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TONBRIDGE & MALLING
BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SERVICES

Chief Executive

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NB - This agenda contains proposals, recommendations and options. These do not represent Council policy or decisions until they have received proper consideration through the full decision making process.

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28th February 2014

To: MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

(Copies to all Members of the Council)

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board to be held in the Civic Suite, Gibson Building, Kings Hill, West Malling on Tuesday, 11th March, 2014 commencing at 7.30 pm

Yours faithfully

JULIE BEILBY

Chief Executive

A G E N D A

PART 1 - PUBLIC

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of interest
3. Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the Notes of the meeting and Extraordinary meeting of the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board held on 19 November 2013 and on 20 January 2014 respectively.

Matters for Recommendation to the Cabinet

- | | | |
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| 4. | Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan Response to Consultation | 5 - 18 |
| 5. | Local Plan Update | 19 - 28 |
| 6. | Petition regarding Haydens Mews and the White House Conservation Status | 29 - 32 |
| 7. | Town Lock Capital Project | 33 - 36 |
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Matters submitted for Information

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| 9. | Transport Issues and Projects | 59 - 64 |
| 10. | Letter to Planning Minister Nick Boles | 65 - 70 |
| 11. | Urgent Items | |

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive

Matters for consideration in Private

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|--|
| 12. | Exclusion of Press and Public | |
|-----|-------------------------------|--|

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

PART 2 - PRIVATE

- | | | |
|-----|--------------|--|
| 13. | Urgent Items | |
|-----|--------------|--|

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

MEMBERSHIP

Cllr D A S Davis (Chairman)
Cllr M Parry-Waller (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr J Atkins
Cllr Mrs J M Bellamy
Cllr Ms V M C Branson
Cllr F R D Chartres
Cllr D J Cure
Cllr M O Davis

Cllr Mrs F A Kemp
Cllr R D Lancaster
Cllr D W Smith
Cllr A K Sullivan
Cllr M Taylor

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 KENT MINERALS AND WASTE LOCAL PLAN – RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Summary

Kent County Council (KCC) is consulting on the pre-submission version of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP). This report recommends a response to KCC on the consultation document.

1.1 Background to the Consultation

- 1.1.1 Kent County Council is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority and has a responsibility to prepare a suite of plans setting out policies and sites for mineral extraction, importation and recycling as well as waste management. The Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) sets out the overarching strategy. In addition there are the Site Plans (the Mineral Sites Plan and the Waste Sites Plan) which will allocate specific locations and sites for minerals and waste developments. These Sites Plans are not being consulted upon at the moment. The pre-submission consultation will take place after the Inspector's Report into the soundness of the MWLP has been received (estimated: April 2015). All of the Plans cover the period 2013-2030.
- 1.1.2 The pre-submission consultation for the MWLP is the third and final consultation stage. The first consultation at the 'Issues' stage ran between 24 September and 19 November 2010. The Council submitted a response to KCC during this first stage. The second consultation was the 'Strategy and Policy Directions' stage which ran between 21 May and 9 August 2011. The Council made formal representations on this last document. These comments were reported to this Board on 17 November 2010.
- 1.1.3 The version of the MWLP that is currently available for consultation is the one that KCC intends to submit for examination later this year. When adopted, the policies within the MWLP will replace the existing suite of saved Kent minerals and waste policies.

- 1.1.4 The new Plans will be used as the policy framework for the determination of applications for minerals and waste developments in Kent until the end of 2030. The MWLP is the overarching strategic document and the two Sites Plans will have to be in conformity with it. It sets out KCC's long-term spatial vision for the county in relation to minerals and waste. It also outlines the strategic objectives for the county. It sets out a delivery strategy which identifies how the objectives will be achieved in the plan period. It identifies two areas where key (strategic) mineral and waste development is likely to take place. It also provides the development management policy framework against which minerals and waste applications will be considered.
- 1.1.5 The MWLP (once adopted) will form part of the Council's Development Plan which means that the policies contained within it will need to be used alongside the planning policies in the Council's adopted Development Plan Documents to assess local planning applications. For this reason alone it is important that the Council responds to this current consultation because there will be direct implications for future decision-making locally once the MWLP is adopted.

1.2 Consultation Matters

Local Development Scheme

- 1.2.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is the project plan for the MWLP; it sets out the timetable for the production of the documents including the examination and adoption dates. The latest published version of the LDS (December 2012). It indicates that the MWLP should have been submitted in October 2013 and examined in March 2014. Furthermore, it indicates that the pre-submission version of the Sites Plans will be consulted on in September 2014, yet the website states that this is not likely to take place until April 2015 after the Inspector's Report for the MWLP has been received.
- 1.2.2 **Proposed Response** – The Local Development Scheme is not up-to-date and does not correspond with the timetables displayed on the website. The LDS indicates that the MWLP was submitted in October 2013 and that the pre-submission version of the Sites Plans will be published for consultation in September 2014. This is inconsistent with the information on the website and should be corrected so that stakeholders have a clear idea of the key milestones for the production of the MWLP, the Mineral Sites Plan and Waste Sites Plan.

Supplies of Land-won Minerals: Silica Sand – for information

- 1.2.3 Silica sand is considered to be a mineral of national importance, due to its limited distribution. The Folkestone Beds, west of Maidstone is the traditional extraction area for silica sand in Kent. National policy requires Mineral Planning Authorities to plan for a steady and adequate supply of silica sand by providing a stock of permitted reserves. There are three existing silica sand quarries in Kent. Whilst two of the three quarries have sufficient reserves to last for the entire plan period,

one site (Wrotham Quarry (Addington Sand Pit)) does not. In response to this situation, the MWLP states that a site allocation will, therefore, be required in the Mineral Sites Plan to identify sufficient reserves to meet national requirements for silica sand. Whilst the Sites Plan will not be published for consultation until April 2015 at the earliest, this matter is being drawn to the attention of the Board because not only does the Pit fall within Tonbridge and Malling but the site and its future extension area lie in the Kent Downs Areas of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB). The AONB is a nationally important designation and so developments within it or its setting have to have regard to the particularly sensitive nature of the environment. The exact extent of the allocation will not be known until the Sites Plan is published next year.

Strategic Site for Minerals – Medway Cement Works, Holborough

- 1.2.4 The site of the proposed Medway Cement Works, Holborough and its permitted mineral reserves are together identified as the Strategic Site for Minerals in Kent (Policy CSM3). The policy states: ‘...*Mineral working and processing at the Strategic Site for Cement Minerals will be permitted subject to meeting the requirements of relevant development management policies...*’. The supporting text to the policy states: ‘...*there are likely to be significant changes agreed to the approved layout and design, which would require a fresh planning application being approved prior to the development of the site...*’. The most relevant development management policy is Policy DM10: Health and Amenity. This states:

Minerals and waste development will be permitted if it can be demonstrated that they are unlikely to generate significant adverse impacts from noise, dust, vibration, odour, emissions, bioaerosols, illumination, visual intrusion, traffic or exposure to health risks and associated damage to the qualities of life and wellbeing to communities and the environment

- 1.2.5 **Proposed Response** – There are no objections, in principle, to Medway Cement Works, Holborough being identified as a strategic site for minerals in the MWLP because it enjoys the benefit of an extant planning permission. However, to assure the local community that their health and amenity will not be harmed as a result of a revised scheme, either Policy CSM3 or DM10 should be amended. It should be clearly stated that the local impacts of the revised proposal on the environment and local community must be equal to or less than those of the permitted scheme. This would include matters such as the impact on the landscape in terms of the scale and massing of the development and the impact on the highways network, as well as impacts from noise, dust, vibration, odour emissions etc. As an alternative to additional wording to this effect at the end of CSM3, the following wording could feature at the end of Policy DM10:

In the case of a revised proposal to an existing permitted scheme, the changes should generate impacts that are less than or, at worse, equal to

those from the existing permission.

Land-Won Mineral Safeguarding

- 1.2.6 At the meeting of the Board on the 12 March 2013, a topic paper on Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) and Mineral Consultation Areas (MCAs) prepared by KCC was reported. This topic paper was prepared to help improve the understanding of these policies.
- 1.2.7 The purpose of MSAs is to ensure that mineral resources are adequately and effectively considered in land-use planning decisions, so that they are not needlessly sterilised, compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The designated MSAs are illustrated on the Key Proposal Map at the back on the MWLP which is based upon the British Geological Society data. Ubiquitous minerals, namely chalk and clay, are not being safeguarded. The minerals that are safeguarded are: brickearth, sharp sand and gravel, soft sand (including silica sand), ragstone and building stone. Defining MSAs carries no presumption for extraction and there is no presumption that any areas within MSAs will ultimately be acceptable for mineral extraction (specific sites are designated for that purpose). Equally there is no presumption that non-mineral development within a MSA is automatically precluded.
- 1.2.8 MCA designation is a mechanism that aims to ensure that consultation takes place between KCC and district planning authorities when mineral interests could be compromised by non-mineral development, especially in close proximity to a known mineral resource. An MCA has been established around the safeguarded mineral reserves at Holborough **[Annex 1]**.
- 1.2.9 There are two policies in the MWLP relating to mineral safeguarding: CSM5 and DM7. Policy CSM5 is the strategic policy that states that minerals resources will be safeguarded. It also states that a MSA and a MCA have been identified for Medway Works, Holborough. Policy DM7 **[Annex 2]** is the development management policy that sets out in more detail how to treat non-mineral developments which are incompatible with safeguarding the mineral within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. The aim of the policy is to facilitate prior extraction of the mineral wherever possible before non-mineral development occurs.
- 1.2.10 **Proposed Response** - It makes sense to prevent the sterilisation of potentially economic viable minerals resources that are important to the delivery of sustainable economic growth. However, the MWLP does not adequately set this policy within the wider national planning policy context. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) clearly has a growth agenda at its heart. Para.14 requires local planning authorities through the making of Local Plans to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. Furthermore it states that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs. In addition para.173 in the NPPF states: '*...the sites and the scale of development identified*

in the plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened...' In light of this National Policy - which should underpin all local planning policies - the MSA policies (CSM5 and DM7) and the supporting text need to state:

Safeguarding should not put at risk the deliverability of sustainable growth identified in Local Plans in response to local evidence of need.

Local planning authorities are required to respond to local evidence of need for housing and cannot afford to have their strategies to respond to this need sterilised by restrictive safeguarding policy. It should be noted that Mineral Safeguarding Areas are not listed as one of the specific policies in the NPPF which indicate that development should be restricted (please see footnote 9 to para.14 in the NPPF).

- 1.2.11 Policy DM7 needs to be reworded to accurately reflect the responsibilities and powers of Kent County Council as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority for Kent. The policy opening sentence states: '*...Planning permission will only be granted for non-mineral developments which are incompatible with safeguarding...*'. KCC is not the local planning authority for non-mineral and non-waste development; this is the responsibility of the Kent districts. The policy should accurately reflect this and be reworded to:

'...Kent County Council, as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, will not be supportive of non-mineral developments which are incompatible with safeguarding the mineral...'

- 1.2.12 The aim of the safeguarding policy needs to reflect the risks that it poses to the viability and therefore deliverability of non-mineral development overlying the safeguarded minerals. Policy DM7 states that one of the conditions for allowing non-mineral development is if the mineral can be extracted satisfactorily prior to the incompatible development taking place. This is an over-simplification. The condition should recognise that the mineral should be extracted where it can be done so in a timely way that does not put at risk the deliverability of the non-mineral development overlying it. The policy should better reflect the policy in the NPPF (para.143, bullet point 5, p.33) which states that prior extraction should be encouraged, where practicable and environmentally feasible. The first bullet point in Policy DM7 should be reworded to:

'...it is practicable, environmentally feasible and economically viable for the mineral to be extracted in a timely way that does not put at risk the deliverability of the incompatible development taking place...'

Oil, Gas and Coal Bed Methane

- 1.2.13 Policy CSM8 [**Annex 3**] covers proposals for hydraulic fracking for shale gas. This process involves water (plus additives) being pumped under pressure into productive shale rocks via a drilled bore to open up pore spaces and allow the shale gas to be pumped to the surface for collection. Given the relative infancy of this form of mineral extraction, particularly in the UK, a precautionary approach should be adopted to dealing with such proposals. This approach could include seeking evidence of the proposed process being proven to work safely (within the UK) with no unacceptable harmful adverse impacts on water courses, biodiversity, properties and the local environment and communities.
- 1.2.14 **Proposed Response** – Given the nature of shale gas extraction by hydraulic fracking, Policy CSM8 should take a precautionary approach. Insert a bullet point after the first paragraph that reads:

evidence being supplied demonstrating that the extraction process has been tested and proven, within the UK, to be safe with no harmful adverse impacts on water courses (groundwater, water bodies and wetland habitats) biodiversity, properties and the local environment and communities.

