

Sevenoaks Local Plan Regulation 18 (Part 2) Consultation.
Kent County Council Response (January 2024)

Policy/Paragraph	Commentary
	<p>Kent County Council (hereafter referred to as the County Council) appreciates the challenges that exist within Sevenoaks in respect of the Greenbelt areas meeting the housing requirement, the significant increase in delivery of homes required compared with the adopted Local Plan and the necessary infrastructure that will be required to support this growth. The County Council notes that this consultation follows on from the previous Regulation 18 consultation, to which the County Council provided a response on 11 January 2023.</p> <p>The County Council is committed to working with the District Council and other key stakeholders to ensure that sustainable growth is delivered to meet the identified housing need, supported by necessary infrastructure – that is planned for, funded and delivered in a timely manner, ahead of housing / commercial growth where required. The County Council therefore welcomes the recognition within the Local Plan of the need for infrastructure to be delivered ahead of development commencement and would welcome continued joint working to secure this. This will ensure an ‘Infrastructure First’ approach to development. The County Council welcomes acknowledgement within this Local Plan consultation document of the need to provide additional infrastructure to support the delivery of new housing. To deliver sustainable development within the district, close working and a collaborative approach with all key stakeholders will be crucial – taking in to account all necessary infrastructure and services required to deliver robust and resilient communities during the plan period and beyond– whilst also considering any cross boundary, strategic implications of growth.</p> <p>The County Council recognises that the District Council has adopted the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and wishes to work with the District Council to ensure that infrastructure is funded appropriately and adequately. The County Council has been vocal in its concerns with the CIL, the processes to secure contributions and whether this mechanism is able to secure the necessary contributions to deliver necessary infrastructure. Within this response, the County Council recognises the steps taken by the District Council in relation to education provision and the CIL, however, the County Council continues to challenge the level of contribution which can be secured through the CIL, especially for large scale strategic sites, such as the proposals at Pedham Place, and for infrastructure / services which are evolving in their delivery, such as Adult Social Care. The County Council wishes to work with the District Council in considering how adequate development contributions to deliver necessary infrastructure can be secured through the sites proposed through this Local Plan and would welcome continued engagement on this matter.</p> <p>As the Local Plan progresses, the County Council would value timely engagement in the shaping and inputting, as appropriate, into the draft Statement of Common Ground to ensure that all cross-boundary and strategic matters are properly and clearly addressed.</p>
<p>Introduction</p>	
<p>Healthcare, Education and Retail</p>	<p><u>Education</u></p> <p>The County Council notes that the Local Plan consultation document states <i>“Many children are being sent outside of the District”</i>. However, the majority of children choose their secondary school by expressing a preference – it would therefore be more accurate to state that many children <u>choose a school that is</u> outside of the District.</p>
<p>Vision and Objectives</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>In respect of Vision 7 and ensuring the delivery of sustainable, high quality and resilient infrastructure, the County Council continues to raise concerns about the current CIL process operated by the District Council whereby infrastructure providers are required to bid for schemes which have previously been assessed as necessary to facilitate sustainable growth and mitigate a severe impact. The County Council considers that this process restricts the adequate funding of key infrastructure that is necessary to support growth.</p> <p>The County Council strongly recommends that where mitigation is required because of the impact of a development, this is delivered by the developer at their risk and this should be set out within the Local Plan – ensuring the risk of infrastructure delivery doesn’t fall solely on the infrastructure provider. Without this clarity in the Local Plan, the County Council considers that there is a significant risk that essential schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will not be delivered. This is also the case where developers are allowed to make a section 106 contribution to the County Council, which then passes the risk to the County Council to deliver the scheme. The County Council will only accept section 106 contributions where sites are a significant distance from the development and where there are several developments, each producing an impact to be mitigated at the same location, where County Council cost consultants have been used to identify the required contribution and there is an appropriate allowance within the budget to cover risk of cost increases dependent on the level of investigation undertaken as design work progresses.</p>

