

# STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

9 February 2021

## Local Plan Review Update

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	<i>Rob Jarman (Head of Planning and Development)</i>
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Mark Egerton (Strategic Planning Manager)
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	<i>All</i>

### Executive Summary

At the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 meeting of this committee, Members resolved that officers provide a short, written update at each meeting of this committee, concerning any slippage and/or progress on delivering the Local Plan Review on the timetable agreed. This report provides the requested update.

### Purpose of Report

*Noting*

### This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the report be noted

### Timetable

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee	9 February 2021

# Local Plan Review Update

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the 10th March 2020 meeting of the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure (SPI) Committee, Members resolved that officers should provide a short-written update at each meeting of the committee, concerning any slippage and/or progress on delivering the plan on the timescale agreed. This report provides the requested update.
- 1.2 As noted in the verbal update to the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021 meeting of this committee, the Local Planning Authority received in the region of 3,000 submissions to the Local Plan Review Regulation 18 Preferred Approaches consultation.
- 1.3 Officers are now processing and analysing the submissions with a view to publishing the representations on the Council's website by the end of February 2021. Officers are also seeking to report an analysis of the consultation, to comprise a summary of representations and views of consultees, to this committee at the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 meeting.
- 1.4 One of the matters raised repeatedly by respondents has been the amount of new housing that is proposed to be delivered over the Local Plan Review plan period. Members are aware that the formula for calculating housing need is prescribed by the government using a standard methodology that applies across the country, rather than being set locally. There are several examples of authorities proposing not to fully meet the housing need figure that results from the government's standard methodology and have failed their Local Plan examinations. This would potentially lead to 'planning by appeal' and the authority being put into special measures.
- 1.5 The Kent Association of Local Councils has also questioned the level of windfall allowance that is used by Maidstone Borough Council. The windfall allowance helps to calculate the number of residential units delivered outside of allocated sites and whilst overall housing need is calculated using the government's standard methodology, the windfall figures are calculated based on local circumstances.
- 1.6 In Maidstone Borough Council's case, the windfall allowance uses an average delivery of unallocated sites since 2008. The windfall allowance is then projected forwards over the plan period, with no forecast windfalls in the first three years as all expected completions will hold planning consent. The figures are updated annually and have proven robust at the examination in public of the adopted Local Plan as well as at planning application appeals.
- 1.7 There has been no material change in circumstances that would lead officers to recommend changing the approach to windfall calculations, as suggested by the Kent Association of Local Councils. This includes the fact that the government's housing need calculation has now reverted back to its 2017 methodology. However, officers will review the position for the

production of the Regulation 19 draft Local Plan Review consultation, that is scheduled to take place in June 2021.

- 1.8 Members will be aware of a number of years of debate around the potential for a new route along the Leeds Langley Corridor, known as the Leeds Langley Relief Road. Indeed, the need to consider a case for such a route was included as a criterion in Policy LPR1 of the adopted Local Plan by the Inspector at the time.
- 1.9 Since that time, ongoing discussions with Kent County Council (KCC), as Highway Authority, have confirmed that from a purely highways perspective, this route would not receive support. However, KCC has also confirmed that were a business case to be presented around the need for such a route in order to open up development potential along the corridor, they would be prepared to assist with funding bids and, where appropriate, lend the authority's CPO Powers.
- 1.10 The Local Plan Review Regulation 18 Preferred Approaches Consultation Document contains a safeguarded area, to allow this corridor to be examined further to inform the position that Maidstone Borough Council should adopt going forward. Therefore, in order to establish whether a business case does exist for some of this corridor to be protected within the Local Plan Review, a piece of work is being commissioned to explore the development potential of the corridor and its' ability to provide the basis of a realistic funding package to deliver the necessary infrastructure.

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## **2. RISK**

- 2.1 This report is presented for information only has no direct risk management implications. Risks associated with the LPR are dealt with through the usual operational framework and have been previously reported.

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## **3. REPORT APPENDICES**

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