



Public Document Pack
TONBRIDGE & MALLING
BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SERVICES

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6 September 2016

CABINET - TUESDAY, 6TH SEPTEMBER, 2016

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the Tuesday, 6th September, 2016 extraordinary meeting of the Cabinet, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No Item

5. **Local Plan - The Way Forward (Pages 3 - 12)**
Supplementary report of Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health
-
6. **West Malling Parish Neighbourhood Area (Pages 13 - 14)**
Supplementary information

J E BEILBY
Chief Executive

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

06 September 2016

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT: LOCAL PLAN – THE WAY FORWARD

This supplementary report highlights some further amendments to ‘The Way Forward’ incorporated after the Cabinet report papers were finalised.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 In the lead-in to the Cabinet meeting the opportunity has been taken to continually refine ‘The Way Forward’ document.

1.1.2 Attached is an amended version of the Introduction, which has been altered slightly to improve emphasis and clarity. It is envisaged that some similar, minor amendments for these purposes will be made to the rest of the document, without changing either the sense or substantive content, in advance of the public consultation period.

1.1.3 In addition, a number of changes are suggested to the presentation of the test of the guiding principles (page 22) and also to a number of the consultation questions. These are also attached.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 See main report.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 See main report.

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 See main report.

1.5 Equality Impact Assessment

1.5.1 See main report.

1.6 Policy Considerations

1.6.1 See main report

1.7 Additional Recommendation

1.7.1 The recommendation to Cabinet on the main agenda item seeks the approval of documents as a basis for the forthcoming consultation, but for the avoidance of doubt the following additional recommendation is suggested:

The amendments appended to this supplementary report be incorporated into 'The Way Forward' document, together with any other minor editing alterations identified by the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health to further improve clarity.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Ian Bailey
Planning Policy Manager
Louise Reid
Head of Planning

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning, Housing
And Environmental Services

Minor Amendments to sections of 'The Way Forward' – New text in Bold/Italic, deleted text lined through.

1. Amendments to the Introduction (Pages (i) to (v))

A New Local Plan for Tonbridge and Malling - The Way Forward Explained

Introduction

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan. This is a very important document that will guide and manage future development in the Borough up to 2031.

The purpose of having a Plan is to identify future needs for new homes, jobs and community facilities such as schools, medical facilities, roads and public open space and then to put policies and plans in place to meet them. The Plan also provides a framework for considering and determining planning applications for anything from home improvements to major new developments.

Most people only become aware of Local Plans when they make a planning application themselves or if they have been consulted on an application nearby, but most Local Authorities have one and they have to be kept up to date. In areas where there are no Plans in place or existing Plans are becoming out of date Local Authorities and the communities they serve have less control over where and when development can take place.

Fortunately, Tonbridge and Malling is not in this position. We have an existing Plan adopted between 2007-10 and sufficient land supply to meet our needs for at least the next five years. **Even so** But we must not be complacent. The Government wants Local Authorities to prepare their new Local Plans as soon as possible to take on board the planning reforms introduced over recent years. **These reforms** which are mainly aimed at **encouraging** providing for economic growth and ensuring a strong future supply of new homes. That is why we are pushing ahead with our timetable, which will see the new Plan adopted in 2019.

During this consultation we would like to invite you to become involved and share your views and comments on the emerging Plan. We will help you by guiding you through the process and by offering a number of different ways to **respond to get engaged** during this consultation exercise.

Your comments will be carefully considered and taken into account as the Plan progresses. There will also be further consultations and opportunities for comment before the Plan is submitted to the Government next year.

This **document** ~~short note~~ summarises the progress we have made so far in compiling the evidence to support the Plan. It also sets out as simply as possible some of the national and local planning objectives that we are seeking to achieve. It then looks at a proposed way forward in the form of a potential development strategy.

More detailed policies will follow in future drafts of the Plan while at this stage we are setting out the main issues for the Plan to address and establish a high level approach that will form the basis for the rest of the Local Plan.

This note will conclude by **providing** ~~signposting and offering~~ links to further information and full versions of the consultation documents as well as a summary of how to get involved.

A New Local Plan for Tonbridge and Malling – Progress So Far

In order to plan for future development we have to understand what future needs will be and this has been the focus of the work so far. One of the most fundamental needs is for homes and for this reason one of the first pieces of evidence prepared was something called a Strategic Housing Market Assessment or SHMA.

Using an approach prescribed by Government, the SHMA ~~This~~ estimates the need for new housing up to 2031 based on population changes, how households change and how people moving **home** into and out of the Borough. It also looks at 'hidden households', where people are not able to get the homes they need usually because of the affordability of the housing that is available.

The SHMA also considers where the needs should be met in the Borough depending on where the need arises, the type and tenure of housing (from flats to family homes, homes for older people and those buying their first home, for ownership or renting). ~~and~~ Importantly, **it also considers** the affordability of new housing.