The detailed wording of the Policy should also be amended to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and I will ensure KCC are advised accordingly on all such policy wording.

Waste Reduction

- 1.2.15 The MWLP includes a policy on waste reduction, CSW3 [**Annex 4**]. This is focussed on reducing waste during all forms of new development and integrating space within new developments to allow for the storage of segregated waste to facilitate recycling. Whilst the essence of this Policy is welcomed, it is questionable whether it should feature in a strategic policy document such as the MWLP because it relates to detailed development matters. These are more appropriately dealt with by the districts in Kent.
- 1.2.16 **Proposed Response** – Delete Policy CSW3 (Waste Reduction) from the MWLP. The Policy contains detailed matters relating to non-waste development which is not appropriate for a strategic policy document such as the MWLP. These matters are best dealt with through the Local Plans prepared by the districts in Kent who have the responsibility for assessing and determining applications for non-waste development proposals.

Location of Non-Strategic Waste Sites

- 1.2.17 This policy sets out locational criteria for determining applications for non-strategic waste sites. As with previous policies addressing impacts of permitted operations, the terminology in the Policy is not consistent with the requirement of the policy in the NPPF. The policy should recognise that any proposal for a non-strategic waste site as part of a new major development for employment or on land within industrial estates would also need to demonstrate conformity with the adopted Local Plan prepared by the district authority.
- 1.2.18 **Proposed Response** – Amend the opening paragraph of Policy CSW6 so that it is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (para.143). It should read: ‘...*providing that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on sensitive receptors...*’.
- 1.2.19 The policy does not reflect the need for proposals for non-strategic waste sites to demonstrate conformity with relevant policies in other documents that make up the Development Plan for the local area, i.e. the Local Plan, for permission to be granted. Amend the text in the opening sentence of the policy to read:

‘...Permission will be granted at sites for non strategic waste facilities in the following locations, providing that there is no significant adverse impact on sensitive receptors and the proposal is consistent with the policies in the adopted Local Plan prepared by the district planning authority...’

Identifying Sites for Municipal Solid Waste – Tonbridge & Malling

- 1.2.20 This section of the MWLP identifies that in the short to medium term, the Allington Waste Management Facility will need to be expanded to include a new Household Waste Recycling Centre to serve Tonbridge and Malling. The MWLP does not identify the site for development because this is a matter for the Waste Sites Plan consultation. Instead, the MWLP includes a high-level policy framing this proposal. Policy CSW7 states: ‘...*A site will be identified in the Waste Sites Plan for a Household Waste Recycling Centre to serve the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling...*’.
- 1.2.21 **Proposed Response** – The Borough Council is supportive of this approach and Policy CSW 7. The identification of the site for a Household Waste Recycling Centre to serve Tonbridge and Malling must be informed and be consistent with the policies in the NPPF and the Local Plan prepared by the Borough Council. In particular, the environmental criteria should ensure that the permitted operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health, including from noise, dust, visual intrusion, traffic and take into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites in the locality.

Energy from Waste (EfW) Facilities

- 1.2.22 One of the fundamental aims of the MWLP is to reduce the amount of waste being sent to landfill. The Plan identifies that there will need to be a substantial increase in the number of EfW plants during the plan period if a rapid shift away from landfill is to occur. The identification of sites is not a matter for the MWLP. Sites for additional EfW facilities will be identified in the consultation document for the Waste Sites Plan (not yet undertaken).

Safeguarding Permitted Waste Sites

- 1.2.23 The purpose of this Policy (CSW17) is to protect the current stock of waste management facilities. The policy seeks to safeguard permitted waste sites by refusing planning permission for the redevelopment of these sites to non-waste management uses unless alternative waste management capacity is provided elsewhere. Neither the policy nor the supporting text recognises that KCC does not have powers to determine non-waste development proposals.
- 1.2.24 **Proposed Response** – Decision-making on non-waste development proposals rests with the local planning authorities, i.e. the Kent districts, not KCC and such proposals will be assessed against the policies in the Local Plan which, along with the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, the Mineral Sites Plan and the Waste Sites Plan forms part of the Development Plan. Amend the Policy to reflect this distribution of authority:

Planning permission will not be supported by Kent County Council for development of sites which have permanent planning permission for waste management or which are identified in the Waste Sites Plan unless this does not reduce the existing waste management capacity of the site or an equivalent annual capacity can be provided at an alternative site within Kent.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan, once adopted, will form part of the statutory Development Plan for Tonbridge and Malling Borough. Decisions on planning applications in the borough have to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Mineral Safeguarding Areas and the Mineral Consultation Areas will need to be illustrated on the Proposals Map for the Development Plan.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 At this stage in the consultation process on the MWLP there are no financial or value for money considerations.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 As highlighted above, the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, once adopted, will form part of the statutory Development Plan for Tonbridge and Malling Borough. If a representation is not made at this stage, there is the risk that the concerns and priorities of this Council and the potential impact on local communities will not be fully addressed.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report.

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 The proposed responses in this report be transmitted to KCC as the Council's formal response to the consultation on the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Pre-Submission, January 2014).

Background papers:

Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30
Pre-submission Consultation (January 2014)

contact: Nigel De Wit
Lindsay Pearson

Steve Humphrey

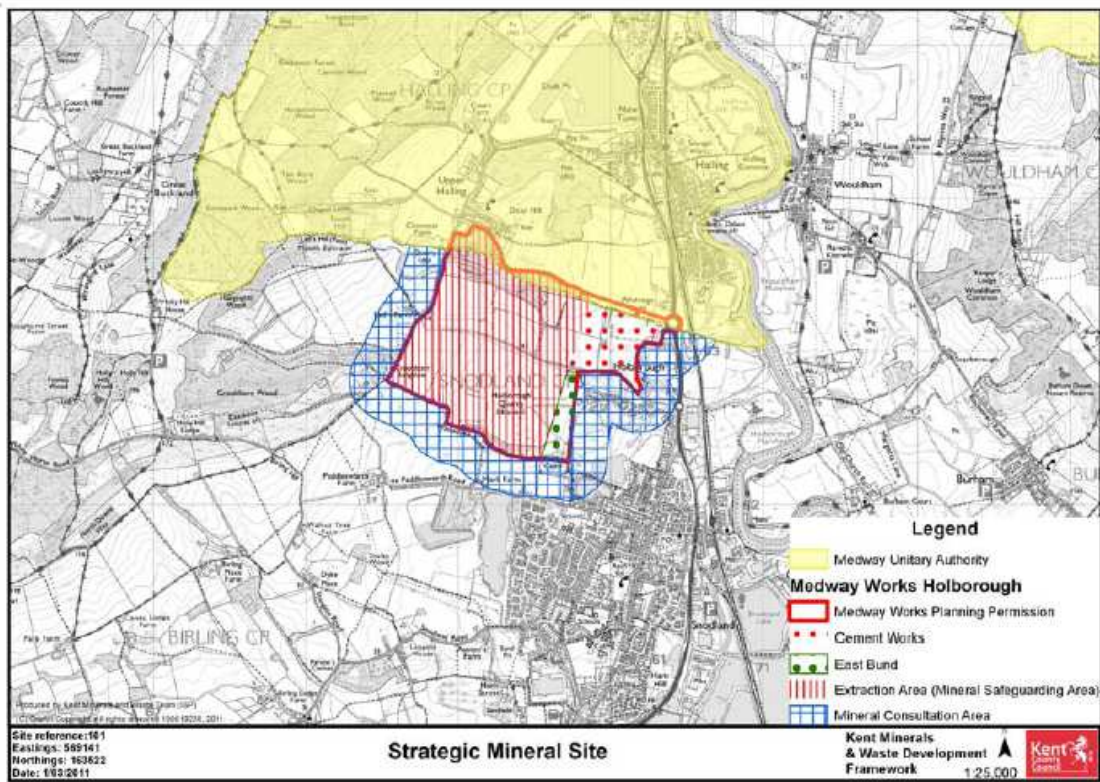
Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.

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Figure 16 Medway Works, Holborough



Policy DM 7

Safeguarding Mineral Resources and Importation Infrastructure

Planning permission will only be granted for non mineral developments which are incompatible with safeguarding the mineral within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and/or importation infrastructure within a Safeguarded Wharf or Railhead identified on the Key Diagram in Appendix D where:

- the mineral can be extracted satisfactorily prior to the incompatible development taking place; or
- the applicant can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Mineral Planning Authority that the mineral is either not of economic value or does not exist; or
- the incompatible development is of a temporary nature and can be completed and the site restored to a condition that does not inhibit mineral extraction within the timescale that the mineral is likely to be needed; or
- In the case of a wharf or railhead the applicant can demonstrate that additional/replacement capacity at another wharf or railhead is available in Kent which is similar to or better than the facility that it is replacing in terms of accessibility, location in relation to the market, suitability and size of the berth for dredgers, barges or ships, suitability/size of adjacent available land for processing and stockpiling of minerals and there are no incompatible developments in close proximity which could jeopardise the operation of the replacement site; or
- it constitutes development which is exempt from mineral safeguarding policy, namely householder applications or it is infill development of a minor nature in existing built up areas.

Policy CSM 8

Oil, Gas and Coal Bed Methane

Planning permission will be granted for proposals associated with the exploration, appraisal and development of oil, gas (including shale gas and natural gas), coal-bed methane, abandoned mine methane and underground coal seam gasification subject to:

- development taking place in appropriate locations where the proposals do not have significant adverse impacts on amenity or the environment; and
- there being no significant impact upon sensitive water receptors including groundwater, water bodies and wetland habitats; and
- all other environmental impacts being mitigated to ensure that there is not a significant adverse impact upon the local environment or communities; and
- exploration and appraisal operations are for an agreed, temporary length of time; and
- the drilling site and any associated land being restored to a high quality standard and appropriate after-use which supports the local landscape character.

Policy CSW 3

Waste Reduction

All new development should minimise the production of construction, demolition and excavation waste and manage any waste sustainably. New development should incorporate into its design adequate space for the occupiers of the proposed buildings to store waste separately from recyclable and compostable materials prior to their collection. The following details shall be submitted with the planning application, except for householder applications:

- (a) The measures to be taken to show compliance with this policy on waste reduction; and
- (b) A site Waste Plan detailing the nature and quantity of any construction, demolition and excavation waste to be sent off site and the destinations.

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

This report updates Members on progress towards the new Local Plan, including the preparation of evidence, community engagement arrangements and proposed revisions to the timetable. Members are also requested to acknowledge and accept the outcomes from the final version of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, arrangements for the forthcoming “Call for Sites” exercise and revisions to the Local Plan timetable.

1.1 Local Plan Progress Since the Last Board Meeting in November 2013

- 1.1.1 Members will recall from previous reports to this Board that officers have been preparing an evidence base to underpin a new Local Plan commensurate with the National Planning Policy Framework. This report sets out the headline figures from one of the key pieces of evidence for any Local Plan, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment or SHMA, which identifies the objectively assessed needs for new housing over the plan period to 2031
- 1.1.2 Planning Inspectors, overseeing Local Plan Examinations around the country, have made it very clear that Local Planning Authorities must acknowledge their objectively-assessed needs in emerging plans and there are numerous examples where failure to do so has resulted in examinations being abandoned or plans being found unsound. The absence of an adopted development plan or an identified 5 year supply of housing land (plus a buffer of between 5 and 20 per cent) can result in ‘planning by appeal’ and a loss of control by Local Planning Authorities over where new development is located.
- 1.1.3 Tonbridge and Malling remains in a relatively strong position having adopted a Local Development Framework (LDF) under the previous planning system and currently a healthy housing land supply, but the Government has made it clear that it wishes new Local Plans to be in place at the earliest opportunity.

