

# Core Strategy Consultation Update

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# Core Strategy Representations

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Maidstone Borough Council Consultation Portal. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [http://maidstone-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning\\_policy/csdpd/cspc/csp2011?pointId=1316771356235](http://maidstone-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning_policy/csdpd/cspc/csp2011?pointId=1316771356235). The page title is "Maidstone Borough Council - Core Strategy Public Consultation 2011 - Core Strategy Public Parti".

The portal header includes the Maidstone Borough Council logo, a search bar, and navigation links for "Accessibility", "LDF Homepage", and "Contact Us". Below the header, there are links for "Login / Register", "Who Said What?", "Help", and "Print".

The main content area is titled "Consultation Home > Planning Policy > Core Strategy > Core Strategy Public Consultation 2011 > Core Strategy Public Participation (Reg 25) Consultation 2011".

The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with the following items:

- Core Strategy Public Participation (Reg 25) Consultation 2011
  - CS Introduction + Vision (selected)
  - CS Objectives
  - CS1
  - CS2
  - CS3
  - CS4
  - CS5
  - CS6

The main content area displays "CS Introduction + Vision" with the following details:

- Type: PDF
- Size: 5,792.1K
- A "Download File" button with a green arrow icon.
- Buttons for "View Comments (251)" and "Add Comments".

A message box at the bottom of the main content area states: "The event is not currently available for consultation."

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the system tray with the time 14:50 and date 28/02/2012.

# Representations

- We had representations on every aspect of the Core Strategy:
- Introduction and Vision – 253 representations
- Core Strategy Objectives – 148 representations
- CS1 – Borough Wide Strategy – 491 representations
- CS2 – Maidstone Town Centre – 119 representations
- CS3 – Maidstone Urban Area – 153 representations
- CS4 – Rural Service Centres – 111 representations
- CS5 – Countryside – 298 representations
- CS6 – Sustainable Design and Development – 96 reps

# More representations

- CS7 – Sustainable Transport – 142 representations
- CS8 – Economic Development – 120 representations
- CS9 – Housing Mix – 107 representations
- CS10 – Affordable Housing – 160 representations
- CS11 – Local Needs Housing – 80 representations
- CS12 – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation – 103 reps
- CS13 – Natural Assets – 99 representations
- CS14 – Infrastructure Delivery – 128 representations
- Appendices – 36 representations

# Main Issues Raised

## CS1

- Housing target and land supply:
  - Too many houses need too much land
  - Not enough houses and land identified
- Site specific allocations should be made
- Housing strategy – some support the pattern and others object to it
- Jobs target – some think it is too high and some too low
- Junction 8 – some objections and some support with alternative sites suggested
- Employment strategy – support for development at Junction 7 but also concern over the impact on the AONB

# CS2 Maidstone Town Centre

- In centre versus out of centre retail and office development
- The Core Strategy should specify how much retail warehousing floorspace is required
- Implications of vacant office and retail floorspace in the town centre
- The role of residential uses in the town centre
- Traffic congestion and parking in the town centre
- Deliverability of town centre aspirations

# CS3 – Maidstone Urban Area

- Green Wedges – what is their function and how will they be defined
- Can development occur within Green Wedges
- New Green Wedges suggested
- Release of Greenfield sites on land adjacent to the urban boundary

# CS4 – Rural Service Centres

- Some comment about the villages designated
- Infrastructure and the need for development to provide it in a timely manner
- Employment sites and the need for a consistent approach throughout the Core Strategy

# CS5 Countryside

- Land at the former KIG site should be protected
- Special Landscape Areas should be retained
- Landscape at Junction 8 not suitable for development
- Policy is not strong enough to protect high quality landscape from inappropriate development
- Policy approach to the Kent Downs AONB
- Protection of best and most versatile agricultural land

# CS6 Sustainable Design and Development

- Lack of detail in policy
- Neighbourhood plans/local vernacular/local context
- Viability in relation to sustainable construction
- Construction standards and building regulations
- Community safety and crime prevention
- Use of language – too much flexibility