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<p>Table 1 – Vision and Objectives</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council continues to raise concerns that the CIL bidding process is a barrier in the delivery of infrastructure schemes which have already been identified as necessary to mitigate the impact of development. There should be a presumption that schemes necessary to mitigate the impact of a development should be delivered by the developer and at their risk rather than that of the infrastructure provider. The County Council would ask that the Local Plan include policies to cover these key issues.</p> <p><u>Public Rights of Way and Access (PRoW)</u></p> <p>As a general statement, the County Council is keen to ensure its interests are represented with respect to its statutory duty to protect and improve PRoW in the County. The County Council is committed to working in partnership with local and neighbouring authorities, councils and others to achieve the aims contained within the County Council’s Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) and the County Council’s ‘Framing Kent’s Future’ strategy for 2022-2026.</p> <p>PRoW is the generic term for Public Footpaths, Public Bridleways, Restricted Byways, and Byways Open to All Traffic. The addition of PRoW within the Glossary is welcome; however, it is recommended statuses of these four paths, provided above, are specifically stated as these are the terms most people are familiar with and so will avoid doubt or misunderstanding. The PRoW network serves a broad range of users and delivers diverse benefits - often considered a recreational network of paths for personal health and wellbeing, it is also a means for: people to access services and workplaces, a safer alternative to local roads, offers sustainable transport opportunities so improving local air quality, supports many aspects of local (often rural) economies, and fosters community cohesiveness and interaction. The County Council recognises that PRoW is relevant to the Plan’s Vision Statements V1, V2, V3 and V7; and Objectives OB1, OB5, OB7, OB17 and OB19.</p> <p>The PRoW network is a key element in how Sevenoaks District will develop to 2040 and, likely, beyond. The County Council intends for people to enjoy, amongst others, a high quality of life with opportunities for an active and healthy lifestyle, improved environments for people and wildlife, and the availability of sustainable transport choices; and, therefore, expects the Plan to give prominence to PRoW and improvement to the network during its duration.</p>
<p>Chapter 1: Development Strategy</p>	
<p>Development Strategy</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, welcomes and supports the approach taken by the District Council to identify and prioritise development sites in locations where it is possible to walk and cycle to key facilities, and where necessary improvements can be delivered in accordance with design standards such as LTN 1/20 for Cycling. The County Council is also supportive of allocations where public transport services are commercially viable or have the prospect of becoming commercially viable with ‘up front’ developer contributions to improve routes and services.</p>
<p>Regulation – Part One – Settlements</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, welcomes and supports the approach taken by the District Council to prioritise developments within and around existing settlements where these offer opportunities for journeys to be undertaken sustainably on foot, by bike or on public transport.</p>
<p>Table 1.4 Pedham Place – Further Information</p>	<p>The County Council would welcome engagement with the District Council should this strategic site be pursued, this is to ensure that the infrastructure required to support the new settlement is planned for from the outset, with adequate funding mechanisms identified, and a programme of infrastructure delivery established. The County Council notes that a site at this quantum will need to deliver considerable a range of infrastructure, and therefore the County Council would welcome continued engagement to address this challenge and ensure the site remains viable and deliverable if it is to be pursued.</p> <p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, notes that Pedham Place is the only site submitted which has the potential scale to accommodate a ‘stand alone’ settlement. The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, has significant concerns with the location of the settlement. The proximity to the M25 creates a barrier for sustainable transport journeys by foot, bike or public transport and will make it more likely that this will become car orientated. For this significant size of development, the proposal must include the provision of</p>

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	<p>high-quality sustainable infrastructure up front and in accordance with the hierarchy set out in the transport section of the plan, measures to sustain public transport services, a good mix of land uses to contribute to the 'internalisation' of trips will all be essential to counter this outcome. All of these measures will need to be brought together in a comprehensive Masterplan. The County Council would therefore welcome further engagement on this site with both the District Council and any site promotor regarding necessary mitigation to ensure that suitable sustainable transport and active travel opportunities are secured through the Local Plan and delivered. The County Council also draws attention to the need for National Highways to be engaged. The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, will constructively engage with parties to ensure any scheme which may be brought forward is appropriate and the County Council looks forward to understanding and contributing to the proposed mitigation measures which may be brought forward as part of the Local Plan.</p>
<p>Policy ST1 – A Balanced Strategy for Growth</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, recommends the following additional text within this policy:</p> <p><i>There will be a particular focus on sites that are close to services and facilities and/or well-connected by public transport, walking and cycling, <u>and with the potential for these to be further improved.</u></i></p>
<p>Consultation Questions</p> <p>1. Which is your preferred option? a) Option 1 – Baseline plus AONB sites on the edge of settlements b) Option 2 – Baseline plus standalone settlement c) Option 3 – Combined approach of all the above d) None of the above 2. Please explain your answer</p>	<p>The County Council would welcome continued engagement as the growth options and proposed allocations are considered and developed to ensure they are support by adequate infrastructure.</p> <p><u>Development Investment</u></p> <p>The County Council would prefer the development of areas of the district where the combined quantum of development sites will more adequately support the future development of necessary infrastructure to support communities – infrastructure than can be planned for, funded and delivered in a timely manner.</p> <p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, have preference to Option 1 where the sites on the edge of settlements can be well served by sustainable transport options. If this is not the case, then Option 2 would be preferable where the stand-alone settlement is of sufficient scale and mix of land uses to fund significant investment in infrastructure to enable the development to meet sustainable objectives.</p>
<p>Policy ST2 – Housing and Mixed Use Site Allocations</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, looks forward to continuing to work with the District Council to ensure that allocated sites within the Local Plan can be suitably and safely accessed from the public highway, where good quality footways and cycle routes and crossing points in accordance with latest design standards exist or can be implemented and extended to the development site. Allocated sites should also have access to good quality public transport services or be where services can be suitably improved to provide a realistic alternative to a car journey, and where capacity is available on the network or where this can be improved in accordance with emerging transport policies.</p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, raises considerable concern relating to the insufficient information provided at this stage to determine whether issues with the sites within this policy can be overcome. The County Council would therefore strongly recommend that further engagement is carried out with the County Council, as Local Highway Authority, as these sites are assessed for their suitability as allocations within the Local Plan.</p> <p><i>MX10 Land at Breezehurst Farm</i></p> <p>This site is potentially in an unsustainable location – the County Council is concerned whether sustainable transport opportunities can be offered to Edenbridge Rail Station, alongside other local amenities and employment. At present, access only appears to be via Crouch House Road, and this could result in the development having a high reliance on car travel. The County Council also raises concerns relating to pinchpoints on Crouch House Road (rail bridge with height restriction) and insufficient railway bridge widths on Hilders Lane, Grants Lane and Dwelly Lane which could affect construction and public transport connections to the site and wider amenities. Safe and suitable access should be further assessed.</p>

