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### Request for Potential Strategic Employment and Retail Sites

The Council would like your help in providing information on sites in Maidstone Borough which you believe may be suitable for strategic employment and retail development in the period up to 2026, which is the period to be covered by the Council's Core Strategy. The information will supplement the Council's evidence base for the Core Strategy and subsequent land allocation documents.

The assessment of sites is expected to complement the Local Development Framework technical documents and strategies, including the Maidstone Employment Land Study (July 2008), the Maidstone Economic Development Strategy (November 2008), and the Retail Need Assessment Study (April 2008).

It will also enable the Council to have a better understanding of its potential economic development land supply, particularly in relation to the Maidstone Hub policy contained in the emerging South East Plan. The Hub policy focuses on high quality jobs and gives priority to completion of the major employment sites in the town, as well as strengthening Maidstone's role as the County Town. The South East Plan policy further supports high quality proposals for intensifying or expanding the technology and knowledge sectors at established and suitable new locations.

Full details can be found on the Maidstone Borough Council website <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk> - look under Local Development Framework.

Completed pro-formas, preferably by email, will need to reach the Council by 5pm on Friday the 29th of May 2009.

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## **Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, on the 13 March 2009, endorsed the First Review of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan as Supplementary Guidance to the Local Development Framework. The document was produced by the Kent Downs AONB Partnership, and has been prepared by means of detailed engagement, consultation, assessment and appraisal processes in line with best practice guidance. Maidstone Borough Council has been involved throughout the review process.

The policies in the plan are not, and are not intended to be, land use planning policies. Rather they are for the overall management of the land within the AONB. The Management Plan recognises that it is for the local planning authority to balance the impact of any development proposal on the AONB against all other material planning considerations. The ultimate goal of the Management Plan is to ensure that the natural beauty, special character of the landscape and vitality of the communities within the Kent Downs AONB are recognised, maintained and strengthened well into the future. As part of the review, the plan content has been updated to be consistent with LDFs and policies in the emerging South East Plan.

The Management Plan is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, and the document will be available on the LDF webpage shortly.

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## **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)**

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is expected to be published on the LDF webpage by the end of the month. The Assessment forms part of the Council's evidence base for the Core Strategy and subsequent Local Development Documents.

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## Kent Design Guide 2005/06 (KDG)

The Kent Design Guide was endorsed as Supplementary Guidance to the Local Development Framework by Cabinet Member for Regeneration on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009 (although the Guide is subject to call-in procedures until 11<sup>th</sup> May).

The KDG was published by Kent County Council on behalf of the Kent Design Initiative. The Guide was produced to "ensure that all new development results in vibrant, safe, attractive, liveable places where people want to be". The KDG provides the criteria necessary for assessing planning applications. The document has been in wide circulation across Kent and implemented by Maidstone Borough Council for development control purposes since its publication. The Guide has helped to ensure that all those involved in development within Maidstone achieve high standards of design and construction. Endorsement as Supplementary Guidance maintains the standing of the KDG as a material consideration when considering planning applications.

There are additional specialist appendices to the KDG, which relate to a number of topics. However, there is less clarity surrounding the rigour of the processes which these documents have been through in their compliance with requirements for supporting consultation and sustainability appraisal. Consequently, the Council does not intend to endorse the supplementary appendices although, as particular elements of the guide undergo review, compliance with procedural requirements will ensure that Local Authorities should be in a position to endorse other appendices of the Guide in due course.

The Kent Design Guide is available to view and download from Kent County Council's website at

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/council-and-democracy/kent-design-guide.htm> and will be available on Maidstone Borough Council's LDF webpage shortly.

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## South East Plan (SEP)

At the time of publication of Planning Viewpoint, the South East Plan is expected to be adopted and published in spring 2009. Further information is available at <http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/seplan.html>

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## Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Adopted

Following useful early discussion at a number of stakeholder meetings, a formal draft consultation document, the Residential Extensions SPD was published for six weeks public consultation between 7<sup>th</sup> November and 19<sup>th</sup> December 2008 in accordance with the Local Development Framework plan making regulations.

A total of 84 duly made representations were received during the consultation period from 24 contributing consultees. The 84 representations comprised 13 objections, 34 observations and 37 supports, which can be viewed on the Council's online consultation page. The feedback from public consultation and the stakeholder group meetings has informed amendments to the draft SPD.

Subsequently, the Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document was adopted as part of Maidstone's Local Development Framework by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009 (although the SPD is subject to call-in procedures until 11<sup>th</sup> May).

As part of Maidstone's LDF, the adopted SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Residential Extensions SPD will be available on the LDF webpage shortly.

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## Conservation Area Appraisals (CAA)

Maidstone Centre, Boughton Monchelsea Cock Street, Boughton Monchelsea Quarries and Otham Conservation Area Appraisals were formally approved on 27th February 2009 and are available to view and download from the Landscape and Conservation webpage at

[http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/planning\\_building\\_control/landscape\\_conservation.aspx](http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/planning_building_control/landscape_conservation.aspx)

Printed versions of the documents are also available for viewing at Maidstone Gateway, King Street; Maidstone Reference Library, St Faith's Street; County Central Library, Springfield; and Coxheath Library, Heath Road.