The SHMA will continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure it is up to date. In the summer of 2016 **based on the prescribed approach** our need was for 13,460 new homes over the 20 year Local Plan period or 673 a year. However, once existing planning permissions and known sites are taken into consideration, we need to find land for approximately 6,000 additional homes. To put that into context, there are currently about 3,000 homes at Kings Hill.

To begin the process of finding sites where this future growth could be located we have also invited suggestions through a 'call for sites' during which we received over 250 submissions across the Borough. These have been assessed for their practical potential to deliver future growth by 2031. This exercise forms part of our Strategic Land Availability Assessment (or SLAA) which is an important part of our evidence but does not mean that the sites coming through will end up being allocated for development. We do believe though, that the evidence shows that we should be able to provide for our future housing needs. Other parts of the evidence base have considered our future needs for employment land and jobs. Like the housing assessments, this has been broken down into what type of employment land and jobs are needed and where it should be located. The evidence shows that we need to find up to a further 33 hectares of employment land up to 2031 or the equivalent of about 20 football pitches.

This Local Plan will consider the best way to meet our future development needs and also deliver some of our other planning objectives, such as improving community facilities and protecting the best of our local environment, heritage assets and amenities. The consultation document 'The Way Forward' explains how we propose to do this and we would really appreciate your views, particularly in respect of the suggested development strategy.

Once the development strategy starts to take shape the rest of the Local Plan can be worked up, such as deciding where new schools and GP surgeries will be located, how and when improvements to the road network and other forms of transport will be introduced and the preparation of more detailed planning policies to supplement the national planning framework. We will also seek your views on these next year.

The Way Forward – A Proposed Development Strategy for the Local Plan

The Way Forward document explains in more detail why we are preparing this Plan, what it has to address and the thinking that leads to a proposed strategy. Questions are posed throughout the document and there are a number of ways that you can respond, which will be explained at the end of this note.

To meet the needs we have identified we start by looking at the sites and *the* opportunities that the Government and our own residents would expect us to prioritise, for example, any sites that have been previously developed (also known as 'brownfield' sites) and other sites located within built up areas that are at the least risk from flooding. There are also sites in the current Plan that have been previously identified as having potential for meeting future needs, safeguarded sites and opportunity areas. We have called these the building blocks for the strategy. They

are the obvious starting point, but they alone will only meet about a third of our needs.

To meet the remainder we have applied a number of guiding principles based on national and local planning policy objectives. These include meeting needs where they arise across the two housing market areas and making the most of existing infrastructure by locating development around transportation hubs, for example in locations close to railway stations and bus routes.

It is also important to ensure that there is a range of sites, both large and small, so that the benefits of new growth can sustain local services and businesses in some of our smaller settlements while also delivering a higher volume of new homes through larger developments to sustain our 5 year housing land supply which we are required to make available.

Some of those larger sites may also provide opportunities to deliver much needed, strategic infrastructure improvements, such as relief roads or new schools, the funding for which from more traditional sources is falling. However, **they such sites** should be of a proportionate size capable of delivering the infrastructure to meet the needs of the new community.

The potential development strategy contained in the Way Forward is derived from tackling the issues arising from the evidence described earlier and working with these building blocks and guiding principles to suggest a quantum and distribution of future development that best meets our future needs while delivering on a number of national and local planning objectives in the most sustainable way.

We would welcome your views on the Way Forward whether you think we have got it about right or **whether** if you think there might be an alternative way. Further information on how to get involved can be found below.

How to Get Involved in the Local Plan and Have Your Say on the 'Way Forward'

The first public consultations on the new Local Plan for Tonbridge and Malling will commence on Friday 30th September 2016 and run for 8 weeks closing at 5pm on the 25th November.

There will be copies of everything you need on our website, but if you would prefer to see a hard copy of the consultation documents they will be placed at the Borough Council's main offices at Kings Hill and Tonbridge Castle, **and in** all libraries in the Borough. Copies will also be provided to each of the 27 Parish and Town Councils in Tonbridge and Malling.

There are 15 ~~set~~ questions in the consultation document, **to** which we would welcome your **responses** ~~comments~~ on either in writing, by email or by filling out a survey on-line. Alternatively you may wish to make your own comments, which again, we would welcome either in writing or by email (see addresses at the foot of this note).

There will be some small public exhibitions around the Borough for set periods during the 8 week consultation and these will be manned at **certain** times if you would prefer to talk to one of us about the Local Plan. Details can be found on our website.

To find out more about the Local Plan, the evidence base and see the full consultation documents and how to respond please visit our web-site here:

<https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/services/planning-and-development/planning/planning-local-plans>

Our address is: Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Local Plans Team, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4LZ

Our email address is: localplan@tmbc.gov.uk

If you would like to be kept up to date with progress on the Local Plan and/or be contacted as part of future consultations you may wish to be included on our Local Plan mailing list? If so please send us your name and address and/or email address.

