

Examination of the Thanet Local Plan

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Dear Mr Verrall,

Initial Questions for Examination

We have been appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the Examination of the Thanet Local Plan. We have commenced our preparation and have a number of initial questions which are set out below.

Sustainability Appraisal

The *Sustainability Appraisal – Environmental Report* (Document CD7.4) refers to two strategic options. For Option 2 (which excludes the former Manston Airport as a residential-led mixed-use allocation) it states that the findings were appraised in the *Revised Options Sustainability Appraisal* ('SA') dated June 2018. Based on the documents provided the revised SA does not appear to form part of the examination library? Please can the Council forward a copy to ourselves, and ensure that the additional evidence is made available on the examination website?

As you will be aware, the Planning Practice Guidance¹ ('PPG') advises that the SA should predict and evaluate the effects of the preferred approach and reasonable alternatives. It also states that the significant positive and negative effects of each alternative should be identified. Please can you point to where the SA (or the Revised Options SA) has considered and compared reasonable alternative strategies, especially for the distribution of housing growth?

¹ Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 11-018-20140306

Transport Evidence

The *Duty to Cooperate Statement* (Document CD7.3) suggests that the Council has committed to provide additional transport information and analysis “in due course”. What evidence is Document CD7.3 referring to, and what are the timescales for its completion?

Do any of the evidence base documents consider how traffic flows are predicated to change on A or B roads within 200m of the Sandwich Bay SAC? If so, where is this set out?

Housing

The *Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update* (Document CD4.1) uses the 2014-based household projections as its starting point. What is the difference when compared to the 2016-based projections? Do the latest projections have any significant implications for the OAN and the housing requirement in the Plan?

Appendix B of the Plan includes a list of sites along with their expected delivery over the remainder of the plan period. Please can the Council refer us to the relevant evidence base documents which support the conclusions reached, especially for the strategic sites and larger allocations?

Alternative (Omission) Sites

Some representors are seeking a different use of land to the one proposed in the Local Plan. Please can the Council prepare a list of such sites that were put forward in response to the Publication Local Plan? It would be helpful if the list includes details of each representor, the allocation proposed in the plan, the allocation/land use being sought and a map showing their location.

Employment Land

The *Employment Land Update and Economic Needs Assessment* (Document CD2.2) recommends making provision for around 15 hectares of employment land (gross). In contrast, the Plan allocates some 53.5 hectares of land. What is the breakdown of allocations by size, and how much of the allocated land has extant planning permission for employment uses?

Next Steps

In order to progress matters please can the Council provide a written response to the above initial questions by **5pm on Friday 11 January**.

At this stage it is not possible to confirm the exact dates for the forthcoming hearing sessions, as this will largely depend on the answers to the questions set out above. However, we understand from the Programme Officer that potential hearing dates in April and May have been discussed, with a suitable venue to be confirmed.

We will circulate a draft Matters, Issues and Questions paper in due course and a draft Hearing Programme and Guidance Notes once more details are known. Please note that the Council will need to give at least 6 weeks' notice before the start of the first hearing.

We trust that the above questions are all self-explanatory, but should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us through the Programme Officer.

Yours Sincerely,

Matthew Birkinshaw and *Victoria Lucas*

Inspectors

17 December 2018