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	<p><i>MX9 Land off Fairmead Road</i></p> <p>Fairmead Road does not appear to be adopted by the County Council, this will need to be addressed.</p> <p><i>HO25 Land to the west of Manor Lane, Hartley</i></p> <p>The site has a lack of safe and suitable access and is isolated from sustainable transport connections and local amenities.</p> <p><i>HO29 Brittain's Lane, Kippington</i></p> <p>The County Council notes that there is a need to understand traffic generated by the site on Brittain's Lane / Oak Lane, and Brittain's Lane / A224 London Road junctions and that safe and suitable access is available to the site and wider amenities.</p> <p><i>HO28 Land between Back Lane and the A21, Bessels Green</i></p> <p>The County Council is concerned regarding the lack of visibility splay for B2042 Cold Arbor Road when at A25 junction looking south-west bound. This will be intensified by development and increase in traffic which causes a potential safety concern.</p> <p><i>MX15 Pedham Place (possible Wasps site west of M25)</i></p> <p>The County Council raises the need for safe and suitable access to be secured to both Pedham Place and the possible Wasps site currently lack active travel links. Possible development to the west of M25 will also have a pinch point due to Wested Lane railway bridge, this must be further considered by the District Council. It is also noted by the County Council that bus services will also struggle to serve the western development in its current form.</p> <p><i>HO14 Land at Lullingstone Avenue, Swanley</i></p> <p>The County Council notes the uncertainty that the full extent of Lullingstone Avenue is adopted by the County Council – this will need to be addressed.</p> <p>The above comments should not prejudice the County Council, as Local Highway Authority, if other highway issues arise during the planning process for these or other sites which may be put forward for allocation within the Local Plan.</p> <p>The County Council notes that the Kent Transport Model (KTM) is being utilised by the District Council and this will provide a transport evidence base to inform decisions over capacity for housing and employment site locations and quantities.</p> <p><u>Minerals and Waste</u></p> <p>It is noted that the Sevenoaks Local Plan period is coincident with the proposed full review KMWLP 2024-39.</p> <p>The County Council, as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, notes that this policy contains a number of sites where safeguarded land-won minerals occur, these are:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Sevenoaks Area Baseline Sites</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">M4 Sevenoaks Quarry, Bat and Ball Road 950 units-coincident with Folkestone Formation</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Westerham (Option 1 Sites)</i></p>

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	<p>HO31 Land East of Croydon Road (Southern parcel), Westerham 82 units-coincident with Folkestone Formation</p> <p>HO32 Land East of Croydon Road (Northern parcel), Westerham 76 units-coincident with Folkestone Formation</p> <p><i>Sevenoaks Urban Area (Option 1 Sites)</i></p> <p>HO28 Land between Black Lane and A21, Bessels Green 183 units-coincident with Hythe Formation (46.15%), Folkestone Formation (20.95%)</p> <p>HO29 Brittain's Lane, Kippington, Sevenoaks 300 units-coincident with Hythe Formation</p> <p>MX13 Land at Moat Farm, off Homedean Road, Chipstead 70 units-coincident with Hythe Formation River Terrace Deposits (17.26%), Folkestone Formation (100%)</p> <p>Allocation site M4 is an operational quarry, and it is understood that full extraction of the permitted reserves by the current operator would be carried out prior to any non-mineral related development. The County Council would ask that this is recognised by the Local Plan.</p> <p>The other sites all have a degree of coincidence with safeguarded land-won minerals (Policy CSM 5: Land-won Mineral Safeguarding of the KMWLP).</p> <p>The County Council, as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, strongly recommends that the District Council, as part of further assessment of the sites prior to a Regulation 19 consultation, should fully assess these sites as to their effect on the safeguarded minerals (if prior extraction of the minerals is not envisaged as part of their development). If an exemption to the presumption to safeguard is then considered appropriate, there should be a fully evidenced Minerals Assessment (MA) that demonstrates why any of the exemption criteria of Policy DM 7: Safeguarding Mineral Resources can apply. The potential for significant sterilisation of a strategic aggregate mineral (Folkestone Formation) is of concern, Kent is a significant area for the supply of this mineral, not only for Kent's needs but other areas in the Southeast where this important mineral is either absent or significantly constrained by such designations as Natural Landscapes and National Park designation. Therefore, it is considered that there may well be a case for a degree of prior extraction of some, if not all, the coincident sites discussed above.</p>
<p>Sevenoaks Railway Station</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>Sevenoaks Railway Station is a key sustainable transport hub and as such is considered a good location for growth and increased densities with appropriate parking standards and investment in enhancing public transport and walking and cycling infrastructure provision. More detailed transport modelling (based on the local plan transport model) is likely to be required to understand the interactions within the local transport network depending on the scale and characteristics of the development.</p>
<p>Chapter 2 Housing Choice for all</p>	
<p>Housing for Older People</p>	<p><u>Development Investment</u></p> <p>The County Council welcomes the District Council's support and willingness to work with the County Council on the delivery of suitable housing for older people. In addition to the appropriate physical accommodation, the County Council is seeing substantial change in how social care is delivered, with a significant move toward telecare and assisted living services that can be accessed from a person's existing home. The County Council would therefore welcome the opportunity to look for the District Council's support in securing future developer contributions via its CIL mechanism that allows appropriate adult social care infrastructure and equipment to be funded and delivered for the benefit of Sevenoaks older residents.</p> <p>A further issue that is being seen county wide, and equally in Sevenoaks, is extreme difficulty recruiting staff into the Adult Social Care sector. This is a growing problem and may be exacerbated as Sevenoaks population ages further. The County Council would welcome joint working with the District Council to understand opportunities where the Local Plan may be able to assist with this issue.</p> <p>The consultation document is clear in its narrative that Sevenoaks has a significantly ageing population, and the pressure on adult social care infrastructure and resources is very high. In the same way that the District Council has moved education out of its CIL governance to ensure that the impact of development is fully mitigated, the County Council would</p>

