers. Rather, that Sutton Valence is relatively sustainable compared with certain other settlements in terms of its services and transport connections etc but, moreover, based on capacity for growth, notably, environmental and infrastructure constraints.