- 1.1.4 This report also updates Members in respect of the rest of the evidence base and particularly the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which assesses the supply side in meeting our future housing needs. This piece of work is being carried out internally and is about to reach a key stage known as the “Call for Sites”. This is a requirement set out in draft National Planning Policy Guidance and involves an invitation to land owners, developers and others with an interest in land in the Borough to suggest sites for future development.
- 1.1.5 Nominating a site is no guarantee that it will be developed and there will be a thorough assessment of any proposals before sites are taken further, but this is a necessary requirement of the assessment. Clearly, the ‘messaging’ allied to this process will need a sensitive approach to guard against fears and expectations being falsely raised. It is anticipated that this exercise will take place during April and May.
- 1.1.6 Community engagement is an important factor in successful plan-making and significant progress has been made since last November in raising awareness of the Local Plan process with the 27 Parish and Town Councils in the Borough. At the time of writing this report, 21 meetings had been held with 6 more arranged. The feedback has been largely positive and the dialogue has generated some useful information about local issues, infrastructure requirements and priorities. This will feed into the new plan.
- 1.1.7 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out the general principles for how the Local Planning Authority involves the community in plan-making and planning applications, prepared in July 2005, is now out of date. The Local Plan represents a good opportunity to refresh the SCI (which is still a requirement) so that it is fit for purpose.
- 1.1.8 The next formal stage of the Plan’s preparation will be the Issues and Options stage (Regulation 18 in the Town and Country Planning Local Plans Regulations 2012). This will take the form of a major public consultation exercise and will be based on the key issues arising from the evidence gathering and some options for going forward. All comments received will be carefully considered and included in a report, which has to be submitted with all the other documentation to the Planning Inspectorate when requesting an Examination.
- 1.1.9 In a proposed change to the indicative timetable for the Local Plan presented to this Board last year, merit is now seen in introducing an additional Regulation 18 consultation on a preferred option, before moving to a deposit draft Plan, for submission to the Government. The deposit draft (Regulation 19) provides another opportunity for comments.
- 1.1.10 The Government has also announced that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will be reviewed on or around its second anniversary. There are no details of what, if anything, may change, but the extra time needed for a preferred option stage would have the added advantage of taking on board any

adjustments that might otherwise have resulted in abortive work or 'retrofitting' the Plan to accord with a revised NPPF.

- 1.1.11 Consequently, a revised timetable at **[Annex 1]** to this report for information and Members are requested to acknowledge and accept this as a basis for a new Local Development Scheme.

1.2 Tonbridge and Malling Strategic Housing Market Assessment – Summary

- 1.2.1 G L Hearn and Partners have prepared the new SHMA for Tonbridge and Malling and the final version was received shortly before this meeting. The same consultants have prepared separate reports for Maidstone and Ashford as part of a joint commissioning exercise. These reports have also recently been finalised and have been prepared in close working liaison with offices of all three authorities.
- 1.2.2 Tonbridge and Malling is covered by two Housing Market Areas (HMAs). The northern part of the Borough forms part of the Maidstone HMA and the remainder forms part of the Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells HMA. Officers have worked closely with their counterparts at Maidstone throughout the process and will be meeting colleagues in Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells shortly to share the results for that part of the HMA under the Duty to Cooperate (for information – Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells were invited to update their SHMAs in late 2012 when this process began, but declined as their plans were at a different stage at that time).
- 1.2.3 Our specialist advisors have used a robust methodology reflecting the latest Government guidance and responding to emerging evidence from Local Plan examinations. The objective assessment of the need has taken account of the latest demographic and migration information and has been adjusted to take account of local sensitivities such as evidence of suppressed household formation (for example, where older children are living with parents for longer before they can afford a home of their own).
- 1.2.4 The Objectively Assessed Need for housing for Tonbridge and Malling for the period 2011 to 2031 is for 13,000 new homes, or 650 per annum, representing a growth in the existing housing stock of 1.4% per year.
- 1.2.5 To put this into context, during the period 2001/2 to 2011/12, an average of 615 new dwellings per annum were delivered in Tonbridge and Malling (peaking in 2004/5 at 977 units) and the total housing stock grew on average by 1.3 per cent per year. However, the last decade has seen a number of large housing sites coming forward at the same time, which has contributed to these higher delivery rates and the economic recession has also resulted in a slow down since 2008 (394 units were completed in 2012/13).
- 1.2.6 The existing housing supply position, including completions since 2011, development plan allocations, planning permissions and an estimate from

windfalls (for the first 5 years only) is approximately 5,800 units. This leaves a target of 7,200 dwellings or approximately 400 units a year to plan for up to 2031. As well as identifying an overall supply of land through the Plan period, we are also required to ensure a five year supply (plus an appropriate buffer) based on the Objectively Assessed Need is practically available and deliverable.

- 1.2.7 The previous housing targets in the Local Development Framework cascaded down from the South East Plan were for 450 units a year, so the new figures represent a significantly higher target. The challenge for the new Local Plan will be to identify a continuing supply of deliverable housing sites to maintain this momentum.
- 1.2.8 For information, the Maidstone SHMA identified an Objectively Assessed Need for 19,600 additional housing units or 980 units per annum over the same period. However, Maidstone has now 'approved' a housing target of 19,100 units. It is not currently entirely clear how this position has been reached or justified. There is a Duty to Cooperate meeting now planned in late March.

1.3 Progress in respect of other Local Plan evidence

1.3.1 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

- 1.3.2 As noted above, the results of the desk-based study of estimated housing supply identifies approximately 5,800 units. The next stage of this work is to undertake a "Call for Sites", which involves inviting landowners and others with an interest in land to suggest additional sites for housing and/or other forms of development.
- 1.3.3 It is anticipated that this will take place during April and May for a period of 8 weeks after which the results will be carefully considered.

1.3.4 Employment Land Review

- 1.3.5 Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners have been commissioned to review the Employment Land Review and an inception meeting was held in February. This will be an important piece of work as the NPPF advises Local Planning Authorities that they should ensure land designated for employment use in Local Plans will be deliverable over the life of the plan. This study will review current allocations for their suitability and deliverability in the light of meeting the needs of the local and wider economy.
- 1.3.6 This exercise may generate some additional sites for alternative uses, such as housing.

1.3.7 Bushey Wood Ecological and Archaeological Surveys

- 1.3.8 Bushey Wood is identified as an Area of Opportunity in the adopted LDF to contribute to meeting future housing needs should the need arise. The site has a

number of policy constraints including local wildlife designations, a scheduled ancient monument and regionally important geological constraints.

- 1.3.9 Initial mapping work and consultation with Natural England and the Kent Wildlife Trust has highlighted the potential habitat importance of parts of the area and there are also a number of local and European landscape and ecology designations both within and outside the site. Ecology is thus going to be a key factor and surveys will help us better understand the site's development potential and provide us with key evidence as we move forward.
- 1.3.10 Green Belt Review
- 1.3.11 As noted above, one of the requirements of preparing a new Local Plan is to carry out a review of the current extent of Green Belt. This reflects the NPPF stance that although 'constraints' such as AONB and similarly high level designations are not for Local Plans to review, 'policy areas' should be critically examined and balanced against development needs. Inspectors are increasingly expecting this work to be undertaken to help support the work carried out within the SHLAA and SHMA. Where such a review has not been thoroughly carried out, Inspectors are finding fault with Local Plans.
- 1.3.12 This review will be carried out in house over the next few months and will confirm whether designations continue to meet the requirements for being included as Green Belt as set out in the NPPF.
- 1.3.13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- 1.3.14 Flood risk is an important consideration in preparing development plans and the issues associated with flooding have been highlighted this winter during an unprecedented period of damaging storms. The adopted Core Strategy for Tonbridge and Malling (Sept 2007) recognises this in Policy CP10 and the accompanying paragraphs 6.2.23 to 6.2.29. These refer to the Catchment Flood Management Plan for the River Medway, prepared by the Environment Agency, which in turn sets the context for the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), a key piece of supporting evidence for the Local Plan. The SFRA covers those areas where development might be proposed in future and is supplemented by the preparation of site-specific Flood Risk Assessments when proposals are brought forward.
- 1.3.15 It is worth noting that the NPPF currently does not rule out development in areas at risk to flooding. It does advise against using areas at highest risk by applying a sequential test to ensure that areas at lower risk are developed first. However, if after having followed the sequential test it is still considered necessary to locate a development in a higher risk area, an 'exception test' may be applied. To pass this test it must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweighs the flood risk.

1.3.16 This may be an area of national policy that the Government may wish to address in the review of the NPPF. In anticipation of this, officers will revise the SFRA once the details of that review are known.

1.3.17 Infrastructure Delivery Plan

1.3.18 Another critical part of the Local Plan evidence base is the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which addresses the need for, delivery and maintenance of, future infrastructure to meet the needs of the existing population and also those of new communities as a result of planned growth.

1.3.19 Contact has been made with many of the infrastructure providers and regular meetings are held with KCC officers responsible for services such as education and highways. The meetings with the Parishes have also provided a useful insight into priorities for infrastructure at the local level both now and looking towards 2031. However, it has not been possible to prepare a detailed IDP to date because this necessarily has to follow other key pieces of the evidence base and, particularly, establishing the levels of future growth. There will be further updates on this to future Boards as the work progresses.

1.4 Community Engagement and Statement of Community Involvement

1.4.1 Following a briefing prepared for all Parish and Town Councils last September, officers have been attending 1-1 meetings to explain the Local Plan process in more detail, including some of the challenges ahead and to discuss local priorities and issues both current and looking towards 2031.

1.4.2 The exercise has been extremely useful and we have received largely positive feedback and a willingness to continue the dialogue through the Local Plan process.

1.4.3 For the unparished areas of the Borough and the public at large, other engagement techniques and consultation opportunities will be employed to ensure as many people who wish to be involved with the process can be accommodated. In addition to the formal consultation exercises, there will also be a short article in the spring edition of the "Here and Now" magazine and regular updates on the relevant pages of the Council's website. The new citizen's panel will be another mechanism for consultation at the appropriate time.

1.4.4 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was adopted in July 2005. It was prepared to meet requirements set out in the now superseded regulations and set out how the Council would consult on the specific LDF documents the Council would be preparing at that time. I intend to review the SCI and report it to the next meeting of the Board.

1.5 Next Steps

- 1.5.1 Officers will continue to prepare the evidence base as indicated in section 1.3 above and begin to consider issues and options for Members' consideration prior to the first round of formal Regulation 18 consultations now anticipated to be in September this year.
- 1.5.2 Further updates will be reported to this Board including any relevant changes arising from the review of the NPPF and the final version of the National Planning Policy Guidance.

1.6 Revised Timetable/Local Development Scheme

- 1.6.1 A revised timetable, which will form the basis of a new Local Development Scheme [**Annex 1**], incorporates the additional 'Preferred Option' consultation stage.

1.7 Legal Implications

- 1.7.1 As the Local Planning Authority, the Borough Council is required to prepare and keep up to date a development plan for its area. Failure to prepare a new Local Plan will result in the adopted LDF becoming increasingly ineffective.

1.8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.8.1 Failure to maintain an up to date Local Plan may lead to an increasing number of challenges to planning decisions resulting in increasing legal costs.
- 1.8.2 Joint commissioning of consultants to prepare evidence has been pursued where possible representing good value for money.

1.9 Risk Assessment

- 1.9.1 The risks associated with not preparing a Local Plan in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG can be illustrated by reference to other Local Plan Examinations.

1.10 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.10.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.11 Recommendations

- 1.11.1 That Members **NOTE** the update on progress towards preparing the Local Plan, including the proposed Call for Sites exercise; and
- 1.11.2 **ACKNOWLEDGE** and **ACCEPT** the following:
 - 1) the final version of the Tonbridge and Malling Strategic Housing Market Assessment, including the Objectively Assessed Housing Need for the Borough to 2031, as forming part of the Local Plan evidence base; and

- 2) the revised Local Plan timetable at **[Annex 1]** to this report, which can be used as a basis of a revised Local Development Scheme.

The Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:
Nil

contact: Ian Bailey

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning Housing and Environmental Health Services

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	This is an update report for Members on progress on the Local Plan.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	This is an update report for Members on progress on the Local Plan.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.

Timetable for the Local Plan to form the basis of a new Local Development Scheme

Year	2014												2015												2016																				
Stage	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D									
Evidence Base	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█																																					
Issues & Options Reg 18						█	█	█	C	█	█	█																																	
Preferred Option Reg 18													█	█	█	█	C	█	█	█																									
Draft Plan Reg19/20																					█	█	█	C	█	█																			
Submission Exam Report																																		S	█	P	E	█	█	R	█	█			
Adoption																																												A	█

Notes: C = Consultations, S = Submission, P = Pre-examination meeting, E = Examination, R = Inspector's Report received, A = Adoption

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member) - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 PETITION REGARDING HAYDENS MEWS AND WHITE HOUSE CONSERVATION STATUS

The Council has received a petition from residents of Haydens Mews (36 signatories) requesting that the Council revise the Tonbridge Conservation Area boundary to include this area. The area had previously been part of the Conservation Area until a comprehensive review was carried out in 2008 and subsequently adopted by the Council in July 2009. The petitioners are of the view that inclusion within the Conservation Area will stop the dilution of the character and ambience of the area through the control of minor amendments to individual properties such as the installation of replacement windows.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Tonbridge Conservation Area was first designated in November 1969 by Kent County Council who was the designating authority at that time. The boundary was later reviewed by the Borough Council in 1981, 1985, 1990 and most recently in 2009. The revisions made in October 1985 extended the conservation area to include the playing fields in the vicinity of Yardley Park and Elm Lane, namely the area that is now Haydens Mews and The Haydens.
- 1.1.2 Planning permission for the residential development in The Haydens and Haydens Mews was granted by appeal in 1988. Proposals were subsequently resubmitted and granted planning permission in 1992. The development included the provision of informal open space facing onto Yardley Park Road.
- 1.1.3 The Council appointed an independent specialist to review Tonbridge Conservation Area and it was concluded that despite the attractive character of The Haydens and Haydens Mews, it did not possess the necessary historic or architectural character to justify inclusion with the conservation area and it was removed in July 2009.