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	<p>like to encourage a similar approach around the delivery of adult social care infrastructure, due to the high importance of ensuring adequate care for people in need. The County Council would therefore ask that further liaison takes place in regard to understanding the needs of adult social care to ensure that the changing infrastructure and service needs are understood and that the funding is appropriately secured.</p> <p>Kent County Council also supports the focus on providing specialist older persons accommodation, through Policy H4 and would like a be involved in further discussions to make sure that the current and emerging needs of the elderly population continue to be supported through the Local Plan.</p>
<p>Housing density and intensification</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p><i>Paragraph 2.31</i></p> <p>The County Council is supportive of the District Council's approach to increase the density of housing provision where these will meet housing need and lead to properly planned for provision supported by the 6 types of areas identified by the District Wide Character Study (DWCS).</p>
<p>Gypsy and Travellers</p>	<p><u>Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)</u></p> <p><i>Paragraph 2.35</i></p> <p>The County Council notes a typographical error within this paragraph and recommends it is corrected to "<i>an area <u>not</u> likely to flood</i>".</p>
<p>Chapter 3 Employment and Economy</p>	
<p>General Comments</p>	<p><u>PRoW</u></p> <p>The County Council is supportive of Policy TLC1 7ii and the promotion of walking and cycling; and Policy TLC2, which encourages access via sustainable modes of transport. The County Council also appreciates the various references to promoting sustainable access in town centres - the Local Plan's support for sustainable access will contribute to changing cultures and, over time, should see more people adopt these modes for local journeys.</p> <p>Tourism and the visitor economy is an important economic driver for the District. The PRoW network supports this sector as shown by Figure 3.5, which recognises the District's only National Trail - the North Downs Way - and other local promoted routes. The County Council therefore also welcomes Policy EMP6 and its reference to improving 'last mile' links - over time these small improvements will enhance the PROW network and so increase the likelihood of use by a greater audience with all the consequent personal, environmental, and economic benefits.</p>
<p>Delivering new employment land</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, looks forward to continuing to work working with the District to ensure proposed sites within the Local Plan can be suitably and safely accessed from the public highway, where good quality footways, cycle routes and crossing points in accordance with latest design standards exist or can be implemented and extended to the development site and where good quality public transport services exist or can be suitably improved to provide a realistic alternative to a car journey, and where capacity is available on the network or can be improved in accordance with emerging transport policies.</p>
<p>Chapter 4 Climate Change</p>	
<p>Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p><i>Section 4.4</i></p> <p>The County Council, as Local Highway Authority is supportive of the policies in section 4.4 where these relate to location and transport and travel.</p>

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<p>Policy CC1 Mitigating and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change</p>	<p><u>PRoW</u></p> <p>The recognition that 36% of the District's CO2 emissions result from transport (Figure 4.1) is a clear justification for future developments to deliver Active Travel enhancements. Policy CC1, bullet 2 acknowledges by inference that sustainable movement can reduce emissions. The County Council recommends the inclusion of a clearer statement requiring provision of agreed sustainable Active Travel options, thereby supporting and underpinning other sections of the Plan.</p>
<p>Policy W1 Flood Risk</p>	<p><u>Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)</u></p> <p>The County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority notes the following extract from the policy - <i>"Flood mitigation measures shall be installed and maintained in perpetuity at developers' own expense or put into a management company to ensure their long-term retention, maintenance and management. The provision of any other flood protection and resilience measures required will be informed by the Flood Risk Assessment."</i> Assuming that Flood Mitigation measures incorporate SuDS, it should be recognised that some SuDS Systems are adopted by a Water and Sewerage Company or even, on rare occasion, the County Council as Local Highway Authority - therefore not for the developer / a management company to fund the maintenance of. The County Council would therefore ask that this be recognised in the policy.</p>
<p>Sustainable Drainage</p>	<p><u>SuDS</u></p> <p>Paragraph 4.23, states <i>"In 2015, Kent County Council became a statutory consultee as the Lead Local Flood Authority and adopted a Drainage and Planning Policy Statement which should also inform the development of drainage schemes,"</i>. The County Council latest policy was adopted in 2019. The County Council would ask that this be reflected within the Local Plan.</p> <p>In respect of the extract - <i>"There will also be situations where consultation with the Environment Agency will be necessary, such as where there may be a risk to groundwater Source Protection Zones or vulnerability zones."</i> The County Council would advise that for any surface water proposed to enter a main river, the approval of the Environment Agency is also required.</p>
<p>Policy W2 Sustainable Drainage</p>	<p><u>SuDS</u></p> <p>The policy states: <i>"All drainage schemes must deliver a net reduction in runoff rates, mimic natural drainage flows as closely as possible and manage surface water as close to the source as possible."</i> Whilst this is commended, it appears to be in conflict with the requirements of DEFRA's Non Statutory Technical Standards (S2) for sustainable drainage systems (s2) which states: <i>"the peak runoff rate from the development to any highway drain, sewer or surface water body for the 1 in 1 year rainfall event and the 1 in 100 year rainfall event should never exceed the peak greenfield runoff rate for the same event."</i> Whereby it is required for any new surface development to go out at a rate no greater than existing, it does not require a net reduction – the District Council may wish to consider this.</p>
<p>Chapter 5 Design</p>	
<p>General Comments</p>	<p><u>Development Investment</u></p> <p>The County Council considers that it is positive to see Design Review Panels utilised to ensure high quality design is achieved – particularly in medium to large development schemes.</p>
<p>Policy D3 Design Codes</p>	<p><u>PRoW</u></p> <p>The chapter seeks to require that all new developments create well-designed places to promote sustainable and healthy communities. The proven benefits of safe and secure spaces, having green space in close proximity, and convenient walking and cycling access, is widely documented; and supports the Plan's stated Objectives. Reference to healthy and sustainable communities is therefore encouraged throughout the Local Plan. The County Council would also strongly encourage reference to the design of non-motorised access provision to ensure accessibility for all.</p>

