

Local Plan Context

On 20 May 2016, the Council submitted the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2016) ("draft MBLP") to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

Therefore, the determination of this application requires the Committee to consider two Local Plans carefully and this matter is discussed below.

1. Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan 2000 (MBWLP 2000):

The MBWLP 2000 is the development plan for the purposes of the statutory test in section 38(6) of the 2004 Act, by which the application must be determined.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) directs that relevant policies in a development plan adopted prior to the NPPF should be given weight according to their consistency with policies within the NPPF.

The draft MBLP seeks full alignment with the NPPF. Crucially, it sets out the full objectively assessed need (18,560) for housing and allocates land to fulfil this requirement in accordance with the national planning policy priority in paragraph 47 of the NPPF to boost significantly the supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs.

The draft MBLP development strategy, *inter alia*, identifies strategic residential development to the North West and South East of Maidstone, and sets out site allocations. The south eastern area is shown as being part of the open countryside in the MBWLP 2000 and 'saved' policies such as ENV28 and ENV32 apply.

However, the MBWLP 2000 clearly did not set out objectively assessed housing need for the period 2011 to 2031. Therefore, inevitably, one of the results of catering for housing growth is that settlement boundaries must change.

For these reasons and in the particular circumstances of the present case, the failure of this application to accord with saved policies ENV28 and ENV32 in this respect is a matter that should not be accorded significant weight in the determination of this application. That being said, the precise level of weight to be accorded is a matter for the Planning Committee.

2. Draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan ("draft MBLP"):

In February 2016, Full Council authorised the draft MBLP for submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination. In doing so, the Council endorsed the draft MBLP as a sound and legally compliant local plan. For this reason, significant weight should be attached to the draft MBLP in the determination of planning applications. Furthermore, the Council relies upon the delivery the housing development in the draft MBLP site allocations to demonstrate a housing land supply in excess of 5 years.

Head of Terms

Propose the additional entry: The establishment of a 'monitoring committee' prior to the submission of the first reserved matters application to be responsible for the review of all aspects of the development with such members to include an officer of the Council, two elected members of the Council and a representative of the developers (contribution toward the set of this committee).

The Recommendation remains unchanged