- 1.1.4 The concerns raised in the petition relate to the loss of character and ambience of the area due to alterations made to individual properties and the petitioners consider the best way to address this dilution is to re-instate conservation area status.

1.2 Tonbridge Conservation Area

- 1.2.1 In 2008, the Council appointed independent specialist consultants to assess the boundary of Tonbridge Conservation Area and to prepare a conservation area appraisal. This work concluded that Haydens Mews, attractive as it is, did not merit inclusion within the conservation area. Areas that are included with conservation areas should be of special architectural or historic importance to justify that status.
- 1.2.2 The justification for the deletion of The Haydens and Haydens Mews was reported as follows: *“When this area was first designated it comprised open space. It is now a modern housing development (The Haydens) which means that the original character has substantially changed. Whilst what has replaced the open space is an attractive development in its own way, its character is not of architectural or historic importance. For these reasons, this area no longer merits inclusion within the conservation area”*.
- 1.2.3 The deletion was subject to a public consultation exercise, to which objections were raised. Nevertheless, the Council remained unconvinced of the special historic and architectural character of the area, and Members approved the recommendations to delete it from the Conservation Area following a report to the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board on 20 October 2008. The Conservation Area Appraisal and revised boundary was subsequently adopted by Council in July 2009.

1.3 Loss of Character and Ambience of Haydens Mews

- 1.3.1 The covering letter to the petition states that residents of Haydens Mews are concerned that the character and ambience of the development is being eroded due to the loss of common features, such as style and material of windows.
- 1.3.2 Conservation area status would not address these concerns due to permitted development rights that exist in all areas, including designated conservation areas.
- 1.3.3 The Council recognises that the area does have a character that is unique and this is recognised in the Tonbridge Character Area supplementary planning document which seeks to maintain, protect and enhance the character of the area and is a material consideration for development management purposes. That document was adopted in February 2011 and supplements a sound policy in the adopted Local Development Framework (Managing Development and The Environment DPD –Policy SQ1)

- 1.3.4 The area is described as “a development of substantial detached and terraced mews houses. The properties are set at angles along curving roads and culs-de-sac and clustered around shared driveways. Accessed via a pillared entrance off Yardley Park Road, the development is connected with Portman Park and Hadlow Road via Bourne Lane through a series of footpaths.”

1.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1.4.1 The removal of Haydens Mews from Tonbridge Conservation Area was subject to a public consultation exercise along with all other alterations to the boundary that were proposed at that time. That followed a detailed analysis of the area. Objections were raised to the proposed exclusion and reported to Members of the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board on 20 October 2008. Although the objections were carefully considered, the Council remained of the view that the area should not form part of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal and revised boundary was subsequently adopted by full Council in July 2009.
- 1.4.2 There have been no changes in circumstances, legislation or other considerations since the review of Tonbridge Conservation in 2009, and consequently there is no justification for a further review of the boundary.
- 1.4.3 The petition points to minor changes to properties that have occurred but these are generally matters that have the benefit of permission granted by Parliament (permitted development) which applies even in conservation areas.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 Conservation Area boundaries are prepared and reviewed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and as such any review must be prepared within the legislative framework.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.6.1 There are no significant financial considerations arising directly from the report.

1.7 Risk Assessment

- 1.7.1 None identified.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.8.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report.

1.9 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Tonbridge Conservation Area boundary is not reviewed and the petitioners be advised of the reasons outlined in this report.

The Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Jill Peet

Nil

Steve Humphrey

Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	No changes are proposed.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	No changes are proposed.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		No impacts are identified as no changes are proposed.

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 TOWN LOCK CAPITAL PROJECT

Summary

This report updates members on progress and provides a programme for the implementation of the scheme.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 I last reported to members on the Town Lock project at the meeting of this Board on 4 June 2013. At that time the detailed design was being finalised so that the scheme could be costed prior to inviting tenders for construction. Members may recall that, in the context of a fixed scheme budget, I had highlighted the possibility that elements of the design would need to be reviewed if the estimated cost exceeded that budget.
- 1.1.2 In the event, the estimate did indeed exceed the budget and so I was prevented from proceeding to tender stage. This is frustrating, but not uncommon, particularly with schemes involving features such as engineering near the river which are often difficult to cost. There followed a period of working with the Environment Agency and Halcrow, the designers, to redesign various elements of the scheme such that the costs could be reduced to an affordable level. This process has been necessarily time consuming in order to retain the essential project requirements and function without significant loss of overall quality. The scheme has now reached the limits of what can be achieved by 'value engineering' and so it is appropriate to now continue to tender to determine the 'real' cost of building the revised scheme.

1.2 What has been done?

- 1.2.1 The scheme 'plan' has not had any fundamental changes, although individual elements of the scheme have been critically scrutinised to see how they might be provided in a less expensive way.
- 1.2.2 The key focus of the value engineering has been upon lighting and upon the flood wall. The lighting has been simplified such that there will be a 'lit way' through the

scheme rather than an attempt to provide lighting to all areas of open space. This takes account of reflected light from adjacent buildings and is better in environmental terms such as light pollution and power consumption.

1.2.3 The reinforced concrete flood wall has been replaced for a significant part of the scheme by a masonry wall/earth bund composite structure which will be equally as effective. The brick cladding and coping to the remaining concrete flood wall has been deleted. Some railings have been deleted consistent with the existing similar areas in Medway Wharf Road.

1.2.4 Elsewhere, small changes have been made to a number of other elements which cumulatively will all help in reducing cost.

1.3 Programme for Implementation

1.3.1 The revised drawings and tender documents are programmed to be completed by the end of March which will allow tenders to be received and analysed during May.

1.3.2 A start on site is now anticipated for July 2014, which will allow the majority of construction work to be completed during the summer months when working conditions are most favourable. Completion will be around October/November dependent upon the contractor's approved construction programme.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 None arising from this report.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 The scheme budget is currently fixed at £791,600, funded from a variety of sources including contributions from nearby development, funds from the Environment Agency and the Council's own capital plan funding.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 There is still a risk that a tender will not returned within the available budget and a further review might prove necessary in those circumstances.

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 That Members **NOTE** the update on progress towards implementing the Town Lock capital project and **APPROVE** the programme as outlined.

The Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers: Nil

contact: Steve Medlock

Steve Humphrey
 Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The scheme is designed on the basis of 'access for all' to the lock side open space.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 KCC CYCLING STRATEGY

1.1 Joint Transportation Board (JTB)

1.1.1 The JTB, at its meeting of 2 December 2013, resolved that it wished to adopt the Cycling Strategy as presented, subject to a number of clarifications. The JTB also requested that the Borough Council adopt the Strategy as a material consideration in Planning matters.

1.2 Planning Considerations

1.2.1 The Strategy, which in its updated version, is Annexed to this Report, is both aspirational and contains some specific proposed routes, in four sub-areas: Tonbridge, Medway Gap, Kings Hill and Borough Green and Wrotham.

1.2.2 The more detailed routings might be achieved by use of a combination of funding sources and/or directly through development itself, dependent on the context.

1.2.3 The Strategy should form part of the context for considering planning applications and in the production of the forthcoming Local Plan.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 The document would simply be another material consideration in making planning decisions. It has not been through the necessary processes of public consultation to become a formal planning policy document.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 None directly in the consideration of planning matters.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 No risk, provided that the document is not treated as an *overriding* consideration, in its own right, in planning decision making.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 The Kent and Tonbridge and Malling Strategy 2014-2019 **BE ADOPTED as a material consideration** in decisions on Planning applications and in the production of the Local Plan.

The Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Lindsay Pearson

Nil

Steve Humphrey

Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	No part of the community will be disadvantaged by the use of this document as a material consideration.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	Improved facilities for those aspiring to healthier lifestyles
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.

Tonbridge & Malling cycling strategy 2014-2019

A report prepared by Kent County Council with support from Sustrans and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council



www.kent.gov.uk/cyclingstrategies

This publication is available in other formats and languages call 24 hour helpline:
03000 418181 Text Relay: 18001 03000 418181

Images: Courtesy of KCC Explore Kent

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1. Introduction

This Cycling Strategy is a collection of policies and related action plans that work together to promote cycling and the development of appropriate cycling facilities throughout Tonbridge and Malling Borough.

The Strategy was originally drafted by Sustrans, working in partnership with officers from Kent County Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, as well as local cyclists. It builds on the previous strategy "Putting the Wheels in Motion", published in September 1998.

It is recognised that there are many advantages associated with encouraging cycling as a viable form of transport, exercise and source of recreational enjoyment. Everyone should have the opportunity for independent mobility, and in order to achieve this it is vital that the street environment and infrastructure facilitates this. The vision of this strategy is to create an environment, particularly in the urban areas of the borough, where people of all ages and abilities feel able to cycle safely and easily and to enjoy the experience.

Over 40% of all journeys made are less than two miles, and almost 70% are less than 5 miles; of which 69% are made by car (Department for Transport, 2005). Cycling offers a truly door-to-door alternative transport solution. It is often quicker than motorised forms of transport for short journeys and provides an affordable means of travel for most.

Cycling is fun and an ideal activity for all the family. It provides an opportunity to enjoy sights and sounds during journeys that cannot be experienced in a motor vehicle. It offers access to areas that are often too far for many to walk. It also boosts local spending as cyclists tend to shop locally and spend more. Cycling is reported to be worth £2.9bn to the UK economy with the average cyclist spending £230 per annum (London School of Economics, 2011). Therefore an increase in cycling in the borough has the potential to improve the local economy.

This strategy aims to release some of the suppressed demand to cycle, particularly in urban areas. A third of students at secondary schools would like to cycle yet often the actual figure is just 2% (Sustrans, 2006). Continuity of route is the key to getting more people to cycle safely and this strategy seeks to join the many disparate cycle routes in the urban areas of the borough.

A relatively short but very attractive cycle route was opened in 2005 linking Tonbridge and Penshurst, which forms part of the National Cycle Network. Signed as Regional Route 12, it is proving very popular with over 60,000 users recorded in 2012. Indeed, it has recently been voted one of the most scenic routes in Britain (http://www.visitengland.com/en/Things-to-do/Outdoor-England/Scenic-Cycle-Routes.htm?SL_ClassKey=1). The route forms part of the Tudor Trail which will extend Regional Route 12 to Hever and Edenbridge. This strategy seeks to build on that success and to apply the lessons learned to other areas of the borough.

We need to improve conditions for cyclists, enhance the safety of cycling, provide more cycle parking, and integrate cycling within other relevant initiatives. This strategy unashamedly concentrates on routes in the urban areas of Tonbridge and the Medway Gap, as this is where population densities are highest and where most new development will take place in the coming years. Nevertheless, there is also merit in providing the missing links identified in the National Cycle Network to encourage inter-urban travel and cycle tourism.

In a challenging financial climate, funding for new transport infrastructure is limited. However, opportunities will continue to present themselves, particularly where new developments are proposed, and it is vital to have a robust cycling strategy in place to enable us to take full advantage of them.

2. National and local policy overview

This Strategy is influenced by and interacts with a range of national and local policies and strategies. This chapter briefly outlines the current policy context within which the Strategy has been prepared.

National Cycling Policy Overview

The Department for Transport and Department of Health jointly published the **Active Travel Strategy** in 2009, which aims to put walking and cycling at the heart of the local transport and public health agendas. The strategy emphasises the importance and benefits of active travel; in terms of health, the environment and the economy. Its guiding principle is that walking and cycling should be the mode of choice for most journeys. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced guidance in November 2012 (PHG41); on **Local Measures to Promote Walking and Cycling as Forms of Travel or Recreation** which has been taken into account within this strategy.

Local Cycling Policy Overview

The third **Local Transport Plan for Kent (2011-16)** sets out Kent County Council (KCC)'s policies and delivery plans for the management and improvement of the local transport network. It has five principal themes, all of which include cycling as an aspect; 'Growth Without Gridlock', 'A Safer and Healthier County', 'Supporting Independence', 'Tackling A Changing Climate' and 'Enjoying Life in Kent'.

Growth Without Gridlock is based on measures in Kent's Growth Areas and Growth Points that support housing and employment as well as the management and maintenance of the countywide road network. This includes cycle routes as an important factor, in particular with regard to reducing traffic congestion.

A Safer and Healthier County brings together a variety of partners working towards a number of common aims, including promoting active travel.