We look forward to hearing from you.

2. Amendments to the Plan Objectives (page 17)

Plan Objective 1: As far as possible to provide for homes and jobs that are best suited and accessible to meet identified local needs.

Plan Objective 2: Support and sustain local communities across the borough, big and small, by planning to meet needs, including needs for community facilities, where they are generated.

Plan Objective 3: Protect high value, important natural and heritage assets.

Plan Objective 4: Deliver sustainable growth to support urban and rural economies, making the best use of infrastructure.

3. Amendments to the Guiding Principles (page 22)

The principles identified to guide decisions about the location of future development are as follows: Focussing the assessed development needs:

- 1. *Focussing opportunities* adjacent to the principal urban areas of the Medway Gap and Tonbridge, in each housing market area**
- 2. *Focussing opportunities* adjacent to a range of settlements across the borough to help support and sustain local communities, big and small**
- 3. *Locating new development* in reasonable proximity to transport hubs, utilising and building upon existing infrastructure**
- 4. *Locating new development* in the least constrained parts of the borough**
- 5. ~~By providing~~ *To provide* a mixed portfolio and location of sites, big and small, to meet a range of needs throughout the duration of the plan period up to 2031, over the short-term (up to 5 years), medium-term (6-10 years) and over the long-term (11-15 years)**
- 6. ~~By delivering~~ *To deliver* a level of growth at key locations to facilitate significant improvements to support infrastructure, eg schools, highways**

and healthcare, for the benefit of local communities

7. ~~By focussing~~ *Focussing development* on the contribution that larger potential sites could deliver in a proportionate way to meet wider plan objectives and ensure delivery in the plan period.

4. Amendments to the Questions (Pages 37, 41 and 42)

Q8. What should be the *main* role of Tonbridge Town Centre moving forward? ~~i.e. Should the priority be for shopping or for it be a retail hub, a social and cultural uses or a balance of these or other approaches~~ ~~hub or a combination of the two?~~

Please explain.

Q9. Should the Local Plan include a *more* flexible policy framework for Tonbridge to allow the Town ~~to be able to respond to future market investment opportunities for a range of land uses and developments to enable the Centre and adjoining areas to thrive~~
Yes/No?

Please explain.

Q10. Do you have other thoughts about how planning policy should guide development in and around the town centre?

Q13. In delivering *new* development, *what features are important to you locally?* ~~which local standards are important to you?~~ Please can you rank the following ~~potential standards~~ in order of importance, giving 1 for the most important down to 7 for the least important:

Providing affordable housing

Providing publicly accessible open space

Stipulating car parking standards

Controlling housing densities

Applying internal space standards

Achieving greater accessibility standards

Applying water efficiency standards

Are there any other priorities that you think should be considered when delivering new development?

5. Consequential Amendments to the Summary of Consultation Questions in respect of Questions 8, 9 and 13 (Pages 47-49)

Summary of Responses received in respect of the proposed designation of a Neighbourhood Planning Area at West Malling

Summary of Response	Respondent
General support for a West Malling Neighbourhood Plan. (32)	Sandra Bowen, Barbara Earl, Amy Squires, Denise Cook, Paul Mitchell, Suzette Smithson, Caroline Cruse, John Dring, Michael O'flaherty, Evelyn Werry, Nicholas Robinson, Lisa Ingram Mick Anderson, Yvonne Brown, Paul Ross, Christine Roberts, Ian Friday, Philippa Haftke, Phil Green Marc Pegler, Anthony Drake, Keith Bullard, Jane Pegler, Andrew Gower, Jan Atkins, Heather Cornes Martin Williams, Iain Abbott, William Cornes, Miranda Stacpoole, Emma Cuff, Joleen Shearing.
Support for local residents having more of a say in development proposed for West Malling through a Neighbourhood Plan. (8)	Michelle Peirce, Steve Harriott, Richard Byatt, Phil Granger, David Mitchem, Linda Martin, Rebekah Marsh, Michelle Peirce
Support for a Neighbourhood Plan for West Malling. Noted that further development will exacerbate lack of parking for visitors and residents. (5)	Kate Clayton, Philip Barwell, Keith Mann, John Kirkpatrick, David Yeo
Support for Neighbourhood Plan as a means of protecting the character of West Malling. (4)	Andrew Protheroe, Joanne Millsom, Martin Adam, John Gledhill
Support for the application to designate a Neighbourhood Planning Area, but disappointed it does not go further east to Broadwater Road. Respondent also seeking extension of Green Belt over whole area. (1)	C. A Bowden
No specific comment on the application to designate a Neighbourhood Area. General comments on the Neighbourhood Planning process. (1)	Gladman (John Fleming)

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