

Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee

18 April 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (April 2016)

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| Final Decision-Maker | Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee |
| Lead Head of Service | Rob Jarman: Head of Planning and Development |
| Lead Officer and Report Author | Andrew Thompson: Principal Planning Officer |
| Classification | Public |
| Wards affected | All |

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

That Committee:

1. Approve the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as supporting evidence to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan;
2. Give delegated authority to the Head of Planning to update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan prior to submission, recognising that it is a “living document”.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all and Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

- Securing provision of and improvements to infrastructure in our Borough

Timetable

| Meeting | Date |
|---|---------------|
| Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee | 18 April 2016 |

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (April 2016)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifies the infrastructure schemes necessary to support the development proposed in the Local Plan and outlines how and when these will be delivered. The IDP is therefore a key evidence base document and infrastructure planning tool which will support the examination and implementation of the Local Plan.
- 1.2 The IDP was comprehensively reviewed during autumn/winter 2015 and, at its meeting on 13 January 2016, this Committee approved the updated version for publication as supporting evidence to the Local Plan, recognising that the IDP is a “living document” and may require further updating prior to its publication. On 13 January it was also decided that the IDP should return to this Committee for approval to submit the document to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as supporting evidence to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, so that any amendments required as a result of consultation responses, factual updates and/or further evidence being made available by infrastructure providers, could be considered by this Committee.
- 1.3 Since February additional information has been made available from key infrastructure providers such as the NHS and Kent County Council. The updated IDP schedules therefore set out a number specific schemes identified by the NHS to improve GP surgeries in response to planned growth, and outline KCC’s confirmed approach to mitigating the impact of new development on the delivery of its youth services, adult social care services and community learning services. Factual updates have also been incorporated where appropriate, taking account of consultation responses and the progression/development of individual schemes.
- 1.4 Additionally, the introductory sections of the IDP have been supplemented to provide some further context as regards how schemes have been identified, and the evidence which underpins them. Altogether the changes between January and April enhance the robustness of the IDP and ensure that the document is as up-to-date as possible for Committee’s approval to submit the document alongside the Local Plan. The IDP is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.5 Councillors will note that the IDP makes numerous references to ongoing technical work – particularly in respect of transport infrastructure – and it is possible that the completion of additional work in the coming days and weeks may necessitate further factual updates to the IDP prior to submission. This report therefore seeks Committee’s approval to submit the IDP to the Secretary of State, recognising that further factual updates may be required prior to submission of the document.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee considered a revised IDP at the meeting in January, and the accompanying report summarised the key schemes in each of the IDP schedules. The majority of the IDP schedules remain largely unchanged since January, and therefore this report sets out the key changes to the IDP, and does not reiterate the summaries provided at the January meeting.

Health provision

- 2.2 Perhaps the most significant change to the IDP is the inclusion of a series of schemes to improve and/or expand GP Surgery capacity in response to planned growth. MBC officers have been in regular contact with NHS Property Services (South East) throughout the development of the Local Plan, and outline requirements were set out in the IDP published alongside the Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) in spring 2014. A revised set of requirements, taking account of development proposed in the Publication (Regulation 19) version of the Local Plan, has recently been made available from NHS Property Services, and these are included in the IDP Health Provision schedule. The West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) took on this responsibility from NHS Property Services earlier this month and therefore the CCG has also verified the submission.
- 2.3 Many of the existing GP surgery sites in these areas are constrained, and in some cases additional consulting space and patient facilities can only be provided through the internal reorganisation of existing space. Other surgeries however have some capacity to extend, and therefore extensions of varying scales are identified as a means to provide additional capacity to respond to the need generated by new residents.
- 2.4 Seven schemes are identified to support growth in the central, northern and north western parts of Maidstone, including extensions at Brewer Street and Barming surgeries and internal reorganisations at The Vine Medical Centre and Blackthorn Medical Centre. In the southern, eastern and south eastern parts of Maidstone an additional nine schemes are identified including extensions at The Mote Medical Practice, Orchard Medical Centre and Bearsted Medical Practice and internal reorganisations at Grove Park, Sutton Valance and Cobtree Medical Practice.
- 2.5 In the rural areas, schemes for each of the Rural Service Centres are identified, through extensions of varying scales at Headcorn, Staplehurst, Lenham, Marden and Harrietsham. Improvements are also identified at surgeries within the Larger Villages of Coxheath and Yalding.
- 2.6 As was anticipated, the updated set of schemes builds on those previously identified, and reflects NHS requests for developer contributions sought through the development management process. Accordingly, significant financial contributions have already been secured towards delivery of many of these schemes through consents granted on sites proposed for allocation in the emerging Local Plan.

