

Minute of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee held on 11 September 2018

74. Town Centre Article 4 Direction - Options

Mr Stuart Watson, Planning Officer (Strategic Planning), addressed the Committee. Mr Watson explained that there was sufficient evidence that a non-immediate Article 4 Direction was appropriate for; County Gate, County House, Medway Bridge House, 23-29 Albion Place, Sterling House, Maidstone House, Romney House, Gail House, Kestrel House, Knightrider Chambers, 62 Earl Street, 66 Earl Street, 72 King Street and Clarendon Place. The Council recognised that further work could be undertaken to reduce the likelihood of intervention by the Secretary of State, if required.

The Committee debated the proposal and commented that:

- The Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan outlined that the development of housing units was to be achieved using office stock, which contradicted the Article 4 Direction; and
- The timing of the Article 4 Direction was not appropriate, and it should instead be included in the review of the Local Plan.

Mr William Cornall responded that there were broader issues that impacted on this decision, as greater control of office stock ensured for better quality homes that were of an appropriate size and included the provision of parking.

RESOLVED: That no Article 4 Directions should be taken forward for the Town Centre.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 1 Abstentions – 0