

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

DRAFT PLAN FOR SUBMISSION (REGULATION 19)

OBJECTION TO SOUNDNESS ON BEHALF OF LENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

POLICY LPRSP4 (A) (6) (e)

HEATHLANDS GARDEN SETTLEMENT

POTENTIAL CONNECTION TO A NEW M20 MOTORWAY JUNCTION

LPC TWELVE

1. Policy LPRSP4 (A) (6) (e) requires a potential connection to a new M20 junction as a result of cumulative development between M20 Junctions 8 and 9.
2. The potential for a new motorway junction was a major part of the initial promotion of the Heathlands concept. Maidstone Borough Council has never published the initial sieve analysis which led to the identification of Heathlands as a potential location for a council-led garden community.
3. There is no evidence that Highways England would support the provision of such a new junction in terms of the scale of development currently envisaged. The letter from Highways England to Helen Whately MP dated 3rd June 2020 makes it clear there are no plans to build a new junction in the vicinity of Lenham.
4. M20 Junction 9 is in Ashford Borough. There is no evidence of any proposed development within Ashford Borough on a scale which would give rise to a case for the provision of a new motorway junction. If such development was proposed Lenham Parish Council would expect it to be disclosed in the draft Statements of Common Ground, which it is not.
5. It is possible that Heathlands was selected as a location because of the potential for a new motorway junction on the M20. Now that it is clear that there is no realistic prospect of such a new motorway junction being provided, it would better for the plan to no longer contain a garden community at Heathlands.
6. Even if it did prove feasible to provide a new motorway junction at Heathlands this would be a very expensive item of infrastructure. That expenditure would drain to a very significant extent the CIL funds which are likely to arise from new development within the plan period. These funds would be provided as part of the special arrangement for community infrastructure levy proposed to support Heathlands.
7. The aspiration for Heathlands to be served by a new motorway junction indicates that this is in essence a car-dependent proposal.

8. Because there is no realistic prospect that a new motorway junction could ever be provided, Lenham Parish Council believes the plan is not sound whilst it continues to contain the reference to a new junction at policy LPRSP4 (A) (6) (e). This is misleading.
9. It is undesirable in principle for public consultation documents to include potentially misleading statements.
10. Lenham Parish Council also believes it would be undesirable and unacceptable for the plan to continue to contain Heathlands which is fundamentally a car dependent development proposal.

Changes to the plan sought to address soundness issues.

11. Lenham Parish Council believes the car dependent Heathlands proposal should be deleted from the Review in its entirety.
12. If Heathlands is to be retained in the plan, then clause 6 (e) in LPRSP4 (A) should be deleted. The case for a new motorway junction has not been substantiated. The reference to a potential new motorway junction is both misleading and undesirable. This is unsound.