- 2.7 Although many planning consents are already in place, the delivery of these new homes will take place over a number of years, as indicated in the Local Plan housing trajectory. This means that the point at which the need for GP surgery improvements/expansions arises may not be until the latter part of the short term, or into the medium term. The ability to deliver these schemes will also be affected by the timing of funding becoming available – including when the relevant trigger points are reached and developer contributions are paid. MBC will therefore work closely with the CCG to share information and to ensure that a coordinated approach to delivering new health infrastructure can be realised to mitigate the impact of new development in a timely manner.

Social and community infrastructure

- 2.8 The County Council is responsible for the provision of services for adult social care, community learning, youth services and library provision, which form the substantive part of the schedule. As part of KCC's response to the Local Plan publication, the County Council outlined its intended approach to mitigate the impact of new development on the delivery of these services, and this is reflected in the IDP.
- 2.9 Significantly, KCC has confirmed that it does not anticipate the need for large new pieces of tangible infrastructure, such as new buildings. Instead a more flexible approach has been adopted, to provide additional capacity and/or improvements to existing facilities, where the need is generated by new development.
- 2.10 For adult social care, community learning and youth services, the County Council has not identified any specific schemes as part of its input to the IDP and Local Plan but instead outlines an intention to seek small scale improvements, for instance through improved accessibility or additional equipment, as a means to cope with additional demand. Twelve libraries are specifically identified for capacity improvements, together with the mobile service, however no specific schemes to provide additional capacity have been identified though KCC's input to the IDP and Local Plan. A similarly flexible approach is therefore proposed to provide additional capacity in response to increased demand from new residents, which may include physical works to buildings, or through provision of additional equipment or bookstock.
- 2.11 Given the number of proposed allocations which have already obtained planning consent, developer contributions have been secured to provide increased bookstock at key libraries and towards a variety of improvements to support the County Council's other community and social services in areas where growth is proposed. Should the need for more strategic community infrastructure arise in the future, the CIL is likely to be the most appropriate route to fund projects, and this is reflected in the IDP.

Education provision

- 2.12 The County Council has also clarified its approach to the delivery of requisite primary school places to accommodate proposed development in the South East Maidstone Strategic Development Area. The need for a new primary school within site H1 (10) South of Sutton Road will be wholly generated by development within that site, meaning that the new school will be site specific infrastructure. The size of the school is now identified as “up to 2FE” (forms of entry) reflecting the Education Authority’s position that a 2FE school would be required should the development generate in excess of 210 primary pupils, but that a 1FE school would be required should a lower number of pupils be generated.
- 2.13 For site H1 (8) West of Church Road, Otham, the IDP now clarifies that the primary school mitigation will be an expansion of the nearby Greenfields Community Primary School by up to 1FE. Again this is site specific mitigation and the scale of the expansion will be determined by the number of pupils generated by the development.
- 2.14 For clarity, and given that there is an established need, the schemes to provide new 2FE primary schools to serve the broad locations at Lenham and Invicta Barracks are now included in the IDP education schedule, together with the scheme to expand Staplehurst Primary School by 0.5FE. These schemes had previously only been referenced in the preamble to the IDP schedules. However, KCC has confirmed that these are key infrastructure requirements necessary to support planned growth.