Supporting Independence aims to improve access to services and opportunities, particularly for those who do not have access to a car. Part of this involves improvements to cycling infrastructure, enabling efficient and cost effective access to services without the use of vehicles.

Tackling a Changing Climate looks to reduce transport emissions, in conjunction with the Kent Environment Strategy, through the promotion of greener travel.

Finally, *Enjoying Life* in Kent recognises the wider role that transport can play in improving our quality of life. This includes improving cycling access within the countryside.

The Local Transport Plan notes that cycling strategies have already been developed and adopted in Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Sevenoaks, Shepway and Thanet. KCC's objective is for each district in Kent to have a cycling strategy in place by 2015 and for these to be updated every five years thereafter.

The **Countryside Access Improvement Plan (2007-2017)** (CAIP) is KCC's strategy to increase usage and enjoyment of Public Rights of Way (PROW) and open green spaces in Kent. The county's vast network of paths should be a gateway for residents and visitors to explore Kent's wildlife, history, and landscapes. The CAIP seeks to develop the PROW network to increase sustainable access to these features.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework

The Local Development Framework, (2007-2021)

LDF) for Tonbridge and Malling is a key planning document setting out the Borough Council's vision, aims and objectives, which will determine the future pattern of development across the borough. The LDF identifies the principle locations for development during the plan period, which in turn assists with the planning of new and enhanced cycle routes. The extract below identifies these areas:

"New development will . . . be concentrated at the main urban areas of the Medway Gap (including Kings Hill and Snodland), Tonbridge and the Walderslade part of the Medway Towns urban area and at those larger rural settlements that have a range of services or reasonable access to them. New development will be located within the built-up areas of these settlements mainly on previously developed land or by conversion of existing buildings. In addition, there are four major brownfield sites where development has already been permitted which will accommodate and ensure delivery of the major part of the Borough's strategic housing requirement up to 2021. Development elsewhere, in the countryside and at smaller rural settlements more remote from services, will be more restricted. No greenfield sites will be required for housing development to meet strategic needs up to 2021." The four major brownfield sites that have been identified are: Holborough Lakes, Kings Hill, Leybourne Chase, and Peters Pit.

3. Local priorities

Why Cycle?

The role of walking and cycling in helping to create liveable towns and cities and promoting health improvement and social inclusion has not always been fully acknowledged by government and the health authorities. Recently, however, the link between transport, physical activity and health has been highlighted in the Chief Medical Officer's Report (2009) and by the British Medical Association (BMA) in its report, Healthy Transport = Healthy Lives (2009). Warnings about the health consequences of an increasingly sedentary society are now widely reported and it has been estimated that the cost of transport-related physical inactivity in England costs the economy £9.8 million per year. This is in addition to the estimated £2.5 billion annual healthcare cost of treating obesity.

The BMA outlines the recognised health benefits associated with active travel, which include:

- improved mental health
- a reduced risk of premature death
- prevention of chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, depression, dementia, and cancer

Furthermore, walking and cycling are effective ways of integrating, and increasing, levels of physical activity into everyday life. However, the BMA suggests that there has been underinvestment in walking and cycling infrastructure to date.

Cycling in urban areas can improve air quality through reducing congestion and the local air pollution that comes with it, as well as reducing the carbon emissions that can cause climate change. It has been reported that air pollution reduces life expectancy by 7-8 months, which has the equivalent economic impact of £20 billion per year, (Air Quality Strategy, 2007).

Cycling also benefits the local economy. The Viking Coastal Trail (VCT) Study has shown that this goes

beyond the purchase and maintenance of cycle equipment. The VCT is a 28 mile multi-purpose route within Thanet, which opened in 2001 and has been very popular with cyclists. The study looked into the economic benefits associated with the route and it was found that many cyclists stopped at local cafes and pubs. Other business that benefited from the route included local attractions such as museums, historic houses, and accommodation providers. The success of the trail has led to many businesses catering for the needs of cyclists, which confirms the positive impact that they continue to have on the local economy.

4. Improving the cycle network

New routes will be designed to provide safe, continuous links between communities and popular destinations such as shops, schools, leisure centres and work places.

To ensure the highest possible standards, Local Transport Note (LTN) 02/08 Cycle Infrastructure Design will be the standard guidance underpinning the design and construction of new cycle infrastructure. Additional guidance will include LTN 01/12, Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists, Manual for Streets 2 and the Kent Design Guide.

There is also a role within land use planning to enable users of new developments to undertake more journeys on foot or by bike. A hierarchy of users has been developed, which can assist in prioritising the needs of different transport modes where there are conflicting demands on carriageway space, or there is incompatibility in the highway layouts suiting different modes. A set of minimum requirements must be met if the infrastructure is to be convenient, accessible, safe, comfortable and attractive for both pedestrians and cyclists.

Cycling England produced a report with the Department for Transport, based upon evidence from continental Europe and the English Cycling Demonstration Towns, suggesting that a £10 per head investment is required nationally to significantly increase cycling. Their results indicated that cycling levels rose by 10-50% after this level of investment coupled with a carefully considered strategy. The report also found that for every £1 invested in cycling, the value of decreased mortality is £2.59, which represents high value for money.

Policy 1: A network of high quality routes will be completed in the urban areas of Tonbridge and the Medway Gap providing convenient and safe access throughout those areas. The network will include routes to and from the surrounding countryside to facilitate leisure cycling. Where a route is currently designated as a public footpath, it is likely that it will be converted to a cycle track or bridleway to permit cycling.

Detailed recommendations for new and improved routes in the urban areas can be found in chapter 9 of this report.

Policy 2: Wherever possible measures will be provided which give cyclists priority over motorised traffic in terms of accessibility and journey time.

Cycle Parking

Cycle parking needs to be convenient, safe and secure. A cycle locked in a shed at the end of a garden is less likely to be used than one stored close to the front door. Therefore, it is vital that there is a secure storage area close to the usual exit of a property and that new residential properties have sufficient storage for cycles. This should be managed through the development control process.

Cycling can form part of longer journeys if there is good integration with public transport. High quality, secure cycle parking at railway stations is essential to promote this. There is a good supply of parking at Tonbridge Station, which has recently been complemented by the introduction of a Brompton Dock cycle hire scheme, but this is often fully utilised and needs to be kept under regular review. Significantly increased provision is also proposed as part of the remodelling of the West Malling Station Forecourt. However, cycle parking at most other stations in the borough is very limited and should be improved.

5. Maintenance of the cycle network

A key component of all public cycle parking facilities is that they should complement and enhance the local environment while remaining functional and within cycle parking standards. Wherever possible, new cycle parking will be planned to meet these requirements and will ideally be sourced from local suppliers, designed by local artists making use of distinct yet functional designs.

A number of sites for improvement have been identified and are outlined within this strategy. In addition, Kent County Council (KCC) Highways and Transportation and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) will continue to ensure that cycle parking is included in all new developments.

Policy 3: Cycle parking will be provided in all developments (both new build and change of use) that result in the employment of people and secure cycle storage will be provided in all new residential developments in the borough.

Unless new and existing cycle facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard they will quickly fall into disrepair and will not be used.

Structural maintenance on a cycle track is generally not as demanding as for a carriageway but it requires more regular and frequent cleansing and cutting back of vegetation. This includes ensuring that roads frequented by cyclists are maintained, with whipping branches and vegetation kept cut back.

Policy 4: KCC will work with partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks within the borough.

6. Safer cycling

National Standard Cycle Training (Bikeability) is now provided across Kent by both KCC and via School Games Host Organisations.

Bikeability comprises three levels of competency-based cycle training. Level 1 is aimed at the basic bicycle control skills that are required to cycle safely in any environment and is delivered in an off-road environment such as a playground. Level 2 is delivered on quiet roads and teaches participants the skills necessary to take a basic on-road journey and includes a variety of junctions. Level 3 tackles busy traffic situations and complex junctions. Importantly, participants must demonstrate competence at each level before they progress to the next.

Policy 5:

- a) All year 6 children will have the opportunity to participate in Level 1 and 2 Bikeability Training.
- b) All children in years 7 to 9 will have access to Level 3 training.
- c) Adult cycle training will be available via work place travel planning initiatives.



7. Promoting cycling in Tonbridge and Malling

Without the promotion of cycling in Tonbridge and Malling the uptake of cycling and the use of cycle routes are unlikely to increase.

Therefore, to make this strategy successful, cycling must be promoted in a variety of ways to a range of different audiences. First and foremost, KCC and TMBC's websites need to be kept updated to enable local residents and visitors to access the latest information on cycle routes and facilities. All cycle routes should be fully signposted for the benefit of new cyclists and those who are unfamiliar with the area. Cycling should form a key component of School Travel Plans and local clubs and cycle shops could help to promote cycling within the borough through active promotion and use of the local network. KCC will continue to develop and maintain a range of publications that will cover both the local and county cycle network and successful recent initiatives, such as Sky Ride Local and TMBC's Bike Event during National Bike Week, will be repeated wherever possible.

Policy 6: Ensure cycle routes are fully advertised and signposted within the borough and that cycle maps are available for all routes.

8. Monitoring the cycling strategy

Monitoring should take several forms including continuous automatic counters on cycle tracks and detailed route user surveys.

This will enable a detailed database to be established which in turn can inform economic appraisals and health impact assessments in the borough.

Policy 7: Automatic counters will be installed throughout the cycle network to enable a detailed analysis of usage. Each new proposal will be assessed to see if an additional counter should be added to augment the data gathering process.

9. Proposed development of the cycle network:

If we are to achieve the aims set out in this strategy then the schemes chosen must create a network that appeals to both existing and potential cyclists.

Numerous consultations around the county have highlighted a number of key areas that have to be tackled to enable more people to cycle safely, more often. Therefore, in order to plan and prioritise the development of the cycle network in Tonbridge and Malling, the following criteria have been applied:

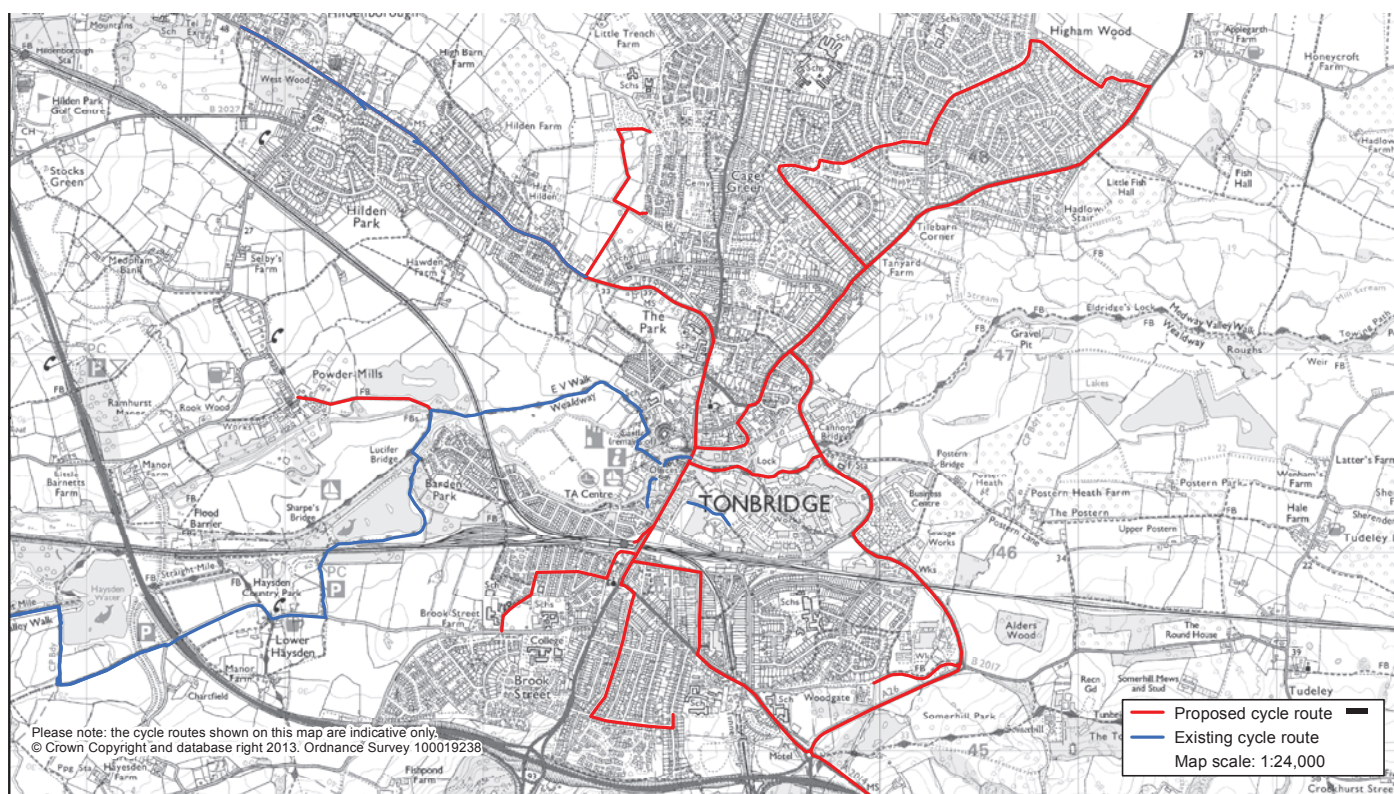
- a) Inexperienced cyclists prefer routes away from heavy traffic largely due to perceived and actual safety concerns related to cycling on busy and/or high speed roads.
- b) Separate, designated cycle lanes are preferred (whether on or off road), with inexperienced and infrequent cyclists preferring off-road routes.
- c) Existing routes need to join up and be continuous; therefore gaps in the network must be addressed.
- d) Barriers need to be addressed to improve cycle accessibility e.g. busy and/or high speed roads, rivers and railway lines as well as gates and railings.
- e) A high proportion of people cycle for leisure and this is a good way to enable people to be active, get fit and acquire cycling skills.
- f) Fear of crime needs to be addressed by increasing secure cycle parking provision at key locations.

