



COXHEATH PARISH COUNCIL

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

22nd December 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

Local Plan Review Regulation 18 Preferred Approaches Consultation - Dec 2020 ("Reg 18b")

I am writing to inform you that Coxheath Parish Council fully supports the submission made by the Coordinating Team that includes the Maidstone Branches of KALC and CPRE, the Joint Parishes Group and The Bearsted & Thurnham Society. We would wish that the Coordinating Team's submission is taken as the view of Coxheath Parish Council.

We make the following additional comments:

Further to our earlier representations this year to Gavin Ball Coxheath Parish Council is pleased to see nearly all the remaining sites in Coxheath, as identified under the ongoing and repeated 'Calls for Sites', eliminated.

The Parish Council is somewhat surprised most of these were ever entertained being on Grade 2 agricultural land, established woodland or areas designated as Land of Local Landscape Value, along the Greensand Ridge. However, two small scale sites have already been granted consents and have therefore disappeared from the consultation process in the meantime.

Certain sites also ignored the current policy regarding coalescence of settlements contrary to Policies SS1 - Spatial Strategy and SP17 – The Countryside. These policies specifically mention protection of "... Maidstone and surrounding Villages", and states "... will retain the separation of individual settlements."

The current document out for consultation does continue to paint a 'glossy' picture of Coxheath as a Larger Village. SP7 Section 6.112 Page 103 promotes the continued sustainability of Larger Villages to meet community needs with the retention of community services. Sadly, following the 2017 Local Plan adoption and the promotion of other Planning Applications by MBC the following services have

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now closed in Coxheath:

- Stockett Lane Doctors Surgery – closed summer 2020, now vacant and a future windfall site;
- Orchard Dental Practice – closed summer 2019;
- Orchard Doctors Surgery – planning consent already granted by MBC for demolition in 2021 to be replaced with housing;
- The Spice Lounge as the sole remaining licenced premises – following an appeal due to close and become either a Tesco Express or Retirement Flats.

Reading further on at Section 6.118 Page 107 of the document states, “Healthcare services in the village are particularly strong and continues with the identified Key Infrastructure requirements for Coxheath to include under item 2c “Improvements to health infrastructure including extension and/or improvements at Orchard Medical Centre and Stockett Lane Surgery.” This could be somewhat difficult to achieve and we would have thought the author(s) might have been more in touch with what is happening in this area.

Coxheath has seen more than its fair share of development in recent years with, in all but one case, the number of houses promoted exceeding the number allocated to the Rural Service Centres. This is contrary to the current Local Plan 2017, along with the continued Spatial Strategy SS1 Section 10 on Page 52, which clearly states Larger Village equals Limited Development.

Yours sincerely,

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