# CS7 Sustainable Transport

- Improvements needed to bus services
- Higher priority to be given to walking and cycling
- Build a by pass or ring road to improve access to the south of the borough and relieve congestion
- Improve access to and from the Rural Service Centres and to the south of the borough
- More of new development to be located near to urban areas and the town centre
- Improvements to and more rail links to London
- More emphasis on car sharing
- Lack of parking in the town centre needs addressing
- More transport infrastructure required to promote Maidstone's role as a hub
- More information and measures needed to tackle how air quality is to be improved
- HGVs need to be diverted away from RSCs and the town centre
- More strict requirements for Transport Assessments are needed
- Policy is not ambitious enough

# CS8 – Economic Development

- Why plan for the maximum amount of land required
- Approach to existing employment sites
- Jobs target
- Sequential test
- Opportunities may exist in other rural settlements aside from the RSCs
- Warehousing provision
- Distribution of employment land

# CS9 Housing Mix

- Mix should be left to the market to determine
- Confusion as smaller villages don't want or need housing
- More detail is required
- Some specific allocations required to deliver family housing
- Elderly provision needs to be accounted for
- Parish councils should have influence over mix
- Figures in the SHMA are confusing

# CS10 Affordable Housing

- How to avoid sub division of sites
- Policy flexibility for and against
- Policy target is arbitrary
- Viability assessment of the target
- Contradiction in aims between affordable housing and general housing
- Gypsy and traveller accommodation
- Affordable housing in rural areas and the parish council influence
- Policy is too prescriptive – this should be left to the market to determine

# CS11 – Local Needs Housing

- Policy needs to be clarified
- Settlement types and different needs
- Localism and the influence of the NPPF
- Criteria are too strict
- Same aims as CS9 and CS10

# CS12 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

- How robust is the existing GTAA?
- What is the need for pitches
- The need for clear guidance
- Impact of development on the settled community
- Stronger criteria for sites needed
- Unauthorised sites and enforcement

# CS13 – Natural Assets

- Landscape should be included as a natural asset
- The River Medway should be included as a principal asset
- Policy is too urban centric
- Policy is too narrow in its definition and implementation of measures
- Need to review 2007 Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)
- Policy should protect best/most versatile agricultural land
- There is conflict between CS13 and allocation at Junction 8
- Conflict between CS5 which is too vague and CS13 too narrow
- Lack of reference to the Water Framework Directive
- No reference to the AONB
- Not enough protection for existing public rights of way
- Too restrictive and onerous to potential development
- Impact of NPPF
- New policy to encourage off site woodland planting

# CS14 Infrastructure Delivery

- Infrastructure phasing
- Dedicated planning agreements
- Community Infrastructure Levy contributions
- Lack of policy support for provision of strategic utilities infrastructure
- Need for additional types of infrastructure such as places of worship
- Highways infrastructure
- Water shortage
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan Urban/Rural Split

# So what?

- We are looking at how the Core Strategy might change in response to the representations and changes in national guidance
- What do you think about the issues raised?
- Strategic sites might be allocated as opposed to strategic locations for growth to allow for more certainty – what do you think?
- Do we need a town centre Area Action Plan – what does this add? What do you think?

# Next Steps

- We may need to come back to you and discuss your representation in detail
- We will be reporting to Cabinet in June with a revised Core Strategy taking into account changes indicated by the representations where appropriate
- We will be producing what is known as a Regulation 27 Consultation Pre-Submission version of the Core Strategy in the summer
- We will then go out to formal consultation
- We will then submit the Pre-Submission version and all the representations made to the Secretary of State who will appoint an Inspector
- Inspector will look at comments and decide if a hearing is needed
- If a hearing is held the Inspector will decide who should appear and what is going to be discussed
- Inspector then produces a report on the Core Strategy and judges if it is “Sound” or not.
- Adoption procedures follow thereafter