

Consultee Comments for Planning Application

23/504068/OUT

Application Summary

Application Number: 23/504068/OUT

Address: Land East Of Albion Road And North Of Copper Lane Marden Kent TN12 9EG

Proposal: Outline application with some matters reserved (access only sought) for the removal of 2 former agricultural sheds and erection of up to 117no. dwellings and associated infrastructure including partial footways on Albion Road.

Case Officer: Marion Geary

Consultee Details

Name: . Marden Parish Council

Address: Memorial Hall, Goudhurst Road, Marden Tonbridge, Kent TN12 9JX

Email: Not Available

On Behalf Of: MBC - Marden Parish Council

Comments

Please see attached document in regard to Marden Parish Council's response on this application.

Marden PC reserves the right to comment further if additional information becomes available.

Marden Parish Council Response to Maidstone Borough Council:

23/504068/OUT – Land East of Albion Road and Copper Lane, Marden Outline application with some matters reserved (access only sought) for the removal of 2 former agricultural sheds and erection of up to 117 dwellings and associate infrastructure including partial footways on Albion Road.

Cllrs recognise that this is an allocated site in the emerging Local Plan, which may or may not be adopted but they have severe reservations about this planning application in the context of the existing Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan. For the following reasons:

- In terms of the existing Local Plan the site sits outside the settlement boundary so is not compliant with MBC Local Plan Policy SP17 Development in the Open Countryside. The density of the proposed housing (117 units, more than the 113 units identified for site LPRSA295 in the emerging Local Plan) should be avoided on the edge of the village location and a reduction of units per hectare should be considered if MBC is minded to approve.
- There is a fundamental flaw regarding public footpath KM281 as the principal route for pedestrians between the proposed development and the facilities in the village centre, although it is unlit and therefore almost all users will consider it unsafe in the hours of darkness. Even if the majority is surfaced (as suggested in Appendix I of the applicant's Transport Assessment), it will be unsuitable for wheelchair and pushchair users as the first section west of Albion Road will remain gravelled. Paragraph 6.27 of the applicant's Planning Statement claims that "*the footpath enhancement work includes footway widening of Public Footpath KM281, to provide a 1.2-1.5m wide footway.*" However, Appendix I of the Transport Assessment makes clear that this is reliant on the hedge vegetation being cut back, and seasonal growth will inevitably result in a lesser width for much of the year. Furthermore, any width less than 1.5 m will be insufficient for pedestrians to pass any pushchairs or wheelchairs coming in the opposite direction (refer to Figure 6.18 of the Manual for Streets). The Department for Transport's 'Inclusive Mobility: A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure' is therefore based on a minimum footway width of 2.0 m, with an absolute minimum of 1.5 m. As such, KM281 could only ever act as a secondary route for pedestrians, and then during daylight hours only.
- The applicant suggests that it is safe for pedestrians to walk along Albion Road, where there will be no footway, and paragraph 7.3.29 of the Transport Assessment claims that pedestrians may wish to "*take refuge in the verge along the side of the Albion Road carriageway*" to avoid oncoming traffic. This is a wholly inappropriate basis to plan pedestrian access to and from a major housing development in the 2020s, especially for wheelchair and pushchair users. Paragraph 7.3.24 of the Transport Assessment rightly notes the Manual for Streets Guidance about shared streets being likely to work well "*where the volume of motor traffic is below 100 vehicles per hour.*" However, this needs to be compared with paragraph 7.3.21 which states: "*The future traffic flows (2028 with development) along Albion Road (between the site access and Seymour Drive) is around 232 – 261 vehicles in a weekday peak hour.*" The access problem thus speaks for itself because Albion Road will have to be the principal route for pedestrians between the proposed development and the facilities in the village centre (whether the applicant likes it or not) due to the problems with footpath KM281. The missing footway along Albion Road thus must be provided to an acceptable standard to meet the Manual for Streets / Inclusive Mobility guidance and capable of passing a road safety audit should MBC be minded to approve.
- There is also a lack of connectivity into the neighbouring development at Russet Grove and through to the Stanley Road / South Road / Howland Road area, highlighted as an important consideration at the applicant's information events in July 2022.

- The lack of permeability to the site for walking/cycling is contrary to NPPF paragraphs 111 and 112 (see below), MNP In2 Sustainable Travel and In3 Traffic Generation.
- NPPF Paragraph 111 – *‘Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.’*
- NPPF Paragraph 112 – *‘Within this context applications for development should: (a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second, as far as possible, to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use; (b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport; (c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive, which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cycles and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards; (d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles, and (e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.’*
- The proposed development will not only generate a significant amount of additional traffic but also movement of heavy construction vehicles during the build period along the narrow roads and lanes and is contrary to NPPF paragraph 113 *‘All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.’*
- KCC Highways has not yet commented but there are severe concerns about the proposed access, the suggested improvements to Albion Road and the Thorn Road/ Albion Road/Plain Road junction which is blind and dangerous for motorists and pedestrians, NB: At the MBC Examination stage in May, Kent Highways questioned the access in Albion Road where it is likely that many of the vehicle trips associated with the development will route to and from the northern section of Albion Road. This route commonly features on-street parking which reduces the available carriageway width and prevents continuous two-way traffic flow. Additional vehicle movements would be expected to increase vehicle conflicts and delays in the absence of mitigation.
- There are severe concerns over surface water management, water supply and sewerage as well as electricity supply already being under great strain throughout the village and this proposed development must not exacerbate these issues. The application has not demonstrated conformity to MNP Policies NE1 Surface Water Management, NE2 Water Quality and In1 Water Supply and Sewerage and the provision of sustainable drainage solutions is essential prior to the application being approved.
- In the emerging Maidstone Local Plan Main Modification 6 it quotes *‘Developers and MBC will work proactively with the sewerage service provider to ensure that any necessary upgrades to wastewater treatment works and/or sewer network resulting from new development are identified early to ensure that performance of wastewater infrastructure is not diminished by the connection of new development. Additionally, ‘Developers will be expected to provide or contribute towards additional requirement being provided to an agreed delivery programme.’*
- Whilst it is stated by the applicant in the Planning Statement that there could be a biodiversity net gain of 27.7% in habitats and 59.3% in hedgerows, the biodiversity information is inadequate and out of date. Therefore, an Ecological Impact Assessment should be provided with a wider scope and focus on the likely negative impacts the site will have on the existing biodiversity both on the

site and in the adjacent area as per the main modification to the emerging Maidstone Local Plan identified by the Planning Inspector.

- The frequent surface water flooding of Copper Lane eastwards from the junction with Thorn Road, passing the proposed emergency and pedestrian / cycle access, was described to the applicant's representatives at the information events held in July 2022. This is illustrated on page 14 of the representation from Mr Edward Thomas dated 14 October 2023. Paragraph 7.2.16 of the Flood Risk Assessment claims that *"Elevated surface water flood risk is identified in highways at distance from the site. However, these are not considered likely to preclude access/egress from the site."* This is clearly misleading, and no measures are proposed by the applicant to ensure the safe and effective use of the proposed emergency and pedestrian / cycle access during periods of heavy rain that occur at least annually (and not just during extreme weather conditions).
- Sub-section 12.3 of the Flood Risk Assessment also notes: *"Potential for shallow groundwater has been identified during site investigation works. The results obtained to-date are inconclusive and further ground water investigation is recommended to assess the potential for groundwater to impact the site and drainage solutions. Notwithstanding the above, it is considered likely that mitigation will be possible."* This is too vague for a robust Flood Risk Assessment, especially because it is not possible to attenuate groundwater flows should these be found to exacerbate the elevated risk of surface water flooding at the lower (Copper Lane) end of the site.