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## Gypsies and Travellers

### Gypsy and Traveller Sites Development Plan Document

A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment undertaken in 2005/6 identified a need for some 32 additional pitches in the borough for the period 2006 to 2011. The Partial Review of the South East Plan (see below) will confirm how many pitches the Council must identify in the borough for the 10 year period 2006 to 2016. The Council is now appointing consultants to help it prepare a Development Plan Document (DPD) with the specific purpose of finding the additional necessary sites for Gypsies and Travellers.

The appointed consultants will assist the Council in identifying and assessing potential sites in consultation with interested parties. There will be public consultation on a 'long list' of these potential sites, after which a shortlist of sites will be agreed by the Council early next year to take forward into the DPD. The draft DPD will be subject to formal public consultation before being Examined by an independent Planning Inspector. The Inspector's recommendations will be binding on the Council.

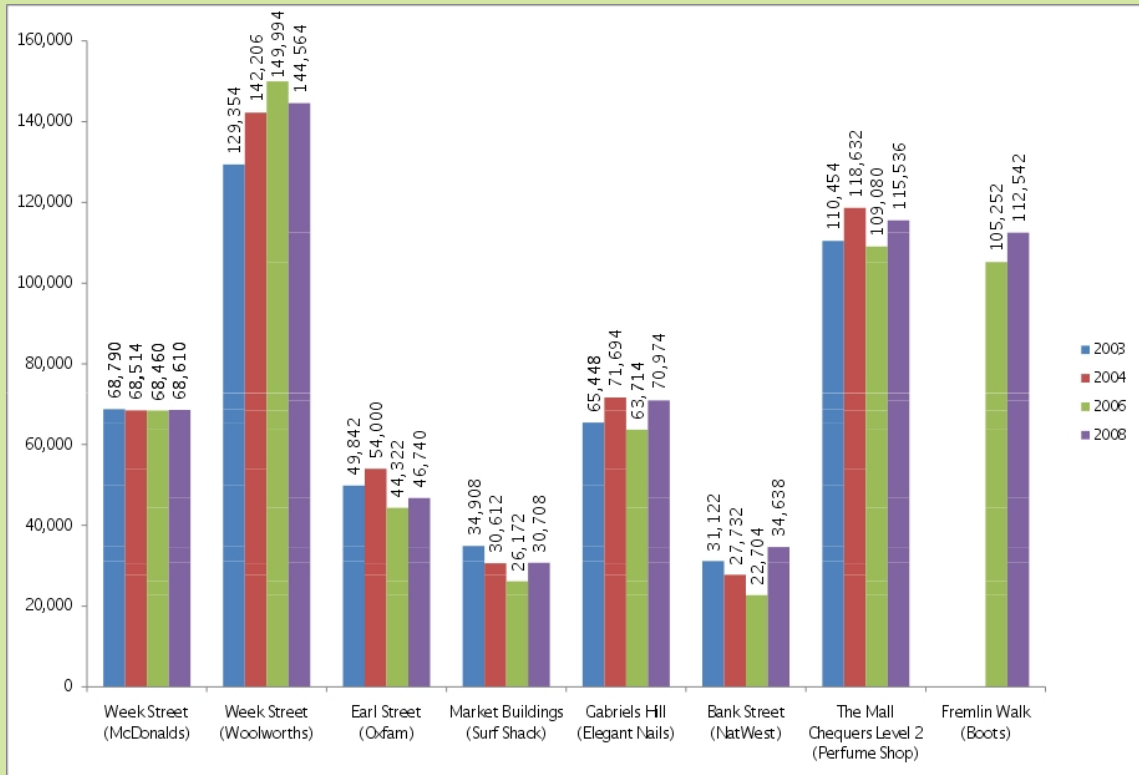
### South East Plan Partial Review: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation

This Partial Review was commenced by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) before its demise and will be taken forward by the new South East England Partnership Board (SEEPB). SEERA assessed 4 options for how pitch requirements could be distributed across the region earlier this year and agreed its 'preferred option' in March. This option would give Maidstone Borough Council a requirement to provide for 35 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and for 3 travelling showpeople pitches (2006 to 2016). SEEPB will submit its Preferred Option to the Government Office for the South East and there will be a period of public consultation between Monday 8 June to Friday 28 August. The Examination in Public is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010. The Examination panel will publish a report of its recommendations which will then be considered by the Secretary of State before the final policy is confirmed.

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**Annual Monitoring Report Erratum**

Page 48 - Delete figure 4.3 and replace with the amended figure 4.3 below:



Amended figure 4.3 - Results of the 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2008 Footfall Survey at 7 points in the Town Centre

Page 50 - The 1st sentence of the 2nd paragraph:

“Jacobs concluded that overall there was a ~~31%~~ **5.6%** increase in the estimated daily pedestrian flows between 2006 and 2008 showing vitality of the town centre.”

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## Local Development Framework consultation database

This newsletter is circulated by post and email to people and organisations who wish to be informed of Maidstone Borough Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) and planning policy. Those on the database also receive notification of important stages in document production, such as when public consultation for development plan documents or supplementary planning documents will take place and details of how to participate.

The Maidstone Planning Viewpoint newsletter is also available online at <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk>

Look under 'Local Development Framework' and 'Latest LDF Newsletter.'

### Adding/removing your details from the database

If you received this newsletter by post or email your details are already held on the Council's LDF database.

Please contact us if you would like your details to be amended or removed from the Database.

**A black and white, printer friendly version of this newsletter is available to download from <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk> under the Local Development Framework webpage.**

**Please call 01622 602234 or email [ldf@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@maidstone.gov.uk)**

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