In order to develop this strategy, Sustrans has undertaken an audit of the existing cycling facilities throughout the urban areas of Tonbridge, the Medway Gap, Snodland, Kings Hill, Borough Green and Wrotham and Medway Valley East. Some of the routes in Tonbridge and Malling are amongst the oldest dedicated facilities in Kent and were built to specifications that have long since been superseded.

Detailed recommendations for each area have been prepared and are outlined below. It should be noted, however, that the proposals are indicative only and that their implementation will be dependent upon securing the necessary funding and the completion of satisfactory detailed design and public consultation exercises at the appropriate stage.

A. Tonbridge area

The map below provides a representation of what the Tonbridge cycle network could look like with the recommended improvements in place. The map shows a continuous, linked network allowing cyclists to get to a variety of destinations within the area easily and safely. The map is followed by the detailed recommendations.



1. Create a link from the centre of Tonbridge and the railway station to the schools and colleges to the south. Two routes are proposed, the first via Waterloo Road, Douglas Road, Sussex Road and the Public Footpath skirting The Judd School to Brook Street. The second would connect to Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls via Quarry Hill Road, Pembury Road, St. Mary's Road and Baltic Road.

2. Provide a safe on-road route through Railway Approach and the High Street. Railway Approach links the south of Tonbridge and the railway station to the town centre and is a key gateway to the town for residents and visitors alike. However, much of the traffic travelling through Tonbridge is currently funnelled

across this bridge over the railway line and the volume and size of many vehicles is intimidating to all but the most experienced cyclist. It is therefore vital that improved facilities are provided for non-motorised users, which could be achieved by rearranging the highway space to provide a standard width foot/cycleway whilst maintaining sufficient lane-width for vehicles. Initial investigations suggest that there is adequate space between the bridge parapets to undertake this improvement.

KCC and TMBC are currently preparing a programme of public realm and traffic management improvements for the Lower High Street area following the cancellation of the London Road / Hadlow Road Link scheme. The proposed measures include:

- Footway widening, to provide a safer and more pleasant pedestrian environment, create spaces for street furniture, cycle parking and public art and opportunities for activities and events.
- The provision of appropriately located, part-time loading bays at footway level, to reduce disruption to through traffic without hindering pedestrian movement.
- The rationalisation of bus stops and controlled pedestrian crossing facilities, to smooth the flow of vehicular traffic in areas of poor air quality and better cater for pedestrian desire lines, with a view to the forthcoming redevelopment of the Botany area.
- The installation of footway surfacing across the side road bellmouth junctions, to further ease pedestrian movement on the High Street and raise driver awareness of their presence.

Collectively, these measures will create a more accessible and attractive urban environment, balancing the needs of all road users, which will act to encourage and facilitate walking and cycling.

3. Create a route from the centre of Tonbridge to the north east housing area. The provision of a route along Lyons Crescent, East Street and Hadlow Road is critical to linking the large residential area in the north east with the town centre and the station. This route would also provide an important link to schools in the area. A secondary route would continue along The Ridgeway, Royal West Kent Avenue, Salisbury Road, Romney Way, Higham Lane and Barchester Way.

4. Create a link from the B245 London Road to Welland Road and Darenth Avenue. This includes the continuation of the existing cycle route on London Road to link to the North West housing area. This largely traffic free route alongside Hilden Brook would provide an important connection between the town centre, the North West housing area and local sports facilities by bypassing Shipbourne Road, which is insufficiently wide to provide for safe cycling. It would

also provide useful links with the existing cycle network in Hildenborough.

5. Extend the facilities on London Road to Half Moon Lane in Hildenborough. This short missing link will complete the network in Hildenborough to permit good access for all residents to and from Tonbridge town centre.

6. Extend the existing facilities on the Medway Valley Walk to include cycling facilities and signage. A short section of this route, near Tonbridge Lock, has been built as part of the new development in the area and it is now accepted as a multi-user path (designated MU33). The rest of the path is also designated MU33, but is not of such high quality. If this path was widened and a few minor improvements were made to the surface of the route, it could become an important new cycling link between Cannon Lane and the High Street.

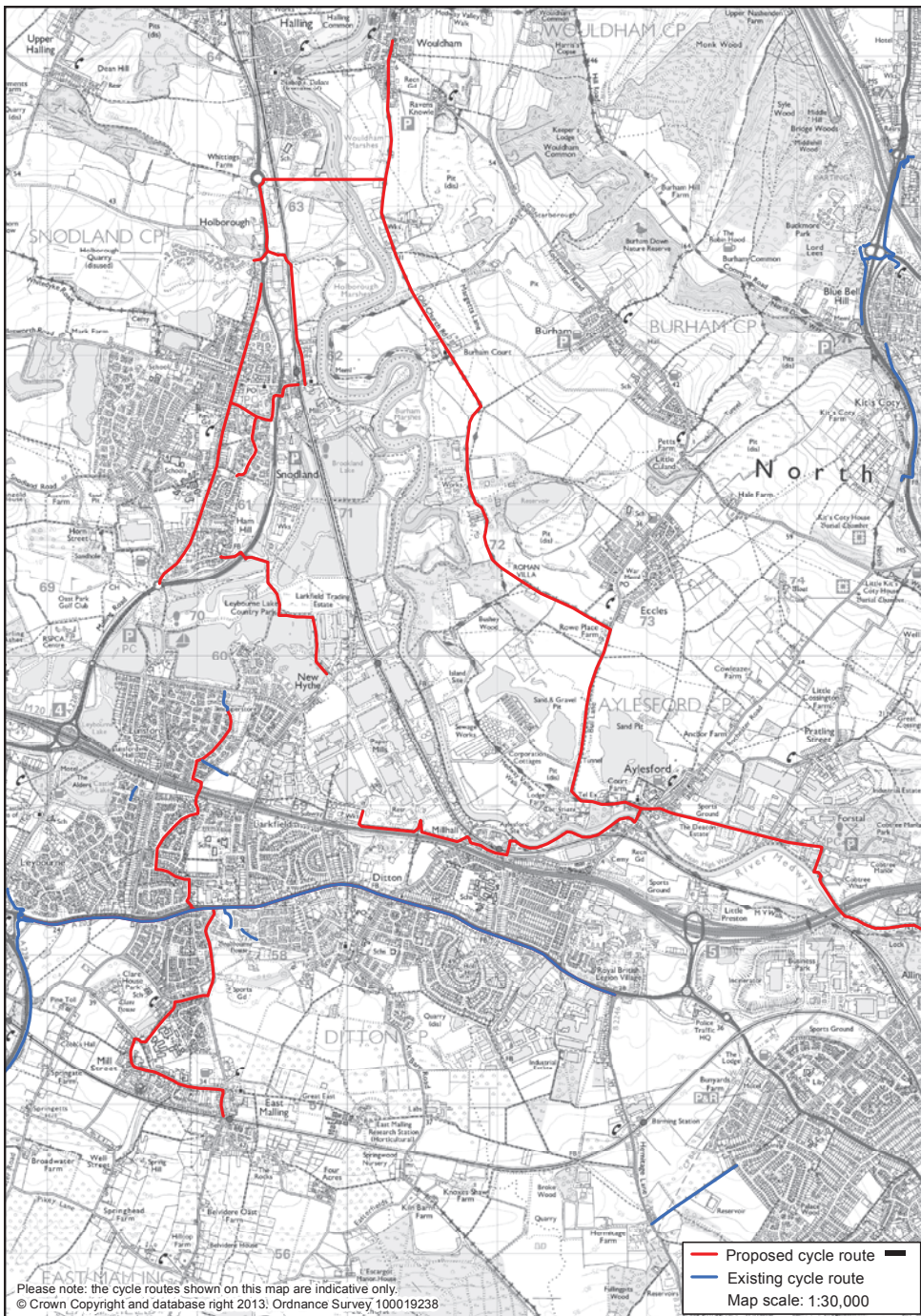
7. Create a link between the Tonbridge to Penshurst cycle route (Regional Route 12) and Powder Mills. This would provide a traffic-free route between a proposed residential development at Powder Mills and Tonbridge town centre and facilitate longer-distance cycle journeys into the Weald.

8. Create new routes between the A21, Tonbridge Station and Cannon Lane. The proposed A21 Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling scheme includes the provision of a non-motorised user route, which would run parallel to the new road. If this scheme is delivered, it is vital that onward cycle links are provided to key trip attractors within Tonbridge, including the railway station and the commercial and employment sites along Cannon Lane.



B. Medway Gap

The map below provides a representation of what the Medway Gap cycle network could look like with the recommended improvements in place. The map shows a continuous, linked network allowing cyclists to get to a variety of destinations within the area easily and safely. The map is followed by the detailed recommendations.



9. Create a link between Aylesford station and Aylesford village. The Medway Valley Walk provides the most direct link between the station and the village and, if improved, would encourage commuters to cycle to and from Aylesford station. This would also require adequate secure cycle storage at Aylesford station.

10. Create a link between Aylesford village and Maidstone. This route would provide a continuation of Route 9 (above), following the High Street and Forstal Road before re-joining the Medway Valley Walk and continuing to Allington Lock and onwards towards Maidstone town centre.

11. Create a link between Station Road and Bellingham Way. By upgrading the existing public footpath alongside the M20 into a multi-user path, a valuable cycle route could be provided between Aylesford, Leybourne Park, Leybourne Lakes and the New Hythe industrial area.

12. Link existing fragmented cycle facilities on the A20 London Road. There are several missing links in the A20 cycle route between Leybourne and Allington. These include the stretches between Hermitage Lane and Mills Road and between Ditton Place and Bradbourne Lane. The provision of these links would complete a safe and continuous cycle route between Maidstone and West Malling, thereby encouraging students and commuters to cycle to schools and workplaces in the area.

13. Create a link between the A20 London Road and Thackeray Road. This proposal would provide a much-needed, lightly-trafficked link from London Road to the residential areas to the north of the A20/M20 corridor. This could be achieved by upgrading the footbridge over the M20, increasing railing height and widening the footpath. This route would greatly improve cycle access to local schools, shops and Larkfield Leisure Centre.

14. Create a link from the A20 London Road / New Road Junction into the Larkspur Road housing area. This is another important link from the A20 to a residential area – in this case the Larkspur Road area of East Malling. Widening the existing footway on New Road could provide sufficient shared use facilities. The route would then continue along Chapman Way, Blacklands, Mill Street and High Street to East Malling Station. Blacklands may need to be upgraded to a bridleway to allow safe formal access for cyclists and would provide a safe link between the housing area to the north and the schools and railway station in East Malling village.

15. Create a north-south spine route through Snodland. There are already good cycle links through Leybourne Lakes Country Park between Lunsford and Snodland and a toucan crossing on the A228. The north-south spine route would provide an onward connection to the centre of Snodland via Malling Road.

16. Create a two way link between Malling Road and Snodland Station. This should incorporate a traffic-free link around the corner on Rocfort Road,

which is a busy junction with many HGVs to negotiate. This would provide a much safer route to the station for cyclists.

17. Sign the northern section of Saltings Road as an on-carriageway link. This is a simple scheme to alert drivers to the presence of cyclists and would provide an alternative to the narrower section of Malling Road, where on-street parking can present a hazard.