Should the Council be minded to approve, MPC would wish to see mitigation to all the above through conditions and Section 106 planning obligations.

MPC notes the commitment in the applicant's Planning Statement that the proportion of affordable housing will be 40% (i.e. 47 homes). In addition, MPC expects that a high proportion of this affordable housing should be allocated to local needs housing; and the provision of housing for older residents (Policy In6 of Marden NP) and disabled residents. MPC therefore welcomes paragraph 6.22 of the Planning Statement: *"The proposed scheme provides a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings, including bungalows which can cater for older people and disabled households."* Consideration should also be given to the provision of 'First Homes' for local people or an alternative housing ownership product.

Marden Parish Council's Regulation 18b and 19 responses to the draft Local Plan regarding this site is attached which also took into account design, layout, residential amenity, landscape, ecology and open space.

Appendix D

Marden Parish Council Previous Response to Regulation 18b on sites LPRSA295 and LPRSA314**23/504068/OUT – Land East of Albion Road and Copper Lane, Marden**

Outline application with some matters reserved (access only sought) for the removal of 2 former agricultural sheds and erection of up to 117 dwellings and associate infrastructure including partial footways on Albion Road.

Strategic Planning
Maidstone Borough Council
Maidstone House
King Street
Maidstone
ME15 6JQ

Also sent to:

Borough Councillors David Burton and Annabelle Blackmore
Helen Grant MP
County Cllr Eric Hotson

17th December 2020

Dear Sir / Madam,

Marden Parish Council is pleased to respond to Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan Review: Regulation 18b Preferred Approaches Consultation 2020.

Detailed Site Allocation Policies LPRSA295 – Land North of Copper Lane / LPRSA314 – Land East of Albion Road

The Parish Council does not agree that the adjacent Sites 295 (Land North of Copper Lane) and 314 (Land East of Albion Road) should be taken forward for housing development as part of the 'Preferred Approaches' consultation for the reasons summarised below.

1) Poor pedestrian connectivity to the village

- There are limited pedestrian links to Marden, with no footways on the east side of Albion Road south of Seymour Drive or south of Jewell Grove on the west side.
- There are no public footpaths across either of the sites and the minor roads in the vicinity are narrow and unlit. Footpath KM281 on the opposite side of Albion Road from Site 314, linking with the 'Windsor Meadow' development, is unsurfaced and very narrow between high hedges.
- For site 295, Copper Lane is a single-track country lane with no prospect of a footway to link to Thorn Road or Howland Road, and no footways on Thorn Road, Albion Road or Howland Road in the vicinity of the site.

2) Significant impacts of vehicular access into and out of the site and around the village

- The capacity of Albion Road is heavily constrained by on-street parking, and under the 'Access to Public Transportation & Services' assessment in the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) it is stated that the *“required mitigation measures unfeasible due to the requirement for 3rd party land, or the requirement to remove existing resident parking (with no apparent alternative) [in] order to achieve suitable*

road widths.” Both sites are then described in the borough council’s own words as *“unsuitable on access grounds.”*

- For traffic heading to or from the Maidstone, Staplehurst or Yalding directions, there would be significant impacts from additional traffic at the Albion Road / High Street / Howland Road T-junction, at the High Street / B2079 Maidstone Road T-junction and the length of B2079 within the village envelope used for on-street parking which are already frequently congested.
- The A229 to the north of Linton and into Maidstone is also inadequate and already heavily congested, and constraints mean that the planned improvements to the Wheatsheaf roundabout and Linton Crossroads are unlikely to be sufficient to accommodate the additional traffic over the longer term.
- Road connections to the west of Marden to amongst others Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Kings Hill are along narrow, minor country roads. Road connections to the east of Staplehurst towards Headcorn and Ashford are equally poor. Connectivity to the motorway and trunk road network, in whichever direction, is slow and poor along country lanes.

3) Visual impact of the development on the countryside

- Site 314 is on an elevated position and visible on the skyline across the open fields (depending on season) from Copper Lane, Thorn Road and Marden Thorn, which means that any development will have the potential for harmful impact on the surrounding countryside.
- Site 295 is on an elevated, sloping, position and visible across the open fields for some miles, especially in a wide arc stretching from the southeast to the west, which means that any development could not realistically be screened and therefore will inevitably have a harmful impact on the surrounding countryside. Even were it feasible, any widening of Copper Lane for Site 295 would result in a significant loss of mature trees, established hedgerows, ditches and numerous ponds on either side, resulting in fundamental impacts to its character and distinctiveness as a ‘quiet lane’.

4) Environmental and biodiversity impacts

Residents have reported evidence of Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (BoCC 4) red listed species (yellowhammers, woodpeckers, and fieldfares) on both sites. For Site 295, Natural England survey records show great crested newts present in the Copper Lane area, and under the ‘Ecology (including ponds)’ assessment in the SLAA for Site 314, it is also recorded that the rough grassland/scrub area may provide suitable habitat for reptiles.

5) Not in conformity with the Marden Neighbourhood Plan

Housing development on both sites would be variously inconsistent with aspects of Marden Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) policies NE3, NE4, NE5, BE1, In1, In2, In3, In4, A1, A3, A4, E1 and E2. Site 295 would also be inconsistent with MNP policy NE1 due to surface water flood risks including on the site, Copper Lane, Howland Road and Thorn Road.

6) Poor sustainable transport connectivity with Maidstone and the surrounding area

- For Site 314, there is a very limited daytime bus service along Albion Road, with no buses on Sundays.
- For Site 295, there is no bus service along Copper Lane, Howland Road or Thorn Road.
- For both sites, under the ‘Access to Public Transportation & Services’ assessment in the SLAA, the required mitigation measures are described as *“unfeasible due to insufficient site scale to achieve increased bus service regularity, even when considered collectively with adjacent sites”*. Both sites are then described in the borough council’s own words as *“unsuitable on sustainability grounds.”*

7) Limited local employment opportunities

There are limited local employment opportunities in Marden, and as noted above both car and public transport options for those seeking to work in Maidstone are likely to remain poor. Some employment opportunities may exist in Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells or Ashford, but commuting to London by train is likely to be the only choice for many.

8) Lack of capacity on the railway

- Marden railway station is on the Kent Coast route between Tonbridge and Ashford. Direct services are available to Charing Cross (and also Cannon Street at peak times) but – leaving aside the current coronavirus restrictions – these are already at or near ‘standing room only’ during peak hours with no possibility to extend or run more frequent trains because the line and station capacity limits have been reached.
- Other large-scale housing developments in Staplehurst, Headcorn, Ashford and East Kent will also be putting increasing pressure on train capacity in future years.
- Marden station already has severe parking problems in a very constrained area, and as noted above, there are limited pedestrian links from either site to Marden station.

9) Sewerage, water and electrical supply concerns

- The sewerage system in Marden was already under great strain, even before the recently completed housing developments and those currently being completed. Frequent problems occur at the Roughlands pumping station which connects the village with the Horsmonden wastewater treatment works. The existing sewer network also surcharges during periods of heavy rainfall, causing significant health concerns. All these problems would be exacerbated by any further large-scale housing development.
- South East Water has an ongoing programme to renew and strengthen its existing network, but it is not clear whether this will offer the capacity to deal with the individual and cumulative impacts of additional large-scale housing developments.
- Marden also experiences frequent power cuts during thunderstorms due to weaknesses in the existing electrical supply network.

10) Detailed comments on each site

Further details are given in Annexes A (Site 295) and B (Site 314), and attention is also drawn to the detailed objections to housing development on both sites submitted to the committee by concerned local residents.

11) Proposed conditions

The Parish Council also wishes to comment on the proposed conditions for these two sites put forward in draft policies LPRSA295 and LPRSA314.

