

Notes of Local Plan Initial Review

Held at: 27th October, 2025

Present: Cllr Marr and Cllr Miles, Clerk.

This meeting was to have an initial look at the new Local Plan in order to identify areas of support, comment or challenge the parish may wish to make in response to the Regulation 18 consultation.

The Plan will need to be further examined, but the following points were noted upon first reading.

1. If Sevenoaks DC had asked TMBC to take housing allocations, why cannot TMBC ask Sevenoaks now as more greenbelt is being re-classified as greybelt?
2. What actions will be taken to ensure new developments address the housing needs of the borough and not just create 'sink/overflow' estates for London boroughs? What discussion have taken place with RSL's etc to ensure greater gearing on allocation policies to address the local housing needs?
3. Our understanding is there could be over 3000 new homes built within 5 miles of Wouldham, this is in addition to the 1200 already at Peter Village. Infrastructure does not clearly identify how this could work. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies upgrading junctions, and improving walking routes, but also extends the Primary School in Wouldham to cover intake from Snodland, Burham and Eccles. This means that there is an expected large increase in traffic along the A228 and through the villages, but with no plan of how this would be managed. It seems very naïve to think that residents who are not in Wouldham would walk miles to get to school, particularly when the only Travel Plan issued was produced when planning for the new school went through which is now totally out of date and is not working even without additional pupils.
4. Settlement Hierarchy: Wouldham and Peters Village have been allocated as separate area within this hierarchy. Therefore, Wouldham should also be a Tier 4 (Secondary) or even Tier 5 village as it has less services than Burham (also Tier 4). A Tier 3 village should be 'Sustainable locations with a good range of services and facilities' Wouldham has no facilities other than 2 public houses, playing field, mobile library and a village hall. Burham has a petrol station/shop, bakery, 2 Halls, family centre, primary school, allotments, 2 pubs, GP Surgery and playing fields.
5. Why do developments on the East Bank include, Aylesford, Eccles and Wouldham, but nothing for Burham?
6. Although BREEM to a good standard is great to help with climate change, why have not policies been introduced install solar panels to public buildings/new builds as a standard? Retrofitting to meet climate requirements incurs additional cost to TMBC which could be passed on to developers.
7. It seems that the only employment opportunities for the East of the Borough is for logistics/storage/distribution, with a small amount of general industry at Laker Road. Most higher skill jobs seem to be around Kings Hill and Tonbridge. We feel this could create a split borough in terms of those with higher skill locating further west leaving a vacuum in the east. Alternatively, it could increase the need for additional travel for skilled workers to obtain suitable employment.
8. We feel that as a potential Rural Exception Site, further development in Wouldham could be considered in terms of bungalows for the elderly. With an aging population in the village, residents have to move from lifetime homes to unknown areas with no connections. However, with only single lane roads and no facilities, it is hard to see how any further building could be accommodated.