

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