- Widening Copper Lane is not feasible without irreversible harm to its character and setting in the landscape, as noted in point 3) above. It is a narrow, single track country lane, with ditches and ponds on both sides of the road.
- It is not feasible for Copper Lane to be used as a bus route for the reasons noted in 3) and 6) above plus, at the northern end, it joins Howland Road which is also unsuitable as a bus route due to the road constraints at Rose & Crown Cottages.
- Widening surrounding roads is not feasible because:
 - Thorn Road and Plain Road are country lanes, with ditches and hedgerows and private land on either side. It would not be cost effective to purchase the land required to widen these roads.
 - Albion Road is residential with private land on both sides of the road. It would not be cost effective to purchase land required to widen this road.
- The capacity of Albion Road is heavily constrained by on-street parking. The removal of resident parking in Albion Road will only add to congestion in other parts the village as those residents do not have off-road parking, as noted in point 2) above.

12) Sustainability Appraisal

Marden Parish Council comments as follows in respect of Sites 295 and 314 contained in the ‘Interim Sustainability Appraisal of Maidstone Local Plan Review – Regulation 18b Consultation’ report:

- i) Under SA objective 2: Services & Facilities, it is noted that both sites are distant from the nearest secondary school and average commuting distances from these locations are high. With the nearest secondary schools being located in Maidstone, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, and as noted under point 7) above commuting to London by train is likely to be the only choice for many, this is certainly true, and to the extent that the assessment should probably be ‘--’ overall when compared with other locations in the borough with significantly shorter travel distances.
- ii) Under SA objective 3: Community; it is stated that “Minor positive effects are expected from both site-specific allocation policies because of the requirement... for landscaping to soften views from surrounding areas”, but this does not appear to be a valid ground for consideration under this heading and thus the assessment should probably be ‘0’ overall.
- iii) Under SA objective 4: Health; Site 295 is not located any closer to existing open space or the public rights of way network than Site 314, and in both cases, this is not offset by provisions in the site-specific allocation policies to the extent that the assessment should be higher than ‘0’ overall.
- iv) Under SA objective 7: Sustainable Travel; the ‘+’ assessment for both sites is disputed because:
 - a) pedestrian links to the village centre and station are poor and difficult to improve;
 - b) there are no cycle-friendly routes in the vicinity;
 - c) existing bus services are limited during weekdays and non-existent in the evening and on Sundays / bank holidays and any suggested improvements may never materialise;
 - d) existing peak train services are essentially full to capacity already.

NB – Points b) to d) also apply to Marden as a whole under Policy SP6(d).
- v) Under SA objective 12: Flooding; the assessment of ‘-’ for Site 295 is too high because it ignores the effects of surface water flooding on the proposed vehicular access route via Copper Lane and should be reduced to ‘--’.
- vi) Under SA objective 13: Climate Change; the assessment should probably be ‘--’ overall as for SA objective 2.
- vii) Under SA objective 14: Biodiversity, the assessment for Site 295 should be reduced to ‘--’ and that for Site 314 to ‘-’ for the reasons given in point 4) above.
- viii) Under SA objective 16: Landscape; the assessment values in Table 6.11 do not align with the descriptions in paragraph 6.170, with the former being considered more accurate for the reasons given in point 3) above.

13) Conclusions

Detailed Site Allocation Policies LPRSA295 (covering Site 295) and LPRSA314 (Site 314) should not be included in MBC’s Preferred Approaches document for the reasons given above.

‘Garden Communities’ Site 309 – Land North of Marden

The Parish Council welcomes the omission of Site 309 (Land North of Marden) from the ‘garden communities’ options to be taken forward under the Borough Council’s ‘Preferred Approaches’ consultation.

For the record, Site 309 was considered to be unsustainable and unsuitable for development for the wide range of reasons set out in Annex C including:

- 1) The development offers no benefits to the existing community
- 2) Lack of cohesion with the existing community due to severance caused by the railway line

- 3) Principle of a ‘garden community’ – demonstrably neither an extension to the urban area of Maidstone or a new settlement separate from an existing village
- 4) Not in conformity with the Marden Neighbourhood Plan
- 5) Severe environmental and biodiversity impacts
- 6) Poor sustainable transport connectivity with Maidstone and the surrounding area
- 7) Limited local employment opportunities
- 8) Traffic impacts from access into and out of the site, through and around the village, and further afield
- 9) Lack of capacity on the railway
- 10) Overwhelming lack of community support for the proposal

Other housing, employment and mixed-use sites

The Parish Council supports the Borough Council’s acceptance of the conclusions of the SLAA that the other proposed housing, employment and mixed-use sites in Marden should not be taken forward as part of the ‘Preferred Approaches’ consultation.

Existing Local Plan Policy EMP1(2) - South of Claygate, Pattenden Lane, Marden

The Marden Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance of sustaining a vibrant business economy and seeks to promote business interests where compatible with other policies in the plan. This accords with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that seeks to enable the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses, the development and diversification of agriculture and other rural businesses and enable sustainable rural tourism and leisure that respects the character of the countryside.

The Parish Council therefore looks forward to suitable proposals being submitted under existing Local Plan Policy EMP1(2) - South of Claygate, Pattenden Lane, Marden in the Plan Period, provided that they are also consistent with MNP policy E1 and other relevant NPPF, Borough and Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Spatial Strategy, Spatial Strategic Policies and Policies Map

The Parish Council raises a number of comments and suggestions on the proposed Spatial Strategy, spatial strategic policies and policies map in Annex D attached, and particular attention is drawn to the following.

- i) Policies LPRSA295 (covering Site 295) and LPRSA314 (Site 314) should not be referenced in policy SP6(d) (formerly SP9) – see above.
- ii) In point 4) a) of policy SP6(d), the railway station enhancements should be specifically noted as additional car parking and step-free access to the ‘down’ platform as indicated on page 35 of the Marden Neighbourhood Plan
- iii) In point 4) of policy SP6(d), an extra ‘key infrastructure requirement’ *“e) Measures to reduce, manage and mitigate river, surface water and sewer flooding”* should be added. In addition to more frequent and severe river flooding, a significant worsening of surface water and/or sewer flooding from individual and combined events has been experienced across the parish in recent years. Any new development – of whatever size – in Marden therefore must take specific account of river, surface water and sewer flooding and contribute appropriately to the funding of the infrastructure measures required to reduce, manage and mitigate such events.
- iv) In respect of policy SP6(d), it noted that the ‘HRS Screening Report’ states in Appendix C that “this policy will result in the development of 145 new homes alongside 1000 new homes as part of the Neighbourhood Plan” in error. This reproduces the Policy SP6(c) text for Lenham and should instead read “this policy will result in the development of 113 new homes.”

- v) Should policy SP9 (formerly SP17) be adopted, a review of the extent of the Low Weald landscape of local value should be undertaken because the local landscape character areas '44 Staplehurst Low Weald', '45 Sherenden Wooded Hills' and '57 Teise Valley', as defined in the 'Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment' (2013), are all rightly placed in the 'Conserve' category and thus require additional protection as part of an extended definition.
- vi) In point 4) of policy SP13(a) (formerly ID1), it should be made much clearer that the indicative list of priorities for Section 106 developer contributions can be varied to include specific infrastructure measures required to support policies SP1 to SP10 (e.g. measures required to support an amended policy SP6(d) to reduce river, surface water and sewer flooding in Marden).
- vii) Additionally, should policy SP13(a) be adopted, a review of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan should be undertaken to ensure that the priorities for Community Infrastructure Levy payments also align with these priorities (as varied to support policies such as SP6(d), etc.).
- viii) Should policy SP15 (formerly DM1) be adopted, the further action on page 19 of the Marden Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Marden should be undertaken by MBC in light of the National Planning Policy Framework, latest Historic England guidance, etc.
- ix) In respect of the policies map, the following further actions on pages 36, 42 and 43 of the Marden Neighbourhood Plan should be completed as part of the Local Plan Review:
- To modify the map to encompass the major Highwood Green housing development given planning permission in 2012 and completed in 2017 within the settlement boundary.
 - To modify the map to encompass the light industrial/vehicle repair site at the western most part of the Pattenden Lane industrial/commercial area within the economic development area.
 - To modify the map to show the Church Green part of the Marden district centre.
 - To modify the map to extend the High Street part of the Marden district centre south east to include the Village Club, Stanleys Garage and Marden Tandoori.