Additional changes

- 2.15 Further changes to the IDP schedules are more limited in nature; primarily to reflect the progression of schemes such as the commencement of works on the Bridges Gyratory schemes. Southern Water has identified a series of proposed development sites which will require a connection to the local sewerage network at the nearest point of adequate capacity, and this is also reflected in the IDP.
- 2.16 The IDP is an important component of the supporting evidence base submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the Local Plan, and therefore provides a key opportunity to aid the Inspector’s understanding of how individual infrastructure schemes have been identified and the timescales for their delivery. The introductory sections of the IDP (Parts 1 – 4) therefore set out a more comprehensive explanation of how the IDP has been developed, its relationship with other evidence documents and how the IDP will be implemented and reviewed over the course of the Local Plan period. It is considered that this additional contextual information will enhance the robustness of the IDP as a whole, to demonstrate that the necessary infrastructure can be delivered in a timely manner to support growth.

Updating the IDP pre-submission

- 2.17 The IDP makes numerous references to ongoing technical work – particularly in respect of transport infrastructure – and it is possible that the completion of additional work in the coming days and weeks may necessitate further factual updates to the IDP prior to submission. Technical assessments are currently underway to establish more detail on the need for transport schemes at Lenham and Invicta Barracks broad locations, and the output of this work will need to be considered for inclusion in the IDP. To ensure that the IDP is as up-to-date as possible for submission, it is recommended that any necessary factual updates are incorporated within the IDP prior to its submission.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

Option A: Approve the IDP for submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as supporting evidence to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, and give delegated authority to the Head of Planning to update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan prior to submission, recognising that it is a “living document”.

Option B: Reject the IDP for submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as supporting evidence to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. This option should be selected if the IDP is not considered to be fit for purpose.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option A is recommended. The IDP is informed by an extensive evidence base and by significant input from infrastructure providers. The IDP is an important component of the supporting evidence base submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the Local Plan. The IDP is a “living document” and it is important that the document submitted to the Secretary of State is based upon the most up to date evidence available. The granting of delegated powers to the Head of Planning will ensure that any necessary factual updates can be incorporated in the IDP prior to its submission.
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5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 Engagement with infrastructure providers has been continuous throughout the development of the Local Plan, both through formal consultation exercises and more informal engagement and liaison. In preparation for submission of the Local Plan, the IDP has been comprehensively reviewed to take account of the latest available evidence and information provided by many infrastructure providers have provided detailed responses to the request for input to the IDP, taking account of the revisions to the Local Plan.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 The IDP will be updated as necessary to take account of any factual updates and then submitted alongside the Local Plan to the Secretary of State.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

| Issue | Implications | Sign-off |
|--|--|---|
| Impact on Corporate Priorities | The IDP will support the Local Plan and will assist in the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities | Head of Planning and Development |
| Risk Management | A key risk to the Local Plan programme relates to the Council's ability to demonstrate sound infrastructure planning necessary to support planned growth | Head of Planning and Development |
| Financial | A number of schemes identified in the IDP are to be funded wholly or partly by the Council through its Capital Programme and New Homes Bonus. The IDP will inform the future allocation of CIL receipts, decisions on which will be made by the Council. | Head of Finance & Resources |
| Staffing | The IDP will need to be regularly reviewed if it is to provide an up-to-date evidence base and infrastructure planning tool. | Head of Planning and Development |
| Legal | The IDP is prepared as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan, supporting its soundness, required to facilitate its progression through Examination in Public, to adoption. | Team Leader (Planning), Mid Kent Legal Services |
| Equality Impact Needs Assessment | The IDP identifies the infrastructure necessary to support development in a sustainable manner, and therefore seeks to minimise the potential equality impacts of new development in the borough. Access to new and improved local community infrastructure should benefit those equality groups most in need. | Policy & Information Manager |
| Environmental/Sustainable Development | The IDP identifies the infrastructure required to minimise the environmental and social impacts of new development, whilst facilitating economic development and growth within the borough. | Head of Planning and Development |
| Community Safety | The IDP identifies interventions required to mitigate the safety impacts of new development such as transport schemes. Kent Police have been consulted on the IDP. | Head of Planning and Development |
| Human Rights Act | N/A | Head of Planning and Development |

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| Procurement | Consultants are used to prepare specialist or technical evidence to support the Local Plan and are appointed in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures. | Head of Planning and Development Section 151 Officer |
| Asset Management | N/A | Head of Planning and Development |

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Maidstone Borough Local Plan: Infrastructure Delivery Plan (April 2016)

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None