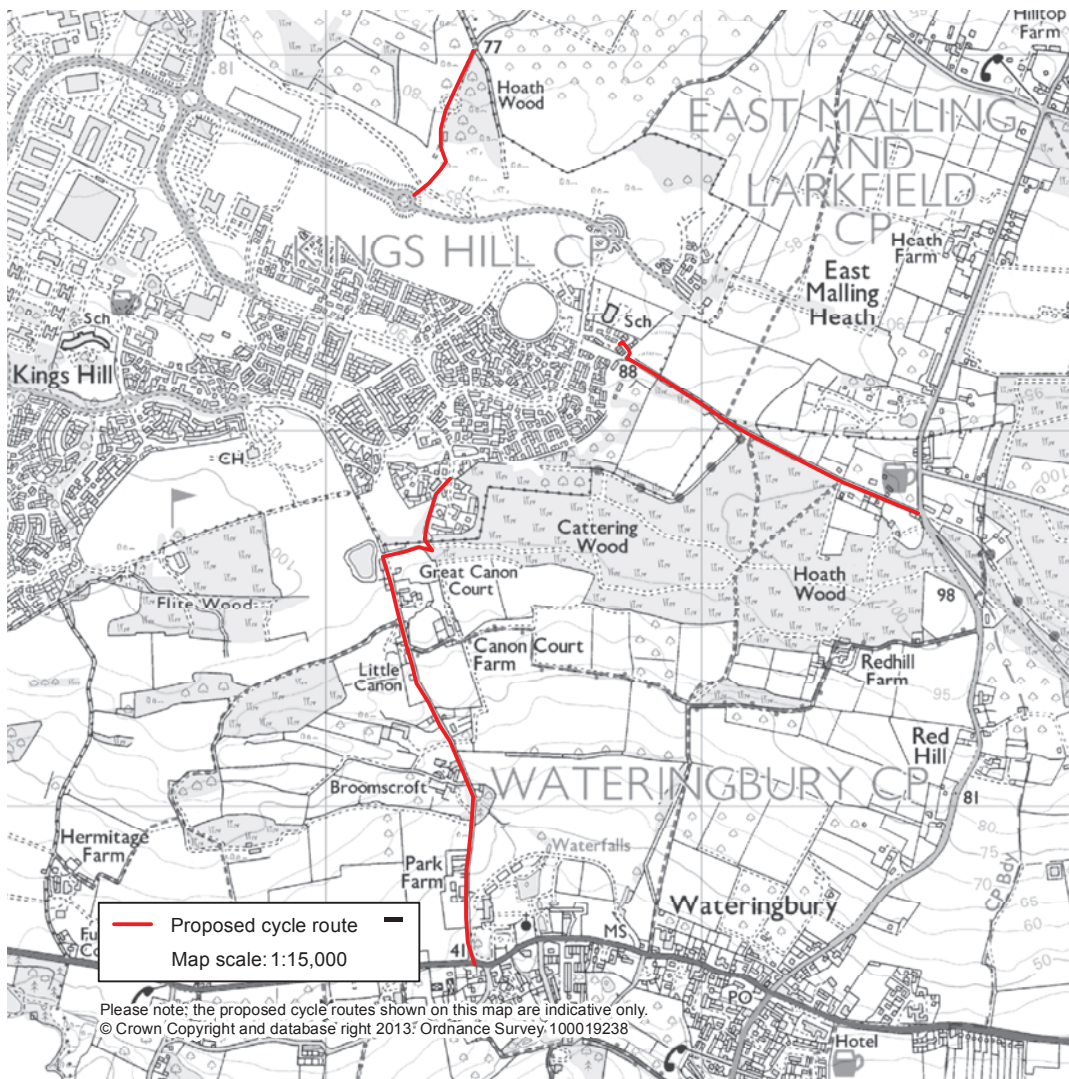
18. Create a link between the Holborough Lakes development and Snodland Station. A multi-agency project to deliver a shared use route between Holborough Marshes and Snodland Station is currently underway. The project is funded by developer contributions and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. It is being delivered in 3 phases:-

- Surface improvements to the existing public footpath across Holborough Marshes and the re-siting of fencing to provide greater width at pinch points.
- A toucan Crossing on the A228 to the north of the Holborough Services Roundabout.
- An on-carriageway link from the new toucan crossing to the shared use route across the marshes.

19. Create a link between the Peter's Pit development, Snodland and Aylesford. A major new residential development is planned for the disused quarry at Peter's Village near Wouldham, which would be connected to the A228 at Holborough by a new bridge over the River Medway. The bridge represents a significant infrastructure enhancement and will open up walking and cycling routes on both sides of the river. The most important strategic opportunity is an improved route on the east bank linking Maidstone and the Medway Towns via Aylesford and Wouldham; a new alignment of National Route 17 between Rochester and Maidstone. This route would serve the villages of Wouldham, Eccles, and Aylesford and would be attractive for both commuting and leisure purposes.

C. Kings Hill

Cycle provision within Kings Hill is generally good and will improve further as the development progresses. Many of the footpaths within the residential areas are shared use and the access roads all have dedicated cycle lanes. The recently constructed link to West Malling Station along the A228 Ashton Way is well used and makes cycle access to and from the station attractive, safe and convenient for many commuters. This link will shortly be complemented by the delivery of the West Malling Station Forecourt Improvement Scheme, which includes the provision of additional secure cycle storage. The map below provides a representation of what the Kings Hill cycle network could look like with the recommended improvements in place. The map is followed by the detailed recommendations.



20. Create links between Kings Hill and the quiet lanes surrounding the development. The provision of lightly trafficked links between Kings Hill, Wateringbury and onwards towards Maidstone via Canon Lane/Teston Road and North Pole Road would provide a pleasant short cut to Maidstone Hospital and other workplaces in the town.

D. Borough Green and Wrotham



21. Create a link between Borough Green and Wrotham Station and Wrotham village. There are currently no dedicated cycle facilities in the Borough Green and Wrotham area and the provision of an on-road link between Wrotham village and the railway station is considered to represent a valuable first step in the development of a more comprehensive local network.

Appendices

1. References

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2. Local Road Safety Statistics

In 2012, the number of cyclists killed on roads in Kent increased from the 2011 figure of 1 to 4. The number of crashes resulting in killed or seriously injured casualties also rose from 52 to 60. The number of slight crashes decreased however, from 313 to 267.

It is important to note that these statistics do not take into account the number of cyclists using Kent's roads. Nevertheless, the figures in each category clearly need to be reduced if people are to feel safe when cycling and others are to be encouraged to cycle.

Some 83% of cycle casualties were male and 16 year olds were the most vulnerable age group, followed by 13, 14 and 22 year olds.

Within Tonbridge and Malling, there were 143 crashes involving cyclists over the period 2008 to 2012. The Times Cycle Safety Campaign highlighted a number of locations in Kent that KCC is investigating further, including the following sites in Tonbridge and Malling:

- A228/M20 Junction 4 to Ham Hill, Snodland
- A228 / Tower View junction, Kings Hill
- Lucks Hill / Winterfield Lane junction, East Malling
- New Hythe Lane, Larkfield
- Teapot Lane / Millhall junction, Aylesford
- Hall Road / Station Road junction, Aylesford

Tonbridge & Malling
cycling strategy
2014 -2019

A report prepared by Kent County
Council with support from Sustrans and
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 TRANSPORT ISSUES AND PROJECTS

Summary

This report provides an update on a range of current transportation issues affecting the Borough.

1.1 A21 Public Inquiry

1.1.1 We are still waiting to hear the outcome of the Public Inquiry which closed on the 9 July 2013.

1.2 Rail Issues

1.2.1 **West Malling** - the £800,000 re-modelling project to improve the station frontage at West Malling railway station has now commenced.

1.2.2 The work includes a re-design and landscaping the station forecourt, improving passenger access and transport connections into West Malling. Additional cycle parking, improved lighting, better CCTV coverage, and more signage are all part of the programme of work for the project as shown in **[Annex 1]**.

1.2.3 A significant funding source for the forecourt remodelling scheme is the agreed Section 106 contribution of £387,000 (following indexation) from the Leybourne Chase development. Other funding streams include the County Council and the Department for Transport.

1.2.4 Access to the station entrance and car parks will be restricted while the improvements take place and passengers can information about this in the station booking hall. However the station car park will remain available for the duration of the project, which is due to complete in the summer.

1.2.5 **Snodland** – Southeastern anticipate that passenger demand for their services at Snodland will grow significantly due to housing developments in the area. To meet this growth they are a proposing to stop high speed services at Snodland in the peak which would create a journey time improvement of two to three minutes on

the Maidstone West services. However this is subject to the delivery of a scheme to enhance the station facilities and provide car parking and bus interchange. We will work with KCC, Network Rail and the Rail Operator to examine how these improved facilities might be provided.

1.3 Lower Thames Crossing

1.3.1 In December the Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin announced that the government will drop one of the options for a new Lower Thames crossing and will carry out further work on the remaining two options.

1.3.2 The original proposals for a new crossing in the Lower Thames included:

- Option A at the site of the existing A282 Dartford-Thurrock crossing;
- Option B which would connect the A2 Swanscombe peninsula with the A1089;
- Option C connecting the M2 with the A13 and the M25 between junctions 29 and 30; and a variant to Option C that would additionally widen the A229 between the M2 and M20.

1.3.3 Feedback on the consultation showed that Option B received limited support and would frustrate plans for development in the area.

1.3.4 As a result it has been decided that 'Option B', connecting the A2 Swanscombe Peninsula with the A1089, will be discarded and that further work will be done to choose between options A and C.

1.3.5 In the meantime, I understand that the government remains committed to introducing 'free flow' charging at the Dartford-Thurrock crossing from October 2014 to alleviate congestion in the short term. The system will remove the existing toll booths and allow users to pay remotely, similar to the London congestion charge.

1.4 Transport Funding Bids

1.4.1 Members will recall from earlier reports to this Board that the County Council's initial bid to the DfT's Pinch Point Fund for widening the eastern overbridge at Junction 4 of the M20 was not successful.

1.4.2 KCC still considered that this scheme fitted the criteria and resubmitted the scheme to a further tranche of funding.

1.4.3 Unfortunately this has also been unsuccessful despite the fact that similar schemes in other parts of the country were funded.

1.4.4 Nevertheless KCC are submitting the scheme to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for Local Growth Funding and given its strong business case, are hoping

that this will secure the necessary contribution. We will find out either way this summer and understand that construction could then take place during 2015/16 if successful.

- 1.4.5 More generally, Members may be aware from the report to the recent Economic Regeneration Advisory Board, that work is underway to prepare a “Community Plan” to set out detail on specific infrastructure projects across Kent and Medway that will require further funding. This is in the context of a Growth Plan for Kent and Medway. Further work will be needed to prioritise west Kent’s transport priorities in liaison with other authorities and partners. This will feature in the future work of this Board.

1.5 Airport Capacity

- 1.5.1 The interim report of the Davis Commission’s consideration of runway capacity in the south east was published on 17 December 2013. This included a short-list of three plausible options for increasing long term capacity, two options at Heathrow and one at Gatwick, which will now be the subject of further analysis and assessment.
- 1.5.2 At Gatwick, the Commission’s further work will be based on a potential new runway sufficiently to the south of the existing runway to enable independent operation. At Heathrow, the first option is for a new runway to the north west of the airport at a distance to enable independent operation. The second option at Heathrow is an extension of the existing northern runway to the west to enable it to accommodate two runways; one for departures and one for arrivals.
- 1.5.3 The Thames Estuary options were not short-listed at this stage. Although seen as offering potential advantage in noise impact, they also provided the Commission with many challenges and uncertainties, particularly on financing and environmental impact. However, the Commission intends to carry out additional analysis on the Isle of Grain option in the first half of 2014.
- 1.5.4 The Commission’s final report is to be no later than summer 2015 and will need to examine the detailed business case and environmental assessment for each option as well as their operational, commercial and technical viability. The results of this analysis are to be put to national consultation in the autumn of this year and will be published alongside the Commission’s recommendation to Government.
- 1.5.5 The Commission has now published an Appraisal Framework which sets out in detail how it expects scheme designs to be developed and how they will be appraised. The Appraisal Framework includes the Commission’s original objectives against which options will be assessed; updated scheme designs for each short-listed option to be used as the appraisal starting points; business case and sustainability information; and a set of appraisal modules explaining the methodology to be used by the Commission in assessing the options.

1.5.6 Clearly the Commission's work is now entering an interesting and critical stage. The Appraisal Framework will enable a consistent and detailed analysis of the short-listed options to be presented. This will enable the Borough Council and others to form a clearer and well informed view of the balance to be made on environmental impact and the economic case for expansion. For Tonbridge and Malling, the way these factors are balanced in respect of Gatwick will be particularly crucial, but comparison with the Heathrow option will also be important. Officers will keep a close watch on the work that will now emerge from the Commission and report back to the Board to formulate the Council's views at the consultation stage.