Development Management Policies

The Parish Council raises a number of comments and suggestions on the proposed development management policies in Annex E.

Additional comment

The Parish Council notes that there is an error on pages 255 and 266 – Policies LPRSA066 - Land East of Lodge Rd and LPRSA114 – Land at Home Farm should be listed under a 'Staplehurst Site Allocations' heading as they are not located in the parish of Marden.

Yours sincerely

Alison Hooker
Clerk to Marden Parish Council

Marden Parish Council Previous Response to Regulation 19 on site LPRSA295**23/504068/OUT – Land East of Albion Road and Copper Lane, Marden**

Outline application with some matters reserved (access only sought) for the removal of 2 former agricultural sheds and erection of up to 117 dwellings and associate infrastructure including partial footways on Albion Road.

Maidstone Borough Council
Local Plan Review - Regulation 19
10th December 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Review Regulation 19

Marden Parish Council has reviewed Regulation 19 documents for Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Review and supports the spatial strategy and believes the plan is sound and legally compliant.

The Parish Council wishes to make the following comments which are summarised below and explained in more detail on the attached document.

LPRSA295 – Land North of Copper Lane and Albion Road

Marden Parish Council continues to have concerns about site LPRSA295 Land at Copper Lane and Albion Road Marden, for the reasons laid out in the Regulation 18b submission, see attached.

The Parish Council acknowledges that conditions have been applied in the Draft Local Plan to mitigate some of the risks identified in the Parish Council's Regulation 18b submission and have identified further conditions they would like to see applied should this site be included in the approved Local Plan.

Design and layout

- To avoid a detrimental impact on the skyline from Copper Lane and surrounding countryside and to maintain the sensitive boundaries to the south no building should be higher than 2 storeys.

Landscape and ecology

- Landscaping throughout the site should reflect the whole site, not just the sensitive southern boundary
- The layout of the site along all the boundaries should avoid a regimented layout and respect the local character and residential amenity of neighbouring properties and along the sensitive boundaries
- The design of the site should pay special attention to artificial lighting systems to reduce visual intrusion from the countryside and the negative impacts on wildlife

Access, Highways and Transportation

- Safe pedestrian connections to the site along Albion Road, Copper Lane and to link with KM281 needs to be in place before development commences.
- Safe cycling connections to the site along Albion Road and Copper Lane also ought to be in place before development commences.

Open space

- The Marden Infrastructure Spend Plan identifies key deficiencies in the open space of Marden. (See page 4 of accompanying Annex)

LPRSP6(E) Marden

The Parish Council would like to see the following added to the conditions to Policy LPRSP6(E)

Point 2:

- LPRGT1(9) should read LPRGT1(6)

Point 4:**Key infrastructure requirements for Marden****(4)(a)**

- The Marden Infrastructure Spend Plan [MPC Infrastructure Spend Plan - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#); and the Marden Highways Improvement Plan [MPC Highways Improvement Plan - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#) identify key deficiencies in the infrastructure and highway network around Marden.
- The Parish Council is very concerned about flooding and wishes to see conditions applied to mitigate river, surface water and sewer flooding.
- Improvements to cycle access as well as pedestrian access should be included.
- The loss of pubs and restaurants should be resisted as well as local shops, community facilities and green space.

Policy LPRSP10(A) – Housing Mix

- Development should include a sustainable mixed community of affordable housing, local needs housing, housing for the ageing population, Gypsy and Traveller provision and market housing.
- All types of housing developments should meet the optional technical standard of M4(2) and M4(3).

Policy LPRSP13 – Infrastructure Delivery

- All references to transport should be updated to read sustainable transport.

Policies map

Several errors and omissions have been found, which need to be corrected.

Yours faithfully

Alison Hooker

Clerk to Marden Parish Council

cc. Borough Councillor Blackmore, Borough Councillor Burton, Borough Councillor Russell, County Councillor Parfitt-Reid and Helen Grant MP.

Annex A - Marden Parish Council response to the MBC Regulation 18b Preferred Approach Policy LPRSA295 Land North of Copper Lane Marden

		NPPF paragraph	Local Plan Policy	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
Conclusion and summary	<p>Site 295 is considered unsustainable and unsuitable for housing development because.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian connectivity with the village centre is poor • Vehicular access into and out of the site, and through and around the village, would cause significant impacts at a number of locations • The A229 to Maidstone is already heavily congested, and connections to other large towns and the motorway / trunk road network are along narrow, minor country roads • The visual impact of development on this elevated, sloping site will inevitably be far reaching, especially in a wide arc stretching from the southeast to the west • There are limited employment opportunities in Marden, with both car and public transport options for those seeking to work in Maidstone likely to remain poor • Commuting to London by train is likely to be the only option for many, but services are already full during peak periods – with no prospect of increased capacity – and this can only worsen with further housing developments • Access to retail and leisure facilities is constrained in a similar way to employment opportunities • The water, sewerage and electrical systems in Marden are already under great strain, even without any further housing developments • The environmental and ecological impacts would cause irreversible harm • Adversely affects the amenity of the area 	20, 78, 84, 91, 92, 94, 98, 102 to 104, 108, 109, 112, 127, 149, 155, 158, 163, 170, 175, 181, 182, 189 to 183	SP5, SP9, SP17, SP18, SP23, DM1, DM2, DM3, DM4, DM6, DM20, DM21, DM30, ID1	NE1, NE3, NE4, NE5, BE1, In1, In2, In3, In4, A1, A3, A4, E1, E2

Comments relating to conditions in MBC Preferred Approaches document

Access, Highways and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening Copper Lane is not feasible. It is a narrow, single track country lane, with ditches and ponds on both sides of the road. It is subject to flooding <i>(see Figure 5)</i>. • It is not feasible for Copper Lane to be used a bus route for the reasons above plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At the northern end it joins Howland Road which is not suitable as a bus route due the road constraints at Rose and Crown Cottages. • Widening surrounding roads is not feasible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thorn Road and Plain Road are country lanes, with ditches and hedgerows and private land on either side. It would not be cost effective to purchase the land required to widen these roads. ○ Albion Road is residential with private land on both sides of the road. It would not be cost effective to purchase land required to widen this road. • Under the ‘Access to Public Transportation & Services’ assessment, the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) records (with added emphasis): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>“Required mitigation measures unfeasible due to the requirement for 3rd party land, or the requirement to remove existing resident parking (with no apparent alternative) on order to achieve suitable road widths. Site recommended as unsuitable on access grounds.”</i> ○ <i>“Required mitigation unfeasible due to the scale of the site and an insufficient number of units to support a new bus route and the requirement for 3rd party land. Site recommended as unsuitable on sustainability grounds.”</i> • Other conditions Marden Parish Council would prefer to see added <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pedestrian only access to Copper Lane, no vehicular access ○ Provision of a gateway feature at the 30mph limit on Thorn Road ○ The road junction at Plain Road and Thorn Road to be one way around the triangle ○ Provision of a pedestrian island in the centre of High Street and Albion Road junction
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Annex A - Marden Parish Council response to the MBC Regulation 18b Preferred Approach Policy LPRSA295 Land North of Copper Lane Marden

