

Template responses to Maidstone Borough Council's Regulation 19 Local Plan Review

This objection will be for the Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to approve (or not) the proposed Local Plan by Maidstone Borough Council.

Start with 'I am objecting to Policy Number LPRSP4 (b): Lidsing Garden Community for the following reasons: then add any or all of the suggestions below.

It contravenes Policy LPRSS1 - Spatial Vision and objectives in the Local Plan for the following reasons:

- It destroys rather than conserves the Kent Downs AONB by putting a new access road through part of it to access the M2 at Junction 4..
- The development will be visually intrusive from the AONB
- Rather than 'maintain the distinct character and identity of villages and urban area' it turns the 13 house hamlet of Lidsing into a 2,000 house community, an increase of 150000%.
- It creates an urban sprawl and joins Maidstone to Medway and does not 'avoid coalescence between settlements and Maidstone and the Medway Gap/Medway towns conurbation'.

Ecological*

- The loss of a greenfield site that forms part of the setting to the Kent AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).
- Damage to wildlife and flora species contrary to paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- It contravenes paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework in that it will lead to a net loss of biodiversity.
- The area is part of the 'protected' Medway Gap which was designed to separate the dense urban areas of Walderslade, Lordswood and Hempstead.

Traffic**

- Inadequate local road network that does not cope with current levels of traffic. (Lidsing will bring an estimated 10-12,000 traffic movements/day).
- Increase in rat-running through Boxley Village. BPC consultation with KCC Highways resulted in the answer 'nothing can be done to prevent this other than building a by-pass'.
- Construction traffic during the development phase using narrow county lanes. No routes for construction traffic put forward.
- Further impacts on traffic from the Lower Thames Crossing, Gibraltar Farm and East Hill developments that have not been taken into account.

Objections by Medway Council

MBC has a legal duty of care to co-operate with neighbouring authorities. Medway have objected to this proposal on account of transport impact, impacts on the environment, sustainability, social infrastructure, landscape impact, impact on the purple hills SSSI and on the Kent AONB. In their statement of common ground MBC stated that 'this is a critical cross border strategic development that will require close working between MBC and Medway Council so that benefits are maximised and negative impacts minimised. Medway Council are opposed to the development, so their views have not been taken into account by MBC. This is not duty of care to co-operate.

Social Infrastructure

- Local schools are already oversubscribed. Have you had difficulty accessing a local school?
- Local Health services are already overstretched. Do you struggle to get Doctors/Dental appointments?
- Medway Hospital is one of the most over capacity hospitals in the country and due to site constraints will not be able to expand to meet demand.

Employment

Part of the Lidsing site is for business units. Are these needed? Will they be used? And who by? There are vacant units at Rochester Airport, Lordswood and Gillingham Business Park. These are all within 3 miles of Lidsing and have good access to the A2.

Protected Water Zone

Lidsing is on a protected water zone as per Maidstone Stage 1 Surface Waste Management Plan 2013 produced by JBA for KCC. How is this going to be managed and protected?

* You can comment from personal experience as to what will be destroyed when this development is built. Do you walk in Capstone Valley? How will your view be changed?

** You can comment from personal experience of the roads you use daily as to how the additional traffic would affect you.