

Name: Staplehurst Parish Council (Contact Parish Clerk – Mick Westwood)

Company (optional):

Address: Parish Office, Village Centre, High Street, Staplehurst,
TONBRIDGE Kent TN12 0BJ

Email: clerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk

How did you find out about the Core Strategy? Regular contact with MBC.

**Please note: we are unable to consider your comments unless these details are fully completed.*

General Guidance

- Please tick one box per question (with the exception of Question 10 regarding junction M20 J8).
- Please use the comments box under each question if you wish to expand on your answer e.g. if you ticked 'object' please suggest alternative or additional wording.
- You can also use the text boxes to make comments on the site plans.
- If you wish to suggest amendments to the site plans, please submit these on a separate document.

Please return this completed form to:

Spatial Policy

Maidstone Borough Council

Maidstone House

King Street

Maidstone

Kent

ME15 6JQ

e: LDF@maidstone.gov.uk

THE CORE STRATEGY

1. Policy NPPF1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy? YES

....Wish to make a general observation?

Comments

SPC object to this policy as there is no nationally agreed definition as to what is sustainable development and more importantly how it is set within a local context. The NPPF which called for 'balance' appears to have been undermined by recent moves to review Section 106 agreements whilst interfering with Affordable Housing targets. It is nigh on impossible to plan as the goal posts keep changing.

2. Policy SS1 – Strategic housing location to the north west of the urban area

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? YES

Comments

SPC feel it is difficult to comment on this policy. However, concerns have been raised as to the approach for emergency services to the hospital and general access to the area. It is felt that the road improvements as stated would need to take place before any housing development in order for the area to cope. Signed agreements are insufficient.

3. Policy SS1a – Bridge Nursery

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? YES

Comments

SPC has concern as to the approach for emergency services to the hospital and general access to the area. It is felt that the road improvements as stated would need to take place before any housing development in order for the area to cope.

4. Policy SS1b – East of Hermitage Lane

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? YES

Comments

SPC has concern as to the approach for emergency services to the hospital and general access to the area. It is felt that the road improvements as stated would need to take place before any housing development in order for the area to cope.

5. Policy SS1c – West of Hermitage Lane

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? YES

Comments

SPC has concern as to the approach for emergency services to the hospital and general access to the area. It is felt that the road improvements as stated would need to take place before any housing development in order for the area to cope.

6. Policy SS2 – Strategic allocation in south east Maidstone

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? YES

Comments

The total figure of 1075 homes is not sustainable. There will be an obvious need for a new secondary school as well as primary. It is anticipated that a large number of these new residents would not work in Maidstone and therefore commute. This would have a direct impact on the Weald as these commuters are as likely to use Headcorn and Staplehurst Railway Stations. There are concerns over adequate water and sewerage provision. As it stands the Willington Street junction is often gridlocked and the road improvements as stated would need to take place before any housing development in order for the area to cope.

7. Policy SS2a – Langley Park

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? SEE 6 ABOVE

Comments

8. Policy SS2b – North of Sutton Road

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? SEE 6 ABOVE

Comments

9. Policy SS2c – North of Bicknor Wood

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? SEE 6 ABOVE

Comments

10. Strategic employment location at M20 J8

Do you:

....Support land to the east of M20 J8?

....Object to land to the east of M20 J8?

....Support land to the south of M20 J8?

....Object to land to the south of M20 J8?

....Support land at Woodcut Farm?

....Object to land at Woodcut Farm?

....Wish to make a general observation? Yes, support the principle of employment generation but see comments

Comments

SPC acknowledges the need for employment sites. However there is a concern that depending on which site is chosen that this could turn into a mini KIG. The site must be a true employment site with the emphasis on businesses and factories, rather than a distribution centre with 'warehouses'. The appropriate road improvements as stated would need to take place before any development in order for the area to cope. If there is to be no Leeds Langley bypass then heavy goods vehicles and other large vans/lorries should be dissuaded from taking the Leeds Castle- Linton Crossroads- Coxheath route.

11. Policy SS4 – Newnham Park

Do you:

....Support this policy?

....Object to this policy?

....Wish to make a general observation? Yes, support the principle of employment generation but see comments

Comments

SPC acknowledges the need for employment sites. However there is a concern on the scale of this site and the impact on the surrounding area and access routes.

The appropriate road improvements as stated would need to take place before any development in order for the area to cope. If there is to be no Leeds Langley bypass then heavy goods vehicles and other large vans/lorries should be dissuaded from taking the Leeds Castle- Linton Crossroads- Coxheath route.

It is not clear as to the need for the provision of a subsidised shuttle bus to operate between the site and the town centre, via New Cut Road and Ashford Road. It would better to improve the existing park and ride facility and other current bus services which are invariably poor.

MBC's stance on ensuring Newnham Park does not take business away from Maidstone Town Centre is uncompetitive and unhelpful. The market should decide what is most appropriate. The fact that people wish to shop elsewhere than Maidstone is a matter for them.

12. General comments

Comments (please use this box if you have any comments on the document as a whole that are not covered by the above questions)

Rural service centres

From Core Strategy Strategic Sites Allocations Consultation Document (page 40):

7.1 The following distribution of 1,130 new dwelling on greenfield sites at the rural service centres will be included in policy CS1 of the draft Core Strategy, which is the borough wide strategy setting out the spatial distribution of development. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009 and the Strategic Sites Assessment 2009 demonstrated an adequate choice of sites to meet this target.

CS1 additional text

Appropriate greenfield sites, to accommodate in the order of 1,130 new dwellings alongside suitably scaled employment opportunities, will be allocated at the edges of the five rural service centres of Harrietsham (315 dwellings), Headcorn (190 dwellings), Lenham (110 dwellings), Marden (320 dwellings) and Staplehurst (195 dwellings).

Support this Policy

SPC acknowledges the need for some housing development.

SPC acknowledges the research and modelling work done by MBC to arrive at these figures and will challenge any Developer attempting to raise the figures.

SPC accepts the MBC proposed figure of 195 homes for Staplehurst on greenfield sites as sustainable, providing adequate infrastructure especially around roads, transport and secondary school provision is provided.

Much of the existing transport and service infrastructure is at full capacity or is poor/inadequate in provision. SPC feels the problem of empty homes within the area has still not been fully addressed, whilst some existing homes have been for sale for a period of 2 years.

SPC awaits site allocations for the RSC's in anticipation and urges MBC to bring forward this work. Information relating to these Site Allocations will assist SPC in developing its Neighbourhood Plan.