Comments relating to the site

Site Reference: 295	North of Copper Lane	Policy considerations		
		NPPF paragraph	Local Plan policy	Neighbourhood Plan
Physical and social connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are limited pedestrian links to Marden. • Copper Lane is a single-track country lane with no prospect of a footway to link to Thorn Road or Howland Road, and no footways on Thorn Road, Albion Road or Howland Road in the vicinity of the site (see Figure 1). • There are no public footpaths across the site and the minor roads in the vicinity of the site are narrow and unlit. • There is no bus service along Copper Lane, Howland Road or Thorn Road. • The site is not adjacent to the current settlement. 	78, 84, 91, 98, 104, 182	SP5, SP9, SP17, SP23, DM1, DM21	BE1, In2
Highway considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As noted above, Copper Lane is a single-track country lane, with mature trees, established hedgerows, ditches (some deep) and numerous ponds on either side resulting in little prospect of widening it to provide a two-way road (see Figure 1). • There would be significant impacts from additional traffic at the junctions at either end of the lane onto Thorn Road and Howland Road, especially as these are adjacent to substandard bends with restricted sightlines (see Figure 2). • Howland Road is constrained by the blind bend at Rose and Crown Cottages. • The only other option for access to the site would be via Site 314 using Albion Road, but that site is itself considered unsuitable for housing development (see separate assessment). • The capacity of Albion Road and the length of Howland Road within the village envelope is heavily constrained by on-street parking. • For traffic heading to or from the Maidstone, Staplehurst or Yalding directions, there would be significant impacts from additional traffic at the Albion Road / High Street / Howland Road T-junction, at the High Street / B2079 Maidstone Road T-junction and the length of B2079 within the village envelope used for on-street parking. • The A229 to the north of Linton and into Maidstone is also inadequate and already heavily congested, and constraints mean that the planned improvements to the Wheatsheaf roundabout and Linton Crossroads are unlikely to be sufficient to accommodate the additional traffic over the longer term. • Road connections to the west of Marden to amongst others Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Kings Hill are along narrow, minor country roads. Road connections to the east of Staplehurst towards Headcorn and Ashford are equally poor. • Connectivity to the motorway and trunk road network, in whichever direction, is slow and poor along country lanes. • For traffic heading to or from the Goudhurst, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge or Tunbridge Wells directions, there would be significant impacts from additional traffic at the Albion Road / Plain Road / Thorn Road T-junction and at the Thorn Road / B2079 Goudhurst Road / Shephurst Lane crossroads. • Under the 'Access to Public Transportation & Services' assessment, the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) records (with added emphasis): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Required mitigation measures unfeasible due to the requirement for 3rd party land, or the requirement to remove existing resident parking (with no apparent alternative) on order to achieve suitable road widths. Site recommended as unsuitable on access grounds." ○ "Required mitigation unfeasible due to the scale of the site and an insufficient number of units to support a new bus route and the requirement for 3rd party land. Site recommended as unsuitable on sustainability grounds." 	84, 102 to 104, 108, 109, 181	SP23, DM1, DM6, DM21, DM30	In2, In3

Annex A - Marden Parish Council response to the MBC Regulation 18b Preferred Approach Policy LPRSA295 Land North of Copper Lane Marden

Site Reference: 295	North of Copper Lane	Policy considerations		
		NPPF paragraph	Local Plan policy	Neighbourhood Plan
Character and setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is on an elevated, sloping, position and visible across the open fields for some miles, especially in a wide arc stretching from the southeast to the west, which means that any development could not realistically be screened and therefore will inevitably have a harmful impact on the surrounding countryside (see Figures 3 and 4). Even were it feasible, any widening of Copper Lane would result in a significant loss of mature trees, established hedgerows, ditches and numerous ponds on either side, resulting in fundamental impacts to its character and distinctiveness as a 'quiet lane' (see Figures 1 and 3). Under the 'Landscape Character' assessment in the SLAA, it is stated that the <i>"The Landscape Character Assessment identifies that the site is within the Staplehurst Low Weald landscape character area, which forms a part of the Low Weald landscape character type. The overall condition of the area is considered to be Good, and the sensitivity to be High, with an overall recommendation to Conserve."</i> 	127, 170	SP17, SP18, DM1, DM2, DM3, DM30	NE3, NE5
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are three Grade II listed buildings in close proximity to the site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewell House / Bishop House Stone Pit Farmhouse Barn north west of Stone Pit Farmhouse Under the 'Archaeology' assessment in the SLAA, it is recorded that there is <i>"potential for Bronze Age and later prehistoric remains as well as post medieval agrarian heritage remains."</i> 	189 to 193	DM4	BE1
Fluvial and surface water flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Map shows evidence of the surface water flooding on site including the road network, Copper Lane, Howland Road and Thorn Road – proven on the ground (see Figure 5). Under the 'Drainage' assessment in the SLAA, it is recorded that <i>"No watercourses showing up from mapping however that does not mean they are not present. Further investigation needed as to method of discharge."</i> 	155, 158, 163	DM1	NE1
Ecological considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents have reported evidence of RSPB red listed species (yellowhammers, woodpeckers, and fieldfares) on the site. Natural England survey records show great crested newts present in the Copper Lane area. 	175	DM1, DM3	NE4
Education and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are very limited pedestrian links to Marden Primary School, Marden Medical Centre or Marden Dental Surgery, and there are already difficulties reaching Maidstone and Pembury Hospitals and the county town's secondary schools, especially during peak hours and on public transport. Any large-scale development south of the Greensand Ridge can only worsen the existing situation and prove increasingly unattractive to potential residents of the site when combined with the 'baseline' development allocations in the current local plan. 	20, 78, 84, 91, 94	SP5, SP9, DM1, DM20	A1, A3, A4
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are limited local employment opportunities in Marden, and as noted above both car and public transport options for those seeking to work in Maidstone are likely to remain poor. Some employment opportunities may exist in Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells or Ashford, but commuting to London by train is likely to be the only choice for many. Marden railway station is on the Kent Coast route between Tonbridge and Ashford. Direct services are available to Charing Cross (and also Cannon Street at peak times) but these are already at or near 'standing room only' during peak hours with no possibility to extend or run more frequent trains because the line and station capacity limits have been reached. Other large-scale housing developments in Staplehurst, Headcorn, Ashford and East Kent will also be putting increasing pressure on train capacity in future years. Marden station already has severe parking problems in a very constrained area. 	78, 84	SP5, SP9, DM1	In4, E1

Annex A - Marden Parish Council response to the MBC Regulation 18b Preferred Approach Policy LPRSA295 Land North of Copper Lane Marden

Site Reference: 295	North of Copper Lane	Policy considerations		
		NPPF paragraph	Local Plan policy	Neighbourhood Plan
Retail and Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As noted above, there is poor connectivity with the existing retail and leisure options available to residents of Marden. Facilities in the town of Maidstone would be similarly difficult for potential residents of the site to access except by car, and even then, increasingly so during peak periods when the combined impacts of current and future developments in the locality add to existing pressures. However, this site is also unlikely to have the 'critical mass' to support any retail or leisure options within the development itself. 	78, 84, 92, 182	SP5, SP9, DM1, DM20	A1, E2
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marden experiences frequent power cuts during thunderstorms. Impact of additional demand on the existing electrical supply network Gas: No known issues. Water: South East Water has an ongoing programme to renew and strengthen its existing network, but it is not clear whether this will offer the capacity to deal with the individual and cumulative impacts of additional large-scale housing developments. Sewers: The sewerage system in Marden was already under great strain, even before the recently completed housing developments and those currently being completed. Frequent problems occur at the Roughlands pumping station which connects the village with the Horsmonden wastewater treatment works. The existing sewer network also surcharges during periods of heavy rainfall, causing significant health concerns. All these problems would be exacerbated by any further large-scale housing development. Landline: No known issues. Broadband: Ultrafast fibre broadband is becoming available in parts of Marden, but bandwidth problems are common with standard and superfast broadband. Mobile: No 5G coverage in Marden. 4G coverage is variable, depending on network and exact location. 	112, 149	DM1, ID1	In1



