

LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18 (STAGE 2) CONSULTATION - UPDATE

Item HP 26/10 referred from Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee of 17 March 2026

Members were provided with an update on the Local Plan Regulation 18 (stage 2) Consultation that took place between 10 November 2025 and 2 January 2026. An update on Local Plan transport work and the associated financial implications was also provided.

Summaries of the feedback received, individual question responses and analysis and supporting information was available on www.tmbc.gov.uk/local-plan-responses

General key themes from those responding to the consultation had expressed views in respect of overall housing numbers, scale / location of proposed site allocations, infrastructure capacity especially highways, water, healthcare and schools, greenbelt protection and the adequacy of supporting evidence. Concerns about the impact of development on local character, heritage and the environment were also raised.

With regard to the emerging risk from South East Waters response to the Local Plan consultation and concerns around their capacity to provide sufficient water supply to new development, it was confirmed that discussions with Government, South East Water and neighbouring authorities were ongoing. Further guidance was awaited and Members would be updated as soon as possible.

Particular reference was made to the further transport related work required to inform and support the next stage in plan-making for the Regulation 19 Local Plan, as detailed in 12.3 to 12.7 of the report. In summary this included further testing for a preferred growth scenario for Regulation 19, more detailed junction design and mitigation testing and integrating the findings into the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Microsimulation modelling was currently being investigated for Tonbridge and M20 Junction 6. This could be in the region of £45,000 up to £80,000 respectively, dependent on whether an existing model could be updated and built upon.

There was detailed and robust discussion in relation to the perceived adequacy of junction analysis and the realism of modal shift assumptions, the risks associated with missing the statutory deadline for plan submission, including potential Government intervention, speculative development and uncertainty due to local government reorganisation. The importance of maintaining progress and meeting the December 2026 deadline for submission of a Local Plan was recognised. Members would receive regular updates via the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee and wider engagement sessions.

In recognition that the Local Plan, once adopted, would be the key planning document for Tonbridge and Malling, Cllr King proposed, Cllr Thornewell seconded and it was

***RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the responses received to the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation and their publication on the Borough Council's website be noted and endorsed;
- (2) the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation question response summaries and associated officer comments, as published on the Borough Council's website be endorsed;
- (3) the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation responses be fully considered in the preparation of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Regulation 19 Local Plan; and
- (4) the update provided in relation to progress on transport evidence for the Local Plan and the potential cost implications of the work proposed be noted.

***Recommended to Cabinet**