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Chapter 6 Health and Wellbeing	
General Comments	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>The County Council welcomes the Strategic Objective set out within this paragraph. The historic environment also has a role to play in public health. The current and substantial pressures faced by health and social care demand a search for innovative solutions to continue meeting the demands of a modern population over the coming years. Heritage can play an important role in the contribution of the arts to person-centred, place-based care through means such as arts-on-prescription activities, cultural venues and community programmes. The historic environment, archaeology and heritage form part of our experience of being human and can provide individual as well as collective opportunities to engage with arts and culture whilst having positive effects on our physical and mental health and wellbeing in the process.</p>
Chapter 7 Historic Environment	
General Comments	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>In 2017, the District Council published its Historic Environment Review document. Section 6.3.3 states “<i>The District’s legacy has been handed down through the generations, but it cannot be taken for granted. Some of that inheritance is under greater threat than ever before, and its future cannot be taken for granted. There is an important story to tell, and it is strongly recommended that the Council prepare an overarching heritage strategy which articulates the historic character and evolution alongside reference to the spectrum of strategies and potential projects which would enable more effective protection, celebration and enhancement of the historic environment.</i>” As far as the County Council is aware, the Sevenoaks Heritage Strategy has never been developed and this is reflected in the draft Local Plan policies, which at present, do not fully describe the role that the District’s heritage can play in life in the area and explain how it can contribute to health and wellbeing, the economy, social inclusion and education. The County Council would recommend that the District Council develops the Heritage Strategy as recommended by the Historic Environment Review.</p> <p><u>Libraries</u></p> <p>Sevenoaks Museum houses many historic objects that tell the story of the development of Sevenoaks & forms part of the historic assets of the town, therefore, the County Council would expect the Museum to be referred to within the Local Plan.</p>
Figure 7.1: Heritage Assets and Conservation Areas	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>It should be noted, that in addition to the nationally and locally designated heritage assets shown, there are also numerous non-designated heritage assets in Sevenoaks. These local sites - archaeological sites, historic buildings and landscape features, are often what give areas their distinct historic character and also need to be conserved and enhanced during development management, where possible.</p>
Strategic Objective OB16.	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>The County Council supports the strategic objective as if successfully achieved, it allows Sevenoaks to grow while preserving its distinct historic character.</p> <p><i>Paragraph 7.7</i></p> <p>The County Council recommends replacing the the word “<i>useful</i>” with <u>invaluable</u>. The Historic Environment Record (HER) is the only place where information on the wide diversity of heritage sites and features is brought together, in fact including data from all the other resources identified in this section.</p>
Policy HEN1 Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>The County Council is supportive of this policy and is pleased to see the full range of heritage features included in the policy.</p> <p>Change in rural areas should certainly be managed sensitively. It should be noted that much of Kent has historically had a dispersed settlement pattern. Development between villages and hamlets and among farm buildings would in many places be consistent with the historic character of those areas. Historic England, Kent County Council and Kent Downs</p>

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	<p>AONB have published guidance on historic farmsteads in Kent that considers how rural development proposals can be assessed on whether they are consistent with existing character. The Kent Farmsteads Guidance has been endorsed by the County Council and it is recommended that District Council considers adopting the guidance as Supplementary Planning Document.</p>
<p>Policy HEN2 Sensitivity Managing Change in the Historic Environment</p>	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>While the current text is correct, it should be noted that where the asset affected is an archaeological asset, the Heritage Statement may need to incorporate a Desk Based Assessment (DBA) or even the results of archaeological fieldwork. The County Council can advise on the need for a DBA/fieldwork on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<p>7.13 Archaeology</p>	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>The current text is incorrect and needs to be amended. In recent years the Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP) dataset has been replaced with Archaeological Notification Areas (ANA). No reference should therefore be made to AAPs. In addition, it is not appropriate to regard ANAs as heritage assets as all areas are covered by ANAs of one grade or another, so all of Sevenoaks would be regarded as a heritage asset under the current text.</p> <p>The County Council would therefore recommend the following text is included within the Local Plan:</p> <p><u>Kent County Council has defined Archaeological Notification Areas to guide Sevenoaks District Council on when to consult the County Council on proposals affecting archaeological assets. These can be viewed on the Sevenoaks District Council website.</u></p> <p>It would then be helpful for the District Council to include the ANAs on their website.</p>
<p>Policy HEN3 Archaeology</p>	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>As noted above, Areas of Archaeological Potential are no longer used – the following amendment is therefore recommended:</p> <p><i>“Where an application is located within, or would affect an Area of Archaeological Potential or suspected area of archaeological importance <u>an archaeological asset, an archaeological assessment should be provided.”</u></i></p> <p>The second sentence – <i>“Preference will be given to preservation in situ unless it can be shown that recording of remains, assessment, analysis report and deposition of archive is appropriate.”</i> is also incorrect in its current form. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes it clear that excavation and recording is not an equal alternative to preservation in-situ, it should only be carried out where preservation in-situ is not appropriate. The current text does not make that order of priority clear. The County Council would suggest the following is replaced by:</p> <p><u>Where development proposals affect non-designated heritage assets with an archaeological interest, the District Council would expect the archaeological deposits to be preserved in-situ. Where this is not possible, clear justification will be required.</u></p> <p>The fourth sentence is also slightly confusingly worded as it is not clear what the ‘possible impact’ refers to. It could perhaps be better worded as:</p> <p><i>“Developers will be required to record any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and possible impact <u>significance and the potential impact of their proposals”.</u></i></p>
<p>Policy HEN4 Locally Listed Buildings and Assets</p>	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>The County Council is pleased to see that the policy requires applicants to demonstrate that the significance of the assets has influenced the design of the proposals.</p>