Figure 1 - View looking east along Copper Lane showing rural character as a 'quiet line' line by mature trees and established hedges



Figure 2 - View looking north along Thorn Road towards the Albion Road / Plain Road junction, illustrated the restricted sightlines and lack of footways



Figure 3 - View looking north from Copper Lane across Site 295 illustrating one of the many ponds, with Site 314 and the Russet Grove development on the skyline beyond



Figure 4 - View looking north at entrance to Site 295 from Copper Lane, with Site 314 and the Russet Grove development on the skyline beyond



Figure 5 – Various views of repeated recent flooding in Copper Lane – December 2019, February 2020, March 2020 and November 2020

Annex B - Marden Parish Council response to Regulation 18b Preferred Approach Policy LPRSA314 Land east of Albion Road, Marden

		NPPF paragraph	Local Plan Policy	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
Conclusion and summary	<p>Site 314 is considered unsustainable and unsuitable for housing development because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian connectivity with the village centre is poor • Vehicular access into and out of the site, and through and around the village, would cause significant impacts at a number of locations • The A229 to Maidstone is already heavily congested, and connections to other large towns and the motorway / trunk road network are along narrow, minor country roads • The visual impact of development on this elevated site is likely to be far reaching, especially from the south • There are limited employment opportunities in Marden, with both car and public transport options for those seeking to work in Maidstone likely to remain poor • Commuting to London by train is likely to be the only option for many, but services are already full during peak periods – with no prospect of increased capacity – and this can only worsen with further housing developments • Access to retail and leisure facilities is constrained in a similar way to employment opportunities • The water, sewerage and electrical systems in Marden are already under great strain, even without any further housing developments • The environmental and ecological impacts would cause irreversible harm • Adversely affects the amenity of the area 	20, 78, 84, 91, 92, 94, 98, 102 to 104, 108, 109, 112, 127, 149, 170, 175, 181, 182, 189 to 193	SP5, SP9, SP17, SP18, SP23, DM1, DM2, DM3, DM4, DM6, DM20, DM21, DM30, ID1	NE3, NE4, NE5, BE1, In1, In2, In3, In4, A1, A3, A4, E1, E2

Comments relating to conditions in MBC Preferred Approaches document

Access, Highways and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity of Albion Road is heavily constrained by on-street parking. The removal of resident parking in Albion Road, as recommended in the Preferred Approaches document, will only add to congestion in other parts the village as those residents do not have off road parking.. • Under the ‘Access to Public Transportation & Services’ assessment, the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) records (with added emphasis): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>“Required mitigation measures unfeasible due to the requirement for 3rd party land, or the requirement to remove existing resident parking (with no apparent alternative) on order to achieve suitable road widths. Site recommended as unsuitable on access grounds.”</i> ○ <i>“Required mitigation unfeasible due to the scale of the site and an insufficient number of units to support a new bus route and the requirement for 3rd party land. Site recommended as unsuitable on sustainability grounds.”</i> • Other conditions Marden Parish Council would prefer to see added <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pedestrian access to the site from the village centre on the east side of Albion Road to be installed prior to commencement of construction ○ Provision of a gateway feature at the 30mph limit on Thorn Road ○ The road junction at Plain Road and Thorn Road to be one way around the triangle ○ Provision of a pedestrian island in the centre of High Street and Albion Road junction
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Annex B - Marden Parish Council response to Regulation 18b Preferred Approach Policy LPRSA314 Land east of Albion Road, Marden

Comments relating to the site

Site Reference: 314	Rear of The Howlands, Albion Road	Policy considerations		
		NPPF paragraph	Local Plan policy	Neighbourhood Plan
Physical and social connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are very limited pedestrian links to the village, with no footways on the east side of Albion Road south of Seymour Drive or south of Jewell Grove on the west side (see Figures 1 and 2). • There are no public footpaths across the site, and Footpath KM281 on the opposite side of Albion Road from the site (linking with the 'Windsor Meadow' development) is unsurfaced and very narrow between high hedges (see Figure 3). • Albion Road, in the vicinity of the site, is narrow and unlit south of Jewell Grove. • There is a very limited daytime bus service along Albion Road, with no buses on Sundays. • The site is adjacent to the new development at Russet Grove (reference: MA 17/504754) currently under construction but there appears to be no provision for a pedestrian connection between the two sites. 	78, 84, 91, 98, 104, 182	SP5, SP9, SP17, SP23, DM1, DM21	BE1, In2
Highway considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As noted above, Albion Road is narrow, unlit south of Jewell Grove and has no footway on the east side south of Seymour Drive (see Figures 1 and 2). • For all traffic movements, there would be a significant impact from additional traffic entering and leaving the site from/to Albion Road. • The capacity of Albion Road is heavily constrained by on-street parking. The removal of resident parking in Albion Road, as recommended in the Draft Preferred Approach document on page 179, will only add to congestion in other parts the village as those residents do not have off road parking. • For traffic heading to or from the Maidstone, Staplehurst or Yalding directions, there would be significant impacts from additional traffic at the Albion Road / High Street / Howland Road T-junction, at the High Street / B2079 Maidstone Road T-junction and the length of B2079 within the village envelope used for on-street parking. • The A229 to the north of Linton and into Maidstone is also inadequate and already heavily congested, and constraints mean that the planned improvements to the Wheatsheaf roundabout and Linton Crossroads are unlikely to be sufficient to accommodate the additional traffic over the longer term. • Road connections to the west of Marden to amongst others Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Kings Hill are along narrow, minor country roads. Road connections to the east of Staplehurst towards Headcorn and Ashford are equally poor. • Connectivity to the motorway and trunk road network, in whichever direction, is slow and poor along country lanes. • For traffic heading to or from the Goudhurst, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge or Tunbridge Wells directions, there would be significant impacts from additional traffic at the Albion Road / Plain Road / Thorn Road T-junction and at the Thorn Road / B2079 Goudhurst Road / Shephurst Lane crossroads. • Under the 'Access to Public Transportation & Services' assessment, the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) records (with added emphasis): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>"Site recommended as unsuitable on access grounds due to the need to remove existing resident parking, with no alternative apparent, or for 3rd party land to widen the road, in order to provide suitable access to the primary road network."</i> ○ <i>"Required mitigation measures unfeasible due to insufficient site scale to achieve increased bus service regularity, even when considered collectively with adjacent sites 295 and 269. Site recommended as unsuitable on sustainability grounds."</i> 	84, 102 to 104, 108, 109, 181	SP23, DM1, DM6, DM21, DM30	In2, In3

Annex B - Marden Parish Council response to Regulation 18b Preferred Approach Policy LPRSA314 Land east of Albion Road, Marden

