

Neighbourhood Planning Team
Maidstone Borough Council

Maidstone Borough Council

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Date: XXX

By email only

Dear Sir/Madam

MARDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2017-2031

Consultation pursuant to Regulation 16 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

Consultation period 14 June 2019 to 26 July 2019

Marden parish was designated a neighbourhood area on 14 January 2013. During the preparation of the plan, the Borough Council has offered advice and support to the parish council on matters such as the neighbourhood planning process, the evidence base, the plan's regard to national policy, and general conformity with the strategic policies of the Maidstone Development Plan. Contact with the parish council has been maintained throughout the plan's preparation. The parish council has afforded the Council opportunities to informally comment on draft iterations of the plan, and has responded positively to the advice given.

The parish council undertook public consultation on the pre-submission version of the Marden Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14) between 9 June 2018 and 21 July 2018. The Borough Council submitted representations on the plan and, in response to all representations received, the parish council amended the neighbourhood plan as appropriate.

The Borough Council is satisfied that public consultation on the pre-submission draft neighbourhood plan was carried out in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), and the submission plan and supporting documents meet the requirements of Regulation 15. Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency have confirmed that a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Habitats Regulation Assessment is not required for the plan.

Public consultation (Regulation 16) on the Marden Neighbourhood Plan, facilitated by Maidstone Borough Council, commenced on 14 June 2019 and closes on 26 July 2019.

The Marden Neighbourhood Plan was considered by the Council's Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee on 9 July 2019, when support for the plan was confirmed. The plan is inclusive and well-written, and its policies are considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Maidstone Development Plan. However, the text of the neighbourhood plan requires some corrections and/or amending to achieve greater clarity in certain areas, as set out below.

Page no.	Paragraph/Policy no.	Representations
	General: References to 'visual continuity'	<p>Amendment: The Marden Neighbourhood Plan makes several references to 'visual continuity'. Replace with 'landscape and visual effects.'</p> <p>Reason: For clarity. The impacts of development are often more than just visual, so impacts on the landscape, and therefore landscape effects, may also need to be considered.</p>
9	Paragraph 3, Aim 7: Priority habitats and species	<p>Amendment: Add emboldened text. 'Promoting the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and species.'</p> <p>Reason: For clarity.</p>
13	Paragraph 1: Historic hedgerows	<p>Amendment: Replace 'heritage' hedgerows with 'historic' hedgerows.</p> <p>Reason: Correction.</p>
16	Paragraph 1: Retention of existing shrubs and trees	<p>Amendment: Add emboldened text and delete strikethrough text. '... all existing shrubs and trees of appropriate condition not on historic hedgerow alignments ... If established habitats and natural visual features are ...'</p> <p>Reason: For clarity.</p>
17	Paragraph 1 and Policy NE5: Landscape planting	<p>Amendment paragraph 1: Add emboldened text and delete strikethrough text. 'As noted above all new planting where appropriate on boundaries should be characteristic traditional, native species of local provenance.'</p> <p>Reason: For clarity. Species optimising wildlife benefits are not necessarily native and, because of their habit, natives are too robust for many restricted locations.</p> <p>Amendment Policy NE5: Add emboldened text and delete strikethrough text. 'New landscape planting in Marden must be selected from predominantly native species of local provenance for landscape and visual effects continuity ...'</p> <p>Reason: For clarity.</p>

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24	Paragraph 2: Conversion of rural buildings	<p>Amendment: Add sentence to explain that planning policies should avoid isolated dwellings in the countryside. Exceptions to this are set out in NPPF paragraph 79.</p> <p>Reason: For clarity.</p>
37	Paragraph 3: Affordable Housing	<p>Amendment: Add "to meet a borough-wide need" at the end of paragraph 3, to distinguish this paragraph from preceding and following paragraphs that refer to affordable housing delivered on rural exception sites that meet a local need.</p> <p>Reason: For clarity.</p>
38	Paragraph 3: Housing for Gypsies and Travellers	<p>Amendment: Delete references to "established links with the parish" in paragraph 3 and elsewhere in the neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>Reason: The accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers is an established borough-wide need and cannot be restricted to persons with links to the parish. 'Planning policy for traveller sites', DCLG 2015, does not sanction the inclusion of a local connection criterion.</p>
41-42, 47, 47a, and 49	Page 41 final paragraph and elsewhere in the plan, and Annex 1 and Map: References to Claygate distribution warehouse	<p>Amendments: Delete references to modifying the adopted Local Plan 2017 at its next review in respect of the Claygate distribution warehouse site. The adopted Local Plan already includes this site within the Marden settlement boundary and within the designated Economic Development Area (policy SP22(vii)). Amend Annex 1 and Map (FA3 & FA4) to reflect the Local Plan Policies Map.</p> <p>Reason: Correction.</p>
47a	Annex 1 Map	<p>Amendments: Adjust Marden settlement boundary to reflect the adopted Local Plan at FA3 & FA4 (see above), and to the north-west where EMP1(3) adjoins the MBC Economic Development Area. Reference on the Map to policy I4 (Station) should be In4.</p> <p>Reason: Correction.</p>
44	Paragraph 1: Developer contributions	<p>Amendment: Delete "The contributions can also be sought through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which is a financial contribution charged at a standard rate. MBC approved the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule effective from October 2018"; and replace with "MBC approved the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule effective from October 2018. CIL is a non-negotiable levy on new floor space (which meets the specific criteria set out in legislation and the Council's adopted CIL charging schedule)."</p>

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		Reason: To clarify that CIL is a non-negotiable charge.
48-49	Further Actions	Observation: There are several 'further actions' for the Borough Council identified in the table and elsewhere in the plan. Whilst these recommended actions can be considered by the Borough Council during the review of the adopted Local Plan, a commitment to amend the Local Plan cannot be made at this point. It would be preferable if the neighbourhood plan referred instead to a parish council action to submit representations seeking amendments during public consultations on the Local Plan review.

In summary, regulatory requirements have been met, the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Maidstone Development Plan, and a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required. The Marden Neighbourhood Plan is supported by Maidstone Borough Council.

Yours faithfully,

Rob Jarman

Head of Planning and Development

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