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	<p>The County Council would also suggest that the Historic Environment Record be identified as the appropriate repository of information about locally listed assets, so that it is available to all those preparing development proposals in the District.</p>
<p>Policy HEN5 Responding to Climate Change in the Historic Environment</p>	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p>The County Council is pleased to see this policy included in the draft Local Plan. Climate change will significantly impact the District’s heritage and it was encouraging to see this reflected in the policy.</p> <p>The current text focuses on adapting historic buildings to make them more efficient. Historic England has produced a range of guidance on the role that heritage can play in mitigating climate change and historic building adaptation (‘Climate Change Adaptation Report’ (Historic England, 2016)). The guidance demonstrates that historic structures, settlements and landscapes can in fact be more resilient in the face of climate change, and more energy efficient than more modern structures and settlements. This has also been updated in the HE report ‘There’s no Place Like Old Homes: re-use and Recycle to Reduce Carbon’ (Historic England 2019). This could usefully be highlighted in the text as an encouragement to retain old buildings where possible.</p> <p>A second issue of relevance that should be mentioned here is the role that SuDS can have on buried archaeological remains, as these are an important response to climate change. SuDS may have both direct and indirect impacts on the historic environment. Direct impacts could include damage to known heritage assets – for example if a historic drainage ditch is widened and deepened as part of SuDS works. Alternatively, they may directly impact on unknown assets such as when SuDS works damage buried archaeological remains. Indirect impacts are when the ground conditions are changed by SuDS works, thereby impacting on heritage assets. For example, using an area for water storage, or improving an area’s drainage can change the moisture level in the local environment. Archaeological remains in particular are highly vulnerable to changing moisture levels, which can accelerate the decay of organic remains and alter the chemical constituency of the soils. Historic buildings are often more vulnerable to flood damage to their foundations than modern buildings.</p> <p>When SuDS are planned, it is important that the potential impact on the historic environment is fully considered, and any unavoidable damage is mitigated. This is best secured by early consideration of the local historic environment following consultation with the Kent Historic Environment Record and by taking relevant expert advice. The County Council has recently produced advice for SuDS and the historic environment. It provides information about the potential impact of SuDS on the historic environment, the range of mitigation measures available and how developers should proceed if their schemes are believed likely to impact on heritage assets.</p>
<p>Policy HEN7 Historic Parks and Gardens</p>	<p><u>Heritage Conservation</u></p> <p><i>Clause (b)</i></p> <p>It should be noted that there are no truly natural landscapes in Sevenoaks. The landscape that is visible today is the result of many centuries of evolution and the pattern of roads, tracks, field boundaries and hedgerows that gives the modern landscape its character is firmly rooted in the past. The Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Survey (2001) (HLC) is an important resource for understanding the landscape of Kent and its development through time. The County Council emphasises that the HLC is a strategic, not local, assessment. It allows a look at the landscape of Kent and draws conclusions about the development of the landscape in different parts of the county and the county as a whole. It is not detailed enough to use at a small scale. It is not appropriate, therefore, to use the HLC data alone to inform specific development proposals or to identify potential development sites. To assess the historic landscape in a detailed way it is necessary to refine the existing HLC further. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has recently done this for their Borough and the County Council recommends that District Council also undertakes this exercise – the County Council would welcome further engagement on this point.</p>
<p>Chapter 8 The Natural Environment</p>	
<p>General Commentary</p>	<p><u>PRoW</u></p> <p>The County Council welcomes reference to PRoW and cycle routes being part of the District’s Blue Green Infrastructure Network. When taken with the recognition within paragraph 6.8 that local planning policy is able to influence local access provision, the proposed requirement for planning applications to recognise, protect and enhance Blue and Green Infrastructure (Policy BW1) is desirable. However, some applicants may not recognise access as part of this policy given the title ‘Safeguarding Places for Wildlife and Nature’. It is therefore requested that this is amended to ensure access is specifically acknowledged.</p>