Site Reference: 314	Rear of The Howlands, Albion Road	Policy considerations		
		NPPF paragraph	Local Plan policy	Neighbourhood Plan
Character and setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is on an elevated position and visible on the skyline across the open fields (depending on season) from Copper Lane, Thorn Road and Marden Thorn, which means that any development will have the potential for harmful impact on the surrounding countryside (see Figure 4). Under the 'Landscape Character' assessment in the SLAA, it is stated that the <i>"The Landscape Character Assessment identifies that the site is within the Staplehurst Low Weald landscape character area, which forms a part of the Low Weald landscape character type. The overall condition of the area is considered to be Good, and the sensitivity to be High, with an overall recommendation to Conserve."</i> 	127, 170	SP17, SP18, DM1, DM2, DM3, DM30	NE3, NE5
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are three Grade II listed buildings in close proximity to the site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewell House / Bishop House Stone Pit Farmhouse Barn north west of Stone Pit Farmhouse Under the 'Archaeology' assessment in the SLAA, it is recorded that there is <i>"potential for Bronze Age and later prehistoric remains as well as post medieval agrarian heritage remains."</i> 	189 to 193	DM4	BE1
Fluvial and surface water flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No known flood risk issues. Under the 'Drainage' assessment in the SLAA, it is recorded that <i>"No watercourses showing up from mapping however that does not mean they are not present. Further investigation needed as to method of discharge."</i> 			
Ecological considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents have reported evidence of Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (BoCC 4) red listed species (yellowhammers, woodpeckers, and fieldfares) on the site. Under the 'Ecology (including ponds)' assessment in the SLAA, it is recorded that <i>"GCN have been recorded within the surrounding area so may be present. The rough grassland/scrub area may provide suitable habitat for reptiles."</i> 	175	DM1, DM3	NE4
Education and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are limited pedestrian links to Marden Primary School, Marden Medical Centre or Marden Dental Surgery, and there are already difficulties reaching Maidstone and Pembury Hospitals and the county town's secondary schools, especially during peak hours and on public transport. Any large-scale development south of the Greensand Ridge can only worsen the existing situation and prove increasingly unattractive to potential residents of the site when combined with the 'baseline' development allocations in the current local plan. 	20, 78, 84, 91, 94	SP5, SP9, DM1, DM20	A1, A3, A4
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are limited local employment opportunities in Marden, and as noted above both car and public transport options for those seeking to work in Maidstone are likely to remain poor. Some employment opportunities may exist in Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells or Ashford, but commuting to London by train is likely to be the only choice for many. Marden railway station is on the Kent Coast route between Tonbridge and Ashford. Direct services are available to Charing Cross (and also Cannon Street at peak times) but these are already at or near 'standing room only' during peak hours with no possibility to extend or run more frequent trains because the line and station capacity limits have been reached. Other large-scale housing developments in Staplehurst, Headcorn, Ashford and East Kent will also be putting increasing pressure on train capacity in future years. Marden station already has severe parking problems in a very constrained area. 	78, 84	SP5, SP9, DM1	In4, E1

Annex B - Marden Parish Council response to Regulation 18b Preferred Approach Policy LPRSA314 Land east of Albion Road, Marden

Site Reference: 314	Rear of The Howlands, Albion Road	Policy considerations		
		NPPF paragraph	Local Plan policy	Neighbourhood Plan
Retail and Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As noted above, there is poor connectivity with the existing retail and leisure options available to residents of Marden. Facilities in the town of Maidstone would be similarly difficult for potential residents of the site to access except by car, and even then, increasingly so during peak periods when the combined impacts of current and future developments in the locality add to existing pressures. However, this site is also unlikely to have the 'critical mass' to support any retail or leisure options within the development itself. 	78, 84, 92, 182	SP5, SP9, DM1, DM20	A1, E2
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marden experiences frequent power cuts during thunderstorms. Impact of additional demand on the existing electrical supply network Gas: No known issues. Water: South East Water has an ongoing programme to renew and strengthen its existing network, but it is not clear whether this will offer the capacity to deal with the individual and cumulative impacts of additional large-scale housing developments. Sewers: The sewerage system in Marden was already under great strain, even before the recently completed housing developments and those currently being completed. Frequent problems occur at the Roughlands pumping station which connects the village with the Horsmonden wastewater treatment works. The existing sewer network also surcharges during periods of heavy rainfall, causing significant health concerns. All these problems would be exacerbated by any further large-scale housing development. Landline: No known issues. Broadband: Ultrafast fibre broadband is becoming available in parts of Marden, but bandwidth problems are common with standard and superfast broadband. Mobile: No 5G coverage in Marden. 4G coverage is variable, depending on network and exact location. Under the 'Utilities' assessment in the SLAA, it is recorded that unspecified utilities are present and that <i>"The developer should ensure that appropriate consultation with the underground utilities operator take place."</i> 	112, 149	DM1, ID1	In1



Figure 1 - View of Albion Road looking north from entrance to The Howlands illustrating narrow width and lack of footways



Figure 2 - View of Albion Road looking south from junction with Seymour Drive illustrating narrow width and end of existing footway on eastern side



Figure 3 - View of Footpath KM281 looking east towards Albion Road illustrating narrow width between high hedges and unmade surface



Figure 4 - View from Thorn Road looking northeast towards Site 314 with new housing in the Russet Grove development on skyline beyond

ANNEX

Marden Parish Council – Regulation 19 response

Policy LPRSA295 Land at Copper Lane and Albion Road Marden

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
Design and layout			
The two adjacent land parcels shall be designed and delivered through a joint masterplan with a single point of access to Albion Road and a joint strategy for open space provision	MPC considered Copper Lane to be inappropriate for vehicular access except for emergency vehicle access.	Para 104, 110	In3 – Traffic generation
Lower densities should be located adjacent to sensitive boundaries.	To avoid a detrimental impact on the skyline from Copper Lane and surrounding countryside and to maintain the sensitive boundaries to the south no building should be higher than 2 storeys	Section 12 para 130(b), (c)	BE1 – Local Character BE3 – Sustainable Construction
The south part of the site around the existing ponds shall be kept free of development with new landscaping to soften and break views from the south.			
Development should be integrated into the slope on the site to minimise landscape impact.			
Design of the site will need to ensure neighbouring resident’s amenity is protected			
Site design and layout shall be informed by a local historic impact assessment.			

ANNEX

Marden Parish Council – Regulation 19 response

Policy LPRSA295 Land at Copper Lane and Albion Road Marden

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
Landscape and ecology			
A phase 1 habitat survey will be required, which may as a result require on and/or off site mitigation for the existing habitat of local fauna/flora.		Section 15	NE4 – Biodiversity and Habitats
Structural landscaping will be required throughout the site to soften and break up the impact of built development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed landscaping throughout the site should reflect the whole site, not just the sensitive southern boundary • The layout of the site along all the boundaries should avoid a regimented layout and respect the local character and residential amenity of neighbouring properties and along the sensitive boundaries • The design of the site should pay special attention to artificial lighting systems to reduce visual intrusion from the countryside and the negative impacts on wildlife 	Sections 2 and 15	BE1 – Local Character BE2 – Residential Amenity NE3 – Landscape Integration NE5 – Landscape Planting NE6 – Soil Conservation
Structural landscaping will be required along the south edge to soften and break up the impact of built development in views from the south.			
Existing tree/hedge site boundaries shall be retained and enhanced apart from where required for vehicular or pedestrian access.			
The site’s design should have regard to the setting of the High Weald AONB.			
Development will be subject to a site-wide strategy to incorporate an appropriate level of biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local policy.	The recently passed Environment Act 2021 now states a 10% net gain in biodiversity values as a condition.		NE4 – Biodiversity and Habitats

ANNEX

Marden Parish Council – Regulation 19 response

Policy LPRSA295 Land at Copper Lane and Albion Road Marden

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
Access, Highways and transportation			
Provision of suitable vehicular access to Albion Road that meet adequate capacity standards and safety provisions.	MPC considered Copper Lane to be inappropriate for vehicular access except for emergency vehicle access. MPC raised concerns at Reg 18b re constraints on Albion Road re on street parking for properties that have no off-street parking provision	Section 9	In2 – Sustainable Travel In3 – Traffic Generation
Development will be subject to the creation of safe pedestrian connections to the wider pedestrian network.	Safe pedestrian connections to the site along Albion Road, Copper Lane and to link with KM281 needs to be in place before development commences Safe cycling connections to the site along Albion Road and Copper Lane also ought to be in place before development commences.	Section 9: Paras 104, 105, 106	

Open space			
Provision of new open space on site in accordance with Policy LPRSP13 & LPRINF1. Provision shall include not less than 1.25 ha of open space, with typologies in accordance with Policy LPRSP13. The strategy shall ensure that areas designed to support biodiversity net gain shall not be publicly accessible		Section 8	A2 – Open Space
Not less than 0.3 useable green open space shall be provided, incorporating children’s play to meet the needs of the development.			