1.6 Legal Implications

1.6.1 None

1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.7.1 None directly for the Borough Council

1.8 Risk Assessment

1.8.1 Not required.

Background papers:

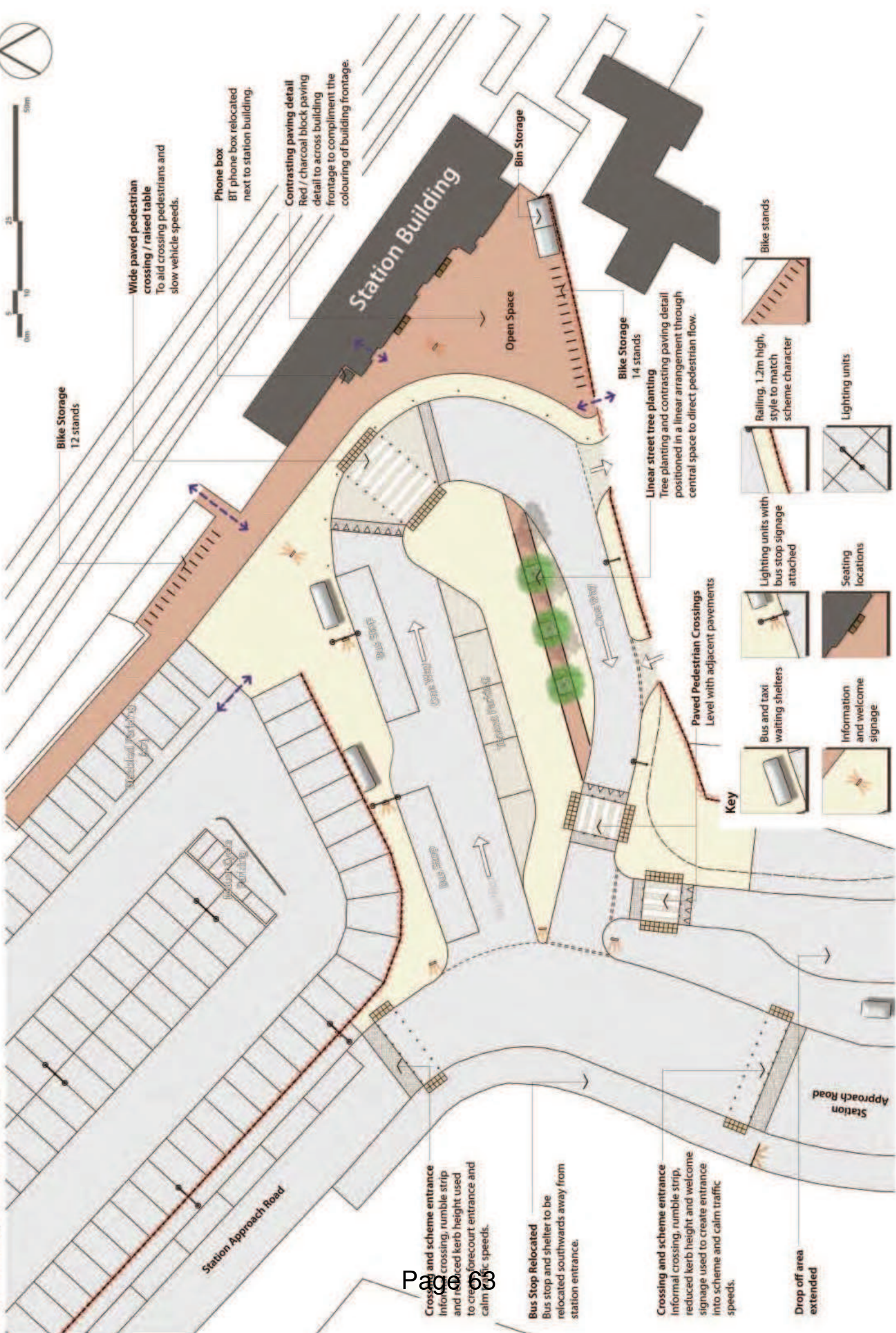
contact: Mike O'Brien

Nil

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health



West Malling Station Frontage



Wide paved pedestrian crossing / raised table
To aid crossing pedestrians and slow vehicle speeds.

Phone box
BT phone box relocated next to station building.

Contrasting paving detail
Red / charcoal block paving detail to across building frontage to compliment the colouring of building frontage.

Bike Storage
12 stands

Open Space

Bike Storage
14 stands

Linear street tree planting
Tree planting and contrasting paving detail positioned in a linear arrangement through central space to direct pedestrian flow.

Bike stands

Railing, 1.2m high, style to match scheme character

Lighting units

Lighting units with bus stop signage attached

Seating locations

Bus and taxi waiting shelters

Information and welcome signage

Paved Pedestrian Crossings
Level with adjacent pavements

Key

Crossing and scheme entrance
Informal crossing, rumble strip and reduced kerb height used to create forecourt entrance and calm traffic speeds.

Bus Stop Relocated
Bus stop and shelter to be relocated southwards away from station entrance.

Crossing and scheme entrance
Informal crossing, rumble strip, reduced kerb height and welcome signage used to create entrance into scheme and calm traffic speeds.

Drop off area extended

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 LETTER TO PLANNING MINISTER NICK BOLES

This report informs Members of a letter prepared by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation to the Planning Minister Nick Boles MP on 28 January 2014 raising a number of issues relating to the Government's ongoing Planning Reforms.

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Councillor Sue Murray, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, attended a Planning Policy Seminar on 15 January 2014 and later wrote to the Planning Minister to draw attention to some of the new requirements on Local Planning Authorities and the challenges they present when preparing Local Plans. A copy of the letter is at **[Annex 1]** to this report and a recent response from the Planning Minister is at **[Annex 2]**.
- 1.1.2 The particular challenge of meeting the Duty to Cooperate, introduced by the Localism Act and now a test for Local Planning Authorities to pass when submitting plans for examination, could be assisted by more thorough guidance than is currently available in the form of the draft National Planning Policy Guidance. Practical problems, such as Local Planning Authorities being at different stages of plan-making and how to satisfactorily address cooperating with Local Enterprise Partnerships and the Greater London Authority, also remain.
- 1.1.3 Neighbourhood Plans can present difficulties for Local Planning Authority Policy Teams from a resource point of view and also in how best to incorporate these into the Local Plan.
- 1.1.4 The ongoing planning reforms and the prospect of frequent National Planning Policy Guidance updates lead to further delays in finalising Local Plans and this appears to be continuing unabated as illustrated by the recent announcement that the National Planning Policy Framework may now also be about to be reviewed.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this informative report.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this informative report.

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 There are risks associated with delaying the Local Plan preparation. The appended letter highlights these to the Planning Minister.

Background papers:

contact: Ian Bailey

Nil

Steve Humphrey

Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health Services

Mr Nick Boles MP
House of Commons
LONDON SW1A 0AA

28 January 2014

Dear Mr Boles

Re: Planning Policy Seminar 15 January 2014

I was pleased to be able to attend the above and would agree with many of the comments made by those who spoke. I would, however, like to bring to your attention the following concerns my Authority has on the Duty to Cooperate and the NPPF in general.

The new requirement of meeting the Duty to Cooperate is in its infancy and the draft guidance has not answered all of the questions that have arisen for plan making authorities. From a practical point of view, being at different plan making stages is a major hurdle for neighbouring LPAs. Even when evidence has taken strategic matters into account, it is not always practical for positive collaboration in the form of joint policies or planning statements to be put in place.

There is also the question of how best to cooperate with the likes of the LEP, the Mayor and GLA (ie not covered by the Duty, although the Greater London Act includes a 'Duty to Inform'), which have a potentially major influence on housing provision and journey to work patterns. Early indications are that the housing need of Greater London will not be accommodated within the 32 London Boroughs and the City Corporation, therefore, when the London Plan is revised in 2016 the GLA will inevitably look beyond London for a solution to meeting this need.

The prospect of Neighbourhood Plans presents another challenge for Local Plan preparation. Notwithstanding the resource implications on policy teams of assisting multiple Neighbourhood Forums from preparing plans simultaneously, incorporating these plans when adopted into Local Plans may also slow down the Local Plan process.

A challenge for all Local Authorities in preparing a new Local Plan is that the process has been constantly changing making it very difficult to submit a Plan that accords with the appropriate guidance at the time. The draft Planning Guidance launched in beta mode last summer in response to the Taylor Review is an innovative way of ensuring that guidance is kept up-to-date and relevant in the future. However, it may exacerbate the problems being faced by LPAs trying to submit a sound Plan if a key piece of guidance is amended around the time of submission. We have responded by suggesting updates are properly registered and referenced (preferably tracked) and that archived guidance can be readily

traced and 'carbon dated' so that at Examination, officers and Inspectors can refer to the relevant guidance upon which Plans were based at the time.

In terms of Local Plan content, an obsession has developed in respect of the prescribed methodology in defining Objectively Assessed Needs (OAN) and the requirement of the NPPF to meet these needs in full. Many authorities have taken on the challenge but not achieved this because it is unpalatable locally. Very few have been successful at advancing reasons why their OAN cannot be accommodated but most have failed at public examination.

A review of the NPPF and of the Local Plans system has now been instigated. This is relatively soon after both have been established. There is a view emerging that this will lead to a different interpretation given to meeting OAN in full, with local authorities given more flexibility in how they address it. Unless this is clarified very soon the current tranche of local plans under preparation will be forced into very challenging decisions about land allocation that might subsequently prove to have been unnecessary were there to be a policy shift. If local authorities sense this there is bound to be a major slowing down of progress in the next year or so.

The foregoing reflects some concerns we currently have on NPPF, which I hope will enable you in turn to understand them also.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Sue Murray
Cabinet Member for Planning & Transportation

Cc Cllr Nicolas Heslop, Leader Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Mr Steve Humphrey, Director of Planning, Housing & Environmental Health



Department for
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20 FEB 2014

Sue Murray

Thank you for your letter of 28 January regarding the Duty to Cooperate, Local Plans and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Government is clear that this country has a serious housing need and local authorities have a common responsibility to meet it. We introduced the Duty to Cooperate to require authorities to work together effectively on strategic planning matters that cross their administrative boundaries, including housing. We expect authorities to explore all possible avenues to deliver their own housing needs and to accommodate the needs of neighbouring authorities in the same housing market area where it is reasonable to do so. Local planning authorities are not obliged to accept the unmet needs of other planning authorities if they have robust evidence that this would be inconsistent with the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, for example policies on Green Belt or other environmental constraints.

We are currently finalising the draft National Planning Guidance following feedback and public comment from local planning authorities, including Tonbridge and Malling. The guidance on the Duty to Cooperate has been strengthened to emphasise the importance of effective cooperation between London boroughs, the Mayor of London and councils outside London. The guidance also emphasises the importance of effective collaboration between local planning authorities and LEPs. This message was also made strongly in guidance to LEPs, published in July 2013, on the preparation of Strategic Economic Plans, which will form the basis of the forthcoming Growth Deal negotiations.

I am keen to offer as much support as possible to local planning authorities to ensure that they are planning effectively for strategic matters in their local plans. We are doing this through the Planning Advisory Service and Planning Inspectorate. If your authority would like to access this support please let me know.

In regards to your concerns about neighbourhood plans, local planning authorities have a duty to advise or assist parish and town councils and designated neighbourhood forums that are producing a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order. It will be for the local authority to decide how best it meets its 'duty to support' requirement taking account of

local circumstances, the complexity of the Neighbourhood Plan or Order being prepared and the skills and resources of the local authority and the local groups. The Government provides funding to local authorities to enable them to fulfil their new responsibilities, including advice (up to £30,000 in the case of a neighbourhood plan or order led by a parish council).

On your concerns that the Local Plan requirements are continually changing, we have streamlined procedures through the Localism Act and introduced new regulations, policy and guidance to make planning easier to understand and to do – both for practitioners and local people. Councils have been given the flexibility to decide how best they would provide local plans for their area with the emphasis on ensuring that these plans are kept up to date and are a true reflection of the views of local people.

You also raised concerns that the guidance review being published at a sensitive local plan stage may exacerbate uncertainty and stall plan production, the guidance needs to be up-to-date, relevant and accessible; existing guidance had become bloated and outdated. There is a fine balance between ensuring guidance is fit for purpose and minimising disruption to plan-making and decision-taking underway. In many cases the guidance simplifies and clarifies existing guidance rather than substantively changes the content. I would openly encourage Tonbridge and Malling to work quickly and proportionately in taking account of the new guidance in reviewing their existing Local Plan.

In regards to reviewing the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plans, although we are currently keeping a careful eye on how the Framework is playing out in practice, and intend to review it formally in due course, there are no immediate plans to undertake a wholesale review of policy or the process for preparing Local Plans.

W. Kent

Nick Boles

NICK BOLES MP