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Policy/Paragraph	Commentary
Chapter 9 Infrastructure and Community	
General Commentary	<p>The County Council would welcome continued engagement with the District Council in respect of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan preparation and updating to ensure it remains up to date and includes necessary infrastructure to support the delivery of sustainable development. The County Council notes that reference is made to viability within this section. The County Council highlights the need to ensure proposed allocations, and the necessary infrastructure to support those allocations can be viably delivered.</p> <p>The County Council agrees that delivery <i>“of suitable and appropriate infrastructure to support growth, alongside the maintenance of existing infrastructure, is crucial to the wellbeing of residents, those who visit, provide services, invest and work in the District.”</i> (p235). However, the County Council would recommend that reference is made to timely provision of infrastructure – seeking to ensure infrastructure is provided at the right place at the right time, as seen in the first Regulation 18 consultation.</p> <p><u>Waste Management</u></p> <p>Significant development within the Sevenoaks District will undoubtedly put additional pressure on the waste services provided by the County Council in this area. The County Council as the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) provides a Waste Transfer Station (WTS) at Dunbrik, Sevenoaks for the receipt of kerbside waste collected by Sevenoaks as the Waste Collection Authority (WCA). There is also a co-located HWRC for residents to dispose of household waste. Sevenoaks also benefits from a small standalone HWRC in Swanley. Both of these facilities are strategic, serving not only the whole of the Sevenoaks District, but also parts of adjoining Districts.</p> <p>The provision for waste is not mentioned in detail in this document. Considering the extent of the development proposed, there is a need for waste and the increased demand on infrastructure to be discussed. This could be reported in a positive way as the County Council already has a project in progress and another identified to address this projected demand.</p> <p>The County Council has undertaken an Infrastructure Review and identified an immediate need for a replacement Waste Transfer Station and future expansion of the Swanley HWRC to meet housing demand as set out in the Local Plan document. The WTS is operating at capacity and will not be able accommodate all the waste arisings collected by the District Council as the WCA without redevelopment. A project to construct a replacement WTS on land adjacent to the existing WTS is currently being progressed.</p> <p>The Swanley HWRC is a small site which accepts a wide range of household delivered materials and has a growing population catchment. As the site does not have enough space for a separate HGV area, it has to be closed when the bins need to be changed. This results in queues of householder vehicles building up on the approach road, which also impacts upon the local highway network. Bin changes are also more frequent than on larger sites, as a lack of space means that there is only storage for a limited number of empty bins. Due largely to the HWRC booking system, the County Council is currently forecasting sufficient capacity for the short term (up to 5 years) with the potential need to expand in the medium term (5-10 years).</p>
Policy IN1 Infrastructure Delivery	<p><u>PRoW</u></p> <p>The County Council notes the following extract of this policy - <i>“All new development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)”</i>. Recognition of the need to deliver infrastructure both onsite and offsite is vital as access between destinations is rarely limited to a single environment. The County Council would welcome therefore continued engagement in relation to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. It should, however, be also recognised that access infrastructure could be required that is not specified within the IDP - some projects, such as removing, say, unnecessary staggered barriers, will be too small to be listed within the IDP. Infrastructure requirements must not, therefore, be limited only to those schemes or works included within the IDP and Policy IN1 must be revised accordingly.</p>
Education	<p><u>Development Investment</u></p> <p>The County Council would prefer the development of areas of the district where the combined quantum of development sites will more adequately support the future development of education infrastructure. Small, disparate development sites can lead to difficulties in the planning and development of education infrastructure in particular.</p> <p>The County Council requests clarification as to whether the graphic about housing need on page 66 correct – it states that the overall housing need is 10,680, with 6,345 as affordable housing – that’s almost 60% affordable. However, on page 72, the consultation document then talks about 30% affordable on brownfield sites and 40% affordable on greenfield sites, suggesting an average of 35% affordable.</p>

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Policy/Paragraph	Commentary
	<p>Based on the overall housing need of 10,680 dwellings over the Plan period, and assuming a 35% affordable housing target within the overall dwelling number, this estimates a need for 8.5 FE of secondary education infrastructure, and 250 Sixth Form pupils. For primary education, the dwellings numbers suggest a future need for 10FE over the same plan period. However, it is not immediately straight forward to suggest where the additional capacity will be required until there is more certainty and detail provided around the allocation of future development sites.</p> <p>As a general comment, the County Council welcomes the steps that the District Council is now considering in order to ringfence the delivery of education infrastructure via section 106 planning obligations and to effectively remove it from its current CIL governance.</p> <p><u>Education</u></p> <p><i>Paragraphs 9.18 -9.20</i></p> <p>There is an error at paragraph 9.18, where it states: “There are 34 state primary schools in the District”. The correct number is 42 primary schools including one infant and one junior school.</p> <p>Also in paragraph 9.18, the County Council is pleased to note the recognition that there is no remaining capacity in Sevenoaks District secondary schools. Any new housing, even very small developments, adds to that demand. The County Council has no capital budget for accommodating new pupil demand as a result of new housing so this recognition should lead to robust section 106 agreements where developer contributions and land are made available to the County Council to enable new provision to be built.</p> <p>In paragraph 9.19, there is a recognised need for a new secondary school in the central/northern part of the district to be delivered within the plan period. However, this is largely dependent on the large development site going ahead, due to the availability of land. If the large developments go ahead in the North of the district, then a new 5FE-6FE secondary school will be required. A site of approximately 5 hectares, and sufficient developer contributions is then required.</p> <p>The safeguarded land for a secondary school in Edenbridge is welcomed. However, before the Department for Education will allow a new school to opened, the County Council must demonstrate that such a school would financially viable. Currently, the planned new housing in Edenbridge is only just sufficient to indicate that a 4FE school would be viable. A 5FE school is more feasible.</p> <p>Within paragraph 9.20, the Local Plan refers to the new Special Educational Needs provision in Swanley. The County Council seeks engagement with the District Council and other relevant stakeholders, including the local community to ensure that these plans are progressed.</p> <p><u>Adult Education</u></p> <p>The County Council would welcome continued engagement with the District Council in respect of adult education. In future years, it is likely that the County Council will move towards seeking flexible and multifunction shared accommodation that could deliver adult education services, amongst other beneficial uses.</p>
Policy ED1 Education	<p><u>Education</u></p> <p>This policy states that the District Council will work with the County Council as Education Planning Authority to ensure that sufficient provision is available at the time that it is needed. This is very welcome, caveated by a repeated mention that any new schools will have to be entirely funded by developers through developer contributions. Sufficient buildable land must be identified through scheduling, with a view to such land being transferred free of charge, as the County Council has no funding to purchase land or fund new build.</p>
Sports and Leisure Facilities	<p><u>Sports and Recreation</u></p> <p>The reference to Sport England’s Active Design Guide is welcomed.</p>