ANNEX

Marden Parish Council – Regulation 19 response

Policy LPRSA295 Land at Copper Lane and Albion Road Marden

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
The function and quality of any open space shall not be prejudiced by a dual requirement to provide surface water drainage mitigation.		Section 8	NE1 – Surface Water Management
Where it is not feasible, due to site characteristics, to provide an appropriate level of on-site open space in accordance with Policy SP13(B), the scheme shall make appropriate financial contributions towards off-site provision targeted at known deficiencies in the area.	See Marden Infrastructure Spend Plan: MPC Infrastructure Spend Plan - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge (mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)		
Utilities Infrastructure			
The Applicant to demonstrate that adequate connections to the nearest points of the network are achievable and that adequate capacity exists/can be created for all utilities.	The water, sewage and electrical systems in Marden are already under great strain, without any further housing developments	Section 2, Para 8; Para 11	In1 – Water Supply and Sewerage NE1 – Surface Water Management
Where there may be limited capacity in the utility network, the occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of infrastructure.			

ANNEX

Marden Parish Council Regulation 19 response

Policy LPRSP6(E) Marden

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
1) In addition to minor development and redevelopment of appropriate sites in accordance with policy LPRSP6, approximately 124 new dwellings will be delivered on site H1 (46), and 113 on LPRSA295.			
2) Two pitches are allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in accordance with policy LPRGT1(9).	LPRGT1(9) should read LPRGT1(6)		In7 – Housing for Gypsies and Travellers
3) One existing site is designated as an Economic Development Area in order to maintain employment opportunities in the locality (policy LPRSP11a), and a further 4,084m2 employment floorspace is allocated on one site (policy LPREMP1(2)).	Unclear as to where the economic development area is. The colour Key to maps is ambiguous and difficult to view.	Section 8 para 93	E1 – Business and Employment
4) Key infrastructure requirements for Marden include:	Cycle access should be included as well as improvements to pedestrian access In point 4a) 'and cycle' should be inserted between pedestrian and access	Paras 104, 110	In2 – Sustainable Travel In4 – Marden Station

ANNEX

Marden Parish Council Regulation 19 response

Policy LPRSP6(E) Marden

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
<p>a) Improvements to highway and transport infrastructure including railway station enhancements, a variety of measures to improve sustainable transport infrastructure, and improvements to pedestrian access in accordance with individual site criteria set out in policies H1(46), LPRSA295 and LPRSA314;</p>	<p>See Marden Infrastructure Spend Plan MPC Infrastructure Spend Plan - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge (mardenkent-pc.gov.uk) for details of infrastructure improvements needed in Marden and Marden Highways Improvement Plan at MPC Highways Improvement Plan - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge (mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)</p> <p><u>Flooding - Sewage</u> Sewerage system under great strain with frequent problems occurring at the Roughlands pumping station which connects the village with the Horsmonden wastewater treatment works. The existing sewer network also surcharges during periods of heavy rainfall, causing significant health concerns.</p> <p><u>Flooding - Surface Water</u> <u>Flooding – Fluvial</u></p>	<p>Section 9: Paras 104, 105, 106</p>	<p>In1 – Water Supply and Sewerage NE1 – Surface Water Management NE2 – Water Quality</p>
<p>b) Provision of 0.6 form entry expansion at Marden Primary School;</p>			<p>A3 – Primary Education</p>

ANNEX**Marden Parish Council Regulation 19 response
Policy LPRSP6(E) Marden**

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
c) Improvements to open space which improve overall quality, and address forecast deficits of in 0.9Ha play, 3.3Ha sports, 0.9Ha allotment, and 27.4Ha natural/semi-natural green space; and			A2 – Open Space
d) Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Marden Medical Centre			A4 – Healthcare Facilities
5) The loss of local shops, community facilities and green spaces will be resisted, and new retail development, community services and open space will be supported to meet local needs in accordance with policy LPRSP11c	The loss of pubs and restaurants should also be resisted “pubs and restaurants” should be inserted after “shops”.		A1 – Community Facilities E2 – Retail Development

ANNEX**Marden Parish Council Regulation 19 response****Policy LPRSP10(A) – Housing Mix**

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
Maidstone Borough Council will seek to ensure the delivery of sustainable mixed communities across new housing developments and within existing housing areas throughout the borough.	<p>Development should include a sustainable mixed community of affordable housing, local needs housing, housing for the ageing population, Gypsy and Traveller and market housing.</p> <p>All types of housing developments should meet the optional technical standard of M4(2) and M4(3)</p>	Section 5 para 62, 63, 64, 65 Section 6 para 78	In5 – Affordable Housing In6 – Housing for Older People In7 – Housing for Gypsies and Travellers

ANNEX**Marden Parish Council Regulation 19 response****Policy LPRSP10(A) – Housing Mix**

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
On major housing development sites or mixed-use development sites where 10 or more dwellings will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more, the council will require the delivery of affordable housing	An appropriate percentage of M4(2) and M4(3) standards should be met	Section 5 para 62, 63, 64, 65 Section 6 para 78	In5 – Affordable Housing In6 – Housing for Older People In7 – Housing for Gypsies and Travellers

ANNEX

Marden Parish Council Regulation 19 response

Policy LPRSP13 – Infrastructure Delivery

Reg 19 conditions	Marden Parish Council comments	NPPF paragraph	Marden Neighbourhood Plan
<p>4. Where there are competing demands for contributions towards the delivery of infrastructure, secured through section 106 legal agreements, the council will prioritise these demands in the manner listed below: Infrastructure priorities for residential development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Affordable housing ii) Transport iii) Open Space iv) Education v) Health vi) Community facilities vii) Public realm viii) Waste Management ix) Public Services & x) Libraries 	<p>ii) Transport – should read “sustainable transport”</p>	<p>Section 9: Paras 104, 105, 106</p>	<p>In2 – Sustainable Travel</p>
<p>Infrastructure priorities for business and retail development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Transport ii) Public realm iii) Open Space & iv) Education/Skills 	<p>i) Transport – should read “sustainable transport”</p>	<p>Section 9: Paras 104, 105, 106</p>	<p>In2 – Sustainable Travel</p>

ANNEX

Marden Parish Council Regulation 19 response

Policies map page 42 Marden

- The EMP1(3) site in the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017 should be shown as part of the Economic Development Area
- The settlement boundary should be extended to encompass the Highwood Green housing development (site FA1 in the adopted Marden Neighbourhood Plan 2019) given planning permission in 2012 and completed in 2017
- The FA2 site in the adopted Marden Neighbourhood Plan 2019 should be shown as part of the Economic Development Area
- The local district centre designation should include the additional FA3 and FA4 sites shown in the adopted Marden Neighbourhood Plan 2019
- The field to the east of Thorn Road and to the west of LPRSA295 should not be included in the settlement boundary as currently agricultural land and not subject to any allocation in Regulation 19. (see map below). Settlement boundary should not include this area.
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