

Ian Bailey
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West Malling
Kent, ME19 4LZ

Date: **INSERT DATE**

My Ref: T&MReg18

Your Ref:

Dear Mr Bailey

Re: Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation

I refer to the above consultation and wish to make the following representations on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council.

Whilst it is acknowledged that Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council have a requirement to meet identified needs, it is noted that these Local Plan proposals could have a significant impact on Maidstone Borough residents and businesses. Residents in Maidstone Borough have contacted Maidstone Borough Council to express their grave concerns regarding these proposals.

Should Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council proceed with its proposed development strategy, mitigating transport impacts on already busy routes into Maidstone will be vital, including the A20, Hermitage Lane and the A26, the latter having already been subject to a significant increase in traffic following developments at Kings Hill.

It is noted that there are a number of 'potential developable areas' situated near to the border with Maidstone Borough. In particular the 'South Aylesford and Ditton' area is proposed for significant new residential and employment development. This area already suffers from severe traffic congestion at peak times and congestion in non-peak times and the proposed developments will potentially make the situation much worse. There are also significant concerns around air quality and the associated impact of new development in this regard.

In their current form, the proposals could also allow settlements to coalesce with Maidstone. Provision of open space as part of any development, in order to address this issue should therefore be a priority.

Proposals for this part of the borough should therefore include measures to deal with congestion, provision of open space and to address air quality issues. Such measures should consider the location of current and future communities and transport routes, rather than borough boundaries. In particular, the current problems around Hermitage Lane and the A20 must be addressed and the proposal to investigate a longer term solution to transport challenges in the vicinity is welcomed. Focus in this regard should be upon an

alternative transport route that draws road traffic away from this part of the A20 and Hermitage Lane in particular, whilst having regard to mitigating congestion and improving traffic flows on the wider road network in the area. Focus should also be on any potential improvements to public transport that could address this issue.

My officers look forward to working constructively with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to consider these matters in the future and establish mutually acceptable solutions, through the duty to co-operate. We also look forward to working jointly with Kent County Council given that there are clearly matters that fall within their remit and responsibility.

We also look forward to providing comments when further details of the Local Plan proposals become known.

Yours sincerely