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	The Local Plan consultation document references the 2018 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) – this data is rather out of date. The District Council is encouraged to update the PPS as these should typically last 5 years – engagement would be welcomed on this update.
Policy SL1 Sports and Leisure Facilities	<p><u>Libraries</u></p> <p>Discussions about the current library building and the potential for the library service to move to a newly developed leisure site is underway between the District and County Council.</p>
Policy UD1 Utilities and Digital Infrastructure	<p><u>Digital Infrastructure</u></p> <p>The policy is noted, however it is considered that an update to the text is required as it is referring to superfast broadband when Government policy has been pushing for gigabit-capable (i.e. full fibre) since the publication of the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review in 2018. 75% of premises in Kent now have access to gigabit-capable connections and the Government’s ambition is to achieve near universal coverage across the UK by the end of the decade. It is requested that reference to “<i>superfast</i>” should be replaced with <u>gigabit-capable</u>.</p>
Community Facilities and Services	<p><u>Libraries</u></p> <p>The County Council notes that there is very limited reference to libraries – Libraries, Registration and Archives is a significant community service with 11 libraries, additional mobile stops, and a home library service offer that reaches across the whole district and should be considered within the Local Plan.</p>
Infrastructure Delivery	<p>The County Council refers to commentary made within the introduction in relation to section 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy.</p> <p>PRoW</p> <p><i>Paragraph 9.7</i></p> <p>The paragraph recognises the need for infrastructure to be delivered on occasions ahead of development. The County Council strongly supports this approach and will look to the District Council to require such a delivery. Experience has shown the late delivery of infrastructure causes unnecessary disruption and fails to embed new or changed behaviours, resulting in failing to attain hoped for benefits. In ensuring infrastructure exists from the outset for a development beginning to be occupied, this will help establish positive behaviours, particularly avoidance of using cars for local journeys.</p>
Chapter 10 Transport	
General Commentary	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The County Council’s Local Transport Plan 5 is currently being developed in accordance with Government policy and this offers a real opportunity for policies in this and the Sevenoaks Local Plan to reinforce each other to better address challenges and deliver outcomes listed in the plan. The County Council looks forward to working with District Council to address the challenges of promoting sustainable transport choices in line with emerging national and local transport policies. As discussed within the Local Plan consultation document, the outputs from the transport model for Sevenoaks, developed from the Kent Transport Model, will provide the necessary evidence base to identify ‘hot-spots’ and mitigations to be included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan or to highlight the need for adjustments in the spatial strategy.</p>
Policy T1 Sustainable Movement Network	<p><u>PRoW</u></p> <p>The County Council strongly encourages partnership working regarding changes around the PRoW network to ensure consistency both with standards around the county-wide PRoW network and the various applicable statutory procedures, such as when upgrading the status of a Public Footpath to Public Bridleway to establish public access rights for cyclists and horse riders. The Local Plan consultation document recognises the County Council as a partner, such as in Policy T1, but would like to see the County Council stated specifically in its role in respect of the PRoW network.</p>

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	<p>The County Council must remain engaged with the District Council in respect of the PRow network to ensure it remains relevant to changing needs, promotes opportunities to enhance active travel, and prioritises projects to maximise active travel benefits.</p> <p>As noted in the County Council's response to previous Regulation 18 consultation, the popularity of horse riding and its contribution within the rural, tourism and visitor economy has not been acknowledged – this should be included in further Local Plan documentation.</p> <p>The County Council's previous request for recognition of those with disabilities has been acknowledged with consideration of need for 'wheeling' (this should be defined within the Glossary for ease of understanding). However, disabilities are broader than just mobility impairment - the Local Plan must acknowledge this and consider how development can ensure those with other disabilities are provided for so as to conveniently enjoy access within the District.</p> <p>The County Council has been unable to find reference within the Plan to the ROWIP, a statutory document for PROW management. The ROWIP's six 'Key Themes' complement the Plan's ambitions so it would seem relevant and advantageous to acknowledge the ROWIP. The ROWIP should be recognised as part of the Evidence Base documents.</p> <p>The PRow network needs to be enhanced and extended to support the Local Plan's active travel ambitions. The PRow network is disjointed, whether severed by roads or having no continuity of public rights; and is predominantly comprised of Public Footpaths, where lawful public use is limited to pedestrian and mobility vehicle access. Significant off-road access enhancement will be gained by up-grading the status of footpaths to bridleways, thereby extending lawful use by cyclists; and this can often be achieved at comparatively small cost to road network enhancements. It is recommended Policy T1, bullet 11 uses this as an example - it is believed many prospective developers will be unaware of this as an option.</p> <p>The County Council supports Policy T1: Sustainable Movement Network in respect of bullets 8, 10, 11, 12, and 13.</p>
<p>Policy T2 Sustainable Movement</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The policy will need to include a requirement for developers to implement Travel Plans to monitor mode share and implement and promote a range of transport measures to achieve agreed targets. It is recommended that the District Council forms a support network for organisations with travel plans in the district.</p> <p><u>PRow</u></p> <p>The Sustainable Movement Hierarchy (Figure 10.3, para. 10.7, and Policy T2) is welcomed in principle. This policy should ensure that development contributes to meaningful improvement (both on and off site) towards facilities across the District being accessible by all.</p>
<p>Vehicle parking</p>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <p>The District Council should liaise with the County Council in respect of vehicle parking standards.</p>